

Something borrowed, something new - a re-evaluation of the value of place-names as indicators of Viking-Age market sites.

The title of this paper alludes partly to its subject – place-names indicating sites of Viking Age markets – and partly to the discourse the paper writes itself into, and responds to with new information. It is generally accepted that the place-name type *kaupangr* indicates the existence of a market site during the Viking Age. Similarly, the place-name element *torg* is seen to possibly indicate a similar, if smaller, type of locality (Kruse 2020, Schmidt 2000, Christophersen 1991, Andersen 1977). Their importance and possible connections to rulers (Stylegar 2009), events and emerging urban structures in Scandinavia have also been debated at length, especially in publications in connection with the excavations at Kaupang near Larvik (cf. Skre & Stylegar 2004).

However, it has never been attempted to see how place-names with market (and/or trade) indicating elements correlate with demographic realities, nor see the establishment of emporia in Old Norse - *kaupangr*, or *-torg* in a wider European context. This article seeks to explore the non-Scandinavian origin of trade-indicating words like *kaupangr* and *torg* (Ljunggren 1937, Schmidt 2000) and see if this relates to a possible temporal or typological distinction in emporia-type seen in the light of correlation with Iron-Age, Viking-Age or Medieval place-name types. In addition, historical demography will be used as the main parameter on which to evaluate the location of known Viking-Age and early Medieval urban and emporia sites.

Historical demography is crucial in assessing most models of historical and archaeological phenomena, but which has often been neglected, mainly as a result of available data (Gammeltoft, Jakobsen & Sindbæk 2015: 19f). However, today we have the data analysis tools available to create an approximation to a demographic mapping significantly more accurate and geographically than hitherto and offers new ways to understand old problems. The demographical evaluation is based on a dataset of known historical settlement sourced from the newly georeferenced version of *Norske Gaardnavne* (Rygh 1897-1919), see illustration below. The overall picture will show that demography plays a larger role in the choice of locality for Norwegian emporia-building than has hitherto been realised.

Keywords: Viking-Age emporia, place-names, place-name types, distribution maps, demography

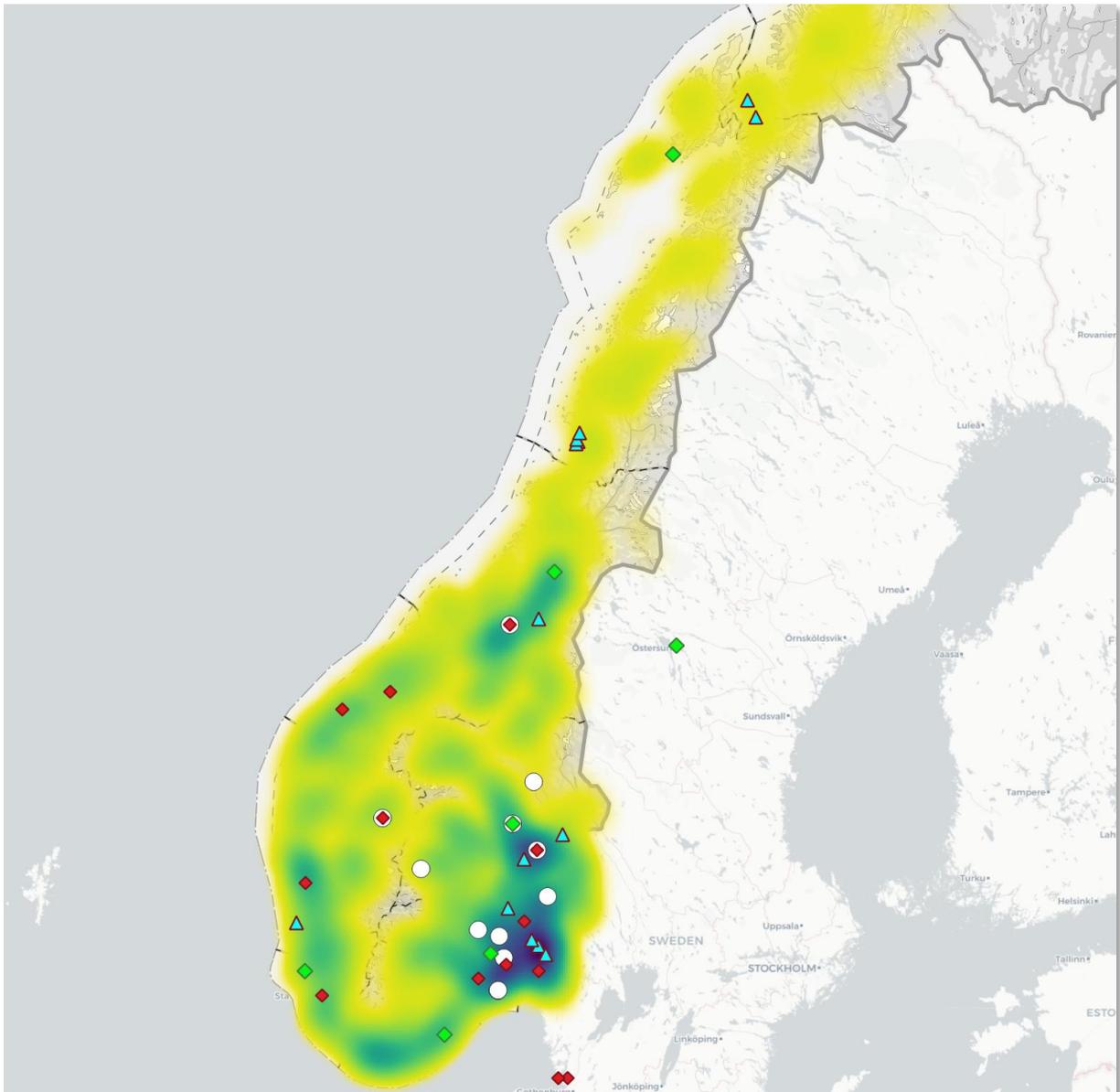


Illustration: Map of Norway showing the correlation of settlement concentrations with *kaupangr* and *torg* localities, documented emporias and late Viking-Age/early Medieval urbanised areas.

Key to illustration

Heat map: The higher the settlement concentration, the darker the colour.

Points: *white circle* = *kaupangr*-locality; *blue triangle* = *torg*-name; *green diamond* = documented market site; *red diamond* = late Viking/early Medieval urbanised area. NB. Some emporium sites and urban areas overlay *kaupangr*-localities, showing that the locality in question developed into a Medieval urban entity.

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