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:

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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

herausgegeben von

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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 peripherals 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 discussed 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 update 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 Dietrich (Institut für Urgeschichte 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.
Contents

The conception of "central places" in time and space

Winfried Schenk
"Central Places" as a point of discussion from German geography in (pre)historical research 11

Marion Brüggle
Types, meaning and significance of "central places" in the Germanic provinces of the Roman Empire 14

Jörg Drauschke
The search for central places in the Merovingian kingdom 26

Jürgen Udolph
The evidence of central places in place names 49

Questions concerning continuity through the centuries: case studies

Hauke Jöns
Case study 1: The Elbe-Weser region in northern Germany (the regions of Sievern and Stade in the first millennium AD) 69

Johan A.W. Niclal
Response to case study 1: Power formation and the rise of central places in the Elbe-Weser region and the coastal area of the northern Netherlands — a comparison 90

Birgitta Härdd
Case study 2: Uppåkra — Lund. A central place and a town? Western Scania in the Viking Age 101

Claus von Carnap-Bornheim
Comment on: Uppåkra — Lund. A central place and a town? Western Scania in the Viking Age (B. Härdd) 112

Ulrich Müller
Case study 3: Trading centres — Hanseatic towns on the southern Baltic Coast: Structural continuity or a new start? 115

Rolf Bärfngenger
General comment on: Trading centres — Hanseatic towns on the southern Baltic Coast: Structural continuity or a new start? (U. Müller) 141

Trade contacts in the reflection of the finds

Sebastian Brather
Silver, weights and scales around the Baltic, 8th to 11th centuries 143

Christoph Kliger
General comment on: Silver, weights and scales around the Baltic, 8th to 11th centuries (S. Brather) 165

Sunhild Kleingärtnernr
Trade contacts as reflected in archaeological finds: Costume accessories 170

Iben Skibsted Klæsae
Comments on: Trade contacts as reflected in archaeological finds: Costume accessories (S. Kleingärtnernr) 189
Barbara Armbruster
Remains of the Viking-Age goldsmith's craft and workshop 191

Heiko Steuer
Comments on: Remains of the Viking-Age goldsmith's craft and workshop (B. Armbruster) 214

Central places and their hinterland: examples and casestudies

Dagfinn Skre
Centrality and places. The central place Skiringssal in Vestfold, Norway 220

Michael Müller-Wille
Comments on: Centrality and places. The central place Skiringssal in Vestfold, Norway (D. Skre) 232

Michiel H. Bartels and Michel Groothedde
Central places and fortifications: The case study Deventer and Zutphen – a medieval Burgenordnung in the eastern Netherlands? 238

Martin Segschneider
Comment on: Central places and fortifications: The case study Deventer and Zutphen – a medieval Burgenordnung in the eastern Netherlands? (M. Bartels and M. Groothedde) 255

Donat Wehner
The hinterland of the early medieval trading places Wolin and Menzlin: A comparison 258

Mateusz Bogucki
The Baltic emporia and their hinterland – comments on Donat Wehner's study of Wolin and Menzlin 267

Lars Jørgensen
Gudme and Tisso. Two magnates' complexes in Denmark from the 3rd to the 11th century AD 273

Dagfinn Skre
Comments on: Gudme and Tisso. Two magnates' complexes in Denmark from the 3rd to the 11th century AD (L. Jørgensen) 287

Means of transport and trade routes – routes to central places?

Jonathan Scheschkewitz
Water transport – specialized landing-places in the coastal areas of northwestern Germany in the first millennium AD 289

Jens Uriksen
A comment on: Water transport – specialized landing-places in the coastal areas of northwestern Germany in the first millennium AD (J. Scheschkewitz) 309

Oliver Grimm
Traffic-related reflections on Norway's prehistory and some remarks about Sweden 315

Jan Bill
Towards an archaeology of transport. Some comments on: Traffic-related reflections on Norway's prehistory and some remarks about Sweden (O. Grimm) 328
Babette Ludowici
Overland routes as markers for central places: The Hellweg between Rhine and Elbe 335

Volker Hilberg
Overland routes, transport and power. Some comments on: Overland routes as markers for central places: The Hellweg between Rhine and Elbe (B. Ludowici)

Structures of rule and religion

Matthias Hardt
Structures of power and religion according to the written sources 345

Przemyslaw Urbańczyk
What did early medieval authors know about structures of governance and religion in northern Central Europe? (A comment on M. Hardt)

Andres S. Dobat
'...and hold therein feasts of sacrifice' — archaeological perspectives on the sacral functions and significance of Late Iron Age Scandinavian central places 362

Alexandra Pesch
Comments on: '...and hold therein feasts of sacrifice' — archaeological perspectives on the sacral functions and significance of Late Iron Age Scandinavian central places (A. Dobat) 374

Summary

Michael Müller-Wille
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

Summary and perspectives 380
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 (Graumann 2006, 18). According to Christaller (1941, 1968), Demcke (1973), Graumann (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 Fein (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 Fein 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 Knuow 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. (Fein 1970, 3). Slightly modified, Christaller's theory can also be found in Demcke (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. Demcke 1973, 44 fig. 1).

Fein (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 Fabich (1999a, 42-44), Grimm (2006, 20) concludes that the southern Scandinavian model of central places from the time of the Roman Empire to the Middle 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,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>area of functional category</th>
<th>era</th>
<th>grading of central significance (grading of intensity)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A political and administrative function and facilities</td>
<td>Early and High Middle Ages.</td>
<td>castle territory, seat of a castle district, King's court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages</td>
<td></td>
<td>seat of a lower gau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages/Modern Era</td>
<td>vox elegans (administration council)</td>
<td>official residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>seat of a main gau, King's palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>seat of a clan, King's court of higher significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>seat of central administration of a political territory (principality, duky, shire, countship, county, canton, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>official seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B judicial facilities</td>
<td>Early and High Middle Ages</td>
<td>lower justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages</td>
<td>upper justice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Era</td>
<td>town court (with or without penal jurisdiction)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>local court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>district court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manorial court</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gau thing, gau court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clanthing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C strategic facilities and protective function</td>
<td>Early Middle Ages</td>
<td>refuge of a settlement cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages</td>
<td>urban fortification, also protecting neighboring population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gau castle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D cultural and clerical facilities</td>
<td>Prehistory/ Middle Ages</td>
<td>celtic sites of regional importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Ages</td>
<td>archbishop's seat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>archbishop's seat, gau church, cathedral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gau church, cathedral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E cultural facilities</td>
<td>Middle Ages/Modern Era</td>
<td>grammar school, high school, college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grammar school, high school, boarding school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cathedral school, academy, college's academy, university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F logistic, provisioning and charitable function</td>
<td></td>
<td>hospital, orphanage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>almshouse, home for the disabled, hospice, old people's home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G agricultural facilities and agricultural administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>administration of a secular/feudal ecclesiastical manorial land, granary for local supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>manorial granary for a larger area</td>
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<tr>
<td>H small trade and craft</td>
<td></td>
<td>could ban certain trades</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>unexploited trade, organisation in guilds</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bane of certain trades (e.g. brewer, weaver, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bane of trades may include neighboring towns</td>
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<tr>
<td>I facilities of trade and commerce</td>
<td>weekly market, market</td>
<td>weekly markets</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>fair-produce fair, grocer's fair, livestock fair, specialty fair</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>trade fair, factory</td>
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<td>staple right</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>fair-trade fair, special fair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>right to extract and possesstomks, own coin and currency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J transport and communication</td>
<td></td>
<td>local port</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>intersecting trade routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>import, intersection of several trade routes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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 Börme (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-Willer (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 an 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 Fæbø 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. Baalby, Huseby), or religious activities in the proximity of a royal seat (e.g. Hou) (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 Anderson (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 Vikström (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 Thorskars hundare, which contains Old Swedish Thorsaker “acre of the God Thor” (Anderson 2007, 508).

- “al temple”, a term from the sacred sphere, documented also in Gothic alis, Old Saxon ahl, Old English ealh “temple, sanctuary”; in the Heliand and Wulfla “temple” was assumed to be an element in place names by Brink (1996, 261-262; Brink 1999, 11ff; Vikström 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, 227ff), also see Brink (1996, 249 [with maps of Nordic names]; 258-260; 1999, 11ff) and Grim (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 hag, 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” (Anderson 1992a, 250). Brink (1996, 265f; 1999, 11ff) discusses a correlation with central places, cf. also Vikström (2001, 207-225).

- Old Norse haugr “hill, tumulus”, Old Danish hægh, 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, 268), 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; Grim 2006, 18; 24 and especially Vikström 2001, 252-272).

- Place names with hus(a)- and the related Old Swedish word husaby(i) 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 (Anderson 2007, 506; Brink 1990, 58; 1996, 248-250 [with map]; 264; 1999, 11ff; Grim 2006, 18).

- Amongst the terms for trading places in the north there is, of course, the Old West Norse word kaupstaðr, Old Danish kaupanger, -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 kaupstath, Old Swedish kapstadhe, which also occurs in place names, e.g. in Danish Kobsted, Norwegian Kopstad and Swedish Köpstad(en) (Anderson 2007, 506; cf. Grim 2006, 18 and Beck 1987).

- According to Brink (1996, 249; with maps), place names derived from kun “king” and gár “garden, estate”, Kungs- for example, also indicate centrality.

- Trading places and locations of ports are suspected in place names like Lade, Løchele or Lakhammar. The verb laða “to load goods” is seen here (Grim 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 Anderson (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 Herström (1999), Grim (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” (Grim 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.

- Tor “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) (Anderson 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 in place names, e.g. Odense (cf. BIINX 1996, 261; 1999, 111f).

— Finally, mention should also be made of denominations for people, retinue, servants, as most notably discussed by ANDERSSON (2007, 509). Examples are Old Swedish kärl (Old West Norse. jarl), *styrir "commander of a vessel, ship", pagan names for priests such as Old Swedish *godhi (Old West Norse godi), occupational titles such as Old Swedish byti "administrator", smidher "blacksmith", and denominations for warriors and retainers such as Old Swedish karl, *runker, sven, th(r)ægn.

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 ækr "field, acre, corn, arable crop" (cf. UOCHIP 2006a, 319). It is also found in its Low German form, from Middle Low German acker, which SCHEIRMANN (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 (MÖLLER 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 (GAMLISCH 1938; also in England, cf. UOCHIP 2006a, 319). However, as I have already explained elsewhere (UOCHIP 2000, 419), one should be sceptical (similarly ANDERSSON 1992b, 530 and VĘTSKIND 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.

3.3 Swedish, Danish by, Norwegian bø "village", older "homestead", occur in Germany almost exclusively in Schleswig-Holstein, 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 UOCHIP 1994, 855-857; BRY 1996, 118). The compound bosgård is not found in Germany or in the neighbouring settlement areas of Central Europe.

3.4 Scandinavian Halla "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
silt deposits are not convincing. Places with hall do not indicate salt at all (cf. Udo et al. 1999).

3.5 Care must also be taken when considering place names with Old Norse haugr as indicating central places. Indeed, it does appear as "cultic place" in West Norse texts (Andersson 1992a, 250) but, first and foremost, haugr means "accumulation of rocks, a heap of stones". Like Graff (1834-1842), Bach (1953, 409) assumed Old High German hargr, hara to mean "lucus, nemus, forum, delubrum, ara, capitulum" and therefore understood a cultic place, surrounded by a sacred grove, in such place names. The perception amongst British scholars is similar (cf. Udo et al. 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 Vixmann (2004, 171f.) a religious reference can be assumed in some place names. For further discussion of German place names that may include harg, see Udo et al. (2000, 420f.). Care has to be taken nonetheless; Laur (2001, 43f.; 88f.; 100; 206ff.) quite rightly emphasises this and — like Udo et al. (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 hæg, 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 Udo et al. (1994, 859-863) (Figure 2). Usually, when field names contain this element it is due to their elevated position.
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 hjall, 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 Uouw 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 CælchÝþ, CælchÝþ, 801 CælchÝþ), Erith (695 Earlyhyð), Hythe (675 hueþ). 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()- 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 kaupang, kaping, which frequently appear in place names, and also kaupstãt, kapstãth “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. Boeck 1987). Slavic kupec “trader, merchant, etc.” is a Germanic loanword (cf. Uouw 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, Lelle 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 Käsumark, today Ksmark, 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 Margoldendorp, 1315 Marketoldendorf (Casimir et al., 2005, 258) Markt 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,
haust; how, sal, and vi as examples. Of these, ak, albs, harg, haus, how 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 Anderson 1992b; Anderson 2005; Kossár Sibinsen 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 Anderson (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), Leehlau (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 heilig, Icelandic helig, Danish helig, etc. is discussed in detail by Vikstrand (2001, 226-252; 2004, 175ff.) from a Nordic perspective; place names in Schleswig-Holstein are discussed by Laur (2001, 86f., 213-220); for occurrences in other German place names, see Udolph 2000, 422.

d) Old Norse vi, 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, 176ff.), 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 thunigious 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); Wickowski 1970; and Udolph (2000, 423ff.).

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 Germany - 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; Gudensberg near St Wendel; Gutenwegen (district of Ohrekreis); Gudensberg near Gotha (for details see Udolph 2000, 417f.);

ii) the word heilig/heilig "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 vi "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 Weilholz near Regensburg (cf. Schwarz 1950/51); Weimar in Thuringia; Weimar near Kassel; Upper-, Lower-, Syrie-Weimar (for details see Udolph 2000, 422f.). These places can

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

56
be considered central to a certain degree (for archaeological research in the area around Weimar see Timpe 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, Ubohm 2006b). It seems we can find at least a few indicators for places with central functions in such place names.

3.16 According to Vikstrånd (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 (Laup 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 Brussel, 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. Schütte 1970). One should also take note of the stapel right. This type of place name is discussed in detail in Ubohm (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, stapel etc. see Ubohm (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 Vikstrånd (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 Ubohm 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 Ubohm 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
Dingeth, 1200 Dingethen, Dingeth, 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; UdoPla 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 (UdoPla 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 ziehen, Old High German -zihan, Old Saxon -ihan "to accuse", Gothic -teihan, Hittite tekuskai- "to show", Old Indic dīśati, Greek. δηλονωμι 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: Thiefe, in the district of Salzgitter, and Tiede, an abandoned settlement in the district of Peine. Both can be traced back to the Old Germanic *Ti-ithi (see Casimir 2003, 320ff. and UdoPla 2005, 471, for details), which is particularly important because derivations with -ithi are attributed to the earliest stages of Germanic settlement (for recent details see UdoPla 1994, 258-274 and Casimir 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 Uooop 1994, 601f.) in Gothic mabh "place of assembly, market", German Mahlstatt, Old High German mahal (mâl) "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; Thiromal; Hermalsous-Argenteau, 779 (copy around 1191) Harimalla; Hermalsous-Huy, 1131 Harmla near Brussels, from *harja-maþla, *hara-malzla; Kirch, Rotherditoip near Kassel, 1081 (forgery around 1100) Thledmal, 1074-1090 (copies of various age) Dieithmelle, from thiot and mahal, mâl "site of public court"; Malberg, 1169 Madalberich near Bitburg (Eifel); Malberg near Kippenheim (Lahn); Malberg and Madalbergostraça near Humbach-Montabaur; auf dem Malberg near Bad Ems; Malching, 769 Mahalethhi "Mahaleiche" "mahal oak", 817 Mahaleihinga; Malstatt in Wetterau, 1040 Malsta; Malter 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), Matlock (NF), Matlock (DB), and presumably also, with the short form male, in Molash, Mole Drove, Molland, Mollands.

It would certainly be worthwhile to compile a detailed list of place names with mahal( ), but that is something for the future. Nevertheless, some of these places are not unimportant today (Hermalle, Kirch, Rotherditoip, 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 of 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 (Uoooph 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 (L. Uoooph).](image-url)

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**Figure 8. torg etc. in place names (L. Uoooph).**
3.22 Central functions for place names composed with -tun such as Sigtuna, Ulltuna, 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 Uoox (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 *tun- is regarded as a cognate of the Celtic dunum, dunon.

3.23 Place names containing voll "wall" or vang "field, lea, meadow" have been considered as potentially indicative of central functions by Brouk (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 w(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 Schieve (1976; see figure 10; see also a detailed discussion in Uoox 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 wæch "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 Udoiph): it was critically received and debated. Based on Scintra-Sewc (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, retainue, servants", which have been investigated by Andersson (2007, 509), in particular. At best, Old Franconian thungins 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 Löve (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 herdsmen is named Konary; soap is mydlo, so Mydlini 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, Přemysliden 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 (Uoox 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 kłany, Lower Sorbian kłany "general store, shop", Polish kram "general store, stall", Old Polish "sale item", Czech kram "small store, sale item, junk", further borrowed into Ukrainian, Russian, Belorussian and Lithuanian. See a distribution map of the place names in Uoox (1987, 573).

- Upper Sorbian hermank, Lower Sorbian jarmank, jer-
mank "annual fair, carnival", Polish jarmark "usually annual market, taking place during a specific period of time", Czech jarmark, Slovak jarmak, Jarmok, Russian jarmarka, Ukrainian jarmark, Belorussian jarmolka, Lithuanian jarmkas, 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 Usciu 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 Usciu 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), Dunajcka Streda; for Friday Piątek, Piątnica (Slavic piąt, piąty "five, the fifth"), Hungarian Pénkelye (hely means "place"); and, most prominently, Saturday as in Sobota, Sobótka, Suboty, Hungarian Szombat-hely (based on the word Sabbat). The map shows the frequency of the occurrence of such place names (see map 12) and, noticeably, 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 (Usciu 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 isthmus 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 Travenbrücke (for a detailed evaluation of these words and their respective place names see Usciu 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
article by Pfeffer (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), clausatum/Cloister “cloister, monastery”, Zelle/Zelle/cell “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, Ucouni (2000, 423) pointed out, that it would not be uncommon to encounter cultic continuity. Siewierski (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, Pfeffer (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 summarised briefly without going into too much detail. Essential reading on this subject is an article by Briese (1974) with a title that outlines the aim of his study: “Frankische Siedlungen 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, Northeim, Osterode, Mullheim, Buchheim, Stockhausen and similar names indicate Franconian settlements”.

It was mainly due to Bach’s benign reception of this theory that it 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 Ucouni 1998) has rarely been taken into account. The attitude of the most recent and most extensive study was, therefore, largely positive: indeed, Jochum-Gogolück (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 Ucouni (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
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-ecclésiastical, 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 “Namensforschung” (Eckel et al. 1995). Based on the above, I have attempted to find indicators for central places in continental toponomy.

— 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 Tempel”, Halle, hang, 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 wicol (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, rynok “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 (Szonbat-hely) and Romanian.

— Indicators for assembly places are contained in place names with thing/ding, Tie and mahall (e.g. in important place names such as Dimitrov, 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, Gutenwegen; the word helig, heliga “holy, sacred” (although, in field and place names, this may just indicate property of the Church); the Norse word vî, vé “holy”, equivalent to German weih-, wie, as in Weimar, is a designation for a “religious office-bearer”; and Old Franconian thunginis “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 herdsmen” 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 and 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 perevoloki), Polish przewoloka, Czech převlaka.

— No evidence could be found of a supposed “françonisation” 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 validated, 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 Limmisul/Eresburg, Donareiche, Marklohe/Marklohe, did not develop into central places—or may not even have been central in the first place (Stuwe 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 Stuwe (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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