

Vibeke Dalberg

NAME AND PLACE

**Ten essays on the dynamics
of place-names**

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The role of toponymic analogy in the reshaping of place-names*

The effect of analogy with existing place-name material is not only seen in the formation of new place-names. Place-names that are already in use can influence each other, too. When certain acoustic conditions are fulfilled, it is not seldom that place-names are reshaped in such a way that their appearance comes to correspond wholly or partly with place-names that are of a different origin.

With my starting point in the reshaped place-name, that is in the result of the reshaping, I aim to discuss some factors which in my opinion indicate that toponymic analogy has been at work. Problems that concern the questions as to where and how reshaping can take place and which name-users seem particularly likely to be involved will only be touched upon briefly in this context.

As examples are selected names, firstly where reshaping can be assumed to have taken place with reasonable certainty and secondly where the reshaped form has made sufficient impact to gain a footing as an orthographic standard form. Although the names have generally been transmitted in several older forms that document their non-reshaped form, the process will only be illustrated by one citation from before the reshaping and one showing the result.

Generally, only parts of the place-name are reshaped. If one wishes to employ the terms first and second elements for these parts, it is necessary to note that it is not a matter of a first and second element in the etymological sense. At the moment of reshaping the place-name is a proper noun and if it can be understood as being segmented, this is merely how the name-users perceive the elemental structure of the name. Even though the elements might be identical

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with the etymological elements, they are in principle of a different nature. It is the name-user's synchronic perception of the structure of the place-name that underlies the reshaping. This is demonstrated when the process involves a change in the etymological elemental structure of the name.

A displacement of the syllable-boundary has taken place in the name of the North Sjælland settlement *Ålsgårde* (Hellebæk p., Lynge-Kronborg h.). From an etymological point of view the generic of the name is the noun *skår* 'cut, breach', as can be seen for example in LR 1582–1583 Alskaar (DS II: 14–15). In the reshaped form, *Ålsgård*, which is found, for example, in Mandt 1613 Aalsgaardtt, the *-s-* in *skår* is assumed to belong to the specific, i.e. *Åls-*, while the rest of the word is understood as the noun *gård* and written as this.

In the West Jutlandic *Vedersø* (p., Hind h.), the syllable boundary has been displaced in the opposite direction. The name was originally a compound of the personal name *Withar* in the genitive and the noun *høj* 'mound', as appears from the form RO c. 1325 withershøgh (DS XVII: 466–67). With reshaping to *-sø*, represented in, for example, LR 1609 Wedersjøe, *-s-* from the specific has been interpreted as a part of the generic *-sø*.

It can also happen that place-names that were not created as compounds are reshaped to look as though they are compounds. An example is the place-name *Nisted* (Lumby p., Lunde h.), the name of some farms that in Ldh c. 1510 is written as Nystæ. Originally the name was a simplex **Nisti* (< ODan **nisti* 'hook, corner', cf. DS XIV: 162). In its reshaped form *Nisted*, for example Mandt 1610 Nystedt, it looks as though it is a compound in the common generic *-sted*. *Holland*, which was the name of an inn north of Copenhagen (Kongens Lyngby p., Sokkelund h., enters into the present *Hollandsvej*), was originally an imperative name *Hold-an* 'rein in'. Here the verbal form + adverb is reshaped so that the name looks like a compound in *-land* corresponding to *Holland* in the Netherlands (Nyrop 1882: 49), differently Zinglensen 1979: 97).

Incidentally, it should be made clear that this information about the etymological form of the names is mentioned here because it is relevant for the description of the form that has been affected by

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the reshaping, which has often undergone a sound development. In the original formation we have the opportunity to observe the elements that formed the basis for the subsequent reshaping. For the determination of the actual reshaping process, however, the etymologies of the names are without relevance.

The role of toponymic analogy is difficult to isolate in connection with the reshaping of the *first part* of the place-name – using a perhaps less concise but rather more adequate term – although it is striking that the result of the reshaping often corresponds to familiar place-name elements such as, e.g. *Sø-* ‘lake’ and *Lund-* ‘grove’. The explanation as to why it is more difficult to identify the patterns lying behind the reshaping of the first part of the place-name than the second part is probably to be sought in a pattern-forming place-name lexicon. When place-names are being coined, there are naturally many more options available as the specific in a compound name than as a generic. This greater variation in the available place-name lexicon is reflected in the reshapings, which show a correspondingly wider dispersal.

A particular type of reshaping of the first part of a place-name can, however, be ascribed to toponymic analogy with reasonable certainty. This is reshaping to familiar personal names. In appellative compounds personal names as the first element are rare, while toponyms containing personal names are of frequent occurrence. To cut a long story short, the background for this difference is that appellative compounds rarely require a specific that specifies the generic by referring to a uniquely occurring object, as a personal name does. Such a limited field of reference can rarely be relevant with words such as appellatives that have to refer to categories of objects, while words like proper nouns on the contrary point out individualities.

There are examples of reshaping to both masculine names and feminine names. The latter are often contained in genitive forms without *-s* (cf. Dalberg 1986: 162). We find this reflected, for example, in the East Jutlandic *Bodilmølle* (Hørning p., Hjelmslev h.), where the reshaped form corresponding to the feminine personal name *Bodil* is documented in DATl IV: (1768) 195 Bodil=Mølle. In

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older sources such as KancBrevb 8/7 1586 the locality is referred to as Buol Mølle, and it is perhaps the noun *bol* ‘small-holding’ that enters into the etymological specific (DS XII: 102). The *-s-less* form is also found in the West Jutlandic *Gertrudbæk* (< Dan *bæk* ‘brook’; Tvis p., Hammerum h.), which displays reshaping to the feminine personal name *Gertrud*. An earlier form of the name is KrSk 3/1 1547 Giettrup beck. This was originally a watercourse-name, probably coined with a place-name *Gettrup* as its specific (DS XVII: 258). Later it became the name of a farm and is recorded in its reshaped form in, for example, VibLandstSkPanteb 18/2 1633 Giertrudbek.

The fact that *Gertrudbæk* refers to a farm can hardly be without relevance for the reshaping. When the name-bearer belongs to a category of localities whose members often bear names compounded with personal names, this is bound to be conducive to reshaping. In the case of manor-house names personal names are not rare as specifics. The East Jutlandic *Haraldskær* (< Dan *kær* ‘pond, marsh’; Skibet p., Tørrild h.) has since 1844 been known in this form, which shows agreement with the genitive of the masculine personal name *Harald*. The fact that the name was borne by a manor-house at the time of its reshaping has undoubtedly contributed to the reshaping of the original *Harritzkier*, which also occurs in M 1668. The etymological specific of the name would seem to have been a place-name (DS VIII: 89–90).

Congruity between the name-type resulting from reshaping and the category of the denotatum can also be illustrated by one of the rare examples of a whole place-name’s being subjected to reshaping. The Funen farm-name *Vilhelmsgave* (Øster Hæsinge p., Sallinge h.) is recorded in, for example, M 1688 and DAtl III (1767) 516 as *Willeholms Gab*, respectively *Wilholmsgab*. From the beginning it was a nature-name, a compound of yet another nature-name, **Villeholm*, and the noun *gab* ‘gap’. In its later function as a farm-name it becomes reshaped to *Vilhelmsgave*, as can also be seen in M 1844. The personal name as a specific is a very characteristic feature of names in *-gave* ‘gift’, where they refer either to the person who presents the locality as a gift, for example *Frederik* in *Frederiksgave* (Sønderby p., Båg h.) in Fyn, or to the recipient of the gift, as the

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feminine name *Edele (Ulfeldt)* in *Edelgave* (Smørum p. and h.) in Sjælland (DS XIV: 326, Jørgensen 1981: 31). The names in *-gave* are usually borne by farms. With the reshaping of *-gab* to *-gave* and *Vil(le)holms-* to *Vilhelms-*, corresponding to the genitive of the masculine name *Vilhelm*, *Vil(le)holmsgab* has been adapted to form a type of name suitable for the nature of the locality.

With the preceding example I have already opened up the next question, which concerns the place-names whose last part has been subjected to reshaping. In the material of approximately 350 examples selected as a basis for my paper, this is the most numerous group.

The influence of toponymic analogy can first be noted in the instances where reshaping has resulted in entities that only have *equivalents in the onomastic lexicon*. The top-scorer here is undoubtedly reshaping to *-lev*,¹ and as might be expected, it always involves the names of settlements. Acoustic conditions are often conducive for reshaping to *-lev*, as many generics of other origins can develop a form that is close to the local pronunciation of *-lev*. This is in all likelihood the background for the following reshapings.

The East Jutlandic *Randlev* (p., Hads h.), which in 7/4 1488 has the form *Randløff*, is a reshaping of a name which in *De Vita et Miraculis Beati Nicolai Arusiensis c. 1350* (transcript by Bartholin, *Vitae Sanctorum Danorum* 402) is spelt *Ranlog*. The etymological generic of the name is perhaps the ODan noun *lōgh* or *lōgh* ‘water’ (DS XII: 74, DSÅ V: 493).

The West Jutlandic *Bjørnslev* (Nørre Vium p., Bølling h.) occurs in M 1688 as *Biørsleff*. Older forms, e.g. KrSk 12/8 1585 *Biørsleie*, show that reshaping has taken place to *-lev* of a presumably original *-leie* ‘lair’ (DS XVII: 493).

In West Jutland we also find *Strellev* (p., Nørre Horne h.), whose name has this form in *-lev* in, for example, DAtl V (1769) 741 *Strelev*. We find the name in a more original state, *strelhøch*, in 14/11 1203 (1313, c. 1350) and from this form we see that the ety-

¹ *-lev* is an Iron-Age name element denoting ‘inheritance, what is left for somebody’.

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mological generic is the ODan noun *hōgh* ‘mound’ (DS XVII: 574–75). The final consonant in this word in the local dialect develops to [w] and the initial *h-* of the word is lost in its positions as the second element in a compound. In combination with the final *-l* of the first element [øw] has been interpreted to be a name in *-lev*.

In several cases it is the acoustic merging between a weakened form [-lə] of *-lev* and [lə] in other names that is the basis for the reshaping. In the name of the village of *Vejle* (p., Sallinge h.) in Fyn, 1351 (1476 *ÆDA* I 108) *Weteleue*, such a weakened form has been accepted into the orthographical norm. In most cases, however, the written form retains the written norm *-lev*, and this is the reason why we also find the following name examples reshaped to *-lev*, at least in the written language.

Haslev (p., Ringsted h.) in Sjælland is written *Hasløf* in *KancBrevb* 19/7 1560. Older forms, however, e.g. *RJb* 1370–1380 *Haslæ*, reveal that this is a case of reshaping of an originally simplex **Hasli*, a derivative of the tree-denoting term *hassel* ‘hazel’ (Jørgensen 1981: 48).

Gislev (p., Gudme h.) in Fyn has, as shown by many sources, e.g. 17/7 1489, an older form *Gislæ*. This is the basis for the reshaping to *-lev*, as recorded, for example, in *KancBrevb* 18/10 1577 *Gisløf*. From the etymological point of view the name is identical with the ODan noun **gīsæl* ‘stick, wand’ (DS XIII: 152).

The Sjælland village-name *Kastelev* (Sværdborg p., Hammer h.) is actually the noun *kastel* ‘castle’. In its ODan form with stress on the first syllable, *kastellæ*, it has been given the function of a place-name, cf. *Mandt* 1610 *Castele* (DS XVI: 177). In its reshaped form it appears, for example in *M* 1664, as *Casteløff*.

A phonetic merging of a similar nature must lie behind some reshapings to *-rød*. The development of the ODan noun *ruth* ‘clearing’ to *-rød* is a peculiarly dialect feature found in North Sjælland and *-rød* originally only belonged in names in North Sjælland. Sometimes *-rød* was weakened to [-rə], as can be seen in the old pronunciation of, for example, *Horserød*, [hørsərə] and *Brederød*, [breərə] (DS II: 14, 90). It must be such weakened forms that are the basis for the reshaping in *Hulerød*, also the name of a settlement in North Sjælland (Søborg p., Holbo h.). The name is found with

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many older forms revealing that *-rød* is unoriginal, e.g. KancBrevb 20/6 1551 Hullere. The reshaping to *-rød* (< ODan *ruth* ‘clearing’), which is documented in Jb 1660–1661 Hollerød, must have had *-re* as its starting-point, cf. the form cited from 1551. This is perhaps all that remains of an original *-øre* ‘gravelly beach’ (DS II: 52).

Since there are particularly many of these names in North Sjælland, the form in *-rød* acquires the characteristic of being the standard form and can thus give rise to analogical formations in other parts of the country (cf. Hald 1965: 162). Hellerød, M 1688 Hillerød, is thus the name of a village in North-West Jutland (Søndbjerg p., Refs h.). Even so, reshaping to *-rød* has taken place of a name form which in M 1664 is represented as Hillerøe. Perhaps the etymological generic is again *-øre* (Jørgensen 1982: 55). Close to the east coast of Jutland lies the island of *Alrø*. Also in this name several sources have the form *-rød*, for example LR 1545 paa alrødt (cf. DS XII: 92). In the island-name the reshaped form has not, however, been able to win acceptance as the written norm.

As a final example of reshaping to an entity that only has a toponymic equivalent, I shall mention the reshaping to *-strup* in the name of the now-lost West Jutlandic farm *Hestrup* (Heldum p., Skodborg h.), in MK 1817 written thus. The earlier form of the name was *Hættestrud*, as attested in older sources, for example Mandt 1614 Hettestruud. Originally it was probably a comparative name that was once borne by a locality with a shape like a *hættestrud*, i.e. ‘liripipe’ that was fashionable in the Middle Ages (DS XVII: 41–42). After reshaping, the name fits into the large flock of names in *-torp* ‘dependent settlement’ with specifics ending in *-s* that appear in the form *-strup*.

The next category of reshaped names showing evidence of toponymic analogy is characterised by the fact that the reshaped entities are *homonymous with living topographic appellatives whose meaning does not fit the denotata of the names*. The models here are the semantically secondary names that have been created as a term for one locality, e.g. a lake, and later metonymically transferred to another one, e.g. a settlement by the lake. If the name is formed from words that retain homonymy with living appellatives, their

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meaning will rarely be adequate for name-bearer number two. The etymological elements of the name obviously pertain to name-bearer number one. It is most frequently settlements that bear semantically secondary names, and correspondingly it is most often names of settlements that are reshaped with these as models.

Rudersdal north of Copenhagen (Søllerød p., Sokkelund h.) is now the name of a residential neighbourhood but was originally borne by the King's travelling stable that stood by the lost settlement *Rude*. The form in *-dal* 'valley' occurs for example in M 1844 *Rudersdals Kroe*. Older forms such as MB 1682 *Rude Stald*, however, reveal that reshaping has taken place of the etymological generic *-stald* 'stable' to *-s + -dal* (Jørgensen 1981: 97).

In South Sjælland we find *Vallø* (Valløby p., Bjæverskov h.), the name of a manor-house and formerly also of a village. The etymological generic is *-lev*, as can be seen from older forms, e.g. *Waleuæ* from 22/7 1346 (DS XVI: 45–46). As will be recalled, *-lev* could develop to [lə] and hence contribute to these names being reshaped to *-lev*. Here the [lə]-form itself has been affected by reshaping. The pronunciation shows that the name has been taken to be a compound with *-ø* 'island', corresponding to the orthographical form which, for example, is represented in M 1664 *Wallø*. For the name as a part of an epexegetic formation see Dalberg (1991: 68–69).

An example taken from Fyn is *Aborg* (Gamtofte p., Båg h.), the name of a village that was first recorded in this form in Mandt 1600. The older name forms, e.g. 20/11 1508 *Abordh*, show that the etymological generic is the ODan noun *barth* 'border, edge', for which the local pronunciation merges with *-borg* 'castle, fortification' (DS XIV: 286).

From the North Jutlandic area mention might be made of the village-name *Søndbjerg* (p., Refs H.), whose reshaped form is documented in 29/5 1512 *sønbergh*. The basis for the reshaping to *-berg*, later *-bjerg* 'hill', can be found in the form 24/2 1408 *Sunberk*. As can be seen from the even earlier form 12/12 1382 *Synbyrky*, the etymological generic is an ODan **birki* 'growth of birch-trees' (Jørgensen 1982: 123).

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Ilskov, a parish name in West Jutland (Hammerum h.), appears, for example, in VSKOrig 1792 in the form with *-skov* 'wood, forest'. Originally the name was compounded of the nouns *ild* 'fire' and *horn* 'horn', as can be seen, for example, from KancBrevb 1/1 1579 Ildtzhorn. The reshaping of *-s* from the etymological specific + *-horn* to *-skov* is yet another example showing that at the same time the syllable boundary has been displaced (cf. DS XVII: 292).

The East Jutlandic *Haslund* (p., Galten h.) was originally compounded with the ODan noun *hēm* 'home'. The basis for the reshaping to *-lund* 'grove', which is attested in Hb 1772, is partly a form *-um*, developed from *-hēm*, documented in many older and younger sources, including M 1688, partly the *-l* from the etymological specific, the noun *hassel* 'hazel' (DS XVIII,1: 7).

Reshaping to *-sø* 'lake' in the name of the Jutlandic village *Ravnsø* (Vester Nykirke p., Skast h.), M 1664 Raffnssøe, has as its basis an *-s* from the etymological specific + the remains of the original generic *-hede* 'heath', as can be seen for example from the form 28/5 1504 Rafwenshiæ (Jørgensen 1983: 107).

In the above-mentioned examples, the reshaping took place to *-dal*, *-ø*, *-borg*, *-berg*, *-skov*, *-lund* and *-sø* in names that were borne by localities that had developed into urbanised settlements or parts of these, and not a valley, an island, a castle etc. The toponymic analogy that has made itself felt here is of the very effective type, for such reshapings of settlement-names actually belong to the most frequently occurring type. If we allow the pattern-forming place-name lexicon to determine our point of view for a moment, the following observation can be made: *-sø* and *-lund* belong among the types of generics that attract most settlement-names. In the material as a whole, reshaping to *-sø* stands alone at the top. In second position comes reshaping to *-sted*, where calculations are complicated because of orthographic merging between *-sted* and certain names in an original *-s* + *-tved*. The forms in *-sted* of the latter names are not in themselves reshapings but can be the basis for such. In the third position follows *-lund*.

One could imagine that reshapings to *-sø*, *-lund*, *-borg* etc. were encouraged by the topographical conditions at the locality, in

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such a way that there was a lake, a grove and a castle by the settlements whose names have been reshaped to *-sø*, *-lund*, *-borg* etc. but this would not seem to have been so in most cases (cf. Dalberg 1991: 26–33). The result of the reshaping must first and foremost be ascribed to toponymic analogy.

Sometimes one finds the term folk-etymology employed about reshapings of the type that I have described here. Elsewhere in this book I have touched on the inappropriateness of this. Firstly the word folk-etymology in itself is a poor term for the phenomenon. Secondly the current definition of what has been referred to as folk-etymological reshaping is inadequate for these place-name reshapings. With the appellative reshapings the name-user makes unidentifiable entities identifiable by transforming them into known words. In place-names it can almost go in the opposite direction. As has been shown by several examples, the reshaping in place-names also affects entities that correspond to familiar words, just as the result of the reshapings can correspond to words that had died out long ago. Think, for example about the reshaping of *-stald* to *-s + dal* in *Rudersdal* and about *-le* becoming *-lev* in *Kastelev*. However, the difference between place-name reshaping and appellative reshaping is perfectly explicable. Place-names are proper nouns and should not, therefore, necessarily be identifiable with well-known words. One could pose the question why they should be subject to reshaping at all. The answer in my opinion is that by reshaping they achieve closer resemblance to other place-names in the onomasticon of the name-user in question and in this way come to function more satisfactorily. In its reshaped form the name sends out clear signals as to what kind of word it is, namely a toponym. A further argument in favour of this claim is that it is almost impossible – at all events among the names that have been studied – to find examples of a name whose reshaped form does not have toponymic parallels. Thus, the name of the lake *Paddesøje* (Gamtofte and Turup p., Bågh.), e.g. in 1743 FFF III 177 *Paddes Øye*, earlier *Paddesø*, e.g. JacMadsen c. 1600, is only apparently an example of this. Admittedly this is an example of the reshaping of a generic characteristic for lake-names, *-sø*, pronounced [*-soj*], to an entity that is a homo-

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graph of the noun *øje* ‘eye’. The name of the lake is now *Øjet* (DS XIV: 296, DSÅ V: 214). As a result of reshaping the name has been removed from the large group of lake names that end in *-sø* ‘lake’ but in return it has been made to agree with another group, namely the one made up of lake-names containing the word *øje* (cf. DSÅ VII: 169, 392 under *Tyreøjet* and *Øjet*).

The identity of the name-users who have produced the reshapings that have taken place under the influence of toponymic analogy is a different problem altogether. It has sometimes been claimed that the scribes of the sources are particularly frequently involved. It can be difficult to determine when this accusation is justified but the responsibility for the transmission of the written expression is of course theirs in any case.

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