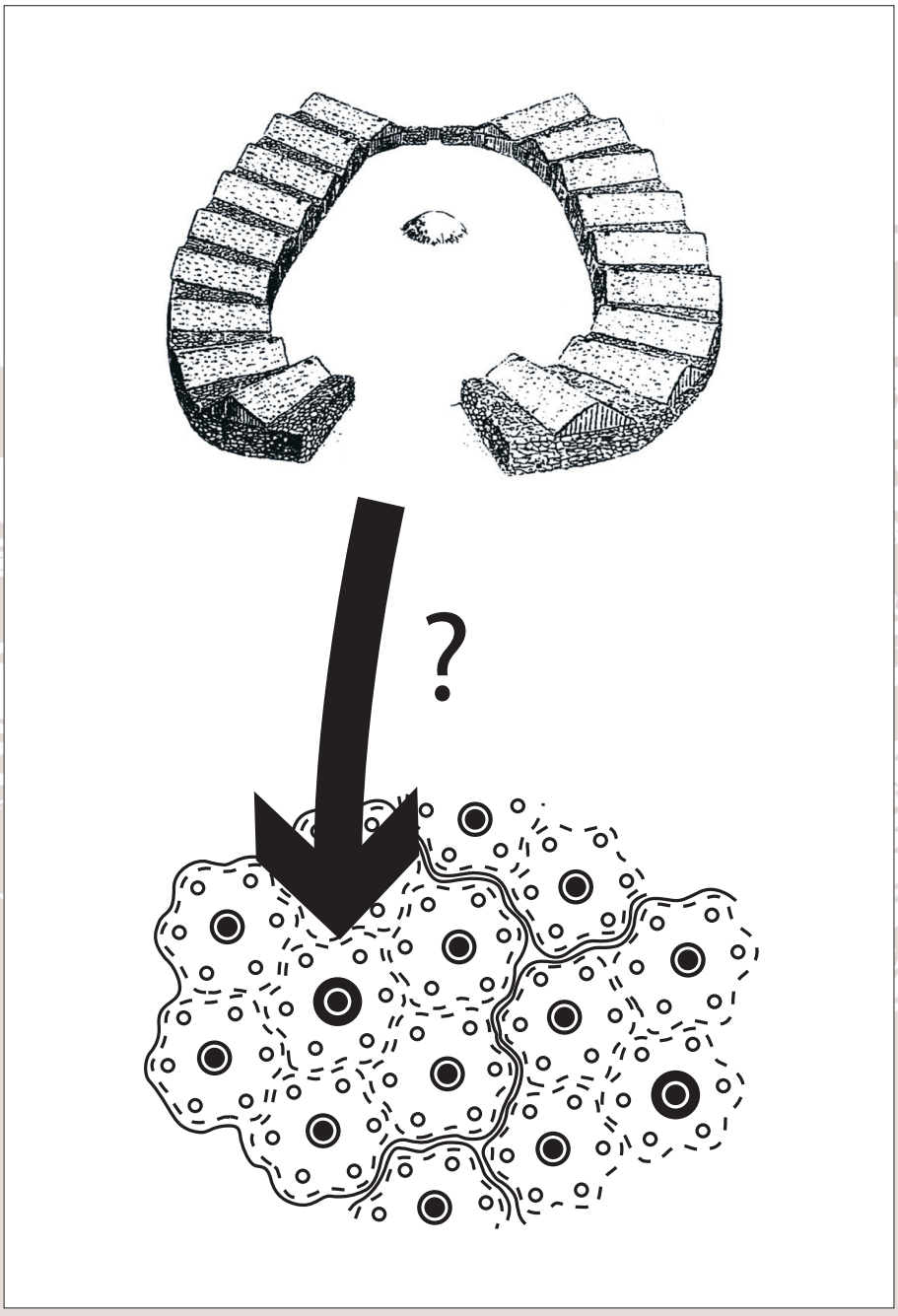
AmS-Skrifter 22

Oliver Grimm

Roman Period Court Sites in South-Western Norway – A Social Organisation in an International Perspective



Edited by the Archaeological museum, University of Stavanger and the Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology in Schleswig

Universitetet i Stavanger
Arkeologisk museum

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AmS-Skrifter 22
Arkeologisk museum, Universitetet i Stavanger
Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger

Redaksjon/Editorial office:
Arkeologisk museum, Universitetet i Stavanger
Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger
Redaktør av serien/Editor of the series: Mads Ravn
Redaktør av dette volumet/Editor of this volume: Mads Ravn
Formgiving/Layout: Ingund Svendsen

Redaksjonsutvalg/Editorial board:
Mads Ravn
Marianne Nitter
Arne Johan Nærøy
Einar Solheim Pedersen
Ingund Svendsen

Utgiver/Publisher:
Arkeologisk museum, Universitetet i Stavanger
Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger
N-4036 Stavanger
Norway
Tel.: (+47) 51 83 26 00
Telefax: (+47) 51 83 26 99
E-mail: post-am@uis.no

Trykket av/Printed by:
www.grafo.no

Stavanger 2010

Skrift/Font: Warnock Pro/Conduit

ISSN 0800-0816
ISBN 978-82-7760-144-1
UDK 902

Cover:
Above: the south-western Norwegian Klauhauane court site (Capelle 2000, fig. 57 after Magnus/Myhre).
Below: Christaller´s central place model according to the market and supply principle (Christaller 1962, fig. 1).

Abstract

Grimm, Oliver 2009: **Roman Period Court Sites in South-Western Norway - a Social Organisation in an International Perspective.** *AmS-Skrifter 22.* 190 pp., Stavanger. ISSN 0800-0816, ISBN 978-82-7760-144-1, UDK 902

Court sites consisted of a group of houses, encircling an open place, which were used for gatherings. Twenty five such sites with a maximum outer diameter of 80 m are known in Norway today, mostly in the very north and south-west of the country. These sites are a major class of archaeological monument in Norwegian archaeology, and as such they deserve international attention.

The present study, which considers south-western Norway, has two main goals: firstly, to publish the excavation documents of four large-scale investigations of such places in areas to the north and south of Stavanger; secondly, to consider all the sites in south-western Norway in archaeological, social and functional terms against a local, regional and international background. From an archaeological perspective, the gathering places in the south-west were mainly in use in the first half of the first millennium AD, and the houses were used as temporary accommodation and for the preparation of food. Socially, the sites themselves seem to point towards a gathering of persons of equal rank. However, there are often indications of a top level in the society and/or large farms close by. Functionally, the gathering places seem to have met social needs since they were situated in the middle of naturally delimitated settlement districts. One may assume additional functions, such as: the holding of tings etc. The study focuses its discussion on the use of the sites in terms of equality (ting) vs. inequality (gatherings controlled by persons of some rank). In fact, many different arguments can be put forward for both points of view, but on the basis of the present source situation it seems difficult to make any firm statement. The study particularly relates to archaeological central place research in selected European countries, but sadly there is little to deduce from these methodologically well-advanced studies with regards to the very first centuries AD in Norway and on a broader scale.

Oliver Grimm, Stiftung Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesmuseen, Zentrum für Baltische und Skandinavische Archäologie, Schloß Gottorf, D-24837 Schleswig. Telephone: (0049) 04621-813543. Email: oliver.grimm@schloss-gottorf.de

List of contents

Preface

Back in 1996, I had my first encounters with the remains of court sites in south-western Norway, namely those in Jæren to the south of Stavanger. Particularly impressive was their well-preserved state and the so-called Dysjane-site, which is located on a ridge c. 100 m high that allows a wide-ranging panoramic view, covering parts of flat-Jæren and the North Sea. From that year onward, my memories were refreshed by other study trips to these same locations, including some equally impressive places in the north of Norway, but it all remained puzzling to me. The idea of focussing on the south-western sites as a study object was further stimulated by a note of a former director of the Archaeological museum in Stavanger (AmS), O. Møllerop, who had asked for a synthesis of that kind in an article published in 1971.

Four times I was lucky. Firstly, there was a two-years post-doc scholarship granted from the „Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft“ that made it all happen. This scholarship allowed a stay at AmS in the first year and an evaluation in Schleswig/Kiel in the second year, and I was glad to have representatives of the “Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft” making quick supportive decisions with regards to the many organisational tasks. Secondly, Norwegian, Swedish and German archaeologists gave precious encouraging pieces of advice and/or supported my letters of applications with their statements (Professors B. Myhre, O.S. Johansen†, E. Straume, J. Callmer, H.W. Böhme, C. von Carnap-Bornheim, M. Müller-Wille, and E. Gringmuth-Dallmer). Thirdly, I am very grateful to the AmS, who not only allowed the study of the excavations´ documents and additional sources, but who had a positive influence on the further working process in many respects. Thanks to H. Jacobsen, the director, L. Selsing, the research coordinator at that period, and the folks at the topographical archive for their help! I do hope that the expertise of the employees (B. Myhre, T. Løken, S. Kristoffersen, P. Haavaldsen, O. Hemdorff, Å. Dahlin-Hauken, just to name a few) has prevented me from making all too many factual mistakes. Fourthly and finally, without the benevolence of L. Foged Thomsen (Århus), who took care of the graphic solutions, there would be no study at all.

The most influential day in the entire research period was in November 2006 when I presented a 30 minute paper with some of my thoughts and results to employees of the AmS. This short paper was followed by an intense discussion of one hour. It was on that same occasion that I recognised some of my misconceptions. Similarly, I. Storli’s book on the northern Norwegian court sites, published in 2006, offered new insights. This led to a major shift in the outline of the present paper, which now offers alternative substories instead of just one, the power-related angle that I had particularly speculated upon in the first place. The other initial idea, however, remained untouched, that is to choose an international archaeological perspective in order to discuss court sites and the society that built them in the first centuries AD. I do hope that this approach, with its many facets, is not reminiscent of yet another “waiting for Godot” (a masterpiece I very much like) but rather creates a colourful search for a variety of explanations. One more basic decision, to avoid the search for „ultimate depth“ and to choose instead an essay-like structure for the international chapters 3 and 6, was taken during the writing process.

I would like to thank the Archaeological museum, University of Stavanger (AM) for accepting this manuscript for printing, after slight changes, also the AM and the Centre für Baltic und Skandinavian Archaeology (ZBSA, Schleswig) respectively for editing this book. In this respect, Dr. Mads Ravn (AM) and Prof. Claus von Carnap-Bornheim (ZBSA) deserve particular attention, as do the Professors J. Callmer (then still in Berlin), M. Müller-Wille (once Kiel) and H. Steyer (once Freiburg) for their, mostly positive, reception of the manuscript. Lars Foged Thomsen (Århus) has been kind enough to remodel some of the illustrations! Not least do I very much appreciate the work of Sharon Shellock M.A. (London) who turned my original manuscript into real English.

There is a world outside archaeology that I very much like. During the working period, I enjoyed meetings with old friends and new acquaintances in Norway, Denmark and Germany, among them Jan-Ingulf, Frans-Arne and Trude, Heidi, Lars, Christina, Tristan and Mila, Mette, Stefan, Sven, Michael, Paul, Chin-Mei and, in particular, Gabriele, Dave and Claudia. I was also happy to have others, who provided additional encouragement during periods when there were some very heavy seas: Edgar, David, Henryk, Lisa, Nick and Peter, not to mention Heiko, Andreas and Don. All of them enriched my life considerably, and so finally did David, with two unforgettable evenings at the Volksbühne Berlin in 2008.

Mange takk, thanks, vielen Dank!

Oliver Grimm

(Kiel, summer 2007 – Schleswig, spring 2009)

1. Introduction

In the year 1861, the archaeologist N. Nicolaysen arrived at the Tu-ridge, a site that is situated in the middle of the long, narrow, and very fertile, N-S oriented area called Jæren, which lies to the south of Stavanger in south-western Norway. This ridge, roughly 100 m high, with its panoramic views that cover flat-Jæren to the north and south, high Jæren to the east and the North Sea to the west would probably have impressed him considerably if it was his first visit. On the hill he found well-preserved archaeological remains, the most notable of which was a grave mound (Krosshaugen) ca. 40 m in diameter, containing a famous Migration period woman's grave (excavated in the late 1860s). Further to the east on the ridge, there was a peculiar area of ca. 60x35m and it took quite a while to make some sense of this space (fig. 2). There were two half-circles with longitudinal, ca. 10-15 m long earthen walls, and each pair of those walls had a depression in between. In the midst of the inner area, which had no walls or depressions, there was a minor mound. Nicolaysen had no doubt that what he saw were archaeological remains, but he asked himself what these remains could have been? In front of his inner eye arose a collection of houses encircling an area, and he might have known about Icelandic gathering sites (ting places), which were used for meetings in the open and had simple houses (booths) for short-period stays nearby (figs. 3-4, 25). Nicolaysen speculated about Dysjane´s use (the site's name on the Tu-ridge) as a ting-place, perhaps aware of the medieval ting held on the ridge. However, he advised that archaeological investigations be carried out in order to be more certain, since alternative interpretations, such as longitudinal burial mounds, could not be ruled out (Nicolaysen 1862-1866:301). The "ting-interpretation" is the egalitarian concept for a court site: the houses, all very alike, were used by people of the same rank for gatherings.

On the cover of this book there is a reconstruction drawing of a court site and an arrow with a question mark, leading to a visualisation of the central place concept. The central place theory, developed by W. Christaller for modern times, is of geographic origin (Christaller 1933). Simply, it postulates paramount centres of equal rank at the same distance in an idealized landscape in modern times, each one encircled by underlying settlement areas (chapter 3.2). This theory was used in archaeology mainly in the 1970s for discussing settlement hierarchies in pre-modern times. For the above mentioned Tu-ridge, it has been argued that there was once a centre of power on that hill that, *inter alia*, controlled the gatherings at the court site (Lund 1965:299-304, Rønneseth 1986). Taking this a step further, one would be tempted to assume that other such seats to the south of Dysjane are indicated by yet more gathering places, very much in line with Christaller´s way of thinking, though relating to the Roman Iron Age. The "power-related interpretation" is the inegalitarian concept for a court site: the people who gathered were controlled by chieftains/petty kings residing close by.

The ambivalence of the interpretation, equality vs. inequality, is the "red thread" or *Leitmotiv* of the following study: what kinds of source materials and approaches are important for discussing the total amount of ca. ten south-western Norwegian court sites, which mainly date to the first/second to fifth century AD (fig. 6)? Is there any possibility of ascribing one of those spheres to the sites, or could it be, on the contrary, that both spheres might have co-existed? Or, the most radical thought, might any decision-making fail due to the limitations one has to face in interpreting archaeological monuments and finds?

The starting points for this study were much more practical. Firstly, it was a personal interest in Norwegian court sites, raised by visits to several of these places, which created the question of what these surprisingly well-preserved remains might once have been. Secondly, it was an article written in 1971 (Møllerop 1971). This was so far the first and last attempt to consider the court sites in Rogaland (five by then) in a way that summarized the excavation documents of

four such places. In this article, an attempt was made to describe the sites from an archaeological perspective with regards to their construction and dating, whereas the functional question was only briefly touched upon. O. Møllerop, the author and a former director of the Archaeological museum in Stavanger (AmS), expressed an agenda for future court site research (Møllerop 1971:166):

– firstly, the publishing of the excavations (mostly unrealized up to the present day),
– secondly, modern re-investigations (carried out to some extent),
– thirdly, reconsiderations of the sites´ meaning on an enlarged material base (mostly unrealized since the aforementioned first task remains to be faced).

This study has two main goals, very much relying upon the unrealized parts of Møllerop´s agenda:

– a presentation of the voluminous excavation documents of three court sites in Jæren (Klauhauane, Leksaren and Håvodl to the south of Stavanger: fig. 6) investigated in the period from 1934 to 1961, by means of a short summarizing text (chapter 4), a general description site by site (chapter 11) and a specific description, excavation by excavation (chapter 12). Another site in Jæren (Dysjane) that has been investigated to some extent in the nineteenth century is introduced in a briefer way (chapters 4 and 11), as is another investigated and unpublished site, (Øygarden) to the north of Jæren (chapters 5, 11 and 12). The other sites in the South-West, four of them unexcavated (Spangereid, Skjelbrei, Kåda, Ritland) and a fifth one excavated (Oddernes: Rolfsen 1976) will play a lesser role (chapters 5 and 11);
– a consideration of the court sites as a reflection of a social organisation within both a local, regional and international perspective (chapters 4-6). The local perspective addresses the archaeology, context and supposed function(s) of the gathering grounds, whereas the regional and international perspectives will hopefully contribute to a better understanding of the sites on a wider scale. Internationally, three kinds of approaches will be chosen: a comparative approach, considering those monuments outside Norway that are in some way related; an approach that connects the sites to the archaeological central place research in selected European countries; and a third and final approach that assumes an archaeological-historical perspective by briefly shedding light on certain political events in northern and middle Europe in the third and fourth centuries AD.

Before turning to the main evaluation (chapters 4-6), there will be a short introduction to court site research (chapter 2) and a far more lengthy introduction to archaeological central place research, with court site studies as a vital element (chapter 3).

A clear, succinct presentation was given top priority. For that reason, the excavations are only concisely referred to in chapters 4 and 5, and the international chapters 3 and 6 have the character of an essay. There is no intention to consider international research in length and exhausting detail but rather to make short references to those chosen subjects and research methods that are deemed enlightening for court site-related reflections. Finally, the present study focuses particularly on three large sites in Jæren to the south of Stavanger: Dysjane, Klauhauane and Leksaren. These were the only large sites in south-western Norway and they are thought to have been in use in roughly the same period. There was no more than a distance of, roughly speaking, five and ten kilometres respectively from one to another. If one is to hope to come to any solid conclusions for the South-West, Jæren seems to be the one and only natural choice.

Court sites are far from being a south-western Norwegian phenomenon (fig. 5). In contrast, they are much more numerous and much more thoroughly discussed in northern Norwegian archaeology (most recently Storli 2006). The research further to the north is referred to in some chapters and used for comparative purposes (2, 3.2, 6.2). In addition, some sites were discovered in western and middle Norway, but since there is only limited knowledge, they will be completely disregarded in the present analysis (Randers 1989, Stenvik 2001, Bruen Olsen 2006).

2. A short history of court site research

The court sites' history of research has been treated in length in various studies (for example Johansen/Søbstad 1978:9-11, Kallhovd 1994, Grimm/Stylegar 2004:115-118, Storli 2006:41-47). Therefore, the presentation chosen is brief and is aimed at separating several main periods of research without being too specific. The next chapter will take a far more detailed approach, and consider the court site research strategies as a lively facet of Norwegian central place archaeology (chapter 3.2).

The *first* period of research, i.e. "the initial period", covered the second half of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century. In that era, many south-western and northern sites were discovered, and some minor investigations were carried out. In addition, scholars put forward initial interpretations but expressed their uncertainty as to whether the remains were former grave mounds or houses. According to the most elaborate interpretation, by N. Nicolaysen, (mentioned above), the ancient monuments were remains of simple houses (booths) belonging to ting sites (Nicolaysen 1862-1866:301). As a matter of fact, this same interpretation was present in all the different periods of research, though with varying intensity.

The *second* period of research, "the period of excavations and settlement controversy", covered the middle of the twentieth century. Numerous investigations in the North and South-West substantiated the view that the long walls on the spot were undoubtedly house remains. A dispute arose about the method of interpretation. J. Petersen, the excavator of the sites in the South-West, considered them to be ruins of Roman period settlements in Jæren. This was highly welcome as this period had virtually no house remains known in the area in question (e.g. Petersen 1938:156-157, Møllerop 1957:65-67). The opponents emphasized that these sites did not serve as ordinary settlements but were used for different kinds of gatherings, for example judicial, cultic and military (Rønneseth 1959:68-74, 1961:25-26, 1966: 23, Lund 1942, 1965:288-310). It was H.E. Lund who stressed the coincidence between court sites, large burial mounds and large boathouses in the North, and he suggested a network of chiefdoms, each with a gathering place near the actual centre of power (fig. 12). He was particularly in fond of the idea that the gathering grounds were used as accommodation for chieftain's warriors. Remarkably, Lund argued the same way for the South-West (Lund 1965:299-302). Rønneseth, however, suggested that the locations of the gathering places were chosen in order to be well within reach of people from limited settlement districts but there were no centres nearby (e.g. Rønneseth 1966:23). In this era of research, numerous attempts were made to look for monuments outside Norway that were somehow related, covering the area from Öland to the northernmost continent, but also extending to cities in the Far East (chapter 6.2). A rather late offspring of those discussions is a very instructive paper that creates a link to Roman amphitheatres (Armstrong 2000).

The *third* period of research covering the late 1970s up to the 1990s could be called "a period of unification". It was during this period that H.E. Lund's northern Norwegian court site excavations were published in a lengthy and highly influential article by O. S. Johansen and T. Søbstad (1978). Like Lund, the authors underlined the coincidence between court sites and outstanding archaeological finds and monuments in northern Norway but, in contrast to Lund, a wide range of functions was attributed to the gathering places (Johansen/Søbstad 1978:51). It seems that this method of argument had an impact on the interpretation of the south-western Norwegian counterparts, which were now linked to chiefdoms and the exertion of power (Magnus/Myhre 1986:265, 315, 380). In 1986, Dysjane´s connection to such a centre on the Tu-ridge was persuasively demonstrated by O. Rønneseth, who thereby rejected his earlier point of view concerning a strategic placement of the gathering places far away from any power (chapter 11.5, Rønneseth 1986). In south-western Norway, the re-investigation of the Håvodl site proved insightful, as did a re-study of the

Leksaren site (Haavaldsen 1986, 1988, Kallhovd 1994). The latter study published some of the excavation documents, presented an entire series of radiocarbon datings, and described in detail the court site research that took place in the South-West during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The *fourth* period of research, starting in the late 1990s, can be coined "a period of chiefdom controversy". On the one hand, the sites in the North and in the South-West were still considered to be gathering places, right at or close to former chieftain's seats (Johansen 1989, 1990: 48-57, Løken 1992:55, 2001a, Lillehammer 1994:154-155, Solberg 1998:243-244, Løken 2001a:11, Solberg 2002, Grimm/Stylegar 2004:118-122). Even more radically, it was suggested that one site in the North (Tjøtta) was actually the chieftain's farm itself (fig. 5; Berglund 1995:48-49, 342-344). On the other hand, the hypothesis was suggested that the gathering places were deliberately placed on somewhat "neutral" ground, close to several adjacent farms that were inhabited by persons of the same upper rank (Storli 2000:96-100, 2001:105-109, 2006, Olsen 2003, Bruen Olsen 2006). It was stated that in those days there was no such thing as stable centres of power and therefore the degree of political organisation in terms of chiefdoms was considered to have been overestimated.

Perhaps, one will at a later date recognize yet another period of research that started in the very early 2000s: a *fifth* period and yet another of "unification". In two short contributions, the similarities rather than the differences between the sites in the South-West and North were rightly stressed (Myhre 2002:201-207, Bertelsen/Løken 2005). As has been described, scientific research has the shape of a spiral that refocuses on topics again and again, but each time on a higher level (Näsman 1991b:322). In this respect, the present research is characterized by a revival of several classical topics of court site research, that is: the overall Norwegian and ting-related perspective. However, the research is also taken to a higher level, and includes working on an enlarged material base and using a more elaborate method of argument.

In summary, one may conclude that there is a complete agreement today that the court sites are house remains in archaeologically outstanding areas, but there is a controversy about the kind of society building and using them. This dispute about the gathering places and whether they reflect either equality or inequality is the "red thread" or *Leitmotiv* of the present study.

3. Methodology

3.1. The source materials

The first material to be examined is the archaeological evidence. The houses and finds of the court sites will be used to discuss the chronology and function of these areas. Additionally, outstanding monuments (mainly large burial mounds) and finds (preferably richly furnished graves) will be taken as indicators for the presence of an upper class in the society (chapters 4-5). In a much wider perspective, other Norwegian and non-Norwegian areas will be briefly examined in order to enrich the discussion about south-western Norwegian court sites (chapter 6). Finally, stone or wooden churches are considered as evidence for important medieval, and even older, farms (chapters 4-6). Any details about the church buildings themselves are excluded from the present study, but Scandinavian church excavations are briefly introduced.

The second source material is the written evidence. Except for Ottar's account in the late ninth century, runic inscriptions in the earlier and later *futhark*, Scaldric poetry and rare mentions in continental texts, the overwhelming majority of genuinely Norwegian sources are medieval (e.g. Helle 1974:13). Written recordings are important for locating royal farms and goods, major medieval farms, ting sites and abandoned churches (chapters 4-6). However, they will not be referred to in detail, nor will continental sources which, for example, relate to the ting organisation, royal seats and the tribe of the *Alamanni* (chapters 3 and 6).

The third and final source material is the toponym evidence. As was argued by M. Olsen in the beginning of the twentieth century, farm names can be used to reconstruct aspects of social and religious history (Olsen 1915, 1926). His interpretation was criticized in the middle of the twentieth century, but research in Norway, Sweden and Denmark in recent decades has used place-names with great success, thus pinpointing farms of major importance (chapter 3.2, fig. 11).

3.2. Central place research in Norway, Great-Britain and Germany

Introductory remarks: Archaeology, Christaller and Thiessen polygons

The aim of chapter 3.2. is to outline one special facet of archaeology. This branch, which might be labelled "social archaeology", "spatial archaeology" or "central place archaeology", attempts to locate networks of centres of power in pre-modern times. Unfortunately, an international review of the last decade's research is absent, except for a few descriptions (Näsman 1988:123-126, Renfrew/Bahn 1991:153-191, Steuer 1994, Callmer 1997, Steuer 1998, 2007a). The present chapter is not meant to be a thorough review but a superficial look at research in Norway, Great Britain and Germany.

As will be argued in the following, Norwegian place-name specialists, historians and archaeologists pioneered social/central place studies as early as in the first half of the twentieth century, and court site related research played a vital role almost from the beginning up to the present day. In contrast, it may seem that a systematic evaluation of centres of power in a regional or wider sense did not start any earlier than in the 1960s/1970s in British and German archaeology. As to the two latter countries, only a few articles will be briefly introduced by outlining their characteristic approach, and this is done on purpose since some of the sites or research strategies are going to be returned to later in the text (chapter 6). After the British and German interlude there will a short summary about archaeological central place research.

Subsequently, further scientific branches of interest will be introduced: historical research concerning royal residences/Königspfalzen, geographical-historical research referring to Christaller´s central place concept, church excavations and finally place-name research. The present chapter ends with some final remarks, which include attempts to make some generalisations and comments about the political implications of the research.

This introduction cannot end without a short reference to W. Christaller´s central place concept. This concept of the early 1930s is of geographic origin and relates to modern times (Christaller 1933, Heinritz 1979, Haggett 1983:451-482). Simply, it postulated and tried to verify a hierarchical settlement pattern for twentieth century south-western Germany that is considered to have had paramount centres at a regular distance from each other. Centrality, in Christaller´s terms, refers to those functions that relate both to the centre itself, and which reach further beyond. This, however, does not necessarily imply a central position in a given area. Christaller described a series of central functions supposedly typical for such places: from administration down to the facilities of the traffic system, such as railway stations (Christaller 1933:139-140). He deduced a hierarchy regarding settlements that was based on "economic theory", in particular the behaviour of the providers and consumers of goods; the latter were thought to travel to the markets that were the closest whereas the former would try to cover an area as large as possible for the distribution of their products. In addition, it was taken as given that the number of markets would be limited and all areas were part of the economic system. Mathematically speaking, the intentions of customers and providers would be ideally reflected by markets in the midst of a hexagon, and with this highest level established, markets of minor rank would have fixed, regular positions along the hexagon's border. These markets would tend to assume other central functions, and that would turn them into true central places. Christaller himself underlined the difficulties of using the central functions for measuring centrality; instead he applied the "telephone method". Simply speaking, this is an evaluation based on the number of factual telephone units in relation to settlement sizes. In using this method, settlement sizes were all of a sudden used for evaluation purposes. Interestingly, the original theory had not considered this criteria. The above system of central places relates to the "market and supply principle" (compare the cover of this book), but others were described only briefly, and without further elaboration; for example, the "administration" and "traffic" principle.

Christaller´s central place study had a strong impact on geographers, who tried to develop more advanced principles and evaluation methods. Just as influential was a comparable, yet independently developed theory by A. Lösch that was based on purely economic grounds (Lösch 1944, Haggett 1965, Schöller 1972). It seems that the central place concept found its way into archaeology from the 1970s and onwards in three different ways:

– firstly, by the basic use of the term, applied to centres of power without any further explanation of all its implicit meaning, as has been the case more and more frequently since the 1990s (e.g. Hübener 1993, Larsson/Hårdh 1997, Myhre 1997b, Näsman 1998, Hårdh/Larsson 2002);
– secondly, by using the spatial structure of Christaller´s concept in the Anglo-American "New Archaeology", probably transferred via the American model-oriented and statistic New Geography (fig. 15);
– thirdly, by a functional evaluation of central places, started by geographers and historians in the late 1960s and later adopted by archaeologists (figs. 22-23).

Another spatial evaluation method in Anglo-American archaeology, in fact more important than Christaller´s central place theory (though sometimes combined with it), has been the use of Thiessen polygons. For defining the borders of sixty seven city-like centres in America, D. J. Bogue applied an entirely geometric method in 1949 that, in earlier times, was used by the US Weather Bureau (Bogue 1949, Haggett 1973:310). In this method, each centre is connected with the bordering centres by a line, and subsequently a point is made at its half and from there a line is drawn in a right angle. Consequently, this results in a number of polygons that define the borders of each centre. Again, it might seem that that this method of spatial analysis found its way into archaeology via the American New Geography (figs. 14-15).

Norwegian research from the early 20th century up to the present day

As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, the place-name researcher M. Olsen made a nationwide catalogue of farm names that reflect pre-Christian cult in order to discuss social and religious history for parts of the first millennium AD (Olsen 1915). Denotations of particular importance were, for example, *Hov*-farms („temple"), which reflect worship in some sort of a building and *Bø*-names („farm"), which were often close by (Olsen 1926:227-288). According to Olsen, these farms, which often occurred

in pairs and were situated on exceptionally fertile ground in naturally delineated "core regions", were large ones during parts of the first millennium AD. In addition, many of these areas had medieval churches, thus reflecting some sort of "cult place continuity". The nationwide collection of names revealed clusters that were far more dense, as can be shown by an eastern Norwegian example. In Vang/Åker to the east of the Mjøsa-lake, i.e. Norway's biggest inland lake, several names allude to pre-Christian cult (figs. 5, 11). Independently, archaeology pinpoints an area of particular concern, for instance by referring to many burial mounds of substantial size, the most outstanding Early Merovingian period burial known from the entire country (Åker), other richly furnished graves, treasure finds of Viking Age date etc. (e.g. Pilø 1993a, Rolfsen 2000, Pilø 2005). In addition, the area's fertile soil and the written records on early royal manors in Åker are worth mentioning. Taking all these sources together, it seems sound to suggest an eminent centre of power that covered large parts of the first millennium AD whose "cultic sphere" was recognized by M. Olsen as early as nearly one hundred years ago. Archaeologically, however, physical traces of the centre of power itself remain to be found.

In the middle of the twentieth century, the historian A. Steinnes drew attention to a medieval tax (*utskyld*), which eighty farms in south-western Norway had to pay, according to a written source that dates to 1322 (Steinnes 1953, 1955). This tax was interpreted as a reflection of a much older obligation to supply the king and his retinue with nutrition during their stays at those farms in a period with an "ambulant" kingdom. Besides the *utskyld*-farms, a few farms by the name of *Huseby* („village of houses") and *Ull-* (carrying a god's name) plus royal seats known from medieval sources were incorporated, thereby reconstructing an entire network of primary and secondary farms the kingdom used while travelling (fig. 12). The supposed south-western Norwegian kingdom (*utskyldriket*) was dated to the pre-ninth century AD, and it was thought to reflect a kingdom of Swedish origin (as Snorre understood it), that arose in eastern Norway and united large territories by implementing a *Huseby-*/*utskyld*-farm system in newly conquered areas.

From the 1940s onwards, the archaeologist H.E. Lund made extensive journeys through, and many excavations in, northern Norway, and he was able to pinpoint different areas which were archaeologically outstanding due to large burial mounds, richly furnished graves, large boathouses used for protecting ships against bad weather conditions and finally, court sites (the earliest article: Lund 1942, the latest: Lund 1965). This set of criteria was considered indicative of former chieftain's seats (fig. 12). In addition, medieval written records on Viking Age petty kings in some of the areas, (mainly in Tjøtta, Steigen and Bjarkøy), and place-name evidence at two court sites (Leknes, Lekenga; derived from Old Norse *leikr*: play, fight, sport) that alludes to (ritualized) recreational areas were also taken into consideration. Today, H.E. Lund is well-known for his opinion that the grounds served as gathering places of retinues at the chieftains´ seats (Lund 1965:292-293), but other functions were considered too, for example playing (see above), ting (Lund in an unpublished Tromsø manuscript: Storli 2006:143) and cult (due to charred animals´ bones in the mound in the middle of the Steigen-site: Lund 1942).

In the 1950s, there was an intense discussion about the south-western Norwegian court sites. H.E. Lund transferred the interpretation he had used for the north to this area, stating that the south-western places, in particular Dysjane on the Tu-ridge, were to be found in highly remarkable archaeological contexts that suggest former chieftain's seats (Lund 1965:299-305). Taking this a step further, he proposed that there were undetected sites in "high potential" surroundings like Avaldsnes and Sola/Madla at the Hafrsfjord (Rogaland), and even further to the south-east in the county of Vest-Agder (fig. 6). However, the south-western Norwegian discussion took place mainly between the court sites´ excavators J. Petersen and O. Møllerop on the one side and the archaeologist and historian O. Rønneseth on the other.

O. Rønneseth, who explicitly referred to H.E. Lund's argument, emphasized that two out of three large court sites in Jæren (Dysjane, Klauhauane) were situated at ting grounds of medieval times that were known from the written sources (fig. 6; Rønneseth 1959:68-74, 1961:25-26, 1966:23). He strengthened his retrospective use of written sources by emphasizing the sites´ strategic placement in the midst of naturally delineated settlement areas. However, it was suggested that several functions be attributed to the gathering places, namely: ting, cult, competitions (sports and/or ritualized) and market. In contrast to Lund, however, any spatial

congruence between centres of power and gathering places was denied.

J. Petersen and O. Møllerop, the south-western court sites´ excavators, launched the "settlement hypothesis" by arguing that the court sites were a "missing link" of south-western Norwegian settlement archaeology that up to that period had failed to identify any settlement remains of purely Roman date in Jæren, whereas there was splendid evidence for Late Roman and Migration Period farms (Petersen 1938:156-157, Møllerop 1957:65-67, Kallhovd 1994:60-92). In an instructive case study of the 1950s, O. Møllerop considered the pre-modern settlements at the Bø-farm immediately to the east of the Klauhauane court site (Møllerop 1957:48-58). As he demonstrated, the Bø-farm outlined the surrounding farms in archaeological respects, for example by pinpointing the number of large burial mounds (fig. 9). In addition, the *Bø*-name itself (see above) and the medieval church that once stood in Bø were named as additional evidence for a once important farm. Though following a quite different agenda, this Bø-study is the earliest example of a contextual analysis of a south-western Norwegian court site. This highly instructive study, however, would have been even more persuasive by making use of other corroborative data, such as Bø´s placement on exceptionally fertile ground, the outstanding Roman period burials known from Bø and the name given to the farm just to the east, i.e. *Ullarland*, which alludes to pre-Christian religion (chapter 4.3).

In summary, one may conclude that early Norwegian attempts to locate pre-modern centres of power date back to the first half of the twentieth century, and that toponym, historical and archaeological sources were used. Remarkably, the court sites have been intensively discussed, using a highly interdisciplinary approach since the 1940s. Simply put, research has split since the 1970s: one branch prolonged the research just described, whereas yet another responded to the influence of Anglo-American "New Archaeology".

M. Olsen's use of place-names was strongly rejected in an influential Swedish article in the 1950s, in which some of the name categories were rejected as not being indicative of pre-Christian religion. Also, the so-called "kilometre-method" was criticized, i.e. the uncritical formation of name clusters, even when the denotations were too far apart from each other to have any relationship (Sahlgren 1950). It seems that it was not until the 1990s that research in M. Olsen's terms was re-intensified and expanded to include all of Scandinavia. As to Norway, a re-analysis of south-western Rogaland mainly resulted in a verification of Olsen's old list of farm names (Sandnes 1992).

Steinnes´ Huseby/*utskyldriket*-studies of the 1950s were chosen for an archaeological investigation in J. H. Larsen´s M.A. thesis (Larsen 1978). This undertaking included a systematic study of archaeological finds that were supposedly indicative of large Viking age farms in south-eastern and south-western Norway. The study had to conclude that archaeology could not ascribe any paramount role to the farms that had been named by Steinnes. It was conceded, however, that they might have held that role without the need to display any particular wealth. In more recent times, strong evidence was gathered against Steinnes´ thesis. On historical grounds, *utskyld* was described as an ecclesiastical tax of twelfth century date without having any deeper roots (Gjerløw 1988). According to toponym research, the *Huseby*-farms were not founded any earlier than at the transition from the Viking age to early medieval times, very much in contrast to A. Steinnes´ substantially older dating (Brink 1999b). With regards to the well-known eastern Norwegian Kaupang trading-site it was argued, for example, that there was an old central farm called *Skíringssalr* (the name ending *-sal* referring to a hall building) that was replaced by a *Huseby*-farm as a part of a royal network of such places (fig. 5; Hoel 1986:128-132, Brink 1996:271-273, 2007).

The court sites continued to be a vigorously discussed type of archaeological monument, in particular in the north of Norway. H.E. Lund, who had pioneered such research for the north of the country from as early as the 1940s, never found acceptance with his thesis that these monuments were once situated close to centres of power and served, inter alia, as gathering places for retinues. This non-acceptance was probably based upon the fact that he never adequately published the investigations at many of the sites, and also on account of his right-wing attitude, as it was perceived, during the Nazi occupation (Johansen 1988:28). The turning point came with a lengthy paper of O. S. Johansen and T. Søbstad (Johansen/Søbstad 1978). The excavation documents and finds were described in detail and the authors emphasized, as had Lund, that court sites and other major archaeological monuments (large boat-houses, large burial mounds, richly furnished burials) are found in the same areas. However, the gathering

places themselves were often placed somewhat marginally, at some distance from the supposed centres (fig. 12). From a functional point of view, a far wider range of use was proposed in relation to the late Lund's concentration on the retinue-related aspect. More recently, Johansen has elaborated on the argument, and his approach has had a lasting impact on research in the North and South-West (Johansen 1988:48-56, 1990:27-33).

O. S. Johansen also detected four house remains parallel to each other in 1974 in Bøstad on Vestvågoy (Lofoten islands), following descriptions from a local informer (Johansen/Søbstad 1978:44-46). These houses make up one of the more dubious court sites, but considering the fact that the other half of the site would have been situated on a surface that had long since been destroyed, the interpretation seems plausible (figs. 5, 13). Further to the south-west of the court site the famous, almost 90 m long, Borg house was detected in 1981 (Stamsø Munch/Johansen/Roesdahl 2003). The investigations a few years later covered substantial settlement remains but, in addition, organic materials for radiocarbon dating were taken from a large boathouse and the supposed court site. Today, we know of two main periods of the Iron Age farm at Borg. A court site, if it really was one, of ca. eight houses (with two radiocarbon dates reaching back to the Roman period), a Late Roman and Migration Period boathouse of 20 m (in fact the initial phase of a Viking Age boathouse, dated by the present shoreline), and a long house of 60 m with an integrated hall section (erected in the fifth century) belonged to the first phase in Borg. The most notable find of this phase, a horse-mounting of gilded silver that was found in the house, and which dates back to the late sixth or seventh century, has parallels in finds from Scandinavian and continental petty kings´ graves. For the Merovingian and Viking periods, the source situation is considerably better, and includes two large boathouses, splendid loose finds, (for example a sword's hilt from Eltoft), and high status objects found in the long house. In its second phase, it was nearly 90 m long and existed from the seventh to the tenth century. In the hall part of this house, there were fragments of glass and bronze vessels that were possibly used for ceremonial purposes. Also found were five *guldgubber.* These tiny gold plaquettes usually found in Scandinavian halls or as deposits in postholes belonging to halls date to the Merovingian or Early Viking date (for example Herschend 1993, 1999, Watt 1999, 2004). Often these *gubber* show two persons facing each other and these are interpreted, by the use of written sources, as images of gods. Therefore, the finds in Borg, which were partly unearthed as deposits in posts, allude to the presence of a pre-Christian cult in this part of the building. In the Middle Ages, there were still intense settlement activities in the area and a wooden church. The elevated situation of the Borg farm was probably chosen because it allowed a wide view and had access to a sheltered bay to the east.

The results of the Borg-investigation are astonishing given the northern location. It is owing to O. S. Johansen, however, that Borg was categorized as a second class centre of power in the remote North. This status was based on topography, i.e. less suitable soil in an area remote from the main travelling route (the Northern Way), and archaeology, i.e. the far superior "high potential" surroundings in other northern areas such as Tjøtta, Bø/Steigen and Bjarkøy (figs. 5, 12; Johansen 1990:53). Finally, it is important to keep in mind that Borg is one of very few such investigated sites in Norway (including the eastern Norwegian site at Kaupang), standing beside the far more numerous southern Scandinavian central places, most notably in Gudme/Lundeborg (figs. 5, 27; Åker: Pilø 1993a, 2005, Rolfsen 2000; Kaupang: Skre/Stylegar 2004, Skre et al. 2007, 2008; Gudme/Lundeborg: chapter 6.3).

The most recent northern Norwegian court site research has retained the idea of the sites´ affiliation with highly remarkable archaeological contexts but has interpreted this differently. According to the first explanation, the court site at Tjøtta was the chieftain's farm (fig. 5; Berglund 1995:48-49, 342-344). The second explanation postulates that the gathering places were deliberately built on "neutral" ground in order to serve the needs of socially equal inhabitants of high rank, who lived on the neighbouring farms (Storli 2000:96-100, 2001:105-109; 2006, Olsen 2003). The latter hypothesis emphasized the ting aspect by referring to the written sources (Tacitus` *Germania*, ca. 100 AD, and legal regulations for Iceland in the Middle Ages) and archaeology (remains of supposed ting sites in Iceland, which resemble court sites). Furthermore, social stratification in the North is thought to have been much less advanced than hitherto suspected, seen against the Icelandic background that is known from the Middle

Ages. These interpretations will be returned to at a later date (chapter 6.2).

South-western Norwegian central place research from the 1970s onwards was far less concerned with court sites than that in the North. Instead, it was aimed at locating supposed chieftain's seats and large farms respectively, as was the case in J. H. Larsen´s archaeological study of the *utskyldriket* (see above), K. Sognnes´ introduction of archaeological models for the western Norwegian Iron Age and B. Ringstad´s overall analysis of large burial mounds of the Bronze and Iron Ages (Sognnes 1979, Ringstad 1986). As early as 1973, K. Odner´s Ph.D. thesis addressed the economic structures in western Norway's Iron Age (Odner 1973a-b, Myhre 1978:253-254). His study, which used Iron Age rock shelters as indicators for economic specialisation, cannot be described any further in the present study. It presented a model on economic and political organisation, based on the early Norse settlement period in Iceland and on sparse continental written sources on the Germanic tribes (mainly Tacitus), relating to the Early Iron Age (table 9, chapter 6.1).

Since the mid 1980s, the influence of the mentioned Johansen/Søbstad paper can be seen in south-western Norwegian court site studies (Magnus/Myhre 1986:265, 315, 380). Repeatedly, Dysjane on the Tu-ridge (chapter 11.5) was referred to as evidence for the connection between those gathering places and centres of power, but other sites were named too (Løken 1992:55, Lillehammer 1994:154-155, Solberg 1998:243-244, Løken 2001a:11, Grimm/Stylegar 2004:118-122, Kristoffersen 2006). An anti-thesis based on I. Storli´s reflections for the North (see above) was expressed in the early 2000s (Olsen 2003). Choosing Dysjane on the Tu-ridge as a case study, it was argued that due to many high status finds of the Late Roman and Migration Period in the surroundings, there was no dominating chiefdom on the Tu-ridge. Rather, there were many farms with persons of equal rank using the court site for meetings (chapter 4.2).

Two articles of B. Myhre describing centres of power in south-western Norway deserve particular attention, since they belonged to the Norwegian studies that were most explicitly connected to the Anglo-American „New Archaeology". In addition, the first was probably closer than any other to a contextual analysis of court sites in south-western Norway, and to solving the „court site question" (provided it is solvable).

In 1978, an analysis of Iron Age society in the very fertile low Jæren took many archaeological finds and monuments into consideration (Myhre 1978). In addition, Iron Age place-names were briefly addressed and source materials, such as churches and medieval taxation lists of farms, were used retrospectively. This overall look resulted in a very few outstanding areas that were equated with former major farms (fig. 8). For the Late Roman and Migration Periods, court sites were also briefly referred to as possible locations for religious and judicial gatherings and their placement close to supposed large farm areas was emphasized. However, due to the ongoing discussion regarding function, the gathering places had only a marginal position in the article. As a matter of act, this analysis came very close to an overall analysis of the court sites and only few criteria were missed, such as topography, the total number of place-names alluding to cult or major farms and administrative and ecclesiastical divisions of the Middle Ages. In the article, Service's model of four subsequent stages of primitive social organisation (from band to tribe, from chiefdom to state) was tested against a south-western Norwegian archaeological background (Service 1971). In addition, K. Odner´s doctoral thesis on economic structures in the Early Iron Age of western Norway, which shares many common traits with Service's analysis, was relied upon (Odner 1973a-b). According to Myhre, south-western Norwegian society progressed through three different stages of social organisation in the first millennium AD, from equality to chiefdom and finally, state (table 9, chapter 6.1).

In 1987, chieftains´ graves and territories in south Norway from the Migration Period were addressed in a well-known article (Myhre 1987). This study was based on an analysis of a total number of 60 graves, with gold objects, glass and bronze vessels and in addition all other such finds from the area. By mapping these graves and using a statistical analysis, for instance with regards to the spatial analysis of gold weights, the conclusion was put forward that nine coastal areas were archaeologically outstanding (fig. 14). They were considered an archaeological expression of chieftain's seats of Late Roman and Migration Period. Situated to some extent at the end of valleys, they acted as a focal point for contact networks of minor centres further inland. It was argued that other kinds of archaeological monuments substantiate this point of view, namely groups of large boathouses at the centres and the hill

forts surrounding them. The nine regions are thought to reflect some of the Scandinavian peoples that were named by the gothic historian, Jordanes, and are said to coincide to some extent with Viking, and later, administrative centres. Methodologically, Myhre's study owed much to British "spatial" and "social" archaeology (Hodder/Orten 1976, Renfrew 1984).

The above-mentioned article was criticized for leaving the 60 graves unnamed, and for omitting any examination of how representative these burials could be. For southern Norway, the study has been scrutinized alongside other archaeological monuments that are considered to be indicative of an upper class, such as the huge grave mounds that have a minimum diameter of 20 m (Stylegar 2001). Stylegar´s article came to the conclusion that there were centres of different rank. Also, the idea that shifts of centres and overlordships took place was considered to be worthy of examination. Despite the critique mentioned above, Myhre´s study is still mainly untouched inasmuch as there are strong archaeological, and other, indicators for important Migration Period sites. Since the analysis covered a much larger area than Jæren and Rogaland, and was mainly concerned with the Migration Period, court sites were entirely omitted from the study.

In summary, one may conclude that Norwegian central place studies, toponym, historical and archaeological, began early in the twentieth century. There is a line of continuity to the later period of research, which intensified in the late 1970s and that was inspired by the Anglo-American "New Archaeology". It is important to keep in mind the interdisciplinary approach of the Norwegian studies and the eminent role of the court sites since the 1940s.

German archaeology in the 1960s and 1970s

It is possibly owing to a 1965 article of J. Werner, on hill forts of the Early Alamannic period (the late third to late fifth century) in south-western Germany, that the first attempt was made to locate networks of centres of power in German archaeology (Werner 1965). One concern of that article was the Glauberg, Wetterauskreis (Hessen) to the northeast of Frankfurt, once situated in the northern part of Alamannia close to the Obergermanisch-Rätischer Limes (fig. 28, chapter 6.4.). Up until the 1960s, it was the only such site that was, to some extent, investigated. Unfortunately, finds and documents of the excavation, which examined a fort that had been re-used from Neolithic times onwards, got lost during a fire in 1945. However, knowledge continues to exist, in particular a short description of the excavator, which was published many years later (Glauberg-catalogue: 84-89). In the article, the remains of fortifications and buildings belonging to a "princely seat" (*Fürstensitz*) and to craftsmen of the Early Alamannic period, were referenced, but today one may be sceptical about the actual dating and interpretation. Undoubtedly, however, there were many remarkable finds of the Early Alamannic period up to the late fifth century, most notably coins, terra sigillata, glass fragments etc. In addition, there were Roman *Zwiebel-* and Germanic *Bügelknopffibeln*. The former are often thought to have belonged to military persons of some rank (if in gold) in the Roman provinces and in a Germanic context, the latter are a Germanic fibula type, derived from a Roman archetype and also used as a status indicator of warriors (RGA 8:503, 510, Schultze 2002:64-65, Steuer 2007b). A reference to contemporary Roman written sources, most notably the writer Ammianus Marcellinus, who was familiar with Alamannic affairs, demonstrated that petty kings and princes of equal rank (*reges regalesque*) were well known to the Romans, whereas no information was given about the places in which they lived. Based on the Glauberg material, Werner concluded that the "noble men" resided in hill forts, and in the case of the Glauberg, such a fort would have been situated close to a main long distance route. Several other such forts with finds of the Early Alamannic period were pinpointed, and Werner suggested an entire network of such "princely seats", among them the Runder Berg. Research from the 1960s and onwards, not least inspired by the article just mentioned, have led to a lively discussion that still lingers on. An example of this is the extensive investigation at the Runder Berg that revealed a Merovingian hall, with a suspected fifth century predecessor (chapter 6.3).

In 1969, W. Kimmig discussed "princely seats" (*Fürstensitze*) of Late Hallstatt date (sixth and fifth century BC) on hill forts, and referred explicitly to the article by Werner that is described above (Kimmig 1969). As was the case with the above-mentioned Early Alamannic period, there was only very limited knowledge about the much earlier counterparts. In this article, it was mainly the Heuneburg (Gem. Ertingen, Kr. Biberach) in south-western Germany that was used to identify a set of characteristics typical for such places: an *acropolis*

(a high plateau on the hill), a suburbia (settlements underlying the hill), a number of Mediterranean finds, such as vine amphorae that were salvaged on the hill, and finally richly furnished burials in the surroundings of such sites, which are thought to be the graves of "noble men" (fig. 18). With these criteria in mind, the author proposed an entire network of such sites in parts of Middle Europe. Some of these fully matched the aforementioned criteria whilst others had less corroborative data (fig. 17). These archaeological recordings were interpreted as an indicator for a hill fort-based dominion in the hands of dynasties (thought to be reflected by a number of richly furnished graves found in the areas around the forts), and for the imitation of Mediterranean high cultures (the outline of the forts with an *acropolis* and a suburbia being an architectural reference to Athens as the most outstanding example). In this respect, the acropolis on a hill fort was considered to be a tribe's centre or perhaps a residence of "noble men".

The investigations at the aforementioned Heuneburg, just to the north of the Danube on a 60 m high dominant hill of 300x150 m, yielded much enlightening information from the 1960s and onwards. Included were indicators for an almost urban-like settlement in the period from BC 600-400, including: the Mediterranean-style famous clay brick wall (Lehmziegelmauer), which is the only such construction north of the Alps; a contemporary craftsman's area in the south-east corner of the fortification (in parts of the sixth century BC), and finally, the remains of a supposed three-aisled hall-building of the fifth century BC, with an internal width of 9 m between the inner rows of postholes, in the same area (fig. 18; Kimmig 1989b, Gersbach 1999). In addition, the existence of an open area (agora, forum) was speculated upon in the fort, along with a cultic area and a sort of "residence", perhaps on the outside, (the above-mentioned hall, with its surprisingly non-dominant position in the fort, was disregarded in this respect).

As can be shown, Kimmig´s contribution to centres of power of Late Hallstatt date had a long-lasting influence on research. Indeed, it is still felt today. Recent excavations at the Glauberg (mentioned above) point towards a hill fort of Late Hallstatt date, including richly furnished burials, a "procession road" leading up to one of these burials and, finally, one well-preserved, almost complete stone statue (1,86 m high) of a warrior and fragments of three, probably more, very similar stone statues (Glauberg-catalogue). In addition, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) has launched an extensive research project on the genesis and further development of Late Hallstatt centres of power, in terms of early centralisation and urbanisation including re-excavations at the Heuneburg.

In 1974, H. Wüstemann studied the social structure of the Bronze Age in the area of north-eastern Germany that lies between, and is naturally delineated by, the rivers Elde and Dosse (fig. 17; Wüstemann 1974). This area is well known for a number of richly furnished, though to some extent badly recorded, cremation burials mainly dating to period V, and examined from a social archaeology viewpoint by H. Wüstemann. He took the entirety of graves in the area into consideration, with the "royal grave of Seddin" (Bronze Age period V) in a mound of 80x11 m chosen as the starting point. The main burial (a man) in a grave chamber is the most outstanding of Bronze Age date in parts of middle and northern Europe (May/Metzner-Nebelsiek 2005). However, according to Wüstemann, there were other outstanding mounds, at least one of almost equal size, in a total of four adjacent areas. Thereby, different chieftain's areas from period V and VI were reconstructed (fig. 17). His Marxist approach, though stressing the limitations of the archaeological source material, traces the formation of a noble elite to a rise in social inequality, caused by an economic surplus that was thought to have resulted from the control of animal husbandry and bronze manufacture.

For each period considered, these articles could be seen as the earliest attempts by German archaeology to identify networks of centres of power that can be discerned by regular sets of characteristics, be it with regards to hill forts (Werner, Kimmig) or grave mounds and burial furnishings (Wüstemann). The first two articles are related to monuments and/or written sources of adjacent high cultures, and may generally be attributed to the western German "historical paradigm". According to this paradigm, history does not repeat itself. Rather, each era has its own individual characteristics (Mante 2007:153-160). In contrast, the third contribution attempted to explain the archaeological record against a Marxist background ("historical materialism") that in fact might be considered anthropological since the supposed sequence of societies that would climax in socialism was, at its

origin, influenced by nineteenth century anthropology (Mante 2007:160).

British archaeology in the 1970s

In 1973, D. L. Clarke suggested the use of operational models aiming at a "New Archaeology" (Clarke 1973). Four so-called paradigms were introduced, among them a geographical model relating *inter alia* to Christaller´s Central Place Theory (see above). The term "New Archaeology" was coined from the American New Geography of the 1950s and 1960s that had a wide range of models and methods for spatial evaluation (Clarke 1973:53, Wagstaff 1987:27). The related archaeological research was called "spatial" or "social archaeology" but it might just as well be labelled "central place archaeology" owing to the explicit quotation of Christaller´s theory (Hodder/Orten 1975, Renfrew 1984). Three British articles which analysed networks of centres of power in a spatial sense shall be briefly described without exemplifying the models in depth.

In 1973, I. Hodder discussed location models and Romano-British settlement with regards to walled towns in Roman Britain in the third and fourth centuries AD in the South-East of the province (Hodder 1973). Based on literary and epigraphic evidence, the highest hierarchical level of settlement in administrative, economic and social terms were major walled towns, followed by lesser walled towns and "other major" and "other minor" un-walled settlements.

In this same article, Christaller-based predictions, founded on his various principles, were tested against archaeological source material. Also, for a spatial analysis, Christaller´s networks were applied, as were Thiessen polygons (fig. 15). The article, which cannot be described or commented upon in any further detail had a clearly shaped outline with different procedures described and tested, but it was emphasized that due to the limitations of the archaeological source material only few predicted hypotheses could be tested.

Also in 1973, C. Renfrew discussed monuments, mobilisation and social organisation in Neolithic Wessex (fig. 1; Renfrew 1973b). As a starting point, the large Neolithic monuments of Wessex were chosen, e.g. the circular enclosures that have a bank and an internal ditch. Most notable of these was Stonehenge, which required considerable manpower to be built. An analysis of spatial distribution demonstrated that ca. 120 long barrows (all of them situated on the chalklands) can be subdivided into five groups that coincide regionally with a causewayed enclosure (Early Neolithic) and a major henge monument like Stonehenge (Late Neolithic times). A well-established social organisation was thought to be reflected by the considerable manpower needed for constructing the monuments, and the trend towards monumentality climaxed in the Late Neolithic, when thirty million man hours were needed for erecting Stonehenge III. These calculations led to the argument that social organisation increased throughout the Neolithic (fig. 16). Initially there were five areas that could be equated with "chiefdoms". These had causewayed camps of Early Neolithic period that served as a centre or rallying point for a wide area, and Late Neolithic henges with "council houses" in between. However, in the Late Neolithic, the social organisation might have incorporated the entire area in order to master the time, and energy, consuming building activities. Renfrew's article followed several of Clarke's paradigms, firstly the anthropological paradigm, by introducing and testing the set of criteria for chiefdoms according to Service (see above) and secondly the geographic paradigm, by applying methods of spatial analysis like, for example, Thiessen polygons. In yet another contribution on prehistoric Wessex, a comparison of round houses in Neolithic henges with such buildings from the eighteenth century of Creek and Cherokee Indians constituted one more reference to Clarke's anthropological paradigm (Renfrew 1973a:fig.51).

In 1978, S. Frankenstein and M. J. Rowlands addressed the Early Iron Age Society in south-western Germany with an explicit reference to the abovementioned 1969 paper of W. Kimmig (Frankenstein/Rowlands 1978). In the article, the supposed Heuneburg domain was chosen as the main subject. As was argued, a south-western German settlement hierarchy was indicated by regular sets of grave furnishings in burials close to hill-forts like the Heuneburg, or located in groups in other areas (fig. 18). Four different levels were identified (from the most powerful chiefs down to minor/village chiefs). The uppermost stratum was thought to be indicated by inhumation burials in wooden chambers, which contained wagons and horse trappings, imported (or locally made) bronze vessels for wine drinking, imported glass etc. The spatial pattern was considered an indicator for a system of semi-autonomous areas that once covered parts of

south-western Germany, and the Heuneburg controlled one of these. According to the excavations, a centre of specialized handicraft was situated in this area that manufactured, for example, the wagons and glasses that were found in the most exceptional graves around the Heuneburg. The article correlated the emergence of a Heuneburg-based supremacy with the simultaneous establishment of trade links between the western part of Central Europe, the Greek colonies and the Etruscans in the western Mediterranean. Archaeological material was tested against the neo-Marxist theory of a "prestige goods economy" that had previously been discussed in ethnology (Kümmel 1998). Following that argument in very simple terms, political power comes into being with the access to and the distribution of foreign goods that are assigned high status.

The aim of this very brief examination has been to outline several "New Archaeology" based studies and present them as examples of central place archaeology in the 1970s. Following Clarke's criteria, different extra-archaeological models from other scientific disciplines were put to the test, but the basic work was an overall analysis of archaeological monuments or finds that were thought to be indicative of centres of power or rank. It remains an open question to the present author whether British archaeology saw any earlier attempts to locate centres of power in a spatial sense. The studies that were briefly introduced above are still used for reference (e.g. Bradley 1991, Renfrew/Bahn 1991:153-194, Earle 1997).

Some preliminary conclusions about archaeological central place research

As has been stated earlier, the considerations about Norwegian, German and British central place studies were only sketchy. There was no intention to introduce the articles in length or to consider their reception up to the present day. Norwegian research can be dated back to the first half of the twentieth century, whereas it would seem that the earliest attempts of that kind in Germany and Great-Britain were made in the 1960s and 1970s. The articles mentioned do share an overall perspective on those archaeological finds and/or monuments that were thought to be indicative of an upper class and/or early centres of power. In western Germany (Werner 1965, Kimmig 1969) and to some extent Norwegian research (Lund 1965, Larsen 1978, Johansen/Søbstad 1978), archaeological recordings were correlated with written sources, either contemporary or later, which were used retrospectively. The British studies are different inasmuch as non-archaeological operational models were introduced and tested; not least of these were the geographical models, which were influenced by the principles of New Geopraphy. Norwegian research (in particular B. Myhre´ s studies) was to some extent inspired by that. Eastern German archaeology is an interesting case as it was as model-orientated as the Anglo-American "New Archaeology", and its "historical materialism" may even be considered anthropological in its origin (Wüstemann 1974, Mante 2007:160).

A discussion about the proper use of analogy (simply: "archaeology as archaeology/traditional archaeology" versus "archaeology as anthropology") is outside the framework of the present paper (e.g. Clarke 1973:53-55). When looking at studies of the Iron Age in Scandinavia, one may actually perceive a change of perspective in the interpretation of "nation-building" in the Late Iron Age. Away from anthropological considerations of the 1970s and 1980s, attention has turned to the application of historical models, i.e. the uprising of the Anglo-Saxon and Merovingian kingdoms (e.g. Näsman 1988, Callmer 1991, Näsman 1998, Opedal 1998).

Repeatedly, this brief examination of selected articles has encountered hall buildings that have been excavated in areas that are thought to have been centres of power, in particular at Borg in northern Norway and the Heuneburg and the Runder Berg (the latter two in south-western Germany). A closer look into literature would probably reveal a discussion about halls much earlier than the 1970s and onwards, as one example might elucidate. The settlement in Westick, Stadt Kamen, Kreis Unna (western Germany) was excavated in the 1920s/1930s and in the years 1998-2001 (fig. 1; Stieren 1936, Vierck 1991, Manke 2006). The investigations yielded evidence for a wealthy settlement in the period from the second to the fifth century AD, including, for example, not less than 1200 Roman coins. This wealth is thought to have resulted from the wide-ranging contacts of the site on a main long distance route (*Hellweg*). Foremost, there was a house of 48 x 7.5 m, which had a three-aisled section in the eastern half and no inner subdivision in the other half. Close to the small western side, a treasure find (56 Roman coins) of the second half of the fourth century was unearthed in an area with shallow posts parallel to the small western

side. This western part was identified as a hall due to the lack of any inner subdivision, the shallow posts to the west (interpreted as remains of a "high seat") and the treasure find "deposited" in this part of the building.

In summary, there is no doubt that a more profound consideration of Norwegian, British and German archaeology will be worthwhile. Central place research for pre-modern times has more than just one archaeological facet, as the next subchapters shall demonstrate. Remarkably, halls will once again play a major role.

Historical research:
Royal residences/Königspfalzen

In 1965, A. Gauert addressed the structure and topography of royal seats, mainly in France and Germany, from the time of the Merovingian Empire onwards (Gauert 1965). This article was an offspring of the extensive German *Pfalzenforschung* project, which was started in the same decade. In it, written sources and, to a lesser degree, archaeological evidence were used to emphasize the theory that halls, churches and domestic royal buildings (residences) were common for all those sites, as were the economic courts that were situated on the outside. In contrast, fortifications as in Tilleda (see below) were typical only for the Ottonic period (tenth and early eleventh century).

In 1968, A. Gauert briefly reflected upon Norwegian royal seats of the Viking Age, mainly based on Snorre's history of the Norwegian kingdom that was written in the thirteenth century, and which probably relied on older sources to some extent (Gauert 1968). According to Gauert, there is a need to distinguish between simple courts of the "ambulatory" kingdom, which were used only for short stays and residential courts that were used for long periods. For the era under discussion, the latter were only to be found in south-western Norway, and include Avaldsnes ca. 50 km to the north of Stavanger, which is described most thoroughly (fig. 6). As the written sources tell us, the following buildings once belonged to the Late Viking and early medieval royal site at Avaldsnes: a hall, a royal bedroom, a room for conferences and audiences, a kitchen only used for preparing food for the king, and storage buildings for cereals. In Christian times, the church of the site is said to have been connected with the hall by means of a road. It is a highly important conclusion that the use of Snorre's description of Avaldsnes seems to allow a complete match of criteria with the kinds of major representative buildings (hall, church and residence) that are known from Merovingian and later royal sites.

Notably, Gauert had only very limited archaeological material to rely upon in the 1960s since Avaldsnes, as much as its continental counterparts, remains mostly unexplored in terms of large scale investigations. The fully excavated Tilleda of the Ottonic kingdom is an exception to that rule (Zotz 2003). In general, the Carolingian Aachen would hardly be representative because it served as a capital in its flowering period, i.e. the outstanding reign of Charlemagne in the late seventh and early eighth century. In the following, three excavations shall be briefly introduced: the site in Tilleda and two very impressive British sites that have been chosen for comparative purposes.

Tilleda, on the Pfingstberg to the south-east of the Harz-mountains, is mentioned from 972 to 1192 in historical sources and was used by the Ottonic kings, who had their roots in that part of modern Germany (figs. 1, 19; Grimm 1968, 1990). Archaeological research in the years 1935-1939 and 1958-1967 covered both the "main" and the "secondary" fortifications. All in all, fifty two houses were excavated and the more representative of these had stone foundations, while the others were "sunken houses". In period II of the eleventh century, there were several representative buildings: a stone church almost 30 m long, an initial residential building on its own, a later building of the same type in a church tower and finally a wooden hall. Phase I, dating to second half of the tenth century, had three separate stone buildings (a residence, a hall and a chapel), but the investigation remained incomplete since parts of that occupation layer had been destroyed.

The royal palace at Yeavering, situated in north Northumberland in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Bernicia (Newcastle is situated roughly 50 km to the south-east), has been mentioned by the monk, Bede (c. 672/673-735), as the royal township *Ad Gefrin* (fig. 1). The investigations in the years 1953-1962 (to some extent rescue-excavations), covered altogether five areas (A-E), including A with the main buildings (Hope-Taylor 1977, briefly Wilson 1979:65-68). Five distinct phases (I-V) were identified in area A, and from phase II onwards there was a sequence of representative buildings and facilities. Based on scarce archaeological data and historical recordings, the Anglo-Saxon site was dated from the mid-sixth to the mid seventh century. In phase IIIAB, the first "monumental" phase,

there were several buildings or constructions of particular concern: the major hall (A2) of ca. 25x10 m had faced walls and was covered inside with white plaster (fig. 19). Internal posts might have carried a wooden floor, and a group of postholes with a trapezoid plan in the eastern part of the house may indicate a throne or a chair (fig. 20). Building D2b was built as a shelter around the older house D2a. Contemporary burials around free-standing posts outside its southern end, a setting of three posts close to the inner southern end and deposits of ox-skulls inside the east door may indicate a religious function. The assembly structure (E), i.e. the "wooden theatre", could house 150 persons, and in front of it there was a chair or a throne (fig. 20; chapter 6.2.5). The so-called "great enclosure" was interpreted as a folk centre.

The royal seat of Cheddar, Somerset (Wessex) dating back to Late Saxon and early medieval times, and well-known from the written sources, might represent a rural palace of the kings in Wessex (fig. 1; Rahtz et al. 1979, briefly, Wilson 1979:65-68). The rescue excavation of 1960-1962 that covered 0.8 hectares verified seven main occupation periods dating to the ninth to fourteenth centuries, plus activities before and after these dates. As far as period 1 of ninth and early tenth century date is concerned, the remains of a large building, at least one domestic house, a somehow questionable gatehouse and a storm water ditch were identified (fig. 19). The long building of 24x6 m, with its post-in-trench construction, was interpreted as a bow-sided hall, owing to the well-advanced craftsmanship. It possibly had two floors, with a hearth belonging to the upper level. In period 2 (c. 930 to the late tenth or early eleventh century), the site's layout was completely changed, including a stone chapel overlaying the old hall, plus a post-built hall of 17x9 m. In both periods, there may have been more buildings in the adjacent areas, but these remain unexplored.

Generally speaking, Tilleda and Avaldsnes match fully with A. Gauert's "three-buildings-axiom" (hall, church, residence) for royal sites. For the British sites, a maximum of two out of three criteria is present but it is important to emphasize that the lack of residential buildings in both instances might result from the incompleteness of the investigations. In addition, it seems sound to replace Gauert´s criterion (a church) against yet another type of building (a cult house) for sites that pre-date the Christianisation of the people. Gauert's considerations will be returned to at a later date, in order to shed some light on the physical appearance of both royal and petty king's seats during most of the first millennium AD in parts of Europe (chapter 6.3).

Geographical-historical research: "Christaller studies"

As was described earlier, Christaller proposed a list of functions for evaluating the degree of centrality that could be assigned to settlements/cities. However, it wasn't this list of functions that was applied but the "telephone method" (see above). In a 1975 paper (based on a lecture in 1972), the geographer D. Denecke reshaped this list to make it applicable to historical times and he listed ten central functions/facilities, from those regarding traffic to those for political and administrative matters (fig. 22; Denecke 1975). He considered this list very suitable for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, despite some problems in accessing statistical data for that era, but for earlier periods it was considered to be far more complicated. In 1971, the historian M. Mitterauer had already proposed just four functions for historical times: political, judicial, ecclesiastical and economic (Mitterauer 1971:455). Apart from these mere methodological reflections, practical studies were made by different scholars, as shall be shown by two examples.

The first example is the *Habilitationsschrift* of the geographer K. Fehn that was finished in 1968. He attempted to analyse centrality in a part of Bavaria in southwestern Germany from the Late Latène period up to medieval times (Fehn 1970). For this purpose, altogether six periods were discussed with respect to historical development (part I), topography (part II), and functions of particular centres (part III) and particular types of centres (part IV) respectively. Methodologically speaking, four criteria for measuring centrality were used: political-administrative, cultic-ecclesiastical, economic and cultural, though the latter was omitted from the evaluation. Due to the source materials available, the study mainly focused on large, dominant forts or settlements and their placement, whereas spatial-functional relationships with the surroundings and the settlement structures were hardly touched upon.

The second example is two articles that concern the Swedish Mälar-region. The historian H. Andersson addressed central places, settlements and cities in

Scandinavia at an archaeological conference in Kiel in 1972, with an explicit reference to Mitterauer´s paper, mentioned above (Andersson 1972). His main concern in the paper was the different important sites that are situated around the Middle Swedish Mälar-lake, namely Helgö, Birka, Sigtuna, Uppsala, Enköping and Stockholm (fig. 1). A set of central functions was reconstructed for all the places mentioned, but methodological problems in evaluating the oldest sites and their surroundings were underlined. The archaeologist K. Lamm returned to functional considerations of Helgö by mentioning the discussion cited above (Lamm 1982). In a very general way, a list of six central place criteria was mentioned for Helgö but, surprisingly, administrative functions were not taken as given (table 8). As to Birka, a wider range of functions was considered possible. In the paper, any consideration of Helgö´s and Birka´s relation to the surroundings was disregarded.

In summary, there was a well-structured list of central functions given by D. Denecke for historical times, but practical studies for older periods proved all too problematic since there was no hinterland analysis or any attempt to measure degrees of centrality. One could say that the methodological problems are no clearer than in Christaller´s approach.

Later archaeological research still has ties to these functional considerations. A model regarding the centre-hinterland-relationship was presented by B. Myhre for the south-western Norwegian Migration Period (fig. 14). The last two decades saw various archaeological studies of this kind, among them:

– a methodological study that introduced a reduced set of central functions for pre-history by presenting the Slavonic settlement to the east of the river Oder in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as an example (fig. 23; Gringmuth-Dallmer 1999),
– a comparison between the mainly Viking Age centre at Tissø (Sealand) and the royal seat in Aachen that was the capitol of Charlemagne´s empire (fig. 1; Tissø: see below; Aachen: e.g. Binding 1995:72-98),
– a study that addressed central sites in the Bohemian Basin (fig. 1, chapter 7; Salač 2002),
– a study that concerned the exchange of silex artefacts in Neolithic Middle Europe (Zimmermann 1995:71-108)
– a study that focused on Norwegian trading sites of the Viking Age (Stylegar/Grimm 2005b).

Finally, place-name analysis, in terms of S. Brink´s research, points to different functional aspects of important settlement areas. Also, it is possible that centrality could be measured by an analysis of the name clusters´ density, and of the groups of names that are represented (see below).

Church excavations

In 1966 and 1967, the excavation of Mære church in Trøndelag (middle Norway), which is situated on a topographically dominant ridge to the east of Borgenfjorden, arrived at highly interesting results inasmuch as remains of several buildings were revealed beneath a stone church of twelfth century date (fig. 5; Lidén 1969, 1996). Firstly, there was a well-defined wooden church associated with a burial ground. Secondly, there were wall ditches and postholes that pre-dated the church. Four of these postholes were close to each other in an area of just a very few square metres and yielded post deposits of so-called *guldgubber.* Often, these tiny gold plaquettes show two persons facing each other and are interpreted, by the use of written sources, as images of gods (see above). The circumstantial evidence of the *guldgubber* in Mære was interpreted as an indication of a pagan cult building *(hov).* As a matter of fact, it is known from written sources that Mære was a centre of religious activity for a large district in late heathen times. Thirdly and finally, there were remains of an even older building on the spot, which has been dated to the Migration Period on the basis of finds, such as pottery and glass sherds.

The reconstruction of a temple in Mære on archaeological grounds could be critically commented upon in various ways. Firstly, a historical-archaeological analysis on overall Scandinavia concluded that *hov* did not denote a purely pagan building but rather a room that was also used for everyday purposes (Olsen 1966, 1995). Secondly, archaeological studies have demonstrated that Scandinavian *guldgubber*, often found in halls or as post deposits in hall buildings, date back to the Merovingian Period or Early Viking Age (Herschend 1993, 1999, Watt 1999, 2004). Thirdly, archaeological investigations in the twelfth century Lisbjerg church, north of Århus in Denmark, unearthed traces of what may have been three subsequent hall buildings that were surrounded by a fence (fig. 1; Jeppesen/Madsen 1995/1996). Consequently, the results from

the Mære excavations were most recently interpreted as archaeological evidence of a chieftain's seat that included a hall, which is in line with other Scandinavian cases (Näsman/Roesdahl 2003:285).

In the same vein, the famous heathen temple at Swedish Uppsala is also worthy of a mention (fig. 1). The reconstruction of this building is met with scepticism today, since a re-evaluation of the church investigation does not validate the temple hypothesis. Rather, it points towards an older church, or older buildings beneath the church (Nordahl 1996). In addition, it has been pointed out that the well-known account of Adam von Bremen cannot be taken as irrefutable evidence that a temple existed in Uppsala. In contrast, it may be related to a hall (Dillmann 1997). Finally, hall building(s) in Uppsala are worth mentioning when it comes to the question of where cult ceremonies were possibly held. As a matter of fact, the place-name of Uppsala in itself may indicate that there were once several halls at this location (Brink 1996, 269-271, personal communication L. Klos, Kiel). However, this interpretation is just one among several (Nyman/Arrhenius 2006:532-533). In addition, archaeological investigations of the 1990s revealed two man-made plateaus to the north of the church: one of these has an investigated hall building of c. 50x12 m, whereas the other remains unexcavated but may yet yield another hall (Duczko 1998).

Most recent research in Swedish Uppåkra and Danish Tissø, however, has shed new light on the exertion of pre-Christian cult (fig. 1). The large settlement in Uppåkra (Skåne) once covering 40 hectares, i.e. the largest of all Iron Age settlements in southern Scandinavia, was investigated in the period 1996-2004. As the excavation demonstrated, settlement activities were intense for the entire first millennium AD and, based on many exclusive finds, Uppåkra was interpreted as having been a centre of power over long periods of the first millennium AD. Since 2001, a minor building of 13 x 6.5 m has been excavated in the central part of the settlement (fig. 32). This building with a wall ditch and four massive roof-bearing posts existed from Roman times up to the Early Viking Age and yielded many deposits, among them 110 *guldgubber*, which were partly found as deposits in postholes, and sacrificed weapons and animal bones just outside. Based on the objects salvaged and the circumstantial evidence, the house has been interpreted as a cult building (Larsson 2004, Hårdh 2006). In Danish Tissø, which is briefly referred to at a later date (chapter 6.3.2), different elements of a chieftain's seat were found close to each other, i.e. a hall and a somewhat questionable residential building. In addition, there was a fenced area with a small rectangular building close to the hall. This was regarded as a sacred area that included a cult building by the excavator, L. Jørgensen (fig. 29; Jørgensen 2002, 2005).

With regards to the present court site study, it is important to keep in mind that stone churches, often twelfth century Early Romanesque, are likely to have been built on the grounds of magnate's farms of the Late Iron Age which often were, in fact, older. This conclusion is not only suggested for high potential sites like Mære, Uppsala and Lisbjerg mentioned above. It has also been the case for lesser magnates that had built stone churches, like for example in southern Swedish Bjaresö and in south-western Norway in general (Lidén 1987, 1995, Callmer 1992). Most recent research has attempted to ascribe wooden medieval churches to farms of secondary importance in the south-west of Norway (Haaland 1998). Finally, the presumable existence of separate cult buildings in Uppåkra and Tissø is worth remembering when considering the house that was found in the middle of the Klauhauane court site (chapter 4).

Place-name research

As has been described above, the Norwegian place-name specialist M. Olsen pioneered the use of farm names for discussing matters of social and religious history. However, after a vigorous source-critique in the middle of the twentieth century, it seems to have taken until the 1990s that the issue was taken up again in a systematic manner.

As the Swedish scholar S. Brink has demonstrated, there is a regular pattern for many Swedish sites in the second half of the first millennium AD: farm names that usually cover an area of several hundred metres reflect hall buildings, handicrafts, cults, retinues, slaves etc. These areas are interpreted in terms of a chieftain's/petty king's farm with underlying settlements (fig. 11; e.g. Brink 1999a).

In addition to those Swedish studies, the mainly southern Scandinavian "Gudme" case carries weight inasmuch as a place-name, along with maritime archaeological, research enabled the discovery of the famous Gudme/Lundeborg site in Funen (chapter 6.3: Kousgård Sørensen 1985, Crumlin Pedersen 1987).

Notably, "Gudme" means nothing other than "home of the gods". It remains an open task to investigate the archaeological "value" of the other, mainly southern Scandinavian, farms that have this name.

As to Norway, Brink emphasized the instructive name material that has been preserved (Brink 1999a:426 footnote 8), but besides the eastern Norwegian trading site of Kaupang, which included a Huseby-name, he did not touch upon it (see above). Most recently, however, he did elaborate far more on the Kaupang case, and he ended up with an entire "place-name sphere" that alludes to religious, social and other matters in both the Early and Late Iron Age (Brink 2007).

Generally, the extent to which Brink´s model, which basically refers to Sweden, is transferrable to Norway is open to discussion. In addition, it is worth returning to the work of Magnus Olsen, who almost one hundred years ago highlighted the "place-name spheres" with a social and religious background, for example (as stated above) the "classic" combination of the names By/Bø and Hov(e), which allude to important "secular" and "cultic" farms respectively. The most instructive collections of religious place-names that were presented by M. Olsen relate to the areas at Åker, Hedmark in the East (fig. 5; Olsen 1915: appendix) and on the northern part of the minor island of Tysnes in Hordaland in the West (fig. 5; Olsen 1938).

Final remarks

This subchapter addressed central place research by means of a few selected, yet important, articles. Emphasis was laid upon Norwegian archaeology and, in particular, court site research. It seems that Norwegian scholars pioneered such studies as early as the first half of the twentieth century, with court sites playing a vital role. However, there are only a limited number of physical remains of such centres, most notably at Borg in the North but also in eastern Norwegian Kaupang. German and British studies seem to have been carried out since the 1960s/1970s, and some of the mentioned sites or topics will be returned to later (chapter 6).

Scandinavian central place research, using archaeological, historical and toponym source materials, is well-defined today for Norway, probably even more so for southern Scandinavia (briefly in chapter 6.3). The importance of the halls that were used for meetings and cultic ceremonies cannot be underestimated. Many have been unearthed since the 1980s, and it is worth keeping in mind that some excavations revealed halls beneath churches. With regard to Scandinavia, the earliest such halls seem to date back to the fourth century AD (fig. 21) (Herschend 1993, 1999). However, the investigation of the south-western Norwegian Forsand-village to the south-east of Stavanger, which was in use from as long as ca. 1200 BC to the seventh century AD, proved insightful (fig. 6,21; Løken 1998, 2001b). In Forsand, a hall was erected in the fourth century AD, but in addition there was an entire sequence of exceptionally long houses from ca. 200 BC to 300 AD. According to the excavator, T. Løken, they had integrated halls, judging from their middle sections, which had posts that were set closer to the long walls than they were in the rest of the house. In this respect, a reference to the much later northern Norwegian Borg was made (fig. 13). Norwegian Forsand and Borg are highly enlightening when seen against A. Gauert's three-buildings-axiom for royal sites of Merovingian, and later, date. It might be wise to differ between *one-out-of-three-solutions* in Gauert's terms (three separate buildings in royal sites: a hall, a church/temple, a residence) and *three-in-one-solutions* (Norwegian Borg and Forsand: hall, cult and residence under one roof).

As was demonstrated, Christaller´s central place concept has been quoted in various ways in archaeology. Firstly, there is the basic use of the term, which does not exemplify all its implicit meaning. Secondly and thirdly, Christaller´s spatial networks and lists of central functions were applied for historical and archaeological periods. Critically, one may conclude that Christaller´s geographical theory proved all too problematic, since it seems virtually impossible to measure varying degrees of centrality and centre-hinterland relationships based on purely archaeological source materials. And how could it be otherwise, considering that Christaller himself turned to the "telephone method" instead of the much more sophisticated, though hardly or completely unrealisable measuring of central functions? However, the central place concept remains instructive in archaeological respects for both the visualisation of networks of hierarchical settlement structures, and the assumed multifunctional nature of centres.

The present subchapter could be easily criticized for being too superficial. This, however, is the result of a lack of studies which try to trace common red threads in European archaeology. For example, a "social archaeology" was given as much in British as in

German archaeology, as can be shown by the programmatic summarizing publications of well-known scholars in both countries, which appeared within a couple of years of each other (Steuer 1982, Renfrew 1984).

In addition, it would be worthwhile to integrate a much wider framework of studies and countries into considerations of this kind. One of the cases at hand would be, for example, Dutch research, such as J. H. F. Bloemer's attempt to locate settlement districts and centres of Germanic tribes to the north-east of the Limes in modern day Holland (Bloemer 1983). Another case would be eastern European find spots and areas, indeed, some (Jakuszowice, Mikulčice and the Bohemian Basin) are introduced at a later date (chapters 6-7).

Going much further than the sketch in the present chapter, it would be worthwhile to ask about archaeological central place research in and outside Europe in a broader sense. One case could be the early excavations of suspected hall buildings, like that at Westick, briefly described above, or the Dutch Fochteloo site that was investigated almost as early as Westick but was published much later (fig. 1; Van Giffen 1958, Taayke 1995). However, though such cases would be enlightening as evidence for early hall-related theories, by themselves they would not fit the central place definition in the present study, i.e. the scrutiny of networks of centres of power in a regional or wider framework. Another case is a paper on nobility, fortification and dominion among the Germanic tribes (Dannenbauer 1941). In several respects, this article was later revised (e.g. Werner 1965). It is not possible, for example, to reconstruct a Germanic hereditary nobility nor a hill fort-based dominion of Germanic tribes from the very first centuries AD onwards. However, the article stands out as an early example of wide-ranging reflections about the physical structure of centres of power.

Finally, one has to keep in mind the ideological bias of the research that took place during the Third Reich. As a matter of fact, Christaller´s central place theory can be detected in the settlement outlines (*Raumplanung*) of Nazi occupied Poland. Christaller´s role seems unexplored so far, but it is possible that he considered his theory to be a geographic expression of the *Führer principle*, which was well-suited for practical application in Poland (Rössler 1989:123-127, 1990). At one time, H. Reinerth, one of the most infamous German Third Reich archaeologists, had a *Führerhaus* of Bronze Age date reconstructed in the Unteruhldingen museum, based on an excavated feature in the southern German Aichbühl settlement (Schöbel 2002:fig. 34). From an archaeological point of view, it remains an interesting task to investigate the extent to which German research of the 1930s and 1940s attempted to legitimize Adolf Hitler's reign by identifying many such *Führer* in pre-history (besides the Reinerth case just mentioned). As it seems, this question has not been broadly addressed by the increasing number of recent works that have studied archaeology during the Third Reich (e.g. Leube 2002, Steuer 2002).

As far as Scandinavia is concerned, E. Sprockhoff was the author of a German Nazi propaganda book on Norwegian archaeology, in which the assumed common cultural heritage of Norway and Germany was misused for justifying the Nazi occupation of Norway (Sprockhoff 1945). The propaganda element is particularly evident in the prologue and epilogue of this book. Besides this, there are several photos with German people in uniform in front of archaeological monuments or finds, and it is impossible to tell who is an "occupying soldier" and who is an "archaeologist". Remarkably, however, there is a chapter on court sites, in which they are interpreted as ting grounds (Sprockhoff 1945:57-62).

3.3. The study's methodology and goals

In 1971, O. Møllerop (1971:166) outlined the agenda for future court site research, namely:

– the publication of the excavation documents,
– modern re-excavations,
– a further discussion about the interpretation of the sites on an enlarged material base (after having realised the first two concerns).

One could say that, since this article, progress has been made in fulfilling one out of three concerns of the agenda. A re-investigation of Håvodl took place in the late 1980s, and in addition, a presumed site discovered in the 1970s was excavated immediately in southernmost Oddernes (fig. 5). In addition the gathering place by the name of Leksaren has been re-evaluated recently. Regrettably, however, this promising undertaking, in which important aspects were addressed,

overlooked even the excavation documents and finds from Leksaren to some extent, not to mention those from the other sites in Jæren (Kallhovd 1994).

In conclusion, two out of three issues in Møllerop´s agenda remain mostly unfulfilled. They will be the main focus of the present work:

Goal A is the publication of the investigations by means of a short summarizing text, in contrast to a full-scale collection of data in the form of tables and drawings (chapters 4.1, 5, 11-12). The emphasis is laid upon the examination of the main construction and dating of the sites in Jæren to the south of Stavanger. The focus will be on these because they were the only large ones, and at the same time the most thoroughly investigated, sites in south-western Norway.

Goal B is the social-functional evaluation by raising the question of "equality vs. inequality" in relation to the gathering grounds. It takes a local, regional and international perspective (chapters 4-6). Top priority will be given to social aspects, with a strong reference to central place research. In contrast, the functional aspects are considered as closely connected, if not derived from, the social ones. It is hoped that a wide range of archaeological cross-references might be helpful for discussing who built the sites and what the society looked like.

4. Court sites in Jæren

4.1. Introductory remarks

In this chapter, the four court sites in Jæren to the south of Stavanger will be discussed, i.e. three that were completely investigated (Leksaren, Klauhauane, Håvodl) and a fourth (Dysjane) that remains mostly unexplored (fig. 6). Minor investigations took place in the late nineteenth century (Dysjane, Klauhauane), whereas the main ones were carried out from 1934 to 1950 (Håvodl, Leksaren, Klauhauane). Finally, re-investigations were made up until the 1980s (Klauhauane: 1959-1961, Håvodl: 1984; 1986-1989).

Klauhauane, Leksaren and Dysjane are large gathering grounds with a number of ca. 15 houses, situated on marginal grounds (fig. 6). Together with a few comparable counterparts in the very north of the country (Tjøtta, Steigen, Leknes, Bjarkøy), they are the largest of all, in some cases with an outer diameter of up to 80 m (fig. 5). In contrast, the site in Håvodl is much minor, irregular and placed on a moraine ridge (Myhre 1972:164). All four places in Jæren rest upon man-made earthen walls.

The other court sites in south-western Norwegian Rogaland and Vest-Agder, all in all six of them, will be considered much more briefly in chapter 5 (fig. 6). Among them are two more investigated places (Øygarden, Oddernes).

4.2. Archaeology

The excavations of the court sites will be considered in a summarizing way by omitting any house-by-house approach. Detailed information can be found in chapters 11 (site by site) and 12 (excavation by excavation; house by house). In the following, the sites' general outline and phases, a summarizing evaluation of the finds and the finds´ dates and radiocarbon dates respectively will be the main focus. A large amount of pottery material was found in the houses: thousands of sherds, mainly of the so-called coarse undecorated ware. In the present study, only well-datable and well-stratified objects will be considered, since only these will be of use in the discussion of functional and, in particular, chronological matters. Only a very few selected objects have been drawn, mainly pottery (finer ware). Since these sherds are very fragmentary, it was decided to omit any descriptions. Obviously, the bucket-shaped pots mainly belong to the early examples. However, a separate study would be needed to relate these objects, perhaps together with the material from ordinary settlements (e.g. Ullandhaug: Myhre 1980) and in three particular boathouses (Nord-Kolnes in Jæren: Rolfsen 1974), to the much better known and well-dated items in graves (Shetelig 1904, Bøe 1931:164-203).

Construction

Generally speaking, the houses formed a ring around an open area (figs. 3-4, 6). The rectangular buildings, mostly with an average inner measurement of c. 10 x 4 m, had stone walls on three sides and a small side facing the place in the middle with only a light construction, if there was any. Often, these houses had different types of hearths: round ones that were located in various spots, and longitudinal ones which ran along the main axis. All of the houses were probably used as accommodation, as there is no indication of use as byres or stables. The culture layer in the houses is said to have been several dozen centimetres thick. These traits are shared by almost all the excavated houses, and there are only few without any hearths or that have a much different size or orientation. Additionally, burnt layers were noted in the houses, but there is no sign of any destruction layers. Evidently, the sites´ plans reflect the results of a longer period of use and some, if not most, of the irregularities are based on later alterations. The excavations did not cover the areas outside the actual gathering places but, as it seems, there were no visible archaeological features apart from the mounds in the middle.

Already the first excavations of the late nineteenth century pointed towards several periods of use, indicated by hearths and pits on different levels, or the overlay by later stone walls. It was in Klauhauane in the

late 1930s that it was noted explicitly for the first time that the houses did not rest upon sterile soil but were placed higher up (up to 50 cm and sometimes more) on man-made earthen walls. It is essential to keep in mind that the levels for court sites in Jæren (and for Øygarden to the north described in chapter 5) *always* relate to the lower end of the stone walls and did *not* reach as far down as the sterile soil.

House 9 of Leksaren stands out among all the excavated houses because of its well-recorded internal stratigraphy (fig. 7, chapter 11.3). As J. Petersen, the excavator, rightly stated, there were hearths and pits in the house that stratigraphically coincided with the lower end of the stone wall, and there was yet another level, c. 30-40 cm higher up, consisting of a stone-framed longitudinal hearth and three postholes. This upper level, covering only a part of the house's centre and its southern end, remained untouched during the investigations. Therefore, anything hidden further beneath this level, and the appearance of the upper level in the house interior as a whole, are unknown. Actually, there are various indicators for a yet older occupation phase. The stone walls did not rest upon sterile soil and several hearths were described as "sunken". Only their upper parts were found higher up in the culture layer at the level of the lower end of the stone walls, but actually they reached further down. In summary, it is possible to suggest two well-recorded periods of use in house 9 of Leksaren and yet another that pre-dates these. Petersen's excavations of the other court sites in Jæren demonstrated without any doubt that houses with stone walls were characteristic of the later period of use, whereas the hearths and/or pits that are partly overlain by these stone walls indicate a yet older occupation phase that is difficult to describe.

Thanks to the re-investigations of Klauhauane and Håvodl, it is possible today to have a far clearer idea about the periods of use. In both cases, it was recorded that the stone walls of the houses rested upon an older occupation layer, and that there was an initial building period of houses that had wall ditches (chapters 12.1, 12.3). In this respect, it is very important to note that Early Roman houses with wall ditches and inner rows of postholes were excavated in an area that is believed to be a court site in southern Norwegian Oddernes (figs. 5, 7). It seems sound to suggest that the houses in Jæren, which were roughly the same size, looked rather similar. A close examination of the excavation recordings that were left by J. Petersen shows that "ditches" were described in two instances, i.e. house 1 in Leksaren and house 4 in Håvodl (p. 151, 160). In the latter case, this was the earliest of all the elements that were recorded (stratigraphically) in the area parallel to a house's small side. Keeping in mind the considerable number of hearths and pits in many houses that pre-date the later occupation periods, there is every reason to suggest that older buildings existed, possibly with wall ditches. In this respect, the earthen walls beneath the well-recorded stone houses seem to be the remains of former culture layers or, perhaps more likely, shallow outer earthen walls which once belonged to the initial, somehow lighter house constructions. More recently, houses with shallow outer earthen walls were observed during the excavations of Roman period settlement sites in Rogaland, outside Jæren (Hundvågøen to the east of Stavanger; Forsand further to the south-east; pers. comm. T. Løken and O. Hemdorff, AmS).

To some extent, two periods of use are also indicated by hearths. Initial round hearths at different spots in the house were often replaced by longitudinal, sometimes stone-framed, hearths along the middle axis (e.g. p. 154). Often, the later hearths were stratigraphically simultaneous with the early stone wall period but house 9 of Leksaren stands out as an exception, since a hearth of that kind was a much later addition in a house with stone walls (fig. 7). The Klauhauane-site, however, yielded no evidence at all for longitudinal hearths (except perhaps for two houses).

Postholes were described for many houses, but stone-framed depressions were taken as evidence by J. Petersen as much as flat stones on the surface level that were supposed to have served as a substructure of a post. A regular system of posts was rarely recorded, and house 12 of Leksaren, with two times two very well-defined postholes, stands out as an exception (p. 167). Stratigraphically, postholes were almost exclusively associated with the stone wall period, but the remaining evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate that these were a general constructive element of that period. Remarkably, the above-mentioned Oddernes case, with its internal rows of postholes, also demonstrated an initial period of a court site with such a constructional feature (fig. 7).

Mounds in the middle of the open place were common elements of all the large sites in Jæren. None contained any burial, but in contrast there were indications for

hearths and perhaps the preparation of meals (chapter 11.5. Possibly, the mound to the north-east of the minor Håvodl site should be considered to be an equivalent to the middle mounds (p. 154). The Klauhauane reinvestigations in the years 1959-1961 yielded evidence for a square house beneath the middle mound (p. 179). This house, which differed from the others in outline and lacked any inner hearths, coincides stratigraphically with the initial period of the gathering ground.

Most recently, the star-shaped grave monuments in Dysjane and Klauhauane were considered, along with more such monuments in Rogaland (chapter 11.5, pp. 137, 139; Myhre 2005:8-9). These reflections, which attributed a cultic sphere to the monuments by referring to Swedish research, remain unexplored in the present article. For both court sites, the chronological relationship between the star-shaped monuments and the gathering grounds is an open question. In fact, Klauhauane is an interesting case because there were presumed house remains beneath the star. Therefore, it may be equated with the second period of the court site's use, or with activities that post-date this period, provided that the stone walls belonging to the second period of court sites were removed before the star was built.

Finds

The fully excavated court sites in Jæren yielded fairly homogeneous find materials, but Klauhauane stands out as the one site with the largest number and variation of objects (table 1). Common for all the houses were several hundreds of pottery sherds, particularly abundant in Klauhauane, with an average of 350 sherds per house, whereas there was, for example, only an average of 100 for Håvodl. The court sites' finds were made up almost entirely of the so-called coarse undecorated ware, which probably amounts to 99% of all the finds. In contrast, coarse but decorated and finer ware is seldom. Basically, there are two kinds of finer ware represented in the gathering places: so-called "Jutlandish-inspired" pottery on the one hand (a few sherds in Håvodl and Klauhauane) and bucket-shaped pots *(R270-277)* on the other hand (usually very few sherds in the majority of all the houses). Another very well-defined group of finer ware, i.e. handled vessels *(R361)*, are completely absent in the court sites, except from sherds found in Klauhauane in the late nineteenth century (trench II of 1891: p. 174). The numbers of finds in some houses are quite exceptional. House 5 of Klauhauane yielded as much as 150 sherds belonging to one bucket-shaped pot (p. 172). House 3 in Håvodl had five times more pottery than the others at that location; on the contrary, house 12 in Leksaren and houses 9 and 10 in Klauhauane had a significantly reduced number of sherds than the other houses in the neighbourhood (pp. 161, 172). It seems impossible to figure out whether these differences in numbers point to a more or a less intense and/or a longer or shorter period of use.

The second group of objects found in the court sites consists of just a very few tools, mainly whetstones and knives (table 1). Particularly poor was the Leksaren-site with altogether only one or two tools, whereas Klauhauane had an average of one tool per house. Klauhauane yielded different kinds of tools, such as knives, whetstones, unspecified iron tools, a spindle whorl and an awl. As to the knives, it is important too keep in mind that they are mostly in a much corroded state, making typological identifications almost impossible (without X-rays). According to recent studies of later Roman knives in the Danish bog offering site, Illerup place A, there were different types, among them a weapon knife (Ilkjær 1993:257-264). The possibility that some of the objects in the court sites (altogether, one find in Leksaren and five in Klauhauane) may have belonged to that latter category cannot be ruled out.

"Other objects" are the third group of finds known from the court sites (table 1). As was the case with the tools, there is an average of one such object for each house in Klauhauane, whereas finds of that kind are rarer in Håvodl and Leksaren. In Klauhauane, there were, for example, glass beads, slag, amber, a mounting, an arrowhead, a bronze fibula and a golden finger ring.

Charred bones, which are known from almost all the houses, are the fourth and final group of finds. Regrettably, any osteological analysis is missing (table 1). However, considering the hearths in the houses, and the considerable number of comparatively large, longitudinal hearths that were used intensely and/or for a longer period of time, it is natural to attribute the bones to the preparation of meals. Possibly, this assumption is strengthened by the organic remains on some of the pottery sherds.

The most notable finds are a golden finger ring from Klauhauane and a silver fibula with a long catch plate that was found in Dysjane. The first find belongs to

a considerable group of minor rings that are known from Roman period Jæren. All in all some 40 gold rings weighing a few grams are known from Rogaland, plus a much smaller number of heavier items (Andersson 1993:151-159). The latter object is quite remarkable for the Roman period of Jæren. It would be a separate study to analyse how many silver fibulae are known from that era in Jæren, but one would probably end up with very few finds, for example two such objects and a golden ring found in a woman's burial in Reve (Klepp), which is dated to period C2 (e.g. Andersson 1993:154). In addition, there were glass beads (Klauhauane, Leksaren) and a gaming-piece (Leksaren) in excavated court sites´ houses. Finally, one has to remember the complete absence of any finds with a "military" character (apart from single arrowheads from Klauhauane and Leksaren and the somewhat questionable knives mentioned above).

In the late 1960s, a farm site of the Late Roman and Migration Periods was completely excavated at Ullandhaug to the east of the Hafrsfjord (fig. 21; Myhre 1980). This same farm site shall be briefly introduced in order to make some comparative remarks in relation to the court sites. The farm and the gathering sites are both located in Jæren and in their outer appearance, i.e. the stone walls, they were and are very much alike. The Ullandhaug farm mainly consisted of three buildings (nr. 1-3). The excavator, B. Myhre, once made a spatial analysis of the houses in order to determine the functions of the different rooms. According to his study, rooms were used for storage purposes, as byres, as everyday living rooms and perhaps as living rooms ("hall" in house 1) with a more specialized use (i.e. mainly for the preparation of major meals). For the purpose of a few superficial remarks, it will not be necessary to elaborate on a recent re-interpretation of the Ullandhaug farm in which one room (II) in the main long house (3) was thought to resemble a hall (Løken 2001b:72-73, fig.16).

The comparison between the Ullandhaug-farm and the court sites shows striking differences. First and foremost, a farm like Ullandhaug consisted of several buildings, with rooms designed for different purposes. In contrast, there is no sign of any functional differences between the court site's houses, with the square building in the midst of the Klauhauane site being the exception to the rule. Secondly, a farm like Ullandhaug displays a variety in the find spectrum, especially with regards to the many different tools needed for mastering everyday life (table 1). Not less than 56 tools were salvaged during the excavations, mostly originating from living rooms. Once again, the court site investigations yielded a very different picture inasmuch as there were only very few tools found, i.e. a maximum of one per house. Thirdly and finally, the composition of finds is very different with regards to the pottery. Generally speaking, bucket-shaped pots amount to 50% of the pottery in Ullandhaug (all in all 400 items in terms of find numbers), whereas only a very few percent of bucket shaped pots are represented within the pottery material of the court sites that otherwise consists of sometimes many thousands of sherds of the so-called coarse, undecorated ware. The number of pottery sherds from the court sites as such would probably suggest a much longer and/or more intense use of the houses. In addition, one may argue chronologically inasmuch as the almost complete absence of bucket-shaped pots in the court sites (if they are found, they belong to the uppermost culture layers) may suggest that the gathering sites were in use mostly *before* the erection of the Ullandhaug farm. However, all of the distinctions made above would need further substantiation before they could be taken at face value. However, it is clear enough that Ullandhaug, as a farm, followed a quite different spatial organisation, with a find spectrum of its own.

In summary, one cannot go wrong in stating that the Ullandhaug farm and the court sites in Jæren are basically different. As to the court sites, the basic function of the houses seems to have been the accommodation of people and the preparation of food, judging from the amount of pottery, organic remains on some of the sherds, and perhaps the charred bones. In contrast, any large scale use of the houses for repairs, daily activities such as weaving or the sharpening of tools etc. seems rather unlikely, not to mention a use as byres or stables.

Dating

The last time that Iron Age pottery in Norway was systematically analysed was in J. Bøes classical monograph "Iron Age pottery in Norway" (Bøe 1931). Regrettably, a modern synthesis is missing. As to Rogaland´s settlements, the unpublished pottery from the entirely investigated Forsand village inhabited from the Bronze Age up to Merovingian times would probably be a key material for that task (fig. 6, 21; e.g. Løken 1992, 2001b).

The pottery of the court sites mainly consists of coarse

undecorated ware that might have been in use from as early as the Bronze Age up to as late as the Migration Period, but probably even longer (Pilø 1993b:26-28, pers. communication B. Myhre, AmS). These objects will be completely disregarded in the following.

The present study will solely focus on stratified and reliably datable objects which were chronologically scrutinized in most recent times. As far as pottery is concerned, only three categories of finer ware are taken into consideration, whereas all the other groups addressed by J. Bøe remain unused since their chronology might be doubtful today (pers. communication B. Myhre, AmS). *Jutlandish-inspired pottery,* which shows similarities to finds further to the south of Denmark, was identified by J. Bøe by means of the ware, form, colour, surface and decoration. Bøe also discerned an eastern and a south-western group as well as isolated finds (Bøe 1931:24-25). W. Slomann dated this high quality pottery to period *B2*, i.e. the late part of the first century AD and the first two-thirds of the second century AD, on the basis of the south-western Norwegian finds (Slomann 1971:13-14). Interestingly, an analysis demonstrated that the eastern Norwegian artefacts were evidently manufactured on location in the East (Resi 1986:51-53). The one pottery type that is fundamental for court site reflections is the so-called *bucket-shaped pots (R270-277)*. Straume dated these to the period from late C2 up to D2, but it seems that, in south-western Norway, this pottery did not come into use any earlier than period C3 (Straume 1987:13-14; pers. communication S. Kristoffersen, AmS). *Finer-handled vessels* (*R361*), dating to the periods C2 to D1 will play hardly any role in the present study, since they are almost completely absent from the court sites (Straume 1987:16-17). All the datings given above refer to finds in burial contexts. It would be a separate study, perhaps relating to the mentioned Forsand-excavation, to investigate whether these datings are the same for settlement contexts in Rogaland.

Following the approach that is outlined above, the earliest reliably dated objects (Håvodl; Klauhauane) belong to the so-called "Jutlandish-inspired" pottery known from period B2. In the case of Klauhauane, sherds belonging to such pots are said to have been found inside and outside the house in the very middle of the court site that belonged to the initial building period in this location (phase 1: pp. 158; 181). In Håvodl´s case (house 2), the pottery was salvaged at the lowest layer of the stone-walled building (phase 2: pp. 151-152). However, sherds of bucket-shaped pots found closely nearby might indicate a stratigraphical mix-up.

Fibulae with long catch plates were found in both Dysjane (silver: p. 139) and Klauhauane (bronze: p. 181). The two specimens belong to a subtype of this fibula (Almgren Serie 2, 196-197) that is usually considered as a chronological "key artefact" of period C1 (RGA 8:501-502; 525). However, such fibulae have been found mixed with other subtypes (Almgren Serie 3, 206-207) in a few Norwegian graves, which date to period C2 or C2-C3 (Straume 1998:440). As to the Norwegian fibulae of Roman period date, a new analysis in both chronological and social respects would be highly desirable. For the fibulae with long catch plates that were found in court site houses, reliable information about their stratigraphical provenance is missing in both cases. Since the excavation notes in Klauhauane explicitly testify to finds that belong stratigraphically to the stone wall period (phase 2), there is good reason to suggest the same for the fibula.

Finer handled-vessels *(R 361)* dating to the period from C2 to D1 are completely absent except for sherds salvaged in 1891´s trench II of Klauhauane (p. 174). However, there is no way to date the investigated house area since any proper information about the finds' stratigraphy is missing.

The only objects that are comparatively numerous and stratigraphically well-defined are fragments of bucket-shaped pots (pp. 158, 168, 201). As to their stratigraphy, one has to differentiate between the Håvodl-site, where sherds were found close to the lowest level of the layer belonging to the stone wall period, and Leksaren and Klauhauane where the finds were, as a rule, found at least 20 cm higher up in the stone wall stratum. In the two latter cases, one may suggest an artificial stratification of layer 2: *layer 2a,* which is without bucket shaped pots (the bottom layer of phase 2) and *layer 2b*, which includes such fragments (at least 20 cm up in layer 2, sometimes up to 50 cm high). Only few of these sherds are undecorated and among those that are decorated there is a dominance of the comb-decoration that is usually associated with early examples (Bøe 1931). For the present study, these are dated to the late fourth and fifth centuries in order to emphasize their place in the settlement sphere, in contrast to burial contexts where one would suggest a dating to the late fourth century. There are only two decorated sherds among the late

examples of bucket shaped pots: house 1 in Leksaren yielded a sherd with a ribbon interlace of the fifth/sixth century, 50 cm high up in layer 2 (find nr. 46, p. 168), and in house 6 in Klauhauane another example, with beading *(perlerækker),* was found. In fact, the latter belongs to the latest of the latest bucket shaped pots, dating to the middle of the sixth century (find nr. 295 p. 180; Kristoffersen 1999:103-109). House 6 yielded different comb-decorated sherds of bucket-shaped pots 30-60 cm high in layer 2 (i.e. the artificial layer 2b). Since these were both beneath and above the example with the beading, there was probably a stratigraphical mix-up.

There are other finds from court sites that are worth mentioning. House 15 of Leksaren yielded sherds of imitation glass pottery that could be dated either to period C3, or the transition C3/D1, based on "original" glass finds (p. 169, Straume 1987:34). However, no stratigraphy has been provided for the house. In continental respects, a bead with a loop, as is known from Leksaren, belongs to the "achter- oder körbchenförmige Anhänger" (type 82-87) according to Tempelmann-Maczińska (p. 169). Subtype 84, from Leksaren, has a broad date range, spanning period C1 of Late Roman Iron Age up to the Migration Period (Tempelmann-Maczińska 1985:table 2). For this reason, the find is of no use for any dating purposes, and furthermore, it was ascribed to house 14 from Leksaren with no certainty.

Finally, different types of objects, mostly tools, are usually dated by period, e.g. quartzite whetstones from the Early Iron Age, in contrast to the schist whetstones that are usually attributed to the Late Iron Age (Petersen 1951:254, Myhre 1980:134). It is important to keep in mind that few objects with a dating of that kind were rescued during the court site investigations, e.g. a knife of somewhat questionable Viking date in house 7 of Leksaren (p. 161) and a schist whetstone from the Late Iron Age in house 7 of Klauhauane (p. 172). However, neither of these is reliably associated with the houses' main period of use. Instead, they were found either "high up" in the house or were unstratified.

Another such object is a bronze needle from Klauhauane that was found in the 1891 trench 1 (p. 174). This object is long gone, but there is a sketch by Jan Petersen that has been preserved (p. 181). Probably, this item could have been associated with group C of the simple Viking ring needles (Petersen 1928:fig. 238). However, a reference was made to a yet earlier needle type that, in Sweden and on Bornholm, has been dated to the Late Migration or Early Merovingian Periods (Nerman 1935:fig.389, Nielsen 1986:fig.10, Kallhovd 1994:104-105). As a matter of fact, the association between the lost Klauhauane find with group C of simple ring nails seems more likely. In the present context of dating the court sites, the one thing to keep in mind is that no reliable stratigraphy is given for the needle. According to the original description by the excavator, Gustavson, it was found at the western edge of trench I. This means: in the wall of the house itself and probably in that part of the long wall facing outwards (p. 174). For dating the Klauhauane site it is much more important to be aware of that, in half the houses, bucket shaped pots of the early type were found in the upper part of the culture layer ("artificial layer 2b") that belonged to the stone wall period (p. 173). They indicate the end date for those houses, so on this basis one can rule out any comprehensive use of the gathering place after the Early Migration Period.

In summary, one has to concede that, using the approach outlined above, there is only a very limited number of both stratified and reliably dated objects. The situation is further complicated by indications of stratigraphical mix-ups. Cautiously, one may suggest an Early Roman date (*period B2*) for the initial building period *(phase 1)* that relies upon the stratified sherds of "Jutlandish-inspired" pottery from Klauhauane and a later Roman date *(probably period C1 and onwards)* for the second building period (*phase 2*), which relates to the fibula with the long catch-plate from Klauhauane. This second building phase is in need of further elaboration. In Håvodl, bucket shaped pots were found up to 20 cm high in layer 2 but not any higher. In contrast, sherds of that kind were found at least 20 cm high up in layer 2 (artificial layer 2b) in Klauhauane and Leksaren.

In her extremely valuable chronological study of the south-western Norwegian Roman and Migration Period, W. Slomann also touched briefly on the court sites (Slomann 1971:13, 20-21). According to Slomann, the sites were erected in period *B2* (Håvodl, Klauhauane, Dysjane) and C2 (Leksaren) and abandoned at the end of the Roman period. The brief discussion above mostly agrees with her suggestions, except for the initial datings for both Dysjane and Leksaren, which remain unexplainable to the author. As to the abandonment, the comb-decorated bucket-shaped pots as early examples of that pottery type would, in fact, indicate a dating to period C3, as proposed by Slomann, rather than to the

Early Migration Period, but any statement to that effect would make its judgement by using pottery from known burial contexts.

Radiocarbon datings are available for Leksaren and Håvodl (in fact, a series of datings) and Klauhauane (three datings). Several samples have to be omitted from the study, since their datings were highly misleading, perhaps due to "impure" samples (pp. 152, 162, 173). Organic materials from Klauhauane and Håvodl, which originate from the initial building period (*phase 1*), may indicate an Early Roman Iron Age date (perhaps as far back as the latest pre-Roman Iron Age). The organic materials from the second construction period (*phase 2*) in Håvodl dated to the Late Roman and Migration Periods. In Leksaren (with no samples of *phase 1*), the lower part of the second construction period (*phase 2a*) is dated to the Early Roman Iron Age, whereas the datings of phase 2 in general and of phase 3 (partial alterations) mostly point to the Late Roman and Migration Periods. Surprisingly, two samples from Leksaren (from hearths in houses 2 and 12) have provided datings that cover parts of the Migration Period and reach well into Merovingian times (pp. 159, 162). However, those samples may possibly originate from a later reuse of these two houses. In the case of several other houses in Leksaren, an end date is suggested by the early bucket-shaped pots in the upper part of the culture layers.

Cautiously, one may conclude, by using the datable finds and the radiocarbon datings, that the court sites seem to date back to the Roman and, to some extent, the latest pre-Roman Iron Age and Early Migration Periods. Additionally, however, there were probably activities in these areas that pre- and post-date these periods, but which are not associated with a comprehensive court site use. Simply put, one would associate the initial building period with the Early Roman Iron Age and the later stone wall phase with the Late Roman and Early Migration Periods, but it remains an open question as to whether the restructuring of phase 2 took place at the same time at all the sites. In the same way, the degree and essence of activities that post-date these periods cannot be determined. When it comes to the afterlife of the court sites in Klauhauane and Leksaren, however, one can be rather sure that only parts of the gathering grounds were affected. This assumption is based on the fact that in both cases half the houses yielded early bucket-shaped pots in the upper part of the culture layer that belongs to the second and final stone wall period. In this way, these sherds determine the end dating of the court sites as such.

Summary

To summarize as briefly and simply as possible (table 2): The court sites were erected in the Early Roman Iron Age (if not earlier). The initial houses had wall ditches and round hearths, and also, possibly, shallow outer earthen walls. It is possible that there was a house in the middle of all the sites (as evidenced for Klauhauane) that had some special function, as these were the only houses without any inner hearth(s). Either in the Early Roman Iron Age, or at the transition from the second to the third century, the sites were rebuilt, as it would seem, directly upon their predecessors, with no indication of any destruction layers. The new houses had stone walls and, to some extent, longitudinal, stone-framed hearths along the middle axis. Regular sets of postholes may have been a common construction element, though it is not possible to be sure. The central mounds, which contain evidence of hearths and/or the preparation of meals, belong to this period. It would seem, from the dominant position of many hearths, the abundant pottery material, the organic remains on pottery sherds and the charred bones that the houses were used for the accommodation of people and the preparation of meals, whereas there is practically no evidence for repairs or daily domestic activities, such as weaving and the sharpening of tools, or for the use as byres or stables. The finds reflect neither the presence of warriors (perhaps except for two arrowheads) nor that of socially elite persons. If found in a grave context, a gold finger ring (Klauhauane) and a silver fibula (Dysjane) would indicate a person of some rank, but the houses in which these objects were found do not stand out in any other respect, such as size, structure or additional finds.

Admittedly, this reconstruction is based on evidence that is sometimes very scarce, and for almost each sentence there are severe source-critical limitations. However, the majority of the conclusions made would be valid for the majority of 35 houses excavated in Klauhauane, Leksaren and Håvodl. As far as the minor investigation of Dysjane in the late nineteenth century is concerned, the knowledge is simply too poor to make any firm statements. In several respects, the court sites in Jæren resemble each other far more than the excavated Øygarden-site that is situated further to the north and which is described in chapter 5.

4.3. Context

The investigated court sites in Jæren (Klauhauane, Leksaren, and Håvodl) seem to have had the same main period of use in the first/second up to late fourth/fifth centuries or, in other terms, in the Early and Late Roman Iron Age and the initial part of the Migration Period. One cannot go wrong in suspecting the same dating for the Dysjane gathering ground on the basis of the above-mentioned fibula and the general resemblance to the other places. In the following, the settlement and social history of the first centuries AD in parts of flat Jæren will be discussed, omitting North Jæren, close to the Hafrsfjord, which so far has no court site recorded.

As to the Early Roman Iron Age, there are comparatively few known burials in Jæren, and farms of that period are virtually non-existent in the archaeological record (Slomann 1971:fig. 2-3). As can be shown, only three graves of the Early Roman Iron Age in south-western Rogaland yielded objects of Roman provenance. All of these date back to period B2, and a grave from Li (Riska) ca. ten kilometres to the east of Stavanger is outstanding inasmuch as it contained two glass vessels and a gold finger ring (Lund Hansen 1987:437-439). In addition, there are four gold finger rings of B2 date known from Rogaland (notwithstanding the aforementioned grave from Li; Andersson 1993:151-159). Obviously, foreign objects were very scarce compared to the far higher number in the Late Roman and Migration Period. As far as middle and southern Jæren is concerned, i.e. the court site area under scrutiny, only one of the named objects was salvaged there, i.e. a minor golden finger ring from Store Haaland, Nærbø, to the east of the Klauhauane court site (fig. 9).

Seen from a far wider perspective, richly furnished burials of the "*Lübsow* (*Lubieszowo*)-type" were a common phenomenon in parts of northern and middle Europe, i.e. graves dating to period *B1* and *B2* with many objects of Roman provenance, among them the eponym burials from north-western Poland and the famous Hoby-grave from Lolland (fig. 1; Eggers 1949/1950, Gebühr 1974, Hahuła/Nowakowski 2001). The only Norwegian specimen that was once associated with the Lübsow-group (though as a "second class" example) is grave 6 from the eastern Norwegian grave field in Storedal (Petersen 1916, Eggers 1949/1950:fig. 11). This cannot come as any surprise since obviously it was eastern Norway that had access to such goods in the Early Roman Iron Age, rather than any other Norwegian area (Lund Hansen 1987:fig. 83).

In the Late Roman Iron Age, the number of recorded graves in Jæren is higher than in the earlier period but there is still a complete absence of farms belonging to the initial part of this era (Slomann 1971:fig. 4-6). Farms of the *Ullandhaug*-type, which consisted of one main long house with additional buildings, seem to have been erected in the latest Roman Iron Age. However, it is important to keep in mind that three radiocarbon datings from Ullandhaug reach back as far as the late pre-Roman and Early Roman Iron Age, but the full-scale investigations did not establish any knowledge about building activities that were simultaneous with the initial period of the court sites (see above; Myhre 1980:fig. 71 for the radiocarbon datings). There are a number of richly furnished burials for that period, containing Roman goods and/or gold rings and, to some extent, swords or weapon sets, which seem to testify to a social stratification in Jæren (list 1). One burial in a chamber grave, which was probably no longer intact when it was salvaged, surpasses all others: the weapon grave from Erga (Klepp), which dates to period C2 and contained, most notably, a silver chape, a gilded baltric mount and a 20g gold finger ring (fig. 6; S. Kristoffersen in Obrestad 2004:158-159; Rau 2005). The silver chape from this burial, which probably indicates an exquisite scabbard and sword, has only two contemporary parallels in Norway (one from the famous Flagghaug-grave in Avaldsnes further to the north in Rogaland) and, based on this find, the Erga-grave can be equated with a number of southern Scandinavian and continental petty king's graves of period C2, i.e. it is contemporaneous with the continental *Haßleben-Leuna* horizon, whose Gommern-grave is a close parallel to both Avaldsnes and Erga (fig. 1, chapter 6.4, Haßleben-Leuna: Werner 1973, Gommern-catalogue).

The source situation for the Migration Period is completely different. The considerable number of farms of the *Ullandhaug*-type and the indicators for settlement activities that extended to marginal areas led to the assumption that Jæren was, during this period, as densely populated as in late medieval times (Myhre 1983). In the same way, there are a larger number of burials than in the Late Roman Iron Age, including many high status burials (Myhre 1987:fig. 1-7). The most outstanding of all Migration Period women's graves in Rogaland and probably Norway (*Krosshaug*) was found on the

Tu-ridge (Magnus 1975, Kristoffersen 2000, cat.nr. 47). The woman, buried in the middle of the fifth century, had, for example, a splendid relief fibula of gilded silver with style I-decoration and a set of foreign goods, e.g. several bronze vessels. Besides this, many more outstanding graves of that period are known in middle and southern Jæren: relief fibulae (gilded silver or bronze) seem to indicate an upper class of women, whereas the graves of important men often had weapons or military equipment (belts etc.) along with foreign objects like bronze cauldrons and glass vessels (list 1; Kristoffersen 2000). Finally, the Migration Period hoard finds of Jæren are unparalleled in other Norwegian areas, foremost is that from Store Oma (Time) with gold rings and other objects of ca. 600 g of gold (list 1; Bøe 1922).

In summary, one can suggest a very clear distinction within the archaeological material that is contemporaneous with the court sites. If we accept the given source situation as a direct reflection of the period as it was we can suppose that the Early Roman Iron Age of Jæren, i.e. the period in which the court sites were erected, saw practically no settlement activities in the area (no farm house of that period is known), that times were generally peaceful (judging from the paucity of weapons), and that social stratification was unknown (richly furnished graves remain to be found). By contrast, the Late Roman Iron Age and Migration Period (probably to some extent identical with the second period of use of the court sites, i.e. the stone wall period) was characterized by intense settlements activities (many farms of the *Ullandhaug*-type), a distinct military sphere (judging from the weapon graves) and a well-defined social stratification (reflected by many richly furnished burials at different social levels). Naturally, one has to raise the question of the trustworthiness of the present archaeological record for the Early Iron Age: was Jæren really devoid of settlement, and did the few people who lived there enjoy a peaceful and egalitarian society? As a matter of fact, the situation could have been essentially different, as shall be briefly described.

The first factor to be aware of is the incompleteness of the archaeological record, for instance with regards to settlement archaeology. The complete absence of any Early Iron Age farms in Jæren might be explained by the court sites themselves. If ordinary houses were constructed in the same way as the initial court site houses, i.e. with wall ditches and shallow outer earthen walls (if there were any walls at all), they would be invisible in the landscape today. In addition, there are different reasons why the evidence based on burials might be misleading. There may, for example, have been burial customs that have left no trace on the surface. The Forsand-village to the east of Stavanger existed for ca. 2000 years (fig. 6). Therefore, one would expect an amazing number of grave fields and grave-finds, but in fact, one is left with some dozens (pers. communication T. Løken, AmS). This means that, without the settlement archaeological investigations in Forsand, our knowledge would be next to nothing.

Generally, the homogeneity of grave furnishings does not necessarily testify to an egalitarian society when we bear in mind that it might have been periods of instability and rivalry that stirred up the need to display a social status in the grave furnishings and outline (Kossack 1974, Randsborg 1980). It would be wise to exercise caution and remember the discussions in present day Denmark about its problematic seventh century. This period is devoid of any grave finds of particular importance, yet there is overwhelming evidence of building activities in the early decades of the eighth century, such as the foundation of Ribe and the building of the Kanhave Kanal (Näsman 1991a, Myhre 1998, 8-28). This has lead to the suggestion of a "proto-Danish" kingdom of seventh century AD that was responsible for the early eighth century's "flowering period". As for Jæren and south-western Norway in general, it is important to keep in mind that a lack of any remarkable record for the first and second centuries AD (apart from the court sites) is contrasted with very remarkable grave finds and indicators for social stratification in the third century (chapter 6.4).

The number of weapon graves was evidently influenced by mortuary practice. Weapons as furnishings were not widespread any earlier than the Migration Period of Rogaland, but the paucity in particular in the Early Roman Iron Age is not necessarily a reflection of peaceful times but rather a consequence of burial customs (Bemmann-Hahne 1994:fig. 27-32). It is even more remarkable that highly extraordinary graves like Erga and Avaldsnes (fig. 6) are comparatively "early" in relation to the general chronological pattern of Late Roman Iron Age weapon graves in Rogaland. In addition, it is essential to keep in mind that the Danish excavations of the offering site at Illerup place A revealed no less than ca. 6-7 sets of splendid weapons and military

equipment belonging to the "petty kings" (leaders of military units) of an army in the early third century (Ilkjær 2001b:fig. 3, chapter 6.4). It is suspected that the total amount of such petty kings was even higher, since the site was only partially excavated. Erga and Avaldsnes belong to a very few Scandinavian graves that can be connected to such "petty kings", in fact there is only a handful for the entire Late Roman Iron Age in Scandinavia, compared to at least six that are attested to in Illerup for, at the earliest 207, but not much later (Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996:291-296, 368-369). This is to say that, probably, many more such burials did exist but are not known of today, and furthermore, there were areas with such "petty kings" but, due to a lack of weapon burials, these persons will remain undetected. It is yet another question whether weapons in graves were really meant to display former active warriors. However, this very worthwhile discussion can be omitted from consideration in the present context (e.g. Härke 1990).

The second factor to keep in mind is Jæren's topography. This area is one of only a very limited number in Norway that mainly includes some inland parts of the East and the Trondheimsfjord in the middle, which offer large fertile areas that are well-suited to agriculture (Skre 1999:417). In this respect, Jæren stands out in the whole of south-western Norway. It was the topography that made Jæren an area that was able to support early settlement activities and a comparatively dense population. It cannot come as any surprise that there are already indicators for intense settlement and social stratification in Bronze Age Jæren, compared to only a very few other Norwegian areas (Lillehammer 1994:106-121, Solberg 1994). Just to mention one monument from the Bronze Age: as has been suggested, there was once a grave mound 50 m across and up to 7 m high at Hauge on the Tu-ridge in Jæren (Myhre 1968). If this is true, it would have been among the largest of all such mounds that are known from Rogaland´s prehistory. Generally speaking, the pre-Roman Iron Age is a period that is as less visible in the archaeological record as the Early Roman Iron Age, but a development towards some stratification in the society seems to be present in the archaeological record, with some richly furnished graves and remarkable loose finds from the second century BC and onwards (Pilø 1993b). Based on the scarce archaeological material, it would be easy to talk about a "fall and decline" following the Bronze Age. However, the large-scale excavations in Forsand that are mentioned above yielded evidence for social stratification in terms of two houses of Bronze Age date (perhaps predecessors of the houses that were used for gathering purposes), an entire sequence of dominant farms with an exceptionally long house, including a hall-like section, from ca. 200 BC to 300 AD and, finally, a chief's farm with a hall building erected in the fourth century AD (Løken 1998, 2001b, compare chapter 6.3.2). Evidently, the conclusions drawn in Forsand should not be transferred one-to-one to Jæren, but the "invisibility" of an entire village on the present day surface, and distinct indicators for social stratification on settlement archaeological grounds that very much pre-date the Early Roman Iron Age are worth keeping in mind in respect to Jæren. Very simply, Jæren is the one area in south-western Norway that would be expected to have attracted the most numerous population, and have developed social stratification, probably much earlier and much more intensely than Forsand.

Generally speaking, Scandinavian central farms often covered areas of a few hundred m and had different functions and a long period of use, as archaeology, place name research and retrospective historical studies do indicate (chapter 3). The northern Norwegian Borg-site is the one well-known Norwegian example of that kind, including a long house of up to 90 m with a hall-part dating between the fifth and tenth centuries, and substantial medieval settlement remains that include a wooden church. However, there are yet older indicators since the Roman period, i.e. a somewhat questionable, radiocarbon dated court site and a large boathouse that is dated by its relation to the coastline (chapter 3.2). Borg, however, was only second class in northern Norwegian respects. When it comes to Jæren, which is to some extent both topographically and archaeologically in a category of its own in Norway, one would expect to find areas much more promising than Borg in the far North.

In the following, the court sites in Jæren (Dysjane, Klauhauane, Leksaren, Håvodl) will be considered site-by-site from a long-term perspective that includes archaeological and other source materials, i.e. topography, place-name evidence alluding to pre-Christian cult and central farms, medieval churches (all wooden, except for the one in Orre), medieval ting sites and the medieval taxation of the farms. By using this approach it should be possible to locate important farms in a far more reliable way, compared to focusing on just one

archaeological period, or on archaeology alone (fig. 8, tables 3 and 5, list 1).

Dysjane on the Tu ridge is placed in the middle of an area that was delineated by the North Sea to the west, rivers to the north and south and high Jæren to the east (figs. 6 and 9, tables 3 and 6, list 1; Rønneseth 1986). This exceptionally fertile ridge, which allowed a panoramic view, would have been the natural gathering place for the area (Magnus 1975:141-143). Consequently, the ridge served for holding a medieval *fjerdingsting*, i.e. it was one of four major tings in Rogaland, and a medieval *weapon ting* within a *skipreide*, i.e. an area where each free man had to present his weapons once a year, and, in the case of emergency, people from a fixed district (*skipreide*) gathered on the ridge before they went to a ship that was part of the royal naval defence, i.e. *leidang* (Rønneseth 1986). For the Roman Period, we know of altogether four grave or loose finds with outstanding objects from the ridge, i.e. the greatest number of such finds in the area**.** No substantial remains of a farm of the Late Roman and Migration Periods have been reported but 16 *guldgubber*, dating from the Merovingian period up to the Early Viking era were found in a house ruin (Rønne 1999:116, Watt 1999, 2004). If this ruin was of substantial age, one may suspect a former hall or cult building on the ridge, based upon the provenance of such *gubber* in other Scandinavian areas (chapter 3.2). In the Migration Period, the ridge is the most outstanding find spot in the area, including the richest of all women's graves (*Krosshaugen*) in Rogaland, yielding, for example, a splendid relief fibula, and a weapon grave that includes a Vestland cauldron, a glass beaker and two gold finger rings (Magnus 1975, Kristoffersen 2000 cat.nr. 47). From Merovingian times, a boat grave with a fragment of a Kentish squat jar made of blue glass belongs to the most outstanding finds in the whole of Rogaland, and as to the Viking Age, a rider's grave from Særheim is worth mentioning as it is one of very few such burials in south-western Norway, perhaps indicating a royal follower of high rank (Braathen 1989, Rønne 1999:117). Place-names allude to a heathen cult on the ridge (*Frøy*landsvatnet and a *Frøy*land-farm immediately to the east), and so probably do the images of two persons (gods) facing each other (to some extent resembling those on a *gubber*) on a Viking Age runic stone from Tu (Sandnes 1992:fig. 1, NIyR 3:156-160). This same stone relates to two socially outstanding families in the surrounding area, one living on the ridge and the other living just to the north, in Kleppe. A stone cross that once stood on the substantial *Krosshaugen*-mound might indicate early Christian ceremonies that were held on the hill before the first churches were built (Rønneseth 1986). For medieval times, it is important to keep in mind that, of the total of four farms on the Tu-ridge, several were among the large farms in Jæren (judging from the taxes they had to pay), whereas the church built to the north in Kleppe may indicate a break of continuity with regards to the exertion of cult.

Besides the Tu-ridge, one has to take notice of other remarkable finds in the settlement district under scrutiny (figs. 8-9, table 3). The one and only really exceptional Roman period grave in Jæren was found a further c. five kilometres south-west in Erga (see above). In addition, several farms to the south-east are worth mentioning, i.e. Store Oma, which has the largest collection of all Migration Period hoard finds (objects of 600 g of gold) and Fosse, with its weapon burial that yielded, amongst other objects, a belt mount made in what is now present day Belgium (Bøe 1922, Kristoffersen 2000: cat.nr. 42, S. Kristoffersen in Obrestad 2004:138-139). Just as impressive is the place-name evidence for the Lye-farm (once *Lygi*) whose name probably alludes to an old religious or political gathering place (NG 10:143-144, Sandnes 1992:fig. 1). Most recently, Lye has been justly highlighted as a forgotten central place of the Roman Iron Age, from an archaeological point of view, and in the same respect, the nearby Vestly farm (which once belonged to Lygi) is worth mentioning too, with its well-known sixth century smith's grave (Myhre 2007).

In summary, the Tu-ridge with the Dysjane court site had a dominant position in an area that was naturally delineated, both topographically speaking and with regards to all the archaeological and additional evidence. As to the Migration Period, one could suggest a centre of power on the ridge, that included the exertion of cult as is indicated, for example, by the *guldgubber*-find, and a specialized workshop that manufactured all the splendid objects with style I-decoration that were concentrated on and around the ridge (e.g. Nissen Meyer 1934:40-48, Hauck 1992:231-237, Kristoffersen 2000:154). From a long-term perspective, the areas with outstanding finds to the south-west (Erga) and south-east (Store Oma, Fosse, Lygi) probably were only of secondary importance, though one may suggest episodical shifts of power. For his lifetime in period C2, for example, the man later buried in Erga probably had

no counterpart of equal rank in the area, and it might be that persons at the Lye farm had a comparable position in parts of the late Migration Period.

Klauhauane (Ødemotland) is placed in the middle of a settlement area that is delineated by the North Sea to the west, high Jæren to the east, the Hå-river to the north and heathland, bogs and a minor river to the south (figs. 6 and 9, tables 3 and 6, list 1; Løken 1992:55; pers. communication L. Prøsch-Danielsen, AmS). The area's importance as a natural gathering place is reflected by its function as medieval *weapon ting* within a *skipreide* of the *leidang* once held in Kvia, very close to the former Klauhauane site (Rønneseth 1961:25-26). The Ødemotland-farm itself belongs to a number of neighbouring farms which yield remarkable finds of Late Roman and Migration Period date, such as fragments of glass vessels and bronze cauldrons**.** Most notable is a grave from period C3 from the Bø-farm, with its Vestland cauldron and gold 25g finger ring (Lund Hansen 1987: 438). In many respects, this is the dominant farm: placed as it is on exceptionally fertile ground, it surpasses the others with regards to the number of large burial mounds. Also, the farm name itself (*Bø*) points towards a farm of secular importance, whereas yet another farm denotation, *Ullarland* to the east, alludes to the presence of cult (Rønneseth 1961:19, Sandnes 1992:fig. 1). In medieval times, this farm was among the very few in Jæren with a church, and it was a large farm, judging from the taxation. The "twin-farm phenomenon", i.e. a *Bø*-farm combined with another, whose name alludes to heathen cult (often, but not always, *Hov*, indicates some sort of religious building), was described as early as 1926 by M. Olsen. He emphasized that these farms were found in the midst of old settlement districts, often with much later medieval churches, which might indicate some sort of "cult place continuity" (Olsen 1926:227-288).

Besides Bø/Ullarland, there are several farms to the north-east that have yielded a considerable number of outstanding objects. The farms´ placement and importance might, to some extent, be explained from a maritime angle, i.e. Obrestad is one out of a very few natural harbours in Jæren and the Hå-river gives access to farms further inland. This coastal area matches almost all the criteria described for Bø/Ullarland, i.e. richly furnished burials, a place-name alluding to heathen cult (Nærland) and possibly a medieval church in Nærland (fig. 8, table 3, list 1). Based on the evidence just mentioned, one may feel tempted to ascribe the leading role to the Nærland-farm, but this remains hypothetical since nearby Obrestad, for example, was a royal farm in the Viking Age (Larsen 1978:85-86).

Taking all the evidence for the area together, with *Klauhauane* in the middle, the court site was situated close to an important "twin farm" (Bø/Ullarland) to the north-east. The evidence for yet another large farm (if it was just one, perhaps at Nærland?) further to the west and close to the sea is just as persuasive as it is for Bø/Ullarland, with no chance of making hierarchical or chronological subdivisions (if they ever existed).

Leksaren is located in an area that is delineated by the North Sea to the west, heathland, bogs and a minor river to the north, high-Jæren to the east and the very narrow strip of flat-Jæren to the south (figs. 6 and 8, tables 3 and 6, list 1; Løken 1992:55). Considering the settlement density in relation to the narrow strip of land further to the south, *Leksaren* served as a natural focal point. However, in medieval times, the *skipreide's* main farm was further to the south in Voll (to the east of the below mentioned Horr), indicating a break in continuity with regards to gathering places (Steinnes 1974:83-86). The settlement district under consideration is far less intensely investigated than those that are further to the north and are thus closer to the Archaeological Museum in Stavanger (pers. comm. B. Myhre, AmS). South Varhaug to the west of the court site yields a few, but nevertheless important, indicators for a farm that was once important in the area. Foremost of these indicators is a farm ruin of Late Roman and Migration Period, i.e. a long house of 75-100m and at the same time the longest or second longest of all such houses known from Jæren, a medieval church (one of the few in Jæren) and a considerable taxation in medieval times. In the south of the settlement district there are a number of remarkable farms: Kvassheim with a well-known grave field, Hagan with a large farm of the Late Roman and Migration Periods (length: 90 m) and Horr, which had a considerable medieval taxation. In summary, there are indications of a once important farm close to Leksaren that might have held a dominant position in a naturally delineated settlement district.

Håvodl is an exception to the rule since it was located in high Jæren (ca. 100 m above sea level) in an area with only few farms (fig. 6, table 3 and 6, list 1). Immediately to the south of Håvodl, there was a farm that dates to the Late Roman and Migration Periods (Lyngaland), and judging from the main house of 60 m, it was one of the

important farms in Jæren (Petersen 1936:36-58). On the next farm to the north (Eikeland), a ca. 30 m long grave mound was excavated in the 1960s (Myhre 1965). It contained a stone-framed grave chamber of 7 m, i.e. the longest known in Norway. The female occupant carried a relief brooch of gilded bronze with a runic inscription in the early *futhark* that might allude to the exertion of cult (chapter 7, Krause/Jankuhn 1966:nr. 17a).

In summary, the large court sites in Jæren (Dysjane, Klauhauane, Leksaren) and the far more minor site in Håvodl have to be kept separate from one another, not only in relation to their size but also with regards to their locations. Evidently, the first of these served as focal points for the naturally delineated settlement districts in flat Jæren, whereas the latter might have been a gathering place for a very few farms in high Jæren, if it served this purpose at all. As was once argued, there were no more gathering grounds in that part of flat Jæren, since the known sites covered adjacent areas and all of the court sites were placed on marginal grounds that were less suitable for agriculture. This means that if there had been more such sites situated just the same way, they would have been preserved and found (Rønneseth 1966:23).

Generally, the source situation is much better for the Late Roman and Migration Periods than it is for the Early Roman Iron Age. In settlement archaeological terms, there is the problem that one cannot prove any settlement of importance that covers most of the first millennium AD, including the Early Roman Iron Age. The Tu-ridge and Bø/Ullarland seem to be have been dominant in relation to the neighbouring farms. As far as the Late Roman and Migration Periods is concerned, one may go as far as to postulate a centre-and-satellite-system, i.e. a large farm/centre in the middle surrounded by underlying farms. As to the Tu-ridge, an even more elaborate differentiation may have existed, including a closer ring of underlying "middle" farms and a more remote ring of lesser, minor farms. Any such assumption sounds daring but settlement-archaeological studies for eastern Norwegian Ringerike suggested a network of large farms of people who were land-owners in their own right, surrounded by underlying farms that were run by subordinates (fig. 10; Skre 1999). This system is thought to have been established in the third century AD and kept intact for the rest of the Iron Age right through to medieval times, though it was modified.

In conclusion, there are no less than three substories to be told regarding the court sites context, and these stories sound different depending upon the complexity, ranging from simple to advanced, that one might ascribe to the society´s structure:

– substory A (taking the sources as they are, with a minor degree of speculation): The population building the gathering grounds was limited in number and equal in social status. At a later date, social stratification and settlement activities may have increased.
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. Persons with some rank living on neighbouring farms had the grounds built.
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were built. The initiative for erecting the grounds lay in the hands of centres nearby, and they controlled what happened there.

4.4. Function(s)

The functions that are thought to have been attached to central places in modern and historical times and in archaeological periods were briefly touched on above (figs. 22-23; chapter 3.2). The German geographer D. Denecke once suggested not less than ten of these functions for such sites in historical times. It is interesting to keep these reflections in mind when turning to the court sites that have almost as many suggestions as to their function(s).

Interestingly, some aspects can be categorically denied right from the start on topographical or archaeological grounds. Firstly, there was certainly *no* fortificatory function because the sites were sometimes placed at the foot of minor ridges nearby (Klauhauane) and furthermore, there is a lack of indicators for any encircling fortifications that would turn them into some sort of Öland hill forts (chapter 6.2). Secondly, we can be sure that they were *no* ordinary settlements because stables and byres were missing and the find spectrum is different from the one known in settlements (see above).

Naturally, a first function may have been social. Evidently, the starting point for discussing the court sites is their location in the middle of settlement districts, which is what made them a natural gathering place. This location indicates gatherings of people, who assembled

because of social needs, such as communication. Another social facet would be sports, competitions etc., as they are possibly alluded to by Lek-names (old Norse leikr stands for "play, fight, sport": Rygh 1898:64-65; NG 10:26) at two northern (Leknes and Lekenga/Tjøtta) and one south-western site (Leikvang-farm at Skjelbrei: chapter 5). It is possible that people gathered at these places in the open air, long before the court sites were built and certainly, in the case of Tu/Hauge and Klauhauane, they continued to do so after the sites had been abandoned. The existence of a very long tradition cannot be doubted in these instances.

A second function may have been judicial, in terms of tings that were held on the site. As mentioned above, this was suggested by N. Nicolaysen as early as 1866 (chapter 1). Three arguments can be put forward for strengthening this interpretation, the first being that meetings of this kind by Germanic groups are reported by Tacitus (chapters 13-15) at the transition from the first to the second century AD, that is mainly contemporary with the initial period of the court sites (chapter 6.2), the second being the ting meetings that were held by Norse settlers in Iceland (chapter 6.2) and the third being that the medieval ting places were right by, or very close to, abandoned court sites (for instance at Steigen in northern Norway and Hauge, close to Dysjane in the South-West). When examined closely, each of these arguments is far from being unproblematic. The first relates to contemporary events but refers mainly to peoples who lived many hundreds of km further to the south. The second refers to Icelandic sites which are still disputed (chapter 6.2) and the third relates to the court site areas, but roughly 1000 years later. However, the court sites´ placement in the middle of settlement districts is worth keeping mind. If a ting organisation did exist in the first centuries AD in the North it seems reasonable to ascribe it to the court sites.

A third function may have been religious. As early as 1942 this argument was put forward in relation to the finds that were revealed during the Steigen-excavation in northern Norway (Lund 1942). The mound in the very middle of the Steigen-site contained charred animals´ bones and charcoal. These remains were interpreted as the left-overs of ritual feasts. In the same way, the square house underneath the middle mound in the Klauhauane-site is worth considering (p. 179). Its very square shape, the lack of hearths inside the house and their presence on the outside, together with many pottery sherds, testify to a use that was different from that of the other houses belonging to the court site. Most recent Swedish and Danish research (described in chapter 3.2) unearthed minor houses that were considered to be cult buildings because they were found in fenced areas (Tissø: fig. 29) or contained many guldgubber and deposits (Uppåkra: fig. 32). Could it be that the Klauhauane house was a much earlier, specialized cult building? There may yet be another argument that supports the religious interpretation. According to continental written sources, ting existed alongside cult on these same sites (chapter 6.2.1).

A fourth function may have been economic. As it seems, this use was first proposed in the 1960s (for example Rønneseth 1966:23). No further explanation was given, but again one could suggest that if "local markets" (or perhaps "exchange of goods" would be more neutral) were existing as an institution in the first centuries AD, the court sites would have been the natural place to hold them. A somewhat vague piece of evidence for an "economic" sphere may be the shaft furnace at the south-western Norwegian Håvodl-site and the several hundred kg of slag found at the northern Norwegian Leknes-site (p. 94, 155, Johansen/Søbstad 1978:41).

A fifth function may have been political, in a power-related sense. If the court sites´ erection was an initiative of "petty kings" living close by (Hauge: Dysjane), or living at some distance but still with an immediate control of the area (Bø/Ullarland: Klauhauane, Sør-Varhaug: Leksaren), one could go as far as to suggest a political function. This would have meant that meetings would be called by the "petty king".

A sixth function may have been military. As has been strongly argued by H.E. Lund, the court sites were used as accommodation for the retinues of "petty kings" (Lund 1965:292-293). In this respect, it might seem striking that, except for two arrowheads and some more hypothetical weapon knives, weapon finds were extremely rare at the investigations of the south-western gathering places. However, if the housing of retinues was just one among several different functions, there would be no need for dozens of weapons to be found during the investigations. The military aspect might be vaguely reflected in two sources. The first is evidence for the existence of retinues in the first centuries AD, as mentioned by Caesar and Tacitus from a continental perspective and as elucidated by Danish bog offerings in parts of Scandinavia (chapter 6.4). The

second is the weapon-tings of medieval times, which were close to the former south-western court sites of Dysjane and Klauhauane (Rønneseth 1986). Each man had to present his weapons once a year, and in the case of emergency, people from a district (skipreide) gathered here before they went to a ship that was part of the royal naval defence (leidang). If ting meetings were a reality in the very first centuries AD, there may have been weapon tings on these same sites.

There are not less than three substories to tell about the court site's function(s):

– substory A (just keeping to the sources with a minor degree of speculation): The one decisive function was social, owing to the gathering ground's placement in the middle of a naturally delineated area;
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There were other functions in addition to the social aspect i.e. ting, cult and market (prerequisite: firm institutions of the type mentioned above and their association with the gathering grounds);
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There were even more functions in addition to those just mentioned, i.e. "political and military" (prerequisite: a highly stratified society with "petty kings" at the top, who had built the court sites and controlled what happened there).

4.5. Summary: Court sites of Jæren – equality vs. inequality

To put it as briefly as possible:

1. Archaeology (subchapter 4.2). Two court site phases can be distinguished: one that dates to the Early Roman Iron Age, with houses that had shallow outer earthen walls (?), wall ditches and a house in the middle of the open place (at least in one instance) and a later phase of the Late Roman and Early Migration Periods, with houses that had stone walls and a mound in the middle. On the site, there were pre- and postdating activities of an undetermined character. Up to the present date, there is no certain proof that the gathering places stayed intact in their entirety during the Late Migration or even into the Early Merovingian Period.

2. Context (subchapter 4.3). There are three substories to tell:

– substory A (taking the sources as they are with a minor degree of speculation): The population that built the gathering grounds was limited in number and equal in social status. At a later date, social stratification and settlement activities may have increased.
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. Persons with some rank living on neighbouring farms had the grounds built.
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. The initiative for building the grounds lay in the hands of centres that were nearby, and these centres controlled what happened at the grounds.

3. Function (subchapter 4.4). There are three substories to tell:

– substory A (just keeping to the sources with a minor degree of speculation): The one decisive function was social, owing to the gathering ground's placement in the middle of a naturally delineated area;
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There were functions in addition to the social aspect i.e. ting, cult and market (prerequisite: firm institutions of the kind mentioned above and their association with the gathering grounds);
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There were even more functions in addition to those just mentioned, i.e. "politics and military" (prerequisite: a highly stratified society with "petty kings" at the top who had the court sites built and controlled what happened at them).

The question of who built the court sites and the functions they served will be addressed again, with an international perspective, in chapter 6. Hopefully, this will help in reaching conclusions that are more solid than than those which are based on a merely local or regional background.

In the following chapter, the six court sites that are outside Jæren will be introduced from an overall southwestern Norwegian perspective. Since these are situated more remotely from each other, and remain far less intensely investigated, one cannot hope for any conclusions that are as sophisticated as those in this chapter.

5. South-Western Norway in a court site perspective

5.1. Introductory remarks

In the previous chapter, the four court sites in Jæren, which are located to the south of Stavanger, were described. In the present chapter, an overall south-western Norwegian perspective will be chosen by briefly introducing six more sites (fig. 6). It is important to keep in mind that the gathering places outside Jæren were mostly minor and differ greatly from an "ideal" circle-shaped court site design. Only two out six (Øygården, Oddernes) were excavated, whereas the four others remain unexplored and undated up to the present day.

5.2. Rogaland

For a long time, court site archaeology in Rogaland had a total number of five sites under investigation: four sites in Jæren and a fifth, called Øygarden ("deserted farm") on Åmøy, an island north of Stavanger, which was discovered in 1932 and investigated in 1940 (chapter 12.4). The full-scale excavation of the 10 houses in a semi-circle at Øygården yielded evidence for two phases: an early phase, with hearths on sterile soil and a later phase, which was up to 50 cm higher and had stone walls, longitudinal stone-framed hearths along the central axes of the houses and regular sets of postholes. In eight out of ten cases, longitudinal hearths coincided with regular sets of postholes. Two minor mounds immediately to the east of the site, one of which has a hearth, might be considered to be an equivalent of the so-called middle mounds that are known from the large court sites in Jæren (fig. 6, chapter 11.8).

The number of excavated finds was very restricted (table 1). An average of far less than 10 pottery sherds and one tool was found per house, except for house 9, with as many as c. 50 sherds, among which were the only sherds from bucket-shaped pots. With an average of one tool per house, Øygården has the "top score" among the court sites, as is the case for Klauhauane in Jæren, but the excavation of the Ullandhaug-farm revealed a far higher number of tools in an ordinary settlement context. The most exquisite find is a minor sherd from a glass beaker (p. 190; Hougen 1968:88-89). Such finds ("claw beakers") are, elsewhere in Norway, known only from the Borre grave field and the Kaupang trading site. There are, however, many more such finds in Sweden (for instance in grave I in Vendel) and in particular on the continent and in south-eastern England (Näsman 1984: 66, RGA 12:153-166). The Swedish finds belong to the early part of the Merovingian period, i.e. the late sixth and the main part of the seventh century (Näsman 1984:69).

There is only very scarce evidence available for dating purposes, and radiocarbon datings are absent. Based on a fragment of a well-defined early type of a bucket-shaped pot with comb-decoration, the early part of phase 2 (*phase 2a*: i.e. the bottom layer of the stone wall period) can be dated to the late fourth and perhaps fifth century (p. 190; see above). The mentioned fragment of a glass beaker was found close to the top of a longitudinal hearth. Based on stratigraphy, the late use of the court site (phase 2b: the top of the hearths of the stone wall period, which are sometimes up to 50 cm high in layer 2) dates to the Merovingian period.

The area in the north-west of the island, where Øygården is situated, has yielded a richly furnished woman's grave of the Late Roman or the earliest Migration Periods, including ca. 100 glass and amber beads, and a mixed Viking Age grave with finds that included, for example, a bronze cauldron from the British isles, two coins, fragments of a silver arm ring etc. (table 5, chapter 11.8). In addition, there are several grave mounds with a diameter of 15-25 m perhaps used for the burials of persons of some rank, and finally, it is important to remember the fragmentary glass beaker of Merovingian date that was found in one of the court site's houses. On the other side of the island, in the South-East, there are a total number of five large boathouses, probably dating back to the Late Roman and Migration Periods, and a hill fort nearby. In summary, one may conclude that the Åmoy-island had an important position in the

Iron Age, probably owing to topography, i.e. its strategic placement in relation to the islands to the north of Stavanger and the settlement areas further to the east (Løken 1992:55). As a matter of fact, the archaeological record, which alludes to some sort of "centre" during parts of the first millennium AD on the island, is more substantial than for the adjoining islands further to the north (Myhre 1987:fig.1-7, Larsen 1978:fig.11-17).

In several respects, the Øygarden-site is different from the large counterparts in Jæren that were discussed in chapter 4. Firstly, it is the only site in south-western Norway that forms a half-circle (fig. 6). Secondly, the later phase, with its longitudinal stone-framed hearths and regular sets of postholes in eight out of ten cases, is far more homogeneous than in any of the court sites investigated in Jæren (chapter 12). Thirdly, the number of pottery sherds is far less than for its counterparts in Jæren (table 1). Fourthly, the dating is outstanding inasmuch as there are indicators for a court site use in the Early Merovingian period, due to a glass beaker found close to the top of one hearth and more such hearths of the same height in other houses. Fifthly, Åmoy, with its strategic position, yields evidence for two focal areas in terms of large farms/chieftain's seats: one to the northwest, which existed throughout large parts of the first millennium AD (including the court site) and another one to the south-east (mainly testified to by five large boathouses, and probably belonging to the Late Roman and Migration Periods). As to the latter aspect, however, there were, to some extent, similar problems in ascribing the one and only important farm/centre to some of the the court sites in Jæren (see above).

In the 1970s and 1980s, two more court sites were discovered to the north of Øygarden: Kåda on Randøy, which consists of four houses, and Ritland in Hjelmeland with only three preserved houses, whereas the others were probably destroyed by agricultural activity (fig. 6). Since both sites remain unexcavated, their dates are unknown. If they, together with Øygarden, belonged to a system of court sites to the north of Stavanger, as has been suggested, one would expect a mainly Early Iron Age use for both Kåda and Ritland (Løken 1992:55).

The court site at Kåda on the island of Randøy had a well-chosen strategic position with regards to the islands nearby and the mainland to the east (fig. 6, chapter 11.9; Løken 1992:55). The four recorded houses, which are not in any regular order, have stone walls and their size is comparable to what is known from their counterparts in Jæren and Øygarden (Haavaldsen undated). The number of houses at Kåda cannot have been much higher since there is the foot of a ridge to the west and north, and the removal of any remains would have left traces on the surface. Kåda is an irregular court site, which can be compared to the one in Håvodl, and just as in that case, there are traces of Iron Age farm remains nearby. Two large boathouses, each of which is 20 m long, were found to the south-east and south-west of the court site. The local connection between sheltering sites for ships and gathering places is a well-known phenomenon in northern Norway (fig. 24, chapter 6.2). In Kåda´s case, one would usually date these sheds to the Late Roman and Migration Periods, as with many other such remains in south-western Norway, and it is tempting to date this court site in the same way (Grimm 2006b:68, 412). However, one has to keep in mind the indicators for Viking Age settlement activities that are evident in the surroundings, i.e. an iron extraction site nearby and a fibula from the British Isles, which was found on a minor island just to the south (Haavaldsen 1992:9). Finally, the farm name itself (Kåda: "the underlying settlement") probably relates to a subordinate position under a large farm, but one cannot be sure whether this would have been the case by the time of the Roman and Migration Periods (Stylegar/Grimm 2002:87). From a wider perspective, a hill fort further to the north on the Randøy-island is worth mentioning, and so are indicators for a second area of archaeological concern (besides the Kåda-surroundings) on the mainland immediately to the east. In summary, one may conclude that the irregular court site at Kåda was perhaps connected to two large boathouses, but it remains doubtful as to whether any farm of importance was situated close to Kåda (table 5).

The court site at Ritland was strategically placed in the Suldal-valley in northern Rogaland, between the western end, facing an inner fjord, and the eastern end of the valley (fig. 6, chapter 11.10, Løken 1992:55). The court site itself was detected by means of an aerial photograph and, in the period the photograph was taken, it consisted of three houses and a few mounds nearby (Bang Andersen 1976). Since the area was used for agriculture, more house remains are likely to have been destroyed. The houses of c. 10x5 m with stone walls are reminiscent of those belonging to the other court sites in Rogaland. One cannot be sure about the original layout of the court site; it could have been a half-circle, as

we saw in Øygarden, or circular sites, like those known from Jæren. The houses recorded by the aerial photograph have a regular order rather than a "random pattern" as in Håvodl and Kåda. Close by was a substantial cemetery of at least 50 mounds, the largest known in the entire valley, dating from the Early and Late Iron Ages (table 5). On the other side of the river, the remains of yet another (though destroyed) grave field have been recorded at Nærheim, and the only find of Early Roman Iron Age date in the valley was excavated there (Løken 1992:55). This latter find may in fact vaguely indicate a Roman context of settlement activities, including a gathering place. In this respect, the strategically placed court site may have served for gatherings of persons living in the valley, and the grave fields close to the court site and on the other side of the river indicate a comparatively dense settlement, perhaps in the form of a large farm in the valley.

Yet another court site was proposed for Rogaland in the year 1972: Skjelbrei in the very marginal Høyland fjellbygd, ca. 10 km to the east of the inner end of the Gandsfjord and ca. 200 m above sea level (fig. 6, chapter 11.7; Myhre 1972:163-164, 1975:238). This proposal took its starting point from the first description of the place given by T. Helliesen early in the twentieth century. What Helliesen wrote, is strongly reminiscent of his description of the Håvodl-site further to the south. In both cases, house remains of c. 10x5m with stone walls are to some extent oriented towards a place in the middle, and both sites are situated on moraine ridges. Unfortunately, the Skjelbrei-site is long gone but the description is thorough enough to make a sketch. As to the irregularity of the site, one has to keep in mind that the excavations of such gathering places in Jæren and at Øygarden unearthed houses with different orientations or others that were invisible on the surface. Hypothetically, the Skjelbrei-site could have had a more regular layout at the beginning. It was once associated with a farm that had a number of burial mounds to the east and, generally, in an area with indicators of a pre-Roman and Early Roman Iron Age settlement. In fact, it is in contrast to most of Høyland fjellbyd, which yields no such evidence. Therefore, one may suggest that a couple of farms once existed in the area, and if Skjelbrei really was a court site, it may have served those farms as a place for common activities. Keeping in mind how marginal that area is in comparison to Jæren further to the south-west, any kind of social hierarchy of farms might be questioned, but it is worth mentioning that the *Leikvang*-farm, just to the east of the supposed gathering ground, has an outstanding number of grave mounds in the surrounding area (table 5). Besides archaeology, there is another piece of evidence for a gathering ground in the area. The farm immediately to the east goes by the name of *Leikvang* (literally: "a meadow used for plays, competitive fighting, sports etc."). According to the place-name specialists O. Rygh and M. Olsen, farm names with the elements *leik* (derived from old Norse *leikr*) probably allude to former gathering grounds that were used for some sort of common activities (NG 1:64-65, Olsen 1915: 26). Remarkably, the Norwegian archaeologist H.E. Lund had stressed that two northern court sites coincide with such names, i.e. Leknes and Lekenga/Tjøtta (Lund 1965:308). Perhaps, Skjelbrei is a third example of this kind, in which case this might be a validation of an otherwise somehow dubious gathering ground. It is an interesting foot-note that there were only two further Leik-farms in Rogaland (NG 10:26, 166, 209, 480).

In summary, one may conclude that the sites to the north of Stavanger (Øygard, Kåda, Ritland) shared a strategic position in relation to waterways and/or settlement districts, and have in common an archaeological record of some importance that might reflect a "centre of power" (Øygard) or a "large farm" (Kåda, Ritland) in the surroundings, but there is no immediate spatial connection to the gathering grounds (except perhaps for Øygarden). If Skjelbrei, to the east of Stavanger, in the very marginal Høyland fjellbygd was a court site, it may have served for the common activities of several surrounding farms, but it is highly uncertain whether these farms were any different in social respects.

It is owing to H.E. Lund that the question of more court sites in Rogaland was examined (Lund 1965:300-302). Taking the general archaeological record as a starting point, he rightly speculated upon a couple of more sites in promising areas such as Sola/Madla at the Hafrsjord (to the north of the recorded sites in Jæren), Egersund (to the south of the well-known sites in Jæren) and Avaldsnes 50 km to the north of Stavanger (fig. 6). It would be easy to suggest yet another area with a high potential for such a site: the inner end of the Gandsfjord, some kilometres to the east of the Skjelbrei-site (Myhre 1997b). However, all these areas should once have had substantial court sites, judging from their topography and archaeology. Therefore, one may remain sceptical as to whether such gathering places, each

with up to 20 houses that had stone walls and an outer diameter of almost 100 m, would have been destroyed without leaving any substantial traces on the surface. Some more dubious gathering grounds were addressed in a 1975 paper (Myhre 1975). However, they simply do not appear to be as promising as Skjelbrei, which was earlier and, probably correctly, addressed by the same author in 1968 (see above).

As to central and southern Jæren, O. Rønneseth regarded the recorded large sites (Dysjane, Klauhauane, and Leksaren) as a complete reflection of the past by arguing that they were strategically placed in three adjacent areas. In addition, any more sites that were situated as marginally as those mentioned would have remained intact and thus would have been discovered. As for Jæren, however, one has to consider other gathering areas. As the place-name researcher M. Olsen proposed almost one hundred years ago, the Lye-farm (originally: Lygi) to the south-east of the Tu-ridge points by its very name to religious or political gatherings (NG 10:143-144, Sandnes 1992:fig. 1). Following this argument, one has to keep in mind that the Dysjane court site was placed in the midst of a naturally delineated settlement district. However, there was one more gathering place in Lygi, some kilometres to the south-east, which served for religious and/or political purposes, provided that the farm name reaches as far back in time as the first centuries AD. Lygi is situated in an area with promising finds that in particular belong to the Late Roman and Migration Periods, as has been justly stressed in a very recent article (Myhre 2007). However, if there were gatherings at Lygi, they took place in the open-air, since it is difficult to believe that, if a substantial court site had once existed, it could have been removed without leaving any physical trace or local tradition. In addition, all the evidence named above, in terms of geography and in a long term perspective, points rather towards an actual centre on the Tu-ridge at the Dysjane court site. This does not negate the possibility, that Lye held a dominant position in parts of the latest Migration Period.

5.3. Vest-Agder

Vest-Agder in the south of Norway did not enter into court site research before the 1960s when H.E. Lund speculated about undetected sites in both Rogaland and Vest-Agder, and as to the latter area, he explicitly pointed to Oddernes (fig. 6; Lund 1965:300-302). Almost a self-fulfilling prophecy, the Oddernes-investigations in the early 1970s unearthed traces of what was interpreted a court site (Rolfsen 1976). Since then the Oddernes case was only rarely touched upon but speculations about yet another gathering ground in Vest-Agder, i.e. Spangereid, stimulated reflections in the 2000s (Stylegar 1999:147-153, Stylegar/Grimm 2005 a:95-96).

In 1971 and 1972, large areas were investigated to the west of the Oddernes church (chapter 11.1, Rolfsen 1976:65-73). In the south of the investigated area, there were altogether five house remains, mostly parallel to each other, which were unearthed by using a mechanical excavator. All these houses were invisible on the surface and only partially preserved. House 1 was the best-preserved and, ca. 10 x 5 m in size, it had u-shaped wall ditches with infiltrated dark earth and charcoal (fig. 7). In addition, there were rows of postholes, an oval hearth in the eastern corner and a huge pit of two to three m that post-dated the house and which was overlaying the north-western long wall. The culture layer was 20 cm thick. Finds were very few, i.e. altogether four sherds of pottery, charred bones and charcoal. Since all these objects were found in the ditches and in a posthole it was considered likely that other finds might have been removed by the mechanical excavator. Radiocarbon datings for the north-western wall ditch and the hearth point towards the first and second centuries AD. As a matter of fact, house 1 of Oddernes would have been very similar to the initial phase of the court sites in Jæren, as is particularly evident in the case of Håvodl and Klauhauane (chapters 4; 12). In Oddernes, however, there were inner rows of postholes, whereas no such thing was recorded for the initial building period in Jæren. For the houses in Oddernes it remains an open question as to whether there were any shallow earthen walls to the outside and what kinds of finds and find composition were once there. House 1 of Oddernes is the only one of all the investigated court site houses in south-western Norway with a well-defined and measured culture layer (c. 20 cm thick). The layers of the sites in Jæren are said to have been several dozens of centimetres thick, if not one metre, as in Klauhauane (Møllerop 1957:64). Using Oddernes as a reference, the numbers for Jæren seem proportionate given an initial phase of 20 cm and two "artificial horizons" in the later stone walls phase (see above).

The site in Oddernes was introduced as a court site by its excavator, P. Rolfsen, with a reference to the houses´

placement, which were roughly parallel to each other in one row. One would expect another row of houses on the opposite eastern side but their absence might be attributed to many, perhaps later, pits and the bad preservation of the houses in general. Alternatively, it might have been a half-site as in Øygarden (fig. 6). Even today, the court site interpretation seems the most reasonable, since the particular arrangement of houses is strongly reminiscent of gathering grounds but is so far unknown in ordinary settlement contexts.

The site in Oddernes was once placed on a ness between the Otra River estuary to the west and the Topdal fjord to the east, and the settlers had a rich fauna and flora, good conditions for agriculture and protected natural harbours at, for instance, Lahelle, Kongsgårdbukta and Narviga (chapter 11.1**,** Grimm/Stylegar 2004:119). The area has been heavily affected by modern destruction, but it once housed a huge prehistoric burial ground with more than 100 mounds, some of them substantial, making this one of the largest known barrow cemeteries in southern Norway. Only little is known about the graves´ furnishings but swords, metal ornaments, a gold finger ring, and a bronze cauldron might be a remote echo of persons of some rank who were once buried there. In addition, substantial settlement remains were unearthed covering parts of the first millennium AD, perhaps including traces of what might have been a Late Iron Age hall building near the church, which was excavated in the early 1990s. At one time, a well-known runic stone stood outside the Early Romanesque stone church, commemorating a certain Eyvindr, a godson of Olaf the Saint, who probably initiated the first church building at Oddernes. The fortificatory component of the Oddernes area is indicated by a hill fort at nearby Ringåsen. Some of the place-names in the area (*Lahelle*, *Narvika*) may allude to substantial maritime functions. In summary, one may conclude that the supposed court site at Oddernes belonged to one of the most outstanding find spots in southern Norway, judging from a substantial grave field and similarly substantial traces of settlement activity. Though heavily destroyed, Oddernes once housed one of the important "centres of power" in southern Norway, and it would be logical to ascribe the actual centre, including a gathering ground, to the area near the church.

In 1999, concise measurements, taken to the west of the stone church in Spangereid, Lindesnes kommune in southern Norwegian Vest-Agder, revealed a group of houses with walls to the outside and depressions in between, which to some extent surrounded an area in the centre (fig. 6, chapter 11.2, Stylegar 1999:147-153, Stylegar/Grimm 2005:95-96). Judging from the general outline and the houses´ arrangement, size and construction one may interpret these remains as relics of a somehow irregular court site. This interpretation, however, is complicated by the dense vegetation, the remains of many more settlement traces on this spot and the irregularities of the site. This disorder, however, might reflect later alterations rather than the original layout. It seems that A. Lorange excavated some of the houses´ long walls in 1879 and rescued pottery sherds but it was his belief, as it was of other scholars of his time, that these were longitudinal grave mounds and did not constitute the long walls of house constructions (chapter 2). Finds in such long walls, which are also known from early court site investigations in Jæren, (see above) may originate from secondary burials or older settlement materials on the spot. Strictly speaking, the Spangereid site is undated but considering the paucity of Late Iron Age pottery in the South, the finds in the long walls that were rescued in 1879 probably date back to the Early Iron Age. Following the court site interpretation for Spangereid, the site would be a parallel to the clearly visible later period of court sites in Jæren, in contrast to the findings in Oddernes, which represent the initial building period.

Spangereid can be found to the north of the Lindesnes peninsula, i.e. a very dangerous obstacle to seaborne traffic that made Spangereid a place of some importance, as whoever was able to control the area could control southern Norwegian seafaring at a very vulnerable passage (Stylegar/Grimm 2003, 2005a). The isthmus is characterized by many remarkable archaeological monuments and finds of the Roman and Migration Periods, among them a voluminous grave field. This consists of a minimum of c. 100 mounds, including, for example, c. 15 Early Iron Age burials, which are outstanding on account of their furnishings and/or the diameter of the mounds. In addition, it is worth keeping a mind a total number of seven large boathouses and a canal, which date back to the Late Roman and Migration Periods, when taking into consideration the rising of the land over the last 2000 years. The somewhat questionable hall building dates back to the fourth century AD at the earliest and three hill forts, two of them close to some of the ship sheds, were possibly used

during parts of the Early Iron Age. As to the Viking Age, there are two richly furnished woman's graves in boats and a treasure find further to the south, and the Middle Ages stand out because of a twelfth century, Early Romanesque stone church and a large boathouse. As regards Oddernes, one may go as far as to postulate yet another southern centre of power in Spangereid, including a gathering ground.

There is reason to ask, as with Rogaland, whether there were any more court sites in the south of Norway. As mentioned above, H.E. Lund speculated upon such locations in Vest-Agder but the only place he explicitly, and rightly, pinpointed was Oddernes. When it comes to Vest-Agder in the Late Roman and Migration Periods, there is an area that is well-known for its considerable number of richly furnished burials: Lunde/Huseby, which is in the south-east of the Listapeninsula and to the west of Vest-Agder (fig. 6). As a matter of fact, there is every reason to suggest some sort of a "centre of power" in the area, owing, for example, to the wealth displayed in many Early Iron Age burials and to one of the comparatively few Husebyfarms in south-western Norway (Stylegar 2001). If there were any more gathering grounds in the South, Lunde/Huseby would be the most likely candidate, but any such site might be long gone due to intense modern destruction, for example in the favourable harbour in Lundevågen.

5.4. Summary: Court sites in south-western Norway – equality vs. inequality

The investigations in Oddernes and Øygarden have proven to be insightful. The aforementioned first site, which had remained invisible on the surface from after its abandonment up to the most recent times and was found accidentally, had the same initial layout as the gathering grounds in Jæren. In Oddernes, as well as in Jæren, there are strong indications for a dating of the initial period to the Early Roman Iron Age. All the other gathering grounds in the South-West of Norway belonged to the second phase with stone walls, according to their outer appearance. In Jæren, these later constructions are to be dated to the Late Roman and the Early Migration Periods, and as a matter of fact, this may also have been the case for Øygarden and Spangereid. However, Øygarden is a unique case, not least because of its third period of use in the Early Merovingian period. For all the sites outside Jæren, it is a well-established assumption that they served as strategically placed gathering places for a larger area; on a much more limited level, this may even have been the case for Skjelbrei. From a social viewpoint (except for Skjelbrei), there are distinct pieces of evidence for centres of power or large farms in the court site surroundings but (a), there is often no immediate, recognisable spatial relation and (b), these pieces of evidence generally date back to no earlier than the later Roman Iron Age. As to the function(s) of the gathering grounds, there is nothing definite to deduce, except for the prevailing social needs that would be met by the grounds and some sort of sports, plays and/or fights (elucidated by the *Leik*-name close to the Skjelbrei-site).

As to the context, two substories might be told, if we take as given an Early Iron Age date for the initial court site period:

– substory A (taking the sources as they are): The population using the gathering grounds was equal. A distinct social stratification came into being later;
– substory B (speculative): Persons with some rank living in neighbouring large farms or centres of power had the court sites built and oversaw proceedings at the gatherings.

In general functional terms, two substories might be told:

– substory A (taking the sources as they are): The sites were used for social purposes (communication, sports, games etc.) by the people who gathered there, owing to their strategic placement in relation to settlement areas;
– substory B (speculative): There may have been additional functional tasks: ting, cult, market, politics and military. Whatever they were, those tasks would have been dependent on a well-advanced society with firm "institutions" attached to the grounds, and perhaps with "petty kings" at the head.

The conclusions that can be drawn for the gathering grounds outside Jæren in social and functional terms are far less sophisticated than those for Jæren itself. The following chapter will reflect upon the context and function(s) of the court sites, in particular those in Jæren, against an international background.

6. Court sites in Jæren in an international perspective

6.1. Introductory remarks

So far, the present study has chosen a local and regional approach for discussing the court in the south-west, but has mainly focused on Jæren to the south of Stavanger (chapters 4-5). The gathering places in Jæren, which make up less than half of the sites in the South-West, were chosen on purpose. It was only these that were regular and circular, just a few kilometres from each other and thoroughly investigated. If any of the former gathering places in the south-west were to allow a better understanding of this kind of archaeological monument at all, it would be the sites in Jæren. However, some court site investigations outside Jæren were rather insightful, and so were considerations about the overall topography and archaeology of the sites in the south-west. Not least, the question was raised as to whether there were more such sites, either destroyed or remaining undetected up to the present day.

It cannot come as any surprise that the Jæren-related court site reflections were far more sophisticated than those that considered south-western Norway on the whole. The result as to the archaeology, context and function(s) of court sites in Jæren shall be repeated:

As to archaeology, two court site phases can be distinguished from each other: an earlier phase in the Early Roman Iron Age with houses which might have had shallow outer earthen walls, wall ditches and a house in the middle of the open place (at least in one instance) and a later phase in the Late Roman and Migration Periods, which had houses with stone walls and a mound in the middle. On the site, there were pre- and postdating activities of an undetermined character. Up to the present date, there is no certain proof that the gathering places as entirety stayed intact in the Late Migration, or even Early Merovingian periods.

As to context, there are three substories to tell:
– substory A (taking the sources as they are with a minor degree of speculation): The population building the gathering grounds was limited in number and equal in social status. At a later date, social stratification and settlement activities may have increased.
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. Persons with some rank living on neighbouring farms had the grounds built.
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. The initiative for building the grounds lay in the hands of centres nearby, and they controlled what happened there.

As to function(s), there are also three substories to tell:
– substory A (just keeping to the sources with a minor degree of speculation): The one decisive function was social, owing to the gathering ground's placement in the middle of a naturally delineated area;
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There were functions in addition to the social use, i.e. ting, cult and market (prerequisite: firm institutions of the mentioned kind and their association with the gathering grounds);
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There were even more functions in addition to those just mentioned, i.e. "politics and military" (prerequisite: a highly stratified society with "petty kings" on the top who had the court sites built and controlled what happened there).

As has been described in chapter 3.3, the socio-contextual and functional analyses do not have equal importance. In contrast, functions might be considered as nothing other than something that is derived from the context. Simply put, the more simple the society's structure, the fewer and easier were the tasks of the gathering grounds. As we have seen, the socio-functional analysis results in contradictory views on local

and regional grounds, reaching from the simple to the far-advanced.

The following international perspective will hopefully enrich the discussion and make it easier to make any statements of interest and probability. Three kinds of studies will play a role: a comparative study, a study referring to central place research and yet another study with an archaeological-historical background. The ensuing summary will discuss whether the international perspective has been helpful. The, admittedly brief, introduction of many different topics seeks to make cross-references to court sites but exhaustive details will be omitted. The entire chapter is archaeological and historical in its outline, whereas any explicit anthropological perspective is missing. This is regrettable, but deliberate, for two reasons.

Firstly, a perspective of that kind was chosen by B. Myhre in his 1978 article that analysed Iron Age society in Jæren (Myhre 1978:253-255). In this article, Service's model of four subsequent stages of primitive social organisation – from band to tribe, from chiefdom to state – was tested against an archaeological background (Service 1971). In addition, K. Odner´s doctoral thesis on economic structures in the Early Iron Age of western Norway was relied upon (Odner 1973a-b). It presented a model on economic and political organisation based on sparse continental written sources on the Germanic tribes in the first centuries AD (mainly Tacitus) and the Early Norse settlement period in Iceland. This model shared many common traits with Service's analysis. Briefly, as B. Myhre put it, south-western Norwegian society ran through three stages of social organisation in the first millennium AD: from tribe (egalitarianism) to chiefdom and finally, state (table 9). In the 1980s, the archaeologist's use of Service's model has been critically viewed in a long-term-perspective. For Stone, Bronze and Iron Age respects there would always be a tendency to trace the simple to the more advanced. However, a decline would follow at the end of the first two periods. Consequently, one should think of an entire circle of "fall and rebirth" rather than an evolutionary, irreversible development from the simple to the more advanced (Näsman 1988:124). Any more recent literature, for example, outspoken attempts to relate an archaeological to an anthropological chiefdom-related perspective, will be disregarded in the following (for example Earle 1987, 1991, 1997). Those attempts, however, seem to be concerned with the Bronze rather than with the Iron Age.

Secondly, later Scandinavian research prefers historical-archaeological to anthropological analogy when discussing Viking Age nation-building (for example Näsman 1988, Callmer 1991, Näsman 1997, Opedal 1998). In fact, the uprising of the Merovingian and the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms has been considered an instructive analogy to the nation-building in the North. Could it be that such an approach would be almost as relevant for Roman and Migration Period respects when the possibilities of linking together the Scandinavian and continental societies of this period are considered? As will be argued, well-dated southern Scandinavian bog-offerings can be related to events on the continent that are described in Roman written sources. It would be easy to consider that link as vague. However, one might argue that it affects the visualisation of society in Norway and Jæren in the third century AD, and perhaps earlier.

6.2. A comparative perspective: From northern Norway to Rome

As early as in 1866, N. Nicolaysen suggested that the Dysjane court site on the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge may have functioned as a ting place, but did not rule out an alternative interpretation of it as a collection of longitudinal grave mounds (chapter 1). His argument was perhaps influenced by the knowledge about the Tu-ridge that once had such a function in medieval times and by supposed Icelandic ting sites, which were rather similar in their outer appearance. As a matter of fact, the interpretation of court sites as the remains of ting places survives up to the present day; in fact it is stronger than ever (chapters 2, 3.2).

The second period of court site research, as it was called (chapter 2), saw various attempts to relate Norwegian court sites to monuments in the outside world. H.E. Lund probably went further than any other scholar by publishing an article in Germany in which he described gathering grounds in the North, and asked for help in identifying the supposed continental predecessors, but he failed with that attempt (Lund 1964). Except for Lund, links to foreign monuments were made by other scholars, for example, Saxon fortifications in north-western Germany (Grieg 1942:174-176), fortifications of the Eketorp-type on Öland (Stenberger

1933:260-262), and ring-shaped fortifications in the Orient (L´Orange 1953:307). It is important to keep in mind, however, that these cross-references were partly based on misconceptions inasmuch as the first two contributions wrongly implied a fortificatory function of the Norwegian gathering grounds. In addition, all of the above-mentioned monuments postdated the Norwegian court sites. The most recent attempt to relate the gathering grounds to Roman amphitheatres is yet another offspring of that discussion (Armstrong 2000).

In the following subchapter, there will be a comparative perspective, and it is natural to look first at both the northern Norwegian court sites and the Icelandic monuments that are considered to be ting sites by many scholars. The ring-forts on Öland were considered unsuitable for comparison shortly after this proposal was made (Petersen 1936:70), but perhaps even an initial wrong choice may be insightful. The above-mentioned Anglo-Saxon royal seat at Yeavering, which dates to the middle of the first millennium AD, is a highly enlightening case study since at this location there was a gathering site and a hall. Strangely, it was never introduced into court site research. Finally, Roman amphitheatres will be briefly considered.

Court sites in Jæren –
court sites in northern Norway

The analysis of court sites in Jæren in chapter 4 revealed two construction periods, from the first/second to the fifth century AD: a construction that was earlier and less substantial and a later construction with more solid buildings (table 2). According to a hinterland analysis, the gathering grounds were situated right at (Hauge: Dysjane) or somewhat remote (Bø: Klauhauane; Varhaug: Leksaren) from very remarkable archaeological surroundings, which possibly reflect large farms/centres of power (table 5). The sites in the South-West do have counterparts in middle and northern Norway (fig. 5, chapter 2). However, it is only in the latter area that they have been thoroughly analysed and they seem to date back to the second or third century AD in origin (Johansen/Søbstad 1978, Johansen 1980, Storli 2006). The question is: to what extent could northern Norwegian court sites help in the discussion of the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites?

H.E. Lund's contribution to court site archaeology cannot be underestimated. He was the only Norwegian archaeologist who took part in excavating sites in both the South-West (Øygården) and the North and made explicit cross-references (in the following Lund 1965). It is owing to his large-scale research from the 1940s to the 1960s that the sites in the North were recognized to have been located at archaeologically outstanding areas, with large boathouses, large burial mounds and richly furnished graves (fig. 12). In addition, written testimonies referring to centres of power close to some of the sites (Tjøtta, Steigen, Bjarkøy) and place-name evidence that alludes to games being held at those places (Lek-names derived from old Norse leikr, i.e. "play, fight, sport" etc) also played a role. Today, Lund is well-known for his military interpretation: the court sites are supposed to have been used as accommodation for chieftain's warriors (e.g. Lund 1965:292-293). However, early on, Lund considered other functions too: ting (unpublished manuscript; Storli 2006: 143), cult (deduced from charred animal bones found in the mound right in the middle of the Steigen-site: Lund 1942) and games (based on the above-mentioned toponym indicators). In his lifetime, he found no proper reception, a fact that can probably be attributed to a lack of adequate publications by him and his right wing position (as it was perceived) during the Nazi Quisling-regime (Berglund 1986, Johansen 1989:28, Thomassen 1996:61-68). One of the sites excavated by Lund shall be briefly introduced for reflection.

Bjarkøy, an island of only ca. six to four km ca. 150 km to the south-west of Tromsø, had a good access to natural resources and fertile soils and was situated at the main seafaring route, i.e. the Northern Way (figs. 12, 24; Knutsen 1995:1-2). The island is known from written sources to have been a Viking Age chieftain's seat and the homestead of an important family in early medieval times, who had large possessions further to the north (Bratrein 1995).

The court site was once situated ca. one km to the east of the Øvergård-farm in an uncultivated area (Lund 1954, Johansen/Søbstad 1978:13-25). The site, which once contained ca. 16 houses, had an outer diameter of 55x44 m, and some thirty mounds to the outside, which had diameters of up to 7m and maximum heights of 0,75m. In the years 1950-1953, H.E. Lund made extensive excavations. The outer mounds were shown to be cooking pits, and all but four damaged houses in the gathering ground were investigated. The walls existed of earthen materials without any stones. There were no constructional remains at the small side

facing the open area in the centre, but there were minor remains of what was possibly a wall at the small side that faced the outside. Lund thought there may be inner wooden walls and two rows of postholes further inside, but he expressed the difficulties that there were in identifying the latter. Hearths of a simple kind with charred stones, charcoal and ashes were found along the houses´ main axes. House 3, which was described in larger detail than the others, had a culture layer 30-35 cm thick and two to three occupation layers that were identified by means of hearths and supposed postholes on different levels. Furthermore, Lund's overall plan clearly indicates hearths partly beneath the long walls (provided that the inner delineation of the walls was identified correctly).

Generally speaking, the houses yielded a few tools (an average of one per house), nail fragments, charcoal and charred bones whereas pottery was virtually absent, except for one find (table 1). Some artefacts from Bjarkøy deserve particular attention: a rectangular iron plate with a bronze frame and fragmentary bronze plate-metal (house V), a glass bead (house XI) and finally three arrowheads (house VII-IX). There is hardly any stratigraphy given for the finds´ provenance except for the glass bead, which was said to have been salvaged very close to the sterile bottom. It remains an open question as to how the finds and find composition from Bjarkøy relate to ordinary settlement contexts in the north of Norway, if one disregards the already mentioned Borg as testimony for a chieftain's farm in the north. Greipstad, which lays ca. 30 km to the south-west of Tromsø (on Kvaløya) and was investigated in the early 1960s, may still be the most voluminous investigation of a Migration Period settlement in the North (fig. 12; Munch 1965, Johansen 1979: 98-99). There were altogether five houses with long walls made of stone and turf, among them two which were supposedly for dwelling (I; II) and some more with other specialized functions (III-V). Pottery and other objects were rarely found, and house II was the only one with a fragment of a bucket-shaped pot. Relating Greipstad to the court site on Bjarkøy, there seems to be hardly any difference with regards to the number of artefacts and the find composition. It might be worthwhile to consider this question more subtly.

For dating the court site, two kinds of source materials are important. The finds yield only limited chronological information. The quartzite whetstone and pottery (both from house 9) date back to the Early Iron Age whereas the schist whetstones, the glass bead (house XI) and perhaps some of the arrowheads and knives stem from the Late Iron Age. The ten radiocarbon datings made by Johansen/Søbstad cover the period from the second/third century up to the Viking Age but it is important to keep in mind that some samples are unstratified (Storli 2006:table 1).

In conclusion, the Bjarkøy-site was probably used for a long period of time, as is shown by the thick culture-layers, the hearths on different levels and the datings. One may suspect a building in the third century AD (based on one radiocarbon dating) and a use up to as late as the Viking Age (indicated by finds and radiocarbon datings). The Viking Age glass bead, said to be found close to the sterile bottom, might indicate a stratigraphical mix-up.

An overall archaeological look at the island unveils several Iron Age cemeteries, probably an indication of the existence of several farms (fig. 24; Munch 1994, Bratrein 1995, Knutsen 1995, Straume/Bollingberg 2005, Storli 2006:116-118). As a closer look demonstrates, the most remarkable archaeological finds and remains originate from the east part of the island, around the Øvergård-farm that lies in an elevated area with a panoramic view, and with a medieval church further to the north-east. To the south, there was a cemetery in Trumsneset, which included a burial mound that was once 20 m across, and a richly furnished Viking Age burial with a silver arm ring (the mound and burial being the most extraordinary such testimonies known from the island). Close by were two boathouses of 20 m. Another, yet larger, boathouse was once situated to the north in Nergård. To the east of the Øvergård-farm there was once a bogland area, and here was found the so-called "Bjarkøy cauldron" of the Vestland-type. This bronze vessel, manufactured in Gallia, is the largest of all such specimens known so far, and with its diameter of 80 cm it was able to contain 300 litres. Still further to the east lay the gathering ground (ca. one km away from the farm) and a large cemetery at Austnes (even further away).

Different interpretations were put forward for Bjarkøy or, more generally, for archaeological areas with court sites in the north of Norway. Altogether three points of view can be distinguished from each other but all of them would relate to the outstanding archaeological surroundings of the gathering sites. The crucial point is

the interpretation that can be made on this basis.

Hypothesis 1 was expressed by H.E. Lund and others (Lund 1954, Johansen 1989:33-38, Munch 1994, Bratrein 1995). The outstanding archaeological testimonies on the island for parts of the first millennium AD were linked with the written medieval testimonies of an earlier chieftain's seat on the island. Lund explicitly stated that the outstanding monuments and finds were not situated in one spot, but were at some distance from each other. To him, this reflected a chieftain's seat with a court site on marginal grounds at some distance and with one harbour to the north and yet another to the south, in fact both with large boathouses (Lund 1965:289, 293).

Hypothesis 2, launched by B. Berglund, is a radical version of the point of view mentioned above (Berglund 1995:48-49, 342-344). The court site in Tjøtta, situated further to the south, has been interpreted as the chieftain's seat itself (fig. 12). If one accepts this thesis as being generally valid then the court site on Bjarkøy could be interpreted in the same way.

Hypothesis 3 was repeated frequently by I. Storli (explicitly for Bjarkøy: Storli 2006:116-118). According to her point of view, the gathering grounds are not just unconnected to a chieftain's farm; they did not belong to any particular farm at all. As far as Bjarkøy is concerned, it has been emphasized that there were several Iron Age farms which have yielded remarkable archaeological finds and monuments, and it has been suggested that the gathering ground was placed deliberately between those farms. Therefore, as I. Storli put it, the archaeological material from the Iron Age date does not match with the commonly held opinion that Overgård was the chieftain's farm. Following that line of argument, it would have been persons of an upper yet equal rank who met at the gathering grounds. The ting argument was introduced by referring to the *Steigartinget* on the island of Engeløya, which was mentioned in relation to the Early Middle Ages but which possibly belongs to an older tradition; remarkably, there was once a court site in Steigen (fig. 12). In addition, continental written accounts were emphasized, i.e. Tacitus´ description of a "Germanic" ting order for ca. 100 AD, and the ting organisation in Iceland. Iceland's society and ting have been chosen as a model for court site interpretation. Thus, the ting of the free men is supposed to have been the main forum for taking political decisions and the power of the numerous "chieftains" was limited in times of conflict that did not offer the chance of establishing any permanent centre. In a long term perspective, however, power was in fewer hands (Storli 2006:140-142).

Admittedly, hypothesis 1-3 were presented in a very sketchy way without any further elaboration. All of them share an awareness about the very special archaeology of court sites in the north of Norway, yet the common basis leads to very much opposing views. Hypothesis nr. 2 is the only one that can be put to a direct test on the basis of the archaeological findings. For the investigated Tjøtta court site and all the others in the North and the South it very much seems that there was no farm on the spot since byres and stables were missing, as is any house that is more outstanding than the others, as one would expect for a "chieftain" (Storli 2006:119-121). As a matter of fact, a house of that kind is known from northern Norwegian Borg, as has been described already (chapter 3.2).

Thus, one is left with the other point of views, and neither of them can be categorically ruled out. The question of "equality vs. inequality" with regards to the court sites may be considered with a reference to Tacitus. In his *Germania*, written shortly before AD 100, Tacitus has left a thorough description of the ting organisation of armed free men (*Germania*, chapters 11-13; Schulze 1995:30-38, Hardt 2006). The ting was the highest political forum of a tribe, even for those with a king, to take decisions about, for example, war and peace. It was the place for jurisdiction and for electing the person, or more precisely: the judge (*princeps*), responsible for representing the law. As to the latter, it is disputed whether a judge was elected or whether the *princepes* chose someone from among themselves. It is essential to keep in mind that ting were also cult places, as written sources indicate (Schulze 1995:34). This kind of ting organisation could only operate with small tribes and territories. Increasing power and a growth of social and economic differentiation led to a decline of the importance of the ting organisation. According to Tacitus, Germanic kings had only limited power (*Germania*, chapter 7), but at the same time he emphasized the strong kingship of the *suiones* (*Germania*, chapter 44). It is a commonly held opinion that successful military campaigns in the Migration Period led to an intensification of royal power.

Taking Tacitus´ account literally, there is a strong validation of the ting-thesis with regards to the

Norwegian gathering grounds. However, it is important to keep in mind that Tacitus primarily referred to continental respects, relied upon hearsay and tended to idealize Germanic matters in contrast to the depraved Roman world, as he saw it (Wolters 2005). Yet another crucial point affects the tension between given laws and the factual situation. Briefly put, Tacitus´ descriptions themselves reflect an ambivalence between equality (the ting) and inequality (dominion exerted by kings). The power-related aspects will be returned to later, when an attempt is made to approach the social organisation in Jæren in the first centuries AD (chapters 6.3 and 6.4).

As was briefly described above, literary testimonies may help to shed light upon the society's structure in the period of court site use. Yet another approach, returning to the Bjarkøy-case that was outlined above, would be an enlarged archaeological perspective. In this respect, it is important to remember the Borg-case (figs. 12-13). Topographically speaking, a chieftain's farm situated at Øvergård on Bjarkøy would have been rather similar to Borg, being in an elevated area with a panoramic view and access to sheltered harbours. In addition, the Borg farm can be demonstrated to have existed continuously from the fifth to the tenth century, and, judging from the findings, it was the only farm with a rank of that kind in the surroundings. Borg, however, only held a weak position compared to Bjarkøy, which could rightly be suggested to have yielded a much more substantial chieftain's farm (Johansen 1990:53). Referring to Borg, firm conclusions can not be made for any earlier than the fifth century, though there are vague indicators for an earlier important position in that area, i.e. a somewhat dubious court site of Roman date and a large boathouse dated to the Late Roman and Migration Periods on the basis of coastline evidence. Therefore, Borg and Bjarkøy may have seen the free and equal society who built the gathering grounds in the second or third century AD, since in that period there were no permanent powers in terms of chieftain's farms. However, a northern Norwegian top rank in the society that pre-dates the fifth century AD is indicated by burials. A grave in Bø, 40 m close to a court site, in fact contained two outstanding burials of C1b date: a man, for example, with a Roman sword and fragments of textiles that are identical with the uniforms that were worn in the Roman army, and a woman with a silver fibula with a long catch plate (fig. 12; Slomann 1959, Solberg 2000:115). One cannot go wrong in stating that this couple, if it was a couple, was at the top of northern Norwegian society in period C1b. Even earlier, there was a woman buried in Einang, two kilometres away from the Leknes-court site but in a dominant position on a ridge with a panoramic view that covered the court site, if it already existed at that date (fig. 12). This, sadly plundered, grave of period B2, which is in a large burial mound, contained a fibula with embossed silver sheet metal and fragments of sheet gold (Resi 2005). Remarkably, it was once regarded as a northern Norwegian parallel to the continental and southern Scandinavian "princely graves" of the Lübsow-type (Eggers 1949/1950, Johansen 1990:50-51). These few northern Norwegian burials may indicate the forming of a top of society in the second and third centuries AD, i.e. the period in which the court sites were built.

A much wider archaeological perspective would relate to central place studies (chapter 3.2). As was argued on the basis of toponym and archaeological source material, a large farm/centre of power covered an area of several hundred metres and included a hall as well as the encircling farms of subordinates (fig. 11). Transferring this same spatial aspect to Bjarkøy, one would expect a large and paramount farm at Øvergård with a panoramic view, and subordinate farms under its control. Harbours with large boathouses were situated to the north and to the south, a "holy bog" to the east (used for sacrificing the Vestland cauldron) and a gathering ground yet further to the east.

In summary, the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court site at Bjarkøy cannot be answered with certainty. There may have been a stability of the social hierarchy from the fifth century AD onwards, as one may judge from the Borg-excavation. The period in which the northern Norwegian court sites were built is yet another case. There are a few richly furnished high status graves of the second and third centuries AD in the far north, but there is no solid settlement archaeological proof for any paramount farms.

As far as functional aspects of the northern gathering grounds are concerned, the island of Engeløya to the south of Bjarkøy, which had not less than two court sites, is worth mentioning: an Early Iron Age site in Bø and a mainly Late Iron Age site in Steigen (fig. 12). As to the first site, it is an interesting fact that northern Norway's most famous Early Iron Age grave was found

just 40 m apart from the gathering ground in Bø. The above-mentioned weapon burial that was part of it had several remarkable furnishings in military terms, and it is tempting to transfer the military "sphere" of the burial to the gathering ground nearby. As to the later court site on the island, the one in Steigen, the link between this site that had just been discovered and the so-called *Steigartinget*, which is known from medieval written sources, was made as early as 1931 (Havnø 1931, quoted after Johansen/Søbstad 1978:11). In addition, one may propose social purposes in general terms, and the exertion of religion for the Engeløya sites, the latter deduced from charred animal bones found in the mound right in the middle of the Steigen-site (Lund 1942).

In conclusion, the Bjarkøy case has demonstrated that the court sites in the north share many elements with their south-western counterparts, namely: the house remains, the vicinity to areas yielding highly remarkable archaeological finds and monuments, the somewhat remote position on marginal ground in relation to the supposed centre and pieces of evidence for different kinds of functions. For the South-West, there is a distinct difference in the find spectrum of ordinary settlements and gathering grounds. The latter yielded only very few tools in contrast to an overwhelming amount of pottery material, whereas it was the other way around with ordinary settlement sites. Whether any such find-based distinction can be made for the north remains an open question, since the gathering ground in Bjarkøy and the settlement in Greipstad can not be separated from one another, at least at first glance. Returning to the "red thread"/Leitmotiv of the present study, Bjarkøy may be seen as yet another example of a gathering ground that displays the ambivalence of "equality vs. inequality". The ground itself alludes by its very construction and its somewhat "neutral position" to the free and equal society which used it, whereas the entire archaeological background on the island is perhaps an expression of the one important chieftain's and several underlying farms. Thus, different interpretations continue to exist with no chance of ruling out either. An intermediate position would suggest that there was a development from a simple to a more advanced society in the course of the first millennium AD but that way of thinking is not in line with the court site that remained at its original size during its entire period of use.

Court sites in Jæren – ting sites on Iceland

In general, the court sites in Jæren consisted of houses encircling an open place (figs. 2-4, 6). The rectangular houses, often with inner measurements of ca. 10x4 m, were obviously used for accommodation and the preparation of food. In the middle of the open place there was a flat mound that did not contain any burial but which sometimes had the remains of what may have been hearths. Perhaps, these mounds were a secondary addition, since a re-excavation in Klauhauane unearthed a square house beneath the mound that was contemporary with the early building period of the gathering ground (pp. 174, 179). As has been mentioned, N. Nicolaysen was the first ever to introduce the ting aspect into the court site discussion. This was, in fact, as early as in 1866 when he was describing south-western Dysjane on the Tu-ridge (chapter 1). The one scholar who persevered in putting forward this hypothesis was O. Rønneseth, who addressed the closeness of south-western Dysjane and Klauhauane to well-known medieval ting sites (Rønneseth 1959:68-74, 1961:25-26, 1966:23). It may well be that Nicolaysen and/or Rønneseth had Icelandic evidence in the back of their minds. However, a thorough introduction of Iceland into the court site discussion was not made any earlier, it would seem, than in M. Olsen's 2003 M.A. thesis, which was concerned with the gathering grounds in Rogaland (Olsen 2003, compare Storli 2006). The question is: to what extent could Icelandic sites, when considered as remains of former ting places, be a help in the discussion of the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites?

In 1843, the botanist and poet, J. Hallgrimsson, discovered a group of house ruins just outside Rejkjavik at a placed called Tingnes, which by its very name is reminiscent of a ting place (fig. 25; Ólafsson 1987). This same site was linked with the so-called Kjalarnes assembly, i.e. one out of two local assemblies in Iceland that predates 930 AD (before the Allting was founded). In the period up to ca. 1900, various investigations took place in Tingnes, and in 1981 field research was restarted by the National Museum of Iceland. The site, located on a small peninsula, consists of 15-18 monuments that are visible on the surface in an area of, all in all, 6000-7000 square metres. Most of the remains are rectangular houses with walls of stone or turf. Simply, two groups of houses once faced each other with one of their open small sides. In between the groups, there was an open

place. However, the houses do not follow any regular plan, since on the one side there were only three houses, whereas the other side consists of many more such remains in two rows. The row closest to the middle has a circular stone enclosure 18 m across encircling a minor ring of 8 m that is made of turf walls. As the detailed excavation map shows, the outer stone ring was once overlain by two booths (Ólafsson 1987:fig. 2). The very few artefacts that were salvaged are undatable, and organic materials were too few to use for radiocarbon datings. According to the stratigraphy, i.e. three volcanic ash layers, the site has been roughly dated to the period between ca. 900 and the thirteenth century. The findings were interpreted as partial evidence for a former ting place, and in this respect, the stone circle regarded as a so-called "circle of judgement" (known from the written sources) seemed corroborative. However, the difficulties in any such interpretation were pointed out, these being the houses´ association with different periods of use and their different constructions. Alternatively, the booths were regarded as sheep-houses and the stone circle as remains of a small church (or even a sheep-house). One basic problem in the above-mentioned interpretation is the fact that the Kjalarnes assembly that is known from the written sources would not have taken place at the area that runs by this name, but further to the south in Tingnes.

For the period of the "Free State" up to 1271, there is no systematic list of the ting sites, but soon after that, in a period of Norwegian hegemony, a new law mentioned twelve districts (ting), which must have been to some extent identical with the earlier situation (fig. 25; Karlsson 2005). Research that was mainly carried out in the nineteenth century pinpoints not less than 80 such sites, many more than are to be expected on the basis of the written records. A lengthy critical review of the, mostly nineteenth century, investigations of supposed ting sites came to the conclusion that the identification of assembly sites in Iceland remains a serious challenge and, in the face of the present sources, alternative interpretations, such as temporary dwellings, cannot be ruled out (Friðriksson 1994:105-145). The above-mentioned Tingnes interpretation was also criticized in this respect, as was any attempt to reconstruct Icelandic society on the basis of findings of that kind. The review ended by stressing that a study of a large sample of booths may contribute to a better understanding.

In the period of the Icelandic "Free State" up to 1271, the power lay in the hands of 48 persons in Iceland which are called *goðar* or *hovðingar* in the written sources of the thirteenth century. These persons acted as lawgivers and judges and were supported by their tingmen. Three of those districts with a *goðar* or *hovðingar* made up one Icelandic ting district. At the end of the "free state" period, there was an increase in power, and by then it was only ten powerful families who controlled the island (Sigurdsson 1992, Ebel 1998).

Returning to the Norwegian court sites, the Icelandic monuments share two essentials: the general outline of the sites and their placement in areas that are historically and/or toponymically known as ting sites. However, the outline is far more regular in Norway, whereas the correlation with historically known ting sites seems to be considerably higher for Iceland. Remarkably, the latest northern Norwegian and earliest Icelandic grounds may date to the ninth/tenth century. In a perspective of this kind, the link between the northern Norwegian *Steigartinget*, known from written sources, and the court site in Steigen itself, might in fact validate the ting-related interpretation for Iceland.

As to the main topic of the present study, i.e. the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the south-western court sites, one has to concede that any conclusions that can be drawn for Iceland and the gathering grounds in the South-West are at least 500 years apart. However, even for the South-West the ting argument seems rather plausible since they were strategically placed in settlement districts and/or found in areas later used as ting sites. One of the crucial points is whether Iceland's social organisation (many *goðar* or *hovðingar* at the beginning, and later on a process of centralisation) can be related to the Early Iron Age of what is present day Norway. Later in this study, an attempt will be made to describe the social organisation of south-western Norway in the very first centuries AD by using archaeological and historical material (chapters 6.3, 6.4).

Court sites in Jæren – ring forts on Öland

Basically, the court sites once consisted of three main elements: radially placed houses, an open place in the middle, and yet another house or a mound in the very middle of the open place (figs. 2-4.6). The layout of the court sites in Jæren seems to be an architectural reflection of equality, since the houses in the circle seem very

much to be alike in size and use. Based on this layout, it would be natural to ascribe the grounds to a group of socially equal persons.

In the second period of court site research, different types of monuments outside Norway were related to the gathering grounds. In 1933, the Swedish scholar M. Stenberger made a link to the ring forts of the Eketorp-type on Öland, which in fact have a close resemblance in their radially placed houses and house sizes (Stenberger 1933:260-262). However, J. Petersen, the south-western Norwegian court site excavator quickly responded with the argument that the monuments on Öland had obvious fortificatory functions, whereas those in Norway had not, judging from the lack of any outer fortification encircling the houses (Petersen 1936:70). As a matter of fact, there is no knowledge whatsoever about what was once outside the gathering grounds, except for the cooking pits prevalent in the north of Norway, but still, any wooden fortification in terms of a palisade seems far-fetched, in particular with regards to the natural paucity of wood in south-western Jæren. However, even if the link to ring forts on Öland was initially wrong, to what extent could these fortifications on a Swedish island help in the discussion of the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites?

On Öland, there are 16 well-known forts plus three to four sites that are more uncertain, and as excavations or loose finds indicate, the majority of these date back to the Late Roman and Migration Periods, though some of them were reused later (fig. 26; Näsman 1997). There is a concentration of forts on the middle part of the island, whereas the distances between the sites are greater to the north and to the south. The diameter of the ring walls varies from between 38x44m up to 160x210m. The dry skin-walls were made of limestone blocks and a filling, with a vertical front and a stepped back, and the walls were 4-6 m high as well as 4-6 m broad in some of the forts. The houses were placed radially against the ring-walls, and sometimes there was a block of houses in the middle.

The extensive Eketorp-excavations, which covered the interior of the fort (1964-1974) and parts of the wall (1977-1983), unveiled three different periods of use (Näsman 1989). In phase II of the Migration Period, the fort had an outer diameter of ca. 100 m and a total of fifty three houses, mostly placed radially, some as a block in the middle and yet one more that was isolated in the middle. As the investigations showed, the houses served as accommodation or as byres, except for the isolated example in the middle, which was used as a stable and a work place. Among the finds, there were, for example, a limited number of tools as well as pottery and animal bones. Indicators for any intensified handicraft were absent whereas other objects, such as almost 50 glass sherds of at least 12 vessel types, which date to the Early Migration Period, testify to contacts with the outside world, a phenomenon that is also known from Öland in this period. The investigation concluded that Eketorp was permanently settled in period II (but fully-accomplished only for one to two generations) whereas the earlier phase I and the considerably later period III saw only a periodic use. In the following, only the well-recognisable period II will be briefly referenced, since its interesting details are very instructive when transferred to court sites.

Generally speaking, the entire layout of the site, with its houses that are all of a comparable size, gives the impression of a very egalitarian society. Consequently, one may consider Eketorp as a reflection of a society of the free and equal. This, however, may be a misconception; the result of over-exaggerating the outer appearance of the ring-forts.

As far as Eketorp is concerned, house 3 in the middle of seven houses that formed a middle block in the fort deserves particular attention (fig. 26; Herschend 1993:193-195, 1999). As an analysis showed, the house, with an inner measurement of ca. 13x4 m, was subdivided into three parts: a canopy entrance and a small entrance room, a middle part and an inner end. According to the analysis of the find materials, there was a clear distinction between the pottery materials that related to the inner room and the weapons that were concentrated in the middle part. Based on the same room division and the find distribution (otherwise unknown in Eketorp), the middle room of house 3 has been considered to be a hall. This interpretation of house 3 is in fact strengthened by its position more or less in the middle of the fort, with its entrance facing the largest open area. As was suggested, house 3 was designed to meet the two main principles of Eketorp: equality (as exemplified by all but one house in Eketorp and the inner domestic part of house 3) and inequality (a person, even if it was only a primus inter pares, held a position of military responsibility).

An overall analysis of the island's forts in relation to the Migration Period society showed that, according to

stray finds, house remains and field systems, the forts were situated strategically in relation to densely populated districts (bygder) but outside the areas of cultivated land (Näsman 1997). All in all, eight hundred Migration Period farms may have housed ca. nine thousand persons, and the many gold hoards known from the island, mostly sacrifices, seem to reflect a wealthy period with wide-ranging contacts. The solidus coins that were evenly distributed in the settlement areas were interpreted as belonging to warriors who had served as mercenaries on the continent and as a sign of a "people in arms". Sacrifices of war-booty, for example, in Skedemosse on Öland, seem to indicate that the south-western Baltic was a war-zone in the fifth century AD. In this respect, the ring-forts seem to testify to a well-organized society on the island due to the fact that they were built after a common design, their strategic placement in relation to settlement districts and their function as strongholds of resistance in the case of an enemy invasion.

As recent research has emphasized, one area in the midwest of the island surpasses all the others in archaeological respects. This site yielded, for example, a gold collar of fifth century date, the famous sixth century Björnhovda patrices that portray a high ranking warrior, (one of which has a ring sword), indicators for a specialized workshop, place-name indicators for religion and finally a settlement area of particular wealth. In addition, the largest of all ring-forts (Gråborg: 160x210 m) and a harbour by the name of *Snäcksta* ("landing place of *Snekke*-type ships") are situated in the area. The findings have been taken as an indicator for a "petty kingdom" that was in high command of the armed forces of Öland (Hagberg 1976, Steuer 1987, 205, Fabech 1999, 44). Following this argument, house 3 in Eketorp would suggest some sort of local commander.

In conclusion, the ring-forts on Öland are not what they seem, and an inegalitarian society is thought to have existed at both the individual site (house 3 of Eketorp) and the island (the Björnhovda-area with the largest of all ring-forts at Gråborg). The question is whether this perhaps surprising, though admittedly very much simplified, description of recent ring fort research for Öland affects the discussion of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the south-western Norwegian court sites?

Each of the large gathering grounds in Jæren (Dysjane, Klauhauane, and Leksaren) had ca. 15 houses with similar dimensions (fig. 6). The excavations did not yield any evidence whatsoever for anything like house 3 at Eketorp. However, the Dysjane site remains mostly unexplored and a minor nineteenth century investigation unveiled a silver fibula with a long catch plate dating to period C1 in one of the houses (chapter 11.5). Theoretically speaking, one cannot rule out the existence of an Eketorp-style house 3 in Dysjane, but this remains highly hypothetical. More probable is the existence of a hall outside the gathering ground, as a series of *guldgubber*, found in a (probably pre-modern) house ruin on the Tu-ridge may indicate (chapter 11.5). In a Scandinavian perspective, it is a well-established assumption that this same ruin was once in fact a hall building that was erected in the fourth century at the earliest (chapter 3.2). Taking the archaeological surroundings of the Migration Period as a whole, there is reason to suggest that the ridge was not just one out of several south-western areas with a gathering ground but was in fact the one that held a dominant position. In general archaeological terms, the Tu-ridge occurs like a south-western Norwegian parallel to the Björnhovda area. However, these reflections cannot be accepted at face value. The most critical objection is chronological, because the hall and the dominant position of the ridge would have been of Migration Period date, and for most of that era there was no longer any gathering ground in use. With their comparable size, the south-western court sites would more likely point towards adjacent areas of the same standing in the Roman Iron Age, but perhaps the Tu-ridge assumed a dominant position in the Migration Period.

As to the main topic of the present thesis, i.e. the discussion concerning the "equality vs. inequality" question, the Öland case study has proven highly enlightening since it demonstrated that things are not always what they seem from the first archaeological examination. However, the conclusions that have been drawn for Eketorp and the society on Öland in the Migration Period are not transferrable on a one-to-one basis to Jæren.

Court sites in Jæren – the assembly structure at Yeavering

Among the south-western Norwegian court sites, Dysjane on the Tu-ridge is the best evidence for elucidating the ambivalence of the "equality vs. inequality"

question (chapter 11.5). The mostly unexplored gathering ground by the name of Dysjane may point towards an egalitarian society, since the houses had roughly the same size and probably the same use, as the other excavated grounds in Jæren (Leksaren, Klauhauane, and Håvodl) demonstrate. Evidence of an inegalitarian society is just as strikingly perceivable in terms of the many splendid burials and in the possible remains of a hall with a series of *guldgubber*. However, the burials date to the Migration Period and the building, if it was a hall, cannot have been erected any earlier than in the fourth century AD (Herschend 1993, 1999, Løken 1998, 2001a).

Therefore, there was only a minor chronological overlapping between the later period of court site use on the one hand and the hall and the splendid burials on the other. As to a hall and gathering ground on the same location, there is a surprising parallel known from England. To what extent could the royal site at Yeavering, mentioned above (chapter 3.2) help in the discussion of the "equality vs. inequality" question regarding the court sites?

The investigation of the royal palace at Yeavering in north Northumberland (Newcastle is situated roughly 50 km to the south-east) in the years 1953-1962 unveiled a residence that dates back to the mid sixth to the mid seventh century (figs. 1, 19; Hope-Taylor 1977, Wilson 1979:65-68). This residence is known from the written sources to have belonged to the Anglo-Saxon kingship. In phase IIIAB, the first "monumental" phase, there were several buildings or constructions of particular concern:

– a major hall (A2) of ca. 25x10 m with a trapezoid group of postholes in the eastern part of the house that probably once belonged to a throne or a chair (fig. 20);
– a cult building (D2b) with contemporary burials around free-standing posts outside its southern end, a setting of three posts close to the inner southern end and deposits of ox-skulls inside the east door;
– a so-called "great enclosure" interpreted as a folk centre and which is omitted in the following.

The area in the middle, between the hall to the east and several buildings to the west, yields constructional remains of a very special kind (fig. 20, Hope-Taylor 1977:119-121). Nine foundation trenches to the west, parallel to each other, carried once continuous walls that are terminated by posts to the outside, and the broader the trenches became towards the west, the deeper they were. These trenches formed an arc of circles, but were in fact less than a sixth part of a full circle. Further to the west, four postholes were found that were once the base of oblique posts. In front of the lowest trench, there was a trapezoidal arrangement of eight small post-holes, and further to the west, there were postholes and daub-wash, which is considered to be the basis of a screen of rendered wattle work.

The archaeological findings point towards a seated area (maximum width: ca. 20 m; length from the lowest to the highest seats: ca. 20 m) that offered ca. 300 feet of effective seating space, or in other terms, space for 150 persons (judging from today's theatre standards). A later enlargement doubled the seating space available. In front of the "wooden theatre" stood a platform that was probably once used as a high seat or a throne.

In conclusion, Yeavering yields evidence for different kinds of buildings and constructions that belonged to an Early Anglo-Saxon royal seat, among them a hall, a cult building and a "wooden theatre". This same "theatre", which was used for gatherings of 150 persons in its initial phase, was not for the free and equal who took common decisions, rather there was a person of rank who sat on a throne or a high seat in front of the seated area and held a position of command in the society.

Returning to Jæren, it is important to keep in mind that what was found at Yeavering essentially postdates the court sites. One may carefully suggest that the large court sites once had ca. 15 houses serving as accommodation for 60 persons, calculated by using a guide of four persons in a house of roughly 40 square metres (Løken 2001a:table 4). The combination of gathering ground and hall, as in Yeavering, perhaps also existed at the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge. Yet, there is one big difference. The architecture in Yeavering links the exertion of power to both a hall and a gathering ground by means of high seats or thrones. In contrast, there is no way to connect power and assembly on the Tu-ridge in the first centuries AD. The hall, if it existed at all, was not built any earlier than in the fourth century AD.

As to the main topic of the present study, i.e. the discussion of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the south-western Norwegian court sites, the Yeavering case study has proven highly instructive. However, the link between power and assembly, as it is evident

in Yeavering, cannot be demonstrated to have existed for the supposed hall and the gathering ground on the Tu-ridge.

Court sites in Jæren – Roman amphitheatres

In 1964, H.E. Lund published an article in Germany in which he asked for help in identifying the supposed continental predecessors of northern Norwegian court sites, but he failed with his attempt (Lund 1964). The sites addressed by others as cross-references, for example the Eketorp-type hill forts in Sweden (see above), shared some resemblances in outline but were of a later date. Recently, an article introduced Roman amphitheatres as the architectural inspiration (Armstrong 2000). The question is: up to what extent could Roman amphitheatres help in a discussion of the question of "equality vs. inequality" in regards to the court sites?

The term amphitheatre, a Latinized Greek word, denoted a theatre that was made up of two halves (Bomgardner 2000, Pauly I: column 619-624). The earliest such building was built in Pompeii ca. 70 BC, but perhaps an older wooden predecessor might have existed in the Forum Romanum in Rome. The main body of buildings was finished in the late first and the entire second century AD. The Coliseum in Rome, the largest of all amphitheatres (188 x 156 m, designed for ca. 50.000 spectators), was finished in the year 80 AD, and it was the blueprint for all such buildings in the provinces (fig. 32). The sites were used for spectacula, i.e. gladiator combats and staged hunts of animals. In addition, there were often small shrines in the buildings.

N. Armstrong's suggestion that court sites were derived from a Roman amphitheatre archetype, with which it shares some superficial traits, is one of various attempts to relate the Germanic way of living and the rise of novelties in the society to influences from the South, very much in the manner of "ex oriente lux". On a rather simple level, one may justly point towards the deliberate use of Roman sets of drinking vessels to imitate the upper Roman class (briefly, Lillehammer 1994:178-183). According to far more sophisticated suggestions, a pottery production of Roman style was active in East German Haarhausen (fig. 1) and, as a matter of fact, this was indeed the case (Dušek 1999). In addition, the sailing technique as evidenced by the Nydam-ship of the fourth century AD was considered to have been borrowed from the Roman world (Crumlin-Pedersen 1997:187). Most sophisticated, however, are the attempts to assume an architectural transfer of Roman archetypes to northern Europe.

A similar suggestion for the northern gate of the Eketorp hill-fort will not be considered (Herschend 1985). Rather, a Norwegian case of this kind will be briefly mentioned. The present author once suggested a link between Mediterranean, i.e. Hellenistic and Roman boathouses, and Norwegian sheds (Grimm 1999:34-35) but he later withdrew this proposal (Grimm 20006b:96-99, Grimm 2006c:9-10). Very simply speaking, there is no need to look for southern archetypes as Norwegian seafaring existed as early as in the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age, as is evidenced by the many foreign artefacts of that date (for example Solberg 1994). Taking this a step further, it is easy to assume the existence of a method of protection for vessels along the weather struck western Norwegian coast. From this perspective, we can see how internal stimuli led to the building of shelters, rather than any outside influence.

This argument would also affect the court sites. If one was considering an architectural solution for a group of persons who gathered together and needed temporary accommodation, a court site outline would be a natural solution. It remains striking, however, how this outline came into being in the first or second century AD, and why a rather advanced solution was chosen instead of gatherings in the open, as probably happened at the ting sites that still existed in Dyjane and Klauhauane after the court sites had gone out of use. Even more striking, one may suggest a fixed court site concept before the actual constructions were built in Jæren, since the gathering places were probably rather similar to each other at the very beginning, and they were built in the same period. Consequently, it seems much more persuasive to ascribe this concept to a local context rather than suggesting a Roman archetype that shares only some vague superficial traits with the Norwegian constructions.

As to the main topic of the present study, i.e. the discussion of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the southwestern Norwegian court sites, it is owing to N. Armstrong that the question about the influence behind the sites' design was raised again but, in contrast to his argument, it seems natural to consider the sites a "Norwegian" invention. They guaranteed a place to stay for a group of persons who gathered together. However, it is surprising that such an advanced solution was chosen.

One step further, one may suggest that the fact that the buildings followed a common design at roughly the same date presupposes a master plan and the power to realize it, *perhaps* in the hands of just one person.

Summary

It seems natural to assume that the gathering places in Jæren were probably built after a common fixed design, and that its origin was probably local, since the sites met social and other needs in easily understandable terms. If they were built at the same time, it is tempting to think of one person in Jæren who had the master plan, the skills and the power to have that plan realized. This, however, remains highly hypothetic.

The hill-forts on Öland and the royal Anglo-Saxon site at Yeavering were very instructive cases. The Eketorp-fort was demonstrated to be egalitarian at first and inegalitarian on a second archaeological examination, and there was one dominant centre on the island that held an overall command. The royal site at Yeavering had both a hall and an assembly ("wooden theatre") linked to the exertion of power by means of thrones or high chairs. None of this was found at the south-western Norwegian court sites. The Tu-ridge with the Dysjane gathering place is the most enlightening site in south-western Norway since a connection of the kind mentioned above might have existed between a court site (probably first/second to fifth century date) and a somewhat questionable hall (erected not any earlier than in the fourth century AD).

The northern Norwegian court sites and the physically similar sites on Iceland seem to have been closely connected to a ting organisation whose political and judicial processes were egalitarian. However, the written recordings are far from unproblematic. The Roman Tacitus left contradictory descriptions that emphasize both the ting and the power-related aspect of Germanic tribes, and in Iceland, there was a gradual process of centralisation in the hands of a few persons. From this perspective, court sites alone would not necessarily indicate that this was the one and only form of political organisation. Simply, some people might have been more equal than others. These people made the decisions, and the others were merely expected to comply.

To put it very briefly: the comparative approach gathered evidence for the ting-hypothesis (northern Norwegian court sites; Icelandic ting sites), whereas there is no obvious link between the gathering grounds and the exertion of power in the same way as can be observed in somewhat different archaeological circumstances (the Eketorp ring-fort on Öland; Yeavering in England). An exception to this rule might have been the Tu-ridge with a court site and a somewhat questionable hall, but the two only overlapped, if at all, in the fourth and fifth century AD. It remains open whether the common fixed design of the court sites followed the initiative of one person of rank.

The intention of the following subchapter is to throw some light on the society in Jæren in the first centuries AD from an international central place perspective in order to approach the power-related aspect on an enlarged base.

6.3. A central place perspective: from Tu to Yeavering and Mikulčice

Scandinavian and mainly Norwegian central place research aims at locating networks of pre-modern centres of power (chapter 3.2.). These studies use an interdisciplinary approach by taking into account archaeological, toponym and historical sources, the latter retrospectively. Simply, in the understanding of the Swedish place-name researcher S. Brink, a central site covered an area of several hundred metres and included *inter alia* a hall, a cult area, an assembly place and underlying settlements of military followers, craftsmen, priests etc. (fig. 11, Brink 1999a). These places are thought to have existed in the second half of the first millennium AD and often well into the Middle Ages, whereas only some seem to have had a line of continuity back to the Roman Iron Age that can be argued for on archaeological grounds (see below).

Obviously, south-western Norwegian court sites had two main periods of use (table 2; chapter 4): The later period of Late Roman and Early Migration Period date coincided chronologically to some extent with the central place phenomenon mentioned above, whereas the initial period of the Early Roman Iron Age is much more difficult to describe in terms of central place research, if at all.

Chapter 6.3. will use the Tu-ridge as the most well-suited among the south-western Norwegian areas with a court site to address a central place perspective in two different ways: the first relates to the later period of court site use and the second relates to the initial period.

Late Roman and Migration Period centres of power in an international perspective: the Tu-ridge, Gudme/Lundeborg and the Runder Berg

The present study has repeatedly referred to the Tu-ridge, which provides a far better source situation than the other south-western Norwegian areas with court sites (chapter 11.5). Worth mentioning is its well-defined position in the middle of a naturally delineated area, the outstanding archaeological grave finds from the Late Roman to Viking periods, a series of *guldgubber* found in a presumably pre-modern house ruin (in which case this could very well have been a hall) and indicators for a variety of central place functions that were once associated with the ridge. Settlement archaeological investigations, however, are so far missing. Northern Norwegian Borg (fig. 13; chapter 3.2.2) has provided surprising insights into a chieftain's farm, but it was only a second class farm in northern Norwegian respects, and obviously one would expect the Tu-ridge to have played a much more prominent role, in particular in the Migration Period, which provides the most remarkable source situation. The question is: what do we know about centres of power outside Norway that were roughly contemporary to that on the Tu-ridge that reached some sort of "peak" in the Migration Period, and up to what extent might that be helpful in the discussion of the "equality vs. inequality" question in regard to the court sites?

The area close to Gudme/Lundeborg in south-eastern Funen has long been well-known for two reasons: firstly the Broholm treasure find, which probably dates to the fifth century AD, and which contained 4 kg of gold objects, and secondly the mainly Roman period grave field at Møllegårdsmarken (fig. 27, Albrectsen 1971, Thrane/Munksgaard 1978, Lund Hansen 1987:404, 420-425). With its 2000 burials, it is the largest of that period in Denmark and included almost 100 burials with furnishings from the Roman Empire. The systematic use of metal detectors in the 1980s made obvious that the area on the south-east of Funen yielded many more extraordinary finds. The ensuing excavations in Gudme unveiled a chieftain's hall of 47x10 m with many splendid objects, 50 contemporary farms nearby and many indications of the presence of specialized craftsmen such as goldsmiths, and warriors of high rank (Michaelsen/Østergaard Sørensen 1994, Jørgensen 1995:89-95). The ca. 900 m long Lundeborg harbour contained thousands of ships' nails and many different traces of more ordinary handicrafts (Thomsen 1994). It appears that the main period of use in Gudme/Lundeborg lasted from the early third to the sixth centuries AD, and one of the decisive factors for choosing the area was the sheltered natural harbour (Crumlin Pedersen 1987:116-123, Thrane 1993, Nielsen et al. 1994, Jørgensen 1995, 89-95, Thrane 1998, 1999, 2001). Silver spurs and treasure finds with silver objects of Viking Age date, two Early Romanesque stone churches and indications of royal goods point towards a continuity of central functions (Fabech/Ringtved 1995:22-24, Jørgensen 1995:89-95). In addition, placename research has demonstrated that the densest cluster of names that indicate heathen cult in the area of present Denmark is found in that region, and the most remarkable of these names is "Gudme" to be translated as "home of the gods" (Kousgård Sørensen 1985, Hauck 1994; Beck 1995).

The *Runder Berg* ca. 2.5 km to the west of Bad Urach, Reutlingen, at the northern edge of the Swabian Alb, is situated 700 m high and is only accessible via a narrow 300 m long crest to the south-west (fig. 28). Two areas of 300 x 50 m have been settled since prehistoric times: one area at the top of the ridge and a second area on the eastern slope (Schiek 1991, Pauli 1994:9-12, Koch 2003). On the basis of loose finds, J. Werner had in 1965 pinpointed an Early Alamannic hill fort on the Runder Berg (chapter 3.2; Werner 1965:448-449). Ensuing large scale investigations verified different periods of use with the most remarkable traces from the fifth century AD and onwards whereas activities that pre-dated this were difficult to trace (Koch 2003). To the fifth century belonged foremost a palisade of 210 m covering the north-east of the plateau, a pottery production imitating Roman craftsmanship and a goldsmith (Koch 1984, 149, Gross 1992, Spors-Gröger 1998, Koch 2003). In addition, sherds of at least 165 glass vessels were found, which were produced in what is now modern day Belgium, northern France and Rhineland, most notably 25 cm high conical beakers of the Kempston-type, which are, as a matter of fact, the most splendid products of Frankish glass production (Koch 1987:299-307, RGA 12:153-167). Former house areas of warriors of high rank and their families were identified by clusters of glass finds, whereas the most distinct concentration of such objects in the south of the fortification in a delineated rectangular

area of 25 m in length was taken as an indication of a hall building that was destroyed during later building activities, as would have been the case for any building belonging to a "petty king" (Koch 1987:306-307, Vierck 1991:121-122). As has been suggested, the fortificatory function was the most essential (signified by different destruction layers) but, in addition, a road in the valley must be calculated for (Vierck 1991:122). The Runder Berg was reused as a centre of power repeatedly: in the seventh and early eighth centuries (including a hall), in the ninth and tenth centuries (including a church) and maybe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for which there are as yet no traces of buildings (Koch 1991:83-127, 2003).

These, very oversimplified, descriptions were intended to provide a rough impression of two highly remarkable sites. In the following, Gudme/Lundeborg, the Runder Berg and the Tu-ridge in south-western Norway will be considered under three headings (table 6). In fact the Tu-ridge replaces Spangereid, which was chosen in an earlier article of the present author (Grimm 2004).

Topographically, the Tu-ridge was deliberately chosen as the one area in Jæren that is ca. 100 m high and offers both a wide panoramic view and exceptionally fertile soil. For Gudme/Lundeborg there was a maritime criterion, i.e. the natural harbour on both sides of the Tange Å (Crumlin Pedersen 1987:116-123), and a terrestrial criterion, i.e. the placement of Gudme a few km to the inland, yet strategically related to communication networks, and with good access to agricultural land, meadows, marsh, waterways etc. (Fabech/Ringtved 1995:20, 22-26). In the case of the Runder Berg, the need for a sheltered, inaccessible hill was the decisive criterion, but a road connection down in the valley might also have played a role (Vierck 1991:122). The Runder Berg is the only fortified site and a military threat is evident from the different destruction layers on the hill. In contrast, there are no signs of any fortifications or destruction layers in Gudme/Lundeborg and on the Tu-ridge. In the latter case, however, this impression is gained via a transfer of the court site investigations in Jæren (Klauhauane, Leksaren, Håvodl), which did not yield any such indications.

As to the *context* (i.e. s*ocially*), Gudme/Lundeborg is unique in that the archaeological findings leave no doubt that this centre of power had no counterpart of equal rank on Funen or, in fact, in large parts of Scandinavia. Yet there might have been other important areas, probably more episodical, as indicated by the Himlingøje grave field, which peaked in period C1b, for Sealand and the golden horns from Gallehus of Early Migration Period date for southern Jutland (figs. 1; 27; Lund Hansen 1995, Axboe/Nilsen/Heizmann 1998). In contrast, the Runder Berg is one of its kind in an entire network of Alamannic centres of power on hill forts, though most recent investigations of the Geiß- and Kügeleskopf did, for example, point towards temporary camps of retinues, in contrast to a centre such as that on the Runder Berg (Steuer 1997). Seen in a wider scale, Gudme/Lundeborg was unrivalled in its social rank, whereas both the Tu-ridge and the Runder Berg were only of a secondary class. However, the Tu-ridge was the one dominant spot in parts of Jæren, whereas the Runder Berg was probably just one out of many of the same rank.

Functionally, the Tu-ridge served many different purposes, as has been suggested earlier (table 4). As a matter of fact, one may go as far as stating that there would have been a match with the majority of the central place functions that were once considered for modern and historical times (chapter 3.2). Those central functions, in Christaller´s and Denecke´s terms, are supposed to have covered not only the centre itself but a larger area (fig. 22). Hypothetically speaking, one may sketch two rings of subordinate farms: one that incorporated farms of medium importance, the other incorporating lesser farms, both rings encircling the Tu-ridge. Perhaps, the Tu-centre of the Migration Period did not only cover the naturally delineated area of which it was the centre, but reached further beyond (from a functional point of view). As can be shown, the centres in Gudme/Lundeborg and on the Runder Berg might have had just as many functions as the Tu-ridge. The spatial distribution of many Alamannic hill forts may indicate service areas of both comparable and limited size. In contrast, Gudme/Lundeborg might have covered not only the fifty contemporary farms nearby but the entire island of Funen.

As far as the topic of the present study is concerned, i.e. the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites, the very brief introduction of Gudme/Lundeborg and the Runder Berg does in fact strengthen the argument for a hill-based centre of power on the Tu-ridge in the Migration Period. Considering the question of halls in Gudme/Lundeborg, Runder

Berg and northern Norwegian Borg, it does not seem too far-fetched to suspect a building of that kind on the Tu-ridge though the only thing that is known is a series of *guldgubber* once said to have been found in a house ruin. In a wider Norwegian and international perspective, the Tu-ridge would appear as a centre of power with many different functions that did not only cover a ring of underlying farms around the ridge, but a wider area. In the Early Migration Period, there was still a court site "active" on the ridge. Whatever its activities were, the area as such probably retained them after the abandonment of the site. If there was a centre of power on the hill in the Migration Period, (and there undoubtedly was), there is every reason to suggest that it controlled or had an influence on gatherings held on the hill, be it in the still existing gathering ground or later in the open. However, this assumption would only be valid for the late period of court site use.

A spatial analysis of dominion in the Iron Age: Avaldsnes, the Tu-ridge and the Forsand-village as seen against a European background

So far, the present study has paid too much attention to the latest Roman and Early Migration Periods, which was the court sites´ second period of use. In contrast the initial period, in particular the Early Iron Age, was barely considered. The present subchapter will try to approach this topic by presenting the present knowledge about the physical appearance of Iron Age centres of power in Rogaland as seen against a European background. Avaldsnes, which is described in the written sources and the Tu-ridge's house ruin that contained the *guldgubber,* are concrete pieces of evidence that can be used for reference, as is the voluminous investigation of the Forsand-village ca. 25 kilometres to the south-east of Stavanger, which yielded evidence for a settlement with a remarkable continuity and indications for social stratification. This subchapter will be chronologically reversed by starting in the Viking Age and early medieval times. By doing so, it will be a trip from the well-reported to the obscure. The three-buildings-axiom by A. Gauert for royal sites of the Merovingian kingdom and onwards (three separate constitutional representative buildings: residence, hall, church) that is mentioned above, in contrast to other spatial solutions (Borg as a "three-in-one-solution": residence, hall and cult under one common roof), will serve as a "red thread" (chapter 3.2). The question is: to what extent might a spatial analysis of dominion in the Iron Age be a help for discussing the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites?

Most recent studies have shed new light on Avaldsnes on the island of Karmøy in northern Rogaland, which is well-known for spectacular archaeological finds from different archaeological periods, not least the richest of all Scandinavian Roman period weapon graves and two ship burials of Viking Age date (fig. 6; Slomann 1964, Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996:292-293, Opedal 1998, Bonde/Stylegar 2009). The western shore of Karmøy is exposed to the North Sea, making seafaring a dangerous undertaking. An alternative and safer route led through the narrow passage by the name of Karmsund between the island of Karmøy and the mainland. Avaldsnes was situated close to the narrowest part of this passage and was thus well-suited for the control of sea-borne traffic, and probably owed much of its importance to this topography.

The aforementioned A. Gauert referred primarily to Avaldsnes in his study on Norwegian royal seats of the Viking Age (Gauert 1968). Not surprisingly, his main source was Snorre's history of the Norwegian kingdom. This was written as late as in the thirteenth century but probably relied to some extent on older sources. According to Snorre, the following buildings once belonged to the Late Viking and early medieval royal site at Avaldsnes: a hall, a royal bedroom, a room for conferences and audiences, a kitchen used solely for the preparation of food for the king, and storage buildings for cereals. In Christian times, the church of the site is said to have been connected with the hall by means of a road. Therefore, Viking Age and early medieval Avaldsnes match fully with the aforementioned Gauert's three-buildings-axiom inasmuch as there was a hall, a church and some sort of a residence with a royal bedroom on the site. As was recently argued, the south-western Norwegian kingdom may in fact have been Merovingian in the very beginning. This theory has been based on a wrongly dated, supposedly Merovingian ship grave from Avaldsnes and a number of richly furnished burials of Merovingian date in south-western Norway that were found on farms known to be royal in later periods (Myhre 1965b, Myhre 1966, Opedal 1998:127-130, Bonde/Stylegar 2009). Without going into any detail, it cannot be ruled out that not only did the south-western kingdom reach as far back as the Early Viking period, but so did the "trinity" of

associated separate representative buildings in Avaldsnes: hall, residence and a cult building that was a predecessor of the church (compare Tissø and Yeavering further below in contrast to Borg further below).

The Ottonic Königspfalz at Tilleda, as well as the English royal site at Cheddar, have already been described above (figs. 1, 19, chapter 3.2). As to the first and thoroughly excavated site, which was built in the second half of the tenth century, there were all kinds of representative buildings from period I onwards. In contrast, Cheddar displays only a limited number of representative buildings: a hall for period I (dating from the middle of the ninth century) and a hall plus a stone chapel for period II (c. 930 to the late tenth or early eleventh century). The lack of a residential building in Cheddar might be attributable to the incompleteness of the investigation.

Yet another case worth mentioning is the Miculčice hill-fort, situated in the very south-east of Moravia close to the river Morava (figs. 1, 29). It belonged to few urban-like royal sites in the ninth century kingdom of "Great Moravia" that had been Christianized since the early ninth century (Poláček 1999). Large-scale investigations in Miculčice, which lasted several decades, verified a period of use during the ninth century AD in a main and secondary fort that covered 2.4 and 7.7 hectares respectively (Poláček 1996, 2002). In addition, there were two suburbs. In the main fort there were representative stone buildings, i.e. several churches and a palace. This palace was once situated at the highest spot within the main fortification, but a proper publication seems to be missing (Poláček 1996:241). The most elaborate traces of handicrafts (jewellery) were also found in the main fortification.

The Tissø-excavations on eastern Sealand in Denmark began in 1995 and covered a settlement site 1.6 km long and 200-300 m wide that dates from the sixth to the eleventh centuries, situated close to an inland lake (figs. 1, 29; Jørgensen 2002, 2005). The most spectacular find was a gold neck ring of almost 2 kg in weight that had already been discovered in 1977. There were offerings in the inland lake nearby. As a matter of fact the name of the lake (Tyr´s sea, Tyr being the god of war) is probably indicative of those depositions. An early magnate's seat was situated to the north of the area and included a hall building of 40 x 7 m. A later seat of this kind, whose initial phase belongs to the second half of the seventh century, was situated further to the south. Altogether, four different periods can be distinguished from each other at this site, the main buildings of which were: a house of almost 50 x 12 m (a hall), a dwelling house to north of the hall (the residence?) and a fenced area with a rectangular building to the south of the hall (a cultic place). In summary, the buildings at Tissø come close to Gauert's three-buildings-axiom, if the church is replaced with a cult building-criterion.

The sites mentioned so far, Tissø in the North, Cheddar in the West, Tilleda in the south and Mikulčice in the East, might be described as royal seats of an "ambulatory" or "wandering" kingdom without any capitol. It is only in Tilleda, that three representative buildings (residence, hall, and church/temple) in A. Gauert's terms were unearthed. In the other cases, the question of whether there was some sort of a residence remains open.

In regards to the Viking Age, two more Norwegian cases besides the aforementioned Avaldsnes are worth mentioning. Northern Norwegian Borg yields evidence for a chieftain's farm with a three-in-one solution, that is: residence, hall and cult under one common roof (fig. 13). When it comes to the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge, the presumed hall on the site might have been in use as late as the Viking Age. *Guldgubber*, like those salvaged in a house ruin (the presumable hall) on the ridge, have been found in settlement contexts from the Merovingian period up to the Viking Age in Scandinavia, and, notably, these were mostly found in halls or as deposits in postholes belonging to such buildings (Herschend 1993, 1999, Watt 1999, 2004).

Leaving the Late Iron Age, the next station on the way back is the middle of the first millennium AD. The above-mentioned buildings in Borg and on the Tu-ridge (fig. 13) would still have had their place, and so would the halls in Gudme/Lundeborg and Runder Berg (figs. 27-28). For all those cases, there is no match with the "three-buildings-axiom" in Gauert's terms. There might have been either a three-in-one-solution, as in Borg, or a magnate's farm with a hall that served for assembly and cult and, perhaps, some sort of a "residential building". A building of the latter kind, however, has not been recorded for the middle of the first millennium AD so far.

As to Anglo-Saxon royal sites, Yeavering dates to parts of the sixth and seventh century AD (figs. 1, 19-20, chapter 6.2). Besides a hall of 25x10 m there was one building (D2b) that was perhaps used for religious

purposes, as indicated by contemporary burials around free-standing posts outside its southern end, a setting of three posts close to the inner southern end and deposits of ox-skulls inside the east door. Due to the incompleteness of the excavations, there may have been more buildings in Yeavering, perhaps including some sort of a residence.

When it comes to royal sites of the Merovingian kings, one would expect Gauert's axiom to have already been realized, but the only way to come to any conclusion is based on written testimonies. It is important to keep in mind that the Merovingian kings resided in Gaul in cities where Roman buildings still existed and that they did not construct royal sites of their own outside the cities in the east of their realm before the seventh century (Zotz 2005:642).

Finally, Jakuszowice, Woiw. Kielce, 50 km to the north-east of Kraków (Poland), located on a loess upland close to a minor river is worth mentioning. Remarkably, substantial settlement remains from the first to fifth centuries and a "princely burial" of the fifth century have been recorded (fig. 1; Godłowski 1991, Steuer 2000). The settlement of 7 hectares belonging to the "*Przeworsk* culture" reached its peak in the Late Roman and Migration Periods. In a very thick culture layer, many finds of Roman origin were found, for example 75 coins, 30 glass fragments, a fragmentary *Zwiebelknopffibel* of Roman provenance (often thought to have belonged to military persons of some rank in the Roman provinces) etc., as were locally produced finds, for example fibulae and wheel-turned pottery. In the excavation area there were many traces of specialized handicrafts, for example a gold and silver smithy, pottery production, amber manufacture, iron extraction etc. Regrettably, only minor parts of the settlement were investigated and no substantial building remains have surfaced. The settlement was once ca. 300 kilometres away from the Limes.

In conclusion, hall buildings were of great importance for any petty king's or royal seat in the middle of the first millennium AD whereas there is no evidence for residences or cult buildings (except for Yeavering: fig. 19 and Uppåkra in southernmost Sweden: fig. 32). However, the source situation is in many cases problematic because some sites were incompletely investigated and others have been partly destroyed by later activities. For Scandinavian respects, it is important to keep in mind that halls were not erected any earlier than in the fourth century AD (Herschend 1993, 1999). Borg is paradigmatic for a three-in-one solution (residence, hall and cult under one common roof), whereas one would definitely suggest a more advanced solution at Gudme/Lundeborg.

Going further back to the Roman period and in particular the early part of it, the Forsand-village ca. 25 kilometres to the south-east of Stavanger is a good starting point (fig. 6). The excavation unearthed an entire village that existed from ca. 1200 BC to the seventh century AD with as many as 170 houses with several phases (for example Løken 1992, 1998, 2001b). The Late Roman and Migration Period saw the most intense settlement activities, including 12-16 contemporary farms in two groups and the farm of a village chief, including a minor house with a work place, a long house (the residence?) and a comparatively broad, bow-sided house of 31x9m (a hall) erected in the fourth century and placed parallel to each other (fig. 21). Remarkably, there were seven houses that pre-dated these in the period from ca. 200 BC to 300 AD which were partly situated on their own and which in most cases outmeasured all the others with their maximum length of up to 50 m. The middle parts, with their longitudinal hearths, had posts that were placed closer to the long walls than was the case in the rest of the house. With reference to the aforementioned Borg-case, these buildings were interpreted as domestic houses with an integrated hall-part. This interpretation seems like a settlement-archaeological indicator for the presence of a social stratification dating as far back as ca. 200 BC. However, the findings must not be overexaggerated as sometimes there was only one such house among 7-10 contemporary farms in Forsand, yet in other cases there were two. This does indicate social stratification, but not in terms of a single control of power (Løken 2001b:59).

Besides the rather instructive Forsand-case, there is some settlement archaeological evidence from Jutland, e.g. the Hodde village with indications of social stratification from as early as the pre-Roman Iron Age (Løken 2001b). Apart from this, there is little such knowledge that can be contributed from Scandinavia and the continent north of the Limes. Supposedly, a wealthy settlement was found close to the highly extraordinary Hoby-grave on Lolland, dating to period B1 (fig. 1; Storgaard 2003:112). However, any proper publication is missing so far. One place of particular concern on the continent is the well-known Lübsow/

Lubieszowo-grave field in present day north-western Poland, which has a minimum of six high status burials (though these do not attain Hoby-status) dating to the periods B1 and B2 (fig. 1; Eggers 1949/1950, Gebühr 1974, Hahuła/Nowakowski 2001). This grave field points towards several generations of a top rank in the society and some permanence in settlement. Consequently, one would expect that the remains of a once substantial settlement are still to be found in the area. For continental respects, written sources are also of interest, in particular Tacitus` *Annales* 2, 62. There it is explicitly stated that Marbod (unknown year of birth; deceased in 36/37 AD), who lived in Rome for a while as a young man and became the king of the Markomanns later, had a residence and a fort nearby (*regiam castellumque iuxta situm*) in his realm in parts of present day Bohemia and Moravia (fig. 1; Kehne 2001). The appearance of that residence and the fort remains an open question that has been mentioned by many different scholars (e.g. Dannenbauer 1941, Callmer 1997:18). Keeping in mind Marbod´s very powerful position, however, this case would hardly be suitable for making comparisons with the contemporary society in northern Europe.

Returning to the topic of the present study, i.e. the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites, one has to conclude that there is very little to deduce from the Scandinavian and continental sources for the Early Roman Iron Age on the basis of a spatial analysis of dominion. In general, it is an open question as to whether there was any "architecture of power" in terms of special settlements or buildings before the 3rd century AD, when a centre of power came into being at Gudme on Funen in southern Scandinavia. The written source on king Marbod´s residence could hardly be counted as corroborative data for Scandinavia. We are left with the starting point for the Early Iron Age, which is the Forsand-village. However, this is actually worthy of some consideration as it was only ca. 30 km away from the Tu-ridge and existed throughout the entire Roman and Migration Periods. Following the arguments of its excavator, T. Løken, there is reason to suggest some social stratification on settlement archaeological grounds as early as the pre-Roman Iron Age in terms of long houses which stand out by their dimensions and integrated hall parts.

Putting aside settlement archaeology, there is hardly any evidence on the basis of burial furnishings of pre-Roman or Early Roman Iron Age date compared to 4 kg of gold (grave, treasure, and loose finds) in the Migration Period, i.e. the "Golden Age" of Rogaland (for example Myhre 1987, Løken 1998:4). Yet, the importance of the Forsand-investigation cannot be underestimated. It is very possible that the hall with *guldgubber* on the Tu-ridge had a predecessor in terms of a long house with an integrated hall-part. Considering Jæren as the most important settlement area in south-western Norway with regards to fertility and size, social stratification is likely to have arisen much earlier and much more substantially than in Forsand.

Summary

Following a central place agenda, a very lively picture of a Migration Period centre of power was drawn for the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge. It was probably the most outstanding spot in the entirety of middle and southern Jæren, when seen against both a regional and international background. In contrast, the Early Roman Iron Age seems like an unsolvable case in central place respects since there is not the slightest piece of evidence known from Jæren, and even an international perspective fails in identifying any substantial building remains of that date in Scandinavia or north of the Limes. The entirely excavated Forsand-village to the south-east of Stavanger can be used for making interesting speculations about social stratification on the basis of settlement archaeology. Facing such a stratification in an entire sequence of outstanding buildings from as early as ca. 200 BC and onwards, one would have to expect a much earlier and more substantial development of that kind for Jæren, which yields the most fertile and largest piece of land favourable for agriculture in south-western Norway. If any development was on its way towards social stratification in Jæren earlier than in the Early Roman Iron Age (and we can be rather sure that it was), the first place to have played a role would have been the Tu-ridge.

6.4. An archaeological-historical perspective: court sites, bog offerings and the Limes

As the archaeological evaluation has shown, the court sites were probably erected in the first or second century AD (table 2). This assumption is mainly based upon series of radiocarbon datings supplemented by only a

few pottery sherds of period B2. Since there are very few finds that belong to the initial period of court site use, this early era cannot be characterized by any more detail. In the same way, the Early Roman Iron Age of Jæren yields very scarce evidence, i.e. a rather limited number of burials, almost none of which had yielded any objects of particular wealth or weapons, and virtually no farm house in an ordinary settlement context (chapter 4.3). Facing the present source situation, the early court sites cannot be embedded into any regional context.

In the following, an attempt is made to come to some understanding of Jæren's society in the first and second century AD by using external sources. Firstly, the most recent Danish bog offering research is addressed, mainly based on the evaluation of the Illerup site close to Århus. This affects the interpretation of society on the Scandinavian Peninsula as much as on the neighbouring continent and, to some extent, it is possible to use Roman written sources for validation (Ilkjær 1990, 1993, Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996, Ilkjær 2000, 2001a, Biborski/Ilkjær 2006). Secondly, the technological analysis of Roman swords, again on the basis of the Illerup finds, is very insightful. Obviously, both approaches relate to the late second and/or early third centuries AD (i.e. period C1b), but the implications might in fact point towards general developments reaching further back in time. The question is: to what extent might these archaeological-historical reflections help in the discussion of the "equality vs. inequality" question regarding the court sites?

An article published in 1999 addressed the Norwegian Roman period graves which contained swords (Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1999). Eight finds were identified as Roman due to their stamps or manufacturing marks, among them seven from eastern Norway that were dated to the third and fourth centuries AD. Next it was emphasized that many other swords in Norwegian graves (as many as 80 in a preliminary lists) were probably made in Roman workshops as they do not differ typologically from the eight, undoubtedly Roman, products. As the chronology shows, as many as ca. 50% of all these swords can be dated to period C1b. Most recent metallurgical analysis of the swords from Illerup, carried out by M. Biborski, has strengthened the Roman hypothesis. The prevalent Scandinavian sword types of period C1b, i.e. *Vimose-Illerup* and *Woerden-Bjärs*, are thought to be entirely of Roman provenance because of their complicated manufacturing techniques (Biborski/Ilkjær 2006:280-295).

As to Jæren in southwestern Norway in the Roman period, just two weapon graves have been referred to in the afore mentioned study: Hå (Hå) of period C1 and Håland (Hå) of period C3, in both cases richly furnished burials (list 1; Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1999:table 2). Taking the general paucity of weapons in Jæren in the Early Roman and the initial part of the later Roman period as it is, times would appear to have been peaceful in Jæren. However, a critical examination of the source material would suggest that, due to the nature of the burial rites, the archaeological record is misleading (Bemmann-Hahne 1994:fig. 27-32). Weapons were widespread in Early Roman Iron Age burials in eastern Norway but a decrease followed in the Migration Period, and it was the exact reverse in south-western Norway. For this reason, weapons are likely to have been widespread in Roman Iron Age south-western Norway but were not used as grave furnishings.

It remains an open question as to how the peak in Roman swords of C1b date in Norway can be explained. In the quoted article, it has been considered to be a result of the elite members of Norwegian society being part of yet older communication and trading networks. Any such view, however, has to be weighed against the alleged Roman ban to export weapons to foreigners (Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1999). However, this assumption may be the result of a misunderstanding of written sources (Rankov 1999). Alternatively, the burials that contained swords might be regarded as belonging to those Norse mercenaries in the Roman army who returned with their weapons at the end of their service. In the same respect, the above-mentioned northern Norwegian weapon-grave of C1b date from Bø (just 40 m away from a court site) carries particular weight inasmuch it not only contained a Roman sword but also yielded fragments of textiles identical with those used in the Roman army (Slomann 1959, Solberg 2000:115). It is an interesting fact that the graves with Roman swords belong to some extent to clusters in inland eastern Norway. Hypothetically speaking, one might regard these clusters, which are in very limited areas and are particularly evident in Hadeland (Oppland), as an archaeological reflection of once existing military subunits (Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1999: table 2, Grimm 2008:79-82).

Danish bog offerings of military equipment, which

mainly date from the third to the fifth centuries AD, have been well-known since Conrad Engelhardt´s investigations in the late 1850s and following but their meaning is still very much discussed (e.g. Ilkjær 2003; Lund Hansen 2003). Today, there seems to be some agreement that these sites reflect major offerings made on a few occasions and that the military equipment of a defeated army, e.g. swords, shields, lances and spears, were thrown into holy waters by victorious domestic forces. There is some reason to suggest that large offerings (not least the ca. 15.000 objects of the early third century from Illerup place A) resulted from battles close to the holy water. Looking on the restricted areas of provenance of some find categories (Scandinavian strike-a-lights, three-layer-combs with peculiar construction techniques from parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula etc.) and/or raw materials (elk antlers from the Scandinavian Peninsula, an axe shaft of south-western Norwegian's Christ's thorn) one could suggest different waves of attacks in the first half of the third century AD. These departed from the northernmost continent or parts of the Scandinavian Peninsula respectively and headed for Jutland and Funen (fig. 30; for example Ilkjær 1993:vol. 3, 376-385; 2001a:vol.9, 347-353). However, the possibility that the majority of these men had their homesteads on parts of the Scandinavian peninsula but were mercenaries in the Roman army cannot be ruled out (Hedeager 1992a:203, Lund Hansen 2003:89).

For the Illerup place A offering that is dated to the early third century, an army of 400 men has been ascertained but the site was only partially investigated, and many finds remain unsalvaged. In addition, three different military ranks were identified by the shields that had iron, bronze or silver/golden mountings (Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996:fig.57). Each of the five „commanders" might have had a retinue consisting of ca. 70 men, calculating the evidence from the excavated part of the site. It is important to keep in mind that the evaluation of southern Scandinavian bog offerings of early third century date points towards attacking armies with an identical structure, and the same was probably the case for the victorious defenders. One may rule out almost any participation of forces that originated in present day Norway. However, a link to a wider network and the same military structures is evident, owing to the presence of commanders´ graves in western Norwegian Rutli in Sogn og Fjordane (fig. 5; dating: C1b) and Erga and Avaldsnes respectively (see below; dating: C2). All of these burials would have been hierarchically well-defined in the "Illerup-army". One may object that these graves (there are more than those mentioned that fit into Illerup-categories) are few and they do not constitute any immediate link since the burial customs were chosen by the family of the deceased and not by the "warrior" himself, if he was a warrior at all (Härke 1990). However, the first objection does not adequately take into account the effect of burial customs and the varying preservation conditions for different archaeological source categories (many "lost" graves we do not know of, in contrast to overwhelming find materials offered at the same time in a bog). The second objection is very much worth reflecting upon, but in the present case the display of a well-known system of military ranks in burials is evident, whether the deceased had left any instructions for the burial in his lifetime or whether all of it was done by his surviving family. In this respect, it is an interesting foot-note that there were standardized weapon sets in Norwegian Merovingian and Viking Age burials, to some extent in congruence with later written regulations (Solberg 1985).

In the third century AD, i.e. a period of political instability, the Roman Empire was threatened by neighbouring peoples, foremost the Persians, but also by various Germanic tribes (fig. 30; e.g. Nuber 2005). Just to mention three instances: a massive raid into Gallia in the years 233/234 is indicated by many "treasure finds", which are thought to have been hidden from the attackers (fig. 30; e.g. Nuber 1990). In the years 259/260, the *Obergermanisch-Rätischer Limes*, i.e. the frontier for the only area east of the Rhine under Roman control, was long believed to have been crushed by brutal force, and the former Roman land (the provinces *Germania superior* and *Raetia*, mostly in present day Baden-Württemberg) was taken (e.g. Nuber 1990). Another raid into Gallia took place in the year 275 or a bit later. The so-called *Flußfund von Neupotz*, i.e. the many objects of Roman provenance found in the Rhine, is considered to be the lost booty of plunderers of that event (Künzl 1993). Interestingly, the above-mentioned Bjarkøy cauldron in the very north of Norway is the largest of its kind, but the next biggest artefacts originate from Neupotz (fig. 5). If treated with caution, this might provide us with an idea as to how that cauldron from Bjarkøy got into new hands and finally found its

way into a bog (as a sacrifice, one may assume) in the very north of Norway, in fact only one kilometre away from a court site (Straume/Bollingberg 1995).

For a long time, it was a commonly held belief that the tribe of the *Alamanni*, mentioned for the first time in the year 213 AD, was among the plunderers or conquerors in the above-mentioned events. In contrast, it is considered more likely today that (a) this tribe is mentioned for the first time in the late third century, (b) the Alamannic ethnogenesis that united groups of different origins did not take place any earlier than on the newly conquered ground and (c) the process of Alamannic settlement on this former Roman territory did not get any stronger before the fourth century (fig. 30; e.g. Wenskus 1961:494-512, Keller 1994, Fingerlin 2005, Nuber 2005). Thanks to Ammianus Marcellinus (ca. 330-395), a Roman historian of Greek origin, there is much information about the *Alamanni* in the midst of the fourth century; his descriptions are important because he was an eye witness to some of the events being described. According to Marcellinus' notes, the forces consisted of three military ranks. The numbers given for the men who made up Alamannic retinues vary greatly in the written sources. However, sometimes retinues of the fourth century consisted of only a few hundred people. If this was the case, retinues of the earliest Alamannic formation process in the late 3rd and early 4th century may have consisted of even less people, with no chance of being any more accurate (for example Steuer/Hoeper 1999, 467-470, Steuer 2003).

Admittedly, this has been a hazardously shortened description of highly complex events in the third and fourth century AD, but it very much seems that archaeological and written sources can be linked with one another and do unite parts of the northernmost continent with parts of Scandinavia. The most important thing to keep in mind is the military units that were active in present day Denmark and southern Germany, which had three military ranks and totalled „70 men" (*Illerup, place A*) and „less than a few hundred men" (*Alamanni*).

Returning to south-western Norway, two outstanding weapon graves are worth mentioning: one in Erga ca. five kilometres to the south-west of Dysjane and another in Avaldsnes ca. 50 kilometres to the north of Stavanger (fig. 6). The latter burial is known to be Scandinavia's richest weapon grave of the Roman period, owing to an almost 600 g gold neck ring (for example Slomann 1964, Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996: vol. 5, p. 293-297). In addition, there were more outstanding grave furnishings, such as a shield with a silver boss, silver mountings (only fragmentarily salvaged) and a silver chape. In Erga, a comparable chape was found, together with a belt mount (Ag) and a fingerring (Au) of 25g but the grave monument was probably no longer intact when excavated (S. Kristoffersen in Obrestad 2004:139, Rau 2005). Both burials would have belonged to the uppermost rank in the "Illerup army" and two of them, known from Rogaland´s period C2, are highly remarkable since weapon graves were scarce in the Roman Iron Age of that area. There are only two more Norwegian commander's graves of the Late Roman Iron Age: that in western Norwegian Rutli, Stedje (Sogn og Fjordane), which dates to period C1b, and the middle Norwegian grave in Rømme, Orkdal (Sør-Trøndelag), which belongs to period C2 (fig. 5; e.g. Schulze-Dörlamm 1985, Carnap-Bornheim/Ilkjær 1996:369). However, the effects of burial customs and the varying preservation conditions for different archaeological source categories come into play again. In Illerup place A, five to six sets of equipment that had belonged to commanders were rescued that date to AD 207 at the earliest, and there are hardly any more weapon graves of equal rank known for the entire Roman period in Scandinavia. Consequently, one has to consider many more such graves as being "lost" in those areas that had a weapon burial custom, not too mention those without any such rite. For Norwegian respects, it cannot be underestimated that two out of only four such graves of the Late Roman Iron Age originate from Rogaland with a still rather sparse weapon burial custom in that era.

As far as the topic of the present study is concerned, i.e. the question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites, one has to conclude that the archaeological-historical perspective provided some results that were perhaps surprising. The number of Roman swords of C1b date in Norway and the resemblance of grave furnishings to finds known from Danish bog offerings sites of period C1b (mainly Illerup place A) relate to a society that had a well-advanced military structure, in eastern probably as much as in south-western Norway. This kind of structure, which in fact presupposes a development reaching further back in time, is known to have existed in parts of Norway

whether forces participated in the events on Jutland and Funen in the early third century AD or not. Generally speaking, burials of Early Roman Iron Age date in south-western Norway do not display any particular wealth. One of the very few exceptions, however, a burial from Bø (Torvastad) with a fragmentary Roman bronze vessel (B 6050), was found very close to Avaldsnes and dates to period B2 (fig. 6; Lund Hansen 1987:438).

This could be viewed, though very cautiously, as the missing link for south-western Norwegian "centres of power", which had roots back in the Early Roman Iron Age, though these were much less substantial than they were later on when they had an architecture of their own.

There is yet another and far more impressive exception from period B2, which is a burial from Li (Riska) with two glass vessels, a gold finger ring etc. (S 2448) found c. 10 km to the east of Stavanger (Lund Hansen 1987:437). In south-western Norwegian respects, both burials undoubtedly indicate members of an elite class in society in the late first and most of the second century AD.

The weapon graves in Avaldsnes and Erga were found in areas with no indication of a court site. However, the burial from Erga was found only ca. five kilometres away from the Dyjane gathering place on the Tu-ridge that has been repeatedly attributed to a mainly Migration Period centre of power in the present study. Naturally, one would expect the individual who was buried in Erga to have acted as a „petty king" in his life-time. It is probable that there was no-one of equal rank in the closest surroundings, and that this is why he also controlled the Tu-ridge to the north-east. Considering the ridge's topography and taking into account an archaeological long term-perspective, however, it seems likely that the real centre was usually located there, an exception to the rule being the Erga-grave that is mentioned above.

Finally, military subunits operating in Jutland and close to the Limes in the third century AD were described as having consisted of "ca. 70 men" (*Illerup, place A*) or "less then a few hundred men" (*Alamanni*) respectively. As far as the court sites are concerned, we might speculate a total number of ca. 60 persons gathering, i.e. four persons in ca. 15 houses of 40 square metres each in Dysjane, Klauhauane and Leksaren (Løken 2001a, table 4). Thus, the "organisational units" in Jæren, Jutland/Funen (including both the attackers and defenders behind the Illerup scenario) and on the continent north of the Limes might have been of comparable size (table 7; Grimm 2006, table 3). As to the court sites, they cannot be reliably related to any particular military sphere but it is an interesting observation that the number of persons that gathered would have equalled the mobilisation for a military unit. Following the Illerup principle, the person buried in western Norwegian Rutli (Sogn og Fjordane) in period C1b and those in Avaldsnes and Erga (both in Rogaland, but dating to period C2) would have commanded such a unit. One may suspect that these units were in fact retinues. Based on the written sources, two kinds of retinues can be distinguished from each other (Schulze 1995:41-47). Caesar (*De bello gallico VI, 23*) refers to persons of rank who would instigate a raid and who would attempt to gather people for just that one occassion. In contrast, Tacitus` *Germania* describes far more advanced retinues as stable groups that lived in the house of their commander in peaceful times. It is not intended to speculate upon these written sources but it remains an interesting question as to how northern retinues, that we shall take as given in the Roman Iron Age, were structured in the light of those written sources.

To put it very briefly: The archaeological-historical perspective concludes that Jæren had probably seen well-established military structures since the initial part of the Late Roman Iron Age (compare the graves in Rutli, Erga and Avaldsnes). As to period C1b, it is plausible that swords of Roman origin were once as widespread in south-western Norway as they were further to the east of the country. These military structures and the available number of Roman swords might have been rooted in developments that began earlier and may reach back to the Early Roman Iron Age, i.e. the first period of court site's use. Any such assumption would not only affect the military world, but the society as such.

6.5. Summary: Court sites of Jæren – equality vs. inequality

In the present study, the court sites of Jæren are deliberately focused upon: they are the only large sites in the South-West, very similar to each other, only a few kilometres apart from each other and, finally, built at roughly the same time. If one hopes for results from

south-western Norwegian court site research, then the gathering places in Jæren would be the natural starting point. Therefore, chapter 4 referred to the archaeology, context and function of these particular sites from a local perspective. By contrast, chapter 5 considered the gathering places from a regional, that is to say a south-western Norwegian, perspective, but this way of thinking again emphasized the importance of Jæren. These chapters failed to arrive at any clear conclusions. Instead, they offered conclusions of varying degrees when it comes to the red thread/*Leitmotiv* of the present study: the question of equality vs. inequality regarding the court sites.

As to the *context* (or, in other terms, *socially*), three alternative interpretations were outlined, relating to a society ranging from simple to advanced and that built the gathering sites:

– substory A (taking the sources as they are with a minor degree of speculation): The population building the gathering grounds was limited in number and equal in social status. At a later date, social stratification and settlement activities might have increased;
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. Persons with some rank living on neighbouring farms had the grounds built;
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There was a dense population and social stratification in the period the gathering grounds were erected. The initative for building the grounds lay in the hands of centres nearby, and they controlled what happened there.

Functionally, three alternative interpretations were put forward, differing between monofunctional, oligofunctual, and multifunctional aspects of the gathering sites:

– substory A (just keeping to the sources with a minor degree of speculation): The one decisive function was social, owing to the gathering ground´s placement in the middle of a naturally delineated area;
– substory B (with a medium degree of speculation): There were functions in addition to the social, i.e. ting, cult and market (prerequisite: firm institutions of the kind mentioned above and their association with the gathering grounds);
– substory C (with a high degree of speculation): There were even more functions in addition to the those just mentioned, i.e. "politics and military" (prerequisite: a highly stratified society under the authority of „petty kings", who had the court sites built and controlled what happened there).

The present sixth chapter had an international perspective that was, at best, meant to be helpful in the discussion of the court sites on a larger base. Three different kinds of studies played a role: five comparative studies (chapter 6.2), two with a central place perspective (chapter 6.3) and, finally, a study that has an archaeological-historical background (chapter 6.4).

Firstly, the comparative approach gathered evidence for the ting-hypothesis (northern Norwegian court sites; Icelandic ting sites), whereas there is no obvious link between the gathering grounds and the exertion of power, as it can be observed in somewhat different archaeological circumstances (the Eketorp ring-fort on Öland; Yeavering in England). An exception to that rule might be the Tu-ridge with its court site and somewhat questionable hall, but the two of them overlapped only, if at all, in the fourth and fifth centuries AD. It seems a well-established assumption that the gathering grounds were built after a common fixed design at the same time, perhaps following the initiative of one person of some rank in Jæren with the power to have his idea realized.

Secondly, following a central place agenda, a very lively picture of a Migration Period centre of power was drawn for the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge. This was probably the most outstanding spot in the entirety of middle and southern Jæren, seen against both a regional and international background. In contrast, the Early Iron Age seems like an unsolvable case in central place respects since there is not the slightest piece of evidence known from Jæren, and even an international perspective fails in identifying any substantial building remains of that date in Scandinavia or north of the Limes. The entirely excavated Forsand-village to the south-east of Stavanger can be used to make some interesting speculations about social stratification on the basis of settlement archaeology. Facing such a stratification in an entire sequence of significant buildings from as early as ca. 200 BC and onwards, one would have to expect a much earlier and more substantial development of this kind for Jæren, which yields the most

fertile and largest piece of land favourable for agriculture in south-western Norway. If any development was on its way towards social stratification in Jæren earlier than in the Early Roman Iron Age (and we can be rather sure that it was) the first place to have played a role would have been the Tu-ridge.

Thirdly, the archaeological-historical perspective concluded that Jæren probably as much as eastern Norway, southern Scandinavia and the northernmost continent saw well-established military structures in the initial part of the Late Roman Iron Age. It is a well-established assumption that those structures were rooted in developments that started earlier and may reach back to the Early Iron Age, i.e. the first period of court site´s use. Any such assumption would not only affect the military world, but the society as such.

To piece together the different threads of chapter 6: there are persuasive arguments for launching the ting hypothesis, on comparative-external as much as on local and regional south-western Norwegian grounds (considering the "ting place continuity"). However, this strongly egalitarian element is confronted with aspects of social stratification and dominion. The south-western Norwegian Forsand-village to the south-east of Stavanger provides some evidence for a social stratification on settlement-archaeological grounds as early as in the pre-Roman Iron Age. Any assumption of this kind might be strengthened by the indications for advanced military structures in parts of Norway in the initial part of the Late Roman Iron Age. They might be rooted in developments which started earlier. *Hypothetically speaking*, one may suggest that some sort of "centre of power" already existed on the south-western Norwegian Tu-ridge during the period in which the court site by the name of Dysjane was constructed. On the ridge, the gathering ground and power were simply too closely connected to disregard an interrelation, in contrast to the large sites further to the south (Klauhauane and Leksaren) where it is far more difficult to argue for such an immediate spatial connection.

7. Final Remarks: Court sites and beyond

The Dysjane court site on the Tu-ridge in south-western Norway is probably almost as well-preserved as it was during N. Nicolaysen´s first visit (in 1861, if this was his first visit) to the ridge (fig. 2). There are two halves to the site, with pairs of longitudinal earthen walls and depressions in between. These two halves encircle an area in the middle, and in the midst of this area there is a minor mound.

Ca. 25 such sites with a diameter of up to 80 m are known today from Norway, most notably from the South-West and the very North. Undoubtedly, these are amongst the most impressive kinds of archaeological monuments in Norway, together with, for example, very substantial grave mounds, some much more than 50 m across, and the ship finds from Gokstad and Oseberg (figs. 3-6). Even in European respects, the gathering sites deserve particular attention as well-preserved testimonies for impressive building activities of the first or second centuries AD outside the Roman world.

The present study partly followed an agenda for future court site research in south-western Rogaland that was once described by a former director of the Archaeological museum in Stavanger (AmS), O. Møllerop, in 1971 (chapter 1). He proposed:
– To restudy the excavation documents from four sites;
– To carry out further excavations;
– To discuss the sites´ function(s) on this enlarged base.

One could say that some parts of Møllerop´s agenda were realized in the last decades by means of:
– A restudy of some of the Leksaren excavation documents by K. Kallhovd in 1994 (chapter 2);
– Re-investigations in the middle and late 1980s at the Håvodl-site in Rogaland (chapter 12.1), and an excavation of a just detected site in the 1970s in southernmost Oddernes in Vest-Agder (chapter 5).

The present study devoted itself to the still unrealized goals in Møllerop´s terms:
– The publication of the documents from four investigated sites in south-western Rogaland (chapters 4-5, 11-12);
– Reflections on the sites´ use on that enlarged material base (chapters 4-6).

The analysis of the gathering places was made in three major steps:
– A local court site perspective for Jæren that addressed the archaeology, context and function of the sites (chapter 4);
– A regional court site perspective for Rogaland and Vest-Agder that attempted to gather additional evidence (chapter 5);
– An international court site perspective that tried to shed light on the monuments from a wider comparative, central place and archaeological-historical perspective (chapters 3 and 6).

The present analysis focused upon the court sites of Jæren: These are the only large sites in the South-West, very much like each other, only a few kilometres apart, and, finally, built at roughly the same time. If one hopes for results in south-western Norwegian court site research, the gathering places in Jæren would be the natural starting point. In addition, an attempt was made to approach the contemporary society of Jæren that built and used the court sites. In this respect, the topographically and archaeologically outstanding Tu-ridge with the Dysjane court site in the midst of a naturally delineated settlement district, and of flat Jæren in general, played a key role.

The working process itself and worthwhile conversations at AmS changed the outline of the present study inasmuch as the initial hypothesis relating the gathering sites with the exertion of power was chosen as just one out of two (the other being the ting-related aspect). In doing so, some of the earlier contributions of the present author are partly withdrawn. The question of "equality vs. inequality" regarding the court sites that has been the red thread/*Leitmotiv* of the analysis remained open during the entire work on purpose. It was

considered as equally important to show a maximum awareness of source-critical implications and to assume an international perspective that, is was hoped, would enrich the discussion about Jæren that in many ways is bound to fail because of a lack of knowledge in basic archaeological terms for the very first centuries AD.

According to the author's opinion, the basic task of clarifying all aspects of court site archaeology is unsolved. There is good reason to suggest, as was done in the present study, that the sites went through two different stages: a primary stage where wood was used as a building material and that was mainly Early Roman Iron Age and a secondary stage that used stone and was mainly Late Roman and Early Migration Period date (table 2). This, however, is far from being substantiated beyond doubt. A dubious aspect is the question of later use. So far, indications are scarce: the upper part of the culture layers in the houses can often be dated by early representatives of the bucket-shaped pots as the main body of later specimens. Notably, they date back to the late fourth and perhaps fifth centuries. There are, however, a few unstratified finds that postdate the main period of use and some radiocarbon datings, mainly from Leksaren and to a lesser degree from Håvodl, which point towards a use/reuse in the later part of the Migration and perhaps even into the Merovingian Period. These few radiocarbon datings, from samples taken out of relatively late features within court site houses, are thought-provoking. However, they cannot be taken at face value as proof of the entire court site organization's "afterlife" in the Late Iron Age. Rather, they point towards a sporadic reuse of some of the houses.

It is the author's point of view that there is no definite answer to the question of "equality vs. inequality" or, as one may call it, "the social question" regarding the court sites. The one unsolvable problem when searching for an answer is the lack of archaeological sources for the Roman period. As described above, the first two-thirds of Jæren's Roman Iron Age could be regarded in different ways, ranging from an area with comparatively few inhabitants and without any social stratification to one that had a dense population with different social levels (chapter 4.3).

Following the latter perspective, the Dysjane court site might have had a link to an Early Roman Iron Age centre of power on the Tu-ridge. Since that centre was so close, it had probably built the site and controlled the gatherings. The situation in Klauhauane and Leksaren, however, might have been different since the large farms were further apart, and the connection just cannot be visualized as persuasively as for the Tu-ridge. Taking the ridge in its archaeological hegemony for parts of Jæren's Iron Age, one may actually suggest that Dysjane was the first site built in Jæren and the starting point for erecting such gathering grounds in south-western Norway.

A completely opposite, and perhaps more plausible, proposal was made by O. Rønneseth (chapters 2; 3.2). The large sites in Jæren were placed out of strategic concern, i.e. to serve as gathering grounds that were easily accessible to all concerned. However, the social centres were not in these locations. Thus, Klauhauane and Leksaren were strategically placed, yet not associated with any large farms (these were present but were at some distance and they are not well-attested any earlier than the Late Roman and Migration Period). Dysjane was placed the same way, and a centre of power just happened to be nearby but one cannot be sure that this centre already existed as a "firm institution" in the Early Roman Iron Age. Jæren's Migration Period is much easier to envisage. The Tu-ridge seems to have been the one overwhelmingly dominant spot, but all the lengthy reflections made in the present study were mostly out of context since the gathering grounds were probably no longer used (chapter 6).

Even the status of the Tu-ridge, however, that seemed unquestionable has been very recently rocked by highlighting the Lye-area some kilometres to the south-east (Myhre 2007). There is even reason to suggest a "forgotten" central place of Late Roman and Migration Period date in Lye, on archaeological as much as on toponym grounds (*Lygi*, i.e. the original way of spelling, stands for a gathering place, perhaps in religious terms; compare NG 10:143-144). A long-term perspective stretching throughout the entire first millennium AD and even further back in time might rather, however, point towards the supremacy of the Tu-ridge, topographically and archaeologically speaking. Exceptions to that rule would only have been natural, which would mean that there were episodical shifts of power in the short term, but generally the people on the Tu-ridge would have retained their power, since they benefitted from the ridge's strategic position along with its fertility, which was outstanding even for Jæren.

From a functional point of view, social matters, like

meetings, sports and games seem to be the first choice among all the different functional tasks that one may ascribe to the court sites when taking into consideration Christaller´s and Denecke´s list of central functions for modern and historical centres of power (chapters 3.2, 4.4). If ting meetings were held there, so probably was the exertion of cult that can be demonstrated to have been attached to the same kinds of sites by means of written sources (chapter 6.2). Even economic matters, for example in terms of a local exchange of goods, cannot be ruled out. Tacitus is the one source for the ting as the main political forum of decision-making of the free and equal in the very first centuries AD, but he described Germanic tribes with strong kingdoms as well. This means that sometimes the ting might have been the only forum for politics and jurisdiction but in other times there might have been petty kings, "the more equal among the equal", to set the agendas and the others were expected to do nothing else but to comply.

The lengthy international perspective in the present study has proven insightful in different ways. When it comes to the Tu-ridge in the midst of flat Jæren, which stands out in topographical and archaeological respects like no other spot in the area, there is every reason to suggest that once there was a centre of power on that hill. It seems to have reached its peak in the Migration Period but, in this respect, different factors are worth keeping in mind: how representative are finds in general, and in what periods was wealth displayed by means of large burial mounds or richly furnished graves? One cannot go wrong in stating that a centre of power on the ridge was probably closer to centres of "continental design" (with hall buildings of their own) than to the northern Norwegian chieftain's farm at Borg that united different representative functions of dominion (hall, cult, residence) under one common roof. However, any such paramount farm (to chose a more neutral term) cannot be demonstrated to have existed any earlier than in the third/fourth century AD, judging from overall Scandinavian and continental sources. It remains an open question as to whether any "architecture of power" existed in its own right in the first two centuries AD. As to Jæren, two aspects are worth mentioning. Firstly, the entirely excavated settlement of Forsand, to the south-east of Stavanger and outside Jæren, yielded evidence for a social stratification on settlement archaeological grounds that dates back to ca. 200 BC. As a matter of fact, one would surely expect that to have happened much earlier and much more intensely in Jæren. Secondly, an archaeological-historical perspective shows that Jæren probably as much as eastern Norway, southern Scandinavia and the northernmost continent saw well-established military structures in the initial part of the Late Roman Iron Age. Probably, these structures were rooted in developments that had already started in the Early Roman Iron Age, i.e. the first period of court site's use.

The present author would be the first to admit that the present study could be criticized in many ways, in particular chapters 3 and 6, which give a very brief, if not to say oversimplified, introduction to many different topics. This criticism could also include the focus on research in just a few countries, the European-centred approach, the lack of any anthropological considerations and the ignorance of the living conditions of Iron Age man and woman.

As a matter of fact, a kind of "individualized history" might be written by using the runic inscriptions in the earlier and later *futhark* that are known from Jæren. It is probably not a matter of pure coincidence that several objects with inscriptions of the earlier *futhark* were indeed found close to the gathering grounds. The most interesting of these inscribed items is probably a relief fibula of gilded bronze from Eikeland, Time (only several hundred metres to the north of the Håvodl court site), which belonged to a woman's grave found in Norway's largest grave chamber not less than 7 m long (e.g. Myhre 1965a, Kristoffersen 2000:cat.nr. 45). The inscription on this fibula could be interpreted in terms of a man giving the fibula as a gift to his wife (e.g. S. Kristoffersen in Obrestad 2004:81), but others have ascribed a more ritual meaning to the inscription (e.g. Krause/Jankuhn 1966:cat.nr. 17a).

There is no doubt that court sites would be a well-chosen topic for further reflections and, hopefully, the documentary materials presented in the present study will be helpful. Most recent contributions have expressed the hope of reaching some conclusions on court site archaeology that would cover both northern and south-western Norway (Myhre 2002:201-207, Bertelsen/Løken 2005). Undoubtedly, this would be highly welcome as a reanimation of the approach once chosen by H.E. Lund (1965).

The international perspective has been deliberately chosen to allow as colourful a picture as possible for south-western Norway and central place research in

general. What was sketched in this study was nothing but a very small selection of international central place research, and the present analysis failed to exemplify the different kinds of methodological angles. It seems to the present author that, except for few contributions, any international history of research is missing (chapter 3.2). This is highly regrettable.

The Bohemian Basin, delineated by ridges from the outside world, is chosen as a last vivid picture in terms of "court sites and beyond" (figs. 1, 31; Salač 2000). An overall archaeological analysis unveils four areas that stand out when seen in a long-term perspective, for instance in terms of the many foreign goods and richly furnished burials from the Late Neolithic onwards. In two of the cases (1-2), the exploitation of natural resources also played a role. It very much seems that topographical criteria were decisive for choosing the areas, i.e. the combination of fertile soils with traffic routes: in three out of four cases (1-3) those were waterways which lead to other parts of Europe and in yet another case (4) it was the important land route that connects Bohemia with Moravia. Due to the absence of excavations or older occupation layers being covered by a present city, as is the case with Prague (Praha), the appearance of these premodern places or farms is unknown. Many interesting questions would arise from the Bohemian case when it is seen against the spatial pattern of central sites in other areas, perhaps even some that have been mentioned in the present study…

8. Literature

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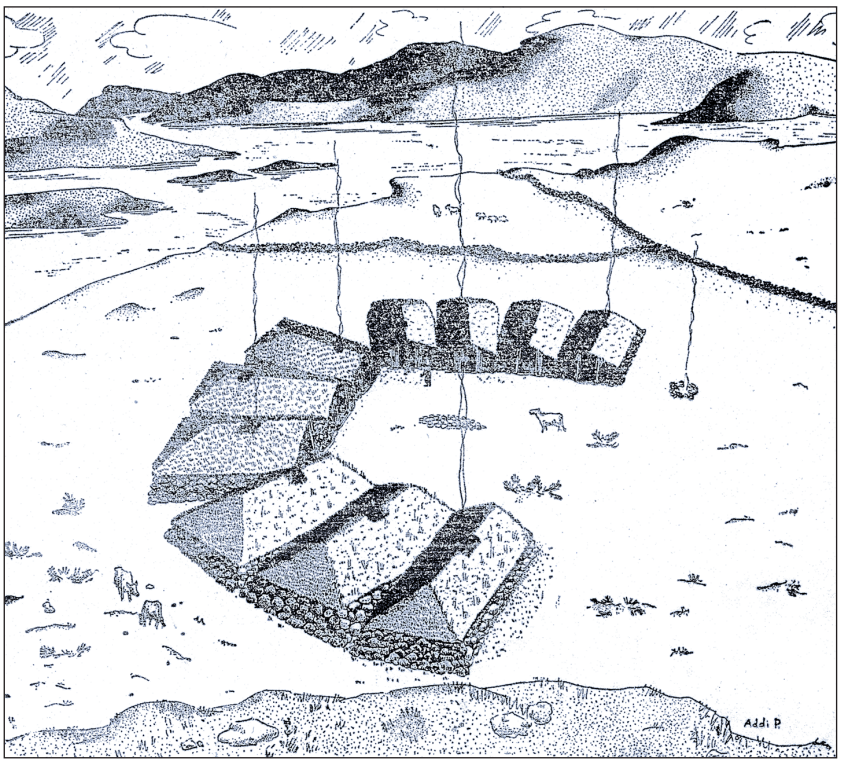
9. Maps 1–32

Fig. 1. Some sites mentioned in the text (outside Norway).

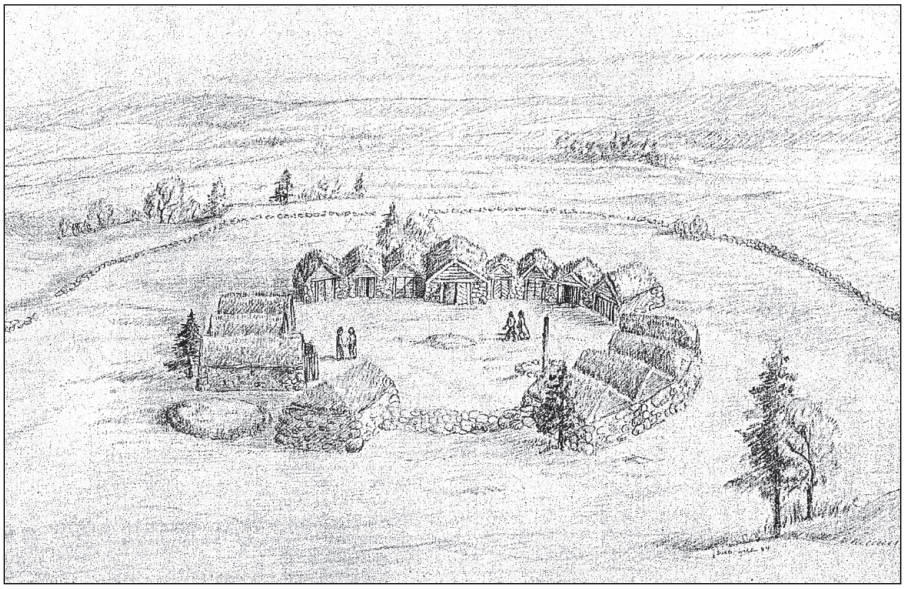
Fig. 2. An aerial photograph of the Dysjane court site on the Tu-ridge (Foto: R. Jonsrud, AM).



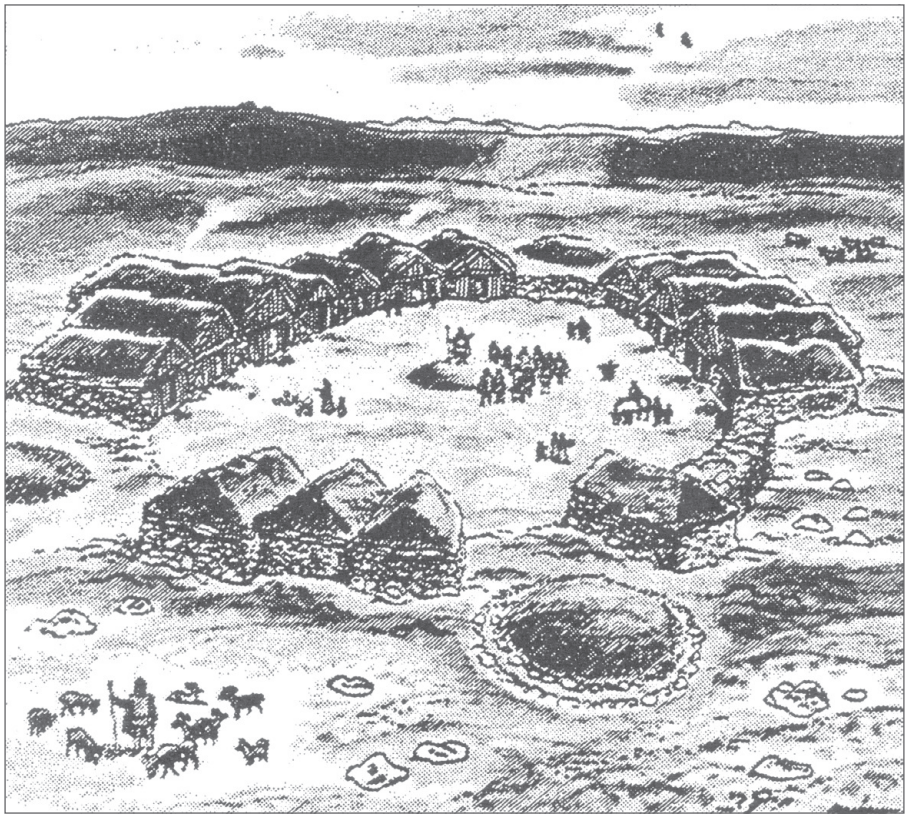
Øygården in the South-West (drawing: Stavanger Aftenposten 1940; top. ark. AmS).

Steigen in the North (drawing: A. Reinert in 1956; published in Lund 1959:fig. 2).

Fig. 3. Reconstruction drawings of court sites.



Leksaren in the South-West (drawing: Oelbracht in the 1940s; published in Sprockhoff 1945:59).



Leksaren in the South-West (drawing: A. Næsheim; published in Kallhovd 1994:fig. 9).

Fig. 4. Reconstruction drawings of court sites.

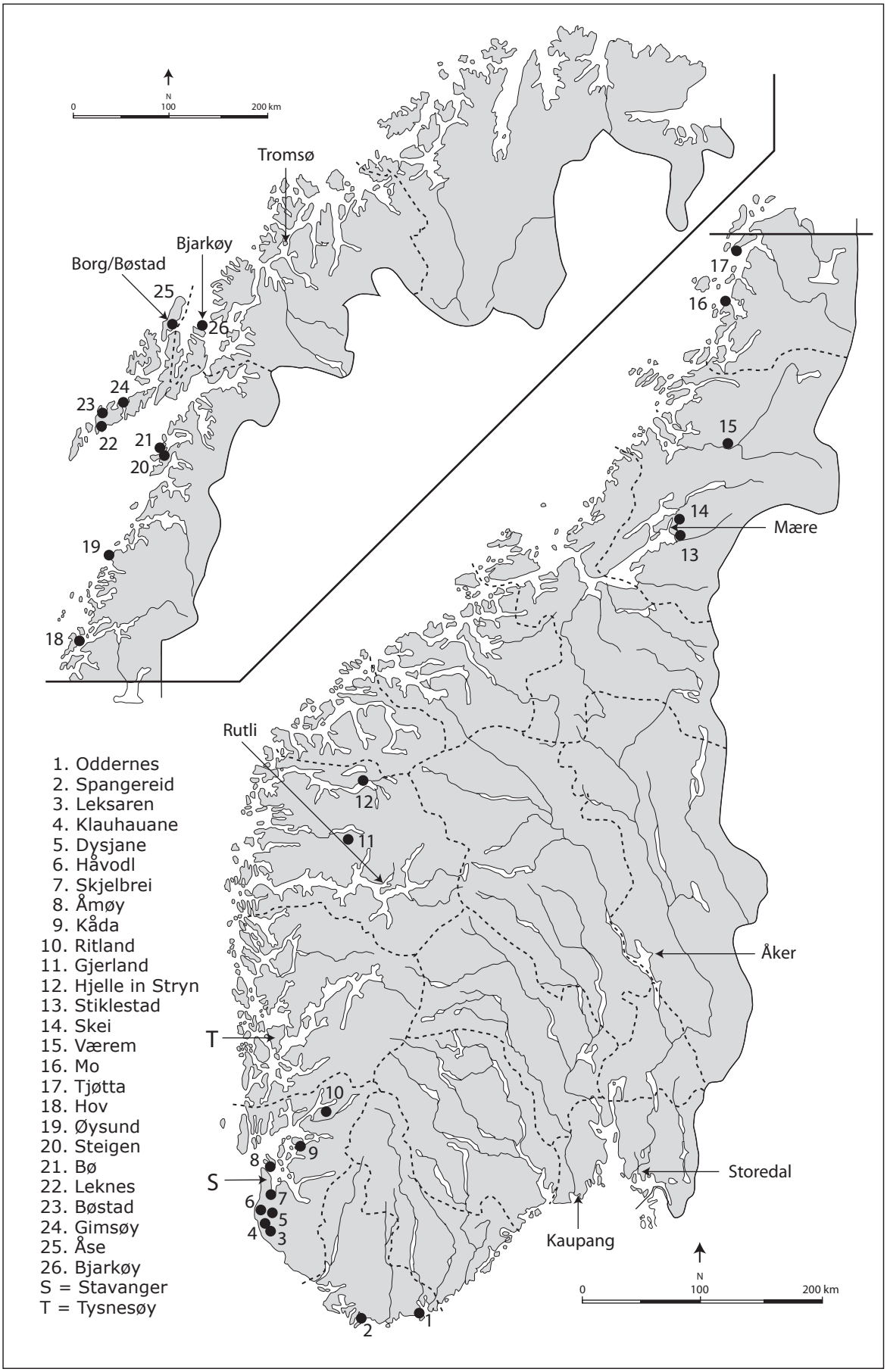
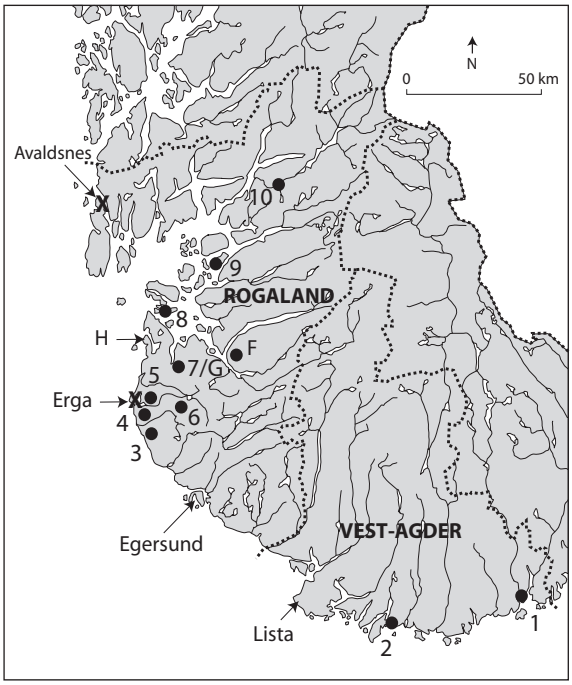
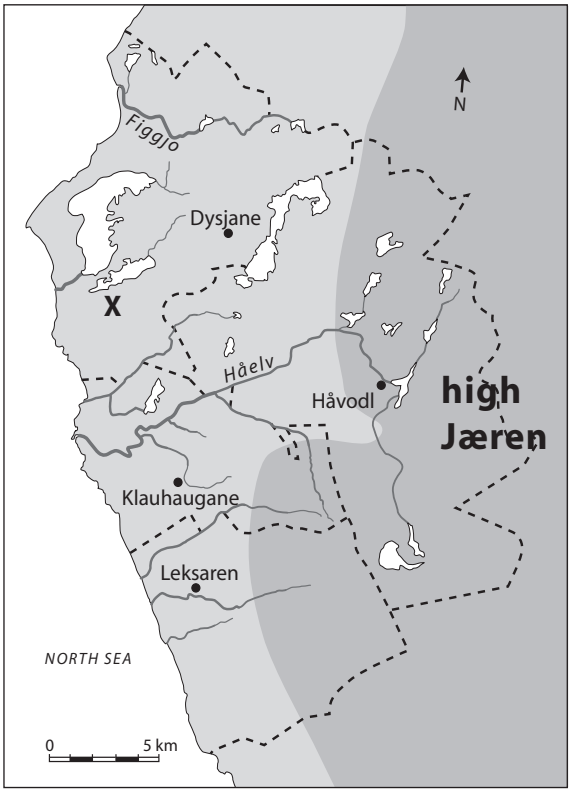


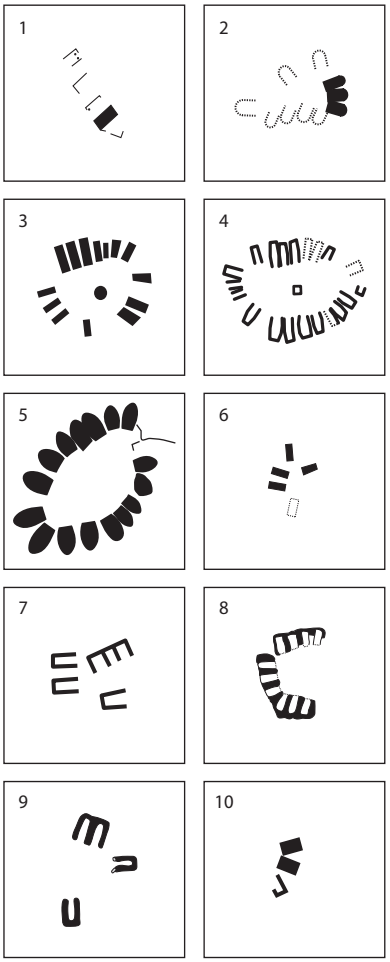
Fig. 5. Court sites in Norway and other Norwegian locations mentioned in the text (partly after Grimm/Stylegar 2004: fig. 1).



The court sites in the South-West (1-10) and some of the other sites mentioned in the text (partly after Grimm/Stylegar 2004:fig. 9). "X" marks the outstanding weapon graves in Erga and Avaldsnes; H: Hafrsfjord; F: Forsand; G: Gandsfjord to the west of Skjelbrei (nr. 7).



Court sites in middle Jæren (Grimm 2006a:fig.3). "X" marks the Erga weapon grave.



Simplified plans of the court sites. (Grimm/ Stylegar 2004:fig.2 with alterations).

1. Oddernes
2. Spangereid
3. Leksaren
4. Klauhauane
5. Dysjane
6. Håvodl
7. Skjelbrei
8. Øygarden
9. Kåda
10. Ritland

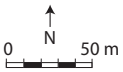


Fig. 6. Court sites in south-western Norway.

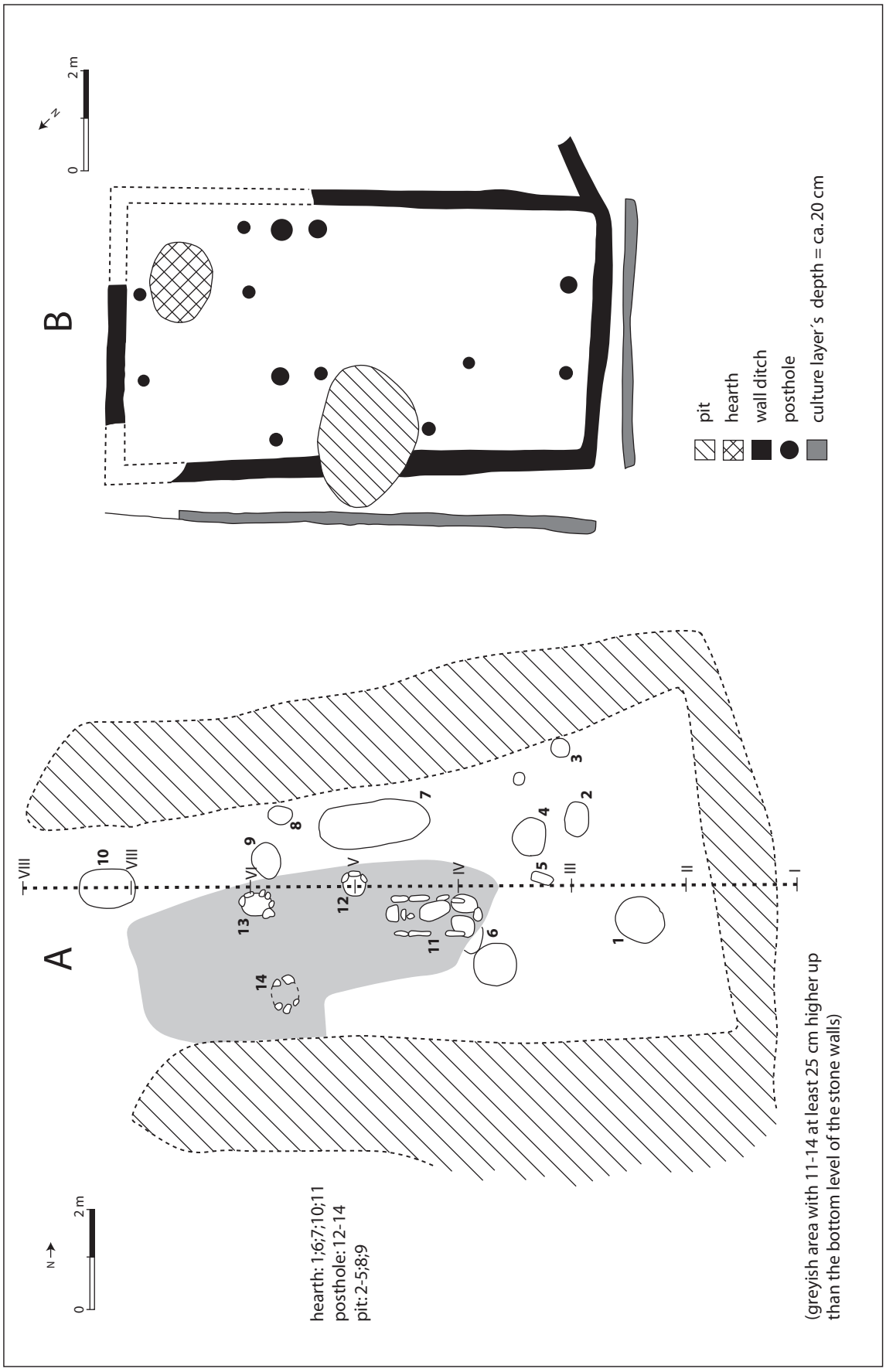


Fig. 7. Excavation plans of court site houses.
A. House 9 in Leksaren (top. ark. AMS; redrawing: Lars Foged Thomsen); B. House 1 in Oddernes (Rolfsen 1976: fig. 4)

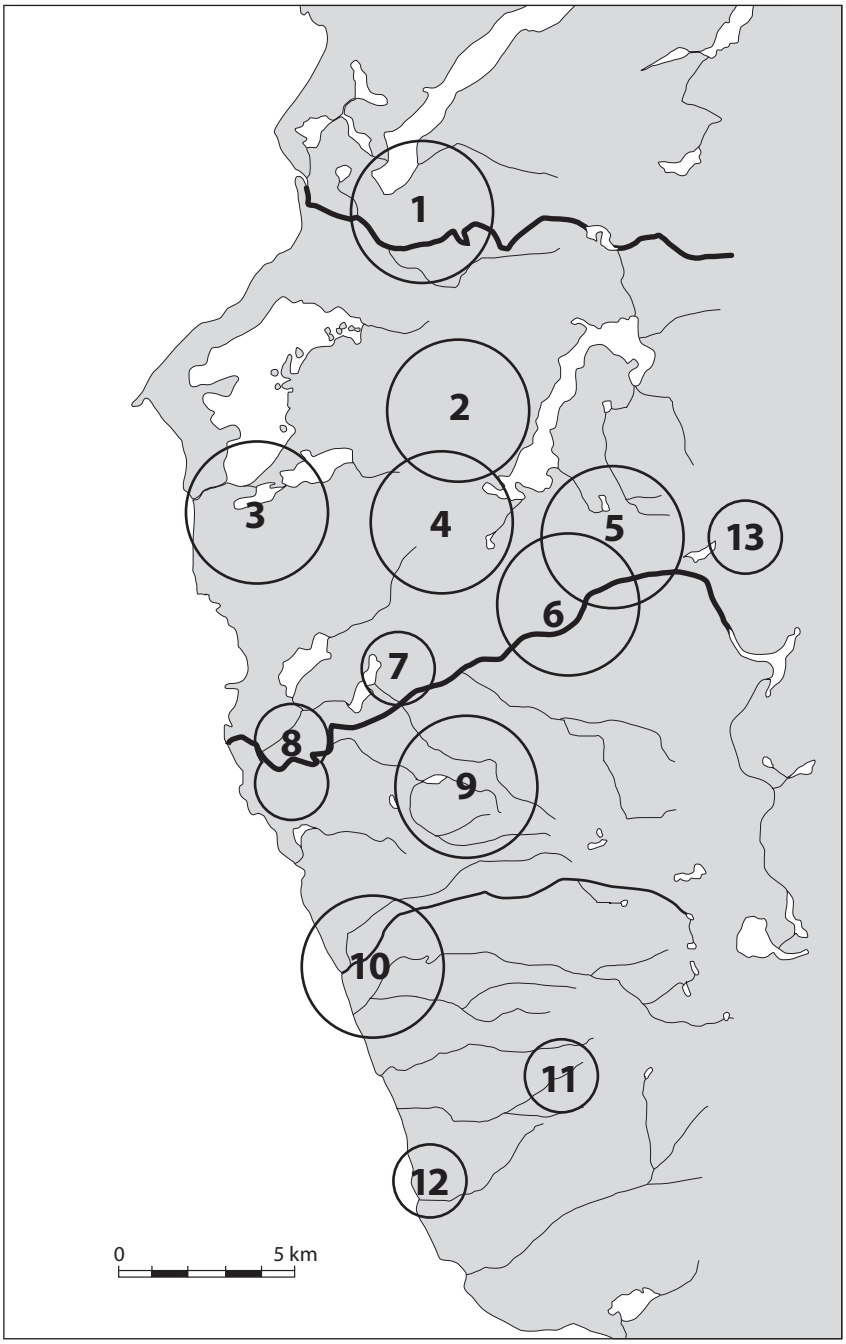
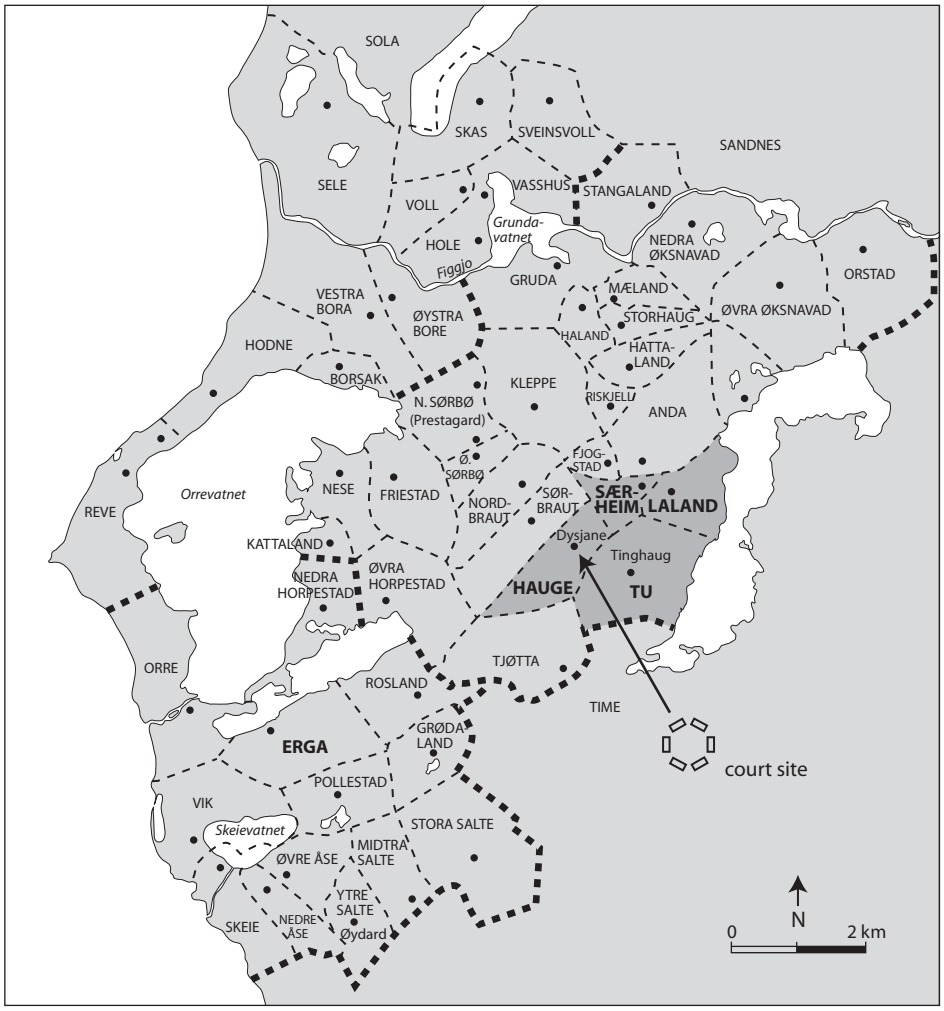
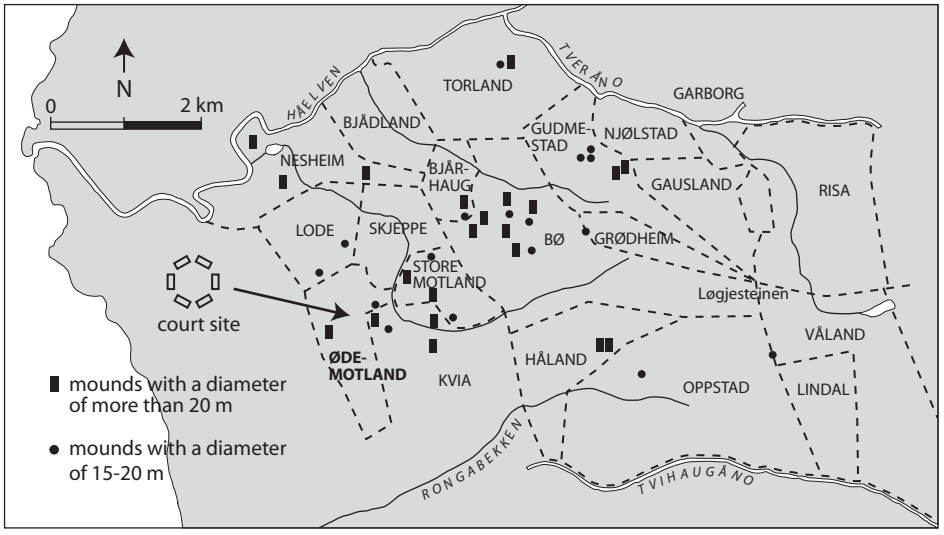


Fig. 8. Focal areas in middle and southern Jæren in the first millennium AD and the Middle Ages (compare table 3 list 1; partly redrawn after Myhre 1978: fig. 19).

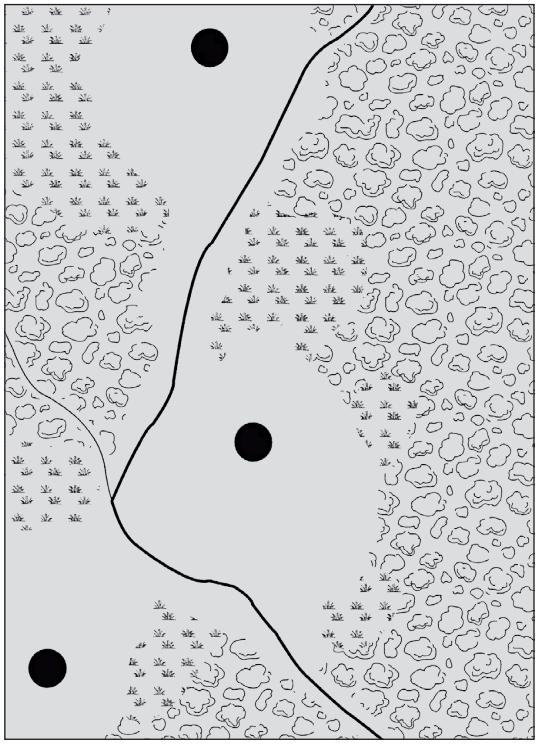


Dysjane (top. ark. AmS; redrawn by Lars Foged Thomsen).
The outstanding areas on the Tu-ridge and at Erga are indicated.

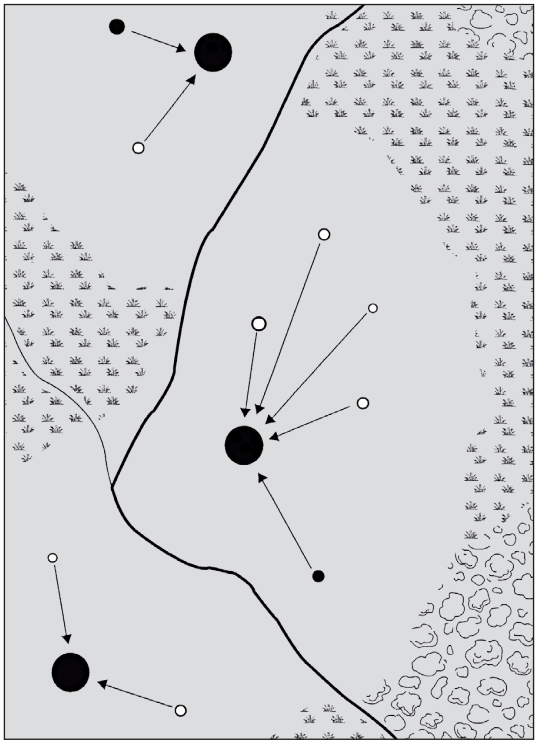


Klauhauane in Ødemotland (after Møllerop 1957: fig:1).

Fig. 9. South-western court sites in their surroundings.



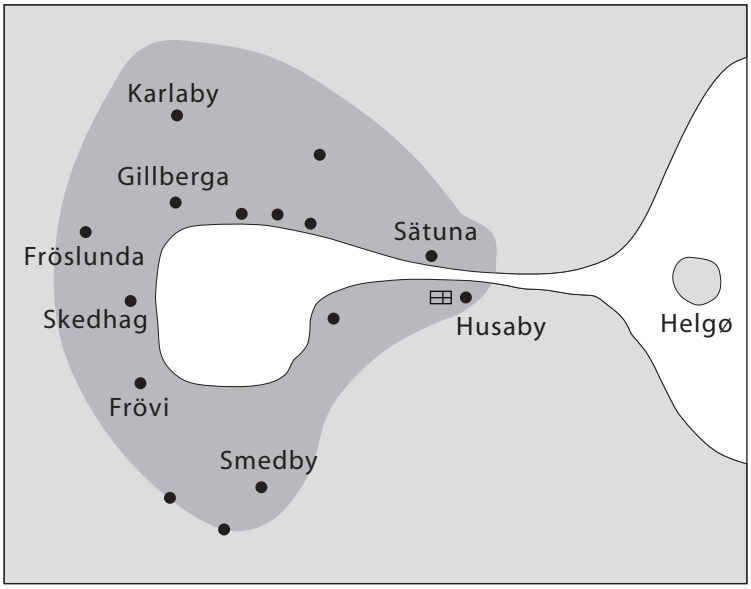
Until 200 AD, the land was exploited from a few large farms. The land closest to the farms was intensively exploited, probably as manured fields (grey areas). More distant areas were extensively exploited as pastures and occasional fields ("grassy" signature).



During the 3rd to 6th centuries, smaller subordinate farms were established from these large farms in the hirtherto unexplored areas. In the same period, the extensive way of working the land was introduced into hitherto unused areas. Some of the subordinate farms were run by slaves, others by free men – all of them dependent on the landlord of the large farm.

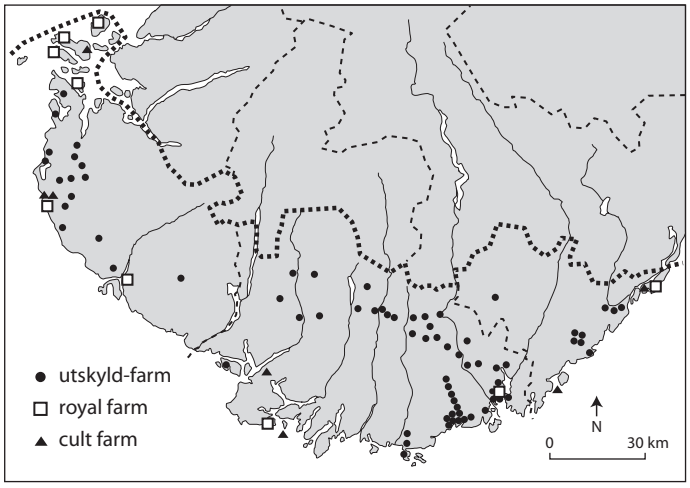
Fig. 10. The presumed development of settlement in the first half of the first millennium AD in parts of inland Eastern Norway (Skre 1999: fig. 4).

Vang/Åker at the Mjøsa lake (Hedmark) in inland eastern Norway. (after Olsen 1915:appendix). Names alluding to heathen cult (Disin,Viðarshov, Þórshof, Vangr, Njarðarshof (Olsen 1915:106).

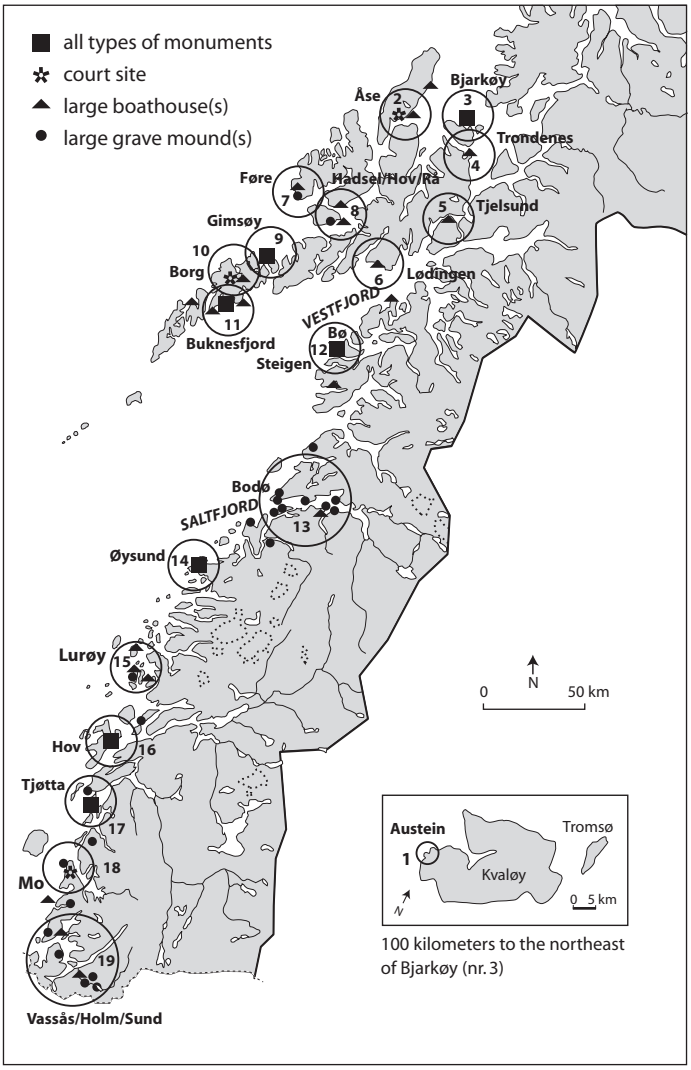


A model for an idealised central-place-complex settlement situation. Situated around an inlet during the Late Iron Age in central Sweden, it has the focal site of Tuna, an Early Medieval Husaby, plus sites for cult activities, a retinue, an assembly and a craftsman in the form of a (black-)smith (Brink 1999a fig:10).

Fig. 11. Place name research by M. Olsen (1915) and S. Brink (1999a).

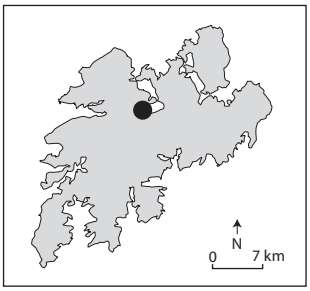


A. Steinnes´ reconstruction of the utskyldriket (after Larsen 1978: fig.9).

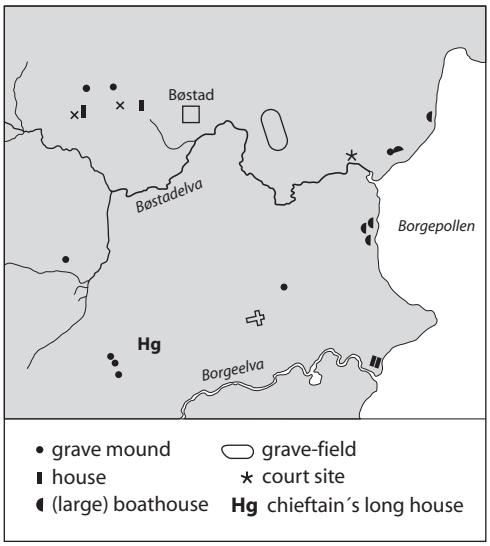


H.E. Lund´s reconstruction of northern Norwegian chiefdoms in the first millennium AD (Grimm 2006b: fig. 27 using various maps by I. Storli and B. Berglund).

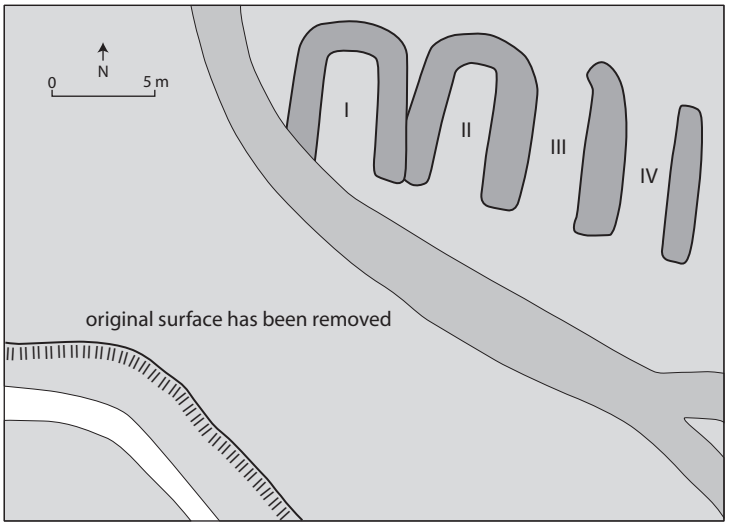
Fig. 12. Norwegian central place research carried out in the middle of the last century.



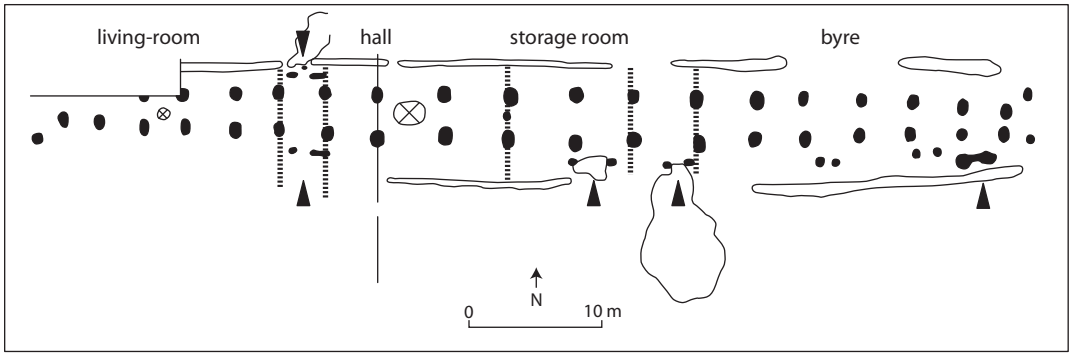
Borg on Vestvågøy (Lofoten islands).



Building remains and grave mounds at Borg (after Munch 1991:fig.1).

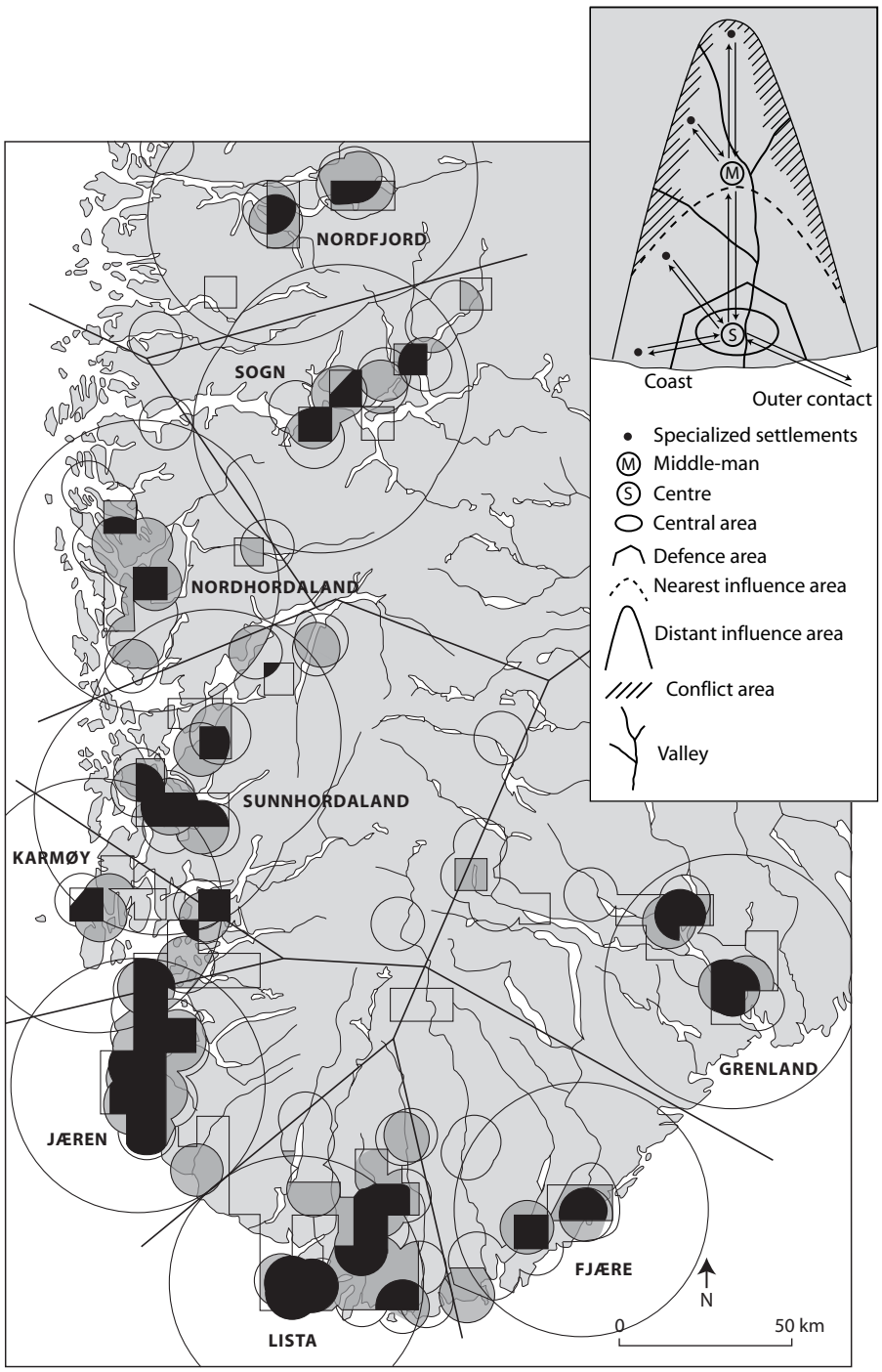


Plan of the supposed court site (after Johansen/Søbstad 1978:fig.15).



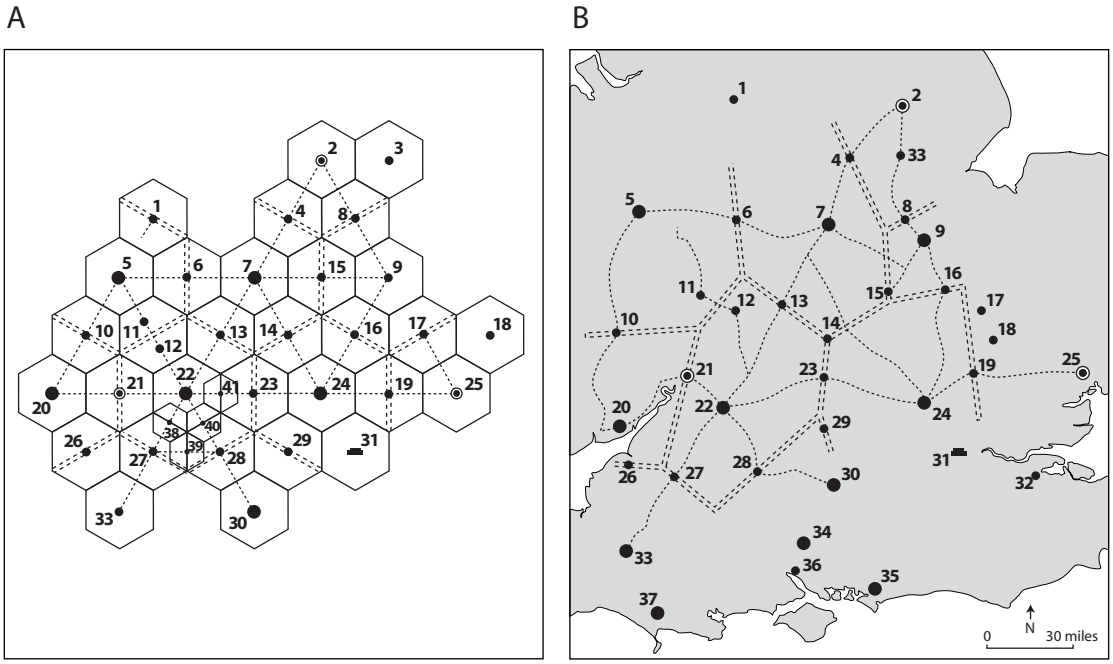
Simplified plan of the chieftain´s long house (Løken 2001b:fig. 5 after Stamsø Munch).

Fig. 13. The northern Norwegian chieftain´s farm at Borg.

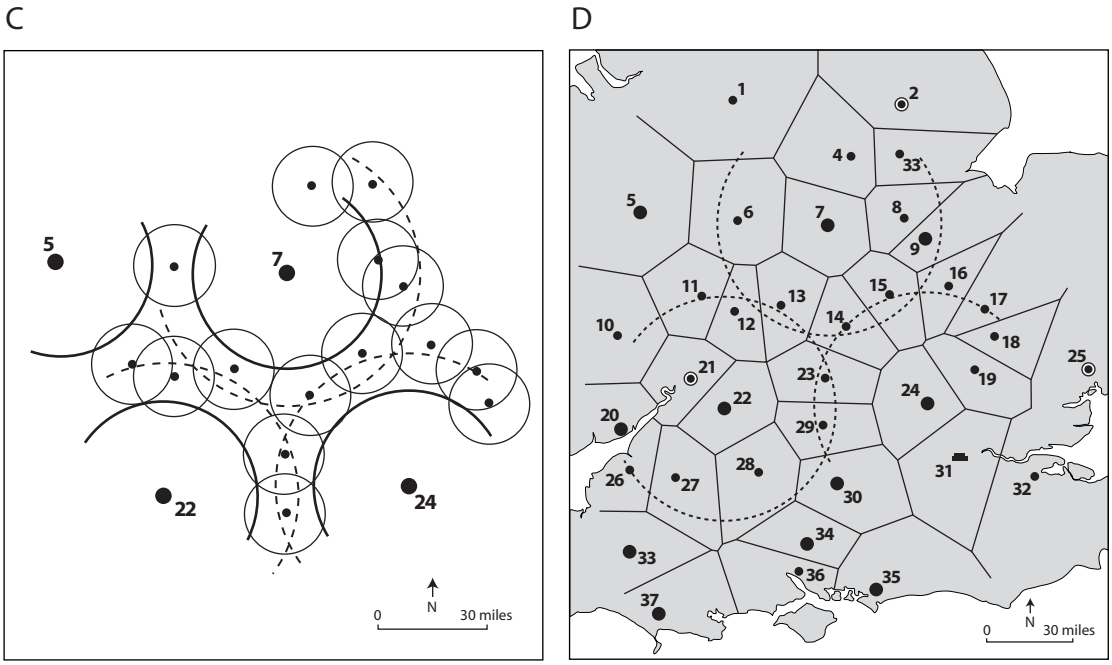


Areas identified by means of 60 graves with bronze cauldrons, glass vessels and gold objects.

Fig. 14. B. Myhre´s reconstruction of chieftain´s graves and territories in the south-western Norwegian Migration Period and a model of the area´s interaction (top to the right) with the hinterland (after Myhre 1987, fig. 7; 13).

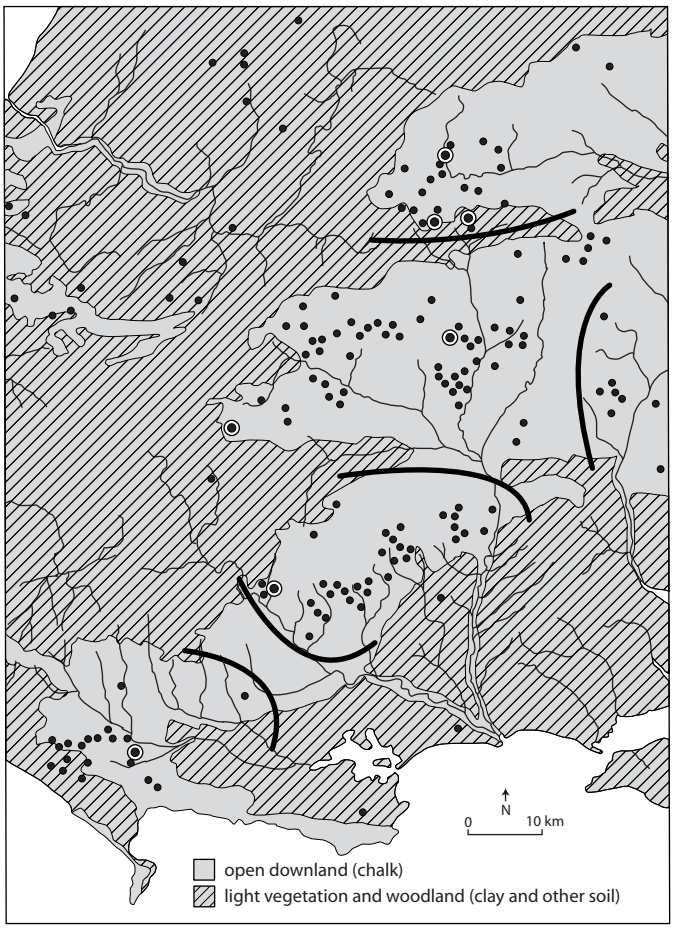


Romano-British settlement as predicted by Christaller´s transport principle (A) and as it existed in reality (B).

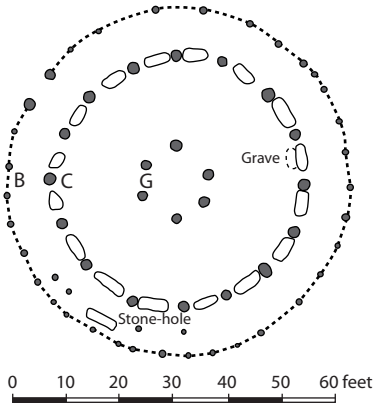


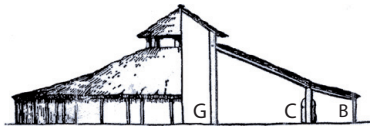
Service areas as predicted for the Romano-British walled centres using a modified version of Christaller´s model (C) and the factual situation as possibly indicated by the use of Thiessen polygons (D).

Fig. 15. I. Hodder´s use of Christaller´s central place theory for the Romano-British walled towns/centres (after Hodder 1972, fig. 23.2.; 23.3.; 23.6.; 23.7.). Major sites: 5. Wroxeter; 7: Leicester; 22: Cirencester; 24: St. Albans.

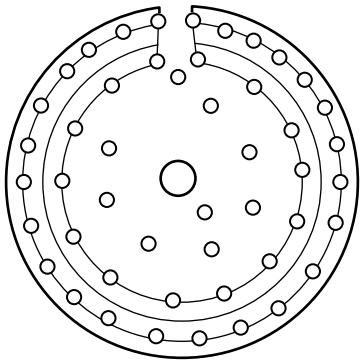


The emergence of chiefdoms: "causewayed camps" (circles) and long burial barrows (dots) of the first farmers. In the later Neolithic the camp of each territory was replaced by a major henge monument.



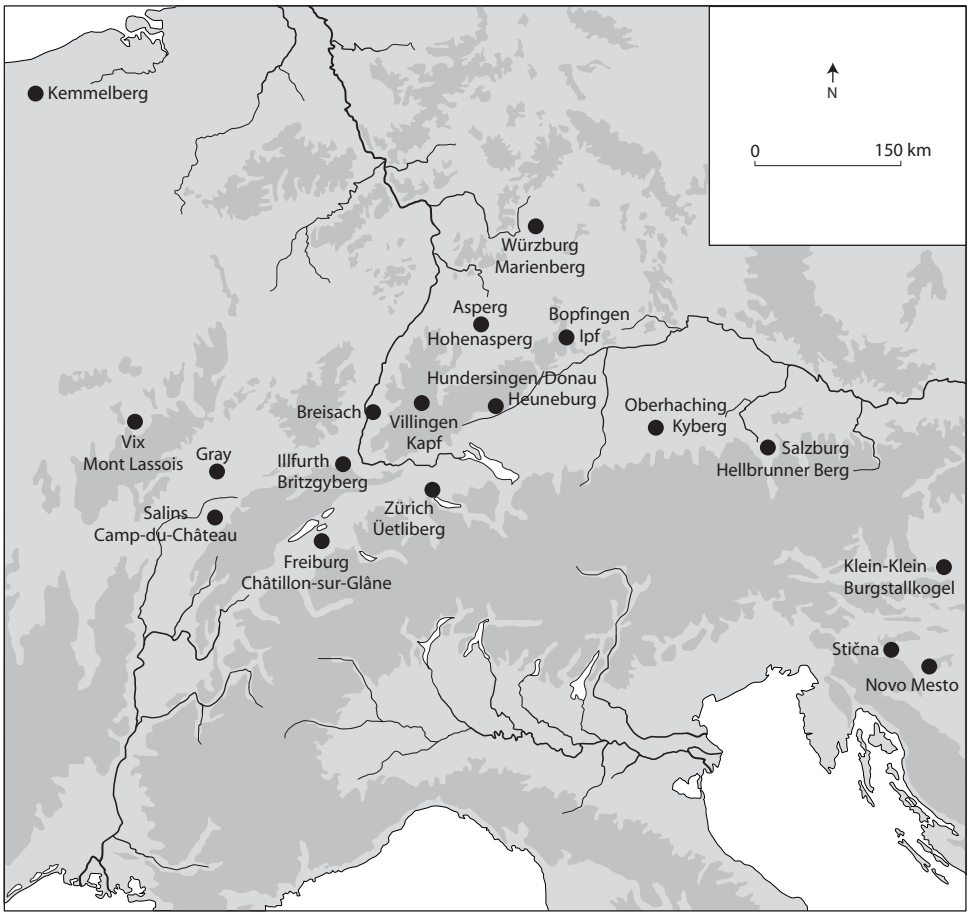


Reconstruction of a circular wooden building found in the enclosures of several of the henges.

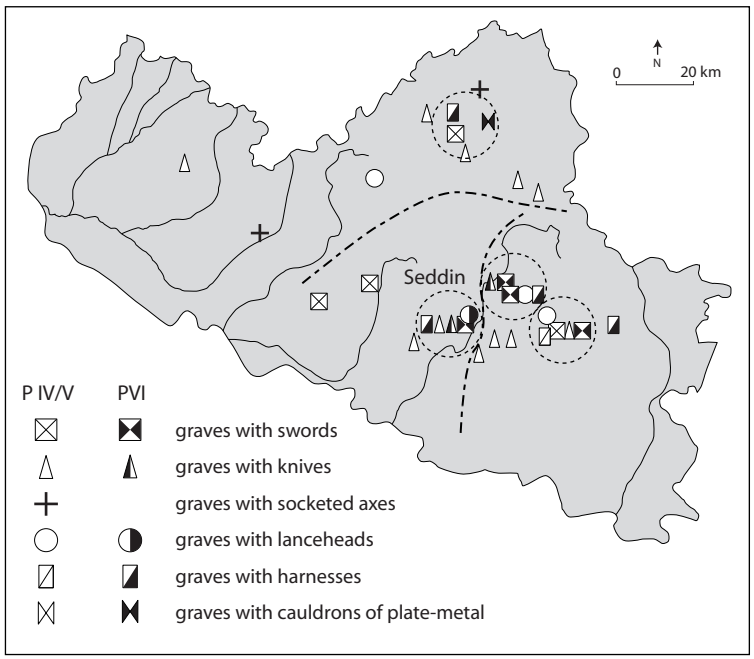


18th century ground plan for a "rotunda" of the Cherookee Indians, used for accommodating several hundred people. Such rotundas were compared with the circular buildings in the henges.

Fig. 16. C. Renfrew´s reconstruction of social hierarchy in neolithic Wessex (Renfrew 1973a: fig. 49-51; compare Renfrew 1973b) .

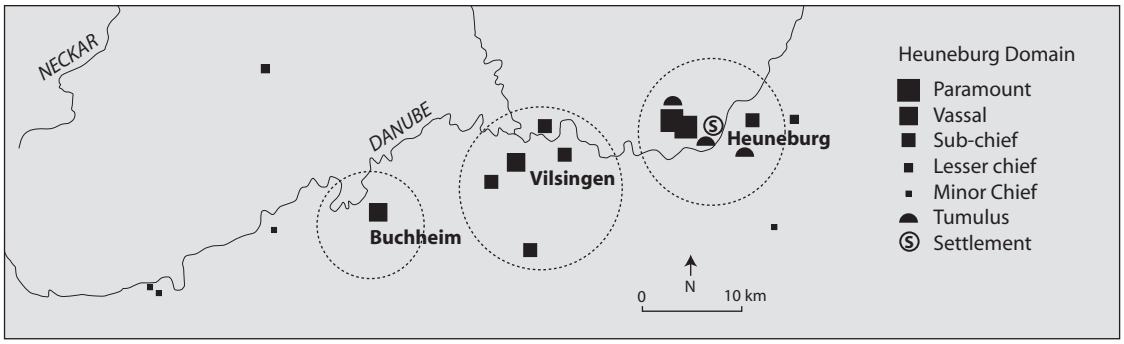


Centres of power of Late Hallstatt date in parts of middle Europe (after Kimmig 1983a:fig. 45 with a reference to Kimmig 1969).

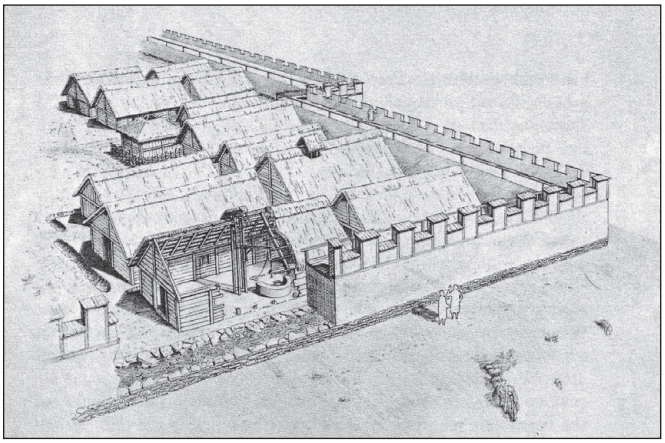


Centres of power of Bronze Age date between the rivers Elde and Dosse in eastern Germany (after Wüstemann 1974: fig. 9).

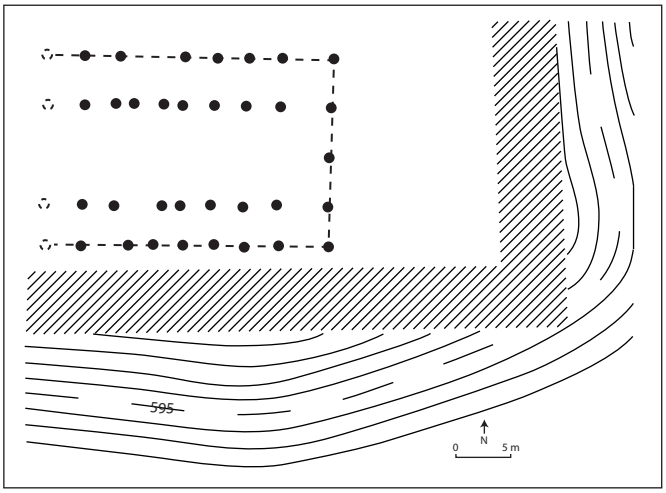
Fig. 17. Networks of centres of power reconstructed by German archaeologists in the late 1960s and early 1970s.



Reconstruction of a social hierarchy based on regular sets of grave furnishings (partly after Frankenstein/Rowlands 1978:fig. 1).

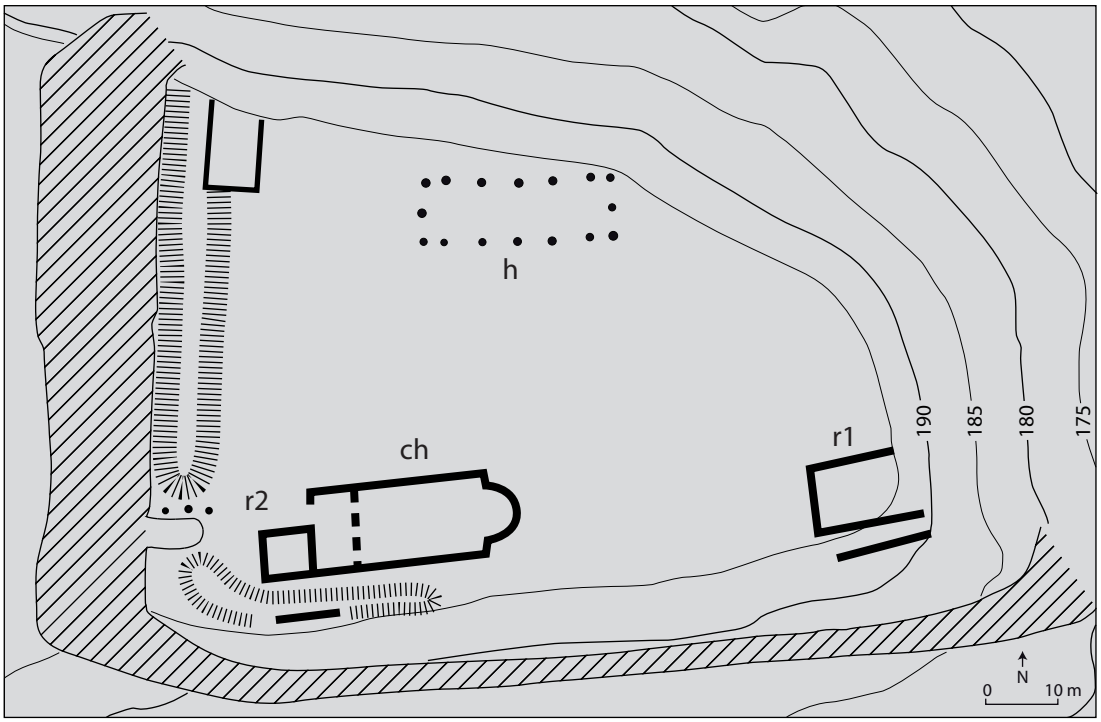


Reconstruction of the south-eastern corner of the Heuneburg with the famous "Lehmziegelmauer" of Mediterranean type in parts of the 6th century BC (after Kimmig 1983b:fig. 45).

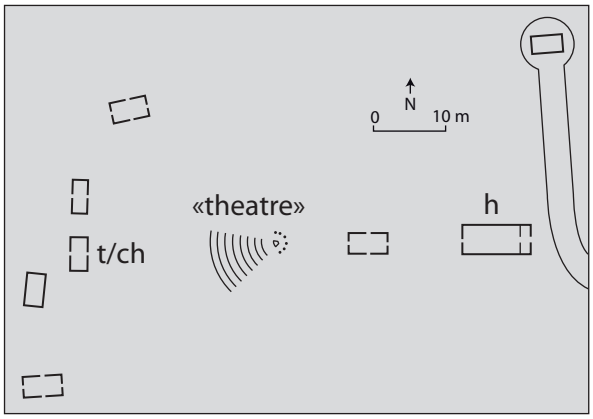


Parts of a "hall" in the South-East in parts of the 5th century BC (after Kimmig 1983b:fig. 48).

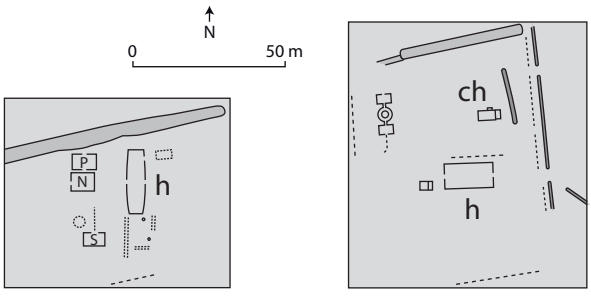
Fig. 18. The Late Hallstatt centre of power at the Heuneburg in southern Germany.



Tilleda

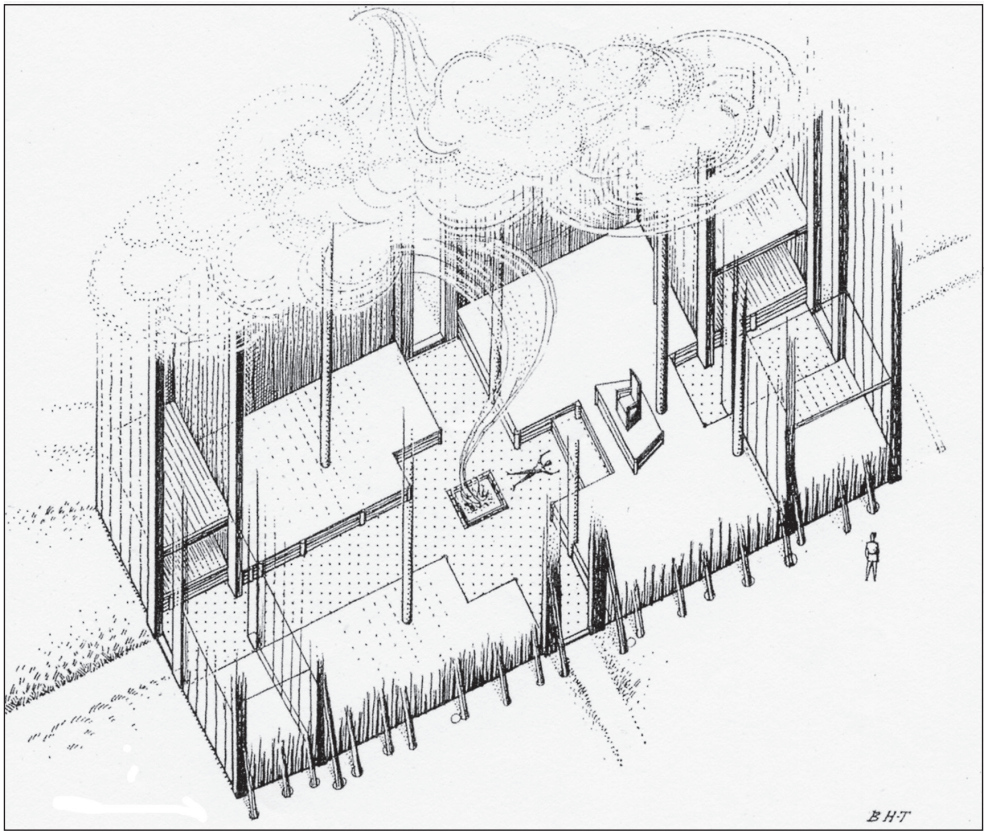


Yeavering

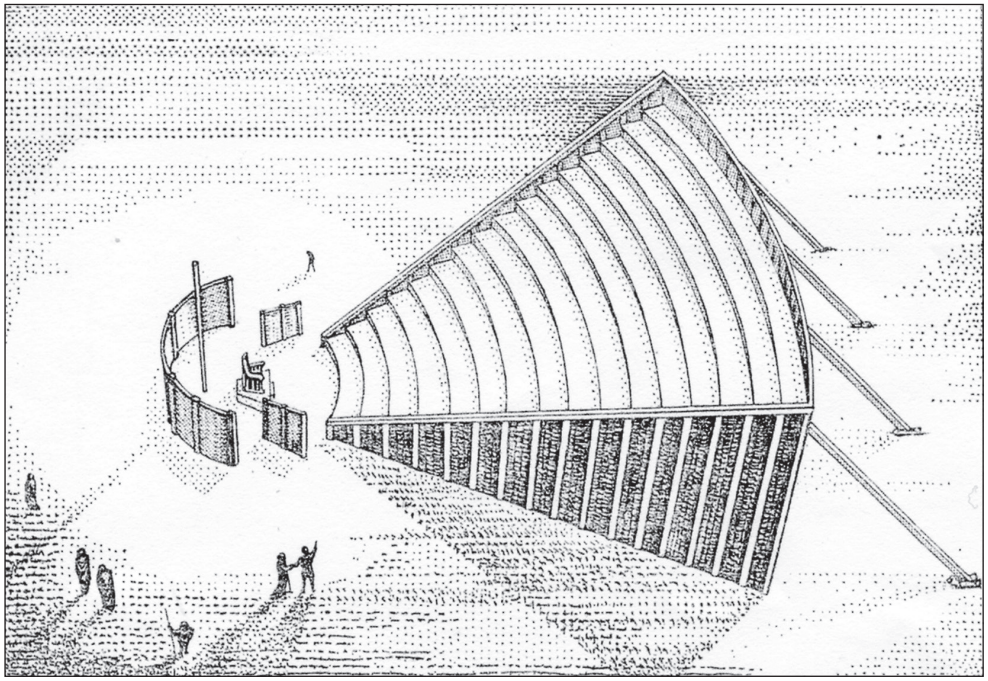


Cheddar, period 1. *Cheddar, period 2.*

Fig. 19. Royal seats in Germany and Great-Britain (after Grimm 1969: fig. 26B; Wilson 1976: fig. 2.7). h = hall building; ch = chapel/church; t = temple; r1: initial residence; r2: later residence.

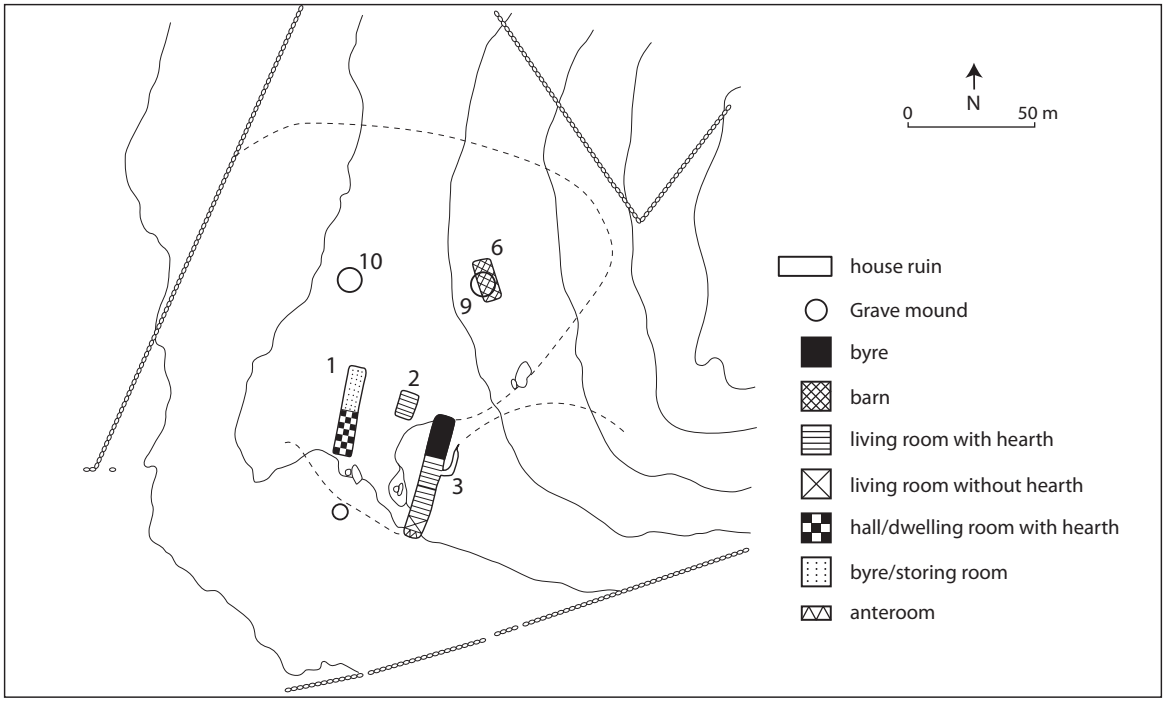


hall

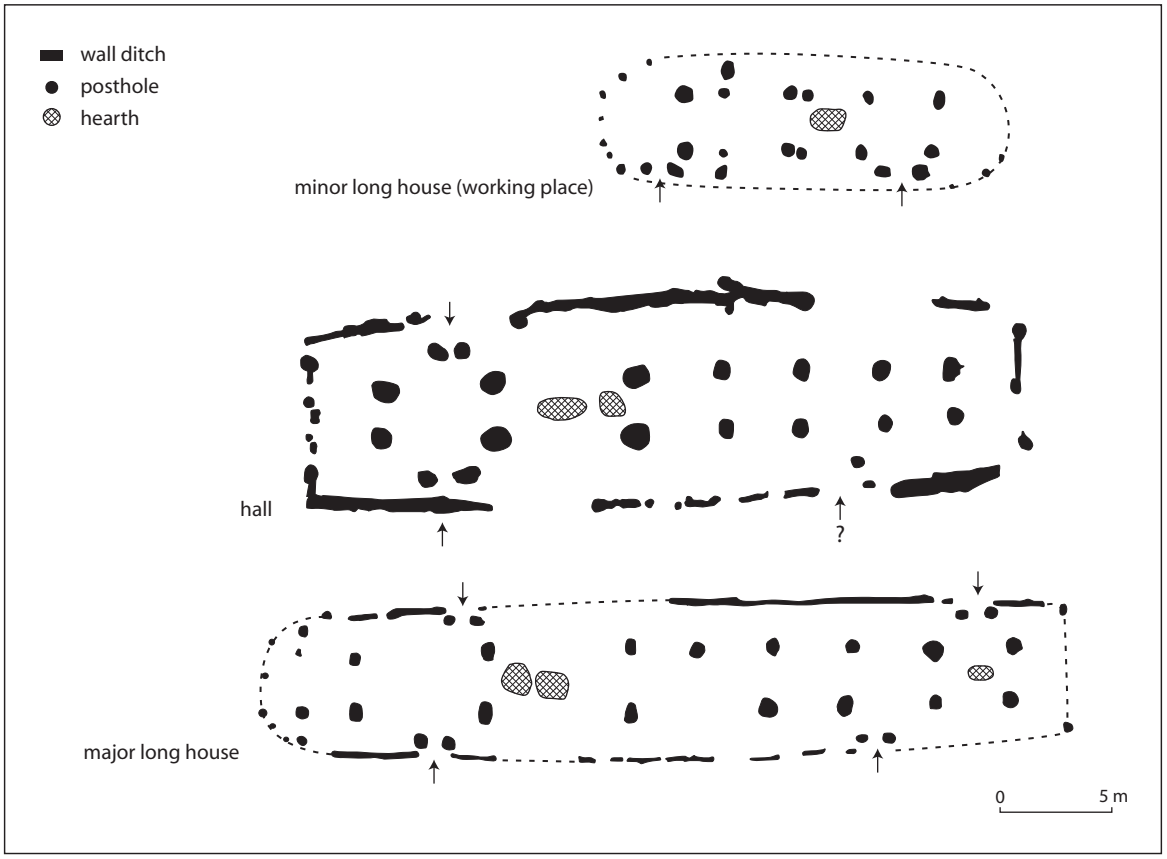


«theatre»

Fig. 20. Reconstruction drawings of the royal seat at Yeavering (after Hope-Taylor 1977,fig. 57; 59).



Ullandhaug farm (after Myhre 1980:fig. 132).



Main farm of Forsand (after Løken 2001b:fig. 18).

Fig. 21. Long houses and halls/hall-like parts of Late Roman/Migration period Rogaland in south-western Norway.

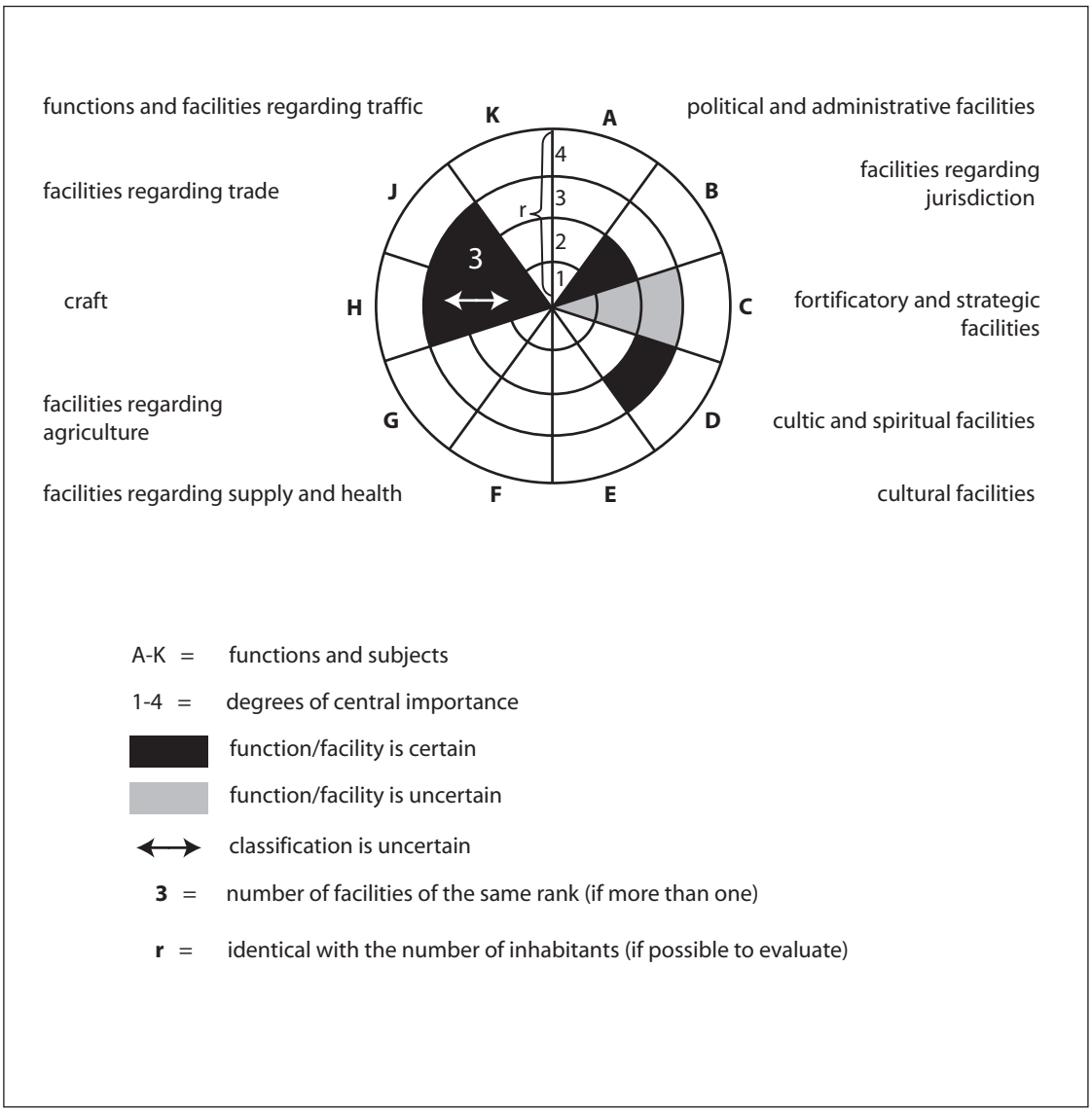


Fig. 22. D. Denecke's hypothesis on central functions in historical times (Denecke 1975: fig.1).

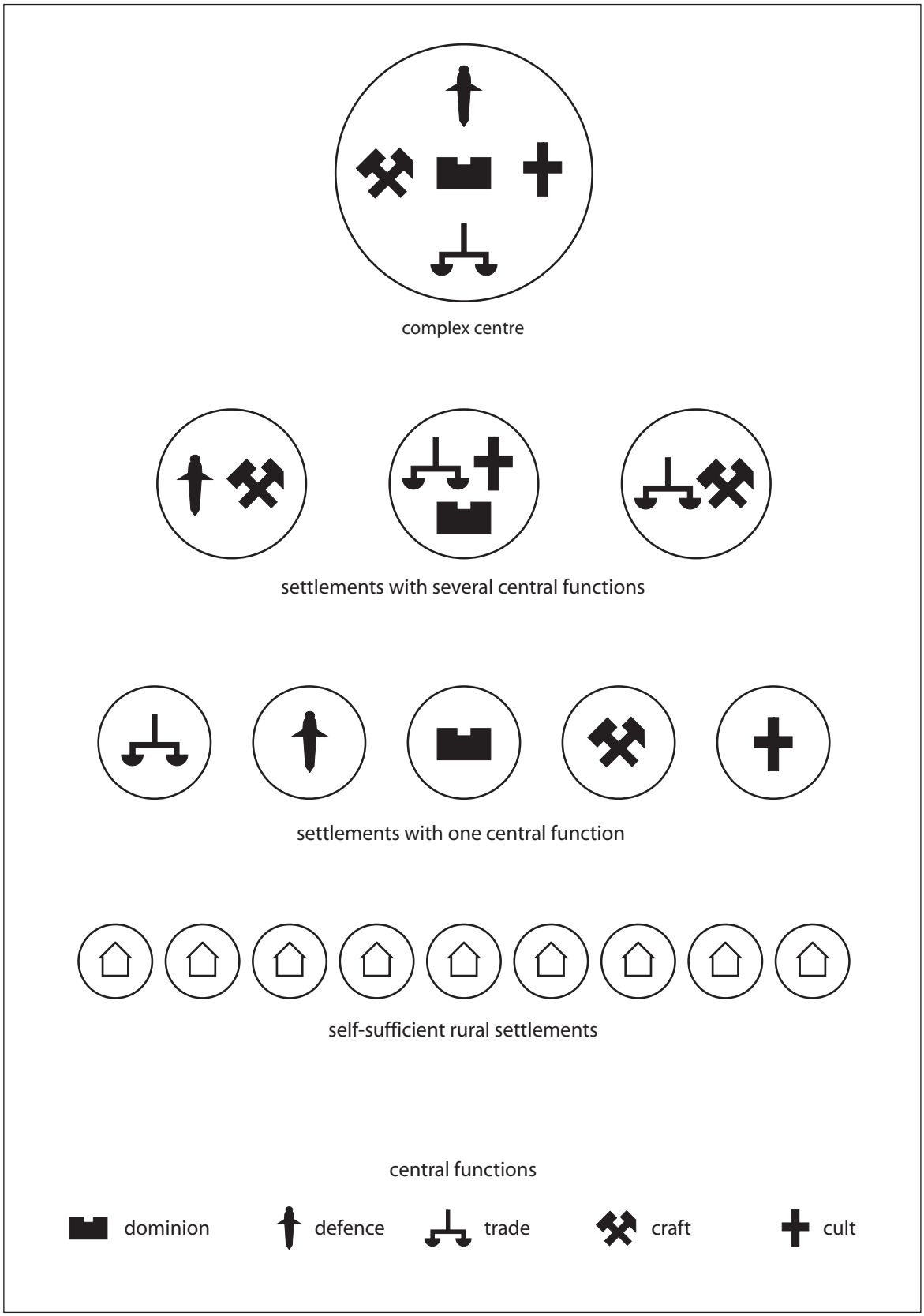
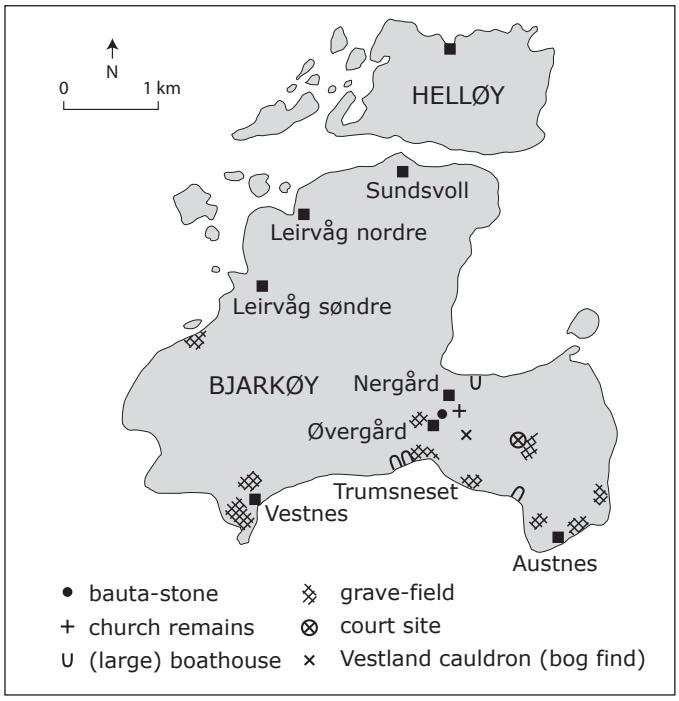
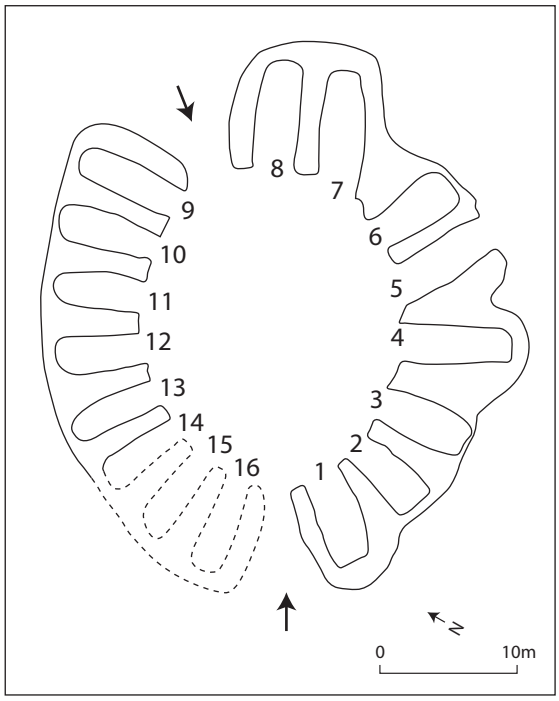


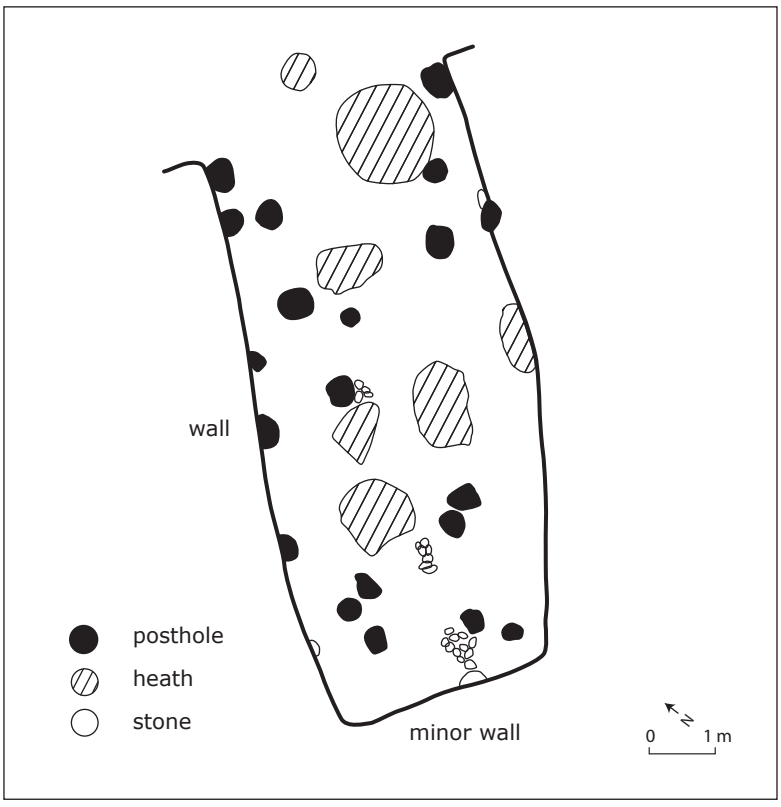
Fig. 23. E. Gringmuth-Dallmer´s hypothesis on central functions of sites in archaeological periods (Gringmuth-Dallmer 1999: fig.1).



Building ruins and grave mounds on Bjarkøy (after Straume/ Bollingberg 1995:fig.12).

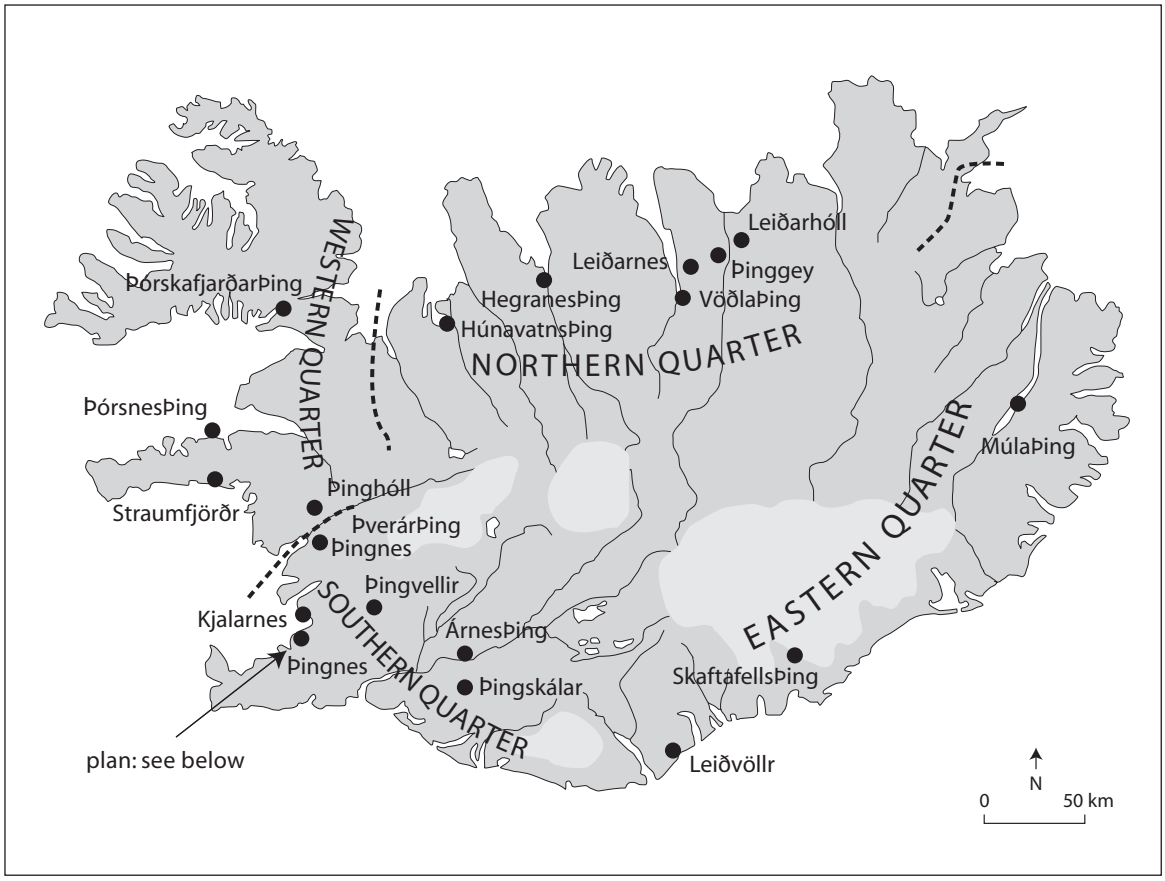


The plan of the court-site (after Storli 2006:fig. 9).

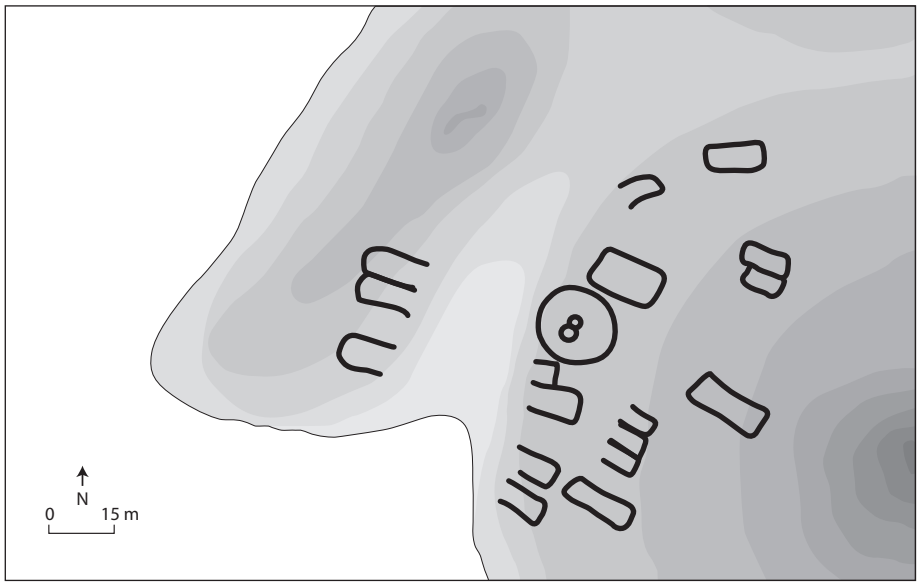


Simplified plan of house 1 (after Johansen/Søbstad 1978:fig. 5).

Fig. 24. Northern Norwegian Bjarkøy (compare fig. 12).

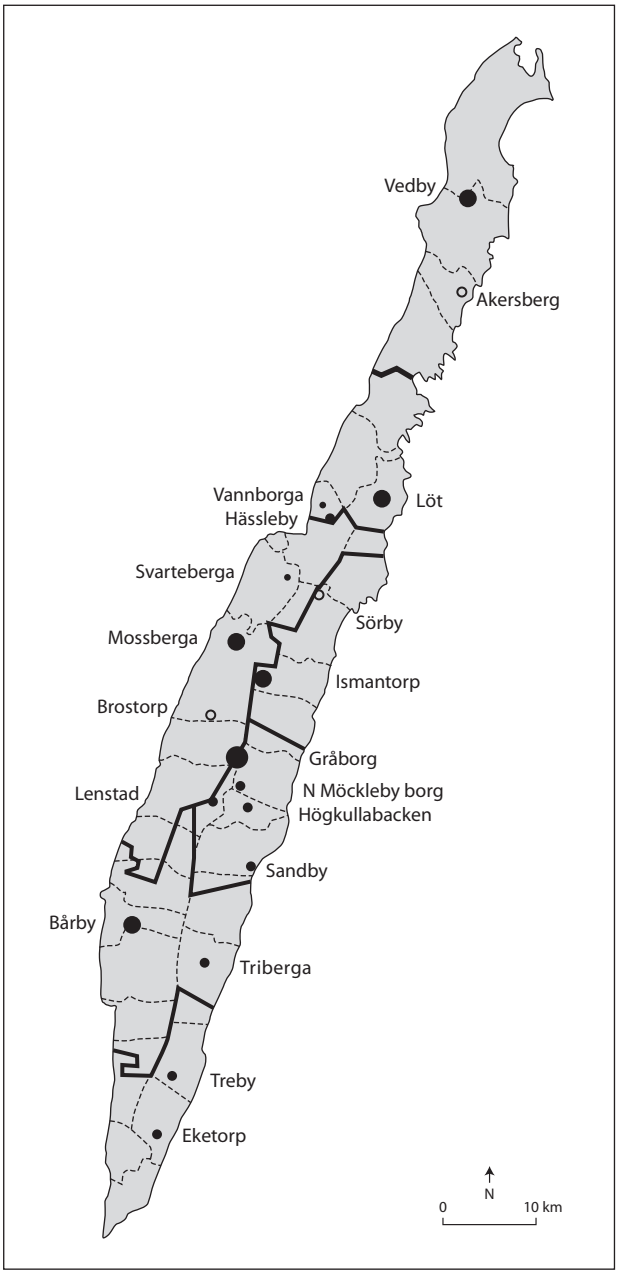


Division of Iceland into ting districts (after Karlsson 2005:fig. 40).

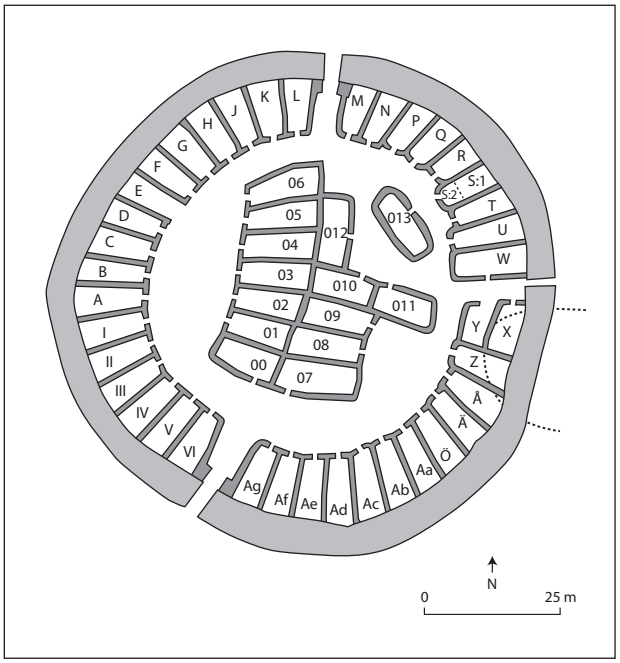


Simplified plan of the þingnes-site (after Storli 2006:fig. 45).

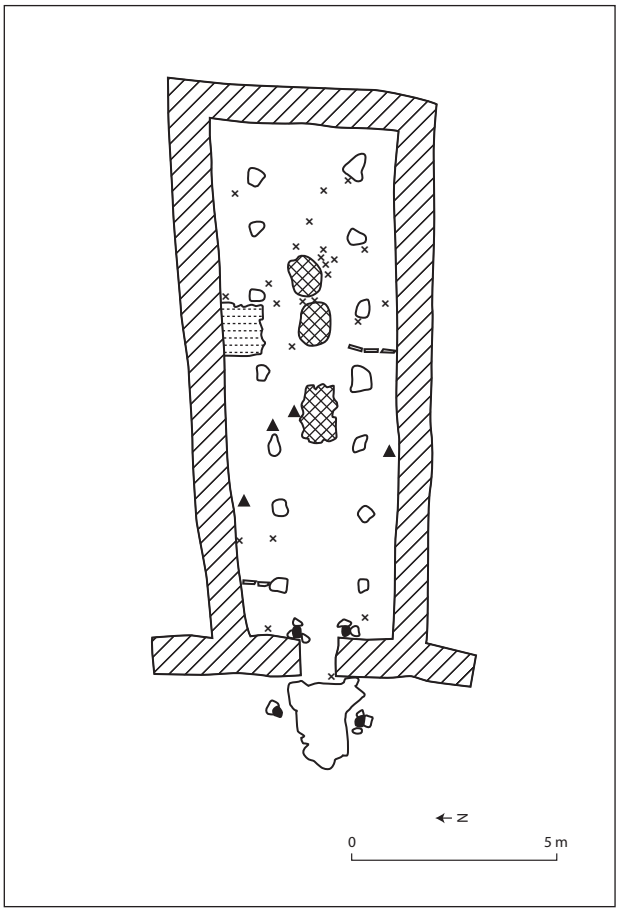
Fig. 25. Ting in Iceland.



Distribution of the forts (spot: verified; open circle: uncertain), the parishes (dashed lines) and the härad districts indicated by thick lines (after Näsman 1997:fig. 3).

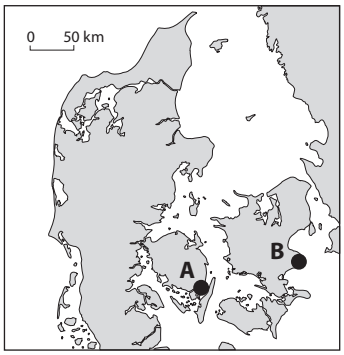


Plan of Eketorp, phase II (after Näsman 1989:fig. 7).



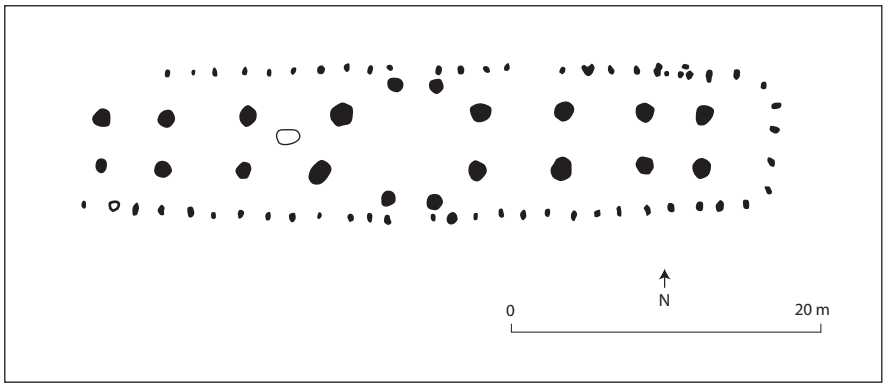
House 3 of Eketorp with a hall-like middle part (after Herschend 1993:fig. 15). Triangles: weapons; crosses: household ceramics.

Fig. 26. Ring-forts of the Eketorp-type on Öland.



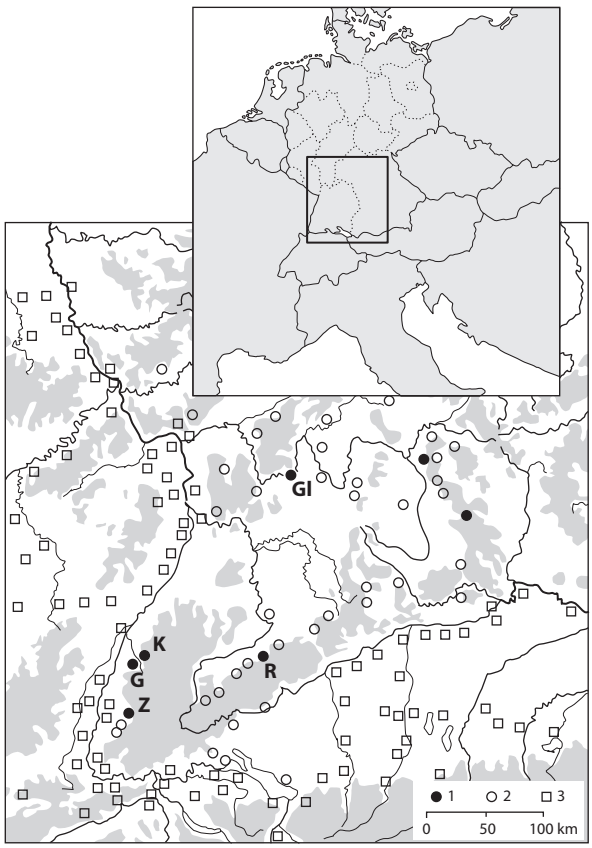
Two outstanding find spots mentioned in the text: the grave field in Himlingøje, which reached its pea in period C1b (B) and the Gudme/Lundeborg area, which peaked in the Late Roman and Migration period (A).

Simplified topography of the Gudme/Lundeborg area (after Crumlin Pedersen 1987:fig. 11).



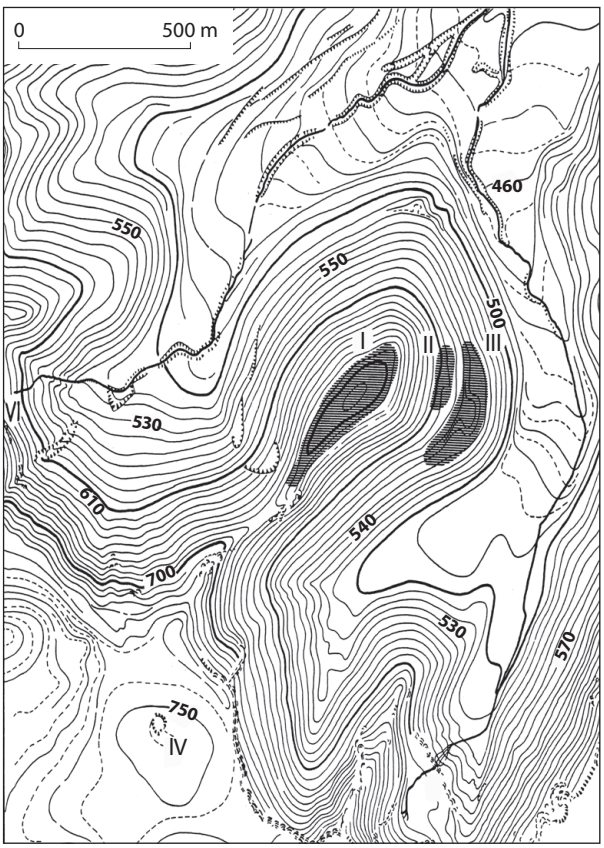
The "royal hall" of Late Roman and Early Migration Period date in Gudme (after Michaelsen/Østergaard Sørensen 1994:fig. 6).

Fig. 27. Himlingøje and Gudme/Lundeborg.

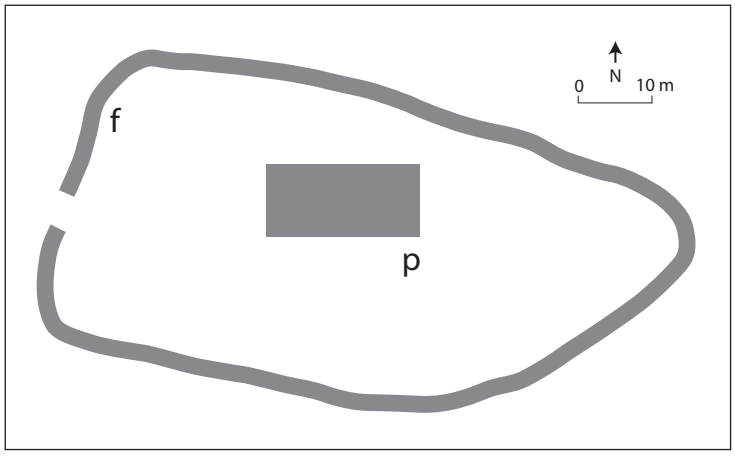


Early Alamannic hill forts (after Steuer 1997:fig.1-2 with a reference to Werner 1965).

1. hillforts with large-scale investigations. Mentioned in the text: Gl = Glauberg; R = Runder Berg; K = Kügeleskopf; G = Geißkopf; Z = Zähringer Burgberg
2. hill forts with loose finds
3. Late Roman forts

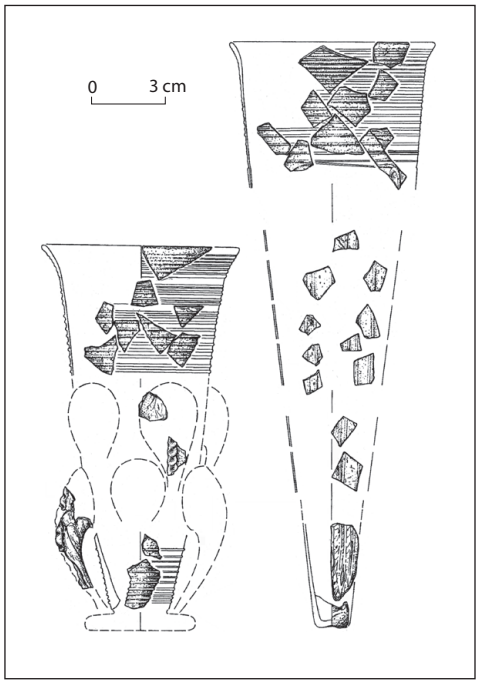


The Runder Berg, used in several phases of the late 3rd/4th century to the 10th century AD (after Pauli 1994:fig. 2). I: plateau on then top; II/III: terrace; IV: hollow; V-VI: waterfall.



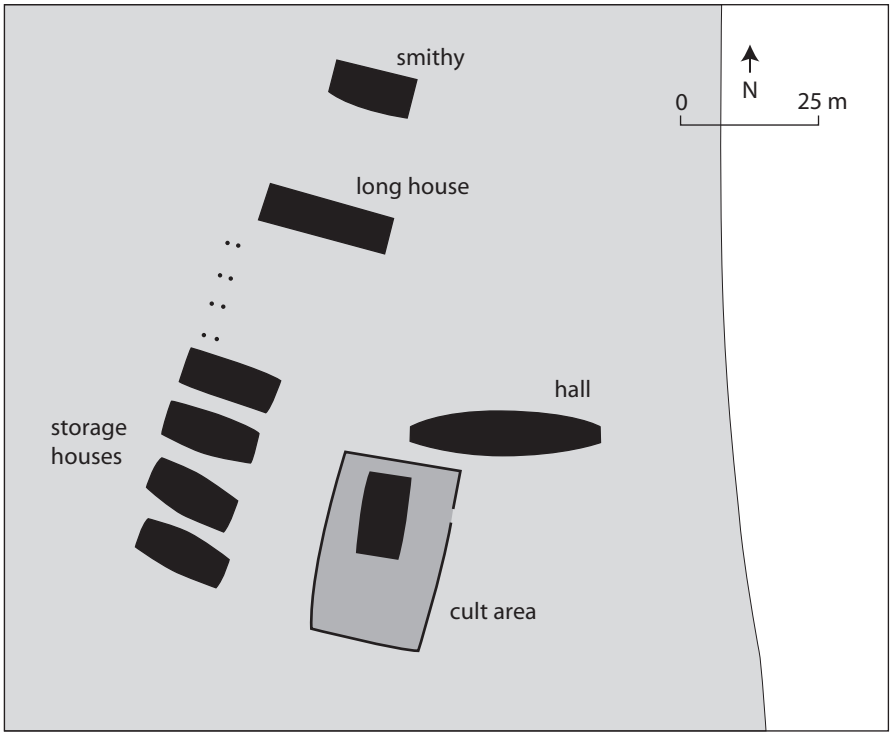
Simplified plan (after Koch 1991:fig. 35).

f: fortification (late 5th century)
p: hall (Merovingian)

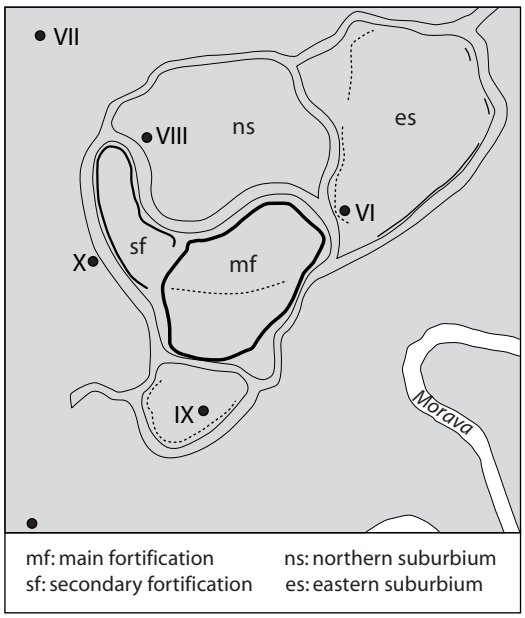


Claw beaker (to the left) and a conical beaker of the Kempston-type (to the right) belonging to the occupation layer of late 5th century date (after Koch 1991:fig. 44).

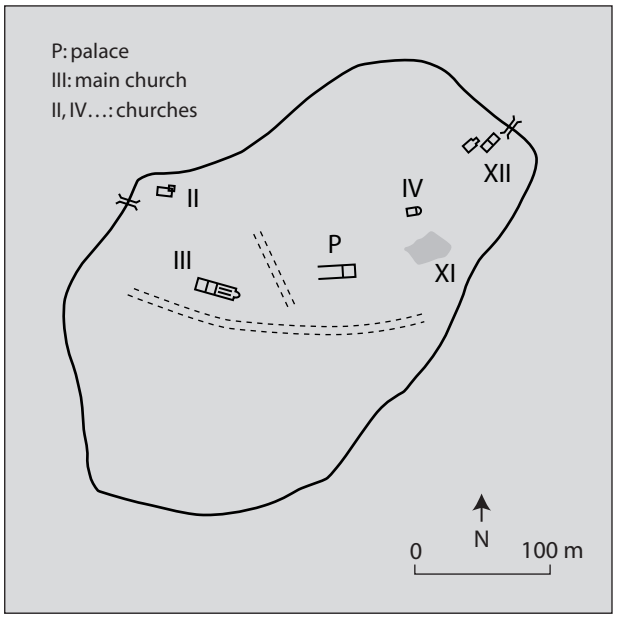
Fig. 28. The early Alamannic Runder Berg in south-western Germany.



A royal seat of Viking Age date at Tissø on Danish Sealand. Phase 3 dating to the 9th and 10th centuries AD (after Jørgensen 2005:fig.72).

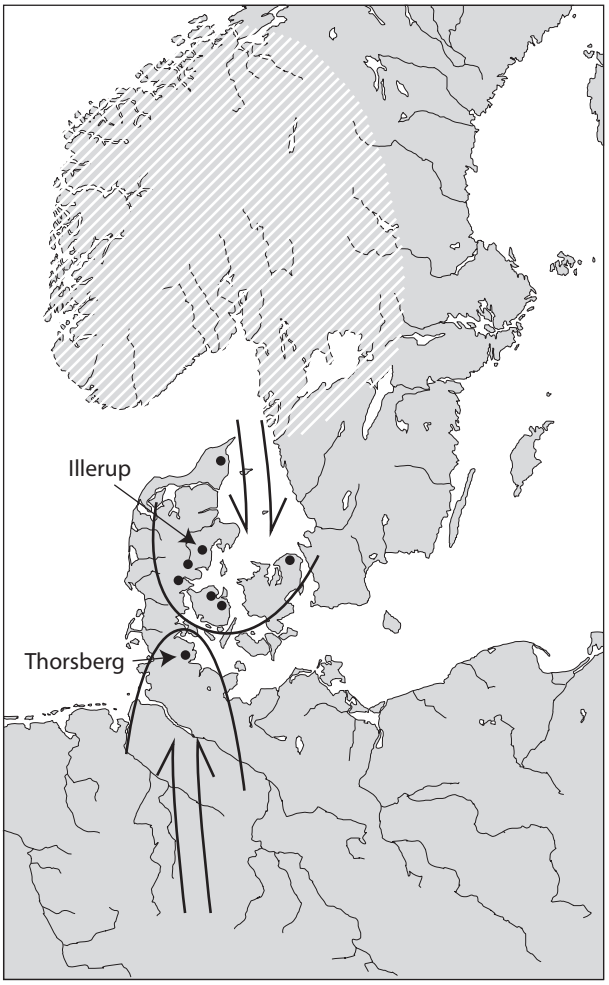


Topography of the royal seat of 9th and 10th centuries AD at Mikulčice, once in "Great Moravia" (after Polaček 2002:fig.1).

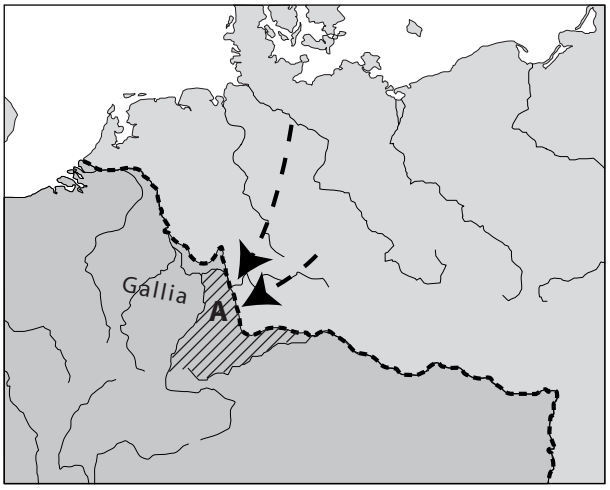


Simplified plan of the partially investigated main fortification of Mikulčice (Polaček 2002:fig.1).

Fig. 29. Royal sites of the late 1st millennium AD in Tissø and Mikulčice.



The analysis of bog offerings in Denmark, dating back to period C1b, points towards different waves of attacks originating from the Scandinavian peninsula (for example Illerup place A) and the neighbouring continent (main offering in Thorsberg; after Ilkjær 1993: fig.153).



In the late 3rd or, more probably, 4th century, the Alamanni (literally "all men") began to settle on former Roman ground (A = Alamannia, i.e. the land of the Alamanni in the former Roman province Germania superior and parts of Raetia).

Fig. 30. Some political events in the 3rd and 4th century AD in parts of northern and middle Europe.

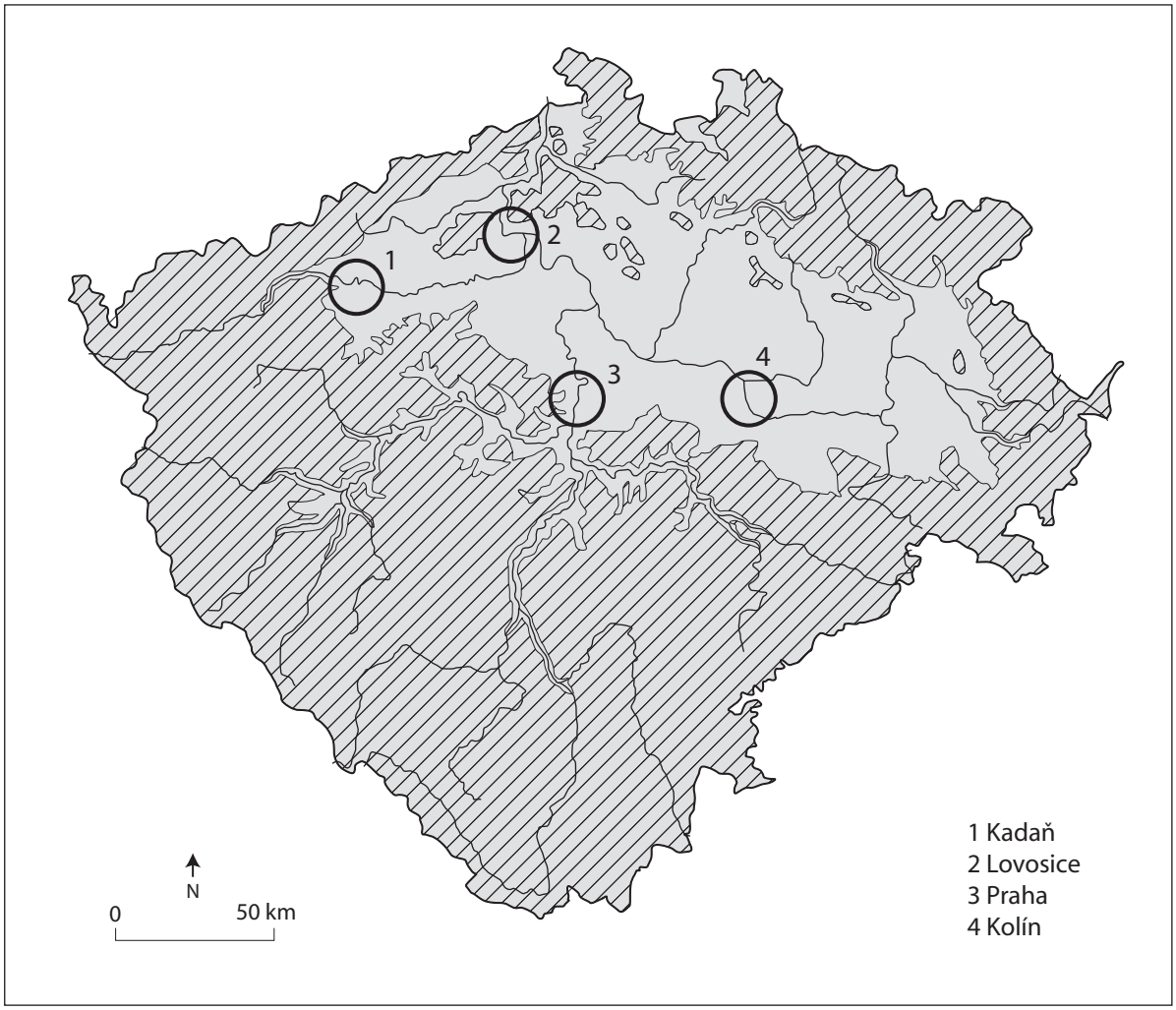
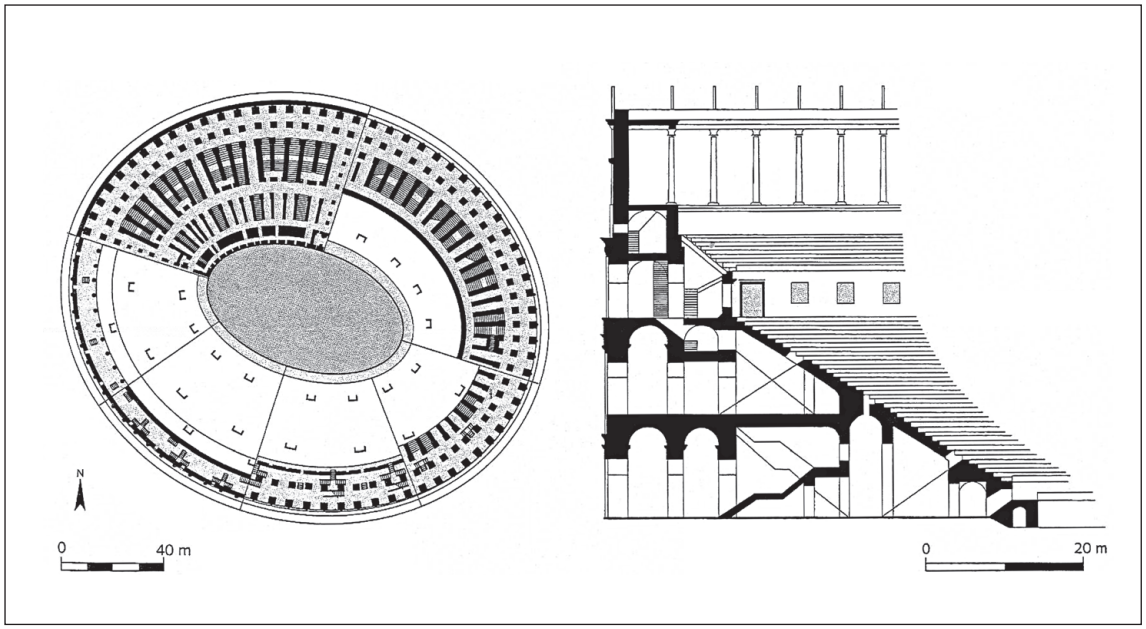
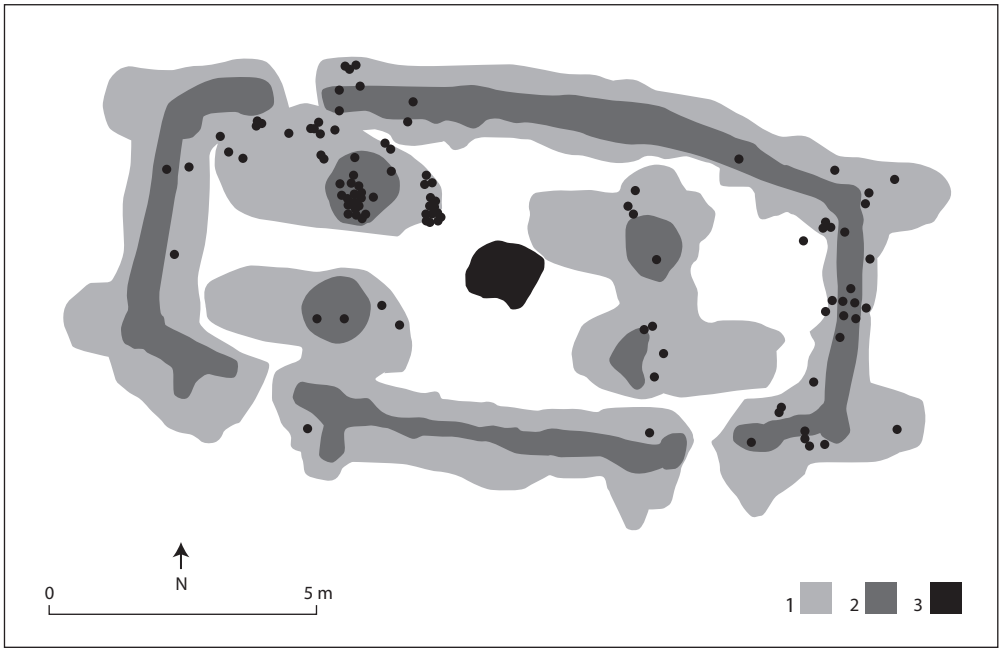


Fig. 31. The Bohemian basin (light grey) with four long-term central sites (Salač 2000: fig: 9).



The amphithreatre (Kolloseum) in Rome in the second half of the first millennium AD (Palily I, colomn 621-622 after Flavisch).



The cult house in Uppåkra (after Hårdh 2006: fig. 90). 1: ditches; 2: wallsand postholes; 3: hearth.

Fig. 32. The Kolloseum in Rome – the cult house in Uppåkra.

10. Tables 1-9 and List 1

Table 1. Finds in court sites and ordinary settlement contexts

Court sites´ finds

Site (houses)	*Pottery (bs)*	*Tools*	*Other objects*
Håvodl (4)	400 (4)	2 (Whetstone, unidentified object)	2 (Bog iron, slag)
Leksaren (ca. 15)	4700 (40)	1-2 (Knife, whetstone?)	3 (Gaming-piece, arrowhead, beads)
Klauhauane (ca. 20)	7000 (50)	15 (5 Knives, 5 whetstones, 3 iron tools, spindlewhorl, awl)	14 (4 Beads, 2 pieces of slag, iron fragment, buckle?, band, finger ring, amber, mounting, arrowhead, fibula)
Hegreberget (10)	87 (4)	7 (4 Knives, 2 whetstones, spindlewhorl)	16 (6 Pieces of slag, 4 beads, 2 pieces of bog iron, 2 rock crystals, pendant, glass)
Bjarkøy (11 of 16)	*1*	*12-13 (7-8 Whetstones, 4 knives, undetermined object)*	*10-11 (3-4 Arrowheads, glass bead, iron plate with bronze frame, sheet bronze, flint, iron pieces, nail fragments, slag)*

– Pottery: ordinary ware; (bs): bucket-shaped pots; the numbers relate to the number of sherds.
– Almost all the houses with charred bones
– Some of the houses stand out because they were particular rich or poor in finds; 150 sherds of one bucket-shaped pot from house 5 in Klauhauane are excluded since they would falsify the overall impression

Number and composition of finds per house in the Ullandhaug-farm in Jæren

House (dimensions)	*Pottery (bs)*	*Tools*	*Other objects*
1 (35 x 5 m)	15 (25)	3 (Knive, quern, whetstone)	8 (e.g. iron fragments, slag, mount)
2 (8 x 5 m)	63 (91)	8 (e.g. Quern, melting pot, sinker)	-
3 (44 x 6 m)	107 (46)	44 (Half of them whetstones and querns, in addition f.eks. a few loom weights, spindle whorls, flint pieces etc. and single objects like f.eks. a knive and a melting pot)	17 (e.g. many iron fragments, one glass beaker, one glass bead, one spearhead)

– Pottery: find numbers (not the number of sherds); pottery: rough undecorated ware; bs: bucket-shaped pots
– Given here: the houses used for living (sometimes with sections used for other purposes too) and the entirety of finds in the houses (mostly originating from the sections used for living)
– Houses 2-3 with charred bones
– Source: Myhre 1980:250-252

Table 2. A short interpretation of the excavated court sites in Jæren

Phase	*Character*	*Archaeology*	*Dating*
1	Undetermined (settlement traces?)	Loose finds	Pre-Roman Iron Age?
2	Court site (“period 1”)	Constructional elements: – Minor outer earthen walls? – Wall ditches – Wooden walls – Postholes? – Round simple hearts (irregularly placed) – A house in the middle (Klauhauane)	First and second century AD: – Jutlandish inspired pottery (period B2: Håvodl, Klauhauane) – Radiocarbon-datings (all the sites)
3	Court site („period 2“)	Constructional elements: – Stone walls – Postholes – Longitudinal, large, partly stone-framed hearths (along the middle axis) – A mound in the middle	Third to fifth century AD: – Fibula with a long catch plate (period C1: Klauhauane; Dysjane) – “Generation 2-3” of bucked- shaped pots (transition C3 to D1: all the sites) – Radiocarbon-datings (Håvodl, Leksaren)
4	Partial re-use („afterlife“)	Restructuring of houses	Sixth and seventh centuries AD or even later: – Stratigraphically late hearths – Finds (unstratified)

– Source: chapters 4 and 12

Table 3. Focal areas of the Iron Age and the medieval times in middle and southern Jæren

Farm(s) (court site)	*Splendid finds Iron Age*	*Major farm ruin (Migration period)*	*Name indicators*	*High taxes (Middle Ages)*	*Other Medieval indicators*
1. Grude, Bore	Yes	–	–	Grude, Bore	Bore (wooden church)
2. Tu, Hauge *(Dysjane)*	Many: IA	„Hall (?) with *guldgubber*“	*Frøyland*	Anda, Tu	Hauge (stone cross)
3. Erga, Orre	Yes	–	–	Orre	Orre (stone church)
4. Re	Few	–	–	–	–
5. Lygi, Vestly	Yes: EIA	–	*Lygi* (today Lye)	Lye	Lye (wooden church)
6. Oma, Fosse	Yes	–	–	Oma	–
7. Rimestad	Yes: EIA	–	–	Øvre Haugland	–
8. Njærheim	Yes	Vigre: 70m Obrestad: 60 m	*Njarðarland*, *Njarðareimr*	Njærheim	Njærheim (wooden church?) Obrestead (royal site)
9. Bø, Ullarland *(Klauhauane)*	Yes	Ullarland: 47x10m	*Bø*, *Ullarland*	Bø	Bø (wooden church)
10. Varhaug *(Leksaren)*	One grave find: EIA	Sør-Varhaug: 75-100m	–	Sør-Varh.	Varhaug (wooden church)
11. Herikstad, Anisdal	Few: EIA	–	–	–	–
12. Kvassheim, Hagan, Horr	Yes	Hagan: 90m	–	Horr	–
13. Sæland, Lyngaland *(Håvodl)*	Few: EIA	Lyngaland: 60m	Runic inscription, old Futhark (Eikeland)	–	–

– Abbreviations: EIA = Early Iron Age; IA = Iron Age

– Outstanding finds of the Iron Age: list 1

– Sources: archaological finds = table 4; major farms = Myhre 1978:fig. 26; taxation = Myhre 1978:fig. 23; name indicators: Olsen 1915; Sandnes 1992; Runic inscription = Krause/Jankuhn 1966, nr. 17a (Eikeland); Medieval churches = Hovland/Næss 1987: 91; royal site at Obrestad = Larsen 1978:fig. 9.

Table 4. Function(s) of the centre of power on the Tu-ridge with the Dysjane court site

Period	*Find/monument*	*Functional interpretation*
Late Roman	– Several exceptional loose or grave finds on the ridge or in the neighbouring area	– An upper social stratum on the hill and a "large farm" at Tu/Hauge: →political (dominion)
Roman and Early Migration	– Court site on the hill	Different kinds of use: →social (gathering) →judiscial (ting) →political (ting) →cultic? →economic ? (local market) →military?
Migration	– Four richly furnished women's burials on the hill, all of them with relief fibulas (giltet Ag) – One high status weapon grave, 5th century (sword, lance, shield, glass vessel, Vestland cauldron, gold rings etc.) – Many gold objects with relief decoration close to the Tu-ridge	– An upper social stratum on the hill and a "large farm" at Tu/Hauge: →political (dominion) – Splendid fibula: →specialised workshop – Weapon grave: →military?
Merovingian to Early Viking	– 16 *guldgubber*, found in a house ruin at Hauge	– *Guldgubber*: →cult – *Guldgubber*: →specialised workshop
Early Merovingian	– Richly furnished woman's burial with a glass vessel, ca. 600 AD (Tu)	– An upper social stratum on the hill and a "large farm" at Tu/Hauge: →political (dominion)
Viking Age	– Rider's grave, fairly disturbed, probably 10th century AD (Særheim)	– A royal follower of high rank: →political (dominion)
Late Viking Age/ Early Medieval	– Stone cross standing upon a large burial mound (*Krosshaug*-grave)	– Possible indicator for early Christian ceremonies on the hill: →cultic
Medieval	– One of four main *ting* sites in Rogaland (Hauge) – Local weapon *ting* for a ship district/*skipreide* (Hauge)	Different kinds of use: →judiscial (ting) →political (ting) →military (weapon ting)

– Source: Chapters 4.3 and 6.3

– Literature: Nissen Meyer 1934; Magnus 1975; Rønneseth 1986; Lund Hansen 1987; Braathen 1989; Hauck 1992; Andersson 1993; Ilkjær 1993; Bemmann/Hahne 1994; Rønne 1999; Kristoffersen 2000

Table 5. Context of the court sites in south-western Norway

Court site	*Important finds (grave, loose, hoard)*	*Archaeology (in addition)*	*Name indicators*	*Middle Ages*
Ritland	–	Two grave-fields nearby (IA)	–	Church?
Kåda	Irish hoard find (VA)	Two large boathouses (LR/MP) near the court site; a hill fort on the northern part of the island	*Kåda*: „the underlying settlement"	–
Hegreberget	Woman´s grave (LR); double grave (VA)	Five large boathouses and a hill fort on the south-eastern part of the island	–	–
Skjelbrei	–	Several settlements nearby (early Roman IA)	–	–
Dysjane	Many graves (LR to VA); hoard find (MP)	House ruin (hall?) with *gullgubber* (LIA); Runic stone (VA); stone cross (VA)	*Frøylandsvatnet* and *Frøyland*-farm to the east (cult)	Early Christian site; ting site
Klauhauane	Some burials (LR/ MP)	Several large burial mounds (Bø)	*Bø*- and *Ullarnes*-farms to the east (large farm and cult)	Wooden church (Bø), ting
Leksaren	One loose find (MP)	Large farm ruin (ca. 90m, MP)	–	Wooden church (Varhaug)
Håvodl	Woman´s grave (MP)	Large farm ruin (60m, MP); long mound with a chamber of 7m (woman´s grave, MP)	Runic inscription on a woman´s fibula in a grave (MP): cultic	–
Spangereid	Several burials (LR to VA)	Seven large boathouses (LR/MP); large cemetery (IA)	*Njerve* (Njord)-farm: cultic	Stone church
Oddernes	Few burials (IA)	Large cemetery (IA); Runic stone (VA)	–	Stone church

– LR = Late Roman Iron Age; MP = Migration period; LIA = Late Iron Age; VA = Viking Age; IA = Iron Age

– Source: chapters 4 and 5

Table 6. Late Roman and Migration period centres of power: the Tu-ridge, Gudme/Lundeborg and the Runder Berg

A. TOPOGRAPHY

Site	Tu/Hauge	Gudme/Lundeborg	Runder Berg
Placement	– Inland on a hill	– Coastal with ridges	– Inland on a ridge
Criteria for the placement	– Strategic position; fertile soils (fortificatory?)	– Natural harbour; fertile soils; good inland connections	– Fortificatory (connection to a road?)
Constructional solution	– Centre on a hill	– Centre in a flat area with ridges nearby	– Centre in a hill-fort

B. CONTEXT

Site	Tu/Hauge	Gudme/Lundeborg	Runder Berg
Type	– „Centre with a hall“	– Centre with a hall	– „Centre with a hall“
Chronology	– “Permanent” from the Roman Iron Age onwards?	– „Permanent“ from the 3rd century onwards?	– Since the late 3rd/early 4th century with breaks in continuity
Rank (LR/MP)	– Rank 2	– Rank 1	– Rank 2

C. FUNCTIONS

Site	Tu/Hauge	Gudme/Lundeborg	Runder Berg
Dominion	– „Hall“, prestige finds	– Hall; prestige finds	– „Hall“; prestige finds
Fortificatory/ military	– Hill, rich weapon grave (MP)	– Clench nails of Nydam ships; ring swords etc.	– Hill fort
Handicrafts	– Production centre (MP)	– Gold smithy etc.	– Gold smithy
Mercantile	– Distribution centre (MP)	– Distribution centre; harbour area	?
Cultic	– „Hall“, *guldgubber*, stone cross	– Hall; place names	– „Hall“ ?
Cultural/social	– Court site, “hall”	– Hall	– „Hall“ ?
Regarding traffic	– Placement at the royal way through Jæren („Kongsvejen“)	– Harbour	– Connection to a road?
Judiscial (ting)	– Court site, ting site	?	?

– LR = Late Roman Iron Age; MP = Migration period
– source: chapter 6.3

Table 7. Social organisation in the first centuries AD in parts of Europe

Area (source material)	*Leadership (source material)*	*Retinue´s size (source material)*
Jæren (court sites)	“Petty king” (Erga-grave)	Ca. 60-70 (number of men in the court sites´ houses)
Jutland and Funen (bog offerings)	“Petty king” (e.g. finds in Illerup place A)	Ca. 70 (ratio in Illerup between the commander and ordinary soldiers)
South-western Germany (written sources)	„Petty king“ (written sources)	„Less than a few hundred“ (written sources)

– The bog offerings of the first half of the 3rd century AD were excavated in Jutland and Funen, but they possibly reflect attacking forces from the Scandinavian peninsula (f.i. Illerup place A) or the continent (Thorsberg); alternatively, these forces served in the Roman army before attacking parts of present day Denmark; indirectly, victorious domestic „Danish“ forces must be assumed, as structured and at least as numerous as the attackers
– Source: chapter 6.4

Table 8. Functions of the central places at Helgö and Birka in the Swedish Mälar region

Criteria	*Helgö*	*Birka*
Administration	Unknown	Yes
Ting	Unknown	Yes
Cult	Probably yes	Probably
Crafts	Yes	Yes
Trade	Yes	Yes
Strategically placed as to traffic	Yes	Yes

– Since different buildings in Helgö were considered as halls (Vierck 1991, Herschend 1993), it would be easy to ascribe administrative and cultic functions to Helgö today
– Source: Lamm 1982:4

Table 9. A model on social organisation and economic structure in Iron Age Jæren

Period	Pre-3rd century AD	3rd-7th century AD	Post 700-800
Political organisation	Egalitarian society	Chiefdoms and stratified society	State
Economic structure	Reciprocal (exchange of goods among the equal)	Reciprocal and redistributive (exchange of goods controlled by a “centre”)	The beginning of a market economy (but with continuing reciprocal and redistributive economic structures)

– Base: anthropological (Service 1971) and to some extent historical analogy (Odner 1973a; b)
– Source: Myhre 1978:254

List 1. Important finds of the first millennium AD in focal areas in middle and southern Jæren

1. Grude and Bore

Roman period: Grude (loose find) = gold ring 5 g (dating: B/C; S 3193)

Migration Period: Bore (loose find) = Vestland cauldron (D; C 6832); Grude (hoard find) = ring money Au 55g (B 1901)

Merovingian Period: –

Viking period: Bore (grave find) = Irish mount (2nd half of the 9th century; S 7129); Grude (loose find) = silver ring (B 1505)

2. Hauge, Tu and other neighbouring farms on or at the Tu ridge (including a court site, i.e. Dysjane)

Roman period: Hauge (court site Dysjane) = silver fibula (C1; C 4912); Tu (grave find?) = gold ring 2g (B/C; B 4644a) ; Tu (grave find) = lance, glass with a Greek inscription, wooden bucket with bronze mounts (C3; S 1494); Tu (grave find) = bronze vessel (C3-D; B 2505-2517); Særheim (loose find) = gold berlock 6g (B/C; S 1518); Laland (grave find) = Østland cauldron (C2; S 421); Anda (grave find) = Hemmoor bucket (C2; S 2337); Braud (loose find) = gold bead 7g (B/C; B 4061); Horpestad (grave find?) = gold ring 7g (B/C; C 7477); Øksenevad (grave find) = sword (C1b/C2; S 6009)

Migration period: Hauge (grave find: Krosshaug) = gold fibula, relief brooch gilded Ag, clasps Ag, glass vessel, bronze dish, fragments from other bronze vessels etc. (D1; B 2269-2299); Hauge (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag (D2b; B 4000); Tu (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag (D23;C 21407); Tu (grave find) = sword, Vestland cauldron, glass vessel, two finger rings Au etc. (D1; S 1476-1493); Anda (grave find) = fragmentary silver figure with relief decoration (D1; B 2973-2974); Anda (hoard find) = different objects Au 170g (C 6700/6705); Sør-Braut (grave find) = sword, Vestland cauldron, wooden vessel with bronze mounts, ring Au (D2; S 2452); Nord-Braut (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag (D1; S 2451; Braut (grave find) = Vestland cauldron, glass (D1, S 4058i); Friestad (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag (D2b; S 1969); Tjøtta (grave find) = glass (D1; B 4298-2504)

Merovingian period: Hauge (found in a house ruin) = 16 guldgubber (Merovingian/Early Viking Period; B 5392); Tu (grave find) = glass vessel, glass beads (ca. 600; S 3615)

Viking period: Hauge = stone cross (perhaps reminiscent of Early Christian ceremonies on the hill); Tu = Runic stone (perhaps reflecting some sort of a powerful family on the hill and cult); Særheim (grave find) = rider´s burial (10tth century?; S 3962); Laland (grave find) = Irish mount (Early Viking Age; S 5670); Laland (grave find) = silver needle (S 382); Braut (grave find) = foreign weapon (S 2453).

3. Erga, Orre, Store Salte and Reve (neighbouring farms)

Roman period: Erga (grave find) = sword, chape Ag, belt mount Ag, fingering Au (C2; S 1911); Erga (grave find) = glass (C3; S 4446); Orre (grave find?) = gold band (C1; B 2548); Salte (loose find) = gold ring 10g (B/C; S 4249); Salte (loose find) = gold ring 11g (B/C; B 4782c); Salte (loose find) = gold ring 1g (B/C; S 3122); Reve (grave find) = gold ring 6g, two silver fibula (C2; B 4643); Reve (grave find) = glass (1-575; S 3845); Reve (grave find) = bronze cauldron (1-575; lost)

Migration period: Salte (grave find) = Vestland cauldron (D2; S 7990); Erga (grave find) = relief fibula Ag (D1; S 7131); Erga (hoard find) = ring money Au 172g (S 3904); Reve (grave find) = wooden bucket with bronze mounts (D, lost)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: Orre (grave find) = wooden bucket with bronze mounts (ca. 800; B 2564); Orre: two graves with Irish mounts (B 2561: 1st half of the 9th century; S3549: just Viking Age); Orre (grave find) = silver needle and decorated silver piece (S 1149-1150); Reve (grave find) = Irish mount (S 1865); Reve (grave find) = silver ring; Reve (grave find) = silver arm band (S 8506)

4. Re and neighbouring farms

Roman period: Håland (grave find) = sword, buckle, glass vessel etc. (C3; S 4069)

Migration period: Re (grave find) = Vestland cauldron (D1; B 1862-1865); Re (hoard find) = ring money Au 186g (B 4856)

Merovingian period: Re (grave find) = weapon grave with golden ingot (S 2518-2525)

Viking period: Line (grave find) = Irish mount (1st half of the 9th century; S 4259)

5. Lygi and Vestly

Roman period: Vestly (grave find) = sieve Bronze (C2; S 1053)

Migration period: Vestly (grave find) = sword, military belt, finger ring Au, many tools (D1; S 8635); Vestly/Lye (loose find) = glass (D; lost); Vestly/Lye (grave find) = glass (D1; B 1849-1850); Vestly/Lye (grave find) = glass, Vestland cauldron (D2; S8635); Garpestad (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag (D2b; B 1781-1784, 1877)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: –

6. Oma and Fosse

Roman period: Oma (grave find) = bronze cauldron (1-575; lost); brass cauldron (grave find) = (1-575; lost); copper cauldron (1-575; lost)

Migration period: Fosse (grave find) = sword, belt mount gilded Ag (Roman), buttons/mounts gilded Ag with relief decoration etc. (D1; S 6697); Oma (hoard find) = different objects Au 637g (C 18265/18270)

Merovingian period: Oma (grave find) = imported weapon (c. 750-800 AD; S 4549)

Viking period: –

7. Rimestad

Roman period: Rimestad (loose find) = gold ring 8g (B/C; B 4696)

Migration period: Rimestad (grave find) = glass vessel with mounts gilded Ag in relief decoration (D2a; S 4268); Rimestad (grave find?) = glass (D; B 2132)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: –

8. Nærheim and neighbouring farms

Roman period: Nærland (grave find) = sword, gold ring 20g, glass (C2-D; S 1466-1472); Nærheim (loose find) = gold ring 14g (B/C; B 5115); Obrestad (grave find?) = gold ring 6g (B/C; C 7746); Hå (grave find) = sword, Østland cauldron, glass (C1; S 4152)

Migration period: Nærheim (hoard find) = ring money Au 62g (find number)

Merovingian period: Hå (grave find) = 100 glass and quartzite beads (ca. 750-850; S 8172, 8174, 8175)

Viking period: Nærbø (loose find) = Irish mount (S 2005), Refsnes = two graves with Irish mounts (2nd half of the 9th century; S 3246 and
S 5073)

9. Bø and neighbouring farms (including a court site, Klauhauane)

Roman period: Klauhauane (court site) = gold ring 3g (B/C; S 7181a); Bø (grave find) = gold ring 25g,Vestland cauldron (C3; S 4355); Store Håland (grave find?) = gold ring 2g (B2; C 1087); Håland, grave 1 = sword (C3; S 4068), Håland, grave 2 = sword, glass (C3/D1; S 4069)

Migration period: Motland (grave find) = Vestland cauldron (D2; C 16268); Torland (grave find) = wooden bucket with bronze mounts (D; S 493-495); Ullaland (loose find) = glass (D; lost?) ; Ødemotland (grave find) = sword (D1; 8613)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: Torland (hoard find) = Irish mount (B1856)

10. Varhaug (including a court site, i.e. Leksaren)

Roman period: –

Migration period: Varhaug (grave find) = drinking horn (D1; S 5650)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: –

11. Herikstad and Anisdal

Roman period: Herikstad (loose find) = Østland cauldron (C2; B 1861)

Migration period: Herikstad (grave find) = bronze cauldron and two wooden buckets with bronze mounts (D; B 389-390); Anisdal (grave find) = sword (D2; 2067-2082)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: –

12. Kvassheim and neighbouring farms

Roman period: Kvassheim (grave find) = gold ring 6g (B/C; B 5292); Kvalbein (grave find)= gold ring 10g (C3; S 2348)

Migration period: Kvassheim, grave 80A = sword, glass vessel with mounts Ag (giltet) in relief decoration (D1; B 5343); Kvassheim (grave find) = glass vessel (c. 450-550; B 5300); Kvassheim, grave 15B = sword (D1; B 5354); Kvassheim (grave find) = relief fibula gilded Ag with relief decoration (D2b; B 5362); Voll (grave find) = sword, six buttons gilded Ag with relief decoration (D2; S 927-938); Kvalbein (grave find) = glass (D; C 16290-16292)

Merovingian period: Stavneim (loose find) = golden neck ring (S 8507)

Viking period: Kvalbein (grave find) = foreign weapon (S 2349); Voll (grave find) = foreign weapon (S4945)

13. Sæland and Eikeland (including a court site, i.e. Håvodl)

Roman period: –

Migration period: Sæland (grave find) = glass (D; lost); Eikeland (grave find) = relief fibula Bz with a Runic inscription in a long mound with a 7 m long grave chamber (D2b; S 9181)

Merovingian period: –

Viking period: –

Notes
– Bracteates have been generally excluded
– Literature: Andersson 1993; Bemmann/Hahne 1994; Bøe 1922; Holand 2001; Ilkjær 1990; Kristoffersen 2000; Lund Hansen 1987; Straume 1987; Braathen 1989; Holand 2001; Larsen 1978; Rønne 1999

Finds outside the focal areas (fig. 8)
– Roman period finger rings: Nordre Reime (to the south of nr. 8), Oppstad (to the east of nr. 9), Årsland (to the east of nr. 12)
– Sword graves of the Roman and Migration period: Tunheim (to the south of nr. 5), Øvregård (north from nr. 2)
– Major farm buildings of the Late Roman and Migration period: Rauland (Ånestad) and adjacent Torhold (Tvihaug), both to the east of nr. 10
– Glass or bronce vessels of the Migration period: Voll (to the east of nr. 10), Netland (to the north of nr. 5)
– Objects with relief-decoration of the Migration period date: Skretting (to the east of nr. 10), Garpestad (to the south of nr. 5)
– Foreign weapon of Viking Age date: Nordheim (to the west of nr. 5)

11. Description: Site by site

11.1. Oddernes

TOPOGRAPHY

– Oddernes is located on the ness between the river Otra estuary to the west and the Topdal fjord to the east in a rich fauna and flora with good conditions for agricultural use and protected natural harbours in, for example, Lahelle, Kongsgårdsbukta and Narviga

– The court–site itself was found to the west of an early Romanesque stone church

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*
Unknown	1971	1971/1972 (P. Rolfsen)

– Compare page.

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle Mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
5 (+X)	8 X 5 m	?	1	Few: Pottery, charcoal, charred bones	1St/2nd century AD (four c14-dates); the finds are undatable

– House construction: Wall ditches and inner rows of postholes (compare fig. 7); only one row of houses was recorded, but another row if it once existed further to the north-west would have been destroyed by intense settlement activities in the area

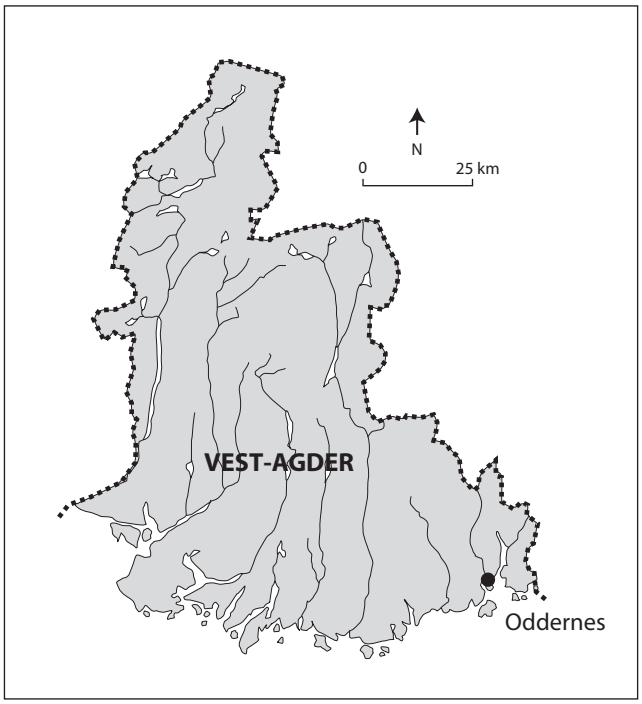
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: traces of intense settlement activities

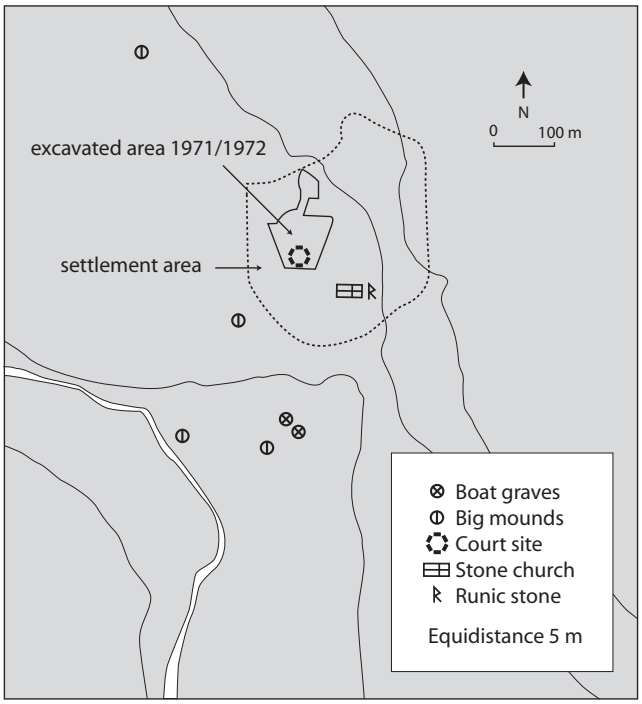
– Wider context: A once important farm, indicated by a village of Roman/Migration period date, an almost completely destroyed Iron Age burial ground with more than 100 barrows, some of them substantial and some of them containing richly furnished burials; near the church, remains of what might have been an Iron Age hall building (excavated in the early 1990s); a Runic stone once outside the church commemorates Eyvindr, a godson of Olaf the Saint, probably initiating the first church building in Oddernes (compare pp. 48-49, table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

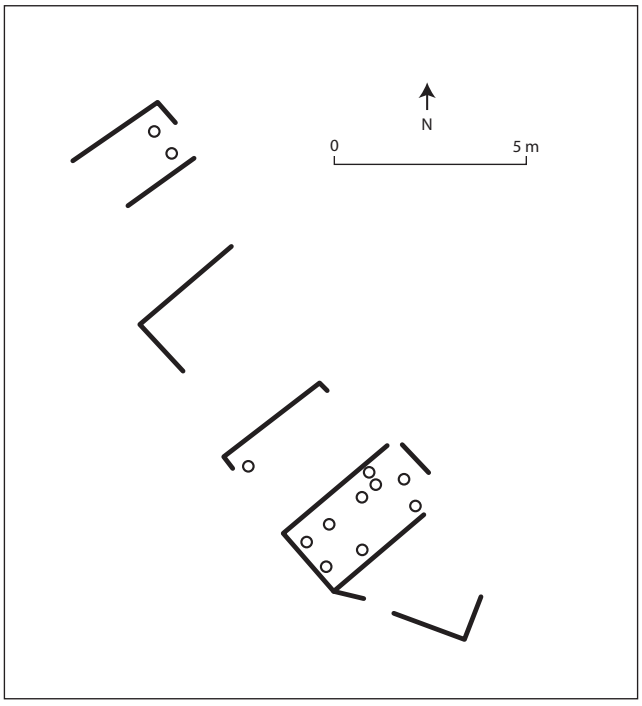
- Rolfsen 1976: 65-73



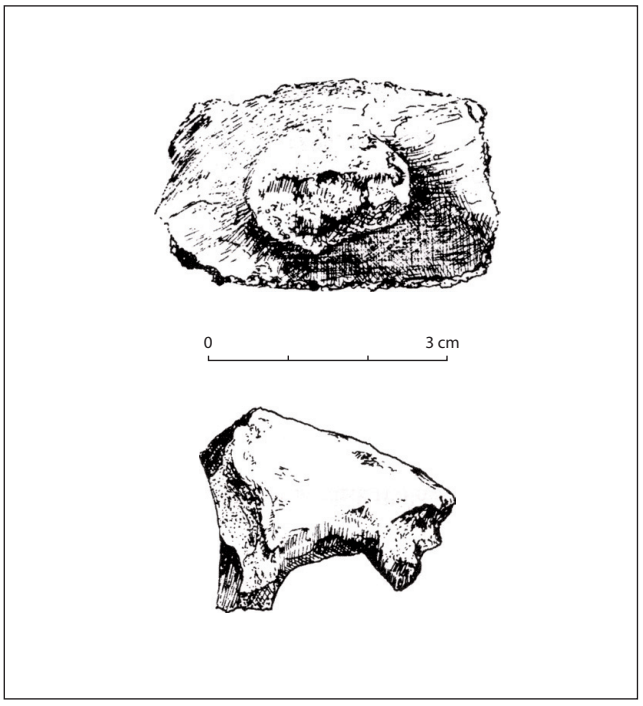
Oddernes in Vest-Agder.



Court site´s topography (Grimm/Stylegar 2004:fig. 7).



Court site´s plan (after Rolfsen 1976:fig. 2).



Pottery found in house 1 (after Rolfsen 1976:fig. 6).

11.1. Oddernes

Oliver Grimm

11.2. Spangereid

TOPOGRAPHY

– Spangereid and the farms nearby are situated in a plain amongst minor ridges at a narrow strip of land with a peninsula at the south (Lindesnes) that was an obstacle to seaborne traffic

– The court site is located to the west of an early Romanesque stone church in a pine wood in an area with substantial traces of settlement activities and in the periphery of a once extencive grave-field

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*
60 X 40 m	Late 1990ies	1879 (O. Rygh)

– In 1879, an investigation in the houses´ long walls unearthed pottery but the walls were mistaken as longitudinal grave mounds (compare p. ?)

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
C. 10	Unknown	Probably none	1?	Pottery (long walls)	None

– The house construction with parallel long walls and sunken areas in between is reminiscent of the second period of court sites in Rogaland; yet it is difficult to identify house remains in Spangereid because of the dense vegetation and the many different settlement remains and grave mounds in the very area

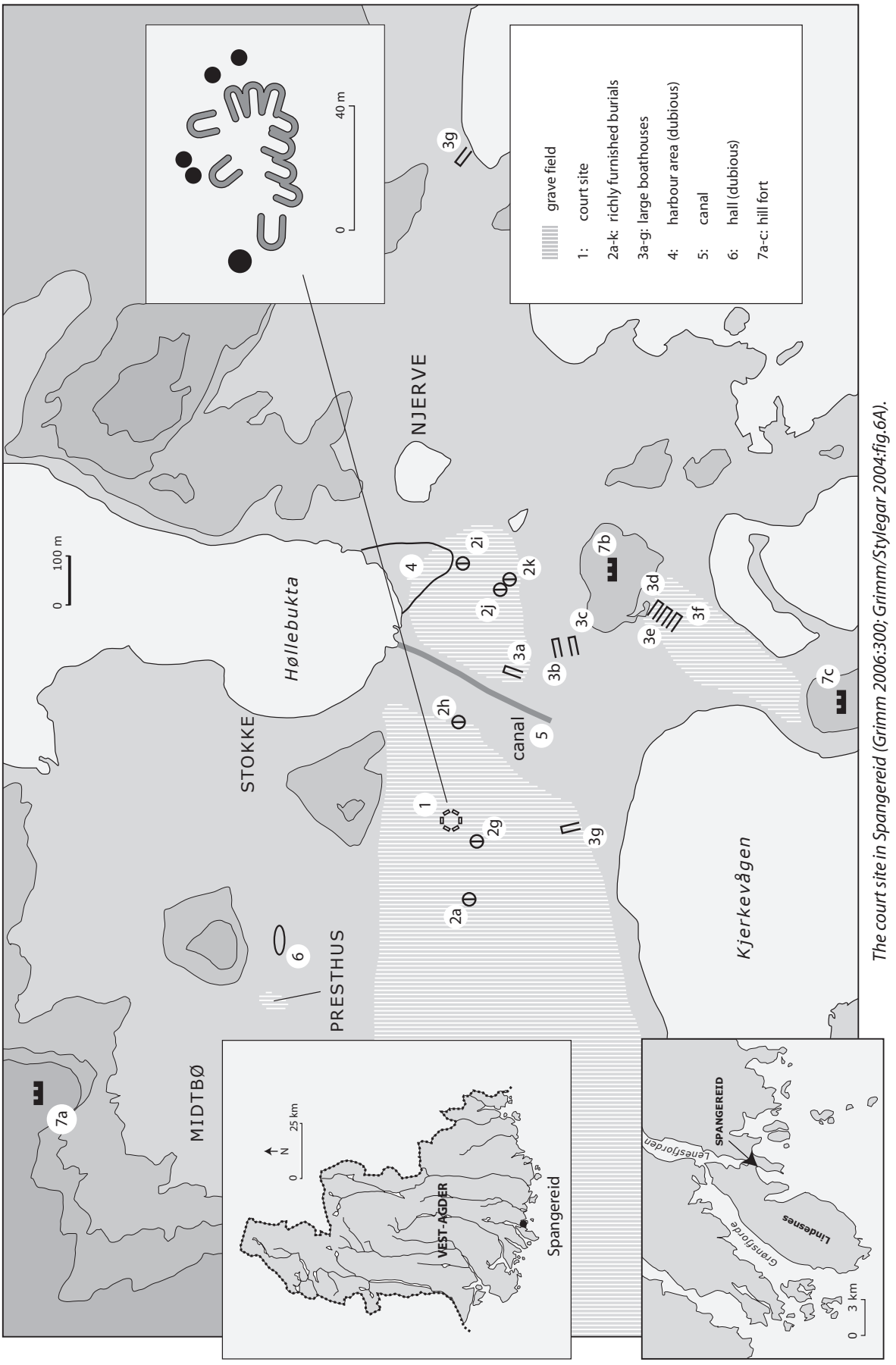
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: substantial settlement remains visible on the surface (pits, houses etc.)

– Wider context: a once import farm area, indicated by many richly furnished burials of the Early and Late Iron Age, seven huge boathouses and a canal of the late Roman/Migration period, one such boathouse belonging to the Middle Ages, a somehow questionable harbour area to the north, a dubious hall to the northeast, three hill forts etc. (compare pp. 49–50, table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

– Stylegar 1999: 147-153; Stylegar/Grimm 2005: 95–96.



The court site in Spangereid (Grimm 2006:300; Grimm/Stylegar 2004:fig.6A).

11.2. Spangereid

11.3. Leksaren

TOPOGRAPHY

– In flat–Jæren, close to Varhaug, ca. two km away from the open sea, the Reiestad–rivulet immediately to the south, and the railway built in the 1870s/1880s just to the east

– The court site was situated on a shallow gravel deposition in a dry area less apted for agricultural use and strategically placed in an area delineated by a rivulet and uncultivated land (bogs, heathland) to the north, high Jæren to the east and the narrowing strip of flat Jæren to the south (compare fig. 6)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
60 X 47 m	1892 (Gustafson) 1932 (Petersen)	1938/1939 (J. Petersen)	Leksaren contains the name „laks“ (salmon), as once suggested by M.Olsen (letter at top.ark. AmS)

– G. Gustafson mentioned the site in his diary in 1892 but it was J. Petersen who saw it for the first time in 1932 to introduce it into literature; the excavation is described in chapter 12.2

– M. Olsen´s name interpretation is found in a letter kept at AMS

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle Mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
Ca. 15	10 X 4 m (Mostly)	Diameter: 6 m	2	4700 Pottery sherds, few other objects	Phase 1: 2nd/3rd century (C14) Phase 2: 4th/5th century (finds; C14) Postdating activities (C14)

– House construction: Phase 1 perhaps with wall ditches, phase 2 with stone walls (compare chapter 12.2)

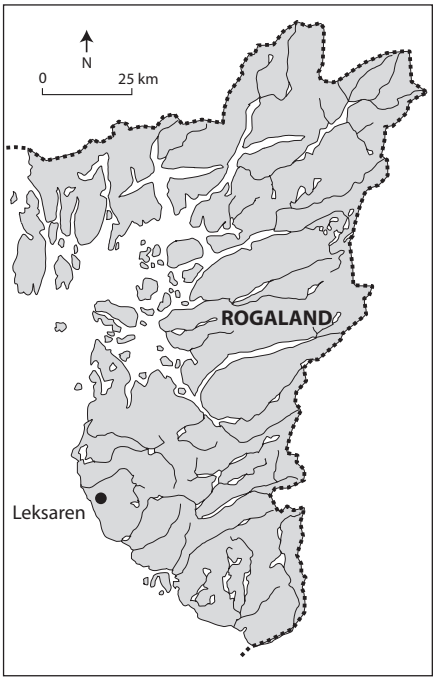
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: Four mounds with hearths or burnt areas, one close to the middle mound, the other outside the court site (compare p. 163)

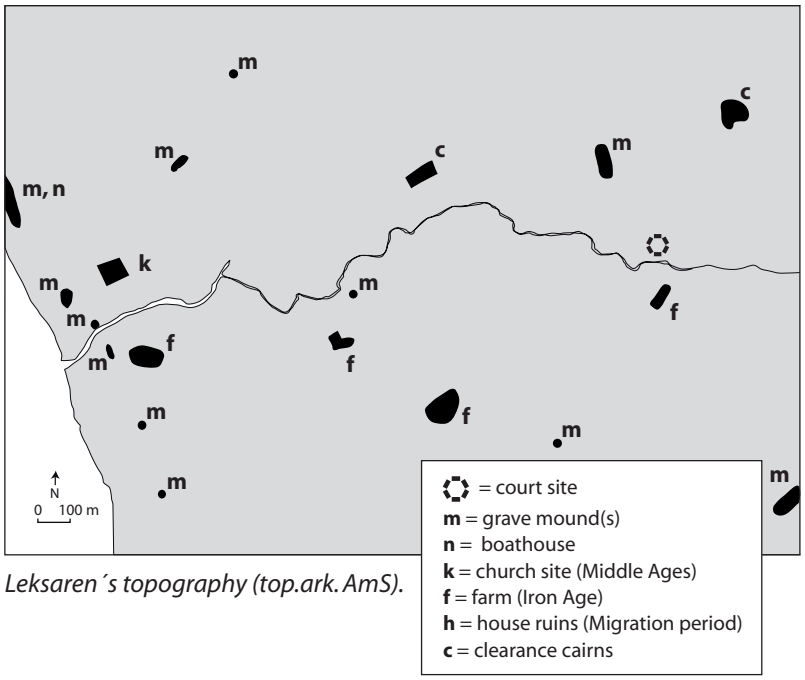
– Wider context: Once a substantial grave mound („Leksarenhaugen“) was situated to the east; the possibly largest of all farm houses of late Roman and Migration period date in Jæren (75–100 m long) existed to the west, indicating a farm of importance (compare p. 41, table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

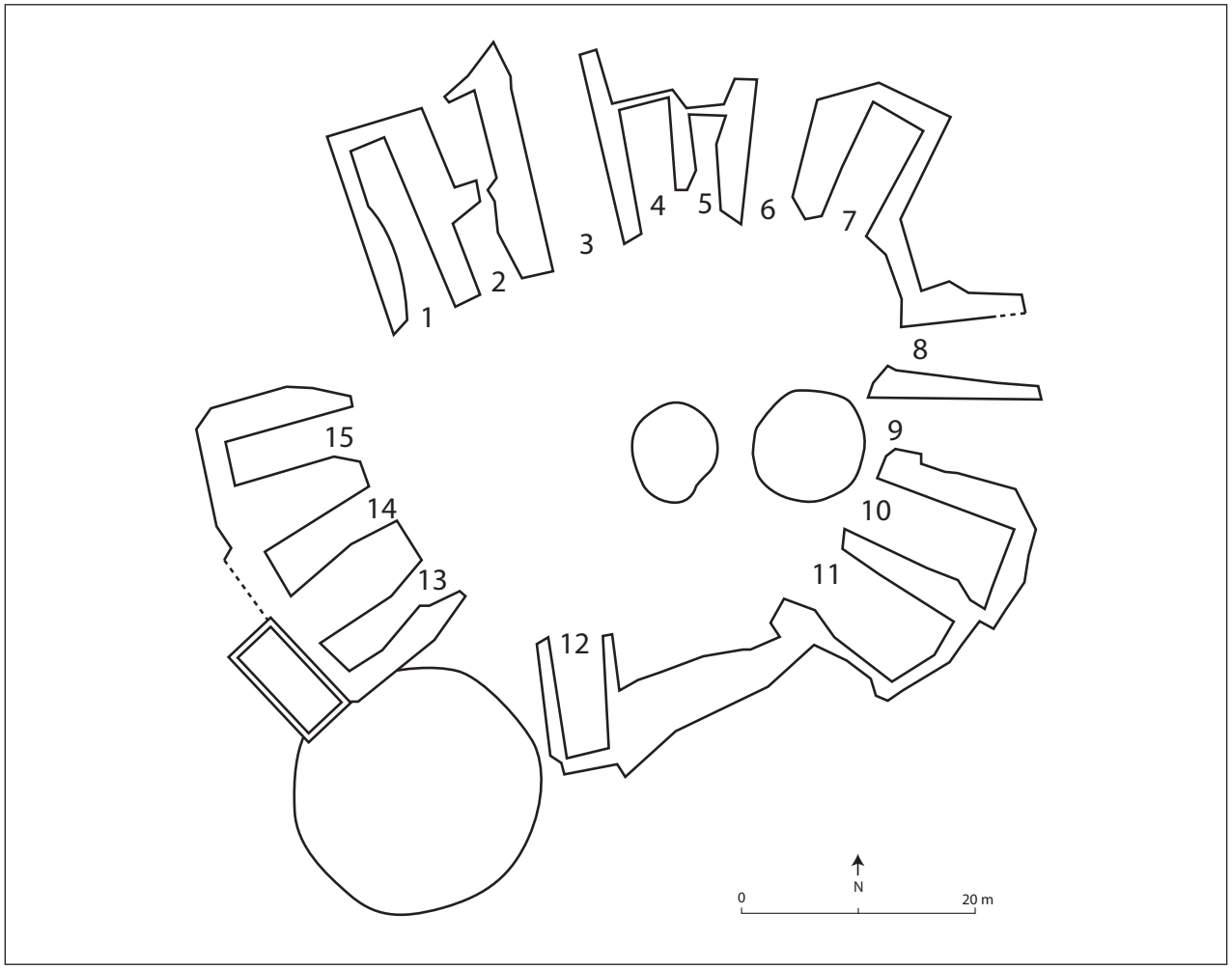
– Petersen 1932a; 1938a–c; 1939a–b; Kallhovd 1994



Leksaren in Rogaland.



Leksaren´s topography (top.ark. AmS).



Leksaren´s plan measured in 1992 (after Kallhovd 1994:pl. 2).

11.3. Leksaren

11.4 Klauhauane

TOPOGRAPHY

– In flat Jæren, close to Nærbø, four km away from the coast

– The court-site is situated at the foot of a minor hill (Hanaberget) on a very stoney plain unsuitable for agricultural use; once it was strategically placed in an area delineated by the Hå-river to the north, high Jæren to the east and an uncultivated area (bogs and heathland) and a minor river to the south (compare fig.6)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
80 X 55 m	1884	1891 (G. Gustafson) 1930-1950 (J. Petersen) 1959-1961 (O. Møllerop)	Klauhauane („claws of a cow“) might refer to the visual impression given by the walls and house grounds (Møllerop)

– The excavations are described in chapter 12.3

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Datings*
Ca. 20	10-12 X 5 m	Diameter: 7 m	2	7000 Pottery sherds, few tools and other objects	Phase 1: 1st/2nd century ad (finds; C14) Phase 2: 3rd to 5th century (finds)

– House construction: Phase 1 with wall ditches (including a house beneath the middle mound), phase 2 with stone walls (chapter 12.3)

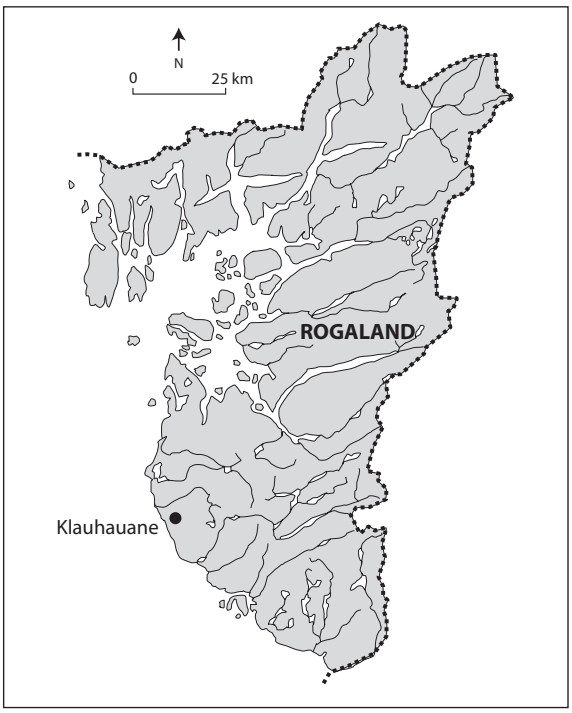
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: Several grave mounds to the northwest and northeast of the site and a star-shaped burial site overlaying the northeast of the court site (compare p. 173)

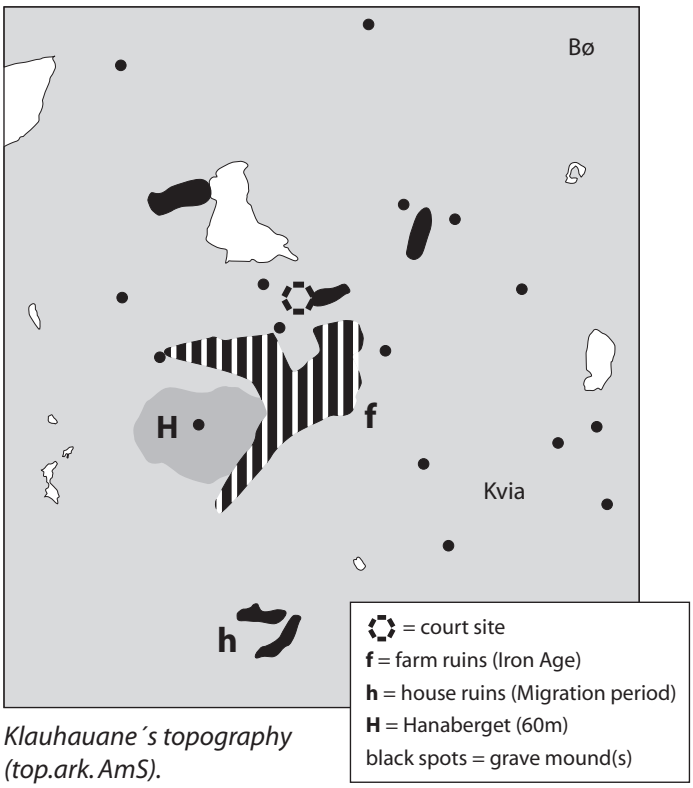
– Wider context: Several minor grave-fields and singular burial mounds in the sorroundings, some of the graves´ funishings indicate wealthy persons; to the south the Hanaberget farm of late Roman and Migration period; the Bø and Ullarland-farms further to the north-east were probably paramount because of their archaeological and general context and the name-giving (compare p. 41, table 5.)

BASIC LITERATURE

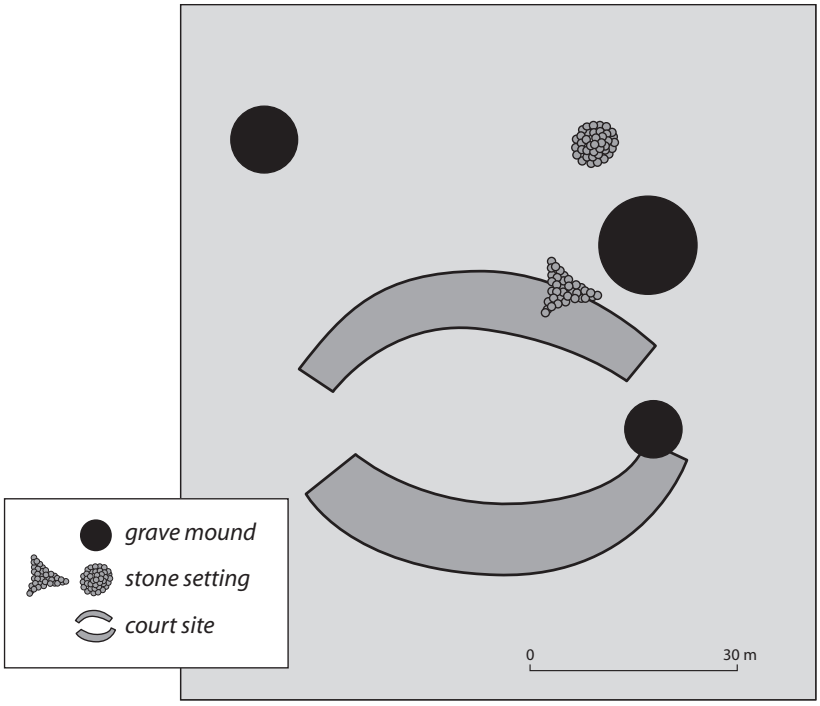
Nicolaysen 1884; Petersen 1939c; 1941a-b; 1942a-b; 1946; 1947a-b; 1948; 1949; 1950; Møllerop 1960a-b; 1961, Capelle 2000.



Klauhauane in Rogaland.



Klauhauane´s topography (top.ark. AmS).



Klauhauane´s simplified plan (top. ark. AmS).

11.4. Klauhauane

11.5. Dysjane

TOPOGRAPHY

– Placed in flat Jæren, on the Tu–ridge, south from Klepp, nearly ten km away from the open sea

– The Tu–ridge is exceptionally fertile even in Jæren´s respects but the area Dysjane was built upon is clayish and therefor less apted for agricultural use; once Dysjane was placed strategically in an area delimitated by rivers to the north (Figgjo) and south (Håelva) and high Jæren to the east (fig. 6)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
60 x 35m	1861 (Nicolaysen)	1869; 1879 (see below)	Dysjane: grave mounds (plural of old norse *dys*) according to Rønneseth 198b:315

– The excavations were described by Kallhovd 1994: 93–99 (a short summary is given below)

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
Ca. 17	Unknown	Diameter: Ca. 8 m	2	Few: A fibula Ag, a spindle whoorl, pottery etc.	Phase 1 and 2: undetermined

– Phase 1: Indicated by overlain culture layers; phase 2: Houses with stone walls

CONTEXT

– Immediate context: a star–shaped grave to the north-west (nr. 14), six grave mounds (Nr. 15–20, one without a number) to the south-east, none of these with finds of particular concern

– Wider context: for most archaeological periods in the first millenium AD, the Tu–ridge yields many important finds, for example the richest Migration period woman´s grave from Rogaland *(Krosshaugen)*, indicators for a hall building with *guldgubber*, a rider´s grave of Viking Age date etc. Topography, archaeology and other source material strongly suggest a centre of power once existing on the hill, in fact the most powerful one in middle and southern Jæren (compare pp. 40-41, table 5)

Excavations in Dysjane in 1869 and 1879

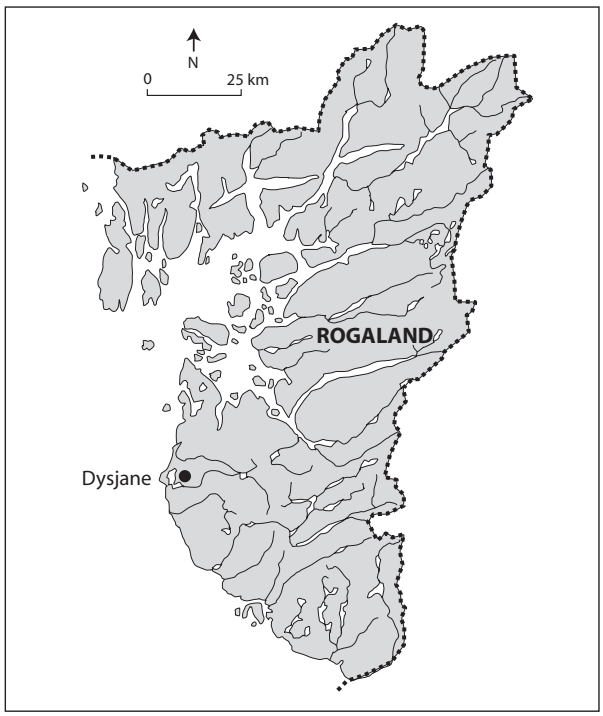
In 1869, Nicolaysen investigated four house walls and the areas between them (nr. 2-3, 6-7), the mound in the middle (nr. 1) and the star-shaped structure (nr. 14). He mainly found a fibula (C 4912) and pottery (C 4911, 4912) in the houses and a glas bead in the middle mound.

In 1879, Bendixen covered the house walls 4, 8-11 and 13, the house area between nr. 4-6 (= nr. 5) and nr. 11-13 (= nr.12) and finally the grave mounds 15-18. He recognised an old earthen wall on the spot (initial phase) and overlaying walls (younger phase). In the houses he found a spindle whorl and pottery (B3323a), pottery (B3323b) and an iron eye (B3323c). The investigation of the grave mounds came to mostly negative results except for nr. 17 with a grave chamber containing pottery sherds and charred bones (B3324).

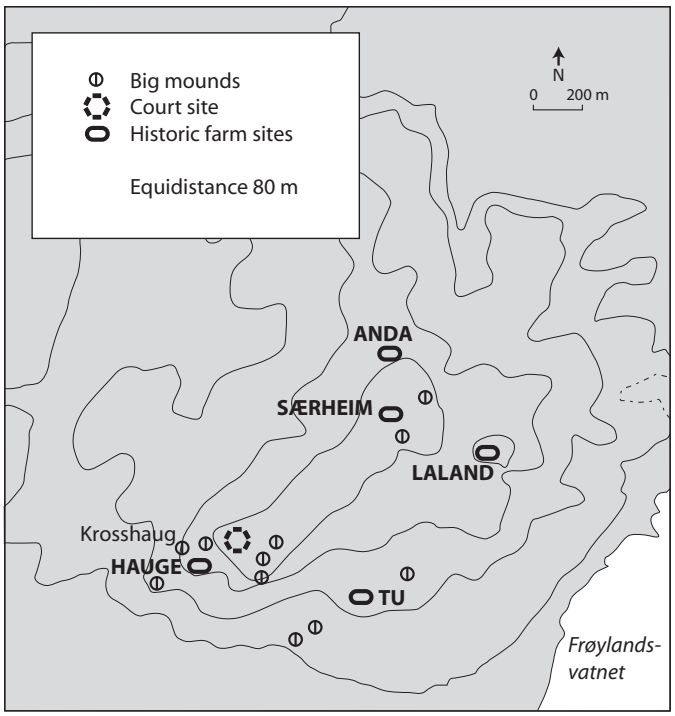
The court site finds are mostly unstratified and undatable. A silver fibula with a long catch plate (C4912) is a key find of period C1 (RGA 8: 501-501; Straume 1998: 440). It was found in the area 6-7, close to the internal division wall that seems to be overlain by the later houses´ main long walls (compare pp. 32-33)

BASIC LITERATURE

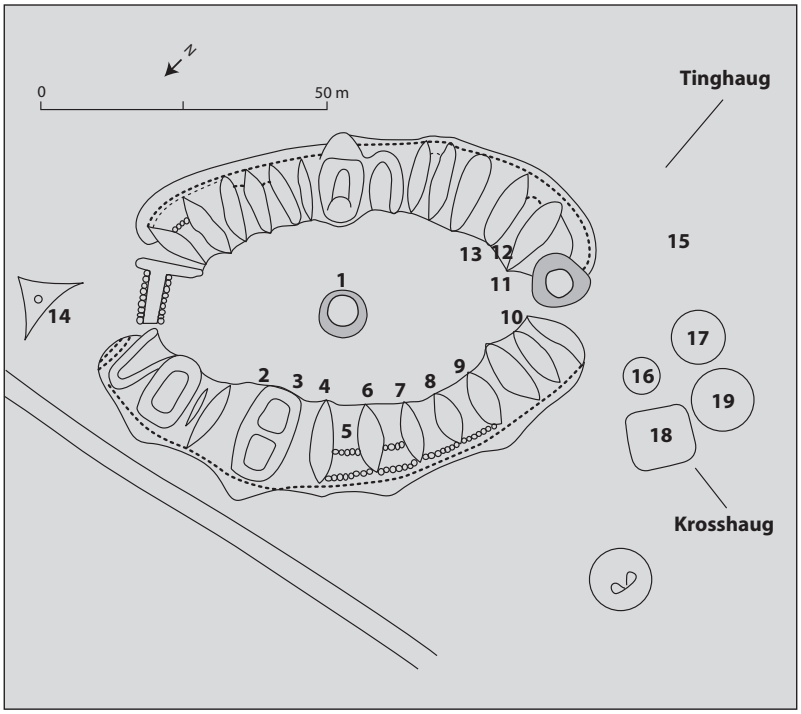
Nicolaysen 1866; 1869; Bendixen 1880; Kallhovd 1994: 93-99



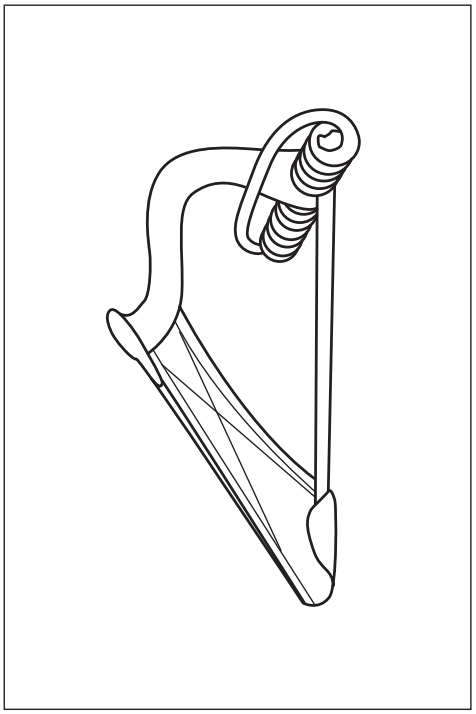
Dysjane in Rogaland.



Dysjane´s topography (Grimm/Stylegar 2004:fig. 6).



Dysjane´s plan made by Bendixen in 1879 (after Kallhovd 1994:fig. 4).



Fibula found during the investigation in 1869 (C 4912). Redrawing. No scale.

11.6. Håvodl

TOPOGRAPHY

– The court-site was placed in high Jæren (ca. 120 m above sea level) on a moraine ridge (Myhre 1972:164), 250 m to the west: the late Roman and Migration period Lyngaland–farm that was visible from Håvodl (compare fig. 6)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
C. 35x30m	1913	1934–1935 (J. Petersen) 1984; 1986–1989 (P. Haavaldsen)	Håvodl: „The elevated wall, field“ (Petersen 1936:59)

– The excavations are described in chapter 12.1

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*„Side mound“*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
C. 5	9 x 3 m	Diameter: 5 m	2–3	400 Pottery sherds, few other objects	– Period 1: 1st/2nd century AD (C14) – Period 2: 3rd–5th century (C14; finds)

– House construction: Period 1 with wall ditches, period 2 with stone walls (compare chapter 12.1)

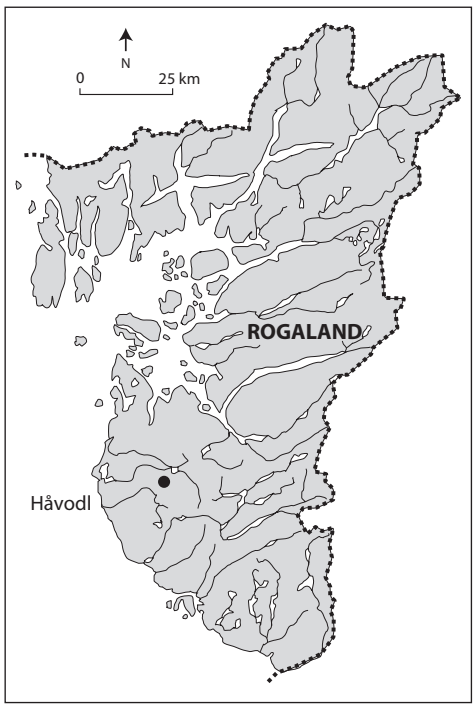
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: traces of settlement activities between the houses 3 and 4 and a mound to the north-east of house 4, the latter one an equivalent to the middle mounds of the other court sites? (compare p. 154)

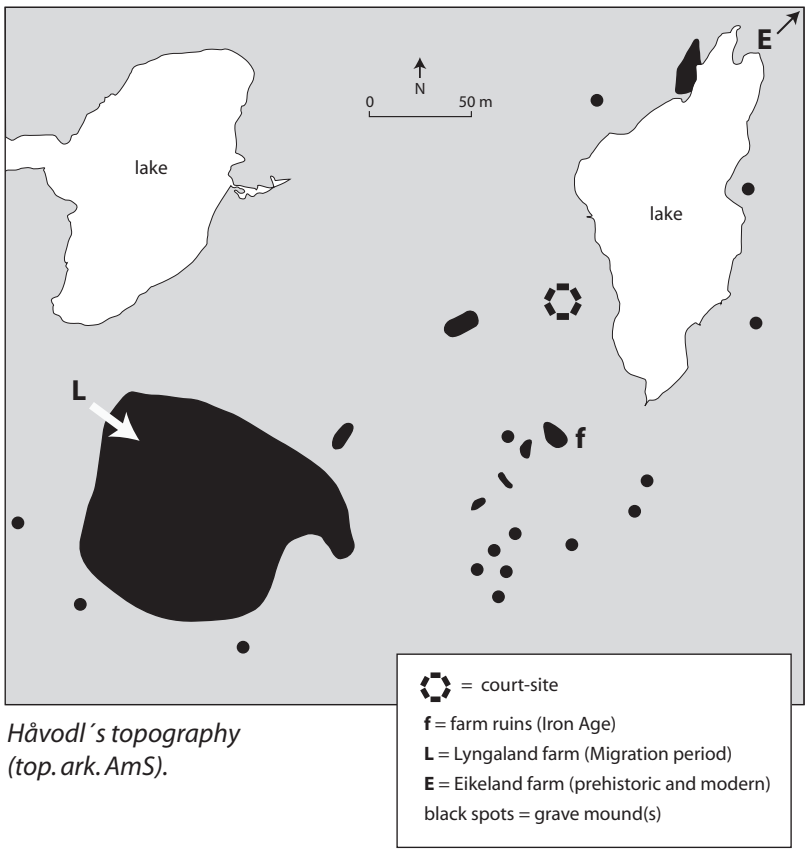
– Wider context: a farm of substantial size to the south (Lyngaland) and different graves from Sæland and Eikeland testify to the presence of persons of some rank (compare pp. 41-42, table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

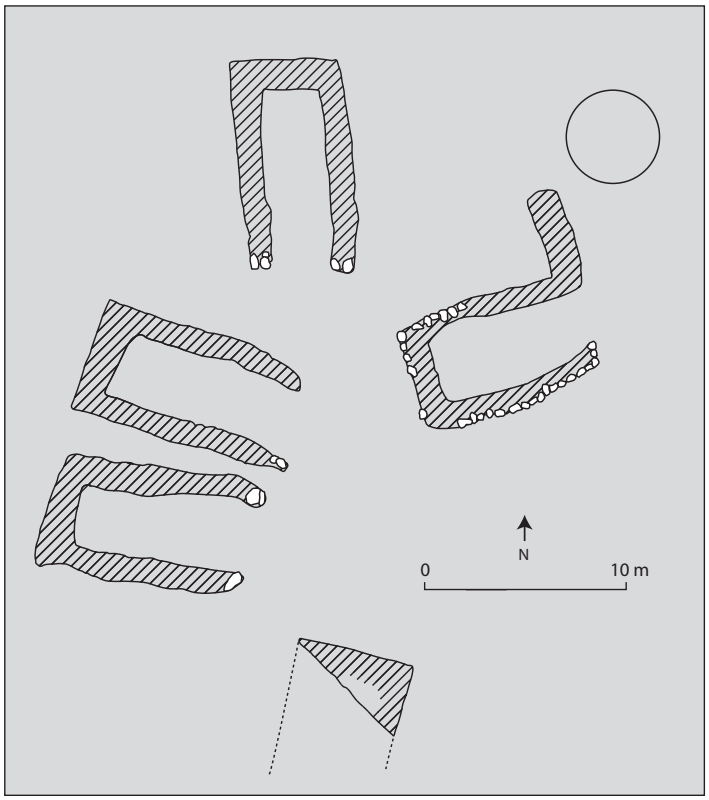
– Helliesen 1913; Petersen 1936; Haavaldsen 1984, 1986a–b; 1987, 1988a–b, 1989



Håvodl in Rogaland.



Håvodl´s topography (top. ark. AmS).



Håvodl´s plan (after Petersen 1936:table LXII).

11.6. Håvodl

11.7 Skjelbrei

TOPOGRAPHY

– The supposed, long destroyed court site in Skjelbrei was once situated on a moraine ridge that extended into the Leikvang–farm (Myhre 1972: 64), in the marginal Høyland fjellbygd (ca. 200 m above sea level), ca. 10 km to the east of the inner end of the Gandsfjord

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
Unknown	1904 (Helliesen)	None (site removed)	Leikvang (farm): „meadow used for gatherings or games“ (NG 1:64-65)

– Ten years later, Helliesen made the same kind of description for the Håvodl court site (compare p. 47)

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	Houses´ inner size	Middle mound	Phases	Finds	Dating
6	10X4 m/11x6 m	Side mound?	Unknown	None	Unknown

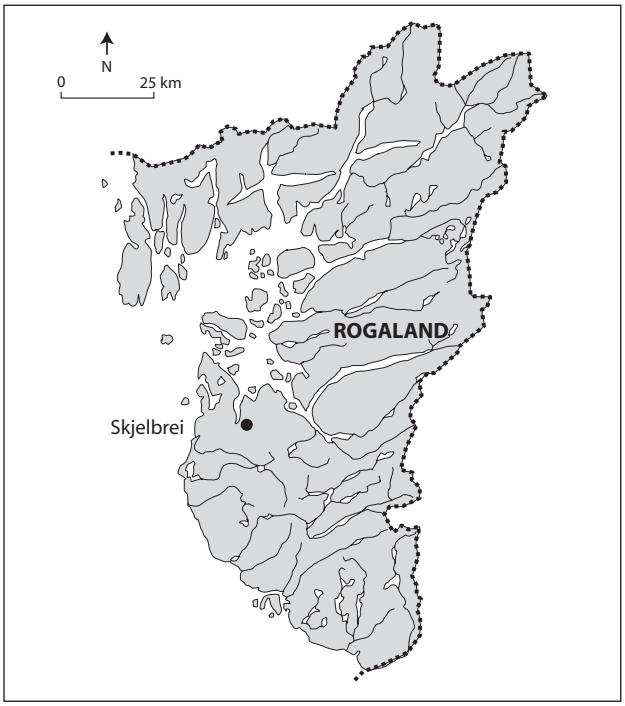
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: six mounds, two of them immediately to the south (the latter ones “middle mounds”?)

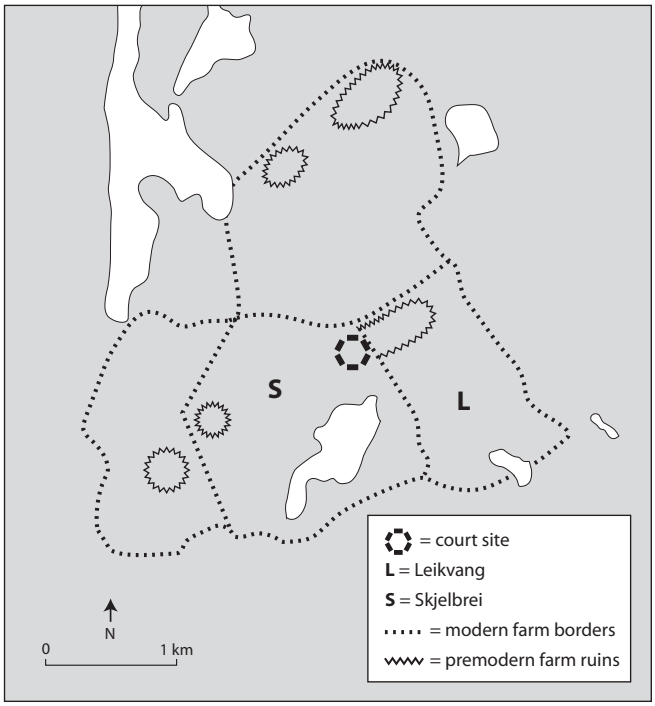
– Wider context: to the east grave mounds and settlement remains probably once belonging to the same farm; its name *Leikvang* might allude to the farm´s function as gathering place and/or recreational area; finds of the pre–Roman Iron Age originating from two neighbouring farms and pottery sherds from a claearance cairn at Skelbrei which possibly date back to the early Roman period are the earliest Iron Age finds known from the entire Fjellbygd–area; they might indicate a group of neighbouring farms of the same time which had a social focal point at the supposed court site; topographically speaking, the entire Høyland fjellbygd was a marginal area, very much in contrast to the densely populated and socially stratified inner end of the Gandsfjorden to the west (compare p. 47, table 5)

LITERATURE

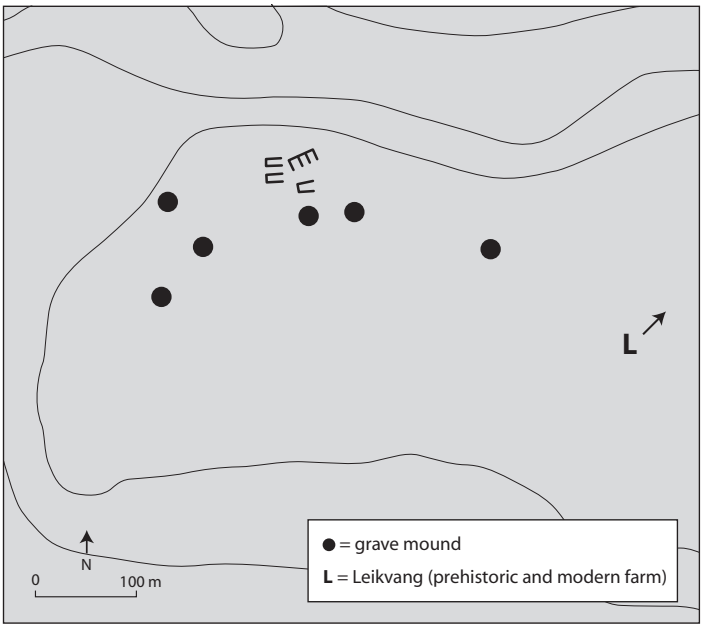
– Myhre 1972:36,39, 163f.; Myhre 1975:238



Skjelbrei in Rogaland.



Court site´s topography (after Myhre 1968:fig. 54).



Reconstructed plan of the court site (after Myhre 1968:fig. 14).

11.8. Øygarden

TOPOGRAPHY

– The court–site is situated on the north-west of Åmøy just to the north of the Hegreberg–hill (ca. 70 m above sea level), ca. 300 m away from the coast, in an area less suitable for agricultural use but with a good view to the islands to the north; the island has a strategic position relative to the southernmost islands of the Boknafjorden in an area where many sailing routes crossed and communication distances were relatively short (Løken 1992:55)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Form*	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
44 X 27 m	„Half–circle“	1925	1940 (J. Petersen)	Øygården, i.E. „the abandonned farm“

– The excavation is described in detail in chapter 12.4.

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ Number	*Houses´ Size*	*„Side“ mounds*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Radiocarbon-datings*
Ca. 10	8 X 4 m (mostly)	Diameter: 4 and 7m	2 (mostly)	Few objects: Pottery, tools etc.	Phase 1: undated Phase 2: late 4th/5th and/up to late 6th/7th century AD (finds)

– House construction: phase 1 is undetermined; in phase 2 there were houses with stone walls (chapter 12.4)

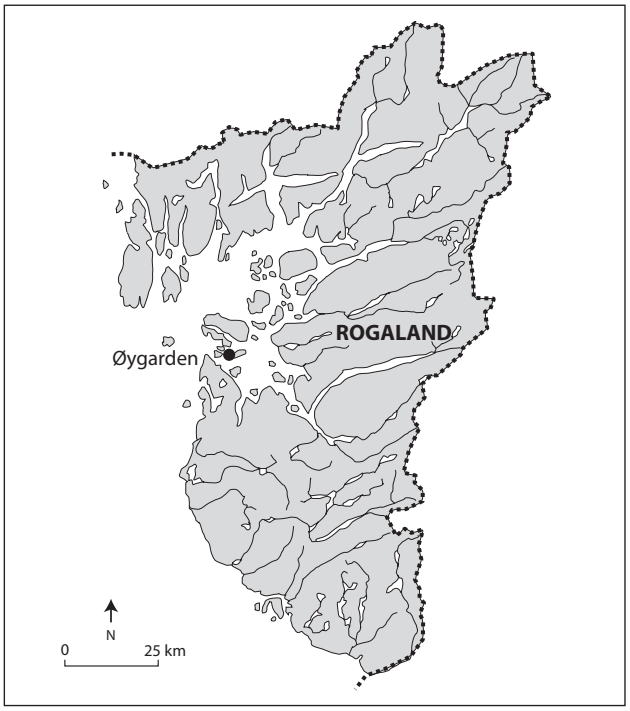
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: two mounds (4–4,5 m and 7 m across) to the east of house 9; perhaps an equivalent to the middle mound known from other court sites? (Compare p. 186)

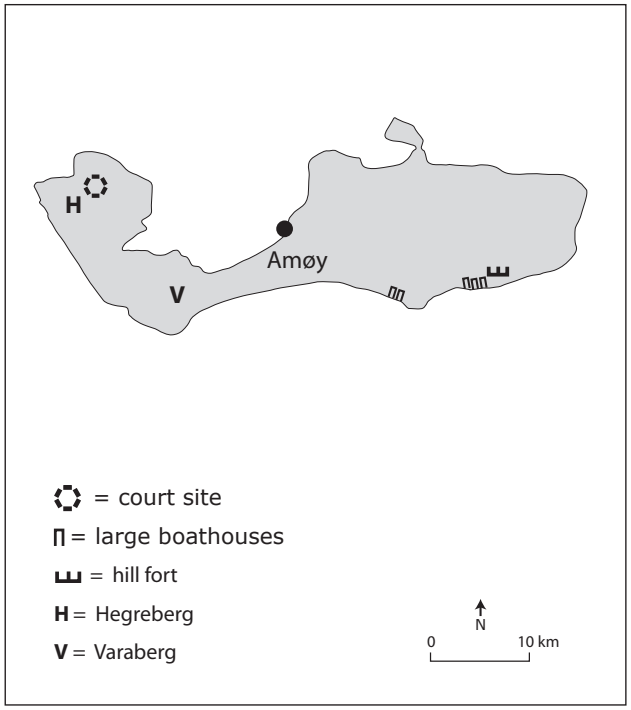
– Wider context: a farm of some importance at Hegreberg is indicated by woman´s grave dating to the 2nd half of the 4th century ad containing a bronce fibula and 102 glas and amber beads etc., fragments of a early Merovingian glas vessel from the court–site and a richly furnished double grave of Viking Age date (for example with a bronce cauldron, two cufic silver coins, some silver objects etc.); on the south-eastern end of the island (four km away), there was a group of five large boathouses of Late Roman and Migration period date and a hill fort (compare pp. 45-46 f., table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

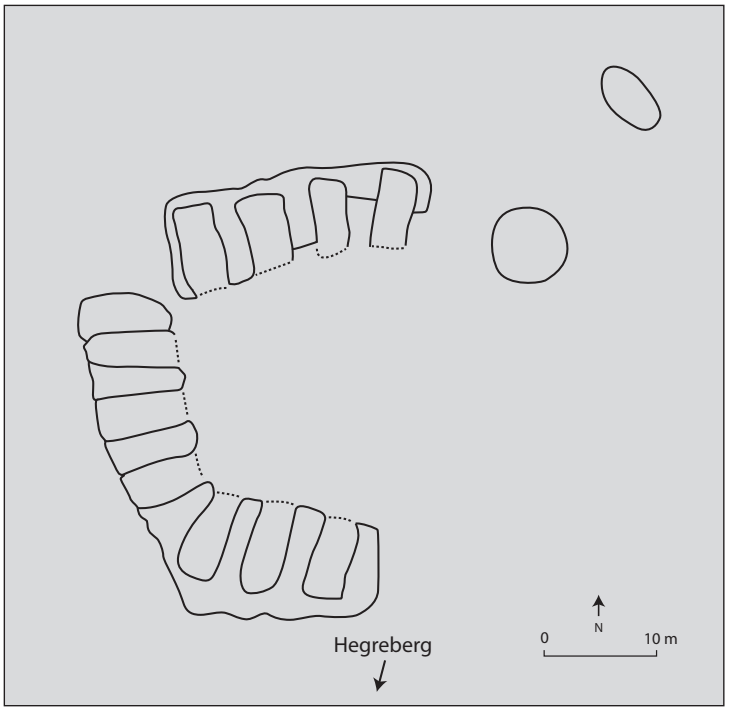
– Petersen 1932b; 1940; 1952



Øygarden in Rogaland.



Øygarden´s topography (after Myhre 1997:fig. 14).



Øygarden´s plan (top. ark. AmS).

11.8. Øygarden

11.9. Kåda

TOPOGRAPHY

– The court site was situated in the south of Randøy, with ridges just to the north and a bay to the south-east and yet another one to the south-west; the gathering place on a small island in northern Rogaland had a strategic position relative to the islands of the inner Boknafjord and the isolated settlement areas of the neighbouring mainland (Løken 1992:55)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*	*Place name*
40 X 30 m	1970s/1980s	None	Kåda (farm name): „the underlying settlement“ Knarravågen (place name): „beach of war/cargo ships of late Viking or medieval date“

– Due to the name–giving, the Kåda–farm had only secondary importance, but how old could that name be? (compare page 46f.)

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
C. 4	8–10X3 m	None	1?	None	Unknown

– House construction: stone walls

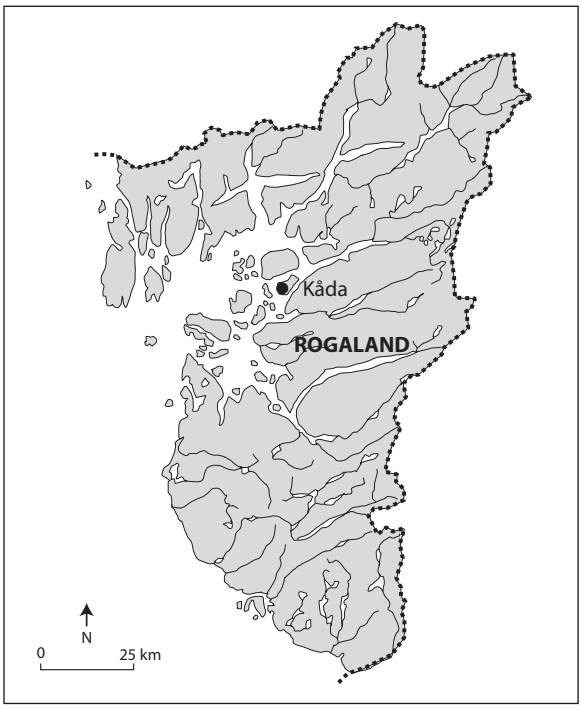
CONTEXT

– Immediate context: two minor farms of Iron Age date, one at the spot and one just to the west

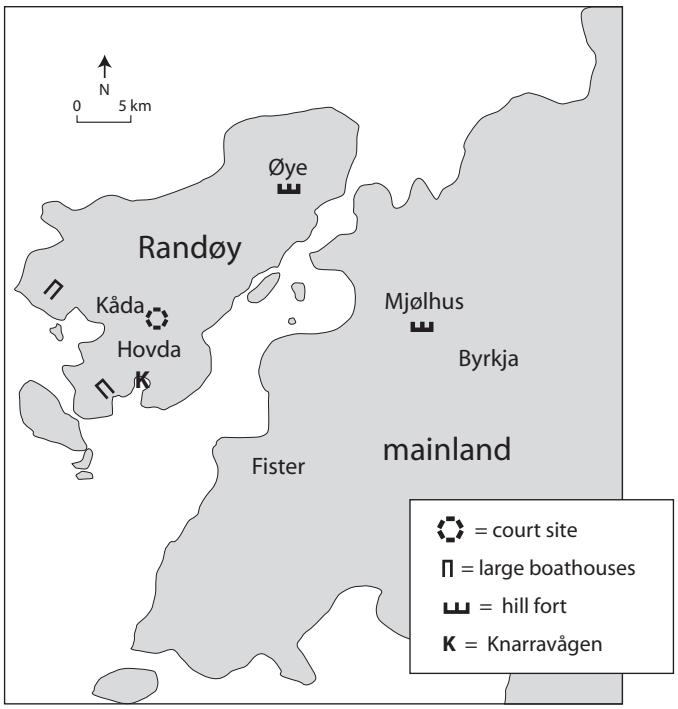
– Wider context: large boathouses to the south-east and south-west (Randa, Hovda), each of which ca. 20 m long and probably dating back to the late Roman and Migration period; an iron extraction site of Viking Age date to the north-west (Randa), a splendid 9th century Irish fibula at the southernmost tip of Randøy (Børøyna); on the mainland, there are known richly furnished burials of early Iron Age date at Mjølhus (one with a lead seal showing the Roman goddess Victoria once belonging to a leather purse and another one with a golden finger ring) and at Byrkja (containing a bead in Millefiori–technique originating from the area adjoining the Black Sea), a smithe´s grave of Viking Age date (Fister), and a Frankish fibula (Mosnes). Perhaps, a once important farm was situated on the mainland (compare p. 46, table 5)

BASIC LITERATURE

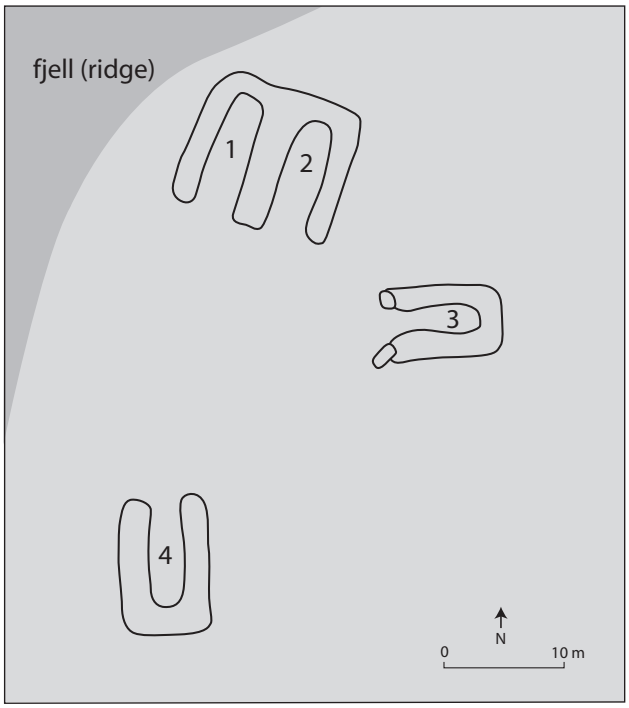
– Haavaldsen 1992; Haavaldsen undated



Kåda in Rogaland.



Court site´s topography (Grimm/Stylegar 2004:fig. 6).



Court site´s plan (top. ark. AmS).

11.10. Ritland

TOPOGRAPHY

– Close to the Suldalslågen-river, the wide flat heathland in Ritland was suited to agricultural use; the partly destroyed court site discovered on an aerial photograph had once a strategic position because of its central position in a valley with a church nearby and pathways leading up the mountain (personal communication B. Myhre, AMS)

GENERAL INFORMATIONS

Outer diameter	*Year of discovery*	*Investigation*
Unknown	1970S (S. Bang-Andersen)	None

– Compare page 44

SPECIFIC INFORMATIONS

Houses´ number	*Houses´ inner size*	*Middle mound*	*Phases*	*Finds*	*Dating*
3 (+X)	10 X 5 m	Unknown	1?	None	Unknown

– House construction: houses with stone walls; only the south-eastern part of the court–site is preserved, the rest may be removed because of agricultural use

CONTEXT

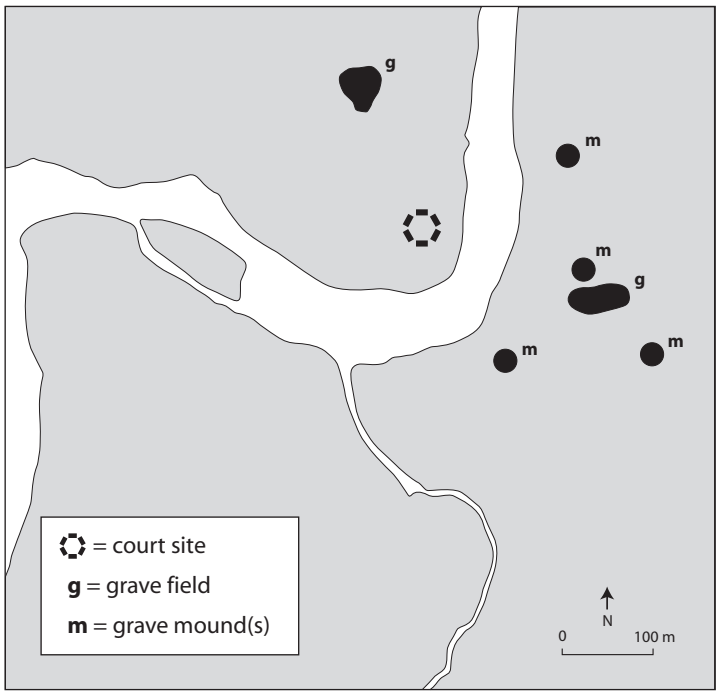
– Immediate context: Three grave mounds (diameter 8–14 m)

– Wider context: Further to the north, a gravefield consisting of altogether 48 mounds with burials from the Early and Late Iron Age (in fact the largest burial ground in the valley; yet another gravefield at Nærheim just on the other side of the river with the only find of older Roman period date in the valley (compare pp. 46-47, table 5)

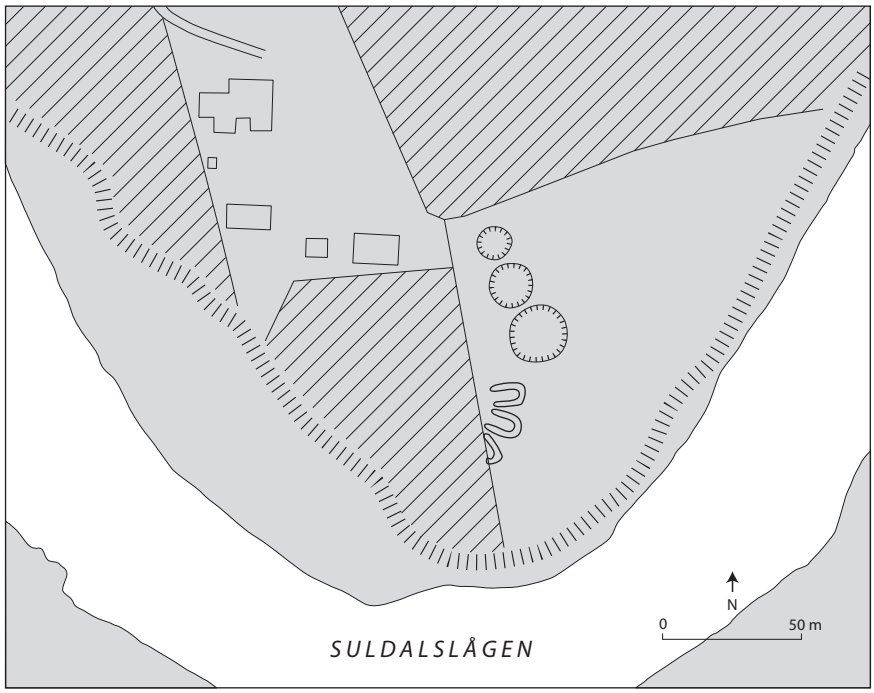
BASIC LITERATURE

– Bang Andersen 1976; Lillehammer 1986

Ritland in Rogaland.



Court site´s topography (top. ark. AmS).



Court site´s plan (after Bang Andersen 1976:fig. 2).

12. Description: Excavation by excavation

The Håvodl excavations

(1934-1935: J. Petersen;
1984; 1986-1989: P. Haavaldsen)

(Literature: Helliesen 1913:6-10, Petersen 1936, Haavaldsen 1984, 1986a-b, 1987, 1988a-b, 1989)

Håvodl: The investigations

The excavations in the 1930s and the 1980s, which covered an irregular court site that once consisted of five houses, unveiled many traces of human activity, not only in the houses themselves but also in the surroundings. Two overall drawings of Håvodl were made in the 1930s, but in fact Svihus´ simplified sketch records the distance between houses 3 and 4 more precisely than does the well-known drawing published by J. Petersen (p. 154; personal communication P. Haavaldsen, AmS). J. Petersen underlined two periods of use for the houses (relating to different levels of pits in house 2 in particular) and a Roman period date (using some pottery finds for dating purposes). The re-excavation half a century later is very helpful for elaborating the findings of the 1930s but some of the results also raise new questions (pp. 155-157). A shaft furnace of a continental type to the east of house 3 and wall ditches in houses 3 and 4 are amongst the most important discoveries of the 1980s, as is the fact, missed by J. Petersen but previously mentioned by O. Møllerop (1971:160-161), that the stone walls did not rest upon the sterile soil, but were higher up.

Houses 1-3 are alike each other inasmuch as there was a longitudinal hearth along the middle axis. Since regular sets of postholes were found solely in the inner part of house 1, it is questionable whether they were a constructional element in general. Indicators for different building phases were noted in all the houses, most notably wall ditches in houses 3 and 4 as the oldest constructional elements. House 4 yielded the most complicated stratigraphy since initial wall ditches were overlain by hearths, which themselves are partly placed underneath the stone walls of the final building phase. In fact, the initial phase of house 4 probably had the same outline as the others, with an open small side facing the place in the middle. In several respects, house 4 is an exception from the rule since a longitudinal hearth is missing and almost all the pits and round or oval hearths were found close to the opening of the later house that faces the outside. In general, the Håvodl-investigations indicated an initial building phase, with wall ditches and minor round hearths and a later phase, with stone walls and longitudinal hearths along the middle axis. It is an interesting thought that the mound to the north-east of house 4 with a hearth might be interpreted as an equivalent to the middle mounds known from other court sites.

The ca. 400 finds salvaged by J. Petersen consist almost entirely of coarse undecorated pottery, except for few sherds of finer ware, a whetstone, another tool that cannot be identified with certainty, bog iron and slag. The most notable objects are several sherds belonging to the so-called „jutlandish inspired pottery“, a fine ware dating to the period B2 and some comb-decorated bucket-shaped pots of the latest Roman or Migration periods (pp. 32-36).

For dating the site, a few stratified finds and a series of radiocarbon datings can be used. The later period of the court site´s use, i.e. the period with stone walls, is dated by representatives of bucket-shaped pots of the latest Roman or early Migration period date, either found at the very bottom or 15-20 cm high up in the layer that belongs to this phase (houses 1, 2, 4). Corroborative evidence is gained via radiocarbon datings of supposed roof materials in two houses (nrs. 2-3) and by a whetstone of Early Iron Age date that stratigraphically postdates one of the houses (nr. 3). When it comes to

the early period of the court site´s use, that is, the period with the wall ditches, the only valuable chronological guide is the radiocarbon datings. The datings that are available for houses 3 and 4 seem to indicate a mainly early Roman Iron Age date for this period of use. In general, the dating task is complicated by a stratigraphical mix-up of pottery of varying dates in house 2 and radiocarbon datings for the area east of house 3, which in two out of three cases turned out be much later than one could expect from the stratigraphy.

Håvodl: The houses

Nr.	Inner size	Walls´ height	Archaeological elements	Phases	Phases´ subdivision
1	9,20 x 3,15m	49-75 cm	Ph: 1-7; 11 Ph/pit: 8 H: 9 Pit: 12-13 Stone: 10	2	1 = Lower part of posthole/pit? 8 (partly beneath the long wall) 2 (main phase on the bottom level) = Upper part of pit 8, h 9 and all the rest including the stone walls (H 9 with two phases, the western part being the older and perhaps already attached to phase 1 or to an intermediate phase?)
2	9,20 x 3,50m	49-83 cm	Ph: 6;8-9;11-14 H: 3;5 Pit: 2;4; 10 Stone: 7 ”Burnt mound”: 1	2	1 = H 5 (party beneath the long wall) 2 (main phase on the bottom level) = H 3 and the stone walls (pits 2, 6, 8 and 9 on two different levels, perhaps in terms of phase 2a and 2b)
3	9,30 x 3,30m	32-71 cm	Ph: 1;4-9;12 H: 15 Pit: 2;14 Stone: 3;10;11;13; 16;17	1-2	1 = *Wall ditch (re-excavation)* 2 (main phase on the bottom level) = Pits, postholes and the stone walls (according to the measurements, the middle part is the oldest of h 15; the hearth seems to have belonged to phase 2)
4	8 x 3,80m	25-51 cm	Ph: 3;4;6;7 H: 8-11;13 Pit: 1 Stone: 2;5 Ditch: 12	1-3	1 = Ditch 12 (Petersen´s excavation), *wall ditches (re-excavation)* 2 = H 8 and 11 (some beneath the long wall) 3 (main phase on the bottom level) = Pit 1, ph 3-4, 6-7, stone walls; *a posthole overlaying h 8 (re-excavation)*
5	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data

Abbreviations:
– Ph = posthole; H = hearth
– Bottom level refers to the majority of constructional elements in the houses at the lower end of the stone walls

Håvodl: The finds

House	Finds	Datable and stratified finds
1	S 6172 – Mostly coarse undecorated pottery, bog-iron, charred bones, charcoal, burnt bark	– One piece of an undecorated bucket-shaped pot (find nr. 15) = Bottom layer of the main phase (phase 2); dating: not earlier than the middle of the 4th century
2	S 6171 – Mostly pottery, slag, charred bones, charred bark	– Jutlandish pottery with a stamp decoration (find nr. 38) = Close to the bottom layer of the main phase (phase 2); dating: period B2 (p. 158) – Comb-decorated bucket-shaped pot (find nr. 42 or 47) = Close to the bottom layer of the main phase (phase 2); dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 158)
3	S 6300 – Mostly pottery, whetstone (quartzite), charred bones, charcoal, stone	– Whetstone (find nr. 1) = Stratigraphically postdating the court site; dating: Early Iron Age
4	S 6301 – Mostly coarse undecorated pottery, charred bones, charcoal	– One comb-decorated piece of a bucket shaped pot (find nr. 25 or 27) = Ca. 15-20 cm high up in the layer of the main phase (phase 3); dating: late 4th/5th century AD (p. 158)
5	No data	no data

The find numbers relate to the original excavation report; the numbers referring to the decorated bucket-shaped pots in the houses 2 and 4 differ in the report and on the pottery itself but since the objects are the only decorated ones of their kind in the houses in question, one may use the information given about their stratigraphical provenance.

Håvodl: The radiocarbon datings

Sample´s provenance	Dating number (year)	Dating	Interpretation
East from house 3			
102/99 I/II: Charcoal from a cooking pit (p. 155)	T 7842: 87/639 (1988)	380-540	Assumption: The sample originates from activities earlier than the main period of the court site (phase 2) since the cooking pit it originates from is overlain by a culture layer to be found beneath the eastern stone long wall of house 3; perhaps this layer may be associated with the initial court site (i.e. the one with the wall ditches); result: the dating is much too late
102/98: Charcoal (birch) from a cooking pit (p. 155)	T 10710: 92/623 (1993)	75-140	Assumption: Like above; result: as one could expect it due to stratigraphy
98/95: Charcoal (furnace); p. 155	T 7843: 87/638 (1988)	400-440	Assumption: like above; result: the dating is much too late
Inside house 4			
92,5/110,5: Charcoal (birch) from cooking pit 8 (p. 173)	T 70711: 92/610 (1993)	55-220	Assumption: The sample originates from the middle period of use of the court site since the cooking pit it was taken from postdates the initial wall ditch for stratigraphical reasons and is at the same time overlain by the stone wall of the later house and a posthole belonging to that same final house phase
South-east from house 4			
88/112: Charcoal (birch) from a cooking pit (p. 156)	T 10709: 92/606 (1993)	70-140	Assumption: The sample predates the main period (period 3) of the court site with the stone walls since the cooking pit the sample was taken from is overlain by a culture layer found beneath the southern long wall of house IV (perhaps that layer may be associated with the initial court site phase)
Inside house 2,3			
S 6300: Bark from house 3 (p. 154)	T 11376: S 6300 (1994, corrected)	235-370	Assumption: The sample originates from building materials (roof covering?) belonging to the main phase
S 6171: Bark from house 2 (p. 154)	T 11377: S 6171 (1994)	450-630	Assumption: Like above

Håvodl: The dating (synthesis)

House	Phases	Phase/datable find	Phase/radiocarbon-dating
1	2	2: Middle of the 4th century at the earliest (pottery)	–
2	2	2: B2 and late 4th/5th century (pottery)	2: 450-630 (roof material?)
3	2	2: Not later than the migration period (tool)	1: 75-140 (culture layer beneath the house´s stone wall) 2: 235-370 (roof material?)
4	3	3: Late 4th/5th century (pottery)	1-2: 70-140 (culture layer beneath the southern stone wall) 2: 55-220 (cooking pit of the middle phase)

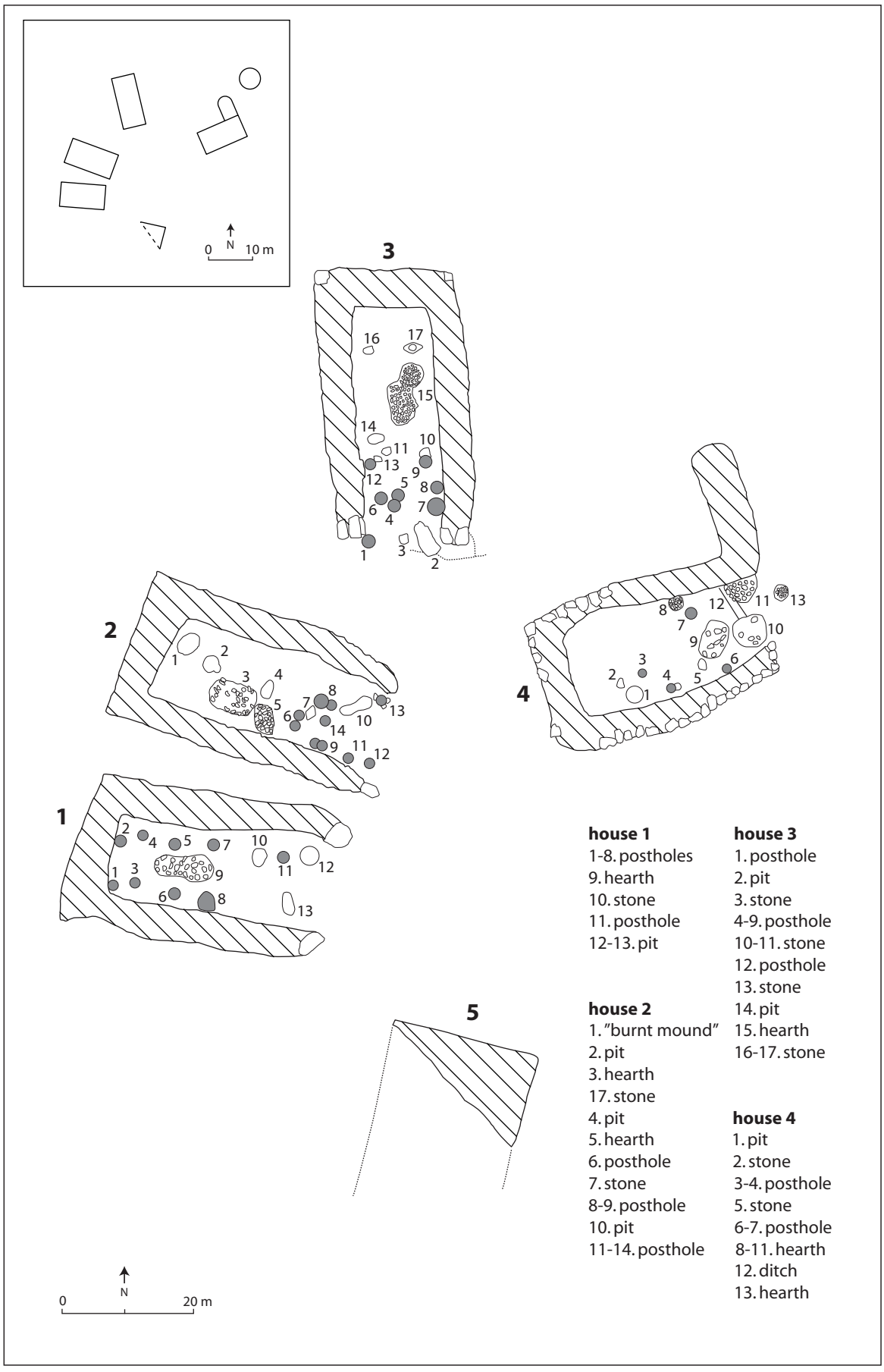
- The pottery finds in house 2 vary considerably in their dating, though they are said to have been found early in the same position, i.e. very close to the bottom of the main layer (phase 2)
- The radiocarbon dated samples to the east of house 3, which are supposed to originate from activities earlier than the court site´s main period of use, yielded in two out of three cases much later datings than expected

Håvodl: Additional monuments

Description	Observations and finds	Dating
– Mound to the north-east of house 4; diameter: 5 m; heigth: 20 cm (excavated in the 1930s): p. 154	– One piece of pottery, charcoal (hearth?): Petersen 1936:59	– Undetermined (contemporary with the court site?)
– Area between the houses 3-4 (re-excavations): p. 154-155	– Traces of houses, hearths, pits, one furnace	– Stratigraphically, the area is supposed to predate the main phase of house 3 (phase 2); however, two out of three radiocarbon-dated samples are from the Migration period (p. 171)

Håvodl: The context

Farm	Monuments/finds	Dating	Interpretation
Sæland	– Grave mound (17-19 m across) immediately to the south of the court site containing an incremation grave in an urn with a bronze strap buckle, tools and a whetstone of quartzite (S4925)	– Late Roman? (Petersen 1936:59)	– Mound size indicates an upper social layer
dito	– Unspecified grave find with a glass vessel (lost; Holand 2001:203)	– Migration period	– Furnishing indicates an upper social layer
dito	– Lyngaland farm: main house of 60 m, secondary house of 30 m (Petersen 1936:37-58; Myhre 1980:291-297)	– Late Roman/ Migration period	– House size indicates a farm of some importance
Eikeland	(A): A long mound of 30 m, with Norway`s longest grave chamber (7 m long) including a woman` grave with a rune-inscribed gilded, bronze relief fibula (S 9181) (B): Grave mound; diameter: 20 m (top.ark. AMS)	(A) Migration period (B) Undated	– Mound size (A,B) and furnishings (A) indicate an upper social layer



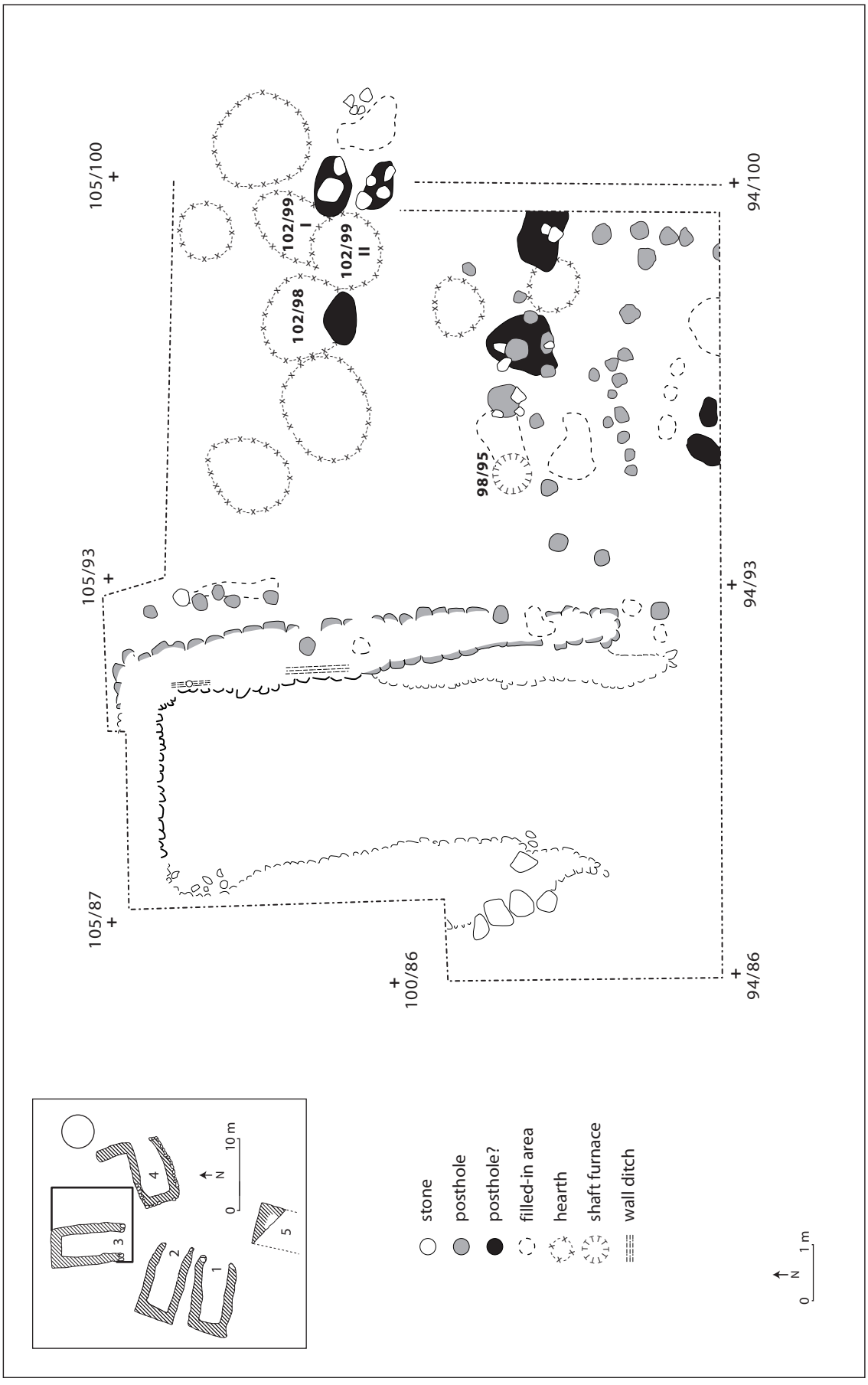
house 1
1-8. postholes
9. hearth
10. stone
11. posthole
12-13. pit

house 2
1. "burnt mound"
2. pit
3. hearth
17. stone
4. pit
5. hearth
6. posthole
7. stone
8-9. posthole
10. pit
11-14. posthole

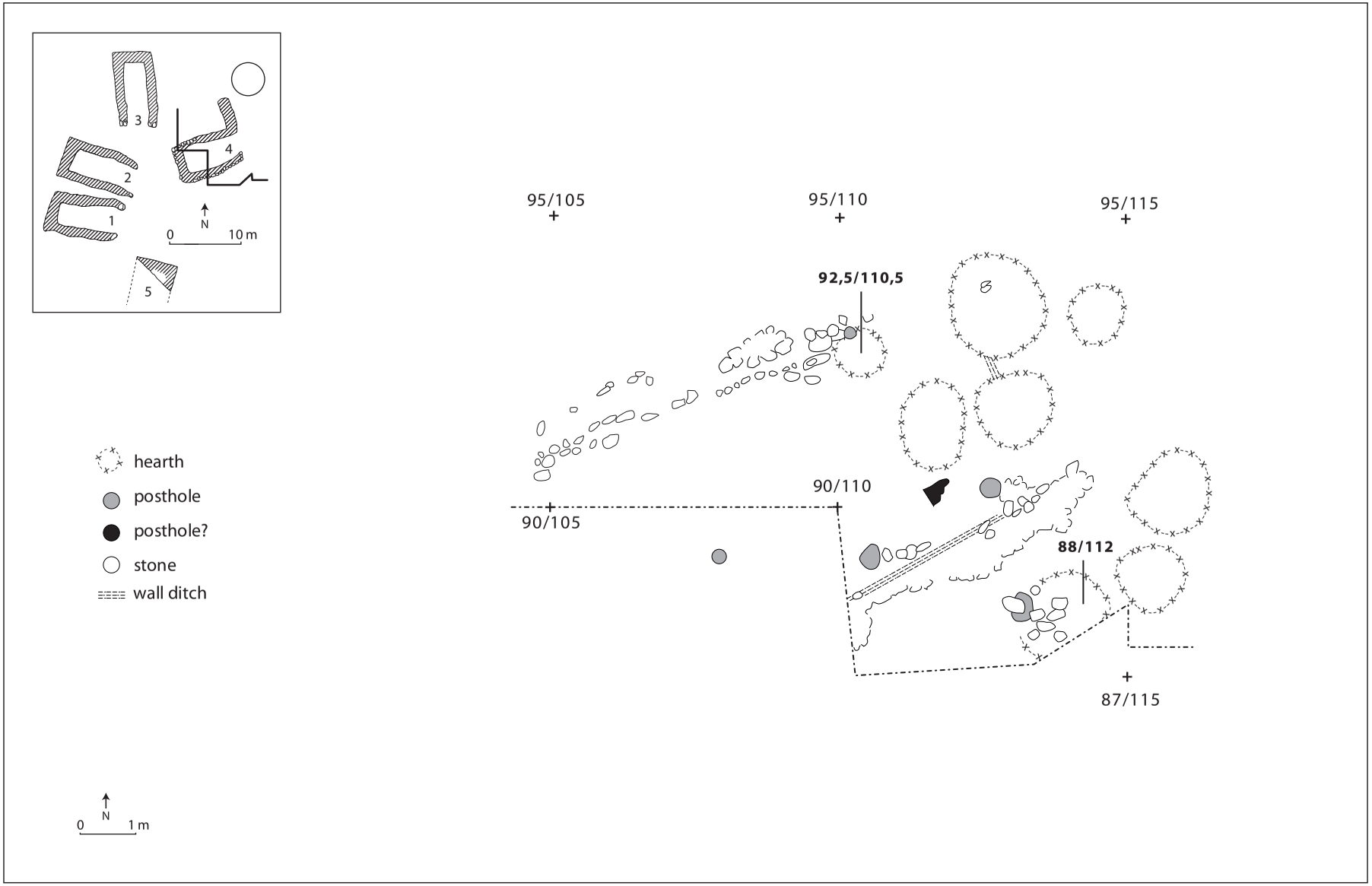
house 3
1. posthole
2. pit
3. stone
4-9. posthole
10-11. stone
12. posthole
13. stone
14. pit
15. hearth
16-17. stone

house 4
1. pit
2. stone
3-4. posthole
5. stone
6-7. posthole
8-11. hearth
12. ditch
13. hearth

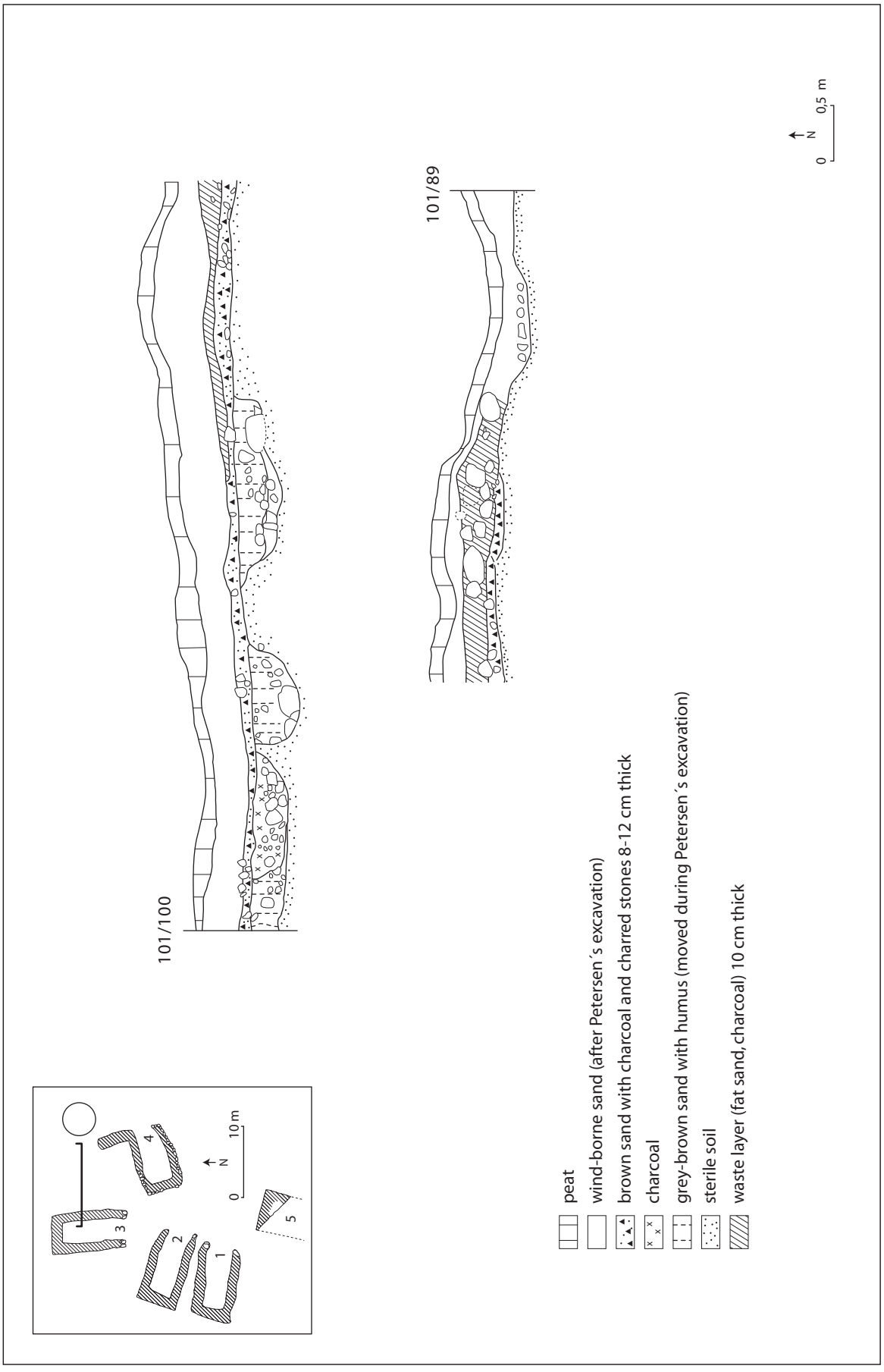
Håvodl´s plan (top to the left: Svihus 1934 at top. ark AmS; main plan: Petersen 1936: table LXII).



Håvodl: Plan of the area east of house 3, re-excavation (top. ark AmS).



Håvodl: Plan of house 4, re-excavation (top. ark. AmS).



Håvodl: profile of the area east from house 3, re-excavation (top. ark. AmS).

Jutlandish inspired pottery. Find nr. 38. House 2 (S 6171a). Scale 1:1 (Petersen 1936:table XLIV).

(find nr. 42/47)
house 2 (S 6171a)
scale 1:2

(find nr. 25/27)
house 4 (S 6301a)
scale 1: 2

Fragments of bucket-shaped pots.

Datable pottery from Håvodl.

12.2. The Leksaren excavation

(J. Petersen 1938-1939)

(Literature: Petersen 1932a, 1938a-c, 1939a-b, Kallhovd 1994)

Leksaren: The investigation

The excavation in the late 1930s covered a court-site that once consisted of ca. 15 houses (p. 164). J. Petersen, the excavator, left a particularly lively description for house 9 with its two distinct layers, one close to the lower end of the stone wall with round hearths and another at least 25 cm higher up, with a longitudinal stone-framed hearth and three well-preserved post-holes (p. 108). However, O. Møllerop later used the photographic evidence to emphasize that the houses´ stone walls did not rest upon the sterile bottom but were higher up and that there was an earlier building phase on the sterile soil (Møllerop 1971:154). An unspecified ditch (wall ditch?) in house 1, some postholes and pits overlain by stone walls and finally „sunken" hearths in house 9 might have belonged to that initial phase (p. 160).

Longitudinal, stone framed hearths along the middle axis were the most distinct features in the houses (p. 165-167). They were found in six instances, five times on the bottom of layer 2 („phase 2a") but in the case of house 9 ca. 20 cm higher up in that layer („phase 2b"). More frequent were round hearths, sometimes belonging to the initial period, sometimes seemingly contemporary with their longitudinal counterparts or sometimes actually the latest element in the house (i.e. hearth 6 in house 2). Regular sets of postholes were rarely recorded during the investigation, houses 9 and 12 being the only cases of that kind. Stones in many other houses were considered as substructure for once standing posts but one may be sceptical about this interpretation today. The mound in the middle might have contained remains of a hearth. A re-drawing of the entire site made in the year 1992 revealed that the mound to the south-west is overlain by a house´s long wall.

The salvaged finds, almost 5000 in number, are almost exclusively made up of coarse, undecorated ware (p. 161, table 1). Besides that, there was only 1-2% that were pottery of different kinds (primarily ca. 40 sherds of bucket-shaped pots), and altogether only one or two tools (a knife and a somewhat questionable whetstone). Among the more unusual finds in court site´s respects, there are a gaming piece and bird´s bones (house 8) and eleven glass beads (house 14). When it comes to the bucket-shaped pots, they almost exclusively belong to the early, comb-decorated type, with few later exceptions: one being comb-decorated and stamped (yet still belonging to the early representatives) and a second one with a ribbon-interlace (p. 168). The most remarkable among the salvaged objects are fragments of imitation-glass pottery, which resemble type IV of the so-called „facettenschliffverzierte Gläser" (p. 169, Straume 1987:34).

For dating the site, one has to rely upon very few finds and a series of radiocarbon datings. Unfortunately, no reliable datings are available for the first building phase. As to the second phase, it is important to keep in mind that the comb-decorated bucket-shaped pots of the late 4th and perhaps 5th century were regularly found at least 20 cm up in layer 2 (i.e. artificial „layer 2b") within the stone wall period. For the four houses in question, the bucket-shaped pots probably indicate the end dating. In a fifth house (nr. 1), however, the fragment of a bucket-shaped pot with ribbon interlace dates to the late 5th (?) or 6th century (Bøe 1931:192-194, fig. 315). Remarkably, there are no more finds in the houses than can be reliably dated to the Migration period. Some radiocarbon datings cannot be accepted at face value for any serious chronological considerations, since they either led to obviously wrong results or were taken from samples which cannot be associated with any particular culture layer (phase 1 or 2). Some of the datings relate to the Late Roman and Migration periods, yet two refer to a Migration and perhaps Merovingian date. However, the one sample (cal. AD 555-650) originates from hearth 6 in house 2 that might have been a later addition to that house, and the other one (cal. AD 435-605) is found in a very atypical house (nr. 12) with a very clear and undisturbed outline of the late type. It cannot be ruled out that this particular house was in fact the latest of all at Leksaren. Taken together, there is no persuasive argument for stating that the entire court site as such remained intact throughout the Migration period and well into Merovingian times. Any such assumption would be in sharp contrast to the end dating of four houses as is indicated by early representatives of bucket-shaped pots.

Leksaren: The houses

Nr.	**Inner size**	**Walls´ heigth**	Archaeological **elements**	**Phases**	**Phases´ subdivision**
1	12,60 x 3,30 m	27-71cm	H: 5;11;15 Pit: 2-4;12;13 Stone: 1;6-10;14	2	1 = H 5 and “wall ditch” (see below) 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls
2	13 x 3.50 m	41-98 cm	H: 2;3; 6 Pit: 5;9 Stone: 1;4;7;8	3	1 = ? 2 = Almost all the rest plus the stone walls 3 = H 6
3	12,70 x 5 m	34-110 cm	H: 1;3;11;13;14 Stone for post?: 6-10;12 Stone: 2;4;5	2	1 = H 11;14 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls
4	7,10 x 2,90 m	60-106 cm	H: 2 Stones: 1;3;4	2	1 = ? 2 = All of it
„5“	6,10 x 2,80 m	56-105 cm	None	2	No data
6	10,50 x 3,80 m	49-112 cm	H: 4;10-13 Pit: 1;20 Stone: 2;3;5-9;14-19	3	1 = H 11; 13 2 = Lower part of h 4, all the rest and the stone walls 3 = Upper part of h 4 and a second floor level recorded 20 cm higher up
7	8,20 x 3,50 m	55. 105 cm	H: 7 Stone: 10;11 Hole: 1-6;9 “Clay deposit”: 8	2	1 = ? 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls
8	9,90x 4,20 m	43-89 cm	H: 2-4 Ph: 1;7;9 Pit: 5;6 Hole: 8	2	1 = H 2 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls
9	11,60 x 4,40 m	48-86 cm	H: 1;6;7;10;11 Ph: 12-14 Pit: 2-5;8;9	3	1 = H 1;6;7 2 (+5/10) = H 10; pit 2;5;8;9 plus the stone walls 3 (+minimum 25) = H 11; ph 12-14 (two floor levels were recorded, one at the bottom of phase 2 and the other one belonging to phase 3)
10	10,80 x 4,10 m	44-100 cm	H: 1;2 Burnt layer: 3;b Hole: 4-11	2	1 = H 1 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls
11	9,80 x 5,20 m	54-92 cm	H: 1;13 Central h: 4-6;8;9 H: 15 Pit: 3;7;10;11 Stone: 12;14 “Grave”: 2	3	1 = H 13; “grave” 2 (see below) 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls 3 = Central h: 4-6;8;9
12	8 x 3,50 m	31-51 cm	H: 3 Ph: 1;2;4;5	2	1 = H 3 (lower part) 2 = H 3 (upper part), all the rest plus the stone walls
13	8,80 m x 3,25 m	51-103 cm	H: 9 Pit: 3, 4 Stone:1;2;6-8;10;11 Hole: 5	2	1 = ? 2 = All of it and the stone walls
14	9,30 x 3,80 m	67-110 cm	H: 2;7 Pit: 1;3;5;6;10-13 Stone: 4;8;9;14-16	2	1 = ? 2 = All of it and the stone walls
15	9,30 x 3,70 m	58-100 cm	H: 8 Pit: 1;9;14 Stone: 2-7;10-13	2	1 = Pit 9 2 = All the rest plus the stone walls

– H = hearth; Ph = posthole
– House 1: there was described a ditch (wall ditch?) with charcoal in the excavation report that was close to the very bottom of layer 2; perhaps this feature can be compared to the well-recorded wall ditches found during the re-excavations in Håvodl (p. 155-165)
– House 11: the stone ring with an inner sunken part (nr. 2) that contained charred bones (including a tooth) and charcoal was interpreted as a „grave“; however, the very much comparable feature nr. 3 in house 10 at the Øygarden court site was considered to be a hearth (p. 189)

Leksaren: The finds

House	Finds	Datable and stratified finds
1 (6711)	A. Pottery (257 sherds), b. burnt clay, c. charred bones, d. iron object, e. charcoal, f. burnt earth (sample), g. flint	– Bs with comb-decoration (nr. 64) = 35 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 168) – Bs with ribbon interlace (nr. 46) = 50 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: late 5th (?)/ 6th century (Bøe 1931:192-194, fig. 315); p. 168
2 (6712)	A. Pottery (400 sherds), b. burnt clay, c. charred bones (a considerable number found in one pit), d. burnt earth (sample), e. 15 flint, f. charcoal, g. burnt hazelnut	– No bs
3 (6600)	A. Pottery (570 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, burnt bark, e. earth samples, f. flint	– Comb-decorated bs, missing today, some of them found 10 cm high in the upper layer; dating: late 4th/5th century
"4" (6601)	A. pottery (250 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, burnt bark, e. burnt layer (sample), f. unspecified material, g. flint	– No bs
5 (6602)	A. Pottery (251 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, burnt peat, e. earth (sample)	– No bs
6 (6603)	A. Pottery (315 sherds), b. burnt clay (mostly found north of the eastern long wall), c. charred bones, d. charcoal, burnt peat, burnt bark, e. whetstone?, f. burnt earth (samples)	– Bs with comb-decorations (nr. 73, 74, 116) = 20-30 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 168)
7 (6604)	A. Pottery (137 sherds), b. clay (burnt or unburnt); c. charred bones, d. charcoal, e. iron knife, f. undetermined iron piece, g. earth (sample), h. flint	– One comb-decorated bs, missing today, probably 20-30 cm high in the upper layer; dating: 4th/5th century – Iron knife (almost like VJG:fig. 413); = Unstratified; dating: Viking Age?
8 (6605)	A. Pottery (268 sherds), b. clay c. charred bones, d. charcoal, burnt peat, e. half a gaming-piece of schist (R178), f. flint, g. bird`s bones, h. slag	– No bs – Gaming-piece (schist, flat type R 178) = Right from the bottom of layer 2; dating: see below
9 (6606)	A. Pottery (243 sherds), b. burnt clay, c. charred bones d. charcoal, e. earth (sample)	– No bs
10 (6607)	A. Pottery (580 sherds), b. charred bones, c. burnt bark, d. undetermined material, e. flint, f. earth (sample)	– One comb-decorated bs with a stamp fragment = Unstratified; dating: late 4th/5th century (Bøe 1931:186-187, fig. 283-284)
11 (6608)	A. Pottery (335 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, including a tooth ("grave to the east)", d. charred bones, e. charcoal, f-h. flint, i. slag.	– No bs
12 (6609)	A. Pottery (85 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, d. charcoal e. arrowhead, f. flint	– No bs
13 (6713)	A. Pottery (220 sherds), b. clay, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, e. arrow, flint, f. flint	– No bs
(14) 6714	B. Pottery (350 sherds), a. eight glass beads (dark blue), two more beads and yet another with a loop, c. clay pieces, d. charcoal and burnt bark, e. charred bones, f. burnt earth , (samples), g. flint	– Bead with a loop = unstratified (house 14?); dating late 3rd century (Tempelmann-Maczynski 1985:33, Gruppe VII type 87, table 2); p. 169 – Nine decorated pieces of bs, mostly comb-decorated = Unstratified; dating: late 4th or 5th century (p. 168)
15 (6715)	A. Pottery (350 sherds), b. clay pieces, c. nail fragments, d. charred bones, e. earth (samples), f. flint, g. burnt bark	– Three bs with comb-decoration; nr. 29 = Unstratified; nr. 35, 134 = 20-30 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 169) – Imitation-glass pottery (nr. 179, 180, 184, 18?, 190) = Unstratified; dating: 4th century (Straume 1987:34); p. 189

– Pottery: mostly coarse undecorated ware; bs = bucket-shaped pot

– House 8e: the gaming pieces were once dated to the 4th century AD (Petersen 1914:79), but today, one would have to suggest a much wider dating (pers. communication Å. Dahlin-Hauken, AMS)

– House 11c: the charred bones and the tooth were found in a sunken feature (nr. 2) framed by a stone ring of 2,75 x 1,80 m; however, for a feature of that kind in Øygarden (nr. 3, house 10) the excavator J. Petersen proposed perhaps rightly an interpretation as hearth

Leksaren: The radiocarbon datings

Feature	Sample (provenance)	Radiocarbon dating
House 2	A = Organic material from a sherd belonging to splashed ware (from the northern part predating hearth 6) B = Organic material from a pot with handle (south of hearth 6 but on the same level) C = Charcoal (hearth 6)	A = 990-790 BC (Tua-640) B = 260-415 AD (Tua-639) C = 555-650 AD (Tua-636)
House 4	– Organic material from a sherd (no information about stratigraphy)	– 0-200 (Tua-393)
House 9	A = Organic material from a small cooking pot (“*7 cm above sterile soil”)* B = Charcoal (from a layer parallel to the northern long wall, “*c. 10 cm up in layer 2”; perhaps remains of an older wall ditch)* C = Charcoal (from hearth 11)	A = 50 BC-75 AD (Tua-641) B = 30 BC-135 AD (Tua-391) C = 235-400 AD (Tua-390)
House 12	A = Organic material from a sherd belonging to coarse undecorated ware (“*2 cm above sterile soil”)* B = Charcoal (from hearth 3)	A = 80-315 AD (Tua-392) B = 435-605 AD (T-10933)
House 15	A = Burnt bark (out of the culture layer; no further information) B = Organic material from a bucket shaped pot´s bottom (no further information) C = Organic material from a bucket-shaped pot (no further information)	A = 240-410 AD (Tua-637) B = 390-540 AD (Tua-642) C = 365-50 BC (Tua-643)
Middle mound	A = Charcoal, birch (out of the middle area) B = Organic material from an undecorated sherd (no further information)	A = ca. 400-550 AD (Tua-638) B = ca. 400-550 AD (Tua-644)
Mound to the south-west	– Charcoal, birch (out of the “hearth” or “grave chamber”)	– 1600-1300 BC (T-10889)

– Datings taken from Kallhovd 1994:143-155, fig. 18
– Houses 9 and 12: the samples are said to have been taken from areas very close to the sterile bottom; however, the levels in Petersen´s excavation report do usually refer to the lower end of the stone wall as the lowest point of reference, and the excavations did not systematically reach down to the initial building period and the sterile soil further below; it remains an open question as to what kinds of samples were dated.
– House 9: one may suggest that the layer parallel to the northern long wall was in fact the remains of a wall ditch of the initial period or that it belonged to the early part of the stone wall period; both assumptions, however, remain hypothetical
– House 15: the dating of organic material that was attached to a bucket shaped pot to the pre-Roman Iron Age must be rejected as being far too early

Leksaren: The dating (synthesis)

House	Phases	Phase/datable find(s)	Phase/radiocarbon-dating(s)
1	2	2b: late 4th-6th century	–
2	3	–	2?: 260-415(?) 3: 555-650
3	2	2b?: late 4th/5th century	–
6	3	2b: late 4th / 5th century	–
7	2	2b: late 4th / 5th century	–
9	3	–	3: 235-400
12	2	–	2: 435-605
15	2	2b: late 4th/5th century	2: 240-410; 390-540
middle mound	?	–	400-550 (two times)
mound SW	?	Late Iron Age	1600-1300 BC

– Phase 2a relating to the bottom level of phase 2 at the lower end of the stone walls; phase 2b is at least 20 cm high up in layer 2 (sometimes coinciding with hearths)
– Several radiocarbon datings have been kept out of consideration because of the source-critical objections named above
– Mounds: the middle mound might be equated with the phases 2-3 of the court site; the mound to the SW yielded strongly contradictory datings, which remain somehow enigmatic.

Leksaren: Additional monuments

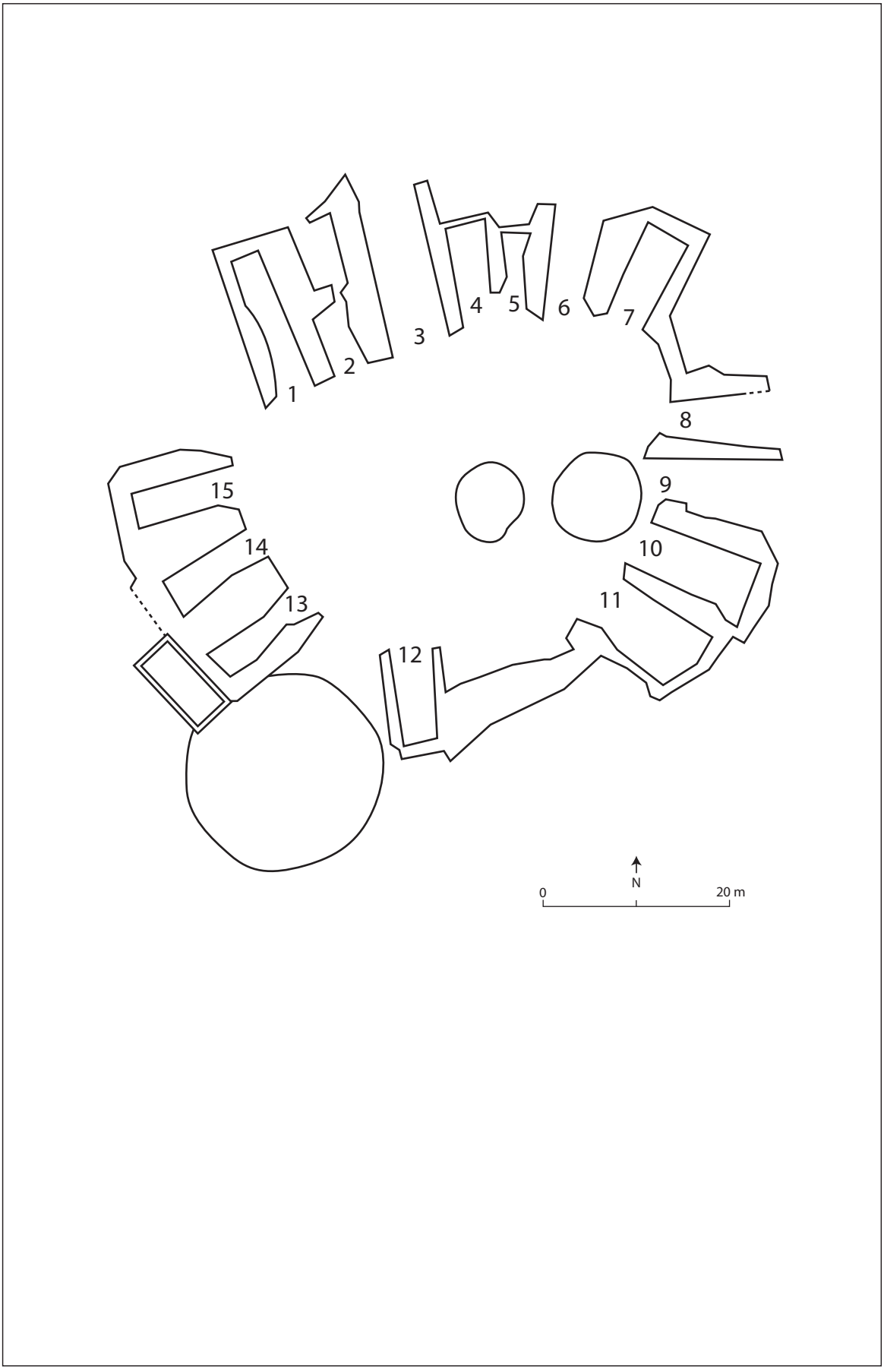
Description	Size	Finds	Observations	Interpretation	Dating
– Mound in the middle (S 6610)	– Diameter: 6 m; heigth: 0,70 m	– Pottery (245 sherds), clay, charred bones, charcoal, earth (samples)	– Some stones in the middle	– Hearth?	– Migration period
– Stone ring, west of houses 10-11 (S 6611)	– Outer diameter: 8 m; inner diameter: 4 m	– Three sherds	– Posthole in the middle?	– Undetermined	– Unknown
– Mound to the south-west (S 6716)	– Outer diameter: 13 m; heigth: 80 cm	– Pottery (200 sherds), clay, charred bones, charcoal, whetstone, schist, pumice stone, flint	– Two stone rings to the outside – Stone-framed area in the south	– Hearth or grave mound? (see below)	- Bronze Age/Late Iron Age (p. 162)
– Mound to the north-west (S 6717)	– Diameter: 11 m	– Fragments *R361*, charred bones	– Mostly destroyed, – Two minor concentrations of charred bones	– Hearth or grave mound?	– *R361* = period *C2* (type a according to Straume 1987:16)
– Mound to the north-east, outside house 7 (S 6613, 6718)	– 5 x 3 m; 0,5 m high	– Pottery (c. 40 sherds), clay	–	– Dump deposit or hearth for pottery-making?	– Unknown
– Large mound, east of the rail-way („Leksaren-haug“)	– Unknown (removed)	–	–	– Probably a grave mound	– Unknown

– The mound to the south-west had a stone framed area of 50x50 cm in the south, open to one side, interpreted as a hearth by the excavator J. Petersen and re-interpreted as minor grave chamber by K. Kallhovd (1994:131)

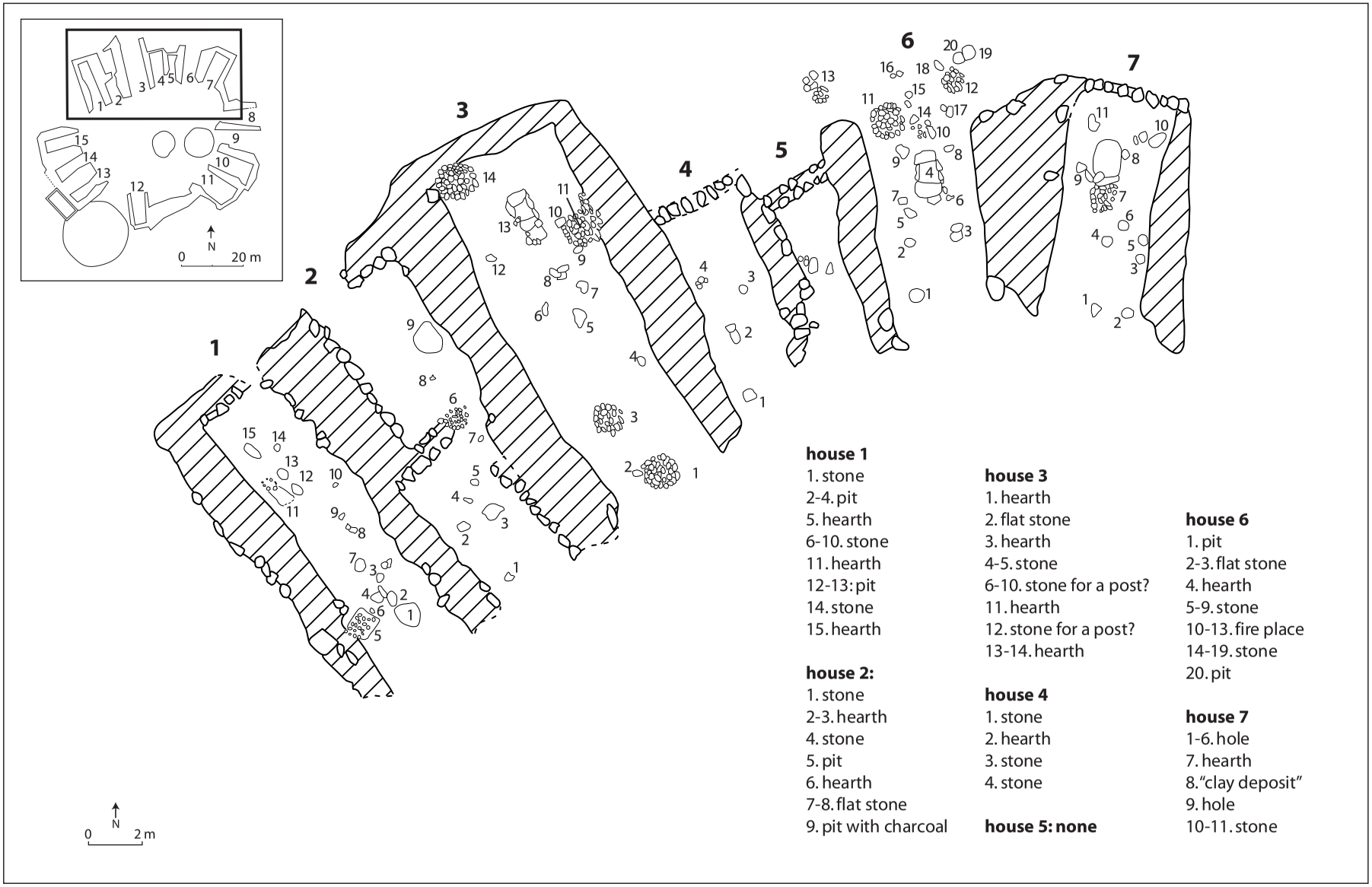
Leksaren: The context

Farm	Monument/find	Dating
Sør-Varhaug	A = Farm with a 75-100 m long main building (Nylvest) B = Burial with a glass beaker	A = Late Roman and Migration period B = Migration period

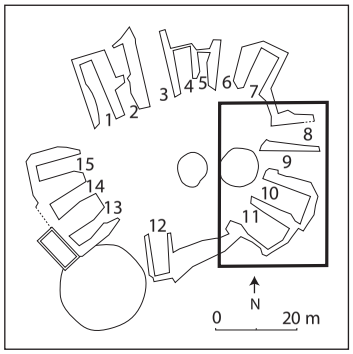
– The absence of archaeological finds may be based upon a lack of research due to the relative distance from the Archaeological museum in Stavanger (AmS); the areas closer to the museum are much better investigated (pers. communication B. Myhre); however, in a long-term-perspective, Sør-Varhaug stands out as an important farm (p. 139, 141, 151-152)



Leksaren: the plan of 1992 (Kallhovd 1994: table 2).



Leksaren: houses 1-7 (top. ark AmS).

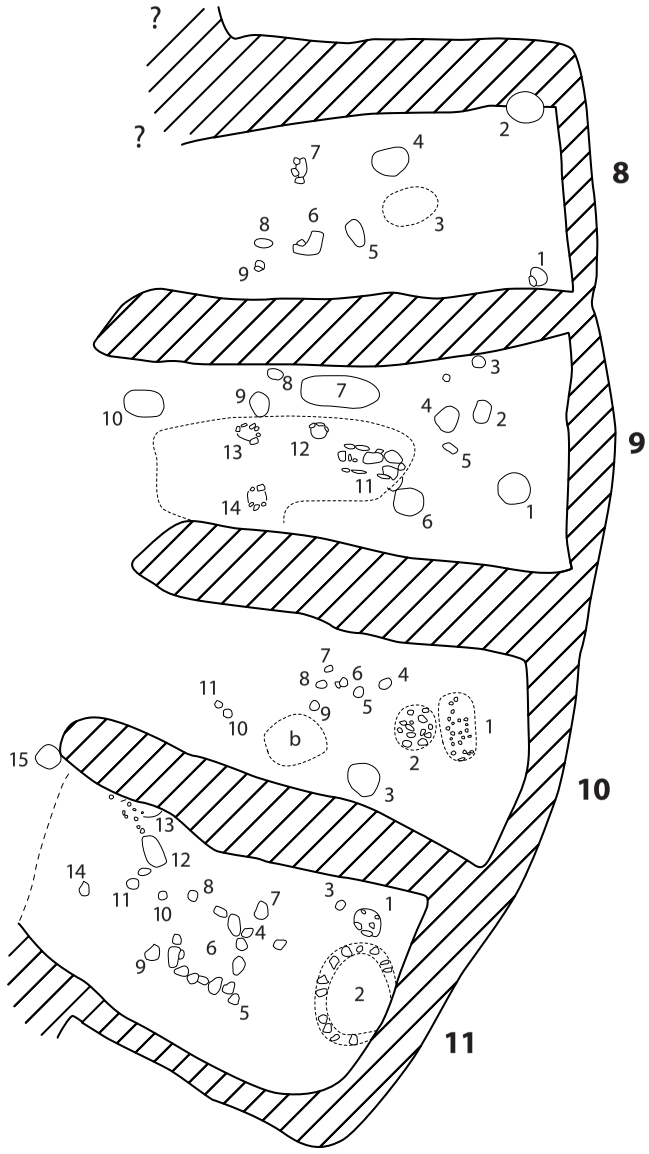


house 8
1. posthole
2-4. hearth
5-6. pit
7. posthole
8. hole
9. posthole

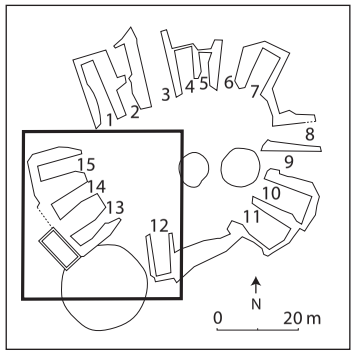
house 9
1. hearth
2-5. pit
6-7. hearth
8-9. pit
10. hearth
on a higher level:
11. stone-framed hearth
12-14. postholes

house 10
1-2. hearth
3, b. burnt layer
4-11. hole

house 11
1. hearth
2. "sunken grave"
3. pit
4-6, 8-9. hearth
7. pit
10-11. pit
12. stone
13. hearth
14. flat stone
15. hearth



Leksaren: houses 8-11 (top. ark AmS).

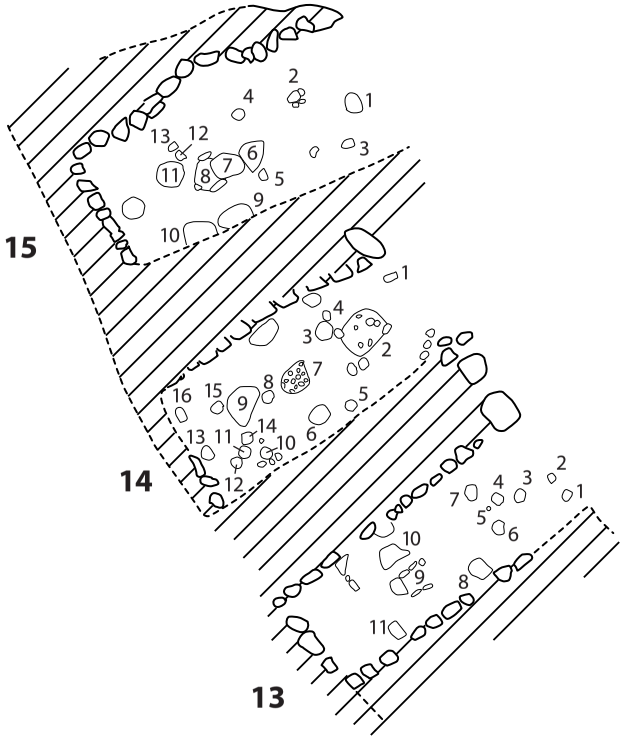


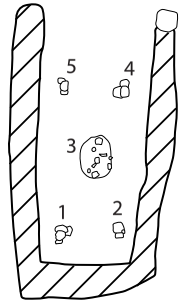
house 15
1. pit
2-7. stone
8. hearth
9. pit
10-13. stone
14. pit

house 14
1. pit
2. hearth
3. pit
4. flat stone
5-6. pit
7. hearth
8. stone
9. stone
10-13. pit
14-16. stone

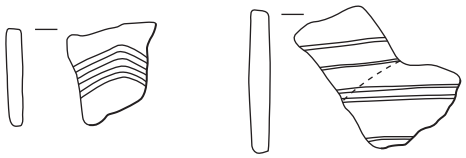
house 13
1-2. stone
3-4. pit
5. hole
6-8. stone
9. hearth
10-11. stone

house 12
1-2. posthole
3. hearth
4-5. posthole



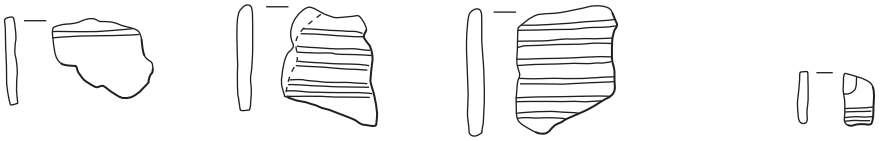


Leksaren: houses 12-15 (top. ark. AmS).



(find nr. 46) (find nr. 64?)

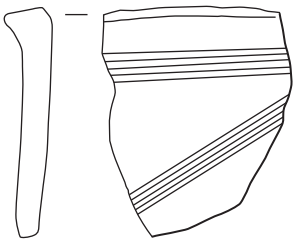
house 1 (S 6711a)



(nr. 116) (both without numbers: find nr. 73 and 74?) (no number)

house 6 (S 6603a) house 10

(find nr 35) (find nr. 29)

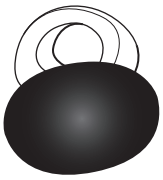


(find nr. 134)

house 15 (S 6715a)

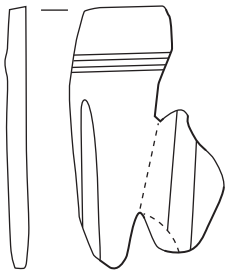
scale: 1:2

Fragments of decorated bucket-shaped pots from Leksaren.

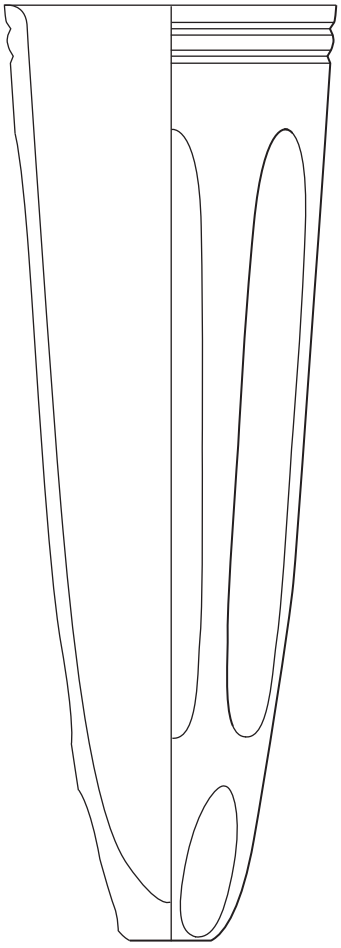


glass bead from house 14? (S 6714a). Scale 3:1.

house 15 (S 6715a)



glass-imitating pottery from Leksaren
(find nr. 179, 180, 184, 18?, 192).
Scale 1:2



related glass find from a grave in Vatshus,
Klepp/Rogaland (C 3300-3313) dating to period C3
or the transition from C3 to D1 (after Straume 1987:pl. 5, 48).
Scale 1:2

Glas bead and glas-imitating pottery from Leksaren.

12.3. The Klauhauane excavations

(J. Petersen: 1939-1950; O. Møllerop: 1959-1961)

(Literature: Nicolaysen 1885, Petersen 1939c, 1941a-b, 1942a-b, 1946, 1947a-b, 1948, 1949, 1950, Møllerop 1960 a-b, 1961)

Klauhauane: The investigations

The investigations of the late 19th and mid 20th century covered a court site that once consisted of ca. 15 houses **(p. 195).** The large-scale excavations in the midst of the last century were never properly published.

Excavation in 1891

G. Gustavson´s trenches of 1891 (p. 174) covered house 15 (?) in the north (trench I) and houses 1-2 or 2-3 in the south-east (trench II). Trench I is said to have yielded evidence for several culture layers, altogether up to 1,20 m thick, the oldest of which actually predated the house´s long walls. For trench II there is no proper description. Finds were few, among them charcoal and charred bones (B 4812). Pottery fragments from trench II belonging to the so-called "fine handled" vessels (R361) date to the Late Roman and Migration period (C2-D1; Straume 1987:15-17) and may indicate the house´s period of use, provided that the sherds originated from the house layers. A lost bronze needle from trench I (belonging to group C of the simple nails according to Petersen 1928:fig. 238) is probably of Viking Age date (p. 181). However, due to its provenance from the outer part of a long wall of stone, it cannot be used to date the house in question. Furthermore, Gustafson investigated several mounds in the surroundings (compare Kallhovd 1994:100-106 for a thorough description of Gustavson´s investigation).

Excavations in the years 1939-1950 and 1959-1961

The excavator, J. Petersen, had already emphasized in 1939 that the stone walls of house 8 did not rest upon the sterile soil, but on a man-made layer. In the following years up to 1950 it was noted that there were "sunken" hearths underneath the lower end of the stone walls, suggesting an older period of use on the spot. The re-excavations in the years 1959-1961 yielded evidence for an initial building phase with wall ditches that predated the phase with stone walls. Initial houses on sterile soil were unearthed in the east (i.e. house 20, invisible on the surface) and in the very middle of the court site beneath the "middle mound" (i.e. house 21: p. 174). The later houses with stone walls had round hearths along their middle axis, whereas longitudinal stone-framed hearths were absent (except, perhaps, for the houses 1 and 13) and so were regular sets of post-holes. The irregular impression left by the court site might be misleading to some extent, since houses of the initial outline were invisible on the surface (houses 20-21) and there were yet others which were destroyed (houses 16-17), but it is not possible to describe these any further.

In the middle of the 20th century, altogether 7000 objects were salvaged, almost exclusively sherds of coarse undecorated ware (p. 172, table 1). In contrast, there were only c. 50 sherds of bucket-shaped pots (excluding 150 fragments from house 5 belonging to one pot) and a few items of so-called " jutlandish-inspired" pottery (p. 201). There is a total amount of 15 tools, making an average of one per house. Beads, mostly of glass, were found in four of the houses. The most remarkable object is a gold finger ring (3g) found in house 5 (p. 181).

The initial phase´s dating is indicated by fragments of the so-called "jutlandish-inspired" pottery inside and outside house 21 that is dated to period B2, i.e. the late part of the 1st and the first two-thirds of the 2nd century AD (Slomann 1971:10; 14). Not quite congruently, the radiocarbon-datings of the same house produced slightly older datings. When it comes to phase 2, i.e. the stone wall period, one may propose an artifical subdivision. Phase 2a at the bottom of this layer is strictly regarded undated but a gold finger ring found close to the bottom of the same layer in house 5 indicates a use in the Roman period, as perhaps does a fibula with a long catch plate, a key find of period C1, salvaged in house 18. Phase 2b, a minimum of 20 cm high up in layer 2, is defined by comb-decorated bucket-shaped pots of the late 4th and perhaps 5th century (p. 173). A bucket-shaped pot with beading dating to the midst of the 6th century (house 6) is the only exception from that rule but strangely a comb-decorated representative was found higher up in that house, probably indicating some stratigraphical mix-up (pp. 172, 180). There are strong indicators for an end dating of the site as such in the latest Roman or early Migration period. Six of the houses yielded early representatives of

bucket-shaped pots in the uppermost culture layer (p. 173), and in addition, the simple hearths found in all the court site´s houses were a phenomenon that is older than the stone-framed, well-advanced hearths that are typical for Late Roman and Migration period farms of the Ullandhaug-type (Myhre 1980:212).

Klauhauane: The houses

Nr.	Inner size	Walls´ heigth	Archaeological elements	Phases	Phases´ subdivision
1	9,20 x 4,10 m	91-146 cm	H: 1-3. Stone: 4-7 A, B: Groups of stones (rectangular) H: C. Stone: S	1-3	1 = H 2;3 2a (+0,35/0,70) = Almost all the rest plus the stone walls 2b (+x): = Hearth c; stone rows a, b?
2	12,80 x 4,90 m	52-149	H: 2; 3a;4;7. Ph: 1;ph? Stone: 3;5; 6 Stone-framed area: 3	1;2	1 = H 7 2 (+0,35/0,70) = All the rest plus the stone walls
3	9,75 x 5,10 m	83-142 cm	H: 2;8 Ph: 1;3-6 Stone: 7	1;2	1 = No elements 2a (+35/70) = Lower part of h 8, all the rest plus the stone walls 2b = Upper parts of h 8 (up to 50 cm high in layer 2)
4	10,70 x 4,50 m	75-124 cm	H: 3;7;10;11;13 Ph: 1;4;8;12 Stone: 2;5;6 Hole: 9 B: burnt layer	1;2	1 = H 3;10;13 2 (+0,35/0,60) = All the rest plus the stone walls
5	10,50 x 4,50 m	81-149	H: 10;14;23;29 Ph: 1-5;9;11-13;15-18; 20-22;24 Stone: 6-8;19;27;28. Hole: 25;26	1;2	1 = H 29 2 (+x) = All the rest plus the stone walls
6	11 x 4,50 m	73-145	H: 4;9. Pit: 2 Ph: 1;3;5-7. Stone: 8	1;2	1 = H 9 2 (+ 40/60 cm) = All the rest plus the stone walls
7	8,40 x 6 m	54-107	H: 4;7 Ph: 1;2;5;6;8-10. Stone: 3;11	1;2	1 = No elements 2 (+20/40) = All the rest plus the stone walls
8	10,50 x 4 m	79-155	H: 1;2	1;2	1 = H 2 2a (+x?) = Stone walls 2b = H 1 (35-40 cm high up in layer 2)
9	10 x 4,20 m	69-102	H: 1;2 Pit: 3-5	1;2	1 = H 1? 2 (+x?) = All the rest plus the stone walls
10	6,60 x 2,80 m	–	H: 1;2;x	–	1 = H x 2 (+x?) = H 1;2 and the stone walls
11-12	9 x 4 m		Unexcavated	–	–
13	12,75 x 3,25m	68-128	H: 1-4 Ph: 5 “Short walls”: A-B	1;2	1 = H 1-3 2 (+x?) = Almost all the rest and the stone walls (no firm statement for the short walls: younger?)
14	7,20 x 3,50 m	60-89	H: 1 Ph: 2	1;2	1 = No elements 2 (+35/50) = H 1; ph 2
15	11,50 x 3,50 m	76-103	H: 1;2 Stone: 3	1;2	1 = No elements 2 (+x?) = All of it plus the stone walls
16-17	All in all ca. 14 x 12 m	No walls	Ph: 1-5; 12-16. H: 6-10 Ash/charcoal layer: 11	?	?
18	11 x 3 m	?	One hearth, one pit, burnt layers	?	?
19	5 x 3 m	?	Stone walls	?	?
20	Rectangular?	?	Wall ditches stone walls	1;2	1 = Wall ditches 2 = Stone walls
21	5 x 5 m	No walls	Wall ditches, several hearths to the outside, mound	1;2	1 = Wall ditches; several hearths to the outside 2 = Mound (covering the house remains)

– H: hearth, Ph: Posthole
– House 16/17: Either phase 1 or 2 (in the latter case, the stone walls had been removed); another posthole belonged to the houses; it was found 60 cm underneath the lower stones of the star-shaped grave (p. 174)
– House 21: Entrance to the west

Klauhauane: The finds

House (find nr.)	Finds	Datable and stratified finds
1 (6820)	A. Pottery (300 sherds), b. iron pieces, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, e. wooden parts	– No bs
2 (6821)	A. Pottery (ca. 360 sherds), b. iron knive, c. charred bones, d. charcoal, e. burnt peat, f-g. flint	– Decorated bs (not found at AMS) = ca. 50 cm high in layer 2; dating: not earlier than the middle of the 4th century
3 (6890)	A. Pottery (200 sherds), b. iron fragment, c. charred bone, d. unidentified object, e. charcoal, f. flint, g. earth (sample)	– Three undecorated bs = ca. 20-55 cm high in layer 2; dating: not earlier than the middle of the 4th century
4 (6891)	B. Pottery (300 sherds), a. bead, c. buckle?, d. iron tool, e. head, iron, f. band, iron, g. tool, iron, h. slag, i. charred bones, k. charred bark, l. charcoal, m. burnt earth (sample), n. flint	– Four comb-decorated bs = ca. 30-50 cm high in layer 2; dat.: late 4th/5th century (p. 180)
5 (7181)	B. Pottery (450 sherds), a. finger ring Ag, c. loom weight, d. iron knive, e. iron fragments, f. charred bones, g. charcoal, h. earth (sample), i. flint	– Finger ring = ca. 10 cm high in layer 2; dating: Roman Iron Age (p. 182) – Knife R 145/146 = like above; dating: older Roman Iron Age – Three comb-decorated bs = Ca. 50-70 cm high in layer 2; dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 180)
6 (7182)	B. Pottery (800 sherds), a. glass bead, c. iron fragments, d. charred bones, e. charcoal, f. bark	– Three comb-decorated bs = 30-60 cm high in layer 2; dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 180) – One bs with beading = 40 cm high in layer 2; dating: 6th century (p. 180)
7 (7183)	A. Pottery (450 sherds), b. clay, c. tool, iron, d. rod, iron, e. whetstone, quartzite, f. whetstone, schist, g. charred bones, h. charcoal, i. wooden pieces	– Whetstone, quartzite = ca. 30 cm high in layer 2; dating: older Iron Age – Whetstone, schist = Unstratified (dating: younger Iron Age)
8 (6720)	A. Pottery (150 sherds), b. amber bead, c. bead, burnt clay, d-f. iron knife, g. iron tool, h. piece of iron, i. whetstone, quartzite, k. whetstone, schist, l. clay, m. charred bones, n. charcoal, o. flint	– Bs = Loose finds from the house (high up in layer 2?); dating: not earlier than the middle of the 4th century
9 (7258)	A. Pottery (76 sherds), b. iron fragments, c. charred bones, d. clay (sample)	– Five comb-decorated bs = 30-40 cm high in layer 2; dating: late 4th/5th century (p. 180)
10 (7259)	A. Pottery (67 sherds), b. charred bones, c. charcoal	– No bs
11; 12	Unexcavated	– No finds
13 (6893)	D. Pottery (200 sherds), a. glass bead, b. bead, rock crystal, c. mounting, bronze, e. nail fragment, f-g. iron pieces, h. charred bones, i. charcoal, k. earth (sample)	– No bs
14 (6892)	A. Pottery (ca. 250 sherds), b. nail fragment, c. slag	– No bs
15 (6719)	A. Pottery (ca. 155 sherds), b. knive, iron, c. tool, iron, d. iron nail, e. iron fragments, f. charred bones, g. charcoal (hearths)	– Knife R145 = 30-40 cm high in layer 2; dating: older Iron Age
16/17 (7382)	A. Pottery (ca. 1050 sherds), b. knife, iron (fragment), c. arrowhead, iron, d. iron nails, e. charred bones, f. charcoal, g. nutshell, h. burnt eartch (samples), i. clay	– No bs
18 7540/7696	7540: D. Pottery (122 sherds), a. awl, iron, b. nail, c. iron fragments, e. whetstone, kvartsitt, f. charred bark, g. charcoal, earth (samples), h. beach pepple, quartzite 7696: B. Pottery (214 sherds), a. fibula, iron, c. rust, d-e. charred bones, f. charcoal, g. burnt earth (samples)	– Fibula with a long catch plate = Unstratified; dating: period C1b (p. 181) – Whetstone, quartzite = Unstratified; dating: older Iron Age
19 (7539)	A. Pottery (110 sherds), b. charred bones, c. charcoal, d. burnt earth (sample)	– No bs
20 (none)	Unknown	– No finds
21 (none)	Pottery, for example, sherds from jutlandish-inspired ware	– Jutlandish-inspired ware = Inside and outside the house; dating: period B2

– Pottery: almost exclusively coarse undecorated ware; bs: bucket-shaped pot
– House 5: there were 150 sherds belonging to one comb-decorated (unstratified) bs (the sherds are missing)
– Many more finds, mostly pottery, were loose finds - salvaged without any stratigraphical notes (S 7024; 7262; 7263; 7384) or in the open area between the houses (S 6894) and between or close to the houses 9 and 10 (S 7260, 7261, 7365, 7383)
– Finds were also salvaged during G. Gustavson´s excavation in the late 19th century in the trenches I/II (pp. 170, 181)

Klauhauane: The radiocarbon datings

Provenance	Dating
Charcoal taken from the wall ditch of house 21 (p. 179)	350-590 AD
Charcoal taken from hearths outside house 21 (dito)	40 BC- 210 AD; 210 BC- 20 AD

– The radiocarbon dating for the wall ditch, which is too late from a stratigraphical point of view, may result from more recent mixed-in organic material
– Literature: Møllerop 1971:154; Kallhovd 1994:130f.

Klauhauane: The dating (synthesis)

Phase	House	Dating
1	21	– Radiocarbon datings from samples originating from the hearths outside the house: 210 BC - 20 AD; 40 BC - 210 AD – Jutlandish-inspired pottery found inside and outside the house: period *B2*
2a	5	Gold finger ring: Roman Iron Age
2b	2-6, 8, 9	Comb-decorated bucket-shaped pots: late 4th and 5th century AD

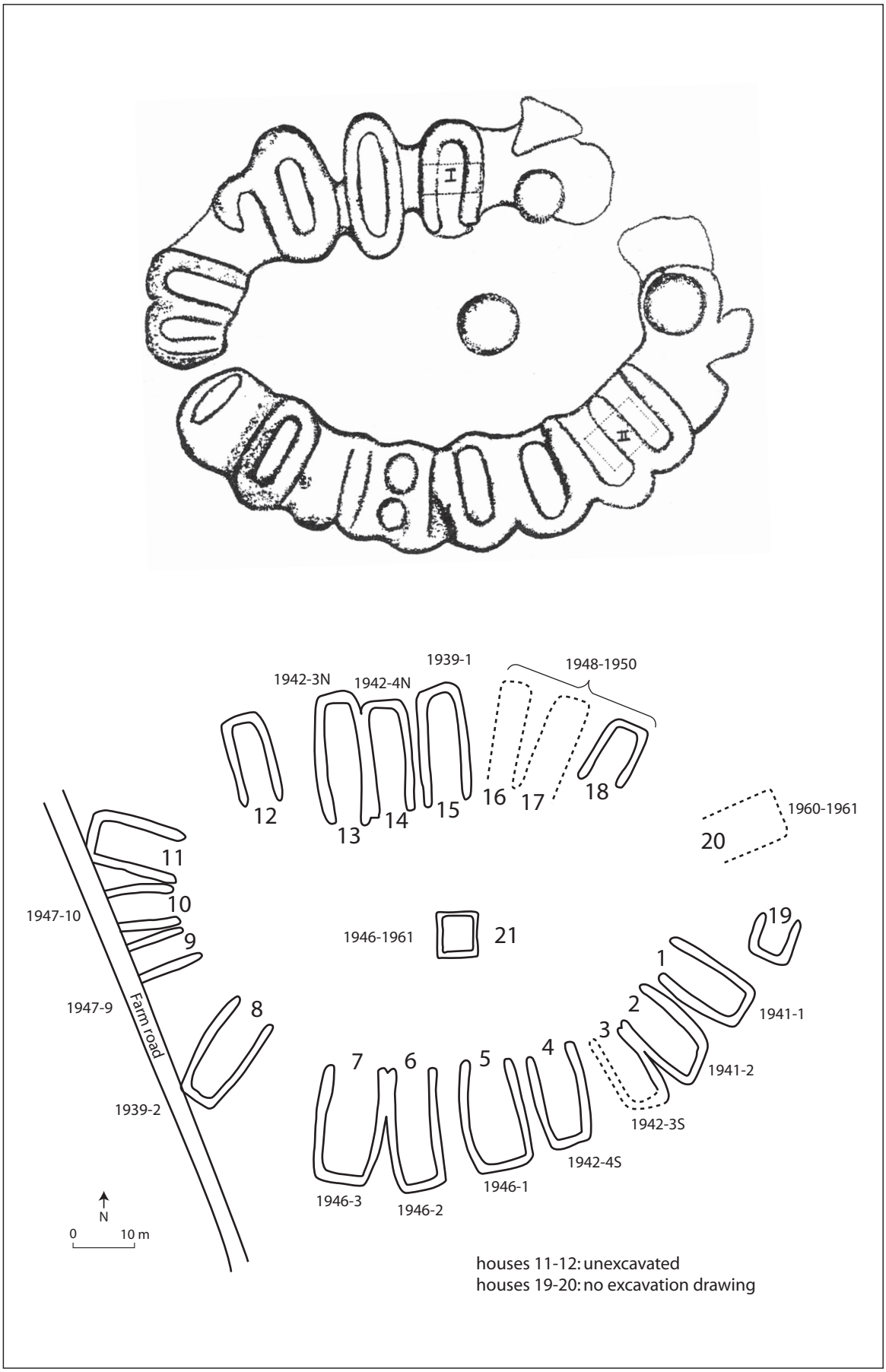
– Phase 2a = bottom of the stone wall period; phase 2b = at least 20 cm up in that layer and with bucket-shaped pots
– House 5: a bucket-shaped pot of 6th century date is said to have been found 40 cm high up in layer 2, whereas a comb-decorated one was found 60 cm high, probably indicating a stratigraphical mix-up

Klauhauane: Additional monuments

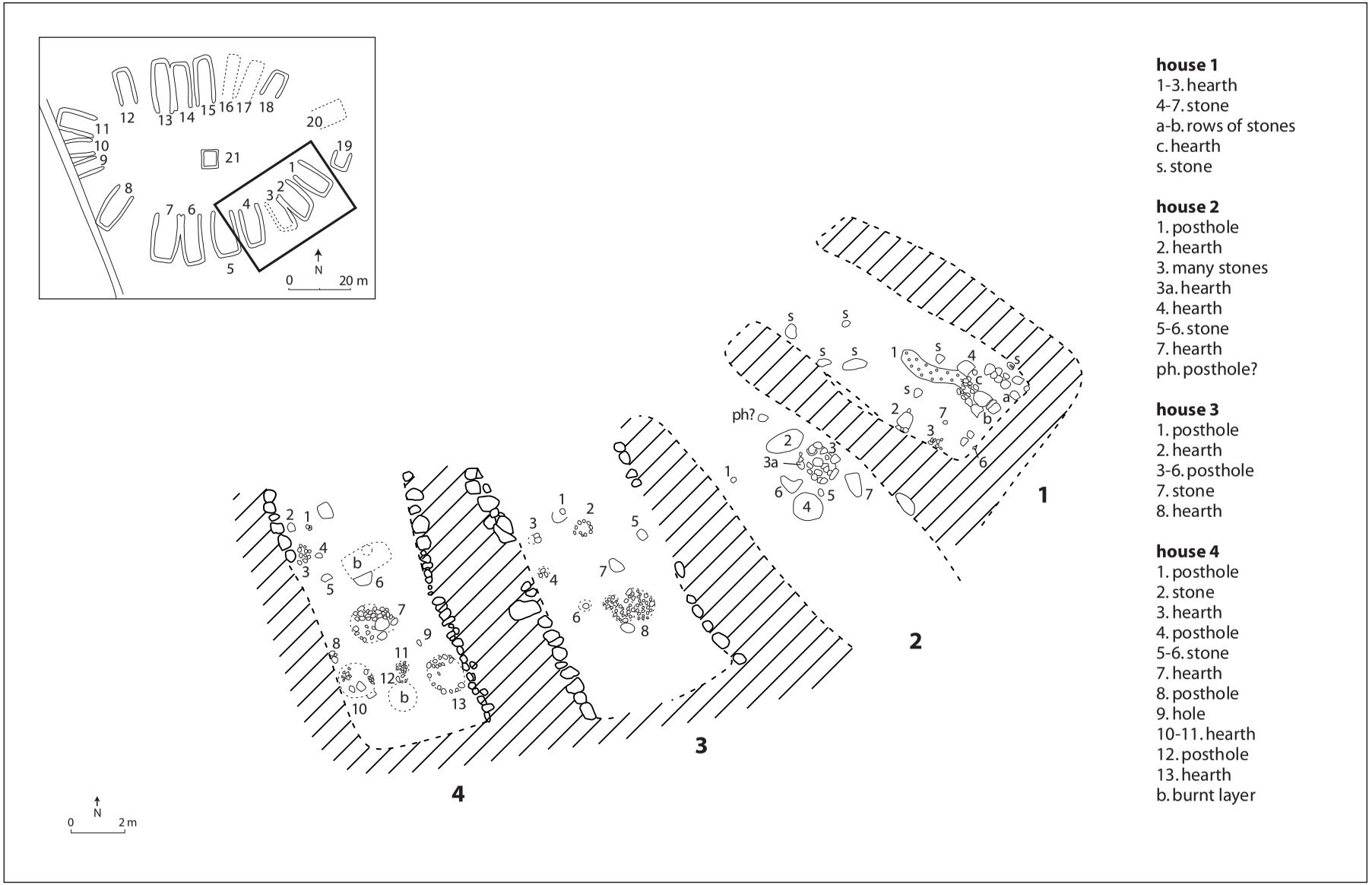
Description	Size	Finds	Observations	Dating
Mound in the middle (7264)	7 m (diametre)	Pottery (300 sherds)	Pottery mostly in the south-west; interpretation: hearth?	Postdating the 2nd century AD (see above)
Mound to the east (7265)	8 m (diametre)	– Iron knife R407?, – stone tool, – pottery (four sherds), – charred bones, – charcoal, – flint	Burnt layer, charred bones to the east; interpretation: hearth.	Unknown
Star-shaped monument (7541)	11 m (arm to arm)	Pottery (16 sherds), charred animals´ bones, charcoal	Stratigraphically postdating the court site´s houses nr. 16/17; interpretation: grave mound?	Unknown
Mound to the north-east	20 m	Bronze/Vestland cauldron (C 16268):?	Was the mentioned cauldron found in that mound? (Møllerop 1961:85)	D2
Mound to the west	Minor	Rune-inscribed oblong object in an incremation grave (B4383):?	Was the mentioned grave found in a mound with an impressive grave chamber just to the west of the court-site? (Møllerop 1960:25)	Early Iron Age

Klauhauane: The context

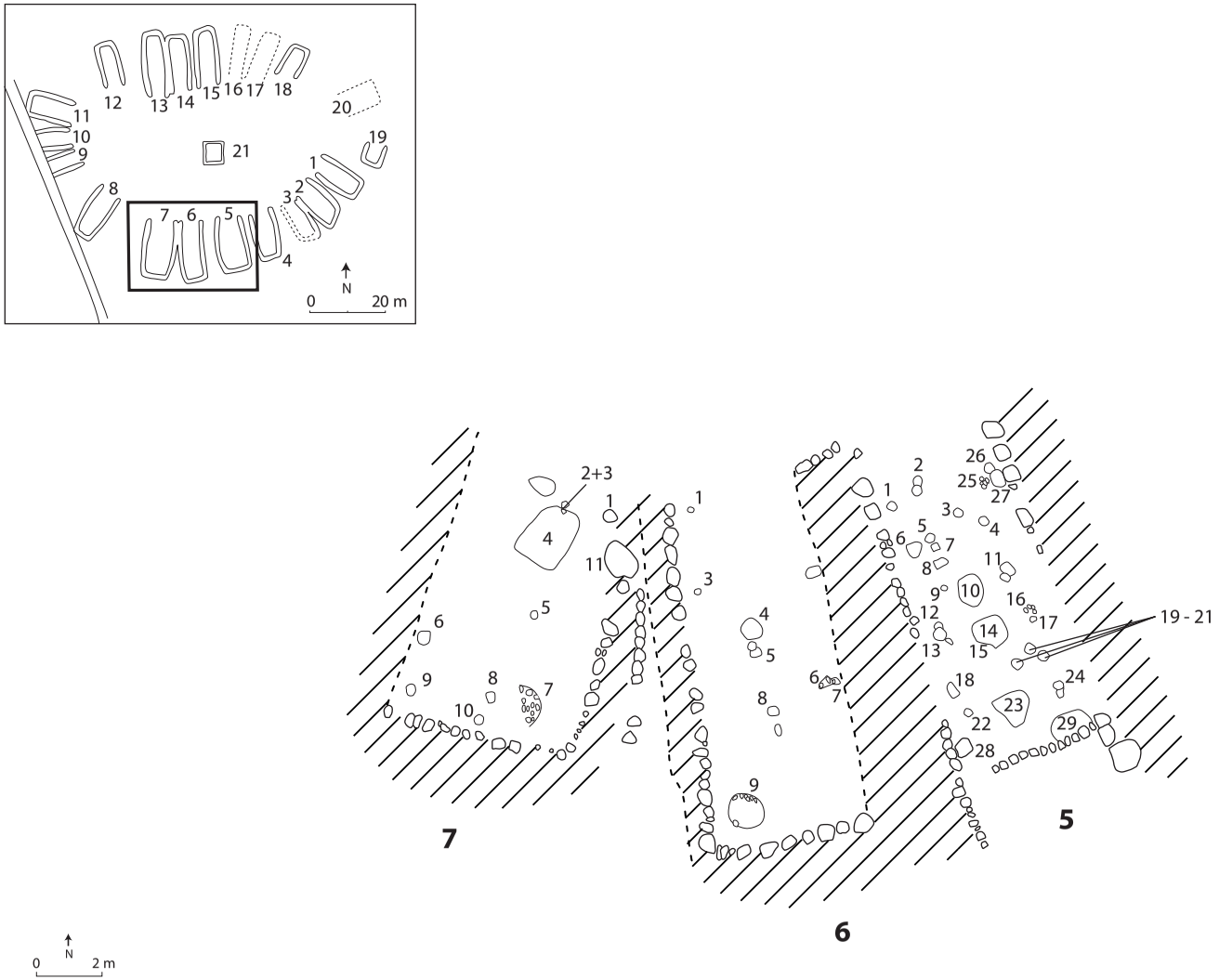
Farm	Monument/find	Dating	Interpretation
Ødemotland	A = Large grave mound with a weapon grave (including a sword) in a wooden coffin of 4x1 m (S 8613) B = Two farm areas (including Hanaberget with houses of 27 and 10 m; S 7698, 7810, 7941)	D1	A = Grave of an upper level of society, due to the mound´s size and grave chamber B = Late Roman/Migration period farms
Bø/Ullarland	Many grave mounds, among them several of considerable size, several outstanding grave or loose finds and place name indicators for a large farm (Bø) and heathen cult (Ullarland)	Early Iron Age (and forth)	A pair of important farms several hundred m to the north-east



Klauhauane: plans (above: sketch from H. Bucker jr. of 1891; below: after a sketch made in 1983; both maps from top. ark. AmS).



Klauhauane: houses 1-4 (top. ark. AmS).

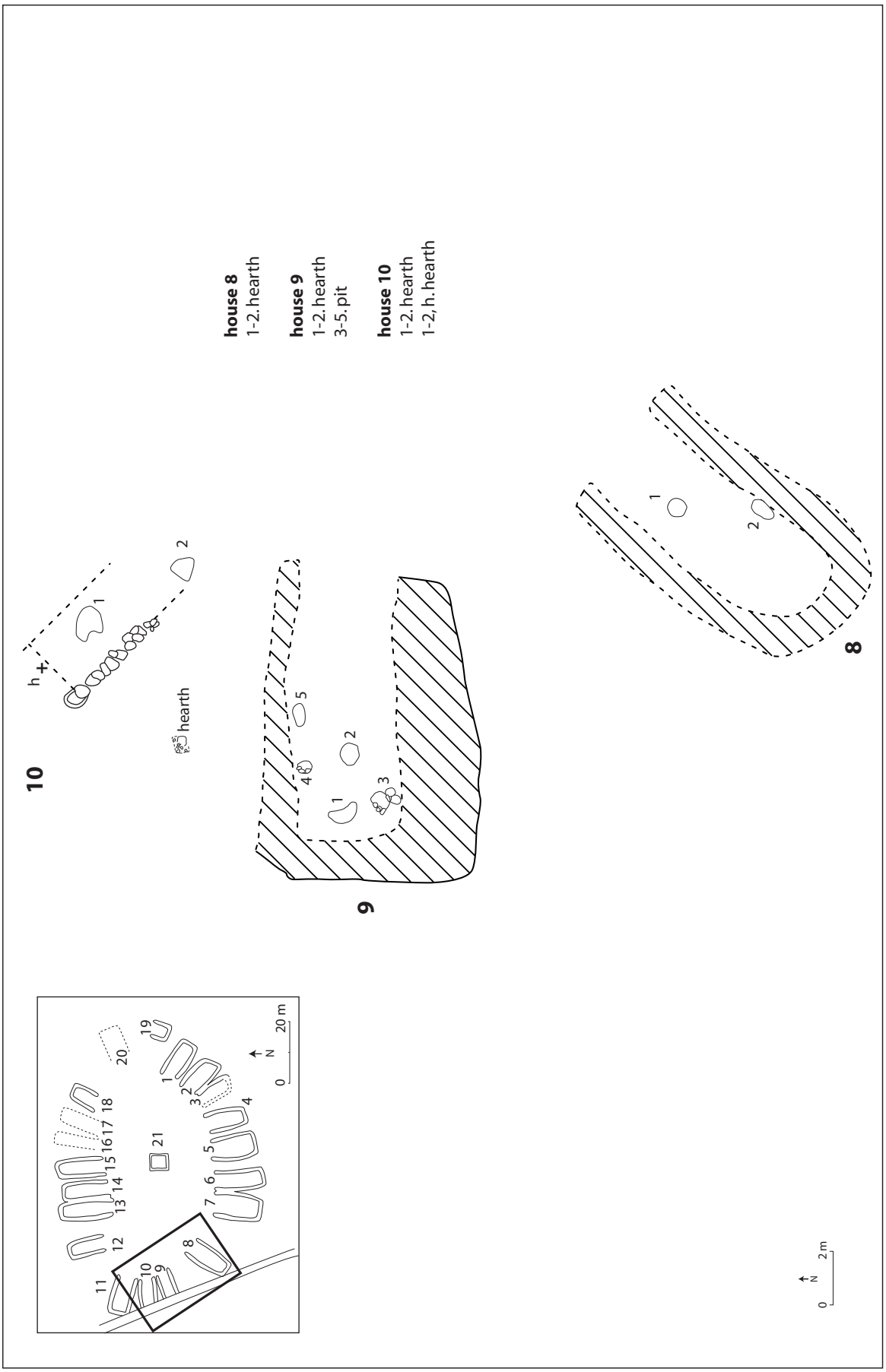


house 5
1-5. posthole
6-8. stone
9. posthole
10. hearth
11-13. posthole
14. hearth
15-18. posthole
19. stone
20-22. posthole
23. hearth
24. posthole
25-26. hole
27-28. stone
29. hearth

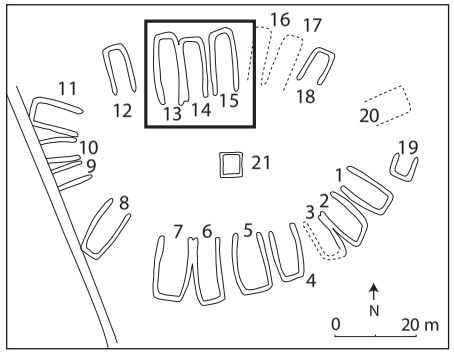
house 6
1. posthole
2. pit
3. posthole
4. hearth
5-7. posthole
8. stone
9. hearth

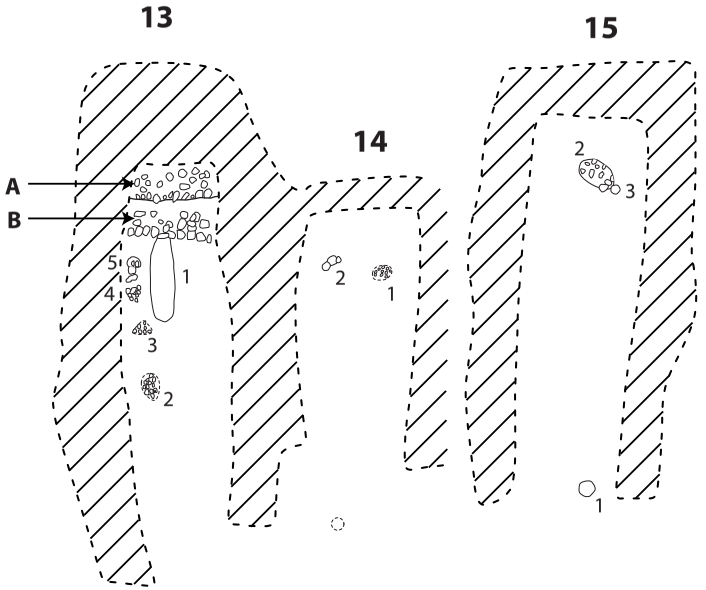
house 7
1-2. posthole
3. flat stone
4. hearth
5-6. posthole
7. hearth
8-10. posthole
11. stone

Klauhauane: houses 5-7 (top. ark. AmS).



Klauhauane: house 8-10 (top. ark. AmS).

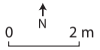




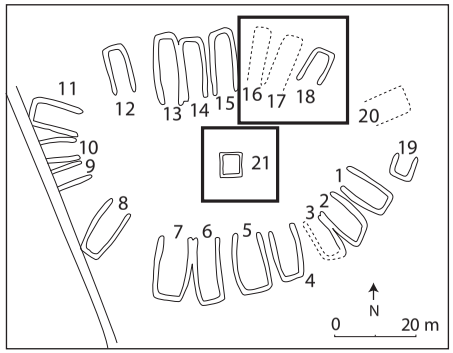
house 13
1-4. hearth
5. posthole
A, B. short walls

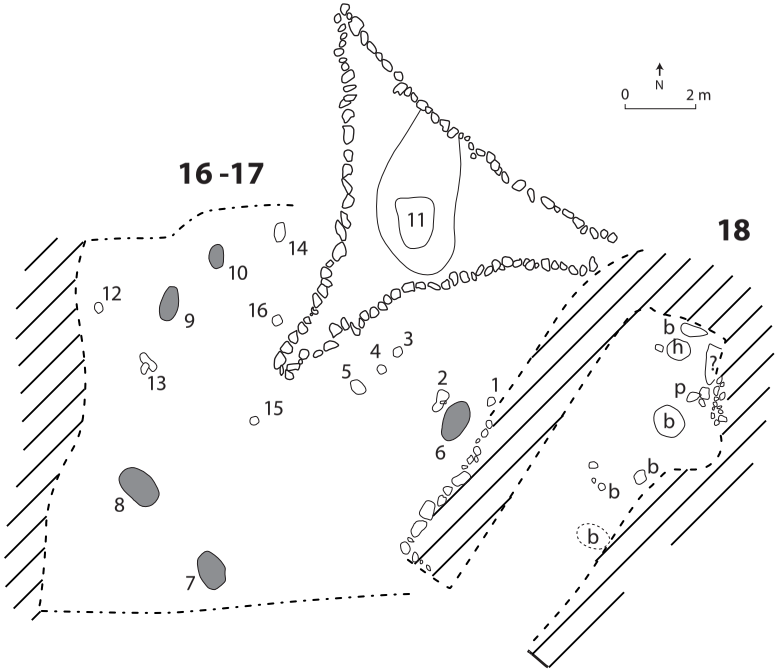
house 14
1. hearth
2. posthole

house 15
1-2. hearth
3. stone



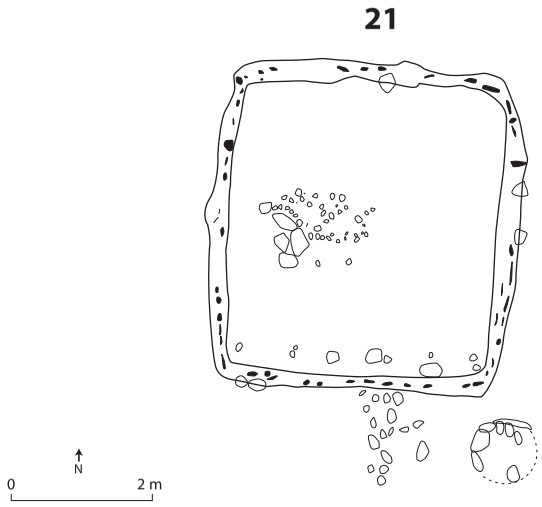
Klauhauane: houses 13-15 (top. ark. AmS).





houses 16-17
1-5. posthole
6-10. hearth
11. layer with ash and charcoal
12-16. posthole

house 18
b. burnt layer
p. pit
h. hearth



house 21
- wall ditches
- several hearths to the outside
- mound (later)

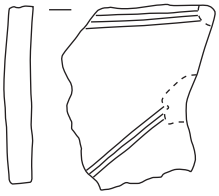
houses 16-18 and 21 (top. ark. AmS).

house 4 (S 6891b)

nr. 74

nr. 126 (?)

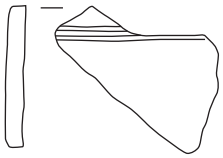
nr. 135



nr. 156

house 5 (S 7181a)

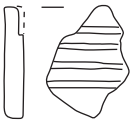
nr. 80



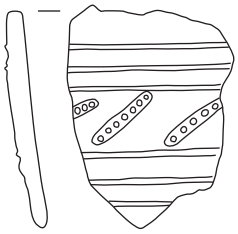
nr. 91

nr. 133

house 6 (S 7182a)



nr. 206

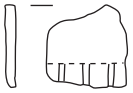


nr. 295

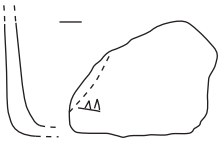
house 9 (S 7258a)

nr. 10

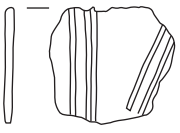
nr. 12



nr. 14

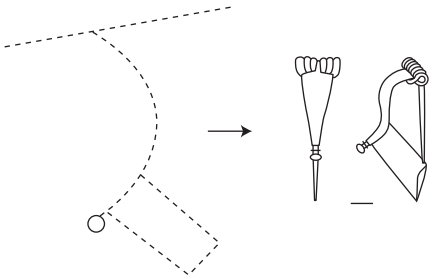


nr. 35

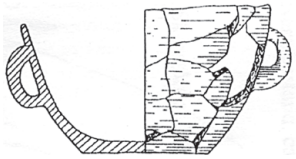


nr. 39

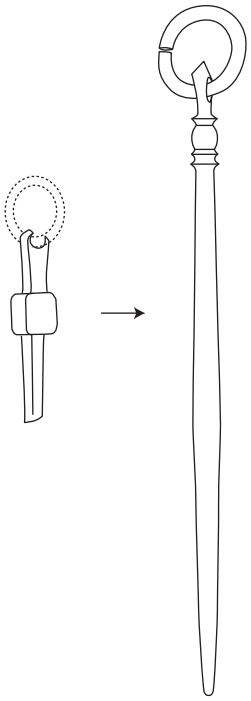
Finds from Klauhauane.Fragments of bucket-shaped pots (scale 1:2).



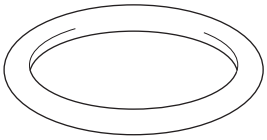
A corroded fibula from house 18 (S 7696a) with a complete object for comparision. No scale.



Jutlandish-inspired pottery (Møllerop 1971:fig. 4b) found inside and outside house 21. No scale.



Fragment of a bronze needle found in 1891 and simple ring needle of type C according to Petersen (Kallhovd 1991:103). No scale.



Golden finger ring (S 7181a) from house 5. Simple type according to Andersson (simplified drawing of the type taken from Andersson 1993:fig. 7). No scale.

Finds from Klauhauane.

12.4. The Øygarden excavation

(J. Petersen 1940)

(literature: Petersen 1932b, 1940, 1952)

Øygarden: The investigation

The Øygarden excavation in the year 1940 covered a court site that is unique in Rogaland because of its half circle-shaped form (fig. 6). J. Petersen, the excavator, left a very clear description of the different phases of the Øygarden-site, house by house, in his excavation report. He separated two phases from each other in stratigraphical and constructional terms and dated the earlier phase to the Roman period and the later phase to the Merovingian period. As a re-study of the excavation´s documents shows, the subdision into phases is well-recognisable but a closer look on the datable and stratified finds seems to indicate that the initial phase is in fact undated and the later phase should be subdivided.

On the surface, the houses were clearly visible due to their surviving standing stone walls and the sunken house floors in between, but it is important to keep in mind that house 10 was not recognisable at first sight but was found accidentally when excavating the area between the houses 6 and 7. The initial phase on sterile soil was recorded in nine out of ten cases in terms of a layer up to ca. 50 cm thick underneath the stone walls, but it was only in a few houses that substantial remains (round hearths on the sterile soil in the houses 1, 5, 9 and 10; an unspecified pavement in house 5) were found. The later phase is much better known, and mostly it consisted of stone walls, regular sets of inner postholes and longitudinal, sometimes stone-framed hearths along the houses´ main axis. However, two houses stand out as exceptions, i.e. house 2 whose stone walls rested upon sterile soil and house 7 with hearths, pits and postholes on the sterile soil and stone walls on a higher level, but there was nothing else belonging to that later phase. In addition, a minor trench between the houses 8 and 9 unveiled two culture layers, indicating that the activities did not cover the visible house areas alone. In general, no firm statement can be made about the house constructions of the initial phase, but the younger and rather homogenous period was characterised by longitudinal hearths, regular sets of inner postholes and outer stones walls (house 7 notwithstanding). It is an interesting thought that two minor mounds immediately to the east, at least one with a hearth, were an equivalent to the "middle mounds" known from other court sites in south-western Norway (fig. 4, p. 186). Perhaps these two mounds also reflect different periods of use. When it comes to mounds associated with the court sites, there is one open question. In the original report and the published find report (S 6781), a mound in the middle of the court site (4 m in diameter) is referred to (p. 185). It cannot be stated with certainty where this mound was actually located. If it was found "in the middle" of the site, perhaps at half the distance between the "outer houses" nrs. 1 and 9, it is not indicated in the overall sketch of the gathering place left by Petersen (p. 186).

As to the finds, there was only a limited amount of salvaged pottery (ca. 90 sherds). Remarkably, half of that pottery was found in one house (house 9), in fact the only one with fragments of bucket-shaped pots (p. 190). The most remarkable object is a sherd belonging to a glass vessel (claw beaker) of Merovingian date, otherwise known in Norway only from the famous Eastern Norwegian Borre grave field (p. 190). Glass beads were salvaged in half the houses, but it would be matter of its own to analyse whether they carry any weight in chronological respects. Thus, datable stratified artefacts are very few and, strictly regarded, one is left with a decorated sherd of a bucket-shaped pot and the mentioned glass fragment.

Chronologically, one has to concede that there are no datable and stratified objects from the initial period of court site´s use. Furthermore, there are only two chronological indicators for its later period, which is characterised by houses with stone walls. A fragment of a decorated bucket-shaped pot of late 4th or 5th century date was found in the bottom level of that phase (more precisely, close to the stone walls´ lower end). The fragment of a glass beaker of the Merovingian Age originates from the upper end of a longitudinal hearth, thereby indicating the very end of use of house 10. However, Petersen´s record shows that it was only in house 10 that the main hearth of phase 2 reached 60 cm in height, whereas in the other houses, if known, they were only 40 cm high. For this very reason, house 10 might have been in use for longer than the rest of the site.

Øygarden: The houses

Nr.	Inner size	Walls´ heigth	Archaeological elements	Phases	Phases` subdivision
1	7 x 4,40 m	62-101 cm	Ph: 3;4;6;9;10 H: 1;7;8;13 „Grave“: 16 Stone: 2;5;11;12	1-3	1 = H 13 2 (+30-35) = H 7;8; stone walls; ph 3 (+60) = “Grave”, nr. 16 (see below)
2	8,40 x 3,80 m	39-122 cm	Ph: 1;4;7-12 H: 5;13 Stone: 2;3;6;14	1	1 = All constructional elements *(stone walls and postholes on sterile soil)*
3	8,30 x 3,20 m	30-91 cm	Ph: 2-4;6-11 Pavement: 5 Stone: 1	1;2	1 = Ph4? 2 (+30-40) = Stone walls; ph, pavement 5
4	7,30 x 3,75	59-76 cm	Ph: 1-3;5;11;12 H: 8 Stone: 4;6;7;9;10	1;2	1 = No constructional elements 2 (+10-35) = H 8; stone walls; ph
5	8,50 x 4 m	49-107 cm	Ph: 4-6;9;10 H: 7;8 “Pavement”: 1 Stone: 2-3	1, 2	1 = H 8, pavement 1, ph 5 2 (+30) = H 7; stone walls; ph
6	7,50 x 3,80 m	71-92 cm	Ph: 2;3;7-10 H: 4-6 St: 1;11-13	1;2	1 = No constructional elements 2 (+20-40) = H 4-6; stone walls; ph
7	7 x 3,20 m	112-127 cm	Ph: 3;9 H: 1;6 Stone: 2,4;5;7;8;10;11	1; 2	1 = All constructional elements 2 (+25-50) = Just the stone walls
8	7,50 x 3,40 m	76-96 cm	Ph: 1-6, 8-10 H: 7 Stone: 11	1;2	1 = No constructional elements 2 (+15-35) = H 7; stone walls; ph
“x”	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	1,2	1 = Top of an earlier culture layer 17 cm above the sterile soil 2 = Top of a later culture layer 30 cm above the sterile soil
9	7,75 x 3,55 m	53-104 cm	Ph: 2;3;5-8 H: 1;4 Stone: 9	1, 2	1 = H 4 2 (+20-25)= H 1; stone walls; ph
10	8 x 3,60 m	83-111 cm	Ph: 5;6;10;11;18;19 Hearth: 3;7;9; 13-16;21 Stone: 1;2;4;8;12; 17; 20;22	1, 2	1 = H 13;14;15;21 2 (+25-40) = H 3;7;9;16;21

– H: hearth; Ph: posthole
– „Grave“ (nr. 16) in house 1: fragments of pottery, charred bones and charcoal covered by small stones
– „x“: a part of the area between the houses 8 and 9 without any superficial trace of a building

Øygarden: The finds

House	Finds	Datable and stratified finds
1 (S 6770)	A. Pendant of amber, b. iron knive, c-g. iron objects/ fragments, h-i. pottery (eleven fragments), k. whetstone, l. scraper, m. flint, n. pumice (stone), o. charred bones, p. charcoal, q. rock crystal, r. burnt earth (sample)	– Whetstone = 35-40 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: Early Iron Age (see below)
2 (S 6771)	A. Nail fragment b. iron fragments, c. pottery (three fragments), d. charred bones, e. charcoal, f. flint	– No dating
3 (S 6772)	A. Pottery (four fragments), b. slag, c. bog iron, d. flat round stones e. charred bones, f. charcoal (samples), g. burnt earth (sample), h. fragmentary blade of a knive, iron (perhaps similar to R 407)	– Knive (h), perhaps similar to R407 = unstratified; dating: Late Iron Age (see below)
4 (S 6773)	A. Pottery (five fragments), b. nail fragment c. slag, d. bog iron, e. charred bones, f. charcoal, g. slag/burnt earth (samples), h. flint	– No datable finds
5 (S 6774)	A. Glass bead, b. iron cylinder, c. pottery (two fragments), d. charred bones, e. charcoal, burnt bark (birch)	– No datable finds
6 (S 6775)	A. Glass bead; b. iron knife; c-h. iron fragments, i. slag, k. charcoal, l. charred bones, m. pottery (one fragment), n-o flint, p. rock crystal	– No datable finds
7 (S 6776)	A-B. Glass bead, c-e. iron objects and fragments, slag, e. charred bones, f. charred hazelnut; g. charcoal (sample), h. burnt earth (samples), i. flint	– No datable finds
8 (S 6777)	A. Iron knife (R145/146?), b. nail fragment, slag, c. pottery (six fragments), d. sandstone, e. wheststone, quartzite, f. natural quartzite, g. charred bones, h. charcoal	– Whetstone, quarzite (e) = 30 cm high in the upper layer (layer 2); dating: earlier Iron Age
9 (S 6778)	A. Spindle whorl, bronze (R166), b. glass bead, c. pottery (48 fragments), d. nail fragment, e-f. slag, g. flat oval stone, h. charred bones, i. charcoal, k. burnt earth (sample)	– Spindle whorl: close to the bottom of the upper layer, to the east of the main hearth; dating: later Iron Age (type IIc according to Høigård Hofseth 1985:35f.) – Pottery: comb-decorated bucket-shaped pot = close to the bottom of the upper layer; dating: late 4th/5th century **(p. 211)**
10 (S 6779)	A. Glass beaker (fragment), b. glass bead, c. pottery (seven pieces), d. clamp, iron, e. nail fragment, f. charred bones, g. charcoal (samples), h. flint	– Fragment of a glass vessel: close to the upper end of the main hearth 3/9/16, ca. 60 cm higher than the bottom of the upper layer; dating: Merovingian (p. 211)

– The pendant of amber (house 1: phase 2 or postdating this) and the beads (houses 5, 6, 9, 10: mostly belonging to phase 2) are in need of a chronological examination

– House 1: the whetstone was once dated by the excavator J. Petersen to the Early Iron Age due to its form without any further details being given ; this seems somewhat questionable, however, since whetstones are dated by means of the material rather than their form (f.eks. Myhre 1980:134)

– House 3: knives of type Rygh 407 have been dated to the later Iron Age in general (Rygh 1885, Petersen 1952:100); a weapon grave from northern Rogaland (Foldøy, Suldal) with a knive of this kind is dated to the Merovingian period (Rønne 1999:cat.nr. 7)

Øygarden: The dating

Period	House (stratigraphy)	Dating
1	1-10 (settlement traces underneath the stone walls)	Undated
2a	9 (bottom of phase 2, i.e. close to the lower end of the stone walls)	Bucket-shaped pot: late 4th/5th century
2b	10 (60 cm high up in phase 2)	Glass find: Merovingian

– phase 2 b, i.e. 60 cm high up in layer 2 and associated wint a Merovingian period find, is only to be found in house 10, all the other hearths in layer 2, if known, have a maximum height of 40 cm.

Øygarden: Additional monuments

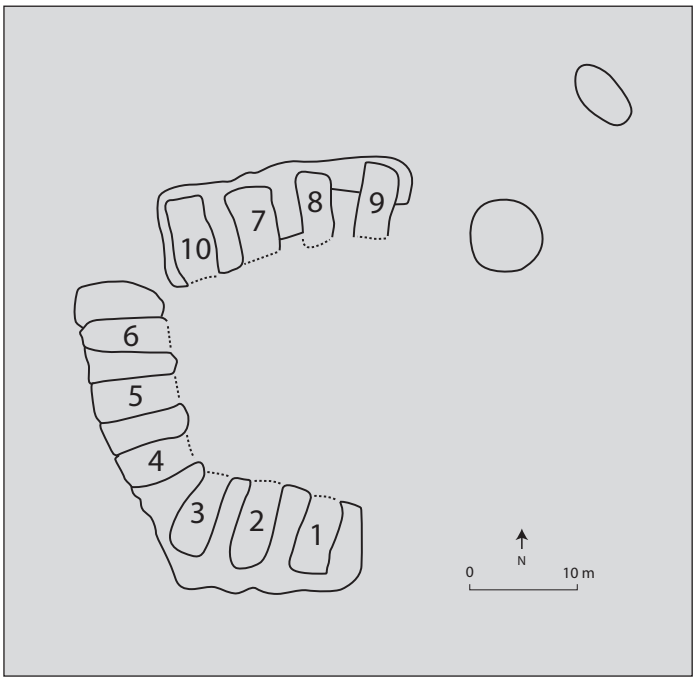
Description	Size	Finds	Observations	Inter-pretation	Dating
"Mound in the middle (S 6781)"	Diameter: 4-4,5 m	Charred bark and earth, earth (samples)	Stone layer in the mound	Hearth?	Undetermined
Mound to the east of house 9 (S 6780)	Diameter: 6,5-7m	– Iron knife (R407), – charred bones, – tooth fragments (cow or horse), – burnt earth (sample), – glass bead, – charcoal (sample)	Hearth in the west	Offering mound?	Knife of the type Rygh 407 (uncertain; if it was: Late Iron Age: **p. 205)**

– The mound in the middle (S 6781) cannot be located with certainty; it is not indicated in the general sketch of the gathering place (p. 182)

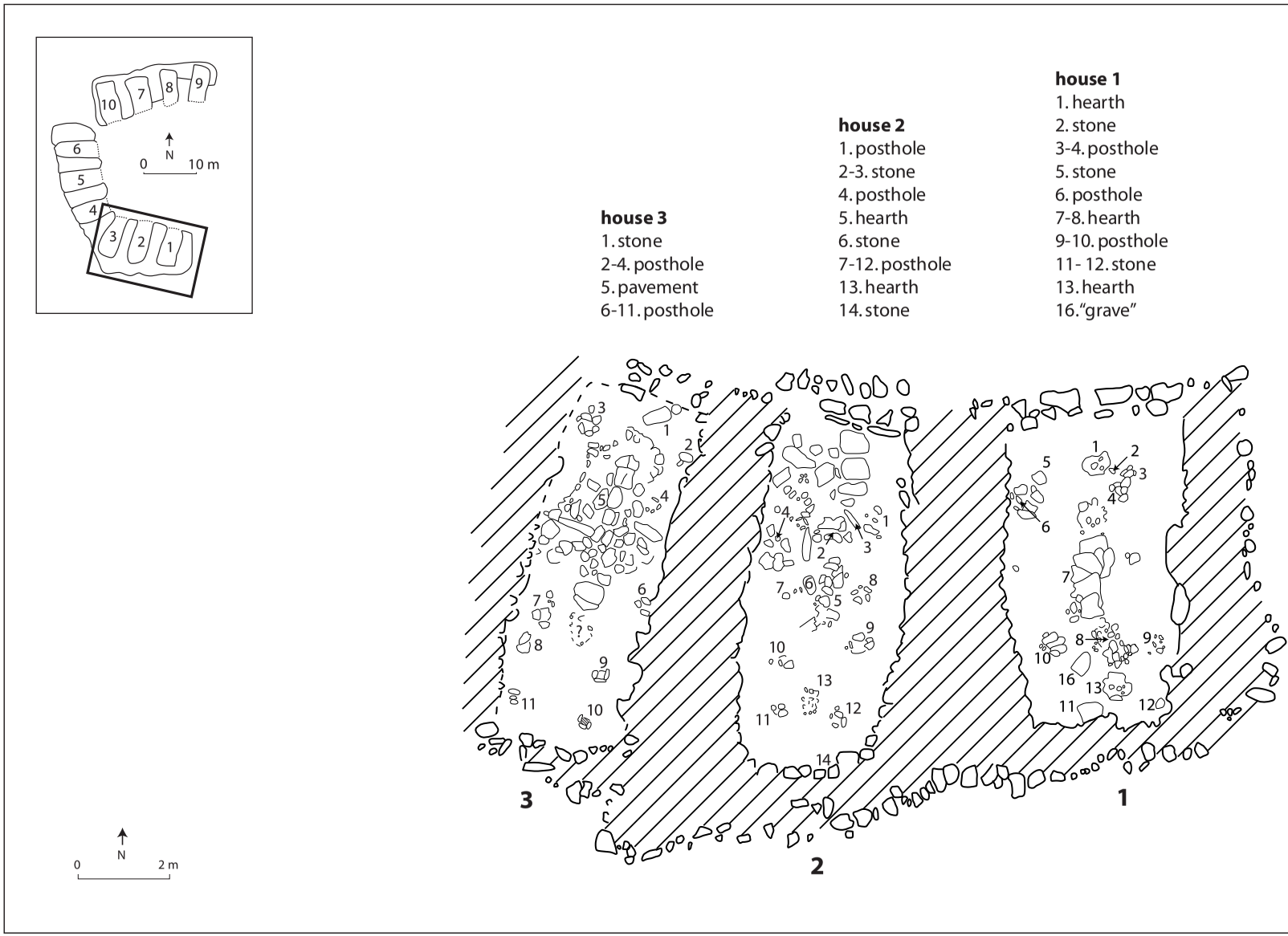
Øygarden: The context

Farm	Monument/find	Dating
hegreberg	A = Woman`s grave (bronze fibula, 102 glass beads etc.): S 2951 (see below) B = Double grave (Anglo-Saxon bronze vessel, coin, sword, axe, smithing tools, boot nails etc.): S 6782 C = several grave mounds (one 18 m long) D = Three bauta stones (3-4,5m high)	A = 2nd half of the 4th century AD (see below) B = Viking Age C = Iron Age (?) D = Early Iron Age
Varaberg	A = Several grave mounds (one is 25 m in length, another is 20 m across) B = Bauta stone, almost 3 m high C = Soapstone quarrel	A = Iron Age (?) B = Early Iron Age C = Late Iron Age
Lunde Søre, Meling	A = Five boathouses, 20-30 m long B = Hill fort	A = Late Roman/Migration period B = Undated

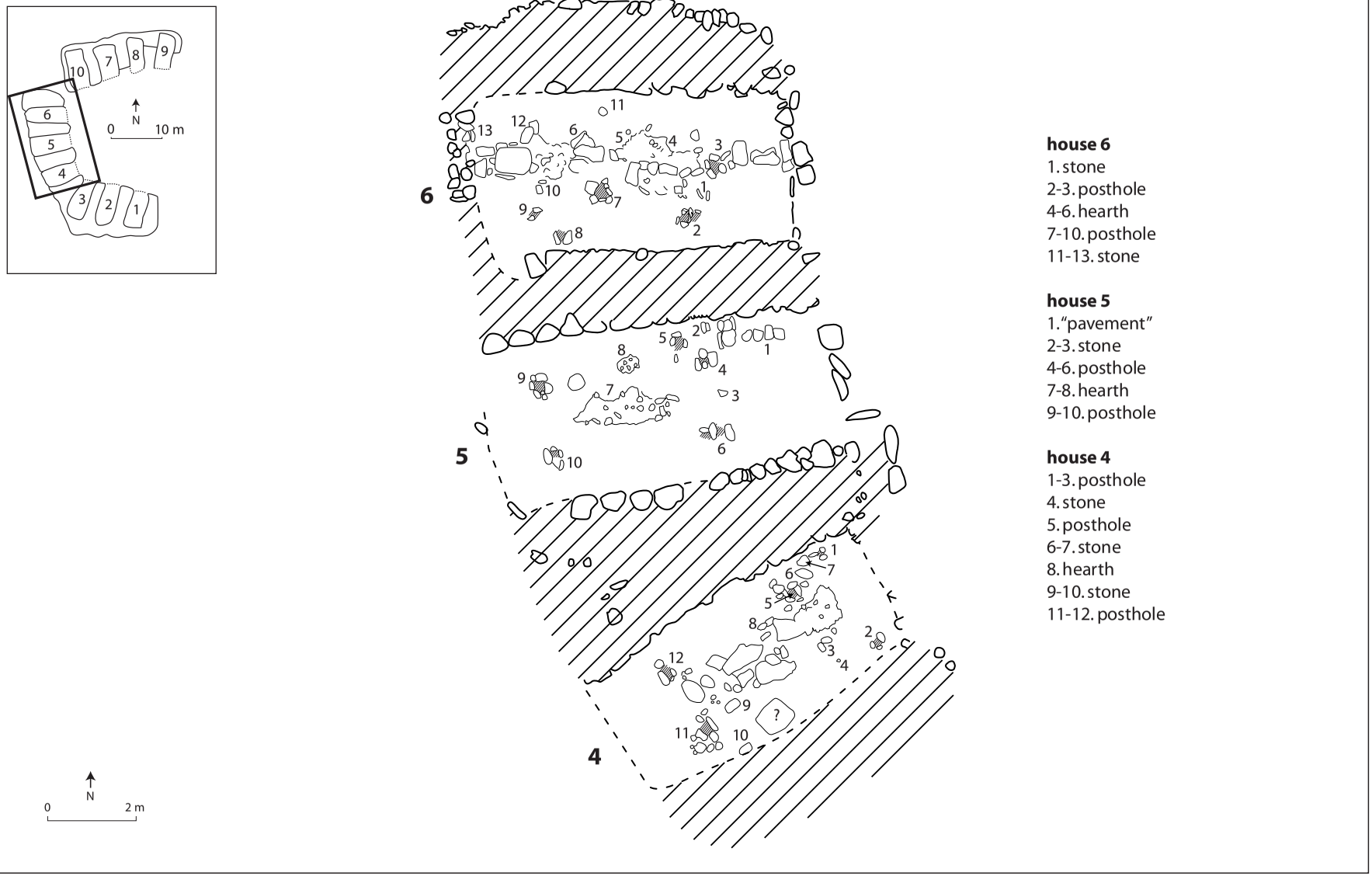
- The fibula with a triangular head and foot plate is comparable with finds known from the Kvassheim cemetery in southern Rogaland (grave 19; 21A; compare Lillehammer 1996:146, 149-150)
- Hegreberg and Varaberg: western part of the island; Lunde Søre and Meling: eastern part



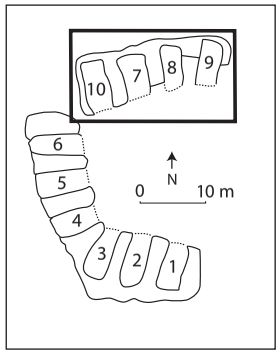
Øygarden: the plan (top. ark. AmS).

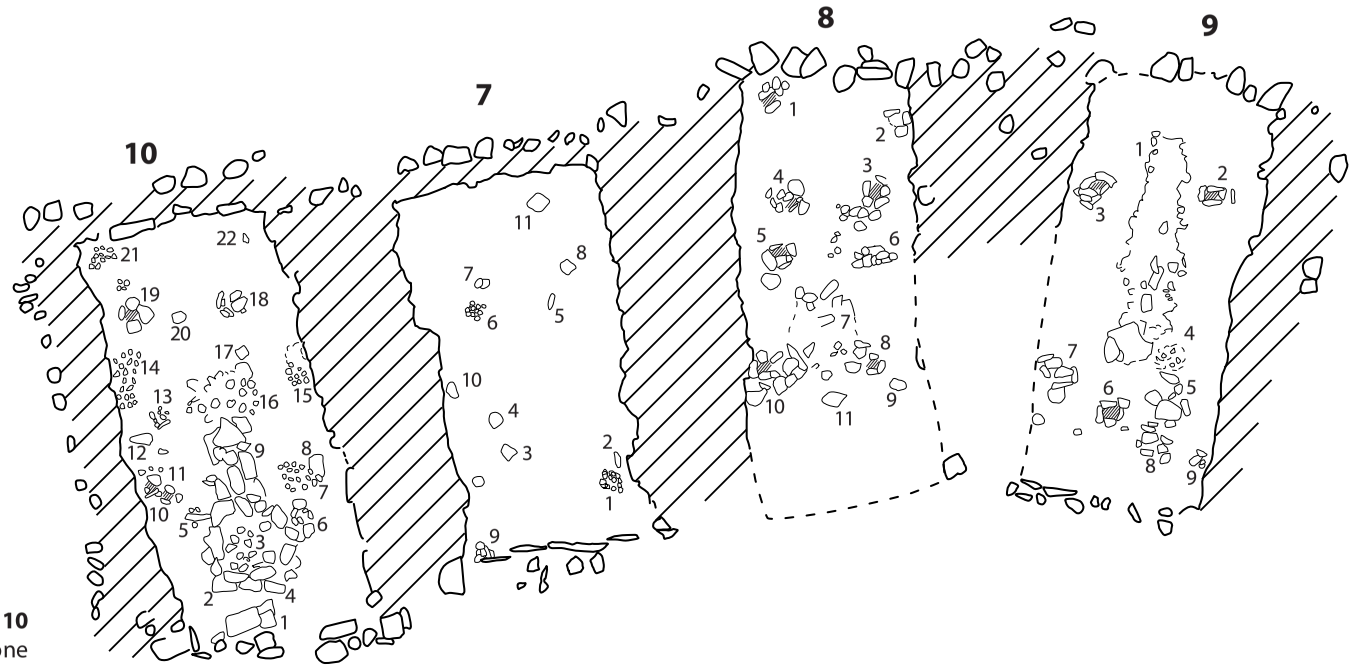


Øygarden: houses 1-3 (top. ark. AmS).



Øygarden: houses 4-6 (top. ark AmS).





house 10
1-2. stone
3. hearth
4. stone
5-6. posthole
7. hearth
8. stone
9. hearth
10-11. posthole
12. stone
13-16. hearth
17. stone
18-19. posthole
20. stone
21. hearth
22. stone

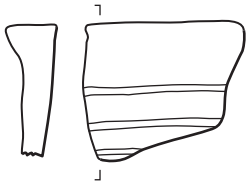
house 7
1. hearth
2. stone
3. posthole
4-5. stone
6. hearth
7-8. stone
9. posthole
10-11. stone

house 8
1-6. posthole
7. hearth
8-10. posthole
11. stone

house 9
1. hearth
2-3. posthole
4. hearth
5-8. posthole
9. stone

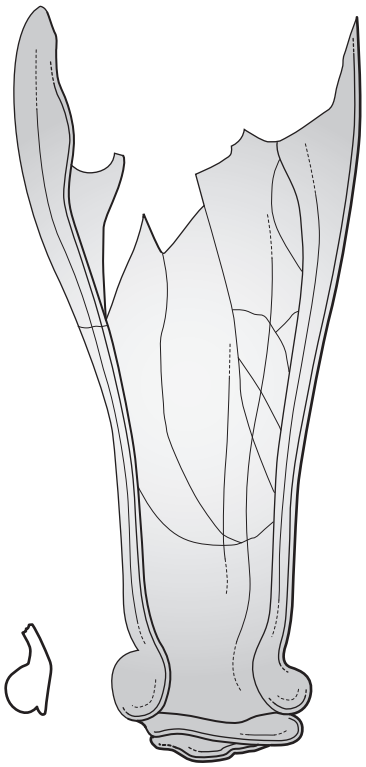
N
0
2 m

Øygarden: houses 7-10 (top. ark AmS).



(find nr. 40)

house 9 (S 6778c)
scale 1:2



A minor glass fragment from house 10 (S 6779a)
and a related find from a grave in Vendel, Uppland, Sweden (after Stolpe/Arne 1912:table VII, fig. 5).
scale 1:2.

Fragment of a bucket-shaped pot and a glas vessel from Øygarden.

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Museum of Archaeology, University of Stavanger
N-4036 Stavanger, NORWAY
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ISSN 0800-0816
ISBN 978-82-7760-144-1
UDK 902