This article deals with the toponymic evidence – the place-names – in the Tjølling area, and the historical evidence they may reflect. In the settlement district (bygd) of Tjølling we find a few, probably very old, settlement-names, in -vin and -heimr, presumably to be dated to the first half or the middle of the first millennium. These are grouped around a lake whose name is probably to be found as the first element of one of these names, namely Vittersen. This name may be interpreted as denoting a sacral lake, probably of importance in some cultic activity here, containing a word related to the ON noun vítr, véttr, vettr, vættr ‘supernatural being, spirit, god’. Other settlement-names portray the settlement district as a large archipelago during the Iron Age, with several large and small islands, the names of some of which have been preserved. Finally the names Huseby (< Skiringssalr), Tjølling (< Bjødalvang) and Kaupang are interpreted and discussed. These names are to be seen as evidence of the socio-economic importance of this district, with an aristocratic chieftain’s or royal farmstead controlling a major harbour-market-place (Kaupangr).

The Tjølling settlement district has enjoyed a lot of attention in archaeological and historical research for centuries, for obvious reasons. The toponymic evidence, which also is very interesting, has not been scrutinized and discussed to the same extent, and that is a pity. Here we find some illuminating place-names together with some really obscure ones. One of the challenges to the analysis of these names is to establish some kind of chronology in the toponymic milieu, a common problem when working with the place-name material in Scandinavia.1

The Tjølling area received a lot of attention from early historians, who constructed their narratives on the basis of the sagas in particular, and declared this region the "cradle of Norway" (see Skre, this vol. Ch. 2; Munch 1850; Sørensen 1900, 1909a, 1909b; Storm 1901; Bugge 1909, 1915; Kjær 1909a, 1909b). This scholarship was later discredited, especially from the 1950s onwards, mainly for its insufficient evaluation of the sources and over-reliance on sagas, which shifted focus away from the Tjølling area. Instead Charlotte Blindheim’s sensational archaeological excavation at Kaupang, coupled with the new interest in Borre amongst other sites (see, e.g., Myhre and Gansum 2003), changed the disciplinary standpoint from history to archaeology in respect of Tjølling, with a new focus on Kaupang. The shift can in broad outlines also be said to be one from the area being seen as a major political site, one of the significant royal strongholds important in state-formation in Norway (rikssamlingen), to it being regarded as perhaps the most important port and market site in early Norway, vital for trade and mercantile contact with Europe.

So what is the evidence that the place-names of the Tjølling area can bring us? Do they underline or reduce the political and mercantile importance of Tjølling? Although not so easy to interpret, coupled with the chronological uncertainties, they seem to

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1 Normally phonetic notations from the dialect are used when analyzing names, together with early name-forms from (preferably medieval) documents. In this case, dialect name-forms are to be found in Rygh 1897–1936:VI and in the Place-Name Archive in the University of Oslo (Seksjon for Namnegransking). Since dialect forms have not been of decisive importance for the interpretations presented in this article, I have chosen to omit them. Anyone interested is referred to Rygh 1897–1936 or Seksjon for Namnegransking. Older forms of the names here cited are from Rygh 1897–1936; as for the sources, see Rygh 1897–1936.
hint at the Tjølling district as one of the most interesting areas in Norway, with indications of social and political significance in prehistory and the early Christian Middle Ages.2

4.1 The Early Iron-age names

To give some chronological framework for the area, we can establish that Roman Iron-age finds are known from the places where today we find the settlements Slottet, Auby, Klåstad, Valby, Huseby, Håkestad, Grenneberg and Vestad, and Migration-period finds from Roligheten, Amundrød, Vik, Skalleberg, Eide, Istre and Skåra, plus finds from either the Roman Iron Age or the Migration Period from Hosle (Blindheim 1974).3 To place these finds topographically, it seems important to note that in the very centre of the Tjølling district there is nowadays a small lake, Vittersentjørn, surrounded by quite a large marsh. This seems, most probably, to represent a fairly large lake, c. 1 km x 0.5, of the Iron Age, which like several other lakes in Scandinavia has been lowered and partly drained in the 19th century (Skre, this vol. Ch. 17:Fig.17.2). It is notable that this lake has a central – maybe even focal – location in relation to the distribution of the Roman Iron-age and Migration-period finds.

If we look for the earliest settlement-names in Tjølling, four names stand out: Guri, Lauve, Vittersen and Lingum. The first three are to be identified as -vin names, while the latter is clearly a -heimr name. Both the -vin and the -heimr names are, in my opinion, mainly to be dated to the Roman Iron Age or the Migration Period in Norway, although both types continued in use into the Late Iron Age.4 In the latter period, however, it would appear that they occur as developed and stereotyped forms, such as several instances of Askim, Solheim etc., and -vin names showing no i-umlaut (cf. Olsen 1926:154 and 158; Jansson 1951; Ståhl 1976:75; Pamp 1974:34; Brink 1988:73, 1991). The names that may be from the Early Iron Age are of course only a mere fraction of the names once in use during this early period, a point that it may be necessary to call attention to when addressing scholars other than toponymists. As for the -vin name-element we have also the complication that the word "vin" originally denoted a kind of meadow (cf. Gothic winja 'pasture, fodder; meadow'), and

2 Normally, in an analysis of this kind of a settlement district, one would have to be much more minute and penetrating, analyzing early cadastral registers and survey maps from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, analysing dialect forms, collecting and analysing natural-feature and field-names and other minor names, together with a topographic analysis in the field. This has been impossible for me when writing this article. For the potential for a more minute analysis, see (below) the information from maps and the document from 1439 regarding the boundary between Østby, Huseby, Lauve etc., and the mention of a name Helgefjell in the vicinity, which probably has wide and important implications for understanding the early landscape here. This article is hence to be looked upon as preparatory for a more minute analysis of the Tjølling bygd.

3 It may be important to stress from the outset for non-toponymic specialists that these finds do not, of course, date the historical farms and hamlets in the vicinity here mentioned. The question of if and when archaeological finds can be used for dating a prehistoric settlement whose name seems to have survived into modern time is a wide and complicated one (see, e.g., Brink 1984), which I will touch upon in passing later on.

4 I here use Early Iron Age for the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period combined (c. AD 1–600) and Late Iron Age for the Merovingian and Viking Periods together (c. AD 600–1050); roughly, because it is so difficult to be precise on chronology for place-names.

5 All early name-forms here and below are from NG.
a semantic development during the Iron Age to the sense of ‘settlement’ seems very likely (Brink 1988: 74). The problem is, then, to decide if we can identify an original sense of ‘meadow’ or a later one of ‘settlement’ for -vin names.

All three -vin names in Tjølling are problematic in respect of their qualifiers. This, in its own right, is an indication that they are ancient. Only Lauve seems to be fairly uncomplicated. In 1370 it was written a Laufuini, in 1391 a Laufuine, and in 1397 a Lauuine and i Laufvine (Rygh 1897–1936:V:295), which seems to indicate an older Laufvin, containing the ON noun lauf n. ‘leaf, leaves’, here probably indicating deciduous forest. Maybe this vin, ‘meadow (of some kind)’, was used for the harvest of leaves, cf. ON laufadráttr m., laufho¸g n., laufho¸gstr m. If this interpretation is correct, it is also evidence of the age of this name, according to the criteria noted. Lauve is thus to be looked upon as a really old name, probably to be dated to the Early Iron Age. The other two are more
It is tempting to see an older name for the lake, a possibility already proposed by Oluf Rygh (1897–1936: VI:295), but what this name may have been is uncertain. The problem relates to how we understand the -r- in the name-form in Røde Bog, a cadastral register of estates under the Bishop of Oslo prepared by Bishop Eystein in Oslo c. 1400. Normally -x- stands for -ks- (or -gs-), which gives a first element *Vittiaks-* which is most difficult to explain. However, there are known cases of -x- in 15th-century Norwegian documents being used for -s-, such as Gerixstadhom (ON Gíristáðum), Aurixstade (ON Óyrístaðum), Heixstadhom (ON Heiddisátum) etc. (ABI:xxx–xxxii) in Aslak Bolts jordebok (cadastral register) from the 1430s, and several other sources. A possible interpretation of the first element in the name Vittersen could therefore be as an old -vin name, but what the first element may be is more obscure. Here, it is tempting to see an older name for the lake, a possibility already proposed by Oluf Rygh (1897–1936: VI:295), but what this name may have been is uncertain. The problem relates to how we understand the -r- in the name-form in Røde Bog, a cadastral register of estates under the Bishop of Oslo prepared by Bishop Eystein in Oslo c. 1400. Normally -x- stands for -ks- (or -gs-), which gives a first element *Vittiaks-* which is most difficult to explain. However, there are known cases of -x- in 15th-century Norwegian documents being used for -s-, such as Gerixstadhom (ON Gíristáðum), Aurixstade (ON Óyrístaðum), Heixstadhom (ON Heiddisátum) etc. (ABI:xxx–xxxii) in Aslak Bolts jordebok (cadastral register) from the 1430s, and several other sources. A possible interpretation of the first element in the name Vittersen could therefore be as an old name of the lake, *Vittin/Vettrin*, producing a compound *Vitrissvin/Vettrissvin*. Such a qualifier would fit very well with a possible ancient lake-name, Pr.-Germ. *Wehtr-iax*, which would plausibly be identified with ON vitr, vettir, vetrir, vetr f. ‘supernatural being, spirit, god’; Sw vittra ‘fairy (of the forest)’6 cf. OE with ‘being, demon’, OHG with ‘spirit, being’ (< *wehtli-/wehtla-*) (NO:507; SEO: 1402; AEW:672). This etymology makes it possible to interpret the lake-name *Vettiriax > Vitrin/Vetrir as ‘the lake where supernatural being dwells’, or perhaps ‘the lake dedicated to gods and super naturals’. Hence, such a name of the lake is semantically to be connected to Scandinavian lake-names such as Guðsör, Tissa ('Týr’s lake'), Odensö etc. A plausible assumption may thus be that here, in the very central part of Tjølling district, there was a sacral lake during the Iron Age, dedicated to gods and natural beings, perhaps a lake where offerings were made to the deities, a well-known practice during prehistoric time in Scandinavia.7 This old lake has today only two remnants in the form of Vittersø-tjønna and the small Lille-tjønna in the south-east (see Skre, this vol. Ch. 17: Fig.17.2). It would be interesting to see if there are any votive deposits to be found in this marsh and lake, as have been found at Tisso on Sjælland, Kärringsjön in Halland, Skedemosse on Oland and more. Vittersen-tjøn would therefore qualify for a potential successor to Kaupang for fature archaeological surveys.

In this connexion it is extremely interesting to note a natural-feature name, Helgefjell, for a small but very distinct hill immediately to the east of Lille-tjønna (Skre, this vol. Ch. 17: Fig. 17.2), a hill with a very steep side to the west, which must have fallen steeply into the former lake. This is obviously an old name, mentioned, for instance, by Alexander Bugge in Tjølling bygdebog (1915:41), but found already in a document from 1439, cited in a judicial survey document from 1703, dealing with the boundary between the farms Austby, Huseby, Laue etc. in Tjølling parish.8

In this letter six men in the local law court announce that they have walked the boundary between Austby, Huseby, Laue etc., and in the letter the different boundary marks, in the form of bedrocks by the sea, a stone by a gate, a pine with a cross cut in it, the flat rock in the road, “og saa ouster i Helgafield”, i.e. and then Helgefjell to the east, etc. are mentioned. Boundary-marks were normally noticeable and easily identified natural features, and Helgefjell seems to qualify for this purpose.

The name Helgefjell has many counterparts in Scandinavia and Iceland. The most famous is perhaps the Helgefjell in western Iceland mentioned in the often cited passage in the Eyrbýrgja Saga when the settler Thorolf took land in Breiðafjörð and there built a hall with a high seat and a small cult house.
with an altar on which he placed an oath ring. The saga continues to relate that (Eyrbyggja saga pp. 9–10):

Thorolf named the mountain Helgefjell, 'Holy Mountain', into which he then believed he would file in any way, either by blood spilt in rage, or by anybody doing their 'elf-tremblers' there – there was a skerry called Dritsker [Shit-Rock] for that purpose. (Hreinsson 1997:134)

Here on Porsness, 'the headland dedicated to Thor', Thorolf named the mountain Helgefjell, 'Holy Mountain', into which he then believed he would enter when he died, and he created a cult site for cult practices and a thing site for legal matters. How much truth there may be in this story is very uncertain. However, there are several other Helgefjell etc. in Scandinavia, and we may conclude that many of these must have had a cultic-legal background (cf. Brink 2001).

Since this name here in Tjølling is evidenced as early as 1439, and in the letter it is said that 70- to 80-year-old men could verify the boundary marks 50 years before, hence c. 1390, this name may well qualify as an old name, most probably of pre-Christian origin. The situation of this Helgefjell in the immediate vicinity of a lake to which it may be possible to assign a name *Vitrir/Vetrir with its own cultic-religious background inevitably makes this a most intriguing place. If the interpretations are valid, Helgefjell seems to strengthen the hypothesis of previous cultic-religious activity at this former lake, and it would be extremely interesting, as mentioned above, to have an archaeological survey of the area.

North of the lake and the settlement of Vittersen we find Lingum. The name is written Limaensbygdh in 1495, in 1496 Lingensbygdh; in 1512 Lingensbygdh; later on in the 16th century the -bygd is dropped and we find Lindem, Lindem etc. (Rygh 1897–1936:VI:297). Rygh (loc. cit.) assumes that this name goes back to ON Lindheimr. However, the medieval name-forms point in different directions; the qualifier could be interpreted as: 1) ling 'heather' or perhaps 'moor, heath, sandy land';16 going back to ON lyng n. 'heather' (< *lingwa-), or a word *ling (< *lingwa-), a cognate with lyng, found in Swedish place-names and in Sw lingon 'lingonberry' (SEO:xxx); 2) lim n. 'lime' (cf. Henningsmoen 1974:25–6); or 3) lind f. 'lime (tree)' or 'well, water' (AEW:357). This place-name is most definitely to be understood as a name in -heimr, but the settlement has evidently been looked upon as a habitative isolate and therefore as a separate bygd, 'settlement district', or perhaps it had a wider spatial denotation. Since the Tjølling settlement district probably bore the name of its central occupied area, the bygd, during the Early Iron Age and in the middle of the first millennium, this name, ON Limheimsbygd, could be a candidate for this.

There may be another early place-name in the Tjølling district, namely Hæm, situated on a small former island between the mainland and a larger island Possey (to all appearances < porssey). This name seems to be a -heimr name. In Røde Bog it is written i Hæme i Possøyne; in 1393 we have a Hæme; in 1374 a Hæm; and in 1427 i Hævem (Rygh 1897–1936:VI:300). Rygh (loc. cit.) interprets the name as an older Háheimr, with the first element hár 'high', but notes that the hill, which might be the reason for the name, is small ("Den Høide, som for siger. " (DN 12:201, also published in Berg 1915:182)). An alternative interpretation, perhaps more plausible, could be that the first element is to be connected to the homonym há 'bay', found in several Swedish place-names (Zetterholm 1936), cf. ON hár m. 'the fork on a boat to have the oar; shark (a name given the fish from its sharp, triangular fin)' (SEO:327; DEO:144). In the Early Iron Age and still during the Late Iron Age, a small but
conspicuous bay reached up to the settlement site of Hem from the east (Fig. 4.1). This could explain the name.

It is possible that the Early Roman Iron-age (c. AD 100–200) finds, in the form of a set of jewellery, a knife and a gold finger-ring which were excavated by Slottet in 1888 in the burial mound (12 m in diameter) of a woman interred in a small chamber (Blindheim 1974:72), may be connected to Vittersen. This hypothesis finds support in the fact that Early Iron-age names in -heimr and -vin seem to have denoted not so much settlements but rather larger home territories, as I have suggested and discussed elsewhere (Brink 1991, 2002b:688–9). The archaeological finds here at Slottet may well qualify as being within the home territory of an Early Iron-age Vittersen, although this is, of course, merely a hypothesis to be tested. Two Roman Iron-age burials at Huseby excavated by Nicolaysen in 1867 (Blindheim 1974:76) may be connected in the same way to an Early Iron-age Guri settlement immediately to the west of Huseby.

The risk of circular argumentation is naturally – as often in the interface between archaeology and toponymy – a direct problem in cases like this, but observations of these kinds must be noted and eventually applied systematically in more extensive investigations in the future.

Thus the earliest settlement-names in Tjølling are interestingly grouped around the lake (*Vitrir/ Vettirir), with Guri to the south, Laue to the east, and both Vittersen and Lingum to the north of the lake. When comparing this settlement situation, which I assume to represent the Early Iron Age, with the Late Iron-age settlement situation in Tjølling, one gets the impression that the focus has moved from around and north of this lake to the area south of the lake, between the lake and the sea at Viksfjorden, with Huseby at the centre. This shift in settlement structure may partly be due to the shore displacement (land upheaval), with new, dry land to cultivate, and partly to the draw of the sea for seafaring, fishing and trade.

This leads us to the question of landscape change over time, and here the place-names can provide interesting evidences for an earlier maritime landscape and help us to reconstruct an Iron-age situation. The Tjølling area has been affected by the shore displacement (Sørensen et al., this vol. Ch. 12:267–72). When Kaupang was established the sea-level was c. 3.5 m higher than it is today, and during the Early Iron Age it is possible that it was 5–6 m higher. During the Late Iron Age, with a shoreline c. 3–4 m higher up the land, there was a long, narrow bay, pointing up towards Grettø, to the west. This bay must have been narrow and maybe quite long. It would therefore be plausible to connect the place-name Dregn, a settlement immediately to the west, with this former bay. The name Dregn (*Dran, Dren) could be interpreted as containing the ON dregn m. ‘thick log’ (Rygh 1897–1936:VI:290; cf. AEW:82), originally used in a figurative sense for the long and narrow bay.

Another, smaller, bay was at Kaupang, pointing to the north, towards Guri. Malmøya and Lamøya were present, but smaller than today, and the large Vikerøya, at the end of Viksfjorden, then consisted of several smaller islands. A significant bay went from Viksfjorden to the north-east, up to Vik. This Iron-age bay is evidently the explanation of this name, Vik ‘bay’. Next to Vik, by the ancient shoreline, we find the settlement Varil (a Vararelli 1376; Vararelli 1378; i Varello 1385; i Warelli 1391). The name probably originally denoted a landing place for ships. It contains the word vor f. ‘landing place’ (varar in the gen. sing.) and hellir m. ‘rock, flat rock’: hence ON Vararhellir.

To the east, west of Sandefjorden, there was a long and narrow peninsula stretching to the south. The delimitation of this elongated peninsula at the western side was a long and narrow inlet, a bay that opened out at the landward end (Fig. 4.1). This kind of small bay, with a lake-like end, was called a mar, ON marr m., or a *marr, a word found, inter alia, in some Swedish place-names (Moberg 1988–78: 8). This word is to be found in the place-name Marum (< Marheimar) on the Tjølling side of the fjord, in 1341 written as Marveimar and a Maraveimar, and in Rode Bog Mareimar.

East and south of Viksfjorden there were three islands in the Iron Age, which became connected towards the end of this period, creating the large, crooked peninsula we still have today. Thus Viksfjorden was in contact with Sandefjorden to the east for some or all of the Iron Age through two channels or sounds (cf. Blindheim 1976b:76). For the outermost of these islands, with the settlements Eftang, Fristad and Skjeggestad, the name seems to be lost. The name of the largest island is, however, known from medieval documents. In Røde Bog we find i Sandakre i Possøyene (Sandakr being a now lost settlement), i Kleikakre i Possøy; Sannes i Possøy; i Haemae i Possøyene; Sammesrud i Porsey and Sammesrud i Possøy; and finally i Høitom i Possøy. The name of this large island during the Middle Ages was therefore Possøy, which Rygh (1897–1936:VI:304) derives from Porsøy, an interpretation that may find support in the form Porsay in Røde Bog. This island name is then to be placed in the typological group of theophoric island names such as Frösö and Norderö (< Njerðbarøy). It is notable that on this old island we find the place-names Hövland (Hofland RB) and, nearby, Skisäker (Skesager NR), both of which can be given a pagan, cultic interpretation, and so perhaps represent a cult site on the island.

Between the mainland of Tjølling and the large island of Possøy during the Iron Age there was a smaller island. We may find its name in the settle-
ment-name Hosle, which in 1401 was written a Hoslu (Rygh 1897–1936:VI:299). Rygh (loc. cit.) attempted to derive the name from a river-name, but had to admit that no potential river or stream is to be found here. Instead, this name reflected as a feminine noun, could be the older name of the island: hence *Hasla ‘the island known for hazel’. When the shore displacement had proceeded to the point that this small island was joined together with the mainland via a small passage of land, a small isthmus, this became a site in the waterway where one had to haul the ship or boat over the small isthmus between the inlet from the east and the Viksfjorden, which may be reflected in the settlement-name Eide. The name is the dative singular form of the word eið ‘portage’; isthmus where one has to haul the boat between areas of water.

That the sea once formed a passage, and later on a bay, north of the former island with the assumed name of *Hasla is corroborated by the name Syrrist (i Siaugharystrw, i Siagharystrv RB), which goes back to a Sjóvaristra, containing in its second element the name of a river, *Istra (also found in the neighbouring name Skallist, in RB found as i Skalistrw), and the word sjór ‘sea’ as the qualifier, giving the meaning that here, at this site, the river *Istra flowed into the sea.

This river-name, *Istra, is also found in the settlement-name Istr, upstream, of the name of the settlement was written a Istru in 1390 and in 1439 as Istre. This river-name has parallels in Scandinavia, but its etymology is quite obscure. Per Hovda (1971:141) thinks the river-name is a derivative with an ancient -str-suffix to a stem in the word ON *íss m. ‘ice’, because this calm-flowing river froze unusually early.11 The obvious connection would otherwise be with ON ístr n. ‘fat’, but why this river would be blessed with such a name (ON *Istra, Pr.-Germ. *Istrón) is uncertain. Perhaps the quality of the water was likened to the white and glossy ister ‘fat’. The more adventurous and daring toponymist would note that a hydronymic stem *ístr- is found in river-names in Europe, for example in the old name of the Danube, Istrus (Krahe 1964:71), and try to connect our Norwegian name with those. In this case I am more cautious, and prefer a local explanation.

Finally, we must comment on the name of the large bay of Viksfjorden. This name is secondary, probably formed from the settlement with the name of Vik into which the fjord led. Scholars have discussed the older name of this bay. One interpretation is that the old name of the bay was simply *Vík ‘bay’ (Holm 1991:50); another, which has found several adherents, is that the first element in the name Skiringssalr (see below), a former name of the Tjølling settlement district during the Middle Ages, *Skiringr, could have been the original name of this bay. This *Skiringr could contain the ON adjective skirr ‘clear’, giving the name the meaning of ‘clear bay’ or ‘bay with the clear water’ (Fries 1980). This option—which I myself once recommended (Brink 1996b: 272) – can be questioned. The older name of this bay may instead be found in the settlement-name of Eftang, in RB known as Efíang, an interpretation already mentioned by Oluf Rygh (1896:7; cf. NSL:96).12 This bay thus had a typical name in -angr, meaning ‘bay’, as in Stavanger, Levanger etc. The first element is the word alpt ‘swan’, here in the plural, elptr.

After this excursus on place-names as evidence of landscape development, we can go back to the settlement-names, but turn now to the names that probably had their origin in the Late Iron Age.

4.2 The Late Iron-age and Viking-age names

In all probability, settlement-names containing -stad (< -stáðr) in Norway are to be placed in the Late Iron Age or the middle of the first millennium AD (Sandnes 1973:24; NSL:294–5; cf. Brink 1983:8–9). This holds also for place-names in -by with a first element—in stem-composition—containing a word relating to some topographical or vegetational feature rather than a personal name (Hellberg 1967:407–9). For example Vílby (: víllr ‘bank, pasture, levelled field’) and Sandby (: sund ‘sound, strait’).

The -stad names are Skreppstad (i Skreippistad-hom RB), probably containing a man’s name Skreppir, and the much noticed and discussed Gjerstad (a Geirståðum in Flateyjarbók; á Geirstóum in Ynglingatal; Gerestad NRJ), where the identification with this Gjerstad and the names found in Flateyjarbók and Ynglingatal is uncertain. In Ynglingatal, King Olaf, called Geirstaðólfr “Geirstad-elf”, is said to have been buried at this place. The first element seems to contain a man’s name Geirr or Geiri (Rygh 1901:85). Vestad, in the north of Tjølling, is a very interesting name. In RB it is written i Vestadhum, and the first element could be interpreted as the word vé ‘pagan cult site’, or, if an adjective, ‘holy, sacred’. Hybested by the river *Istra is written i Hyppistadom in 1398, in 1422 a Hæpppestadom, and in 1472 a Hyppestadom. The qualifier in this name may be a deprecatory nickname of a man, *Hyppin, containing the word hupp ‘lump’ (cf. the name of a female slave in Rigshula: Tørughjypja). Klåstad (i Klastadom 1372; Klastadum 1426) has not been interpreted and the first element is uncertain. Skjeggestad (i Skaggastadum RB) seems to contain a man’s name Skøggi (Rygh 1901:221), and finally Fristad (i Fristadum RB) may be a reduction of an older *Friðreksstáðr or something similar.

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11 For a discussion of a Pr.-Scand. hydronymic suffix -str, see Andersson 1975.
12 Another possibility, which cannot be ruled out, is that Efíang could be an older name for a narrow, small inlet, separating Eftang from Fristad during the Late Iron Age, as has been proposed by Gösta Holm (1991:50).
Together with the -stad names, and Valby and Sundby, there are a couple of other settlement-names that might be assigned to the Late Iron Age, such as Stålaker, with no reliable older written form, Bergan (i Bergfhum RB), an older Bergar, and others. Valby (af Valbe RB) is a -by/-be name containing the word val/vol flat grassland. The name is perhaps to be seen in conjunction with the place-name Vollen found at Tjolling church to the east. This name Vollen might be old, as old as the name Pjöldyng, and the word is often found in place-names for assembly sites, as, for instance, Voll in central locations in the old parishes in the province of Gjæstrikland in Sweden and in names such as Tingvalla, Pingvellir (Brink 1990:355–7, 2003, 2004). Tom Schmidt (2002a:448) has suggested that Valby is a detachment from the old Skiringssal (=Huseby), which also seems to be the background to Østy ‘the (detached) farm to the east’, east of Huseby.

Medieval names, or more correctly, place-names that were established during a colonisation phase of the early Christian Middle Ages that may already have begun in the Viking Period, are settlement-names in -teit, -rud, -rød and -bol. Åsmundrud is an older Åsmundarrud (or -rud), containing the man’s name Åsmundr; Kolstrud (Koosrud 1398), a man’s name Kolr; Ommundrud (Amunderød 1320), which Rygh (1897–1936:VI:296) interprets as Ogmundarrud, hence a man’s name Ogmundr, Swenherd, probably an older “Staeinarud to a man’s name Sveini, or a Stenaru
, to svin n. ‘pig’; Mosserud, probably an older Mosaru to mosi m. ‘dog’. A couple of names indicate deserted settlements, perhaps deserted during the late medieval agrarian crisis, such as Ódegården, Auby (Audeby 1458) and Tuft (< Tupit), denoting the foundations of a deserted house or farm.

Finally we come to the intricate but most interesting place-names in the centre of the Late Iron-age settlement district of Tjolling, the obvious foci of which were Huseby and Tjolling church. The discussion over the years has been focused on the place-name Skiringssal, a name lost today, but known from medieval sources. The big question has been where to locate Skiringssal, and also what kind of denotatum the name had. Before we refer the different opinions, let us review the occasions on which the name occurs in medieval texts and documents:

In the famous poem Ynglingatal (st. 30) we read in the stanza dealing with Halfdan Whiteleg (Jónsson 1912b:12; transl. Brink):

ok Skereið
i Skiringssal
of brynjaðs
beinum ðrugið
And Skereið
in Skiringssal
leans [droops] over
the bones of the mailshirt-hero

In Snorri’s Ynglinga saga (Jónsson 1922:ch. 44), in his Heimskringla, which has the poem Ynglingatal as its source, we read: [Hælfan dan hitbein] vard gamall mædr; hann varð sóttan dæð at Pottii ok var siban fluttar út á Vestfold ok heyggir par, sem hét Skereið í Skiringssal (“Halfdan became an old man; he died of illness at Toten and was then carried out to Vestfold and buried in a barrow in a place called Skereid in Skiringssal”).

In chapter 10 in Søgbrot af nokkrun fornknunum í Dana ok Svie veldi (“A fragment of the history of some ancient kings in the Dana and Svea realms”) we read: Þa er Sigurðr Hringr var gamall, var þat á einu hausti [... at þa konu ímoti homon Gand-dáls synir, mágar hans, ok báðu, at hann mundi veita þein líð at rúða á hendr þeim konungi, er Eysteinn hét, er því ríki réð, er þá hétu Vestmarar, en þá heitir Vestfold. Þa voru höfð blót í Skiringssal, er til var sótt um alla vikina... (“One autumn, when Sigurd Ring was old, the sons of Gandalf, his sons-in-law, approached him and asked if he could provide them with a force of men so they could ride to the King, who was called Eystein, and who ruled the kingdom that was called Vestmarr and which is now called Vestfold. At that time there was a major sacrifice [blót] in Skiringssal, which was visited by the whole of Vikinn...”).

In Fagurksinn (Ms. A, ch. 4) we can read of Halfdan the Black: lícarr hans var iarðaðr a Steini a Ringariki enn honufóðr hans var flutti í Skirms sal a Vestfold oc var þar iarðat (“his body was buried at Steini in Ringeri, but his head was taken to Skiringssal in Vestfold and was buried there”).

In a document from 1419 (DN 1:661) a Thorald Kane pawned to Sir Markvard Buk “alt Gudrina, sæm eim li at ríki ré, e er Sigurðr, eir því ríki réð, at hann mundi veita þein líð at rúða á hendr þeim konungi, er Eysteinn hét, er þvi ríki réð, er þá hétu Vestmarar, en þá heitir Vestfold. Þa voru höfð blót í Skiringssal, er til var sótt um alla vikina... (“One autumn, when Sigurd Ring was old, the sons of Gandalf, his sons-in-law, approached him and asked if he could provide them with a force of men so they could ride to the King, who was called Eystein, and who ruled the kingdom that was called Vestmarr and which is now called Vestfold. At that time there was a major sacrifice [blót] in Skiringssal, which was visited by the whole of Vikinn...”).

In an enumeration of landed estates belonging to St Stephan’s and St Georg’s Hospital in Tonsberg from 1445 (DN 9:295), we have the heading “Skiringssal”, under which we have the names: “Monom, Namfnesale, Brekko, Kepekare, Nesium”, some names lost today or difficult to identify, the rest to be located in Tjolling parish. Finally we have to take into account the name-form Skiringes heal found in the famous report of Othore’s journey from Hålogaland down to Hedeye in the late 9th century.

The lively discussion on the identification of the locus of Skiringssal has been very extensive, and sometimes rather polemic, especially during the 19th century. It was probable from the documents that the name denoted not a single farm but some kind of area or district, but the question was whether the name was to be identified with the parish, which is intimated by the letters of 1419 and 1444; or with a manorial estate, consisting of some farms, as could be hinted at by the register from 1445; or as alluding to a district larger than the Tjolling parish, including Sandeherred
What is important – an issue that was not addressed in the previous discussion in the 19th century and around 1900 – is to ask oneself what the term *salr* denoted. We also have new foundations to stand on when discussing the usage of names for parishes and settlement districts (*bygd*) during the Middle Ages (see Brink 1990).

A *salr* was originally not a district or something spatial: it was used for a building, a hall. The word *salr* was the old word for such a hall building, and we find it in some – but not many – very interesting place-names in Scandinavia, such as *(Gamla) Uppsala, Skíringssalr,* a couple of *Oðinsalr,* “Tesal,” several *Sala,* and some more (Brink 1996b:255–7). These names were hence originally the names of actual halls, but must early on have been transferred to the settlement that the hall related to. Such an imposing hall, owned by a king or a chieftain, inevitably made an impression and was well known, so that from an early date the area around the hall must have been identified with the hall-name, giving then the area the meaning “the area/district under the influence of *N*-hall”. This must be the explanation why, during the Middle Ages, we find the name Skíringssalr as denoting an area or a district. The same is the case with, amongst others, “Tesal”, which, during the Middle Ages, denoted the west part of Råde parish in Østfold (Rygh 1897–1936:VI:306), who concludes that the first raised hall was originally not a district or something

etc. (see e.g. Munch 1890; Sørensen 1900; Kjær 1909a, 1909b; Sørensen 1909a, 1909b; Bugge 1909, 1915). Today this question seems rather academic.

The fact that *salr* is used in many fjord- and bay-names, and the name for a bay could easily contain the word *skirr,* denoting clear water etc. However, the bay alternative seems incomprehensible that the hero *Ing* should in this case have been called “the bright or shining *Ing*”. No such appellative is ever recorded to my knowledge.33 Sigurd Fries (1980) later argued a case that Skíringr be seen as an older name for Viksfjorden. This is more acceptable from a toponymic viewpoint; with this interpretation we could abandon the alternative with an unknown god’s name *Skíringr.* The suffix -*ing* is used in many fjord- and bay-names, and the name for a bay could easily contain the word *skirr,* denoting clear water etc. However, the bay alternative is – in my view – also to be questioned; the older name for Viksfjorden is probably to be found in the settlement-name *Eftang,* which thus goes back to an ON *Eltangr*.

Andreas Nordberg (2003:268) has recently proposed an interesting interpretation of Skíringssalr. He argues that *Skíring-* could be a qualifier for the *salr,* the hall itself, meaning “the bright, shining hall”, and gives several parallels of early descriptions of famous banqueting halls with similar epithets. The problem with this interpretation is rather on the linguistic side, since a word *skíring-* or a similar construction – a kind of extension of an adjective with the suffix -*ing* and with the same or a similar meaning – is unknown.

Today, to be on the safe side, it seems most probable that Skíringssalr is to be interpreted as the name of a hall, situated in Huseby, whose first element is a *Skiring* of unknown meaning and denotation. It is furthermore most likely that the name *Skíringssalr* for the hall and later on the settlement here was superseded by Húsabyr, a change which might have its background in the fact that in the Middle Ages Skíringssalr came to be used as a territorial name for the *bygd* or the parish. It is well known, when one name is “elevated” and given a new and wider denotation, for a new name to be used for the original deno-

13 However, one can note that the name *Ing* is connected to Freyr in the compound *Ingunarfreyr* (AEW:286; see also Hellberg 1986).
taturn. This is the case when, for example, a name for a settlement with a church is used for the parish and the settlement gets the new name Kyrkbyn 'the church village'.

There has also been some discussion over how to understand the form of the name Skiringesalr found in the famous report of Othure's voyage, namely OE Sciringes heal. Was this a translation of an Old Norse name, or was it a misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the Old English writer? In my opinion the easiest way to explain OE Sciringes heal is to see it as a corrupt form of Skiringesalr, where the second element -salr has been wrongly identified with OE health m. 'bend (perhaps also bay)' by an Anglo-Saxon notetaker or interpreter, but several other possibilities seem plausible.

To make a complicated case even more complicated we have probably to face another name in -salr in this parish, namely the aforementioned "Nafnesale" mentioned in the Tønsberg register from 1445. This name was noticed by Rygh (1897–1936:VI:292), and the following older forms where known by then: Namfnesale 1445; Nummesall 1664; Nonmesal 1723. In the latter cases "Nafnesal" was a dependent farm under Brekke. According to Rygh (loc. cit.) this name is to be identified with the farm Haugen in Tjølling, and I have no reason to doubt this identification. The word name as a qualifier in a place-name seems to represent a very rare bird. One scholar once made the following reflection (Rygh 1897–1936:358): "Nafn (Navn) findes ellers ikke som Stedsnavn og synes ikke meget skikket dertil" ("Name is otherwise never found as a place-name and does not seem very well suited as such as e.g. ON namn, 'a name' – a view one can entirely concur with. A commonplace and does not seem very well suited as a "noa"-designation, perhaps for a god's name too holy to utter. The other possible explanation is that the first element is the word nafn, a derivation of the word naaf, with the meaning 'namesake'. In that case Nafnasalr should be seen linked with Skiringesalr, which seems possible with the occurrence of two -salr in the same settlement district. Where both salr dedicated to a god Skiringer, so that the minor salr had to change its name to Nafnasalr? I have to rest my case with presenting these suggestions. We end up with the conclusion that the Tjølling district seems to have had two place-names in -salr. The only other case I know of where we have two -salr in the same settlement district (more or less), is in Gamla Uppsala in Sweden, with Sala and Uppsala. Nafnasalr is something of a mystery (cf. Skre, this vol. Ch. 19:439–40).

The next problem relates to Huseby. This name has been etymologically discussed, and Asgaut Steinnes highlighted it in his book Husebyar of 1955. From the Swedish evidence, where the husabyar seem to have been royal farms constituting the great bulk of the bona regalia, Steinnes formed the hypothesis that the Norwegian husebyar were also old royal farms. Sometimes this hypothesis lead Steinnes to quite startling conclusions, as for Huseby in Tjølling, which during the Middle Ages is known to have been in seigneurial possession, owned by the nobility, and one of the biggest farms in the parish. From this evidence, Steinnes concludes: "Det kan ikke vera stor til om at vi her har å gjera med ein gamal kongsgard. " (There can be no doubt that here we have to do with an old royal farm.) This may seem a poorly grounded and risky statement, but could actually agree with some evidence (Skre, this vol. Ch. 11:246–7).

As with the Swedish husaby names and those found in Østfold, it now seems clear that these settlements had an older name (Hoel 1986; Brink 1999b, 2000). Hüsabyr started as a kind of appellative that replaced an older name – similar to kyrkbyn > Kyrkbyn, prestgården > Prestgården etc. – in our case here
churches in Norrland must have been built on an
much of northern Sweden, this was a common prac-
the church in Huseby, built by the chieftain or king
this parish was erected at Tjølling. Normally, in a case

It is an intriguing question why the church for
this seems rather odd. One would assume that the
church-builder would be the central figure at Huseby.
Maybe this was the case here too, but for some reason
the church was placed at the assembly place rather
than at Huseby. One cannot, however, disregard the
possibility that Tjølling church was built as a com-
munal undertaking by the farmers and noblemen of
the whole district (Skre, this vol. Ch. 17:394–6).

Finally we come to Kaupang. The name goes back
on an appellative, ON kaupangr 'market, trading
place' etc.15 The kaupangr in this case denoted the
harbour and probably the trading site at Kaupang,
which, according to the archaeological surveys that
have been carried out here, were of considerable
extent. It seems very plausible that this kaupangr was
under the control of the person in power, resident at,
or in control of Huseby (Hoel 1986:132; Brink 1996b:
273). We do not know how old the word kaupangr is
in the Nordic languages; the answer depends on how
to understand the etymology of the word, and the
possibility that the word is a loan from some other
language (possibly West Germanic). It is clear that
the word was used in the Viking Period, according to our
sources, and the place-names in kaupangr etc. in
Scandinavia seem to be prehistoric in many cases.
Therefore the most probable assumption is that
Kaupang is "organic" in our case, and was not given to
the site in a later phase of history.

4.3 Summary
We end up with a most interesting toponymic picture
for Tjølling. During the Early Iron Age the area saw
agarian activity and several settlements, according to
the archaeological finds and place-names. From the
surviving Early Iron-age place-names it would appear
that the settlement was grouped around a lake in
the central part of Tjølling, a lake with the possible
name *Vitrir/ Vettrir, perhaps embodying a percep-
tion of the lake as a kind of a sacred lake. During the
Iron Age, the landscape of Tjølling was different from
that of today. Several large or small bays and inlets
existed, and also probably three islands, of which we
know the name of one (Possay < Ærøsøy), a probable
name for a second (*Hasla) but for the third island,
by Eftang, the name has been lost. Settlement expanded during the Late Iron Age, with several new farms, such as Hyggestad, Klåstad, Fristad, Skjeggestad, Skreppestad, Håkestad etc., and the focus of the district moved, from the settlement around the lake *Vitrir/Vettrir to the area south of the lake and towards the sea, to Huseby–Kaupang–Guri–Østby–Tjølling. The central settlement here must have been *Skiringssalr, denoting a feasting hall, a name later replaced by Huseby. It is possible to see all of these settlements as a kind of a complex (cf. Brink 1996b:238), with interdependent settlements, or rather, the main resident at *Skiringssal/Huseby having been in control over the harbour and trading-place Kaupang, and perhaps also the assembly site at Tjølling. The case discussed here is, at least for Norway, a unique case in respect of the historical information provided by place-names.