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Placing Place Names in Norwegian Archaeology

Current Discussions and future Perspectives

Sofie Laurine Albris (ed.)

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

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Northern Rogaland and southern Vestland mapped by Joannes Janssonius in 1636. Public Domain.

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CONTENTS

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Preface

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sofie Laurine Albris *National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen, January 2023*

Håkon Reiersen and Christopher Fredrik Kvæstad

The Iron Age and Medieval portage at Haraldseid, southwest Norway. Legends, place names and archaeology

The old Norse term eið occurs in many Scandinavian place names. It denotes a passage over land between two trafficable waters, i.e., an isthmus which could be utilised as a portage for boats, people and cargo. Thus, the eið place names provide important evidence of sites that may have been central communication routes in premodern times. Haraldseid in southwest Norway is among the prominent examples of portage sites. Here, the personal name Haraldr has been associated in local legends with the Viking king Haraldr Fairhair, who resided nearby at Avaldsnes. Place names and legends documented in the 19th–20th centuries might disclose important historical insights into the use of this cultural landscape. Indeed, the archaeological evidence suggests that there might be a core of truth in some of the legends, bridging the gap between myth and reality. The article combines place names, folklore, early maps, historical and archaeological evidence in a synthesis about the strategic importance of the Iron Age and Medieval portage at Haraldseid. While local elites probably controlled and maintained the portage under the influence of rulers at Avaldsnes in the Iron Age, more direct royal control and transport of Hanseatic goods are attested in the Medieval period.

> 'For a period of time, Haraldr Fairhair lived at Haraldseid. The first time he travelled in these parts, he went in the Ålfjord to Haraldseidvåg. He then pulled his ships over the portage to Eidsvik and sailed out the Skjoldafjord. But he enjoyed the site of the portage so much that he later settled here, and Haraldseid was named after him. While he was living at Haraldseid, he had many ships in the Ålfjord.
>
> One time, Haraldr went courting to a girl from Kallstveit (others say Meland). He went to the girl regularly, but he did not want people to know how often he went, and he therefore had an underground passage made. The long tunnel from Haraldseid to Kallstveit is still there. In the Haraldsdal valley, there are many stone cairns and grave mounds, so it is not hard to believe that there have been many battles in these parts' (Mauland 1931, p. 37 authors' translation).

Introduction

The region of Rogaland in southwest Norway is rich in archaeology, at least partly due to its strategic placement. All ships sailing to the Continent from the northern and western coast of Norway had to pass through this region (Fig. 1). For ships passing the northern part of Rogaland, there were four main routes (Tveit and Elvestad 2006, p. 77). The main seaway went through the narrow, protected strait of Karmsund, on the eastern side of Karmøy island. The Iron Age centre and Medieval royal seat at Avaldsnes was situated centrally in the strait (Skre 2017). A second and much riskier route went across open waters on the western side of Karmøy. The last two alternative routes went through fjords further to the east and across the two major portages at Haraldseid and Sandeid. The main background for the long-lived centre at Avaldsnes was its strategic placement along the seaway at a point where traffic easily could be controlled. Active use of the alternative routes across portages, however, could potentially weaken this advantage.

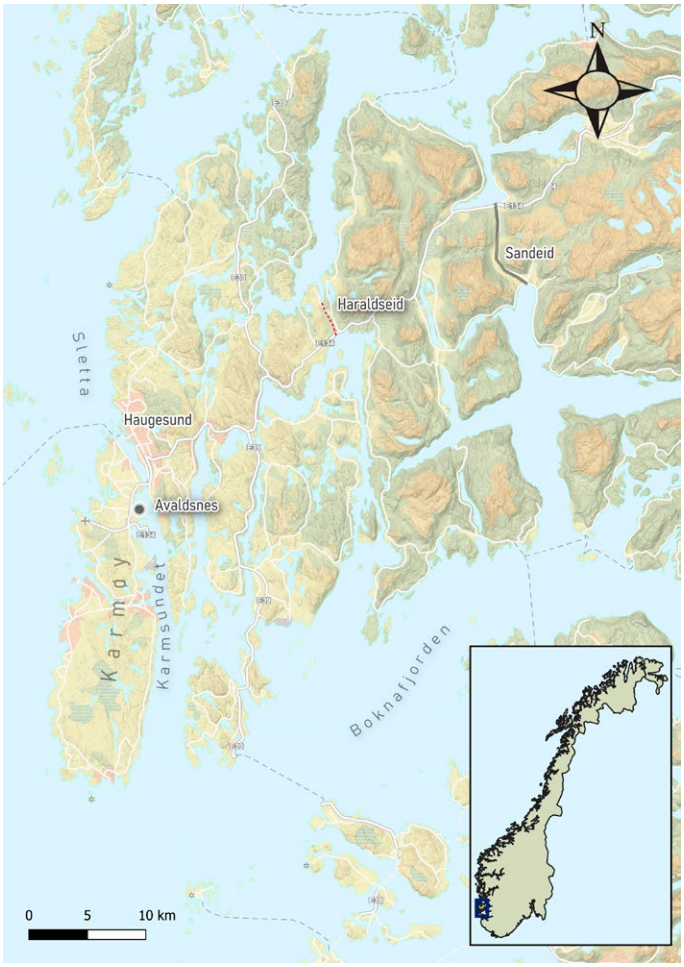

***Figure 1**. The location of Haraldseid in northern Rogaland along the Norwegian coast. The main seaway went through Karmsund, with another portage across Sandeid. Map: Christopher F. Kvæstad.*

This article discusses evidence of organised use of the Haraldseid portage in the Iron Age and Medieval period. It attempts to bring together research from the last decades, including studies of documentation of modern use, legends and place names related to the portage (Østrem 1996, 2012), the mapping of Haraldseid on Dutch maps from the 17th century (Fyllingsnes 2006) and results from the archaeological investigations in 2004 (Tveit and Elvestad 2006, Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020). The core of the article is a presentation and discussion of the archaeological evidence. Even so, the authors aim to include all types of available evidence, with a special emphasis on the interaction between place names and legends in the study area. Compared with the archaeological evidence, the local legends seem to preserve a core of truth surviving as local, collective memory. The legends linking Haraldseid to king Haraldr Fairhair (Østrem 1996), whose main residence was at Avaldsnes, could reflect actual long-term relationships between the Avaldsnes rulers and their allies at the portage.

Eið-sites: Place names and archaeology

The point of departure for discussing Haraldseid is the name in itself (1514-1621 Haralssedh, 1563 Harrildtzeidt). While surviving as the name of a farm, it is ultimately related to a wider area, the *eið* or portage. Similar to places with the element *skeið* (see Loftsgarden, this volume), the presence of the place name element *eið* provides the first clue that this might be a site of historical and archaeological interest.

One of the defining characteristics of places is that they have names. Place names provide sources of valuable information about the society and the local traditions they are placed in. They may inform about central locations and their functions in older rural settlements, including important sites of political power and communications (Særheim 2014). Place names not only locate where activities, happenings, or phenomena took place; through the linguistic material, the names may also tell us something about what may be connected with the place. Place name research aims to uncover the background for the naming of a place, i.e., topography, flora or fauna, methods of labour, traditions and historical events (e.g. Gelling 1993, Haslum 2012, p. 34, Særheim 2014, p. 49).

Place names containing the element *eið* are frequent in Scandinavia, as well as in the northern Atlantic islands inhabited by Norse populations in the Viking period (Nyman 2006, p. 169). The basic meaning of the term is 'walking', but the word more specifically refers to a passage between two trafficable waters. Other names for portages in Scandinavia are *-bor* and *-drag*, referring to places where boats were carried and pulled, respectively (Fig. 2, Nyman 2006, p. 170). Some *eið*-names might merely indicate an isthmus which had the potential to be used as a portage, although not necessarily used as such in a systematic manner. However, some *eið*-names convey important sites for communications throughout a long period of time.

***Figure 2**. Illustration of the two main methods of crossing a portage, carrying and pulling boats. After Magnus (Magnus 1555).*

At Haraldseid, the importance of the function as a portage is underlined by the place name *Isvik* (1766 Isvig, 1883-92 Eidsvik), interpreted as a later form of an original Eidsvik (Østrem 1996, p. 37–38, 1999, p. 535, 2012), found in the southern part of the isthmus. A similar pair of *eið*-names are found at the neighbouring portage at Sandeid. Here, the farm name Eide is found in the northern end at Ølen, with the settlement district Sandeid situated in the southern end. The stretch Sandeid-Eide is rich in archaeology (e.g. Fyllingen 2020). In the neighbouring region of Agder, another important *eið*-site with rich Iron Age archaeology has been identified at Spangereid (Stylegar and Grimm 2005, Stylegar 2006).

It is reasonable to assume that the original name of Haraldseid was *Eið*, with the genitive form of the man's name *Haraldr* added as prefix later (Østrem 1996, p. 36). As we shall see, in local legends there is little doubt that the man in question was the Viking king Haraldr Fairhair. Only two farms with the name Haraldr are known from Rogaland, and the other site, Haraldsveit, is situated between Haraldseid and Sandeid (Særheim 2007, p. 89). Since the personal name Haraldr seems not to have been affected by i-umlaut, it probably arrived in Scandinavia after the 6th century AD (Sørensen 1958, p. 246). Haraldr is attested in several Danish and Swedish Viking Age runic inscriptions (cf. Peterson 2007, p. 106). In Denmark, the personal name is typically compounded with the suffix *staðir* in place names, but also occurs in *torp*-names (Sørensen 1958, p. 246). Danish and Swedish *staðir*-names are generally thought to have ceased production in the Late Iron Age (see Gammeltoft, this volume), while *-torp* is a Late Viking Age and Medieval place name type.

Before returning to the place names and legends of the area, we will take a detour to post-Medieval uses of the portage at Haraldseid.

***Figure 3**. The Haraldseid portage seen from Skjoldafjord towards Ålfjord in the north. Båtavika is situated to the left of the industrial buildings, with the present settlement cluster at Isvik seen to the right. These areas presumably were the southern end of a western and an eastern route across the portage. Photo: Christopher F. Kvæstad.*

Boat travellers and Dutchmen

The use of the portage for transporting small boats is first mentioned in a legal case from 1766, where it is stressed that such transport relied on help from local farmers (Østrem 2012). While the use of the portage is mentioned briefly by a cartographer in 1859, more substantial sources first occur in the late 19th and early 20th century. At this time, the portage was mainly used by itinerant Romani groups known as the 'boat travellers', who got local farmers to transport their boats across the portage. The boat travellers mainly used the same, fixed routes, and one of these ran across Haraldseid (Vie 2013). The first mention of this practice dates from around 1900, when an ethnologist noted that, in the olden days, the Romani travellers had their boats transported from Haraldseid to the Skjoldafjord (Østrem 1996, p. 32).

The final phase of this use of the portage is documented by ethnographic interviews, reflecting a number of different methods used to move boats across the portage. In the 1930s, two brothers from the area were hired to transport three boats, using a wheeled hay-sled. The boats were open clinker-built vessels with four or six oars. According to another account regarding the same period, it was also common to put logs or thwarts under the boats when pulling them. It was also reported that in the early 20th century, boats were frequently carried across Haraldseid (Østrem 1996, p. 35–36, Tveit and Elvestad 2006, p. 78).

Even though this is the only documented use of the portage, Dutch maps from the 17th century seem to testify that the portage has deeper historical roots (Fyllingsnes 2006). The Dutch, who by the 16th century replaced the Hanseatic league as the dominant mercantile power in northern Europe, intensified the trade with western Norway in the 17th century. The trade in timber, driven by the construction of rapidly expanding Dutch cities, introduced the traders to the inner arms of the Boknafjord, a region known as Ryfylke (Kjerstad 2017). The timber trade made it necessary to properly map the Norwegian west coast for sea travel.

The first Dutch maps of Norway seem to rely on information from maps made by bishops in Bergen and Stavanger in the early 17th century (Berg 2017). However, the different versions of the maps indicate that the Dutch cartographers got additional information from sailors having local knowledge. While the map printed by Bleau and Bleau (1640) is explicitly based on the map of Stavanger bishop Scabo (deceased 1626), the rather similar map printed by Janssonius (1636) has several additional place names lacking on the Bleau map (Fig. 4). Both Bleau's and Janssonius' maps mark the land stretch *Harelds Eid*. On the maps, sites of parish churches like Avaldsnes and Sandeid are marked with dots. Haraldseid, on the other hand, is written in a similar manner as fjords. Thus, it must have been a well-known portage at this time.

It is a known phenomenon from early maps based more on mental imaging than on precise measurements, that they underline important features through exaggerations (Miller and Mason 2018). For instance, lake Røldalsvatn shown furthest to the northeast in Fig. 4, is greatly oversized (compare Fig. 1). This area was important for the Dutch timber industry, as the timber was floated down from the lake and loaded at the mouth of the river Suldalslågen (*Lougn elf* on the map) (Fyllingsnes 2006, p. 25). In a similar way, the significance of Haraldseid is underlined on the map by representing the isthmus narrower than it is. By making it narrower, it is shown as an easily manoeuvrable stretch of land. The Dutch merchants did not have ships that were suitable to being pulled over a portage. However, if the sailing conditions were risky, their valuable cargo could be transported the land route across Haraldseid while their ships carefully were manoeuvred around Karmsund.

Figure 4. *Extract of northern Rogaland and southern Vestland on Janssonius' (1636) map. Public Domain.*

Legends and place names

The mentioned historical sources indicate the same types of transport across portages which are known at many other sites in Norway in the post-Medieval period, including the transport of people, boats and cargo (Stylegar 2006). However, at Haraldseid, local legends suggest that the portage has a far older history.

The Haraldseid legend is closely linked with the Viking king and partly mythical figure of Haraldr Fairhair, a key character in the foundation myths of both Iceland and Norway. In both the Medieval period and more recently in the Romantic era, Haraldr was actively used as 'a heroic narrative character disseminating a foundation story of Norway becoming an independent nation' (Guttormsen 2017). The main source to Haraldr Fairhair is Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla, written in the 12th–13th centuries (Killings 1996). Here, the king is portrayed as the first king of Norway, reigning c. AD 872–930.

According to Snorri, after a series of conquests, Haraldr won a great victory over his petty king enemies at Hafrsfjord near Stavanger c. 872. Haraldr then became sole ruler of the country, ruling from his five manors in western Norway, of which Avaldsnes was the most prominent (Mundal 2017, p. 35–37). Although parts of Snorri's accounts are obvious reconstructions, the consensus is that Haraldr directly ruled a western Norwegian kingdom. Avaldsnes upheld the position as a royal manor to the 14th century, and the harbour was regularly used by the Hanseatic league in the 14th–15th centuries (Skre 2017, Elvestad and Opedal 2020, Hommedal 2020).

The passage quoted in the introduction captures the core of the Haraldseid legend, as it was recorded around 1900 (cf. Mauland 1931). It states that:

1. Haraldr Fairhair pulled his ships over the Haraldseid portage
2. Haraldr Fairhair dwelled at the Haraldseid farm
3. Haraldr Fairhair made an underground passage to a girl at Kallstveit
4. There are many cairns along the portage, the evidence of battles

Importantly, the core of the legend establishes the relationship between the king, the portage and the farm, and it also connects archaeological features in the landscape to the legend ('underground passage', cairns). In the following, we will review some of the associations in local legends with place names and features in the landscape. While not all legends are very old, they say something about how the local perception of the landscape up until recently was strongly associated with the legend. We will first examine the place names and legends from Haraldseidvågen following the beginning of the eastern path to Isvik, before turning to the end of the western path and the legend of the secret passage to Kallstveit (compare Fig. 5).

Dramatic legends of King Haraldr's men

From Haraldseidvågen, the boats were presumably pulled up *Longbakka* ('the long slope'), up the *Dalen* ('valley') area. Higher up the valley, the name *Båtaleite* (specific: no. *båt*, 'boat', generic: no. *leite*, 'place with a good view', Særheim 2007, p. 139) also relates to the transport of boats across the portage. The latter is believed to have been the site where the king's men rested when pulling boats over the portage (Østrem 1996, p. 35).

Near the site Skogagjerdet, two rocks are called *Røvarsteinane* ('Robbers' rocks'). An informant recalled a legend told by his father Henrik Dybdahl (1880-1937): '*Røvarsteinane* are related to Haraldr Fairhair and his boats. He came sailing from the north into the inner part of the bay of Haraldseidvågen. He then pulled the boats over logs to the Skjoldafjord where he was safe. On this trip, two of his men died and were buried here. They wanted to build a grave mound, but there was not enough soil for a mound' (Østrem 1996, p. 34, authors' translation). As the two men were not properly buried, it was said that they returned to haunt the site as ghosts. According to the informant, a man sitting on a white horse had been seen at the site.

The same informant further recounted the legend of the hill *Hovåsen* ('the high hill', cf. Særheim 2007, p. 110). The name is pronounced *Håvåsen* and has been interpreted locally as 'Head hill', as 'håve' is dialect for head. 'One of the robbers who had joined [Haraldr] got his head cut off. How and why, we do not know. His head was put on a stake on Håvåsen, as it is possible to see the Skjoldafjord from there. It was used as a marker for those who pulled the boats over logs' (Østrem 1996, p. 34, authors' translation). This legend exists in another version not mentioning Haraldr Fairhair, and it was probably based on the story of an actual murder in 1656 (Østrem 1996, p. 35).

Stylegar (2004) has previously argued that the Viking period portage path went along the east side of the valley to Isvik, and that the western path instead belongs in a younger phase. Part of his argument was that ancient graves are often found alongside the path of roads and portages. He therefore described the presence of a series of *haug* place names ('hill' or 'mound', cf. Særheim 2007, p. 90–91) following this part of the valley. From north, we have *Nausthaugane*

at Haraldseidvåg, then *Grimshaughaugen*, *Haugen*, *Asbjørnhaug*, as well as *Bjørkhaug*. However, these *haug* sites all seem to reflect natural hills and not burial mounds. While there was probably an eastern route alongside the western route, today there are no preserved traces of it. Instead, the combination of ancient roads, graves and a cluster of relevant place names are only documented on the western route to Kallstveit.

Queen Nua and the secret passage to Kallstveit

Another colourful local legend is linked with a leitmotiv in the sagas – Haraldr Fairhair's many extramarital affairs with mistresses (Norse: *friller*). The quote preceding the introduction above mentions Haraldr's lover at Kallstveit or Meland. Another informant, Lars Bjoland (1881-1969), gives a slightly different version of the legend, placing Haraldr's 'queen' at Nuasete: 'On Haraldseidheia, with a view over the Skjoldafjord, the croft Nuasete is located. Here, king Haraldr had the queen Nua guarding the passage' (Østrem 1996, p. 33, authors' translation). At the highest point on the west side of the portage, queen Nua controlled the traffic while Haraldr's men were pulling their ships across the portage. Several sources state that there was a secret passage at Nuasete, and one source claims that King Harald once hid there (Østrem 1996, p. 33). Mauland (1931) instead relates this story to Kallsveit/Meland, southeast of Nuasete, and states that the secret passage went from Haraldseid to Kallstveit.

The secret passage obviously refers to the sunken roads in the outfields of Haraldseid, Meland and Kallstveit, passing Nuasete. Even today, the remains of these roads have rather impressive dimensions, and it is easy to understand that they were interpreted as the remains of a collapsed, secret passage. At the end of this path, there is a cluster of place names explicitly related to portage practices, including *Båtavegen* ('The boat road'), *Draget* ('The [boat] drag'), and *Båtavika* ('The boat bay') in the Skjoldafjord (Østrem 1996).

The main lesson to be learned about this legend is that the sunken roads in the outfield of Kallstveit were perceived in the 19th and early 20th centuries not as portage roads but as traces of something old, associated with King Haraldr. Most likely, this means that the route had gone out of use before the documented use of the portage in the 18th to early 20th century. This certainly was not the route used by the 'boat travellers', it belongs to an older phase. Stylegar's (2004) assumption that the *Båtavegen* route belongs to the youngest phase therefore seems less likely. Presumably, both the eastern and the western routes were used in prehistory, and Stylegar might be right in assuming that larger ships followed the eastern path.

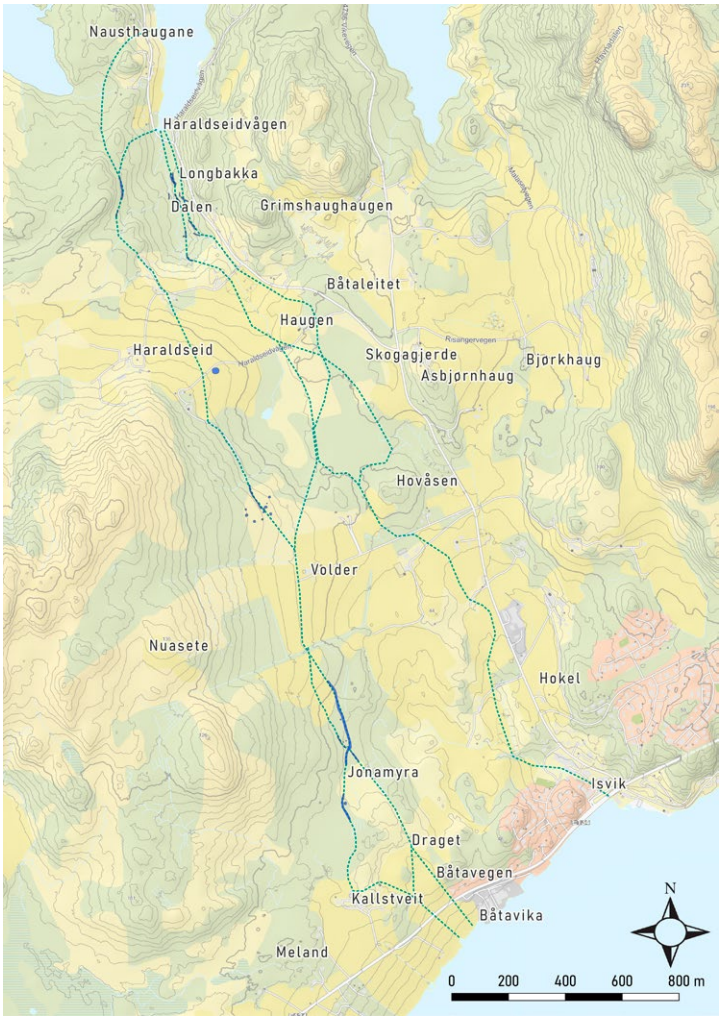

***Figure 5**. Place names and possible routes across Haraldseid. Map: Christopher F. Kvæstad.*

The archaeology of *Haraldr's eið*

Neither the documented use of the portage by boat travellers in modern times, the mention of the portage on Dutch maps, nor the legends associating the place name with a Viking king, provide any guarantee that the portage was actually used in prehistoric and early historic times. Could there be any core of truth in the vivid legends? To investigate whether the portage was used prior to the 17th century, we must turn to the archaeological material.

Although local legends have been very much alive at Haraldseid in recent centuries, very little was known archaeologically about the area until surveying and minor excavations were initiated in 2003-2004 (Elvestad 2003, Tveit and Elvestad 2004). For some years, only tentative results from the excavations have been available (Tveit and Elvestad 2006).

Recently, the archaeological material has been catalogued, radiocarbon dates and osteological analyses have been recollected, and the examined sites have been re-surveyed and added to the Askeladden database of cultural heritage (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020).

With the place name as our starting point, we will first address the association with King Haraldr. Are there any possible traces of elite presence or indication of royal influence at Haraldseid? Did Haraldr Fairhair or any of his kind either dwell in or impose their influence on this area? We will then consider the traces of the *eið* itself. Is there any evidence of landing sites, and what are the characteristics and dates of the roads known across the portage? What kind of use and transportation do they indicate, and was traffic merely local, or regional in scope?

Figure 6. *Roman glass vessel and Viking period sword from two other sites in Rogaland, resembling those found at Haraldseid. Photo: Terje Tveit © Arkeologisk museum, UiS.*

From rich graves to royal domain

Although 19th century antiquarian accounts mention ancient house remains on the Haraldseid farm (Nicolaysen 1868, p. 153), these remains are now lost and there have been no settlement excavations at the farm. It is assumed, however, that the initial farm settlement at Haraldseid was situated at the site known as Syståvå (Østrem 1999, p. 403). This farm site is situated some 60 metres above sea level, with a good overview towards the Ålfjord and the northern inlet to the portage at the bay of Haraldseidvågen. Previously, there were several burial mounds in this area, but today only the largest burial mound is preserved, although damaged.

This burial mound is 18 metres in diameter and is situated a hundred metres northeast of the present farmhouses (Haraldseid in Fig. 7). Burial mounds of this size are rare in the region; large burial mounds are mainly found near Karmsund and Avaldsnes (Ringstad 1986). Before 1829, the remains of two richly equipped graves were found in a burial mound 'close to the houses' at Haraldseid (Nicolaysen 1862, p. 336). The mound in question was most likely the large mound mentioned above. The recorded finds were lost, but from the antiquarian descriptions, it is assumed that these finds originated from two different graves.

The first was a grave with a facetted glass vessel of Roman origin from the late Roman or Migration periods (c. AD 300-550). The glass was decorated with rectangular fields, and it held 0,3 litres. A glass of a similar type is depicted in Fig. 6. Roman glass vessels were part of the elite lifestyle in the Early Iron Age, and formed an important element in ritual drinking feasts where the social bonds between the elites and their warriors were negotiated (Reiersen

2017, p. 99). The lady of the house had a special role in this ritual, and glass vessels are found in the graves of men and women of the elites. It is possible that the glass vessel, whether it belonged to a woman or a man, was a gift from allies. The grave with a glass vessel presumably was the primary grave in the large burial mound, suggesting that the relatives of the deceased were so powerful that they had the opportunity to raise a monument of this size.

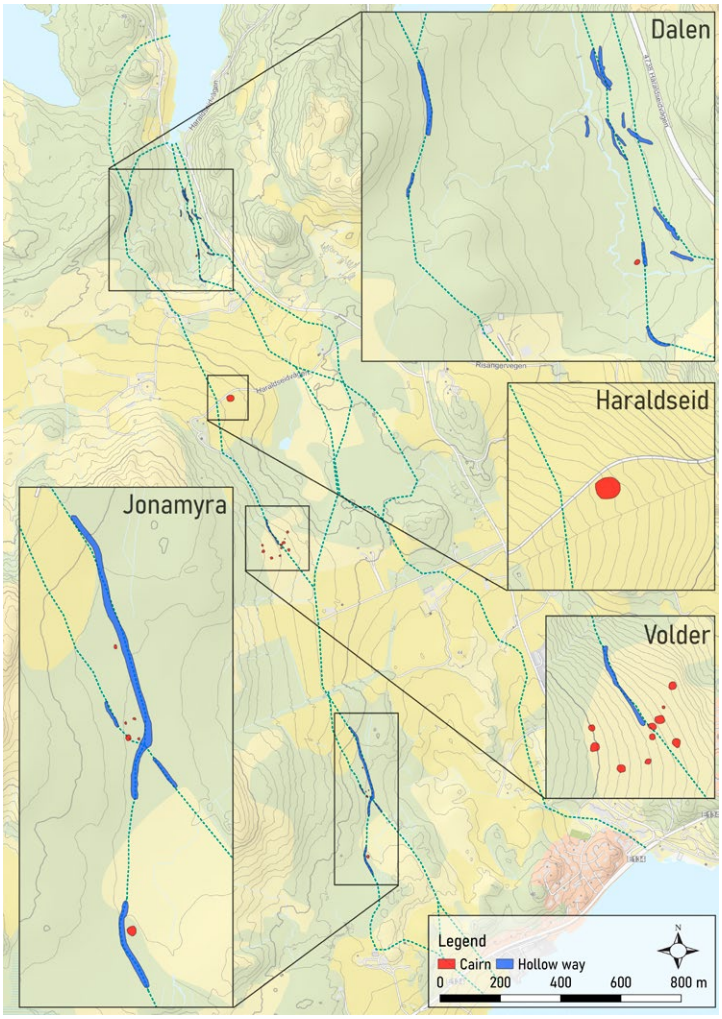

***Figure 7**. Archaeological features across Haraldseid, at the sites Haraldseid, Dalen, Volder and Jonamyra. Map: Christopher F. Kvæstad.*

In the Viking period (AD 800-1050), another richly equipped grave was incorporated into the mound, perhaps to create a link to the ancestors. This was an equestrian burial with a horse bridle and stirrups. Although the finds are lost and other finds from the grave remain unknown, this was probably also the grave of an outstanding person. Graves with stirrups are rare in southwest Norway. Before 1925, two soapstone vessels were found in one or more

graves close to the main farm at Haraldseid, indicating the presence of additional Viking period graves close to the settlement (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020, p. 63).

Another richly furnished Viking period grave was found a few hundred metres east of the large burial mound. The placement of this grave was rather atypical, situated low in the terrain and next to a small river. Judging from other burial mounds known across the portage, this grave was most likely situated close to one of the routes across the portage. The grave included parts of an axe blade and a sword of Petersen's (1919) type H where the handle had bronze inlay. The sword was rather poorly preserved, but as an illustration, a similar sword is shown in Fig. 6. The grave is dated to the first half of the 9th century.

In sum, the graves known from the Haraldseid farm give the impression that a powerful elite lineage dwelled here in both the Early and Late Iron Age. The glass vessel and the large burial mound raised in the late Roman or Migration periods show that local elites had access to prestigious objects and that they had the power to put many people to work making a large burial mound for the lineage. Similarly, in the Viking period, another important individual was buried with equestrian gear in the old burial mound. The burial with a sword found along the portage route suggests a close association between the elites at Haraldseid and control of the traffic across the portage. From the placement of the graves, it seems to have been important for the Viking period elites at Haraldseid both to show a link to the ancestors buried in the large mound at the farm and to show their association with the portage.

When the first written sources emerge in the Medieval period, Haraldseid is listed as a royal domain. At this time, direct royal control of the farm is thus documented. In the 15th century, the farm was managed by nobleman Trond Benkestok, a member of the royal council (Østrem 1999, p. 403). In the early 17th century, the farm is listed as situated along the common road (Østrem 1996, p. 37), and this brings us further to the documented routes across the *eið*.

Routes across the portage

As seen in the discussion regarding place names, there are several possible routes across the portage. This review focuses on actual evidence of sunken roads that have been excavated. The review centres around the quoted descriptions of the excavators Tveit and Elvestad (2006), supplemented with additional information from subsequent landscape surveys, object studies, osteological analysis and radiocarbon dates (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020). The evidence is examined from north to south, starting with the main locality at Dalen, and then continuing with the minor surveys conducted at the sites at Volder and Jonamyra (Fig. 7).

A landing site in Dalen

> 'At the end of the portage in the north, there are two sunken roads running parallel into a bog bordering the present shoreline [Fig. 8]. The first testpit was opened on a transverse section of the parallel sunken roads a few metres from the bog. The testpit displayed a rather complex structure. The depressions on each side initially understood as sunken roads, can be interpreted as two tracks on each side of an artificial earthwork, approximately 2 metres wide and 75 cm high. The tracks were probably dug down to a layer of sand, and the waste material was used in the earthwork. (…) Along the edge of one of the tracks there was a low string of stones marking the transition between

the track and the earthwork. In the middle of the earthwork between the two tracks there was an overturned stone monument, and close to the monument there was a concentration of charcoal and burnt bones. (…) On the left fringe of the track, there was another structure of flat stones and one small standing stone'

(Tveit and Elvestad 2006, p. 79–80).

***Figure 8**. The two parallel tracks at Dalen prior to excavation, seen towards north. Photo: Endre Elvestad © Stavanger maritime museum.*

The excavators interpreted the site as a landing site for boats. The oldest traces from the site were a few Mesolithic finds as well as pottery sherds assumed to date from the late Bronze Age (1100-500 BC) (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020, p. 62). Two radiocarbon dates confirm a use of the site in the late Bronze Age (Table 1). However, the radiocarbon dates clearly identified an intensified use in the Roman period. The charcoal and cremated human bones, as well as fragments of an antler comb, stem from a Roman or Migration period burial. The 460 grams of bones presumably stem from a young adult (Bratbak 2004). In western Norway, standing stones were raised mainly in the phases AD 200-550 and 900-1100 (Knutzen 2006, p. 95). Due to the context, the stones at Haraldseid might be associated with the former phase. Tveit and Elvestad (2006) interpret these stones as marking the landing site. Interestingly, county governor De Fine (1745, p. 62) mentioned two standing stones at Haraldseid, assumed to be markers of the county border. The stones may just as well have marked the landing site to the portage, and one of these stones were rediscovered by road workers in 1965 (Østrem 1996, p. 37).

The grave and establishment of a landing site in the Roman period are contemporary with the first elite burial at the Haraldseid farm, the grave with a Roman glass in a large mound. While there were no finds at the landing site from the Viking period, there were, rather surprisingly traces from the Medieval period. These were sherds from stoneware of a type used by Hanseatic merchants in the high-Medieval period (c. AD 1150-1350) solely for the transport of goods. This type of stoneware differs from finer Medieval ceramics which were traded goods and are more commonly found in rural Norway (Demuth personal communication in Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020). As the ships of the Hanseatic league probably were too large for transport across the portage, presumably only the cargo was sometimes transported over land, reducing the risk of losing the cargo in rough seas (cf. Stylegar 2006). The sherds might stem from an accident during transhipment. As Haraldseid was a royal estate and under the control of nobleman Benkestok in the 15th century, the transhipment and transport of products across the portage was probably under royal control in the Medieval period (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020, p. 62).

***Table 1**. Radiocarbon dates from charcoal samples taken at the excavation in Dalen and surveys at Volder and Jonamyra in 2004. Conventional dates after Gulliksen et al. (2006). Recalibrated using OxCal 20 (v. 4.4.3) with 2σ. In the article, the many dates to the Roman period (and overlaps with the late pre-Roman period) are emphasised.*

Lab. ref.	Sample	Locality	Uncalibrated	Calibrated	Period
T-18043	19	Dalen	2820 ± 70 BP	1199-819 cal. BC	Late Bronze Age
T-18044	22	Dalen	2825 ± 70 BP	1201-825 cal. BC	Late Bronze Age
TUa-5589	15	Dalen	2020 ± 35 BP	106 BC-114 cal. AD	Pre-Roman/Roman period
TUa-5588	7	Dalen	1890 ± 35 BP	65-235 cal. AD	Roman period
T-18042	17	Dalen	1925 ± 80 BP	101 BC-326 cal. AD	Pre-Roman/Roman period
T-18041	1	Dalen	1745 ± 65 BP	129-432 cal. AD	Roman period
T-18047	30	Volder	1925 ± 80 BP	101 cal. BC-326 cal. AD	Pre-Roman/Roman period
TUa-5590	28	Jonamyra	6005 ± 45 BP	5026-4786 cal. BC	Mesolithic period
T-18045	25	Jonamyra	3025 ± 85 BP	1447-1016 cal. BC	Early Bronze Age
T-18046	27	Jonamyra	2310 ± 80 BP	751-167 cal. BC	Pre-Roman period

Wheel tracks at Volder?

Up the valley from the landing site there are several sunken roads, partly running parallel one another. There is also a cairn here, and previously there were several cairns along the road including the Viking period grave with a sword (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020). As mentioned, further south there might have been both a western route towards Kallstveit and an eastern route towards Isvik, but only the western route is known archaeologically. At some point the western route went further uphill, and the next traces of roads and cairns are to the northwest of a farm named Volder. To the south-east, the place name Nuasete occurs. As we have seen, the sunken roads of this area have been associated in folklore with Haraldr Fairhair's secret passage to visit queen Nua or a Kallstveit girl. The road at Volder went across a field with ten cairns. What was first seen as two parallel roads was later verified to be only one road.

> 'One testpit was established 90 [degrees] across the two depressions. In the distinct depression there was moraine sediment of grey silt under the turf and a layer of reddish-brown sand. Between the silt and the sand there was a thin layer of gravel cut off at each side by two darker fields with the same breadth of approximately 20 cm [Fig. 9 left]. The fields were running parallel in the same direction as the track, and

the breadth between them was 120 cm. Between the track and the parallel depression, there was an earthwork consisting of reddish-brown sand containing fragments of coal. In the shallow depression there were no traces of structural elements.

Our interpretation of the track is that the original ground surface and the relatively loose sediment of sand, was removed to uncover the compact layer of grey silt. The waste material was placed close to the road forming the earthwork between the depressions. The darker areas might be wear marks from wagons, wheeled sleds or sleds. The width between the wear marks was, as already mentioned, 120 cm, approximately the same as in Danish prehistoric roads' (Tveit and Elvestad 2006, p. 81).

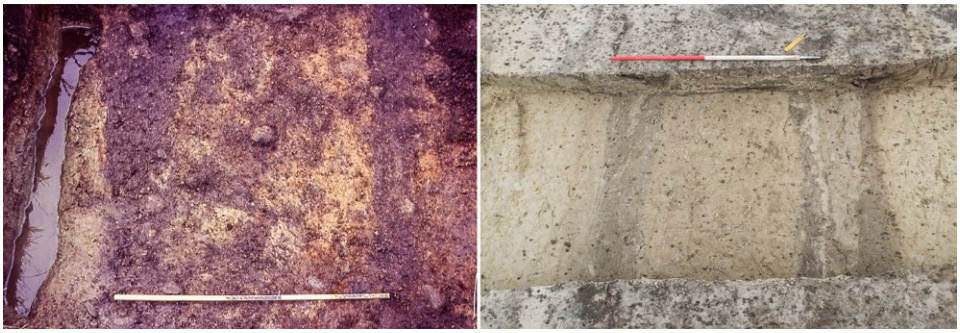

***Figure 9**. Left: Road with possible wheel tracks at Volder. Photo: Endre Elvestad © Stavanger maritime museum. Right: Similar tracks at Sømmevågen in Sola. Photo: Christopher F. Kvæstad © Arkeologisk museum, UiS.*

The charcoal sample from the tracks was dated to the early Roman period (Table 1; cf. Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020, p. 67). At the time the tracks were excavated, no prehistoric roads with wheel tracks were known from Rogaland. Today, at least one parallel is known from the locality Sømmevågen in Sola. In 2013, the site of a smithy from the 8th and 9th century was excavated (Meling 2014a). Here, a 50 metres long road was preserved, ending at the workshop (Fig. 9 right). The road with wheel tracks resembles those at Volder, indicating that vehicles with wheels – either wagons or sleds – were in use in the region prior to the Medieval period (Reiersen and Kvæstad 2020, p. 67).

A stone-paved road and box-shaped tracks at Jonamyra

In the area around Jonamyra, there are two sunken roads crossing each other, varying between U-shaped, V-shaped and square-shaped profiles. One of the roads is heading in a south-easterly direction towards the place name cluster *Draget*, *Båtavegen* and *Båtavika*. There are five small cairns in the central part of Jonamyra, as well as one larger cairn, 10 metres in diameter, furthest to the southwest (Fig 10 left).

'In this area one testpit in a deep V-shaped formation revealed a structure similar to the tracks at the first site – a dugout depression with a layer of stones in the bottom with a breadth of 1 metre. The only difference was that the bottom layer consisted of fist sized stones laid upon sandy and humified sediments. The depression was about 40–50 cm deep and was dug into sediment consisting of gravel. A survey with an earth auger gave the impression that the structure continued for at least 25 metres in each direction from the test pit.

> Another testpit was dug on a site close to the area with the portage place names. This track was a box-shaped or square depression with a breadth of approximately 1,5 metres and approximately 30 to 40 cm deep. Directly under the upper layer of turf, there was a thin flat layer of gravel and sand. But in contrast to the other structures this depression seemed to be due to wear. Not by walking or riding, but by the transport of broader objects' (Tveit and Elvestad 2006, p. 81).

***Figure 10**. Left: Trench with stone paved road at Jonamyra. Photo: Endre Elvestad © Stavanger maritime museum. Right: Stone paving radiocarbon dated to the Viking period, found underneath the present Sundevegen in Stavanger. Photo: Even Bjørdal © Arkeologisk museum, UiS.*

The radiocarbon dates from Jonamyra were rather early, including dates to the Mesolithic, the early Bronze Age and the Pre-Roman Iron Age (Table 1). The youngest date is interesting, however, as the first paved roads in Denmark occur in the Pre-Roman Iron Age, although the classical examples stem from the Roman period (Jørgensen 1988). In Sveio, the neighbouring municipality to the west, both a pre-Roman phase and a Viking period phase have been identified below a historical road known as the Royal road (Serafinska 2013). At Jonamyra, it is also possible that the pre-Roman date reflects the last activity before the road was constructed. The best regional parallel to the paved road at Jonamyra seems to be the paved road unearthed below the present-day road Sundevegen in Stavanger (Fig. 10 right). Even if the radiocarbon dates from the Sundevegen road stem from the Viking and Medieval periods, two farm complexes from the Roman and Migration periods have been excavated along the road and were presumably connected to it (Bjørdal 2019). Finally, during excavations at the portage Tiltereid in central Norway, a similar stone paved road was the foundation of a road laid with logs (Norwegian: *kavlveg*) (Heen-Pettersen and Haug 2015, p. 29). The oldest phase was dated to the early Bronze Age, with timber from the Viking period dating the latest phase.

As was stated by the excavators Tveit and Elvestad (2006), the road running south-east and having a box-shaped depression seems to have been shaped by wearing through the transport of broader objects, perhaps a horse with a sled carrying a boat towards Båtavika?

Finally, a few remarks should be made about the lack of radiocarbon dates confirming the use of the Haraldseid portage in the Viking period. As has been noted, the establishment of a richly furnished grave alongside one of the paths, indicates the importance of the portage at this time. From the mentioned analyses of other multi-phased roads, there is also reason to believe that not all phases can be identified by datable evidence. At Sundevegen, the local

context suggested that the road was in use in the early Iron Age, although only Viking and Medieval dates were recorded (Bjørdal 2019). Without the rather surprising finds of Medieval ceramics at Haraldseid, there would have been no direct evidence for the use of the road after the Roman period. By its impermanent nature, the transportation across the portage did not leave many traces after the road was established. Had the local soil conditions allowed for the preservation of unburnt wood, the picture might have been different. The log road found at Tiltereid was dated to the Viking period (Heen-Pettersen and Haug 2015). Without the preserved logs, only the Bronze Age phase would have been possible to identify there.

The documented roads across Haraldseid are presumably the surviving remnants of a larger network of paths that originally existed here. The preserved roads give the impression of different types of transport across the portage. Some roads have been dug out, and even paved, indicating a well-organised facilitation of a portage of regional significance. Other roads show traces of the transport itself, including possible traces of wheels and sleys. While the excavations at Haraldseid so far have been rather limited, it is in fact the best archaeologically examined stretch of road in the Rogaland region.

The Haraldseid portage and the rulers at Avaldsnes

Based on the archaeological features in combination with various sources, we might then try to discuss and synthesise the present knowledge about the portage across Haraldseid in the Early and Late Iron Age and in the Medieval period. The potential of using the isthmus as a portage presumably has been known by people travelling these parts already in the Mesolithic times and the Bronze Age. However, both radiocarbon dates and artefacts indicate an intensified use of the portage from the Roman period onwards.

The landing site at Dalen by Haraldseidvågen seems to have been established in the Roman period, with cultural layers, standing stones and a cremation grave from the period. The possible wheel tracks at Volder have a similar date. It does not seem to be coincidental that the inclusion of a Roman glass vessel in a large burial mound at the Haraldseid farm stems from approximately the same time. The location along the portage provided an opportunity for the people dwelling at the farm to increase their power by taking control of the traffic. The transport of boats or cargo across the portage demanded that local people facilitated the transport and allowed traffic to cross their land. The establishment of a better organised portage in the Early Iron Age coincides with the first signs of local power.

As has been stated by most researchers dealing with Haraldseid, the portage, due to its place in the communication, could not be understood separately but must be put into its regional context. The assumption made by Nordland (1950, p. 45–46) that Haraldseid was a 'back door' to Avaldsnes and Karmsund still seems the most reasonable explanatory model for understanding the regional context of Haraldseid throughout the Iron Age and Medieval period. As the most important centre of power in the region was so intimately related to the control of the traffic through the main seaway, it is likely that the portages at Haraldseid and Sandeid avoiding the Karmsund were controlled in one way or another (Table 2). These areas all had a deep history of power structures linked to topography and traffic. When actors with royal ambitions entered the scene in the Viking period, these well-established structures could be utilised.

In the Roman period, the Avaldsnes area had both the largest concentration of Roman imports in the region and the most opulent grave in Scandinavia from the period (Reiersen 2010, Stylegar and Reiersen 2017). There are indications that the Avaldsnes milieu had allies situated alongside the alternative seaways avoiding Karmsund (Elvestad 2010, Reiersen 2017). Elvestad (2005) has shown that status objects from the Early Iron Age in northern Rogaland are concentrated along the seaways, stressing the importance of controlling the traffic. We might therefore take a closer look at the distribution of Roman glass vessels in northern Rogaland, and in the bordering parts of Vestland in the north (cf. Reiersen 2017, Figure 5.6).

In southern Vestland, Roman glass vessels are found at Rosendal and Etne, both of which were major centres with good access to agricultural and outfield resources (Reiersen 2017). Glass vessels are also found at Stord and Borgundøy, minor centres situated strategically where several seaways met. Likewise, in northern Rogaland, Hebnes was a minor centre, strategically situated at the crossing of several fjords. A few glass vessels are found outside defined centres. One is found on the small island Feøy, strategically situated along the seaway going west of Karmøy, the other is found at the Haraldseid portage. Thus, the glass vessels are found at major centres, as well as at strategic places where the seaway could be controlled. It is rather likely that this pattern shows that glass vessels were given as tokens of alliances between milieus at major centres and subordinate partners situated at strategic places (Reiersen 2017, p. 99–106). In a regional context, the Avaldsnes centre is the most likely provider for the Haraldseid glass vessel, and it is plausible that this object reflects alliances with Avaldsnes.

***Table 2**. A simple comparison between activity at Avaldsnes and traces of elite presence and activity along the roads at Haraldseid in the Early and Late Iron Age and the Medieval period.*

Period	Avaldsnes	Haraldseid farm	Haraldseid portage
1-550	Elite graves Elite settlement	Large grave mound Grave with glass vessel	Roads established (stone paved, wheel traces), grave and standing stones at landing site
550-1050	Ship graves Royal manor	Equestrian grave	Rich grave with sword along road
1050-1550	Royal manor Hanseatic harbour	Royal domain managed by nobleman Benkestok	Hanseatic sherds at landing site

In the Early Iron Age, the name of the central farm most likely was uncompounded *Eið*. The genitive form of the man's name *Haraldr* then probably was added sometimes between AD 550-1050. At Haraldseid, the central features of the Viking period are the equestrian grave with stirrups found at the farm, and the grave with sword and axe situated along the portage path. Both stirrups and swords are associated with the uppermost levels of society. Similar to the status objects of the Early Iron Age, the datable weapon graves from the Late Iron Age in northern Rogaland cluster at seaways and portages (Hofseth 1988, p. 34–35). The two Viking period graves from Haraldseid might thus be put into a similar context as the Roman glass vessel, with Avaldsnes interpreted as the main agent controlling the regional traffic.

In the Merovingian period and Viking period, Avaldsnes upheld its position as a regional centre. The two oldest ship's graves in the country from the late 8th century indicate the presence of regional kings (Stylegar and Bonde 2009, Opedal 2010, Bill 2020), and from the 9th century, the sagas portray Avaldsnes as a royal manor (Mundal 2017). Opedal (2010) has suggested that the Avaldsnes kings had regional networks of allies in both the 8th and 9th centuries. In the latter period, Haraldseid has been pointed out as an important strategic site at the core of Haraldr Fairhair's kingdom (Opedal 2010, p. 197–199).

In this context, the equestrian burial with stirrups at Haraldseid seems highly relevant. Of the three preserved equestrian graves in Rogaland, one is dated to the 9th century, the two others to the early 10th century (Braathen 1989, p. 89–90, Meling 2014b, p. 113). Several researchers have associated the equestrian graves with the *lendmenn* administrators of the king, or a level below these (Skre 1998, p. 330 with references). The equestrian burial from the strategic site at Haraldseid could tentatively be linked to the establishment of alliances tying together the kingdom of king Haraldr Fairhair and his successors. The equestrian burial was put into the same mound as the older elite grave, stressing the link to the old lineage at Haraldseid. This might indicate that this was an alliance with the existing lineage, rather than a confiscation of land and a replacement of landowners. However, one cannot rule out the latter possibility. The new name of the portage might be related to the alliance with royals, or otherwise allude to contact with the kings at Avaldsnes, heirs of Haraldr Fairhair.

At some point, the portage probably was transferred more directly into royal hands, and in the Medieval period it was royal domain. Due to its' strategic importance, it seems it was eventually confiscated by the crown. At this time, people directly related to the king managed the farm. In the 15th century, the farm was managed by a member of the royal council, Trond Benkestok. The excavations at Dalen revealed sherds of Hanseatic transport ware. Again, Haraldseid's role as an alternative to Karmsund is underlined. The Hanseatic league used the harbour at Avaldsnes at least in the 14th and 15th centuries (Elvestad and Opedal 2020). Although the merchant group at times were in direct conflict with the crown, the use of the Haraldseid portage for the transport of cargo was presumably done with royal assent. While we have no direct traces of Dutch travellers using the portage in the 17th century, the maps at least confirm that this transport route was known at the time. Later, the use of the portage mainly was reduced to the local transport of boat travellers, before the millennia old practice went out of use prior to the Second World War.

Epilogue: The Haraldseid legend as collective memory

Through our work with the archaeological features at Haraldseid the last couple years, the authors' view of the local legends has changed. While at first the authors regarded the local legends merely as recent folklore, we now consider these as the final remains of old traditions having key embedded memories about ancient uses of the landscape.

Collective memory, or social memory, are shared pools of memories, knowledge and information within social groups, a process by which a 'society uses its past in giving its present form a meaning' (Byock 2004, p. 300). Collective memory can be constructed, shared, and passed on by large and small social groups. In contrast to individual belief, it is a construct of a collective notion about past ideas and events seen as a social phenomenon (Connerton 1989, Halbwachs 1992, Hutton 1993). Like all memory, they are not 'ready-made reflections of the past, but eclectic, selective reconstructions' (Lowenthal 1985, p. 210).

People tend to use the landscape and parts of it as mnemonic devices to navigate their surroundings (Wiley 2008), and spaces inscribed with meaning through past events become places. At Haraldseid, the actual use of the portage throughout the Iron Age was manifested in networks of roads guarded by burials of ancestors. Through the interpretations of these remains and the retelling of the Haraldseid legend, the narrative of powerful actors using and controlling the portage have been a part of the local understanding of the landscape for centuries.

In the end, the archaeology allows the core of the Haraldseid legend to be one of several possible interpretations. If Haraldseid was the farm of an ally of King Haraldr Fairhair, the king might well have dwelled at the farm enjoying an obligatory banquet (Norse: *veizla*). In some way or another, the farm might have been named after King Haraldr or his royal lineage. In addition, King Haraldr might well have travelled across the portage with the help of local men and women. But he was neither the first to do so, nor the last.

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This article was not part of the seminar, and we are grateful for Laurine Albris' subsequent request that we contribute to the publication. We also wish to thank Nils Olav Østrem for initially asking us to write about the archaeology of Haraldseid. As representatives of the archaeology in Rogaland, we also wish to draw attention to the fact that, in 2020, the place name archive for Rogaland was relocated to Arkeologisk museum, UiS, on the initiative of its founder, Inge Særheim. A digital copy of the archive is managed by the University of Bergen. We do hope the integration of a place name archive in our archaeological archives will lead to productive research in the future, combining archaeology and place names.

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Placing Place Names in Norwegian Archaeology

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

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

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

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

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