Circling Concepts

Marte Spangen
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A Critical Archaeological Analysis of the Notion of Stone Circles as Sami Offering Sites

Marte Spangen
Cover: The Geaimmejávri structure with the lake in the background in late September 2012. Photo by the author.
To Tine (1941–2014)
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Acknowledgements

Apparently there are only two types of PhD theses; those that are done and those that are not. I am happy to be able to add my work to the first category within the four years or so I have had at my disposal for this project. It would not have been possible without all the good help and support I have received along the way. First and foremost I extend my gratitude to my main supervisor Anders Andrén at Stockholm University for his contributions concerning the content and structure of my writing, but no less for his positive feedback and persistent trust in my ability and capacity to do the project I wanted to do. Moreover, I am grateful to my second supervisor Bjørnar Olsen at Tromsø University for careful reading of my manuscript and valuable input on cultural–historical, theoretical and research technical issues. His integrity and healthy skepticism have forced me to rethink, rearticulate and refine many aspects, which have added greatly to the strengths of the thesis. Carl–Gösta Ojala at Uppsala University did a thorough reading of a preliminary manuscript as a discussant for my final PhD seminar and deserves many thanks for insightful comments and questions.

During my years in Sweden I have had the privilege of working alongside highly competent colleagues within many fields at the Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies at Stockholm University (SU). They have all been very forthcoming with help and advice when needed. Special thanks to Jan Storå and his students at the osteological laboratory for assisting with species determination of some of the material, to Kerstin Lidén for essential input concerning radiocarbon datings and isotope analyses, to Anna Källén for interesting and lively conversations about postcolonial theory and the like, and of course to Markus Fjellström who included my material in his isotope study, and who has willingly offered his help with analyses, datings and interpretations. Many thanks also to Anna–Kaisa Salmi at Oulu University for determining the lion share of the osteological material in the project. Several co–organised conference sessions and co–writing experiences during the project period with Markus, Anna–Kaisa and Tiina Äikäs (also Oulu University) in the research group OSSO (Osteoarchaeological Studies of Sámi Offerings) have been very enjoyable and educational, thank you all.

I also want to thank my fellow PhD students in the archaeology department at SU, Anna, Anna, Anna, Linda, Jenny, Cecilia, Ingrid, Elin, Elisabeth, Florent, Per and Magnus, as well as “our” post–doc Ali, who have provided valuable input in many seminars and other contexts, but also necessi–
ties such as the occasional listening ear, glass of wine, fun excursions and general support. Special thanks to Norwegian PhD colleague Linn for treading the immigration path ahead of me and making my transition to a Swedish existence much easier with good advice on everything from taxes and housing to more academic issues.

I have benefitted greatly from a one–year Erasmus exchange stay at the Department of Archaeology, History and Conservation (IAKH) at the University of Oslo in 2015, skilfully organised by Annika Mobacker and Helene Neumann. The stay was generously extended by IAKH with ten months as a guest researcher in 2016. Thanks to everyone at the department for their encouragement and support, especially to my academic contact person Julie Lund and to my fellow PhD students Astrid, Lars Erik, Marianne, Marianne, Becky, Mari, Knut Ivar, who has also helped out with some GIS issues, and all the others who participated in various seminars and enthusiastically read and commented on more or less intelligible chapters of the thesis. Special thanks to Bettina for last–minute proofreadings, library pick–ups, food deliveries and general support. Thanks to all other archaeologist colleagues and friends in Oslo who have contributed insights and encouragement too.

Trevor Barnett has proofread several articles during the project, which has been a great help in improving my writing. Mark Oldham did an efficient job with the final proof reading of the main text on a tight deadline, though I have probably added more mistakes afterwards than he had the chance to remove. I also want to thank Linda Qviström for proofreading my Swedish abstract and Inger Máret Ánne Eira who took the assignment of translating an abstract into North Sami on short notice. Again, any oddities are surely down to me.

The project has included a lot of travelling and practical work. There is not enough room here to mention everyone who has given their contributions by name, but none of you are forgotten. I especially want to thank Hege Skalleberg Gjerde for including me in her field work before I could start my own PhD, for all our travels and discussions over the years and for helping me out with a quick reading of some text towards the final deadline. Among those involved in the outdoors part of the present project, I must first and foremost thank the fantastic crew that volunteered for my two excavations: Anni–Helena Routsoala, Siiri Tolonen, Synnøve Thingnes, Anna–Kaisa Salmi, Camilla Olofsson and Ingvild Larsen – you are stars! I really appreciate your efforts, including the crucial Finnish internet searches and various translations that Anni–Helena, Siiri and Anna–Kaisa did for me. Thanks also to everyone else who joined me for a day or two along the road and to all those who have sent me information about interesting stone structures that I could not visit myself. Employees at various museums and archives I have visited and contacted have my gratitude for all their help, especially Dikka Storm and Monica Hansen at Tromsø Museum. Thanks to Erik Kjellman, Johan Arntzen, Steinar Kristensen and Magne Samdal who have all been...
helpful in trying to sort out some total station and photogrammetry issues. Tromsø Museum and the Department of Archaeology at Tromsø University lent me the necessary equipment for the field work in the area. Travels and other efforts have relied on substantial financial support from the Norwegian Sámi Parliament, the Berit Wallenberg foundation, the Albert and Maria Bergström foundation, the Birger Calleman and Einar and Carolina Bergström’s donation scholarships, the Swedish Research Council and the Norwegian Archaeological Society. I am very grateful to Varanger Sámi Museum for hosting the survey subproject funded by the Norwegian Sámi Parliament and to the archaeologists at the Sámi Parliament for their help with various practical and principal issues.

A heartfelt thanks goes to Randi and Per, Turid, Kristin and Trond, Gudrun and Magnus, Julie and Ola, Synnøve and Tom Andreas, Dag and Therese, Mia and Jan Ingolf, Louise and Oli, and, last but not least, to Jan Magne and Anine, and all their families, for giving me homes away from home on various surveys and travels over the last four years. Thanks also to everyone who did so prior to the official start-up of my PhD. This project would have been very difficult and certainly less enjoyable to complete without your hospitality and care. I am also very grateful to Jenny Karlmark, who generously made room for me in her various abodes during a year or so when I was commuting to Stockholm. Other good friends everywhere are not forgotten, but Marie Ødegaard and Hanne Aannestad deserve special mention for being anchors in the occasional sea of despair, for all good laughs and discussions and for generally being such fantastic friends.

Finally, many thanks to my entire family, but especially to my parents Dag and Katrine, for cheering me on and helping me out in so many ways. This final result is dedicated to my late aunt Inger Cathrine, who understood what this sort of writing entails, and who never ceased to encourage and support me.

Oslo, 9 Sep 2016,

Marte Spangen
Preface

This project was conceived in 2007, when I was living in Nesseby, Finnmark, and working at the Varanger Sámi Museum with several projects to disseminate knowledge about Sami rituals and beliefs through exhibitions, signposting, digital guides and research seminars. In trying to describe the use of the circular offering sites, I realised that this had not been explored in very much detail, and I thought it would be a fascinating project to find out more about them. However, some of my fellow archaeologists initially met the project with a certain skepticism: how would I say anything about these enigmatic stone structures when there were no finds? And what about the ethical issues concerning the study of Sami offering sites? This hesitance illustrates two aspects: the fact that the relatively many (mostly unpublished) finds in the structures have been largely unknown to archaeologists, partly due to the way Sami ethnography and archaeology have been separate fields (or networks) during the 20th century, and how ethical concerns have led to precaution and a consequent barrier for doing archaeological research on offering sites. The latter is for good reasons that I will discuss further in the thesis. The point here is that these notions affected the planning of the project, as I did not even consider studies of finds as a possibility and doubted if I would be allowed to do any excavations. I aimed instead to do extensive surveys and landscape studies. Furthermore, I was initially very cautious about any local or general opposition against an investigation.

After a few years of working on this project in my spare time, while simultaneously trying to get funding for a Norwegian PhD, I learned that there was indeed a potential in this material, finds or not, and that neither local Sami nor the Sami parliament were necessarily opposed to further investigations. Thus, both my own knowledge and the general attitudes to this sort of research slightly changed over the course of time from my initial idea in 2007 until I finally got the opportunity to start my PhD project at Stockholm University in 2012.

This delay has had substantial impact on how the project eventually unfolded, mainly because of the experience I gained in the meantime, the way certain archives and materials became more available and following my move to a different academic environment in Sweden, but also due to the general course of events and the slight changes in the socio–political context that happen all the time. In short, I ended up somewhere completely different from where I started – yet coming back to northern Norway again and again.
All photos, illustrations, tables and maps are by the author unless otherwise stated. Background maps are by the Norwegian Mapping Authority (www.statkart.no). Please note that the private archive of Ørnulv Vorren was reorganised in 2014, so that designations in the literature list may be incorrect. Numbers in parenthesis after site names refer to the present catalogue. All Sami spelling is in North Sámi, unless otherwise stated.
1 Introduction

Around a thousand Sami offering sites and sacred sites have been recorded in Sápmi, the main historical Sami occupation area in northern Fennoscandia (fig. 1). The topography and natural morphological shapes of these various offering sites differ, often within the same chronological periods and geographical areas. They include larger landscape features, peculiar cliffs, large boulders, smaller rocks, trees, and rivers, in some cases in terms of prominent features that are easily associated with ritual use. However, some offering sites comprise of very inconspicuous places (e.g. Qvigstad 1926; Manker 1957; Äikäs 2015). The identification of the offering sites depends on oral traditions, place names and finds that have been recorded by missionaries, travellers, local inhabitants and others through the centuries, as well as through archaeological and ethnographic investigations in the 19th and 20th centuries. The historical and ethnographic sources indicate that some of the sites may previously have featured simple constructions made from stone, wood or antler, including foundations for depositories and various kinds of delimitations, but such features are quite rare and usually of a modest size and shape. Nevertheless, a number of large dry–stone enclosures in northern Norway have come to be understood as such delimitations of offering sites. They have been labelled “Sami circular offering sites” or “circular sacrificial sites”, and they are by now a well–established category of cultural heritage site (cf. e.g. Vorren and Eriksen 1993; Olsen 2005). These structures have been subject to only limited archaeological investigations, which has rendered “Sami circular offering sites” a somewhat enigmatic concept, currently used about a wide range of morphologically diverse structures. Essential questions remain about the consistency of the category and about when, how and why such structures were built and used. According to the recent focus on materiality in archaeology, emphasis should be on what the structures and things themselves have to say, as well as what they cannot say, and how they bring the past into the present (e.g. B. Olsen 2010; Olsen and Witmore 2015: 191). An immediate observation concerning the materiality and agency of these structures is, in a Sami archaeological context, the relatively considerable size and visual impact, which seems to be in opposi-

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¹ The spelling “Sámi” has been widely used in the Anglophone literature, as well as “Saami”, but “Sami” is the official English spelling of the name. To some extent the word “Lapp(–s)” is still in use, but it should be noted that this is considered an obsolete and derogatory term.
tion to the fact that they have been relatively little explored by archaeologists and quite vaguely explained. The explanations that have been put forward have focused on quite unspecific religious rituals and symbolic connotations. This has left the structures floating in various heritage discourses as something very solid and tangible yet rather elusively associated with an undefined past spirituality. It can be argued that this description is valid for many interpretations of archaeological remains that we do not understand very well. However, this status and the ritual associations have some particular connotations in a Sami context. The reception history of centuries of cultural and religious oppression and intrusive and disrespectful past research on Sami ritual sites, as well as intertwined discourses of majority hegemony and stereotypes and a more recent internal “central myth” about stereotypical Sami ways of relating to the world, means that this category creates and reproduces particular associations, memories and relationships of power. The categorisation of these structures therefore has wider implications than just for the archaeological interpretation of a past context.

Consequently, this thesis is not only about defining and contextualising the various stone structures currently included in the category “Sami circular offering sites”, but also about how and why such definition and categorisation matter and to whom. This is explored through these main research questions:

1. When, where and why did the phenomenon of building large stone enclosures or delineations like those recorded in northern Norway occur? How were these structures used and what contemporary cultural and socio–political context and influence does this use imply?

2. Are all the different structures that are currently defined as or suggested to be Sami circular offering sites in fact reflections of the same cultural phenomenon? If not, can different types and their specific meaning and use be defined?

3. What is the socio–political and epistemological background for the establishment of the current interpretation and category of circular offering sites, and what cultural and societal impact will any potential redefinition of the whole or parts of the category entail?

To obtain knowledge about these research questions, archaeological, ethnographic and historical sources and methods have been applied within a theoretical framework of discourse analysis, practice theory, postcolonial theory and related constructivist understandings of knowledge production, cultural
Fig. 1. Map of Sápmi, the main historical Sami occupation areas. The demarcated areas, and especially the border zones, have hosted various ethnic groups, not only the Sami. The Sami occupation area appears to have been more extensive than in this illustration in the Middle Ages, when much of the inland and mountain areas of northern Fennoscandia were mainly Sami (Zachrisson 1997; Lehtola 2004; Bergstøl 2008a; Hansen and Olsen 2014). Map: Wikimedia Commons, with additions by M. Spangen.

expressions and identity, while maintaining a focus on the materiality of the archaeological evidence and the “evidential constraint” of this (Wylie 1992, 2002; B. Olsen 2010). On this foundation I analyse the impact the articulation and discussion of this category has had on stakeholders in the past and the present. For practical and evidential reasons, the material study is mainly focused on today’s northern Norway, but an additional main discussion explores how and why the category has been applied in other areas of today’s Sápmi and beyond. Below, I will outline the cultural historical contexts of the construction and initial use of the structures in northern Norway that were first labelled “Sami circular offering sites” and contextualise my dis-
1.1 Sami pasts

The Sami are indigenous people of northern Fennoscandia. They are stereotypically associated with reindeer herding, but this is a quite recent development for only some Sami groups. Their traditional economic adaptations have been diverse and based on different types of hunting, fishing, gathering, husbandry and agriculture. Despite some overall linguistic, material, religious and other shared characteristics, Sami culture has had a variety of local articulations, which have left a similar variation of archaeological traces, both from everyday practices and more explicitly ritual activities. Exactly when and where it is relevant to talk about a Sami past has been a disputed topic in archaeology and elsewhere. This project primarily considers archaeological remains from medieval activities in northern Norway, and the mainly Sami habitation in today’s county of Finnmark and the fjord and inland areas of the counties of Troms and Nordland during the Middle Ages is usually not refuted. There is more resistance to the idea of an Iron Age and medieval Sami identity and presence in more southern areas and whether this can be traced through archaeological material (e.g. Zachrisson 1997; Gjerde 2016). When presumably non–Norse groups in these areas are discussed, there has been a reluctance to call them Sami. An articulated reason is that this would be an anachronistic use of a modern ethnic label (e.g. Werbart 2002; Wallerström 2006). While I agree that it is highly complicated to relate specific material expressions to a not further specified Sami identity, I would claim that there is evidence for a factual Sami group identity from the Early Iron Age onwards. The distribution of Early Metal Age (c. 1800–500 BC) asbestos ceramics within the historically known main settlement areas of the Sami in Scandinavia indicate common cultural practices that have been suggested to have led to the social differentiation that eventually gave rise to such a Sami ethnicity in these areas (Jørgensen and Olsen 1988). In the Viking and Early Middle Ages (c. AD 800–1200), several cultural expressions seem to spread throughout this area and indicate a cultural consolidation (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 132–133). I believe ethnicity should definitely be considered as one possible structuring factor and structured result of such common cultural practices, even if group identities are difficult to substantiate by archaeological sources alone without falling into old simplifications of distribution of certain materials as reflections of the territories of various “peoples”. Shared material culture and social practices are part of group identities, but numerous studies have shown that this is not a one–to–one relationship (cf. Jones 1997). In previous research, the existence of a Sami ethnicity has been argued based on linguistic evidence of group names,
but primarily focusing on the exonyms for people of the north recorded from the Early Iron Age onwards, such as *fenni* or *finnoi* (Zachrisson 1997). However, these terms probably refer to less specified hunter–gatherer groups. From c. AD 500, the term *skritiphinnoi* is used in written sources, and this is more certainly related to the Sami, as it is a latinisation of the Norse exonym *skridfinner*, which reflects a stereotype of the Sami as people who skied, as in *skrida a skidum* (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 36–37). This substantiates that there were inhabitants in northern Fennoscandia that were perceived as a group with a common cultural identity different from the Norse in the Early Iron Age. Following the constructivist and instrumentalist anthropological theories from the 1960s onwards, instead, self–identification is considered a primary element in an ethnic identity (e.g. Barth 1969; Cohen 1974). In line with this, it is even more important to consider evidence that the terms *sabme* and *sabmelaš* existed already in proto–Sami language, which has been dated back to the Pre–Roman Iron Age (c. 500 BC–AD 1) (Korhonen 1988; Aikio 2006: 39–40; Heikkilä 2014: 271). Because these words are different in various Sami dialects and languages, they must have been introduced before these were differentiated. Due to the existence of distinct loan words from Old Norse in South Sami, this differentiation will have to have happened some time before c. 700 AD (Strade 1997). It has been discussed when *sabme* and *sabmelaš* gained meaning as endonyms, but the collective evidence supports the existence of a group identity in Fennoscandia where the members identified as Sami in the Iron Age, possibly from the last centuries BC and more certainly from the early centuries AD onwards (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 31, 39–48).

It is more uncertain exactly which groups saw themselves as parts of this ethnicity at any given time, how they expressed it and when this was seen as more relevant than other local identities or identities related to family, age, gender, status, subsistence activities, etc. However, to define most “Finns” of the Scandinavian Late Iron Age (AD 550–1050) and Early Middle Ages (AD 1050–1200) that are described in medieval written sources as Sami populations is not very controversial today (cf. Mundal 1996; Aalto 2010: 115ff; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 36). The sources also indicate that these populations were associated with, though not restricted to, certain main occupation areas. The 9th century source of Norwegian chieftain and trader Othere’s account to King Alfred the Great of Wessex describes a very distinct border for the Iron Age Norse population in northern Norway, which probably coincides with the clearly diverging material culture northeast and southwest of the Lyngen fjord near Tromsø (Olsen 2011: 29). Beyond this border, says Othere, was “unsettled” land where “finnas” (Old English) would move around to hunt in the winter and fish in the summer (Bright 1917: 38). Observable differences in terms of preferred jewellery, subsistence strategies, housing, burial customs, and so on between the inland, inner fjords and outer coast in Troms and Nordland counties in northern Norway in the Iron Age
substantiate the presence of two different cultural groups in these areas too. These groups most likely identified as Sami and Norse respectively on an overarching level (e.g. Schanche 1986; Hansen 1990), even if evidence indicates more complex local identities, especially in border areas (e.g. Sandmo et al. 1994; Olsen 2000a; Spangen 2005; Bruun 2007).

It seems this cultural geographical border was maintained for centuries, though there are examples of settlements crossing it, and evidence for extensive contacts across it concerning trade, intermarriage and other social interactions (e.g. Hansen 1990; Storli 1994; Olsen 2011: 29–30). A 12th century source still defines three habitable zones in Norway as the seaside and the inland mountains, while the third woodland zone was inhabited by the Finns. The source also describes tribes in the north as pagans, defining them as distinctly different from the by then Christian Norwegian population (História Norwegie 2003[1100s]: 53–55). By the 13th century, however, the traditional border by the Lyngen fjord was challenged through increased non–Sami colonisation of the coastal areas of Finnmark and inner fjords in Troms and Nordland (Hansen 1990; Olsen 2011: 30). This probably followed a number of major societal changes; contrary to the Sami, the Norse population was purposefully Christianised during the Early Middle Ages as part of the establishment of a unified Christian Norwegian kingdom, and thus became part of a larger Christian European cultural sphere (e.g. Lind 2000). The Christian fasting laws resulted in a substantial European demand for a prime product of the northern Norwegian coast, stockfish. Together with the establishment of a Hansa office in Bergen in southwestern Norway, territorial competition with the Russian city state of Novgorod and political ambitions for the north, this led to the establishment of fishing villages along the Finnmark coast (e.g. Lind 2000; Bruun 2011; Olsen 2011: 30). We only have historical records of these from the early 16th century onwards, but excavations indicate that many of them were established between 1200 and 1400 (Andreassen and Bratrein 2011a, 2011b). While they are often referred to as Norwegian, they did in fact incorporate fishermen from several other areas, such as Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Scotland (Olsen 2011: 30). The fishing villages included small Roman Catholic churches and churchyards. At the same time the strong Russian city state of Novgorod was expanding its interest zones in the north and controlling the fur trade in these areas, while also promoting Greek Orthodox Christianity among local populations, especially around the orthodox monasteries and chapels in northwest Kola peninsula and in today’s easternmost Finnmark and northeast Finland (Storå 1977). There were repeated conflicts and skirmishes between Norwegian and Russian/Karelian representatives in the areas of today’s northern Norway, and the Norwegian establishment of a church and fort in far east Vardø around AD 1300 has to be seen in this context (Olsen 2011: 30–31).

The Sami in these areas were of course affected by the religious preferences and activities of these colonisers, and there is evidence to suggest they
in part included Christian elements in their ritual repertoire at an early stage (Rydving 1995a; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 215, 224). However, apart from a few scattered attempts, there was no missionary activity directed at Sami groups in particular, and it seems they for the most part continued their traditional ritual practices despite any Christian impact. During the Middle Ages (AD 1050–1536), these groups had diverse subsistence strategies that included hunting, fishing and some sheep husbandry (Odner 1992; Hedman et al. 2015). It is likely that many Sami were keeping a few tame reindeer as draft and decoy animals even back in the Iron Age. Reindeer herding as a main and widespread occupation does not seem to have emerged until quite late in Finnmark (though see Olsen and Hedman 2009; Hedman et al. 2015), probably after c. AD 1600, when the wild reindeer population was substantially decimated, but herding still only engaged parts of the Sami population (e.g. Vorren 1977; Olsen 1984:68, 1987; Odner 1992; Vorren 1998). The largescale meat–producing reindeer–ranching (cf. Ingold 1980) of today is a quite recent development from the 19th century onwards. Importantly, this describes the situation in Finnmark in northern Norway, while other Sami areas have had different historical trajectories and developments. For instance, reindeer herding was apparently part of the economy in inland northern Sweden at a much earlier stage, possibly back to the Iron Age and increasingly so from the 13th century onwards (e.g. Aronsson 1991; Hedman 2003; Bergman et al. 2008; Salmi et al. 2015). Similarly, radiocarbon–dated hearths in good grazing areas indicate a possibility that reindeer herding may have been implemented in the Norwegian county of Nordland from the Late Iron Age (Andersen 2011), and in inner Troms from c. AD 1400 (Sømmerseth 2009), though the calibration curves cannot rule out later dates (cf. Ch. 4.11). It should be kept in mind that one activity has not necessarily excluded the other, and that reindeer pastoralism and herding in different versions may have been combined and also integrated with hunting, fishing and other enterprises (e.g. Sømmerseth 2011; Bjørklund 2013).

In short, the overarching Sami culture has had many local appropriations according to ecological, geographical, economic, colonial and other cultural preconditions (cf. e.g. Hultkrantz 1994; Hansen and Olsen 2014; Hood 2015; Bergman and Hörnberg 2015), just as group identities in general are usually articulated both as a general whole and through individual expressions (e.g. Eriksen 2002). Following Bourdieu’s approach to classes, these identities can be defined as statistical probabilities rather than set entities; social groups are constantly made, they are not finished and delimited social realities (Bourdieu 1989a: 17–18; Jones 1997). Past Sami identities have of course also been negotiable and flexible, resulting in a variety of material expressions. As described above, it must have been situational whether individuals chose to define as Sami or in more local terms, but it is worth noting that ethnic identities can be enmeshed in everyday practices like production and trade (Odner 1983; Jones 1997: 133) even if these are not conscious
expressions of ethnic identity. Thus, archaeological material can be said to be remains of Sami practices even if the practitioner was not consciously identifying as Sami through or during the activity in question, while such common cultural practices may provide and become a basis for defining ethnic distinctions.

1.2 Sami archaeology

I choose to define what I do in this project as “Sami archaeology” (cf. e.g. Storli 1986; Olsen 2001a, 2007). For some this is a controversial definition, partly because it is understood to indicate that a certain past or specific archaeological remains and objects are decisively Sami, and partly because the prefix “Sami” is perceived by some to make the archaeology more political than “other” archaeology. Concerning the first point, it is true that some Sami archaeology has tended to promote essentialist group identities with consistent and very long–lasting material expressions. Paradoxically this is in line with the persistent 19th century evolutionist understanding of the Sami as a static “nature people” on a lower level of development, as opposed to the majority populations’ flexible cultures and historical developments (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 2–4). Even if the scholarly literature on Sami culture is substantial and goes back at least 150 years, the 19th century field of “lappology” included very little about Sami history and even less about relevant archaeology. As a static nature people the Sami were hardly expected to have a history worth exploring and therefore remained a subject for ethnographic studies (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 1–4). Apart from the evolutionist view, there was also a blatant disregard of the well–documented past Sami populations in, for instance, northern Norway because a (pre)history of a minority culture within the borders of the recent nation state of Norway would be difficult to fit into its 20th century nationalist archaeology (Hesjedal 2000, 2004). Thus, Sami (pre)history, or in more cautious terms, Sami past(s)², was little described or explored in archaeology and history.

² Much of Sami past has to be studied through what is often called “prehistoric archaeology”, because of the lack of written sources. However, the conceptual division between history and pre–history is somewhat unfortunate because the latter concept tends to evoke a certain inherent association with something less evolved, old–fashioned or primitive. As most non–western people will have to base their history on unwritten sources, this entails that they only have a “prehistory”, which is too easily translated to an understanding of these groups as primitive or static. In addition, the concepts of “history” and “prehistory” are assumed to relate to the study objects, time frames and products of historians versus archaeologists as they were defined in the 19th century, which is no longer applicable, since archaeology is currently applied to all time periods and includes use of historical sources, and because researchers in both fields eventually write history (cf. Andrén 1997: 11–12; Olsen 2004: 20–22).
until the 1970s unless the studies concerned issues related to the presumed Sami immigration contra their descendence from a Stone Age population or questions that also concerned the Iron Age Norse population (e.g. Nilsson 1838; Brøgger 1909; Gjessing 1928; Simonsen 1967). Only in the 1980s was “Sami archaeology” acknowledged as a distinct and relevant field of research in its own right, though ethogenesis and relations to the Norse and other neighbouring groups continued to dominate the research questions. This belated expansion of the archaeological research on Sami pasts has to be seen in context of the Sami cultural revival from the 1970s onwards, including intense debates about Sami rights, especially in Norway in relation to the well-known Alta dam building protests, as well as a global postcolonial movement at this time (Schanche and Olsen 1985; Olsen 2004; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 5). Indeed, the establishment of Sami archaeology is clearly a postcolonial political project and part of a tentatively decolonising process. Aims have been to establish that the Sami have a past that may be studied through archaeology, and to critique and restructure the nationalistic and colonial project of Scandinavian archaeology in order to encompass Sami interests and concerns (e.g. Schanche and Olsen 1985; Olsen 1986, 2004; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 6, 8; Spangen et al. 2015).

As mentioned above, and somewhat contradictorily, there are examples of Sami archaeology that have rather prolonged stereotypical attitudes of Sami cultural expressions as static. This is, however, related exactly to the political importance and the power structures involved in shaping this field of research. The struggle to gain acceptance even for the basic idea that the Sami have had a past that can be studied through archaeology is an important reason why some Sami archaeology has tended to identify aspects that are similar to historically-known Sami ethnic idioms as positively Sami in the past. The burden of proof has been, and still is, distinctly on the minorities and on any researchers promoting Sami archaeology and Sami presence in the past, whether in scientific debates or some rather harrowing land use court cases in Norway and Sweden in the last few decades (e.g. Bull 2004; Zachrisson 2004a). This demand for positive identification has forced a dichotomisation and essentialisation that is difficult to combine with the constructivist understanding of culture and identity that has become an increasingly important part of the Scandinavian archaeological discourse over the same decades as Sami archaeology has been established as an articulated field of research (cf. Jones 1997: 142; Olsen 2001a: 84–85). Similarly, the underlying rationale of the postcolonial critique within Sami archaeology of the existing cultural hegemony has resulted in a certain acceptance of “strategic essentialism”. As coined by Gayatri Spivak in the 1980s, this aimed to

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3 On the other hand, there are abundant examples of Scandinavian “non–Sami” archaeology that struggle to escape essentialist understandings of the relation between (distributions of) material culture and ethnic group identities too.
designate a pragmatic approach for minority groups, where the political purpose of a temporary essentialism had to have primacy over a general non–essentialist theoretical understanding of identity. The aim was to allow such “subaltern” groups, as she labels them, to create a sense of self and a group identity in order to give a voice to those who have had no advocates in the colonial discourse because they have not been recognised as a group, as individuals or even as existing (Spivak 1988). Spivak has later stated she regrets coining the term “strategic essentialism”, because she believes it has been vulgarised and used to plainly support essentialist ideas of identities, forgetting about the strategic and pragmatic aspects (e.g. Spivak 2012: 5–6). It may be argued that the strategic essentialist approach is still needed in some Sami and other indigenous contexts (Olsen 2001a), but more in line with its intended provisional application, recent developments in Sami archaeology aims to move beyond the dichotomising struggle of always having to prove things to be Sami, to discussing Sami pasts as the more encompassing category of all aspects of the past that somehow have affected or affects past or current Sami groups (Olsen 2004). As such, the term “Sami archaeology” describes archaeological research that concerns the long or short–term trends and events likely to have affected and affect Sami parties. Despite a Sami perspective, this Sami archaeology does not exclusively focus on objects and structures that are specifically or singularly related to the Sami, but also on studies of non–Sami groups and individuals and any past activity in areas of Sami habitation and use, because this is of course also part of the Sami pasts, just as Sami past existence and remains of Sami practices in Fennoscandia are part of our common Nordic or European pasts (Olsen 2004; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 6–8; Gjerde 2016).

Despite this development, and despite the fact that the recent socio–historical developments of Sami struggles for rights and acceptance are not always explicitly discussed in all studies of Sami pasts, all such studies are inevitably part of this discourse. Thus, the political aspects are unavoidably entangled with Sami archaeology, but I do not find this problematic. Rather, it is problematic if researchers still believe that any archaeology is unrelated to current socio–political practices and beliefs. Any wishes to talk about “just archaeology” or our common past without distinguishing group identities, and to avoid ethnicity as a subject or ethnic labels because they are too political or complicated, are frequently promoted by people in privileged positions that are not themselves constantly confronted with the remains of colonial and racist structures, an attitude that can be compared to what is often seen in discussions about gender–related issues (e.g. Wylie 2003; Ojala 2009: 54). Of course, such avoidance is just as much a political statement and action as a pronounced study of specifically Sami pasts, though the former is implemented in a rather seductively discreet manner. This naturalisation can be described in terms of the cultural hegemony of the majority pop-
ulations, who maintain the privilege of defining what questions are acceptable to discuss.

1.3 Sami cultural heritage management

Along with the increased awareness of general critical theory and the socio-political embeddedness and role of archaeology, there has been a global development focusing on how to approach the pasts and cultural heritage of various minority groups (Meskell 2012). So-called indigenous archaeology encompasses a broad and not always compatible variation of approaches to the pasts of indigenous groups, often with a strong emphasis on participation and collaboration (e.g. Nicholas 1997, 2010; Watkins 2000; Smith and Wobst 2004; Silliman 2010; Colwell–Chanthaphonh 2012). Early on it was defined as archaeology that should be performed “with, for, and by” indigenous people (Nicholas 1997), though the content and meaning of this phrase has been discussed (e.g. Atalay 2006). In general, indigenous archaeology is an attempt to counter traditional archaeology and the latter’s colonial affiliation through the use of archaeological enterprises as a means of self-expression, empowerment and emancipation, and to “reclaim” the history of minority groups that have suffered subordination and marginalisation under colonial rules (cf. Ojala 2009: 44).

Indigenous groups do share some commonalities in their histories, struggles and rights in the context of colonialism (Silliman 2010: 219), but the common denominator may still be somewhat misleading. Groups around the world that identify in this way obviously have very different preconditions for interest, possibility and option to participate in archaeological research on their past or to gain any self-determination over their cultural heritage. The Sami alone consist of many regional groups spread out in the four current nation states of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, which have very different historical developments, political conditions and attitudes to their Sami minorities, their cultural heritage and indigenous rights in general (see for example Ojala 2009 for an overview of this).

Notably, all Sami archaeology in the way it is defined above is not per se indigenous archaeology. The concept of indigenous archaeology is actually rarely mentioned in Sami archaeology in Norway, while there has been some focus on the related concept of public archaeology. Yet much of the archaeological work in Sami contexts is in line with principals described in these approaches, with a focus on community acceptance and participation in planning, performing and deciding the output of archaeological projects, as well as on the ethical responsibilities of the researchers to contribute with something positive to the local (indigenous) community (e.g. Skandfer 2001; Damm 2005; Myrvoll 2010b; Barlindhaug 2013). The reason why indigenous archaeology has been a less explicit topic in Norway is not that the
research community has been unaware of this approach, but possibly rather because some historical events have led to extended legal protection for Sami cultural heritage and official devolution of Sami cultural heritage management to the Sami–elected body of the Sami Parliament. Such atonements remain out of reach in many other indigenous contexts, where consultation and cooperation is often as far as the indigenous influence goes (Smith 2006: 280–281, 289). This may make the practice of explicit indigenous archaeology as articulated over the last few decades less necessary in Norway than in other areas, since Sami self–government in cultural heritage matters was already formalised here by the early 1990s (cf. Myrvoll 2012: 66). The initiative in Norway grew out of a long history of Sami struggles for better conditions and rights, but the late 1970s and early 1980s Alta conflict, mentioned above, created a socio–political situation where the concern for the indigenous Sami population grew to become a public topic. Their lack of rights was given broad attention, which lead to extensive and more formalised amendments than in the other countries with Sami inhabitants. This included the founding of the Sami Parliament (SP) in 1989, which administers certain aspects of Sami traditional industries, education, language and culture and is to be consulted in government decisions affecting the Sami. The ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples convention (no. 169) was ratified in Norway in 1990, further confirming a Sami right to control over “their own economic, social and cultural development” and any developments that affect “their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well–being and the lands they occupy or otherwise use” (article 7). Cultural heritage management is not mentioned in the convention as such, but it is obviously relevant in this context. By 1994 the SP was delegated the practical authority of Sami cultural heritage management, implementing an administration of archaeologists and other specialists who handle planning cases in the Sami areas from Finnmark in the north to Hedmark in the south in much the same fashion as is done in these singular counties (which have the delegated authority for “non–Sami” cultural heritage in the same areas). This gave the Sami a formalised self–determination in questions of cultural heritage that has been a prominent power factor concerning, among other things, land use. Final decisions about invasive actions such as excavations, which is usually a prerequisite to allow developments, are still formally made by the Norwegian Directorate of Cultural Heritage, but only after recommendations from the SP.

A fundamental problem with laws and regulations that define rights to cultural heritage is that this expects that each group has a defined cultural heritage (e.g. Rowlands 2002; Hodder 2010). As discussed above, the need to prove a past group identity has had a dichotomising effect, where Sami archaeology has resulted in some more essentialist interpretations of various materials and contexts. The effort to obtain and justify a separate Sami cultural heritage management presents another example of this, as it has had to
include arguments for a separate and consistent Sami cultural heritage that differ from the Norwegian cultural heritage (Schanche 1993a: 56–57). Two apparently diametrically different arguments have been used to establish such an authority in Norway; one is that the Sami have a particularly close relationship with their cultural heritage, including an extensive local knowledge about these, while the other is that the pronounced assimilation policies of Norwegianisation in the 19th and 20th centuries have resulted in the Sami losing touch with their historical and cultural roots. According to archaeologist Audhild Schanche the promotion of these conflicting arguments are based on two different knowledge categories; from a Sami perspective there is a focus on learning from experienced and local knowledge, while the non–Sami, majority perspective is on the authoritative, expert knowledge and how to disseminate this to the unknowing locals. This difference has several reasons, partly related to ethnopolitics and the described need to distinguish Sami cultural heritage management from the corresponding Norwegian equivalent. Both have, however, been based on more or less unspoken “central myths”, with a Norwegian self–understanding as a homogeneous, consistent and ancient culture, with the Viking and the free farmer as important symbols, while the Sami has promoted an opposite self–understanding as close to nature, ecologically conscious, peaceful, egalitarian, harmonic and spiritual (Berkaak 1992: 56–57; Schanche 1993a: 55). This negation means that the cultural values that are accentuated as typically Sami are indirectly defined by the majority society, sometimes with emphasis on aspects that have previously been seen as negative by this majority, such as spirituality in terms of neoshamanism. This is a, probably unconscious, confirmation and internalisation of the prejudice that a Christian Sami is necessarily a Norwegianised Sami. The focus on the Sami as people living close to nature and in ecological harmony is equally related to the majority stereotype of the Sami as a nature people. However, these aspects are especially important in a discourse vis–à–vis the majority, and less so internally in Sami contexts (Schanche 1993a: 57–59).

Since a change in national legislation in 1978, material and immaterial Sami cultural heritage is automatically protected if it is older than 100 years. This seems viable since there are few Sami written sources until the 19th century\(^4\), and it has also been related to the fact that the material culture of the semi–nomadic Sami population decayed faster than that of the sedentary Norwegian population (Ween 2010: 213). Rather ironically, preparatory acts show that the legislation is actually based on a notion of the Sami culture as static and unchanging, and thus a good source for knowledge about past Norwegian conditions (Falch 2004: 54). In any case, the law coincides with a general tendency, especially in the early years of self–governed Sami cul-

\(^4\) A few exceptions include clergymen with a Sami family background (e.g. Lundius 1983[1670s]).
tural heritage management, to focus on the recent past, even if archaeological material back to the Stone Age has been continuously discussed as part of Sami pasts (see e.g. K. Schanche 2004). The focus on the experienced local knowledge has led to an emphasis on cultural monuments in the landscapes of Sami groups more than objects, though this focus is also partly related to the conflicts about land rights, origins and Sami presence in the past that tend to hover in many areas. However, the focus on the recent past in early Sami cultural heritage management may also be considered part of the mourning process that the cultural revival of the 1970s onwards has incorporated; for the generation that experienced the harsh measures of Norwegianisation in the mid–20th century, the lost past Sami culture was emotionally associated with their grandparents and great grandparents (Schanche 1993a: 60). I will come back to the emotional aspects of cultural heritage power and understanding in Chapter 6, but it is worth noting that even in 1993 Schanche asked if it was perhaps time to pay more attention to some aspects of Sami pasts that do not coincide with the “central myth” of the Sami as, for instance, inherently egalitarian and particularly spiritual. She suggests basing a Sami feeling of community on other aspects than cemented ideas about Sami cultural heritage, and thus open up for more ways to be Sami (Schanche 1993a: 61).

The issues Schanche presented in 1993 were part of a recurring debate internally in Sami cultural heritage management throughout the 1990s, with a focus on what Sami heritage management was and should be, and for whom and for what purpose they were working (Skandfer 2001: 113). For instance, the Sami Parliament has stated that knowledge about one’s own history is a criterion for identifying individual alternatives of actions (The Sami Parliament 2001; cf. Skandfer 2001: 116). Despite this discussion and the early call from Schanche for opening up for more variation in the past and thus facilitate a variation in current individual choices on how to be Sami, there has been a continued tendency to describe a unified Sami way of relating to nature, landscape and history (e.g. Mulk 1994a: 130; Skandfer 2001; Kleppe and Mulk 2006:368; cf. also Mathisen 2004), and to combine arguments for Sami lost traditions due to assimilation policies with reminders about their closeness to archaeological heritage and knowledge about such, sometimes within the same paragraphs (Skandfer 2001: 126–127, 166). This may seem contradictory, but it does in fact hold true, since both factors are instrumental for the current Sami relation to their cultural heritage: the variation today in where the Sami population live, what they work with, what language they speak and generally how they relate to nature, landscape and history, means that the Sami both have close relationships with cultural heritage in the landscape and that they have lost knowledge about such sites. To what extent one or the other is true, is not only a question of local conditions but vary from individual to individual. Anyone with less specific knowledge may of course still feel a strong attachment to archaeological heritage and see this as a key
element in their “Sami–ness”, but it should be kept in mind that context and individual status matter greatly for which traditions are transferred (cf. e.g. Myrvoll 2012: 36–38). While I think most researchers are very aware of this complexity, the emphasis on traditional knowledge and local memories in Sami cultural heritage and archaeology has not always been articulated with the individual variations in mind, but has rather depicted traditional knowledge as a particular trait of Sami culture in general – in a sense as part of the Sami central myth. A consistent focus on traditions in Sami archaeology and cultural heritage is undoubtedly necessary and highly valuable in many ways, in terms of providing general understandings of landscapes, resources and their use, but also by adding critical voices and alternative viewpoints that may challenge set views and old theories and inspire new ideas and suggestions (Colwell–Chanthaphonh 2012: 281). However, the focus on traditions runs the risk of implicitly giving preference to the recent past and also reproducing this as a template for understanding older Sami cultural history, which again maintains an image of the Sami as particularly static and traditional instead of acknowledging variations (cf. e.g. Olsen 2000b; Berg 2001). Similar problems have been pointed out concerning the general use of ethnographic analogies in archaeology, in terms of “the tyranny of the ethnographic record” (Wobst 1978). In addition, there is a tendency to oppose indigenous people as tradition bearers to a Western scientific modernist stereotype, even if there is a demonstrably less homogenous discourse among majority stakeholders too than published overviews tend to assume (cf. Smith 2006: 283ff). One cohesive aim of this thesis is to explore the difficult balance between these aspects in terms of how traditional and expert knowledge is constituted, disseminated and influenced by each other in various heritage discourses, including indigenous (Sami) contexts. It further explores how this changes or reproduces power relations and what effects and impacts these articulations of knowledge and power have on the wider socio–political contexts.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

The thesis thus includes two main discussions, one focusing on the plausible origin and initial use of the large stone enclosures in northern Norway that were first labelled “Sami circular offering sites”, as well as whether a range of other morphologically deviant structures now included in the same category are expressions of the same cultural phenomenon. Another main trajectory is discussing the societal context and impact of the definitions and redefinitions of this category. Chapter Two presents a theoretical outline and a research history in terms of a discourse analysis focusing on the appearance, consolidation and distribution of the category. The chapter also introduces some further issues concerning the socio–political importance of such cate-
gorisations and interpretations and some deliberations on how these are established and maintained through networks of people, material remains, legislation, recording technology, etc. Chapter Three contains an overview of research on Sami offering sites and ritual sites as a comparison to the circular offering sites and some more detailed discussions about the reception history of this partly traumatic research history. In Chapter Four I present the results of my own investigations, including comprehensive surveys, two smaller excavations and analyses of various find material. A suggested typology is introduced and the understanding of the structures currently included in the category is revised. In Chapter Five, I present ethnographic, historical and archaeological evidence for a new interpretation of one of the subcategories identified in Chapter Four, which is argued to be equally plausible as the traditional offering site explanation. I also discuss scenarios of recent reuse of some of the structures and the record this has produced. Furthermore, I discuss the complexities of how archaeological heritage may be reconceptualised through interdependent discourses on a local and expert level. Chapter Six discusses why a specifically ritual explanation has been attractive in both these contexts, further considering how this has been affected by internal and external stereotyping and the intertwined global indigenous discourses of “rites and rights”. I reflect on the processes of sacralisation and authentication in terms of the wider consequences and power relations involved in archaeological categorisation and cultural heritage management. It is suggested that cultural heritage management also includes the distribution of an “emotional hegemony”, and that this and separate standards for appropriate communication makes a decolonised management of assumed ritual sites and other heritage very difficult in the current state of power/knowledge. Chapter Seven includes some summarised conclusions and outlooks for further research.
2 “Sami circular offering sites” – genesis and implications

In this chapter, I explore the history of the category of Sami circular offering sites in terms of its origin and expansion over the last 170 years. I will argue that the original interpretation of certain large stone structures in Finnmark and Troms counties in northern Norway is founded on somewhat uncertain evidence, and that the notion of stone circles at Sami offering sites has become a truism that currently reinforces the interpretation of an expanding range of structures as offering sites despite a lack of substantiating evidence. I am not claiming that such interpretations are always wrong, but I will argue for a need for more source criticism, more thorough investigations and more openness to alternative explanations concerning both individual sites and types of structures. The archaeological material that underlies my argument will be further presented in Chapter 4. I will only give a preliminary and more superficial introduction here.

Sami circular offering sites, or circular sacrificial sites, have previously been defined as circular dry stone walls with a diameter of 4 to 9 m and a height up to 100–125 cm, built from stones found in the immediate terrain (fig 2) (Vorren 1989: 89; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 217). As the name indicates, they have been interpreted as sites where offering rituals were performed. The stone walls sometimes enclose a mound or cairn presumed to have been the equivalent of an altar where the sieidi, i.e. an offering stone or a wooden figure, was placed (Vorren 1985a: 70–72; Vorren and Eriksen 1993). For several reasons the circular offering sites have been thought to date from the late Middle Ages, supported by a radiocarbon date from a structure on Angsnes, eastern Finnmark (51), that indicate use between AD 1425 and 1615 (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 75; Olsen 2002, Hansen and Olsen 2014: 218). Rocks of peculiar shapes have been found in a few of the circular offering sites and these have been suggested to be overthrown sieidi (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 76–77, 140, 156). Because of a relative closeness to hunting pits and graves it has been suggested that the structures were used

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5 “Circular sacrificial site” is widely used in the literature, but I use the term “circular offering site” when not citing other writers, because Sami rituals seem to have taken more the form of reciprocal gift exchanges with gods and powers, i.e. giving or offering, rather than destructive sacrifices (A. Schanche 2004a; Insoll 2011; Äikäs 2015:43–44).

It has been assumed that the phenomenon of circular offering sites was mainly associated with Finnmark and Troms, the two northernmost counties of Norway (e.g. Vorren 1985a), but especially in recent years a range of structures in other parts of Fennoscandia have been suggested to be remains or delineations of Sami offering sites with direct or indirect reference to the phenomenon known from northern Norway. The expansion of the category to include various more or less similar structures with a far-reaching geographical distribution obviously has important consequences for the archaeological interpretation of the structures themselves, as well as for the understanding of Sami culture and ritual life in the Middle Ages and for the management and use of this cultural heritage today. Because of this recent and ongoing expansion of the definition to include a morphologically wide variety of expressions, an aim for the project has been to define more specific criteria for this category to ensure better informed recording of such sites in the future. This involves a study of the morphology, context and possible uses of the structures. However, to understand the meaning of this category of cultural heritage, and thus which structures belong to it, it is equally necessary to understand the socio-political conditions that have led to its establishment and distribution. The following research history is based on some specific theoretical understandings about the social production of knowledge and the ontological and epistemological frameworks for this activity. These approaches may be well known to most readers, but since they are fundamental to the discussions and arguments in the thesis, they will still be presented here in some detail.

2.1 A theoretical outline

Ludwik Fleck has described the way certain ideas appear, spread and prevail in research communities through the concepts of “thought–styles” and “thought–collectives”, emphasising the social processes involved in establishing a scientific fact (Fleck 1979[1935]). Fleck considers a transient thought–collective to occur as soon as two people exchange ideas or have a conversation, while research communities can be described as more stable thought–collectives. Within such a collective, certain thoughts become acceptable, while others remain unthinkable⁶ (cf. Fleck 1979: 46, 102–103).

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⁶ This is not dissimilar to Bourdieu’s later concepts of habitus and doxa (e.g. Bourdieu 1977). Bourdieu also describes the social construction of knowledge, but where Fleck assumes that scientific communities are trained for mutual support, likened to a football team, Bourdieu has shown how research communities, like any other social field, are constituted by individual interests, strategies, ambitions and internal power negotiations, in this case to achieve “scien-
Fleck describes how a thought–collective encompasses a wide range of individuals who have more or less specialised knowledge on some subject matter, or, in Fleck’s terminology, that belong to esoteric or exoteric circles of the collective respectively. He stresses that all individuals may belong to several exoteric circles, while belonging to just a few, if any, esoteric circles like that of the specialised scientists. He further describes the way the social context affects scientific knowledge in terms of how various exoteric circles affect the thought–style of the esoteric circles. He simultaneously warns that the latter may become secretive and dogmatic, leading to conservatism and rigidity and an elite position towards the masses. If the esoteric circle instead remains open and democratic, Fleck presumes there is a greater chance of new ideas and developments appearing (Fleck 1979: 105–106). Thus Fleck is concerned with bridging the gap between scientists involved in a certain thought–style and the general public of the exoteric groups through popular journals and so–called “handbook–science”.

Both in this context and in general he understands terminology to be the key to connecting knowledge in new ways. Terminology may, however, also inhibit new knowledge, especially when expressing the development of “thought–coercions” within the thought–collective. An example of an effective thought–coercion in medicine is the active decision to unite all venereal diseases under the rubric “Lustseuche”, or carnal plague, with the associations this entails (Fleck 1979; Kimsma 1990: 50). A similar fusion of complex historical backgrounds and different associations appeared in cultural–historical archaeology through the definition of archaeological “cultures” that more or less implicitly united factors like language, cultural identity, material culture and sometimes biology in a single operational unit linked to space and time. This “thought–coercion” has been labelled a “one–entity” by archaeologist Carl–Gösta Ojala (Ojala 2009: 26) and is also echoed in sociologist of science Bruno Latour’s similar concept of “black boxes”, describing accepted scientific truths or methods of which the background and complexities are not made transparent, questioned or discussed (Latour 1987: 2–3, 130–131, 1999). The description of such concepts resembles the way categorisation works in general, as we make a very heterogeneous world understandable by grouping pieces of knowledge and notions into manageable concepts that are meaningful within a given context or sphere (Kopytoff 1986: 70). Despite the evidential constraints and their perceived relation to detectable similarities and differences, categories are prone to change when the socio–political contexts change and require new concepts and understandings. Archaeological categories are frequently adjusted and reorganised in order to delimit them and to answer new questions. However, such classi-
fications are even more profoundly related to both the result of and the reason for the way we understand the world at a specific time and place.

To some extent Fleck anticipates Foucault’s constructivist understandings of science and scientific facts as social products, but where Fleck focuses on the tension between continuity and discontinuity in science, and particularly the short-term continuity of medical knowledge, Foucault rather describes the changes in the overall social consciousness that cause transformations of the social network, which in turn results in a discontinuity in cultural classifications within various discourses such as science (cf. Kimsma 1990: 51). Thus Foucault is analysing a different level, focusing on the “historical... conditions of possibility” (cf. Foucault 1973: xix), i.e. the conditions for defining knowledge and truth at all. He originally described this as ruled by an underlying “episteme” that permeates all aspects of society, which appears very similar to structuralism, though he denies any universal or ahistorical laws or structures and seeks to describe locally constituted and historically conditioned a priori circumstances that statements emerge from (Foucault 1972; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: xxii). In this approach, Foucault assumes primacy to discourse, but he later abandoned the idea of an underlying “episteme” and placed more emphasis on exploring the significance of non-discursive social practices and power relations to the constitution of knowledge. Through the method of “genealogy” he locates discontinuities in what has often been portrayed as continuous developments and progress in scientific discourses and reveals a lack of deeper meaning and an arbitrariness of interpretation. History is described as an appropriation of a system of rules that have no essential meaning but only results from an abundance of power relations in an endless play of dominations (Foucault 1999a; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 103ff). Importantly, power is here not to be understood as violence, or as an institution or a structure, but rather as the multitude of relative forces and influences at any given time and place (cf. Foucault 1999a:103). Foucault concludes that power and knowledge operate in history in a mutually generative fashion (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 114; Foucault 1999a). Even if the pair are related to individual actions based on individual wishes to influence others, they come into existence as a network of strategies and interests, and not because of an agreed-upon strategy within, for example, a ruling class (though he is not thereby denying the existence of such powerful groups) (Foucault 1999a: 105–106). The French term “dispositif”, awkwardly translated as “apparatus”, describes the heterogeneous combination of discursive and non-discursive practices that support certain combinations of knowledge and power in a tactical economy of domination. It is this combination that is expressed in various discourses, institutions, architecture, laws, scientific statements, etc. that we can later trace. According to Foucault, such an apparatus is the result of a strategic response to specific historical problems, and he describes how power relations continuously depend on such confrontations to provoke and direct strategies (Foucault
However, occasionally the initial time and place–specific strategy can introduce a more general rationality that may be turned into a technology of power that is applicable in other situations (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 120–121; Rabinow and Rose 2003: xvi).

These understandings derive from his famous “archaeological” studies, where Foucault traces two major changes in Western knowledge production; between the Renaissance and the Classical Age, where knowledge was based on resemblance and representation respectively, and between the Classical Age and Modernity. The latter is described as “the Age of Man”, when the discourses of the humanities as we know them emerge (Foucault 1970). In Modernity he finds that the main driving force of the socio–political development is the infliction of a particular type of power in terms of discipline based on definition and control of individuals. This resulted in such discourses and materialisations as the modern prison, with the 18th century idea of the Panopticon as a well–known example. According to Foucault, this illustrates a power technique that spread to all aspects of society during the 19th century. Power goes from being expressed and maintained through physical violence to being implemented almost unnoticed through discipline, frequently with the justification that it is for a common good and even in the individual’s own interest. The underlying logic of disciplining, defining, examining, rationalising, etc., human bodies is similarly expressed in the discursive and non–discursive practices constituting schools, asylums, factories, hospitals and so on (Foucault 1977). Foucault labels this form of power and control the “governmentalisation” of the state. An important prerequisite for this governmentality is the so–called “normalisation” of society by defining boundaries between normal and abnormal in order to sanction the latter. He famously illustrates this by describing the historical development of categories such as “sane” and “insane”, “sick” and “healthy”, “criminals” and “good boys”, and not least “true” and “false”, highlighting the link between power and definition of truth (Foucault 1982: 208, 1999b: 10–11 [1970], 2003 [1978]).

Foucault has been criticised for describing the production and maintenance of discourses in a way that “conflates agency and structure rather than account[s] for their dialectics” (cf. Callewaert 2006: 96) and for writing “history” that has no active or self–understanding subjects (Giddens 1988: 214), but his exploration of the limits of knowledge is not a historical or sociological study of how specific discourses are constructed and reconstructed. His aim is rather to contribute an “ethic of discomfort” that reveals the arbitrariness of established truths and opens a space for movement without offering

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7 In this “ideal” prison the convicts would be spread out in individual cells that were all observable from a guard tower in the middle. The prisoners could not see the guard, thus they would have to assume that they were always watched and adjust their behaviour accordingly. In practice they would become their own guards (Foucault 1977).
prophetic advice on how to handle these insights (Rabinow and Rose 2003: xxviii). The details of Foucault’s historical descriptions and his choice of sources can be discussed, but he makes an important contribution to describing the general construction of power/knowledge that permeates society and our whole concept of reality. Importantly, this does not mean that he promotes endless relativism and dismisses the current discourses as unimportant or meaningless. On the contrary he states that we should take the world of serious discourse, such as the sciences, seriously, because that is the world that we are in (cf. Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 105).

Foucault’s theories, his construction of the modern West and his discourse analyses had a profound impact on postcolonial theory. His description of how discourses constitute their subjects and objects and use categorisation as a way of normalising society inspired, for instance, the postcolonial use of the concept of “Othering”, i.e. the process of constructing ’in’ and ’out’ groups, as famously described by Edward Said concerning the Western view on the East in Orientalism (Said 1978). This is a process that by definition involves an asymmetrical, though interdependent, relationship between those defined and those defining, as the latter perceive their view of the former as the result of correct and normalised knowledge, but also create their normalised self-image based on this process of defining “the Other”. These approaches focus on categorisation and subjectivisation of human individuals and identities, but categorisation of things and cultural heritage can be perceived within the same theoretical framework and also affect the categorisation of humans. As pointed out by archaeologist Laurajane Smith, the expert categorisation of material culture that constitutes cultural heritage management, or cultural resource management (CRM), is very much part of the governmentality that recreates state power vis-à-vis, for example, indigenous populations (Smith 2001, 2004). Following sociologists Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992), she describes how archaeology is one of many disciplines that are mobilised as a “technology of government” to regulate populations when it comes to certain social problems and issues, particularly the question of indigenous identities (Smith 2004: 2–3). She claims that as a result of the development of archaeology as a “professional” “science”, archaeological knowledge and discourse has become a tool “to define, understand and regulate trunculent populations and the social problems and issues that they present for the state” (Smith 2004: 17).

On the other hand, the power of cultural identity has also been used by indigenous people and it has been important not just for territorial claims but for an in–group sense of self–sufficiency and self–worth situations where these were important to regain (Smith 2004: 26). Whether this has been an expedient way forward to actual self–sufficiency and self–government can be debated. As outlined in Chapter 1, the application of a specified indigenous identity to gain rights and justice risks ending up in a backwater of essentialist arguments that validate the majorities’ demands for proven iden-
tities, as well as resulting in the consolidation of stereotypes and potential entrenchment of internal group hierarchies (such as patriarchy). The focus on heritage can also sometimes offer symbolic recognition while diverting the focus from fundamental political and economic issues that structure the current status of many indigenous people as suppressed and discriminated minorities (González–Ruibal 2009; Eisenberg 2013). Even sympathetic efforts like indigenous archaeology are involved in discourses that produce relations of power and define insiders and outsiders. Thus indigenous archaeology runs the risk of creating “one–entities” of normalised operational categorisations that can be arranged, manipulated and spoken for by dominant actors (Ojala 2009: 27, 55). This touches upon the issue also discussed in Chapter 1 that all communities are complex and consist of a range of members with various and shifting meanings and motives, so that no individual can be aware of and representative for all cultural concerns within, for instance, an indigenous group (Battiste 2000; Smith 2004: 78). The problem of defining representative spokesmen is a recurring issue in all community archaeology (Jones 2015) and a challenge for archaeologists who often spend quite limited time in local communities, though community and indigenous archaeology are efforts exactly to mend this gulf between professional and non–professional participation and knowledge (Ljungdahl and Norberg 2012; Barlindhaug 2013). The question is if these efforts really can overcome the interplay of power relations in the internal and wider “tactical economy of domination”. I will return to this debate in Chapter 3.5 and 6.

The theoretical outline above underpins the, not very controversial, understanding that the creation of an archaeological category is highly influenced by the current distribution of power/knowledge and also has wider socio–political repercussions. Following Foucault’s description of the apparatus, such knowledge is constituted not only by discursive but also non–discursive elements or, in agent–network terms, by networks of human and non–human things (Latour 1987, 1999). Archaeological categorisation, knowledge and dissemination is constantly affected by the developments in the material context of, for instance, data collection, storage and communication, which inevitably guides individual actions and strategies. Simple examples are the new means of transportation and changed conditions for travelling over the last 100 years. The digital revolution has similarly altered the access to sources and material. On the other hand, it has also presented new limitations and challenges. For instance, the introduction of the Norwegian online national database of cultural heritage, Askeladden, has raised some issues related to the forced situation of having to choose one preconceived category from a list, both when using portable data collectors (PDAs) out in the field and when entering older registrations into the database. this standardisation tends to conceal ambivalences and doubts and limits the range of personal interpretations, though it obviously has many virtues in making the data collection and records more manageable and comparable. On the other
hand, it may limit the development of new understandings and thinking beyond the set lists in the busy everyday life of field archaeologists. It is fully possible for users to suggest new categories, but that would involve a re-evaluation of both the options and the evidence available that is usually beyond the scope and timeframe of, for instance, the archaeological surveys done by the counties or Sami Parliament in relation to planning. The already set categories and the scope and timeframe of the official assignment results in a reproduction of the categories and consequently the system at large, with important but sometimes unforeseen results for research, dissemination and heritage management (Myrvoll 2010a, 2012: 42–47). Thus, the production of subjects and objects in archaeology is not happening at a theoretical level but in the everyday archaeological work through the reproduction of categories and their effects (cf. Smith 2004).

These understandings of how general categorisation, the creation of scientific facts and cultural resource management are intimately interwoven with the given socio–political situations, power relations, legislation, technology and materiality are essential to the further discussions in this thesis considering the constitution and consequences of archaeological categories and definition of heritage. In the following chapter I will outline the historical genesis and distribution of the concept and cultural heritage category “Sami circular offering sites” (No.: samiske offerringer/ringformete offerplasser), using a discourse analysis with focus on intertextuality, in terms of how the different statements relate to and illuminate each other (e.g. Fairclough 2003). The aim is a better understanding of the origin of the concept and how and why it has evolved into the currently rather broadly–encompassing archaeological term. I suggest that the introduction of the category can be understood with reference to Fleck’s concepts of “thought–collective” and “thought–style”, while the recently increased use of the term in a wider geographical area should be discussed in line with Foucault’s description of how discourses are constituted by specific historical and socio–political circumstances of power/knowledge distribution. This is further explored in Chapter 6, along with the mutual influence and power relations involved in negotiating archaeological and other narratives.

2.2 Research history – the construction of a category

This analysis has to start by noting an absence: despite a substantial amount of information about other Sami offering sites, the circular offering sites, or more generally, manmade stone structures as offering sites, are not mentioned in known contemporary medieval or early modern written sources about Sami offering sites and rituals (see Chapter 3.2). The available sources
are mainly compiled by male Christian clergymen and missionaries writing in the 17th and early 18th centuries in certain geographical areas, and their access to and understanding of information about Sami rituals and religion has been debated (e.g. Qvigstad 1943; Mebius 1968; Bäckman 1975; Rydving 1995a, 1995b). However, the exclusion of such a distinct feature as the stone structures examined here is still remarkable. We have a few examples where certain place names listed as offering sites coincide with the occurrence of such stone structures as described above, but in these cases the place names are usually not directly related to the structures but refer to wider areas (Qvigstad 1926: 326, 334–335; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 69, 201, 203; Sveen 2003: 145). Even if these sites may have gone out of use by the time these sources were compiled, and in fact it appears they had (see chapter 4.9), it is peculiar that they do not mention stone circles as either a type of offering site or in terms of naming more places where they occur as offering sites. This is especially true in areas like Varanger and Porsanger in Finnmark county, where there is a high frequency of such structures and where some of the writers lived and worked for a number of years (Olsen 1910 [c. 1715]; Leem 1975 [1767]). One structure on the headland Angsnes in Nesseby in the inner part of the Varangerfjord (51) is situated only c. 200 meters from the ruins of the first missionary chapel that was built there in 1719–1720 (cf. Beronka 1923: 4–5). Despite this, the stone structure is not mentioned in the lists of offering sites compiled by the local teacher and missionary Isaac Olsen, who worked here until 1716. Olsen otherwise describes the variation in other offering sites in quite some detail, stating that some Sami had “roughly carved wooden images” that were placed in caves or rock shelters, but that they also worshiped a variety of natural features such as large well-grown birches and other trees with some special characteristics that separated them from other trees (these were called by special names), mountains or stones with peculiar characteristics that were called by different names, headlands and promontories in the sea or in freshwater and some “strange” rivers, where the Sami would, according to Olsen, put figures and “trees” made to look like boats and pulks or sledges, hammers and smaller sticks called “lødt mora” carved in different ways (luohtemuora, “offering tree”). Olsen furthermore states that most of the offering sites were placed far into the wilderness so that Norwegians and other Christians could not find them, as this would ruin their power (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 7–8). Olsen’s account has to be taken with some source criticism, but there is no doubt he is describing what he himself has seen and heard, contrary to early sources sources, which tend to quote each other rather uncritically (cf. Rydving 1995b: 28–34). The fact that he does not mention solid stone walls or stone fences around offering sites or enclosures in Varanger is therefore significant, especially as the structures must have been better preserved and more visible at that time than they are today.
Previous research has still assumed that missionaries in the early 18th century did interact with these sites because of another absence: as described above, the mound or cairn that can often be found in the middle of the “classical” circular offering sites has been explained as a place to put a wood or stone sieidi. However, no such offering stone or wooden figure has been found standing within a circular offering site, while in the previously-mentioned site on Angsnes, Nesseby, pieces of three peculiar broken stone were interpreted as the remains of sieiddit that had been destroyed by missionaries (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 201). Against this can be agreed that the missionary activity in Finnmark was only intensified and organised through the official body of “the Sami Mission” in the early 18th century, and desecration or destruction of offering sites was a main method of conversion predominantly in the 1720s by which time these sites appear to have been out of use for some time (see Chapter 4.11 anput datings) (Rydving 1995a: 62ff, 92). A pre–18th century systematic destruction targeting sieiddit (pl.) in circular offering sites in particular throughout the rather vast geographical area where they are to be found, seems quite unlikely. A possibility is of course that these sites continued to have some particular importance or mnemonic capacity the missionaries wanted to eradicate, but that would make it even more remarkable that the phenomenon is not mentioned in their writings. Another possibility is that relatively low stone walls like that on Angsnes became overgrown and were paid less attention than any standing sieidi. However, this could not have been the case on other sites where the missionaries would have had to climb over more substantial walls in order to reach any sieidi. The sieiddit in these structures may also have disappeared because they were small, perishable or of completely different shapes than the ones that are recorded in later sources, and therefore have not been recognised by later visitors. It would nevertheless still be remarkable if they have totally vanished at all the relevant sites so far recorded.

In other areas, there are sources telling of the Sami’s own destruction of offering sites, performed both by converted Christians and those maintaining the indigenous religion. The latter group could destroy and abandon offering stones and sites when dissatisfied with the effects of sacrifices (Fellman 1906: 19–20; Paulaharju 1932: 24, 43–44; Högström 1980: 183; Rydving 1995a: 66). As mentioned, the Sami in northern Norway were exposed to Christianity through their neighbours, trading partners and more unsystematic missionary activity from the Middle Ages onwards and some individuals and groups already perceived themselves as Christians by the turn of the 18th century (Rydving 1995: 69–70). However, a unanimous indigenous destruction of sieiddit in circular offering sites in specific seems unlikely, especially as other offering sites in the same areas have been preserved until today (e.g. Manker 1957). Thus, the lack of such sieiddit is one of the features that has prompted my further exploration of the origins of and evidence for the prevailing offering site explanation.
2.2.1 Early sources describing circular offering sites

It is only in the 19th century that the structures begin to be specifically discussed in written sources (cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 203), with a first mention in 1846, when Johan Fritzner describes the “circular stone setting” on Čiešti/Fugleberget, Nesseby, eastern Finnmark, (48, fig. 4) as a “peculiar facility”. He finds it hard to understand but thinks it looks like “children’s work” (Fritzner 1846: 132, my translation). In fact, it has relatively large dimensions, being 13.5 m in diameter and with walls that even today measure up to 90 cm high. Fritzner does not suggest any other explanations or quote any local knowledge about it. A more thorough study of this and two other similar structures in the bays of Per Larsenvik and Fuglebergbukta, also in Nesseby, was carried out by magistrate Even Saxlund in 1852. Saxlund mentions that there were another three stone wall structures further east that he did not have time to visit. He did his investigations together with the local tradesman and partly university-educated zoologist and archaeologist Andreas Georg Nordvi. Nordvi was born on Mortensnes and came back to run the trading station there after 10 years of studying in southern Norway and Copenhagen as a child and young man. The investigations of the stone enclosures together with Saxlund were undertaken in connection with their excavation of more than 20 scree graves (fig. 3 and Chapter 3.3) in the area, aiming to retrieve Sami skulls for the anthropological collections in southern Scandinavia. Nordvi went on to do a series of excavations for this purpose in the subsequent years (Saxlund 1853; Solberg 1909: 89ff; Kleppe 1974; Schanche 2000: 26).

Immediately after the excavations, Nordvi sent an account of the investigations he had participated in to his old professor in Copenhagen without mentioning Saxlund at all⁸. It was published in the Danish Royal Academy’s annual report (Nordvi 1853), but it did not contain information about the stone circles they had examined. Saxlund, however, soon sent a separate report to the Antiquities Collection in Christiania (today’s Museum of Cultural History in Oslo) where these sites and investigations are described (Saxlund 1853). This handwritten document has remained unpublished and has had limited, if any, impact on later research on these stone structures (cf. it is not referenced in the seminal work by Vorren and Eriksen from 1993), though the source has been used in studies of scree graves (Schanche 2000). Interestingly, Saxlund discusses several possible functions for the stone enclosures and successively excludes alternatives such as houses, hunting blinds and reindeer milking pens, which, he says, ‘some’ had previously suggested. He comments that the structures could be related to pre-Christian Sami rituals, but his text indicates that this option is presented more for a

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⁸ A later source claims that the content was in part stolen from Saxlund, in part fabricated by Nordvi and thus untrue (Solberg 1909: 89 ff).

lack of other likely explanations than because of recorded traditions or other available evidence. In any case he seems to reject this notion and instead concludes that the most likely explanation is that the structures are large unfinished and unused graves for several individuals, due to the similarity in building technique to the scree graves he was investigating (Saxlun 1853). A use as graves appears rather unlikely and the conclusion does not refer to local information, though it seems he has acquired some of the alternative interpretations from other sources, possibly through local inhabitant Nordvi. With the lack of defined sources for the suggestions Saxlun discusses, it is difficult to judge what kind of contact he had with any local Sami, and whether they would be willing to provide any information about such a subject as offerings, if they had any concept at all of the sites in question. As a state official in the process of excavating and emptying Sami graves it is possible that Saxlun had a distant or even antagonistic relationship with any local Sami individuals that had maintained any knowledge about the traditional use of these sites (though local Sami were also involved in opening graves, see below).

According to the general attitudes to folklore among researchers and state officials in Scandinavia at the time, he may also have lacked confidence in any local sources and traditions he was made aware of. Following the in
increased professionalisation of Scandinavian archaeology and associated subjects in the 19th century, tradition and folklore became less prominent and even explicitly disregarded in this discourse. The new source–critical methods and chronological frameworks that developed within the historical disciplines framed folkloristic material as historically unreliable (Burström 1997; Henriksen 2011: 34–35). The same attitude possibly afflicted Nordvi, who was apparently eager to associate with the scientific community (cf. his frequent written correspondence with Professor Steenstrup, Nordvi 1907).

Nordvi’s published report does not mention the stone circles (Nordvi 1853), but in a, presumably later, note in the archives at the Museum of Cultural History in Oslo, he specifically reports on eight stone circles in Varanger. Here he states that though there are no visible signs of their intention or use they have “apparently” (No.: vistnok) been used in Sami pre–Christian worship (Nordvi n.d.). In the given context, the Norwegian word could mean either “according to rumour” or that Nordvi finds this interpretation to be the most likely one. He does not state any source for this conviction; hence it is difficult to know if it was based on local Sami traditions or his own assumption (cf. Spangen 2013a). Nordvi was a prominent man in Nesseby and seemingly well–liked due to his generosity towards the poor (Kleppe 1974: 25), and he clearly had some knowledge of Sami culture and traditions. However, he also engaged in excavating graves and other features and retrieved and exported Sami skeletons, so it is not unlikely that he had a distant
relation to any one with knowledge about traditions in general and sacred sites in particular. He did gain knowledge about offerings of fish oil still made in 1848 to a large standing stone on the other side of the Mortensnes promontory, the rather famous Ceavcegeadge offering stone, but this apparently came to his attention through his own observation of oil stains on the stone (Nordvi 1874).

Nordvi’s note on the assumed ritual use of the large stone enclosures in Varanger is undated, but it is likely to predate the publication of this interpretation by the influential ”lappologist” (see Chapter 3.3) Jens. A. Friis, who collected and systematised extensive knowledge about Sami culture and disseminated this through his highly popular books. This includes two publications in 1871 about his journey through Finnmark, the Kola Peninsula and Karelia in 1867 and about Sami mythology. He mentions circular stone walls in both, saying he has seen them all over Finnmark and that the Sami built them around their sieidi in olden times. Again, there is no indication of where this information comes from (Friis 1871a: 140, 1871b: 91). The statement would have supported Nordvi’s assumption if Friis had been an independent source, but in fact Friis visited Nordvi on Mortensnes during his journey. In the book describing the journey, he mentions that they went out and looked at a stone circle and the scree graves in the area (Friis 1871b: 89–91). Potentially, the suggestion that the stone circles were offering sites was mentioned by Nordvi and discussed on this occasion, while it was only put into print by Friis a few years later. On the other hand, Friis travelled all over Finnmark and it cannot be dismissed that he may have had this information with him to Nesseby and actually informed Nordvi. A reading of Friis’ other work is not very helpful in deciding what is more likely. Contrary to scientists within the historical disciplines, Friis was an eager collector of Sami myths and mythology, but he operated within a discourse where adding information without an actual local source was entirely acceptable; inspired by the pioneering Grimm brothers in Germany, many scholars collecting fairytales and other folklore at this time would adjust the stories to accepted narrative structures and make artistic additions to convince the readers about the true beauty and meaning of the tales and underline the profound insights of the noble folk culture, or in the case of the Sami, the noble savage (Dorson 1966: 290; Hansen and Niemi 2001: 367–368). This was part of the current nationalist discourse and in accordance with the call from 18th century philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder to use popular traditions to inspire a national consciousness, as it was assumed that the true spirit of a nation could be found within the conservative peasant unsullied by modern advances (cf. e.g. Dorson 1966: 289). According to these notions, Sami myths and folklore should reflect their “folk spirit”, preferably somehow in opposition to the image of the Norwegian. As such, the ritual explanation of monuments in Finnmark would fit in with a consistent general picture through the centuries of the Sami “Other” (cf. Said 1978) as heathen, superstitious, prone to
Isak Saba’s photo of the Fugleberget structure, Nessseby, Finnmark (48), taken in 1915. Saba came from Nessseby and was the first Sami representative in the National Assembly. On the right side of the photo it says: “Probably a “gæggæ-gardde” [stone fence], a place for offering ceremonies. There are remains of offering bones next to the “god” nearby.” Per Bomban is standing next to the structure. Photo: Isak Saba – Norsk Folkeminnesamling.

magic and sorcery and as particularly spiritual (Schanche 1993a; Fonneland and Kraft 2013, see Chapter 6.2). On the other hand, it should be noted that the Grimm brothers and their followers did employ methods for collecting folklore that aimed at high accuracy, even if they found it acceptable to add motives to underline what they thought to be the underlying importance. Friis did a thorough job of collecting facts about other aspects of Sami culture, thus it is difficult to judge whether his explanation of the stone circles is a qualified guess after discussing with Nordvi or an accurately recorded Sami tradition.

Interestingly, a short note on a 1915 photo of the stone circle on Fugleberget in Nessseby (fig. 4) taken by Isak Saba, a local man who became the first Sami representative in the Norwegian National Assembly (Stortinget), states that this was “probably” an offering site, referring to finds of “offering bones” by “the god” nearby. This suggests that even he was not informed about any local traditions about the place. He was other wise a keen collector of Sami folklore that was later published by Just K. Qvigstad (see below). A note of concern to the curator Olaus Nicolaissen at Tromsø Museum some years earlier could indicate little local knowledge about or concern for the cultural heritage sites in the screes in Varanger: Saba reports that local people were taking slabs from the graves to put beneath turf stacks,
build fences, and make floors for their cowsheds. One boy had also sold human bones to the guano factory in Vadsø town further out the Varanger fjord. In Saba’s opinion, these individuals had no idea they were destroying graves (Saba 1910).

At the same time, ethnographers did record surviving traditions about other old offering sites in the area, such as the holy mountain of Álda (Aldon), Nesseby, where the actual offering site was destroyed by missionaries in the 18th century but restrictions regarding female presence still remained in the early 20th century (Qvigstad 1926: 324). Rituals were evidently also remembered and even performed by some Sami in relation to the mentioned offering stone on the other side of the Mortensnes headland, which indicates the local knowledge about such features. As described above, traditions about Sami ritual sites have not necessarily been evenly distributed in the local community in the past either. There may have been local information that Saba did not have access to due to such factors that he grew up on the south side of the fjord (where there are no recorded circular offering sites of the “classical” type), his work as a church singer and interpreter or his later prominent status as a Member of Parliament (cf. Jensen 2014). However, both the apparent ignorance among some Sami as to the origin and content of the scree graves, the apparently widespread knowledge about traditions related to other offering sites in the area and Saba’s hesitant definition of the stone circle in the photo could suggest that the ritual interpretation of these was not a result of local information.

The publishing of this conclusion by Friis has had substantial impact. His books were very popular and widely read, and have been frequently referred to by later researchers (see below). They may have inspired the otherwise intriguing claim that a large stone wall enclosure much further south, by Bjellåvatn, Saltdalen, Nordland (141), was a former Sami offering site too (Hagemann 1889: 61). The author of this interpretation, Aksel Hagemann, worked in Saltdal for a while, but he wrote his book about the area many years later, when he was employed as a forester in Alta, Finnmark (Sommerfeldt 1915), at which point he would have had particular interest in Friis’ publications about the north. Unfortunately, Hagemann does not give a source for his assumption about this stone wall either and the structure he describes has so far not been refound (cf. Spangen 2014).

Friis served as a main reference for considering stone circles as offering sites throughout the 20th century, including in Tromsø scholar Just K. Qvigstad’s extensive catalogue of Sami offering sites in Norway from 1926. This includes recorded stone circles, about which he briefly states: “Where only stone circles tell of an offering site today, there has probably previously been standing an offering stone” (Qvigstad 1926: 317–318, my translation from German). The offering site “Ziourres–Iblmel” that is mentioned by early 18th century source Isaac Olsen (1910[c. 1715]) is associated with a stone circle Qvigstad himself had observed a kilometer east of the Klubbvik river in
Nesseby (43, now lost). The islet “Leunje–jaure–suolo” (meaning “the Upper Lake Island”), today known in Norwegian as Offerholmen (“the Offering Islet”), in Øvrevatn, Porsanger, is described as an offering site by priest Knud Leem in 1767, and Qvigstad says that “stone circles are still visible here (1915)” (Qvigstad 1926: 326, 334–335, my translation). The information has later been connected to one specific large stone structure in a scree⁹ (e.g. Nissen 1928; Vorren 1956a, 1958).

Qvigstad collected four extensive volumes of Sami folklore. Unlike Friis, he saw this material as interesting only to researchers and had no interest in presenting it in an appropriate way to the public, thus he included Sami texts and altered nothing in the original narratives (cf. Pollan 1997: 15). These stories from the late 19th and early 20th centuries occasionally mention offering sites, but only in terms of smaller or larger rocks (Qvigstad 1927: 462–469, 1928: 521). They are, however, very late considering the age of the structures that are treated here.

Qvigstad’s work inspired the priest and reindeer herding inspector Kristian Nissen, who visited and photographed Sami offering sites in 1908 and 1924, which resulted in the first and very interesting report about a specific local tradition. Nissen states that the site Beajalgŋai (64), by the river Iešjohka in Karasjok, inner Finnmark, where there are several stone structures including a typical large stone wall enclosure, was known by the sedentary Sami in the area, and probably, he assumes, the reindeer herders too, as an old offering site, though his inquiries did not produce any accounts about the actual use (Nissen 1928). Researchers at the time may have been influenced by Friis and each other, and it is well documented that scholarly knowledge disseminated through books or personal encounters may influence what is later perceived to be old traditions, often maintained and curated by certain knowledgable individuals in the local community (e.g. Burström 1993; Burström et al. 1997; Solli 1996a, 1996b; Aannestad 1999; Brekmoe 2004: 59–60). However, it is quite unlikely that the Sami in Karasjok had read Friis’ books. Reading capabilities and schooling in the Sami areas in the mid-19th and 20th centuries were minimal and students were frequently absent for a variety of reasons (Helland 1906: 547; Qvigstad 1907: 35; Minde 2005; Hoëm 2007: 165–166, 216, 328–329). Thus, Friis’ books may well have exceeded the level of Norwegian that local Sami in Karasjok could or were interested in reading, if they ever encountered any copies of them. The Sami in Karasjok were of course not living in an isolated vacuum and it is fully possible that they could have known about the published explanation through school teachers, officials or other interested visitors. Nissen’s recorded offering site tradition still indicates that there were some local tradi-

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⁹ There are several pit fall traps for reindeer on the island that Qvigstad may have misinterpreted like this, but Friis also describes the offering site here as “several large stone heaps” (Friis 1876: 130).
tions about a ritual use of these large stone builds in inner Finnmark at the
time. However, that is not necessarily a confirmation of an original ritual use
of the structures at Beajalgŋai and elsewhere as offering sites in the Middle
Ages. During the hundreds of years that had passed from its original use to
Nissen’s visit, local traditions could easily have appeared among local Sami
to explain this site and the bone remains there, without representing a con-
tinuous tradition from the actual time of use (cf. e.g. Rowlands 1993; Bur-
ström 1993; Gazin–Schwartz and Holtorf 1999). This has been seen in other
Sami contexts concerning explanations for such features in the landscape as
reindeer pitfall traps and so-called Stallo (“troll”) house grounds (Manker
1960). Without dismissing the potentially old origin of Sami myths and folk-
lore, it is worth noting that, despite the continuous use and occupation of the
Beajalgŋai area, there was a shift in the habitation pattern in the 18th and
19th centuries, with the establishment of the current village of Karasjok
around 1700 and the closing of the borders between Norway and Fin-
land/Russia for reindeer herders in 1852 partly resulting in new families
moving into the area. These may have been informed about old traditions
from people already using the area, but it is also possible that they had to
shape their own more or less historically informed opinions about the struc-
tures they encountered in this, to them, new landscape. I will return to dis-
cuss the relationship between oral traditions, historical authenticity and sci-
entific statements in later chapters.

2.2.2 Investigations by Ørnulv Vorren

Friis and Qvigstad’s seminal publications on offering sites in Norway un-
doubtedly had continuous impact, which may be reflected in the 1941 ques-
tionnaire about offering sites sent out by ethnographer Ernst Manker to Sami
informants in Sweden. One of the questions was if the offering sites were
surrounded by fences of any sort (which one person confirmed, saying there
could be stones and antlers like an “altar ring”\(^{10}\)) (Manker 1957: 86). In
1951, Manker came to northern Norway where he travelled to various sites
of interest, recording especially pitfall hunting systems and offering sites
together with his younger Norwegian colleague Ørnulv Vorren. One of the
sites they visited was the stone enclosure Nedrevatn 1 in Porsanger (83) that
is described by Friis (Manker 1957:26).

After this travel, Vorren went on to discover several similar structures
through his surveys and close contact with locals in Finnmark (e.g. Vorren
Vorren, who also founded and led the Sami ethnographic department of

\(^{10}\) This is an understandable association for a ritual use of the structures discussed here too, but altar rings were not introduced in churches in Scandinavia until the late 16th century, so this would not be relevant for the stone enclosures discussed here were built (see Chapter 3.2).
Tromsø Museum, published a series of articles and eventually a book that included information about this sort of site (Vorren 1956a, 1958, 1982, 1985a, 1987; Vorren and Eriksen 1993). In earlier articles he mentions 19 sites he had recorded in Finnmark and Troms, the northernmost counties of Norway (Vorren 1985a: 73, 1989: 89), while in the later book about Sami offering sites within the Varanger area in eastern Finnmark some are added and other sites are not mentioned anymore (Vorren and Eriksen 1993). The structures he included until 1993 all had relatively massive stone walls and a diameter of 5–10 m, fairly high or at least wide and marked walls without any sign of entrances and no hearths, though small traces of charcoal have been found in the ground in some of them (Vorren 1953b; Vorren and Eriksen 1993:75). Vorren reports on finds that indicate a log superstructure on top of the stone walls in at least two cases, at Storfossen, Karasjok (71), and Nedrevatn 1, Porsanger (83) (Vorren 1970b, 1973a, 1985a: 71–72), of which the latter case had also been observed and described by Friis (Friis 1871a: 140). Vorren assumed that the other structures, at least those situated in or close to pine forests, had had similar constructions, but that any substantial traces of this had eroded by the time he visited them (Vorren 1985a: 71–72). He also reported on finding animal bones that were assumed to be remains of offerings, including bones from reindeer, dogs and foxes, but also other animals (Vorren 1985a: 75, see Chapter 4.7). As mentioned, peculiar stones inside the stone walls were suggested to be overthrown sieiddit (Vorren 1985a: 76, Vorren and Eriksen 1993). The structures Vorren described in his early publications thus have certain specific characteristics that make them reasonably easy to distinguish from other features such as, for instance, tent rings, turfhouse foundations, graves and shooting blinds (see also Chapter 4.3.1).

The offering site explanation for these structures does not seem to have been entirely obvious to Vorren during his first years of investigations. In his 1953 field notes from the site by Lakselvmunningen (82), he consistently calls it an “offering site” in quotation marks (Vorren 1953b). However, he maintains this view, in line with his older colleagues Qvigstad and Manker, from his earliest publications on the subject, supporting the interpretation with the sources described above when considering the two stone structure on Offerholmen (85) and Biekkanoaivi (57) offering sites (Vorren 1956a, 1958). He later substantiated this explanation of the stone enclosures in general by referring the above–mentioned note by Nordvi11 (Vorren and Eriksen

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11 It should be noted that Nordvi is known to have reported on structures and finds from the Saxlund excavations up to 20 years later (Scanche 2000: 100–101), and it could be that he reported on these “circular” structures more than once. This could explain why the machine–written transcription found in the Sami ethnographic archive of Tromsø Museum (TM), which is presumably what Vorren based his understandings on and is possibly even his own transcription (cf. e.g. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 69), does not entirely coincide with the wording in the original handwritten note found in the Museum of Cultural History (MCH) in Oslo. For
1993). Vorren evidently saw these sources as highly reliable and explicitly states that Nordvi’s interpretation must have been based on local traditions and personal observations (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 203), though this is not evident in what Nordvi actually wrote.

Vorren never published a more detailed, comprehensive work considering all the circular offering sites, and, as mentioned above, he includes and excludes different sites and structures in his publications. In two earlier articles, he maps 19 sites in Finnmark and northern Troms that he believes to be included in this category at that time. These are mostly spread out along the Varanger fjord and the main waterways of Porsanger, Karasjok and Kautokeino municipalities, apart from one site in the Skibotn valley in Troms (Gálggojávri, 117) and one site on Segloddon12 (19) on the outer northern coast of the Varanger peninsula13. The publication describes the constructions and some finds, but only in part or in general terms. In his 1993 book on Sami offering sites in Varanger, Vorren describes the structures in this area in much more detail but of course not the sites in other parts of Finnmark and Troms. More importantly he includes a range of new sites that had recently been recorded by his co–author, local historian Hans Kr. Eriksen, in the Kramvik and Grunnesbukt areas in Vardø municipality in the late 1980s and early 1990s (21–30), as well as another site recorded in Sandfjorddalen, Båtsfjord (8), by historian and then county conservator Einar Niemi. It is emphasised in the book that these stone circles are considered offering sites mainly based on a certain morphological similarity with the previously–inventoried circular offering sites (e.g. Vorren and Eriksen 193: 144), but most of them actually diverge morphologically from the 19 structures that had previously been listed by Vorren (see Chapter 4). His co–author Eriksen notes in an earlier field report that it seems somewhat unlikely that the high frequency of such sites in a limited area, sometimes within viewing distance of each other, should reflect an offering practice (Eriksen 1989: 5). He had

instance, the TM transcript calls the structures “circular” (”cirkelrunde”), while the original says “round” (”runde”). A now lost structure in Per Larsenbukt is said in the TM transcript to have been ruined “at the ends” because slabs have been taken for building materials, while the MCH original only says it has been ruined “in later years” because stones have been taken from it. The TM transcript describes the find of a stone with “characters” (”Skriftegn”) in a structure by Karlebotn, while the MCH original defines these signs as “Russian letters” (”russiske Bokstaver”). The letters are also differently interpreted in the two documents. In the TM transcript it says they spell “Doter” and mean “dog”, while the original spells out the Cyrillic letters DOM and translates them (incorrectly) as meaning “house”. In the TM transcript, the assertion about the use of the structures as ritual sites is repeated at the end, while this is not the case for the handwritten note in MCH archives.

12 I have not been able to obtain any more information about this site and it is uncertain why Vorren first included and then dismissed it.

13 A stone circle on Mountain Vuorji (61) in Karasjok, which is mentioned by Qvigstad (1926: 335), was not refound by Vorren when he surveyed the area in 1952 (Vorren 1953a: 162), and this is not included in his overviews.
formerly interpreted similar structures in the nearby Komagdalen (31) as falcon catching facilities\textsuperscript{14} (Eriksen 1988). Unfortunately, the field notes from their common investigations around 1990 are in the late Eriksen’s private archive, which is not available at the moment, but evidently the two authors eventually agreed on the offering site interpretation for the sites in Kramvik/Grunnesbukt. Later interpretations of various structures as offering sites in other areas often make references to this book, which indicates that it has been instrumental in widening the category of circular offering sites to include a range of morphological variation over the last two decades (see Chapter 2.2.4). While Vorren did get information about existence and location of such sites, he did not record any local traditions related to the use of the stone structures as such.

Even if he noted the peculiar lack of mention of the circular offering sites in the writings by Isaac Olsen (Vorren 1985a: 69), Vorren’s many years of investigations and excavations of these sites was based on an understanding of them as offering sites and consequently concentrated on finding offering matter and dateable material\textsuperscript{15}. He also saw the sites in relation to other activities in the landscape and to territorial borders (Vorren 1985a). Most of the finds did not oppose the offering site assumption, as they consisted of bones primarily from reindeer and partly from dogs, which are known from written descriptions to have been part of Sami offering rituals. He does note that the assemblages included other species too, such as fox, but this is not further discussed. Instead it is maintained that offerings in the structures were related the wild reindeer hunt, due to a certain proximity between the structures and hunting facilities for wild reindeer. Some of the sites in Varanger are, however, more closely related to graves. This resulted in a general interpretation that emphasised rituals related to hunting and burials (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 197, 203). The actual proximity between these features can be questioned and the cultural environment of the stone enclosures is discussed further in Chapter 4.5. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the stone structures as offering sites related to hunting and burials was upheld in a series of articles and books throughout Vorren’s career, and these have been instrumental for the later interpretations of these sites.

2.2.3 Investigations by archaeologists

Despite the general adoption of the category “circular offering sites” to describe certain structures and a quite frequent mention in archaeological liter-

\textsuperscript{14} Stone structures thought to have been used for falcon catching have been recorded in southern Norway, consisting of stone walls covered with roof slabs with entrance through the roof or with the twig grids (Mølmen 1986: 342, Alsaker 1997).

\textsuperscript{15} The few dating samples he submitted were from charcoal and remains of wood, and not from the unburnt bones that were found in the structures (see Chapters 4.7 and 4.11).
The sites have received relatively little attention from archaeologists in northern Norway in terms of further research and interpretation. The fact that this remained a theme for the ethnographic department rather than the archaeological department at Tromsø Museum for many years coincides with the general understanding at the time of Sami culture and history as an ethnographic field of study. Though not necessarily reflecting the explicit opinion of ethnographers like Vorren, this relates to the previously mentioned longlived 19th century evolutionary understanding of the Sami as a static “nature people” on a lower level of development, as opposed to the majority populations’ flexible cultures and historical developments (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 2–4). In addition, and as mentioned in Chapter 1.2, the concept of a Sami past had no place in the nationalistic framework of Norwegian archaeology during the 20th century (e.g. Hesjedal 2004). Before the establishment of Sami archaeology as a field of study in the latter half of the 20th century, it was fairly uncontroversial that studies of Sami cultural remains in northern Norway were mainly performed by ethnographers (Schanche and Olsen 1985; Hesjedal 2004: 16, Hansen and Olsen 2014: 5–6), partly with archaeological methods like excavations (though see e.g. Simonsen 1969, 1979). This has also been the case with the sites in question here. Archaeologists have mostly included brief discussions of circular offering sites in publications concerning other subjects and rarely performed independent investigations of the sites in northern Norway. An exception is the excavations Else Kleppe Johansen performed on the sites in Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) and Fugleberget/Čiesti (48), Nesseby, eastern Finnmark, in the late 1960s. The results are presented in her magister thesis, which mainly focuses on the scree graves in this area. However, she does not discuss the function or meaning of the stone circles in any further detail due to the fact that the sites were part of Vorren’s research at the time (Kleppe 1974: 63).

Other archaeologists have discussed the structures on a more general level. In her PhD thesis on scree graves, Audhild Schanche elaborates on Vorren’s interpretation of the context of circular offering sites as related to graves and hunting facilities. She suggests that rituals related to hunting and burials could be connected, as they both involve dealing with death. More specifically, she suggests that the circular offering sites may have been sites for the ritual slaughtering of offering animals (Schanche 2000: 284, 296–297, 2003). In his articles about the labyrinths found along the Finnmark, Kola Peninsula and White Sea coasts, archaeologist Bjørnar Olsen has suggested that both these and the circular offering sites could be interpreted as symbolic Sami “countermeasures” against Christian manifestations like churches and convents that were established in these areas in the late medieval and early modern times (Olsen 2002; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 217–218, 220). The limited extent of these discussions, as minor parts of other investigations, has not allowed for wider comparative studies or a more explicit understanding of the practices related to them. The general notion rather
seems to be in line with Vorren’s description of offering matter being prepared and placed by a *sieidi* or on an “altar” in the middle, implicitly suggesting that at least some individuals climbed the walls into the circle during the rituals.

### 2.2.4 Other structures as Sami offering sites

Over the last half century an increasing number of varying structures in both Finnmark and Troms and other areas of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia have been labelled circular offering sites or compared to such. In addition to stone circles quite similar to the ones described by Vorren in his early work, these sites include circles and ovals of a single or a few layers of rocks or slabs, and semi–circular, rectangular, triangular, or multiangular stone and/or earth structures of various sizes (Manker 1957: 26; Stenvik 1983; Edvinger 1989; Pareli 1991; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 64–65, 160; Huggert 2000; Wennstedt Edvinger and Winka 2001; Manyuhkin and Lobanova 2002; Zachrisson 2004b: 25; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005: 81–82; Edvinger and Broadbent 2006; Karjalainen 2007; Bergstøl 2008a: 107, 122; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2009; Lobanova 2009; Broadbent 2010; Saloranta 2011; Ljungdahl and Norberg 2012; Loeffler 2015). There is no doubt that Vorren’s publications from 1956 onwards, and thus by extension the 19th century sources of Friis and Nordvi, have influenced the interpretations of these constructions, directly or indirectly. Ethnographer Ernst Manker’s seminal work on Sami offering sites in Sweden, where he mentions the phenomenon and Friis’ description (Manker 1957), has also had widespread influence. Certain later publications have had equally substantial impact and become autonomous authorities despite their ultimate reliance on these key sources (fig. 5). In the following section, I present a short chronological literature review of the various structures that have been published as suggested offering sites with direct or indirect references to Vorren and Manker, with emphasis on literature and reports that have had an influence on later interpretations. The chronological presentation also intends to illustrate a quite interesting pattern of how some research questions apparently have gained interest in the different countries and regions at different points in time, which can possibly be related to the general political situation in the various Sami areas over time, including how the Sami heritage management has been organised and institutionalised. I will return to this question in Chapter 2.3 and Chapter 6. The review below is based on published sources. Other suggested circular offering sites in Norway are presented in the catalogue, while suggested sites outside Norway are referred to in the text when relevant to the discussion.16

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16 Please note that the literature review covers the most influential sources, but this thesis does not include a complete survey of all the local historical literature and local archives in all the
As described above, Manker and Vorren visited the Nedrevatn and Offerholmen sites in Porsanger together in 1951, probably inspired by the information about this given in Friis’ publications, as well as the mentions by Olsen, Leem and not least Qvigstad, whom they also visited on this trip (Manker 1952: 105–108, 1957: 26). In the following years, Manker compiled his massive volume of known Sami offering sites in the area of the Swedish Sami. Here he states that sites with circular stone walls like those in Finnmark are uncommon in his area of investigation. Nonetheless, he maintains that a few reports and finds suggest that similar structures may have occurred even in Sweden, more specifically at eight sites out of the total of 507 recorded in his book (Manker 1957: 25–26, see table 1). The listed sites are, in fact, mostly quite morphologically divergent from the large constructions found in Finnmark and Troms, and usually smaller and less elaborate. Some of the sites may sound comparable, but several are not inventoried by Manker himself and depend on other more or less certain sources of information. Among the sites listed by Manker are smaller stone circles on top of boulders (his no. 188 and 292), which are known to occur on top of documented offering stones in northern Norway too. Yet Norwegian researchers have not included such stone circles in the category of “circular offering sites” (cf. Qvigstad 1926: 329–330, Vorren 1985a). The seemingly most relevant mention in Manker’s list is the mentioned site by Bjellåvatn (141), which is described in similar terms as the Finnmark structures (Hagemann 1889), and the stone fence around a sieidi on the island of Haltisaari, which was claimed to have been destroyed by the locals together with the sieidi in the early 19th century (Samzelius 1900: 217). As noted above, the explanation of the former as an offering site is possibly inspired by Friis, while the story about the latter could not be confirmed. Samzelius, who collected the information, also quotes Friis in relation to the Haltisaari offering sites, though not concerning the stone wall as such (Samzelius 1905: 199). Manker does not include a stone structure that archaeologist Gustav Hallstöm describes in 1924 as an offering site with “stones in a circle and antlers and bones to be found” north of the lower waterfall Jierfa between Råtjasjaure (Ruotjájávrre) and “Luoktannjarkajaure” further northwest

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17 This includes parts of Norway and Finland because of the old transhumance routes across today’s borders.

18 Later narratives indicate that Manker was sometimes tricked into recording places that were not actually offering sites, which calls for general caution in accepting all the information in his otherwise very well researched work (Fossum 2006: 126). For various cultural and historical reasons, such “hypothetical” and misleading information from local informants is not uncommon in relation to recordings of Sami offering sites, something which calls for a source–critical attitude to some of the older recordings too (cf. Äikäs 2015: 46). The general sami rhetoric of silence and secrecy is discussed in Chapter 6.
Fig. 5. Flowchart showing the main publications authors have quoted to substantiate interpretations of stone circles and other structures as offering sites. Arrows point from publication to its references. Sources in colour have been quoted five or more times. The number of arrowheads indicate the impact of a source. Dotted lines indicate suggested but undocumented influences. Olsen (c. 1715) and Leem (1776) do not describe stone circles as such but mention offering sites at places or in areas where structures have later been recorded. The chart is not exhaustive and some publications include additional references.
Table 1. Manker’s possible circular offering sites in areas used by the Swedish Sami (Manker 1957).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place names (as in Manker 1957)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peidtjatjåkko, Gällivare, Lule Lappmark</td>
<td>Three masoned stone churches on a mountain top, 12 stones in each circle</td>
<td>Informant and Friis 1871b:140, cf. Samzelius 1904: 196–197, Manker 1957: 145, no. 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltisaari, Soutojärvi, Gällivare, Lule Lappmark</td>
<td>Hearth covered with stones and surrounded by stones, altogether 3.5 m in diam. Possibly previous stone fence around sieidi.</td>
<td>(Samzelius 1900): 217, 1904: 198–199, Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 930, Manker 1957: 151, no. 146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vuoskemjaure, Gällivare, Lule Lappmark</td>
<td>Depression in the ground of about 1 m in diameter close to an offering stone</td>
<td>Hallström 1924: 928–929, Manker 1957: 167, no. 185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bjellåvatn, Saltdal, Nordland, Norway</td>
<td>Circular stone wall of 4–5 m in diameter and 1 m high</td>
<td>Hagemann 1889: 62, Manker 1957: 211, no. 310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auranasa, Rana, Nordland, Norway</td>
<td>A sort of fireplace or altar made from several stones put on top of each other in a circular shape</td>
<td>Hallström 1924: 902, Manker 1957: 222, no. 343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiirivara, Gällivare, Lule Lappmark</td>
<td>A stone circle of 12 stones on top of a large freestanding cliff. Remains of a log ladder up against the cliff and of a fireplace inside the stone circle. Previous finds of antlers under the boulder</td>
<td>Manker 1957:169, no. 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sartajaure, Arjeplog, Pite Lappmark</td>
<td>Four stones in a semicircle on top of larger boulder together with some bones of reindeer</td>
<td>Manker 1957:204, no. 292</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

from Suorvajaure (Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 931). He may have excluded it because dam construction had flooded the waterfall and the site and prevented visiting and confirming it. The flooding resulted in the two lakes mentioned being combined as today’s larger lake Akkajaure (Áhkájávrre)19 (Manker 1957: 159). On the other hand, he includes many other offering

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19 Intensive dam constructing during the 20th century is generally responsible for some major landscape changes in northern Sweden and the flooding of uncertain numbers of cultural heritage remains (Björnstad 2006), and there has been a similar situation in Norway (NOU 1983: 43).
sites he had not visited himself. It is uncertain how he has evaluated the information Hallström gives.

Despite the different morphologies of the sites mentioned by Manker, his restrained articulation of their possible resemblance to the circular offering sites reported on in northern Norway, and the fact that he included photos of the morphologically distinct Nedrevatn and Offerholmen sites in his publication (photos 334–335, Manker 1957), his cautious statements and descriptions have been referred to in later publications to support interpretations of various structures as Sami offering sites, particularly in Sweden and more southern parts of Norway (fig. 5). Some of these assumptions are tentatively supported by traditions regarding Sami offerings in general or Sami presence in the areas in question, but often the relation between the described structures and any tradition is vague at best. Place names are similarly used as evidence, and these can of course be indicative, but should be supported by other evidence, especially as they most often refer to wider areas. Apart from the widespread quoting of Manker, certain more recent publications comprising such uncertain evidence have given additional momentum to the interpretation of stone circles as offering sites.

An example is two simple stone structures north of the lake Forolsjøen in Midtre Gauldal, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway (152–153). These have been interpreted as Sami offering sites with reference to Manker’s mention of the structures in Finnmark (Stenvik 1983), but the stone enclosures on Forolsjøen are not themselves confirmed as offering sites by other evidence. They consist of simple delineations of one or two layers of stones, one around a large natural mound and one around a split boulder, and clearly differ from the large stone wall structures initially described in Finnmark. Split boulders are known to have been used by the Sami as offering stones (cf. e.g. Vorren 1989: 86), but this does not mean that all split boulders were used as such. There has been a tradition of Sami offering rituals in the Forolsjøen area, but the tradition is not directly related to the structures in question (Stenvik 1983). Without any morphological traits convincingly relating them to the large stone wall enclosures in the north, any indicative place names for the site or any traditions relating to the structures themselves, I find the interpretation highly uncertain. The three phosphate spot-test analyses that were performed on the site are not decisive either, as they were taken rather randomly and are without comparative material (cf. Stenvik 1983). A more recent survey has concluded there are no detectable signs to confirm the place as an offering site (Steinbakken n.d.: 110–111). Of course the delineation of areas around these natural features is mysterious and must have some explanation, which could obviously be related to rituals, but this interpretation is of course not confirmed merely by the lack of other explanations. However this interpretation of the Forolsjøen site has had some further impact on later interpretations of structures in the same area (Pareli
In general, the increased recording of various mysterious stone circles and structures in Sweden as Sami offering sites over the last decades rests on a high degree of inter–referentiality and tends to suffer from a lack of independent evidence. Britta Wennstedt has interpreted the so–called “junkeputt” structures in northern Sweden, named after a locality on the mountain Junkeputten in Norrbotten, as Sami offering sites with reference to the stone structures in northern Norway and through a series of associations with various features on other known offering sites, as well as certain traditions (Wennstedt 1989). The traditions do not, however, relate to the structures in question, and some of the references lead back, via a suggested offering site interpretation of two different structures by Olov Isakssons (1961), to the uncertain structures listed by Manker. The explanation of the “junkeputt” structures has later been maintained and further elaborated on with references to certain other structures that, in my opinion, are not morphologically comparable to the circular offering sites in Finnmark and Troms (Wennstedt Edvinger and Winka 2001; Edvinger and Broadbent 2006).

One of these is a heptagonal single row stone structure on a hilltop called Altarberget (“the Altar Mountain”) in Lycksele parish, Sweden. According to Anders Huggert, this was a holy site for the local Sami in the 17th and 18th centuries because the structure in question “can be nothing other than the traditional Saami place of sacrifice” (Huggert 2000: 59–60). Despite an extensive, and in itself interesting, narrative about the historical developments and intrusive Swedish colonisation of the area, it is unclear how the author arrives at this conclusion. To substantiate it, the find is compared with a heptagonal stone setting from Vierrolako, Kustarakaise, Arjeplog, Pite Lappmark (see fig. 6), of which a plan drawing is published by Manker (1957: 205–206, no. 296, fig. 57). However, Manker’s accompanying profile drawing is not included. This shows that the Vierrolako structure is a mound or cairn (Manker 1957, fig. 58), not a stone row like the smaller structure on the Altarberget. The latter structure is subsequently compared by Huggert with Vorren’s plan drawing of the stone circle by Biekkanoaivi, Nesseby, Finnmark (Vorren 1985a: 71, fig. 2), which is peculiar since this structure has substantial meter–high walls and is c. 11 m in diameter (see fig. 7 og 15), while the stone structure on Altarberget consists of a single row of stones and is c. 4 m in diameter (the exact measurements are not stated in the article but taken from Huggert’s fig. 6, here fig. 8). The Altarberget site is also compared to the stone rows by Lake Forolsjøen in Sør–Trøndelag, assuming that the interpretation of these is correct, which, as described above, is rather uncertain. Still, the interpretation of the structure on Altarberget as a Sami ritual site has had a noticable impact on later understandings of various
Fig. 6. Plan and profile drawing of the Vierrolako structure, Arjeplog, Pite Lappmark (Manker 1957: 206, fig. 57–58).

Fig. 7. Plan drawing of the Biekkanovaivi structure, Nesseby, Finnmark (Vorren 1985a: 71, fig. 2).
other structures as offering sites (Zachrisson 2004b: 25; Fossum 2006: 127–129; Wennstedt Edvinger and Broadbent 2006; Loeffler 2015). While there is a substantial interreferentiality among more recent publications, Manker (1957) and Vorren (1985a, Vorren and Eriksen 1993) continue to be the most frequently quoted authors in publications that put forward interpretations of various structures as Sami offering sites. Another example is the so-called Altarringen, “the Altar Ring” on Fulufjäll, Dalarna (Zachrisson 2004b: 25), which has been likened with the structures in northern Norway. Altarringen, however, was heavily restored in the 1930s, based on the idea that it was an altar ring, and it is therefore very difficult to interpret.
today (Lundqvist 2002: 84; Fossum 2006: 128). The sites described by Vorren and Eriksen are also compared to stone circles in areas outside what constitutes the historical Sami occupation area and today’s Sami reindeer herding area, such as the coast of outer Namdalen, Nord–Trøndelag (Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005: 82–83, 2009: 118) and certain areas of Hedmark in inner southeastern Norway (Bergstøl 2008a: 107, 122), though the morphological similarities of the structures found here are questionable.

Some publications have tentatively substantiated offering site interpretations by referring to other sources in more assertive wording than in the original, further consolidating uncertain notions. Recorded stone circles with ambiguous function (Edbom and Nilsson 1999: 21, 23–24) or an “offering site–like” shape (Hedman et al. 1998: 18) have been taken to support interpretation of other stones structures as offering sites (Edvinger and Winka 2001). A report on a circle of stones that was “hard to interpret, but… undeniably evokes reminiscences of circular offering sites…”, and one such small stone circle with finds of charcoal, ash and burnt bones that “has interest in this connection [considering offering sites]” (Fjellheim 1999: 266–267, my translation) has come to be synthesised in the sentence: “Additional stone circles in mid–Norway, in Verdal in Sör–Trøndelag, have been identified as Saami circular sacrificial sites (Fjellheim, 1999: 267)” (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006: 32). Similarly, a very cautious comparison of certain stone circles on the outer Namdalen coast in Nord–Trøndelag county, Mid–Norway, with the structures in Finnmark, has been used as an argument to say that the circular offering sites have: “been constructed in the whole West Saami region (cf. Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005)” (Broadbent 2010: 186). Based on this understanding and with references to many of the other works mentioned above (including Olsen 1910 [c. 1715]; Friis 1871a; Qvigstad 1926; Manker 1957; Stenvik 1983; Vorren 1985a, 1987; Wennstedt 1989; Vorren and Eriksen 1993; Mulk 1994; Huggert 2000; Edvinger and Winka 2001; Zachrisson 2004a), a series of stone structures along the Swedish Bothnian Coast have been interpreted as plausible Sami offering sites or ritual sites (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006; Broadbent 2010). The same study includes a broader and interesting, but criticised (Liedgren and Ramqvist 2012), review of the potential Sami cultural context in terms of surrounding dwelling sites and other features. Phosphate analyses showing elevated levels inside some, but not all, of the structures, are difficult to use as an indicator for rituals as such, as any animal (or human) remains from a variety of activities, for instance slaughter or the handling of hunting produce, would give similar results. The authors’ very general presentation of Sami rituals and beliefs based on much later ethnographic sources is equally insufficient to support the interpretation of the stone structures in question as circular offering sites. It appears that historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources on the use and destruction of Sami offering sites in general are confused with such knowledge about circular offering sites in particular (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006: 49,
Broadbent 2010: 184). There is a tendency towards a circular argument when the morphological differences between the structures in the study are taken to prove the morphological variation among circular Sami offering sites in general and explained as local variation (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006: 46).

This overview illustrates that there has been an eagerness to identify circular offering sites that are comparable with the structures in northern Norway in the southern more Sami areas and in what may perhaps be called “border zones” of Sami areas according to the present research horizon. I think it is relevant and important to discuss the possibility of Iron and Middle Age Sami presence in and use of geographical areas in and beyond the historically known Sami habitation areas, and there are archaeological data that are highly relevant and significant for this debate. However, the argument explicitly about Sami circular offering sites too often rests on insufficient comparisons and leaves it unclear how specific structures can be determined as Sami offering sites based on the available evidence. There are similar issues with the recent interpretations of several other sites in Sweden as Sami ritual or offering sites, despite attempts to support the interpretations with other, and in itself highly interesting, archaeological, historical and ethnographic evidence, traditions and place names (Tervalampi 2012; Heikki 2012; Loeffler 2015). Despite an obvious possibility that a variety of shapes and build forms can do the job in the delineation of a sacred area, which is further discussed in the next chapters, there is also the obvious possibility that the variation in the stone structures discussed here is simply due to a variety of cultural practices that are not necessarily related to anything ritual or even to anything Sami. The ritual focus may result in a missed opportunity to study other aspects of past (Sami) social life. Archaeological material can serve as evidence for Sami presence or rituals, but the review above shows that a common use of stone circles as Sami offering sites is not substantiated, thus the question remains how the other sources of information about more or less certain Sami presence can illuminate the meaning of the specific stone structures that are described.

While the frequency of reference to circular offering sites has been increasing in Norway and Sweden, the category of circular offering sites has not had the same impact on archaeological interpretations in neighboring countries Finland and Russia, possibly because of the language barriers and perhaps because of the somewhat limited archaeological activity in the vast northern and Sami areas of the countries in general. References to Vorren and Eriksen have, nevertheless, found their way into some more recent publications, though not necessarily as conclusive evidence (Karjalainen 2007). Interestingly, a recent master’s thesis presents three large stone structures in screes in Tornio and Kemi, concluding they may be Sami offering sites with reference to the works by Vorren (1987, Vorren and Eriksen 1993, cf. Saloranta 2011). In my opinion, these structures are morphologically closer to the
classical circular offering sites in Finnmark and northern Troms than the other examples in Sweden and southern Norway described above, but I have found one of the alternative explanations Saloranta presents more intriguing and informative than the offering site interpretation. I will return to this in Chapter 5. In the Sami areas of northern Russia, only a limited number of small stone circles in the White Sea area have been thought to be associated with ritual activities (Manyukhin and Lobanova 2002: 23), as well as some larger structures that are said to resemble Sami sacrificial sites (Lobanova 2009: 62), though without direct reference to any of the sources explored above. There are finds of structures along the Kola Peninsula coast that I suspect are very similar to the structures recorded in Finnmark, but these are interpreted at house grounds or pens (pers. comm. M. M. Shakhnovich 11 Aug 2014).

The last few years have seen increased documentation of smaller stone circles interpreted as offering or sacred sites within the core areas that feature larger stone circles in Finnmark (e.g. Schanche 2014; Siri et al. 2014; Schanche and Schanche 2014). Among the more recent additions to the category are some smaller stone circles of c. 2.2 m in diameter found in relation to the large funnel–shaped hunting fences for wild reindeer on the mountain plateau of Ruitu on the Varanger peninsula (Schanche and Schanche 2014). Historical sources name the general area as the location of a Sami offering site, and these have been cited to support the interpretation of several cairns on Ruitu as offering sites (Olsen 1910 [1715]; Leem 1975; cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993:184; Lilienskiold 1942; cf. Niemi 1983: 180). Antlers from one of the stone circles (13) have been dated to modern times (AD 1691–1923). These structures may be ritual sites, but the recording and description of them as “circular offering sites” in Askeladden indicates a comparison with the much larger stone enclosures primarily defined as circular offering sites (Vorren 1985a). Then again, this could be an example of how the limited selection of choices in the Askeladden recording system gives the impression of more clear-cut interpretations than the surveyor intended; since the small stone circles are perceived as ritually motivated, “circular offering sites” is probably the category that comes closest to this interpretation if the neutral “stone circle” is not to be used. One larger structure found within the same project seems more comparable to the larger structures first recorded as circular offering sites, while another structure is similar but relatively small compared to these. The latter contained remains of a small reindeer skeleton (Schanche and Schanche 2014). This will be further discussed below.

The review above shows an increase in the interpretations of smaller stone structures as Sami offering or ritual sites after the publication of the 1993 book by Vorren and Eriksen, though this work is not always quoted, and especially after the turn of the millennium. I find that the recent suggestions for such interpretations generally tend to be based on rather vague and sometimes inaccurate pretexts. There is a notion that stone circles as or on
offering sites are quite common, especially in Finnmark (Manker 1957: 25; Vorren 1982: 58; Mulk 1994: 17020), but this is an exaggeration. As mentioned, Manker listed eight sites with stone circles or structures out of 507 offering sites in total, while Vorren initially listed 19 circular offering sites in Finnmark and Troms (Vorren 1985a). When including newly recorded sites in Varanger in a later publication (Vorren and Eriksen 1993), the number rose to 30 recorded circular offering sites in Finnmark21 and one in Troms. In comparison, Qvigstad listed a total of 214 recorded Sami offering sites of different characters in Finnmark and 59 in Troms in the early 20th century (Qvigstad 1926) and the total number is probably somewhat higher today, according to currently available historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources (Vorren 1989: 79; Myrvoll 2008: 22 with references). Still, as stated in the introduction to this chapter, the alleged frequency of stone circles on Sami offering sites has become somewhat of a truism that reinforces the interpretation of ever more structures as offering sites without consideration for a general lack of additional evidence. This does not mean that the interpretation is always wrong or that offering sites always have to be verified by non–archaeological sources. However, considering the uncertainty of the general explanation of small stone circles as offering sites, I would call for more thorough investigations of such sites to either support the explanation with further archaeological finds or other evidence or perhaps reveal features that could lead to alternative explanations. Importantly, this does not mean that all the smaller structures that are currently included in such a circular offering site category represent one alternative consistent cultural phenomenon, rather surveyors will need to have an open mind and perhaps be a little more creative in suggesting possible explanations for such stone circles (cf. also Edvinger and Broadbent 2006 for a useful discussion of the many possible natural and cultural alternative explanations for various stone circles).

2.2.5 Dissemination of the offering site explanation

Parallel with the research on and recording of circular offering sites, there has been an active popular dissemination of the phenomenon. The Friis books in the 19th century were meant for a wide general audience, and individual structures have been frequently mentioned and visited, such as the one on the so–called Offerholmen, Porsanger (85), which is situated on the lake right outside the “tourist station” (today a camping site) at Skoganvarre, and which was mentioned in travelogues from the early 20th century (Schi–

20 Mulk also says there is a circular offering site in Suorvajaure, northern Sweden (Mulk 1994: 170), but this is not mentioned in her reference (Hallström 1932).
21 One of these, by lake Oardujávri, Nesseby, was investigated in 2008 and dismissed as a goahti house ground (pers. comm. K. Schanche 2008, B. Olsen 28 Jan 2016 ).
stedt 1903: 42–43; Hagen 1926: 217). These efforts increased with new means of communication and a general focus on public education after the Second World War. Vorren published articles about the circular offering sites in popular journals like the Tromsø Museum magazine Ottar. In more recent decades, articles about various structures as potential offering sites have also been published in other local and regional history publications aimed at a broader audience (e.g. Vorren 1956a, 1958; Stenvik 1983; Pareli 1991; Vik et al. 2000; Refsdal 2007). Personal contact has obviously played an important part in distributing the understanding of stone circles or enclosures as offering sites, within the research community, and because ethnographers, archaeologists and other researchers have discussed this with people on travels and visits on similar sites. Particularly Ørnulf Vorren, undoubtedly the main expert on circular offering sites in the late 20th century, engaged in extensive travels and surveys in northern Norway and other areas of Fennoscandia and maintained a wide network of contacts and informants during his many decades of professional engagement with Sami ethnography.

Museums and schools, especially in the Varanger and Lyngen areas, in eastern Finnmark and northern Troms respectively, have included information about and guided visits to such stone circles in their educational programs from the 1980s onwards (e.g. Schanche 1993b; Antonsen and Brustrom 2002). Museum workers like myself have promoted and distributed the offering site interpretation through reports, publications, guiding, educational material, signposting and online resources for the cultural heritage site on the, by now, quite well-known headland of Mortensnes in Nesseby, Finnmark, which includes a circular offering site (Schanche 1984, 1993b; The Sami Parliament 2004; www.saivu.com). The concept of stone circles as offering sites has also been disseminated to a broader public through a popular photographic art project (Sveen 2003). The result is a geographically, and probably socially, uneven but still relatively broad knowledge among certain individuals and groups of non–professionals about this interpretation of stone circles. Based in part on my own experience with what local inhabitants tend to know or not know about these structures in different areas, I suspect that professional statements have been the main source for local knowledge about these sites for the last forty years at least. Popular dissemination through books and conversations between both professionals and non–professionals is likely to have spread the concept among interested parties even in the 19th century, but then probably among a smaller group of individuals that would have had access to and any interest in this information. It is somewhat unclear which way the information went and whether there existed Sami traditions about these stone enclosures as offering sites, and if so, if this was widespread knowledge among Sami all over Finnmark and beyond, or if the scholarly definition and categorisation may have spread or even created some of the local traditions and understandings we meet today. As mentioned above, it is not uncommon that more or less profes-
sional narratives are absorbed and incorporated into the local narratives about the past. However, the current active transfer of the interpretation to other areas and to structures that are quite dissimilar to the “classical” circular offering sites in Finnmark has other socio-political backgrounds and consequences than the mere dissemination of stone circles as Sami offering sites as a cultural–historical fact. This is discussed in the following chapters.

2.3 The implications of the archaeological classification

The overview of the research history of the category of circular offering sites shows that there are several inconsistencies in the mid–19th century interpretation of the large stone structures in northern Norway as offering sites. The interpretation is not based on documented sources and fails to give a coherent explanation of the phenomenon. It appears to be more based on assumptions and lack of other plausible alternatives though there is evidence for local Sami traditions about a ritual use in some contexts. It is difficult to judge to what extent this has informed the scholarly interpretation or vice versa. The introduction of the category of circular offering sites can possibly be described in terms of what Fleck labels a “transient thought–collective”, where a temporary but quite homogenic small group of individual “experts” constitute an esoteric circle with a special interest in history, archaeology and in explaining the stone circles. Their “thought–style” was informed by shared and historically specific concepts and mutual influences, and included proto–ideas, scientific concepts and values of the time. This esoteric circle has kept contact with the exoteric circles through popular dissemination, but as Fleck also shows, such output can consolidate terminology and articulation of concepts and positions (Fleck 1979). The openness of the esoteric circle to input from the surroundings when it comes to acknowledging any local knowledge about the origins and use of the sites in question here is more uncertain, due to the lack of references in these works. While Saxlund apparently had various suggestions presented for him, later researchers have kept a focus that may have excluded any alternative narratives about the use of these sites, possibly reinforcing and spreading a specifically ritual understanding. As such, a thought–style has internal dynamics, related to the structural aspect of the human mind, which tends to resist ruptures and major changes once a concept is formed and reinforced (cf. Kimsma 1990: 49).

The offering site interpretation has later been reproduced in a series of publications and through other channels of dissemination and successively established as an axiomatic fact. While this does not mean the interpretation is necessarily false, there is reason to study the category in more detail based on the available evidence and with an openness to the possibility that the
structures were built with some other initial intention, meaning and use than that of offering or ritual sites.
3 Research on Sami ritual sites

The research historical study in Chapter 2 introduces reasonable doubt about the ritual explanation for the initial construction and use of the so-called “circular offering sites” and the legitimacy of including an increasing variation of structures in this category. In Chapter 4 I will introduce the material in more detail to investigate this doubt through the materiality, topography and find material related to the structures themselves, and to contextualise them in interregional, regional and local landscapes and socio-political frameworks. An alternative explanation is proposed in Chapter 5. However, knowledge about other documented Sami ritual sites is of course crucial in order to judge the soundness of both the traditional interpretation of the circular offering sites and any new interpretations. Hence, the present chapter will briefly outline our current knowledge about Sami pre-Christians beliefs, rituals and ritual sites based on the available historical and ethnographic sources, as well as the contributions archaeological research has made to our understanding of such sites.

A starting point for my investigations is the understanding that Sami beliefs and rituals have been neither coherent nor static and general introductions will inevitably suffer from lack of details and variation. The variants of Sami rituals have been noted by scholars since the study of Sami culture gained interest in the 17th century, but they have to some extent been downplayed in early presentations, giving primacy to a more united and “systematic” image of the Sami belief system and their “pantheon” of gods. In recent years there has been increasing focus on regional differences in research on Sami beliefs and rituals (e.g. Rydving 1995a; Fossum 2006). However, there

22 I am aware that “pre-Christian” is a debatable definition, as it can be read to imply an abrupt change at a specific time between a set of unified non-Christian beliefs and Christianity. The situation is rather that the Sami were influenced by Christian beliefs from the Middle Ages onwards, while the targeted early modern Christianisation had varying results. The actual change in religious beliefs was a long-term process with many geographical variations. The official Christianisation did not end all “pre-Christian” beliefs and practices and some of these continue to be a part of Sami worldview today, even in otherwise rather strictly Christian communities (Jernsletten 2003, 2009; Myrvoll 2011). However, and even if certain understandings are now integrated in the Christian worldview, I find “pre-Christian” a suitable operational term as the ideas are arguably a continuation of the specifically Sami beliefs and practices that were exercised before the Christian influences. This does not mean that these practices were not transformed over time and may have had various expressions both before and during the period that different Sami groups have been Christians.
are some aspects that seem to be fairly universal to Sami groups through time and space as we know them: the traditional Sami worldview can be called animistic, in the sense described by Graham Harvey as “that the world is full of persons, only some of whom are human, and that life is always lived in relationship with others” (Harvey 2005: xi; see e.g. Helander–Renvall 2010 for a Sami perspective). Thus, the surroundings were perceived to include persons in the shape of various natural elements and phenomena such as mountains, rivers, trees, animals, thunder, the moon and the northern lights, but also in elements of the hut or tent and various objects. These persons included guardians, hálldit (pl.), of different sorts ruling or protecting certain areas or topographic elements, as well as gods and goddesses and the deceased (Rydving 2003: 17–18). Individual humans could communicate with these beings in several ways, but the most famous and discussed practice was that of the noaidi23, who was a person with particular skills in this respect (Rydving 2003: 17), also referred to as noaidevuolta. He24 could perform spirit travels after entering a trance through playing the holy drum, singing chants (joik) and often also drinking some substance such as fish oil, lye or alcohol. In trance, the noaidi could visit far–away places, find out where wild animals or the reindeer herd was to be found, how people in other places were doing, ask the spirits or gods which offering was necessary to remedy illness or other misfortune, and even bring people back from the dead (e.g. Historia Norwegie 2003[1100s]: 63; Friis 1632: 399; Rydving 2003: 17–18). Holy drums were used for this purpose and these were also used for divinations by putting an item like a brass ring on the surface and interpret its tendency to stay within either of the painted symbols on the drumhead during drumming with a specially crafted drum hammer (Rydving 2003: 18). These practices are consistent with the so–called shamanism that can be found across the circumpolar area and many other places in the world (e.g. Bäckman and Hultkrantz 1978; Bäckman 2005). Offerings were a substantial part of the communication with the spirits, gods and other beings for all Sami, both in everyday life through, for instance, pouring food or drink into the fireplace, in annual rituals or during life crises such as birth, illness, and death. I will return to discuss the changes in offering matter and rituals, but animal offerings have been a dominant part of these practices in most Sami contexts before the intensified Christianisation (Mebius 1968).

23 The noaidi is often referred to as the Sami shaman, but it is debated both if this definition is accurate for all uses of the Sami word (e.g. Kuropjatnik 1997; Rydving 2003: 17) and what the word shaman encorporates today (Harvey 2003). This is why I have chosen to use the Sami word noaidi instead of shaman throughout the thesis.

24 The noaidi is usually described as a man, though there are traditions that indicate women too could have such roles (e.g. Lundmark 1987; Sergejeva 1997; Kuropjatnik 1997).
This way of perceiving and interacting with the world is reflected in certain ways of interacting with the landscape. As Tim Ingold has described, acting and being in the landscape is also what constructs the perceptions of temporally dependent “taskscapes”, which do not consist of related features, as in a landscape, but of related activities (Ingold 2000: 195). In line with this, Audhild Schanche points out how the Sami landscape will always consist of many taskscapes and simultaneously include a historical landscape, where physical installations and place names indicate that people in the past were there using it, a magical landscape related to religious connotations and remains of ritual activity, a mythical landscape related to the genesis of the landscape, a political landscape related to the strategic use of such symbolic connotations, and a “working landscape” related to the physical interaction with the landscape to create a livelihood (cf. Schanche 1995, 2004: 36). It can be difficult to grasp all these possible landscape conceptions through archaeological remains, but at least these remains constitute a very tangible expression of the actual landscape use and the spatial relationship between different activities in the taskscapes. Sami concepts of the landscape as a collection of manifold taskscapes filled with non–human persons that one has to relate to in appropriate ways has resulted in certain ritualised practices (cf. Bell 1992, see below). Simplistically put, these are visible in the archaeological record in the shape of what is often called “ritual sites”. However, in order to recognise such remains it is necessary to define what a ritual site is.

3.1 What is a ritual site?

The question “What is a ritual site?” has many definitional aspects. The term “site”, as a delimited area in a landscape, is mainly an operational term that relates to our need to approach the past in manageable sections, and it does not necessarily reflect Sami perceptions of the environment in any given situation. This is a necessary delimitation in a scientific analysis, but this act of defining is also related to the intricate networks of power, knowledge, legislation and categorisation discussed in Chapter 2. To make the issue more complex, the term “ritual” is far from a straightforward definition either but can also be seen as a category constructed by a specific Western modernist discourse (e.g. Bell 1992, 1997). It is generally complicated for archaeologists both to define and outline past ritual and sacred sites (Myrvoll 2008; Äikäs and Spangen 2016). In more pragmatic terms, I find the systematic terminology suggested by historians of religion Håkan Rydving and Rolf Kristoffersson (1993) to be a useful methodological tool that takes as a starting point our actual knowledge about any specific landscape use. In their three–level, overlapping terminology, a sacred place is any place with a related religious tradition, such as a holy mountain or lake designated by tradition or a place name, but without recorded knowledge or detectable traces of
actual ritual practices. A cult site, or what I define as a ritual site, is any site where written, oral or archaeological sources clearly testify to ritual activity, including offerings, burials or, for instance, huts where ritual meals were eaten in connection with bear hunts. Finally, a sacrificial site, in my terms an offering site, is a place where there is evidence for sacrificial, or rather offering, practices. Hence, the first term, sacred place, will encompass both the two others, while a sacrificial site will also be a ritual and a holy site (fig. 9) (Rydving and Kristoffersson 1993; Rydving 2010: 34–35). This clarifying terminology defines levels of our knowledge about the place and focuses on the imperfect information we have, rather than speculating on the original use of the individual site (Rydving 2010: 34). The categories may of course be spatially interrelated too; for instance, an offering site may be placed by or on a sacred mountain at a site that contains evidence for additional rituals such as burials. In addition, it is likely that offering or other more ephemeral rituals that we do not have known traces of today have also been performed on or in relation to sacred mountains, burial sites, etc.

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25 There is a lengthy debate about the meaning of the words “sacrifice” and “offering” that I will not go into here, but as mentioned in footnote 5, I am adhering to the understanding that past Sami rituals are better described as offerings because the focus was on reciprocal gifts and not the destructive element that defines sacrifice (A. Schanche 2004b: 5; Insoll 2011).
The definition Rydving and Kristoffersson suggest is useful in order to limit the scope of discussion here, and to define our current knowledge about various site types. Yet, the cognitive content of the term “ritual”, and thus ritual site, is not that easily defined. The term ritual is a category that includes the kind of “thought–coersion” described by Fleck, i.e. a linkage of specific knowledge within a thought–collective to create a category that has implicit associations far beyond an operational term for a set phenomenon (Fleck 1979, see chapter 2). Its meaning has been debated in studies of religion since the latter half of the 19th century and so–called “ritual studies” have in time become a voluminous discourse that includes a multitude of disciplines (for an overview, see Bell 1997). One challenge in these debates has been the diverse understandings within different disciplines and theoretical approaches of what constitutes a ritual (Kyriakidis 2007a: 1). Other key issues have been questions concerning whether rituals are only religious or also profane and the relationship between myths and rituals (Bell 1997: 3ff; Habbe 2005; Fogelin 2007: 56ff; Kyriakidis 2007a:290, 2007b: 290). The latter has often been discussed in terms of whether the idea or the action comes first, suggesting a typical Cartesian divide between the cognitive and practical aspects of religion.

Recent anthropological and archaeological theories have deemed the term “ritual” itself as a loaded and western modernist product of this Cartesian divide between culture and nature, mind and body, subject and object, as well as rational and irrational thought. The coining of the term “ritual” in the 19th century to describe what was perceived as a universal human experi-
ence illustrates how European culture compared itself to other cultures. It has been maintained that because the term “ritual” is firmly situated in a colonialist discourse of us and them, modern and traditional, and again, rational and irrational, it cannot be seen as a purely analytical category but has to be understood as a way of reproducing a specific discourse that serves certain political purposes (Bell 1992: 13–14, Brück 1999: 319). According to religious studies scholar Catherine Bell, rituals should not be set aside as a specific category in this sense, but rather be considered in context as social practices that are interrelated with socio-political aspects such as power. She therefore introduces the concept of “ritualisation”, describing this social strategy of setting aside certain practices. Ritualisation includes a differentiation and privileging of certain, though not necessarily religious, practices, which, among other things, constitute a way of creating power relations (Bell 1992, 1997).

These quite intricate discussions about rituals are trying to define the term, as well as how and why we ritualise and perform rituals, and what rituals do to us. I sympathise with the understanding that rituals are not a separate and universal class of actions, but rather that ritualised actions are social and bodily practices that are structured by, interact with, oppose to or maintain a range of socio-political contexts and structures. Still, I find “religious ritual” a useful operational category to define actions that are specifically aimed at affecting human conditions through interacting with non-human persons or powers. This corresponds with philosopher James Bissett Pratt’s classical definition of religion as “the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities toward the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinies” (Pratt 1920:2; cf. Rydving 1995a: 8–9). It also coincides with the more or less explicit understanding of ritual in most discussions about Sami ritual sites (e.g. Mebius 1968; Bäckman 1975; Schanche 2000; Fossum 2006). In the following section, it will be these kinds of practices and sites that are discussed unless otherwise stated.

Sami ritual sites are thus defined as sites where religious rituals were performed in order to communicate with the powers that were perceived to affect the interests and destinies of Sami groups or individuals. Still, the question remains what kind of archaeological sites should be included in this definition and how we can identify them. Historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith specifically treats rituals in relation to sacredness and has defined rituals as a mode of paying attention. He casts “place” as fundamental in ritual because place directs attention. A place, Smith says, is a focal point for meaning that comes into being as we move around in an indistinctive “space”, get to know it and ascribe values to it (Smith 1998: 32–33, 45; cf. also Tuan 1977). This is in line with common phenomenological understandings of landscape and place in archaeological contexts (e.g. Tilley 1994; Ashmore and Knapp 1999; Bender and Winer 2001), and to some extent
with the recent focus on how heritage is articulated through interaction with places, monuments and objects (Crouch 2015; Smith and Campbell 2016). Smith claims that the way sacred places direct attention, like focusing lenses, is most easily observed in crafted constructions such as temples. In a temple, the ordinary becomes significant or “sacred”. Thus, according to Smith, there are no fundamental categories of sacred and profane, rather these are situational categories of emplacement (Smith 1998: 87), not unlike the contextual ritualisation of practices Bell describes.

It could be argued that the same processes are involved at sacred places without man–made constructions, such as most of the Sami offering sites. Instead of building constructions that define an area as sacred, this focus is created through a cognitive process of setting places aside, hence creating the focus that would otherwise be generated by a particular building. In Sami contexts the ritual sites are quite often, though not always, related to topographical features that stand out in the landscape (fig. 10), in which case one may perhaps say that the specific place comes into focus because of inherent qualities (cf. e.g. Manker 1957: 23, 25; Hallström 1932: 112; Myrvoll 2008, 2012a: 30), that is, through its materiality or the so–called “affordance” of the landscape (Gibson 1979). Certain places invite rituals, so to speak, and their materiality even has an impact on the specific notions and rituals related to a particular place (Svestad 2011; Myrvoll 2012: 30ff). For example, Sami ritual sites can be related to somehow dangerous places in the landscape, like difficult passages on transhumance routes, but they can also be inspired by past events and individual spiritual experiences (Manker 1957: 25; Mebius 2003: 141). Such sites may be completely indistinguishable to outsiders, be it archaeologists today or those that were not, intentionally or unintentionally, included into this esoteric knowledge in the past. Such places that have been remembered until our times have relied on a cognitive focus through memory and practice, and thus a continuous making of the place. This may have been done through continuous rituals and oral traditions, or what Smith calls “paying attention” (Smith 1998), but also through the materiality of the offerings and the detectable remains of previous rituals for as long as these endured (Salmi et al. 2011: 225). A late oral tradition from Troms describes how mountains were “made holy” through different ways of offerings, both by decorating a reindeer buck and chasing it up into the mountain and by making offerings at a certain large rock (Qvigstad 1928: 520–523). Both practices had their effect, but the first would probably only be remembered through retelling, unless the decorative elements or buck skeleton parts were accidentally refound, while the second would leave traces in a specific place that could trigger the memory, or even inform outsiders without knowledge of the oral tradition, about the status of the site (cf. also Connerton 1989). Place names strongly contribute to such remembrance and reflect the way sacred sites are set aside when including words like for instance sieidi, bassi, áiles, vidja, vaerro, sjiela, tsiekkku, hálde, áhkká, áttje
and saivu in different Sami languages, inflections and dialectic forms (Manker 1957: 13ff; Äikäs 2015: 65).

Thus, in some cases place is fundamental in initiating and maintaining rituals, but ritual sites are more diverse, as religious rituals may be performed in many contexts and not always at specially designated places. To some degree this is related to the individual users and the social role of a particular ritual site. A 16th century anonymous source describes how the Sami hunter would “immediately make himself a god from a stone or a tree” at the site where he killed an animal in order for the hunting luck to stay (Storm 1895: 233; Qvigstad 1926: 319). Of course this information has to be read with some source criticism, but it does illustrate the possibility for individuals to create new ritual sites according to the needs of the situation, sites that were not necessarily maintained over time. Such temporality is furthermore an important aspect of Sami everyday offerings of food and drink, often in the fireplace (e.g. Friis 1871a: 151). Considering that this practice is very well documented in ethnographic sources from a wide range of northern Eurasian societies, it is quite likely to have been a general tradition in most, and probably all, Sami communities over a very long time26 (Harva 1927: 452; Bäckman 1984: 36; Westman 1997: 54; Anderson 2013: 272). Consequently, all Sami habitation sites are also ritual sites, though this is not the intuitive or usual understanding of the term in archaeology. The cosmological significance of the Sami house and its layout is well known and discussed in archaeology (Ränk 1949; Yates 1989; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 66–68), but the explicit definition of some habitation sites as ritual sites is usually related to unusual finds of animal bone deposits or objects related to rituals described in later written sources (e.g. Fossum 2006, see below). Yet, temporal ritual meaning and sacredness is relevant for a range of places and has to be considered even for designated offering sites, as different temporalities and the occasional abandonment of Sami offering sites, and any offering stone or figure at this site is documented in both historical and archaeological sources (Högström 1980: 183; Friis 1871a: 138; Fellman 1906: 19–

26 When describing such offerings, researchers have often referred to the goddess Sáráhkká, who was very important, especially to women, and resided under the hearth. However, this specific name is actually only recorded in more southern Sami areas (e.g. Randulf 1723; Kildal 1945 [c. 1730]; Högström 1746). On questioning by Knud Leem in the mid–18th century, the Sami in Finnmark denied knowing of this and the other “–áhká” goddesses known from more southern areas, while recognising several other terms for gods and powers that they were asked about (Leem 1975:421; Rydving 1995b:62, 70). This does not mean that a similar goddess was not worshiped in the north in similar ways as described further south, but the recorded information about Sáráhkká cannot be taken to be directly relevant, and the use of this particular name may be somewhat misleading. According to the sources quoted above, there is no doubt that the hearth was an important ritual site even in North Sami areas, whether the goddess or power related to it was called Sáráhkkka or something else. In some Sami areas this goddess was later replaced with Mary mother of God as a “mother goddess” that had similar functions and was worshipped in similar ways (Myrhaug 1997: 89–91).
20; Paulaharju 1932: 24, 43–44; Hallström 1932: 112–113; Rydving 1995a: 66). In other words, a focus on temporality is needed to understand both the situational perception of a site and more long term changes in how it has been used and understood.

Another key factor for understanding ritual sites is the significance of individual social roles; not all offering sites would necessarily hold the same meaning and sacredness to all interacting persons (cf. Jordan 2003: 215; Äikäis and Spangen 2016). From written and ethnographic sources of the 17th–19th century, at least three types of Sami offering sites can be distinguished: some were used by an individual or a family, some by the whole local community (the siida), and others by people from a whole region and travellers from other areas. Importantly, these are three operational categories that are not necessarily all–encompassing and may blur into each other (Rydving 1995a: 97–104), but they are based on the sources available and show that not everyone would know about or have the same attachment to specific offering sites. Apart from providing a means of general group integrations, rituals have of course had diverse meanings on an individual level within the three user groups mentioned above, i.e. families, local communities and regions, according to individual background and status. While the role of the noaidi in large offering ceremonies has often been emphasised, it is clear that, for instance, hunters would also participate in large offerings (Mulk 2009: 122). In discussing in–group variations, there has been a tendency to focus on the historical and ethnographic evidence for women being excluded from some offering sites and sacred areas (e.g. Mebius 1968: 59, 78–79), though women (and children) were actually involved in or in charge of many rituals that are discussed in historical and ethnographic sources (Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 921; Bäckman 1982, 1984; Lundmark 1987; Rydving 1995a: 147–148; Myrhaug 1997; Mebius 2003; Mulk and Bayliss–Smith 2007; Mulk 2009: 122). Status has been discussed with suggestions that offering sites with metal objects were used to deposit surplus production in order to maintain egalitarian societal values in Sami communities involved in the extensive Viking and Middle Age fur trade (Mulk 1996: 69–70,72; Spangen 2005: 128–129). This idea may however be questioned, as it reflects a persistent stereotyping of past Sami communities as egalitarian and homogenous throughout their history, despite archaeological and historical evidence to the contrary. Material such as scree graves instead indicate social differentiation, medieval sources refer to Sami “Kings”. Interestingly, later sources assert that everyone was equal in communal offering contexts; men and women, masters and servants (indicating that this was not the usual order of things). Then again, the social differentiation and taboos related to ritual sites and contexts have varied within Sami communities both chronologically and geographically (Itkonen 1948: 315; cf. Äikäis 2015: 110; Schanche 2000; Bratrein 2001; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 168). The intersectional identities of those who used specific Sami offering sites, and how this
use affected their individual identity and group integration, has been subject to relatively limited studies in archaeology so far.

Temporality of sites and differences in personal social status and roles would, of course, also affect the individual consciousness about any religious aspect of ritual practices. The integration of beliefs and ritual practices in all aspects of life suggest that Sami offerings related to such activities as hunting and fishing have not necessarily been understood as specifically religious practices, but possibly more as a pragmatic part of the subsistence strategy (Äikäsmäki et al. 2009; Olofsson 2010). Thus, it can be difficult to separate religious and non-religious rituals because the latter may have underlying or intially religious significances but perhaps not consciously so to all agents, especially over time. Furthermore, this aspect makes it all the more difficult to define a ritual site, for instance concerning Sami animal bone deposits, which can have both practical and religious meanings (e.g. Kjellström 1985; Andersen 2009; Jernsletten 2009: 62). Yet, as an operational category, religious rituals can be defined to include all practices that are routinely performed to communicate with the non-human powers that are conceived to have control over the place or the situation, independently of how conscious the individual is of this religious aspect.

Such floating perceptions of the sacred are in opposition to traditional definitions of religion as a unified system of beliefs and practices (e.g. Durkheim 1912: 69; Eliade 1959; Geertz 1973: 90) have been challenged in recent discussions within archaeology and other disciplines, concerning both so-called indigenous religions and world religions (e.g. Gellner 1999; Carriethers 2000; Price 2002; Andrén et al. 2006). The traditional definitions indicate a set framework and clear delimitations, which has been criticised for constituting a specific western intellectual and academic approach (cf. King 2005: 7692). What archaeology and other sources indicate about past Sami worldviews can hardly be described as either a stable or a delimited “system”. This is not to say that Sami pre-Christian religious notions were not structured. However, the conceptualisation of a consistent Sami religion with set rules and concepts, for instance, on how and where rituals should be performed, is primarily a result of the fact that what priests and missionaries wrote in the 17th and 18th centuries about the encountered practices and beliefs had to make sense to a Christian audience. This led to a conflation that is not unusual in colonial encounters between Christians and indigenous religions (e.g. Lorenzen 1999). This incompatibility between the actual Sami worldview and the structuring of their beliefs in the priests’ narratives was pointed out in the as early as in the 1840s by the Sami Christian revivalist Lars Levi Laestadius in his study of Sami mythology (Laestadius 2003, cf. Mebius 2003: 61), but there has still been a tendency among later researchers to generalise Sami religious concepts in presentations and interpretations.

There are of course some similarities across Sami areas and through different time periods (Bäckman and Hultkrantz 1985: 9), but I would claim
that many of these are more related to a general northern Eurasian perspective than a specifically pan-Sami context (e.g. Hultkrantz 1962; Mebius 1968:80ff; DuBois 1999; Odner 2000; Kleppe and Mulk 2006). While we still need to organise what (little) knowledge we have about the Sami ritual pasts from fragmentary sources to make it understandable within our epistemological and ontological frameworks, we should recognise that the divergences and arbitrariness may have been exactly the state of Sami beliefs and rituals at any given time and place. Ethnographic and historical sources indicate that the variation in local Sami religious expressions were often dependent on individual spiritual experiences and practices, including, though not exclusively, those of any local noaidi (Bäckman 1975:54; Pollan 1993; Rydving 1995a: 20; Mebius 2003: 179–180). Thus, the lack of consistent structure is in itself a very fundamental characteristic that needs to be acknowledged before we can gain any broader understanding of Sami pre-Christian beliefs and rituals and their effects on individuals and society. This is similar to the argument that the untidiness of material culture should not be overlooked by archaeologists, but is in fact the essence of the situation when it comes to understanding culture (Shennan 1989: 13; Bender 2006; B. Olsen 2010; Hodder 2012).

According to this discussion, Sami ritual sites, including offering sites, may have come in a variety of forms, with a variety of more or less specific uses, temporalities, level of maintenance, and connotations over time. The quite limited knowledge about rituals and ritual sites we get through the historical and ethnographic sources cannot be used as a blueprint for what we define as Sami ritual sites in archaeological contexts (cf. Manker 1957: 11; Mebius 1968: 31ff; Bäckman 1975: 50ff; Rydving 1995b). This also means that the lack of mention of large stone wall enclosures as offering sites in these sources is not a reason alone to reject the possibility that the large stone circles in Finnmark and Troms that were first labelled as such are in fact remains of offering sites.

3.2 Historical and ethnographic sources to Sami rituals

Temporality is crucial to understanding singular Sami offering sites and ritual behaviours, but time is of course of great importance when discussing the sources too, as is geography and spatiality. In contrast to a previous tendency to conflate available information into a coherent story about Sami beliefs and rituals, current understandings emphasise that the sources have to be considered as time and place specific (Rydving 1995a, 1995b). As outlined above, studies of the Sami have been closely related to missionary activity, with priests’ narratives as the most quoted sources on Sami religion, rituals and
other cultural expressions within the borders of Sweden and Norway in the
17th and 18th centuries. The eastern Sami were in contact with Novgorodian
settlers from the 11th century onwards and with priests and missionaries
from the Russian Orthodox church from the early 16th century. Sami in the
easternmost areas of today’s Finland and Norway were similarly within the
sphere of influence of the Orthodox church, and information about the Sami
can be found in Russian chronicles, decrees and tax records from a quite
early stage (Sergejeva 2000a, 2000b). There are certain relatively old histori-
cal sources about Sami beliefs and rituals in Scandinavia too and these are
of interest to the discussions here because of the general dating of the Sami
circular offering sites to the medieval and early modern period. However, the
first known written sources about Sami beliefs and rituals from the Late Iron
and Early Middle Ages (c. AD 800–1200) are mostly concerned with their
“sorcery” and divinations and say little about other aspects of contemporary
Sami beliefs or religion (of Bremen 2000 [1075]; Ågrip 1973 [c. 1190];
Snorresson 1977 [c. 1190]; Sturlason 1979 [1220]: 71–72, 76; Mundal
written in the second half of the 12th century, do we find a more explicit
description of Sami rituals in a captivating account of the spirit travels of
two Sami in order to bring a woman back to life after she has died due to
sorcery (Historia Norwegie 2003 [1100s]: 63). There is, however, no infor-
mation about Sami offering rituals or offering sites in contemporary sources
from the time of the initial construction and use of the stone structures dis-
cussed here. The initial phase of use may, however, have continued through-
out the 16th century and into the 17th century (see Chapter 4.11 for discus-
sion of the datings), and during this time there is a considerable growth in
written sources about the Sami and their rituals, partly due to general human-
istic currents in Europe and a subsequent increased interest for descriptions
of land, people and history. In his 1555 Historia de Gentibus Septentri-
onalibus (“History of the Nordic Peoples”) Olaus Magnus describe the Sami as
worshiping the sun and the moon and a red cloth attached to a pole with
prayers and ceremonies. He says they make offerings of wild animals and
bones of whales and large fish to their gods. This is done without burning
them during summer, but in winter they put fire to the bones when people
gather for the holidays (Magnus 1976 [1555], 3:2). Other contemporary
writers (Ziegler 1531; Goës 1915 [1540]; Peucer 1560) also described Sami
conditions, but these works are highly dependent on each other (Löw 1956:
17–18). Somewhat supplementary to Olaus Magnus, trader and traveller
Damanius à Goës mentions that the Sami worshiped fire and pillars or piles
(Sw.: stöder) of stone (Goës 1915 [1540]). This information is not very geo-
graphically specific. Neither is the early 17th century Norrigis Bescrifuelse
(“Description of Norway”), which describes specific incidents of sorcery,
magic and a shamanistic spirit travel. About Sami offering sites, it is said
that several people use the same offering sites, and that some have a large
stone, some a large spruce tree and some make a wooden image that they place in a cave underneath a mountain (Friis 1632: 399). This is in accordance with later historical and ethnographic sources.

The 17th century sorcery court cases against Sami subjects are known for describing the use of holy drums, but they also mention a few offering sites and “idol–worship” of wooden figures (Lilienskiold 1942; Lilienskiold 1998; Fellman 1910; Edsman 1985; Rydving 1995b: 24–25). The nature of these sources make them very time and place specific. A similarly interesting and apparently independent early source from Sweden is a c. 1630 manuscript by Olaus Niurenius. His writings were most likely based on his own observations during his 26 years as a priest in Ume Lappmark27, though also including information from other areas (Fjellström 1983: VII; Rydving 1995b: 18–19, fig. 2). Niurenius says the Sami in the Ume Lappmark were increasingly leaving old idolatry and sorcery behind, mostly because of the fear of punishment from the authorities, but he still describes their offering rituals in some detail. According to Nirenius the Sami gods were rocks that looked like birds28, or, in the Kemi Sami areas (in today’s Finland), a carved face at the top of a cut–down tree. To these they occasionally made animal offerings of meat, antler and hides, usually of reindeer, and they would smear the idols with blood from large animals and birds (Niurenius 1983[c. 1630]).

In the latter half of the 17th century, priests and missionaries in Sweden (at the time including Finland) were given specific instructions to document Sami areas and culture, including beliefs and rituals, which resulted in a substantial surge of sources that are relevant here. This was part of a missionary effort, but the attention also related to political, territorial and economic interests in the north from Norway/Denmark, Sweden/Finland and Russia, including the Swedish king’s intention to colonise the northern territories with Swedish citizens (Löw 1956). Priests in the various Sami areas wrote reports that were sent to Schefferus and included in his book together with information from older sources, like the ones mentioned above (Löw 1956; Rydving 1995b:19). The result, Lapponia, was published in Latin in 1673 and became highly popular. It was soon translated into several languages (though to Swedish only in 1956). It has the drawback of not always specifying where the information was collected, and rather conflating the different sources to a master story about a common Sami culture, but it gives a quite sober account considering the contemporary moral indignation over Sami “heathendom”. Both Lapponia and original priests’ narrations from various regions provide very valuable information about many aspects of Sami culture at the time, including Sami beliefs, rituals and types of offering.

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27 Landscape name, “Lappmark” indicating a Sami area.
28 Considering the variety in the offering sites we are familiar with today, this seems to be a rather superficial generalisation.
sites, as well as lists of specific offering sites (Schefferus 1956[1673]; Reutersköld 1910; Wiklund 1983).

In Russia, the newly founded Russian Academy of Sciences sent out academic expedition to the Kola Peninsula in the 1720s (Ojala 2009:209). At the same time the last Ter Sami groups on Kola were officially Christianised, though traditions about their old gods remained and still remain today (Sergejeva 2000b: 23–24). The Norwegian sources grow in number from the early 18th century, mainly initiated by Thomas von Westen, who in 1716 was assigned the task of leading the Danish–Norwegian missionary campaign among the Sami. On a missionary journey to Finnmark the same year he met the teacher Isaac Olsen, who had collected a large quantity of material on the “idolatry and superstition” of the Sami in his work area of Vaaranger, Tana, Laksefjord, and Porsanger. von Westen represented a pietistic missionary activity with focus on individual salvation and made use of gathered information about Sami beliefs and rituals to argue against the Sami and persuade them to convert. He had several priests and missionaries in different parts of the country report on local Sami customs and beliefs (e.g. Olsen 1910 [c. 1715]; Kildal 1945 [1727]; Skanke 1728), information he used in his own writings to inform new missionaries. An advantage of these sources is that some of the information can be delimited to certain geographical areas, but in general they are highly dependent on each other, and in time also on the material von Westen had already collected or written himself (cf. Rydving 1995b: 28–34). Eventually these writings were even used by 18th century Swedish priests and scholars, making their accounts as much third hand sources of Norwegian conditions as independent accounts from their own parishes (Reutersköld 1910; Rydving 1995b: 35–36). There are, however, examples of accounts from 18th century Swedish writers that have individual value (e.g. Högström 1746; Högström 1774, Fjellström 1981[1755]). Interesting Norwegian sources from the mid and late 18th century include the extensive border examination protocols of Major Schnitler, which encompass descriptions of a few offering sites he had observed (Schnitler 1985[1745]: 13–14) and the work by Knud Leem, priest in Porsanger, Laksefjord and Alta in Finnmark, who mentions some aspects of the indigenous religion. Leem also included a longer account about the old religion of the Sami by Erich Johan Jessen–Schardeboell. However, despite some personal observations by Leem, both these accounts rely quite heavily on information from von Westen and the other sources mentioned above, so their descriptions cannot be assumed to always concern Finnmark (Leem 1975[1767]; Rydving 1995b: 38–39).

The written sources about Sami offering customs in the 17th and 18th centuries informed many travel accounts and studies that discussed the Sami in the 19th century. They are central to the 20th century descriptive works about Sami offerings and offering sites in Norway, Sweden and Finland too, though these include a large amount of sites and information that was rec-
orded in the 19th and 20th centuries too (e.g. Qvigstad 1926; Paulaharju 1932; Manker 1957; Mebius 1968, 1972). In the compilations, the variability in Sami offering sites and rituals is evident, though the presentations are not explicitly focused on local variations and rather give general overviews. The recorded sacred sites include mountains and fells, lakes, caves, promontories, islands and islets, screes, heaths and fields, waterfalls and springs. The offering sites themselves can, as mentioned, be related to conspicuous topographical features like a particular mountain peak, cliff or a rock or boulder, but quite often the sieidi could be a smaller and somewhat peculiar stone that stood out from the surroundings. Such stones could also be taken from somewhere else and brought to the offering site (Manker 1957: 29) or moved around by nomadic Sami as a “house god” (von Düben 1873: 238). The written sources indicate that the centre of attention at an offering site could sometimes be a tree or a tree stub. In some cases, wooden poles are mentioned, while simply carved figures of wood were often placed at offering sites, occasionally on a wooden table or “altar”. In addition, simple wooden rods with carved lines and crosses could be placed by larger offering rocks. All these elements are described as having been smeared with blood and fat from the offering animals during rituals (e.g. Leem 1975[1767]: 429, 438, pl. LXXXVI; Mebius 1968: 69; Bergman et al. 2008).

Animal offerings are described the most and seem to have included a wide variation of animals. Reindeer are usually described as being cooked and eaten during the ceremonies, only leaving smaller parts of the soft tissue, as well as blood, bones and the antlers to be given to the god or the offering site. There are, however, narratives about offerings of entire reindeer and cows, sometimes buried alive or left in remote places to die (e.g. Olsen 1910[c. 1715]:12; Mebius 1968: 19). Fish could be offered whole or the fisherman could smear guts, blood and fat, or alternatively the fish oil that was extracted from the liver, on the sieidi. The sources do not mention offering meals with fish or birds. Offerings of fur–bearing predators is little described, apart from general lists of potential offering matter (e.g. Rhee 1983[1671]: 39; Jessen–Schardebooll 1767: 27). The Sami in Swedish areas bought domestic animals from the coastal population in Norway especially for offering purposes, such as sheep, cows, horses, hens and cats (Rhee 1983[1671]: 59; Mebius 1968: 49 with references). Some sources mention human sacrifice (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 8; Waronen 1898: 10), while others specifically state that this did not happen (Niurenis 1983[c. 1630]: 20). There is no indication of human sacrifice on archaeologically–investigated Sami offering sites, though the definition of and difference between offering sites and graves can of course be discussed in some contexts.

There are different descriptions of how and where the offerings were placed, and in the present context any mentions of manmade structures are of course of particular interest. Apart from a table or altar to leave them on, several authors mention containers made from birch bark in which the of-
fered parts of the animal would be placed, by Skanke called “Damengare”. Another way is to put the offering in a small bag of some sort. These containers would then be buried at the offering site. Both practices are recorded in South Sami areas (Mebius 1968: 70–71). In other narratives, these containers or parts of the offering animal could be placed or hung in trees (Niurenius 1983[c. 1630]: 21; Mebius 1968:70). Antlers are frequently described as having been placed around the offering site or sieidi in a so-called “ti-orfwi gardi” (Rdeen 1983[1671]:40), or čoarvegárdi (North Sami for “antler fences”). This feature is also known from various ethnographically and archaeologically–recorded offering contexts (Friis 1871a: 141; Qvigstad 1926: 345, 1927: 458–461; Hallström 1922: 181ff; Manker 1957:25, 86, 91; Rydving and Kristoffersson 1993: 204–205). Knut Odner has suggested that this may have been inspired by the “Swedish magic” conducted by altars in churches (Odner 1983: 49–50), presumably implying that the antler fence is mimicking an altar ring. If so, it would have to be a relatively late phenomenon, as altar rings were not introduced in churches in Scandinavia until after the Lutheran reformation (i.e. in the late 16th century), when the whole congregation started to come up to the altar to take communion instead of only the priests. It could be argued that depositing antlers in this way is similar to constructing a stone enclosure, but the process of construction, material, composition and durability is obviously quite different. An example of an antler fence is portrayed in a well–known, and often reproduced, illustration from Lapponia, where a Sami offering stone is surrounded by a semicircle of reindeer antlers (fig. 11) (Schefferus 1956[1673]: 140). The picture is probably inspired by the information and drawing left by Samuel Rheen. In Rheens image the antlers are not placed in a neat circle, but rather build up and completely cover the back side of the offering site (fig. 12) (Rdeen 1983[1671]: 38). Rheen says the Sami put the antlers behind the offering stone, one on top of another and calls it an “antler fence” because it looks like a fence around the “Storjunckaren” (a name used about the sieidi in some areas, and also used about the superior god in the Sami “pantheon” according to some sources). This can be read in different ways, but it may indicate that the resulting structure was more related to the primary practice of collecting and depositing antlers as offering matter than for the purpose of delimiting an area, even if it ended up demarcating the site and causing the fence association. On some offering sites and sacred mountains there could be a thousand antlers, Rheen claims (Rdeen 1983[1671]: 40). The number of antlers that could be left in these contexts is confirmed by the fact that large amounts were later exported from offering sites for glue production (Keilhau 1831: 208; Lœstadius 2003[1842]: 97; Friis 1871a: 141; Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 922; Manker 1957: 47).

As for man–made stone structures on offering sites, this is not mentioned in the older written sources, but an 18th century account states that offering sites were sometimes fenced in (Högström 1980[1747]: 192), and a 19th
Fig. 11. Sieidi and antler fence, cf. Schefferus 1956 [1673]

Fig. 12. Sieiddit and antler fence, cf. Rheen 1983 [1671]
century ethnographic source makes a similar statement (Fellman 1906b: 18). These do not mention which materials were involved. Hans Hammond, who took much of his knowledge from his father-in-law Thomas von Westen, notes that offering sites could be surrounded by “straw or living trees” (Hammond 1787: 438). There are younger sources describing how the borders of sacred areas around sieidi stones could be very distinct and follow a stream, shoreline or a track of felled trees in the woods, the latter obviously a man-made physical feature, though apparently related to restrictions concerning a larger area or landscape room (Johansson 1944: 54–55, 71–72, footnote 5). In certain later ethnographic sources, stone circles are perceived as old offering sites (Fellman 1906: 391; Pettersson 1979; Jernsletten 2009: 118), and as mentioned in Chapter 2 there are examples of small stone circles on top of boulders that are documented as Sami offering sites (e.g. Qvigstad 1926: 329–330). Qvigstad reports on a circle of large boulders and smaller stones down below the “Stikkelsvågkjerringa” offering stone in Stikkelvågnæringen, Måsøy, Finnmark, (while older sources note a labyrinth in this area) (Urine 1932; Qvigstad 1926: 338). Johan Beronka describes pieces of wood as remains of a fence around the famous offering stones “Kristoffer” and “Lalla” on the Silfar mountain in Børselv, Porsanger29 (Beronka 1922: 108). A 1930s tradition relates a specific horseshoe-shaped structure by Finntjønnan in Sør-Trøndelag (151) to Sami offerings (Parel 1991:89), and in the 1940s an informant in the Sirkas Sami village in Sweden stated that the sieidi could be fenced in “with stone and antler, like an altar ring” when answering the previously mentioned questionnaire sent out by Manker (Manker 1957: 86). An alleged stone foundation with a timber superstructure near the large offering site by Rautasjaure in Jukkasjärvi, northern Sweden, was said to be the remains of a fence within which large reindeer bucks were kept awaiting the offering (Samzelius 1905: 224). In a recent discussion about the finds from this site, it is claimed that the offering site had two standing sieidi stones, and that it was delimited by a “barrier of twigs, antlers and bones” (Mulk 2009: 119), but it is unclear where this information derives from, as no such barrier is described in previously published descriptions (Hallström 1932; Manker 1957: 134ff).

Hence, delineations and other structures have obviously occurred on Sami offering sites, but, as stated before, substantial stone walls like the ones found in Finnmark are not recorded in Sami ritual contexts as we know them from historical and ethnographic sources. This may of course be due to deterioration and erosion of previous wood and stone structures on other known offering sites, or that the perception and use of the sites changed over time and that the physical appearance and manmade attributes were altered ac-

29 Though not in any way certain, this could potentially be inspired by the fact that Friis includes an etching of this offering site next to his description of the stone and wood enclosures other places (Friis 1871a: 140 and illustration).
cordingly. It is also important to recognise the amount of knowledge that has been lost, hidden or only partly passed on and understood because of the dramatic changes in both settlement patterns, accepted cultural expressions and various other changes in context, especially from the mid–19th century and up until today (cf. Hervieu–Léger 2000; Jernsletten 2003). This is further discussed in Chapter 3.5. In such cases the independent potential of archaeological studies to gain knowledge about Sami beliefs and rituals is especially evident, as has been proven by series archaeological studies of various other ritual activities and sites in Sami contexts.

3.3 Archaeology of Sami religion and rituals

The use of material remains as a source for beliefs, rituals and religion has been debated within several theoretical frameworks in archaeology, sometimes with pessimistic conclusions as to what archaeologists could say about these aspects of human existence (e.g. Childe 1944; Hawkes 1954; Binford 1962). The theoretical developments over the last few decades have shed new light on the ways archaeology can contribute to such studies, with approaches are inspired by the practice theory of Pierre Bourdieu and new understandings of how materiality creates and affects religious and ritual practices, as well as our research on these aspects (e.g. Insoll 2004; Andrén et al. 2006; Stutz 2006; Berggren and Stutz 2010; Fogelin 2007; Svestad 2011). Not all ritual and religious connotations and motives can be approached through archaeological methods alone, but the repetitive tendency of rituals, especially those performed at the same place over time, such as on offering sites, is undoubtedly a very valid and sometimes unique source material to religious practices and beliefs of the past. When Sami rituals and beliefs are concerned, the limited geographical and chronological scope of the written descriptions, as well as the many source critical issues, make archaeological sources invaluable (Vorren 1985a; Rydving and Kristoffersson 1993; Fossum 2006: 16–17).

As described above, however, it is important to maintain source criticism of the archaeological material as well. Defining archaeological material as “ritual” has to involve contextualised interpretation and is not something that can be determined only by looking for certain key features. The previously mentioned example of animal bone assemblages in Sami contexts illustrates this: these may have had both practical and religious motives and connotations (Kjellström 1985; Andersen 2009). There has been an attempt to classify bone deposits in different ways based on the information in historical sources that bones in offerings could not be split or broken (Rydving and Kristoffersson 1993: 198), but archaeological material from known and well–documented offering sites show that bones were routinely split for marrow even in these contexts (e.g. Gejvall 1956; Mulk 2009; Salmi et al. 2011;
Salmi et al. 2015). Similarly, the denial of the possibility of burnt offerings in Sami contexts due to the normative taboo of destroying the bones (Mebius 1968:13) is challenged by traces of heat affected or burnt bones, charcoal and fire at documented offering sites in northern Sweden (e.g. Hallström 1915; Serning 1956: 15; Gejvall 1956; Manker 1957: 125, 158; Äikäs 2015: 56), and written sources claim fire would destroy the offering sites, a notion that was actively used by missionaries as a way of desecrating holy sites in the early 18th century (e.g. Qvigstad 1927: 462–465; Rydving 1995b: 65–66). 16th century sources actually describe worship of fire and use of fire at offering sites during wintertime (von Herberstein 2010[1553], 225; Magnus 1976[1555], 3:2).

This further illustrates the importance of discussing chronology and temporality when studying ritual sites. Yet another example of the importance of archaeological studies is the increased and diverging knowledge such investigations have rendered about bear graves. The written sources from the early modern period about rituals and taboos for the bear hunt describe very strict rules for how the bones of the bear should be treated and buried are recorded (Rheen 1983[1671]; Schefferus 1956[1673]; Fjellström 1981[1755]; see even Hallström in Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 804 for late oral information about finds of structured bear graves in northern Sweden). However, bear graves have a substantial geographical and chronological distribution, with graves spread all over northern Norway and Sweden, dating from the 3rd or 4th to the 18th century (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 122), and archaeological investigations of bear graves show great variation both in content, stratigraphy and how the bones have been treated (Zachrisson and Iregren 1974; Zachrisson 1981; Mulk and Iregren 1995; Myrstad 1996; Fossum 2006: 100ff).

A few known examples of recent rock carvings, including human figures, sailboats and a labyrinth shape, are another presumably ritual Sami expression that is only documented through archaeology and not mentioned in contemporary written sources at all30 (Olsen 1984: 23; Bayliss–Smith and Mulk 1999; Simonsen 2000; Mulk and Bayliss–Smith 2001, 2006, 2007; Mandt 2005; Gjerde 2010: 251). Silver hoards from the Viking and Early Middle Ages have also been discussed as ritual deposits in Sami or “hybrid” contexts, whether as offerings or as ritual demarcations of the borders in areas between predominantly Sami and Norse/Norwegian habitation areas in northern Norway (Olsen 2000a; Spangen 2005, 2009, 2010). Though the

30 Ancient rock carvings and paintings are of course also part of the Sami cultural landscape and may have been the source of various beliefs and practices through the ages (K. Schanche 2004; Myrvoll 2008: 10; Bayliss–Smith and Mulk 1999; Mulk and Bayliss–Smith 2006; Mulk and Bayliss–Smith 2007), but the so far limited archaeological investigations of the surrounding terrain at such sites in Sami areas do not give a clear picture of whether there were any activities directly related to the rock art sites as such (Bayliss–Smith and Mulk 1999; Hygen 2006: 40–41; Gjerde 2010: 91).
deposition of (precious) metal is known from later sources about Sami traditions (e.g. Mebius 1972), the particular shape and content of these often substantial silver deposits is not reflected in or explained by written sources (Zachrisson 1984; Olsen 2000a; Spangen 2005, 2009, 2010). Thus, archaeological investigations have consistently provided new information and generated new questions about Sami ritual sites, though such studies have not always been performed by archaeologists. The 19th century studies of Sami rituals were included in the field of research labelled “lapology” (from the obsolete and derogatory exonym “Lapp”), which included cultural, linguistic, anthropological and a range of other studies (e.g. Hansen and Niemi 2001). Despite limited interest in a Sami past per se, lappologist researchers of various specialities also performed excavations to some extent. Burials were particularly targeted because of the physical anthropological studies that made Sami skulls and skeletons a popular source material that was extensively collected and exported in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (e.g. Nordvi 1853; Saxlund 1853; Aspelin 1877; Solberg 1909; Hallström 1922; Schreiner 1931; Schreiner 1935). In addition, there have been many archaeological excavations in relation to Sami burials even after this practice was abolished (Simonsen 1959; Manker 1961; Bratrein 1968; Kleppe 1974; Andreassen 1990; Mulk et al. 1993; cf. Schanche 2000: 99; Svestad 2010, 2013). The investigations have shown a wide variety of local burial customs both in terms of morphology, rituals and choice of topographical surroundings. The materiality of the surroundings is likely to have informed both the choices that were made about placement and construction of the graves, the beliefs that were related to the place and the practices and rituals that were performed there (e.g. Schanche 2000, 2011, 2013). The most well–known type of Sami burials are the scree graves (fig. 3). Investigations have shown that this category includes a wide variation of structures in terms of size, morphology and location, incorporating graves that were constructed in caves, crevices, under large boulders and in various types of screes from c. 400 BC up until the early modern period at least (Schanche 2000: 154–159, 169, 187; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 109). Some graves measure up to 1.6 x 2.7 m (Kleppe 1974, diagram 5 and 6) and they can have well–built chambers, made by removing the stone from the inner area. The way of building the structures by removing stones from the inner area to clear a space is probably what inspired Saxlund to compare the large stone circles in the screes with the graves, though the lack of human remains in any of these large stone enclosures makes this unlikely (Saxlund 1853). However, other graves are only made from small clearances in the scree. In many cases, there are no visible indications on the surface unless they have collapsed and formed a slight depression (cf. e.g. Kleppe 1974; Schanche 2000; Hildre 2002). Apart from the convenience, especially in wintertime, of burying the dead in scree, archaeologist Audhild Schanche has argued that the barren terrain of screes with its many openings between the rocks has
been important as places of access between the worlds of the living and the dead (Schanche 2000: 284).

Archaeological investigations of burial sites in screes have shown that some graves include only animal bones. These have been interpreted as offerings, and investigated animal graves of this sort in Varanger contained bones of reindeer, marine mammals, waterbirds and fish (Schanche 2000:199–201, 296–298, 2003). Interestingly, there is only one known example of a find of reindeer antlers in any of the scree graves, whether human or exclusively animal burials, apart from some finds of antler tools. The lack of antlers has been suggested to reflect that the annually regrowth of antlers was associated with regeneration rather than death, and thus offered to different gods on offering sites rather than at the burial site (Schanche 2000: 292–294). I will return to this point when discussing the osteological assemblages from the stone enclosures in Chapters 4 and 5. Contrary to the absence in the northern scree graves, there are examples of deposited antlers on so-called lakeside and cremation graves in certain South Sami areas of Sweden (though the datings of these graves to the Early Iron Age mean that their ethnic affiliation is debated, cf. Hallström 1924a: 702; Gollwitzer 1997; Ramqvist 2007; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 113). Here, the presence of antlers has been suggested to reflect exactly a regeneration concept in relation to death and burials (Olofsson 2010).

The labyrinths that are found along the Finnmark and Kola Peninsula coasts constitute another interesting phenomenon where archaeology is the primary source of information. These have been treated together with and given a corresponding explanation as the circular offering sites, suggesting they are ritual “countermeasures” against Christian manifestations during the late Middle Ages, see Chapter 2.2.3, and possibly used for burial rituals (Olsen 1999b, 2002; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 217–218, 220). The labyrinths are made from a single layer of head-sized stones, measure 8–12 m in outer diameter and are designed as the “classical” type with only one possible pathway to the centre of the figure (fig. 13). The phenomenon of stone labyrinths is not restricted to Sami areas but can be found all along the Bothnian coastlines, as well as in many areas of both inner and west coast Sweden and the southern coast of Norway (Odner 1961; Kraft 1977, 1982a, 1985; Myrberg 2004; Broadbent 2010). There is substantial variation in chronology and cultural contexts, with labyrinths allegedly being used quite recently both by Sami in Finland and by Swedish farmers for rituals to protect themselves and their herds from, among other things, wolves, wolverines and evil spirits (Anonymous 1983[1723–1732]; Steckzén 1964: 460–461). According to early 20th century records, Sami in inland northern Sweden have used labyrinths for “offerings and sorcery”, especially to affect other people’s reindeer herds (Kraft 1982b). As the labyrinths in Finnmark are situated close to dangerous waters and on localities with access to perilous deep sea fishing, it has also been suggested that they were used in rituals that were
meant to appease the dangers of the sea (Odner 1961: 105–106; Olsen 2002: 40), possibly as magically–loaded aiming points, since they are often related to dangerous waters. They could be protections against the restless spirits of dead bodies of unknown drowned people that would occasionally wash ashore. According to early medieval Norwegian legislation about (temporary) burial of such bodies without status, they should be placed in cairns on the high–water mark. In other parts of Scandinavia labyrinths are found close to burial sites, churches, church yards, execution sites and gallows, where people would be buried without the usual Christian ceremonies (Westerdahl 2012). This would coincide well with a recorded closeness of labyrinths to graves in Sami areas too (Olsen 1991b, 2002:45).

Fig. 13. Labyrinth on Holmengrå, a salmon fishing location in eastern Finnmark. Photo: Vilfred Ingilæ, Wikimedia Commons.

Russian researchers have considered the northern labyrinths to be from the Stone Age and Early Metal Age, or more specifically from c. 2000 BC (Gourina 1956), but sea–level dating rather suggests construction sometime between AD 1200 and 1700 (Olsen 2002: 44). Hence the labyrinths and circular offering sites are apparently contemporary. The connection that has been made between them as two expressions of religious countermeasures is related to their, in a medieval Sami context, unusual monumentality and visibility. However, the labyrinths and the circular offering sites are not spatially closely related, which is discussed further in Chapter 4.4. The only possible exception is a locality on Mortensnes, Nesseby, eastern Finnmark, where there is a renowned Sami offering site called Ceavccageadge (“the Fish Oil
Stone” – the offering stone where Nordvi noted smearing of fish oil in the 19th century. This offering site consists of a large standing stone slab surrounded by 14 concentric stone circles made from headsized and smaller stones laid out with a 60 cm distance between the rows, amounting to a total diameter of 24 m. Due to an early written source who calls this a “trøiburg” (Knag 1934[1690]: 52), meaning “labyrinth”, it has been discussed if this was originally a labyrinth shape that was rearranged by Nordvi during his excavation and restoration of the site in the mid–19th century. Some irregularities in the stone circles on one side of the stone could indicate a previous entrance (K. Schanche 1988: 65; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 102ff), but there is not enough evidence to draw any conclusion. Apparently there were concentric circles around another offering stone closer to Nesseby church that is now destroyed, which may indicate that this was a distinct phenomenon (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 108–109). The offering site with concentric circles on Mortensnes has sometimes been included in some overviews of assumed circular offering sites (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006, fig. 1; Broadbent 2010, fig. 187), while Ørnulv Vorren does not consider these to belong to the same category in his publications (cf. Vorren 1985a; Vorren and Eriksen 1993). Nordvi’s excavations between the 3rd and the 5th stone circles at the Ceavccageadje site produced some interesting finds of animal bones, a metal ring, a stone sinker and possibly a hammer stone. The bones were allegedly distributed so that reindeer antlers were deposited in the east, bird bones, fish bones and beaver teeth to the west and mostly fish bones to the north. In addition there was an assemblage of seal bones, but its localisation is not stated31 (Nordvi 1858; cf. Schanche 2000: 294). Excavations of unequivocal labyrinth–shape sites in Russia have resulted in no finds of objects or bones (Gourina 1956: 347).

As described above, most Sami habitation sites are also likely to have been scenes of religious rituals. The house plan as such has been discussed in terms of its cosmological significance, where the structuration of the floor space and general construction of traditional round turf houses (goahti) constitute a sort of ritual manifestation of the Sami worldview (Ränk 1949; Yates 1989; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 86–88). Particular focus has been lent to the sacred boaššu space behind the fireplace, where some sources state that the drum was stored and into which women were not allowed to move. This space could be separated and demarcated by a larger boaššu stone at that end of the fireplace (opposite to the main entrance of the hut or tent). This is of course a convenient demarcation of a typical Sami house layout and sacred space that is relatively easily detectable in archaeological records.

31 In a letter to his old professor, Steenstrup in Copenhagen, Nordvi apparently gives a different account, stating that the mammals were deposited to the south, teeth of beaver and fish to the west and reindeer and bird bones to the west (sic) (letter to Steenstrup 4 Oct 1858, cf. Schanche 1988).
and has served as an important argument in archaeological discussions about the social context of various house grounds (cf. e.g. Mulk 1994b; Bergstøl 2008b). In addition to this general cosmological aspect, the described hearths have been locations for everyday offerings, but these have usually not left traces in the archaeological record that are distinguishable as specifically ritual. Some habitation sites have produced more unusual archaeological finds of bone deposits or religious paraphernalia such as drum hammers for holy drums that are more easily associated with consciously religious rituals (Carpelan 1975; Grydeland 2001; Fossum 2006: 120ff). Two excavated habitation sites in Finland have shown concentrations of bones and objects such as knives that have been interpreted as ritual deposits (Carpelan 1975; Carpelan, Hogne and Mejdahl 1996). Bone deposits within four excavated goahti house grounds in northern Norway have been interpreted as ritual deposits because of the unusual location inside the houses and in some cases the presence of bones from all parts of the animals (Fossum 2006: 122). In later sources, the burying of offering animals or parts of offering animals inside houses has been described as something especially the coastal Sami did frequently (Qvigstad 1903: 37, 40). A written source from somewhat further south describes how women could make offerings of, for instance, lambs to Sáráhhkka, who was an important goddess related to the hearth (see footnote 26), but the source does not indicate if this was done inside the house (Kiilddahl 1945: 143–144; Mebius 2003: 119). The offering of puppies before childbirth also seems to have happened at designated offering sites (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 11), but finds of dog bones in a few hearths may possibly indicate offerings in living areas too (Hedman 2003: 192, 197; Fossum 2006: 125). Ritual activity in houses has been revealed by excavations and analyses, while the house remains themselves have not indicated any particular status. There is no evidence for houses being built with specific characteristics or especially for ritual use, though there are some late eastern Sami records of how special tents were erected in relation to noaidi ceremonies and offerings (Kert 1961; cf. Sergejeva 1997: 30; Volkov 1996: 101). Some older sources describe how offering sites could be established behind the tent or hut (Mebius 1968: 78). Thus, offering rituals at current living sites have been common, and there is also evidence for later depositions of objects or animals in old houses or house grounds in Sami areas, suggesting they could be held as sacred or ritual sites after they went out of use (Johansen et al. 1968: 76; Grydeland 2001: 9; Odner 2001: 43). Certain traditions today reinforce this interpretation, as hearths, houses and old habitation sites are frequently treated with a certain caution and reverence (Elgström 1922: 341, cf. Andersen 2004: 131; Skandfer 2001:123–124; Buljo 2002: 151–152; Ryd 2005: 26; Sommerseth 2009: 5). This evidence of the ritual and sacred status of contemporary and old habitation sites illuminates the complex relation between rituals and everyday practices and confirms that even if some sources in the early modern period claim that offering sites had to be placed
far into the forests and away from Norwegians or other Christians so as not to be ruined (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 7–8), offerings were frequently performed very close to the habitation sites and inside houses. At the same time, it may be interesting to note the regional differences and the variation in offering matter that was deposited compared to that which was left at larger designated offering sites.

To summarise, archaeological investigations of ritual sites have given very interesting information, which was not known from oral or written sources, first and foremost demonstrating great variation and the potential for unexpected conclusions.

### 3.4 Archaeology of Sami offering sites

Compared to the hundreds of Sami offering sites that are documented in northern Fennoscandia, archaeological investigations are proportionally few. Ethnographers and other researchers have frequently performed small excavations on the offering sites they visited and collected finds of offering matter etc. (e.g. Manker 1957; Itkonen 1962; Vorren and Eriksen 1993), in some cases according to the archaeological standards of the time, but the methodological approaches have varied and not all such investigations are documented in terms of, for instance, stratigraphy. Archaeologists have been less involved in investigating offering sites, partly because of the division of tasks between archaeology and ethnography outlined in the chapters above, but in later decades also for more ethical and political reasons due to the impact of early archaeological campaigns.

Gustaf Hallström was one of the first archaeologists to take a specific interest in the Sami offering sites, particularly in Russia and northern Sweden (Hallström 1922, 1932). He performed a series of excavations between 1909 and 1943, which still remain a substantial part of the professional archaeological excavations that have been made on such sites. Unfortunately he never published his investigations in a comprehensive work (cf. Serning 1956:7; Baudou 1997:142), but some information is available from more cursory overviews (Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924; Hallström 1932). Reports and field drawings exist in archives and add to the understanding of contexts and chronology (Zachrisson 1984; Wallerström 1995a; Salmi et al. 2015). The material he collected has been broadly studied, especially the metal finds (e.g. Serning 1956; Fjellström 1962; Zachrisson 1984, Lund 2015, see Chapter 3.4.2).

Though professional in the contemporary methodological sense, Hallström’s approaches reflect the attitudes that give research on similar material today certain negative or problematic connotations. He was of course informed by the general evolutionist and racist ontology and epistemology of the time, which is reflected in his involvement with the intrusive and wide-
spread physical anthropological, ethnographic and archaeological research on the Sami. For Hallström, this included extensive excavations of offering sites, measuring the skulls of living Sami and retrieving skeletons from graves, some relatively recently deceased (e.g. Hallström 1922). His political leanings are evident from his membership in the pro–Nazi organisation Riks- 
föreningen Sverige–Tyskland (“The National Society Sweden–Germany”) before and during the Second World War (Hübinnette n.d.). At the same time, Hallström had a genuine interest in Sami history and culture, and he performed an abundance of travels and expeditions where he gained impressive knowledge about Sami ways of life through participatory observation, including such straining work as being an attendant for the reindeer herders in shorter periods of time during transhumance moves (e.g. Baudou 1997: 137–142).

Hallström is by no means a unique example of past researchers with a keen interest in cultural studies and what today would be considered dubious political standpoints and ethical standards, especially related to racist anthropological studies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Svanberg 2015; Hagerman 2015; Ojala 2016). The problematic ethical and power related aspects of continuous use of archaeological and osteological material from this sort of research has been broadly debated over the last few decades, including in Sami contexts, and often in opposition to wishes for repatriation and reburial (e.g. Schanche 2002a, 2002b; Mulk 2002; Zimmerman 2004; Edbom 2005; Stutz 2008a; Harlin 2007, 2008; Ojala 2009:228ff; Svestad 2013b, 2013c; Zimmerman 2013; Goldstein 2013; Aronsson 2013). The revival of indigenous cultures and politics across the world and critique of previous brutal approaches has led to a critical awareness of the ethical difficulties related to investigating the ritual sites of indigenous groups (e.g. Carmichael et al. 1994; Insoll 2004: 97–98). An effort has been made to remedy past violations of indigenous rights by so–called “indigenous archaeology”, which was briefly discussed in Chapter 2.2.

In addition to these concerns and the ethnographic dominance in research on Sami pasts, the mid–20th century pessimism concerning archaeological studies of religion in general (see above) has probably contributed to the limited number of archaeological investigations at Sami offering sites in the latter half of the century. A newly discovered metal offering site in Sweden was investigated with archaeological excavations during the 1970s, but this was initially interpreted as a different type of deposit (a merchant’s or thief’s depot) (Zachrisson 1984; Wallerström 1995). However, over the last 20 years there has been a renewed interest among archaeologists for research on Sami offering sites in general. New and more ethically–conscious studies have focused on surveys, inventories and discussions about the landscape and social contexts of Sami sacred sites, rather than intrusive investigations (Mulk 1994b, 1996; Hedman 2003; A. Schanche 2004a; Fossum 2006). These approaches are informed by the reception history of previous such
work and the mentioned ethical considerations. Yet, there are obvious limitations to studies that do not integrate archaeological excavations on the actual sites. One solution has been to study previously retrieved material, partly with methods like radiocarbon dating and isotope analyses that were not available when the finds were first excavated (Mulk 2009; Salmi et al. 2015). In Finland, a series of smaller targeted excavations and subsequent analyses of the find material has been performed over the last ten years, in mutual understanding with the Finnish Sami Parliament and local communities, within projects that have focused on seeing Sami sacred sites in a wider societal context (Okkonen 2007; Äikäs et al. 2009; Salmi et al. 2011; Äikäs and Salmi 2013; Äikäs 2015). There are currently ongoing investigations of osteological material from several offering sites in Norway too (e.g. Salmi 2013a), as well as some fieldwork on such sites in Nordland being performed by representatives from the local Sami museum Árran to retrieve better documented sample material (Aslaksen 2015). Below I will summarise some results from the archaeological investigations of Sami offering sites that are relevant to the further discussion of the structures studied in this thesis.

3.4.1 Features and structures

The archaeological recording of offering sites and further investigations of them have to a large extent confirmed the impression from the older written sources and ethnographic records that offering sites have most often been related to natural landscape features and not to any man–made features that are preserved today (Äikäs 2015: 41–42, 82–83). This is of course to some extent related to the fact that archaeological investigations are mostly performed on sites that are known from historical and ethnographic sources. Peculiar cliffs, rocks and so on are often emphasised in the literature and there is a frequency of anthropomorphic or zoomorphic elements (e.g. Manker 1957: 34; Mulk 1996: 52; Huggert 2000: 63; Äikäs 2015: 86), but investigations of the Sami offering sites in Finland suggest that this cannot be generalised to apply to all offering sites (Äikäs 2015: 104–105). The variability in natural sites and features is more striking.

The occurrence of stone circles on offering sites is discussed in Chapter 2. Substantial stone structures on offering sites are rare in historical, ethnographic and archaeological sources, though there is some intriguing information in certain sources. Antler fences, on the other hand, are described by several authors and have also been documented at a number of offering sites in the 20th century (Qvigstad 1926: 345, Hallström 1921: 181ff, Manker 1957: 25, 86, 91, Rydving and Kristoffersen 1993: 204–205). The past Sami use of wooden figures and “altars”, sometimes called tables, is documented in historical sources, but very seldom preserved in the archaeological record. There are some rare instances of finds of wooden figures and other elements
(e.g. Nicolaissen 1919: 3–25; Vorren 1959; Hansen 2000: 100–101; Bergman et al. 2008), including a peculiar large wooden container on the lake-front of Gråträsk in Piteå, Norrbotten, Sweden, that had apparently held the medieval metal finds that have been interpreted as Sami offerings (Zachrisson 1984; Wallerström 1995). There are also records of offering sites with other features such as depressions and cairns, for instance, on Mount Ruito on the Varanger peninsula, eastern Finmark, where a cairn is surrounded by six depressions, whereof three contained remains of charcoal. Remains of bones and antlers were spread around between the cairn and the depressions. Historical sources call the mountain an offering site, while the depressions and cairns were only recorded in 1983 (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 184–190).

In the vicinity, lately, there has been recorded several more small stone circles with antler remains that have been interpreted as ritual sites, see Chapter 2.2.3 (Schanche and Schanche 2014).

In general, there is little archaeological evidence for manmade structures on offering sites, but this fact obviously has to be balanced against the limited durability of certain constructions. It is still interesting that even Hallström, who investigated and recorded a substantial number of offering sites, encountered very few places with remains of manmade features apart from cultural layers of offering matter.

### 3.4.2 Objects, faunal material and analyses

The amount of finds on offering sites obviously differs according to past and present use and the conditions for preservation. Hallström mainly investigated offering sites that had been known and partly in use until relatively recent times, but with the particular aim to prove that these went further back in time than previously–collected finds from the 17th century onwards had indicated (Hallström 1932: 113, 123). However, he regarded the stratigraphic information from the sites to be only partly valuable because of disturbances due to erosion, previous plundering, etc. (Serning 1956: 7). Plundering, or “investigations”, by Sami and non–Sami locals and visiting tourists is known to have been a frequent occurrence, especially on sites with coins and other metal finds (Hallström 1932: 113). Thus, it is difficult to know how many sites were originally places of metal offerings in different time periods. Today we know of 12 offering sites where substantial amounts of metal objects were deposited in the Middle Ages. Of these 11 are situated in northern Sweden, and one just across the border in Troms in Norway. The limited distribution still gives the impression that metal offerings have been a tradition in a certain region in this time period. The combination of artefacts varies, with a couple of sites carrying mainly iron arrowheads, and in one case an 8th–century sword, while the other sites are dominated by various items of jewellery, mainly made from tin–copper alloys that are shaped as small circular, axe and cross shapes and are considered to be local products
There are also silver and bronze pendants, buckles and mountings, possibly made in the Ladoga area specifically for fur exchange with the Sami who used them for offering purposes (Mulk 1996). In addition, there are Arabic, Polish, German, English, Danish and Norwegian coins, which are obviously imports, but they are given holes or loops, and have apparently been used as jewellery or decoration. There are also finds of woollen threads attached to some of the objects, indicating they were originally hung or attached to something (Serning 1956). Where objects seem to have been deposited individually, this could indicate a similar offering tradition as in later times, when a pendant, mounting or other easily detached ornament, called šiella (or sjiele in South Sami), could be teared off and deposited upon passing an offering site (Mebius 1972). In addition to threads, some offering sites, and not only those with metal finds, have contained fragments of cloth. There are also recorded offering site finds of various tools and utensils, including spoons, knives, axes, saws, nails, a needle, a whetstone, a fire steel, parts of a loom, as well as asbestos ceramics, pieces of glass and pearls, flint (partly gunflints) and pieces and tools of quarts, quartzite and slate (Manker 1957: 49–51). To the extent that Late Iron Age and Early Middle Age silver hoards are considered Sami or “hybrid” offerings in northern Fennoscandia, it is relevant to mention that these are distinct in content compared to graves and the large metal offering sites in northern Sweden (to which they are also geographically mutually exclusive). The silver hoards in northern Fennoscandia are consistently composed of large jewellery and neck rings and only a small amount of coins or cut silver (cf. e.g. Sjøvold 1974; Hårdh 1996; Zachrisson 1998; Spangen 2005).

The metal finds are obviously useful objects of study, considering their chronological significance and the information they provide about the Sami societies and networks beyond the religious aspects. The metal finds from the large offering sites in northern Sweden have been widely discussed and they have perhaps taken some of the interest away from the animal offerings, though these have also been studied. Some analyses of the osteological records have been performed (Gejvall 1956, Manker 1957), but more recent investigations indicate that they have an unfulfilled potential for information about both offering practices and Sami culture and subsistence in general (e.g. Mulk 2009; Salmi et al. 2015). This is partly due to the new methodological inventions, such as isotope analyses that enable both relatively accurate dating of bones and new ways of determining the origins and residence of individual offering animals. There is also a classificatory change involved, as offerings of metal objects and animals have usually been defined and discussed as separate categories (Mebius 1972: 109), while the evidence rather indicate that these two aspects could be maintained at the same time or place through similar ritual practices (Jernsletten 2009: 123–124, Salmi et al. 2015: 19).
Despite the claim in some general overviews that almost any animal could be suitable as offering matter, investigations suggest distinct chronological and geographical differences in this respect. A comprehensive study of the animal bone finds from both Sami offering and dwelling sites in Finland shows some intriguing mutually exclusive tendencies: not surprisingly, considering their subsistence importance, wild and domesticated reindeer are present in both contexts, as well as fish and sheep/goat. Bear bones, however, have only been found at one offering site and no dwelling site, while bones of capercaillie are found at offering sites, but at only one dwelling site. Cattle, beaver, pine marten, wolverine, hare, elk, wolf, and some birds, including willow grouse, have, however, have only been found at dwelling sites (Äikäs 2015: 138). Of course the sample sizes, chronology and excavation methods and frequency of dwelling sites versus offering sites are possible sources of error in this picture, as well as the preservation conditions in the middens of a habitation site as opposed to the sometimes more scattered assemblages at offering sites. In addition, it should be kept in mind that offerings were also made at habitation sites, but the complete or almost complete exclusion of certain species show some interesting tendencies concerning which animals were considered suitable for offerings by the Sami in today’s Finland.

Studies of bones from selected Sami offering sites in Sweden show a somewhat different pattern, for instance cattle is present in several offering contexts and sheep or goat is the second most frequent after reindeer. The latter bones, mainly lower jaws and mandibles, have been defined as goat (Gejavall 1956; Manker 1957: 45–46), but this distinction is very hard to make based on visual inspection alone and may have to be considered uncertain. Finds of sheep bones (certified through DNA analyses) in Sami contexts of hearth row sites in eastern Finnmark has been dated to AD 990–1155 (Hedman et al. 2015: 14–15), indicating that these animals may have been part of a Sami subsistence pattern at a much earlier stage than previously thought. As described above, older sources state that especially the Swedish Sami bought domestic animals on the Norwegian side of the border particularly for offering purposes (Rheen 1983[1671]: 59; Mebius 1968: 49 with references). The only isotope analysis so far of a 13th or 14th century sheep/goat tooth from the large offering site Unna Saiva in northern Sweden shows that this animal was not local but brought there from somewhere else (Salmi et al. 2015: 17, table 3). While this could support the idea of the animal being procured especially for the offering, it could also reflect the moving pattern of the Sami who used the offering site (cf. Hedman et al. 2015; Spangen and Fjellström forthcoming). Interestingly, the goats/sheep at the investigated offering sites in Sweden seem to have been young individuals that were slaughtered in late summer or autumn (Gejavall 1956; Manker 1957: 46).
Contrary to the one find in Finland, bear bones were found on 14 out of 16 assemblages from offering sites in Sweden that were analysed in the mid–1950s, and wolverine on one (not counting another find of bear and wolverine bones in what I think should rather be considered a bear grave, see Manker 1957: 254). Unlike the Finnish contexts, grouse is also present at the Swedish offering sites, in addition to swan, capercaillie and loon (Gejvall 1956; Manker 1957: 45). A more recent investigation of the large bone assemblage from the offering site of Unna Saiva, which was not analysed in the 1950s, rather confirms the same predominance of reindeer, represented with at least 52 individuals, followed by goat/sheep bones from 14 individuals, and a very limited amount of cattle bones, while bear is represented with at least 13 individuals, including several skulls. There are also bones from of elk, beaver, swan, long–tailed duck, scoter, loon and grouse. A substantial amount of the reindeer elements in the assemblage were antlers, either shed or cut off, while the finds of skulls and upper vertebrae suggest that heads were deposited with the flesh attached. Notably, there was a distinct difference in body parts that were deposited from male and female individuals, as heads were mostly from larger male reindeer, while marrow split bones of limb extremities, as well as some upper body parts and lower vertebrae of smaller female reindeer were found in the assemblage, but not the heads. These must consequently have been deposited elsewhere (Salmi et al. 2015).

There are, so far, few published systematic studies of osteological assemblages from Sami offering sites in Norway, and previous overviews tend to give generic determinations such as “animal bones”, or sometimes noting the bones to be from reindeer, halibut or bear, often based on older sources (Qvigstad 1926; Vorren and Eriksen 1993). Nordvi’s excavation of the Ceavcceaðge offering site on Mortensnes is described above, with a variation of bones on the same site but apparently sorted in different wind directions (Nordvi 1858; cf. Schanche 2000, 294 vs. letter to Steenstrup 4 Oct 1858, cf. Schanche 1988). A recent investigation of some smaller assemblages in Tromsø Museum provides a slightly more detailed picture, though it does not include the same number of sites and samples as the Swedish and Finnish investigations. The Bæljašvarre site in Finnmark included reindeer antlers and bones, as well as one bone from unidentified mammal, while samples from the Mørsvikbotn site in Nordland were all from cattle (Salmi 2013a). Another find of antlers by the bog Ferdesmyra in eastern Finnmark is from an unclear context, while the bones from the sites Låhpojohka (74) and Nedrevatn 1 (83) will be discussed further below. The variations are related to chronology, see Chapter 3.4.4.

Collectively, the investigated osteological assemblages from Sami offering sites seem to indicate offerings of antlers, heads, jaws and upper vertebrae, as well as bones from the extremities of grown reindeer. There is a difference in terms of which body parts were offered from older male and younger female animals, while the sheep/goats are all fairly young. There are
bones from wild animals too, and, for instance, marrow split tubular bones from bear (Gejvall 1956; Salmi 2013a; Salmi et al. 2015; Äikäs 2015).

The finds from modern and current activity on Sami offering sites that has been recorded and sometimes collected during the 20th century and in recent years, include coins, tea lights, animal offerings, jewellery and other objects (Spangen 2013a; Äikäs 2015; Äikäs and Spangen 2016). I will discuss this activity further in Chapters 5.6 and 6.

3.4.3 Landscape and social contexts

The landscape setting and context are important for the interpretation of both Sami offering sites in general and of the use of the stone structures discussed here. The offering sites have been put in a broader ecological and societal context since the early 20th century, with Hallström relating them to the distribution of Sami habitation sites and the metal offering finds with long distance trade (Hallström 1924b: 855, 863). In Hallström’s view, there was a difference between the smaller offering sites that were sometimes accidentally discovered and the large offering sites with metal finds. The former were simpler and had no object finds older than the 17th century, while the latter were impressive and included medieval finds. In relation to the latter, there were also living traditions, often far outside the local community. Hallström concluded that the former were secret offering sites for families that got increased attention due to the intensified Christianisation, which put a stop to the use of the large communal offering sites represented by the metal offering finds (Hallström 1924b: 862, 864). In addition, he concluded that there should be large offering sites along the Sami moving paths and some closer to the collective winter habitation sites. Hallström considered the offering sites an important source of knowledge about the history of the development of reindeer herding and “the question of the age of the current species grouping of the Sami” (Hallström 1932: 123, my translation from Swedish), referring to the different cultural traits, territories and group identities of “mountain Sami” and “forest Sami” in the early 20th century. Considering Hallström did not have access to radiocarbon dating of bones, the suggested chronological difference, and thus difference in cultural context, could be mistaken, but the conclusions about the expected distribution and the variation in practices between different size offering sites are still valid and interesting.

Concerning the immediate physical differences between the offering sites and locations, Hallström describes the local topography and shape of the offering sites, but he does not go into the internal variations in their topographical characteristics in any depth, perhaps realising that this has been of less importance for his chosen research questions. As described above, Sami sacred sites are related to a variety of topographical features, sometimes visually peculiar ones. Attempts have been made to categorise the character
of the landscapes and environments offering sites are placed in. In a systematic study of the landscape aspect of the known Finnish Sami sacred sites, Tiina Äikäs relates these to nine main types of landscape feature, namely rivers, lakes, smaller waterways, headlands, islands, hillocks, hills, fells and forests, or combinations of these (Äikäs 2015: 72ff). Offering sites along rivers in Finland are very homogenous in the sense that they are always placed right next to the water, while a closer look at the other topographical groups reveal more variation (Äikäs 2015: 72). The size of the lakes varies, as well as the distance from the shore to the actual sieidi (Äikäs 2015: 73). Offering sites may be placed in relation to dominant high points in the landscape like hillocks or hills, either on the top or along the slope. Only in two cases are known offering stones in Finland situated in terrains where forest is the predominant feature (Äikäs 2015: 75), but of course vegetation may have changed since the initial use of an offering site. Sieiddit on headlands are placed at varying distances from the water, while sacred sites on islands can be related to specific boulders or rocks, but also refer to the entire island. The precise location of Finnish offering sites described in historical or ethnographic sources as related to smaller waterways like brooks, creeks, ponds or springs are not known (Äikäs 2015: 76). Sacred sites related to fells and hills may include larger areas or the whole hill, while in some cases specific offering stones are known (Äikäs 2015: 77). On a general level there is a consistent relation between sacred sites and waterways and high places, but on a local level, the exact position of any known sieidi can be both at the pinnacle or along the slope, and sacredness can also be related to less conspicuous sites. The conclusion is that the selection of place does not seem to have a strict, established form (Äikäs 2015: 78). Äikäs shows that offering sites that, according to written sources, were used by whole communities are usually related to large sacred landscape features such as fells and lakes, while the information indicates that all the types of sacred places where used by individuals (Äikäs 2015: 80–81).

Tiina Äikäs sees the Finnish material to indicate a distinct connection between sacred sites and water (Äikäs 2015: 105ff), which is interpreted as an expression of a general aspect of liminality in sacred sites, i.e. that these are placed at meeting places between different worlds and different elements, like earth and water, but also possibly between earth and sky when it comes to high places (Äikäs 2015: 108–109). As mentioned above, a similar liminality or meeting places between worlds has been suggested for screes (Schanche 2000: 284). Äikäs partly supports the idea of sieiddit as relaying elements on the edge of worlds by referring to research by Inga–Maria Mulk and Tim Bayliss–Smith, who outline a tripartite Sami worldview model, though only as an abstract representation and not as an actual mental model for all Sami (Mulk and Bayliss–Smith 2006: 97; Äikäs 2015: 109). I find such constructed models somewhat unfortunate because of their theoretical nature and superficial relation to actual Sami thinking, especially because the
tripartite worldview model based on theories of anthropology and history of
religion that have been heavily criticised in general and also questioned in
specifically Sami contexts (Eliade 1959; Smith 1998: 14–23; Hansen and
Olsen 2014: 338, footnote 73). The idea of liminality as a structuring con-
cept in human culture is broadly proven through extensive ethnographic
studies (Gennep 1960; Douglas 1966; Turner 1969), and it is also beyond
doubt that the elements, particularly water and fire, have had profound and
widespread use and meaning in rituals and religions worldwide (Oestigaard
2011; Kaliff 2011). However, I would question a more generalised theoretical
model promoting a primarily liminal or sacred understanding of specific
elements such as water as this has sometimes been articulated in archaeology
(e.g. Richards 1996; Helskog 1999; Brück 2011). A focus on elements in the
landscape conceals what I believe to be the essence of animistic everyday
experience of the world, namely the fact that the divide between where hu-
man and non–human persons are present is blurry or even non–existent, and
that despite the relative importance of place described above, sacredness or
ritual meaning can be more a question of temporality (Ingold 2000; A.
Schanche 2004a: 4–5). I am not dismissing the ritual connotations of specific
natural features, especially where such features are repeatedly encountered
in ritual situations over generations and thus become associated with this
aspect. What I suggest is that a more prominent aspect of the Sami animistic
worldview is the understanding of the whole world as potentially “liminal”
in terms of the possibility, and even necessity, to interact with other non–
human persons in the surroundings, again emphasising temporality and per-
sonal experience more than specific and geographically fixed combinations
of topographical factors (Andersen 2004: 131). According to this view, Sami
concepts of important places were perhaps not so much related to the ele-
ments in general, like water, than to particular non–human persons in the
shape of stones, trees, hillocks, lakes, mountains, etc. In a way it is interest-
ing that 64% of recorded Sami offering sites in Finland are located close to
water (Äikäs 2015: 109), but this is hardly surprising in what is stereotypi-
cally called “the land of a thousand lakes”. A similar number of sacred sites
should be anticipated in relation to the abundant lakes and rivers in the Swe-
dish and Norwegian inlands, not to mention the coastal landscape of Norway
(cf. Qvigstad 1926). Consequently, general topographical elements should be
considered, but not overestimated, as being indicative of the religious or
ritual meaning of a place. I am emphasising this because closeness to water
is sometimes used as an argument to establish the sacredness of sites in field
registrations with reference to the sacredness of water as a general rule in
Sami contexts, even when the site in question is actually closer related to
other features, for instance on top of a mountain with only a view of the sea
(cf. Askeladden Id 27665–1, Id 120244–1). The view of water may be a rel-
evant factor in some contexts, but in my opinion a general understanding of
water as liminal or sacred risks simplifying a more complex worldview.
This is not to deny the more mythological connotations of water in Sami contexts, which are evident in the consistent placement of eastern Sami graveyards close to water (Storå 1971: 197; cf. Svestad 2011: 43–44) and the concept of săiva lakes. The word săiva, and a range of dialectical versions in the different Sami languages, has been used about both lakes and mountains and has had many different connotations, some more practical and everyday than others. However, the most quoted understanding is that of a lake with a double bottom connected by a hole resembling a smoke hole, linking it to the other side or the other world. In such lakes the fish were said to be especially large and fat but hard to catch (Bäckman 1975: 14). In this case, there is of course no doubt about the liminal role of the water as an entrance to a parallel world (Bäckman 1975; Äikäs 2015: 110–111).

Landscape elements should also be considered for other sensory qualities than visibility and mythological connotations; for example, as part of a soundscape created by roaring water or echoes from a cliff wall (Lahelma 2008; Äikäs 2015: 112ff). More pragmatically, the placement of offering sites also has to do with the perceived function, often in relation to fishing when by water, and hunting of wild reindeer when on high ridges (e.g. Qvigstad 1926: 318–319; Hultkrantz 1985: 25; Äikäs 2015: 110). In Finland, offerings related to reindeer husbandry also seem to be associated with high landscape elements like hills, fells or lakes at high altitudes, with offering sites situated along migration routes and by various sites that were important to the herding (Äikäs 2015: 141). Again, we need to be keep in mind the multiple ways landscape elements were apparently perceived by Sami in the past, as at the same time sacred and functional, animated and pragmatic (cf. A. Schanche 2004a).

The contextual interpretations Hallström presented have been followed up in more recent research that has discussed the relation between offering sites and suggested winter villages and the relation to dwelling sites of early reindeer herders (e.g. Mulk 1994; Hedman 2003). Another aspect is the more overall distribution of Sami ritual and sacred sites and how these have created a meaningful landscape (e.g. A. Schanche 2004a; Fossum 2006). An important part of this holistic approach is the Sami use of and practices in the landscape related to various subsistence strategies. All sources indicate a close relationship between subsistence activities and offerings. Wild reindeer hunt has been emphasised (e.g. Vorren 1956a, 1958, 1987), but the investigation of offering sites in Finland indicate that there is rarely a connection between sacred sites and preserved hunting installations. However, this could be because wild reindeer hunting in Finland has been performed with provisional means such as snares (Tegengren 1952) and not necessarily durable installations like the very frequent pitfall traps in Norway and Sweden. It is still interesting that in the cases where hunting installations are present in the vicinity of offering sites in Finland, the sieiddit in question have often produced evidence for offerings of fish and other animals as much as of
reindeer. Thus, the shape and placement of offering sites and any proximity to hunting facilities is not necessarily indicative of the offering practices that took place there. This is could be due to chronological differences between the use of any hunting pits, which are notoriously difficult to date, and the use of the sieiddit (Äikäs 2015: 127–132). Historical sources in Varanger indicate changes in the use of offering sites and the animals deposited there, as there are different records of what kind of bones could be found by the sacred mountain and offering site Murgiid–gahparas, Nesseby, at different points in time, including both reindeer and halibut (Leem 1767; Keilhau 1831, cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 125). Äikäs notes some cases regarding the proximity of offering sites to rectangular fireplaces in Finland as a possible indication of a hunting affiliation (Äikäs 2015: 132–133), though such hearths have also been connected to early reindeer herding (Hedman 2003; Sommerseth 2009a; Hedman and Olsen 2009; Hedman et al. 2015). Notably, individual hearths have proven to be nearly impossible to relate to specific cultural activities or time periods based only on morphology (Hedman 2003; Sommerseth 2009a).

In Finland, there are recorded settlement traces within 10 km of most of the investigated Sami offering sites (Äikäs 2015, fig. 66) and there are indications of a much closer proximity between habitation sites and the metal offering sites in inland Sweden (Hedman 2003). Row–organised hearths and other groups of hearths have been associated with communal winter villages as these are known from 20th century ethnographic sources from the eastern Sami areas, even if there is a certain chronological variation within such groups of hearths and some investigation could indicate more complex patterns of habitation and seasonality than the later winter dwellings represent (Tanner 1929; Mulk 1994b; Hedman 2003; Karlsson 2006; Hedman and Olsen 2009; Äikäs 2015:133). Hearths are still proof of habitation or at least prolonged activity in an area. Where traces of huts (goahti) or groups of huts can be observed, it is fair to assume that habitation was maintained (seasonally) over some time. Thus the groups of hearths that are chronologically and geographically close to the offering sites in inland Sweden indicate some interrelation with temporary habitation, while the Finnish archaeological material can hardly be said to support previous claims that offering sites have usually been located close to winter villages or other communal camp sites (Mulk 1996:65, 2009:128; Äikäs 2015:136). Geographical distance may, however, be of subordinate significance in cases where, for instance, a sacred mountain is visible in the distance from the dwelling site (Äikäs 2015: 136).

There has been no systematic investigation of the connection between Sami offering sites and habitation sites in Norwegian areas (cf. Vorren 1985a: 80–81). Moreover, it should be noted that a statistical correlation of the available data is inherently uncertain, since not all habitation sites are recorded in the vast areas where Sami offering sites are found and most rec-
orded traces are not excavated or dated. Combined with the fact that the use
of most offering sites is not dated either, it can be difficult to determine any
direct relationship between the remains of these cultural practices (cf. Äikäsi
2015: 136–137), even if they have obviously worked together within the
same landscape on a broader time horizon.

Territorial borders are likely to represent more lasting macroscale habita-
tion patterns, though they do not seem to have remained entirely unchanged
over the centuries. Presumably older Sami communities were organised in
larger units with defined territories in ways similar to the historically known
siida organization, but we have little information about the regional and lo-
cal territorial borders of the medieval Sami areas. A simple retrospective
understanding is not possible, since the Sami societies went through substan-
tial changes due to impact from, among other things, reindeer domestication,
trade patterns, colonisation, taxation, ecological fluctuations, Christianisa-
tion and national border disputes from the medieval to the early modern pe-
riod (e.g. Berg 2001; Eidlitz Kuoljok 2011; Hood 2015). This may have
affected the territorial boundaries of the Sami too, which means that later
siida divisions are not necessarily relevant for understanding the medieval or
early modern situation or the distribution of offering sites from early periods
(cf. Äikäsi 2015, fig. 67). The changes the transition to more extensive rein-
derer nomadism entailed are of even greater importance. Ørnulv Vorren has
attempted to recreate the territories of the siiddat (pl.) in Finnmark before
this subsistence strategy was established. He bases his suggestion on the
rudimentary information in historical sources from around AD 1700 and
some ecological principles, mainly a presence of one or two major water-
ways within each territory, the access to a variety of resources and an as-
sumption that borders have tended to follow watersheds (Vorren 1978a:
260–261). The tentative result is correlated with the then–known hunting
pitfall systems and Sami offering sites, but there is no striking correspon-
dence between either of these categories and the suggested borders.

Sami offering sites have often been associated with migration routes, and,
after the increase in reindeer herding, with transhumance routes, round–up
sites, slaughtering sites and so on (Äikäsi 2015: 141ff). Here, however, there
is a similar risk of drawing anachronistic conclusions about the age and use
of such sites, since transhumance routes and users of these have changed on
both micro and macroscales over the years due to climatic and local envi-
ronmental changes (affecting weather, grazing and other resources), varia-
tions in subsistence strategies, tax issues, and the closing of national borders.

3.4.4 Chronology

As mentioned above, the find material from offering sites often consists of
bones and antlers that could not be accurately dated until the second half of
the 20th century, when radiocarbon dating became an option. Most of the
typologically–datable objects collected from offering sites in the early modern period and throughout the 19th century stemmed from the 17th century onwards. Hallström’s excavations between 1909 and 1943 produced a large amount of coins and metal finds that indicated use of the offering sites from at least c. AD 1000 to c. AD 1350 (Hallström 1924b: 862, 1932; Serning 1956; Zachrisson 1984; Wallerström 1995: 167). According to more recent investigations, several of these metal objects can be dated back to c. AD 700 (Mulk 1996: 73; Lund 2015).

In newer studies, radiocarbon dating of osteological and other material have provided insight into chronological variations, though the number of datings is still very limited. However, the new investigations of offering sites in Sweden show a very interesting trend, where bones from metal offering sites are dated to the 6th or 7th century, before the first metal objects were deposited, and other datings suggest that animal offerings continued after the metal deposits ceased in the 14th century, and only diminished in the late the 17th century (Mulk 2009, Salmi et al. 2015). The same pattern is visible in the finds from Finland, but with the earliest datings of wild animals appearing in the period AD 1040–1260, while reindeer bones are dated to the 12th century and become more common in the material in the 15th–17th centuries (Äikäs and Salmi 2013; Äikäs 2015). The number of datings is still low compared to the number of recorded offering sites, and there is likely to be a lot of variation in timeframes on sites within the same countries.

Until recently, only six datings had been published on material from five offering sites in northern Norway, all in Varanger (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 201; Schanche 2000: 273). However, several of the sites in question are uncertain or dismissed as offering sites in later research, while samples from the more convincing sites have been taken from the surface or close to the surface and from somewhat uncertain contexts. There are therefore extremely few radiocarbon datings from designated offering sites in northern Norway. Various potentially ritual sites like hearths and habitation sites have of course been dated, while a house in Kvenangen, Troms, with ritual deposits of bones is dated to AD 1450–1650 and assumed to have been in use in the first half of the 16th century, based on other finds (Grydeland 1996: 35–36). In the same area of Kvenangen, puppy bones were found in a hearth dating to AD 1400–1500 (Fossum 2006: 125). Reindeer bone deposits may, as described above, be seen as the result of both pragmatic and ritual motives and are somewhat difficult to define. This bone depositing practice appears have been in use for a very long time, with datings from the Late Iron Age and up to present day (cf. e.g. Andersen 2009, 2011).
3.5 Sami rituals in traditions and archaeology

As discussed above, oral traditions have a particular place and importance in Sami archaeology and cultural heritage management for specific historical, cultural and political reasons. Recent projects in northern Norway have highlighted the value of such knowledge about past practices and relevant archaeological sites in local Sami communities, without assuming that this entails knowledge about historical events of specific sites far back in time (Damm 2005; Skandfer 2001, 2009a; Barlindhaug 2012; Barlindhaug 2013). Ethnographic and archaeological studies show that traditions about offering sites and ritual sites have been maintained until today (e.g. Hallström 1932; Manker 1957; Paulaharju 1932:12; cf. Äikäs 2015:57–58, 235). In general, however, there is a difference between the traditions that exist today and the ritual practices of the pre–Christian era before the intensified missionary activity. While the missionaries observed an active reproduction of beliefs and ritual practices, the elements of past worldviews and religious traditions that are still present, reproduced, and, for that matter, constantly transformed in 20th and 21st century contexts have been maintained and performed under suppressed and clandestine circumstances (see also footnote 22 about the term pre–Christian). The socio–political environment for these kinds of Sami traditions changed quite dramatically in Fennoscandia from the mid–19th century onwards: pronounced government policies of assimilation affected Sami minorities in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia somewhat differently but with severe results for their cultural expressions in all cases (cf. Ojala 2009). As mentioned above, much of the policies was related to romantic, evolutionist, racist and social Darwinist ideas of the Sami as a simple static nature people that would not survive the meeting with or benefit from a modern “civilised” and industrialised life (Ojala 2009:94–97). In Norway, the assimilation was linked to the political and nationalist issue of non–Norwegian communities within the emerging Norwegian nation state (Minde 2005; K. Olsen 2010, 11). A related issue of great impact was the consolidation of national borders in Fennoscandia, or rather the disputes and consequent closing of borders, which hindered Sami transhumance across national borders and resulted in new patterns of territorial use for many Sami groups (cf. Vorren 1979a: 259; Ojala 2009: 94).

In addition to these political issues, the Laestadian religious movement, named after Sami preacher Lars Levi Laestadius, had great impact on many Sami communities from the 1840s onwards. The new puritan–pietist movement resulted in a spurge of pietist Christianity among the Sami, with a focus on individual understanding and salvation. While this consolidated a monotheistic Christianity in many communities, the use of Sami language and ritual elements in this movement has been argued to represent a protest against the increased assimilation at the time and a source of cultural continuation (Myrvoll 2011: 10–14) or recodification of the values of the majority
society, which were given a different meaning through laestadianism (Bjørklund 1978). Yet, laestadian Sami understand the revival as a very distinct discontinuity with the old beliefs (Myrvoll 2011). The above-mentioned factors were probably among the reasons for a noticeable parallel change in ritual practices and cultural knowledge in the mid–19th century: despite many later–remaining elements of practices and beliefs (see below), stories about famous noaiddit (plural) in Norway and Sweden seem to be from around 1830–1840 at the latest. The last accounts about larger offering ceremonies in western Sami areas are also dated to the first half of the 19th century (Kalstad 1997). In the eastern Sami areas of Russia there was a different situation and substantial offerings were made until the 20th century (Hallström 1922, Sergejeva 2000: 30).

In the latter half of the 20th century, additional profound changes occurred that arguably affected Sami cultural knowledge (cf. e.g. Hoëm 2007: 167–169). Apart from the general modernisation in Scandinavia – road building, industrialisation of fisheries, hydropower developments, etc. – the assimilation policies culminated in an eradication of Sami identity in many communities, especially along the northern Norwegian coastline. The policies both stemmed from and resulted in attitudes of Sami culture as inferior and shameful. By the 1960s this was so ingrained in many Sami communities that families abandoned their Sami identity entirely. Parents denied any knowledge of or affiliation with Sami language and culture, resulting in many people later discovering only in adult life that their grandparents and other family were in fact Sami (e.g. Bjørklund 1985; Minde 2005). In other parts of the Sami area this has been less pronounced, for instance the coastal Sami community in the inner Varanger fjord municipality of Nesseby, eastern Finnmark, has been exposed to a Norwegianisation that resulted in a generation not learning Sami at home, but the general Sami identity has not been suppressed in the same way as in villages in, for example, northern Troms (cf. e.g. Odner 1995; Hoëm 2007). Sami and Norwegian identities are continuously discussed and negotiated in communities in inner Finnmark too, while reindeer herding communities in these areas have generally maintained a strong Sami identity, related to the inherently intense socialisation within this subsistence strategy and the status of reindeer herding as an assumed “original” Sami way of life and something that should be protected (cf. e.g. Hovland 1999). The Swedish reindeer herders were actively encouraged by the state to maintain a perceived traditional Sami identity and lifestyle and not take up modern amenities in the late 19th and first half of the 20th century. This was articulated as the “lapp–skall–vara–lapp” policy (“Lapp shall be Lapp”), which aimed to preserve this aspect of Sami societies, while non–reindeer herding Sami were actively assimilated (Ojala 2009: 94). Despite the geographical and individual variations, assimilation politics constitutes a particular case of colonial disruption of the collective memory,
which of course also affected knowledge about religious rituals and ideas (Hervieu–Léger 2000; Jernsletten 2003).

Yet, it is well documented that some knowledge about old traditions such as the use of drums to enter trance and the use of offering stones, as well as more widespread knowledge about healing and how to handle different situations, materials or non-human powers, was maintained for a long time and in part still is today (e.g. Kalstad 1997; Vonheim 1997; Jernsletten 2003, 2009; Myrvoll 2011). This also includes knowledge about old offering sites and graves, but while people may know where these are, and hold them in reverence, the rituals and how to behave at and treat such sites is often forgotten (Jernsletten 2003). Traditions in relation to designated offering sites, that were recorded in the 19th and 20th centuries and which still exist today, tend to be quite inconspicuous and may include the deposition of such items as tobacco, small pieces of silver and coins, and in later years a range of more modern objects like tea lights. The latter is apparently inspired by certain widespread neo-shamanistic or neo-pagan practices (e.g. Mebius 1972; Kalstad 1997, 22; Wallis 2003; Blain et al. 2007; Pluskowski 2011; Äikäns 2015; Äikäs and Spangen 2016). The question is how archaeology relates to these complex networks of past and present traditions, loss, knowledge and power relations. This is further discussed in Chapter 6.
4 Investigations and analyses

The previous chapters have shown that Sami ritual sites include a remarkable variety of locations and configurations of elements, and that the written sources give limited information about the full extent of this aspect of Sami pasts. The lack of mention of Sami circular offering sites, or stone circles as ritual sites as such, in older sources is peculiar, but archaeological evidence could potentially prove that they were in fact an aspect of medieval and early modern Sami ritual life that has simply been ignored by or was unknown to writers in the 16th–18th centuries. In the following section, I will outline the investigations I have performed in the present research project to test this hypothesis and to explore what the stone structures in question could be if they were not constructed as offering sites. Alternative hypotheses and variations have been considered based on the material as a whole and data concerning individual relevant structures.

4.1 Database and archive studies

Previously–published sources concerning Sami circular offering sites in specific are relatively few (see Chapter 2), and they present somewhat superficial and fragmentary information. Some additional information is available in the official Norwegian database for cultural heritage monuments, Askeladden. However, despite continuous work with updating this resource, it has been suffering from a substantial backlog, partly concerning records in the archaeological archives in the counties and the Sami Parliament\(^\text{32}\), but especially when it comes to registrations that have not been reported to these main sources for the database. Because circular offering sites have primarily been investigated by ethnographers, recorded data have not always been filed according to archaeological routines or in the archaeological archives. Some Sami ethnographic data, and particularly data relating to sacred sites, have also been withheld from official records for ethical reasons. This has several motives: certain extensive registration projects in the 1980s were

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\(^\text{32}\) As described in Chapter 1.3, the Norwegian Sami Parliament currently has a similar delegated authority for Sami cultural heritage management as the counties, while this has previously been attended to by other agencies.
based on information from tradition bearers who were promised that recorded sites were not to be made publically available. There has been a maintained tradition of secrecy in some Sami communities, especially where such features as graves and holy sites were only known to certain individuals or families (Myrvoll 2008: 45). With some differences between geographical regions, communities and individuals (cf. e.g. Svestad 2013b), a certain secrecy also relates to the described racist anthropological research and grave opening activities in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and to archaeological excavations of offering sites, in addition to more general prevailing memories about how previous research has been performed by outsiders who subsequently wrote their version of the Sami history with no regard for Sami opinions on the matter. As one tradition bearer has expressed, there has been a sense of being robbed of so much that there was no need to let go of the heritage sites too (A. Jáma in Fossum and Norberg 2012: 20). Another factor is the experience of how published sites have become available and consequently vulnerable to vandalism and use by for instance outsiders with New Age convictions (Fossum and Norberg 2012: 22). Tourist entrepreneurs are also controversial agents in this context (e.g. Fonneland 2013; Äikäs and Spangen 2016). These aspects have led to restricted publication of collected information, which has rather been filed in local physical archives or in local databases like the Brislingen database at Saemien Sijte, the South Sami Museum at Snåsa in Nord-Trøndelag county. By agreement with the tradition bearers, this database could only be accessed by involved parties in the project and the employees at the museum or the collocated Sami Parliament office. Following a wish from the Directorate of Cultural Heritage that all the information should be transferred to Askeladden there have been lengthy discussions, but eventually data from certain areas that had already been published in reports have been digitalised. There has also been a digitalising of data from other areas when in agreement with the local tradition bearers. However, large amounts of information from the original projects are still only available at Saemien Sijte and any further additions to Askeladden are only made with explicit permission from local stakeholders (pers. comm. L.

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33 The term “tradition bearer” (“traditionsbärare”) was originally minted in Swedish folkloristic research in the mid–20th century to emphasise the importance of the narrator (von Sydow 1948). It has later been critisised for not considering subjective variations and for assuming tradition to be static and consistent (Holbek 1985; Cocq 2010:124–125). Still, in recent Sami cultural heritage recording projects it has become a preferred concept (e.g. Ljungdahl and Norberg 2012), reflecting a distinct Sami word, árbečeahppi, which literally means “tradition bearer”, instead of the usual word “informant”. The latter is associated with an unequal power relation, one party simply providing the other with information. Tradition bearers, on the other hand, are aimed to be personally involved in advising the researchers on documentation methods and how to secure a local control over the traditional knowledge, i.e. to be more equal partners in research projects (Porsanger and Guttorm 2011). In the following both terms are used, as, according to this definition, “informant” is a more accurate term in many cases.
Dunfjeld–Aagård, 9 Nov 2015). In Finnmark, there are examples of an almost opposite situation: a local registration project in Karasjok in the 1980s handed over a large amount of data to the county, but this has never been systematised or digitalised because of a lack of resources. Lack of resources to complete the backlog of digitalisation has been a prevailing issue for the Sami Parliament too.

The attitude among Sami tradition bearers to official registration of the cultural heritage monuments has changed somewhat from the 1980s to today because experience has shown that the recorded sites need to be mapped if they are to be safeguarded or at least to be remembered as part of a Sami cultural landscape, even if they disappear due to destruction or decay (A. Jåma in Fossum and Norberg 2012: 20). At present, the Norwegian Sami Parliament demands that Sami cultural heritage sites that are recorded in various projects are entered in the Askeladden database on a running basis. Password–restriction ensures that information about vulnerable sites is later only available to those with a justified need for it (Fossum and Norberg 2012: 19–23), usually restricted to research or official cultural management use (the democratic aspect of this could obviously be discussed). This is also the reason why the catalogue in the present publication lacks coordinates and details about locations. These are however available in Askeladden for password holders and fully listed in the field reports submitted to the Sami Parliament archives (Spangen 2013b, 2014, 2015c).

At the start of the present project in May 2012, 39 structures were recorded as “circular offering sites” (No.: offering) in Askeladden. By August 2016, there were 72 monuments defined as “circular offering sites” in the database, though it still did not include all the structures that have been suggested to be circular offering sites in different fora and not even all the relevant structures that are well–known through Vorren’s publications. A project database was established to compile information from a range of different sources. The database was initially intended to include structures that had not previously been suggested to be Sami (circular) offering sites, but which had qualities and features that could indicate that they belonged to the same category. Misinterpretations have been quite frequent for Sami cultural heritage because of the lack of knowledge about Sami presence and types of monuments in the cultural heritage research and management until quite recently (cf. e.g. Schanche and Olsen 1985; Schanche 1986). This is especially true in more southern areas where cemented theories about a later Sami arrival have caused a default definition of premodern monuments as non–Sami, or, more specifically, as Norse (Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005: 11). Standardised forms for the registration of cultural heritage monuments are currently providing a range of options for specifically Sami monuments, but as discussed in Chapter 2.2 this standardisation entails some problems of its own, and of course correct definitions will still depend on individual levels of knowledge both about Sami culture and other potentially relevant aspects.
To mitigate these issues, I reviewed the following categories in Askeladden where I assumed relevant but misinterpreted structures could be recorded (in addition to the category offering – circular offering site):

– offersted – offering site
– offerstein – offering stone
– offerdepot – offering/sacrificial deposition
– steinlegning – stone setting
– steinsetning – stone setting
– steinkring – stone circle
– steinkrets – stone circle

The review included all records of such structures and sites in the counties of Finnmark, Troms, Nordland, Nord–Trøndelag, Sør–Trøndelag, Møre og Romsdal, Hedmark and Oppland. These counties cover the current geographical administrative area of the Norwegian Sami parliament, except Oppland, where the possible presence of Sami cultural heritage has only recently been acknowledged (e.g. Bergstøl 2008b; På sporet av samiske kulturminner i Oppland 2012). The information retrieved amounted to 1888 singular structures at 1101 sites. These were assessed and categorised as “not”, “uncertain”, “likely” or “certain” circular offering sites based on short descriptions in Askeladden34 and my previous knowledge about circular offering sites and their variation according to preliminary studies and surveys undertaken between 2008 and 2011. The result is summarised in table 2.

This first attempt of a systematic compilation of relevant sites was based on the hypothesis that I was in fact studying demarcated offering sites and that these possibly came in great variation. However, the review instead indicated that relatively few possibly relevant structures seemed to be placed under categories other than “offering site” or “circular offering site”. This can be seen to illustrate the frequent use of the latter category that is criticised in Chapter 2. As the initial field work and research history studies resulted in the hypotheses that the category consisted of a range of different cultural phenomena, and that even the “classical” circular offering sites appeared an uncertain interpretation, it became more relevant to limit the database and discussion to the sites that have been explicitly suggested to be circular offering sites or similar structures at Sami offering sites in various

34 Due to some technical issues with the Askeladden interface in May 2012, the first project database comprised information retrieved for me by the Askeladden administrators. This information did not include details about the archaeological site (“Om lokalitet”), such as notes by the surveyors or oral traditions, and it did not include GIS coordinates. Coordinates were later added, and for some sites additional information was also retrieved. For most posts the short descriptions were considered sufficient to decide the relevance of a site.
Table 2. The 2012 assessment of 1888 individual structures recorded in Askeladden under categories that were assumed to possibly include misinterpreted circular offering sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment 2012:</th>
<th>Not</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Certain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types and context of structures:</td>
<td>Structures in burial fields at farmsteads; stone packings with inside layer of stones; offering sites and offering stones without manmade structures; structures in clearly Norse cultural contexts; natural formations; structures in Stone Age contexts; structures that were unclear to experienced surveyors; small stone circles described as children’s play.</td>
<td>Stone circles in Iron Age burial fields that could be misinterpreted Sami scree graves; structures with possibly relevant characteristics but in a presumably Norse context; structures previously control surveyed and dismissed; structures less than 1.5 m in diameter.</td>
<td>Stone circles and other structures described as possible offering sites.</td>
<td>Structures defined as Sami circular offering sites or offering sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number: 1298 442 95 53

fora\textsuperscript{35}. Thus, the present catalogue incorporates 161 structures in Norway that have been suggested as being circular offering sites or similar manmade features on Sami offering sites with reference to the circular offering sites in northern Norway. The evaluation is based on labelling or descriptions in Askeladden, in literature or in unpublished field reports and other records of various investigations. In a few instances the definition was based on personal communications suggesting that such an interpretation has been discussed by other archaeologists. It should be noted that structures that have

\textsuperscript{35}To avoid confusion about my final results I have not included a list of the 1888 initially assessed structures in the thesis, but the review covered all sites in the mentioned categories up to Id 151820. Later additions to Askeladden in these categories have not been evaluated.
Fig. 14. Map of 161 suggested circular offering sites in Norway. Red circles mark the 81 structures that have been surveyed by the author. Closer to 100 stone circles were visited, but only those explicitly compared to the phenomenon of circular offering sites are included in the present catalogue and map.

been suggested as Sami offering sites without explicit reference to circular offering sites or stone circles as offering sites have not been included.

To trace relevant but unpublished structures, searches were made in the local database Brislingen at Saemien Sijte in 2011 and in the topographical archives at Tromsø Museum and the Sami Parliament office in Va-
rangerbotn, Finnmark, in 2012 and 2013. Due to limited time for these studies, files from municipalities that were selected for fieldwork were prioritised (see below). However, a main focus was placed on studies of the private archive of Ørnulv Vorren at Tromsø Museum, which was only catalogued and made available in 2012, and which was most likely to contain relevant and previously unpublished information. In this extensive archive, most time was spent on going through Vorren’s field notes.

Consequently, I cannot guarantee that I have recorded every mention of possible Sami circular offering sites in the various field reports in the topographical archives, not to mention in the massive corpus of Norwegian local historical literature, but I am confident that the database covers most of the relevant sites that have been recorded since the mid–19th century, and that it certainly includes enough examples of structures to do a valid comparison and evaluation of their distribution and morphological and topographical variations.

4.2 Surveys and definitions

The extensive surveys and inventories of (possible) circular offering sites and similar structures in the project have aimed to record more detailed and accurate empirical information about the structures, their topographical and landscape settings, cultural environments and any additional local information available. Preliminary surveys of 19 sites in Finnmark, Nord–Trøndelag, Sør–Trøndelag, Hedmark and Oppland were performed in 2008–2011, partly in cooperation with another PhD project (Gjerde 2016). The remaining sites in Finnmark, Troms, Nordland, Sør–Trøndelag and Telemark were visited during the project period in 2012–2015. A total of 310 structures were surveyed, including 81 previously suggested circular offering sites, as well as surrounding caches, graves, hearths, fences, and so on (Spangenberg 2013b; 2014; 2015a). Out of these 81 sites, ten alleged stone circles on six localities could not be refound during the fieldwork (cat. nos. 27, 11–112, 118–120, 123, 141, 145–146). In addition to the suggested circular offering sites and similar structures in Norway, I have surveyed a range of structures that were not labelled circular offering sites but that had descriptions in Askeladden that made them sound possibly interesting. These have served as useful comparisons, but they are not included in the main material of investigation. The content of the project database thus illustrates the variation in how the category has already been applied, rather than expanding it further.

All the surveyed suggested circular offering sites were recorded through photography, GPS coordinates, measurements of diameters and heights, recording of any other features and descriptions of the surrounding terrain and landscape. During the last two years of surveys I tentatively used pole
photography and photogrammetry to record the shapes and sizes of the structures more accurately. This adds important information about the shapes of the structures that preferably should have been included from the start of the project and in a more systematic way. The necessary facts were still available for enough structures to inform a correlation study (see Chapter 4.3).

Surveying structures published by Vorren has been a priority, which to some extent has dictated which areas could be surveyed in Finnmark and Troms due to practicalities of time and distances. Other areas were chosen for surveys based on accessibility, frequency of relevant structures and variation in topography and landscape setting. The visited sites are spread out over a distance of app. 2800 km on Norwegian roads, not including criss-crossing detours. Consequently, the complete study area covers a great variation of natural and cultural conditions, concerning climate zones, landscape types and cultural history, including a series of different coastal, fjord, inland, plain and mountain landscapes (fig. 14).

In my descriptions, “sites”, or localities, are defined as the immediate area of one or several suggested circular offering sites or other similar structures and any other archaeological structures within viewing distance or within the same landscape feature (such as a moraine plain or an old beach terrace). This is evaluated based on a subjective perception of the landscape compared with GIS mapping, but not with for example viewshed analyses, which in my opinion would have involved an unnecessary workload compared to the accuracy and relevance of the results (cf. Solli et al. 2010).

The lack of dated cultural heritage in many sites presents a challenge in terms of evaluating the contemporaneity of various elements and structures. Areas around the circular offering sites were surveyed for additional monuments, but due to the limits of the project, only one additional structures, a hearth, was sampled for dating (in relation to the excavation performed at Gållgojávri, see Chapter 4.6.2). However, older monuments have of course also been part of experiencing and understanding the medieval landscape, while younger monuments may have changed these conceptions more or less substantially. In short, the site boundaries and connections between structures considered here rely on spatial and subjective visual information and should be considered mainly operational.

The term “structure” is used to denote the individual constructions within a site, while “features” is used both about any additional constructions within the structures, like any mid-cairns, and about morphological aspects of them, like sloping outer walls.

4.3 Morphological categorisation

Morphological categorisation holds a central role in relation to the main issues discussed in this thesis, such as whether all the structures that have
previously been suggested to be Sami circular offering sites are in fact one “type” and represent the same cultural phenomenon, and, if so, what morphological criteria such structures are defined by. In addition, a main question is for what purpose and in what socio–political context these structures were built and used. The first two questions necessarily focus on more or less formal similarities and differences, while the third relates to the associative and functional aspects of these features, but obviously these aspects are interrelated and affect each other. Apart from the objective of gathering more accurate quantifiable data, the extensive surveys described above were performed to personally experience a number of sites and add an essential qualitative aspect to the choice of criteria for the categorisation. These criteria have been further tested by simple statistical and correlation analyses and comparisons based on different hypotheses about the meaning and use of different structures. The cultural and wider landscape contexts are discussed in Chapters 4.4 and 4.5.

4.3.1 Morphology of the “classical” structures

Because the category of “circular offering sites” has evidently expanded to include more and more diverging shapes, the structures that were first labelled offering sites in Varanger, and the others outside this area that were initially understood by Vorren to be the same type, amounting to a total of 26 structures (cf. Saxlund 1853; Nordvin n.d.; Qvigstad 1926; Vorren 1985a), are taken as a point of departure for defining relevant criteria for evaluating newer registrations. The question is what these “classical” structures have in common that made researchers see them as a unified category in the first place. My immediate impression through the surveys was that most of these structures consist of particularly large, conspicuous and meticulously–built walls (see fig. 15). Further studies revealed several repeated characteristics in terms of size, topography and other features, which are summarised in table 3.

Due to the building technique, where the outer edge of the walls can be difficult to delineate (see below), the inner diameter is considered more defining than the outer diameter. Notably, the overriding majority of the classical structures have a largest inner diameter of between 470 and 760 cm, while only three have a largest inner diameter between 900 and 1070 cm (Fugleberget (48), Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) and Biekkanoaivi (57)). Inner heights go down to 5–10 cm in the Angsnes (51) and Láhpojohka (74) structures, which are situated on fairly flat moraine grounds and have quite eroded walls, but even in these inner heights amount to 40–45 cm at other places in the walls. Thus, the structures measure at least 40 cm in inner height, and up to 140 cm for the built wall in the Geiammejávri structure (63), while some structures are recorded as having higher walls because they comprise high boulders or cliffs, or have cavities in the floor. Some of the highest
Fig. 15. Classical circular offering sites in Finnmark. From top left: Fugleberget/Čiesti, Nesseby (48) with the so-called “Bear Stone” on the hill in the background; Biekkanoaivi, Nesseby (57); Lakselvmunningen/Rahpa, Porsanger (82); Láhpoluoppal, Kautokeino (73); Láhpøjohka, Kautokeino (74); Storfossen/Stuorragorži, Karasjok (71); Angsnes/Geahčevájnjaŋga, Nesseby (51); Nedrevatn/Vuolitjávri 1, Porsanger (83).
recorded walls were in part reconstructed in the 19th and 20th centuries, but these have apparently been even higher when first constructed. Some of the structures that were recorded in the mid–19th century, but are now lost, are said to have had substantial heights up to c. 160 cm (Saxlund 1853; Nordvin 1966; Vorren 1972a). Despite various degrees of erosion and restoration, all the “classical” structures discussed here still have fairly high remaining walls, indicating that an inner height of at least 30–40 cm could be a relevant criterion for future categorisations of similar structures, though not a decisive one.

A main reason why these walls have remained fairly high over the centuries is their particular construction and the consequent width. The “classical” structures are usually situated in rocky terrains and are partly built by removing stones from the inner floor area into the walls. This makes structures in screes semi–subterranean, and it sometimes results in a floor structure that seems almost paved (e.g. Vorren 1972a; Spangen 2016a). Whether this is merely a result of the building technique or a conscious choice for some practical purpose will be discussed in Chapter 4.13. Some descriptions mention slabs that have been placed up against the outer wall or on top of the walls like ‘roof tiles’ (cf. Saxlund 1953, Nordvin n.d.). The inner walls are often vertically straight or with the top of the wall sloping inwards. Previous investigations have recorded inward angles of up to 50–60 degrees (Nordvin n.d., Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 115). The outer walls tend to have an outward slope that sooner or later aligns with the surrounding scree terrain. Where structures are built from a larger variety of rocks on the soil surface, larger rocks have often been used in the inner and first layer of the walls to give a flat vertical inner wall (e.g. Vorren 1955d), while smaller rocks are often used further up in the wall and as a filling to create a sloping outer wall (fig. 16–18). There are usually no openings or entrances in the walls, though it is not impossible to enter them, especially the currently rather low walls, but also by climbing the high walls of the structure by Geaimmejávri (63). It is of course possible that some sort of aid was provided to get in and out of the structures when they were first built. In the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure, the irregularities in the cliff wall to the north affords an easy entrance into the lower inner part of the structure as it stands today.

When built into screes it can be somewhat difficult to judge the delineation of the construction and the outer wall, as they rather stretch on to align with the surrounding terrain. Erosion poses a similar problem. Where measurements of the current width of the walls are available, they are c. 75–195 cm wide with the slimmest representing the more well–preserved walls by Geaimmejávri (63) and in Fuglebergbukta 1 (49). It seems safe to suggest that the current (eroded) walls of a stone structure should be at least 75 cm wide for it to fall within the same morphological category as the “classical” structures. This is of course not to say that other structures may not have had
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>Structure no.</th>
<th>Surveyed</th>
<th>Site name</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Outer diam</th>
<th>Inner diam</th>
<th>Thickness walls</th>
<th>Outer height</th>
<th>Inner height</th>
<th>Central feature</th>
<th>Inner shape</th>
<th>Terrain</th>
<th>Terrain inclination</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Finds</th>
</tr>
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<td>810-900</td>
<td>75-100</td>
<td>80-170</td>
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<td>600-760</td>
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<td>Sloping</td>
<td>Inland</td>
<td>Modern finds and animal bones</td>
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</table>

Table 3. Observable characteristics in “classical” circular offering sites (cf. Saxlund 1853; Nordvi n.d.; Qvigstad 1926; Vorren 1985a).
Fig. 16. Wall in the Gálgojávri structure, Storfjord, Troms (117), with larger stones on the vertical inside and a packing of smaller stones on the sloping outside.

Fig. 17. Wall in the Fuglebergbukta structure, Nesseby, Finnmark (49).
the same use or meaning despite morphological differences, but I would claim that it does restrain the possible functions of a wall, for instance in terms of a wood superstructure (see below).

Ørnulv Vorren generally refers to the stone wall enclosures in Finnmark and Troms as circular in his publications, but in his field notes an angular inner shape is repeatedly described as a general characteristic of the circular offering sites (e.g. Vorren 1970b, 1972a, 1973a36), which is also mentioned and shown in drawings in several publications (Vorren 1985a:71; Vorren and Eriksen 1993:64–65). There are some discrepancies between his plan drawings (e.g. Vorren and Eriksen 1993) and what has been recorded in this project, but my documentation through pole photography does confirm that angular inner shapes are a recurring characteristic in 10 of the 16 “classical” structures that exist today, while one has an uncertain angular shape and six are not documented in a way that could give information about this aspect.

36 “The measuring we carried out did not give a clear impression of the pentagonal shape we noted from the air – from the height of the pine tree here – and which you can see very well when you are standing by the offering site...” (Vorren 1970b, about the Storfossen site, my translation).

“...we have noted that this offering site, just like the one by storfossen (sic.), has a pentagonal shape, of course somewhat approximate” (Vorren 1972a, about the Geaimmejávri site, my translation).

“What we can note is that we even here have found corners, five corners, like on the other offering sites we have measured” (Vorren 1973a, about the Offerholmen site, my translation).

The structure by Geaimmejávri in Karasjok (first recorded by Vorren in 1972) is a particularly evident example of a deliberate hexagonal inner shape (fig. 19). This was partly restored by Vorren (Vorren 1972a), indicating that such a distinct shape may have been a feature in other more eroded structures too. Still, an inner angular shape is evident in enough of these classical structures to be considered a deliberate feature (fig. 20–22).

Another frequent feature in the classical structures that has often been discussed are the mid-cairns. However, this is not a consistent trait, but interchange with such features as natural mounds, protruding rocks stones or no centre features at all. The structures include certain other individual features such as a small stone wall perpendicular on the outer main wall at Gárggoluoppal. Two outlines of larger rocks on the outside of the structures at Gálgggojávri and Geaimmejávri could be interpreted as small enclosures up
against the outer walls and a stone setting on the floor in the middle of the Geaimmjejávri structure. In the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure a much higher wall is built up against the northern cliff wall. This may possibly be a secondary built feature (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 113). To summarise, there are individual morphological features in the “classical” structures that makes for a certain variation within this group. On the other hand, they have certain very consistent traits in common.

All of the 20 “classical” structures where this information is available are located in scree or rocky moraines, and it is evident from simple visual observation that most of these are situated in sometimes quite steeply–sloping terrains (for example Fugleberget, see fig. 15). Eight of the 26 “classical” structures have yielded finds of animal bones. This indicates that animal bones can be expected to be found in this kind of structure, but it cannot be set as a defining criterion. In five of the classical structures there are also finds of wood or wood remains, probably indicating wooden constructions.

Fig. 20. Inner shape of the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure, Nesseby, Finnmark (49). Photogrammetry orthophoto, 2014. Inner diameter 810–900 cm.
Fig. 21. Inner shape of the Ehtemásvárri structure, Karasjok, Finnmark (67). Pole photo, 2013. Inner diameter 490–580 cm.

Fig. 22. Inner shape of the Sulá 1 structure, Karasjok, Finnmark (65). The walls are quite eroded. Pole photo, 2013. Inner diameter 420–470 cm.
A sixth has remains of bark. At least two have finds of modern objects, while a few others have featured other finds (see Chapter 4.8).

From this study of the “classical” structures I draw the conclusion that they have several conspicuous features in common that are used to define a tentative type 1:

*Type 1 structures are made from either clearing an area in a scree to form clearly distinguishable walls or by building substantial walls above the soil surface in rocky terrains. The structures have an inner diameter of more than 400 cm and current walls reaching at least 40 cm in height and 75 cm in width. They are most often situated in sloping or gently sloping terrains. Many have discernible angular inner shapes when measured or seen from above. The walls can have demarcated vertical or inward–sloping inner sides. Finds of wood and animal bones can be expected. Some have central cairns or mounds.*

Importantly, this description of the classical structures is not an exhaustive check list for future investigations, but rather a list of relevant criteria for comparison. Subjective evaluations of similarities and functions will still have to play an important role in any categorisation, not least concerning the wider topographical and cultural context in which the structures are found.

### 4.3.2 Morphology of other suggested circular offering sites

The remaining structures included in this study have been tested against the criteria outlined above. Comparable information for all or most criteria was available for a total of 54 structures of the 161 that have previously been discussed in the literature as (possible) Sami circular offering sites. The individual features are further described in the catalogue, but the variability is illustrated in figure 23. Out of the 54 structures, at least nine are, in my opinion, possible to define as other things, including house grounds, natural features, cairns, a shooting blind and a structure confirmed to be the result of children playing in the 1990s. These are still included in the correlation tables below to illustrate the quantifiable similarities with and differences to other stone structures.

As mentioned there is a clear consistency in the “classical” structures, henceforth called type 1, being situated in rocky terrains. The question of whether they are built from rocks as a result of where they are positioned, or positioned where they are because of the available building material, will be discussed below. My classification of soil conditions is based on standard Norwegian geological definitions (cf. Sigmond et al. 2013), but kept at a fairly general level since today’s geological level of detail has probably not been significant for the past choice of locations. Thus, “scree” is used as a
Fig. 23. Suggested (circular) offering sites in Norway. From top left: Lunkvassberget, Trysil, Hedmark (158); Orvsjøen, Røros, Sør-Trøndelag (154); Klettdalen, Trysil, Hedmark (157); Ramstadlandet 1, Ytter–Vikna, Nord–Trøndelag (142); Rapfjellet, Namsos, Nord–Trøndelag (149); Oulgevári, Karasjok, Finnmark (62); Áisasroaivi, Kvalsund, Finnmark (88); Falkefloget, Vardø, Finnmark (29).

general term for terrain made up of large amounts of smaller or bigger rocks and little other soil, without defining whether the collection of rocks is a block field or accumulated scree. Old “rocky beach terraces” have, however, been defined here as a separate category because they usually provide level
ground for the structures in contrast to the sloping of many other screes. “Rocky moraine” is used to describe moraines where building material for stone structures has been readily available, while “sandy moraine” describes moraine where bigger stones are further apart, though not completely lacking. “Bedrock” includes areas with some scattered rocks. All of the categories above include some currently overgrown terrains.

**Fig. 24. Inner diameter N–S for 54 suggested circular offering sites.**

Inner diameter is considered to be of importance because it affects the functionality of the inner space. However, the available measurements are not all comparable. Diameters are usually stated in all field reports, but vary between general approximations, inner and outer diameter. A simple diagram of all recorded inner measurements in north–south direction in structures suggested to be circular offering sites indicates some plateaus (fig. 24), but it is likely that this to some extent reflects the generally approximate accuracy of the measurements rather than groups or types that are actually this homogenous. The diameters of the relevant surveyed structures have been grouped into what should be considered generalised categories of 1–2 m, 2–3 m, 3–4 m, 4–5 m, 5–7 m and 7–10 m.

According to the description above, the sturdiness of the walls is similarly important in defining the classical structures, as opposed to other phenomena. This is more difficult to quantify because the outer walls in screes are not necessarily very clearly delineated. Most of the structures where such measurements are available do have walls thicker than the suggested minimum of 75 cm width, but for this criteria I think the qualitative impression of solidity
is equally important. Thus, despite a minor quantitative difference, it is considered that the 65–70 cm wide wall in the smaller Falkefloget structure is significantly different from the walls in type 1 structures (see fig. 23). This differentiation is, however, also based on the other criteria, such as the terrain inclination. As table 4 shows, the smaller structures are more often on level ground, while the larger structures are mostly situated in sloping terrain. Similarly, table 5 shows that smaller structures are constructed in grounds with different soil conditions, while larger structures are almost consistently situated in rocky moraines and scree. Thus soil conditions and inclination tend to be interrelated too. These criteria also seem to correspond with the inner shape, where this is known (tables 6–8).

Table 4. Inner diameter and terrain inclination.

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Table 5. Inner diameter and soil conditions.

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</tbody>
</table>

The number of structures that had sufficient verified information to be included in these analyses is too low for the results to be statistically significant. However, the outcomes are quite unambiguous, which leads me to believe that they are in fact representative for general trends. As many as 17 out of 20 angular structures are situated in sloping terrain, while all the confirmed round structures are situated on level ground. Of the 20 angular structures, 19 are placed in rocky terrains and only one on bedrock, while 7 out of 9 round structures are built on sandy moraine or bedrock. None of the angular structures are less than 300 cm in inner diameter, as they all measure between 340 and 1070 cm, while all the structures with a confirmed round inner shape have diameters smaller than 300 cm. This could indicate that a size limit for inner diameter of type 1 structures should be set at 300 cm, not 400 cm as suggested in Chapter 4.3.1. When I choose to uphold the 400 cm limit this has partly to do with the fact that structures smaller than 400 cm in inner diameter tend to have walls that seem less solid and meticulously built.
While this could similarly be due to the materiality of the rocks available, combined with the chosen size of the structure, this makes the walls appear less suitable as foundations for a wood superstructure, and the inner space could not appear and function in the same way as for the larger structures either. The decision is also informed by an evaluation of the geographical distribution, which is discussed further in Chapter 4.4. A limit of 300 cm combined with less weight on the criteria of sturdy walls, would mean that

Table 6. Inner diameter and inner shape, generalised as round, angular or other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100–299 cm</th>
<th>300–499 cm</th>
<th>500–699 cm</th>
<th>700–1100 cm</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oval</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Round</em></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexagonal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentagonal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Angular</em></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Other</em></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUM</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Terrain inclination and inner shape, generalised as round, angular or other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Gently sloping</th>
<th>Sloping</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oval</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Round</em></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexagonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentagonal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Angular</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangular</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Other</em></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUM</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
more structures would be included from, for example, the outer parts of the Varanger fjord (e.g. Grunesbukt, 26), at least one in Nordland (Røsshogdalen, 128) and even examples in southern Norway (Hermodsholtjønn, 159). This may be perceived as a circular argument, as the distribution of type 1 structures now depends on a size limit of 400 cm, while the size limit is influenced by the distribution. However, it would be surprising if the same cultural practice that produced a consistent size and shape within the core area of the classical structures had consistently resulted in smaller physical structures outside this area. My hypothesis is therefore that the smaller structures are aimed at other purposes than those over 400 cm in inner diameter, which is maintained as a limit for type 1.

These correlations indicate that there is a significant concurrence between the inner shape, inner diameter, terrain inclination and soil conditions on the sites of these structures. With the addition of a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the construction, width and height of the walls, I think the suggested type 1 is substantiated, as there is evidence for a consistent construction of large angular stone enclosures in rocky and sloping terrains that are similar enough to constitute a group of structures that probably reflect some common purpose or motive. According to the criteria suggested above, I consider 42 structures out of the 161 suggested Sami circular offering sites to be included in the category called type 1, though 18 of these are only defined as “possible type 1”, while six are probable but not confirmed (see catalogue for individual definitions). Out of the 42, 18 have been further investigated in this project through mapping, surveys, studies of finds and of other sources, various analyses, as well as minor excavations at two sites, which will be described further below.

Table 8. Soil conditions and inner shape, generalised as round, angular or other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bedrock</th>
<th>Sandy moraine</th>
<th>Rocky beach terrace</th>
<th>Rocky moraine</th>
<th>Scree</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oval</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexagonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentagonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angular</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUM</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The other structures in this study do not fulfil these quantitative and qualitative type 1 criteria. These are, in my opinion, a highly diverse collection of constructions that are probably related to a range of cultural activities. I suggest specific functions for several of these in the catalogue, including house grounds, grave cairns, natural features, foundations for hay stacks or turf stacks, falcon traps and WWII military activity, but I find it unnecessary to create subcategories for all these functions and uses in the present context. Instead, I choose to divide the remaining structures into two additional subgroups. Type 2 includes (mostly) smaller and less meticulously-built circular stone structures, such as stone circles of one to three layers of stones or circles of a few singular stones, which are admittedly definable as stone circles, but only included in the category of “circular offering sites” through a superficial comparison with the classical structures (type 1). Type 3 includes the more arbitrary structures with seemingly little or no similarity with classical type 1 structures, such as semi–circular, rectangular, rhombic or horseshoe–shaped stone or turf walls, which have been suggested to be Sami offering or ritual sites with direct or indirect references to the type 1 sites. These types are consequently mainly defined as “not type 1” and include very diverse constructions and features (cf. fig. 23). In the following section, I will concentrate on discussing the category of type 1 structures further.

4.4 Geographical distribution of the type 1 structures
Type 1 described above coincides with what was initially considered a category by Ørnulf Vorren, and it also seems that the geographical distribution of the type 1 structures is focused on Finnmark and northern Troms as he suggested (Vorren 1985a). More specifically, structures that in my opinion fall within this type are found northeast to Neiden, eastern Finnmark, and southwest to Skibotndalen in Storfjord, Troms (fig. 25). The tables above only include suggested circular offering sites in Norway, but my overview in Chapter 2 shows that very few remotely similar constructions are recorded in neighbouring countries, with most suggested ritual sites falling into types 2 or 3. The abrupt discontinuity of similar sites at the present borders between Finnmark county and Russia and Finland respectively appears quite unlikely and may well be the result of fewer archaeological surveys and investigations in the massive northern territories of these countries. It could also be due to different categorisations among researchers in the different countries. Possible type 1 structures have been recorded along the Barents and White Sea coasts in Russia, but they have been understood as house grounds or pens (pers. comm. M. M. Shakhnovich 11 Aug 2014). Other researchers have reported that there are no similar structures in regions such as the coast
of the White Sea, despite very extensive surveys of stone structures in that area (pers. comm. N. Lobanova 24 Apr 2013, M. Kosmenko 28 Apr 2013). No comparable sites have been reported in northern Finland either (pers. comm. T. Äikä 4 Aug 2009, J–P Taavitsainen 16 Jul 2014), which is perhaps even more surprising, since the Gålggojâvi structure in Troms is situated practically on the current Finnish border\(^{37}\), and considering the intensified systematic surveys performed over the last few years by the Finnish Forest Service (Meetsähallitus). A peculiar site at Urroaivi in Utsjoki, just across the border to Finland from Polmak, Tana, includes 18 stone circles measuring 1–6 m, which has been compared to the stone structures in nearby Varanger (Karjalainen 2007). The closest parallels in Finland have been

\(^{37}\) Apparently a tourist brochure with a photo of a type 1 structure circulated in Kilpisjärvi, right across the border to Finland from Gålggojâvi, some years ago. In the photo, the structure seemed to be situated with a view of lake Kilpisjärvi in the background (pers. comm. B. Olsen 2012). As described, no such site has been recorded by Finnish archaeologists, and I have not found more information about this brochure or any such site at the tourist information sites in the area or among the researchers working at the Kilpisjärvi research station doing fieldwork in the area.
found in Tornio and Kemi municipalities further south (Saloranta 2011). I will return to discuss these sites in Chapter 5.3.1.

However, according to our current knowledge, the type 1 structures are distinctly clustered in the counties of Finnmark and northern Troms in northern Norway, though possibly (and quite likely) extending to the Kola peninsula and northern Finland. Interestingly, the distribution area is coherent with the officially shared trade and taxation area for Norway and Novgorod as defined in a 1320s–1330s treaty (Hansen 1996: 68–69). The limit for Russian taxation was set by the Lyngstuva promontory just northwest of the Lyngen fjord in Troms, some 60 km northeast of Tromsø and c. 95 km to the north–northeast of the Gárgggojávri structure in the Skibotn valley (see fig. 25). The apparently almost exclusive distribution of definite type 1 structures to the north and east of this border could possibly suggest that they were related to Russian activity, or Karelian activity on their behalf, as these are known to have been very involved in Russian taxation and fur trade. This does not necessarily mean that people from these groups built and used the structures, but perhaps that Russian/Karelian activity somehow triggered the need for such installations. It is interesting that such structures are not recorded in Karelian core areas, but as mentioned this can have several explanations.

In some cases there are place names in the vicinity of the type 1 structures that reflect Russian/Karelian presence, for instance the name Karlebotn, which has been linked to the Karelians, and numerous place names with the Sámi appellative gárjil– upstream from the Storfossen site (71) (pers. comm. K. Turi 25 Aug 2013), such as lake Gárjiljávri. A lake and a mountain a couple of kilometres southeast of the Geaimmejávri site (63) is called Ruoššajávri and Ruoššavárri respectively, suggesting Russian presence. The northern Sami traditions and legends are full of references to the ravages of these groups, whether they are described as Russians, Karelians or the more general and somewhat mythical čud (e.g. Keilhau 1831: 197–198; Qvigstad 1927; Bratrein 1977). The latter name is also represented in place names close to the type 1 structures, such as river and fell Čudejohka and Čudeoaiivi, close to Gárggoluoppal (72) and the locality Čuđegođáát (53–55) on Angsnes. The Bringnes site is directly linked to the Čud myths, as locals have been of the opinion that the strange interconnected structures here (see below) were subterrainean houses where people hid to avoid the Russian attacks (pers. comm., J. Henriksen 12 Jul 2013). In general, there are many

38 J. A. Friis’ does mention a pentagonal timber structure around a cairn in the Karelian area of Oulangansuu in his travel account from 1871. The local explanation for this was that such cairns were remains of the huts of the Sami that used to live in the area before the Karelian colonisation. A tree stump in the structure had at least 90 tree rings, indicating that it went out of use no later than the mid–18th century. Friis interprets the pentagonal structure as a timber equivalent to the usual Sami round turf goahti, and he does not associate it with the stone enclosures he saw in Finnmark (Friis 1871b:339).
place names in the western Sami areas that reflect the Russian or Karelian activity, also far outside the taxation area described above. It would be very interesting to study the relation of the type 1 structures to various place names, including those related to sacrality, more systematically, but this could not be prioritised within the timeframe of the present project.

On a regional scale, the type 1 structures are very evenly distributed between inland and coast sites according to a definition of inland sites as those that are situated more than 30 km from the shoreline. This is based on the estimated day travel on foot that was used when establishing the state mountain cabins. This does not mean that the coastal sites are necessarily related to the shore or sea on a local level, as even sites close to the sea can be considered “landbound” in the sense that they seem more directed towards terrestrial than marine activities (cf. Hallgren 2008: 92). On a larger scale, the type 1 structures are concentrated to the inland and inner fjords. One outer coast structure in Klemetsvik, on the island Vannøya, Karlsøy, Troms (108), is more likely of type 1. Unfortunately, this site has been heavily damaged by trenching, but the remains of the wall and old photos indicate a type 1 appearance (fig. 26). It has been discussed as a possible Stone Age house ground, situated at 14 masl, but when investigating it in 1984, Håvard Dahl Brattein found small fragments of iron in the then newly-dug trench. Though unusual finds for a type 1 structure (see chapter 4.8) this rather indi-

Fig. 26. Klemetsvik 1, Karlsøy, Troms (108) in 1976, before the trenching through the area on the right-hand side. It is considered a type 1 structure. Photo: H. D. Brattein, Tromsø Museum – Universitetsmuseet.

39 An exception among the classical structures is Seglodden, which Vorren only plotted on one map, on the eastern outer coast of the Varanger peninsula. I have not refound this structure or any further information about the site.
cates a later use. It is unclear where exactly the finds were made and the sampled fragments have later been discarded (cf. Askeladden ID 129047–1). It should be noted that it is situated just outside the taxation borders described above, but these are known to have been routinely transgressed.

In general, the distribution of type 1 structures coincides with a main Sami habitation area in the Middle Ages and early modern period, but Sami habitation and use was by no means restricted to this area. The distribution could be an expression of Sami cultural regionality. Finnmark and northern Troms have other distinctive cultural monuments from the medieval period with similar distributions north and east of the Lyngen fjord in Troms, continuing throughout eastern Finnmark and onto the Kola Peninsula. The labyrinths have been discussed above in Chapter 3.3. These are distributed in the same region, but they have a distinctly outer–coast location that differs from the confirmed type 1 structures. The same is true for the so–called “hellegroper”, slab–lined pits for extraction of oil from sea mammal blubber, which seem to be most abundant along the coast north and east of the Lyngen fjord. Though not primarily Sami remains, the so–called multi–room houses are another very interesting example of a structure type that is distributed on the outer coast of northern Troms, Finnmark and on the Kola Peninsula (fig. 27). The distribution is probably related to coastal traffic, as these enigmatic semisubterranean constructions have been interpreted as meeting places for several ethnic groups involved in taxation and trade. The construction details and finds combine elements known from widely–diverging geographical areas like Karelia, Iceland and southwestern Scandinavia, though the sites seem to have had different internal uses (Olsen et al. 2011). The multi–room houses are situated in the same areas as the early Norse or Norwegian fishing villages that spread along the Finnmark coast from the 13th century onwards, but they do not coincide with the recorded villages of the 16th century on a local level (Olsen et al. 2011: 51).

For the slab pits and multi–room houses, the outer coast location is related to the practical use. Labyrinths also seem to have an inherent connection with (difficult) coastal waters (Odner 1961; Westerdahl 2012). This does not negate that the monuments may have had importance to territorial claims or demarcations, though perhaps rather as a gradual result of the practical positioning and use than a primary conscious choice (e.g. Henriksen 1996; Olsen 2002; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 57ff). This could be a relevant consideration even for the type 1 structures discussed here. If so, the mainly inner fjord and inland locations of the latter could suggest that they communicated internal borders rather than territorial rights to other groups operating primarily along the coast (though interacting with the inland population during taxation, trade or plundering, cf. Hansen and Olsen 2014: 213). As discussed in Chapter 3.4.3, Vorren has used historical and ecological material to suggest possible borders for the *siida* territories around 1700, before the more extensive reindeer herding was intensified (Vorren 1978b; 1978a), but these do
not seem to be particularly coherent with the structures discussed here (Vorren 1985a). However, the early modern borders are likely to have been somewhat different from the medieval territorial divisions, which are very difficult to track with the fragmentary evidence available, even if some topographical features such as watersheds may have kept their status as borders over longer periods of time. Hence, the distribution of the type 1 structures could be related to group territories in the Middle Ages, but I find it more likely that it primarily reflects certain main habitation areas and geographically or ethnically confined practices. Again, this depends on the validity of the criteria set for type 1, as these exclude otherwise similar sites in southern Norway (e.g. Hermodsholtjønn, 159, and an intriguing find in Rogaland, cf. Olsen 2006).

In previous research, the closeness of the classical circular offering sites to water has been emphasised (Vorren 1985a) and this has also been mentioned in several records where other structures are suggested to be similar phenomena (e.g. Rapfjellet, 149). Though there are exceptions, like the Biekkanoaivi site (57), there is indeed a consistent closeness to sea, lakes or rivers. However, as discussed in Chapter 3.4.3, this is not necessarily to do with the religious or ritual significance of water as an element. On the contrary, I would suggest that the closeness to water as a travel route is just as noteworthy (fig. 28–29). The type 1 structures are almost unanimously located by known main travel routes, categorised as main roads and waterways between settlements or destinations with historically or archaeologically substantiated use during the time of construction for the stone structures in question. This could be due to a source error as the main travel routes have been used up until today, making structures along these more likely to be detected. Yet, the correspondence with travel routes is also valid for currently more remote sites like Biekkanoaivi (57). This is situated on the isthmus between the Tana river valley in the west and Karlebotn by the Varanger fjord in the east. The heaths and bogs here make for a challenging terrain in summer, but in wintertime, communication here is much easier. This is also the season when the market in Karlebotn was held, and the old market road from Tana to Karlebotn went through the Biekkanoaivi area, following a still–existing path up from the Tana valley side (Manker 1952: 47–48). Historical sources indicate that the market was established at least by the late 16th or early 17th century (Johnsen 1923: 225, 227, 231; Odner 1992: 16), but of course the market road followed the easiest or otherwise preferred crossing of the isthmus and was probably in use much earlier.

The Gálgejávri structure is also positioned close to the travel route from inner Finland/Sweden to the market place in Skibotn by the Lyngen fjord, which was a trading place at least from c. AD 1500 and probably even before that time (Fossbakk 2004: 90–91). Otherwise, there are few known market places in Finnmark and Troms before c. AD 1700, though some markets from this time may have had older roots. It should, however, be noted
that both the new nomadic reindeer herding, more formalised trade and tax collection, things and legislation, as well as other societal changes, probably affected where the markets in Sami areas of northern Norway were held after c. AD 1600, though they were all held in the inner fjords, the classic meeting places between the Norse/Norwegian and Sami main occupation areas (Hansen 1984; Hansen 1990; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 230). These criteria also seem to have affected the seasonality, thus around AD 1750 all Sami markets northeast of the Lyngen fjord were held around Christmas, while the Sami markets to the southwest of this fjord and old boundary were all held during summer or in the autumn (Hansen 1984: 63, map III). Apart from confirming some sort of regional differentiation along the Lyngen fjord, this may also have been related to who visited the markets to trade with and tax the Sami (Russian or Karelian traders versus “quains”, Birkarls and later Swedish burghers and others). It is difficult to judge any relation of the type 1 structures on a local level with the market, trade and taxation activities because it is uncertain if these were performed in the same places or areas as the recorded 17th and 18th century markets. There are no examples of actual co-location with these markets though the Karlebotn structure (56) is quite
close to the village that is thought to have hosted the old Varanger market.

However, on a regional level, the type 1 structures have some correlation with *siiddit* (pl.) in Finnmark that had market places in AD 1750, such as Varanger (Vehranger), Porsanger, Karasjok (Avjovarre) and Kautokeino (Kuotken), while there seem to be a lack of relevant structures of this specific type in *siiddit* that did not have market places, such as Tana (Tanen), Laksefjord (Laxefjord), Utsjok (Arritsby) and Juxby/Tenoby (Hansen 1984: 63, map III; Pedersen 1994: 59, fig. 5.1). This could also strengthen the hypothesis that the structures were situated in relatively densely-settled areas. The population numbers may have led to the later establishment of markets in these exact areas. Admittedly, Alta (Alten) had a major market place but lack confirmed type 1 structures, though Vorren did record one possible example in 1985, which was never published (Vorren 1985b). I have also received a report on a possibly relevant structure in a valley by Store Lërresfjord/Stuora Liidnavuotna (95) c. 40 km northeast of the current town of Alta (pers. comm. A. Ødegård 15 Jul 2015).
If the type 1 structures are somehow related to travels and communication, the distance between some of the sites could be of interest, but even when accounting for a potentially large number of lost structures and a focus on time spent on travel rather than distance in kilometres, the distribution does not show a clear pattern, with distances ranging between less than a kilometre to around 200 km between confirmed type 1 structures, rather confirming that the clusters probably indicate more densely habitated areas on a regional scale.

Fig. 29. Type 1 structures in Porsanger and Karasjok situated along waterways and travel routes.
4.5 Local cultural environment of type 1 structures

Regarding cultural context, Ørnulv Vorren considered the circular offering sites to be closely related to wild reindeer hunting (e.g. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 307), though admitting that this was less obvious in some cases and that the sites were sometimes closer connected to graves (Vorren 1987: 107; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 203). Known reindeer pitfall traps, which are abundant in northern Norway, are actually situated at least one and usually several kilometres away from the type 1 structures, while there are examples of closer connections with shooting blinds. Another suggested connection is with reindeer migration routes and isthmus or river crossings that would have been favourable hunting spots (e.g. Vorren 1985a: 79). Vorren assumed this for the Beajalgŋai site, where a smaller circular stone wall interpreted as a shooting blind is located about 40 m from the circular offering site (Vorren 1970a). A comparison with the main and normal reindeer migration routes that have been digitalised by the The Norwegian Agricultural Agency does not show a consistent correspondence on a local level, even if migrations routes on a regional level sometimes correspond with the type 1 structures. This could, however, be due to the fact that they also follow natural travel routes and crossing points of rivers and passes. Modern transhumance routes or grazing areas do not seem to have a regular correspondence with the sites either, but, as described, this may be of less significance due to the many changes in the herding strategies, territorial organisations and movement patterns since the Middle Ages.

It has also been frequently claimed that circular offering sites have a close relation to graves (e.g. Schanche 2000: 297). This connection is most obvious for the two rather famous structures of Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) and Fugleberget/Čiesti (48), which are situated in the extensive scree areas on the north side of the Varanger fjord, where there are abundant graves. At least another six structures that are now lost have been reported as being situated in the screes in the same area, more specifically around the bay Per Larsen- vik and the hilltop Klubbnasen/Murghiidgahparas (39–43, 45) (Saxlund 1853, Nordvi n.d.). These would possibly also be situated near or among the many scree graves here. Nordvi specifically reports on a nearby unopened grave by the Fugleberget/Čiesti structure (48), and recent detailed surveys reveal several graves in this area (Siri et al. 2014). The Fuglebergbukta 1 site (49) is situated on the outskirts of an extensive scree area containing several hundred graves dating from c. 400 BC to the early modern period (Schanche 2000). There are also reports on four features inside the type 1 structure itself that have been interpreted as one certain and three possible graves (Kleppe 1974: 63). Unfortunately, none of the immediately–surrounding graves have been dated, which makes it difficult to decide in what context the circular offering site was first built, but the general use of the area for
burials for a long time period before the Middle Ages must have given the site a special significance even in a scenario were existing graves were situated some distance away at the time of the initial construction of the type 1 structures.

However, my investigations indicate that most type 1 structures are not very closely related to graves. There are some source-critical issues related to this conclusion: as described in Chapter 3.3.1, pre-Christian Sami graves have been built in different ways, though graves in scree areas, under large boulder or in cracks in rocks or mountains are very common, especially in eastern Finnmark. These graves can be hard to detect, since graves built as small chambers in screees often have no preserved markers above the surface. Consequently, there is a certain possibility that graves in the immediate surroundings of the type 1 structures have gone unnoticed. On the other hand, recorded cairns and stone heaps nearby have been interpreted as graves because of the “circular offering site” too. A cairn nearby the structure by Láhpojohka (74) was thought to be a grave, but excavation provided no evidence of a burial (Vorren 1966). Suggested graves at the Angnes site (51) are noted in Askeland to be highly uncertain (Id 17356–2–4). One of the three suggested circular offering sites on Brinnges, Porsanger, Finnmark (79–80), was reinterpreted as a large opened grave when archaeologists from the Sami Parliament surveyed the site in 2014 (Id 56624–3), and several nearby fetaures were thought to be additional unopened graves. There are, however, possible alternative explanation to such features. The interpretation of more or less indistinct structures in screes is generally challenging, and such depressions or cavities can of course be expressions of a variety of practices (see below). Based on the material available I would say the claimed proximity to graves is only confirmed for three of the type 1 structures, at Fugleberget/Ciesti (48), Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) and Karlebotn (56).

The by far most obvious connection is rather to opened meat caches. Vorren points out that half of the 19 sites he had recorded by 1985 were accompanied by pits in the same scree or boulder field interpreted as opened caches, or alternatively by caches built up from stones close by (Vorren 1985a: 76–77). This connection has also been noted in my surveys (Spangen 2013b, 2014, 2015a). I find this a highly relevant observation because of the very close spatial correspondence, with some caches situated less than 10 m away. As mentioned above, a large pit on the Bringnes site has recently been reinterpreted as a grave, but the description (as an oblong very deep pit with a triangular or rombic shape, c. 1,5 m long, a little less wide and at least 1 m deep) could easily fit with a cache structure as well. To some extent the recorded caches could similarly be grave cairns rather than opened meat caches, but finds of reindeer bones and antlers in at least one such structure, by Gálłgojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117, cf. Teigmo 1973: 20, Vorren 1973b and photo tsld675 at www.unimus.no), makes the cache interpretation seem relevant, despite the occurrence of animal graves in burial contexts. The pres-
ence of antlers would also be unusual in a grave context. This occurrence of meat caches may help explain the location and functionality of the type 1 structures, which is discussed further in Chapter 5.3.4.

Some of the type 1 structures are situated close to habitation or dwelling sites, while other sites have no recorded traces of past houses or camps in the immediate vicinity. For the most part they are, however, situated relatively near habitation areas, which can be seen in relation to the described proximity to travel routes and clustering in more densely populated areas. As discussed above, there is a source–critical issue concerning the modern activity and recording in such areas. The potential connection to habitation is also a question of contemporaneity. As an example, the bog area to the east of Biekkanoivi, Loahkejeaggi, was one of the winter camps for the Sea Sami from the south side of the Varanger fjord in the late 19th century (Kolsrud 1961: 47; cf. Odner 1992: 23), as was the area Geresborri, just to the south of the hill (Odner 1992: 24). At the time it was customary to cut and store (bog) grass at inland sites and move the livestock to this hay in wintertime (August–April), rather than bring the hay to the coast (as I will describe further in Chapter 4.12, the type 1 structure by Biekkanoaivi was actually used to store hay). This was done because the inland offered another indispensible resource, namely firewood, which at that point was almost completely gone on the coast (Odner 1992: 22–23). However, it is uncertain how this area was used before the introduction of livestock among the Varanger Sami. This seem to have happened sometime in the 15th century (Odner 1992), though there is evidence for the possible introduction of sheep in Pasvik, further east, already in the 11th century (Hedman and Olsen 2009; Hedman et al. 2015). Thus, the type 1 structures appear to have been constructed during a time when most Sami groups in Finnmark and Troms were mainly hunting, fishing and gathering, which, notwithstanding that these activities were of course also maintained after the introduction of farming, livestock and reindeer herding, meant a different use of the landscape and seasonal mobility (e.g. Vorren 1978a, 1979a; Odner 1992). To establish any closeness to contemporary habitation areas on a local level, more datings of house grounds and hearths would be needed, while on a regional level there seems to be a clear pattern of co-location.

4.6 Excavations

The type 1 structures described above have been subject to extensive investigations and excavations, especially by Vorren, but also by other investigators. In the mid–19th century, Saxlund reports on several bone finds under the stone slabs in the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure (49), indicating that he did some investigations, but not excavations as such (Saxlund 1853). Friis later describes his finds of animal bones and a deteriorated wood superstructure in
the structure Nedrevatn 1 (83) (Friis 1871a:140), but these seem to have been surface finds. Kristian Nissen’s early 20th century visit at the Beajalgŋai site (64) resulted in similar finds as well as some pieces of charcoal, which he possibly found through some lifting of stones in the middle of the structure (Nissen 1928). Archaeologist Else Johansen Kleppe investigated the circular offering site Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) in relation to her studies of the scree graves and other monuments on this headland (Johansen and Odner 1968; Kleppe 1974). Her finds included collections of animal bones and birch bark in four separate contexts within this structure (Ts 6435–6438, cat. no. 49). Two of these contexts were interpreted as graves, one behind the bent stone wall by the bedrock in the north and one consisting of a built up stone slab chamber right outside the opening between the bedrock wall and the built wall.

Vorren has still been by far the most active investigator of the type 1 structures. His investigations were not fully reported or published, but studies of notes and drawings in his private archive reveal that he excavated in almost all of the circular offering sites he recorded. Due to the limited documentation of the excavations themselves or any stratigraphy, it is sometimes unclear if this only included deturfing and collecting of finds or more extensive measures, but at least in some cases it appears they involved excavating into ground and into features such as the central cairns (Munch 1965; Vorren 1966, 1970b, 1973a; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 75). Some finds from the investigations were brought into Tromsø Museum, but, judging from Vorren’s field notes, the preserved finds in the collection today only comprise part of the material that was observed in the field. It is unclear if the majority of this material was left in situ or later discarded or lost. In cases such as the excavation of the Lāhpojohka site (74), it sounds like Vorren only brought in a selection of the rather large amount of bones that was found there (Vorren 1966).

Due to the limited documentation of these previous investigations, it was considered appropriate to perform additional excavations in the present project. Two minor excavations were performed in the structures at Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark (63), and Gālggojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117), in 2013 (Spangen 2016a, 2016b). Both these sites consist of type 1 stone structures and they are both lakeside inland sites in similar cultural landscapes. For variation and comparison, it could have been interesting to have chosen a different site along the coast. However, the Geaimmejávri site was chosen because finds of worked wood made it particularly interesting in terms of uncovering details about the assumed superstructures of wood described by several writers (e.g. Friis 1871: 170; Vorren 1985a). The Gālggojávri structure was chosen because it was the only known site of this type that seems not to have been previously excavated by Vorren (cf. Vorren 1982: 65). The excavations represent two case studies on site level and the
cultural history and environments of the structures are therefore described in some detail below.

Ideally, at least two structures of types 2 or 3 in the core area of the type 1 structures should have been excavated for comparison, but this was not possible within the timeframes of the project. On the other hand, there have been excavations in several such structures in both Norway and Sweden that can be used for comparison, though these investigations rather confirm the variation within these types. I have mentioned the excavation in a horseshoe-shaped turf structure by Forolsjøen in the Sør-Trøndelag mountains (cat. nos. 151–152) in Chapter 2. No finds where made, but three samples were taken from different layers of soil for phosphate spot tests (Stenvik 1983). However, the sampling method, uncertain context and lack of comparative material give the results of these tests limited value. The horseshoe-shaped structure by Finntjønnan in Midtre Gauldal, Sør-Trøndelag (151), mentioned in Chapter 3.2, has been partly excavated revealing mixed soils with some traces of charcoal. A sample from the bottom of the embankment was radiocarbon dated to between AD 1470 and 1650 (Pareli 1991: 90). A small rectangular, or today rather uneven, stone wall by Svartdalstjønna, Rennebu, also in Sør-Trøndelag (150), has been partly excavated on several occasions (Odner 1973; Vik et al. 2000; Hellqvist 2012). There is a local tradition saying that this is an old Sami offering site, though this may go back to a 1945 book of local history (Rokkones 2006[1945]; Spangen 2013a). There have been reports about a “bone heap” here and investigations have revealed an up to 15 cm thick cultural layer with animal bones and some charcoal (Odner 1973). The animal bones were all heat affected, or burnt, and they have been identified as coalfish, sheep/goat, large ungulate and some other large mammal, apparently slaughtered elsewhere. Two samples were dated to 146±30 BP, cal AD 1620–1955 (large ungulate) and 54±30 BP, cal AD 1866–1919 (sheep/goat) (Hellqvist 2012, 2013: 14–15). In addition, the various ambiguous structures in the Kramvik/Grunnesbukt area, Vardø, Finnmark, were investigated in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Vorren and Eriksen 1993). However, the documentation of these surveys and excavations are stored in the private archive of the late Hans Kr. Eriksen (Vorren 1990), which is not available at the moment. Hence, the extent of these investigations is uncertain, as is the context of the remains of a wooden rod found in the Grunnesbukt 1 structure (26) that was dated to 145±50 BP (T–10218). The calibrated dating indicates it is from after AD 1665\(^{40}\). A peculiar structure on mountain Lunkvassberget, Trysil, Hedmark (158), was investigated with a small trench in 2011, but the investigation did not give any conclusive evidence as to whether this is a worn-down gravemound with a stone lining, as has been suggested, or if it may have had other func-

\(^{40}\) More precisely 320±70 BP (T–7838). A new calibration indicate a date younger than AD 1440 (2σ, Ox.cal 4.2, Ramsey 2009).

In addition, several stone structures in Sweden have been investigated and excavated to some extent (e.g. Wennstedt Edvinger and Broadbent 2006; Broadbent 2010). Parts of a structure on Lappsandberget 144 site on Bjuröklubb, Skellefteå, Västerbotten, has been deturfed. Searches with metal detector resulted in no finds. Systematic soil sampling revealed higher nitrogen samples within than without the stone structure (Broadbent 2010: 68–69), though, as discussed above, this could be due to a variety of uses. In a structure on Hornslandsudde, Hudiksvall, Gävleborg, sapling was attempted but the material produced no measurable values (Edvinger and Broadbent 2006: 43). As we shall see in the following, there is little in these results to suggest a similarity with type 1.

4.6.1 Excavation at Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark

The type 1 structure by Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark (63, see cover photo), was surveyed in 2012 and subsequently recorded in Askeladden (Id 162772). During the survey, several pieces of wood were observed around and within the stones in the walls and on the floor. One of these pieces was sampled and dated to 682 ±30, Cal AD 1260–1390 (Ua–44725) (Spangen 2013b). The sample is from pine and it is uncertain from which part of the tree, thus the dating could be affected by “old wood effect” (see Chapter 4.11). The site had previously been investigated by Ørnulv Vorren who had also noted finds of animal bones and wood. His plan sketch from the investigation showed some of these finds, but not all those that are described in the notes, and there is no profile drawing of the stratigraphy in his archive, possibly suggesting he only deturfed the floor (Vorren 1972a). The recorded finds have not been located in Tromsø Museum and it is uncertain whether they were brought back at all. The structure was chosen for further investigation in 2013 to gather additional details about the stone and wood construction, and to clarify both the original use and the investigations Vorren had performed.

The site is located by the lake Geaimmejávri, in a rugged and rocky landscape along the far southeastern side of the lake. North and northeast of the structure the terrain slopes towards a bog and some distance to the northwest it slopes down towards the lake. To the south of the structure, the terrain is somewhat higher and characterised by screes and small parallel ridges of bedrock. This terrain is partly difficult to traverse. The vegetation consists of heather, moss, some grass and mountain birch trees. The location is about 25 km from the current main village of Karasjok and along a very rugged tractor road about 10 km up the mountain from the famous Åsebákte site in the river valley, with its row–organised hearths, house grounds and other finds.
Fig. 30. Plan drawing of the excavation by Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark (63) with finds made 29 Aug 2013. Triangles = bone finds, circle = lead bullet, hatched area = finds of wood and bark, circles with cross = photo points. The ground consisted mainly of rocks. Because of a technical error, geometry for the finds from 28 Aug 2013 was not recorded.

from the Middle Ages, though also finds from the Stone Age, Iron Age and modern times (e.g. Simonsen 1979; Skandfer 2009b). The road up the mountain is likely to have been used very far back in time and certainly before the mid–19th century establishment of the Ravnastua state mountain cabin about 5 km further west from the type 1 structure. This was built to house state officials and others travelling to the west and north of Karasjok along the by then well–established path system across the mountain plains.

The very few recordings of cultural heritage in the area that are georeferenced in Askeladden are not representative for the actual finds around Geaimmejávri. As described in Chapter 4.1, there have been several large registration projects in Karasjok, performed by local people in co–operation with the local museum (The Sámi Collections, currently known as RiddoDuottarMuseat, RDM), but the recordings have not been entered into Askeladden. The maps are currently not available, but lists of the recordings with place names, definition of the structures found and also some map coordinates show finds of a goahti house ground, nine caches in scree, two tent habitation sites and a stone setting, as well as several row–organised hearths south of the lake, i.e. in the vicinity of the type 1 structure. There are no pit
Fig. 31. Profile towards the north at Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark (63), after excavating 1m² in the middle of the structure.

Fig. 32. Pieces of partly worked conifer wood at Geaimmejávri, Karasjok, Finnmark (63), found on the inside and up against the wall under eroded rocks.
fall traps in this area, but 142 pitfall traps, six tent habitation sites, 10 caches in screes, six *goahti* house grounds and three stonestet “graves” (probably row–organised hearths, which were previously interpreted as graves, cf. Simonsen 1979), a habitation site and three not further defined stone circles were recorded within an area further north stretching from c. 4 km northwest to c. 8 km north–northwest of the type 1 structure. Further north–northeast another 123 pitfall traps, seven meat caches, four *goahti* house grounds and 37 tent habitation sites were recorded on the northern and north–western sides of lake Máiilejávrí, which is just north of and connected to Geaimmejávrí. The sites are not dated and the lists include recent elements like preserved buildings, a forked pole for fox catching and several hay fields c. 10–15 km north of the type 1 structure. Another two tent habitation sites and two *goahti* house grounds are noted by lake Ruoššajávrí, 2–3 km east–south–east of the structure along the road to Ássebákti, and yet another tent habitation site a couple of kilometres further down in the same direction by lake Sevdnjesluhpojávrí. In addition, Askeladden does include a not georeferenced report from 1980 with recordings of 33 pitfall traps, three stone settings (possibly row–organised hearths) and a stone–lined pit on the western side of Geaimmejávrí (Id 73800). These are probably partly consistent with the recordings Ørnulv Vorren describes in his field notes from the area in 1972, which includes another two house grounds. He excavated the mentioned stone settings (hearths) and found bones, charcoal and parts of an iron cauldron (Vorren 1972a). These previously–unpublished finds illustrates the intensive and continuous use of this inner Finnmark mountain area, which may otherwise be perceived as rather desolate by outsiders.

The type 1 structure itself consists of a high, dry–stone wall built from some very large rocks, but also from some medium and small stones, which reflects the surrounding terrain. Outer diameter is 6–6.5 m, inner diameter 4.5–6 m, while the current inner height is 80–140 cm. There is no sign of an entrance in the wall. The inner wall is fairly vertical, while the outer stone building slopes outwards. The inner floor consists mainly of smaller stones and gives an almost paved impression. In the north–northwest part of the structure, a small semicircle of medium sized stones is built up against the inner wall. This creates a small delineation of c.160x100 cm, inner diameter c. 70x50 cm. Probing showed no signs of charcoal in it. In addition, there is a heptagonal structure made from different sized and uneven shaped stones approximately in the middle of the floor, measuring c. 230x160 cm, c. 155x95 cm in inner size, length direction north–south. Within it were some stones and slabs and a small depression in the middle. There were also several heaps of stone up against the walls in the west, south and east from the eroded wall. Some smaller stones and slabs had been put on top of the walls as if to make it more even, possibly through Vorren’s reconstruction (Vorren 1972a). Pole photos show the distinct hexagonal inner shape of the structure (see Chapter 4.3.1, fig. 19).
Three areas within the structure were excavated; an area of 2 m², incorporating the central heptagonal structure, a small test pit in the southeastern part of the floor and a test pit in the area where the wood was found in 2012 (fig. 30). The heptagonal structure had been described by Vorren as a disturbed cairn, but, as described above, I perceived it more as a stone delineation, and Vorren has also drawn it as such on his sketch (Vorren 1972b). The geological layer here proved to be rocky and mostly undisturbed, suggesting the structure was merely superficial (fig. 31). An exception was a find of quite large amounts of rotted wood in the southeast corner of the southern quadrant. There was also a layer of humus under the stones in the depression in the middle of the field, most likely remains of turf that had developed in the depression, of which the top layer above the surface was removed by Vorren in 1972, while roots and earth underneath the stones were left in place. This suggests that Vorren’s investigation did not include systematic excavation into the floor. A broad selection of animal bone fragments was found, mostly in the southern quadrant (29 bone fragments) and slightly fewer in the northern quadrant (12 fragments). The bones had various degrees of fragmentation and erosion and more than half could only be decided at class level (mammalia). Of the bones that could be further defined there was a clear overweight of reindeer (rangifer tarandus), but also mountain fox (vulpes lagopus), bird (aves) and undecided canine (canidae) (Salmi 2013b, see Chapter 4.7). The first finds were made just underneath a thin top layer of turf and the amount of finds quickly and distinctly diminished further into the rocky ground. Some bones that were found at lower levels may have fallen down in between the rocks, but some were found underneath rocks, suggesting either intentional deposition or disturbance of the top stone layer. There does not seem to be any stratigraphically specific distribution of the species. Surprisingly, a modern rifle projectile was found quite far into the ground (Spangen 2016a).

A small 50x50 cm test pit was placed in the southeastern part of the inner floor because a find here during the 2012 survey was first thought to be the remains of an overgrown wooden pole sticking up from a posthole. However, after deturfing, this turned out to be a piece of antler stuck between the rocks; incidentally, the only find of this kind of material in the excavation. The test pit revealed no other finds or features beneath the surface. Another small test pit was placed in the heap of stones up against the wall to the south–southwest, where a sample of pine wood had been retrieved in 2012. Stones were removed to reveal several large pieces of pine wood up to 29.5 cm long (fig. 32). Some of the pieces were partly worked with an axe or a large knife (pers. comm. A. Kirchhefer 14 Nov 2013). The wood is from conifer and would have to have been brought up to the site from the river valley, as a pollen analysis from a bog at the same height approximately 20 km further east in Karasjok shows there has been little difference in the vegetation in the Middle Ages and today (Høeg 2000). There were no signs of
any other constructions either on the surface or underground in the structure (Spangén 2016a).

In his 1972 notes, Vorren describes a white stone that was visible across the bog from the type 1 structure, implying it could be a sieidi, though there does not seem to be further evidence for this (Vorren 1972a). The rock is still in place, but due to the vegetation it could not be seen from the structure in 2013. During the excavation, we surveyed an area of c. 15 ha around the type 1 structure and several finds were recorded, probably partly overlapping with previous registrations. In the immediate vicinity, there were two pits in the scree c. 15 m southwest of the structure and a constructed low room under a large boulder c. 30 m southeast of it, where the other sides of this had been meticulously closed with stone packings (Spangén 2013b). The former have been interpreted as caches, while the latter could potentially be an opened grave. Other possible explanations include a shelter, cache or trap.

To summarise, the excavation confirmed a frequency of wooden remains and animal bones, that the heaps of stones inside are eroded parts of the walls and that the structure is merely superficial, with no signs of structural features beneath the ground, apart from possible remains of a pole or similar somewhat off–centre in the excavated area. The bone finds are listed in the appendix and the datings in table 10, and discussed further in the following chapters. It is concluded that Vorren most likely only deturfed the site, and that the finds he noted on his field drawings were either collected or at least moved, as none of them were refound in 2013.

### 4.6.2 Excavation at Gálggojávri, Storfjord, Troms

The type 1 structure by lake Gálggojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117, fig. 33), was also surveyed in 2012 and recorded in Askledden (Id 162773). The site is located in the top end of the Skibotndalen valley on the southeastern end of the lake Gálggojávri on the small peninsula Gálggonjárga, very close to the current border with Finland. The area is defined by the large lake, various waterways, small bogs and the surrounding rounded mountains, with scarce vegetation mainly consisting of mountain birch trees and heather. The national border follows the watershed to the south and southeast of the site, and the area is one of the lowest mountain passages between the Swedish and Finnish inland and the coast in Norwegian Troms county. It has been an important travel route throughout history, testified by today’s E8 highway. The mountain passage has made the area of Skibotndalen a natural meeting point. In the 17th century at the latest, but probably even before, a marketplace was established in Skibotn village down by the Lyngen fjord in the north, which was and remained a meeting place for Norwegian, Sami, Swedish/Finnish and Kven traders, as well as various state officials, until the 20th century (Fossbakk 2004: 90; Johansen 2007: 98ff). Transport from the inland went down through the Skibotn valley and remains of the old market
road, partly improved with dry stone walls and culverts, has recently been recorded running from the far northeast end of Gálggøjavri down through the valley. It indicates that part of the journey was made across the water/ice of the lake from the south side were the type 1 structure is located. The roads in the area were not fit for carriages until quite late, so transportation was along waterways by reindeer sledges in the winter and boats in the summer. During the 19th century, a state mountain cabin like the one described at Ravnastua was also built by Helligskogen, somewhat north of Gálggøjavri (cf. Johansen 2007: 120–121).

Sedentary habitation has been scarce in this upper part of the valley, but it has been used by reindeer herding Sami, as well as for hunting and fishing by the various sedentary inhabitants further down (Friis 1861; Qvigstad 1921; Teigmo 1973: 7). According to late 20th century traditions in Skibotn, the area southeast of the lake Gálggøjavri, where the type 1 structure is located, was known to be a good hunting/catching area. Ørnulv Vorren thought the area around the structure had been used for wild reindeer hunts, but it could not be established how such a catch could have been performed (Teigmo 1973: 17). There are no recorded hunting blinds or pitfall traps in the immediate vicinity, and the local hunting ground tradition seem to be related to hunts for wild birds and fur animals, which has been the focus in these areas in more recent generations. The hunt has included birds and fur animals such as ptarmigan, capercaillie, weasel, fox, wolverine, wolf and bear (Teigmo 1973: 20, 24). This hunt was performed with foothold irons,
guns and deadfall or log traps. The use of such traps was a living traditions in Skibotn even into the 20th century (Teigmo 1973: 20, 24, 32). Both reindeer herders and other locals have taken advantage of the, at times, exceptionally good fishing in the lake and streams, the lavish cloudberry fields and the woods for various procurement (Teigmo 1973: 34, 41–43). Informants also described that a named Sami woman had built a certain type of oven in the the area (Teigmo 1973: 52), and it is probably one such oven that was recorded west of the lake during my surveys in 2013 (Spangen 2013b: 85).

Though there are no recorded wild reindeer hunting installations, there are many other traces of activity on Gálggonjárga and surrounding the rest of the lake. Primarily, there are two opened meat caches only 10–15 meters south of the circular offering site itself. A find of a reindeer skull and antlers nearby has been suggested to be another possible offering site, but as described above it is most likely related to one of the caches (Teigmo 1973: 18). These remains are not there today, but it is uncertain if they were collected and brought back to Tromsø museum or not.

Birch charcoal from an oval hearth on a small plain some 50 m south of the stone structure was sampled during the 2013 excavations and dated to 377±36BP, cal AD 1440–1640 (Ua–48769, 2σ, Ox.cal. 4.2, Ramsey 2009), suggesting contemporaneity with the structure (see chapter 4.11). In addition, several possible house grounds were recorded somewhat further to the east of the structure, though these cannot be confirmed as related to its use without further investigation and dating (Spangen 2013b). During the 20th century, several reindeer herding groups have used the Gálggojávri area for seasonal grazing and yearly migrations, and their campsites have been moved several times due to external afflictions like the Second World War and state agreements. One group had their summer camp on the Gálggonjárga headland after the war, but through a Norwegian resolution in 1962 they were forced to tear down their turf huts here and move. Thus house grounds and hearths in the area may well be remains of very recent occupation. During the same time, the reindeer herding family who were, and still are, living across the bay from Gálggonjárga where river Gállojohka flows into Gálggojávri, were forced to stop the migrations to Finland and use the pastures in the area all year around. This, of course, has also left many recent traces of use, like hearths and gathering fences (Kalstad 1973; Slettjord 1973). The area was highly important to the Germans during their withdrawal from Finland in 1944, which has left a great deal of traces related to the defence lines and general activity, as well as remains of one of many prison camps for prisoners of war in northern Norway at the headland Russeneset ("Russian’s Headland") on the western side of the lake (cf. Hesjedal 2015). It is not unlikely that some of the recorded caches, pitfall traps and shooting blinds, especially on the national border, may be misinterpreted and could be remains from war activity rather than past reindeer hunts (cf. pers. comm. A. Hesjedal 30 Jun 2016).
Fig. 34. Plan drawing of the excavation by Gálggojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117), with find. Triangles = bone finds, dotted circle = recent coins, circle with x = recent silver jewellery, circle with cross = recent ring of copper alloy, dotted square = plastic dice, hatched area = shoesole. The wall was partly overgrown with grass, moss and turf. The soil was homogenous, very rocky light brown to reddish–brown sand/earth.

Apart from these many newer activities, there are, however, a range of monuments recorded around the lake that are arguably much older. They were mostly registered during preparations for an early 1970s hydropower dam building, when the type 1 structure was first recorded too. Several pitfall trap systems, meat caches and shooting blinds are found to the west and north of the lake, as well as one pitfall trap on a small promontory on the east side, close to a house ground, and a house ground and several scree graves one of the islets in the middle of the lake (Teigmo 1973: 14–15; Helskog 1973; Munch and Munch 1973). Two islets in the lake have been described as “islets of the dead” and used as temporary burial sites under difficult transportation conditions. This use may be a continuation of an older scree grave practice on the islets, but so-called “summer graves” became particularly relevant with the Christianisation and consequent requirement for burial in consecrated ground (Manker 1961:128), which in this case would mean bringing the dead to the church in Karesuando, Finland. This was most easily done in sledges during winter. The last to be buried on the islets in

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Gálggojávri were two named men in the beginning of the 20th century (Teigmo 1973: 46–50). Thus, some of the scree graves recorded on the islet may be of recent origin, but the use is likely to have older roots (cf. Svestad 2007: 51, 53). Another possible grave was recorded on the far south end of Gálggonjárga on the bank of Gállojohka, consisting of a rectangular stone setting described as a “stone frame” of approximately 1x2 m (Munch and Munch 1973). As for sacred sites, no traditions related to the circular offering site structure itself were recorded in 1973 and there was no information about such sites in the immediate vicinity of the site either, but Swedish Sami reported of an offering stone on the west side of the lake, one offering site in the Helligskogen (“the Sacred Forest”) area and one by Doaresoaivi (Teigmo 1973: 51), both further down the valley. Recent surveys in the area in the last couple of years have not mapped any more monuments in direct relation to the structure considered here (cf. Schanche 2014; Mikalsen 2014; Hesjedal 2015). My own survey in 2012 included a few stone–built circular shooting blinds and a presumed cache, as well as the aforementioned oven, on the western side of the lake (Spangen 2013b: 85–88). The shooting blinds could be related to the wild reindeer hunt, but it cannot be excluded that they are WWII gun emplacements related to the Lyngen frontline or the prison camp on Russeneset a bit further north.

Fig. 35. Excavated trench (N–S) and test pit, Gálggojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117).
The type 1 structure itself is located somewhat withdrawn from the lake, a few hundred meters southeast of and not within viewing distance of the waterfront. It is hidden in a labyrinthic rocky moraine terrain of eskers, overgrown with heather, grass and some deciduous forest, mostly birch. A pollen analysis study from the nearby small lake of Dalmutladdo shows that the vegetation in the area has been quite similar over the last millenia, with some birch forests but very little pine (Bjune et al. 2004). The stone structure is placed in sloping terrain and has an outer diameter of 8–8.7 m, inner diameter 4.5–5.5 m. The inner height of the walls is 40–80 cm, while the outer walls are up to 80 cm high, but slope to align with the surrounding terrain in some places, especially to the east where the terrain is highest. The wall encloses a natural mound that fills much of the inner area. In the mound there is a dug-out hole of about 1.8 m in diameter, 20–30 cm deep. This was already here during the first survey by Vorren in 1973 and he assumed it had been dug by “treasure hunters” (Vorren 1973b).

A search with a metal detector immediately indicated a large amount of metal finds, especially in and around this hole. A trench measuring 1x5 m was placed from the hole in the mound and through the stone wall to the south (fig. 34–35). The metal turned out to be recent coins from the latter half of the 20th century, as well as some very recent jewellery. We also found plastic objects. Three recent fragments of reindeer bones appeared just underneath the turf layer. A shoe sole of fairly recent date was found tucked in between the rocks in the wall. There were no signs of underground disturbances or detectable layer divisions. The section through the wall showed that it had been built from larger stones in the inner lower part and subsequently smaller stones on the outer and sloping part, aligning with the outside terrain. A small terrace had been prepared for the wall to rest on by creating a shallow ditch along the inside between the wall and the mound. This could perhaps have been created by long-time trampling along the wall, but the sharp edge of the terrace under the bottom rocks suggest it was in fact intentionally created. A small test pit was placed in the mound in the north-western part of the structure. It yielded no finds or signs of cultural layers, so the mound is clearly natural.

To summarise, the excavation showed that the wall was obviously a well-planned construction, featuring larger stones on the inside and furthest down, with smaller stones as fillings on the top and sloping outside. While the mound appeared natural, some moving of masses may have been done to shape the bench under and inner ditch along the wall. There were no other subterranean structures or finds. The lack of older finds is peculiar but could potentially be caused by the preservation conditions in this more earthy soil as opposed to the more rocky soils by Geaimmjávri. The bone finds are listed in the Appendix and the other finds and datings are discussed further in the following chapters.
4.7 Osteological material

As described above, Ørnulv Vorren collected some animal bones and observed even more during his investigations, though this is only partly described in his notes and publications or preserved in the museum collection. Other authors describe finds of animal bones that are not preserved today (Leem 1975[1767]; Saxlund 1853; Friis 1871a: 140; Nissen 1928), while the investigations performed by Else Johansen Kleppe brought additional material to light from the structure Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) (Kleppe 1974). My own investigations have also resulted in a collection of animal bones. An appendix at the end of this book presents both preserved finds from various structures and mentions of animal bone finds in different sources.

The assemblages include a large number of fragments where only class or family could be determined (the majority was evaluated in the field according to available literature or otherwise without a reference collection, or based on photos). Among the bones where the species could be determined, reindeer is most frequent, followed by fox, arctic fox and dog. To some extent, this coincides with our knowledge about what species were included in Sami offering contexts (see Chapter 3.4.2). The variations in finds from known offering sites and written sources indicate that almost any animal could be included in Sami offering practices, though with a certain geographical and chronological variation (Magnus 1976[1555], 3:2; Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 11–12; Jessen–Schardebol 1767: 27; Qvigstad 1926: 319; Manker 1957: 45; Mebius 1968). There is mention of fox as one of many possible offering animals in two written sources (Rheen 1983[1671]: 39; Jessen–Schardebol 1767: 27), but fox bones are not known from any other studied bone assemblages from Sami offering contexts. They have, however, occurred in some other ritual contexts: bailiff Lilienskiold reported that the confiscated holy drum of the late 17th century noaidi Anders Poulsson was adorned with “a fox ear, a fox nose and a claw” (Lilienskiold 1942[c. 1700]: 164), and fox bones are also present in Sami scree graves, along with a wide selection of other animal bones (Scanche 2000: 291–292).

Puppies are mentioned as offering matter in a written source (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]: 11), but dog bones are rare in investigated offering site contexts in Sweden and not found at all in the assemblages in Finland (cf. Manker 1957: 47 and table 3; Äikäs 2015: 125). This could of course be due to differences in the offering context, as dogs are described as offering matter in relation to births and may have been sacrificed at less conspicuous offering sites close to the dwelling site rather than at the larger communal offering sites that have been more often recorded and investigated. Finds of dog bones in house grounds and hearths have been suggested to represent offerings. Dogs in an offering context is still unusual. Teeth of a large canine from the Láhpojohkka site (74) could not be osteologically determined as either large dog or wolf, and unfortunately there was not enough material to
decide this through DNA analysis (pers. comm. J. Aspi 27 Nov 2015). There are no recorded finds of wolf bones on offering sites (apart from one record that has to be treated with some source-critical caution, cf. Okkonen 2007: 30). Wolves are not found in graves either, but there are wolf bones in Sami dwelling site contexts (Schanche 2000; Okkonen 2007: 30; Hedman and Olsen 2009; Hedman et al. 2015; Äikäs 2015: 138).

A few finds of sheep bones coincides with known offering matter, as discussed in Chapter 3.4. Sheep/goat bones are frequently found at Swedish offering sites, as are bird bones. The find of wolverine in the structure by Beajalgŋai (64) is more unusual (cf. Nissen 1928: 185). Wolverine has been identified in three assumed offering site contexts in Sweden and Finland, but as described in Chapter 3.4.2, one of these contexts seems to be a bear grave, and the 18th century information from Finland about such bones at an offering site has been considered dubious (Nordman 1922: 1; Manker 1957: 45, 254; Okkonen 2007: 30). Contrary to this, wolverine bones are found in habitation contexts in Finland, substantiating hunt but apparently not offerings of this animal (Äikäs 2015: 138). There are, however, documented wolverine bones in the assemblage from the offering site at Haltenjarka, Norrkaitum, Gällivare (Manker 1957: 148).

Whale bones are not common at known Sami offering sites, though Olaus Magnus reports that the Sami in the 16th century sacrificed whale and big fish (probably halibut?), as well as “wild animals” (Magnus 1976[1555], 3:2). The two whale bone fragments from the Biekkanoaivi site (57) have been included in the overview here, but as they were found on, respectively, a path some distance away and a rock outside the stone structure itself, their contexts have to be considered somewhat uncertain (Vorren 1955a). They have cut marks and the location of the site quite far from the shore clearly indicate they were brought to this site. Snail shells, as found in the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure (49) by Saxlund, are not reported from other Sami offering sites, but do occur in scree graves in Varanger (Schanche 2000). Friis mentions finding fish and animal bones in the cairn at Nedrevatn 1 (83) (1871a: 140).

It is worth noting that there are very few finds of antlers in the structures considered here, which are otherwise very common on offering sites. The investigation in the Láhpojohkka site (74) revealed a few finds (Vorren 1966), one small piece was found by Geaimmejávri (63) (Spangen 2016a) and an informant stated to Vorren that there had been a large amount of antlers at the Storfossen site (71) in the past (Vorren 1970b). A possible explanation for the conspicuous lack of antlers in the material could be the removal of such matter from offering sites for glue production in the 19th century (Keilhau 1831: 208; Friis 1871a: 141; Læstadius 2003: 97; Ahlenius and Sjögren 1924: 922; Manker 1957: 47) or to make various artefacts in earlier centuries, as described by Leem (cf. Leem 1975[1767]: 439). Another option is natural deterioration. Still, the rarity of any fragments of antler does rather
indicate an actual absence of this material in the structures considered here. In an offering context this could possibly be explained by beliefs concerning which offering matter was appropriate in different contexts. As described in Chapter 3.3.1, there are no antlers in investigated Sami scree graves in Va-ranger either, which has been suggested to reflect that the annual regrowth of antlers gave them an association to regeneration, not death. Thus, antlers and bones were offered to different gods (Schanche 2000: 292–294). However, it could be argued that such a taboo is opposed by the rare finds of pieces of antler that have actually been made in type 1 structures.

Some of the reindeer bones found in the type 1 structures have been assessed with regards to size, age and sex of the animal. At the Nedrevatn 1 site (83), the collected bones included remains of at least one individual younger than 48 months and one individual of 18–30 months. The former had signs of muscular stress, which could be compatible with a domesticated draft or pack animal (or a reindeer used for riding, though this is not known from Sami contexts), but studies of such patterns are preliminary and similar changes do also occur in wild reindeer (Salmi and Niinimäki 2016). At Lähppoiojkkka (74) there was one male individual of 18–30 months with an estimated weight of 156.2 kg. In the Geaimmejávri assemblage (63) it was possible to identify three individuals of 36–48 months or more, including one female reindeer that weighed c. 87 kg. The recent reindeer bones in the Gälgojávri structure (117) could be from one animal, though this could not be established with any certainty. If so, the animal would have been about 18 months old (Salmi 2013a, 2013b).

Bones from most parts of the reindeer are included, and canines are also represented by most body parts, but the material is too small to make any useful general comparison with the sex, age and body part distribution in offering sites assemblages. There are many examples of only a few fragmented bones being found. Some of these have cut marks; for instance, three preserved fragments from Lähppoiojkkka (74) have signs of marrow splitting, and Vorren describes the bone assembly here as consisting of many split or splintered bones (Vorren 1966; Salmi 2013a). It is possible that a phalanx and a fragment of a longbone in the Beajalgŋai (64) collection are marrow split, but they have only been determined based on photos so the conclusion is uncertain (personal communication A–K. Salmi 1 Jul 2014). At Offerholmen (85), a split reindeer skull was found during my surveys in 2012 but this was not collected or dated and could be more recent (Spangen 2013b). Some of the bones in the Geaimmejávri assemblage may have been split, but the fragments are too eroded to form a certain opinion (personal communication A–K. Salmi 1 Jul 2014).

Among the assemblages in structures of type 1, there is only the Nedrevatn 1 site (83), that includes heat–affected bones, more specifically three fragments of reindeer (Salmi 2013a). Contrary to this, almost all the bones from the assemblage in the structure of type 3 at Svartdalstjønna,
Rennebu, Sør-Trøndelag (150) are burnt or heat–affected (Bergen Museum cat. no. 2011, cf. Hellqvist 2013). As mentioned in Chapter 3.3, there has been an assumption that Sami rituals did not include burnt offerings (Mebius 1968: 13), but there is various evidence for the opposite (e.g. Hallström 1915; Serning 1956: 15; Gejvall 1956; Manker 1957: 125, 158; Lundmark 1982: 280; Westman 1997: 45; Aikäs 2015: 56).), and this variation cannot be taken to prove the use of a site as an offering site or not.

Generally, the bone fragments that are included in the overview here are from the inside of the stone structures in question, with the whale bones from Biekkanoaivi as an exception. In some cases the bones are from a central cairn or from the central area of the floor, though it is not unusual to find bones spread out on other parts of the floor too (Friis 1871a: 140; Saxlund 1853; Nissen 1928; Vorren 1966, 1970b, 1972a; Kleppe 1968, 1974; Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 198; Spangen 2016b, 2016a).

4.8 Isotope analyses

Isotope analyses have been performed on selected material including reindeer bones from Gálsggojávri, Storfjord, Troms (117), reindeer and fox from Geaimmejávri (63) and sheep and dog from Beajalgŋai (64), both Karasjok, Finnmark (Fjellström 2015b, 2015a). Reindeer from Geaimmejávri (cal AD 1450–1640) had similar sulphur values as the comparative material of modern reindeer from Könkämä, northern Sweden, and may have grazed in the same areas, while the bone from Gálsggojávri is from an animal that clearly grazed in a different area (Fjellström 2015a). It should be noted that the bone from Gálsggojávri that was sampled for isotope analysis could not be dated because of a technical error, but based on dating of another reindeer bone from the same site it is probably very recent (see Chapter 4.4). Hence, the Gálsggojávri sample is most likely from a domesticated animal that grazed in the area after the closing of the borders between Norway and Finland for reindeer herders (in 1852). Considering the geographical distance and topographical separation on different sides of a main watershed. The carbon and nitrogen isotope levels in the reindeer bones versus the fox tooth from Geaimmejávri coincide and suggest that both were local. The fox tooth did not have enough sample material for dating in addition to isotope analyses (Fjellström 2015a).

The Beajalgŋai (64) material is more intriguing and shows some interesting variations. Carbon and nitrogen values clearly show that the dog (cal AD 1210–1280) fed mainly on non–terrestrial foodstuffs, consisting half of freshwater fish and half of marine nutriments, the latter evenly divided between an Atlantic and a Baltic origin (this means the dating could be affected by marine reservoir effect, see Chapter 4.11). Considering the distinct inland location of the site, this is somewhat surprising. It is highly likely that the
dog’s diet has been affected by cultural preferences, i.e. that it was fed. It is not improbable that some amount of marine nutrients could be made available in the inland through barter or trade, or that people (and dogs) would move between inland and coast in an annual cycle. In any case there is likelihood of the dog mainly living somewhere along the coastlines of the Atlantic Ocean or the Bothnian Bay – or both.

The carbon and nitrogen values of the sheep (cal AD 1305–1410) suggest it had a mixed diet. The nitrogen levels indicate that it had eaten proteins from animals fairly high up in the food chain. As it was a grown individual, the increased levels cannot be due to suckling (Fjellström 2015b, pers. comm. M. Fjellström 30 Apr 2015). The analyses indicate that a high amount of the food intake was from freshwater sources, while a minor amount is from marine foodstuffs. Because of the limited access to hay along the northern Norwegian coast, sheep and other livestock have regularly been fed with a mix of seaweed, fish heads and other food leftovers, as well as moss, hay and lumpfish. The mixture was boiled in large cauldrons and called løyping in Norwegian and liepmasat in North Sámi. This tradition was maintained up until the 20th century, and may be a plausible explanation for the high nitrogen level in a medieval sheep tooth too. The substantial freshwater share could indicate a similar use of lake fish for liepmasat in the inland. In addition, these levels rather oppose the possibility that the sheep was mainly fed on the coast, and thus it is less likely to have been purchased from non–Sami groups on the coast particularly for deposition at this site, as described previously regarding Sami in Sweden buying animals especially for offerings in early modern times, see Chapter 3.4 (Rheen 1983[1671]: 59; Mebius 1968: 49 with references). In summary, this could indicate that sheep were kept in this part of inland Finnmark as early as the 14th century (Spangen and Fjellström forthcoming). In support of this surprisingly early sheep husbandry, sheep bones dated to the 11th century have previously been found in row–organised hearths in the Pasvik river valley in the inland further east in Finnmark (Hedman and Olsen 2009; Hedman et al. 2015).

Unless fed with mainly imported foods, the dog has apparently lived a nomadic existence. On a general level that would be consistent with a Sami way of life at the time, but the apparent distance of travel from the Bothnian Sea to the Atlantic Ocean is quite surprising, as long–distance nomadic movements are generally assumed to be a result of the reindeer herding strategies in more recent times. Further conclusions are difficult to reach because of the limited comparative material. A comparison with the isotope values of the reindeer bones from nearby Geaimmejávri (63) or from Gálggojávri (117) does not shed any more light on the issue. Animals bred even closer to the actual find place at Beajalgŋai (64) may demonstrate other values, and a comparison of, for instance, the results for the Beajalgŋai dog with levels in local medieval human samples would be highly valuable, but such a material is not available at the moment (cf. Fjellström 2015a, 2015b).
Fig. 36. Wood remains from Storfossen, Karasjok, Finnmark (71), in the Sámi ethnographic collection, Tromsø museum (L1346a–b). The pointy piece is 69 cm long. The other has clear cutmarks, most likely related to notching. Photo: Foto: Adnan Icagic. Tromsø Museum – Universitetsmuseet.

Table 9. Wood finds in type 1 structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Find</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Munkefjord</td>
<td>Sør–Varanger</td>
<td>Deteriorated pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Karasjok</td>
<td>Conifer pieces, partly worked, rotted wood in ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>Beajalgnaï</td>
<td>Karasjok</td>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>Storfossen</td>
<td>Karasjok</td>
<td>Traces of log fence, parts of worked pine logs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Nedrevatn 1</td>
<td>Porsanger</td>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.9 Wood

Deteriorated logs and other pieces of wood have been found on and inside the walls on several type 1 structures (Friis 1871a: 140; Nissen 1928: 185; Vorren 1973a, 1985a: 71, 1987: 105; Spangen 2013b, 2016a). The finds are summarised in table 9. In some instances, the remains of wood have been perceived as remains of a notched log fence on top of the stone walls, which has led to the assumption that similar structures have had the same kind of wooden superstructures which have later rotted away (Friis 1871a: 140; Vorren 1970b, 1985a: 71–72). Wood may also have been removed and reused for firewood or building materials elsewhere.

Vorren reports on the find of a “fairly large pine log” in the cairn within the structure at Storfossen, Karasjok (71) (Vorren 1985a: 75). He concludes that this log “probably may have been the place where the sacrificial gift has been hidden”, while dismissing the possibility of this being a vaerromuorra, a wooden sieidi, because it did not have a worked root end, unlike how an early modern source from Nordland described this phenomenon (Kildal 1945[c. 1730]: 141ff; Vorren 1985a: 75–76). He also brought two large pieces of wood back to Tromsø Museum from the Storfossen site that had been found in the southwest corner of the wall, one of which has cut marks indicating a notching construction, and one with a pointy end, possibly a pole of some sort (fig. 36). At the Geaimmjeávri site, Vorren mentions a rather deep depression in the centre of the structure as a possible posthole (Vorren 1972a). A substantial amount of half–rotted wood was found underneath the rocks in the floor during excavations in 2013 (Spangen 2016a). In the 19th century, the cairn in the middle of the Nedrevatn 1 structure was described as a hollow pyramid of stone with a distinct cavity where “the actual idol” was thought to have stood (Friis 1871a: 140). Friis suggested the cavities and the remains of wood could be the former presence of a wooden idol like the vaerromuorra mentioned above. It should, of course, be considered that such installations may have varied in shape and constitution. According to a 16th century source, the Sami would worship a red cloth hoisted on a pole or spear (Magnus 1976[1555], 3:2). Other wood features at Sami offering sites were so–called liet–morak (luohtemuorrat), relatively thin rods with carved crosses and lines that were smeared with the blood of the sacrificed animal, and spits used to roast the offering animals (Leem 1975[1767]: 429, 438, pl. LXXXVI, Mebius 1968: 69). Whatever the purpose, the former presence of some kind of larger wood pole or log that has later rotted or been removed could explain why the central cairns and mounds that occur in the circular offering sites are often described as “disturbed”, e.g. at the sites of Biekkanoaivi (64), Láhpojohka (74) and Munkefjorden (58) (Vorren 1955a, 1966, 1976a; Vorren and Eriksen 1993:66).
4.10 Other finds

Very few finds have been made in type 1 structures apart from animal bones and pieces of wood. Among the finds from Vorren’s investigation at the Beajalgøjai site, Karasjok (64), was a small, flat piece of bone fitted with two holes. It was the only find here that was visibly worked into something specific. A bone comb now lost, but drawn by Nordvi (Hansen 1907, fig. 161), has been suggested to be from a grave within the stone structure at Fugleberget/ Čiesti (48) (Kleppe 1974: 63), but Nordvi himself only mentions a previously-unopened grave outside this structure and non inside it (Nordvi n.d.). Combs are not frequent in Sami graves or at offering sites (e.g. Schanche 2000: 208). An antler spoon has allegedly been found in the structure at Gárggoluoppal, Kautokeino, Finnmark (72), by a local man who played there as a child. The exact find context is unclear and the spoon was probably lost (Buljo 1997, cf. pers. comm. T–H Buljo 20 Sep 2012). Antler spoons have been very common in Sami contexts (Skandfer 1997). According to Qvigstad, it was tradition that men offered antler spoons by Vuoidasgálló offering site in the Budalen valley in inner Troms, while women would make offerings of sinew thread and red shoe bands (Qvigstad 1926: 350). Antler spoons have been found on Swedish offering sites (Manker 1957: 49–50) and the removal of antler spoons from offering sites is a repeated theme in Sami stories, emphasizing that anyone who takes them away falls ill and will have to return them (Qvigstad 1926: 342, 348–349; Qvigstad 1928: 516–517, 520–521). According to Leem, this had apparently not prevented the chopping up of antlers from the islet today known as Offerholmen in Øvреватн, Porsanger, to make antler spoons and decorative mountings for walking sticks (No.: stavknapper), but it is unclear if he based this on finds he had made on the islet or some local information (Leem 1975[1767]: 439). None of the preserved Sami antler spoons in museum collections seem to be from offering sites, though their find contexts are not always described in detail (cf. Skandfer 1997).

An interesting find was made in the structure at Karlebotn, Nesseby (56), sometime before the mid–19th century; a stone with some inscribed letters, which was handed over to Nordvi who sent it to the Antiquities Collection in Kristiania (today the Museum of Cultural History, MCH, in Oslo). Nordvi interpreted the letters as “the Russian word Doter (dog)” (Nordvi n.d., my translation). In the catalogue the description is transcribed as “DOML” and translated to “house”, “home” (C8544). However, none of these are correctly spelled Russian words (pers. med. K. V. Birkelund 18 Mar 2013), nor have I found anything similar in the overviews of recorded 19th–20th centuries Russian–Norwegian pidgin language of this area (Broch 1927, 1930). Unfortunately, the stone itself was reported to be lost from the museum collection by 1929, but it is described as being about 68 cm long (“1 1/4 Al. Lang”) with an almost square cross section. Nordvi describes the stone slab as bro-
ken to the right of the word, so that it could be we only have the first of several letters or a sentence (Nordvi n.d.), but this does not make sense with any Russian word either (pers. med. K. V. Birkelund 18 Mar 2013). In his original letter to the Oldsaksamlingen, Nordi records the inscription with a mix of Cyrillic and Latin letters, indicating some confusion on his or the original carvers side. The MCH catalogue states that the inscription seems rather new and probably much younger than the stone structure where it was found. Still, the presence of a (partly) Cyrillic inscription in the stone circle in Karlebotn is intriguing. A stone with an unreadable and possibly Cyrillic inscription has also been found by house grounds close to Oardujávri on the Varanger Peninsula (pers. comm. B. Olsen 12 Jul 2016).

Among the more recent finds in suggested circular offering sites is a lead rifle projectile among the stones in the middle of the Geaimmejávri structure (63). The calibre indicates a 20th century date for this (pers. comm. F. Lindgjerdet 11 Oct 2013, M. Samdal 1 mar 2014). There are annual elk hunts in the area, so the find of a projectile is, as such, not surprising, but the location quite far into the ground and between the rocks in the very middle of the stone structure is more intriguing. The bullet was not deformed, but the wear marks indicate that it had been fired, possibly suggesting it got there by accident.

It is presumed that the find of a small piece of wood with an attached rusty metal fitting and nails in the Biekkanoaivi structure (57) during surveys in 2013 is the result of the more recent use of the stone walls to store hay from the adjacent bogs (Spangen 2015a: 17). The finds in the Gálggojávri structure (117) mentioned above consisted of eighteen coins, fourteen of which dated from the 1970s to the 1990s, one to 1929, one to 1953, one to 1961, and one to the 2000s (the exact year is not distinguishable). In addition, there was a silver necklace and a pendant (this was still not oxidised), a plastic die and a copper alloy ring (Spangen 2016b). The implications of these very recent objects are discussed further in Chapters 5.6 and 6.

4.11 Radiocarbon datings

A range of material from type 1 structures has been radiocarbon dated within this project, while datings commissioned by Vorren have been retrieved from the National Laboratory of Radiocarbon Dating (NTNU, Trondheim) and recalibrated with OxCal 4.2. A summary of these datings and calibrations can be found in table 10. There are, however, several source–critical issues to this timeframe: the contexts in question are not closed and repeated use and repairs could easily impact the chronology. Dating of conifer tree such as pine is unreliable because of the “old wood effect” and possible re-use of timber. The sample from a deteriorated piece of wood found in the Geaimmejávri structure (63) (Ua–44725) should therefore be treated with
Table 10. Radiocarbon dates from type 1 structures. ØVA – Ørnulv Vorren’s private archive, material not yet catalogued at time of sampling, L – ethnographic collections, Tromsø museum, Ts – archaeological collection, Tromsø museum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>Mus.no.</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Dating</th>
<th>Cal. 2σ</th>
<th>Lab.no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>ØVA, bag 6</td>
<td>Beajalgŋai</td>
<td>Canine (Canidae)</td>
<td>804±35 AD 1210–1280</td>
<td>Ua–48764</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Worked pine</td>
<td>682 ±30 AD 1260–1390</td>
<td>Ua–44725</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>L1346a</td>
<td>Storfossen</td>
<td>Pine log</td>
<td>625 ±32 AD 1280–1400</td>
<td>Ua–47127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Ts. 6436a</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta</td>
<td>Birch bark</td>
<td>615 ±33 AD 1290–1410</td>
<td>Ua–47130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Ts. 6438a</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta</td>
<td>Birch bark</td>
<td>572 ±34 AD 1290–1430</td>
<td>Ua–47131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>ØVA, bag 4</td>
<td>Beajalgŋai</td>
<td>Sheep (Ovis aries)</td>
<td>600±37 AD 1305–1410</td>
<td>Ua–48765</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>L919a</td>
<td>Biekkanoaivi</td>
<td>Whale</td>
<td>532±34 AD 1310–1450</td>
<td>Ua–47128</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Angsnes</td>
<td>Charcoal</td>
<td>420 ±75 AD 1398–1647</td>
<td>T–9935</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>FX1819</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Mammal (Mammalia)</td>
<td>408±41 AD 1420–1640</td>
<td>Ua–48761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>bag 5</td>
<td>Beajalgŋai</td>
<td>Canine (Canidae)</td>
<td>390±32 Ad 1440–</td>
<td>Ua–48763</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>bag 4</td>
<td>Beajalgŋai</td>
<td>Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</td>
<td>390±35 AD 1440–1640 Ua–48766</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Ts. 13804–5</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Mammal (Mammalia)</td>
<td>376±33 AD 1440–1640 Ua–48762</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>L1325</td>
<td>Láhpojohka</td>
<td>Canine (Canidae)</td>
<td>379 ±32 AD 1440–1640 Ua–47077</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Ts. 13804–9</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</td>
<td>359±32 AD 1450–1640 Ua–48758</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>Ts. 13804–40</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Mammal (Mammalia)</td>
<td>356±32 AD 1450–1640 Ua–48759</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>L1325</td>
<td>Láhpojohka</td>
<td>Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</td>
<td>357±35 AD 1450–1640 Ua–47126</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>L432c</td>
<td>Nedrevatn 1</td>
<td>Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</td>
<td>322±32 AD 1470–1645 Hela–3361</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>FX1797</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Arctic fox (Vulpes lagopus)</td>
<td>224±32 AD 1630–1960 Ua–48760</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>FT278</td>
<td>Gálggojávri</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>67±33 AD 1680–1930 Ua–48768</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>6435a</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta 1</td>
<td>Birch bark</td>
<td>162 ±32 AD 1660–1960 Ua–47129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>Ts. 13805–4</td>
<td>Gálggojávri</td>
<td>Reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</td>
<td>119±0,6 pMC Modern Ua–48767</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

caution, while a sample from the outer tree rings of one of the rather massive logs Vorren brought back from the Storfossen structure (71) (Ua–47127) may be considered more accurate. The pieces of bone found by Biekkanoaivi (57) are too small, modified (cut) and eroded to decide the whale species (pers. comm. A–K Hufthammer 12 Apr 2013), which means it is not possible to know in what area or at what depth the dated individual has harvested its food. This may have implications for the marine reservoir effect, which varies according to local or regional conditions and between
surface and deep water. How much these factors affect whales along the Atlantic coast at different times and whether it depends on the latitude is debated. Suggested calibrations for 19th century whale skeletons vary between three and 380 years (Mangerud et al. 2006). It is thus difficult to know whether this radiocarbon date is accurate. The marine reservoir effect is also relevant for the dog bone from Bejalgŋai (64) that was dated to cal AD 1210–1280 (Ua–48763), since the animal apparently lived off mainly aquatic foods (Fjellström 2015b). Like for the whale, the range of this effect is impossible to decide accurately because we do not know what marine species the dog fed on. It is possible that it is up to 2–300 years younger than the calibrated date indicates but also that the dating is affected with only a few decades. The sheep from the same locality also had a large intake of freshwater aquatic food, only 50% terrestrial food and a minor intake of marine foods. The freshwater reservoir effect in northern Sweden has been proven to be very low, and it is likely that the effect is similarly insignificant in inner Finnmark. The small intake of marine foods is unlikely to have any major impact on the dating, thus the dating of the sheep is considered to be quite accurate (Spangen and Fjellström forthcoming).

Despite these issues, and despite the fact that the samples are from a variety of materials and structures and collected by different researchers at different times, the datings of the structures discussed here are surprisingly homogenous. Several of the datings stretching back to the 13th century have to be deemed uncertain, but the dating of birch bark found deposited in the floor in Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) to AD 1290–1410, must be considered more accurate and serve as a terminus post quem for this structure. This makes it more likely that other dates stretching back this far are correct, and at least some of the other structures may have been constructed in the late 13th century. The osteological material, on the other hand, is predominantly, though not exclusively, dated to AD 1450–1650. This makes them appear uniform, but it is of course possible that individual samples date to different ends of this calibrated time span, which could mean that depositions were made over 200 years at least.

Some later dates are intriguing. The reindeer bones in the Gálggojávri structure (117) may be explained by a modern offering tradition in the late 20th century (see Chapter 5.6), while a fragment of a fox bone from Geaimmejávri (63) dated to Cal AD 1630–1960 (Ua–48759) is more difficult to interpret. If it is from AD 1630, it could be contemporaneous with other bone finds. A later dating could indicate more recent animal depositions or that stray bones have found their way into the context with scavengers or other taphonomic processes.

In comparison, the types 2 and 3 structures do not have sufficient or accurate enough radiocarbon datings to draw any general conclusions. Vorren found a piece of wood when investigating one of the many structures in the Kramvik/Grunnesbukt area, more specifically in Grunnesbukt, Vardø (26). It
was the end of a rod or stick with a remaining diameter of 3 cm which was dated to 145 ±50 BP (T–10218), originally calibrated to younger than AD 1665 (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 149). A new calibration indicates it could go back to AD 1440, but also up to modern time. Hence, the dating is not very specific and the remains are possibly very recent. The radiocarbon dating of a type 3 horseshoe–shaped structure by Finntjønnan, Midtre Gauldal, Sør–Trøndelag (see chapter 3.2), to c. AD 1470–1650 is performed on a sample of small traces of charcoal in generally very mixed soils. In any case these structures should probably be considered individually, since their diversity indicates that they include several cultural phenomena from different time periods.

As a collective result, the datings indicate that the larger structures in Finnmark and northern Troms were initially constructed and in use within the period cal AD 1210–1640, though perhaps most likely constructed in the 14th century. Some structures have apparently been subject to a prolonged use.

4.12 Interviews and oral traditions

As discussed and illustrated in several chapters above, Sami cultural heritage management has a slightly different point of departure than non–Sami cultural heritage management, which, among other things, has resulted in a focus on quite recent cultural heritage. The collection of traditions related to different parts of the landscape and to specific monuments or sites has been an important part of archaeological fieldwork in Sami areas. Therefore, it should be specifically noted that systematic interviews have not been part of this project, the way it has been in some more geographically–limited archaeological PhD projects in northern Norway (e.g. Barlindhaug 2012, 2013), as well as in larger registration projects in Lule and South Sami areas (e.g. Ljungdahl and Norberg 2012; Myrvoll and Evjen 2015). This would have been interesting in the present context too, but it was not possible within the scope of the project. I have, however, made continuous efforts to get in touch with relevant stakeholders at each site, whether local inhabitants or representatives for local museums or county and Sami parliament offices. At times I have sought out tradition bearers on the advice of these contacts, but my information is mostly gathered through regular conversations with people who live in or use the areas nearby relevant structures, and whom I have met during my surveys. Obviously, certain information, especially related to traditional beliefs and rituals, may not come up in a normal conversation and possibly even less likely when conversing with a non–Sami academic, southerner and outsider like myself. This status can be a barrier, though it may sometimes be an advantage too, because narrators tend to explain in more detail to outsiders, while Sami investigators are assumed to be fluent in
the cultural vocabulary. Nevertheless, I have not found many examples of current traditions about these sites. Instead, people tend to say they know nothing about them, which could of course be part of a tradition of secrecy (see chapter 6.5), though my general impression is that there are very few specific local traditions to record. The known examples are, of course, potentially important and should be noted.

The tradition related to the site at Beajalgjai in Karasjok (64) was discussed in Chapter 2.2.1 Kristian Nissen, who visited it in 1908, says he has not been successful in finding traditions about the use of the site, but that it was known among sedentary Sami in the area as an old offering site, and probably, he assumes, also among the reindeer herding Sami (Nissen 1928: 184). The early date of this recorded tradition is interesting, since it is less likely to have been inspired by scholarly interpretations. A more detailed, but much later, story says that the people in the area around Fugleberget/Čiesti in Nesseby (48) adopted a bear cub and let it grow up among them and even brought it with them when they were making offerings in the offering circle at this site. A noaidi on the other side of the fjord found this so abominable that he turned the bear into the giant stone block that now lies on the hilltop above the circular offering site and is called the Bear Stone (see fig. 15) (Schanche 1984). The story was first recorded in 1979 (The Sami Parliament 2004: 109); it is not included in early 20th century collections of myths and fairytales from the area (Qvigstad 1927), and the Bear Stone is not included in older sources listing offering sites in the area (such as Olsen 1910[c. 1715]). Instead, mid–19th century investigator Saxlund discusses a large, thin slab with a hole through it above the structure that someone had suggested it to be an old idol, a notion he discards (Saxlund 1853). It cannot be excluded that the story told in the 1970s had roots several generations back, but I judge it to be less relevant in terms of information about the actual use of this site in the Middle Ages. Instead, it should probably be considered a recent expression of the general tendency to make stories about prominent features and remains of past activities in our surroundings (cf. e.g. Burström 1993; Solli 1996b; Burström et al. 1997; Gazin–Schwartz and Holtorf 1999; Nilsen 2003; Myrvoll 2012b: 37–38). This is what is assumed in an evaluation by the Sami Parliament, though without denying that this conspicuous stone may well have had mythical connotations even in earlier times (The Sami Parliament 2004: 108–109).

A tradition from Nesseby relates to the Biekkanoaivi site (57), where a local man (born c. 1945) told me he had been taught by his uncle to throw berries into the stone structure when returning from berry picking in the area. From the way his uncle had told him about it, he reckoned it was not only done by the uncle, but also some other people, though he could not be sure if everyone at the time did this, or if this was only related to the Biekkanoaivi site or to other circular offering sites as well. In any case the practice was not labelled as an offering, as no one talked about offerings as such, it was just a
tradition. In my informant’s opinion this could perhaps be due to the conflicts that were aroused in relation to Christianisation. Interestingly, his uncle had also said that they had used the Biekkanoaivi site to store hay or grass from the surrounding bogs and wetlands. It was protected by the wall, and they could go to one place and collect it with a sledge in wintertime (pers. comm. 2013). Apparently there was no conflict between these practices.

A family in inner Finnmark could tell me that an older family member had been extremely eager to protect a nearby site from developments in the area in the mid–20th century, saying it was “not to be messed with”. There was some uncertainty among the living family members if this had been related to the notion of an offering site or some graves, and also exactly where these were located, but it is likely to concern a site of a type 1 structure that was at one point endangered by a certain development project. The family moved into the area in the mid–19th century, but they were very certain the information was “old knowledge” and not from “newspapers or such” (pers. comm. 2013, the informants want to remain anonymous). I have otherwise been given various suggestions about the use and history of the large type 1 structures from local Sami people, including storage for fish, house grounds and remains of the extensive German activity in northern Norway during World War II, demonstrating the same uncertainty and creativity in some Sami contexts as in non–Sami contexts when it comes to explaining unfamiliar remains of the past. An interesting information from much further south comes from a village in Tjeldsund, Nordland, it is said that there was a circular offering site in the mountains here, but he who saw it would never find it again (Myrvoll 2009).

As discussed in Chapter 2, it is uncertain how the mid–19th century interpretation of these sites as offering sites came across, from scholarly or local Sami conceptions. Regardless of the potential Sami origin of the information in the mid–19th century, the revival of the explanation in the mid–20th century has undoubtedly had substantial effect on distributing the concept of stone circles as Sami offering sites. Whatever the relationship between influential professional or local voices and any older traditions about the building and use of the structures in question, the fact that there are stories and emotions related to these sites today has implications for the interpretation and categorisation of the material. I will return to this discussion in Chapters 5.6 and 6.

4.13 Results and discussion

The analyses above have resulted in a division of the material in this study into three main categories of structures: type 1 structures are made from either clearing an area in a scree to form clearly distinguishable walls or by building substantial walls above the soil surface in rocky terrains. The struc-
tures have an inner diameter of more than 400 cm and current walls reaching at least 40 cm in height and 75 cm in width. They are most often situated in sloping or gently sloping terrains. Many have discernible angular inner shapes when measured or seen from above. The walls can have demarcated vertical or inward-sloping inner sides. Finds of wood and animal bones can be expected. Some have central cairns or mounds.

Type 2 include (mostly) smaller and less meticulously built circular stone structures, such as stone circles of one to three layers of stones or circles of a few singular stones, which are admittedly definable as stone circles, but only included in the category of “circular offering sites” through a superficial comparison with the type 1 structures in Finnmark and Troms. Type 3 include the more arbitrary structures with seemingly little or no likeness with type 1 structures, such as semicircular, rectangular, rhombic or horseshoe-shaped stone or turf walls, which have been suggested to be Sami offering or ritual sites with direct or indirect references to the type 1 sites. These types are consequently mainly defined by being “not type 1” and include very diverse constructions and features that are probably the result of a variation of cultural practices.

The type 1 structures seem to have the distribution first noted by Vorren (e.g. 1985) with an overriding majority found in Finnmark and northern Troms counties, possibly extending to the Kola Peninsula. The distribution may reflect natural and historical borders between predominantly Norse and Sami occupation areas in the southwest or a Sami regionality, but the borders can also be associated with the medieval shared Norwegian–Novgorod taxation area, apart from a few possible but not confirmed examples along the coast and similar structures in southern Norway. The concentrations of confirmed or likely type 1 structures in the inner fjords and inland may demarcate important Sami habitation areas, while also showing a certain connection with areas that had recorded marketplaces in early modern times.

The Geaimmejávri (63) excavation showed that there were no subterranean structures. Animal bone finds were concentrated on the surface and in the very upper layers of the rocky grounds, while some bones further down may have fallen down in between the rocks or have been deposited through later disturbances (including previous investigations). Species included reindeer, arctic fox, fox, as well as undefined large mammals, canine and bird. In the Gálggojávri structure (117) there were only modern finds, further described in Chapter 5.6. The excavation here showed that the walls are meticulously built on an artificial brink around the inner area, in this case around a clearly natural mound.

I consider the type 1 structures to have been built in a certain way and so similarly in a vast geographical area because the builders had learned a correct way of constructing such installations, probably according to practical considerations, but also to specific cultural purposes and connotations (cf. Bourdieu 1977). This may be related to certain material aspects and a
knowledge about how to build in scree or more esoteric knowledge about the religious or ritual connotations of certain terrains or building materials. This is typically knowledge that is transferred from one generation to the next through participation and situated learning, which has also been called “incorporated learning” (Connerton 1989) or, with special consideration for the role of materiality, “habit memory” (Bergson 2004; cf. B. Olsen 2010). The building of these stone walls can be compared with the long–lasting Sami tradition for constructing graves in screes, which was also done during the Middle Ages and early modern period. As Saxlund has already observed (1852), there are similarities between the way the walls of the type 1 structures in Varanger and some grave chambers are built, but, in my opinion, even the bigger graves in the screes in Varanger cannot be said to incorporate the same principles as the type 1 structures. The latter are apparently planned to have an angular shape, placed in a certain terrain that is preferably sloping, possibly incorporating wood superstructures and generally appearing more complex and standardised in terms of size and wall construction. These factors indicate that the walls were something more or other than mere limitations of offering sites related to burials or other religious rituals. It is peculiar that the type 1 structures apparently occur quite simultaneously and suddenly in a large area, though still with substantial distances between their distributions. They subsequently go out of use after a relatively short period of time without leaving much recorded knowledge, memories or traditions. In summary, the type 1 structures seem to reflect a quite time and place–specific activity or way of doing things.

I may have excluded too many stone circles from type 1, as it is of course possible that several of the 161 structures in my material are actually expressions of the same cultural phenomenon despite the morphological differences. For instance, certain simpler stone circles could be later occurrences with a similar or identical intended purpose and function, made as “citations” based on visual impressions of the type 1 structures rather than actual knowhow. Notwithstanding the source–critical issues of the find context, the mentioned late dating of a wooden rod found in one of the smaller stone structure in Grunnesbukt, Vardø, could indicate a use of the stone structures here hundreds of years after the larger structures in inner Varanger were built. Nevertheless, for purely material reasons these often loosely gathered stone enclosures could not have functioned, practically or rhetorically, in exactly the same way as the apparently high and rather massive stone and wood walls of the type 1 structures.

Even if the inner angular shape in the type 1 structures can be difficult to discern and also depend on subjective understandings of what constitutes a “round” feature, I think an angular shape has some significance for the use and understanding of these structures. One practical reason for the shape was probably that the walls supported quite close–fitting wood superstructures that were difficult to make as an entirely circular build. Deteriorating logs
and other rotting woodworks have been found on and inside the walls on several sites, in some cases described as remains of a notched structure (see fig. 36) (Friis 1871a: 140; Nissen 1928: 185; Vorren 1970b, 1972b; Spangen 2013b, 2016a). It is likely that more angular stone structures have had the same kind of wood superstructures that have later rotted away (Vorren 1985a: 71–72) or been reused for firewood or building materials once the structures had gone out of use, especially in areas where wood has been scarce, like Varanger.

A valid question in this context is why an offering site would need such a massive delineation. A distinct angular inner form seems unnecessary for a mere delimitation around a siedi and the addition of a log wall or fence would likely result in the siedi and offering site being neither visible nor reachable. Anders Huggert’s suggestion (Huggert 2000: 66) that an angular shape could be inspired by Sami houses seem less likely, as the angular house ground plans are typical for more southern Sami communities and not found in Finnmark. It could also be questioned why a house–like structure on an offering site would be built in an entirely different fashion than other local houses, which were mainly constructed from turf and wood, while also omitting such features as an entrance.

A need for such seclusion could, of course, be due to historical circumstances, either from an external danger or because of an unstable internal socio–political situation. It has been suggested that these structures were Sami symbolic reactions against intensified Christianisation and colonisation processes and the accompanying Christian appropriation of Sami (sacred) landscapes through the building of churches, monasteries and chapels (Olsen 1991b, 2002; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 217–218). However, assuming these structures were constructed in the 13th, 14th century, or even as late as the 15th century, in inner fjords and the inland, this signalling effect would have been less discernible for the non–Sami population and clergy that at this point mainly resided on the outer coast. Trade and taxation travels still went inland, and were also performed by Christian Russians, but the location of the type 1 structures on slopes, beneath cliffs, at the bottom of screes and hills or hidden between moraines is also less prominent than could have been expected if they were meant to be markers in the landscape for uninitiated travellers.

It may have been that these specific offering sites or sieiddit were walled in because they were in particular danger of being destroyed by some external or internal enemies, or that they were used to gain, exercise and display a (sacred) power to prevent or give access to the holy sites (cf. Bell 1992: 206; Fogelin 2007: 65). The occurrence of such an idea on a local level may of course rapidly have spread to other local communities. However, I still find it difficult to believe that, throughout a vast geographical area, this would only be a relevant approach to one relatively small group of offering sites in
particular, preferably situated in rocky, sloping terrains usually with little to otherwise distinguish the site.

While the type 1 structures are distributed throughout the large area of Finnmark and northern Troms, the clustering of sites on a local level is also somewhat strange considering an offering site interpretation. I have previously questioned the apparent clustering of at least 10 stone circles within an area of 2 km$^2$ in Kramvik and Grunnesbukt, Vardø (Spangen 2013a), but following the categorisation suggested here, none of these are currently considered type 1 structures. The frequency further into the fjord, with six comparable structures on a stretch of 7 km between Fuglebergbukta and Klubbnasen, Nesseby, could, however, be similarly questioned. There may be a relatively high occurrence of Sami offering sites in certain areas, especially if we include larger “official” offering sites, inconspicuous “private” offering sites and offerings at occupation sites. Yet, suggesting a danger or power–related explanation for the restricted access, such a frequency of presumably collectively–used fenced–in offering sites within a rather limited area would be at least surprising. In addition, the distribution on the north side of the inner Varanger fjord is quite interesting. The northern shore also exhibits a unique amount of scree graves, potentially suggesting a particularly large population, though the scree burial tradition here stretches over at least 2000 years and consequently many generations. It is, however, interesting to note that the rather well–explored areas on the southern shore have a number of scree graves and traces of intensive habitation from the same time period, but no “circular offering sites” or comparable delineations, which could perhaps have been expected if the stone enclosures were remains of a regional tradition for demarcating certain offering sites. On the other hand, it is obvious that this is related to the availability of suitable landscape and material, as the south side of the fjord has a different geology and lacks the massive slab screes that dominate the northern shore.

Apart from the distinct building technique and peculiar distribution, there are finds in the type 1 structures that may indicate they are something other than delineated offering sites. The osteological assemblages include some animals that are not very common in Sami offering contexts, though it is of course possible that fox, wolverine and dog for some reason were particularly relevant for offerings at these sites in the given period of time. There is ample evidence for the importance of such animals as reindeer, fish and bear in other Sami offering contexts, but the choice of animals seem to have regional differences, and it could sometimes be more random. Written sources report that the colour of the animal could be more important than the actual species in some situations (Mebius 1968: 51). It is also described that the god or spirit itself instructs what animal should be offered via the symbols on the holy drum, in dreams or by having a particular animal present itself at the offering site (Kildal 1945[c. 1730]: 96; Mebius 1968: 48). In these cases, the species offered to the same spirit or power on similar occasions could
apparently diverge from event to event. At the type 1 sites, it rather seems that there is a consistent peculiar combination of species. In addition, the lack of antler finds, which are otherwise very common on Sami offering sites (e.g. Tornæus 1983[1672]: 28), could question the offering site interpretation, despite the suggestion that this is related to the antlers’ association with different forces and gods (Schanche 2000: 284). There may be very practical reasons for the consistent absence of antlers, with only a few exceptions, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

As described in Chapter 2, there is a strange lack of mention of circular offering sites in early written sources. There is the obvious source–critical aspect of the time that has passed since the initial use, but considering the remaining traditions among the Sami in northern Norway about other old offering and sacred sites (e.g. Myrvoll 2011; Jernsletten 2003, 2009), it is also somewhat peculiar that oral traditions relating to these quite conspicuous sites are relatively scarce. This may have several reasons, relating both to traditions of secrecy and to the lack of systematic recording of such specific information in this area. However, local traditions are not referred to in either older written sources or the extensive compilations of Sami myths and folklore collected by Friis and Qvigstad either (Friis 1871a; Qvigstad 1927, 1928, 1929a, 1929b), apart from a completely different explanation for the Munkefjord site (58) that I will return to in Chapter 5. The few examples of local traditions I have come across could be partly inspired by the scholarly interpretations of the 20th century or even back to the 19th century, while the circulation of ideas in printed sources is easier to follow (cf. Chapter 2), the circulation of concepts in more informal forms is hard to track. In whichever direction the ideas were flowing, it seems that the local knowledge about the sites from the mid–20th century onwards has been strongly influenced by the scholarly interpretations, through informal interaction with researchers, publications about local or regional history and what is taught in local schools (e.g. Schanche 1993a; Antonsen and Bruström 2002).

While my discussion of the available archaeological and ethnographic evidence cannot positively disprove the offering site interpretation of type 1 structures, it does show that there are several reasons to question it and to explore other alternatives.
5 Wolf traps in disguise? Introducing a new theory

Since recognizing the inconsistencies of the traditional offering site interpretation of the structures defined here as type 1 (see chapter 4), various other hypotheses have been evaluated in the present project, tentatively relating the structures to such functions and activities as housing, burials, storage, preparation of hunting produce, falcon catching facilities or traps. The osteological evidence, the size and details of the constructions and their topographical positioning has led to the conclusion that only the latter, which has not previously been considered for these structures, is a plausible alternative explanation. There is substantial evidence to reinforce this as a valid hypothesis, which I will discuss in the rest of this chapter.

I would claim that the mere size and solid construction of the walls suggests that they were made for something more than a symbolic demarcation. Reconsidering the offering site theory opens up for more pragmatic explanations, viz. that the substantial walls were in fact built to keep something in, and it appears that if anything was to enter the structures in their original form, with higher stone walls and, at least partly, even wood superstructures, it would have to be from above. These features are given a logical explanation if the walls were built to trap and keep wolves and other predators in.

Stone enclosures as traps do not seem to be described in historical sources from northern Norway, but, as described in Chapter 3, written evidence is generally scarce in these areas in the High and Late Middle Ages. Above, I have argued that the early modern sources from around 1700 should have mentioned a ritual use of stone circles even if this use had ended by the time they were written. Similarly, a lack of a mention of stone enclosures as wolf hunting installations may be seen as peculiar and potentially opposed to this use. However, the specific focus in several of the 18th century sources in northern Norway on offering sites and religious rituals (cf. e.g. Olsen 1910 [c. 1715]; von Westen 1723; Kildal 1945 [c. 1730]; Jessen–Schardeboell 1767; Paus 1787) makes this comparison less straightforward. There are certainly sources treating more mundane aspects too, such as the description of topography, population, economy, flora and fauna, tax lists, court rulings, etc. (cf. e.g. Smith 1928; Brendel and Solberg 1938; Lilienskiold 1942, 1943, 1945 [c. 1700]; Leem 1975 [1767]), and I will return to those that describe relevant aspects. However, while there is no doubt that wolf was
hunted on a regular basis, and while many sources describe past and present installations for the important hunt of wild reindeer, descriptions of the hunt for fur predators, and especially wolf, are usually far less detailed, if mentioned at all. In any case, ethnographic studies indicate a much greater variation in past wolf hunting methods than written sources account for, all depending on the situation, season, local adaptation of the wolves and terrain in question (Pluskowski 2006a: 101).

5.1 Historical and ethnographic descriptions of wolf traps

Pit fall traps of various sizes and designs have been used all over the world from the stone age to the present for catching animals in all sizes, including all sorts of predators (Keyland 1906: 9; Laursen 1991: 249), and pitfall traps for wolves have been used at least since antiquity. Xenophon describes pitfalls with a central pole and a wooden fence that lions, leopards, lynxes, panthers, bears and other predators had to jump over to get to the goat on the pillar in the middle. According to Oppianus, the Romans used similar pits with stone walls around and a lamb on a mound in the middle. Pitfall traps for predators are mentioned in the Langobardian law and in hunting literature from the High Middle Ages in Spain, Italy and France (cf. Laursen 1991: 249). According to French 14th century count Gaston Phébus, it was a disgusting hunting form for low and simple people (Phébus 1971: 258, 260), but between AD 1500 and 1700, when wolves were a scourge in Europe, traps were widely used for efficient extermination (Laursen 1991: 249). The most detailed descriptions of construction and use of wolf traps in Scandinavia are found in 19th century hunting manuals (Swederus 1832; Asbjørnsen 1840; Broman 1842; Hahr 1881; Hahr 1882). According to the manuals, the pitfall traps were to be dug about 3 m into the ground and have a 3x3 m beam frame aligned with the ground surface. The inside was panelled with carved rods or dry–masoned from large smooth rocks. The floor would be covered with split logs or pebbles. Another version was circular stone pit falls of about 220 cm in diameter (Asbjørnsen 1840: 13–14), but the shape of such could also be hexagonal or octagonal (Lie 2003: 10). The pits were covered with boards and turf, leaving a smaller circular or octagonal opening in the middle that would be covered with thin branches and straw. A pole was dug into the ground in the middle of the pitfall and surrounded with rocks to stabilise it. A circular board would be attached on top for the bait to sit on. The bait could be various live or dead animals depending on the preferred catch: carcasses would attract both fox and wolf; ducks were used to entice foxes in particular, but could also catch wolves; dogs were ideal bait.
for wolves (fig. 37) (e.g. Asbjørnsen 1840: 14–15: 25, Broman 1842: 25, Hahr 1882: 25) due to a well–documented wolf aggression towards dogs (e.g. Kojola and Kuittinen 2002; Pluskowski 2006a: 73–74). Six days, or ten at the most, was calculated as the time needed for building a trap, and with 20 days’ work you could do everything from cutting the trees to removing superfluous soil (Laursen 1991: 260). Winter was the preferred hunting season (e.g. Asbjørnsen 1840, Broman 1842: 39, Hahr 1881: 304), both because the fur is at its best during this season and because the wolves were more likely to approach human settlements during times of scarcity of prey and when livestock was kept closer to the houses (Asbjørnsen 1840: 41, Pluskowski 2006a: 102).

The standardised instructions in the hunting manuals aimed to let anyone construct a wolf trap, but in reality such installations had to be adjusted to local conditions and local wolf habitats and behaviour (cf. Pluskowski 2006a: 101). Even following the template, it would be more difficult for an inexperienced farmer to build an efficient trap than for an experienced hunter (Niessen 2012: 54). On the other hand, many Scandinavian farmers are likely to have been experienced hunters too, who quite possibly knew more about the behaviour of local predators and how to catch them than the writers of various manuals in the 19th century, which may explain the abundant variation in trap installations. In northern Sweden, wolf pitfall traps were in use until the 19th and even into the 20th century (Henriksson 1978: 20), but their shapes deviated from those set out in hunting manuals: for instance, the pits were only 2 m deep, usually with inward sloping sides, and sometimes with a high inwards sloping fence surrounding them. Pitfalls with fences
were regarded as better than those without enclosures, because the wolves would jump the fence before becoming aware of the trap. Sometimes a self-closing trapdoor was used instead of brushwood to cover the opening of the pit. The bait could be a live hen, cockerel, dog or goat, which was placed directly onto the wood cover or on a pole in the middle of the pit, but it could also be tied to the pole at ground level, i.e. at the bottom of the pit. Some pitfalls were surrounded by “a broken circle of large, round stones”, though their function is not stated (Henriksson 1978: 48). Early 19th century Sami in Åsele, Västerbotten, Sweden, used to build wolf traps that looked like notched timber houses with a hole in the top, where they would place a “useless” reindeer calf or other animal as bait (Drake 1918: 6–7). Pitfall traps with ducks, or sometimes small dogs or other bait, were used in Tavastland in inland southern Finland in the 18th century, allegedly catching as much as 8–12 wolves at a time on some occasions (Hellens and Bonsdorff 1782: 4). There are also records of pitfall traps with surrounding wood fences from Siikainen, Finland (Schvindt 1905: 13, fig. 92; Lagercrantz 1933: 70–71), probably similar to those recorded in northern Sweden (see above).

Another popular wolf-trapping device featuring a fence was the pen trap. Pen traps with bait were mainly constructed for wolves, although they were also used for catching foxes and other animals. Once inside, there were different ways of killing the wolves, whether catching them in a pit fall, with a net or simply shooting them (Keyland 1906: 9–10). Elaborate pen constructions are described in the southern Scandinavian hunting manuals (e.g. Asbjørnsen 1840: 28ff, Broman 1842: 26, Hahr 1881: 303ff), but the ethnographically-documented wolf pen traps in the Inari Sami area of northern Finland differ from these by being quite simple constructions of notched, inwards-leaning log fences around a small natural hill or mound. A live reindeer or sheep would be tied down on this mound as bait. A few logs were placed as a ladder from the ground up to the top of the fence to aid the predators into the trap (fig. 38). Once inside they could not get out because of the angle of the walls. The wolves are said to have been shot as they jumped into the trap, meaning that the hunters must have been hiding nearby, possibly in an attempt to save the bait. Sometimes as many as nine wolves were caught at the same time using such a structure (Itkonen 1948: 63–64). The last wolf pen trap in the Inari area was built in 1870 and remains visible today as a nine-cornered timber construction about 17 m in diameter\textsuperscript{41}, situated in rocky terrain between two steep slopes in a generally marshy area (Joona 2011, cf. also Nickul 1933, fig. 272:17). It was apparently in use during wintertime, as the log walls are reported to have been supplied with snow embankments on the outside. No wolf was ever trapped in this particular pen, only foxes and wolverines. This kind of trap was alleged-

\textsuperscript{41} During summer 2014 a very large wolf pen trap measuring 50 m in diameter was found in Tsiuttajoki, Inari (pers. comm. H. Havas 19 Aug 2016).
ly used by the East Sami in Pasvik, Finnmark, too (Itkonen 1948: 63–64). However, a tradition collected in the early 20th century describes another interesting type of wolf trap in the East.

![Fig. 38. Wolf pen trap in Inari, northern Finland, measuring c. 17 m in diameter. Itkonen 1948.](image)

Sami area of Neiden (Sør–Varanger, Finnmark) (Qvigstad 1927: 535, 537), which I will return to below.

### 5.2 Archaeological investigations of wolf traps

Today, old wolf pitfall traps are usually only visible as depressions in the ground, possibly with parts of stone walls showing if they were stone clad, if these have not collapsed (Jacobsen and Follum 1997: 184). It can be difficult to identify such constructions and to separate them from other types of monuments. Quite a large number of pitfall traps are known from southern and middle Sweden, most probably dating to the time after a 18th century Swedish decree about mandatory construction of parish traps (Laursen 1991: 260). Not very many old wolf traps are officially recorded in Norway. The ones that have been noticed include both stone built (e.g. Nesset, Møre og Romsdal) and timbered pits (e.g. Isi, Bærum, Akerhus) (Walhovd 1984; Lie 2003). Vorren has suggested that remains of three particularly large pitfalls at Cimmanoaivi, Meskelv and Bigganjárga, Nesseby, could be traps for
predators (Vorren 1955c; Schanche 1988, pers. comm. A. Schanche 19 Aug 2014), and there is another singular large pitfall on the heath Stormelen in Neiden, Sør–Varanger (Vorren 1944: 2), which should potentially be included among these. The Nesseby sites are situated on sandy moraines on high points, two of them on hill tops, and they look like usual pitfall traps for reindeer, only larger (Spangen 2015a). None of them have been excavated, but the interpretation seems quite likely.

In general, very few wolf traps have been archaeologically investigated in Scandinavia, but one investigation in a pitfall at Vakkerbakken, Stor–Elvdal, Hedmark, uncovered an impaling pole made from spruce that was allegedly radiocarbon dated to AD 1400–1640 (Barth and Barth 1989:330), though a new calibration of the quoted date BP, 1485±125 (T–1419) gives a date to cal AD 252–774 (2σ, OxCal 4.2, Ramsey 2009). A wood–clad wolf pitfall with a midpole for the bait at Isi, Bærum, Akershus, is dated to younger than AD 1630 (Walhovd 1984, cf. Laursen 1991: 262). Excavated wolf pitfall traps in Denmark have been dated to the 18th century and show the presence of pointed poles both along the walls and several in the centre of the pit (Laursen 1991: 254–258). Systematic investigations and excavations of wolf traps in Germany, whereof at least one could be dated to the 15th century, have given some very interesting results, such as a consistent presence of pot sherds. These are thought to be remains of ceramic vessels with food leftovers or offal used as smelly bait (Müller 1999: 187; Niessen 2012: 25–26, 28–29; Niessen 2015: 181). According to German written sources, bait in wolf traps could include living animals, such as ducks, sheep, lambs, geese or cats, which were tied or boarded up in the trap, as well as carrion, unusable parts of slaughtered animals or dead pets (Müller 1999: 194, cf. Niessen 2012: 59). In an excavated wolf trap in Ehningen, Baden–Württemberg, numerous bones from sheep, horses, pigs, cattle, deer, and what was most likely dog, were found. Most bones were from less exploitable parts of the animals, like the skull and feet, but some of the skeletons were almost complete. The bones were found at the bottom of the pit, suggesting the baits were placed there or that they fell into the trap with the predators when they were attacked. In any case the dead animals or bones were not removed but simply covered with a layer of soil. The amount suggests the pit was used quite frequently (Müller 1999: 186, Niessen 2012: 29, 60–61).

In 19th century guidelines, it is claimed that the wolf had to be lifted out of the trap and killed elsewhere in order not to scare other wolves away from the place (e.g. Asbjørnsen 1840: 16), but written sources in the 16th–18th century indicate that it was more usual that the wolf was killed in the trap (cf. Pluskowski 2006a: 110). Wolves are infamously omnivorous and have been known to even eat cadavers of other wolves (Johnsen 1923: 304), thus the smell of another wolf’s blood should not be a major problem. However, suspicious smells in general may have been an issue and it was recommended in manuals to spread farm animal dung around the trap or dragging smelly
carcasses around it, such as a half-fried cat (Asbjørnsen 1840: 80). The handling and killing of the wolf probably varied according to local beliefs and conditions, but finds of remains of wolves in investigated traps is uncommon.

5.3 Comparing wolf traps and “circular offering sites”

As described above, wolf traps are known to have had a variety of shapes, including hexagons, octagons and nonagons. They could be built from both wood and stone and they could include subterranean structures, fences on the surface, or a combination of these. Wood constructions included angular log fences, wood panelling and wooden covers, as well as mid-poles for the bait, sharpened wall poles and central impaling poles. Similarly, the type 1 structures have angular inner shapes, while remains of wood, reported “disturbed” mid cairns and possible postholes (Friis 1871a: 140; Vorren 1966, 1973a, 1976a, 1985a:75; Vorren and Eriksen 1993:66; Spangen 2016a) indicate a presence of centre poles or other wood implements that have deteriorated or possibly been removed. The smooth inner and sometime inwards leaning walls in these structures would prevent predators from climbing out, especially when these walls were higher and with an additional wood construction. The sloping outer walls would aid entrance into the trap, perhaps further aided by a simple log “bridge”. As mentioned, similar wood pen traps above ground have been in use in northern Finland until quite recently (Itkonen 1948; Joona 2011), but there are examples of possible wolf traps dug out in screes in Finland too that are even more relevant in the present context.

5.3.1 Ethnographic sources and morphology

In her master thesis *Tornion ja Keminmaan kulmikkaat kivikuopat – susikuoppia vai saamelaisten uhripaikkoja* (“Angular stone pits in Tornio and Kemi – wolf traps or Sami offering sites?”), Anne-Mari Saloranta discusses three angular stone structures in Tornio and Kemi in the innermost Gulf of Bothnia. These structures are situated in gently sloping screes and the walls are mainly built from removing stones from the middle of the structure. Two of them, on Rakanmäki (fig. 39), close to lake Laivajärvi in Tornio, and on Susihaudanmäki (fig. 40), 3 km to the north, have an inner pentagonal shape, while the third site, Jatulinlehdon in Kemi, has an almost square inner shape. All of them have straight inner walls and outer walls that slope or align with the surrounding terrain. The inner diameter is between 8 and 10 m, and the current inner height of the walls is between 1 and 2 m (Saloranta 2011).
Fig. 39. The Rakanmäki structure, Tornio, Finland. Ill.: A–M Saloranta.

Fig. 40. The Sushaudanmäki structure, Tornio, Finland. Ill.: A–M Saloranta.
These features obviously coincide with the type 1 structures discussed here, and I find it quite likely that these structures in Tornio and Kemi and the ones in northern Norway may have had similar uses. Tornio and Kemi are situated in today’s southernmost part of Finnish Lapland, which had a Sami population even in the Middle Ages and early modern period (Lehtola 1997:132; cf. Saloranta 2011:50).

In contrast to the Norwegian ritual explanation, these structures in Finland have been interpreted as wolf traps. This is based on a local tradition about the structure on Susihaudanmäki, which literally means “Wolf Trap Hill”. The interpretation has been disputed because the stone walls, as they appear today, would be insufficient to keep the wolves inside, and there are no signs of additional wooden walls in any of the Finnish structures. Of course, this negative evidence cannot exclude the possibility that they had wooden superstructures at some point (Saloranta 2011: 47), and this is even more likely considering the similarity with the northern Norwegian structures, in which preserved woodwork has indeed been found in at least three cases. There have, however, been some alternative local traditions related to the Susihaudanmäki structure too, i.e. claiming it has been a dumping ground for dead horses and other domestic animals, or that it is an old grave (cf. Saloranta 2011: 41). As described above, both historical and archaeological sources confirm that a variety of animals and animal remains were used as bait in wolf traps, including old horses (Niessen 2012: 60–61). Such a use in the Finnish structures may have resulted in bone heaps that have created these ideas about them being dumping grounds or graves. Of course, the wolf trap tradition has to be treated with the same caution, including the convincing place name, which may of course be of a more recent date. Unfortunately, none of the Finnish structures have been excavated or dated (Mäkivuoti 1988:35; Saloranta 2011: 68), so we have no further evidence as to which animals or animal parts were deposited there and when. Excavations could possibly reveal remains of the missing wood superstructure too.

In both the Rakanmäki and Jatulinlehto structures, some archaeologists have described smaller chambers in the stone walls, about 30 cm deep and 80–100 cm wide (Saloranta 2011: 45). These have been interpreted as bait chambers; small rooms with a wooden cover where a live dog would be placed (Hyötyniemi 1984; Saloranta 2011: 46 and ill. 18–19). There are sources that describe various ways of tentatively protecting live bait, for instance Finnish examples where the hunters have built a small room for the bait from rods or boards around the mid pole (Schvindt 1905: 13–14, fig. 96; Lagercrantz 1933: 83). This could perhaps be an explanation for the small stone wall excluding a room up against the inner wall of the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure (49) too, though this may be secondary, as well as the peculiar low semicircle of stones up against the wall in the Geaimmejávri structure (63), which could possibly be a foundation for such a chamber. One of the Bringnes structures (79 or 80) is also said to have a small “hollow” inside.
the wall (Sveen 2003: 145). A recently recorded structure in Davákv/Sandfjorddalen in Båtsfjord, Finnmark (17), is c. 2 m in inner diameter and too small to be defined as a type 1 structure, but the build is still similar and because of the interesting finds it should be mentioned here (fig. 41). It had two chambers in the rear part of the inner space, one of which contained what looked like the entire skeleton of a small reindeer. A sample was dated to 224±31 BP, which gives a calibrated date younger than AD 1640 (2σ, OxCal 4.2, Ramsey 2009). Despite the late dating, it could be a reminiscence of a trap tradition, potentially set up as a fox or wolverine trap. These have been described in various sources as smaller variants of wolf traps (e.g. Magnus 1976 [1555], 18:38, 17:3; Swederus 1832: 114, Henriksson 1978: 44–45, Lagercrantz 1933: 67).

Saloranta concludes that because of the similarities with the structures in northern Norway, the Finnish structures should be interpreted as Sami offering sites too (Saloranta 2011: 68). Considering the discussion in previous chapters, I am obviously more inclined to consider the Finnish wolf trap explanation for the northern Norwegian structures of type 1.

This interpretation is further strengthened by finds and traditions closer to their distribution area. Qvigstad has recorded a very interesting oral tradition...
about a certain wolf trap type in the East Sami area around Neiden, Sør–Varanger, Finnmark (Qvigstad 1927: 535, 537). The traps are called fuonáš, a term that also occurs in an 18th century North Sami dictionary as fuonnos, referring to “a hole in the ground used to catch wolves, a ’wolf hut’”42 (Leem 1923[1756]: 298, my translation). This indicates that pitfall trap hunting of wolves has been known and practiced in North Sami areas, despite claims to the opposite (Pluskowski 2006a: 101). The traditional information from Neiden does not concern pitfalls, but rather describes the fuonáš traps as a cone shape of wall posts built like a mountain Sami tent, only much larger and with more oblique walls. The posts in the walls were allegedly three fathoms long (c. 564 cm), carved smooth on the inside, and put so close together that the wolf would not get out. The trap was covered with turf and there was a hole in the roof like a smokehole, but larger43. A big pile of reindeer lichen was put inside just under the opening and a live reindeer doe was placed there. The wolf trap was so high that a grown man could stand on the pile of moss and reach the opening in the roof (Qvigstad 1927: 535). Wolves would get a scent of the reindeer and jump in to kill it. When the owners of the wolf trap got there, they killed the wolf (Qvigstad 1927: 535, 537).

Three specific wolf traps in the Neiden area are described in this account, one by Skarfageadje (“The Cormorant Stone”) on the east side of the Munkefjorden, one beyond “Bakanjogâ”44 and one on the heath Fuonášguolbe further up the Munkelvdalen valley. The latter was the newest one, built by the ancestors of the source of the information, Jak Ondrei (born 1857). Allegedly the rich mountain–Sami Stale Uvla donated the first reindeer bait for this trap. In a somewhat comic turn, the story has it that the hunters forgot to pull the ladder back up after placing the animal in the trap and it got eaten by twelve wolves that just crawled back up afterwards and disappeared (Qvigstad 1927: 535, 537). According to Ondrei, the Sami stopped maintaining this structure when the Kven (“kvænene”) started to “drift here to Norway”, because the Kvens allegedly burnt the wall posts (Qvigstad 1927: 537, my translation). This most likely refers to the extensive immigration of Finnish speaking people to Neiden in the 19th century (Wikan 1995: 92ff), which was a source of aggravation and local conflicts. A wolf trap could otherwise be used for several generations (cf. Wikan 1995: 259), and the one on the heath Fuonášguolbe is said to have been in function

42 The word also corresponds to the East Sami huonás (Aikio 2003: 101, Mattus 2006), which is refound in a place name by the described surviving pen trap in Inari; Huonášmyedhiváárás (“the Wolf Trap Path Hill”) (Joona 2011, 2014).

43 The collector of this tradition, Isak Saba (1875–1921), commented that the wolf is scared of moving between two fence posts when it walks along a road in wintertime, but it is not afraid of jumping down into a hole: when Saba was 16 years old, a wolf was killed in a summer cowshed on Barsnjárga in Nesseby. It had jumped down through the smoke hole of the turf house to get to some dried fish heads (Qvigstad 1927: 536).

44 Probably the river Pakanajoki, on today’s Finnish side of the border (Wikan 1995: 259).
Fig. 42. Fuonášnjárga (Munkefjord), Sør–Varanger, Finnmark (58), with H. Havas.

Fig. 43. Inner shape of Fuonášnjárga (Munkefjord), Sør–Varanger, Finnmark (58). Photogrammetry orthophoto.
for a long time before the Kvens arrived, perhaps suggesting it was originally constructed in the 18th century, or even earlier. This was still so well preserved that Ørnulv Vorren managed to locate it in the 1970s (pers. comm. S.Wikan 5 Feb 2014). In a later publication, he stated that such wolf traps had been in use among the Sami in Finland until recently, perhaps with the recorded pen trap in Inari in mind (cf. Vorren 1979b: 83). The two other described traps were older and may thus have been in use in the 17th century or before, though without further investigations this can only remain speculation. Of course, this explanation of old visible traces in the terrain should be treated with the same precaution as any other traditions, in terms of whether they are referring to actual historical events or as explanations for strange and unknown features, but the detailed explanation of the build and use, including a named donor of the first reindeer bait, makes the historical authenticity of this account more convincing.

The description above is clearly referring to a construction made from wood and turf; a stone wall is not mentioned. Yet, a dry stone wall by said Skarfageađge has been identified as the remains of the wolf trap described at this location (Vorren 1979b: 83). It was initially recorded as a “circular offering site” by archaeologists in 1973 (58, Id 67452–1), but when Ørnulv Vorren investigated the site in 1976 he decided to call it a wolf trap “for the time being” because of the local tradition and the place name; according to him the small promontory it sits on is called Fuonášnjárga (“the Wolf Promontory”) (Vorren 1976a). Vorren describes the stone wall as about a meter high with an outward-leaning angle surrounding a low mound of about 2 m in diameter (fig. 42). When digging a test pit in the middle, he found remains of a log (Vorren 1976a). Pole photography and new measurements from a survey in 2014 shows that the structure is in fact clearly hexagonal (fig. 43) and that the inner walls are not as much outward-leaning as straight or even in part inward-leaning. There are some obvious similarities with the “circular offering sites” Vorren was studying at the time, but despite his apparent initial doubt about the trap interpretation, and also conversations with other researchers who thought the structure was similar to the circular offering sites (Simonsen n.d.)45, Vorren maintained in a later publication that the structure was the foundations of a wolf trap with a superstructure of wood and turf (Vorren 1979b: 83).

The ethnographic and archaeological sources above indicate that there have been structures in use as wolf traps that were very similar to the type 1 structures discussed in this project. While the morphology is not necessarily

45 Simonsen notes: “Down by the sea, at the tip of the headland, Ulvestueneset [“the Wolf Trap Promontory”], there is a circular dry wall of large boulders, around a circular, flat, inner space, 5.5 m in diam. The wall is 0.6–0.7 m h. similar to a Sami offering site, but is according to Ø. Vorren a wolf pit, which the place name also indicates.” (Simonsen n.d., my translation).
entirely equal in the different structures, they share key characteristics, though adjusted to individual topographical conditions and most likely also to local wolf behaviour. The examples indicate the functionality of such a structure, which can be further substantiated by examples from other parts of Europe. An interesting parallel is the so-called *fojo/trampa de cabrita*, “goat trap”, that was in use on the Iberian Peninsula until the early 20th century, though most went out of use more than 200 years ago. This structure combines features described for the log pen traps around hillocks in northern Finland and the stone wall construction with central mounds or cairns (fig. 44–45). Recorded examples may have very large diameters (15–72 m), with walls of a height from 2.1 to 2.9 m and a width of 70–140 cm (Álvares et al. 2000: 64–67). Remaining traps show great variation, but they generally include slightly inward-leaning stone walls and sloping outer walls, sometimes enclosing remains of a mound or stone heap inside, where the bait animal was placed.

Fig. 44. Drawing of an Iberian wolf trap with goat bait. Ill.: R. Grande del Brio, cf. Álvares et al. 2000.

Fig. 45. Photo, plan drawing and detail of the inner wall of the wolf trap Llobatera de Lladorre in Catalonia, Spain. Photos/drawing: M. D. Boza and X. Catalá, after Boza 2012, ill.: M. Spangen.

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46 Many thanks to Catarina Tente for making me aware of this parallel material.
A usual feature has been large slabs that were placed on the top of the walls, sticking out into the structure on the inside to further hinder wolves from climbing or jumping the walls. Almost all the traps are situated in sloping terrain and often up against a mountain hill or cliff wall. This, together with the sloping outer walls and sometime use of small cut–down trees or brush es, helped ease the entrance of the wolf into the trap and created an illusion of the bait being very close when it was placed on an elevation inside the trap and the wolf was seeing it from above on the top of the wall or cliff (Boza 2012: 97–98). Of course there is no direct connection between these relatively recent structures in southern Europe and the medieval stone structures in northern Norway, but they exemplify the functionality of such stone enclosures for wolf hunting and their characteristics are remarkably similar to the ones I have described for the type 1 structures.

There is some variation within the group of structures I have labelled type 1, concerning in part diameters, but also the wall shape and the topographic situation, concerning the kind of the scree or moraine and the inclination of the terrain. Three structures in Nesseby, Finnmark (Fugleberget/Čiesti, 48, Fuglebergbukta 1, 49, and Biekkanoaivi, 57) have particularly large inner diameters between 810 and 1070 cm, and a wood superstructure is most likely to have consisted of a fence rather than a closed covering or jointed roof structure as described for the East Sami fuonnoš traps in Neiden. The remaining confirmed type 1 structures have inner diameters between 420 and 760 cm. The build of the walls is, however, similar in the larger and smaller structures. I believe the variation in the type 1 structure is mainly a result of the local preconditions provided by microscale topography, rocks and wood available for the building of a structure and practical onsite solutions, as well as wolf behaviour in that particular area. I find it likely that the structures described here as type 1 have been built for the same purpose but as local articulations of the overall concept. See figure 46–47 for a suggested reconstruction at the Storfossen site (71).

5.3.2 Topographical factors
Apart from a few examples on more level ground, the type 1 structures are situated in sloping and rocky terrains. Contrary to some suggestions that the “circular offering sites” are placed at prominent places in the landscape, they are usually placed beneath hilltops and cliffs or at the bottom of rocky hillsides. The structure by Gálggojávri is almost hidden among zigzagging eskers and none of the sites I have visited are visible from afar. As discussed in Chapter 3.4.3, offering sites can be inconspicuous and placed in sloping terrain too (Äikäs 2015: 78), but the placement in sloping terrain is in fact a tendency for the various Iberian wolf traps as well. This has been explained as a way of leading the predators into the trap from above, giving them a view, sound and smell of the bait inside and easing their access into it (Boza
Wolves tend to seek out hilltops to get an overview of the surroundings (Brainerd et al. 2008: 9), so situating a wolf trap in lower terrain below a peak of hill may have been done with this intention. Wolf hunt manuals recommend placing pit falls by a hill or hillside to ensure drainage (cf. Broman 1842: 24). Other local weather conditions may also have affected the individual location, for instance taking into account wind directions, snowdrift or other aspects.

The placement in scree has obviously to some extent been determined by where there have been available rock accumulations that would provide building materials, but Audhild Schanche has emphasised the dramatic and barren scree landscapes as possible liminal zones between the living and the dead (Schanche 2000: 284). This may well have been a connotation, especially in the large burial fields in Varanger that were in use as such for at least 2000 years. However, the alleged relation between the type 1 structures and graves has only been confirmed in a few cases, and scree and rocky moraine could of course have other connotations and uses too. According to Sami traditional knowledge about predator hunting (collected from all over Sweden), such animals can often be found in steep and rocky landscapes, because most predators avoid flat landscapes with nowhere to hide. It is also easier for them to sneak up and catch their prey in a more rugged landscape (Sikku and Torp 2008: 63–64). This coincides with modern research on wolves: even if wolves are known to hunt efficiently in open landscapes like plains, especially in packs, bait hunting for wolves is more effective in terrains where they can find hiding places (Brainerd et al. 2008: 27). In a landscape with scarce woods, like the coast of eastern Finnmark, a rugged and rocky terrain could serve this purpose. It has been suggested that wolves would have trouble moving around in scree terrain (Saloranta 2011: 46), but this probably underestimates both their ability to adapt to an incredible variety of landscapes and the attraction of a bait. In winter, the preferred wolf–hunting season, snow would cover many screes and boulder fields and create a more easily–manoeuvrable landscape for both man and beast.

5.3.3 Osteological material
The osteological material from type 1 structures partly coincides with our knowledge about which species were included in Sami offering contexts, but there are some interesting exceptions, especially the finds of wolverine and fox bones. Wolverine bones are very rare in studied offering site assemblages and fox bones are not found at all, though fox is mentioned as offering matter in two written sources (see Chapter 4.5). Admittedly, there is only one recorded find of wolverine bones in the type 1 structures, a cranium in the structure at Beajalgŋai (64) (Nissen 1928: 185), but this should be seen in combination with the more widespread occurrence of fox. The presence of
Fig. 46. Suggested trap reconstruction, Storfossen, Karasjok, Finnmark (71). Seen towards the northwest. Ill.: D. Spangen/M. Spangen.

Fig. 47. Reconstructed timber structure plan, Storfossen, Karasjok, Finnmark (71). Based on measurements in existing structure. Ill.: D. Spangen.
these species is at least unusual for an offering site context, while it is highly compatible with a wolf trap function: historical and ethnographic sources explicitly state that the same traps were used for both wolves and foxes, and among other animals that were occasionally caught, wolverines is a recurring and specifically–mentioned species (Magnus 1976[1555], 18:13; Pontoppidan 1753: 32; Asbjörnsen 1840: 14–15; Broman 1842: 25). The 19th century wolf pen trap in Inari is said to have failed to catch any wolves, but it had captured foxes and wolverines (Itkonen 1948: 64). Pen and pitfall traps could be made especially for foxes or wolverines but these were usually smaller than wolf traps47 (e.g. Magnus 1976 [1555], 18:38, 17:3; Swederus 1832: 114, Henriksson 1978: 44–45, Lagercrantz 1933: 67, Lindner 1975).

Wolverines are particularly attracted by the smell of cadavers, and usual baits in Sami wolverine traps have been whole bodies, the head of a reindeer or simply a piece of meat, depending on the method. One could also make a scent trail by, for example, dragging a salted fish along the ground towards the trap (Sikku and Torp 2008: 78–80, 82). An illustration of a fox pitfall trap features in 16th century Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus (Magnus 1976[1555]), apparently showing a distinct angular shape with a wood superstructure that resembles the features described for the type 1 structures (fig. 48), though I would suggest the latter were primarily aimed at bigger animals, i.e. wolves, because of their size. Bears would be another possible large prey, but there are no descriptions of bear traps that fit the criteria as well as the described wolf traps.

With a wolf trap interpretation, the bones found in the type 1 structures should be remains of bait, whether live animals or carcasses. The remains of predators may be animals that were attracted by any such remains of bait and caught relatively shortly after the trap went out of use, hence never collected or removed. Another possibility is that they were skinned by the trap and that carcasses were left as bait. Otherwise, live bait has often been recommended for wolf traps (e.g. Asbjörnsen 1840: 14–15: 25, Broman 1842: 25, Hahr 1882: 25, Qvigstad 1927: 535–537), but in current wolf bait hunting it is suggested to use ungulate roadkill, while any sort of offal will suffice (Brainerd et al. 2008: 7, 27). In northern Fennoscandia, reindeer must have been the most frequent resource even in this kind of context. The reindeer bones in the assemblages from the type 1 structures are predominantly from the legs and the head area (though there are a few examples of ribs, pelvis bones and shoulder blades), suggesting use of less meaty and exploitable parts. This concurs with the osteological material in investigated wolf pitfall traps further south in Europe (Niessen 2012: 60–61), though admittedly it

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47 Interestingly, an anonymous 18th century writer says that the Sami trap for wolverines is called a Labyrinth, but this is an uncertain source, and the information may be a confusion of the actual trap with some hunting ritual related to labyrinths (see Chapter 3.3.5) (Anonymous 1983[1723–1732], 27).
also concurs with the parts of reindeer that were often used in offerings (see Chapter 3.4.2).

Several of the animals found in the type 1 structures are compatible both with an offering and a trap explanation: sheep, dog and larger birds are all related to Sami offering practices, but sheep, goat, dog and birds like duck and jackdaw have also been much used and recommended as wolf (or fox) bait (e.g. Asbjørnsen 1840: 15; Schvindt 1905: 13; Itkonen 1948: 64). Antlers, on the contrary, are typically found on offering sites but are not very compatible with a trap explanation. This makes the distinct lack of such material in the type 1 structures rather significant, though there are several possible explanations for this, both in terms of ritual practices and preservation of this material (see Chapter 4.7). I believe a past occurrence of antlers should have resulted in more fragments, while a ritual restriction against antlers should, strictly speaking, have resulted in no finds at all (though such ritual practices are known to be stretched and adjusted). As it is, the few fragments that have been found could be explained by use of reindeer heads for bait.

Bait hunting works particularly well in wintertime when the wolf has more trouble finding food, but, in any case, the wolf is known to favour whatever prey or food is easiest accessible (Brainerd et al. 2008: 27–28). German evidence shows the use of everything from offal to dead pets and washed–up war horses as wolf bait in traps (Müller 1999: 194; Mayer 2009: 59; Niessen 2012: 59, 61), which means it should not be surprising that a variety of animals can be found northern Norwegian wolf trap contexts too. Finds of some marrow–split reindeer bones in at least two and possibly four structures indicate that the reindeer were cooked and eaten before the bones were deposited. This is a very typical aspect on offering sites, though marrow split bones do occur in several contexts, most obviously as disposed
food leftovers at or near dwellings and in the ambiguous bone deposits (e.g. Grydeland 1996; Munch and Munch 1998; Karlsson 2006:51; Andersen 2009:8). Hence, the presence of marrow–split bones is not by default indicating that the place is an offering site. Food leftovers may well have been used as bait in a trap context, as indicated by finds in German wolf traps (Müller 1999: 187; cf. Niessen 2012: 25–26, 28; Niessen 2015: 181).

Wolf bones are not known from offering site contexts (e.g. Manker 1957: 40ff; Okkonen 2007: 30; Äikäs 2015), but in the Láhpojohka (74) assemblage, two teeth from a large canine that could be wolf were identified (Salmi 2013a). As mentioned, it is unusual to make finds of wolf bones in traps too, but in this case I think such a find would rather strengthen the trap interpretation. The other option is that the teeth are from a large dog. Wolf and dog are notoriously difficult to distinguish based on visual analysis, and even more so when based on only teeth (Pluskowski 2006b) The species would have to be determined by DNA analyses, and, as mentioned in Chapter 4.7, this was not possible from the material retrieved from the one sampled tooth (pers. comm. J. Aspi 27 Nov 2015).

5.3.4 Surrounding cultural landscape

As discussed in Chapter 4.5, the alleged proximity of the “circular offering sites” to hunting facilities, particularly pitfall traps for wild reindeer, migration routes or scree graves, seems to be exaggerated. Rather, there is a frequent connection between type 1 structures and scree caches (geáðgeborra), which are often situated very close by (Vorren 1985a: 76–77, Spangen 2013b, 2014). Despite the possibility of confusing opened meat caches with graves or other practices, I find that the consistent occurrence of such opened or tossed out constructions indicate that there is a real connection with temporary storage. Storage in screes has been very common in Sami areas and they were often reused. Opened caches look like pits or chambers in scree or boulder field, often with randomly dispatched stones from the removal of the covering layers (fig. 49). Food caches would preferably be placed in places where the meat or other products would be conserved by the cold, whether it was reindeer milk that was cooled in streams (ája) or meat that froze in scree storage in wintertime. This has partly resulted in storage pits on north–facing hillsides, but when stored for the group’s return in spring in areas with a lot of snow it could be preferable to place the caches on sites where the snow would be gone early. Scree caches have also been used for storage of other things than meat and thus have diverse morphologies and placements (Sommerseth 2009: 211ff).

The frequency of such storages next to so-called offering sites is peculiar. Of course the landscapes were used for many different things and as described above sacredness could be temporal and was not necessarily defined by topography or with clear borders. The Sami offering rituals can be seen as
a pragmatic part of the subsistence strategy (Äikäs et al. 2009) and, despite many restrictions described in written sources, landscape with sacred sites could also be normal usage areas (Äikäs 2015: 198). The close and repeated co-location of storage and offering site is still unusual. As meat caches must have attracted scavengers and predators it seems highly likely that traps would be built in the vicinity to protect the caches from raiding by wolves, foxes, wolverines and other scavengers. Lewis Binford describes the same phenomenon for the semi-nomadic Nunamiut groups in Alaska, who constructed deadfall traps close to meat caches to keep the competing predators away from the stored food. At the same time the meat caches functioned as bait for the traps (Binford 2002: 135–136). This could also be an aspect to consider regarding the peculiar site of Urroaivi in Utsjoki, just across the border to northern Finland from eastern Finnmark. Here, 18 stone circles measuring 1–6 m in diameter have been found in a scree that also contained 18 meat caches and what was interpreted as a reindeer pit fall trap (Kärjalainen 2007). In some cases, the opened caches by the type one structures are quite deep, for instance at the Beajalgŋai (62) and Sulá 2 (66) sites. These may also be shooting blinds, as is noted on a photo (cf. unimus.no, tsld1503) taken by Johan Kalstad of the cache on Sulá, Karasjok, Finnmark, or perhaps caches reused as shooting blinds in connection with the trap hunt. A smaller circular stone wall built about 40 m from the angular stone structure at Beajalgŋai has also been interpreted as a shooting blind (Vorren 1970a). This would concur with how the hunters were waiting to shoot the
wolves that entered the pen traps in northern Finland (Itkonen 1948: 63–64). As described, some of the structures discussed here are placed in closer vicinity to scree graves, most obvious in the scree areas of the Fuglebergbukta 1 (49) and Fugleberget/Čiesti (48) sites. If the structures are traps for predators, it may seem unlikely that they would be placed close to burial fields, but obviously a scavenger problem may also explain a building of traps in this context.

As noted, Sami landscapes could have combined connotations and uses in general, and the scree and pebble beach ridges along the Varanger fjord have been used for various purposes through the centuries and contain traces of activities such as housing, caches and shooting blinds, including pits from the frequent fox hunting in these areas (cf. e.g. Kalstad 2010: 11, 95). Recent structures for fox hunting have also been documented next to the Fugleberget/Čiesti and Karlebotn (56) structures (Saxlund 1853; Vorren 1955b) and near the Angsnes structure (Odner 1992: 129). Thus, a presence of graves does not necessarily mean that the area has not also been used for other purposes.

5.4 Context and use of the potential wolf traps

Though many geographically–varying Sami hunting methods for wolves are known from ethnographic sources, including poison, cages, pitfall traps, pens and a range of smaller traps (Henriksson 1978: 48; Pluskowski 2006a: 101), the stereotypical image is that the Sami hunted wolves on skis, with guns or spears, often with a skiing stave that had a spear in the other end (Asbjørnsen 1840: 26–27). Many stories emphasise the incredible persistence and bravery of the individual Sami wolf hunters on skis (e.g. Sikku and Torp 2008: 84). This hunting method is probably also very old, but it is perhaps particularly related to the nomadic lifestyle of Sami reindeer herders (cf. e.g. Demant–Hatt 1913: 68, 106–108; Vorren 1976b: 76). For more sedentary Sami groups, permanent installations to defeat the troublesome wolf could be just as efficient.

The number of wolves allegedly caught in such installations, sometimes 10 or 12 at a time, indicates the numbers that roamed Scandinavia until quite recently. The population has fluctuated for both natural reasons and because of hunting and other factors, but in Norway it is estimated that there were about 2500–3000 individuals before the late 19th century near–extinction due to more efficient hunting and the use of poison (Wabakken et al. 2001: 711; Lie 2003: 10). The constant and lethal threat these animals posed to livestock, herds, and even humans, should not be underestimated (Hellens and Bonsdorff 1782: 3–4; Swederus 1832: 94–95; Broman 1842: 21; Hahr 1881:61–62; Nesheim and Monsen 1949:145; Lie 2003:9–10; Pluskowski 2006a:7, 32; Teperi 1977). In the 16th century, Olaus Magnus describes how
wolves would barge into farmhouses to kill livestock, and that people travelling in wintertime would be armed against wolves as if going to war (Magnus 1976 [1555], 18:13). During a wolf population increase around 1720, farms were abandoned because people could not manage to protect their animals (Lie 2003: 9–10). There have always been local variations, but the Sami areas seem to have had especially substantial wolf numbers until quite recently. In 1860 there were so many wolves in Finnmark that the reindeer herds had to be guarded almost around the clock. In Norrbotten in northern Sweden, about 5000 reindeer were killed by predators between 1855 and 1865, while the Prefect’s Office reported that 437 wolves (as well as 257 bears and 787 wolverines) were killed during the same period (von Düben 1873: 26, 80).

Not surprisingly, reindeer herders saw the wolf as a hated enemy (Solem 1933: 92; Ryd 2007; Sikku and Torp 2008), not least because the wolves tended to slay as many animals as they could when attacking a herd, instead of settling for what they could eat (cf. Anonymous 1983[1723–1732]: 23). The Sami called the wolf “the dog of the devil”, and in contrast to the respectful ceremonies related to bear hunts, wolves have been reported to be badly treated when killed, in some areas allegedly with the whole family hitting and striking the skinned body with clubs until there was no meat left on the bones (Niurenius 1983[c. 1630]: 19). To be turned into a bloodthirsty wolf was a threat and something the noaiddit could do if they got angry with you (Qvigstad 1928: 469–471). There are stories from the late 19th and early 20th century about noaiddit using wolves as draft animals, which had associations with dangerous sorcery and the devil (Turi 1988: 44; Frandy 2011: 545; Qvigstad 1928: 481–483). The Skolt Sami were said to be able to turn themselves into wolves (and bears), which is also closely related to a notion of dangerous sorcery and an internal stereotyping of the Skolts as particularly prone to strong magic and noaidevuohta. Though it is likely that attitudes to wolves and a range of other animals were different in a medieval Sami hunter–fisher–gatherer context than among later reindeer herding or farming Sami, it is not impossible that wolves were still hunted in the Middle Ages and early modern period mainly to reduce the population, since the wolves would not only be a general threat but also a competitor for other prey. As mentioned, wolves may also have raided the meat caches for the prey people had already caught.

In the farming communities in the rest of Scandinavia, we can see that wolf hunting was a distinctly collective responsibility. Bounties were introduced during the Middle Ages (Hahr 1881: 36), and wolf hunting is specifically mentioned and encouraged in the Norwegian medieval laws (Gulathing law no. 93–94, Frostatthing law 13.7, cf. Keyser and Munch 1849:45–46, 242). The 13th–14th–century Swedish laws gave direct orders to hunt wolves (Fornämiskalven XLVI, cf. Collin and Schlyter 1827:209–210; Ny-rén 2012:48–50) and from 1734 all Swedish parishes were obligated to build
a wolf pen or pitfall trap and watch and keep these in order (*Byggningsa Balk*, Ch. XXIII, §4–6). In Denmark, a special tax covered the expenses for wolf hunts in the Middle Ages (Laursen 1991: 249). Recorded wolf traps in Norway are often placed on the land of priests, bailiffs or other senior officials, indicating that these had a special responsibility for, or privilege of, wolf hunting (Lie 2003: 10), but in general wolf hunting was a community responsibility in much of Scandinavia during the Middle Ages and early modern period.

5.4.1 Geographical distribution

As described, the type 1 structures discussed here have a very distinct geographical distribution in northern Norway, restricted to Finnmark and northern Troms. Apart from limiting their occurrence to mainly Sami areas, this coincides with the official shared taxation area for Denmark–Norway and Novgorod as defined in the 1320–1330s (Hansen 1996: 69). This could suggest that the structures were somehow related to Russian–Karelian activity. Considering a trap explanation, there could be a connection to Novgorod’s increased control of the fur trade from the 13th century onwards (Hansen and Olsen 2014: 146ff), though the value of wolf furs seem to have been low in the Middle Ages and early modern period (see below) and I find the local decimation of the wolf population and use value of the furs a more likely reason to hunt these animals.

On a regional level, I have pointed to the consistent occurrence of type 1 structures in the inland and inner fjord areas. Again, these would be predominantly Sami areas at the time, but it should also be remembered that the wolf threat has always been greater in inland areas than on islands (cf. Lie 2003: 9) and the distribution coincides well with this aspect. An exception is the possibly relevant structure on the islands of Vannøya, Karlsøy, Troms (108). Here, wolves have been unknown in recent times, and even on the closest mainland they are said to have occurred only during an “invasion” in the 1860s (Bratrein 1989: 40). However, it is not unheard of that wolves made their way out on the islands in northern Norway. Wolf hunts were performed on the island of Andøya, Nordland, only a couple of generations back (pers. comm. R. Bertelsen 15 Nov 2013). In some places, the wolves probably found their way over narrow straights when these froze over in wintertime, but they are known to be able swimmers too and have been observed swimming up to 13 kilometers (Mech 1974: 5; Mech and Boitani 2010: xv). In a past situation of a much larger wolf population this may have been more common and a broader geographical distribution stretching out to at least some larger islands is not unlikely. Still, the mainly inland distribution is interesting and could even in itself be a reason to question the interpretation of the mentioned structure on Vannøya.
While there does not seem to be any distinct coherence between the distribution of type 1 sites and the reconstructed *siida* areas around AD 1700, it is, as mentioned, likely that the clustering in Porsanger, Nesseby and Karasjok/Kautokeino is related to which areas had the highest populations at the time (see Chapter 4.4), and thus simply indicates a general Sami habitation pattern in Finnmark and Troms. The distribution is mutually exclusive with the distribution of Iron and Middle Age Sami habitations on the outer coast that have been interpreted as summer fishing and sea mammal hunting stations (cf. Hansen and Olsen 2014: 59–60), and with the labyrinths, which may also mark locations used for deep sea fishing in summertime (Odner 1961; Olsen 2002). An anonymous writer from the 16th century says that the Sami in Finnmark moved four times a year between the outer and inner coast and the mountains, staying in the mountain forests in wintertime to fish in the lakes and hunt reindeer, birds and other animals (Storm 1895: 232). It seems quite likely that the type 1 structures indicate winter habitations corresponding with the fjord and coastal distribution of certain other sites used in summertime. The osteological material is not sufficient to verify what time of year the type 1 structures were in use, but fur animals have usually been caught in wintertime both because the fur is better and because they tended to be more of a threat and nuisance to livestock and humans this time of year. Conceivably, the wolves may have targeted the nearby meat caches during winters of scarce food or shortly after the meat was buried following late autumn hunts. A factor that could suggest a moving pattern between the coastal sites and the distinct inland areas of the type 1 structures, is the marine nutrition described for the dog and sheep remains found in the Beajalgnai structure in Karasjok, Finnmark (see Chapter 4.8). Though it is not possible to draw widereaching conclusions from only one sample of dog and one of sheep, the previous described finds 11th century sheep bones in winter dwellings in Pasvik, eastern Finnmark, could substantiate that Sami kept such animals in the inland much earlier than previously suspected and that these followed the seasonal moves. Ethnographic records provide a relevant parallel in how East Sami groups would transport their sheep in reindeer-pulled sleds during wintertime (Nickul 1948: 67; cf. Hedman and Olsen 2009: 16).

On a local level, there is variation in how closely related to the living areas the type 1 installations are. In some places they are situated only a few tens of meters from the nearest recorded house ground or hearth, but this is not surprising for wolf trap constructions (of course, it has to be weighed against the lack of datings that confirm contemporaneity between the habitation and the type 1 structure). While fur–bearing predators were probably caught far away from settlements too, it could be logical to catch wolves closer to home because of the threat they constituted to humans and any domestic animals like dogs, tame draft or decoy reindeer and, apparently, sheep. The wolf pitfall traps further south were often built close to the in-
fields, but still in the outland, in order to be accessible, while nevertheless preventing the wolves from attacking the animals at the farm (Lie 2003: 10). Historical sources claim they were built close enough to see them from the houses (Molaug et al. 1958: 399). This would give easy control with the potential catch of wolves among other daily chores (cf. Boza 2012: 98–99).

The medieval laws further south specified that hunting on another man’s land is usually forbidden, while there were exceptions for hunting bear and wolf, apparently seeing this as more for a common good. In a medieval Sami context, individual land ownership would not be relevant in the same way, but it is not unlikely that this kind of land use, in the same way as other activities, was regulated by some sort of territoriality, whether in terms of a siida organisation or more or less overarching community constellations. Apart from a possible need to regulate access to resources, a wolf trap could potentially represent a danger too. In the Scandinavian medieval laws there are special regulations about where to build wolf traps and how to announce it to avoid human injuries. It was a real problem that people fell into traps and got hurt, and a popular legend thematic was people ending up in a trap with a wolf and having to keep it spellbound, for instance by playing the fiddle, to avoid attack (Laursen 1991: 254; Lie 2003: 10–11). Though the type 1 structures are placed over ground with high walls and people were not likely to just fall into them, the placement of large traps was probably regulated in Sami contexts too, at least in terms of territories and accepted sites according to other contemporary activities. A later source in the Kemi Sami area in Finland describes that the Sami hunt was regulated by customary laws, but that the principles for the bear, wolf and wolverine hunt had varied over time (Tegengren 1952: 123). Generally, large trap installations seem to have been a collective enterprise in Sami contexts as elsewhere. For instance, one of the fiuonáš traps described in the Neiden area was apparently built by a group of people, and also supported by a rich local reindeer owner who donated the first reindeer to be used as bait (Qvigstad 1927: 537).

Traps would, of course, also have to be placed where the conditions were good and where the wolves were likely to roam. For instance, the structure in Munkefjorden, Sør–Varanger, Finnmark (58), is placed where the wolves would normally cross the fjord during winter (pers. comm. S. Wikan 4 Feb 2014). The general distribution of type 1 structures along waterways could similarly be related to where wolves would travel in wintertime. Wolves are known to follow convenient roads, beaten tracks and frozen rivers and fjords. As described by Olaus Magnus in the 16th century, travellers were especially vulnerable for wolf attacks. As mentioned above, the early 19th century Sami in Åsele, Sweden, put up hut–like wolf traps along roads or “other suitable places” to catch wolves that followed them and their reindeer herds (Drake 1918: 6). This would coincide with a consistent closeness to market roads too. In some cases the type 1 structures are placed were travellers could choose or were forced to change from landbased to waterbased
transport and vice versa, for instance by Storfossen (71), where you have to drag the river boat past the rapids; by Gálggojávri (117), where the preserved parts of the market road on the north side of the lake indicate transport across the water or ice from the south side, where the structure is situated; and by Geaimmejávri (63), where the site is also located at the south end of the lake and nearby the passing road from Ásebákti further down in the valley. A route northwards from Geaimmejávri can follow waterways and partly remaining paths to eventually end up by the upper end of a lake system in Porsanger where another type 1 site is located on the islet Offerholmen. Several other sites are located along the continued waterway down to the Porsanger fjord. Change of transportation may have presented a particular danger for wolf attacks on animals, transported food products or possibly even humans.

5.4.2 The hunters – communities of practice

The type 1 structures are probably not only distributed according to geographical or ethnic boundaries, practical need or population density, but also according to knowledge distribution. As discussed, the constructional similarities make it highly likely that building these structures was a skill that was acquired through situated learning within a so-called “community of practice” (Lave and Wenger 1991: 51). This concept is similar to what Bourdieu articulates as habitus, where socialisation happens through practices that are more or less unconsciously created and reproduced also by the material products of the social or cultural units (Bourdieu 1977). However, communities of practice in the sense Wenger has defined them are not necessarily related to the family unit, household or even cultural group, but may cut across these categories because it relates to task groups for specific activities (Wenger 2010; Hallgren 2008: 30–31). The overall distribution of type 1 structures is coherent with the general Sami core area in medieval Finnmark, while there are clusters of structures that potentially reflect larger local communities. Not least because these constructions seem to appear at more or less the same time, I find it likely that a co-operation and skill transfer concerning a building of wolf traps happened across family and community (siida) boundaries, in the same way as the massive wild reindeer hunt and the beaver hunt (Schnitler 1962: 360; Helland 1905: 468; Tegengren 1952: 116–122; Storå 1971: 38; Storå 1977: 89; Vorren 1998). Diminishing the wolf population would have been a common good but the collective effort may also have had the purpose of sharing any value of the catch. It seems feasible that members from different families and siiddat would join forces to build and equip the rather massive constructions considered here in a way that would serve its purpose.

In contrast to a quite frequent stereotype of hunters as men, such communities of practice may well have included women. In the Iron and Middle
Ages, it seems to have been a Norse stereotype that Sami women would go hunting, which is reflected in a myth about the giantess Skadi (Mundal 2000: 352–353). Bone arrowheads in Early Metal Age female scree graves could indicate that female hunters were a very old custom in Sami societies. On the other hand, Schanche observes a change in the scree grave material from the Viking Age onwards, when weapons are no longer deposited in graves. She interprets this, along with other evidence, as a change in female roles in hunting from producing to consuming and suggests that this is when the much-discussed taboos against women at certain offering sites appear too (Schanche 2000: 223, 324–325, table 18). Olaus Magnus still maintains in the 16th century that the Sami women would hunt just as well as men or better on skis, though it was the men who distributed the catch and decided what was to be eaten (Magnus 1976[1555], 4:12). This could be the result of a persistent stereotype, but it should still be considered as a possible truthful observation. That is not to say that all Sami women, or men, would necessarily go hunting or trapping, as the inclusion in such a community of practice may have relied on age, social status or other factors. However, it is not unlikely that women would be involved in different parts of a trap hunting process. The building process must have required additional skills such as wood chopping and transportation, notching or building of a wood frame and possibly the procurement of other elements that are now lost. Bait had to be obtained and placed in the trap, possibly after some sort of preparation. The hunt itself, the checking or the watching of the trap may have been done in shifts, while the killing of the animal, skinning and preparation of the fur would also require specific skills and equipment. At least some hunts probably had to include some form of offering as well.

5.4.3 Use and value of wolves and other trapped animals

As discussed above, the wolf and wolf furs have not been very popular in recent reindeer herding Sami contexts. A tradition bearer from Jokkmokk stated that even if the wolf fur was both softer and warmer than reindeer pelts, the Sami would not wear clothes made from predators that eat reindeer (Ryd 2007: 19). Wolf furs have still been used for other purposes in Sami contexts, such as lining sledges. Attitudes to wolves may have been different in Sami hunter-fisher-gatherer communities. Olaus Magnus states that the 16th century Sami dressed in all sorts of valuable furs, which may of course have included wolf (Magnus 1976[1555], 4:4). In the 15th century, wolf skins are said to have been popular in Germany (Martin 1987: 105), and in the 16th century they were allegedly regarded as valuable in Scandinavia, holding a certain esteem as suitable garments for brave warriors (Magnus 1976[1555], 18:3, 18:18). However, judging from archaeological record and historical sources such as custom records and testaments (cf. Erslev 1901, Pluskowski 2006b), wolf pelts do not seem to have been in much demand in
medieval Europe, and there are few descriptions of the actual use of wolf furs in Scandinavia in the Middle Ages too. This lack of mention may indicate that wolf furs were not a luxury product (Pluskowski 2006a: 112–115). There are relatively few finds of wolf bones in medieval contexts compared to bones from other fur animals or, indeed, other animals at all, and the few bones found are predominantly lower limbs, indicating pelts with paws attached. The low number could be related to the difficulty of distinguishing wolf from dog and an a priori expectation of finding dog rather than wolf in many contexts. It could be indicative of limited access to and hunt of wolves, or the fact that these were probably prepared close to where they were caught, i.e. in the ouland (Pluskowski 2006a: 24, 110, 2006b). Pelts may also have been prosessed into other goods before gaining any resell value. Possibly they were just not an export product because of the ample access to wolf all over Europe and because they had greater local (use) value.

Swedish taxation lists from the siida districts of Ávijovárre and Kautokeino in inner Finnmark in the period 1553–1609 show that tax was rarely paid with wolf furs and for 31 out of the 57 recorded years no wolf furs were collected48. However, this only illustrates what the Swedish tax collector received, and the Sami in the area paid taxes to the Russians at the same time. They also traded with the Russians, despite it being forbidden by the Swedish authorities (Smith 1928: 289), and the amount of wolf furs exchanged here is unknown. The demand for various products the Sami could produce would be regulated by cultural preferences among the collectors as well as the needs of the state. For instance, the Swedish king specifically demanded dried pike in taxes from the inland Sami in Finnmark to feed his army in the early 17th century (Fellman 1915: 133; Hood 2015: 43). Studies also indicate regional variations in the goods the Sami used to pay taxes, partly depending on what trading network they were involved in and how various goods were valued by different trade partners (Hansen 2006). Thus, wolf pelts may have been sold to Russian tradesmen because they valued them more. However, as discussed, it is also possible that wolf hunts were in fact relatively limited, perhaps mainly performed as a defensive activity, and that the pelts had more local use value. Fox fur, on the contrary, was very sought–after in the 16th and 17th centuries (Magnus 1976[1555], 18:37; Rheen 1983[1671]: 59; Niurenus 1983[c. 1630]:13; Tuderus 1983[c. 1672–1679]:20), and wolverine was also considered very useful and valuable (Magnus 1976[1555], 18:7–8). Thus, catching these animals in wolf traps would have been a bonus.

48 I am greatful to Bryan Hood for extracting these numbers for me from the transcribed taxation lists that have been published online by Dag A. Larsen and Kåre Rauø, Lenvik Museum.
5.5 The end of the wolf trap – the beginning of the offering site?

Radiocarbon datings of material related to the structures in northern Norway indicate initial building and use in the 13th—17th centuries, but the exact time period is unknown due to the described uncertainties related to the calibrations of the datings (see Chapter 4.11). Based on the available data I would suggest that the structures were generally built during the 13th or 14th century. The end of the initial use is more uncertain, but it seems that animal bones were no longer deposited in most of them after the Late Middle Ages or early modern period (AD 1450–1650), notwithstanding the late 20th century examples from Gálggojávri (117) and one late but rather wide dating of a fox bone from Geaimmejávri (63) (AD 1630–1960).

The apparent abandonment in unison is peculiar, but could be related to a decrease in wild reindeer hunting. The wild reindeer population was severely decimated during the 16th and 17th centuries, and wild reindeer eventually became extinct in Finnmark by the end of the 19th century. An explanation for abandoning the structures discussed here may be that the investment of time and energy in building permanent wolf trap installations was more worthwhile in combination with use of any wild reindeer hunting facilities in the same areas. Building a wolf trap at some distance from the reindeer pitfalls could possibly serve several purposes; an attempt at keeping the wolves away from the reindeer hunting ground, catch and kill a main competitor for prey, profit on or use of the fur, and keep predators away from the yields from the reindeer hunts stored in caches (cf. Binford 2002: 135–136).

Reindeer herding became more common and a new way of life for some, though certainly not all, Sami families in Finnmark during the same centuries. This had profound effects on the general societal and community organisation, concerning settlement pattern, land use and site organisation (Vorren 1979a; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 197). To the extent that the type 1 structures are indicative of the more densely populated Sami areas in Finnmark and northern Troms in the Middle Ages, and thus in a way indicate a certain territoriality, this probably changed at least to some degree due to these alterations and land use and may have affected the use and upkeep of collectively used trap installations too. For those taking up a more nomadic lifestyle, the continuous moves, whether short or long—distance, according to grazing opportunities throughout the year, would probably make wolf hunts in permanent installations less advantageous. Presumably more wolves were killed during the perpetual shepherding of the reindeer, and now with new efficient weapons: according to Olaus Magnus the crossbow was the preferred weapon against wolves in 16th century Scandinavia (cf. Pluskowski 2006a: 102). In the mid–17th century, guns were fairly common among the Sami in northern Sweden, though the frequency varied among different groups. According to Lundius, the Lule Sami were still using bows, while
almost all the Ume Sami were using guns. The mountain Sami would buy expensive guns with steel pipes from Norway (Lundius 1983[c. 1674–1678]: 18). By the turn of the 18th century, about half the Sami in Finnmark owned guns (Nielssen 1986: 26). At the end of the 18th century, a source in southern Norway states that people have stopped building the old kind of wolf traps because it was no longer worth the trouble. Firearms gave them an easier way of killing them, and by 1869 wolves were close to extinction in the south (Lie 2003: 12). However, this did not mean a unison abandonment of other hunting methods; an anonymous 18th century writer comments that not all the Sami own guns and that some still hunt bears with spears (Anonymous 1983[c. 1723–1732]: 26). Wolf hunts with spears could be recounted by old Sami in Jokkmokk in northern Sweden as late as in the early 2000s, indicating that this was a very longlasting custom (Ryd 2007). There are also stories about the spear hunting of wolves in Tana, Finnmark, from around AD 1900 (pers. comm. B. Olsen 22 Jan 2016). The continued spear hunting far up in time could possibly be related to an alleged Sami notion that wolves could not be hurt with weapons (Pluskowski 2006a: 113), though the use of other methods shows that this has not been a common belief among all Sami.

Guns allowed for a more individual and less spatially–restricted way of hunting both reindeer and predators, and have been suggested to have led to the relinquishment of large permanent trap installations for wild reindeer hunt too (cf. Odner 1992: 96). In addition, iron foothold traps, another movable device for efficient individual hunting, were introduced to Scandinavia by the early 16th century (Magnus 1976 [1555], 18:38). These were in common use among the Sami for catching wolf at least by the late 17th century (Lilienskiold 1942[c. 1700]: 178; Nielssen 1986: 26–27). Such weapons and traps may have been preferred by those Sami in Finnmark who took up the nomadic lifestyle of reindeer herding in the Late Middle Ages or early modern times too. At the same time, pitfall traps and pen traps were built and used well into the 19th century in both Sami and non–Sami contexts, but perhaps significantly in areas of sedentary habitation or in Sami areas where reindeer herding was taken up rather late and on a limited scale, like the eastern Sami areas of Neiden and Inari (cf. Olsen 1987). It could also be related to the general economic situation in these areas and the consequent restricted availability of the new weapons and foothold traps. Thus, wolf hunts in Sami and other contexts have been performed in many fashions at the same time, depending on local topography, economic resources and available equipment, subsistence patterns and cultural preconditions such as community structure, territorial rights, legislation, bounties, knowledge distribution and beliefs. A unifying factor has been a wish to remove a problem, whether simply wishing to keep wolves away from meat caches and to benefit from the use value of the furs or to exterminate the animal altogether.
The time of disuse could coincide with the decline of Novgorod as a centre for the fur trade in the 15th century (Martin 1987: 81–85, Hansen and Olsen 2014: 151). Novgorod had controlled this trade for centuries and consequently much of the fur production in a large area of northern Fennoscandia. During the time of use documented for the type 1 structures, the Finnmark and northern Troms region was much disputed, with repeated skirmishes between Danish–Norwegian and Russian–Karelian forces. It has even been suggested that there was a longer Russian holding of the area in the 15th century (Bratrein 2004). It could be that a trap function of the type 1 structures lost its significance with a Russian–Karelian withdrawal from the distribution area in the north after the Teusina peace treaty in 1595. The Swedes took over the taxation rights in these areas, while giving up their own on the Kola peninsula. After the Kalmar war in 1611–1613, Sweden gave up the claim to the coastal areas to Denmark–Norway. Stronger Swedish influence, a growing Norwegian community and market along the coast, where the fishing villages had grown in number and size with a culmination in the late 16th century, as well as increased English and Dutch activity in Finnmark in the 16th century, resulted in a changed administrative order, new trading patterns and a demand for hunting produce that may even have caused a decimation of several fur animal populations (Johnsen 1923: 54; Tegengren 1952: 25–26; Carpelan 1975: 34; Niemi 1983: 153–154, 201, 205; Odner 1992: 13–14). Whether the type 1 structures were abandoned in the 15th, 16th or 17th century, it seems that the original function of them was mostly forgotten by the mid–19th century, giving room for reconceptualisation and the establishing of the other hypotheses discussed in Chapter 2.

5.6 Reuse and reconceptualisation

Despite the likelihood of common notions and practices underlying the sub-category of type 1 structures, the individual structures have had individual life stories of different natural and cultural formation processes after these initial practices stopped. A discussion of later developments will therefore have to be based on the individual site biography, which includes the question of when exactly they fell out of their initial use. This did not necessarily happen at once, i.e. within the same week or month, or even within the same decade or century. Local variation in upkeep of both physical structures and knowledge about their meaning and function would result in different understandings of them, as well as differing deterioration and formation processes. This would also be affected by the solidity and choice of material in the initial structure and local conditions concerning topography, climate, vegetation, and human activities. For instance, there are more collapses of the upper part of the walls at the sites in more steeply-sloping terrains, partly obscuring the inner shape (like at Gálgggojávri, 117) and a slight inward-lean of
the walls have resulted in more collapses of rocks into the structures than outside the walls (for instance at Geaimmejávri, 63). Remains of solid wood superstructures have been best preserved in woodland areas (particularly Storfossen, 71, and Nedrevatn 1, 83), possibly because of the conditions for preservation, but notably also in areas where such material was easily available. The lack of wooden remains in structures in coastal areas could be related to reuse of timber and planks where these materials were scarce. The size of the stone blocks and proximity to the habitation area in Karlebotn (56) are similarly combined affording factors for the ”destruction” of the structure here by locals taking rocks for building materials.

These aspects are related to the materiality of the structures and their agency as things; aspects that have contributed to the past and current understanding and interaction with them. In addition to material differences, it is likely that the different structures have been involved in a variety of narratives about the past and the present according to local conditions and needs, many of which are now lost and forgotten. Considering the geographical distribution and the time that has passed since their first use, it is not very surprising that they are perceived in different ways by local and other stakeholders today. Some are maintaining a relationship with the structures, resulting in certain traditions and practices in some places, while others are unaware or indifferent to their local “circular offering sites”. In this capacity, the structures no longer form a consistent category of cultural heritage, though the recent conceptualisation by archaeologists is reintroducing and spreading a more uniform understanding. Symptomatically, local knowledge about the use of the sites is recorded in areas where researchers, museums and schools have been particularly active in investigating and disseminating the interpretation over the last 50 years (like in Nesseby, Karasjok and Storfjord).

The few local traditions I have learnt about were briefly discussed in Chapter 4.1, but I will elaborate a bit more on these and other forms of reuse here. The first example is not necessarily a sign of reuse, but it is worth considering in this context. As discussed, the presence of marrow–split reindeer bones may be compatible with both a trap and an offering site explanation. While I would primarily claim that they should be seen as part of an original activity, in my opinion as bait in traps, this cannot be stated with absolute certainty. The datings of the marrow–split reindeer bones from two structures, Nedrevatn 1 (83) and Láhpojohka (74) to respectively cal AD 1470–1645 (Hela–3361) and cal AD 1450–1640 (Ua–47126) spans of two hundred years, and it is difficult to say if the finds are reflecting a main, last or post time period of the initial use of the structures. Depending on when exactly this initial use of the sites came to an end, several scenarios are conceivable. It could be discussed whether a trap like this may also have been used for offerings at the same time, presumably related to the hunt. Such an interpretation would challenge a persistent notion of a universal dichotomy
between the sacred and the profane, which has had profound impact on studies of religion and rituals in anthropology, archaeology and other academic disciplines alike throughout the 20th century and until today (cf. e.g. Durkheim 1912; Eliade 1959). Since the 1960s, however, this idea has been questioned, due to new anthropological evidence and a general shift in focus to in–between phenomena and culture and religion as floating fields rather than systems structured by more or less universal mental concepts and binary oppositions (e.g. Turner 1969, Geertz 1973, Bell 1992, 1997). In line with a less dualistic understanding and emphasising the integrated role of rituals and non–human powers in Sami everyday life, it has been suggested that Sami offerings may be seen as a pragmatic aspect of food production comparable to manufacturing hunting tools or setting snares (cf. Äikäs et al. 2009: 118–119). This coincides with the understanding that on a macroscale, Sami ritual and religious landscapes are not spatially separated from the taskscapes of everyday chores⁴⁹ (Schanche 1995, 2004: 36), while on a microscale, the house would incorporate physical and cognitive aspects directly related to the general worldview and ruling daily behaviour and religious rituals in different parts of this space, including the described offerings in the hearth (Ränk 1949; Yates 1989; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 66–68). The co–location of meat caches with the so–called “circular offering sites” could possibly be seen in light of this sort of interchanging meaning and mix of ritual and other functions, but we do not have other examples of animal traps that are used for offering rituals, at least not in Sami contexts. Hunting rituals have been highly important in Sami contexts, but it is doubtful if ritual has been directly related to the actual traps, and least in terms of wolf traps. Unlike hunts for bear, which have been much ritualised, hunts for wolf, as described above, have been more defensively motivated and any recorded rituals seem to have been aggressive and motivated by the association of the animal with danger and evil (e.g. Niurenius 1983[c. 1630]: 19). This may have been different in a hunter–gatherer context, but I still find it quite unlikely that a wolf trap would have a simultaneous meaning and use as an offering site. This of course does not mean there have been no rituals related to wolf hunts. A very late example from northern Sweden concerned a Sami from Korholati on Lake Torneå, who, in 1910, offered money to an offering site at Vuoitaskallo during a, thus far, unsuccessful wolf hunt; after the offering, the hunters had more luck (Manker 1957: 92–93).

While the few current traditions related to type 1 structures are likely to be results of mid and late 20th century research and dissemination, the early 20th century tradition in Karasjok about the Beajalgŋai site (64) could reflect

⁴⁹ This is not to say that there have not been defined areas of sacredness around, for instance, offering sites and graves at certain times and places, which can be seen in such aspects as the use of islands for burials and taboos on behaviour around sieddit and sacred moutains, etc. (cf. e.g. Vorren 1974; Myrvoll 2008; Schanche 2000:340ff; Svestad 2007).
an earlier local reconceptualisation. The datings of the marrow–split bones could potentially indicate that this happened relatively soon after the original use stopped. Most of the animal bones from these contexts have similar datings, but because of the broad calibrated time span it is possible that some of the bones are remains of a trap use that ended in the 15th century, while the marrow split bones were deposited as offerings only in the 17th century. This could potentially mean a 200–year gap between a trap function and an offering site function. While I rather think the marrow–split bones are related to the use of the structures as traps, as remains of the local choice of bait (food leftovers, potentially related to slaughtering\(^{50}\)), such later offerings at some sites could be an alternative valid explanation for why there are not marrow–split bones on all these sites.

Presuming such a 200 years gap between two practices, individual memory would no longer be a relevant factor, and collective memory does not necessarily conserve historical information as much as engage us in a continuous construction of the past (e.g. Rowlands 1993; Halbwachs 1992; cf. Smith 2006:59). While the resistant lingering of things, such as objects and places, gives them a mnemonic capacity that influence the interacting humans (B. Olsen 2010: 209), things are also overseen, hidden and left unrelated with humans for long periods of time, leading to the introduction of “memories” completely unrelated to a past meaning when these things are “rediscovered”. The chain of memory is broken and a transmission of cultural traits can include a complete change of content and meaning (Hervieu–Léger 2000; Myrvoll 2012: 36–38). Multiple examples show how monuments and objects can be reinterpreted in accordance with the worldview of new users, sometimes within quite short periods of time (Burström 1993; Henriksen 1996; Gazin–Schwartz and Holtorf 1999; Hedman and Olsen 2009). This is illustrated by the widespread myth in northern Sami communities in the mid–20th century that reindeer pitfall traps, which are thought to have been in use until the 17th century, were ancient subterranean huts where their ancestors had hidden from “Čud”, Russian or Karelian raiders (Manker 1960:19; Vorren 1998). The economic and societal changes that occurred in the late Middle Ages and early modern time may have meant that new people with no previous knowledge of the landscape in terms family traditions or myths moved into the areas with type 1 structures. It would not be surprising if they assigned a mythical or religious meaning to these rather large stone constructions in a landscape where such monuments are rare. Remains of bones may also have triggered the offering site association.

\(^{50}\) According to Binford’s study of the Alaskan Nunamiut slaughthering practices, one family’s intensive large scale hunt resulted in a huge deposit of marrow–cracked bones. Presumably they did not cook all the bones before splitting them, and they could certainly not eat all the marrow at the site (even if hunters would regularly have such a snack during slaughtering) but it is not stated how this resource was preserved (Binford 2002: 124, 138).
Again, this effect is likely to have differed between sites, and a ritual reconceptualisation may not have been a widespread phenomenon. In his 1850s note on the circular stone structures of Varanger, Nordvi describes how at least two of these structures were damaged because locals had taken stones from them for building materials. This was probably done by local inhabitants, which in were predominantly Sami. As described above, it is not unlikely that any wood superstructures were removed for practical reason and reuse long before the recording of the sites in Varanger in the mid–19th century. The removal of stones and any other materials indicates a lack of reverence for these structures, which could stem from a different understanding of what they represented. The locals were apparently also ignorant to the meaning of the scree graves and removed both slabs for use in other contexts and human bones (Saba 1910). Another possibility is that the structures had negative connotations related to past heathen customs or the trauma of the sometimes brutal Christianisation, so that they were expunged from collective memory or reconceptualised as something else. However, such a reconceptualisation has not been the case for many other known offering sites in Varanger. On the other hand, we do not know whether the consecration of the graves or “circular offering sites” caused any reaction among other locals, as there was probably an unequal distribution of ritual knowledge within the Sami community. An examples of this could be the recent custom to throw berries into the stone enclosures at Biekkanoaivi (57), while, apparently at the same time, it was used to store hay in. However, this is probably more an illustration of the integrated duality of the Sami culture in this area after many years of Christian and Laestadian influence, social and religious changes (Odner 1995).

In the late 20th century these factors resulted in different religious and social adaptions for different generations. The older generation still related rather matter–of–factly to certain traditional elements and practices of old noaidevuohta, like healing, “seeing” or cursing people (No.: gande), as well as the occasional meeting with ancestors or ghosts of dead children51. The younger generations, on the other hand, tended to be more involved with the new shamanism inspired by religious ideas from other indigenous people around the world and more general New Age influence (Odner 1995). This kind of influence may also have resulted in the recent ritual activity observed on Offerholmen, Porsanger, during my survey here in 2012, where a stick with freshly carved runes was encountered, though not in the actual stone structure (85), but on the highest point of the islet (fig. 50) (Spangen 2013b).

I have not obtained more information about the background for this occurrence and it could be a mere memento of a visit, perhaps listing a group of visitors. As described above, the islet is, however, very well known as an

51 Dead–child beliefs are very common in both Sami and other Nordic contexts (Pentikäinen 1968).
old Sami offering site. It was mentioned already in the 18th century by priest and missionary Knud Leem, though without indicating the stone structure here as such. Leem called the islet “Leunje–Jeure–Suolu” in Sami, meaning “Porsanger river’s first lake’s islet” (Leem, 1975 [1767]: 439, my translation from Norwegian), but today it is known as “Offerholmen” or in Sami “Sieidesuolu”, literally meaning “the Offering Islet”. The offering–related names thus seem to be of quite late origin (e.g. Schibstedt 1903: 42–43; Hagen 1926; Nissen 1928: 186). Today, the status of the islet as an offering site is well known locally and promoted in tourist information. The stone structure here, on the other hand, is rarely mentioned, which may explain why the runes were not left there. The use of runes gives associations to “Norse” neo–pagan activity and they spell “O, B, F, TH” a line and then “R”, which could relate to the names of famous Norse gods Odin, Balder, Frey, Thor, and the end of the world, “Ragnarok”. This may seem odd in a Sami context. There are examples of Germanic runes used in Sami areas and by Sami people both in the Middle Ages and in the 19th century (Keilhau 1831: 32–33; Olsen 1943; Snædal et al. 1988), but they are not known to have been part of the ethnic Sami religion. However, the Sami holy drums are often referred to as “runebomme” in Scandinavian languages, which may cause confusion. The use of runes on a Sami offering site could also indicate that the practitioner was someone with limited knowledge about local and Sami history, which may of course apply to both Sami and non–Sami people, locals or visitors (Äikäs and Spangen 2016). In general, neo–pagan and neo–shamanistic movements often promotes a combination of recorded historical practices where it is entirely acceptable to mix rituals and symbols from different contexts (Blain and Wallis 2007).

Neo–pagan or neo–shamanistic activities have been recorded at many Sami offering sites, and often result in depositions of, among other things, coins, small candles, bottles, quartzite, certain plants and animal remains. Importantly, this is not necessarily done exclusively by local Sami people or by visiting New Age followers, but by a variety of actors with mixed motivations, such as neo–shamanistic performers, tourist entrepreneurs or curious visitors, with or without Sami backgrounds (Fonneland 2010; Äikäs 2012; Äikäs and Spangen 2016). Thus, the claim that neo–pagan activities are necessarily a form of neo–colonialism that steals the traditions of indigenous peoples and indicates that these are not able to cherish their own traditions (Wallis 2003: xiii, 17) is too simple in many of these contexts, as local Sami may of course also be neo–pagans. Similarly, the stereotype of archaeologists as a Western opposition to indigenous groups is contradicted in Norway by a growing number of archaeologists with Sami family backgrounds, and the Sami cultural revival has of course affected archaeologists, museum workers and other experts too (cf. Odner 1995). Thus, the construction of scientific and authorised knowledge within what is frequently portrayed as a unified Western mindset is often more complex and intertwined with several
esoteric and exoteric thought–collectives or discourses (cf. e.g. Brattland 2016).

A similar conglomerate of identities and beliefs come together in the re-use of the type 1 structure by lake Gållegojávri in Storfjord, Troms. The finds of 14 very recent coins and other objects during excavation in 2013, and the lack older remains (see Chapter 4.6.2), indicate that a deposition practice was initiated after Ørnulf Vorren confirmed the this structure to be an offering site in 1973, especially as there is no mention of any finds of recent coins or objects during his visit (Teigmo 1973: 17). A general investigation of Sami traditions in the area in 1973 did not result in any information about this site, despite accounts about other offering sites nearby (Teigmo 1973). However, it is possible that the site was known and revered but that locals preferred to tell the researchers about other already revealed offering sites. In my own experience this is a relevant possibility, as I visited and had repeated contact with local residents before and during the excavation in 2013, and also repeatedly inquired if it was acceptable to excavate in the structure.
During these conversations, I was provided with extensive information about other cultural heritage sites, including smaller stone circles, burial sites and the general past use of the area, but recent use of this structure was never mentioned. This may simply be because of a lack of knowledge or interest on the part of those asked, but it may also serve as an example of how difficult it is for an outsider archaeologist to gain enough knowledge about a site and about local community structures, including access to the “right” stakeholders and information or any potential protests (cf. e.g. Myrvoll 2010b), in order to avoid such potentially unfortunate intrusions\(^{52}\). This is particularly challenging in Sami communities with a tradition for silence and “hypothetical”, or misleading, information, concerning ritual sites in particular and as a general rhetorical strategy (Falch 2004: 52–53; Fossum 2006: 126, Äikäs 2015: 46). In any case, the lack of older finds indicate that the deposition tradition is very recent. After 1973 the offering site interpretation was disseminated to other visiting researchers (cf. Vorren 1982) and schoolchildren in a nearby primary school. The school has visited the site regularly since 1986 and taught the children about the assumed Sami offering tradition (Antonsen and Bruström 2002: 49). On these occasions grown-ups in the company have occasionally tossed coins into the centre of the structure (pers. comm. school headmaster and school teacher, 2013). This may have had the less consciously–religious character of throwing coins into a wishing well, but some may also have had a stronger spiritual or emotional experience when doing this. Likewise, it is difficult to know if and how other local Sami, (Sami) archaeologists or various visitors have related to the structure, but the depotisions have some wider implications beyond the individual action. I will return to these aspects in Chapter 6.

In addition to the very conspicuous example of Gálggojávri, recently deposited reindeer bones have been recorded in the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure (49) and by the Bear Stone above the Fugleberget/Čiesti structure (48); furthermore, a small “altar” with a candle was observed close to the structure in Karlebotn (56) in 2014. These are also among the best–known structures in this category and among those that have been investigated and actively disseminated from the mid–19th century, but particularly from the 1980s onwards. This illustrates how both oral traditions and deposition practices have entangled some of the structures with people’s lives in more recent times. In these cases, the structures have presented themselves and become involved with people not as mere objects or things, but as heritage. The materiality of the walls themselves are inviting certain deliberations about the past, but it is only when meeting someone who cares, who finds this important today, that they turn into heritage (Smith 2006: 3; Pétursdóttir 2013b: 37). Obviously I

\(^{52}\) The excavation was of course approved by the Sami Parliament and the national Directorate for Cultural Heritage, according to Norwegian Governing law. The coins and objects we found were redeposited.
and other researchers before me have turned them all into heritage in our terms, but not all of them are involved in regional or local heritage discourses. In one case, a family has such a stone enclosure practically on their doorstep without really paying it much attention, at least not any that was disclosed to me upon my visit. The younger generation was positive to potentially having it excavated, while the older generation at least seemed to agree (this was eventually decided against for other reasons). Yet, the existence of an official heritage category both facilitates and limits the possible heritage meaning of these structures. In the last–mentioned case, the structure was signposted by researchers from Tromsø Museum in 1980\(^{53}\), leaving less space for individual interpretation and potentially erasing any older notions about its meaning and use (cf. Myrvoll 2012).

Playing on the recent enthusiasm for both genetic research and so–called cultural evolution in archaeology, one could perhaps say that the material remains of the past, the monuments that always surround us, are like genes: very real, but still only potentials that may be switched on by relevant factors, and that lead to different effects and results in different environments. If the potential is not switched on, we will never take note of them or even know they are there. Archaeologists do this all the time by expanding our knowledge to new types of monuments and new questions that put known monuments in a different light. For instance, there were no known Iron Age Sami house grounds in Finnmark until the early 1990s (Schanche 1992), but since researchers realised what they had to look for, several hundred have been recorded. Similarly, other stakeholders obviously have their own frames of reference that decide whether they see or not. We have to assume that past people have also seen and cared about the things that were somehow important to them and that they are not necessarily the things we notice and care about today. Having said that, the materiality of the rather massive stone walls considered here makes it likely that they have been noticed in the past, but all sites have evidently not been conceptualised in the same way at all moments in time, as this also depends on other socio–political and cultural aspects of the given historical context.

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\(^{53}\) This was part of a campaign to signpost valuable Sami cultural heritage monuments after the change in legislation in 1978 that gave automatic protection to all Sami cultural heritage older than 100 years.
6 Defining heritage

So far in this thesis, it has been established that there was more variation in Sami rituals in the past than written and ethnographic sources may indicate, and despite a lack of mention and several other inconsistencies, an offering sites interpretation of the type 1 structures cannot be positively refuted. Some such sites have certainly been used for rituals in more or less recent time. Still, the mere construction and materiality of these installations seem to oppose an interpretation of them as pure delineations of sacred space. Together with the finds, these aspects make it plausible that the type 1 structures were initially built as wolf traps. Relevant questions are therefore why a ritual explication has been so prevalent and contagious, or rather what socio-political context has produced and maintained the notion of stone circles as offering sites, and how the new interpretation presented here interact with that situation.

As for the first question, the persistent ritual interpretation of stone circles, despite their materiality, may in part depend on the archaeological debate in the late 20th century, where material aspects have been given somewhat less attention because of the so-called linguistic turn and the related emphasis on constructivism, structuralism and symbolism. I think this is reflected in, for instance, the tentative substantiation of a small heptagonal figure made from a single row of stones on Altarberget in the Ume Lappmark as a Sami ritual site by comparison with a larger heptagonal stone setting around a mound at the site Vierrolako, Pite Lappmark (Manker 1957: 205-206, fig. 57-58, no. 296) and the much larger and higher wall of the Biekkanoaivi type 1 structure (57), as well as the angular ground plan of certain Sami houses in Swedish areas (Huggert 2000). This combination of evidence based on a shape (heptagon) is quite typical in how it overlooks the wide variety in the material expressions that are considered. The linguistic turn provided archaeologists with much-needed theoretical brush-up concerning the role of narratives and a reflexive methodology (cf. Solli et al. 2011), but in the past decade or so, more focus has been given to materiality, partly as a reaction to what some have seen as an excessive constructivism that denies things any real agency or impact (e.g. Olsen 2003, 2010; Pétursdóttir 2013; Olsen et al. 2015). I believe these two aspects have sometimes been staged as more conflicting than they actually are, since it is fairly widely accepted today, at least in Scandinavian archaeology, that people and things work together to create those nodes of historical trajectories and phys-
ical contexts that end up constituting meaningful places, monuments or objects. However, this integrated view also entails that even if the results presented here are based on what is perceived to be reliable material evidence and take the materiality and agency of these stone walls seriously, it is not unproblematic that this unprecedented theory opposes exiting narratives, particularly because of the indigenous and ritual context. Theoretically such narratives may well live on side by side with a new expert explanation. However, the reality of the politics of heritage renders such multivocality less straight-forward.

6.1 Authenticity and the authorised heritage discourse

A major question in this thesis relates to the original use and meaning of a range of stone structures, and it thus constitutes a quite traditional quest for scientific truth about an observable phenomenon. Hopefully it is successful in balancing this with a more complex understanding of what truth is, and that “older” is not necessarily “truer”. Objects and sites have life histories, and their authenticity is not necessarily related to old age or “historical authenticity” (cf. Jones 2010: 184). This has otherwise been a more or less implicit argument in modern archaeology and heritage discourses until quite recently, and it is still a prevailing association when it comes to archaeological remains. The quest for authenticity has been linked to the increasing degree of individualism in Western European religion and society from the 16th century onwards. With this followed a search for essential and true qualities in both individuals and objects. In the case of cultural heritage, this has usually been related to proving the object or monument's ancient origin. More recent research opposes this essentialist approach and emphasises that authenticity is culturally constructed, though it is acknowledged that the materiality of certain objects can give people an immediate sense of authenticity that is related to some inherent quality (Jones 2010: 183; Solli et al. 2011). Still, this materiality has different effects on different people, depending on the context (Ahmed 2004). As we have seen above, authenticity can take many forms and be based on a variety of criteria, whether related to sensory experiences, the personal association of the object or place to origins, roots or a specific historical event, expert guidance or the recreation of an experience or a sense of the past (cf. e.g. Prentice 2001; Myrberg 2004; Hamilakis 2013). Hence authenticity results from action and encounter, but because different courses of action are valued in different ways, with some seen as better and more legitimate than others, authenticity is a process that raises controversy (Jones 2010: 199).
This has been defined as the inherent dissonance of heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). The concept builds on the currently widespread notion of heritage as a discourse, in the sense of a social practice and process through which the past is continuously constructed by multiple stakeholders with various interests (e.g. Ashworth et al. 2005; Smith 2006; Graham et al. 2008; Harrison 2012; Waterton et al. 2015). However, not all stakeholders have the same power of definition. Archaeologist Laurajane Smith claims there is a dominant western discourse about heritage, which she terms the “authorized heritage discourse” or AHD. This discourse naturalises certain assumptions about the nature and meaning of heritage, with a particular focus on “things” (Smith 2004, 2006: 4). Contrary to this focus, Smith has famously defined heritage “not so much as a ‘thing’, but as a cultural and social process, which engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways of understanding and engaging with the present.” In this way, heritage is used to construct, reconstruct and negotiate identities and social and cultural values and meanings in the present (Smith 2006: 2–3). This is described as a self–referential discourse that simultaneously draws on and naturalises certain narratives and cultural and social experiences, based on a range of embedded assumptions about the inherent cultural value of heritage that, according to Smith, stems from a certain monumentality and aesthetics (Smith 2006: 4). As such, there is an inherent dissonance in heritage, because it is about the power to legit–mise – to “authentify”, so to speak – someone’s sense of place, experiences and memories, and, more specifically, the sense of place, experiences and memories of dominant social, ethnic or religious groups (Smith 2006: 81; Graham et al. 2000: 25). Some authors still maintain that there is a separate and more uncomplicated thing called heritage and that only specific conflicts constitute the dissonant events (Smith 2006: 82). In addition, it is frequently claimed that such events can be anticipated and actively managed to promote a more sustainable cultural heritage in order to ensure socio–political stability and economic growth (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996: 268). However, the dissonance cannot be reduced to site–specific management “problems”, as this obscures “the wider cultural and political contexts within which heritage both sits and serves”. The management is the governance and where the negotiation that is heritage happens (cf. Smith 2006: 82). As described in chapter 2, archaeology is part of this governmentality, which means that archaeological categorisations are not merely interesting additions to scientific knowledge, but instrumental to the way certain aspects of the world are perceived and thus how the structures we work within are maintained or altered.

With the theoretical developments and raised awareness in archaeology in the late 20th century, this has increasingly become a factor of discomfort that needed to be addressed. Consequently, multivocality has been a slogan for some time, but attempts to achieve this, such as indigenous archaeologies, may be seen as examples of approaches that promote a perceived sustainable
cultural heritage at the risk of obscuring this inherent governmentality. The problem is not only that the discipline has developed in intimate relation with modernity, positivism, nationalism and colonialism (e.g. Trigger 1984; Olsen 2001c; Smith 2004; González–Ruibal 2010), but also the networks and distribution of education, financing, administration, legislation and other factors that make up the field today (cf. Latour 1987; Olsen 1991a; Shanks 2004: 497–498; Ojala 2009). The often used terms of “co–operation” and “progress” have been criticised for masking this inherent asymmetry and reflecting a condescending language, a colonial attitude and an assumption that local communities are unable to deal with their history in an appropriate way, while simultaneously justifying archaeological projects abroad, particularly in former colonies (Olsen 1991a; González–Ruibal 2009, 2010) – and, one may add, in such home territories as Sápmi. The use of these terms resemble the kind of “strategy of condescension” described by Bourdieu as the dominant party “temporarily but ostentatiously abdicating his dominant position in order to reach down to his interlocutor”, by which the dominant “profits from this relation of domination, which continues to exist, by denying it” (Bourdieu 1989: 46; cf. Bourdieu 1984: 472–473). The trope of co–operation has been central in general community archaeology too, recently articulated in such notions as “hybrid forums” for constant reflection and debate where minority representatives are present from the very start (Callon et al. 2009; Harrison 2012: 223–225) or “archaeological ethnography” that aim to open a space for interaction between archaeologists and “other participants” (Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos 2009: 73–74, see also Solli 1996a, 1996b). These are pragmatic suggestions that may be useful in some contexts, but they do not solve the described inherent dissonance. The mere organisation of the suggested “spaces” and meeting points rather recreates the governmentality of heritage in that it allows minorities or locals to have a voice and participate in constructed fora. It also presupposes that “other participants” are at all interested in this activity and find it beneficial to participate in it on these terms, while not really acknowledging the demand this forwards for the involvement, time, enthusiasm and interest of “the Other”, which cannot always be expected. In many cases “the Other” has better things to do, both concerning general use of time and in order to achieve specific goals of acknowledgement or self–determination (cf. Ween and Riseth 2011). Any participation in these rather idealised fora and spaces ultimately depends on other aspects of the power/knowledge structures of present society, such as individual economic, cultural and social status (cf. e.g. Burström 2014: 105). Importantly, this does not mean that I am discouraging local and indigenous co–operation, discussion and dialogue in and about archaeology and cultural heritage, which has been beneficial in both raising awareness and initiating relevant and ethically conscious research, but I find it important to discuss how multivocality is not necessarily a solution to the underlying problems, or indeed achievable, since truly parallel
and equally valued narratives would rely on a more profound change in the socio–political situation.

Laurajane Smith’s concept of AHD has been highly influential in heritage studies, but it has met criticism, especially based on the understanding of materiality that has been developed in archaeology over the last decade (cf. e.g. Solli et al. 2011; Olsen and Pétursdóttir 2014). However, as discussed, there should be no conflict between acknowledging the real existence, materiality or potential effect of (certain) things on humans and other surroundings and acknowledging the real power inequality inherent in the heritage discourse and the authorisation of specific pasts. The agency of things does limit and shape potential interpretations and reactions. On encounter, remains of the past in our surroundings may even demand attention and impose feelings and memories otherwise long forgotten. However, I would claim that this only has a limited effect on which interpretations are authorised, validated and disseminated, which is rather related to the general power relations in a given society. This is why the present new archaeological (expert) interpretation cannot simply be introduced as another alternative narrative that may be dismissed by those holding a different view. Instead, it is likely to have more impact on further categorisations and interpretations, and thus on the existing power relations, than alternative narratives expressed in other fora, such as the current ritual activities in some of structures discussed here. However, this presumably authoritative new narrative is not necessarily a negative development, as the power and political implications of authorisation are also illustrated by the persistent ritual interpretation of the various structures included in the category of “Sami circular offering sites”, irrelevant of their physical qualities. There are several socio–political reasons why the “authentication” of specifically ritual and religious heritage has been important in the historical contexts where the circular offering sites have emerged as a relevant category, and why this may be useful to challenge.

6.2 Ritual interpretations

There may be very valid reasons for defining various natural sites, and even certain structures, as Sami sacred or offering sites, but in all cases this incorporates a thought–coercion or a one–entity articulation (Fleck 1979; Ojala 2009: 27, 55) that makes the definition far from neutral. As described in previous chapters, the quest to document Sami offering sites goes back to the missionary activities of the 17th century in Sweden and may be related to the general fascination for Sami “sorcery” here and in the rest of Europe. Rumour had it that Sweden’s military successes at the time were due to Sami magic, and this insulting notion was one of the reasons why the Swedish Lord High Chancellor De la Gardie ordered the collection of “true knowledge” about the Sami land and people, resulting in scholar Johannes
Schefferus’ famous book *Lapponia* (Schefferus 1956[1673]), which was mentioned in Chapter 3.2. This included accounts about Sami rituals and religious beliefs, collected by locally–based priests and scholars in Sami areas. The accounts show that the pre–Christian traditions were maintained, something that Sami people were also occasionally prosecuted for. In early 18th century Norway, the recording of the actual offering sites became a priority in order to destroy them. In both countries, drums and other paraphernalia were collected, in some cases to be destroyed and in others to be sold or given away as prestigious gifts to collectors around Europe (e.g. Pentikäinen 1987; Rydving 1995a; Snickare 2014; Nordin and Ojala 2015). This fearful fascination for Sami rituals has to be seen in light of a combination of the witch–trial processes of the 16th and 17th century, Christian idealism, territorial claims, the Enlightenment’s interest in knowledge and collection, and the exoticism born from increased contact with all corners of the world (Löw 1956; Gilje and Rasmussen 2002; Fur 2006; Hagen 2013; Nordin and Ojala 2015).

The focus on the Sami as religious and ritual “Other” (cf. Said 1978) was not entirely an innovation of the early modern period. As described in Chapter 3.2, the earliest written sources frequently refer to Sami sorcery, and the early modern European rumours about the Swedes should be seen in this context. In Norse sources, sorcery seems to be a defining trait of the Sami (Mundal 1996: 106–107, 112; Zachrisson 1997: 166–170), despite many similarities in the beliefs and rituals of the Norse and Sami societies (e.g. Price 2002; Solli 2002). However, the early Christian saga writers are somewhat ambiguous both about the similar heathen magical skills of their otherwise glorified Norse forefathers and the dealings these ancestors had with the Sami (Mundal 1996: 113; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 51–52). While these sources reflect how religious differences were becoming increasingly defining for group identity in Scandinavia through the Christianisation of the Norse population, it is only in the early modern period that the role of religion and rituals in defining the Otherness of the Sami was consolidated, in line with the increased missionary activity and interest for exotic people in general. It has often been emphasised that the Sami were consistently portrayed as a “nature people”, and sometimes as “noble savages”, but this has been accompanied by a continuous notion of the Sami as heathens prone to rituals and superstition or, in more recent times, particularly spiritual. This twin notion was reproduced in ethnographic exhibitions and literature in the 19th and 20th century, and has remained a trope in both Sami self–identification and in popular dissemination of Sami culture in, for instance, museums and tourist brochures until today54 (Schanche 1993; Mathisen

54 Cf. the North Finnish tourist brochure described in footnote 37, which features an easily recognisable “circular offering site” in a Sami area where no such structures have yet been
2004; K. Olsen 2010; Fonneland 2010, 143ff; Mathisen 2014; Spangen 2015b; Brattland 2016). Symptomatically, the Norwegian majority has automatically equated a Christian Sami with a Norwegianised Sami, which has subsequently also become an internalised stereotype among many Sami (Schanche 1993a: 59). As described in Chapter 3.1, this is in concurrence with a general European construction of the Other that has made recent anthropologists claim that the term “ritual” itself is a loaded and western modernist concept, situated in a colonialist discourse of us and them, modern and traditional and rational and irrational (Bell 1992: 13–14). Nordvi’s mid–19th century interpretation of the type 1 structures as most likely ritual sites (Nordvi n.d.), despite the range of alternatives discussed by Saxlund around the same time (Saxlund 1853), has to be evaluated in this discursive context, as should the later, apparently quite immediate, adoption of this interpretation by other researchers, though they have admittedly had additional, if not conclusive, evidence to convince them. The ready acceptance of the supposed support this other evidence gives to a specifically ritual interpretation is consistent with a similar association of the Sami with a particular spirituality.

The later expansion of the category “Sami circular offering sites”, and the preference for a ritual explanation for a wide range of sites and monuments with little further substantiation, reflects these continuous identifications and self–identifications, or the “central myth” (Berkaak 1992; Schanche 1993) of the Sami as particularly spiritual or prone to “magic”. Thus, the identification of specifically ritual sites in the archaeological record is part of several wider discourses, where such sites are more easily associated with the Sami because they are perceived to be so clearly non–Christian, and thus non–Norwegian or –Swedish (even if this notion is not really accurate; there are many examples of natural sites of religious and ritual meaning both within Norse and Christian Scandinavian contexts), and also perceived as particularly important to protect. The identification of ritual sites both gives weight to the idea that the landscape in question was of particular significance to the (Sami) users and, additionally, to any requests for respect and protection – potentially also for such aspects as legal rights to land and water. The latter aspect is most important in areas where past Sami use and habitation is less well known and documented, or even outright contested, such as coastal areas of northern Sweden and mid–Norway, the South Sami area, or the regions south of the official Sami areas of these countries. These are also areas where no confirmed “classical” structures (type 1) have been recorded as circular offering sites but an increasing number of diverging structures (types 2 and 3) have been described as (possible) ritual sites, frequently compared to the “certified” Sami circular offering sites in northern Norway.

recorded – possibly as a simple means to illustrate the exotic Sami spirituality related to the landscape or the area in general.
As such, the stone circles and other structures in question have, in a way, invited this sort of interpretation because of a context where the knowledge about past Sami presence in general and the often deceptively—inconspicuous Sami ritual activity in particular has suffered a colonial disruption. Physical remains that can be related to this activity is consequently a welcome and convenient addition to explaining a specifically Sami use of landscape.

Importantly, pointing out the untenable aspects of the idea that stone circles in general are likely to be Sami ritual sites is not an argument against the documentation of Iron Age or medieval Sami presence in parts of Scandinavia where it has previously been claimed that Sami groups only appeared in early modern times (cf. Nielsen 1891; Sandnes 1973). There is other substantial historical, linguistic and archaeological evidence to refute such immigration theories (e.g. Zachrisson 1997; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005; Bergstøl 2008a; Hansen and Olsen 2014). The general idea of stone circles as Sami offering sites has, however, been demonstrated in this thesis to be an unreliable basis for such arguments, and it would be a disservice to the Sami struggle for rights and acknowledgement to base conclusions on this imagined ritual past, which actually prolongs majority stereotypes – especially when there is the potential to discuss both this aspect and so many other interesting sides of Sami landscape use based on other more convincing evidence. When these structures become such important arguments in today’s debates, I believe this to be because of the intertwined discourses of rites and rights, even if this is usually left unrecognised in the specific cases of recording such sites, both by the individual researchers and in any public dissemination of the material. The same integration of notions is relevant in order to understand the reuse of some of the classical type 1 structures in the generally accepted Sami areas in northern Norway.

6.3 Rites and rights

The recent offerings in the Gálggojávri structure were probably initiated by the expert definition of the site as an offering site in 1973, but they are also related to the Sami cultural revival from the 1970s onwards, which has been especially controversial and emotional in these inner coastal areas in Troms county (e.g. Pedersen and Høgmo 2004). While the limited offerings here have not necessarily been consciously motivated by these identity issues, and may have had different motivations in different individuals, the actions cannot be seen as entirely detached from the intertwined discourses of indigenous spirituality and indigenous rights. As described in Chapter 1.3 concerning Sami cultural heritage management, the late 20th century cultural revival did not only entail making Sami identity and culture visible again. To gain rights and any amount of sovereignty, the Sami also had to emphasise the
differences between their culture and heritage and the non–Sami majority culture and heritage (e.g. Schanche 1993a). Initially this was not done through emphasising rituals and religion, even if persistent attention has been given to the spiritual sides of Sami culture because of the cultural revival’s effect of raising awareness about the traumas of the forced Christianisation. However, most modern Sami have been and are identifying as Christians, and many communities include numerous members of the rather strict Laestadian church. Thus, to many Christian Sami, on the one hand, an outspoken practice of ethnic religion was not a culturally acceptable alternative, while on the other, Sami Christian religious views were not different enough to demonstrate a distinguishing identity in opposition to Norwegian Christians (Fonneland and Kraft 2013).

Even if some shamanistic or animistic beliefs and traditions existed in Sami communities and some younger Sami were inspired by neo–shamanism in the 1980s and 1990s (Odner 1995; Myrvoll 2011), the new revival of shamanistic religion was mainly driven by certain activists inspired by the somewhat earlier movement of indigenous spirituality in the US. However, from around the year 2005, there has been a shift in the focus of these activities to a more local vocabulary of Sami symbols and words, and today this Sami neo–shamanism is often perceived as more authentic than its American counterpart, even if the latter has had substantial influence on the former (Fonneland and Kraft 2013). After 2005, Sami neo–shamans have organised and met the criteria required by Norwegian legislation in order to be acknowledged as a religious community with the rights this entails to perform religious ceremonies of various transition rites. In recent years, members have worked to prepare a common ceremonial repertoire. Importantly, this new, organised Sami shamanism cannot be understood separately from the global discourse of indigenous spiritualism, which has become important as a civil religious dimension of indigenous identity and nation–building. In time, religion has thus become part of the Sami discourse of identity in terms of a clearly–defined distinction from nation state identities and Westerners in general, as well as in terms of a fellowship with other indigenous people, while also demanding respect and legitimacy for this through official standardisation. Sami indigenous spirituality is increasingly part of touristic enterprises, popular culture and media coverage and presented as a positive aspect of Sami identity, and this has had some effect on official legislation and political decision–making, for instance in the case of protecting a mountain in Troms from a ski slope development by drawing on Sami notions of sacrality and rituals associated with the mountain. This is related to the ethno–political project of building a positive identity based on “rites and rights”, which form two interdepending discourses (Kraft 2009, 2010; Fonneland 2013; Fonneland and Kraft 2013).

John L. Comaroff discuss this global trend as a “rise of legal theology”, where “the discourse of rites is elemental to the discourse of rights…and
vice versa”. Referring to Aisha Khan, Comaroff announces that we are entering an era where people identify according to their rights: social identities depend on establishing the authenticity of religious rituals by means of a politics of legal recognition that translates into rights, reflecting a general phenomenon of a rising salience of the law as ideology, practice, landscape of political struggle, instrument of governmentality and so on and so forth (Khan 2007: 144; Comaroff 2009: 194). People are using this focus on legislation to construct and represent themselves as communities, with the wider aim of protecting, among other things, physical and intellectual property, regulating internal affairs, policing boundaries, claiming recognition and generally managing relations with the rest of the world, in short, asserting sovereignty. At the same time, there is a growing salience of faith, with governments allowing all creeds full access to the public domain, in opposition to the previous ideal in the US and some other parts of the Western world of separate state and church. According to Comaroff, the communities that are most assertive of sovereignty are those based on religious (or cultural) difference (cf. Comaroff 2009: 196–198). With the current dominance of these intertwined discourses of rites and rights, it is not surprising that it becomes increasingly interesting and important to establish a common religious identity as well as or as part of a cultural identity and in opposition to a majority religious and cultural identity. The interest in tracing a specifically ritual and religious past also has to be seen in this perspective. Furthermore, I would claim that the temporal and regional variations in the interest in tracing past Sami ritual activity are related to the relevance of these discourses in different areas, which has to do with how the hegemonic heritage discourse is handled.

My discussion here does not aim to undermine a Sami revival of culture or religion, nor to diminish the beliefs and spiritual experiences that are very much a reality for many Sami individuals and communities. I am also well aware that the neo–shamanistic movement is by no means representative for the entire Sami population, and that elements of what may be superficially perceived as neo–shamanistic or new spiritualist practices may in fact be reproductions of very old Sami traditions (cf. e.g. Jernsletten 2003, 2009; Myrvoll 2011). Offerings or similar practices are still performed in Sami areas today; for instance, leaving coins and fishing lures by offering stones along the Tana river in connection with the extensive salmon fisheries here, or placing antlers and coins by offering stones along the reindeer herding migration routes and different important reindeer breeding and gathering grounds. This reverence can also be expressed as a more general respect for the sacred sites of the ancestors by, for instance, pausing, being silent and contemplating this past use (e.g. Kjellström 1987). As described in Chapter 3.3, the respect has extended to such sites as hearths, house grounds and graves. These examples are the results of specific historical conditions and trajectories where old traditions have been maintained. They are related to
individual and group experiences and emotions and should of course be respected as such. However, to the extent that such rituals and attitudes are perceived as expressions of a particular Sami spirituality, they are not unrelated to the discourses outlined above, and paradoxically do not rely only on internal cultural group socialisation but also on majority stereotypes and expectations.

6.4 Emotional hegemony

The post–colonial awareness of the traumatic reception history of exploitation of indigenous people and their cultural resources has led to a particular caution concerning indigenous ritual sites (cf. e.g. Carmichael et al. 1994). This attitude is also related to the described general Western fascination for this aspect of the Other. Rather in line with the stereotyping this has entailed, there has been a tendency to make general statements about Sami or other indigenous people’s sensitivity towards (investigations of) ritual sites or similar research (e.g. Mulk 1994a: 130; Smith 1999; Skandfer 2001; Kleppe and Mulk 2006: 368). This may be true for many representatives for indigenous groups, and in many cases there is certainly reason to consider investigations of indigenous sacred sites as potentially negative, not least due to the long–lasting and traumatic reception history of researcher’s intrusion and destruction of such sites. However, repeated generalisations risks concealing the complexity of indigenous communities today, placing them, again, in a static relationship to the world and to their own cultural expressions. According to such generalisations, it can sometimes appear as if all indigenous people by definition should feel reverence to old holy places or other heritage, which rather continues an unfortunate stereotyping of the Other as particularly spiritual and sensitive, instead of acknowledging the variation in emotions and approaches towards heritage in general and ritual sites in particular (Svestad 2013b). This expectance of the Other comes to the surface in, for example, the controversies that appear when indigenous parties open for the deterioration or destruction of protected spiritual or ritual indigenous heritage in return for other compensations (Rowlands 2002: 130).

Despite the real consideration needed in many cases, the persistent stereotype expressed in a more general idea of the “sensitive native” in Sami contexts may be seen to prolong a view of the northern Other that was previously expressed in, among other things, the diagnosis “Arctic hysteria”. This was initially ascribed to Inuit populations from the late 20th century onwards (Dick 1995), but later also to the Sami. The diagnosis described a psychological weakness that was explained with the lower development of the Inuit and Sami as races. It was associated with the shaman (noaidi) trance, which had shameful connotations (Pollan 1993; Mebius 2000; Hagen 2002: 21). As described above, the ethnic religion is currently being restored as a positive
stereotype of cultural distinction, but both stereotypes of Arctic hysteria and indigenous spirituality or sensitivity are also expressions of a hegemony in terms of which emotions are expected and acceptable on the indigenous part within a discourse; in this case as a hallmark of a unified identity.

These dynamics can be described as “emotion norms” in a “structure of feeling” (Williams 1977; Stets and Turner 2014: 226–227), or “emotional capital” and “emotional hegemony” (Jaggar 1989; Harding and Pribram 2002). The concept of “emotional capital” is used in economic science, education and psychology to describe the value of having staff commit emotionally to a business or brand and how people with other resources can be held back by their lack of self-confidence or other emotional hindrances (e.g. Thomson 1998; McGrath and Van Buskirk 1999; Gendron 2004; Froyum 2009). It has also been theorised as a form of capital in Bourdieu’s sense that is held by individuals and groups due to their affective relationships with others (Ahmed 2004; Zembylas 2007). In heritage studies, emotions are usually discussed in terms of the experiences and feelings cultural heritage objects or sites evoke in visitors, especially through tourist–entrepreneurial or professional staging at heritage sites and museums, but also more generally how emotions (can be used to) create, maintain or contradict common narratives and consequently group identities, i.e. what are also called “collective memories” (e.g. Crouch 2015; Smith and Campbell 2016 with references). Even if this staging is perceived as a positive way of impacting cemented opinions and attitudes, it does rather aim to govern and streamline emotional responses and deciding which reactions are (morally) appropriate, adequate and important to have in meeting with monuments and other heritage, whether this is labelled affect, aura or atmosphere (e.g. Bennett 1989; Meskell 2002; Holtorf 2005; Bille et al. 2015). Thus, besides a conscious management of emotions in various types of dissemination, another type of emotional capital is involved in heritage definition and management, which is the power to define legitimate emotions in relation to cultural heritage, as well as the networks that create this value. This further adds to the complexity of how heritage categorisation, like the one discussed in this thesis, is affected by a variety of individual and group experiences and in turn affects these experiences and emotions.

Emotions are also at play in more principal debates about heritage. As discussed above, the Sami have, over time, submitted to majority governmentality in terms of the way cultural heritage is defined and managed, and how it should be considered and used, which has led to instances of (strategic) essentialisation. While the latter may be a gradually–traversed stage for some Sami groups, there are still discussions about Sami minority and indigenous status in many areas. Shared cultural heritage and collective memory, and thus a shared consistent identity, are prominent aspects of these debates and include an aspect of self–imposed standards of emotions towards heritage that to some extent reflect and confirm majority expectations (cf.
Schanche 1993a). At the same time, discussions about common heritage tend to provide an arena for recounting personal experiences and anecdotal evidence, often including strong emotions about past injustices that many within the group can relate to. As briefly discussed in Chapter 1.3, Audhild Schanche has pointed out that the establishment of a specifically–Sami cultural heritage management in Norway was also part of a healing process, as Sami cultural heritage understanding and management was originally closely related to the mourning that the cultural revival of the 1970s and 1980s incorporated for a generation of Sami people that had experienced the most definite loss of Sami language, traditions, clothing and other aspects (Schanche 1993a).

The establishment of a locally–based Sami heritage management is prone to the same criticism as indigenous archaeology, as it is a pragmatic accommodation of the hegemonic majority heritage understandings; in order to protect land, local histories or interests, cultural heritage in the shape of monuments or delineated places has to be accurately marked off on a map. However, unlike situations where archaeologists consult or include local communities in research projects, the delegation of administrative responsibility has included a real transfer of the power of definition to the Sami population, in terms of focus, purpose and output (cf. e.g. Skandfer 2001; Ween 2010). It also implied a thematisation and recognition of some more fundamental issues of the Sami situation, which is one of many reasons why there is a substantial difference between the two neighbouring countries of Sweden and Norway in how Sami issues are discussed. Unlike individual efforts of ethically–sound research projects, the transfer of decisive authority, though still restricted by a state funded economic framework, is not only a pragmatic solution to an untenable situation but addresses a more profound need for reconciliation between the majority population and historically–suppressed minorities. In a similar vein, it should not be underestimated how important the Norwegian King and the Norwegian Church’s official apology in 1997 for the Norwegianisation process was to individuals and groups in the Sami population of Norway, who consequently felt that they had in fact been heard, and that we were in fact moving forward. This helps create a common ground for discussions by levelling, if not resolving, an asymmetric distribution of emotional capital.

This is not to say that the situation in Norway today is idyllic and reconciled, as there are multiple local and national conflicts and disagreements and still a Sami struggle to have Sami culture, heritage and rights acknowledged by the majority population. However, the difference in how the nation states with Sami populations have handled this aspect has had consequences for the status of these negotiations in various countries (cf. e.g. Ojala 2009; Fur 2016). Sweden has been rather slow to acknowledge any interest in or responsibility for Sami concerns (cf. e.g. Spangen 2015b; Huuva 2016: 70–71) and, in my experience, representatives for the majority population can
have an attitude that fails to fully comprehend the desire from the Sami minority to receive an apology for the wrongs they have suffered for hundreds of years. Why should the present generation excuse what the past generations have done? However, denying this reconciliation, which is very easily granted, only prolongs the colonial power through an “emotional hegemony”. Of course a majority can choose to ignore a minority need without further discussion, but this resonates badly with the aim of the Scandinavian social democracies to provide all citizens with equal opportunities for a good life, and the efforts of these countries to promote human rights internationally (cf. Fur 2016: 153–154). Instead, the minority is directed to channels where the majority will agree to hear complaints, such as courtrooms and political channels. In this context, attempts have been made to define heritage as physical and unquestionable remains that archaeologists may uncover (Thomasson 2001; Zachrisson 2004a; Bull 2004). This is forcing a quest for such remains and a demand for scientific “proof” of their “Sami-ness”, again expecting a certain repertoire of, for instance, ritual Otherness, that has clearly influenced the interpretation of stone circles, as well as other archaeological remains. Legal and political action is of course still necessary for the Sami to gain basic rights, and the use of these channels will not, and should not, “go away” because of a recognition on the majority side of the sustained colonialist wrongs the Sami have suffered. Enforcing a more evenly-distributed emotional capital could, however, contribute to discussions about heritage that are less ruled by stereotypical expectations.

6.5 Communicating knowledge – secrecy and power relations

A complex aspect of the majority heritage hegemony is the dissemination and distribution of knowledge. As discussed in Chapter 4.1, secrecy has been part of the Sami way of dealing with colonialism and cultural heritage; for instance, by protecting the output in local registration projects. In some Sami contexts, silence as such is a very strong rhetorical tool, usually used when disagreeing or finding something unacceptable (cf. e.g. Falch 2004: 52–53). This interrelates poorly with the majority heritage discourse which is based on mapping, describing and discussing cultural heritage, while assuming that any disagreeing stakeholders will protest in words or writing against recording or investigations. The meeting of these modes of expression renders many potential stakeholders true subalterns in Gayatri Spivak’s sense, i.e. as by definition in the shadows and invisible, silenced by the insurmountable barrier of translation that occurs when two discourses clash (Spivak 1988; Morris 2010). As Rosamund Morris puts it, Spivak illuminates that the situation of the subaltern is not one of silence but aporia (Morris 2010: 13). In
other words, the problem is not that the subaltern cannot speak in the simple sense, but that they have no way of becoming visible in the dominant discourse with their way of speaking. If the subaltern is to have a voice that can be heard, it has to be within the established discourse, but when included in this, as many of the mentioned initiatives of indigenous and community archaeologies aim at, it would no longer be subaltern and not express the same views from the same underprivileged position as before. The multivocality that many archaeologists wish to encourage is therefore challenged by a “multi–silence” that is very difficult to fit into the authorised heritage discourse.

Privileged outspoken definitions and authorised narratives of heritage are inherently actions of power with incalculable effects. This project has tried to encompass a variation of sources and opinions, but it is, when all is said and done, highly traditional in claiming that the archaeological material holds a reality that is worth promoting as a truth despite the existence of other narratives. Even if other discourses are free to dismiss this expert statement as less important than their own alternative narratives and truths, the entanglement of authorised heritage and other aspects of individual and group autonomy makes this statement an inevitably implementation of power in the endless play of domination. On the other hand, it may be argued that the expert archaeologist’s role is exactly to challenge various narratives and their complex socio–political backgrounds and repercussions with the very tactile limits, oppositions and insisting reality of material evidence (cf. e.g. Solli 1996a, 1996b; Burström 2014). As such, the discussion above may contribute by exposing some perhaps less expected facets of how the current power/knowledge distribution is maintained by the particular narratives we choose to retell.
7 Conclusions

This PhD project started out as a study of certain large stone–wall enclosures believed to represent Sami offering sites (e.g. Vorren 1956a, 1985a; Vorren and Eriksen 1993), asking some basic questions about their origin, distribution and potential use, as well as their contemporary cultural and socio-political context and influence. The study was initially intended to illuminate diversity in the Sami ritual past, and, with a consciousness of the role heritage has in shaping identities today, to, in turn, contribute to opening up for more diversity in the current definitions of “Sami–ness” (cf. Schanche 1993a). However, the material turned out to tell a rather different story. The research history in Chapter 2 revealed an initial uncertainty about the offering site hypothesis and a lack of references to clarify whether this was merely a scholarly interpretation or in fact derived from local Sami traditions in the mid–19th century. The solid stone circles in Finnmark and northern Troms are not mentioned in the older historical sources on Sami ritual sites in the area (e.g. Olsen 1910[c. 1715]; Leem 1767). There is a consistent lack of sieiddit (offering stones) in the structures, which is surprising considering the wide geographical distribution of these sites and the dating of them to primarily the 13th–17th centuries, i.e. before the surge of systematic destruction of sieiddit by Norwegian missionaries (Rydving 1995a: 62ff, 92). The summary of historical, ethnographic and archaeological knowledge about Sami ritual sites in Chapter 3 further illustrates the singularity of the structures in such a context, even if some delineations of offering sites are noted in these sources. Most notably the so–called čoarvegárđi, antler fence, around sieiddit has been quite common (Friis 1871a: 141; Qvigstad 1926: 345; Just A. Qvigstad 1927: 458–461; Hallström 1922: 181ff; Manker 1957: 25, 86, 91; Rydving and Kristoffersson 1993: 204–205). However, this tradition of gathering antlers around the sieidi was an accumulative process related to antlers as offering matter, and therefore a fundamentally different practice from that of building a solid stone enclosure. The results are also profoundly different in their materiality and durability.

The materiality of the stone structures has generally come to play a primary part in the understanding of their use. Through the extensive surveys, two excavations and various analyses described in Chapter 4, I have documented that these classical structures in Finnmark and northern Troms have a uniform construction in terms of building technique, a current inner diameter of 4–11 m (though most fall between 4.7 and 7.6 m), very solid wall construc-
tion, with inner walls being either straight or with an inward inclination and outer walls sloping to align with the surrounding terrain. The structures frequently feature an angular inner shape, as well as a repeated location in sloping screes or rocky terrain. In addition, some have mid–cairns or mounds, but not all. The degree of erosion differs from site to site, but some still have built walls up to 140 cm in height. Reported finds of remains of wood in several structures is thought to indicate that wooden fences or other wooden structures on top of the stone walls has been a general feature. These repeated features indicate that these structures were built for a similar purpose and as something other than a mere delineation of (sacred) space. This type of construction has here been labelled type 1.

In comparison, the structures that have been recorded as (possible) “circular offering sites” in areas outside the most northern parts of Norway and in more recent decades tend to be smaller and less meticulously–built stone circles, often on level and less rocky ground, as well as a range of structures that morphologically and topographically appear very disparate from type 1. Structures of these diverging types are here labelled type 2, which include what are admittedly stone circles, but of a different build and materiality than type 1, and type 3, which include a range of stone and turf structures of various other shapes and layouts. What is included in the category “circular offering site” today therefore appears to represent a wide variety of structures that do not demonstrate a similarity that justifies an interpretation related to one consistent cultural activity. Instead, it is suggested that type 2 and 3 structures are likely to relate to a wide range of cultural practices dating to several different time periods.

The thesis goes on to focus mainly on the consistent type 1 structures. The preliminary conclusions about its uncertain ritual interpretation initiated a search for other potential uses and several hypotheses were considered, including housing, burials, pens, storage or preparation of hunting produce, falcon–catching facilities or traps. The lack of hearths, entrances and human bones make the first three suggestions seem highly unlikely. In addition, the osteological material, size, construction details and topographical positioning documented in Chapter 4 also oppose most of these suggestions, while it was concluded that the very same features coincide very well with historical, ethnographic and archaeological evidence for wolf traps. Chapter 5 goes on to compare the type 1 structures and the related finds to other sources on wolf traps. The well–known wolf pitfall trap was extremely common in both Scandinavia and other parts of Europe until the 19th century, but historical sources tend to give ideal descriptions of this or certain pen traps (e.g. Swederus 1832; Asbjørnsen 1840; Broman 1842; Hahr 1881; Hahr 1882). The ethnographic record instead shows that wolf hunting has been performed with a variety of installations. The construction principles and topographic positioning of various sorts of described pen and pitfall traps for wolves are convincingly similar to the features of the type 1 structures, and the place-
ment of and finds in the latter also coincide with recorded wolf behaviour and modern wolf bait hunting (Itkonen 1948:63–64; Henriksson 1978: 48; Álvares et al. 2000; Pluskowski 2006a; Brainerd et al. 2008; Boza 2012). The interpretation is also supported by some traditions and place names related to recorded structures of this type: three structures in Tornio and Kemi by the Bothnian Bay are so similar to the type 1 structures in Finnmark that a recent interpretation of the Finnish structures suggests they are Sami offering sites, but in fact there is a local tradition and place name that specifically defines one of them as a wolf trap (Saloranta 2011). Similarly, there is a local wolf trap tradition and place name related to a structure in Neiden, eastern Finnmark, which has been considered a circular offering site by several researchers due to its morphological features (Qvigstad 1927: 535–537; Simonsen n.d.; Vorren 1979b; Askeladden Id 67452–1).

The study has included a fairly large amount of previously collected or recorded animal bones from the type 1 sites, as well as finds from the two excavations performed in the project (Salmi 2013a, 2013b; Spangen 2016a, 2016b). The presence of species like reindeer, sheep and dog, as well as general animal and food remains is consistent with what is reported as preferred bait in various sources, though it is also consistent with what is known to be offering matter in various contexts. Finds of fox, arctic fox and wolverine bones are, however, very unusual for offering contexts (cf. Manker 1957; Okkonen 2007; Äikäs 2015). These are thought to represent predators and scavengers that entered traps after they went out of use – and thus were not collected by the hunters, or carcasses of skinned animals. The possible find of teeth from a large canine has unfortunately not been possible to define as either wolf or large dog. The almost complete lack of reindeer antler in the structures is opposed to a very regular occurrence of substantial amounts of antlers on known Sami offering sites. This could, however, be due to ideas of what is considered suitable offering matter in different contexts (Schanche 2000: 292–294). Other features also match a wolf trap interpretation. Chapter 4 documents the vicinity of the structures to what is considered to be opened caches. This is consistent with ethnographic records of wolf traps that were built near meat caches to restrain wolf raiding (Binford 2002: 135–136). A claimed vicinity to graves can only be confirmed in a few cases, but traps in this context may in fact have a similar protective motive as with meat caches. The previously–claimed relation to reindeer hunting installations and migration routes is not substantiated on a site level, though pitfall trap systems and so on are often located in the same local areas. This is not surprising considering the large amount of such systems in Finnmark and northern Troms (e.g. Vorren 1998).

The structures are clustered in certain regions that are likely to have been particularly densely populated in the Middle Ages and early modern times, possibly in terms of winter habitation areas for semi–nomadic Sami groups that would move out to the coast in the summer. This is supported by the
isotope analyses discussed in Chapter 4.8, which show a large proportion of marine foods for a dog from inland Beajalgjai, Karasjok, though surprisingly also indicating marine foodstuffs from the Bothnian Bay in its diet. A minor amount of marine food for a sheep from the same site could reflect a similar moving pattern, but the small number of samples and lack of comparative material makes it difficult to draw any far-reaching conclusions (Fjellström 2015b). The population clusters the type 1 structures could indicate are also reflected by later recorded marketplaces in the same areas in the 18th century (cf. Hansen 1984). There is no recorded immediate spatial connection between the type 1 structures and the markets, but Chapter 4 illustrated a consistent location along travel routes, whether waterways or important mountain passages, as well as market roads. This distribution could potentially be due to where such sites are most likely to be discovered and recorded today, as the same areas and routes have been most frequently used and travelled, but the closeness to mostly abandoned travel routes in relatively more remote areas like Biekkanovaivi, on the isthmus between the Varanger fjord and the Tana river, seem to indicate a real correspondence. As discussed in Chapter 5.4.1, this is also consistent with how wolves are known to prefer easy terrain and convenient routes, while the placement of some structures close to locations where travellers may have changed from land to water-based transportation could be related to the particular danger of wolf attacks in such a situation. There is also a frequent relation to habitation sites with hearths or goahti house grounds, but the concurrence is difficult to judge due to a lack of investigation and dating of these settlement sites. The geographical distribution of the structures shows no obvious relation to known territorial borders. It is possible that such rather large installations may have gained status as territorial markers over time, but they are not placed in particularly prominent or visible places. The construction and use of large wolf traps was probably a communal enterprise, that may have included including people from several families or local groups, potentially engaging a variety of community members in terms of age, gender, skills and so on for various tasks relating to a wolf hunt and catch.

Judging from currently recorded sites, type 1 structures are found in Finnmark, northern Troms, possibly by Urroaivi in Utsjoki, Finland (Karjalainen 2007), just across the border from Finnmark, and in Tornio and Kemi further south in Finland. Similar sites are most likely also found on the Kola Peninsula in north-western Russia, though the reports from this area are somewhat uncertain. Certain similar sites further south in Norway have been deemed qualitatively different from the type 1 structures in northern Norway, but these may need to be investigated more closely to determine if there could still be similarities in use. If we disregard these and the structures by the Bothnian Bay in Finland, there are several types of medieval archaeological sites that have the same distribution in the north, i.e. in Finnmark, northern Troms and the Kola Peninsula. This incidentally coincides with the
common Russian/Norwegian taxation area as defined in the 14th century (Hansen 1996: 69). Thus, the presence of Russian or Karelian groups may somehow have triggered a need for type 1 constructions, but they may also reflect a Sami regionality in terms of a culturally specific practice. The other archaeological remains with a distribution limited to this area are mostly positioned on the outer coast, mainly reflecting their function and meaning (including multi-room houses functioning as trade and taxation stations, labyrinths related to outer coast fishing and dangerous waters, and slab-lined pits used for sea mammal oil extraction, cf. Odner 1961; Olsen 2002; Henriksen 1996; Olsen et al. 2011). The consistent inland and inner country situation of the type 1 structures is still interesting. As mentioned above, they may indicate winter habitation areas, while it may also be related to the relatively–larger wolf population in inland areas as opposed to the coast and islands. These two rationales interconnect in the fact that winter is usually the preferred hunting season for wolves.

It is considered here that the wolf trap reinterpretation is well substantiated, but the material does not completely defy an offering site explanation. Also, the trap explanation does not coincide with certain local traditions that have been recorded about these sites in Finnmark, among which the early 20th century tradition in Karasjok about the site Beajalgŋai (64) being an old offering site is perhaps the most intriguing (Nissen 1928). Though researchers may well have met and influenced local inhabitants with their scholarly opinions on this matter even in the mid–19th century, the recorded Karasjok tradition is quite likely to be a genuine local Sami understanding of this site. Considering the material evidence, this notion does not, however, have to be in opposition to a medieval use as traps, but could indicate a quite early re-conceptualisation of the structures after they originally went out of use. This is an example of the well–known phenomenon of explaining features in the surrounding as more or less mythical locations when their original purpose has been forgotten (Burström 1993; Henriksen 1996; Gazin–Schwartz and Holtof 1999; Hedman and Olsen 2009), which is reflected in the Sami folklore related to reindeer pitfall traps, which have frequently been understood as their ancestors’ subterranean hiding places during “Čud”, Russian or Karelian raids (Manker 1960:19; Vorren 1998). As described in Chapter 4.11, dated wood finds and some of the bones indicate an initial building and use in the late 13th or 14th centuries, while most of the bone material can only be dated to the rather wide timeframe of AD 1450–1650, which is considered to represent a last phase of the initial use. As discussed in Chapter 5.5, these wide datings makes it impossible to say exactly when the structures first went out of use, which means there could be several different reasons for this. It could be related to the drastic decimation of the wild reindeer population in the 16th and 17th centuries, resulting in an abandonment of the pitfall systems and potentially less need for permanent wolf hunting installations in the same areas, combined with a more nomadic movement pattern.
due to increased reindeer herding. New weapons, including crossbows in the
16th century and guns from the 17th century, as well as iron foothold traps,
initiated other (individual) hunting practices. Changes in territorial claims,
trade and taxation, with Novgorod losing its strong position in the fur trade
in the 15th century and its taxation rights in Finnmark and northern Troms in
the 16th century, a stronger Swedish influence in the inland in the 16th–17th
centuries and an increased Norwegian activity along the coast, all affected
the administrative order, trade patterns and demand for various produce.

Despite a seemingly quite simultaneous disuse of the type 1 structures,
the exact time of abandonment may have differed from site to site. Im-
portantly, they have subsequently had individual life histories and possibly
different cultural significance. Some finds of marrow–split bones, which are
also frequently found on Sami offering sites, could potentially indicate a
subsequent use of some structures as offering sites, though marrow–split
bones are not only found in ritual contexts. Marrow–split bones from
Nedrevatn 1 (83) and Láhpojohka (74) produced wide dating to respectively
cal AD 1470–1645 and cal AD 1450–1640, indicating that they could be
either examples of the use of food remains as bait, or of the re–use of the
structures as offering sites, potentially up to 200 years after their use as a
trap. The finds of very recent reindeer bones, coins and other objects in the
Gálggojávri structure (117), apparently deposited after Ørnulv Vorren sanc-
tioned this as a circular offering site in 1973 (Teigmo 1973, Spangen 2013a,
2016b), further exemplifies the individual site biographies of the structures.
This late deposition practice cannot be assumed to have consistent motiva-
tions either, but may have varied between individuals from strong spiritual
experiences to more random interactions similar to that of a wishing well.

Whatever the motive on an individual level, the practices cannot be seen
entirely separated from the intertwined discourses of indigenous ritual, reli-
gious and political revitalisation. In addition, the finds highlight how aca-
demic and local narratives influence each other, and the complications of
introducing a new and contradictory scholarly interpretation about what has
been considered and used as an offering site. The specifically–ritual interpr-
etation has to been seen in the context of a long–lasting external and internal
stereotyping of the Sami in the Norse and early modern sources as especially
prone to magic and sorcery and in more recent times as particularly spiritual
(Mundal 1996: 106–107, 112; Zachrisson 1997:166–170; Fonneland 2010,
143ff). A distinct attitude to nature and a specific (ritual) relation to the land-
scape have been important tropes both in constructions of Sami identity and
for distinguishing Sami heritage management from the majority equivalent
(Schanche 1993a), while a ritual and religious heritage also tends to be con-
sidered more valuable and worth protecting. This has to be seen in relation to
a worldwide rise of “rights and rites” as two interrelated discourses, where
groups obtain a defined identity through an authorisation of their religious
distinctiveness that translates into various rights (Comaroff 2009). This is
not to diminish the existence of preserved pre–Christian traditions and worldviews in Sami communities (cf. Myrvoll 2011), the spiritual experiences of individuals and groups who profess to neo–shamanistic beliefs or the importance of various places in the landscape as offering or sacred sites, which are no less real or valuable for these conclusions. However, and as discussed in Chapter 6, these individual actions and emotions cannot be separated from the various discourses in which they are inevitably embedded.

The surge of new registrations of various structures with reference to the sites known in northern Norway have to be seen in this context, as such detectable remains of an otherwise elusive, hidden or forgotten Sami ritual past have been a particularly welcome and convenient addition in areas where Sami history and presence has been contested. As such, it is the majority demand for “scientific proof” of such presence that forces a quest for identifiable and certifiably Sami cultural heritage, particularly fulfilling an expectation of a stereotypical ritual relation to landscapes, that has affected the interpretation of stone circles in a specific way.

The deconstruction in this thesis of the category of “circular offering sites” is therefore not only a neutral reinterpretation based on the available material, but may potentially have wider repercussions. The rejection of a generalised notion of stone circles as likely Sami offering sites imply that Sami (ritual) use of landscapes will have to be documented through other sources. As underlined several times in previous chapters, this is certainly not to deny the other evidence for Sami presence in areas where type 2 and 3 structures are recorded. Furthermore, it does not mean that there may not be some stone circles that have ritual connotations; and there are recorded examples where, for instance, smaller stone circles have been recorded on top of larger, confirmed Sami offering stones. However, the aim here is to reveal the untenable aspects of the notion that stone circles in general are likely to represent Sami offering or ritual sites, which in the end may be more harmful than beneficial for the general arguments of landscape use. The aim is also to encourage more systematic investigation to illuminate the potentially broad range of alternative explanations for stone structures that should be considered. Without denying a Sami animistic world view or the recorded abundance of other well–substantiated Sami offering sites in northern Fennoscandia, it also opposes a general stereotyping of past and present Sami being as almost primarily ritual or spiritual.

Of course, a daily interaction with the landscape and its beings, in terms of, for instance, hunting, results in similarly strong connections as a specifically ritual action, and this interaction can also be defined as spiritual. Even if everyday Sami activities in the past have been widely discussed, the debates have tended to focus on another stereotypical Sami emblem, the reindeer, whether in the hunted or herded form. Hunting installations, occupation and mobility patterns and, not least, the transition from hunting to herding have been considered in numerous studies (e.g. Manker 1960; Aronsson
The substantial fur trade and the Sami role in it has also been widely discussed (cf. e.g. Steckzén 1964; Anderson 1981; Storli 1993; Mulk 1996; Bergman et al. 2007; Hansen and Olsen 2014: 129–132, 142–148). The sources indicate an enormous export of furs from northern Fennoscandia in the Iron and Middle Ages, and it is well known that this was not only reindeer pelts, extracted through, among other things, the large, still–observable systems of pitfall traps, but also for instance fox, squirrel, marten, beaver and weasel furs (cf. Hansen and Olsen 2014: 191). However, the hunt itself is less studied. This is partly because of the lack of surviving material. There are some remains of fur–bearing predators in bone assemblages from habitation sites (e.g. Amundsen 2011; Hedman et al. 2015), but much of the installations and hunting equipment for this purpose were probably made from perishable materials or are difficult to identify in the landscape and the archaeological record. For instance, the deadfall traps that have been widely used for various animals all over the world (including for wolves, cf. e.g. Mattingsdal et al. 2001; Binford 2002: 135–136) simply consist of a rock of a size suitable to catch the animal in question, supported by twigs or beams and with a trigger underneath that the animal would tear down when trying to get to a bait. This would cause the rock to fall over the animal – not necessarily killing it, but trapping it. This sort of trap, as indeed any installations made entirely from wood, is likely to be lost or very difficult to trace after hundreds of years. Binford does describes how the hunters would build small fences up towards deadfall traps to lead the animal into it in the desired manner (Binford 2002: 136), and this could be a relevant explanation for some peculiar stone constructions in Sami areas too. In Finnmark there are also reported finds of shooting blinds and installations for fox hunting, but these are usually assumed to be of very recent dates (cf. e.g. Saxlund 1853; Vorren 1955b; Odner 1992: 129; Kalstad 2010: 11, 95), probably because of the known use of such constructions still in the 19th and 20th century, sometimes by named people (Qvigstad 1927: 291, 313, 317, 345, 349), and possibly because they are assumed to be related to hunting with guns. These kinds of constructions are obviously very difficult to date. Any movable hunting devices are even more difficult to retrieve in the actual hunting grounds, while it could be an aspect of house inventories. Smaller fur animals are known to have been hunted with blunt arrowheads made from wood, antler or bone so as not to harm the pelt (e.g. Schefferus 1956[1673]: 257). The perishable material and the context of use (and loss) means that such small items are rare in the archaeological material, but three examples are recorded in the archaeological collections at Tromsø Museum (Zachrisson 1976, 1977). It could be an aspect to look for more consciously in habitations contexts.

Another interesting aspect related to hunting is the many caches. Recorded caches are usually opened, since that make them easier to locate, but there
are also recorded unopened meat caches. Closer investigation of such structures could potentially provide better insight into any variation in use and produce, as well as datings. Investigations of assumed undisturbed cairns and pits in the vicinity of type 1 structures are also a way of confirming or refuting a connection to caches and/or graves, which can be difficult to distinguish on the surface. On a more regional level, the logistics of travelling would be relevant for further studies of both the type 1 structures and hunting in general. Some attempts have been made to trace fur trade routes further south (Bergman et al. 2007), and osteological finds in the multi–room house in Skonsvika, Berlevåg, Finnmark, suggests that prepared pelts of such mainly inland resources were brought to this coastal site, where they were further processed before export to markets elsewhere by sea (Amundsen 2011: 262–263). However, there are still many questions about the practical logistics of this long–lasting and incredibly important activity in Sami areas, and perhaps especially in Finnmark and Troms, that could be further explored through archaeology. Such efforts as GIS mapping of the known and extant older main transit and market roads could potentially reveal very interesting results and a more detailed insight into the fur trade.

More type 1 structures could potentially be tracked along mapped travel routes, but in the vast areas in question, further recording will probably continue to rely on coincidence. As discussed in Chapter 4.1, the archive and literature studies (of local historical kind) in this thesis were mainly, though not only, focused on the municipalities in Finnmark and Troms where such structures were already known. However, considering the inconsistency that has appeared between the amount of information published and that available in the archives and collections, further studies of the archives could potentially reveal some more structures. For instance, the site mentioned by Vorren in a field note from a survey in Alta in 1985 (Vorren 1985b) was never published, and the site is not known by archaeologists in the area today. This is partly related to the fact, discussed in Chapter 4.1, that these sites were part of the investigations of the Sami ethnographic department at Tromsø Museum, and therefore not recorded and included in recent databases in the same way as material from archaeological surveys.

Further excavations of type 1 sites would probably not be the most expeditious way of continuing studies, considering the extensive investigations done by Vorren in most of the recorded sites in Finnmark and the fairly substantial find material he gathered, combined with the conclusions in the excavations in this project that the structures themselves are primarily built on the surface, with little to uncover under the ground. More comparable studies of diverging type 2 and 3 structures could possibly be interesting to test the conclusion that these are not comparable with the type 1 structures, but mostly in order to establish their individual functions and meanings.

The present study has touched upon a wide range of source materials and issues, and, as always, these could all be studied and discussed in more de-
The presentation here aims to make them known and available to other researchers and stakeholders for further deliberations. The intention has certainly not been to deny either the existence of Sami offering sites or the archaeological remains of a Sami ritual past in the areas that have been discussed. On the contrary, this can be substantiated through other sources and archaeological material, and there are abundant examples of Sami offering sites known from historical and ethnographic sources that remain a highly interesting part of Sami landscape and history. A new interpretation of the type 1 structures as trapping devices should not be seen to diminish the ritual and mythical aspects of Sami pasts and worldviews, but rather to add to the complexity that makes Sami and northern Norwegian landscapes so fascinating.
8 Sammanfatning

Det här projektet började som en undersökning av den typ av stora stenringar som har antagits representera samiska offerplatser (f ex Vorren 1956a, 1985a; Vorren och Eriksen 1993). Syftet var att ställa några grundläggande frågor kring deras ursprung, spridning och möjliga användning, samt om deras kulturella och sociopolitiska sammanhang och påverkan på samtiden. Studien var ursprungligen avsedd att belysa mångfalden i samiska ritualer i det förflutna, och, med en medvetenhet om den roll kulturarv har i att forma identiteter idag, i sin tur bidra till att öppna upp för en mångfald i de nuvarande definitionerna av vad det är att vara samisk (jfr Schanche 1993a).


Stenkonstruktionernas materialitet har kommit att spela en primär roll i förståelsen av deras användning. Genom omfattande undersökningar, två utgrävningar och olika analyser, vilket beskrivs i kapitel 4, har konstaterats
att stenringarna i Finnmark och norra Troms som först blev kategoriserade som offerplatser vid mitten av 1800–talet är enhetlig konstruerade. Deras nuvarande, inre diameter är mellan 4 och 11 m (de flesta är mellan 4,7 och 7,6 m stora), de har en mycket solid väggkonstruktion, med innerväggar som antingen är raka eller har en inåt lutande övre del, och ytterväggar som sluttar utåt tills de ansluter till den omgivande terrängen. Anläggningarna har ofta en kantig inre form och en del har rösen eller mindre högar i mitten, dock inte alla. Graden av erosion skiljer sig från plats till plats, men några har fortfarande murar bevarade upp till 1,40 m höjd. Strukturen är konsekvent placerade i sluttande rasbranter eller stenig terräng, vilket gör att graden av erosion ofta är olika i skilda delar av konstruktionerna. Rapporterade fynd av rester av trävirke i flera stencirklar tros indikera att det har funnits trähågnader eller andra träkonstruktioner ovanpå stenmurarna och vidare att detta har varit ett allmänt drag för alla anläggningar av denna typ. Dessa upprepade drag indikerar att konstruktionerna byggts i samma syfte och som något annat än enbart avgränsningar av (heliga) utrymmen.


samt socialt företag som möjligen inkluderade en rad olika samhällsmedlemmar av olika ålder, kön, kompetens och så vidare för olika uppgifter som hänförde sig till vargjakt och –fångst. Dessa fångstprojekt kan ha inkluderat personer från flera familjer eller lokala grupper.


Trots ett till synes ganska unisont övergivande av typ 1–strukturer, kan den exakta tidpunkten för avvecklingen ha varierat från plats till plats. Konstruktionerna har senare haft individuella livshistorier och olika kulturhistoriska betydelse i sina lokala miljöer. Vissa fynd av märgspaltade ben, som också finns i mängd på kända samiska offerplatser, skulle kunna tyda på en senare användning av vissa anläggningar som offerplatser, men märgspaltade ben står dock inte bara att finna i rituala sammanhang. Ett av de märgspaltade benen från Nedrevatn, Porsanger, daterades till 1470–1645 e. Kr., vilket tyder på att detta båda kan vara ett exempel på användning av matrester som bete, om dateringens tidigaste fas räknas, eller återanvändning av strukturen som offerplats, potentiellt upp till 200 år efter dess användning som en fälla, om den senaste del av dateringen stämmer. De mycket recenta renben, mynt och andra föremål som dokumenterades i samband med utgrävningen vid Gållggojávri, Storfjord, har tydligtvis deponerats efter att etnografen Ørnulv
Vorren fastställde detta som en offerring 1973 (Teigmo 1973; Spangen 2013a, 2016b), vilket ytterligare exemplifierar platernas enskilda biografier. Denna sena depo

neringspraxis kan inte antas ha enhetliga motiv, utan kan ha varierat mellan allt från individer med starka andliga upplevelser till en mer slumpmässig interaktion som liknar den vid en önskebrunn. Oavsett motiv på individnivå, så kan denna praxis inte helt separeras från de sam-

manflätade diskurser som i dag är en del av urbefolkningars rituella, religiösa och politiska vitalisering. Fynden belyser också hur akademiska och lokala narrativ påverkar varandra, och vilka komplikationer det, som följd av detta, kan innebär att införa en ny tolkning i opposition till tidigare lokal och akademiska narrativ.

Den beständighet och acceptans som en specifikt rituell tolkning av dessa strukturer haft måste sättas i samband med en långvarig extern och intern stereotypisering av samerna i norröna och tidigmoderna källor. Samer fram-

ställs som särskilt benägna till magi och trolldom och på senare tid även som särskilt ”andliga” (f ex Mundal 1996: 106–107, 112; Zachrisson 1997:166–170; Fonneland 2010, 143ff). Ett särskilt förhållningsätt till naturen och en specifik (rituell) relation till landskapet har varit viktiga inslag både i kon-

struktioner av samisk identitet och för att skilja samisk kulturmiljövård från majoritetens motsvarighet (Schanche 1993a). Urbefolkningars fornlämningar med rituella och religiösa konnotationer har även på ett generellt plan tenderat att vara ansedda som särskilt värdefulla och viktiga att skydda (Carmi-

michael et al. 1994). Detta måste ses i relation till en världsomspännande förstärkning av två sammanflätade diskurser rörande “rättigheter och riter”, där grupper över hela världen definierar sin identitet genom att få acceptans för sin religiösa särprägel vilken i sin tur leder till olika juridiska rättigheter och till suveränitet i form av ett erkännande av gruppen som både påverkar deras inre gruppdynamik och deras förhållande till omvärld med tanke på territoriella rättigheter, markanvändning, upphovsrätt till traditionell kun-

skap, och så vidare (Comaroff 2009). Denna diskussion i avhandlingen är vare sig menad att nedvärdera bevarade, förkristna traditioner och världsbilder i samiska miljöer (jfr Myrvoll 2011), de andliga erfarenheter som individer och grupper med en schamanistisk övertygelse upplever, eller betydelsen av olika platser i landskapet för samiska människor i dag. Detta är inte mindre verkligt eller värdefullt på grund av de slutsatser som dras här, men, som diskuterats i kapitel 6, individuellt agerande och individuella käns-
lor kan inte särskiljas från de olika diskurser i vilka de oundvikligen är in-
bäddade. Den kraftiga ökningen av nyregistreringar av olika strukturer med hänvisning till de anläggningar som är kända i Nordnorge måste ses i detta sammanhang, eftersom sådana synliga rester efter en annars svårstånd, dold eller glömd samisk rituell förflytning har varit ett särskilt välkommet och lämpligt tillskott till arkeologin i områden där samernas historia och närvaro har ifrågasatts. Majoritetens efterfrågan efter “vetenskapliga bevis” för sam-
isk närvaro har framtvingat en strävan efter att identifiera och bekräfta ett
samiskt kulturarv, något som har påverkat bland annat tolkningar av stenningar.

Dekonstruktionen i denna avhandling av kategorin “offerringar” blir därför inte bara en neutral, vetenskaplig omtolkning baserad på tillgängligt material, utan något som potentiellt kan få större återverkningar. Avvisandet av en allmän föreställning om stenningar som samiska offerplatser innebär att samisk (rituell) användning av landskap måste dokumenteras genom andra material eller källor. Som diskuterats i flera kapitel, motsäger detta inte andra bevis för samisk närvaro i områden där stenningar av typ 2 och 3 registrerats, även om deras funktion, datering och eventuella samiska tillhörighet måste utvärderas i varje enskilt fall. Dessutom betyder det inte att det inte alls kan finnas några stenningar i samiska kontexter som har rituella konnotationer – det finns dokumenterade exempel där till exempel mindre stenningar har upptäckts på toppen av större, bekräftade samiska offerstenar. Dock är syftet här att lyfta fram det ohållbara i uppfattningen att stensättningar i allmänhet sannolikt representerar samiska offerplats eller rituella platser, vilket i slutändan kan vara till mer skada än nytta som argument för en förmodern, samisk landskapsanvändning. Syftet är också att uppmuntra till ett mer systematiskt undersökande för att belysa det potentiellt breda spektrum av alternativa förklaringar som bör övervägas. Utan att förneka en samisk animistisk världsbild, den finns dokumenterad i överflöd vid andra väl underbyggda samiska offerplatser i norra Fennoskandien, eller ett särskilt kulturellt förhållningssätt till omgivningarna (t ex A. Schanche 2004a), är syftet också att ifrågasätta en utbredd stereotyp bild av tidigare och nuvarande samisk identitet som nästan primärt rituell eller förandligad.

Föreliggande studie har berört ett brett spektrum av källmaterial och frågor, och, som alltid är fallet, kunde dessa ha studerats och diskuterats ännu mer i detalj. Förhoppningsvis kommer den föreliggande diskussionen att bidra till att göra materialet mer känt och tillgängligt för andra forskare och intressenter vid framtida studier. Mitt mål har inte varit att förneka vare sig förekomsten av samiska offerplatser generellt eller de dokumenterade arkeologiska spåren av gångna tiders rituella, samiska aktiviteter i de områden som har diskuterats. Den mängd av samiska offerplatser som är känt från historiska och etnografiska källor förblir en mycket intressant del av samiskt landskap och historia. En ny tolkning av typ 1–strukturer som fängstanordningar bör inte anses minskande de rituella och mytiska aspekterna av samiska förflutenheter och världsbilder, utan kan i stället komplettera den komplexitet och mångfald som gör det samiska och nordnorska landskapet så fascinerande.
9 Čoahkkáigeassu


odas sähttet leamašan nu go biergorádiosiid várjaleami váste. Okta čuočč-
hus, ahte leat oktavuodat gottiid bivdorokkiide ja johotlatgeainnuide, ií sähte
duodaštuvvot báikkálaš dásis, vaikko leatge dávjá bivdorokkit seamma báik-
kálaš guovlluin maid. Dát ií leat imaš go jurrdaša man olu dákkár struktuv-
rrat Finnmárkkus ja Davvi–Romssas leat (Vorre 1998; Sommerseth 2009).

Struktuvrnat leat sámi guovlluin gos jáhkkimus lea leamašan hui olu
olmmoš gaskaáiiggis ja árra oddaáiiggis, gos jáhkkimus beallejohititsáp-
melaččat leat orron dálvviid ja gesiid ges mearragáttiin. Isotohpa–analysat
mat digaštallojuvvojit 4.8 kapihttalis dorjot dán, ja čájehit ahte okta bean,
mii bohtá siseatnamis Beajalgŋás, Kárášjogas, lea borrar mearrabiepmu, ja
dat mii lea imáš, lea ahte dat borrarun lea boahár Mearrabadaluvvatas.
Veaháš mearraborramuš maid okta sávza seamma guovllus lea borrar, sähttá
čujuhit dasa ahte leat johtán mearrágæti ja siseatnama gaskkas, muhto go
leat nu unnán iskkadeamit ja materiálata muínip sähttá buohtastahttit, de ií
sáhte konkluderet dáií diedúid vuodul (Fjellström 2015b). Registrerejuvvon
märkansajit seamma guovlluin 1700–logus sähttet čájehit ahte guovlluin gos
leat tiipá 1–struktuvrnat leat leamašan maid olu olmmoš (Hansen 1984). Eai
gávdno makkárge njoukggo oktavuodat tiipá 1–struktuvrraaid ja märkansajiid
gaskkas, muhto 4. kapihttal čájeha ahte struktuvrrat leat aivvve huksejuvvon
johtingeainnuid buohta, nugo jogaid ja dehálaš várriid lusa, ja märkangeain-
nuid buohta. Dát juohku sähttá vuolgit das go dáií sajiiid lea leamašan
álkibut gávdnat ja registreret dál danne go seamma guovlluut ja geainnput leat
leamašan anus maid odda áiggis, muhto vánddardangeainnput doar-
resbealbákkiide goso Biekkanoaívií mii lea moottkkis Várjbatuona ja
Deanu gaskkas, čájehit ahte leat vánddartak dakko. Nu movt 5.4.1 kapihttalis
digaštallojuvvo, de soahpá ge dát maid dainna diedúin ahte gumppet
vánddardi dakkár guovlluin goko lea álki beassat, ja muhtin dán struktuv-
rrain leat ge huksejuvvon dakkár sajiide gos vánddardeaddjí lonuht
fievruud eatnamis čähcái, ja gos sähttá leat erenoamáš várra fallehuuvvot
gumpjiide. Gávdnojít maid siiddastallmearkkat nugo árranat dahje
darfébázahusat, muhto dáií lea váttis árvvoštallat go leat unnán guorahal-
lojuvvon ja ií leat diehtu goassáža rájes dát or Gunnasjít leat. Das movt struktuv-
rnat leat huksejuvvon geográfalaččat ií čájet makkárge čielga oktavuodaid
oahpes báikkálaš rájiide. Lihkká, vaikko eai leatge huksejuvvon dakkár saji-
ide gos leat hui oïdnosis, de lea vejolaš ahte dán made stuora huksehusat leat
áiggi mielde šaddan báikkálaš mearkan. Stuora gumppebivdosiid huksehus
ja atnu lei jahkkimus oktása sosiálalaš doabma, masa várra juohkelágan
servodatmielláltut serve, beroškeahá agis, sohkabealis, máhtus ja nu ain,
iesguđetlágan bargguide mat gulle gumppebivdúi. Dáid prošeavttade soite
searvat mánggat berraräät dahje báikkálaš joavkkut.

Dain sajín maid dál diehtit, de gávdnojít tiipá 1–struktuvrrat Finnmárkkus,
Davvi–Romssas, soitet Urroaivvis Ohejogas, Suomas (Karjalainen 2007),
njoula Finnmárkku rájí duohken, ja Durdnosis ja Giemas, veahá lullelis
Suomas. Sullasaš lokalitehtat gávdnojít maid Guoládatnjárggas, oarjada-

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Vaikko buohkat orrot heaitán tiipa 1–struktuvrraid atnimis, de sáhttá goitge báikkis báikái rievddadan juste goas leat heaitán daid atnimis. Struktuvrrain leat manjel leamašan individuália historjját ja iešgüdetlágan kultuvrralaš mearkkašumit daid báikkálaš birrasiin go dat leat. Muhtin čiskojuvvo adadávtit mat leat gávdnon olu oahpes sómi oaffarsajiin sáhttet čájehit ah te muhtin struktuvrrat leat adnojuvvo oaffarsadjin manjít áigge, muhto čiskojuvvo adadávtit eai gávdno gal dušše rituálalaš oktavuođain. Okt dain čiskojuvvo adadávttiin mat bohtet Vuolitjávrris, Porsáŋggus, áigemeroštallojuvvo gullat 1470–1645 m.Kr., mii čájeha ah te biebmobázahusat sáhttet leat adnon seaktin, jus váldá vuhtiț áigemeroštallamiid áramus áigodaga, dahje ah te leat struktuvrra atmigoahtán oaffarsadjin, vaikko 200 jagi manjel go leat heaitán bivdit struktuvrrain, jus áigemeroštallamat dollet deaivásas. Oalle odda bohcocodávtit, ruđat ja eará dávvirat mat gávdnojeđe roggamii Gálggojávrris, Omsavuonas, leat čielgasit biddjojuvvo deike manjel go Ørnlv Vorren navddii struktuvrra oaffárriekkisin 1973:s, mii vel viidásen muitala guovllu duogáža birra (Teigmo 1973; Spangen 2013a, 2016b). Dát vuohki ah te buhtit dávvirriid báikkái i soaitte leat oktasaš ákkaid dihte, muhto soaitá rievddadan olbmuid gaskkas, muhtumiin geain leat leamašan garda vuioŋŋalaš vásáhuusat ja muhtimat ges soitet eanet soaittahagas guođđän dinggaid dohko nu movt sávvangáivvuide lávejít. Vaikko makkár akkat ovttaskas olbmuin leat leamašan, de dát práksisa i spiehkkas nu olu dálá diskurssain mat gusket álgoálbmogii rituálalaš, vuoiŋŋalaš ja politihkalaš ealáškahttimiidda. Gávdnosat čalmmustahttet maid movt akademalaš ja báikkálaš muitalusat váikkuhit nubbi nuppi, ja makkár váttisvuodat das bohtet go odda dulkoumiiit buktojuvvojí ovdan, mat leat earáláganat go ovdalaš báikkálaš ja akademalaš muitalusat.

Go geahččá vuostehágu ja dohkkheami mii lea boahtán ovdan daid struktuvrraid rituálalaš dulkoumiide, de ferte atnit muitus ah te săpmelaččaid birra leat guhkit áigge leamašan sikh olegguldas ja sikkáladas

Go dát čálus bide “oaffarrieggá–kategorija”, de dat ii leat dušhe neutrálá dulkojupmi dan materiála vuodul mii lea olámuttos, muhto dat sáhtta máid dagahit stuora váikkuhusaid. Dat ahtho hilgut dáblalaš govahalling aaffar-rieggáid birra dego duotha sámi oaffarsadjin, gáibida ahtho sámi (rituál) lu- onddugeavahaempimati ferte duodaštuvvet eará materiálaid ja gálduid vuodul. Nu movt mánga kapihttalis digaštallojuvvo, de ii hilggo dát čálus eará duodaštusaid mat duodaštít sámi leahkima daid guovlluin gos dát struktuvrrat leat registrerejuvvo. Dasa lassin ii mearkkas dat ahtho eai sáhte gávdnot muhtin geaderiggeđá sámi konneavsttain máidda gullet rituálalaš kon-notasuvnmat; dat gávdnojít máid ovdamearkka dihte unnit geaderiggeđážad muhtin stuarät rieggeđá alde, mat leat duodaštuvvon leat oaffargeđdün. Dán barggu ulbmiil lea lihkká leamašan čajehit ahtho ii leat doallevaš navdit visot geaderiggeđaid oaffar– dahje rituálabákin, mii baicca sáhtta dagahit eanet vahága go buori dološ sámi luonddugeavahaemi argumeanttait dáfus.
Ulbum lea maid movttidahttit eanet systemáhtalaččat guorahallamiidda čalmmustahtttin dihté man olu alternatiiva čilgehusat gávdnojit maid berrešii árvvoštallat. Barggu ulbum lea maid bidjat gažaldagaid dábálaš stereotypii-jaide mat atnet sихke ovdalaš ja dálá sápmelaččaid identitehta duuše rituálalažžan dahje spirituálalažžan, seammás go ii hilggo sámi animisttalaš máilmmigova, ja daid eará, bures duodaštuvvon sámi oaffarsajiid mat gávdnojit Davvi–Fennoskandias, ii ge daid erenoamaš, kultuvrralaš luonnduokta-vuodaid (A. Schanche 2004a).

Dát dutkkus lea guoskkahan olu gálduid ja buktán olu gažaldagaid, ja nu go álo, de lei buot daid sáhttit guorahallat ja digaštallat dárkileappot. Sávvamis dát digaštallamat leat veahkkin čalmmustahttit ja buktit daid áššiid eará dutkiide ja berošteddiide boahittevaš árvvoštallamiidda. Mu ulbum ii leat biehttalit sámi oaffarsajiid, ii ge duodaštuvvon arkeologalaš bázahusaid mat leat báhcán sámi rituálalaš vássánáiggis daid guovlluin maid birra lean digaštallan. Dat olu sámi oaffarsajit mat leat historjálaš ja etnográfalaš gálduid bokte oahppásat midjiide, leat ain hui miellagiddevaš oassin sámi eatnamis ja historjjás. Oddasis dulkojupmi tiipa 1–struktuvrraid birra mii atná daid bivddusin, ii galggaše navdojuvvot dego ahte livččii hilgume sámi historjá ja máilmmigova rituálalaš ja myhtalaš beliid, muhto baicca ahte lasiha juoidá sámi ja Davvi–Norgga eatnamiidda mii dahká daid vel eanet miellagiddevažžan.
As discussed in Chapter 4, this catalogue includes 161 structures in Norway that have been suggested to be circular offering sites in different databases and other sources. Out of these, 81 have been surveyed by the author. The inventories were carried out partly before the project start–up, in 2008–2011, but mostly during the project, from 2012 to 2015. Time of visit is stated in the catalogue. The surveys included the Norwegian counties of Telemark, Hedmark, Oppland, Sør-Trøndelag, Nord-Trøndelag, Nordland, Troms and Finnmark. Documentation relied on photography, measurements, descriptions and to a lesser extent drawings and photogrammetry. Each structure has been given a catalogue number for this publication, while Id numbers relate to the recording in the Norwegian national cultural heritage database Askeladden (www.askeladden.ra.no, subject to password limitation). Some are also listed in the open access database www.kulturminesok.no.

From experience, and as described in the thesis, Sami cultural heritage in general and ritual sites in particular (most of the entries are officially labelled (circular) offering sites) can be vulnerable, which is why the catalogue does not include coordinates or any accurate descriptions of locations. Unless otherwise stated, many of the structures seem to be of relatively old age. It should be noted than any Sami cultural heritage older than 100 years is automatically protected by law against all disturbances and intrusions. This includes any kind of disfiguring, whether temporary or permanent (cf. the Norwegian Cultural Heritage Act of 1978).

Askeladden entries are given Id numbers successively as they are entered into the database. This thesis only include entries up to Id 151820 and does not consider later relevant additions, unless these have already been included in the study based on other source material. An example of the latter is Lakselvmunningen/Ráha, Porsanger (82), which is one of the circular offering sites that were first recorded and investigated by Vorren in the 1950s (Vorren 1953b, 1985a: 73, no. 8). However, it has only recently been entered into Askeladden (Id 159022).

Descriptions in quotation marks are translated from Askeladden or other sources. Photo ids relate to the online photo database of the Norwegian University Museums, www.unimus.no.
Finnmark county

Berlevåg municipality

1. Løkvika

Id 143336–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012

Description: Small stone structure, apparently circular, built from rocks and slabs up to 45x45x15 cm big, though most are around 35x25x15 cm. Outside the main wall is an outer circle of 10–12 singular rocks c. 1 m apart. Outer diameter of the outer circle: 5.5 m. Outer diameter of the inner constructed wall: N–S: 4.1 m, E–W: 4 m, inner diameter N–S 1.8 m, E–W: 2.1 m. Some scattered rocks inside and around the structure makes it seem somewhat untidy. Compilation of 3–4 rocks in the SW of the inner area. NE in the wall there is a flat slab that may resemble an entrance. The structure could vaguely resemble a grave excavated at Vapsgieddi, Kvænangen, Troms (Grydeland 2001: 75–76) and it is also somewhat similar to 88. Aisaroaivi. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: Stone Age finds around the site.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On moraine terrace E of mountain Heimberget.
Masl: 20 m.

Cultural environment: The structure is built on a ridge with ample Early Stone Age remains, including house and tent grounds, fireplaces and a large amount of artefact and debris finds. Bones from one nearby fireplace has been dated to the Early Stone Age. On the nearby headland of Sanstøberget there are several goahti house ground, probably from an old fishing village (station) and a multi-room house.

Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

2. Dagenvann

Id 132533–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.

Description: “Stone circle or cairn with cleared opening in the centre. Possible offering site. c. 7 m in outer diameter, 3 m in inner diameter, 1.3 m deep. Slopes towards the middle of the inner depression.” Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

3. Gædnjajavri/Geatnjávri

Id 46801–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “2–3 concentric stone circles. Height outer circle c. 20–30 cm.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: E side of lake Gednje (Geatnjávri).
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

4. Store Molvik

Id 73730–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Sami offering site, consisting of a circular embankment of large blocks, inner diameter 2.5 m, outer diameter 4 m. Overgrown with heather on the outside and inside, the wall itself is clear. Well preserved and untouched. Conspicuous and easily seen in the terrain.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the large plain Molviksletta, where the mountain rises. View of the plain as well as the Tana fjord in SW, W and NW.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

5. Styret/Storsteinbukta

Id 46819–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular stone embankment, c. 2 m wide, 50 cm high, inner diameter 4 m, outer diameter 8 m. Not a grave or house ground, but possibly an offering site.” Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On a beach terrace close to the mountain.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: Information about an offering site here or nearby.
Sources: Askeladden.

Båtsfjord municipality

6. Ommen 1

Id 112185–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Circular stone wall with outer diameter 5.1 m in both directions, built from rocks up to 30x30x25 cm, though most are smaller. Inner height of wall is 45 cm, outer height 55 cm. Semicircle of singular rocks visible in the inner floor 80 cm from the wall to the E. Diameter of this is c. 2 m and it may continue underneath the turf filling the inner surface. The floor is an even surface with a depression in the middle. A whale vertebra is built into the NW part of the stone wall. The very even shape suggests this to be quite recent, possibly a gun emplacement or other installation from WWII. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None.
Finds: Whale bone in wall.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated on a fairly low pebble beach terrace.
Masl: 26 m.
Cultural environment: There has been a path used for getting from Hamningberg to Syltevika long this beach area and also a telephone line. Cairns from this are evenly distributed along the beach. There was extensive German activity in the area during WWII because of the fort in Hamningberg. A large nearby cave, the so-called Ommen, has been used as a refuge during several time periods, including the post-war settlement.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Bratrein 1993; Spangen 2013b.

7. Ommen 2

Id 112191–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Sami circular offering site, c. 5.5 m in outer diameter, 5–20 cm high. Seems to be somewhat eroded, especially the SE part.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On beach terrace with pebble scree, some heather.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Close to a large cave used as storage/refuge. German WWII fort nearby.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden, report from H. D. Bratrein under Id 63275, Lok 7.

8. Syltevikmoan

Id 112185–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Oval stone circle, N-S: 9.2 m, E-W: 7.8 m, built from rocks up to 40x70 cm big, though most c. half this size. Secondary opening to the W where the rocks from the walls are piled up on each side up to 55 cm height. The rest of the wall is up to 45 cm high. To the N there is a rectangle made from 4–5 rocks, 100x76 cm, up against the inner part of the wall. In the middle of the inner floor there is a small depression with a small red stone. A published drawing of a mid–cairn is incorrect (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 172). Vorren also describes the inner area as scattered with some rocks, rather than with a central cairn (Vorren 1988). Remains of broken glass and rusty metal in the wall, probably from German WWII activity. Reports on it being built for a hay stack foundation, see below. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: Altered and reused as camp site during WWII.
Finds: Modern debris of glass and metal.
Dating: 20th century.
Location and terrain: Situated on moraine terrace shooting out from the mountain called Báikačearru (meaning “shit scree”, according to Vorren (1988)) above bogs in the bottom of the valley. Path from Sandfjorddalen to lake Syltevikvatn in the NW passes right by.
Masl: 41 m.
Cultural environment: House grounds in the lower part of the valley and camp sites further S.
Informants and traditions: According to a local man the Germans used the stone circle as a tent camp during WWII (pers. comm. A. Ridola 31 Jul 2012). It is probably they who have made the opening to the W and left the glass and metal debris. The same source stated that he has passed the site for decades and the stone in the middle did not use to be there in the past. Another source has reported that a now deceased local man, b. c. 1915, had said he helped carry rocks to build the structure as a boy to form a foundation for a haystack (pers. comm. R. Olsen 15 Dec 2014).

9. Buoidejohka

Id 176081–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular dry–stone wall, 4 m in diameter.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: At the foot and E side of a large circular moraine.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

10. Kjøpmannstind
Id 140369–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Cleared circle of 3 m in diameter on the SE edge of a pyramid–shaped “cairn” made up of large frost–induced stone blocks. Possibly the latter is a natural formation.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: About 1.5 m from the stone circle is a “chamber” in the scree with a diameter of c. 1 m and depth of c. 1 m.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

11. Oardujávri
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Shallow depression with surrounding circular turf embankment with a diameter and 5 m. White rock in the middle. Charcoal under the turf beside this. Several white rocks in the embankment. Investigations in 2008 concluded this is a house ground. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: Investigated by Vorren and partly excavated by the BOREAS project in 2008.
Finds: None known.
Dating: No, but a nearby midden is dated to 325± 45, AD 1460–1650.
Location and terrain: On a hilltops on an esker on the E side of lake Oardujávri.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Several house grounds nearby, as well as a midden with lots of animal bones. This was delimited of a semicircle of rocks at the foot of the site. Dating is from samples of animal bones and charcoal from this midden.
Informants and traditions: Vorren suggests a 70 cm high white rock on a moraine hill E of Oardujávri is Isaac Olsens “Haard Poulchzio aillis giregie”.

12. Røyskattfjellet 1
Id 176075–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular dry–stone wall, possible circular offering site. No further description.” Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Not noted.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Not noted.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Askeladden.

13. Røyksattfjellet 2

Id 176511–3: Offering (Circular offering site).

Surveyed: No.

Description: “Stone circle with diameter of 2.2 m made from larger and smaller rocks down to head-sized. Flat inside bottom overgrown with moss. Two stone rows, 1 m long, extends from the circle towards the SE.” Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: Two decaying reindeer bones.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Not noted.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Right by the stone circle there are 5–6 smaller depressions in the scree, diameters up to 0.5 m.

Informants and traditions: None

Sources: Askeladden.

14. Røyksattfjellet 3

Id 176511–4: Offering (Circular offering site).

Surveyed: No.

Description: “Stone circle of 2.2 m in diameter with two 1 m stone rows stretching out towards the SE. Outside the stone circle there are several small depressions up to 0.5 m in diameter.” Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: Two decaying pieces of reindeer antler.

Dating: Antler sample dated to 65±31 BP cal AD 1691–1923 (my calibration 2 σ, OxCal 4.2, Ramsey 2009, another is stated in Askeladden).

Location and terrain: Not noted.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Several small depression in the surrounding scree, up to 0.5 m in diameter.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Askeladden; Schanche and Schanche 2014.
15. Røyskattfjellet 4
Id 175977–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle/ setting, possible circular offering site.” (Rest of structure description cut short in Askeladden.) Type 2?
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

16. Røyskattfjellet 5
Id 175977–2: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle/setting in scree, possible circular offering site. Outer diameter 6 m, inner diameter 4 m. Walls c. 1 m high.”. This may be a duplicate of Røyskattfjellet 4. Probable type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

17. Sandfjorddalen/Davák
Id 176044–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular dry–stone wall. Built from flat rocks up against a large boulder at the lower end of the structure. Outer diameter 3–4 m, inner diameter c. 2 m. Depth c. 0.6 cm in front and 0.9 cm at the back. In the back “corners”, chambers are built. One is open and empty, the other, towards the S, is closed and bones can be seen between the slabs.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: Reindeer bones from head, mandible, vertebrae, longbones etc., probably an entire small reindeer.
Dating: Sample of reindeer bones dated to 224±31 BP, cal younger than AD 1640 (my calibration 2 σ, OxCal 4.2, Ramsey 2009, another is stated in Askeladden).
Location and terrain: In sloping scree at the bottom of a valley side in a narrow side valley N of Davák/Sandfjorddalen.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

18. Strømvatn
Id 143348–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Slightly oval stone–set circle in the beach terrase. Outer diameters 3.7x3m, inner diameters 2x1.5m. Depth c. 20 cm, embankment height 30–40 cm.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On a beach terrace in the hill up towards the mountain. High up with spectacular view of Båtsfjord, near the village.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

Vardø municipality

19. Seglodden
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Not described in any sources besides its listing in one article by Vorren (1985a). I assume it was discarded after more information or a survey. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: There are recorded pitfall traps, goahti house grounds and various other monuments in this area.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Vorren 1985a.

20. Skinnstakkvika
Id 137483–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
**Description:** Elongated hexagonal/oval stone circle, outer diameter NNW–SSE: 10.6 m, ENE–WSW: 8.6 m. Outer walls somewhat difficult to delimit because they align with the surrounding scree. Inner height up to 75 cm, but the wall is partly made up from cliffs that reach up to 95 cm above the inner floor level. Possible entrance in the wall in the WNW corner where there is no traceable wall for a length of 93 cm. Another 75 cm stretch of very vague wall in the S. The circle seems to be built from removing rocks from the middle and adding them to the surrounding wall. The inner floor is somewhat lower than the surrounding terrain, but it is covered by a c. 35 cm thick layer of turf. Could be related to WWII activities, but do seem somewhat older. Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** Rocky shore.

**Masl:** 19 m.

**Cultural environment:** Windscreen or shooting blind c. 20 m NE of the stone circle is turned towards this and has the opening towards the sea. Possibly rocks have been added to this in more recent days, judging from the lack of lichen on some of the rocks. Maybe German WWII or put up for fox hunting or similar. Many traces of WWII activities in the area.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

**21. Kramvik 1**

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** 2012, 2014.

**Description:** Stone wall with outer diameter N–S: 6.4 m, E–W: 5.1 m, inner diameter N–S: 3.9 m, E–W: 3.75 m. The uneven angular inner shape is visible on ground and indicates a pentagonal shape that is visible on pole photos. Inner wall is up to 80 cm high and 40 cm at the lowest, while highest outer height is 75 cm. Some red rocks on the top of the wall are not so overgrown with lichen and may be secondary. Rocks in the wall measures up to 55x25x20 cm but most of them are smaller. No obvious door opening. Some rocks outside the wall could resemble steps, but it is more likely that they are simply erosions from the wall. The floor inside the stone wall has an inclination from N to S. The S part of the floor is overgrown with moss. In the N part there is a cairn consisting of slabs and rocks. Towards the N wall there is a large flat slab, c. 70x40 cm lying with length direction E–W. Below it there is another oblong block of stone, about 1 m long with a triangular cross section of about 20x20x25 cm, lying with length direction N–S. Vorren describes finding a 70 cm long pointy brown stone with a hole through the pointy end. This was not rediscovered. This is very similar to type 1 structures, but it is slightly smaller. Could potentially be a similar fox trap, or related to turf or hay cutting on the nearby bogs. Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.
Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Built on an old beach terrace in a sloping heath terrain, surrounded of heather moors, bogs and minor cliff areas.

Masl: 53 m.

Cultural environment: c. 2.5 m to the NE of the structure is a depression in the scree, c. 2 m in diameter, c. 30 cm deep, with some frost shattered rocks in the middle. Some 40 m NE of the Kramvik 1 structure there is a shooting blind, a low semicircular dry stone wall, c. 2.5 m in outer diameter. The wall faces the SW, with the opening and floor towards the NE. Quite overgrown with lichen and presumably of old age. About 5 m SE of this shooting blind there is an opened cache, a depression with a low embankment of rocks around, c. 1.5 m in outer diameter. 2 m further SE is another cache, a depression c. 2 m in outer diameter. According to Vorren there are abundant shooting blinds further NE, at the W end of the bog Kramvikmyra. The area had high WWII activity and remains of this has not been systematically surveyed yet. It is likely that some structures in the scree here are from this activity, but not necessarily the ones described for Kramvik 1. The closeby remains of turf cutting, consisting of traces in the bog and several deteriorated turf stacks (fig. 51), could possibly suggest a connection with such activity, potentially as a place to dry turf or grass cut on the bogs.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 155–156; Spangen 2013b.

Fig. 51. Run–down turf stacks in the foreground and the turf cut area on the right edge of the photo. On the old beach terrace in the background is the structure Kramvik 1.
22. Kramvik 2

*Id:* None.
*Description:* Almost circular stone wall in partly overgrown pebble beach terrace. Outer diameter N–S: 5.1 m, E–W: 4.7 m, inner diameter c. 3.5 m. Uneven angular inner shape, pole photo indicates it is pentagonal. Rocks in the wall are up to 60x20x20 but most are about a third of this size. Larger oblong slab of about 115 cm length and 20 cm width lies half across the wall from the outside in on the SSE side. The floor level inside the structure is on about the same level as the surrounding terrain. The wall is up to 60 cm high. The structure is situated at the end of a patch of heather that stretches out on beach terrace towards the SW. Inside the floor is somewhat overgrown with moss, but not very much compared to the outside of the walls. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 2.
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.
*Finds:* None.
*Dating:* Uncertain.
*Location and terrain:* Built on a level old beach terrace in open terraced terrain, surrounded of heather moors and bogs.
*Masl:* 79 m.
*Cultural environment:* In the pebble scree c. 6 m SW of the structure is an L–shaped wall of 1–2 layers of rocks, c. 1x2 m, max. height c. 20 cm. 4 m SE of the structure is a simple stone row. About 3 m S of the structure is another such stone row. 18 m ENE of the structure is an almost rectangular stone setting, probably a hearth, partly overgrown with six visible rocks. On the E–W stretching moraine ridge, that is overgrown with heather and lichen, to the E of Kramvik 2 there is an angle stone row with a slightly rounded corner, both arms measuring c. 2 m. It is made from single rows of lichen overgrown rocks measuring 30x25x20 cm. The area had high WWII activity and it is likely that some structures in the scree here are from this activity. For instance, the angled stone row could be a gun point.
*Informants and traditions:* None.
*Sources:* Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 157; Spangen 2013b

23. Kramvik 3

*Id:* None.
*Description:* Oval to rectangular stone wall or setting with outer measurements N–S: 4.1 m, E–W: 4.6 m, inner measurements N–S: 2.4 m, E–W: 3.5 m. Inner height of the wall is 0–20 cm, outer height 20–60 cm. The wall is somewhat eroded in the ENE and the S. The inside of the structure is entirely overgrown of heather. 13 cm turf layer in the middle. The inner floor slopes from W towards E. In the NW corner the floor area aligns with the lower part of the wall in the N. The inside looks elevated, like a plateau rising above the surrounding terrain. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Situated in pebble scree on an old beach terrace that is not very overgrown. Bog area immediately to the N of the structure. View of Kramvik 2 and 3.

Masl: 75 m.

Cultural environment: 3 m to the E is a depression in the pebble scree, possibly a posthole. The area had high WWII activity and it is likely that some structures in the screes are from this activity. This structure could be a canon emplacement. The closeness to the bog is interesting and it could also have to do with grass or turf drying and largeage. A skeleton has been found under a small shelter 250 m to the W (presumably a scree grave).

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 160; Spangen 2013b.

24. Kramvik 4

Id: None.


Description: Circular stone wall with outer diameter N–S: 5 m, E–W: 5.8 m, inner diameter both ways: 4.3 m. Inner height of the wall is 0–50 cm, outer height is 0–70 cm. Built of rocks up to 55x35x18 cm, but most of them are somewhat smaller, and quite a few rather small. The structure is situated on a rock face overgrown with heather and it is clearly visible when approached from the WSW. It is situated on the edge of the rock face where it slopes towards W, almost like on a small plateau. On the W side the wall is higher but there is an opening in the wall in WNW, possibly because two larger rocks lying on the outside have fallen out of the wall. The wall is somewhat eroded in W and S. The inside of the structure slopes from W towards E. The whole inside is overgrown of heather, but not the wall itself. The turf layer is 17 cm in the middle of the structure. On the highest point of the floor in the W there is a cairn with diameter N–S: 1.2 m, E–W: 1.4 m, of rocks up to 50x25x25 cm. The height of the cairn is 40 cm, and it is situated 10–30 cm from the inside of the wall in the W. Between the rocks you can partly see the rock face underneath the cairn. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. This has strictly speaking not been suggested as a circular offering site before, since it was only recorded during my survey in 2012, but I have included it because it is situated very close to the many other stone circles recorded as circular offering sites in this area by Vorren and Eriksen in the late 1980s, presuming that if they had recorded it, they would have given it the same interpretation. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Situated very close to Kramvik 1, 2 and 3, and can be seen from the two latter. View to Kramvik 3 to the NE.
Masl: 53 m.

Cultural environment: c. 60 m SW of Kramvik 4 is a possible cairn of large rocks up to 70x35x35 cm, with a white rock sticking up, reaching to about 45 cm above ground. There is a red cube-shaped rock just SW of the cairn. Could be natural collection of stones. About 4 m SE of the possible cairn is a small stone circle by a larger rock that has split in two. Rocks have been removed from the area in front of the split rock to make a small cleared surface of c. 50 cm in diameter. A rusty shell–case covered in green plastic lies about 1.5 m from the depression. It does not necessarily have to do with the structure but indicate hunting in the area in recent times. The structure may be related to this. Nearby is also an oval stone circle from a partly opened cache with a triangular wood chest inside. It has been timbered by rough planks with abundant long (modern) nails, but open at the ends. Pieces of planks are scattered around in the area. Other depressions in the scree may be additional caches. The area had high WWII activity. It is not unlikely the wood clad cache is related to war activity, while the plastic covered shell–case suggests more recent activity.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Spangen 2013b. The structure is not recorded by Vorren and Eriksen (1993).

25. Grunneselv

Id: None.


Description: Somewhat uneven circular stone wall with outer diameter N–S: 5.8 m, E–W: 5.9 m, inner diameter N–S: 4 m, E–W: 4.8 m. The plan is irregular. The wall is partly made up of protruding rocks, partly of loose rocks around 35x25x10 cm in size. The wall follows the terrain, so that the height fluctuates. Inner height from the ground up is maximum 45 cm, while the outer height is 75 cm, measured by one of the protruding rocks. A small curved stone wall extends from the wall on the outside in the W. It has an opening towards the W. The inside of the structure is overgrown with heather and slopes from the NW towards the S and SW. The turf layer is c. 10 cm thick in the middle of the structure. A possibility is that the place was used for building hay stacks from grass from the surrounding bogs, and that the stone wall, postholes and wire are part of efforts to secure such a haystack from blowing away or being eaten by reindeer or grazing cattle. If so, the placement on a protruding rock face may be for drainage and dryness. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Situated in sloping terrain on and around a protruding rock face in an open landscape of old beach terraces, bogs, moraine and rock face areas overgrown with heather.

Masl: 54 m.

Cultural environment: c. 15 m W for Grunneselv 1 is one of two cairns, measuring about 60 cm high, 100–150 cm in diameter, built from slabs and rocks, with a de-
pression in the middle. Another small cairn is situated c. 5 m SW of the first and 20 m W of Grunneselv 1. Just N of the cairns a pointed post is lying on the ground, c. 70 cm long and with cross section c. 5 cm wide. It has a nail hole and a nail with a broad round head in the pointy end. Presumably it has something to do with the cairns, which could be post supports. There is a coil of wire under some rocks just N of the structure, indicating recent use of the area and potentially the structure as such. Vorren describes a raised stone outside on the E side of the structure, and he assumes this is secondary, but this was not visible on my visits. He assumes the stone structure to be older than the others in the area, though not stating why, and he relates it to the shooting blinds in the scree further E. Considering the modern remains around it, I find it more likely that the structure has been used in recent times. It could be related to the WWII activity in the area but the building method is not typical of German gun emplacements etc. and the sloping terrain seems inconvenient for such use. Another similar stone circle around a protruding overgrown rock surface right by a small bog has been recorded further up the river by local cabin owner A. Solstad in 2012. This was c. 3 m in diameter, potentially old judging from the lichen growth on the rocks. This is not described under a separate entry here, as it has not been explicitly suggested to be a circular offering site.

Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 151–152; Spangen 2013b.

26. Grunnesbukt 1

Id: None.
Description: Stone wall of rocks up to 60x30x20 cm, but most somewhat smaller, c. 45x30x10 cm, with an unevenly hexagonal inner shape. The structure’s outer diameter N–S: 5.3 m, E–W: 5.4 m, inner diameter N–S: 3.4 m, E–W: 4 m. The walls outer height: 10–66 cm, inner height 20–65 cm. The inner floor slopes somewhat from E towards W. It is rocky, but overgrown with heather, with exception of some clearly visible rocks in the middle. These shape an almost rectangular shape of c. 100x130 cm. A lower stretch in the wall in the NE may resemble a entrance. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 2

Excavation and alterations: Deturfed by Vorren and Eriksen, who found a surface of gravel and small rocks underneath.
Finds: The end of a decayed stick, 3 cm in diameter.
Dating: Uncertain. The stick was dated to 145±50 BP, cal AD younger than 1665 (T–10218) (according to the lab report. Vorren and Eriksen states the date 345±50 BP, but give the same calibrated date).
Location and terrain: The structure is situated on the end of a pebble beach terrace overgrown with heather, c. 6 m from an edge. Beyond this edge the terrain slopes towards a boggy area in the W. View to mountain Falkefloget in the SW, bay Grunnesbuka in the S and towards the mountains in the N.
Masl: 43 m.
**Cultural environment:** A small depression in the ground 15 m S and a pit c. 15 m E from the structure is assumed to be natural. According to Vorren there should be a cairn to the W of the structure. A scree grave in shape of a cairn at the foot of a rock side (Id 68388) is recorded 240 m to the ESE. In the grave, a skeleton was found with a an Early Iron Age cross–shaped brooch (AD 500–600, cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 149). In the description in Askeladden the area with the grave is called Torvemarkbergen, i.e. “Turf field hills”. The name could indicate turf cutting activities in the area, and it is possible that the structure has been to dry and protect turf (see even Kramvik 1). 377 m to the E is a peculiar cairn, Id 57564–1, circular with measurements 580x530 cm, height up to 80 cm, with a depression in the middle about 60 cm deep. Some large rocks are spread around and four large pieces of whalebones are lying right outside the cairn in the N–NW, while several pieces are sticking up between its rocks. It has been defined as a grave. Another two small cairn structures to the W and NW of this cairn. Another 250 to the NE of the whalebone cairn there is a gathering of 22 house grounds and three oval cairns in the pebble beach terrace at c. the same height above sea level. A 150 m to the E of the cairn is a collection of three depressions in the scree.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 145, 148–149; Spangen 2013b.

### 27. Grunnesbukt 2

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** Not refound.

**Description:** Rounded square stone wall with a cairn in the middle. Built similar to a fence. Overgrown with grass inside. Outer measurements diagonal SE–NW: 530 cm, ENE–WSW: 310 cm. Type 3.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** In a scree in a steep slope towards Grunnesbukta.

**Masl:** 50 m.

**Cultural environment:** Vorren doubts this is an offering site, and rather believes it has to do with the hunting installations in the scree closeby (hunting blinds). The structure was not refound during my survey in 2012, but online aerial photos from 2014 (kart.finn.no) indicate that there is an overgrown structure just below the Lillefloget, about 180 m S of the summit as the crow flies, in a boggy area right to the W of river Flogelva. This structure, however, seems to be recorded as a turfhut house ground in Askeladden (Id 136334–1).

**Informants and traditions:** Found by Hans Kristian Eriksen in 1988.

**Sources:** Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 150.

### 28. Flogelva

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** 2012, 2014.
Description: Almost rectangular stone wall with visible walls in NE, SW and SE, and an overgrown embankment of rocks towards NV. Opening in the corner towards the N. Large cairnlike stone setting in the middle, where the visible rocks extends to an area of c. 2x3 m. Outer length of the whole structure NE–SW: 9 m, NW–SE: 5.8 m, inner measurements NE–SW: 7 m, NW–SE: 3.7 m. Outer height of the wall 0–90 cm, inner height: 0–45 cm. Vorren says the cairn could resemble a grave, but that “On closer inspection there no evidence of a burial was found” (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 154). Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: Apparently at least the cairn was investigated by Vorren and Eriksen.

Finds: Vorren describes finding a slab of light sand stone with three curved tracks across the middle, measuring 80x40x10 cm, just outside the wall of the structure. This was not recovered during my surveys.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: On a pebble beach terrace c. 400 m from the current shoreline. Masl: 21 m.

Cultural environment: No recorded structures in the immediate vicinity. The cairn described under Grunnesbukt 1 is situated 560 m to the NE at approximately the same height above sea level The three depressions in the scree 150 m to the E of the cairn are 200 m E of the Flogelva structure.

Informants and traditions: Found by Hans Kristian Eriksen.


29. Falkefloget

Id: None.

Surveyed: 2012.

Description: Stone circle, or judging from aerial photos, unevenly pentagonal structure, with outer diameter N–S: 5.3 m, E–W: 4.7 m, inner diameter N–S: 3.9 m, E–W: 3.4 m. Outer height on the wall: 30–55 cm, inner height: 25–55 cm. The inner area of the structure is overgrown with heather, moss and dwarf birch, with some visible rocks lying around. There is a cairnlike collection of rocks in the middle in the middle, ca.100x80 cm in length direction NW–SE. One of the rocks in this cairn has a peculiar edge sticking up. The rocks in the wall are up to 80x40x10 cm largee, but most are around 50x25x10 cm. In the N the structure has a small extension that breaks with the circular shape, cerating a small “chamber”. There is a rock inside this “chamber”. W of the extension the wall is lower and may resemble an entrance, but some stones on the outside could suggest this the part of the wall has collapsed. The rocks in the wall are probably fetched from screes in the mountain sides in the W and E, as there are not that many larger rocks in the ground by the actual structure. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On a high moraine terrace. The terrace continues between the hillsides towards a lake. It is partly boggy and overgrown with grass, with a small stream running from the waterlogged areas and down past the structure. The structure is situated so that it is not visible when approach from below and the seaside before you reach the terrace it is lying on. Wide views of the shoreline from the structure itself and also to a peculiar large stone block at the end of Falkefjolget that is separated and stands out from the mountain.

Masl: 75 m.

Cultural environment: Two shooting blinds in the pebble scree on the second terrace below the structure. Both consist of a low atone embankment facing SSE, with the opening towards NNW, c. 1.5 m in diameter. There are several stone structures up on mountain Falkefjolget, but these were not visited. According to local cabin owners these are younger and partly related to WWII activity. Falkefjolget means “the Falcon Cliff”.

Informants and traditions: Found by Hans Kristian Eriksen in 1986. A local cabin owner thought the structure had to do with storing grass from the bogs.


30. Lambonesbergan/Langbunesbergan

Id: None.


Description: Stone circle with rocks in one, or some places two, layers, with outer diameter N–S: c. 6.3 m, E–W: c. 5.8 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 4.3 m, E–W: c. 4.4 m. Built from rocks between 45x30x20 cm and 30x30x85 cm. Somewhat eroded and uneven shape. Situated on a hillock and the inner area of the structure slopes from the SE to the NW. Some of the wall has been built on the edge of the steep hillside to the E and some of the rocks have slid down. The W part of the structure also looks eroded and messy. According to Vorren the wall looks like it has once been more built–up, but this is not evident today. Three rocks are lying side by side in the middle of the structure, most likely due to the investigations by Vorren and Eriksen, who assumed these rocks to be sieidis (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 140). Another rock next to them without lichen growth appears to be turned around, and under this are traces suggesting the digging of a possible small test pit. Possibly related to turf or hay cutting in the nearby bogs. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: The structure is situated on the high end of a hillock, a turf covered rock surface, in the middle of a bog. Good views to all sides, but hilltops on both sides in the E and W.

Masl: 75 m.

Cultural environment: Shooting blinds in the area.


Sources: Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 137–140; Spangen 2015a.
31. Komagdalen/Guovžžabiedju

_Id 136294–1_: Steinkrets (stone circle).


_Description_: Circular stone wall in pebble scree, made by stones and slabs taken from the middle of the structure. Outer diameter N–S: 4.1 m, E–W: 4.8 m, inner diameter N–S: 2.6 m, E–W: 2.5 m. Outer height of the wall c. 15–45 cm, but the lower part in the wall is clearly eroded, so that the original lower point is probably 20 cm above the surrounding terrain. Inner height of the wall is c. 50–70 cm when disregarding the part where the wall is eroded. Det inner part of the structure is with somewhat subterranean, and currently partly overgrown with grass and willow. In the W the wall is somewhat lower, which may resemble an entrance, but could easily be due to collapses. Lichen growth indicates that this would have to be long ago. On the top of the wall, flat slabs have been placed, sometims in two layers, but some of these have collapsed in recent times There are two slabs on top of each other in the middle of the structure probably collapses from the wall in S. There appears to be soil underneath them, otherwise rocky inner surface. Quite similar to type 1 structures, but smaller. Resembles falcon catching sites described further S in Norway (Alsaker 1997, see fig. 52–53). Type 2.

_Excavation and alterations_: None known.

_Finds_: None known.

_Dating_: Uncertain.

_Location and terrain_: Situated in pebble scree by the SW end of a small lake in the valley Komagdalen S of the ravine Guovžžabiedju (“the Bear’s Den”). Open treeless terrain overgrown with heather, grass and willow shrubberies.

_Masl_: 71 m.

_Cultural environment_: About 10 m NE of the structure is a large cache (Id 136294–1) in shape of a conical pit in the pebble scree, c. 2,5 m in outer diameter with a faint embankment of thrown–out rocks. Another cache of the same shape is situated c. 3 m NW of this (Id 136294–2). Here a plastic bottle is wedged between the rocks in the SW part of the pit, apparently a secondary use. On the edge of the pit in the ESE is a white rock with a peculiar pointy shape.

_Informants and traditions_: Recorded by Hans Kristian Eriksen in 1991, at which point he considered it likely to be a falcon catcher’s hut, according to his notes on a map found in the topographical archives of the Sami Parliament in Varangerbotn. Later recorded in Askeladden, noting it resembled a circular offering site.

_Sources_: Askeladden.

32. Bjørnskaret/Huhttirjávrrit 1

_Id_: None.

_Surveyed_: No.

_Description_: Stone circle, exposed to the S, in which direction there may have been an opening (a door?). View of Komagdalen and Grythaugen and to another stone circle close by. Type 2.
Fig. 52 Komagdalen, Vardø, Finnmark

Fig. 53 Installation for falcon catching. Ill.: S. Alsaker
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Sloping scree area on mountain hillside NE of the larger lake Huhttirjávvrit.
Masl: 201 m.
Cultural environment: Meat cache only few meters from the stone structure, and abundant caches in the area in general. The nearby bogs at Giron were used for haymaking but it seems unlikely that a structure so high up has anything to do with that. There is a large fence trapping system for wild reindeer on the mountain Ryggfjellet some 3–4 km further NE and several more on the mountain range further in on the Varanger peninsula.
Informants and traditions: Documented by Erik Sundland. Undated photos in unimus.no taken by Vorren indicate he visited similar sites in Bjørnaskaret at some point, but these are not included in his publications. Two photographed stone circles are defined as offering sites in unimus, but Vorren’s caption says “From the ’shooting blinds’ connected with stone fences in Bjørnkaret” (tslf5235).
Sources: Erik Sundland, pers. comm. 9 Jul 2013.

33. Bjørn skaret/Huhttirjávrrit 2
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Stone circle. Some wood remains lying on the walls. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Scree area on mountain hillside NE of the larger lake Huhttirjávvrit.
Masl: 204 m.
Cultural environment: Not far from Bjørnskaret/Huhttirjávrrit 1.
Informants and traditions: Documented by Erik Sundland. See Bjørnskaret/Huhttirjávrrit 1 about Vorren’s surveys.
Sources: Erik Sundland, pers. comm. 9 Jul 2013. Photo: tslf5235.

Vadsø municipality

34. Skallelv
Id 146616–1: Steinring (Stone circle).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle with inner measurements 350x400 cm, width of wall 150 cm, height 50–100 cm. In the middle of the circle is a large slab measuring 200x150 cm.” Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Open landscape with marked beach terraces consisting of large rocks.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Uncertain.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

35. Falkkeila
Id 89525–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle, 350 cm in diameter, height 25 cm.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated partly(?) in pebble scree and areas overgrown with heather. Open landscape with pronounced beach terraces consisting of boulders.
Masl: Uncertain.
Cultural environment: Uncertain.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

36. Andersby
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Stone circle smaller than the ones in Nesseby, mentioned by Nordvi. He gives no further details and the site has not been refound. Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not known.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Nordvi n.d.
37. Sandskjær

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Stone circle smaller than the ones in Nesseby, mentioned by Nordvi. He gives no further details and the site has not been refound. Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not known.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Nordvi n.d.

38. Jacobselvdalen

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Stone circle in scree. Somewhat higher floor level than surrounding terrain. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: At the bottom of a scree in Jakobselvdalen on the NW slope of the mountain Skjøthaugen/Vuolit Guoaiweaski.
Masl: 220 m.
Cultural environment: Close to hay fields that were used in the second half of the 19th century.
Informants and traditions: Documented by Erik Sundland.
Sources: Erik Sundland pers. comm. 18 Sep and 13 Oct 2014.

39. Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš 1

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Saxlund says that there are large circular walls at three different places near the sea underneath and E of the Klubbfjell/ Murgiid–Gahperaš, partly built up against with cliff walls at the upper side that are higher than the walls. He did not get to visit these (Saxlund 1853), and they are not mentioned by later writers. Two of them could potentially be the same two smaller structures Nordvi mentions in Andersby and Sandskjær. Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: The structure has not been possible to find in later years (cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993:121). It is likely that the modernisation of the main road in the 20th century has destroyed it and possibly other stone circles in the area mentioned by Saxlund.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not described. There are large slab screes along the shores in the area.
Masl: Not known.
Cultural environment: Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš is described in older sources as a large offering site where bones of halibut and reindeer could be found. There are plentiful graves around the conspicuous mountain formation. A pond to the NE of the peak has served as an ice fetching pond in modern times, but it has also been claimed to be a so–called Sáiva lake of mythic connotations (Solbakk 2008).
Informants and traditions: Apparently Saxlund have been told by someone about three structures underneath or E of Klubbnasen, but these are not named. It cannot have been Nordvi, who does not mention these structures in his own reports.
Sources: Saxlund 1853.

40. Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš 2
See Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš 1. Possible type 1

41. Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš 3
See Klubbnasen/Murgiid–Gahperaš 1. Possible type 1

Nesseby municipality (Unjárga gielda)

42. Klubbvik/Giettáid
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Nordvi describes one stone circle some “1/4 Miil”, i.e. 2,8 km, E of Klubbvik. The structure here was 56 alen in circumference, i.e. 35,14 m or 11,19 m in diameter, and 2 alen high, i.e. 125 cm. It was built from stone slabs that were 4–6 inches thick, i.e. c. 10–15 cm, adjacent to a cliff upon which there were stone to demarcate the continuation of the stone wall (Nordvi n.d.). It is uncertain if this could be the same stone circle as the one mentioned by Qvigstad 1 km E of the river in Klubbvik, but I have chosen to describe this as a separate structure (see below, cat no) because of the discrepancy in distance from Klubbvik/Klubbelva. The place name Giettáid is in accordance with the location 2,8 km, E of Klubbvik. Probable type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Screes between the shore in the S and relatively steep mountain sides to the N.
Masl: Not known.
**Cultural environment:** There are three registered scree graves in the scree area just W of the large and well-known offering site on Klubbnasen/Murgiidi–Gahperaš (see above) (Id 46958, 17364 and 17365). On the N and E side of Klubbnasen there is a larger area with graves (e.g. Id 89560). Isaac Olsen mentions an offering site W of Klubbnasen called “Ziourres–Ibmel”, “the Otter God” (Olsen 1910:15), see 43. Klubbvik/Tjukkenasbukta 1.

**Informants and traditions:** None known.

**Sources:** Nordvi n.d., Saxlund 1853, Nesseby church book, Qvigstad 1926: 326, Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 120–121. Kleppe refers to a report in the Sami ethnographic archive, but this has not been possible to retrieve. Vorren says he inventoried remains of a stone circle 750 m E of Klubbvik in 1955 (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:121), but his field notes from this year do not include any record of this.

### 43. Klubbvik/Tjukkenasbukta 1

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** Qvigstad notes a stone circle in this area that the road goes through. He suggests this to be the offering site Isaac Olsen lists as “Ziourres–Ibmel”/”Čæwres–Ibmel” (“the Otter god”) (cf. Qvigstad 1926: 326). Vorren says he inventoried the remains of a stone circle 750 m E of Klubbvik in 1955, probably the same one, as the road also went through this (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 121). The location coincides with a small scree area in the bay Tjukkenasbukta. Vorren rather relates the offering site listed by Olsen to a peculiar rock with a carved cross 1 km E of Klubbvik, according to local tradition a mark set on it to remember a man who fell off the mountain cliff here (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 123). Possible type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** 1 km from the Klubbvik river, according to Qvigstad, and 750 m according to Vorren. The Sami place name is in accordance with this location.

**Masl:** Not known.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** Local tradition related to peculiar stone.

**Sources:** Qvigstad 1926, Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 120–121.

### 44. Klubbvik/Tjukkenasbukta 2

**Id 56725–1:** Ukjent (Unknown).

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** In 1971, Kleppe reports a structure in the area that does not seem to be affected by the road, and suggests it may be the the stone circle mentioned by Qvigstad in this area (see above). Since both Qvigstad and Vorren distinctly describes this structure as destroyed by the road, I believe the structure recorded by Kleppe and suggested to be a Sami offering site was something else. I have therefore added it as a separate post. She describes it as a slightly curved wall built from small and
large slabs, about 7 m long, 40 cm wide and mostly 1 m high, stretching from a large boulder in the N–NW through quite steep terrain to the S–SE. The S part of the wall is somewhat collapsed. It was not possible to refind during surveys in 2014. Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In rocky and scree terrain overgrown with some birch forest and heather.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

45. Perlarsavik/Miennjagohppi

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: This stone structure has not been refound in later years, but it is described in the mid–19th century to be a stone circle situated quite far up from the sea, built from horizontally placed stone slabs and adjoined to a cliff wall on the upper side (Saxlund 1853), “upper” suggesting that it was built in somewhat sloping terrain. The inner circumference of the wall was 43 alen, i.e. 26,98 m, of which the cliff wall constituted 13 alen, i.e. 8,15 m. The inner diameter would thus be c. 950 cm. The height of the wall was 2,5 alen, i.e. 157 cm, and the width was 1 alen, i.e. 62,75 cm. Saxlund also says that the outside of the wall was covered with slabs in the shap of a roof. The structure was circular, apart from the cliff wall, which was straight and 3 alen high, i.e. 188 cm. On the flat surface of the cliff, there were rocks delineating the continuation of the wall. Two rocks or slabs in the wall were measured to be 78x47x12,7 cm and 157x31x10 cm, and other rocks were both bigger and smaller than this (Saxlund 1853). Nordvi gives slightly different measurements and says it is 44 alen in circumference and 2,5 alen high and built from large slabs (Nordvi n.d.). Saxlund discusses the possible uses of this structure, dismissing suggestions that it could have a housing purpose or be a fishing cabin or a shooting blind for hunting fox, otter or similar animals. There are no entrances and no signs of a roof. He also rejects the idea that it could be a reindeer milking pen. It is situated in an area with “stone graves”, and he says it may be related to Sami religion (“Lappernes religiøse Væsen”). On a hill further down a large boulder is visible against the sea (Saxlund 1853). Because of the similarities in the building construction to larger scree graves, he concludes it is most likely that the structure was meant for burials of several individuals, but never used, as there is no roof and no signs of burials in it (Saxlund 1853). Probable type 1.

Excavation and alterations: Saxlund says he has picked up some rocks that seemed to have fallen down from the wall, but that he could not see anything peculiar. The floor area looked like the surrounding terrain (Saxlund 1853). Nordvi describes the structure as somewhat ruined because rocks have been taken from it (Nordvi n.d.).
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not known.
Cultural environment: On a hill further down a large boulder is visible against the sea (Saxlund 1853). Per Larsavik is a small bay with a farm and fields above the rocky beach. The structure must have been situated in the cliff area on the SW side of the bay, where the scree holds at least 30 graves, probably more (Askeladden, The Sami Parliament 2004: 12).
Informants and traditions: None known. Saxlund’s discussion of the function suggests there was no recorded local knowledge about it in the mid–19th century either.
Sources: Saxlund 1853, Nordvi n.d.

46. Fugleberget/Čiesti – Perlarsavik 1

Id 26970–46: Offerring/Urgrav (Circular offering site/Scree grave).
Surveyed: No.
Excavation and alterations: Some uncertainty about what investigations were made in this area before the 1970s.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not described.
Masl: Not known.
Cultural environment: Scree burial field with 128 certain and possible scree graves, as well as some other constructions including shooting blinds, fox hunting pits and other stone constructions from various time periods.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

47. Fugleberget/Čiesti – Perlarsavik 2

Id 26970–135: Offerring/Urgrav (Circular offering site/Scree grave).
Description: “Uneven wall of water-rolled stones, inner area overgrown with heather.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: Some uncertainty about what investigations were made in this area before the 1970s.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.
48. Fugleberget/Čiesti

*Id 67220–1: Offersted* (Offering site).


**Description:** Stone wall, oval, possibly previously angular inner shape, somewhat collapsed in N end and disarranged in the SE part. Built from taking rocks out from the inner part and put up on the walls. The structure has an outer diameter N–S of 11.6 m and E–W of 13 m, and an inner diameter N–S of 10.1 m and E–W of 10 m. On the outside the wall partly aligns with the surrounding scree, measuring 0–40 cm, while the inner wall is 60–100 cm higher than the floor. There is a depression in the SE part of the floor area (cf. Spangen 2013b). It is the first structure described in written sources, as priest Johan Fritzner briefly mentions a circular stone enclosure on Fuglebjerget with straight inner walls, outer walls covered with slabs and rocks from the surrounding terrain. He suggests it to be a result of children’s play (Fritzner 1846:132). Saxlund later measured the circumference to 68 alen, i.e. 42.67 m, equaling a diameter of 13.59 m. It was then 1.75 alen or 1.09 m, high. The wall was an alen, i.e. c. 62.75 cm, wide. Saxlund says the wall was covered on the outside of “roof” slabs (“taglagte Stene”) and that one stone in the wall was 1 alen in diameter (?) and 3 inches thick. Otherwise rocks of various sizes were used (Saxlund 1853, my translation). Nordvi gives the same measurements, but says there were several larger rocks of 1 alen x 3 inches, and that the rest of the rocks were small because there were small rocks in that area (Nordvi n.d.). Tromsø Museum archaeologist O. Nicolaissen visited the place in 1891. Apparently the wall was then somewhat eroded, and he describes it as an oval (“langrund”) structure measuring 11x8 m in diameter, 78 cm high. He emphasises that the top of the wall is in line with the surrounding scree, and despite the fact that the structure is placed on a high plateau, it cannot be seen from a distance and that anyone using it “as a vantage” would have good views without being seen themselves (Nicolaissen 1892). Kleppe describes a rectangular depression “the size of a grave” inside the stone circle, but says that no other grave criteria were fulfilled (Kleppe 1974: 63). Vorren considers the information about a possible grave to be unverified (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:116). The information given in Askeladden about four graves inside the structure is erroneous and actually refers to the finds in the structure in 49. Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes/Čeavccagead) 1. Type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** Fritzner mentions that the structure is partly disarranged (Fritzner 1846:132) and Saxlund says a Norwegian had taken rocks from the S wall to build a “fox hut” just next to it (Saxlund 1853). The different measurements show a certain erosion during the late 19th century.

**Finds:** Kleppe suggests that a bone comb, now lost, but drawn of Nordvi (Hansen 1907, fig. 161), could be from a grave within the stone circle (Kleppe 1974:63), but Nordvi himself has not described the grave with this find to be inside the structure, and on the contrary refers to a previously unopened grave outside the circle (Nordvi n.d.).

**Dating:** Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On a scree terrace underneath the Bear Stone, facing the sea, not visible before you come close to the site.

Masl: 67 m.

Cultural environment: Saxlund notes a large stone slab with a hole in it, resembling an eye, standing somewhere above the stone circle, and says that “someone” has suggested this was an idol related to the structure. He does not however find any reason to believe this. He also notes that there are “old stone graves” not far from the stone circle (Saxlund 1853). Nordvi says that there was an undisturbed old Sami grave nearby in which nothing was found (Nordvi n.d.), indicating he investigated it. Vorren refers to an open scree grave 6 m N–NW of the stone circle, probably the same one. In addition he says that the distance to the cliff with the Bear Stone (see below) is 16 m (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 115–116). In his field notes he talks about a large boulder on top of the Fugleberget/Čiesti mountain that points straight to the offering site. Apparently he had not heard the name “the Bear Stone” at the time. The age of the Bear Stone tradition and its ritual importance is uncertain (see Chapter 4.12). Vorren also notes several caves under overhangs in the area that was clearly been built of people, among them what he thought was a shooting blind for fox hunting, but after retrieving a tassel of hair and some birch bark in it, he assumed it could be a grave. He also mentions stone graves “just like the ones in have found around the trapping fences for wild reindeer … but here they have apparently been used for something else, they could be opened graves” (Vorren 1955d, my translation).

Informants and traditions: In a 1968 account, a local woman said that her father had accompanied Nordvi when he excavated a grave where a bone comb was found and that this was within the stone circle (Kleppe 1974: 63). Nordvi himself does not however mention a grave on the inside of the walls, but rather on the outside (Nordvi n.d.). In 1979 and 1984, a local man (from Reppen on the S side of the fjord) told a story that relates the so-called Bear Stone on the hill N of the structure to the stone circle: People on Mortensnes had taken in a bear cub that grew up among them fed of a bitch and became completely tamed and the best playmate the children had. On the S of the fiord there was an evil noaidi who didn’t like the fact that a bear had become accustomed to live among humans. These were tough times with hunger and suffering, and hence the offering site was used more than usual. Once when a lot of people had gathered around the stone circle, as usual with the bear among them, a raven came flying across the fjord. It sat down among those serving, just of the bear. As soon as the raven sat down it turned into the evil noaidi. It spoke to the bear and said that because the bear had grown fond of the humans it should be turned to stone. That is what happened and the stone is still there (Schanche 1984:156).

49. Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes/Cearccageađge) 1

*Id 60076–1: Offersted* (Offering site).


*Description:* Large and conspicuous stone enclosure built underneath and up against a small cliff that forms a part of the construction. Outer diameter N–S: 10.5 m, E–W: 9.1 m, Inner diameter N–S: 9 m, E–W: 8.1 m, outer height 80–170 cm, inner height 55–170 cm (the highest measurements are of the cliff). High curved wall inside the structure closing towards the cliff on one side but with an opening on the other side creates a small chamber. Protruding rockface in the middle of the structures creates a naturally elevated area. Nordvi describes the inside of the walls as very even and with a steadily oblique build so that the top is tilting inwards and can deviate 1 alen from a straight line in the walls, which are 1.5–2.5 alen high. The walls are wider at the bottom, up to 1.5–2 alen, while the top part consist of only one row of rocks. It is built up against an even bedrock that constitutes part of the structure and has about the same height as the top of the wall. Rocks on top of the bedrock outlined the continued circle shape. The wall is said to have a circumference of 48 alen, equaling 30.12 m and a diameter of 9.59 m, and a height of 2 alen, i.e. 125.5 cm (Nordvi n.d.). Saxlund had previously described a stone circle in the scree on Mortensnes, but says that this was 12 alen in diameter, i.e. 7.53 m, and specifies that it was not built up against a cliff (Saxlund 1853). The difference in diameter could be due to measuring the outside versus the inside, but it seems somewhat unlikely that Saxlund would miss and even specifically deny the cliff in the Fuglebergbukta 1 structure. Hence it could be that he is referring to a different structure on Mortensnes that was later removed. On the other hand it is very odd if Nordvi, who should have known about both structures if there were two sites in the scree here, only describes one of these (Nordvi n.d.). With precaution I choose to include the information Saxlund gives under the present catalogue number. Neither Nordvi nor Saxlund mention the little “screen” wall up against the cliff, which may be a recent addition, possibly a shooting blind or something children have built (The Sami Parliament 2004:14). Vorren’s plan drawing of this site shows the hexagonal inner shape and a diameter up to 8.6 m N–S and a wall up to 106 cm high (Vorren 1956b). He notes that the top of the wall is even and flat, and that the variations in measured height are due to unevenness in the adjacent floor areas more than in the top of the wall (Vorren 1955d). The diameter E–W is 8.9 m and the width of the top of the wall is 40–80 cm (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 112). The outer wall is described as oblique, aligning with the surrounding terrain, but slabs have slid out and down so that the outside is steeper than it had been originally. In the middle of the structure there is an elevated area of flat, overgrown bedrock (Vorren 1955d). The little “screen” wall shoots out about 70 cm from the N part of the structure before turning towards the SE. It is about 3.8 m long and up to 127 cm high and creates a small enclosure up against the bedrock in the N with an entrance between this and the wall in its the SE end. Vorren’s drawing also includes measures of a small “seat” made from two parallel rectangular slabs 20–40x80 cm big and a smaller slab of c. 30x45 cm placed
across these (Vorren 1955d; Vorren 1956b). In a later publication Vorren describes it as made from one slab set up across the room from the N bedrock wall, and that the room between this, the small slab wall and the bedrock wall was covered with several slabs (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:113). Vorren speculates in his notes if this “seat” could be a hiding place for offerings, but no peculiar finds were made (Vorren 1955d). Kleppe describes an “entrance” in the NW side of the wall, to the W of the bedrock (Kleppe 1968a and b). I assume she refers to the protruding cliff parts that creates a sort of natural stairway down from the top of the wall here and down into the structure. It is difficult to judge if this has been an original feature or has become more prominent due to recent wear. Type 1.

Excavations and alterations: Probably investigated by Saxlund in 1852, investigated by Nordvi in the mid–19th century, by Vorren in 1956 and by Kleppe in 1968. As said before, it is uncertain if this is the same structure that Saxlund talks about on Mortensnes, but if it is, he also mentions that he lifted some slabs several places inside the structure and made finds of bark, shells and bones (see below). The contexts were such that he could not say if these indicated graves or had come into the site otherwise (Saxlund 1853). Nordvi says this structure is “maintained” as he has have made alterations to parts of it (Nordvi n.d.). Since neither he nor Saxlund mentions the peculiar little stone wall up against the bedrock wall, it is possible that this is a younger (cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 113), which is supported by the dating of birch bark from within this area to Cal AD 1660–1960 (see below). The birch bark was collected during investigations of Else Johansen Kleppe in connection with her field work on the Sami scree burial field on Mortensnes (cf. Kleppe 1974). The offering site had allegedly been investigated by the Sami ethnographic department (Kleppe 1974: 63), but this was a personal communication from Vorren to Kleppe (E. J. Kleppe pers. comm. 14 mar 2013) and a report has not been refound. The only investigation mentioned in Vorren’s field notes is that he lifted the slabs of the “seat” to find a thick piece of bark that could have come there shape the graves nearby, and one slab in the floor without finding anything (Vorren 1955d). Else Johansen Kleppe and her team investigated the inside of the circular offering site and report to have cleared it up or restored it because it was rather disarranged. During this work several finds were made in different parts of the floor area (cf. Kleppe 1968, 1971: 62). One or two of the assemblages were defined as graves (Kleppe 1968, 1971, fig. 61A, 1974: 64). In “Grave I” in the small room behind the curved stonewall (cf. Kleppe 1971, fig. 61A), where the floor was “tiled” with slabs, Kleppe found quite a lot of birch bark (Ts. 6435). It is unclear if this bark came from underneath the floor (cf. Kleppe 1968). According to the plan drawing (cf. Kleppe 1971, fig. 61A), “Grave II” was situated right outside the entrance of the small room. It consisted of a rectangular depression set with slabs and was covered with a large slab (Kleppe 1968). In addition there were finds in two more undefined areas in the SSW part of the floor between the wall and the mound in the middle. The area was too disturbed to determine any grave structures (Kleppe 1968).

Finds: Possibly snail shells, pieces of bark and part of a sheep jaw (Saxlund 1853). In “Grave I”; birch bark (Ts. 6435), in “Grave II”; a clavicula of a velvet scoter duck
(melanitta fusca) and a few small pieces of birch bark (J.S. 517, Ts. 6436), in the two other find contexts; more than ten pieces of birch bark and a fragment of a reindeer calcaneum (rangifer tarandus, J.S. 517, Ts. 6437) and an assemblage of birch bark, two pieces of pelvis and one of a phalanx of reindeer (rangifer tarandus), a coracoid and humerus of black–legged kittiwake (rissa tridactyla) and a coracoid of an unspecified waterfowl (anseriformes) (J.S. 517, Ts. 6438). During the three recent surveys, animal bones have been observed on the protruding rock in the middle of the structure. It is assumed that these are remains of recent depositions, possibly as part of neo–shamanistic or other rituals. The bones found in 2014 were identified from photos as bones from reindeer (rangifer tarandus) and an aquatic bird, which is likely to be a seagull that was lying dead on the spot in 2008. An unfused humerus proximal of a reindeer less than 4 years old had clear cutmarks, indicating that the bones have probably not been brought to the site by other animals. Another scull of a mammal on some slabs is also possibly from reindeer (pers. comm. A–K Salmi 10 Aug 2016). See also appendix.

**Dating:** Pieces of birch bark from all four find contexts have been radiocarbon dated to respectively 162±32, Cal AD 1660–1960 (Ts. 6435a, Ua–Ua–47129), 615±33, Cal AD 1290–1410 (Ts. 6436a, Ua–47130), 572±34, Cal AD 1290–1430 (Ts. 6438a, Ua–47131) and 577±33, Cal AD 1290–1430 (Ts. 6437d, Ua– 47132).

**Location and terrain:** In the sloping slab scree underneath and up against a small cliff, not very far from the sea.

**Masl:** 9 m.

**Cultural environment:** Mortensnes/Ceavccageadge is an area of abundant and varied cultural heritage remains. The structure is situated in the E part of a large scree burial field that contains at least 207 graves (Id 60076) and most likely more, somewhat depending on how the burial area is delineated, since there are also graves in adjacent scree areas (cf. the Sami Parliament 2004: 12, Scanche 1984: 153). Just around the stone structure there are however quite few graves and none directly related to the structure, apart from the finds made in the floor (Kleppe 1968, 1974).

**Informants and traditions:** None known (cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 113).


Photos tsld99, tsld249, tsld250, tslf8273.

**50. Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes/Ceavccageadge) 2**

**Id 60076–406: Offering (Circular offering site).**

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** “Possible circular offering site. Stone circle in a semicircle towards protruding cliff to the N. Dry stone wall of lying slabs. Vegetation on the rockshelf of the inner floor. Outer measurements: 290 cm N–S x 400 cm E–W. Inner measurements: 180 cm N–S x 260 cm E–W. Height 40–90 m.” Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.
Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Scree, wide view to the SE–SW. Over the scree there is a protruding rock covered in heather.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Located in a burial field that consists of 207 graves in a scree, in the same area as Fuglebergbukta 1. The graves are found from the E of the scree and to the W, and the structure is situated in the E part, app. 120 m E of Fuglebergbukta 1, close to the shore to the S.

Informants and traditions: None known.

Sources: Askeladden.

51. Angnes/Geahčeváinjárga

Id 17356–5: Ukjent (Unknown).


Description: Dry stone wall enclosure with outer diameter N–S: c. 8. 9 m, E–W: c. 5.4 m, inner diameter c. 5 m. Inner height is 10–45 cm, outer height 0–15 cm. Pole photos show a pentagonal inner shape, also observed by Vorren during his investigations. He notes that the structure had an E–W inner diameter of 5.75 m, and the walls were 120 and 115 cm wide in these respective directions, giving an outer diameter of 8.1 m. The outer diameter N–S was 7.8 m, the wall being 1 m wide in both these directions. This differs from my measurements and also from the measurements stated in a later publication by Vorren (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 74). His excavation may have altered the structure slightly, and further erosion and current vegetation may be the cause of somewhat different measurements. Vorren also describes a low mound in the middle of the structure with a diameter of a diameter of 127–150 cm interpreted as a platform that the sieidi has been placed on and that also constituted the “sacrifice hiding place” (No.: “offergjemmet”). Around this central elevation there were some scattered stone of a different shape than the once in the walls and elsewhere around (Vorren 1978c).

Excavations and alterations: Ørnulv Vorren and some assistants performed an excavation of the site in 1978. According to the field notes, his team deturfed the elevated mound in the middle and a trench of 15–20 cm width through the structure from E to W (Vorren 1978c). In a later publication it rather sounds like the whole inner area of the structure was deturfed (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 74). The humus layer inside the walls is described as being c. 15–20 cm deep. Underneath there was compact gravel. The wall is said to have been built on a 100–120 cm wide foundation of masses take from the inside of the circle, which meant the floor was somewhat lower than the surrounding terrain. The mound in the middle is described as square and about 150x100 cm, and not entirely central, but situated more to the NE of the inner area of the structure. A test pit was dug in this elevated area. Down at the gravel level there were remains of charcoal and a fragment of reindeer lower leg bone, “though some of the masses here could be burnt stone” (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 74–75, my translation). The bone was found just N of the elevated area. Underneath
a rock at the SW corner of the elevation, charcoal was found, which was C14 dated (see below) (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 75). Type 1.

Finds: According to the field notes there were no finds, but the preserved notes may be incomplete, as they are transcripts of the tape recordings Vorren did when in field. In a later publication Vorren describes finds of half a whale vertebrae, 12x25 cm, and a small piece of reindeer lower leg bone (No.: “leggbein”), as well as charcoal. He also found eight peculiar pieces rocks that were spread around inside the circle and assembled them to three larger rocks assumed to be broken sieiddit (Vorren 1978c, Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 76–77).

Dating: Charcoal from underneath a stone inside the walls was radiocarbon dated to cal AD 1425–1615 (T–9935) (cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 75).

Location and terrain: Gently sloping moraine terrain on the very outer part of the headland Angsnes in the innermost part of the Varanger fjord. Open landscape overgrown with heather but otherwise relatively rocky with stones scattered around. Wide views out the fjord and to the S and N, while the rising hillside in the middle of the headland blocks the views to the W.

Masl: 14 m.

Cultural environment: In Norwegian the whole headland is called Angsnes, but it consists of several smaller promontories that have individual Sami names. The structure is located closest to the one called Geahčevainjárga, meaning “end bay–” or “end boat landing promontory”. The area has an impressive density of cultural heritage remains from the Stone Age and up until modern times, including house grounds, graves, boathousegrounds, large pits etc. Four other structures have been recorded in the immediate vicinity of the stone structure. One is described by Vorren as a depression with some rocks in the middle just to the N of the angular structure, 8.7 m from centre to centre. The depression has a diameter of E–W: 2.5 m and N–S: 1.9 m. Vorren interprets it as a grave (Vorren 1978c). In Askeladden another two irregular depressions or elevations are described as very uncertain graves, while a cairn of 5 m in diameter with an inner crater of 2–3 m in diameter is not further specified (Id 17356). 100 m to the E–NE of the angular structure, downhill towards the sea, there is a group of 13 round house grounds with central fireplaces and one boathouseground (Id 7529). In addition several of the houses have middens. Knut Odner has dug testpits in one house ground and two middens. He found undetermined fragments of animal bones in the house (Odner’s 200 B) and an iron fishing hook in one of the middens (200 I). Three testpits in other middens nearby gave finds of animal bones and charcoal (Odner 1992: 164–165, figs. 37B, 97, 98, 99, 100A). About 170 m NW of the angular stone structure there is a house ground from the first chapel in the inner fjord area, which was built in 1719–1720 to promote the Christianization of the Sami and was in use until 1746 (Beronka 1923: 4). There are several other cultural remains in the area around the church ground, including Stone Age house grounds (of Mortensnes type) and medieval house grounds, whereof one was excavated by Odner and dated to cal AD 1515±95 (T–5018, MASCA, cf. Odner 1992: 164). An impressive amount of house grounds etc. are scattered along the seaside of Angsnes both N and S of this areas. Odner interprets several rows of stone
in the area 200 m SW of the angular stone structure as accesories for fox traps (Odner 1992: 129). Vorren mentions another C14 dating of Odner in relation to the angular stone structure/circular offering site, a house ground further NW dated to 1445±55 (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 73), but according to the information given he must be refering to a sample from a house grund some 400 m to the SW (Odner’s 248F, T–5019, cf. Odner 1992: 174). The inner fjord freezes over during winter. In the early 18th century, tax collectors and other officials would use Angsnes as their starting point for winter travels with reindeer sledges to the S side of the Varanger fjord. A special find from the headland is a coin minted in Reval (Estonia) in AD 1400–1420 (Odner 2001).

Informants and traditions: None known. Recorded by Håvard Dahl Bratrein in 1968.


52. Čuđiidgieddi
Id: None, Odner’s 250.
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle (A), large, round, sacrificial site?” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Odner calls the area Gæččevajnja’rga. Bay on the SE tip of headland Angsnes. The headland features rocky terrains, moraine, heath, bog and scattered birch forests.
Masl: Not stated.
Cultural environment: Depression next to the stone circles (250 B) suggested to be grave or cache. Several Stone Age house grounds nearby.
Informants and traditions: None.

53. Čudegoadát 1
Id: None, Odner’s 254.
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Clearly visible structure, outer diameter N–S: c. 3 m, built by moving rocks from the middle of the circle, but still a lot of rock inside the circle too. Rocks placed to build a beacon in NE. There is a stone row from this and to the W through the N part of the structure. There is also a path going straight through the structure in direction SW–NE that may have disturbed the original shape, as rocks may have been moved to ease the traffic on the path. The rocks are overgrown by lichen, but the structure could be of fairly recent date. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Located in a small bay on the outer SE side of the headland Angsnes/Selešnjárga. The structure is situated on a small mound on the beach in terrain overgrown with heather.
Masl: 2 m.
Cultural environment: Angsnes/Selešnjárga has abundant traces of habitation, burials and other use from the Stone Age until modern times. The structure is situated SSW of a field of house ground (Id 56712), closer to the sea. The place name Čuđegoađát means “the Čud huts/tents”, reflecting the many traditions about Russian/Karelian activity in Finnmark.
Informants and traditions: None.

54. Čudegoađát 2
Id: None, Odner’s 262.
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Clearly visible semicircle of rocks up to 40x50 cm, with an opening towards the E, outer diameter N–S: c. 4 m by the opening, E–W: c. 2.3 m, depression in the middle. Possibly remains of a sheep hut or similar. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Located in a small bay on the outer SE side of the headland Angsnes/Selešnjárga. Relatively level terrain overgrown with grass and some heather and juniper.
Masl: 17 m.
Cultural environment: Situated c. 120 N and above a field of house grounds (Id 56712). See also Čudegoađát 1.
Informants and traditions: None known.

55. Čudegoađát 3
Id: None, Odner’s 261.
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Cairn where the rocks that are visible may resemble a ringform, but hard to decide if this is intentional. Lots of rocks both inside and what may be interpreted as a ringshape. Outer diameter N–S: c. 3.3 m. The W half is very overgrown by juniper bushes, otherwise overgrown by grass and heather. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated in the outskirts at the E of the grass field in the bay, just by a rockside, c. 60 m E of Čudegoađát 2 (Odners 262).
Masl: 19 m.
Cultural environment: See Čuđegoađát 1.
Informants and traditions: None known.

56. Karlebotn/Lágežiibákti/Sæleneshøgda

Id 7536–1: Offersted (Offering site).

Description: Pentagonal stone structure built from large stone blocks and slabs. Outer diameters N–S: 8 m, E–W: 8.4 m, inner diameters N–S: 4.8 m, E–W: 3.5 m. Inner height 40–120 cm high, with the highest point measured by bedrocks in the upper side towards the hill. Easily detectable but not very neatly shaped. Described by Nordvi as having a circumference of 44 alen, equalling 27.61 m and a diameter of 8.79 m, and that it was 1.5 alen high, i.e. c. 94 cm. At the time it was already very damaged because people had taken rocks from it to use as building materials (Nordvi n.d.). In 1955, Vorren describes the site as the not very visible remains of a stone fence with a lot of rocks that had fallen down into the structure, or possible been pushed down of people, so that the height of these masses were up to the remaining height of the wall, indicating that this had originally been rather higher than his measurement of 70 cm at the time. In the N the wall consists of a stretch of bedrock. Some heather, moss and grass was growing inside the walls, which Vorren notes are clearly disturbed. He thinks there are remains of some sort of “offering hiding place” in the shape of a cairn in the middle of the structure, but has trouble defining its location, as there were only scattered rocks lying around. He says that the state of the site reflects that people “have been at the offering site to search for something” (Vorren 1955b). In a later publication it the structure is described as a very uneven circle bordering on a square shape (though a drawing does indicate its pentagonal shape), the biggest diameter E–W being 715 cm and N–S 800 cm (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 70). It is also said that there were remains of a cairn inside it that must have constituted the offering hiding place or the place were the sieidi originally stood, though it was not possible to outline the original measures of this structure (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 71). On the field plan drawing there is a cross in the middle with legend “dug, likely place for offering hiding place” (“gravet, sannsynlig sted for offerjemmet”) (Vorren 1955b). It is unclear if Vorren dug there or if he only reports on the previous disturbance. Type 1.

Excavation and alterations: Isak Saba is said to have “investigated” the site at some point, but it is uncertain what that entailed. Vorren and Banne “hauled away” rocks until they got down to a layer of gravel and small rocks, and they followed the stone wall all around the structure from the bedrock and back to it, concluding that the “fence” was intentionally built (Vorren 1955b). It is unclear if they hauled rocks up on the remains of the wall or further into the structure, and if they did so all around the wall.

Finds: Stone with shallowly carved letters (Museum of Cultural History no. C8544). The letters were allegedly Cyrillic and interpreted as “the Russian word D O M L (house, home) ” (cf. MCH catalgoue, my translation). Nordvi spells it out as
“DOMΠ ’:huus:’” (Nordvi n.d.). Vorren reports the word to be “Doter (Hund)”, i.e. Dog (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 69), as it also says in the transcript of Nordvi’s note stored in the Sami ethnographic archive in Tromsø Museum, but this must be due to a misunderstanding of Nordvi’s handwriting. The stone was broken off at the right end, and Nordvi suggests there could have been more words (Nordvi n.d.). The stone is now lost and the reported word is not consistent with the spelling of Russian words for either dog or house (K. V. Birkelund pers. comm. 18 Mar 2013).

**Dating:** Not dated.

**Location and terrain:** Karlebotn is a bay in the innermost Varanger fjord enclosed with fairly steep hillsides to old beach terraces and the crest leading out to Angsnes in the innermost part of the Varanger fjord. The structure is situated at the bottom of a scree that runs along the hillside Lágeziidbákti/Sælenshøgda on a ridge above and N of the village Karlebotn. A path passes right past the structure and continues towards the headland Angsnes.

**Masl:** 76 m.

**Cultural environment:** Karlebotn has an intense density of cultural heritage remains from the Stone Age and up until the present. Here I will only list the ones closest to the site. Vorren concludes that it is difficult to decide what an offering site here would be related to, but that some possible graves just outside the structure indicate a use related to burial rites (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 71). These consist of a stone circle of 1–2 m in diameter, a small cairn 2 and 3.5 m E of the stone structure respectively. In 2014, several structures were observed in the scree S of the structure, including a cairn with a depression in the middle interpreted as a possible grave some 80 m to the SW, a recently built wind shield 20 m further to the SW, and three other cairns and three possible caches 40–50 m to the SSW of the structure (Spangen 2015a: 9–10). There is also a small shooting blind in the scree 20 m S of the structure, possibly for fox hunting (Spangen 2013b: 16–17). When searching for the offering site, Vorren mentions a stone “grave” that had allegedly been used for fox hunting, as well as a little cairn nearby were the bait had been hidden. However, from the description these seem to have been somewhat to the E of the structure. This known use of the area makes the definition of other cairns and depressions as possible graves etc. somewhat uncertain. Vorren also mentions that two skeletons “back in the day” had been excavated in a sloping scree to the SW of the structure and that he will investigate who did this (Vorren 1955b). These graves are not registered in Askeladden or included in a recent catalogue of documented scree graves (cf. Schanche 2000: 374ff). On a lower terrace 150 m S of the angular stone structure there are two so-called “8–shaped” fireplaces (Id 46949), i.e. stone set fireplaces with rocks marking the entrance area between the fireplace and doorway of the tent or hut, related to Sámi habitation from the Iron Age or later (e.g. Sommerseth 2009). c. 240 m to the E of the angular stone structure there is a circular stone wall construction of about 3 m in diameter and 0.3 m high that has been suggested to be either a grave or a shooting blind (Id 46948). C. 250–650 m to the SE of the structure there are three areas with altogether more than 70 house grounds from the Late Stone Age (Id 67239, 67238, 54815). 180–280 m to the SW, two localities with
Stone Age lithic material is registered (Id 111835–6). There are also house grounds from the Early Stone Age on top of the hillside (Id 46947). Curing the 2014 survey a small “altar”, recently built from slabs and featuring a candle, was observed further down the hill towards the settlement of Karlebotn. This was not present in 2012. It is uncertain if this has any relation to the structure as such or for what reason it has been put up.

Informants and traditions: Vorren had information from superintendent Anton Hoëm (Karlebotn, b. 1931) that the hill N of Karlebotn had been called Alterhaugen, “the Altar Hill”, “hence there had been an offering site there” (Vorren 1955b). Hoëm had his information from Per Nilsen Balk (Nesseby, b. 1897). Vorren found the structure by help of local guide Per Banne. Banne had not known about or seen the site before, but he identified it as the offering site when they were searching the approximate location for the offering site as indicated of Hoëm (Vorren 1955b). The wife of Per Banne informed Vorren that Isak Saba had previously investigated the site and taken a photo of local person Mjenna Abrahamsen standing in the middle of the structure. Her descendants did however not know about the photo or the structure (Vorren 1955b). Among Isak Sabas preserved photos in the Norwegian Folk Memory Collection is a photo of the structure, but not featuring the mentioned Abrahamsen (fig. 54). Isaac Olsen mentions Altargiergie Passe aldo in his list of offering sites in Varanger (Olsen 1934) and Vorren quotes this when discussing the stone structure in Karlebotn, but without further comment (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:69). Presumably he relates the listing to the place name Alterhaugen. Vorren suggests that Isak Saba knew about the site from local sources and investigated the

Fig. 54. Isak Saba’s photo of the Karlebotn structure, Nesseby, Finnmark. Isak Saba – Norsk Folkeminneresamling
site to verify local traditions. What traditions this refers to is not stated (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 71).


57. Biekkanoaivi

Id: None.

Description: Very solid wall, large outer diameter N–S: c. 11.4 m, inner diameter c. 9.3 m, outer diameter EW: c. 10.7 m, inner diameter c. 8.5 m. Current inner height of the wall is between 40 and 110 cm, but it consists in part of larger blocks, one of which has a maximum height 155 cm. The ring includes three large rocks in the S, and some larger blocks in the lower layer of the wall. Inside the ring is a cairn of medium sized boulders and rocks that was reconstructed in connection with the excavation of the site in 1966. There is a strange little square cairn SSW for this large mound. There are collapsed stones inside the wall in SW, SE, NW. The interior walls are straight, while the outer walls are outward sloping, aligning with the scree in the area up against the hillside. Vorren describes the structure as a cairn within a stone fence of 10 m in diameter (Vorren 1955a), later revising this to 9.1 m in diameter (Vorren 1958: 28). In a later publication he says that the structure was hexagonal with a diameter of 6–7 m (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:65). On his visit the wall to the W seemed to be intact and measured 143 cm. Even where the wall was partly collapsed it measured 60–122 cm. The central cairn was originally c. 3 m in diameter and 0.5 m high (Vorren and Eriksen 1993:66). It was altered during the excavations performed by Munch (see below). A photo in the university museum’s database shows the cairn with a quite clear hollow in the middle (tslf6071), but the photo is not dated, hence it is difficult to know if this is from before the excavation. Judging from the description of the reconstructed cairn it may well be (see below).

Type 1.

Excavation and alterations: During the investigation in 1955, Vorren dug into the cairn in the middle of the structure that he perceived as an offering hiding place. He notes that it seemed that someone had dug into this previously and hence he and his guide dug even further down, but found nothing. They also dug along the edges (“kante”, unclear typing), either of the cairn or the wall of the circle; this is unclear. They stripped the surface on these excavation sites of heather and moss before they dug down, but they made no finds (Vorren 1955a). Jens Storm Munch’s report on his excavation here in 1966 is partially reproduced by Vorren and Eriksen (1993: 66), but it has not been recovered in the archives at TMU, only his less complete handwritten field notes. He opened two areas of a total of 9–10 m² in the floor area, one on the SW side of the cairn, and one on the E side. Under a thin layer of turf and humus there was a compact layer of flat and round rocks, which was interpreted as sterile ground consistent with the surrounding scree area. The only find was of a small piece of burnt bone. They also dug through the cairn in the middle until they got down to the same stony sterile layer without making any finds. The cairn was
subsequently reconstructed to be 60 cm high with a flat top (Munch, cf. Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 66). Parts of the wall were reconstructed by Munch and Vorren during their investigations.

Finds: Vorren found a whale bone on a large boulder just outside the stone fence, and another whale bone on the path to the site about 200 m further E. He assumed they came from the offering site and collected them (Vorren 1955a). They are now kept in the ethnographic collections in Tromsø Museum (L919a and b). The pieces are of sculls, but too small to determine the species (pers. comm. A. K. Hufthammer 12 Apr 2013). During the survey in 2014 remnants of wood were found at two places inside the enclosure. By the wall to the S was an eroded piece of wood with a rusty rectangular metal fitting attached and on the rocks in the middle cairn was a piece of eroded wood with rust marks. It is unclear how old they are and they could be related to the hay storing in more recent times. They were not collected.

Dating: The piece of whale scull collected from the boulder close to the stone circle has been dated to 532±34, Cal AD 1310–1450 (Ua–57128). The marine reservoir effect means this dating could be from a few decades to 2–300 years too old and the context is somewhat uncertain.

Location and terrain: Situated in sloping scree at the S foot of the hill Biekkanoaivi with view of wide heath and bog terrain with heather and scattered mountain birch. Masl: 77 m.

Cultural environment: Vorren notes a meat cache (“Geedgeborra”) in the scree somewhat NW of the structure (Vorren 1955a). Another meat cache was found 60 m NW of the structure (Vorren and Eriksen 1993: 66). In addition there are pitfall systems for wild reindeer hunting in the nearby areas. The offering site is situated about 1 km SE of the E end of the so–called Hávgejávri system of pitfalls (Vorren 1958: 28, Vorren 1998: 68, map XIV). c. 1.5 km to the SE, on the other side of the hill Geresborri (“Pulk Hillside”), there is also a system of pitfalls (Vorren 1998: 69, map XIV). Audhild Schanche has registered another possible offering stone (a large boulder) near lake Oksevann some 200 m to the S–SW (Id 56716), but this has not been refound. The bog area to the E, Loahkkejeaggi, was one of the winter habitation areas for the Coastal Sami from the S side of the Varanger fjord in the 19th century (Kolsrud 1961: 47, cf. Odner 1992: 23).

Informants and traditions: Nordvi mentions a stone circle of “Lokkegedde” (Loahkkejeaggi), 1 “Miil” (10 km) from Karlebotn, that he has not had a chance to see himself (Nordvi n.d.). Local guide Per Banne made Vorren aware of the site by Biekkanoaivi in 1955.

Sør–Varanger municipality

58. Munkefjorden
Id 67452–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Description: Clearly visible stone enclosure built down into a slope. Outer diameter N–S: c. 7.1 m, E–W: c. 7 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 5.4 m, E–W: 4.8 m. Inner height 40–100 cm. Clearly angular structure inner shape, situated in sloping terrain, vague traces of a mound in the middle. The diameter of this is N–S: c. 2.5 m. There are traces of test pits, presumably from Vorren’s investigation in 1976. Looks like the wall is best preserved in SSE, where the upper part of the wall slopes inward. This is also visible in the preserved wall in the NE. The wall in the E has eroded towards the inner area. In the W there are large stones preserved as the lowermost part of the wall, but a great deal seems to have collapsed. In the N there are 2–3 stones almost like a staircase down into the pit. A path runs through the structure in direction N–S, almost across a possible test pit in the middle. There is also a path on the upper side of the structure, encroaching on it in NE, E and SE. In the NW there are 9–10 larger stones, presumably collapsed from the wall. Likewise in the SW. Otherwise quite few stones inside the structure. Two small birch trees are growing in the W part of the interior. In Askeladden the structure is described as an unusually well preserved Sami offering site, circular around a flat area without traces of any structures, though somewhat irregular and with some visible boulders in the middle. It is about 5.5 m in diameter and the wall is 0.6–0.7 m high. In an undated fieldnote, Simonsen gives similar information, but notes that the headland is called Ulvestueneset, “the Wolf Hut Promontory” and that it “looks almost like a Sami offering site, but according to Vorren it is a wolf pit. As the place name also indicates” (Simonsen n.d., my translation). In his field notes, Vorren says the structure is situated at a headland on the tip of a small esker that goes all the way out to the pebble beach so that the high water mark is right at the foot of the headland. The structure is meticulously built from large boulders and larger cracks are sealed with smaller rocks. According to his measurements, this side of the wall was about 100 cm high in 1976, while the N side of the wall was 122 cm high and the inner S wall was 130 cm high. The measurements also indicate that the current top of the E wall of the structure was 45 cm higher than the W wall, making it slope towards the water. On the inner side of the E wall, where the structure is dug into the headland, there were quite a few loose rocks that had fallen down into the structure covering the wall, but behind these masses the accurately jointed wall was still visible. Vorren notes this could be to hinder that animals dig their way out. There were rocks that had clearly fallen down from the wall both on the outside but especially on the inside of the wall in the SW, W and NW part of the structure, while the S, NE and N parts of the wall seemed to have maintained the original height. Vorren describes that the wall is oblique towards the inner part of the structure, i.e. “from the top and down to the ground”, “tilting outwards as it goes upwards”, in all parts of the wall, though this is harder to establish.
in the W side towards the sea where the wall is more deteriorated. He also describes a clearly visible mound in the middle of the structure, some 2 m in diameter, which is “somewhat elevated above the rest of the surface”. Type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** Vorren did some minor excavations in the structure in 1976. When digging down of the inner side of the W wall he found that the large bottom stone was placed on a layer of gravel, underneath which there was smaller rocks and pebbles – the wall did not seem to go further down into the ground. When digging a testpit in the middle of the structure, he notes that there are traces of a previously dug pit there that look quite old. The testpit revealed a turf layer of 15 cm, under which they found remains of a wooden pole. Under this there was fine sand, and under the sand there was gravel and smaller rocks etc. The measures of the pole or its state of preservation are not further described. Apart from this Vorren says he will refrain from disturbing the surface of the inner area because he thinks it may be well worth to excavate it to find out more about the structure. In the description of the reconstruction they did after investigating the site, he does however mention that they have dug down of the inner wall in two places, not one. They cover up the centre testpit they have dug with turf, but leaves the old pit open (Vorren 1976a, my translations). Vorren is refering to drawings with measurements, but these have not been located in the Sami ethnographic archive at Tromsø Museum.

**Finds:** Remains of a wooden pole.

**Dating:** The close proximity to the sea indicates that the structure cannot be very old. In a general calculation of sealevel in this area, the first few meters above sealevel are equivalent to a time period of 200 years. This calculation is however based on isobases interpolated from a very restricted number geologically investigated sites in remote areas (with the S side of the Varanger fjord is determined to be on isobase 28 and the N side on isobase 26). Recent research shows local variations in sealevel displacement even within bays, which makes this method very uncertain (Julsrud 2010:36–37; Møller 2002; Sanjaume and Tolgensbakk 2009).

**Location and terrain:** The structure is situated on a shoreline of pebbles and some larger rocks, in quite steep terrain, especially on the W side of the structure towards the sea. Partially overgrown heather and juniper, but clearly visible.

**Mast:** The GPS failed to calculate correct distance, but it is very close to the present sealevel.

**Cultural environment:** There is not registered any other cultural heritage remains in the immediate vicinity of the structure.

**Informants and traditions:** Vorren refers to traditions in the local community, but does not give any names (Vorren 1976a). It seems likely that he had at least some of his information from Qvigstad (1927: 535–537), but Qvigstad does not mention the place name Fuonnosnjarga that Vorren refers to. Today neither the place name nor the structure itself were known to three local men that were asked. One of them is a nephew of Vorren and the two other have lived and have properties in the vicinity of the headland. They did however know about the place name Ulveneset (“the Wolf promontory”) across the fjord, where there wolves used to come down to cross the sea on the ice in winter (pers. comm. H. Havas, 24 Mar 2014).

59. Svartaksla/Røvarfjellet

*Id 57580–1/37161: Offering* (Circular offering site).

Surveyed: No.

Description: Recorded twice, cf. Id 37161 (1974): Four large stone pits, clearly marked in the terrain. Oval embankment of stone. Height of embankment c. 35 cm, width c. 1 m. The approximate radius c. 1.40 (this information is unclear), depth of the pit c. 0.7 m. In the NNE a narrow entrance with width c. 0.8 m cutting through the wall right down to the floor. A pile of rocks in the middle of the pit suggests that this secondary (also less lichen on the stones in the entrance). The structure was recorded again in 1990, cf. 57580: Four stone enclosures and pits, a smaller cairn and some smaller pits and stone heaps. The enclosure in the SE has inner measurements of 2 x 3 m with an embankment of pebbles embankment 2–2.5 m wide. An entrance on the E side (away from the other stone structures). Hard to say if the entrance was original. The rocks were quite overgrown with moss. Inner height up to 0.9 m, outer height c. 0.7 m. C. This is the one that is suggested to be a circular offering site. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known. It is noted in 1974 that all the structures apart from one are clearly undamaged. If one comes in from S will not detect stone pits and ramparts until one is at about 10 m distance due to a slight bump in the scree just in front of the pits, while one of N will discover them on extended hold (when vegetation is less), moreover, it uphill from N, while sloping downward from S against stone pits.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Situated NW of lake Svartakslvatn by mountain Røvarfjellet (Čuddiidvárrri) on a sloping pebble terrace between the mountain side and a rock-face. Spectacular view of Jakobsnes, Bøkfjorden and further out.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: According to survey in 1990 (Id 57580): 1 m W of the structure is a pit in pebble scree c. 2 m in diameter and 1 m deep with a vague embankment around, c. 1 m bred. Another stone structure c. 3 m NW of this pit, a stone wall with embankments up to 3 m wide. Inner measurements 2 x 2 m. The wall is vague and eroded towards the NNE. Inner height c. 1 m high, outer height c. 0.8 m high. The last stone wall is situated c. 2 m E of the latter and 2 m NW of the so-called circular offering site. The walls are up to 3 m wide, inner diameter c. 2 m and inner height of the wall 1.1 m. The wall is vague or destructed towards the WSW. The interpretation is uncertain, graves is suggested. The pit is compared to a similar kind by Gjesvær, where is also an enclosure considered as a potential circular offering site. SE of the firdst described structures there are pits measuring 0.5 to 1 m in di-
ameter and up to 0.4 m dype and some stone heaps of 0.5 to 1 m in diameter up to 0.3 m high. C. 4 m S of the pit (SV) was a cairn with a diameter of c. 2 m. The W part was up to c. 0.5 m heigh. The E part was marked with a semicircle of stones. Suggested to be another circular offering site and graves, or various installations for offering practices.

Informants and traditions: Fritzner had heard of some old stone walls from an ancient fortress by Svartakselvannet (E of the town Kirkenes), that was so old that to forests had grown and rotted over it. Nearby there should be three stone beacons and some graves. He wondered if it were these ruins the eastern Sami were talking about when they told him about “Kamenigorod”, “Stone town or Stone farm”, whereof they had lots to tell (Fritzner 1846: 124, Qvigstad 1926: 338). The site was reported to the county administration in 1990 by Sighjørn Sillnes, Kirkenes, who related it to the myth about The Last Robber Battle (Stærk 1976). Locally, the pits have been called robber graves after the old legend. Archaeologist Povl Simonsen had commented that the mountain is a Sami sacrificial site.

Sources: Askeladden, Fritzner 1846; Qvigstad 1926; Stærk 1976.

Tana municipality

60. Torhop

Id: None.
Description: Small clearly visible stone wall, vaguely defined towards the S, but outer diameter N–S c. 4.7 m, inner diameter c. 4 m, outer diameter E–W c. 5.5 m, the inner diameter c. 3.6 m, 35–110 cm high. Not entirely closed circle, as one end goes in behind the other in the SE. Curious wall NE–SW partitions the structure in the middle. Overgrown by a large birch shrubbery, difficult to get proper measurements, but the level of the floor in the WNW is clearly somewhat higher than the level in the ESE, c. 20 cm difference, so that the partition wall is c. 50 cm high measured from SW and c. 30 cm high measured from NE. More turf in the area under the birch that grows in ESE part, naturally. Partly natural, partly manmade staircase goes down from the cliff in the N into the structure. The site was surveyed of Vorren and staff from the Sami ethnographic department in 1980 in relation to a survey done to signpost some vulnerable monuments according to the Heritage Act of 1978. The Torhop site was however only considered a possible offering site and signposting was postponed to await further deliberations (Vorren 1980:3). Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: According to my informants, a man gotten the idea around WWII that the site was hiding a treasure and dug through the whole thing, destroying it for the most part. It was restored by the villagers to the best of their recollection of the original structure.

Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On rockshelf towards the E on mountain Gáicabákti, “Goat Mountain”, below the rock formation Geita (No.), “the Goat”, sheltered between the cliffs. Small precipice from the shelf and further down to a scree area at the foot of the mountain. View from the structure to the inner part of the valley in the E. 
Masl: 64 m. 
Cultural environment: Apparently two boys once found a human scull in the scree below the place, indicating there are scree graves here. 
Informants and traditions: My local guides Åshild Lamøy and Gudrun Andersen said the has been called “Alteret”, “The Altar”. 

Karasjok municipality

61. Vuorji
Id: None. 
Surveyed: No. 
Description: Described by Qvigstad as an alter with a heap of grey stones on top of it and a stone circle around it. Not described by Vorre, who surveyed the same area in the early 1950s. Not included in later publications. Possible type 1. 
Excavation and alterations: None known. 
Finds: None known. 
Dating: Uncertain. 
Location and terrain: In mountain birch forest on the mountain Oalgevárri just outside the village of Karasjok, c. 3 m from a dirt road up to the top of the mountain were there is a technical installation. 
Masl: 297 m. 
Cultural environment: C. 5 km south of the mountain “Vuor’je–gai’sa”, today called Vuorji, just by the border between Karasjok and Porsanger (prev. Kistrand) municipalities. Qvigstad places it in Kistrand, but the border crosses the mountain top, and if the site was S of this it has to be in Karasjok. 
Informants and traditions: The mountain is mentioned as an offering site in older sources as Vuorie–ziock (Olsen 1910[c. 1715]) or Vuorje–zhjok (Leem 1767: 439). An older Sami man, b. 1840, recounted that there used to be a big offering site by the mountain, full of bones and antlers, where the Sami would make offerings of meat and cheese when moving by towards the coast. 
Sources: Olsen 1910 [c. 1715]; Leem 1767; Qvigstad 1926: 335.

62. Oalgevárrí
Id: None. 
Surveyed: 2012. 
Description: Stone circle with outer diameter N–S: c. 2 m, E–W: c. 2.5 m, inner diameter c. 1 m. Made from very large rocks, c. 80x60x20 cm. One of these is situ-
ated inside the structure in the E. There is a smaller circle of minner rocks in the middle. Some wood found on the surface inside the structure. Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* In mountain birch forest on the mountain Oalgevárri just outside the village of Karasjok, c. 3 m from a dirt road up to the top of the mountain where there is a technical installation.

*Masl:* 297 m.

*Cultural environment:* The mountain is a landmark and hiking destinations and there is a ski slope on the side towards Karasjok in the SE.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Skandfer 2012.

### 63. Geaimmejávri

*Id* 162772–1: *Offering* (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2012, 2013

*Description:* High, circular stone wall of partly very large rocks, but also some medium and small sized, c. 75x80x130 cm, c. 40x25x25 cm and c. 30x20x5 cm, reflecting the available rocks in the terrain around the structure. Outer diameter N–S: c. 6.5 m, E–W: c. 6 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 5 m, E–W: c. 4.5 m. Height between 80 and 140 cm. No sign of an entrance. The inside of the stone wall is vertical, while the outside slopes. The inner floor consists mostly of smaller rocks and gives an almost paved impression, with exception of several heaps of stone that has fallen into the structure along the walls. The wall is not eroded in the NE, which reveals this feature of the floor here. Some smaller rocks and slabs are put on the top of the wall, as if to even it out. In the NNW of the inner area is a small curved stone outline against the inside of the wall, almost creating a small chamber with outer measurements c. 160x100 cm, inner measurements c. 70x50 cm. Slabs and rocks inside it, nothing in particular found when lifting these. In the middle of the floor of the structure is an angular outlining of smaller and larger rocks, outer measurements c. 230x160 cm, inner c. 155x95 cm, length direction N–S. Inside this structure are rocks and slabs, and a smaller depression in the middle. Outside the structure to the ESE are some large rocks that could be placed in a semicircle up against the wall to create a room, but this may also be coincidental in the rocky terrain. See also chapter 4.4.1 in main text. Type 1.

*Excavation and alterations:* Investigated of Vorren in 1972, partly excavated of present author in 2013. Vorren photographed the site (not refound photos) and de-turbed it. He states that there was nothing underneath the rocks that had fallen down from the wall, indicating he moved some of these. For the 2013 excavation, see chapter 4.4.1 in the main text of this thesis.

*Finds:* Vorren made several finds of bones and woodworks in the floor that were only recorded on his field drawing. Bones and wood remains were also found during the excavations in 2013.
**Dating:** A piece of pine was dated to 682 ±30, Cal AD 1260–1390 (Ua–44725AD), several bone finds have been dated to Cal AD 1420–1640, while one fox bone was dated to 224±32, Cal AD 1630–1960 (Ua–48760). See chapter 4.11.

**Location and terrain:** The structure situated in very rocky terrain sloping towards the lake in the NW.

**Masl:** 345 m.

**Cultural environment:** See chapter 4.4.1.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Vorren 1972a, 1972b; Spangen 2013b; Spangen 2016a.

### 64. Beajalgŋai

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** 2013.

**Description:** Clearly visible stone enclosure, outer diameter N–E: 7.9 m, E–W: 8.9 m, inner diameter: 4.9 m, E–W: 5 m, largest outer height 130 cm. The inside wall is vertical, disregarding from eroded parts, while it slopes to align with the terrain on the outside. The inner surface of the ring has less inclination than the ground outside. Some large stones in the floor surface, particularly an accumulation of the middle and towards the E. In the N there is a cluster of small birch trees. Qvigstad described this as a circular depressions in the boulder field with timber beams around (Qvigstad 1926: 332). Nissen says the circular walls are up to 1 m in height. He also comments that the site is not visible from the river (Nissen 1928: 184). Notably both these writers talk about several depressions or circles in plural. Vorren describes the structure as not as big as such sites usually are. Type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** Investigated by Vorren, who brought back some finds to Tromsø Museum. Along with the finds are small notes with sketches indicating the find places for different bones. The structure was signposted by the Sami Ethnographic Department, Tromsø Museum in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

**Finds:** Bone fragments from reindeer, sheep, dog, fox, unspecified mammals; wolverine scull, possibly firecracked rocks and burnt woodworks in the middle (Nissen 1928) and antlers (Qvigstad 1926: 332). Remains of woodworks on the walls (Qvigstad 1926: 332, Nissen 1928: 185). Reindeer bone tablet with two holes (found stored in Vorren’s private archive, Tromsø Museum). In the notes concerning a different site (Márkansáiguoikka), Vorren mentions finds of bones, antlers, “etc.”, inside the circle “or S of it” (Vorren 1970a), probably both, judging from the sketches found together with the bones brought back to Troms Museum. Several pieces of wood both the outside and inside of the wall and partly inside of the floor surface were observed in 2013. Birch grows inside and around the structure, and there are adjacent pine woods, but it is still likely that some of the finds are from construction elements.

**Dating:** Dog: 804±35, Cal AD 1210–1280 (Ua–48764), sheep: 600±37, Cal AD 1305–1410 (Ua–48765), reindeer: 390±35, Cal AD 1440–1640 (Ua–48766), fox: 390±32, Ad 1440–1640 (Ua–48763). The bones of reindeer and sheep were found
on the same spot or in the same area, while the dog and the fox bones were found in
different areas.

Location and terrain: Situated about 6–7 km upstream Iešjohka from river
Sađejohka in a block sea NNW of the top of a hill, down the slope towards the river.

Masl: 203 m.

Cultural environment: Two depressions further up in the scree, on the N and S side
of the hilltop respectively. The one on the N side is c. 25 m SE of the stone enclo-
sure and measures c. 1 m diameter at the bottom, while outer diameter is 4 m N–S
and 3.8 m E–W with the thrown-out rocks. The pit itself is c. 70 cm deep, but in
relation to the thrown-out rocks it is 110 cm deep. The one on the S side is about 35
m SE of the stone enclosure on the other side of the hill. By a mistake measurements
were not recorded but it was similar to the first mentioned. C. 30 m SW of the stone
enclosure there is a dry wall circular shooting blind on the edge of the block sea
towards the pine forest. This has an outer diameter N–S: c. 340 cm, EW: c. 370 cm.
Inner height approximately 125 cm, outer height c. 100 cm. L–shaped piece of wood
stuck between the stones in the NNW in the outside of the wall, which has an overall
length of c. 55 cm and maximum width c. 40 cm. Several pieces of wood around the
wall and beyond, but is uncertain whether they are related this or originating from
fallout trees. The place name is used by Vorren. It is somewhat awkward and possibly
misunderstood, as it makes more sense when combining the root bejalŋŋis with for
instance –várrí (mountain) or –guoika (rapid). Jalŋŋís means tree stub and could
Bea– could be short for beahci, which means pine (pers. comm. I. M. A. Eira 3 Sep
2016).

Informants and traditions: Nissen says that both the local Karasjok Sami, who uses
the area for fishing in summertime, and probably also the mountain Sami who
moves past the site with their herds twice a year, knows it as an offering site shape
the old heathen times (Nissen 1928: 184).

Sources: Askeladden; Qvigstad 1926: 332; Nissen 1928; Vorren 1970a; Vorren
1985a, tsl360, tsl359, tsl358, tsl348.

65. Sulá 1

Id 27539–1/56660–7 (kulturminne 15): Steinring/Offersted (Stone circle/Offering
site).


Description: Conical pit in the scree made by throwing rocks out from the middle. A
lot of large rocks in the bottom of the pit (sized c. 90x60x20 cm), more there than in
the rest of this part of the scree. Outer diameter N–S: 6.2 m, E–W: 5.1 m, inner di-
ameter N–S: 3.5 m, E–W: 2.7 m. Not very pronounced embankment around it, but
outer height: c. 0–70 cm, inner height from the bottom: c. 80–160 cm. The same or a
similar structure in Jergul has been defined as a shooting blind by ethnographer
Johan Kalstad (tsld 1503). Qvigstad reports on two offering sites with stone circles
at what he calls “Suola”. Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In scree on top of small hill on the W side of river Iešjohka.
Masl: 230 m.
Cultural environment: Some 10 m to the SW is a stone enclosure, Sulá 2. NE of the structure there used to be yet another stone circle of some sort, but this was destructed by a gravel pit used for building for the passing road. There are good fishing spots on this little headland and several newer hearths and a tractor road is found here.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Qvigstad 1926: 332, Vorren 1985a. Photo: tsId1503 (labelled “shooting pit”, difficult to say for certain if it is the same site).

66. Sulá 2
Id 27539–2/56660–8 (kulturminne 15): Steinring/Offersted (Stone circle/Offering site).
Description: Stone enclosure around a quite level inner floor made by throwing rocks out from the middle of the structure. Outer diameter N–S: 7.4 m, E–W: 6.6 m, inner diameter N–S: 4.7 m, E–W: 4.2 m. Outer height: c. 0–80 cm, inner height: c. 70–110 cm. Some large rocks inside the structure, including two bedrocks and some others measuring c. 70x50x60 cm. Otherwise the floor consists of smaller rocks overgrown with grass and lichen. A cavity under a large rock in the N of the wall may resemble a chamber, and there is a similar one under a large rock in the S of the wall, but both may be unintentional. Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known. Overview of Vorren’s archive state there should be notes on this site, but they could not be refound.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: A bit further down and SW of the Sulá 1 structure.
Masl: 230 m.
Cultural environment: See Sulá 1.
Informants and traditions: The local people are well aware of the site, and because it is so close to the road it is often visited by archaeologists too.
Sources: Askeladden; Qvigstad 1926: 332; Vorren 1985a.

67. Ehtemásvárri
Id: None.
Description: Conspicuous circular dry–stone wall, “classical” with vertical inner walls and sloping outer walls, angular inner shape. Outer diameter N–S c. 8.3 m, E–W c. 6.85 m, inner diameter N–S c. 5.8 m, E–W c. 4.9 m. Rocks in sizes from 5–60 cm. Heights measured on outside where aligns with terrain some places. Some erosion in W, S–SW, E–NE and NW parts of the wall. In the N–NE, the wall is well preserved and seems to extend into a point. Relatively narrow row of round rocks on
top of the wall where it is preserved. A hollow in the outer part of the wall in the N–NE, c. 18 cm in diameter, and another hollow with similar diameter between the rocks in the N, possibly pole/post holes. No other similar features in other directions. No visible traces of woodworks in the circle. A few larger rocks under the heather W of the centre of the structure, otherwise a relatively even inner floor, apart from some erosion from the walls and some tussocks around the three small birch trees growing in the N part of the floor, as well as one tree in the SW. Type 1.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: On a small hill with view of the river in the E and the large gravel quarry in the NNE. Stone terrain sloping towards the E, N and W. To the S it continues as a rocky plain in front of the hill Ehtemásvárri.
Masl: 257 m.
Cultural environment: No other structures recorded in the immediate vicinity.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Skandfer and Hood 2013.

68. Bojobeasjohka/Guovžžadievvá 1

Id 56660 (fornminne 12): Offerplass (Offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: One of two stone enclosures of head–sized stones of 4–5 m in outer diameter, close to a precipice. One is eroded. Probably the same as recorded here in 2009 as R24: a meat cache of circular offering site, inner diameter 2 m, inner depth 1,2 m, height of embankement 50–80 cm, built from stones 40–70 cm in diameter.
Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In the S side of a moraine hill high above the river Iešjohka across from the outlet of river Bojobeasjohka. Described to be by “road stick 3970”, marking a planned road on the W side of Iešjohka.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: A couple of possible caches nearby.
Informants and traditions: None .
Sources: Askeladden; Simonsen 1969; Skandfer 2009.

69. Bojobeasjohka/Guovžžadievvá 2

See Bojobeasjohka 1. Type 2

70. Ávjovárguoikka

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
**Description:** Mentioned of Vorren (Vorren 1985a) but not further described. I have not found further information about this site in other sources. Possible type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** The place name indicates a site c. 25 km up river Iešjohkka from the site Sula in Jergul.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** None known.

**Sources:** Vorren 1985a.

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**71. Storfossen/Stuoragorži**

**Id:** None.

**Surveyed:** 2013.

**Description:** Stone enclosure, clearly visible. Outer diameter N–S: c. 8.6 m, E–W: c. 9.95 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 6.5 m, E–W: c. 6.5 m. In wall is low in the W and follow the sloping terrain, a lot of eroded stones are lying on the inside. In NV clearly structured, also with some smaller stones. I N two pieces of wood between some large stones, one may resemble a post. Low wide wall in NE, against Ø it is narrower. Quite straight wall in ESE, a cairn–like “corner” in the SE. Here is a piece of wood, but this could be debris from the surrounding woods. Wide wall and quite eroded in S and SV. Visible stones in the middle of the structure, quite large. Cavity where between them, presumably where Vorren dug and found remains of woodwork. A large stone between this middle mound and wall in N, 110x95x35 cm. This was probably there in the first place. Otherwise the stone wall is built by stones measuring between 105x75x65 and 10x10x10 cm, commonly sized c. 45x15x35 cm. Type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** Investigated by Vorren, who seems to at least have deturfed it, as he reports on finding traces of two–three layers of a notched log constructions that had fallen into the structure (Vorren 1970b).

**Finds:** Vorren found remains of woodworks that are stored at Tromsø Museum. These are two pieces of rather large logs, one with cut fits for notching and the other worked into a pointy shape. He also says to have found wood remains in the middle cairn.

**Dating:** 625±32, cal AD 1280–1400.

**Location and terrain:** In sloping terrain on the W facing of a small hill at the end of a moraine ridge. The river Karasjok/ Kárásjohka with the rapids Storfossen/Stuoragorži below in SE. Wooded landscape with pine and birch, heather and moss.

**Masl:** 190 m.

**Cultural environment:** An old winter road passes by in N, NW and V. I noted a possible pit fall trap on the way back to the river. Habitation area further up the
river. Rapids in the river here, meaning you would have to get out of the river boat (long narrow boats particularly suited for river sailing) and carry it past this area.
Informants and traditions: The father in law of Vorren’s guide in 1970 was said to have seen rotting piles of antlers here. My guide Klemet Turi told me about the area further up the river has been settlement and people still have cabins there. There are a lot of gárjill names in this area, reflecting Karelian activity.
Sources: Vorren 1970b; Vorren 1985a; Spangen 2014.

Kautokeino municipality

72. Gárggoluoppal

Id: None.
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Stone enclosure, made by moving stones out from the center of the circle. Outer diameter N–S: 9.5 m, EW: 8.3 m, inner diameter N–S: 6.2 m, EW: 5.2 m. In the NV the wall is very low and it almost resembles an opening, but a smaller stone string is built on the inside in a curve towards the middle of the structure, so there is still not open between outside and inside of the ring. The wall is built of stones of up to ca. 45x45x20 cm but mostly smaller stones, ca. 35x30x10 cm. Outer height: ca. 20–70 cm, inner height about. 40–70 cm. Quite a lot of large stones are visible in the middle of the ring, but it is difficult to decide which of these constitute constructions, since the interior of structure is very overgrown with moss, heather and three young birch trees. There appears, however, to be at least one stone string from a larger stone (40x40x25 cm) in center toward the wall in the SE. The wall is quite chaotic in many places, either not thoroughly built, or eroded, but in the ENE there are some slabs on top of the wall. Just outside the structure to the E is also a stone string of approximately 1.5 m in direction EW. I assume this is the same site that Qvigstad refers to as “Gal’goluobbal”, saying there appears to have been a stone in middle of the structure (Qvigstad 1926: 344). Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: In a 1997 intervju, a local man stated he moved into the area with his parents in the the 1930s and used to play in the structure. He once found a nice antler spoon, but he did not know what had later happened to this.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In scree of large rocks, relatively flat terrain, just by the outlet to lake Gárggoluoppal.
Masl: 335 m.
Cultural environment: NE (closer to the water) the vegetation is characterised by plants related to grazing. This area has been used for recent occupation, with a large rectangular barn house ground of c. 6x13 m N–S, a rectangular house ground of c. 8x7 m in outer measurements, and another two house grounds that were documented in 1997.
Informants and traditions: See above.
Sources: Qvigstad 1926: 344; Buljo 1997; Spangen 2013b.

73. Láhpoluoppal

Id 17472–1: Offersted (Offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Stone enclosure with outer diameter N–S: 8.7 m, E–W: 8.3 m, inner diameter N–S: 6.4 m, E–W: 5.2 m. Outer height: c. 20–45 cm, inner height: c. 5–40 cm. The stones in the wall are c. 45x40x20 cm. The inner area is overgrown by lichen, moss, heather and small birch trees. A partly burnt sign about its protected status is backed up against a tree. Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In relatively flat terrain close by the outlet of the river S of lake Láhpoluoppal.
Masl: 330 m.
Cultural environment: The site is located right next to the yard of the current houses here. There are also several older house grounds here. On the other side of the main road is Láhpoluoppal mountain cabin, now run as a private guesthouse.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Qvigstad 1926: 345; Spangen 2013b

74. Láhpojohka

Id 27523–1: Offersted (Offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Very solid stone enclosure with large, clearly visible cairn in the middle. Outer diameter N–S: 9.1 m, E–W: 9.3 m, inner diameter N–S: 5.9 m, E–W: 6.6 m. Outer height of the wall: c. 40–100 cm, inner height: c. 45–100 cm. The inner area of the structure is overgrown by heather, moss and small birch trees. The cairn is only covered by lichen. A couple of animal bones were found on and between the rocks in the wall and the cairn. These may have ended up there due to the previous investigations, but they may also be secondary. Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: Ørnulv Vorren excavated the S half of this structure and cairn in 1966, as well as a nearby cairn that was supposed to be a grave, but that turned out to hold no finds to support this (Vorren 1966). His team also reconstructed the walls and the cairn after partly excavating it, so that the structure appears more well–preserved today than it does in older photographs.
Finds: Vorren states he found a quite large amount of bones from different animals. A collection of these are stored as L1325 in the Sami Ethnographic Collection, Tromsø Museum, and include fox, dog, reindeer, large dog or wolf and mamals that could not be determined (Salmi 2013a).
Dating: A reindeer bone was dated to 357±35, Cal AD 1450–1640 (Uå–47126) and a canid tooth (dog or wolf)) to 379±32, Cal AD 1440–1640 (Uå–47077).
Location and terrain: Quite level terrain on the N side of the river, thin birch forest and heather.

Masl: 335 m.

Cultural environment: C. 50 m N of the structure is a hearth, probably quite recent. C. 200 m NE of the structure is an area with house grounds where people were living in the 1950s, but which may in part be older. There is a pitfall hunting system for reindeer with 18 pits c. 1 km N of the site on (pers. comm. A. Vars 9 Sep 2012).

Informants and traditions: None known.


75. Básejávri

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.

Description: Cache measuring 3.4 m in diameter, height c. 50–70 cm, with a depression in the middle, c. 50x50cm. Possibly the site with stone circles briefly mentioned by Qvigstad, who says it is close to the estuary of the river Básejohka into lake Básejávri, “not far from Lappoluobbal” (Qvigstad 1926: 345). Vorren looked for this site without finding it (Vorren 1966).

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Not described. In scree

Masl: Not known.


Informants and traditions: A. Vars, Láhpoluoppal.


76. Čudejohkka 1

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.

Description: In a 1997 interview, a local man mentioned two circular offering sites by river Čudejohkka. Possible type 1.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Up on the mountain, straight in from the houses there.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Not noted.

Informants and traditions: N. Bueng.

Sources: Buljo 1997.

77. Čudejohkka 2

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: In a 1997 interview, a local man mentioned two circular offering sites by river Čudejohkka. Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: See Čudejohkka 1.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: See Čudejohkka 1.
Informants and traditions: N. Bueng.
Sources: Buljo 1997.

Porsanger municipality

**78. Nedre Molvikvannet/Vuolit Áhpeluokjávri**

*Id: None.*

Surveyed: 2012.

*Description:* Stone structure with outer diameter N–S: c. 5.4 m, E–W: c. 4.5 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 2.9 m, E–W: c. 2.8 m. Built by removing rocks from the middle, clearly visible constructed wall in W and SW, in part consisting of a large rock, c. 160x120x45 cm, in SSW. Behind this and the wall is a pit with a floor made from smaller pebbles. Highest point of the wall is the large rock, c. 75 cm above the floor, while the constructed wall mens has a largest inner height of c. 70 cm. Lower stretch in SW, could resemble an entrance. Cairn–like structure in the middle, but this may be stones cleared out from the area behind the large rock. A larger rock in the middle of this cairn measurements c. 90x55x25 cm. The constructed wall faces the water and has a good view of both the inlet and outlet as well as a natural crossing point. Due to the view it is not unlikely this is a shooting blind. Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* Three parts of reindeer antlers were found on and between the rocks in the cairn.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* In scree by lake, sloping terrain.

*Masl:* 79 m.

*Cultural environment:* There are remains of foundations for telegraph poles or similar on each side of the crossing.

*Informants and traditions:* None known.

*Sources:* Thuestad 2007.

**79. Bringnes/Smørfjordnes/Briņņa 1**

*Id:* 56624–1/37276: Steinring/Mangeromstuft (Stone circle/Multi–room house ground).

Surveyed: No
Description: “Stone enclosure measuring c. 9.2 m in outer diameter and 6 m in inner diameter. Straight inner walls, outer walls sloping to align with the terrain. Interconnected with a passage through the scree to the neighboring Bringnes/Smørfjordnes/Briŋŋa 2. The structures was said by a local man to have been deeper than they appear today, at least 1 m. The inside is overgrown with heather, moss and willow bushes in the SW part.” One of the structures here is said to have a small “cave” inside the wall (Sveen 2003: 145). Probable type 1.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Slab scree.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: A third suggested circular offering site next to the two interconnected structures was surveyed by archaeologists in 2014 and determined as a large opened grave. It is also said that there are several unopened graves between he two circular offering sites and in the surrounding scree. The opened grave is described as a oblong very deep pit with a triangular or rombic shape, c. 1.5 m long, not as wide, at least 1 m deep. Abundant traces of diverse activities from Stone Age up to today along the rocky shore of the headland.

Informants and traditions: There are old records of an offering site on the headland Bringnes.


80. Bringnes/Smørfjordnes/Briŋŋa 2

Id 56624–2/37276: Steinring/Mangeromstuft (Stone circle/Multi–room house ground).
Surveyed: No.

Description: “Stone enclosure measuring c. 9.1 m in outer diameter and 6 m in inner diameter.” See also Bringnes/Smørfjordnes/Briŋŋa 1. Probable type 1.

81. Beavgohppi

Id 172635–1: Offerring (Circular offering site)
Surveyed: 2012

Description: Simple stone circles with outer diameter N–S: c. 4.9 m, E–W: c. 4.3 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 3.1 m, E–W: c. 2.7 m. Outer height c. 20–80 cm. Built from rocks c. 40x60x25 cm. Situated in very sloping terrain. The inner of the structure is overgrown with heather and juniper. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Rocky hillside.

Masl: 12 m.
Cultural environment: The area has been a winter habitation site in recent times. View of the mountain Latnečohkka (“the Finn’s Hill”) in the N, where a pulk grave has been found.
Informants and traditions: H. Birkely.
Sources: Spangen 2013b.

82. Lakselvmunningen/Rahpas
Id 159022–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Stone enclosure with outer diameter N–S: 7,4 m, E–W: 7,6 m, inner diameter 6 m. The wall is up to c. 65 cm high. The inner area is overgrown of heather and birch shrubries. There is a trench dug in the middle, which was here when Vorren first investigated it in 1953, up to 70 cm deep, with two heaps of masses on either side. Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: Vorren did a small excavation and describes finding some traces of charcoal in the described trench, as well as an area with charcoal up against the inner side of the wall to the S, measuring 40x40 cm.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated in rocky quite level terrain.
Masl: 12 m.
Cultural environment: No other recorded structures in the immediate vicinitiy. The area has been a military training ground until recently.
Informants and traditions: H. Birkely. The site was shown to Vorren by two local men, but he says nothing about their opinions on the function or meaning of the structure.
Sources: Askeladden; Vorren 1953b; Spangen 2013b.

83. Nedrevann/Vuolítjávri 1
Id 107961–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Description: Stone enclosure in a pebble scree by lake Nedrevann/Vuolítjávri, 10 m in diameter with a 1.5 m wide and 0,6 m high wall/embankement. The wall is pronounced towards the E, but aligns with the scree in the W. There is a marked elevation in the middle of the circle that measures 3 m in diameter. Some birch trees in the E part of the structure. A middle cairn is no longer very visible, but is described by Friis in the 19th century as a hollow pyramid of stone with animal bones inside. Type 1.
Excavation and alterations: Uncertain. Vorren’s mentions investigating it for days, but only the process of measuring it is described in the preserved field notes. Three piece of reindeer bones were brought back to Tromsø Museum and form part of his exhibition on Sami offering sites.
Finds: Several reports on finds of woodworks and animal bones. Three reindeer bones are preserved in Tromsø Museum. All of these have been somewhat affected by heat.

Dating: Reindeer bone dated to 322±32, Cal AD 1470–1645 (Hela–3361)

Location and terrain: Situated at the bottom of a steeply sloping pebble scree, partly overgrown with birch, heather and moss, on a promontory in the SE end of lake Nedrevann/Vuolitjávri.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: There is another recorded circular offering site nearby, as well as three meat caches in the same scree.

Informants and traditions: None known.

Sources: Askeladden; Friis 1871:140; Qvigstad 1926:335; Salmi 2013. Photos: tsld666, tsld669, tsld759.

84. Nedrevann/Vuolitjávri 2

Id: 107961–5/63620–1: Offerring/offersted (Circular offering site/Offering site)

Surveyed: No

Description: “Vaguely demarcated stone enclosure, 8 m in diameter, 0,5 m deep and with a 2,5 m wide wall/embankment that is most visible towards the lower part in the S. Two birch brusheries inside the structure.” Probable type 1

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: S–facing pebble scree sloping towards the river in the S.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: In the same scree, around a hillside, as Nedrevatn 1 and the mentioned meat caches.

Informants and traditions: None known.

Sources: Askeladden.

85. Offerholmen/Sieidesuolo

Id: None.

Surveyed: 2012.

Description: Almost conical pit in pebble scree, with up to 180 cm deep cavity in the middle. Embankment around is built from rocks taken from the middle. The rocks measure c. 30x20x15–50x30x25 cm. The embankment has an outer diameter on c. 8 m and an inner diameter on c. 6,5 m. In the S two curved small stone walls seem to be built from the wall in towards the middle of the structure. These are situated behind eachother and are turned towards the lake. In the NNW is a small protrusion from the main wall that resemble a small chamber. Outside this is something resembling a square stone structure in scree. Vorren measured it and concluded the structure had a pentagonal shape. He says the cairn that “must have been in the middle must be thrown out” and that there is a large heap of stone to the S and some in the N. He notes that they found the original floor level in the WSW (Vorren 1973a).
Qvigstad reports that in 1915 stone circles, in plural, could still be seen on the island (“Steinkreise sind auf der Insel noch zu sehen (1915)”, Qvigstad 1926:335). An earlier source only report on one structure (Schibsted 1903:43). Type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** The structure has been well known as a tourist attraction and is said to be deteriorated already in the early 20th century due to many visitors (Nissen 1928:185), and it is probably even more altered from the original build.

**Finds:** Leem (1767) describes finding a large amount of antlers at one end of the islet, but that most had fallen into the water, and that the Sami had taken antlers to make spoons and other objects. He does not mention a structure of any sort. Vorren describes finding animal bones and pieces of wood, but assumes that all these were secondary. Half a reindeer scull was found during the survey in 2012 but it was not collected. From photos it was possible to say that it had been chopped in two with an ax or other sharp tool (pers. comm. J. Karlsson 24 Jan 2014).

**Dating:** Uncertain

**Location and terrain:** Situated in the only visible scree on the W side of the islet that otherwise consist of sandy moraine. Outside the embankment in the S and W the scree is sloping towards the water. Behind the scree in the E is a steep hill up towards the top of the islet.

**Masl:** 80 m

**Cultural environment:** There are eight pitfall traps (presumably for reindeer) along the narrow ridge of the islet. Otherwise many traces of recent activity, including a recent hearth on the SE side and a round stick with freshly carved runes on the very top of the islet, possibly related to some sort of neo–pagan activity. The runes read “O, B, F, TH” a line and then “R” (see main text, Chapter 5.6). Vorren notes two “stone graves” (“steingraver”) N of the structure and a cairn closer to the water in. He is not sure if they are recent or not. These were not recorded in 2012.

**Informants and traditions:** The islet has been known as an old offering site at least since the 18th century. Sources: Leem 1975:439–440; Schibstedt 1903; Nissen 1928; Qvigstad 1926:334–335; Vorren 1956a, 1958, 1973a, 1985a; Spangen 2013b. Photos: tsnf14492, tsnf12577, tsnf12578

**86. Porsangermoen 1**

*Id 107646–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).*

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** Recorded as a circular offering site, but described as a meat cache in a small pebble scree. “Outer diameter 5,5 m and inner measurements 1,5 x 0,9 m (oval). Depth 0,5 m, height towards the E 1 m, towards the W 0,3 m. Built from pebbles and slabs of various sizes.” Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** In a pebble scree.

**Masl:** Not noted.
Cultural environment: Situated 50 m W of the reindeer gathering fence in the N end of a little valley.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

87. Porsangermoen 2
Id 107695–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular offering site with outer diameter 6 m inner diameter is only 1.5 m due to erosion and collapse of the W part of the wall. Height up to 5 m.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the E brink of a gorge. The end of lake Melkevann can be discerned in the N.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

Kvalsund municipality

88. Aisaroaivi
Id 143133–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Round stone structure with outer diameter N–S: 3,9 m, E–W: 3,9 m, inner diameter N–S: 2 m, E–W: 1,8 m, somewhat uneven shape. The stone embankment is up to c. 40 cm heigh, built from slabs and rocks up to c. 55x45x10 cm, but most around 20x25x35 cm. Some rocks towards the middle of structure. Some slabs seem to be built up in the N. Some larger rocks are placed around and outside the outer edge of the main structure. In the middle there is a slightly larger rock and a slab, nothing to see when lifted the slab. The features have a certain resemblance with a grave that has been excavated on Vapsgieddi, Spildra (Grydeland 2001: 75–76). Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain. The nearby hearth was dated to 135±30BP, cal younger than AD 1670, but there is nothing to confirm that these are contemporary.
Location and terrain: Situated on a terrace on the edge of a small precipice. Below lies the valley NE–SW, boggy terrain with a stream. You can see Saiva in the N and a peculiar small hill just to the W of the site (Goahtëcohkka).
Masl: 332 m.
Cultural environment: Between the stone circle and this hilltop is a hearth, Id 143168. The area is intensively used for reindeer herding, with a gathering fence very close by.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b; Schanche 2014.

Gamvik municipality

89. Futelva
Id 141014–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Possible Sami circular offering site. The stone circle is intact.” Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On a little promontory/hill of river Futelva. Can be seen from the main road between Mehamn and Gamvik and on satellite photos.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

90. Svensvika 1
Id 141052–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “One of two stone circle at the foot of the mountain, similar to Sami circular offering sites. Can be seen on satellite photo. View from the site both up the valley and to the sea.” Judging from photo: type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden. Photo in (Rydving 2003:14), but unclear if is from Svensvika 1 or 2.

91. Svensvika 2
Id 141052–2: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
**Description:** “The other of two stone circle at the foot of the mountain, similar to Sami circular offering sites. Can be seen on satellite photo. View from the site both up the valley and to the sea.” Judging from photo: type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** Not noted.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** None known.

**Sources:** Askeladden. Photo in Rydving (2003:14), but unclear if is from Svensvika 1 or 2.

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**Lebesby municipality**

**92. Bukta**

*Id 56663–11: Offerring (Circular offering site).*

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** From the records in Askeladden it is somewhat uncertain which structure at this site is defined as a circular offering site, as it includes several smaller circular depressions in the beach terrace. Structure 9 in the description is said to have seemingly built–up dry–stone walls, c. 30 cm high, while structure 11 is described as a “beach terrace grave”, which is an older term that may indicate both a scree grave or a fish oil extraction grave. The structure here is 4 m in diameter and 0.5 m deep, and may have been defined as a circular offering site during the digitalisation in Askeladden. It is overgrown with grass in the middle. Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** Not noted.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** None known.

**Sources:** Askeladden.

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**Måsøy municipality**

**93. Tarevika**

*Id 143860–2 (probably same as Id 76982–6): Steinkrets (Stone circle).*

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** Two stone circle of uncertain function and date. Circle 2 is a solid circular dry–stone wall, particularly obvious to the W. It includes some larger boul-
ders. Oval shape, oriented E–W. In the middle a large slab that has fallen down. Outer measurements 5.7 x 3.7 m, inner measurements 2.4 x 1.5 m, height up to 80 cm. “Circle 2 seems to large for a scree grave or meat cache. Possibly circle 2 may be a circular offering site or a shooting blind. Watch house in relation to fox or otter hunting has also been suggested (Bratrein 1966)”. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: A rocky terrain up against the mountain on a beach terrace overgrown with heather furthest N in the bay. Circle 2 is situated in the gently sloping foot of the mountain.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Another stone circle is recorded next to it, consisting of rocks put into an oval shape on the brink of the beach terrace. Somewhat collapsed, vague embankment around it. Oriented along the terrace (N–S). Rocks at the bottom. Partly overgrown. Outer measurements 5.8x5 m, inner measurements 2.7x1.4 m. Depth 30 cm.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden.

Alta municiplality

94. Buollándievva
Id: Kulturminnesok.no: 1001731.
Surveyed: No.
Description: kulturminnesok.no: “Conspicuous dry–stone wall or cairn. Outer diameter 3.30 m, inner diameter 2.30 m. The site is about to be covered in birch shrubberies.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: At the bottom of a hill.
Masl: 80 m.
Cultural environment: Reindeer herding area today. Several other stone circles and settings recorded nearby.
Informants and traditions: Locals have called this a circular offering site (pers. comm. A. Ødegård 15 Jul 2015).
Sources: kulturminnesok.no.

95. Jiehtanasjávri
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Quite large stone circle. No further description. Possible type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Placed on a small peninsula on lake Jiehtnanasjávri. The peninsula is peculiarly circular in shape and very flat. Situated in the bottom of the largee Lerrets fjord valley.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Goahti house ground just next to the structure. Habitation site on the other side of the lake. The name of the lake is related to a mountain formation called jiehtnan, meaning “giant” in Sami (No.: jotne). Activity areas in the mountains further up of Nástejávri.
Informants and traditions: Older locals say there has been “occult activities” on this peninsula. A. Ødegård interprets the structure as a circular offering site.

96. Kåfjordbotn/Borani
Id 47559–3: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: Ringshaped structure, 7 m in diameter. Circular ditch about 30 cm wide and 10–15 cm deep. On the inner side of the ditch is a low wall of turf and some rocks (most evident on the NW side); this is about 40 cm wide and c. 10 cm high. There are some large rocks on the outer side of and around the whole circle. Test pit in the centre of the structure showed gravel/sand and some charcoal – no stone paving. “Possibly a circular offering site?? Or something strange from the war?? ” On the N side a hearth has recently been built (burnt wood) with rocks from the structure. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Nearby Borani habitation area. Gravel/sand terrace with heather and birch.
Masl: 25 m.
Cultural environment: At the same site there are a “gravelike” circular stone setting of c. 2,7 m in diameter, a stone cairn of c. 2 m in diameter and a rectangular ditch of 3x5 m.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

97. Leirbakken
Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: Described of Vorren in a field note from 1985 as a stone circle similar to the already known circular offering sites, though he questions the interpretation because the site is situated on what seems to be a manmade plateau at the bottom of
the hillside. The stone circle had been disturbed of erosion and was broken through on several places, but Vorren believed it had originally been a coherent wall. Outer diameter E–W: c. 5.1 m, N–S: 5.2 m. Inner diameter c. 3 m. The wall was 100–120 cm wide and had a height of 60–150 cm. It was overgrown of heather. Possible type 1.

*Excavation and alterations:* Partly destructed.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* Location uncertain, no map follows the report. On the end of the esker across the Alta valley towards the Alta river. Pine woods that had been cut down and given room for some birch. Situated below an edge of a raised area towards the S part of the esker. Sloping terrain, up to 40–50, but the structure itself seems to be placed on a plateau made from digging into the slope in the N and using the material to level out the slope in the S. From the information Vorren gives, it is thought the site was situated of Jordfallet in Alta (pers. comm. M. Arntzen 3 Jul 2015). Here there is a quarry close to the farm Leirbakken.

*Masl:* Uncertain.

*Cultural environment:* 10 m to the NE of this structure was a pit 120 cm deep with the roots of a cut–down log in. Vorren says it may be the result of extracting rocks or for largeage. There was several traces nearby of German activity during WWII (various depressions etc.) and of recent gravel quarrying from the esker.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Vorren 1985a.

98. Ellejávri

*Id 150672–1:* Offering (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* Recorded of the Sami Parliament in 2011.

*Description:* Possible stone circle. Six large rocks and three smaller, c. 4 m in diameter with an opening to the W. Possibly a natural feature. Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* On the SE side of lake Ellejávri.

*Masl:* c. 450 m.

*Cultural environment:* Several fireplaces and caches on the other (NW) side of lake Ellejávri.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Askeladden.

Hammerfest municipality

99. Storklubben

*Id 37243–1:* Offersted (Offering site).

Description: Reported as circular offering site of the author in 2006, but report is missing. Stone circle in the pebble beach terrace. Uncertain diameter, but from memory more than 2 and less than 6 m. Not very high or solid walls. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Skeleton from nearby grave was dated to the 12th century.

Location and terrain: In the small bay mellomrisvågen, 250 m N of the house grounds on the isthmus between Risvågen and Sørhamna. Situated in the pebble beach on the W side of the bay.

Masl: Not noted

Cultural environment: Scree grave further out the bay, which is also surrounded of house grounds and other structures.

Informants and traditions: The skeleton and the grave has been well known among the locals.

Sources: Askeladden.

Troms county

Kvænangen municipality

100. Arahavdi

Id 68218–2: Offering (Circular offering site).

Surveyed: No.

Description: “Circular stone setting, diameter 3 m, dybde 1 m, somewhat eroded inside. Built wall around the edges. width 0.4 m, height 0.2 m. Some larger slabs among the rocks.” Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Slab terrace, heather and gras between rocks, mountain wall and scree.

Masl: Not noted

Cultural environment: Situated 25 m W of a sieidi in shape of a 6 m high natural stone column separated from the cliff wall by only a meter wide space. 12 m NW of this column, in mountain above the scree is a small cave, height 1 m, bredde 2 m, dybde 3 m. 4 m SW of the stone circle is an oval pit, 2x1 m, dybde 0.3 m with large slabs beside. In the other end of the terrace is a similar pit, 1.5 x 0.7 m, diameter 0.2 m. Slabs on the sides. Also a small pit, round with diameter: 0.5 m, similarly with large slabs around.
Informants and traditions: A local source said a sorcerer from Noaidegedden had once dug in one of the pits, because he had heard it held a treasure, but his hands broke out with severe eczema, so he had to give it up. According to the local source, the site is called “Arahavdi” because it was from “Arild’s time”, i.e. very old, but the word áráhávdi literally means “place with buried treasure” in North Sami (cf. Thomassen 1999[1896–98]: 119–121)

Sources: Askeladden

101. Elvestrand

Id 27154–12: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circular offering site. Circle of flat stones in the beach terrace. Diameter 6 m, width 0.5 m. The circle is without vegetation, heather inside.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Beach terrace with slabs outside field with. View towards Kväneangsfjorden, Haukøy and M? in S and SSV, Innerviken in ENE.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: The stone circle is situated 6 m E of several graves, two recorded as “double graves” and four as single graves. Each are circular with a diameter of 3 m, depth 0.2–0.3 m. Also a square stone setting, like a wall of 3 x 3 m, depth 0.3 m built from slabs. In the nearby area are several more graves of a rectangular kind with standing stone that have fallen down. In addition several house grounds that may be from the Stone Age. It is likely that the graves are slabpits for oil extraction (cf. Henriksen 1996).
Informants and traditions: According to local tradition there was a burial ground in this area.
Sources: Askeladden.

102. Ruossalanjohka

Id 150214–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “10 rocks that shape a circle. A flat rock on highest point towards N is a little larger than the others, 280x185 cm.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: In the report a Sami tradition is noted about how stone circles can be delimitations of where dead people have rested when bringing them down from the mountain (Schanche 2011:46).
Sources: Schanche 2011.

103. Slaberg

Id 17601–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Circle of flat slabs, diameter 6 m, width 0.5 m, heather and moss inside. No depression. The structure was initially doubted to be a heritage site, but this perception had to be changed when we found another and clearly visible circle in a certain context in the N end of the beach terrace burial field and the Stone Age house grounds R3, D2, 400 m further NNW.” (The other site refers to 101. Elvestrand, Id 27154–12) Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: on the S side of the cliffs by the S end of the inland at the farm Slaberg.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

104. Šuoikkátjávri

Id 173696–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “The circle has a diameter of 8–10 m, the embankment is up to 40–60 cm high and up to 1 m wide.” Probable type 1.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: By the foot of a scree on the S side of lake Šuoikkátjávris, just S of the river running into lake Gálggojávri. The stone circle is situated by what is now the highest watermark in a bay created by the regulation of the lake.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted. The Gálggojávri area is described in Chapter 4.4.2.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.

Skjervøy municipality

105. Tareneset 1

Id 74042–40: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Circular depression in the pebble beach, made by removing rocks from the inside and putting them into a low embankment along the sides. Overgrown with heather, but rocks are visible in the embankment. Outer diameter N–S: c. 7 m, the embankment in the ESE is shared with the structure of Tareneset 2. Inner diameter c. 3.5 m. Depth up to c. 30 cm. Somewhat lower stretch in the wall in the NE, possible entrance. In my opinion a house ground, even if the site is quite close to the sea. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated on the beach terrace stretching from the NNE side of the field Lauksletta to the houses in the N. Right by a well-known offering site in shape of a very large boulder. No used as a shelter, with a bench and a fireplace.
Masl: 7 m.
Cultural environment: At least 11 slablined pits for sea mammal oil extraction (No.: hellegroper) on this beach, wrongly recorded as a burial field in Askeladden (due to the previous interpretation of such sites).
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

106. Tareneset 2
Id 74042–41: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Circular depression with embankment around in the pebble beach. Overgrown with heather, but some rocks are visible in the embankment in the NE, and a couple of larger rocks in the floor area. Outer diameter N–S: c. 7.5 m, E–W: c. 6.7 m, shares part of the wall with Tareneset 1. Inner diameter c. 3.5 m. Dybde up to c. 50 cm. Possible entrances in both SSE and NV, but may be secondary disturbances. In my opinion a house ground, even if the site is quite close to the sea. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: See Tareneset 1.
Masl: 7 m.
Cultural environment: See Tareneset 1.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

107. Tareneset 3
Id 74042–41: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Pit in the beach terrace. Overgrown with heather. Outer diameter N–S: c. 3.8 m, E–W: c. 3.6 m. Inner diameter c. 1 m. Lower stretch in vollen in SE may be
a 1 m wide entrance. SE of and very close to Tareneset 2. In my opinion a house
ground for a sheep house or a storage hut. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: See Tareneset 1.
Masl: 6 m.
Cultural environment: See Tareneset 1.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

Karlsøy municipality

108. Klemetsvik 1

Id 129047–1: Offering (Circular offering site) (previously recorded as Id 38470–7: Cairn).

Description: Today a semicircular shape cleared in an accumulation of pebbles cut
through by a recent ditch in the S–SW, but from the remains the original outer diam-
eter is estimated outer diameter N–S: c. 7 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 3 m. Partly
overgrown with heather, moss, grass and small birch trees. Previously described as a
large, easily noticeable stone circle. Two photos from 1976 confirm a clearly visible
stone circle, somewhat overgrown in the S. Could have been a Stone Age house
ground, but finds of bits of iron in the ditch profile indicate it is not. These remains
have been discarded. Possible type 1.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated in a sloping accumulation of pebbles between to
small cliffs in hillside on the outer W part of island Vannøya. The description of the
sites in Klemetsvik as three structures on a row in a beach terrade is misleading, as
this one is lower in the terrain and separated from the others by a small cliff.
Masl: 13 m.
Cultural environment: There are two Stone Age house ground on a terrace a little
further up (three recorded, but to me, one looks like a turf cut).
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b. Photos: tsnf10836, tsnf10837.

109. Klemetsvik 2

Id 129047–2: Offering (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.

Description: Horseshoeshaped with opening towards the beach terrace edge Marked
stone embankment in the NW, while that in the SE is quite vague. Embankement
width up to c. 2.5 m, height up to 0.3 m. Overgrown with heather over, while the inside floor is overgrown with grass. Outer measurements 1100x1025 cm, orientated NW–SE, inner measurement c. 725 cm. In my opinion a house ground. Type 3. 

*Excavation and alterations:* None known. 
*Finds:* None known. 
*Dating:* Uncertain. 
*Location and terrain:* On overgrown pebble beach terrace in hillside on the outer W part of island Vannøya. 
*Masl:* 15 m. 
*Cultural environment:* Next to a second house ground, separated by a small stream. 
*Informants and traditions:* None. 
*Sources:* Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

### 110. Klemetsvik 3

*Id 129047–3: Offerring* (Circular offering site). 
*Surveyed:* 2012. 
*Description:* Rectangular house ground measuring c. 12x7 m. Embankments 2–2.5 m wide, height 0.2 to 0.4 m. Overgrown with moss and heather and with grass inside. Type 3. 
*Excavation and alterations:* None known. 
*Finds:* None known. 
* Dating:* Uncertain. 
* Location and terrain:* On overgrown pebble beach terrace in hillside on the outer W part of island Vannøya. 
*Masl:* 16 m. 
*Cultural environment:* See Klemetsvik 2. 
*Informants and traditions:* None. 
*Sources:* Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

### 111. Kammen 1

*Id 48474–1 : Steinring* (Stone circle). 
*Surveyed:* 2012. 
*Description:* “Stone circle, roundish, quite vague, made from rocks and waterroled pebbles. Unclear in the W. Made from a string of even rocks partly hidden by turf. Diameter c. 6.5 m.” During my survey in late summer 2012, the area was so overgrown with high grass and straws that the structure could not be refound. Type 2. 
*Excavation and alterations:* None known. 
*Finds:* None known. 
* Dating:* Uncertain. 
* Location and terrain:* On a sandy seaside area on the SW side of island Vannøya. 
*Masl:* Not noted. 
*Cultural environment:* Not noted. 
*Informants and traditions:* None. 
*Sources:* Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.
112. Kammen 2

Id 48474–2: Steinring (Stone circle).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: “Stone circle, somewhat more evident than the first structure, round–oval, partly built from waterroiled pebbles and rocks. Vague and destructed in the WSW where there are some tones outside the ring. Embankment width c. 0.6 m, height 0.1 – 0.2 m. The rocks are overgrown by grass and moss. Diameter ca 6 m.” As described above, this could not be re-found in 2012. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Sandy grounds right by the sea on the SW side of island Vannøya.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Just next to and south of Kammen 1.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

113. Migan

Id 38505–2: Offering (Circular offering site).
Description: Area with a cairn, some embankments, and some large rocks on a plateau, previously considered circular offering site. Outer diameter of the plateau with embankments N–S: 9.6 m, E–W: 7.9 m, inner diameter N–S: 7 m, E–W: 4.6 m. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In a clearing on a hillside with very dense young birch forest on island Reinøya.
Masl: 94 m.
Cultural environment: Old pastures, now overgrown with new forest.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden, Bratrein 1989: 194 (photo).

114. Nyheim

Id 48487–1: Offering (Circular offering site).
Description: Horseshoeshaped stone setting, outer measurements N–S: 7.5, E–W: 10.7 m, inner measurements N–S: 6.1 m, E–W: 10 m. Possibly foundation for house construction. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Pasture, sloping towards the sea in the SW in Skogs fjord, Ringvassøya.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: In pasture, allegedly another house ground nearby, but this was not refound.
Informants and traditions: None
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

115. Mikkelsvika

Id: None.
Description: Small stone circle on a mountain peak, consisting partly of bedrocks surfaces, partly of loose stones. Outer diameter N–S: 360 cm, E–W: 340 cm, Inner diameter N–S 140 cm, E–W: 195 cm. Confirmed by neighbour’s daughter to be built by her as a child. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Small flat area between protruding small peaks on the mountain right above the village (now mostly cabins) in Skogs fjord, Ringvassøya.
Masl: 53 m.
Cultural environment: No other structures in immediate vicinity.
Informants and traditions: Local cabin owners.
Sources: Pers. comm. from archaeologists in the Sami Parliament and Troms county; Spangen 2013b.

116. Langstrandneset

Id 100098–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle by rock on the next to highest point of the hillside, c. 0,9 m in diameter, built from one layer of stone. Overgrown with grass. Spectacular view of Dåfjorden. Resurveyed in 2011 and considered to be the marking of a trigonometric point.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Peak of the hill, very windblown, overgrown with some grass and heather. N of rock on next to highest topp. View towards Dåfjorden in S, W and N.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.
Storjord municipality

117. Gálggojávri

*Id* 162773–1: **Offering** (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2012, 2013a, 2016b.

*Description:* Stone enclosure built from small and larger rocks measuring 15x15x10 cm–70x55x35 cm. Outer diameter N–S: c. 8.7 m, E–W: 8–8.6 m, depending on whether you include a pit with 10 large rocks around it on the outside of the wall in the E. These resemble a small outer room. Inner diameter N–S: c. 5.5 m, E–W: 4.5–5.1 m, depending on whether measures eroded rocks or original inside of the wall. Outer height: c. 0–80 cm, inner height: c. 40–80 cm. The inside of the wall is built from large rocks and give a straight vertical surface. The outer wall is packed with smaller rock and slopes toalign with the surrounding terrain. Some places the outer wall is merging with the terrain, especially in the E where the sloping terrain is highest. The inside is overgrown by heather and a tree in the SW. A natural mound in the middle with a dugin hole which is 1.7–1.8 m in diameter and 20–30 cm deep. Four larger visible rocks in the W of this hole. See also Chapter 4.4.2. Type 1.

*Finds:* Finds of 18 recent coins, jewellery and a few other objects, as well as three reindeer bones.

*Dating:* Most of the coins where from the 1960s onwards, and the other objects where also very recent. One reindeer bone was radiocarbon dated to post–bomb (1950 or later). See Chapter 4.11. and 5.6.

*Location and terrain:* The structure is situated in terrain that slopes from E towards W. It is in a very strange terrain on Gálggonjárga where moraines crisscross and create a labyrinth–like sense. Big height differences. Just W of the structure is a boggy area in a dead ice hole, separated from the plateau of the structure by a c. 5 m slope. Further SW of the structure and the crisscrossing moraines, the terrain on Gálggonjárga is relatively level and dry, overgrown with heather and birch. See als Chpater 4.6.2.

*Masl:* 520 m.

*Cultural environment:* Just by the structure in the SE and S was two meat caches and on a plain nearby a hearth. See Chapter 4.4.2.

*Informants and traditions:* Several suggestions about the origins of the structure from various members of the local Sami family, including German WWII installation and an old house ground used by the family.

*Sources:* Askeladden, Spangen 2013b, 2016b. Photo: tsld671–676.

Tromsø municipality

118. Durmålselva 1

*Id* 63261–10: **Offering** (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2012.
Description: Three stone circles recorded: “Circles cleared of rocks. Diameter 4–5 m. The circles are dry on low tide and is filled up by water on high tide. Natural occurrence?” Type 2.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Along the sea towards the W on the N side of the pastures of Sandneshamn farm.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Also recorded house grounds in the area.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

119. Durmålselva 2
Id 63261–11: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: See Durmålselva 1. Type 2.

120. Durmålselva 3
Id 63261–12: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: See Durmålselva 1. Type 2.

121. Bånesset
Id 37746–1: Gravrøys (Grave cairn).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: Oval thrown–out cairn, outer diameter N–S: 7.7 m, E–W 7.4 m, inner diameter N–S: 2.5 m, E–W: 5.4 m. The inner area is overgrown with heather. Outer diameter N–S not measuring the area with thrown–out rocks: c. 4.8 m. Pit in W part of the structure, 45–50 cm deep, c. 1 m in diameter. The structure may resemble a stone circle, but a lot of rocks in the slope towards S and the pit inside the structure indicate it is a destructed cairn, as said in Askeladden. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the end of a small cliff. The terrain slopes quite steeply towards the S just where the structure ends. Down the slope are some eroded rocks, but it is not a scree, the rocks for the cairn must have had to be brought to the site from more rocky terrains.
Masl: 13 m.
Cultural environment: Area with classical Norse remains like grave cairns and abandoned Iron Age farm sites.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Troms county.

Balsfjord municipality

122. Buktelva
Id 63164–1: Steinkonstruksjon (Stone construction).
Surveyed: 2012.
Description: “Oval stone build consisting of c. 20 large rocks up to 0.5 m length, placed in 3 layers; length 1.5 m, width 0.8 m, height 0.5 m. Somewhat overgrown with moss on some of the rocks.” The structure was not refound during the survey in 2012. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the W end of a 8 m long protruding bedrock ridge oriented NNW–SSW. It is overgrown with grass and moss.
Mast: Not noted.
Cultural environment: On the S of the ridge is a string of stones and a 1.5 m wide and 4 m long depression
Informants and traditions: According to local information this was a site where the Swedish Sami used to stop when they moved to the coast with the reindeer herd.
Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2013b.

Dyrøy municipality

123. Klauvhamna
Id 68361–5: Offering (Circular offering site).
Description: “Clearly marked round–oval pit; 3 m in diameter, 0.5 m wide embankment in the N and E, marked pit in the W. Relatively flat bottom.” Not refound in 2013 despite thorough search. Probably natural feature. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On relatively level ground on small headland below steep and rugged hillside with forest of birch, alder, willow, juniper, fern and so on.
Mast: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Several pitfall traps for reindeer were recorded in the area, but none of these were refound either.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden.
Nordland county

Andøy municipality

124. Mellaheia

*Id* 170192–1: *Offering* (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2013.  
*Description:* “Stone circle made with head- and torso–sized rocks. Outer measurements N–S 520 cm, E–W 535 cm. Inner measurements N–S 390 cm, E–W 450 cm. Height up to 70 cm. Traces of charcoal found in the N end of the inner area in 2001. Opening in the wall to the W measuring 85 cm N–S. Collection of rocks in the middle forming an oval/circular stone setting overgrown with moss. Diameter E–W 2 m, N–S 2 m, biggest height 20 cm.” No charcoal was detected during probing in 2013. According to the information below, this may well have been a Sami reindeer herding camp, but it is difficult to say without further investigation. Type 2.  
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.  
*Finds:* None known.  
*Dating:* Uncertain.  
*Location and terrain:* On the top terrace of the steep hillside, fairly level ground, pasture overgrown with heather and grass. Wide view of i.a. Åse courtyard site to the S. Just outside of the infields of the nearby farms.  
*Masl:* 270 m.  
*Cultural environment:* Several tent rings and hearths in the area around.  
*Informants and traditions:* None.  
*Sources:* Askeladden; Spangen 2014.

125. Ørnkullan

*Id* 27665–1: *Offering* (Circular offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2013.  
*Description:* “Sami offering site. Stone construction. Marked and visible in the terrain. Rocks very overgrown with moss. Circular stone embankment around two flat boulders. The boulders are oriented NNE–SSW and are 2 m long. Height of the “altar” 0,8 m. 10 cm between the two boulders. Small pond with water between the rocks. No animal bones where found. Diameter of stone circle 6,5 m. Width of embankment 1,5 m, height 0,5 m. The wall is higher inside by the “altar”, height 1 m, cf. sketch. The W part of the wall seems unharmed. Not a Norse grave. The positioning by water is typical for Sami offering sites. Resembles the Sami offering site by Vibukt in Forfjord (Sortland m.) and an offering site Ernst Manker has described from Pite Lappmark.” The site was written off as a natural feature during the survey in 2013. Type 3.  
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.  
*Finds:* None known.  
*Dating:* Uncertain.
**Location and terrain:** In rocky, overgrown and waterlogged terrain on a small peninsula stretching into a narrow strait.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** No other recorded sites in the immediate vicinity.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Askeladden; Spangen 2014.

### 126. Åfjellet 1

**Id 47668–1: Offersted (Offering site).**

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** “N of the rivers Finnåene and Åelva: Circular offering site. Stone circle, c. 6 m in diameter, built on the surface, not dug down (no pitfall trap). Not re-found by [Hans] Horst [in 1877]. Underneath the mountain Åfjellet: Circular offering site, Sami. Stone circle. Diameter 6 m. The rocks were placed so that they made a straight inner wall. On the outside they sloped to align with the terrain. Horst found this one. Are these two identical??” Possible type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** Underneath the mountain Åfjellet and N of the rivers Finnåene and Åelva.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** There was a tradition about Sami habitation here. **Goahti** house grounds have been found at the site and further up in the mountain. In 1879 there was a Sami reindeer herder living on Andøya, according to Horst.

**Sources:** Askeladden, Horst 1879.

### 127. Åfjellet 2

**Id 47668–2: Offersted (Offering site).**

**Surveyed:** No.

**Description:** See above under Åfjellet 1. Possible type 1.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** Underneath the mountain Åfjellet and N of the rivers Finnåene and Åelva.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** Not noted.

**Informants and traditions:** See above.

**Sources:** Askeladden, Horst 1879.
Bø municipality

128. Røsshagdalen

*Id* 28262–1: *Offering* (Circular offering site).
*Surveyed:* 2013.
*Description:* Stone enclosure built between three very large and some not so large boulders, so that the larger are the corners of the structure. Outer diameter Ø–V: 8.5 m, including some presumable eroded stones lying on the outside, N–S: 6.6 m. Inner diameter E–W: 6.2 m, N–S: 4.4 m. Inner height up to c. 170 cm by the large boulder in the NE, lowest E of this at c. 30 cm. Outer height up c. 220 cm by the same boulder, and lowest right beside it at 30 cm. The largest boulder in the wall measures 220x110x270 cm, while the stones in the wall measure 20x30x15 – 50x70x40 cm. The inner area is quite overgrown with grass and plants typical for pastures. Some visible semi–large rocks in the middle, previously interpreted as a hiding place for the offering matter. One larger boulder inside the enclosure by the boulder in the wall in the SW. Previously recorded as a possible circular offering site with similar measurements, noting a possible opening in the wall in the SE by a large boulder in the wall in the ENE. This is quite similar to type 1 in many ways, but the less sturdy walls have made me consider it to be something else – possibly a pen of some sort. It is however an uncertain type 2.
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.
*Finds:* None known.
*Dating:* Uncertain.
*Location and terrain:* Situated in a scree at the bottom of a very steep mountain side far up in the small valley Røsshagdalen. On the N of a small stream.
*Masl:* 169 m.
*Cultural environment:* Just a few meters away is a rectangular, possibly somewhat rounded, stone enclosure forming two attached rooms, one small rectangular higher up in the quite significant slope and one less distinct further down. Altogether it measures c. 9x6 m. Maybe a house ground, possibly a sheep hut with two rooms, or one room and a muck–out area. The steep mountainside is covered in grass and has probably been a grazing area for the small farm in the bay down by the seaside. Several stone fences were recorded further down the valley, one seemingly crossing it, possibly to separate the infield and outfield pastures, though a local historian thought they were built to keep the reindeer of the Sami away from the farm.
*Informants and traditions:* L. Sæther, local historian.
*Sources:* Askeladden; Spangen 2014.

Vågan municipality

129. Draugvika 1

*Id* 23717–2: *Steinkrets* (Stone circle).
*Surveyed:* 2013.
**Description:** “The two stone settings are interpreted as Sami circular offering sites. Previous Description: stone circle c. 10 meter in diameter. Towards the S an extra stone string from the circle to a large boulder. Entirely free of vegetation.” During the survey in 2013 it was difficult to discern this structure. A suggestion for these stone structures has been some to do with preapartion of fish (pers. comm. R. Bertelsen 15 Nov 2013, cf. Kristjánsson 1985: 286ff). Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** In the upper part of a pebble scree with the bay just below in the E. Rocky heather landscape around a grass area there. Area delimited in the N, NW and W by a mountainside.

**Masl:** 10 m.

**Cultural environment:** Close by Draugvika 2, there are also remains of several turf huts nearby, including a boat house.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Askeladden; Spangen 2014

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**130. Draugvika 2**

*Id 23717–1: Steinkrets (Stone circle).*

**Surveyed:** 2013.

**Description:** Stone circle made from a single row of stones in varying sizes from 20x15x15 cm to 45x40x30 cm. Height 0–45 cm, outer diameter E–W: 9.8 m, N–S: 9.5 m, inner diameter E–W: 7.2 m, N–S: 7.5 m. Overgrown with heather and moss. A depression in the middle, irregularly shaped, c. 310 cm NW–SE, ca. 150 cm NE–SW. Small willows in the middle. The stone circle has an uneven height and is marked in the W by some larger stones with less vegetation. In the N and NE are at least four large boulders and the delineation here is vague. See above at Draugvika 1. Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** See above.

**Masl:** 6 m.

**Cultural environment:** See above.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Askeladden; Spangen 2014

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**Tjeldsund municipality**

**131. Dukhaugen 1**

*Id 127733–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).*

**Surveyed:** 2013.
Description: Stone circle, outer diameter N–S: c. 5.4 m, EW: c. 4.8 m, inner diameter N–S: c. 2.4 m, EW: c. 3.1 m. Stones measuring 15x15x15–175x65x20 cm. Circular but with large stones in S, SW og E, whereof a one with “arrowhead shape” is the largest. From one of the large stones in the E there is a string of stones c. 180 cm long. Together with the nearby Dukhaugen 2, and potentially also Dukhaugen 3, this structure could possibly be related to navigation into the shallow bay through a very narrow strait, either as aimpoints in themselves or as foundations for a higher wood construction (cf. Westerdahl 2011). Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: On bedrock on a small hill close to a shallow bay. Both this and Dukhaugen 2 are situated on the NW side of and above a bog area that presumably has been part of the bay in fairly recent past.

Masl: 10 m.

Cultural environment: Close to Dukhaugen 2 and 3. There is a standing boathouse in this shallow bay, but older settlement traces mainly found in another bay further W.

Informants and traditions: A local woman has recounted that her mother used to be afraid to stay in the area with the stone circles after dark.

Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2014

132. Dukhaugen 2

Id 127733–2: Offering (Circular offering site).


Description: Stones scattered on bedrock overgrown with heather, Outer diameter N–S: c. 5.1 m, E–W: c. 4.3 m, inner diameter N–S: 2.05 m, E–W: c. 2.1 m. Single layer of rocks measuring 35x30x20–25x15x10 cm. Some stones inside the outer delineation. Can resemble messy spiral shape but if so the stones would be quite disarranged. Otherwise not many rocks around in the immediate terrain. Sea mark?

See also Dukhaugen 1. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: See Dukhaugen 1.

Masl: 9 m.

Cultural environment: See Dukhaugen 1.

Informants and traditions: See Dukhaugen 1.

Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2014.

133. Dukhaugen 3

Id 127733–3: Offering (Circular offering site).


Description: Collection of rocks resembling a cairn structure with rocks measuring c. 30x20x15–60x40x20 cm. Outer diameter N–S: c. 7 m, E–W: c. 7 m. Not really a
circular wall, so no inner diameter. A pointy slab has recently been raised in the middle of the cairn (lichen only on one side and photos taken a year back or so shows it was not erected at the time). The raise stone measures 130x60x20 cm. The rock underneath it (supporting it) measures 70x60x35 cm. There is also a larger boulder in the outer part of the structures in the SE. This could very well be a grave cairn, or potentially also a sea mark, as suggested for the two other structures in the area, see Dukhaugen 1. Reuse of grave cairns as sea marks is not unusual (cf. Westerdahl 2011). Type 3

Excavation and alterations: A large slab has recently been moved and raised in the middle of the structure

Finds: None known

Dating: Uncertain

Location and terrain: See Dukhaugen 1. Dukhaugen 3 is however situated on bedrock on the other and SE side of the small boggy valley and thus separated from the two other sites.

Masl: 7 m

Cultural environment: See Dukhaugen 1

Informants and traditions: See Dukhaugen 1

Sources: Askeladden; Spangen 2014

Bodø municipality

134. Brattskaret 1

Id 97045–1: Offering (Circular offering site).

Surveyed: No.

Description: “Offering stone with various traces of activity. The rock itself is c. 15 m high and has a beacon on the top. Circular offering site in front of a shelter on the S side of the rock in shape of a semicircular wall. Some of it is recently built, but parts are older. It is 0.5 m high and c. 4 m long. The shelter is 6–7 m deep and the opening is c. 2.5 m high. Lots of marrowsplit bones and antlers in cracks and cavet-ies inside the shelter. Previous finds of clay pipes and remains of skis here.” This site may well have had a ritual meaning, possibly as a grave, though no human skeleton parts have been identified. Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: It seems to have been used and rebuilt over time and undergone several investigations.

Finds: Split bones and antlers, clay pipe and ski remains. Two pieces of skis were found above the shelter.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Not noted.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: Another stone circle nearby, see Brattskaret 2, as well as a bone cache of marrowsplit bones.

Informants and traditions: See Brattskaret 2.
Sources: Askeladden.

135. Brattskaret 2
Id 97045–2: Steinring (Stone circle).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle under a protruding rockface above the large rock, measuring 1.9 x 1.6 m. Informants say this has been used for shelter and accommodation, even if it is more exposed to weather than the first. The shelter may have been used for accommodation, but it may be a circular offering site and have a connection with [the other stone wall].” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: Finds have been made in relation to this structure, suggesting investigations.
Finds: See Brattskaret 1.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: See Brattskaret 1.
Sources: Askeladden.

Leirfjord municipality

136. Finnkona
Id 144767–1: Offersted (Offering site).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Sami offering site/stone on det highest punktet in the N end of the island where there is a large grav cairn from merovingian time with a plundering cavity in the middle (cf. conservator Lund who visited Finnkona in the 1950s). In the N end of the cairn a new beacon is built. Some meters E this cairn is a large boulder c. 3 m long and 1.5 m high, which according to tradition is the Sami offering site. On the E side of this is a circular stone setting c. 2.5 m in diameter, and we know circular stone setting may be related to Sami offering sites.” Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: Local tradition about the offering stone.
Sources: Askeladden.
Rana municipality

137. Fisklausvatnet/Guelehtsjaevrie

*Id* 116707–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
*Surveyed:* No.
*Description:* Stone circle Rocks placed close together to form a circle. Type 2.
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.
*Finds:* None known.
* Dating:* Uncertain.
*Location and terrain:* E side of lake Fisklausvatnet. Open birch forest and grass vegetation.
*Masl:* Not noted.
*Cultural environment:* No other recorded monuments in the immediate vicinity, apart from two different *sieidi* sites 5–6 km further E and SE.
*Informants and traditions:* None known.
*Sources:* Askeladden.

138. Auranasa/Goabdesbákte

*Id:* None.
*Surveyed:* No.
*Description:* Mountain with a remarkable peak that looks like an eagle’s beak, hence the Norwegian name Auranasa (“Eagle’s Nose”). However, in Sami the mountain is called Goabdesbákte; “Drum Mountain”. In 1870 there was still a sort of fireplace or altar made from several stones put on top of each other in a circular shape. Type 2.
*Excavation and alterations:* None known.
*Finds:* Reports on bones and antlers in the past.
* Dating:* Uncertain.
*Location and terrain:* Not noted.
*Masl:* Not noted.
*Cultural environment:* The reports include mention of several old graves along the river running on the W side of the mountain.
*Informants and traditions:* Local Mo i Rana man reported in 1911 that his father (b. 1774) had said there was a big annual offering ceremony on the mountain and that the *noaidi* educated the Swedish Sami there. In 1942 a Swedish Sami woman said there used to be lots of bones and antlers there, and that an older man had told her the old people used to go there to die. However, when she had visited the site, the bones were overgrown and not visible at all.
*Sources:* Hallström 1924: 902; Manker 1957: 222, no. 343.

Hattfjelldal municipality

139. Glasneset

*Id:* None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: “One circular offering site on Glasneset W on the island and one on Reinsømneset somewhat further S on Røsvatnholmen. Recorded by Harald Egenes Lund sometime between 1956 and 1959.” The site is not further described, but it seems unlikely that type 1 structures should be recorded here. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Lorås 1994.

140. Reinsømneset

Id: None.
Surveyed: No.
Description: See Glasneset.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Lorås 1994.

Saltdal municipality

141. Bjellåvatn

Id: None.
Description: Stone structure 1 m high and 4–5 m in diameter. No “idol” and no signs of the old offerings. Highly uncertain, but if the remains I have had reports on from locals really is this site, I would define it as type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Hagemann says this site is situated S of Bjellåvatn. In a later report this is assumed to be S of North Bjellåvatm, which I surveyed in 2013 without finding the site. Local information I have received after the survey in 2013 finds the terrain description to be more like South Bjellåvatn (pers. comm. G. H. Sivertsen and M. Hüttepohl 1 Feb 2016).
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: According to Hagemann, the Sami in the area camped right by the old offering site in the 19th century.
Informants and traditions: I have had reports on a stone setting by South Bjellåvatn that could be the structure in question (M. Hüttepohl 1 Feb 2016), but if so it is very deteriorated and altered.
Sources: Hagemann 1889; Arntzen 1987; Spangen 2014.

Nord–Trøndelag

Vikna municipality

142. Ramstadlandet 1
Id 18337–1: Steiring (stone circle).
Description: “Almost circular stone structure, marked and easily visible in the terrain. Oriented ENE–WSV. Built from medium sized rocks. In the S of the structure is a row of 4–6 stones, possibly S side of a slab cist, but no traces of other sides. No noticeable construction inside the structure. The structure is regular apart from a c. 1 m stretch on the E side. Overgrown with moss, heather and some grass. Measurements: diameter c. 3.5 m, height 0.2 – 0.5 m.” During survey in 2011 a structure was recorded as a fairly visible stone circle with diameter N–S 4–5 m, made from one layer of stones, sometimes two rows beside each other and quite overgrown with heather and moss. Three large rocks were layed out in direction E–W inside the structure, though these did not appear as a cist. As the singular structures in this locality did not have individual coordinates, it is difficult to know if these are description of the same structures. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Several stone circles on a rockface close by the sea in a previous bay with a small bog in the NW and waterlogged terrain in SSE and SV.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Several stone circles within an area of c. 1 ha. Only three were refound in 2011, but some cairns were noted too.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005 (though with a different Id: 39375).

143. Ramstadlandet 2
Id 18337–2: Steinring (stone circle).
**Description:** “On a small elevation in the terrain 32 m WSW of Ramstadlandet 1: Oval stone circle, marked and easily visible, oriented ENE–WSV. Built from small to medium rocks, but more irregular and scattered than Ramstadlandet 1. No noticeable construction inside the structure. Overgrown with lichen, moss, heather and some grass. Measurements: diameter 5.5 m (N–S), 9.5 m (E–W).” In 2011 a structure was recorded c. 40 m S of Ramstadlandet 1. It was very overgrown and it was difficult to determine which of the rocks scattered around was part of the structure and not. Its assumed this is the same as the structure described in Askeladden. Type 2.

**Excavation and alterations:** None known.

**Finds:** None known.

**Dating:** Uncertain.

**Location and terrain:** See Ramstadlandet 1.

**Masl:** Not noted.

**Cultural environment:** See Ramstadlandet 1.

**Informants and traditions:** None.

**Sources:** Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005 (though with a different Id: 39375).

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**144. Ramstadlandet 3**

*Id 18337–3: Steinring (stone circle)*

**Surveyed:** 2011

**Description:** “Closer to the sea on an elevation in the terrain 64 steps WSW of Ramstadlandet 2: Oval stone circle less visible in the terrain and less marked. Oriented NE–SW. Collection of small to medium sized rocks. The structure has several openings. Most coherent in the NW, very incoherent in the SE. Some rocks situated inside the structure in the W. No intrusions made by humans. Overgrown with lichen, moss, heather, some grass and two small deciduous trees. Measurements: length 6,5 m, width 5,3 m.” Type 2

**Excavation and alterations:** None known

**Finds:** None known

**Dating:** Uncertain

**Location and terrain:** See Ramstadlandet 1

**Masl:** Not noted

**Cultural environment:** See Ramstadlandet 1

**Informants and traditions:** None

**Sources:** Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005 (though with a different Id: 39375).

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**145. Ramstadlandet 4**

*Id 18337–4: Steinring (stone circle)*

**Surveyed:** 2011

**Description:** C. 35 m W of Ramstadlandet 2 on a rockface close to the boggy terrain: similar stone circle, circular–oval, oriented E–W. This stone circle is different from the others in that it consists of small cairns instead of rocks that collectively form the ring shape. Each of the cairns are circular or oval and measure c. 1 – 1.5 m in diameter eller in biggest length. The distance between the cairns is 0.4 – 1.2 m.
The whole complex measures c. 3.5 x 4 m. "In 2011 it was not possible to locate the same pattern of cairn, though several scattered cairns were recorded in the area. Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: See Ramstadlandet 1.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: See Ramstadlandet 1.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005 (though with a different Id: 39375).

146. Ramstadlandet 5

Id: None.


Description: Stone circle similar in shape and size to the other structures in the area. Uncertain which structure this would be, but during surveys in 2011 a small possible stone oval with a visible stone in the middle was recorded some 60 m E of Ramstadlandet 2, on a rockface SW of the bog. A row of five stones in the W is the most visible part, it was otherwise overgrown with heather and moss, but it appeared oval, measurements, ca. 1.5x2.5 m. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: See Ramstadlandet 1.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: See Ramstadlandet 1.

Informants and traditions: None.

Sources: Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005 (though with a different Id: 39375).

147. Kjønnsøyhoven

Id 38375–1: Gravrøys (Grave cairn).


Description: " Cairn with smaller cairns in a circle around it. The main cairn is built from small to medium rocks and is clearly visible in the terrain. The middle area is cleared rocks have probably been removed, possibly to make a beacon in the NE part of it. Overgrown of moss and heather. Measurements: diameter c. 4 m, height c. 0.3 m (beacon c. 0.6 m). In different distance from the cairn are smaller cairns made from 5 to 20 rocks. These have a diameter of c. 2.5 m. There are at least 26 of them and they seem to form a certain pattern. They are placed concentrically around the mid–cairn at a distance of 5 – 40 m." Type 3.

Excavation and alterations: None known.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the highest point of the mountain.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005.

148. Sylten
Id 28382–1: Steinring (stone circle).
Surveyed: No.
Description: “Stone circle, removed by gravel quarrying for road construction during WWII. Number of rocks not remembered, but the size was manageable. The rocks were overgrown with turf, and the diameter of the circle was c. 3 m.” Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Not noted.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: Not noted.
Informants and traditions: None known.
Sources: Askeladden; Dunfjeld–Aagård 2005.

Namsos municipality

149. Rapfjellet
Id 120244–1: Offerring (Circular offering site).
Description: “Stones in a semicircle with one rock more into the middle. An opening towards the N is c. 2m. The diameter of the circle is c. 3 m. There is c. 1 m between the central rock and the semicircle of rocks… This may be moved secondarily and may previously have been lying in the opening of the circle, which would have made the shape perfect. There are many circles like this along the coast of Namdal, i.a. in Vikna. I seem to remember that Vorren has written about similar circles in Finnmark, and that they are supposed to be Sami offering sites. My personal opinion is that this is an offering site to Tjaetsålma (the water god). Han had significance for for instance fishing.” Outer diameter N–S: 775 cm, E–W: 750, inner diameter 400 cm, E–W 225 cm. During the survey in 2011 it became this was deemed a natural formation due to the size of the stones and the irregular shape. Type 3.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: On the plateau of mountain Rapfjellet with views of the sea in NW and E. Very difficult to access on foot due to the rugged and steep terrain around the plateau.
**Masl:** 307 m.

*Cultural environment:* No other recorded structures.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Askeladden.

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**Sør–Trøndelag county**

**Rennebu municipality**

**150. Svartdalstjønna**

*Id 141090–1: Offersted (offering site).*

*Surveyed:* 2011.

*Description:* Square but uneven stone wall. The S side is c. 2 m with 2–3 layers of rocks in varying sizes and c. 30 cm high. The NW side is c. 1.8 m long and up to c. 50 cm high. Large rock in the NW corner. A small hearth has been built recently in the SW corner. This has actually not been compared with circular offering sites until a report in 2013 labelled it so. This may be a misreading of the label in Askeladden, but it still demonstrates the active association with this phenomenon. Type 3.

*Excavation and alterations:* Comparison between photos and descriptions by investigators from the 1970s until today indicate that the structure has been substantially altered. It was investigated and samples were taken for dating in 1973, while it was allegedly also investigated in the mid–1990s.

*Finds:* Animal bones from mammals, whereof possibly sheep/goat and some larger animal, as well as haddock.

*Dating:* Dating of samples in 1973 indicated age younger than 250 BP (160±100), as did new datings in 2011 of mammal to 146±30 (Ua42749) and a not specified sample to 54±30 (Ua 43260).

*Location and terrain:* In the Nerskogen area, slightly sloping hillside in mountain birch forest.

*Masl:* 795 m.

*Cultural environment:* Another assumed ritual site closeby. Today a favoured area for cabins.

*Informants and traditions:* In the mid–20th century, a local historian noted that there were rumours about this being a Sami offering site and that on asking an older Sami man he got the answer: “It could be one thing or another”. After publishing this information, it has been repeated in other local historical work and in reports from archaeologists and other investigating the area.

*Sources:* Askeladden; Rokkones 2006[1945]; Odner 1973; Vik, Flå, and Foss 2000; Hellqvist 2013; Spangen 2013b.
Holtålen municipality

151. Gaulhøgdå

*Id* 130549–1: Offersted (offering site).

*Surveyed:* No.

*Description:* “Sjiele–sijjie (offering site), circular, 4 m in diameter, consisting of a circle of rocks, 0.1–0.5 m large. SW of the middle is a pit, almost square, 1.5x1.5m (WNW–ØSØ) and 0.6 m deep. Overgrown with moss, lichen, dwarf birch and crowberries. Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* On a NW stretching moraine over the tree limit.

*Masl:* Not noted.

*Cultural environment:* Not noted.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Askeladden.

Midtre Gauldal municipality

152. Forollsjøen 1

*Id:* None.

*Surveyed:* No.

*Description:* Rectangular stone setting steinsetting in sloping terrain, 9x6 m, no stone wall in the S. Natural mound in the middle up to 70 cm high. A more recent survey has concluded there are no visible signs to confirm the place as an offering site (Steinbakken n.d.:110–111). Type 3.

*Excavation and alterations:* Small excavation in the NE part of the mound in 1975. Concluded the mound is natural. Confirmed by investigation in 1981, when three phosphate spot test samples were taken here and at Forollsjøen 2. These showed somewhat different results (see Forollsjøen 2).

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* In mountain area on a small promontory in the N of lake Forollsjøen.

*Masl:* Not noted.

*Cultural environment:* Large rock 5 m in vest that also is also interpreted as an offering site.

*Informants and traditions:* There has been a local tradition about Sami making offerings by Forolsjøen, but the story has not been directly related to this structure.

*Sources:* Stenvik 1983; Steinbakken n.d.
153. Forollsjøen 2

*Id:* None.

*Surveyed:* No.

*Description:* Rectangular stone setting around split boulder. Overgrown in 1981, not possible to discern during a survey in 2010. Type 3.

*Excavation and alterations:* Spot test phosphate sample taken below the rock showed higher values than another sample from the site. As only three samples were taken at this locality altogether, the results have questionable value.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* See Forollsjøen 1.

*Masl:* Not noted.

*Cultural environment:* See Forollsjøen 1.

*Informants and traditions:* See Forollsjøen 1.

*Sources:* Stenvik 1983; Steinbakken n.d.

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Røros municipality

154. Orvsjøen

*Id 130517–1:* Offersted (offering site).

*Surveyed:* 2010.

*Description:* “Sjiele–sijjie (offering site), oval, 2.5 x 2 m (NE–SW), consisting of a single row of 0.2–0.3 m stones, with an opening of 0.8 m in SE (entrance?). Overgrown by moss, grass and heather. Diameter 210–200 m.” Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* On moraine with mountain birch forest, on lake Orvsjøen.

*Masl:* Not noted.

*Cultural environment:* Several goahti house grounds in the area.

*Informants and traditions:* Local tradition holds that the famous local author Johan Falkberget had said there used to be a Sami offering site on the headland Tullodden, which you can see from this site.

*Sources:* Askeladden; Fjellheim 1999: 192.
Møre and Romsdal

Surnadal municipality

155. Kaarvatn

*Id* 140329–1: Offerring (Circular offering site)

*Surveyed:* No

*Description:* Stone circle, c. 2 m in diameter consisting of 9 visible stones 0.3–0.6 m wide and 0.1–0.3 m high. Some rocks are almost entirely covered in turf. In the N part of the circle is an opening of c. 1.4 m. Type 2.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* Not noted.

*Masl:* Not noted.

*Cultural environment:* Not noted.

*Informants and traditions:* None.

*Sources:* Askeladden.

Oppland

Sel municipality

156. Randen

*Id* 96954–1: Gravroys (grave cairn).

*Surveyed:* 2010.

*Description:* Recorded as grave cairn but suggested by archaeologists to resemble Sami circular offering site. Two–three layers of stones are placed in what seems to be an almost spiral shape on the outskirts of the structure, as one end seem to lie around the outside of the cairn. However, there is a massive dug–out hole in the middle of the structure, and it is quite difficult to discern its original shape. In the S part there are lots of stones that are thrown out there. In the hole, two large stone slabs are left standing upright. Type 3.

*Excavation and alterations:* None known.

*Finds:* None known.

*Dating:* Uncertain.

*Location and terrain:* On a moraine terrace.

*Masl:* 1167 m.

*Cultural environment:* Recorded pitfall traps and so–called “mountain graves” in the area.
Informants and traditions: A local story says a man who dug here never had to work again.
Sources: Askeladden; Gjerde 2016.

Hedmark county

Tolga municipality

157. Klettdalen
Id 144032–1: Steinring (stone circle).
Description: Stone circle, 4.78 m in diameter N–S. Built from 1–2 rows of stones c. 15 cm high to the E and 40 c. in the W. Both slabs and rocks have been used, relatively large from 40x60 cm to c. 30 cm in diameter. Probing showed thin layers of humus in some areas. In the middle there is a small “chamber” built from stones and covered with slab. Not similar to typical hearth shape. The stone circle itself is difficult to judge too, and not typical for either tent circle, grave or other alternatives that were discussed. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: It is known that Edvard and Sonja Barth excavated the structure at some point, but it is unclear what exactly they did or found.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: In high mountain, terrain covered in reindeer moss, heather and dwarf birch. A small lake nearby, but apparently only appears after heavy rain.
Masl: Not noted.
Cultural environment: No other cultural heritage recorded in the immediate vicinity.
Informants and traditions: None.
Sources: Bergstøl 2008a, Gjerde 2016.

Trysil municipality

158. Lunkvassberget
Id 76708–1: Steinring (Stone circle).
Description: Stone circle around a flat elevated round earth area. The rocks are placed close together in one layer. No vegetation. The rocks measure 0.2–0.5m and the total structure is 3.5 m in diameter. This may have been a grave mound that is heavily worn by the frequent use of the site by hikers and others, but the datings are not consistent with a pre–Christian Norse grave. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: Investigated by Hedmark county in 2011 through a minor trench, but this gave few results, as the layers found were quite confusing and did not give any further idea about construction and use.


Dating: The excavation in 2011 yielded some charcoal samples that were dated to the Middle Ages, younger than AD 1220, and modern times.

Location and terrain: On the brink of a precipice on mountain Lunkvassberget, with view of mountain Trysilfjellet.

Masl: Not noted.

Cultural environment: One m SE for stone circle is large boulder, resting on three smaller stones. There are many lines and unevennesses in the rock surface and in the right light it appears as a face. The site is a favoured hiking destination and features benches, bonfire, signs with information and other recent remains.

Informants and traditions: The rock and the site in general is well-known among locals.

Sources: Askeladden; Gjerde 2016; Holseng forthcoming.

Telemark county

Vinje municipality

159. Hermodholstjønn

Id: None.
Surveyed: 2015.
Description: Stone circle with outer diameter N–S: 11.2 m, E–W: 11.8 m, inner diameter N–S: 6.8 m, E–W: 6.3 m. The W end consists of a large boulder. Inner height: 20–110 cm, outer height: 15–200 cm (including boulders). The structure resembles some type 1 structures, but the walls seem less meticulous. Type 2.

Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: None known.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Situated in very sloping terrain in a hillside above a bog area with view of the lake Hermodholstjønn. High mountain area with heather and grass.
Masl: 1120 m.
Cultural environment: The stone circle is just above the route of an old mountain crossing which was part of the pilgrim road system. This route was quicker than an alternative further down, but it was too dangerous to use in bad weather. The lake name Hermodholstjønn relates to a man Hermod who was said to have sought shelter in a cave nearby (No.: hule). The area has been used as summer pastures for goats.
Informants and traditions: Local historian Ragnvald Christensen.
Sources: R. Christensen, own field notes.

160. Steinvollen

Id: None.
Surveyed: 2015.
Description: Large, easily visible stone circle built in a rock accumulation around a natural hollow where a cairn has been built. The cairn measures 2 m in diameter, is up to 50 cm high and has an uneven shape. Made from rocks measuring c. 50x50x30 cm. The stone circle has outer diameter N–S: 650 cm, E–W: 660 cm, inner diameter N–S: 440 cm, E–W: 390 cm (somewhat eroded in the W). Inner height: 40–80 cm, outer height: 35–85 cm. Built from stones measuring 15x15x30–50x50x60 cm. Probing gave no traces of charcoal. Very rocky ground. Somewhat eroded by path in the SSW and in the middle. Many formal similarities with type 1 structures, but not the same qualitative impression, especially concerning the build of the walls. Could be related to the use of the area for pastures, or the glass and metal finds may indicate some sort of storage function, possibly for milk products. Type 2.
Excavation and alterations: None known.
Finds: Broken glass and a metal lid were observed under some eroded rocks in the W, maybe buried there to shield animals from harm.
Dating: Uncertain.
Location and terrain: Mountain terrain with grass, heather and ferns. Situated in sloping terrain next to a small stream, crossing point shows through sheep path. Boggy pastures below the place, most likely used for pastures for the goats mentioned under Hermodsholtjønn.
Masl: 1010 m.
Cultural environment: Very close to the old mountain farm here. Four cairns in the surrounding terrain, possibly clearance cairns. During the 2015 survey two other stone circles or larger structures were noted in the same area. One was situated higher up the hillside and was a clearly visible structure in steeply sloping terrain with grass, heather and some juniper. Outer diameter N–S: 600 cm, E–W: 670 cm, inner diameter N–S: 400 cm, E–W: 370 cm. Outer height 35–100 cm, inner height: 0–90 cm. The wall was most defined in the E, while a stretch in the SSE was very low and could resemble an entrance. Stones measuring 20x30x35 cm, though one boulder measured 65x75x140 cm. It surrounded a cairn measuring N–S: 170 cm, E–W: 220 cm, which consisted of one large boulder and some smaller, but also some loose rocks. Uncertain if this was a natural feature. Probing showed no charcoal. Another structure was found further down and closer to Steinvollen. This consisted of a rectangular build with solid walls with sloping built up against a large boulder on the SW side of this. Time did not allow for further measurements etc. These two interesting structures are not included in this catalogue as separate entries because they have not been specifically suggested to be circular offering sites or anything similar.
Informants and traditions: Local historian Ragnvald Christensen thought the stone structures in the area could be related to hay storage or similar.
Porsgrunn municipality

161. Piksdalen

Id 218202–1: Mur (stone wall).

Surveyed: 2015.

Description: “Circular stone wall consisting of carved blocks and boulders. It has a diameter of c. 7.5–8 m. The wall is c. 1–0.5 m wide. The height is 40–100 cm. There is an opening in the E of c. 1.2 m. Parts of the wall is collapsed in SW and NE. In the middle of the structure there is a large boulder with a flat topp c. 1.2 m high, 2 m N–S, 1 m E–W. Some larger rocks are spread around inside the circle. Between the stone wall in the W and the large block in the middle there is a flat slab that has been broken in two, c. 70 cm long, 40 cm at the widest and c. 15 cm thick.” Not refound during survey in 2015, but found by the county archaeologists later that year. Type 2

Excavation and alterations: The structure has probably changed over the years and a row of rocks in the circular wall appears to have been added quite recently.

Finds: None known.

Dating: Uncertain.

Location and terrain: Hilly forest area.

Masl: 215 m.

Cultural environment: About 10 m E of the structure there is a recent bonfire, possibly made with rocks from the wall.

Informants and traditions: The local name for the structure is “Munkekjerka”, meaning “the Monks’ Church”. It has been perceived as a medieval church or altar, though local historian Harald Hals suggests it was rather a shelter or temporary accommodation for travellers. Local historian Frank Refsdal associates it with the circular offering sites in northern Norway.

Sources: Askeladden; Hals 1968; Refsdal 2007: 122.
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Munch, Jens Storm


Munch, Jens Storm and Gerd Stamsø Munch

Mundal, Else


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Salmi, Anna–Kaisa and Sirpa Niinimäki
Saloranta, Anne–Mari

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Yates, Timothy

Ytreberg, Nils A.

Zachrisson, Inger


Zachrisson, Inger (ed.)

Zachrisson, Inger and Elisabeth Iregren

Zachrisson, Torun

Zembylas, Michalinos

Ziegler, Jacob

Zimmerman, Larry J.

Appendix

Summary of bone finds in type 1 structures, both collected and merely mentioned in the sources. Abbreviations: JS – museum no. in the osteological collection, Bergen museum, BM 2013 – transcript of analyses from Bergen museum, L – museum no. in the ethnographic collection, Tromsø museum, Ts. – museum no. in the archaeological collection, Tromsø museum, ØVA – Ørnulf Vorren’s private archive (bones without museum no. were not yet catalogued at the time of analysis), PC – personal communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cat. no.</th>
<th>Taxon (where determined)</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Bone</th>
<th>Bone part</th>
<th>Side</th>
<th>Museum no.</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>49</td>
<td>Aves, Melanitta fusca</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes) 1</td>
<td>Clavicula</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>BM 2013</td>
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<td>Rangifer tarandus</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes) 1</td>
<td>Calcaneum</td>
<td>Dx</td>
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<td>Aves, Rissa tridactyla</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes) 1</td>
<td>Coracoid</td>
<td>Dx</td>
<td></td>
<td>JS 0516/6438</td>
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<td>Aves, Rissa tridactyla</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes) 1</td>
<td>Humerus</td>
<td>Prox, Dia</td>
<td>Dx</td>
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<td>Aves, Anseriformes</td>
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<td>Coracoid</td>
<td>Dx</td>
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<td>II, Ac</td>
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<td>Rangifer tarandus</td>
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<td>Phalanx I</td>
<td>Dia, Dist</td>
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<td>Sheep</td>
<td>Fuglebergbukta (Mortensnes) l</td>
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<td>Rangifer tarandus</td>
<td>Aangsnes/ Geahčevainjárga</td>
<td>Longbone (‘leggebein’)</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>A part</td>
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<td>Vorren and Eriksen 1993</td>
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<td>Whale</td>
<td>Aangsnes/ Geahčevainjárga</td>
<td>Vertebræ</td>
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<td>Half a disk</td>
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<td>Vorren and Eriksen 1993</td>
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<td>Whale</td>
<td>Biekkanovaivi</td>
<td>Scull</td>
<td>L919a</td>
<td>A part, found on big rock next to it</td>
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<td>Vorren 1955a, Vorren and Eriksen 1993</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<td>Biekkanovaivi</td>
<td>Scull</td>
<td>L919b</td>
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<td>Vulpes lagopus</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Femur</td>
<td>Proximal</td>
<td>Right</td>
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<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
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<td>Complete</td>
<td>Right</td>
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<td>Canidae</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Scapula</td>
<td>Proximal</td>
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<td>Canidae</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Cervical vertebrae</td>
<td>Complete</td>
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<td>Rangifer tarandus</td>
<td>Geaimmejávri</td>
<td>Lumbar vertebrae</td>
<td>Dorsal</td>
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<td>Ts 13804–9</td>
<td>Vertebral arch</td>
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<td>PC J. Karlsson</td>
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<td>Gálggojávri</td>
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<td>Ts 13805–2</td>
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<td>Proximal phalanx</td>
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<td>Radius</td>
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<td>Right</td>
<td>Ts 13805–3</td>
<td>Shaft freshly broken</td>
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<td>Salmi 2013b</td>
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Series editor: Anders Andrén

13. Withdrawn.
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