

Trade and Communication Networks
of the First Millennium AD
in the northern part of Central Europe

Trade and Communication Networks of the
First Millennium AD in the northern part of Central Europe:

Central Places, Beach Markets,
Landing Places and Trading Centres

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Internationalen Sachsensymposium

durch
Babette Ludowici

Trade and Communication Networks of the
First Millennium AD in the northern part of Central Europe:

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herausgegeben von

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Vorwort zur Reihe

Mit dem vorliegenden Band beginnt das Niedersächsische Landesmuseum Hannover unter dem Titel „Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung“ eine neue Reihe von Veröffentlichungen aus dem Bereich seiner Forschungstätigkeit. Dazu gehört die wissenschaftliche Erschließung der umfangreichen archäologischen Sammlungsbestände zur Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends im Gebiet des heutigen Bundeslandes Niedersachsen, die am Haus unter der mittlerweile traditionellen Bezeichnung „Sachsenforschung“ betrieben wird. Sie bildet einen der wichtigsten Schwerpunkte der am Landesmuseum Hannover geleisteten Forschungsarbeit. Vieles von dem, was wir heute über die Lebenswirklichkeit und die kulturhistorische Entwicklung in den Landschaften Niedersachsens im ersten Jahrtausend wissen, basiert auf hierbei gewonnenen Erkenntnissen. Die „Sachsenforschung“ am Landesmuseum Hannover zielt aber auch auf die wissenschaftliche Durchdringung der Ethnogenese und Geschichte des frühmittelalterlichen Stammesverbandes der Sachsen, die seit dem 6. und 7. Jahrhundert als Bewohner weiter Gebiete zwischen Rhein, Elbe, den Mittelgebirgen und der Nordseeküste überliefert sind. Wie andere germanische gentes, etwa die Franken, die Bajuwaren oder die Alamannen, haben die Sachsen die politischen und historischen Abläufe in Europa entscheidend mitgeprägt. Bis heute stiftet ihr Name territoriale Identitäten.

Initiator und Doyen der genuin landesgeschichtlich orientierten „Sachsenforschung“ am Landesmuseum Hannover war Albert Genrich (1912-1996), der hier von 1954 bis 1977 zunächst als Kustos und später als Leiter der vormaligen Abteilung Urgeschichte tätig war. Mit der „Sachsenforschung“ von Beginn an und bis heute aufs engste verknüpft ist das 1949 von Karl Waller ins Leben gerufene „Internationale Sachsensymposium“ mit heutigem Sitz in Belgien, zu dessen Gründungsmitgliedern Albert Genrich gehörte. Die damals noch „Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Sachsenforschung“ genannte Vereinigung fungiert seit vielen Jahrzehnten als international maßgebliches wissenschaftliches Forum für die Archäologie der frühen Geschichte Nordwesteuropas. Derzeit gehören ihr rund 130 Archäologen und Historiker aus Belgien, Dänemark, Deutschland, Finnland, Frankreich, Großbritannien, den Niederlanden, Norwegen, Schweden und den USA an. Albert Genrich war von 1968 bis 1986 Vorsitzender des Symposiums, das einmal jährlich tagt.

In der Nachfolge Genrichs wurde die „Sachsenforschung“ am Landesmuseum Hannover von 1977 bis 2004 von Hans-Jürgen Häßler fortgeführt. Seine Untersuchungen zu frühgeschichtlichen Bestattungsplätzen und Grabfunden aus Niedersachsen haben der Forschung wesentliche Impulse verliehen. Mit der von ihm am Landesmuseum Hannover begründeten und dort bis zu seinem Ausscheiden aus dem Dienst lektorierten und redigierten Reihe „Studien zur Sachsenforschung“ etablierte Häßler, der von 1996 bis 2002 auch Vorsitzender des „Internationalen Sachsensymposiums“ war, ein international anerkanntes Fachorgan zur Frühgeschichtsforschung.

Dem Forschungsverständnis und dem Wirken Albert Genrichs und Hans-Jürgen Häßlers verpflichtet, deren zentrale Konstante der rege fachliche Austausch mit zahlreichen Wissenschaftlern und Forschungseinrichtungen im In- und Ausland war, werden die „Neuen Studien zur Sachsenforschung“ vom Landesmuseum Hannover nunmehr in direkter Verbindung mit dem „Internationalen Sachsensymposium“ herausgegeben. In diesem Sinne programmatisch veröffentlichen wir als ersten Band der Reihe die Ergebnisse des internationalen Workshops zum Thema „Trade and Communication Networks of the First Millennium AD in the northern part of Central Europe: Central Places, Beach Markets, Landing Places and Trading Centres“ am 4. und 5. September 2008 in Bad Bederkesa, den der Arbeitsbereich „Sachsenforschung“ am Landesmuseum Hannover mit veranstaltet hat.

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Foreword

This publication presents the results of an international workshop entitled "Trade and Communication Networks of the First Millennium AD in the northern part of Central Europe: Central Places, Beach Markets, Landing Places and Trading Centres", which was held on September 4th and 5th, 2008, in Burg Bad Bederkesa, near Cuxhaven in Germany. Thirty-six participants from six countries discussed questions relating to structural relationships and points of contact in the first millennium AD between settlements and other localities that were dependent on agriculture and those that functioned as central places, which can be identified as such by evidence of religious activity, trade and exchange as well as traces of craft production.

For several decades now, research in northern Germany and southern Scandinavia has concentrated on coastal Viking Age trading posts and their hinterland. At present, more than eighty sites are known in the area of the North and Baltic Seas that were part of a supra-regional trade and communication network in the early and high Middle Ages. In the written sources, they are usually described as trading posts, market places or early towns. It has been established that these places also played an important role in the life of the inhabitants of other settlements, in both the immediate vicinity and the further hinterland. The discovery of numerous landing places for boats, seasonal markets and craft workshops shows that an infrastructure had developed in the surrounding area for the specific purpose of supplying the central place. The model used in modern town planning for centres or central settlements and their peripheries can also be applied, at least partially, to settlement structures at the end of the first millennium AD.

In southern Scandinavia, in particular, research has also been increasingly preoccupied since the early 1980s with the economic and social conditions before the Viking Age, i.e. in imperial Roman times and the Migration period. Focal points of this research are settlement areas and agglomerations in which settlement continuity can be traced over several centuries and where the archaeological finds and features indicate that they were centres of political, economic and religious power. A centre should not be understood as a clearly circumscribed area but rather as consisting of several contemporaneous settlements with different functions, including beaches or man-made landing places for boats in protected bays, where goods could be loaded and unloaded and where

there are signs of considerable trade and craft activity. Such places gave the central settlements direct access to supra-regional transportation and communication routes.

Scholars generally agree that these Iron Age central places, like the trading emporia of the Viking Age, were under the control of the social elite. On the other hand, the question of who organised the exchange or trading of goods, whether the ruler himself or several more or less independent traders, is the subject of much controversy. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that decisive social changes took place in the central places, which finally led to the transformation from the Iron Age tribal system to the Germanic kingdoms and states of the early and high Middle Ages.

The discovery and preliminary investigation of most Iron Age central places began with a systematic survey using metal detectors, whereby large quantities of high-quality objects made of bronze, silver or gold were recovered. A more detailed examination reveals that the finds consist mainly of jewellery and costume elements of various origins, which when dated often indicate settlement continuity over several centuries. The characteristic find spectrum includes not only the remains of non-ferrous metal-working but also figurative images made of thin gold foil, commonly called "gubber". Gold objects, either as single finds or in hoards, e.g. containing gold bracteates, are also found in low-lying areas around the central places. The purpose of these gold objects was to honour the gods; the gold "gubber" can probably be interpreted as temple money. Concentrations of theophoric place names in the proximity of several central places in imperial Roman times also underline the religious function of the central places.

Research over the past few decades has found increasing evidence of central places in the southwestern part of the North Sea region as well. However, their structure is still largely unknown. In inland areas, too, growing numbers of sites with similar ranges of finds have been found in remarkably convenient topographical locations from the point of view of transportation. A structural comparison of these sites and their functions has not yet been undertaken.

To sum up, it can be said that the research situation regarding central places, their various functions, their surrounding areas and the relationships between them is very different from region to region. While well-substantiated models can already be presented for parts of southern Scandinavia, research has

only just begun in the southern Baltic and southwestern North Sea areas. Against this background, the main objective of the workshop was not only to present and collate the latest scientific approaches and the most recent research projects on the subject but also to discuss them thoroughly. Consequently, when preparing the workshop, the organisers did not send out the usual call for papers but, instead, defined specific topics to be discussed. The focal points thus defined, which not only covered the chronologically and geographically related cultures but also took into consideration the research done by other historical disciplines, provided the basic framework for both the programme of the workshop and the contents of this publication. Experts on each subject were selected and asked to collate the latest research, make a constructive critical appraisal, and produce a manuscript that included the most important points to be considered at the workshop. At the same time, for each subject, a second expert was selected to review the manuscript and write a commentary to be presented in a short statement as the starting point for the round-table discussion.

In order to create the right atmosphere for an animated debate, it was decided to limit the number of participants in the workshop to those colleagues who had agreed to take an active part as either first or second expert. To encourage the participants to prepare themselves thoroughly for the event, copies of all the manuscripts and all the commentaries were placed at their disposal about four weeks before the workshop. English was chosen as the official language. After the workshop, all the authors had an opportunity to revise and up-date their texts and comments to include issues raised during the discussions and take into account new points of view.

We would like to thank all the participants of the workshop for having accepted this unusual procedure without complaint and for having handed in their papers on time. We also wish to thank the Burg Bederkesa Museum for having placed such an impressive room at our disposal, which was a perfect location for our workshop. We also thank Beverley Hirschel (Cologne) for going over all the English texts and Holger Dieterich (Institut für Ur- und Frühgeschichte at the University of Kiel) who prepared the layout of the papers handed out for the workshop and took charge of the graphics for the illustrations in this volume. And, last but not least, our special thanks go to the Fritz Thyssen Foundation (Cologne), which not only financed the cost of accommodation, meals and travel but also provided the necessary funds for the subsequent editorial preparation of the manuscripts for publication.

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The evidence of central places in place names

Jürgen Udolph

1. Introduction

1.1 Definition of "central place"

The aim of central-place research is to locate and describe historical centres of power (GRIMM 2006, 18). According to CHRISTALLER (1941, 1968), DENECKE (1973), GRIMM (2006), STEUER (2007) and others, the term "central place" is generally understood to mean a settlement that is central to a given area, supplies goods and services, and functions as a hub for a larger area. Its significance extends beyond its own inhabitants. Based on Christaller's theory, STEUER (2007, 879) explains that central places would develop where goods and services are offered and where, therefore, appropriate facilities are established. According to FEHN (1970, 2), all aspects of life can be affected by the functions of central places. Consequently, there can be political-administrative, religious-ecclesiastical, economic and cultural centres, in various forms and to various degrees (further details in FEHN 1970, 213ff.). Steuer defines a central place as a settlement concentration bundled with functions that affect certain areas in its immediate surroundings as well as similar, more remote, places. However, archaeologists who assume the centrality of any given place quite often base their conclusions solely on the rich finds from their excavations (STEUER 2007, 878).

1.2 Categories of central places

According to Christaller, central places develop at locations where central goods are offered; not only material goods but also, and more importantly, services (to paraphrase KUNOW 1988, 55f.). Christaller identified certain facilities that must be available if such central goods (and services) are to be traded and exchanged. These are:

- administrative facilities
- facilities of religious and cultural significance
- sanitary facilities
- facilities of social significance
- facilities for the organisation of the economy and social life
- facilities for trade and finance
- commercial facilities
- significance as a labour market
- transport facilities

A central place does not have to be a specific type of settlement or have a specific legal form. (FEHN 1970, 3). Slightly modified, Christaller's theory can also be found in DENECKE (1973), who states that the central functions and facilities that would have been significant in earlier times can be divided into ten groups or functional categories:

- A) political and administrative functions and facilities
- B) judiciary facilities
- C) strategic facilities and a protective function
- D) religious and ecclesiastical facilities
- E) cultural facilities
- F) logistic, provisioning and charitable functions
- G) agricultural facilities and administration
- H) facilities for small trades and crafts
- J) facilities for trade and commerce
- K) transport and communication facilities

This can be expressed in a table (cf. DENECKE 1973, 44 fig. 1).

FEHN (1970) links central places to oppida, military stations, episcopal sees, royal or ducal courts and palaces, monasteries and territorial churches, emporia, salt springs, territorial and refuge fortifications, markets, castles and, finally, towns and cities.

However, in recent years, such detailed classifications have been considered outdated. According to STEUER (2007, 880), for practical reasons historical-settlement geographers and archaeologists have agreed on fewer functional areas, i.e. the five criteria relating to government, protection, resources and crafts, trade, and religion. Occasionally, a sixth criterion is added: justice, but this is hardly tangible in archaeological terms.

Some of the above-mentioned criteria are described in greater detail. "Protection", for example, could include secured market places or fortified refuges, but these would have to be centrally organised. "Crafts" can refer to centralised production facilities; "trade" could include market places, luxury items and imported goods; sacrificial altars or temples can be subsumed under "religion" (STEUER 2007, 881).

1.3 Scandinavian Research

There is no doubt that the subject of centrality and its definition has been largely dominated by Scandinavian research. Nordic studies show that during the Migration Period and at the time of the Roman Empire central places often featured richly furnished tombs, large tumuli, and halls (GRIMM 2006, 22).

Building on the work done by FABECH (1999a, 42-44), GRIMM (2006, 20) concludes that the southern Scandinavian model of central places from the time of the Roman Empire to the Mid-

dle Ages is based on individual considerations developed by topographers, archaeologists, historians, historians of religion and onomastic scholars.

Researchers would, however, agree that the Scandinavian approach cannot be automatically transferred to the Continent and that important factors have not been considered. This is very apparent in a passage by GRIMM (2006, 21), in which he points out that the impressive Scandinavian research on central places is methodologically very advanced but, unfortunately, rather limited. Norwegian analyses, for example,

area of functional category	era	grading of central significance (grading of intensity)			
		1	2	3	4
A political and administrative function and facilities	Early and High Middle Ages	castle territory, seat of a castle district, King's court	seat of a lower gau	seat of a main gau, King's palace	seat of a clan, King's court of higher significance
	Middle Ages	seat of a secular/ecclesiastical manorial lord (chlef's seat, castle, cloister etc.) or subordinate seat of administration	headquarters of a more significant secular or ecclesiastical manorial lord	seat of a subordinate territory	seat of central administration of a political territory (principality, duchy, shire, Erzstift, Hochstift, Niederstift etc.)
	Middle Ages/Modern Era	vogtel administration council	official residence	official seat	residence
B judiciary facilities	Early and High Middle Ages			gau thing, gau court	clan thing
	Middle Ages	lower justice	upper justice		
	Modern Era	town court (with or without penal jurisdiction)	local court	district court	manorial court
C strategic facilities and protective function	Early Middle Ages	refuge of a settlement cluster		gau castle	
	Middle Ages	urban fortification, also protecting neighboring population			
D cultic and clerical facilities	Prehistory/ Middle Ages		cultic sites of regional importance	cultic sites of supra-regional importance „national“ pilgrimage destination	highest cultic site, „international“ pilgrimage destination
	Middle Ages	early church, parish church	archpriest's seat	Archdeacon's seat gau church, Stiftskirche	diocese's seat, cathedral
E cultural facilities	Middle Ages/Modern Era	primary educational institution, elementary school	grammar school, high school, Collegium	monastic school, convent school, boarding school	cathedral school, academy, cavalier's academy, university
F logistical, provisioning and charitable function			hospital, orphanage	almshouse/ home for the disabled, hospice, roadhouse	
G agricultural facilities and agricultural administration		administration of a secular/ecclesiastical manorial lord, granary for local supply	manorial granary for a larger area		
H small trade and hand craft		could ban certain trades	unrestricted trade, organisation in guilds	ban of certain trades (e.g. brewer, weaver etc.)	ban of trades may include neighboring towns
I facilities of trade and commerce		weekly farmer's market: food-, fruit-, plant market	bi-weekly markets	fair: produce fair, grocers' fair, fruit fair, livestock fair, speciality fair	fair: trade fair, special fair
			confinement of trade, <i>Bannmellenrecht</i> (restricting imports that could compete with locally produced commodities) for hawkers and grocers	trade defeat, factory	right to restrict and prohibit surrounding markets, own coins and currency
K transport and transportation				staple right	
		local port	intersecting trade routes		seaport intersection of several trade routes

Classification of functions of central places and facilities in the Middle Ages and Modern Era.

play a subordinate role in academic discussion, while continental research, e.g. the discussion of royal seats such as kings' palaces or princely residences in the late Hallstatt period (750-400 BC), is entirely disregarded.

The theory of northern trading places is also criticised by BÖHME (2001, 494) who states that, apart from Gudme-Lundeborg, none of these "central places" were of more than local or, at best, regional importance. None of these early trading places were fortified and almost none endured as a place of trade or commerce until or beyond AD 1000, let alone developed continuously into a town or city that still exists today. This was also the verdict of MÜLLER-WILLE (2003, 278). It is a very important point, as it is difficult to understand why a "central place" would have been abandoned rather than continue to be settled until the present day. This raises the question whether the (southern) Scandinavian approach can be adopted as a prototype for other geographical areas. Justifiably, Grimm also asks (GRIMM 2006, 21) whether it is possible to transfer and apply the southern Scandinavian research approach to Germany as a conceptual framework today and, *vice versa*, how can German research contribute to future Scandinavian research on central places?

In this context, my article will probably not be of much assistance in answering these questions. However, it does touch on the relationship between Scandinavia and the Continent at one essential point: since place names are my speciality, I would like to ask to what extent Scandinavian research has included onomastic considerations and how these could benefit continental research.

So far, there seems to be a clear discrepancy. STEUER (2007, 905), amongst others, notes that in Scandinavia – unlike on the Continent – place name elements do attest to the presence of central places, as explained by ANDERSSON (2007).

1.4 The contribution of onomastic studies

The significance of place names in the theory of central places is controversial. According to one archaeologist, toponomastic sources can reflect the names of gods, trade, crafts or a military presence, and can be evaluated accordingly (STEUER 2007, 882). In addition, names can refer to the structures of political organisation (STEUER 2007, 883 with reference to FABECH 1999, 456 and other sources). In Scandinavia today, the notion prevails that central places can be identified by place names that contain sacred words or the names of gods and have been in existence since the time of the Roman Empire (STEUER 2007, 895).

The potential of onomastics was considered very positively by Andersson. In an article that is a fundamental contribution to Scandinavian research (ANDERSSON 2007), he first points out that central places usually have names that do not reveal their special status, and that place names may have originated in earlier times, before the place in question developed into a

centre (ANDERSSON 2007, 506). Later, however, he emphasises the fact that many names do contain elements relating to central places or indicate a central place in other ways (ANDERSSON 2007, 506). He explains that central places within the social administration of prehistoric or early medieval times can be identified primarily by their names (ANDERSSON 2007, 506). Using Grimm's terminology (GRIMM 2006, 446), these can be called "place names indicative of a centre". Others criticise Andersson's position. Grimm is more reserved and says that only in isolated cases place names may indicate a large homestead (e.g. Bø/By, Huseby), or religious activities in the proximity of a royal seat (e.g. Hov) (GRIMM 2006, 29).

STEUER (2007, 904-906) articulates his scepticism most explicitly. His essential arguments are:

– since the function of a central place is the result of gradual growth and its function can decline over time, place names can hardly be clear indicators of the central function of a given place;

– to date, many places are called central places on the basis of intensive archaeological research and an analysis of the terrain, although no field or place names are known that would indicate a central function;

– as yet, there is no securely established correlation between the sites of archaeological discoveries and their associated place names – at least, there are hardly any studies and the names that have been preserved are usually younger than the central places they designate;

– one must be aware of possible circular reasoning and a tendency to link archaeological and historical central places with place names and, reciprocally, to presume the existence of central places from such place names.

Onomasticians have to take this criticism seriously. Indeed, one would expect central places to have been named early in their existence and that their names would be preserved because of their important functions and continuous settlement. Such place names should therefore be easy to identify. ANDERSSON (2007, 510) is quite right to emphasise that great care must be taken when analysing toponyms in the vicinity of central places.

It is to be expected that such place names can also be found on the Continent. It should be noted, however, that research has made hardly any contribution on this subject so far. Instead, it can be justly said that the search for place names indicative of central places has been an exclusively Scandinavian affair. From this perspective, continental place names still have a decisive role to play. They can be linked to the question of whether there are place names indicative of central places on the Continent, i.e. outside Scandinavia and the northern Germanic areas of settlement.

Here, it is imperative to ask: what is the nature of the elements in place names that – according to Scandinavian onomastics – supposedly or definitely indicate central places? The task is therefore to collect these elements and determine their occurrence in place names on the Continent. Remnants of

Frisian and both Low and High German are of primary interest but it may also be helpful to keep an eye on Slavic place names, although entirely different name elements are to be expected there.

2. Nordic appellativa and place-name elements

An article by ANDERSSON (2007) is essential reading on this subject as far as Scandinavian research is concerned. He explains, as do other equally important sources – Brink must be mentioned here – that the following appellativa and names are thought to be indicators for central places in Scandinavia (I will only mention the most important elements).

– Old Norse *akr* "field, acre, corn, arable crop", Swedish *åker* etc., amongst others examined by BRINK (1996, 264f.; 1999, 11ff.), and especially by VIKSTRAND (2001, 366-385; 2004, 175). The postulation of a central place is further strengthened when such elements appear in conjunction with the name of a god, e.g. in the medieval district *Thorsakers hundare*, which contains Old Swedish *Thorsaker* "acre of the God Thor" (ANDERSSON 2007, 508).

– **al* "temple", a term from the sacred sphere, documented also in Gothic *alhs*, Old Saxon *alah*, Old English *ealh* "temple, sanctuary"; in the *Heliand* and *Wulfila* "temple" was assumed to be an element in place names by BRINK (1996, 261-262; BRINK 1999, 11ff.; VIKSTRAND 2001, 191-206) and others and is presumed to be an indicator for central places.

– Swedish by, Norwegian *bø* "village", older "homestead, manor", supposedly indicates a large homestead, a farm estate and, therefore, a central place. Similar views have been expressed by OLSEN (1915; 1926, 227f.), also see BRINK (1996, 249 [with maps of Nordic names]; 258-260; 1999, 11ff.) and GRIMM (2006, 18). The compound noun *bosgård* (discussed by BRINK 1999, 11ff.) can be added here.

– Hall "hall" is also seen as an indicator for a large homestead and, therefore, a central place by BRINK (1996, 251-255; 1999, 11ff.) amongst others.

– From the religious sphere, the word *harg*, actually denoting an "accumulation of rocks, a heap of stones", should be mentioned. In older West Norse texts the word is used as a "religious place" (ANDERSSON 1992a, 250). BRINK (1996, 265f.; 1999, 11ff.) discusses a correlation with central places, cf. also VIKSTRAND (2001, 207-225).

– Old Norse *haugr* "hill, tumulus", Old Danish *høgh*, is similarly understood; see also BRINK (1996, 262; 1999, 11ff.).

– Place names containing *hilla*, used in the sense of "elevated place", can be found mostly in Denmark. According to BRINK (1996, 266), these can also serve as an indicator for central places.

– Also from the religious sphere, place names based on the word *hov*, Old Norse *hof* "temple", Norwegian *hov* "temple, small hill", Old Swedish *hof* "yard, farmyard" should be mentioned. This was already pointed out by OLSEN (1915;

1926, 227ff.) who used such place names to identify pagan cultic places in the vicinity of centres of power (cf. BRINK 1996, 260; GRIMM 2006, 18; 24 and especially VIKSTRAND 2001, 252-272.).

– Place names with *hus(a)-* and the related Old Swedish word *husaby(r)* are also understood as indicators of central places. The term was used in medieval law to denote an estate where a representative of the King lived (ANDERSSON 2007, 506; BRINK 1990, 58; 1996, 248-250 [with map]; 264; 1999, 11ff.; GRIMM 2006, 18).

– Amongst the terms for trading places in the north there is, of course, the Old West Norse word *kaupangr*, Old Danish *køping*, Old Swedish *køpinger*, -*unger*. It is apparent in many place names, as a simplex but also as the primary element in compounds. Here, another word for "trading place" needs to be added: Old West Norse *kaupstaðr*, Old Danish *køpstath*, Old Swedish *køpstadher*, which also occurs in place names, e.g. in Danish *Købsted*, Norwegian *Kopstad* and Swedish *Köpstad(en)* (ANDERSSON 2007, 506; cf. GRIMM 2006, 18 and BECK 1987).

– According to BRINK (1996, 249; with maps), place names derived from *kung* "king" and *gård*- "garden, estate", *Kungsgård* for example, also indicate centrality.

– Trading places and locations of ports are suspected in place names like *Lade*, *Lahelle* or *Lahammar*. The verb *laða* "to load goods" is seen here (GRIMM 2006, 18).

– An element that is often found in Scandinavian place names is Old Norse *salr* "building, hall", as in *Uppsala*, for example. BRINK (1996, 255-258; 1999, 11ff.) and others use it as an indicator for a central place.

– Not only ANDERSSON (2007, e.g. 507, 509) has emphasised sacred place names and names that point to the Thing as being an integral part of the toponymy of central places; see HYENSTRAND (1999), GRIMM (2006, 20) and others. The place name *Gudme* fits in here. Onomastic studies have delivered significant information about the area: the highest density of pre-Christian sacred place names in present-day Denmark is found around *Gudme/Lundeborg*, including the name *Gudme* itself ("home of the gods") (GRIMM 2006, 32).

– BRINK (1996, 266) considers Norwegian, Danish, etc. *stav* "stake, pole", but also "construction timber" at least worthy of mention if it appears in place names.

– *Torg* "market" must not be omitted from this list, of course (cf. SCHMIDT 2000): the word apparently originated in the Slavic languages (DE VRIES 2000, 595; cf. below 3.21).

– A central function of places with names derived from *-tun*, e.g. *Sigtuna*, *Ultuna*, *Vallentuna* and others, is controversial. It seems that the basic meaning of *-tun*, "administrative centre", only evolved later so that a central function cannot be assumed automatically (as argued most notably by BRINK 1996, 263f.; 1999, 11ff.) (ANDERSSON 2007, 507).

– According to BRINK (1996, 266), a possible central function for place names containing *vall* or *vang* "field, meadow, lea" should be discussed.

— From the religious sphere, Norse *vi* “sanctuary” is an element attested to in place names, e.g. Odense (cf. BRINK 1996, 261; 1999, 11ff.).

— Finally, mention should also be made of denominations for people, retinue, servants, as most notably discussed by ANDERSSON (2007, 509). Examples are Old Swedish *iærl* (Old West Norse. *jarl*), **styrir* “commander of a vessel, ship”, pagan names for priests such as Old Swedish **gudhi* (Old West Norse *goði*), occupational titles such as Old Swedish *bryti* “administrator”, *smidher* “blacksmith”, and denominations for warriors and retainers such as Old Swedish *karl*, **rinker*, *sven*, *th(i)æghn*.

A list of selected names for homesteads and places with a specific function as indicators for central places can be found in GRIMM (2006, 434). Maritime place names are omitted here since GRIMM (2006, 18) has already covered this topic.

We now need to examine the extent to which these Nordic words appear in continental place names, and whether there are perhaps other elements not found in the north that may contain clues to central places.

3. Place names and central places on the Continent

3.1 The German *Acker* is a fairly common element in place names and equivalent to Old Norse *akr* “field, acre, corn, arable crop” (cf. UDOLPH 2006a, 319). It is also found in its Low German form, from Middle Low German *acker*, which SCHEUERMANN (1995, 108; with important references) says should be understood as “field, acre, tilled field, entire area under cultivation, an owner’s arable land, acre lot”, but also as “unit of measurement of land”. Originally, however, it meant “parcel strip, single parcel of land within a farmed plot (e.g. in the three year crop rotation system)”. The word was therefore usually used to designate the oldest part of the farmland, its core. Nothing here indicates a central place and Müller’s authoritative explanations of the word *Acker* in names in Westphalia (MÜLLER 2000, 80-82) do not indicate centrality either. Furthermore, in Germany, no links to the names of gods are evident (LAUR 2001, 98f.).

3.2 **al* “Tempel”, Gothic *alhs*, Old Saxon *alah*, Old English *ealh* “temple, sanctuary” etc. (see GRIEPENTROG 1995, 33ff.) has frequently been assumed to be in place names on the Continent as well (GAMILLSCHEG 1938; also in England, cf. UDOLPH 2006a, 319). However, as I have already explained elsewhere (UDOLPH 2000, 419), one should be sceptical (similarly ANDERSSON 1992b, 530 and VIKSTRAND 2004, 170, regarding Scandinavia). Thus, SCHMIDT-WIEGAND (1967) was right in saying that “temple” was only a secondary derivation from the broader meaning “settlement, farmstead, villa, casa” (ANDERSSON 1992a, 250). Recently, LAUR (2001, 42f.; 87f.; 203f.) also expressed a similar opinion.

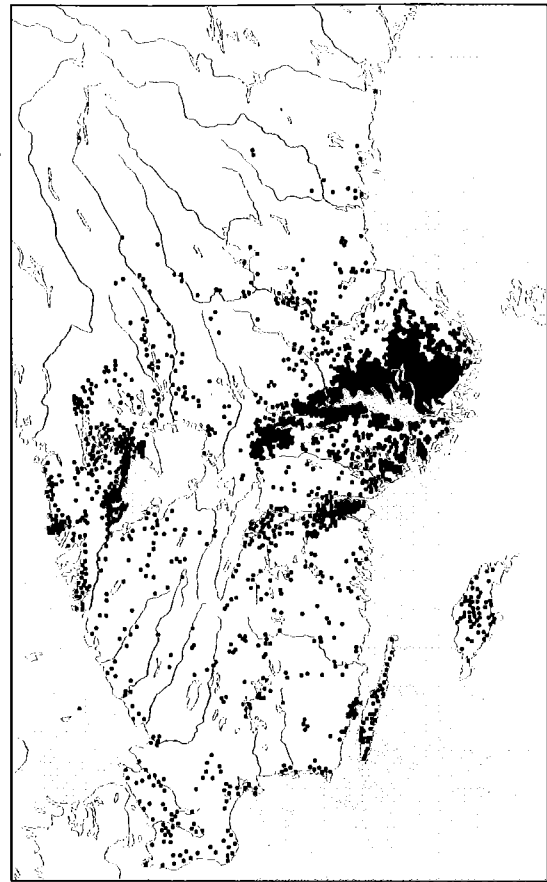


Figure 1. Scandinavian place names in *-by* (G. Franzén).

3.3 Swedish, Danish, Norwegian *bø* “village”, older “home-
stead”, occur in Germany almost exclusively in Schleswig-Hol-
stein, where they simply mean “village” (LAUR 1992, 196).
Traces of particularly large homesteads or farm estates have
not been found. Moreover, I doubt that Scandinavian place
names with *-by* indicate central places and refer to Franzén’s
distribution map of the primary words in such place names
(Figure 1; FRANZÉN 1939, 151). It shows that *-by* was the
ending of choice for the formation of place names in certain
areas. Central places may be among them but, from an
onomastic perspective, this can hardly be proved. As far as
the Continent is concerned, it is also important to reject the
repeatedly expressed view that place names ending with
-by in the middle Elbe region are evidence of Scandinavian
immigration (most recently by SCHMIDT 2005, 403ff.; see
UDOLPH 1994, 855-857; BILLY 1996, 118). The compound
bosgård is not found in Germany or in the neighbouring
settlement areas of Central Europe.

3.4 Scandinavian *hall* “hall” may indicate large homesteads
and central places in the north; on the Continent, however,
this word is nowhere to be found. Attempts to interpret
place names like Halle (Saale), Hallstatt, Reichenhall as
indicating

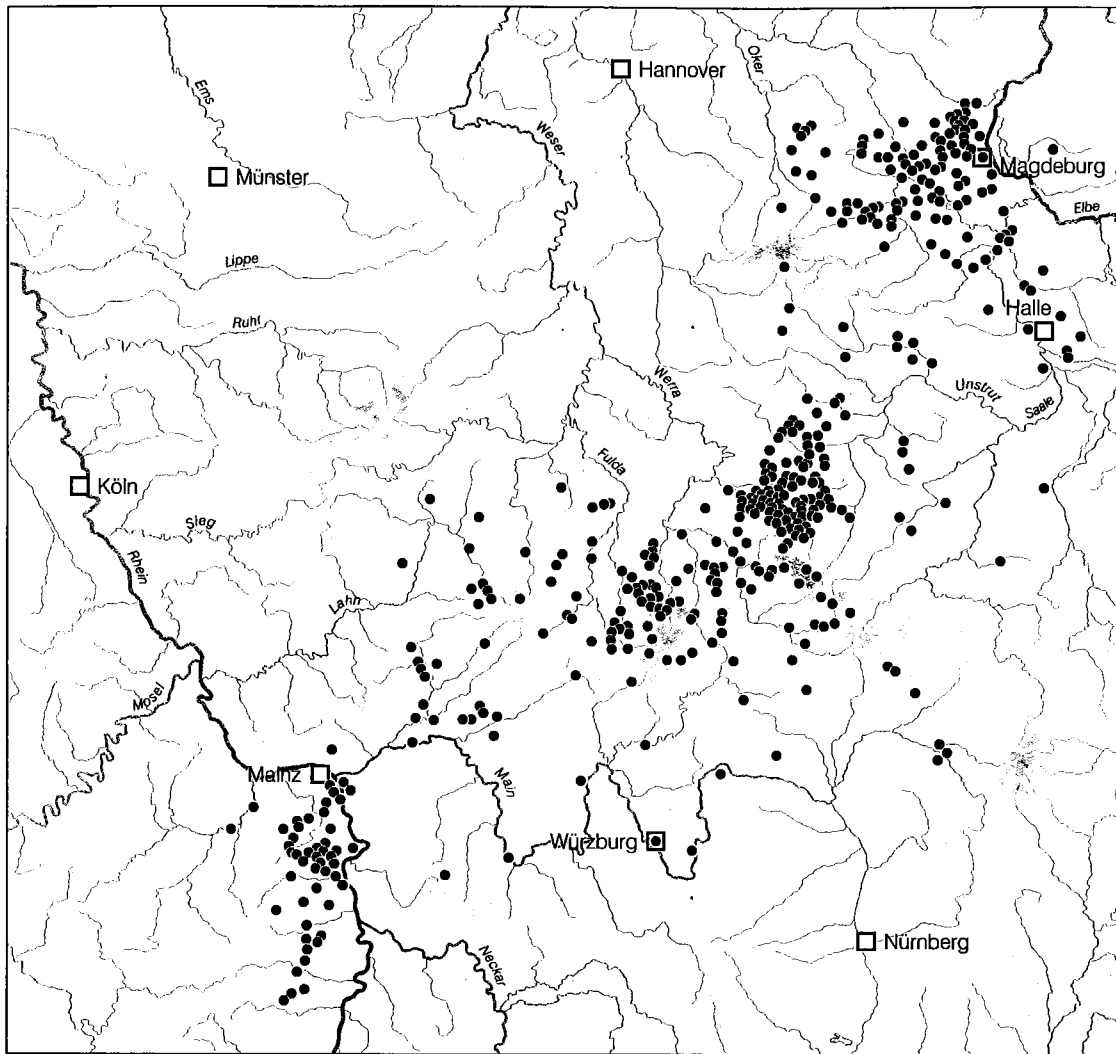


Figure 2. Distribution of **haugaz* in German field names (K. Bischoff).

salt deposits are not convincing. Places with *hall* do not indicate salt at all (cf. Udolph 1999).

3.5 Care must also be taken when considering place names with Old Norse *hargr* as indicating central places. Indeed, it does appear as “cultic place” in West Norse texts (Andersson 1992a, 250) but, first and foremost, *harg* means “accumulation of rocks, a heap of stones”. Like Graff (1834-1842), Bach (1953, 409) assumed Old High German *harug*, *harah* to mean “lucus, nemus, forum, delubrum, ara, capitolium” and therefore understood a cultic place, surrounded by a sacred grove, in such place names. The perception amongst British scholars is similar (cf. Udolph 2006a, 325f.). It would be better, however, to follow Schröder’s suggestion (Schröder 1944, 243) that “heap of stones” is the first documented meaning of the word, as found in Norse texts. According to Vikstrand (2004, 171f.) a religious reference can be assumed in some place

names. For further discussion of German place names that may include *harg*, see Udolph (2000, 420f.). Care has to be taken nonetheless; Laur (2001, 43f.; 88f.; 100; 206ff.) quite rightly emphasises this and – like Udolph (2000, 420f.) – points out the possible confusion with German *har-* “swamp, mud, morass”.

3.6 Brink, most notably, holds the view that place names containing Old Norse *haugr* “hill, tumulus”, Old Danish *høgh*, could be interpreted as religious names and thus indicate central places. As far as the Continent is concerned, this view has to be rejected. The word and its occurrence have been discussed in detail by Bischoff (1975) and Udolph (1994, 859-863) (Figure 2). Usually, when field names contain this element it is due to their elevated position.

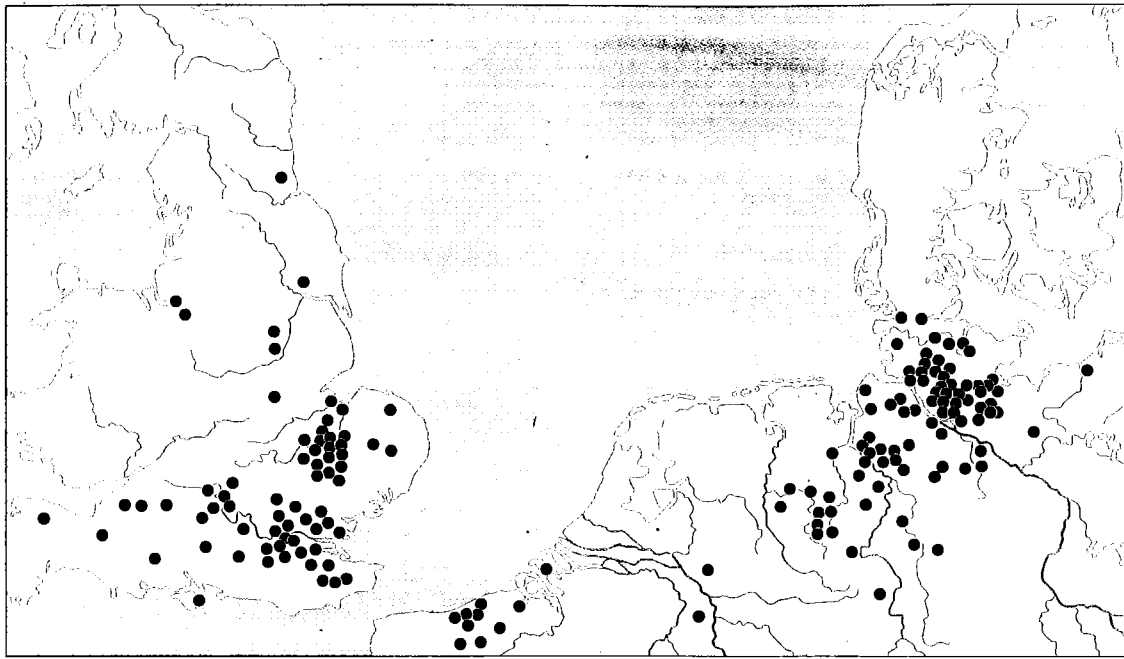


Figure 3. *hude/hyht* in place names (I. Udolph).

3.7 I have not been able to find continental equivalents of *hilla* "elevated place", initially probably "slope, slant". It would seem they are only found in Jutland (LAUR 2001, 73, 101). Given Old West Norse *hjalr*, they are likely to be etymologically related to *hall-* in German place names (cf. above, under 3.4).

3.8 In its religious meaning, Old Norse *hof* "temple", Norwegian *hov* "temple, small hill" apparently has no equivalent on the Continent (cf. LAUR 2001, 42; 101).

3.9 A word that is not found in the north is *hude*. It is no longer employed today but has left its mark in various place names, even very old places (discussed in detail in UDOLPH 1994, 460-473; see figure 3). It can be found remarkably early and often in English, such as Old English *hyð* "place for a ship to disembark; a suitable, shallow shore; small harbour" and also in place names, e.g. Chelsea (785 *Cealchyb, Celchyð*, 801 *Caelichyht*), Erith (695 *Earhyð*), Hythe (675 *huþe*). The original meaning was most likely "headland, bend in a river, sand island" and, therefore, a place that could be used as a port, wharf or ford. I dare say such places should be mentioned – in Germany, for example, *Fischerhude, Harvestehude, Hude* (near Bremen), *Ritterhude, Steinhude, Winterhude* – as they may have had a certain central function because of their location on a river.

3.10 Place names based on the frequently found northern primary word *hus(a)-* or the related Old Swedish *husaby(r)* can be seen as indicators for central places. Nothing similar has been found on the Continent. The numerous place names with *-hus*

– mostly in their dative plural form *-husun/-husen* – often contain a personal name as determiner, occasionally also an appellative or hints at a geographical location. To my knowledge, they do not indicate central-place functions.

3.11 Common termini for trading places in the north, such as *kaupangr, køping*, which frequently appear in place names, and also *kaupstaðr, køpstath* "trading place", are little evident on the Continent (*Kaufungen* in northern Hesse is excluded). Moreover, since these termini are loan words from Latin, such place names cannot claim any great age (cf. Beck 1987). Slavic *kupec* "trader, merchant, etc." is a Germanic loanword (cf. UDOLPH 1987, 576-578).

3.12 There is no equivalent for *Kungsgard* on the Continent.

3.13 Names for trading places or ports equivalent to *Lade, Lahlle* or *Lahammar* in Scandinavia cannot be found either.

3.14 The German *Markt* "market" is found only in later names (cf. BACH 1953, 413) such as *Käsmark*, today *Kesmarok*, and *Donnersmark* (from "Donnerstagsmarkt", i.e. "Thursday market") in Slovakia, *Altenmarkt* in Bavaria and the like. Also in *Markoldendorf* (district of Northeim): 1265 in *Forensi Aldendorp*, 1299 in *villa Margtoldendorp*, 1315 *Marketoldendorp* (CASEMIR et al., 2005, 258) *Mark(t)* is a later addition.

3.15 Sacred place names are important toponyms that indicate central functions. For Scandinavia, I have mentioned *akr* (if in combination with the name of a god), *alhs* "temple", *harg*,

haugr, hov, sal and vi as examples. Of these, akr, alhs, harg, haugr, hov are not found on the Continent; for sal and vi, see below. There are further place names in this category but I cannot discuss them in detail here. Moreover, there are extensive specialised studies on this topic (most notably ANDERSSON 1992b; ANDERSSON 2005; KOUSGÅRD SØRENSEN 1992; LAUR 2001; UDOLPH 2000; VIKSTRAND 2001; VIKSTRAND 2004). Two other place-name elements hint at the sacred sphere: ek "oak" (see VIKSTRAND 2001, 288-291) and lund "grove, copse" (Nordic, VIKSTRAND 2001, 273-288; VIKSTRAND 2004, 173). They are not found in place names in Schleswig-Holstein – nor, therefore, further south (s. LAUR 2001, 96).

Further details can be given on certain aspects of such place names.

a) The names of gods are discussed extensively for Scandinavia by ANDERSSON (2005, 443ff.) and VIKSTRAND (2001, 55-190); for Odin see also HALD 1963; for Týr see HOLMBERG 1986; essential reading for Schleswig-Holstein is LAUR (2001, 106-201); for the rest of the German-speaking area see UDOLPH (2000, 415-418).

b) Cult places are also mentioned above, for the German speaking area see UDOLPH 2000, 418-421, who discusses alh (disapproved), Bock-/Block- (disapproved), Fritzlar (no religious context), Hadamar (no religious context), harg (disapproved), Harimella (no religious context), Hengst, Hersfeld, Itzehoe, Lamspringe (all without religious contexts), Lee/hlaih (disapproved), Steinloge, -loh, Megede, Miele, Mimi-, Nanna, Negenborn, Phol (all disapproved), so that very little conclusive material is available.

c) The word heilig, Old Norse heilagr, Icelandic helig, Danish helig, etc. is discussed in detail by VIKSTRAND (2001, 226-252; 2004, 175f.) from a Nordic perspective; place names in Schleswig-Holstein are discussed by LAUR (2001, 89f., 213-220); for occurrences in other German place names, see UDOLPH 2000, 422.

d) Old Norse ví, vé, "holy" German weih-, wih-, see below 3.15 iii.

e) Designations for religious office-bearers are examined from a Nordic point of view by VIKSTRAND (2001, 386-397; 2004, 176f.), but are hardly ever found in place names in Schleswig-Holstein (LAUR 2001, 223f.). However, it does seem – and, so far, this has not been considered in Nordic research – that traces can be found in German place names: the Old Franconian word thunginus designated the "master of the Thing", a word that has been discussed by Kaspers, Meid and others (summarised in UDOLPH (1994, 589ff.); relevant place names are discussed in UDOLPH (1994, 593ff.)). Slavic sources are mentioned only briefly here but are discussed in EICHLER 1985;

LAUR (2001, 227-231); WITKOWSKI 1970; and UDOLPH (2000, 423f.).

Prudence is advised if one wants to take a closer look at this extensive field of study and consider whether religious place names can indicate central functions. In general, negative impressions dominate. For Germany - here understood as an important part of Germania - one can, at best, anticipate central functions from the following:

i) the names of gods in place names, especially Wotan/Wodan but also others, are fairly well documented in Godensholt near Oldenburg; Bad Godesberg on the river Rhine; Gudensberg near Fritzlar; Gudesberg near St Wendel; Gutenswegen (district of Ohrekreis); Gudensberg near Gotha (for details see UDOLPH 2000, 417f.);

ii) the word heilig/helig "holy" does appear in place names but overlaps with another meaning, i.e. "belonging to the church" (particularly in field names), which means it cannot always be clearly separated from this alternate meaning and is, therefore, uncertain;

iii) the above-mentioned word ví "holy, sanctuary", which certainly belongs in the sacred sphere and is prominent in Nordic place names (discussed from a Scandinavian perspective by VIKSTRAND 2001, 298-365; 2004, 174ff.) e.g. Odense, which has recently been evaluated for the German-speaking area (LAUR 2001, 44ff.; 89; 208-21; UDOLPH 2000, 422f.). The most important place names in the German-speaking area would be Weillohe near Regensburg (cf. SCHWARZ 1950/51); Weimar in Thuringia; Weimar near Kassel; Upper-, Lower-, Cyriax-Weimar (for details see UDOLPH 2000, 422f.). These places can

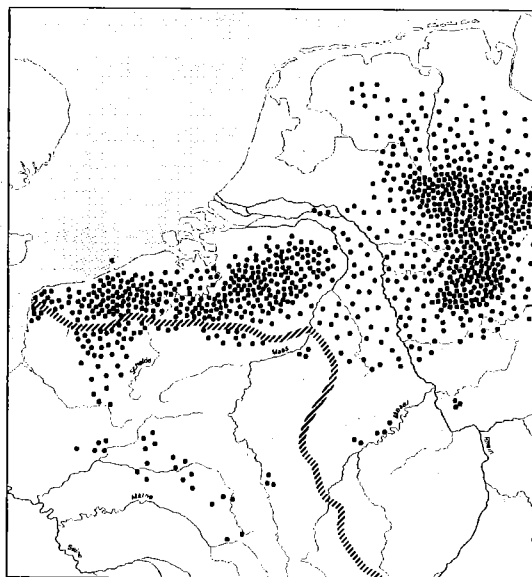


Figure 4. *sel-* in place names (A. Bach, F. Petri).

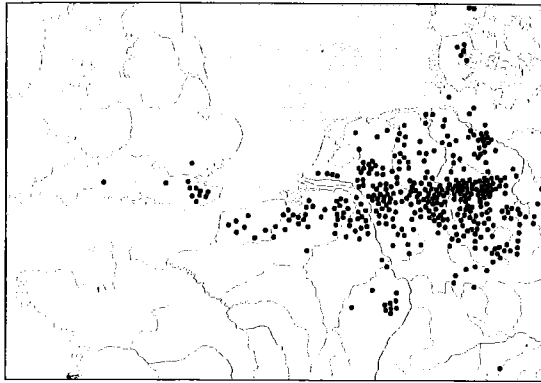


Figure 5. Distribution of the suffix *-ithi* in place names (J. Udolph).

be considered central to a certain degree (for archaeological research in the area around Weimar see TIMPEL 2006). By and large, the results are meagre. However, it would seem that place names based on the names of gods can be seen as religious centres, and that Weimar can perhaps be translated as "holy swamp" (recently, UDOLPH 2006b). It seems we can find at least a few indicators for places with central functions in such place names.

3.16 According to VIKSTRAND (2004, 173f.), the German word *Saal*, equivalent to Norse *sal*, Danish *sal*, designates a "shed, haystack, basic structure" on the one hand, but also refers to a "(festival) hall, large room, hall for religious gatherings" – two meanings that evolved from an older meaning "single-room structure". In Scandinavia, place names that contain Old Norse *salr* "structure, hall" are seen – perhaps justifiably – as indicators of centrality. The word is not found with a religious meaning in Schleswig-Holstein (LAUR 2001, 205f.), nor is it apparent elsewhere on the Continent. There, *-sal* and *-sele* do appear in numerous toponyms, including such well-known names as Brussels, Bruchsal, possibly also Kassel, and others. Their distribution (see figure 4) would hardly indicate central functions.

3.17 Names that contain *Stapel*- sometimes refer to markets, cf. Middle Low German, Dutch *stapel* "staple market", which however – and apparently initially – designated a "boundary post, -stake, elevated seat of a court, site of a tribunal, low justice" (cf. SCHÜTZZEICHEL 1970). One should also take note of the staple right. This type of place name is discussed in detail in UDOLPH (1998, 38), and, therefore, need not be elaborated on here: a supposed connection with Franconian tribunal sites is rejected. Admittedly, some *Stapel* place names may indicate the sites of tribunals so not all can be safely discarded. If this were the case, a central function would be obvious, unless they were only local tribunals as in *Tie* and *Thing* (see below). For English and Dutch occurrences of *stapel*, *stapol* etc. see UDOLPH (2006a, 333).

3.18 Possibly etymologically related to *Stapel* are Swedish, Norse etc. *stav* "stick, pole", which appear in place names and have also been discussed by VIKSTRAND (2001, 292-297). A religious reference is perhaps possible but not in continental German names.

3.19 In almost all Germanic dialects – Gothic is the one exception – the large, general assembly was called *Thing*. This institution has often been called "the backbone of the Germanic state" (for details of this topic, and the following, see UDOLPH 1994, 587-601; 2005, 37-44). According to ANDERSSON (2007, 509), sacred names and names related to the *Thing* constitute a large portion of the toponymy of central places. It is therefore surprising that a comprehensive compilation and mapping of continental Germanic place names based on *Thing* have not even been contemplated (see figure 5). After all, LAUR (1998) dealt with their distribution and commented on it by stating that older place names containing *Thing* are located on the Continent, not in Scandinavia (also see a comment by UDOLPH 2005, 44).

How, therefore, can place names containing *Thing* contribute to the question of indicators for central places? Undeniably, such place names hint at locations where *Thing* assemblies took place but, among them, there are also a number of field names where *Things* were perhaps also held. At such locations, specific structures or facilities that would normally be considered part of the associated material culture and, consequently, could be discovered in an excavation, do not necessarily have to have existed. *Thing* is rather rare in modern settlement names. Of special interest, however, is Dingden near Bocholt: 1163, 1169, 1173 *Thingethe* also

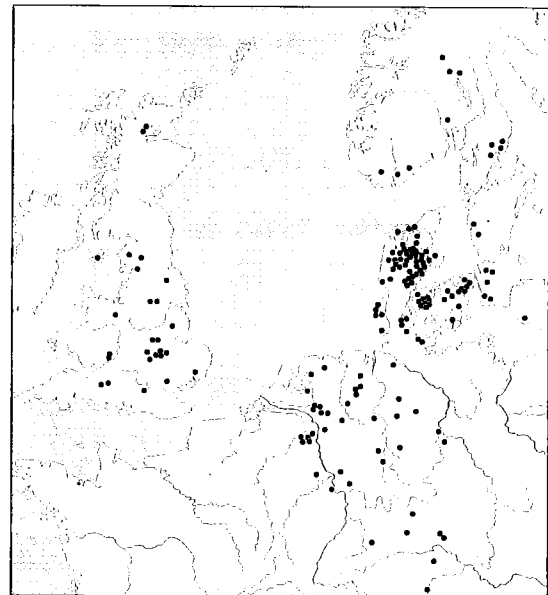


Figure 6. *Thing* in place names (J. Udolph).

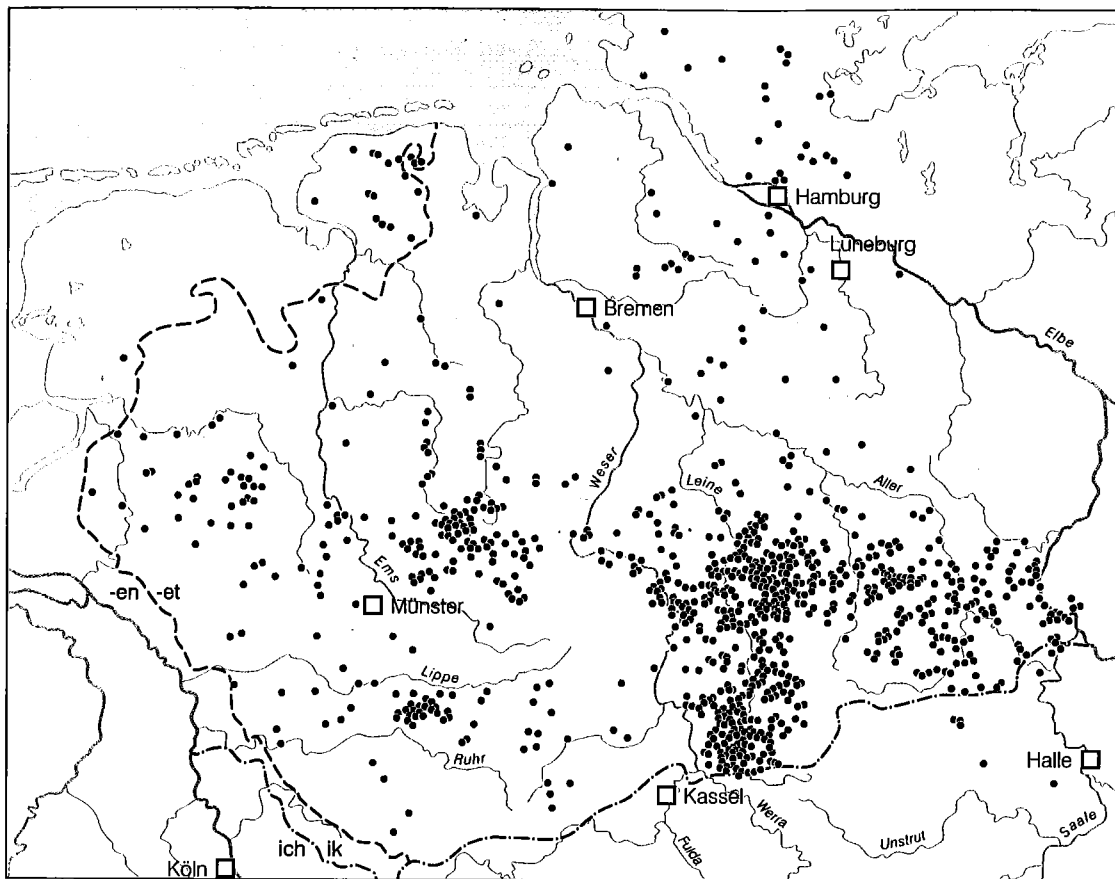


Figure 7. *Tie* in place names (K. Bischoff).

Dingethe, 1200 Dingethen, Dingethe, 1206 Dingede etc., which contain the very ancient suffix *-ithi*, evolved from the basic form **Thingithi*. There is no equivalent of this type of derivation in the Germanic north (see figure 6). Nevertheless, it can be concluded that Thing place names do not further the search for central places as much as anticipated.

3.20 Often associated with and occasionally also mistaken for Thing, the word *Tie* appears frequently in place names in southern Lower Saxony. This has been discussed repeatedly (BISCHOFF 1971; 1972; 1978; UDOLPH 1994, 602-609; 2005, 45-53). A distribution map drawn up by Bischoff (see figure 7) is of particular importance. I have already commented on its etymology and interpretation (UDOLPH 1994, 602ff.). It is an apparently ancient word that originally meant "to point, to show" (and is thus connected with justice) with parallels in the German *zeihen*, Old High German *-zihan*, Old Saxon *-tihan* "to accuse", Gothic *-teihan*, Hittite *tekuššai-* "to show", Old Indic *dišati*, Greek *δείκνυμι* and Latin *dicere* "to tell, to explain, to reckon" which indicate that it is an inherited word in the Germanic languages. Here, particularly, the underlying meaning is "to point at something with words", also "to show

justice, to accuse, to point at an offender".

In southern Lower Saxony, the *Tie* is still remembered today: there are *Tie* festivals and there are still quite a few people who know of these gatherings in olden days. Unfortunately, however, this is not evidence of a central place since such facilities, i.e. facilities for justice or debate, must have been present virtually everywhere, a fact that can also be seen on the *Tie* distribution map. Its presence in field and place names contributes more to questions relating to old Germanic and Old Saxon settlements than to the search for central places.

At best, indications of an early judiciary role can be assumed in the case of a few place names that seem to be rather old. Two places should be mentioned in this connection: *Thiede*, in the district of Salzgitter, and *Tide*, an abandoned settlement in the district of Peine. Both can be traced back to the Old Germanic **Ti-ithi* (see CASEMIR 2003, 320f. and UDOLPH 2005, 47f. for details), which is particularly important because derivations with *-ithi* are attributed to the earliest stages of Germanic settlement (for recent details see UDOLPH 1994, 258-274 and CASEMIR 2003, 438-446).

Another word with a legal context that occurs in place names is certainly worth closer examination, the ancient ap-

pellative mahl, mahal, which is still evident in German Mahlstatt "site of council and tribunal" and Gemahl "spouse". It is found (the following essentially from UDOLPH 1994, 601f.) in Gothic maþl "place of assembly, market", German Mahlstatt, Old High German mahal (māl) "place of assembly, place of tribunal", borrowed into Middle Latin malum, with underlying German *maþla- > mahla- „public assembly, trial“.

It is commonly agreed that, after Thing, mahal is the most frequent German designation for a tribunal, its assembly and its location. A brief list of place names includes: Bauernmal (in Bardengau); Detmold, 8th century; Thiotmalli; Hermalle-sous-Argenteau, 779 (copy around 1191) Harimalla; Hermalle-sous-Huy, 1131 Harmala near Brussels, from *harja-maþla-, *hari-maþla-; Kirch-, Rothenditmold near Kassel, 1081 (forgery around 1100) Thiedmali, 1074-1090 (copies of various age) Diethmelle, from thiot and mahal, māl "site of public court"; Malberg, 1169 Madalberch near Bitburg (Eifel); Malberg near Kippenheim (Lahr); Malberg and Madalbergostraza near Humbach-Montabaur; auf dem Malberg near Bad Ems; Malching, 769 Mahaleihhi "Mahleiche" "mahal oak", 817 Mahaleihinga; Malstatt in Wetterau, 1040 Malstat; Malters in the canton of Luzern; Mecheln, 1008 Machlines; Mechelen (Gelderland), 1200

(in) Mehtlo, and Mechelen in southern Limburg.

Apparent traces in the United Kingdom are Malton (YN), Matlask (Nf), Matlock (Db), and presumably also, with the short form māl, in Molash, Mole Drove, Molland, Mollands.

It would certainly be worthwhile to compile a detailed list of place names with mah(a), but that is something for the future. Nevertheless, some of these places are not unimportant today (Hermalle, Kirch-, Rothenditmold, Malberg, Mecheln, Detmold), which gives the impression that the tradition of a judicial function may have been significant for the durability of a settlement.

3.21 When listing place names indicative of central functions, torg "market" is likely to be included for Scandinavia; the word is evident in Swedish, Icelandic, Norwegian torg, Danish torv, and also Finnish tori. It is, however, a loanword from the Slavic languages. A detailed study, with a map (see figure 8), not only of the Slavic word itself but also its distribution in the Slavic-language area, its links to the Baltic languages, its relationship with Estonian, Finnish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Romanian and Albanian, has apparently been overlooked (UDOLPH 1987, 584-590). With place names like Torgau, the word is also a matter of interest for the German-language area.

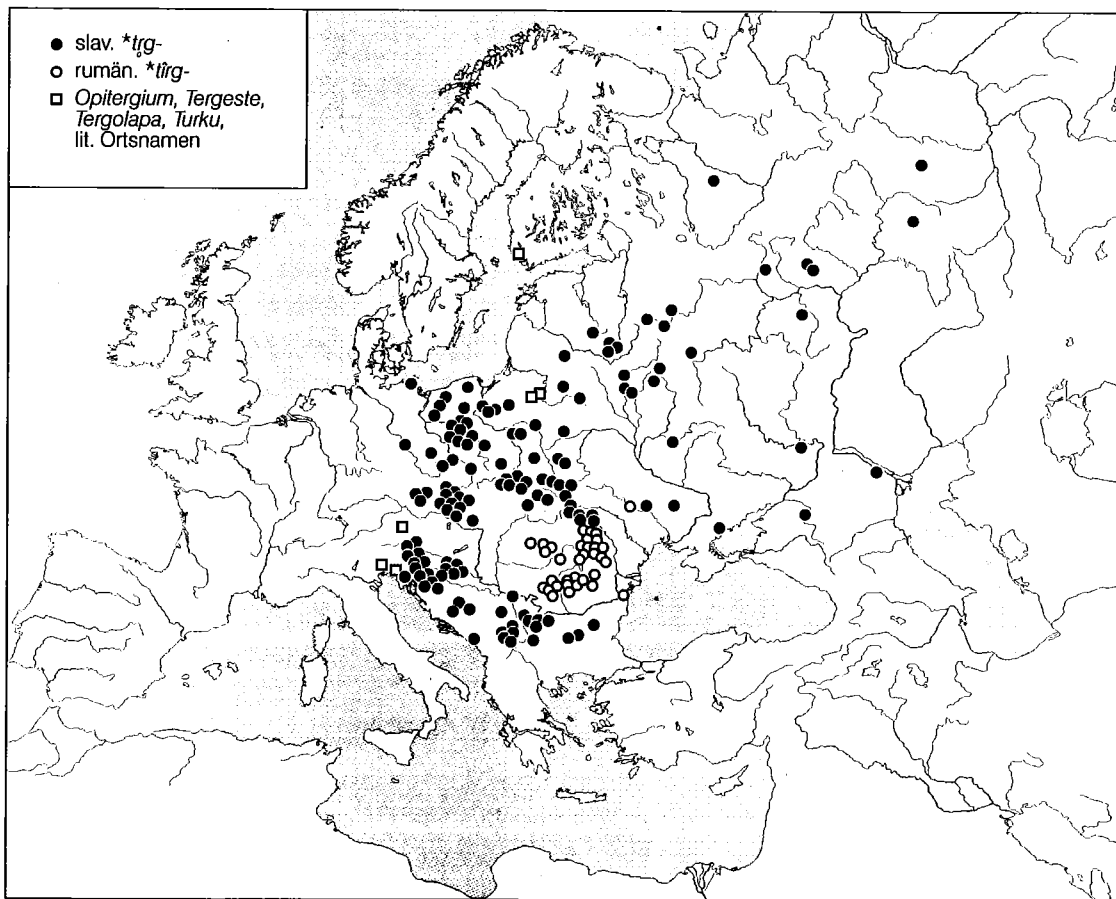


Figure 8. *torg* etc. in place names (J. Udolph).

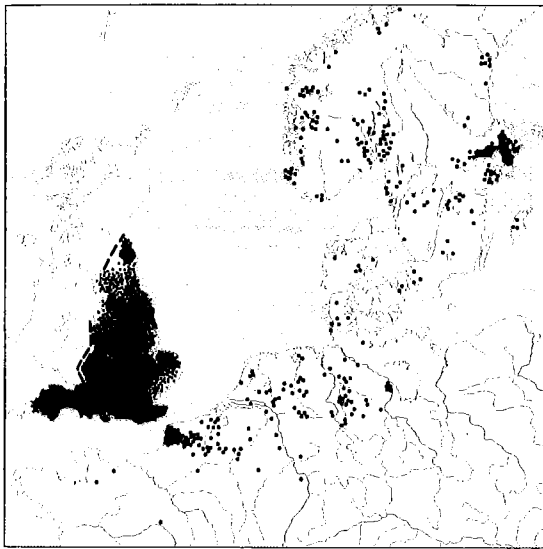


Figure 9. Distribution of *-tun* in place names (J. Udolph).

3.22 Central functions for place names composed with *-tun* such as Sigtuna, Ultuna, Vallentuna are disputed, even in Scandinavia. Such place names on the Continent, as well as frequent parallel English names (see figure 9), discussed in detail in UDOLPH (1994, 609-764), should not be considered either: English *-ton* and the similar *-tun* in German, northern French, Belgian and Dutch names, should be understood as "town, settlement". A general indication of a central function cannot, therefore, be assumed, although several of these place names are certainly very old: this is also apparent in the fact that the Germanic **tūn-* is regarded as a cognate of the Celtic *dunon*, *dunon*.

3.23 Place names containing *vall* "wall" or *vang* "field, lea, meadow" have been considered as potentially indicative of central functions by BRINK (1996, 266). From a continental perspective, this cannot be confirmed: there is neither evidence of a religious context, nor of a social or economic function.

3.24 In the past, place names based on the element *wi(e)k*, e.g. in Braunschweig, Bardowick, Osterwiek, Wibbecke (from *Wik-beke*) etc., were likely to be interpreted as trading places. Since a study published by SCHÜTTE (1976; see figure 10; see also a detailed discussion in UDOLPH 1994, 104-111; cf. figure 11), greater care must be taken with such rapid assumptions.

Initially, the underlying root word of *wik* had an equivalent in German *weich* "soft, flexible", thus pointing to an old construction method in which flexible osier stems were wrapped around poles. Its extension to "trading place" occurred only in more recent times. A recently published study investigated the meaning of the place name Braunschweig (MEIBEYER and NICKEL

2006, especially the articles by Meibeyer, Schütte and Udolph): it was critically received and debated. Based on SCHUSTER-ŠEWIC (1985-1988, 1598), it maintained that the semantic change from the original "(farmers') market" to "fortified place, town" was because farmers' markets were usually held in towns (i.e. in fortified places), a change that is also evident in Sorbian. Little is to be gained with *-wiek* place names in the matter of central places.

3.25 Continental equivalents are rarely found for "denominations for people, retinue, servants", which have been investigated by ANDERSSON (2007, 509), in particular. At best, Old Franconian *thunginus* could be mentioned here but that has already been discussed under *Thing*.

As far as the Slavic languages are concerned, however, there is one area that should at least be mentioned here, which also applies to Hungary, Romania and other southeast European countries. It is that of so-called service-settlement names, which have been discussed in an extensive but, unfortunately, insufficiently recognised study by LÜBKE (1991). Such names were formed as follows:

skot is cattle, so a place name like *Skotniki* designates a settlement of cattle drovers; *kon* is the horse, so a settlement of horse herdsman is named *Konary*; *soap* is *mydło*, so *Mydlniki* is the place where soap boilers lived, and so on. These are examples of "place names designating activities", i.e. place names linked to human occupation. They have also prompted researchers to develop a theory regarding the existence of a particular type of government in the early stages of the Piast, Přemyslid and Árpád dynasties. This study is, therefore, an important attempt to utilise toponymy as a source of information about economic history. It is not possible to elaborate further here but, in future research into the organisation and structure of labour, this category of names should receive greater attention as the question of central organisation may be valid after all.

3.26 As argued repeatedly from various positions, the discovery of potential central functions can be expected when looking at facilities for trade and transportation. From the linguistic point of view, a study must be taken into consideration, in which trade and transportation were discussed in detail on the basis of Slavic termini (UDOLPH 1987). This study included several important points.

– Termini borrowed from the German, such as Polish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Sorbic *handel* "trade, activity", Czech *handl*, later also "haggling", from which only few place names are derived, however;

– Upper Sorbian *kłamy*, Lower Sorbian *kšamy* "general store, shop", Polish *kram* "general store, stall", Old Polish "sale item", Czech *krám* "small store, sale item, junk", further borrowed into Ukrainian, Russian, Belorussian and Lithuanian. See a distribution map of the place names in UDOLPH (1987, 573).

– Upper Sorbian *hermank*, Lower Sorbian *jarmank*, jer-

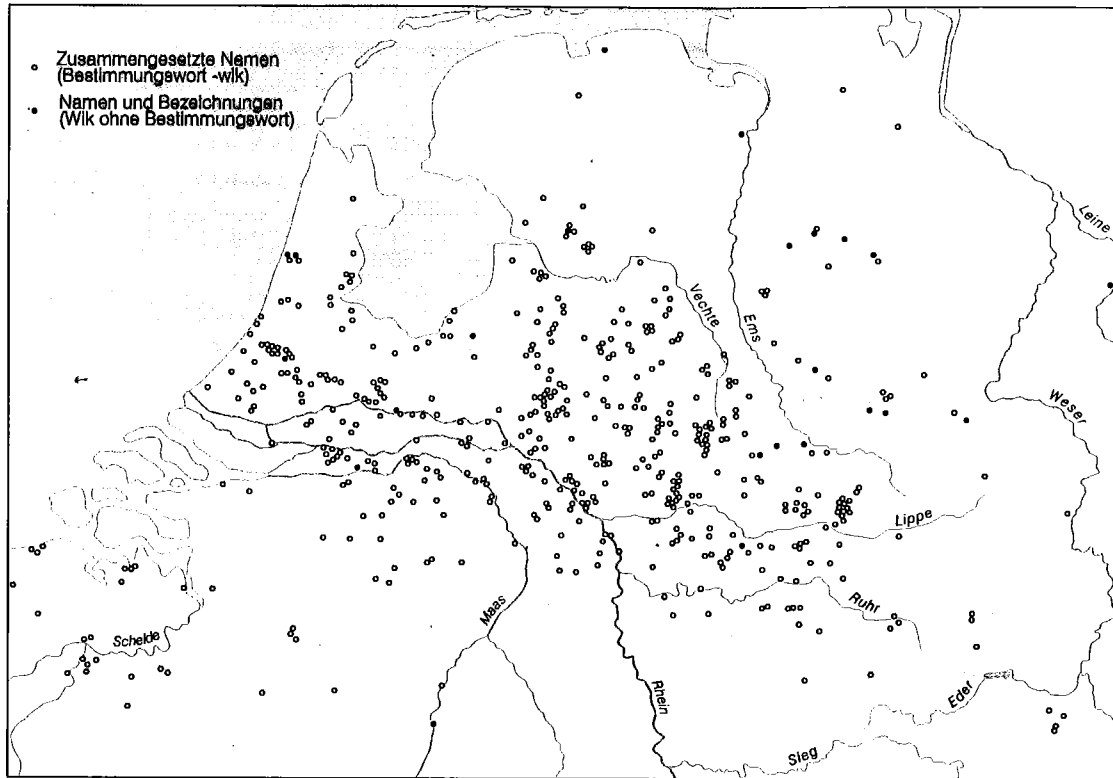


Figure 10. *wik* in German place names (L. Schütte).

mank "annual fair, carnival", Polish jarmark "usually annual market, taking place during a specific period of time", Czech jarmark, Slovak jarmek, jarmok, Russian jarmarka, Ukrainian jarmarok, Belorussian jarmolka, Lithuanian jarmarkas, calqued from German Jahrmarkt "annual market"- in place names, the term is rare.

– A popular word from eastern Europe is Ring, mostly "market place", which also connects with Polish rynek, Lower Sorbian, Upper Sorbian rynk, Belorussian rynak, Russian rynok "ring, circle, market place" and is occasionally assumed to be an early borrowing dating back to Germanic times (a view that has been rejected in UDOLPH 1987, 575).

– A peculiarity, frequently encountered in Slavic countries, relates to place names taken from the denominations for the days of the week. They indicate the day on which a market was held (discussed in detail by UDOLPH 1987, 591-596. See also figure 12). Apparently, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday were not typical market days; the preferred days were Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Examples of such places for Wednesday (in Slavic languages literally "middle") Środa Śląska (German Neumarkt), Dunajska Streda; for Friday Piątek, Pjätnica (Slavic piąty, pjaty "five, the fifth"), Hungarian Péntekhely (-hely means "place"); and, most prominently, Saturday as in Sobota, Sobótka, Suboty, Hungarian Szombat-hely (based on the word Sabbath). The map shows the frequency of the occurrence of such place names (see map 12) and, no-

ticeably, also includes the Hungarian and Romanian language areas: further details are not possible here.

– Customs stations can develop into central places. There seems to be only one study on this subject. This discusses the Slavic word myto "custom, toll", a loan word from Germanic (with links to German Maut, "toll"), and its occurrence in place names (UDOLPH 1987, 596-599). I do not know of similar studies regarding its distribution in Central and Northern Europe, although there are place names of this kind, such as Mauterheim, Mautern and Mauthausen in Austria.

– Specific to the East Slavic language area are so called towage sites, usually on isthmi between two rivers, across which boats had to be towed. Such sites are already known from Viking journeys (Varangians). In Russian they are designated with a derivation of the basic meaning "to pull, to tow" volok, plural voloki; with a prefix attached, there is also the variant perevolok(i), Polish przewłoka, Czech převlaka etc., a word that is also found in Priwall near Travemünde (for a detailed evaluation of these words and their respective place names see UDOLPH 1987, 599-606). It was not uncommon for settlements to develop at such towage sites, as is apparent from this compilation (including maps).

3.27 Naturally, the influence of the Christian Church has left traces in place names, including in the German language area. Places with a church certainly also had a central function. An

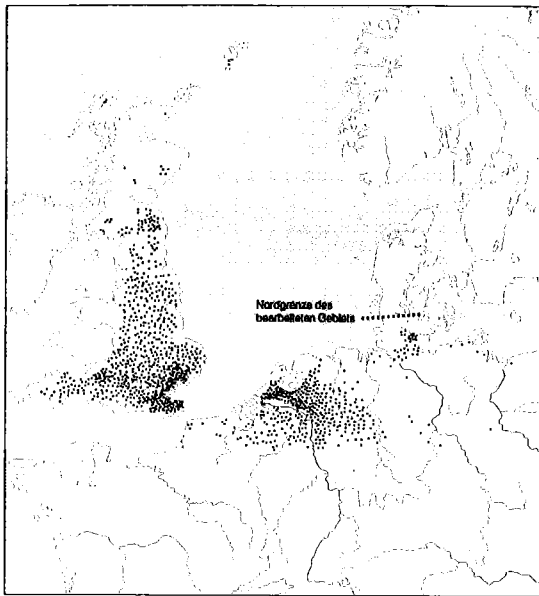


Figure 11. Distribution of *wik* in place names (J. Udolph).

article by PFEIFFER (1980) illuminates the Christian element in place names. The most significant words discussed there are: German Kirche "church" (including Low German, Dutch, English and other analogies), claustrum/Kloster "cloister, monastery", Zella/Zelle/cella "cell". In addition, he sheds light on references to saints and the adoration of the Virgin Mary in place names. In response to this article, UDOLPH (2000, 423) pointed out, that it would not be uncommon to encounter cultic continuity. SANDNES (1992, 259), too, emphasises this point and Olson already assumed widespread cultic continuity: ancient pagan cult centres became Christian sanctuaries – with churches.

However, care must be taken with place and field names containing Christian or church-related words because it is not unusual for these names to refer merely to property of the Church; they are, therefore, not always any help in determining a former central function. Moreover, the official ecclesiastical organisation did not necessarily have a direct influence on such place names. On this point, PFEIFFER (1980, 87) stresses that it would be improper, and overly simplistic, to believe that a centralised religious order meant that place names would also be centrally regulated.

3.28 There is one final area that is of decisive importance in the question of central places on the Continent from an onomastic perspective. Surprisingly, Scandinavian research has not considered it so far, possibly because it is a continental Germanic issue: the so called "franconisation" of German toponymy, thought to be a result of Franconian intrusion. The premise here is that, in the wake of the Franconian conquest of Saxony in the decades around 800, an extensive internal colonisation by landlords was initiated, following the Franconian example, in which not only the royal family but also

the mainly local Saxon and a large part of the Franconian nobility participated. From this perspective, it was soon assumed that Franconian influence did not stop short of place names.

The facts can be summarized briefly without going into too much detail. Essential reading on this subject is an article by BETHGE (1914) with a title that outlines the aim of his study: "Fränkische Siedelungen in Deutschland, aufgrund von Ortsnamen festgestellt" ("Franconian settlements in Germany identified on the basis of place names"). Despite some criticism, many of his views are still held today, leading to such statements as: "Bethge proved that Franconian settlements can be revealed by their names or, rather, by a certain naming mechanism. Taken together, Nordheim, Ostheim, Mülheim, Buchheim, Stockhausen and similar names indicate Franconian settlements".

It was mainly due to Bach's benign reception that this theory was so influential: in his "Namenkunde", for example, he devoted whole chapters to the topic (BACH 1954a, §§ 483-485; BACH 1954b). The legitimate criticism of the theory by Kuhn (for details see UDOLPH 1998) has rarely been taken into account. The attitude of the most recent and most extensive study was, therefore, largely positive: indeed, JOCHUM-GODLÜCK (1995) had set out to verify Bethge's controversial theory (cf. figure 13). Onomasticians who are involved with north German toponyms are usually more critical, i.e. not only Kuhn but also MÜLLER (1970) and UDOLPH (1998).

If the "franconisation" of place names had reached the dimensions presumed by its advocates, it would be a classic case of centralised place naming and we would simply need to scan through place names that feature elements like West(en)- "west", Süd(en)- "south", Nord(en)- "north" and Ost(en)- "east" to find the central places. As explained elsewhere, the "franconisation" theory is unconvincing. Here are the essential objections again:

- the evaluation of the linguistic aspect of the names under discussion is unfounded;
- the majority of the names were established long before

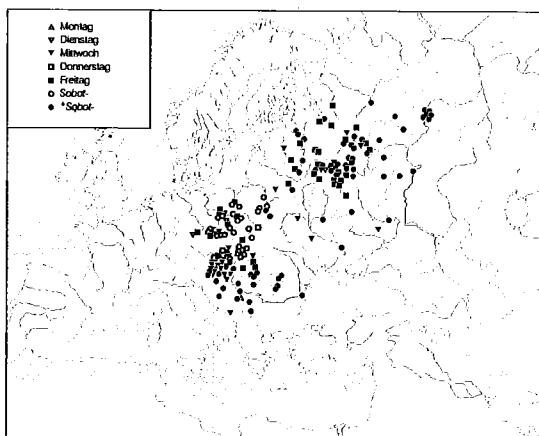


Figure 12. Weekdays in Slavic place names (J. Udolph).

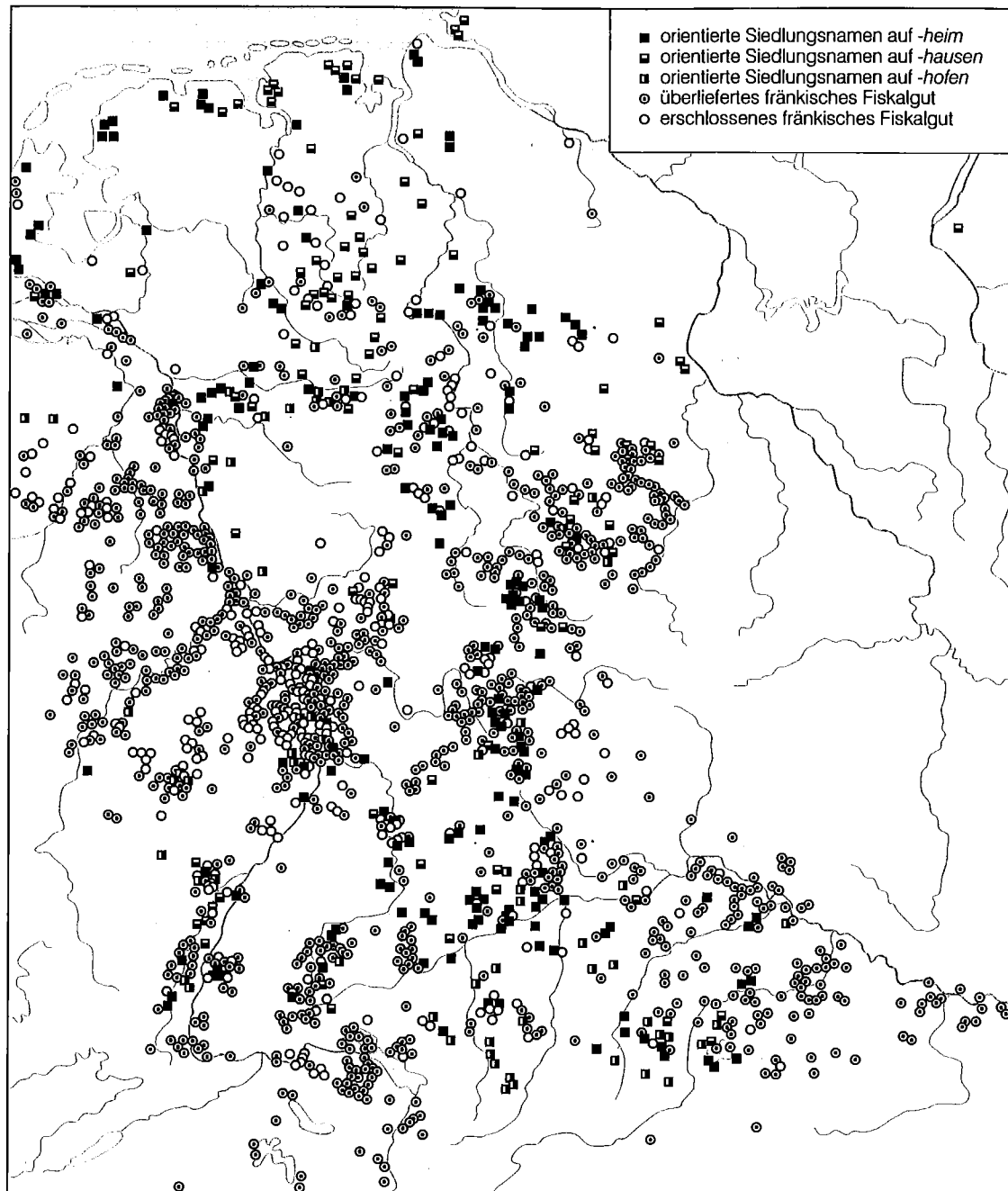


Figure 13. Franconian goods and orientated place names (C. Jochum-Godglück).

the Franconians gained influence;
 – the names can also be found in the north and in England, i.e. totally unrelated to Franconian;
 – Franconian influence has been greatly overestimated (MÜLLER 1970, 269).

The answer to the question of whether onomastics can help determine the names of central places is no, at least as far as the supposed "franconisation" is concerned. This method cannot be used to find central places. With this, I conclude my search for central places, primarily in the German language area, and will summarise the results.

4. Summary of results

My aim has been to search for central-place names from the standpoint of my special field of study, i.e. from an onomastic perspective and concentrating particularly on Central Europe. The search started with a definition of a central place: usually an early centre of power, often the hub of a specific area, which supplies goods and services, and has significance not only for its immediate inhabitants. It was established that, today, research focuses mainly on political-administrative, religious-ecclesiastical, economic and cultural centrality. From the perspective of an historical-settlement geographer or an archaeologist, the principal criteria are: governance, protection, resources and crafts, trade, and religion; a sixth criterion is occasionally added – justice. Modern central-place research still relies on older Scandinavian analyses: Grimm explicitly speaks of the "South Scandinavian theory of central places". However, it has now been realised that it is essential to consider continental factors as well, which has not been the case so far. This also applies to toponomastics, which from a northern point of view is mostly concerned with names containing references to gods, trade, crafts, and military as well as political organisation. Here, according to the Scandinavian scholars, and in particular Andersson, place names are of great importance. On the other hand, this assumption has also been criticised, amongst others by Steuer. However, little has been contributed to the subject from a continental perspective.

A review of Nordic place names yielded about two dozen primary words and name elements that may point to the existence of central places. These refer mainly to religious activities, large structures, the sites of tribunals and trading places. At the same time, however, one can gain the impression that possible central functions have been attributed to such places without sufficient reflection. Nordic research is very much inclined, it seems, to call a place "central" when there is even only the slightest hint of such functions from an onomastic point of view.

So far, German onomastics has made hardly any contribution to the subject. This is also apparent in the fact that no relevant keywords are listed in Bach's important study "Deutsche Namenkunde" (German Onomastics) or in the register of the collection of articles on onomastic research "Namenforschung" (EICHLER et al. 1995). Based on the above, I have attempted to find indicators for central places in continental toponymy.

– Numerous words and name elements that – according to Scandinavian research – would seem to indicate central places do not, in fact, support such an assumption, e.g. Acker, *al "Temple", Halle, harg, haug-, Hof, hus/Haus, -tun, vall, vang.

– Indicative of market places in the broadest sense are hude, Markt (evident only in later names), Stapel- and wi(e)k (but only in later names). Considerably more material can be found in Slavic areas, including several German loanwords such as handel "trade, activity", kram "general store, stall",

jarmank, jermank, jarmark "usually an annual market held over a specific period of time", rynek, rynk, rynek "ring, circle, market place". The most important word, *torg-*, which was also calqued into Scandinavian languages, should also be mentioned here. Particular to Slavic countries are place names based on the names of the days of the week, such as Środa Śląska in Silesia, German Neumarkt, which also has influenced Hungarian (Szombat-hely) and Romanian.

– Indicators for assembly places are contained in place names with *thing/ding*, *Tie* and *mah(a)l* (e.g. in important place names such as Ditmold, Malberg, Mecheln, Detmold), but these can refer to local facilities so one should not necessarily assume a central function.

– Most fruitful are religious place names containing, for example, the names of gods such as in Wotan/Wodan in Bad Godesberg, Gudensberg, Gutenswegen; the word *helig*, *heilig* "holy, sacred" (although, in field and place names, this may just indicate property of the Church); the Norse word *ví*, *vé* "holy", equivalent to German *weih-*, *wih-*, as in Weimar, is a designation for a "religious office-bearer"; and Old Franconian *thunginus* "master of the Thing". Place names related to Christianity may contain *Kirche* "church" (also *kerk-/kirk-* etc.), *claustrum/Kloster* "cloister, monastery", *Zella/Zelle/cella* "cell", or references to saints and the adoration of the Virgin Mary (Mariensee, Marienburg).

– On the Continent, there are no religious implications in *ek-* "oak", *sal*, *sele*, *stav* "stick, pole, pillar, rune".

– In the Slavic settlement area, there are clusters of names that may indicate central places, e.g. service-activity names like *Skotniki* "settlement of cattle drovers", *Konary* "place of horse herdsman" etc.

– The sites of custom houses can also become central places, e.g. Slavic names that contain the German loanword *myto* "custom, toll". In Germany, this word is still evident in *Maut*, *Mauterheim*, *Mautern* und *Mauthausen*.

– A Slavic particularity, most notably in the East Slavic area, are towage-sites, usually *isthmi* between two rivers, across which boats had to be towed. In Russian they are called *volok*, plural *voloki*, or *perevolok(i)*, Polish *przewłoka*, Czech *převlaka*.

– No evidence could be found of a supposed "francisation" of German toponymy, which would indicate centralised place-naming.

5. Conclusion

From an onomastic perspective, the search for possible central-place names on the Continent (particularly in Germany) is limited. Grimm had hoped to transpose and apply the Scandinavian framework to German research in order to further Nordic studies of central-place analyses (GRIMM 2006, 22), but this hope has not been fulfilled. Instead, it seems that Steuer's scepticism (STEUER 2007, 904-906) is justified; the functions of central places are the result of growth and indi-

vidual functions can disappear over time. Consequently, place names say very little about the specific functions of a place – functions that may have evolved only later.

Böhme's critical remark (BÖHME 2001, 494) that hardly any of the Scandinavian "central places" have developed into cities that still exist today is valid, too, and also applies to places on the Continent that have been assumed to have had a central function because of their names. I have pointed out repeatedly that some of these places have evolved into significant towns and cities, but many have not.

Likewise, places known from proto-historical times, such as Irmsul/Eresburg, Donareiche, Marklohe/Markloh, did not develop into central places – or may not even have been central in the first place (STEUER 2007, 891f.). Continuity alone is not enough to assume a central function.

When Grimm points out that central places usually had functional continuity dating back to the Middle Ages, e.g. as the site of a church or manor, the reason may simply be their favourable location for a settlement, and thus for such facilities. Laur's study (LAUR 2005) makes clear that important trading places very rarely had names that actually refer to trade.

From a continental point of view, we cannot agree with Andersson's optimistic statement (ANDERSSON 2007, 510), that, in many cases, typical name clusters are found around central places. At least in northern and central Germany, this could not be established for the first millennium AD. Thus, with STEUER (2007, 907), a clear warning should be issued against circular reasoning and the tendency to link archaeological and historical central places with their names and, *vice versa*, to deduce the existence of central places from place names.

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