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Herausgegeben von Lennart Elmevik und Svante Strandberg

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Personal names on rune stones as a source for the reconstruction of lost words

Henrik Williams

If you are looking for lost words in names, it stands to reason that your best chance should be to start with the earliest sources. In Scandinavia, that means runic inscriptions. Fortunately, these texts are rich in names, primarily personal names. In the oldest inscriptions, stemming from the second to the eighth century AD, virtually every name contains forms of words unattested in later, non-onomastic sources. This is a rich mine to quarry, and although we have an excellent overview of the material in Lena Peterson's dictionary of Proto-Norse names (2004), there is still much to be done.

Here, though, I will deal with a slightly more modern corpus of records, the Viking Age inscriptions on runic memorials. The names on these stones have been much more extensively studied by name scholars, and you might think that there was little left to do. Actually, I would claim that it is only now, when almost all the rune-stone inscriptions have been properly published, that the real work begins. Only when all the material has been collected can any real, comprehensive studies be carried out, and no small part of this undertaking consists in eliminating misconceptions arising at earlier stages of research. Two examples of this latter problem should suffice.

Many runic texts, including some of the most important ones, have been published by Sven B. F. Jansson, Sweden's only professor of runology ever. He also dealt with questions of runic onomastics, although perhaps this was not his strongest field and his interpretations are conventional in many senses. It is quite clear that Jansson usually, or even always, chose a dithematic name over a byname, and a better-recorded name in preference to an unusual one, even when this meant departing from what the runic record itself seemed to indicate. Illustrative are his treatments of **surban** on the Ortala stone (U 593) and **rauþkar** on the Fällbro rock face. The former he interprets (in SRI 7, p. 490) as '*Þorbiorn* (*Styrbiorn*?)' and the latter (Jansson 1946, p. 259) as *Hroðgœirr*. But, as Evert Salberger (2002, p. 49) has convincingly demonstrated, these names are to be interpreted as *Sūrbœinn* 'Sour-Leg' and *Rauðkārr* 'Curly-Red' (1978, pp. 124, 210), respectively.

My point here is not to ridicule the occasional lapse by an otherwise respected runologist such as Jansson. My intention, rather, is to point out a tendency, even in contemporary runology, to choose the seemingly safe interpretation, if it conforms to the commonly known, instead of the rare or even the unique al-

ternative. This is a wise strategy, all other things being equal, but when it violates what is actually written in the inscription it is no longer sound runology. I will discuss one example of this misguided practice and the implications of a textually closer method of interpretation.

The rune stone at Hånningby (U 720) in the province of Uppland, just south of the town of Enköping, bears the following inscription:

myntil : auk : farbiurn : auk : arnkeʀ : auk : kigumantr : litu : resa sten : þensa : u : yb-iʀ : iab : faþur : -in

Myndill ok Farbiorn ok Arngæiʀʀ ok **kigumantr** *lētu ræisa stæin þennsa …, faður sinn.*[1]

Myndill and Farbiorn and Arngæiʀʀ and **kigumantr** had this stone raised in memory of …, their father.

Sven B. F. Jansson, who has published this rune stone (in SRI 8, pp. 247–249), obviously thinks highly of it. He says: 'U 720 is the work of a skilful and original carver. Unfortunately it is impossible, at least at present, to say with any certainty who he might have been.'[2]

The structure of the inscription is quite clear, even if the names of the people involved are not always evident. Four brothers commissioned the erection of the stone in memory of their father. At least two of the brothers have uncommon names. *Myndill* occurs only on two other rune stones and (probably) infrequently for mythological and fictional characters in Old Icelandic (Peterson 2007, p. 166; Magnússon 1989, pp. 641, 647). The runic sequence **kigumantr** definitely represents a unique name, as yet not conclusively interpreted, although Jansson convincingly argues that it contains the final element *-mandr* '-man' and suggests that the first element might be the genitive of the feminine noun *kinga* 'jewel, ornament'; if so, 'the name can probably be understood as a nickname for a man fond of splendour'.[3]

The name of the father, written **iab** (in the accusative case), is also uninterpreted, and here Jansson has no suggestions. He flatly states: 'The name of the father cannot be ascertained.'[4] Earlier attempts at an interpretation are all impossible, since their originators had not succeeded in reading the name correctly.

[1] Vowel length has been added here and below in accordance with Peterson 2006. The last word of the transcription, *sinn*, is incorrectly given as *sin* in SRI 8, p. 248.

[2] Jansson in SRI 8, p. 249: 'U 720 är utförd av en skicklig och originell ristare. Tyvärr är det, åtminstone f.n., omöjligt att med någon säkerhet yttra sig om vem han har varit.' Per Stille (1999, pp. 166, 197) claims that U 720 is to be attributed to the carver Torbjörn (of Sigtuna), something which I (cf. Williams 2000, p. 109) seriously doubt.

[3] Jansson in SRI 8, p. 249: 'namnet [torde] snarast vara att uppfatta som ett öknamn för en praktälskande man'. Stille (1999) suggests that, 'if one dares assume that a couple of runes have been carved in the wrong order' (p. 42: 'om man vågar anta att ett par runor ristats i fel ordning'), **kigu-** could stand for **kuig-**, and he thus arrives at the alternative *Kvīgmandr*, but he quite correctly regards neither this, nor Salberger's interpretation of **iab** (see below) as certain.

[4] Jansson in SRI 8, p. 249: 'Faderns namn kan icke fastställas.'

Nor was Evert Salberger capable of providing an interpretation of this name as it stands. He writes: 'No immediate interpretation is provided by the underlying phonology, which may be rendered as *ia* + *b*(*b*)/*p*(*p*).'[5] He got no further, either, by positing an unmarked nasal, a common enough practice (Liljegren 1832, p. 77 and note 1; Williams 1994). This led him to experiment with an omitted **r**-rune, arriving at the supplemented form **iarb**, which he interprets as the accusative of the man's name *Iarpʀ*, also found on another rune stone (Sm 130) and identical to the strong adjective Old Icelandic *jarpr* 'brown'. The weak form of the adjective is represented in the name *Iarpi* 'the brown one' on an Uppland rune stone (U 373).

Salberger's interpretation has become established, inasmuch as it is not completely rejected by the otherwise quite severe critic Börje Westlund[6] and it is listed without reservation by Lena Peterson in her authoritative dictionary of proper names in Scandinavian Viking Age runic inscriptions (2007, p. 133). Onomastically, it is very attractive and correlates perfectly with other Scandinavian instances of this name (Salberger 1978, pp. 53 f.). Semantically, too, it blends in well with other Runic Swedish personal names derived from colour adjectives, such as *Brūnn*, *Hvītr*, *Rauðr* and *Svartr* (cf. Peterson 2007, pp. 51, 125, 182 and 212, respectively).

The only problem is that it does not say **iarb**, but **iab**, on the Hånningby stone. And we must not allow ourselves to be dragged into an otherwise very attractive interpretation if the evidence is not good enough.

The Hånningby inscription seems in other respects to be very reliable orthographically. The inscription does, to be sure, contain the somewhat odd spelling **u:yb-iʀ** for [øptiʀ] *æftiʀ* 'after', but an extra rune such as this, or a double marking of a speech sound of this kind (Swed. *gardering*; see most recently Larsson 2002, p. 42), is the very opposite of omitting a rune. That the name **kigumantr** has not yet been conclusively interpreted does not give us reason to expect a miscarving in **iab**.

Evert Salberger (1978, pp. 50 f.) tried to explain the missing **r**-rune by referring to quite a few instances in which this rune is omitted before an **n**-rune in the name element *-bjǫrn* and to one occasion when it is absent before a **b**-rune. This *pièce de résistance* of Salberger's argument consists of the sequence **skuba** on a rune stone from the province of Västergötland (Vg 13), a seemingly certain representation of the byname *Skorpa*. But, as Börje Westlund has already pointed out:

> The omission of **r** which we would in that case have in this inscription, the author tries to make credible with reference to a large number of examples of the type **asbion** for **asbio⟨r⟩n**, **meki** for **me⟨r⟩ki**, **skuba** for **sku⟨r⟩ba**. But, for such spellings

[5] Salberger 1978, p. 50: 'Någon omedelbar tydning ger inte det givna ljudunderlaget, som kan teckna *ia* + *b*(*b*)/*p*(*p*) …'

[6] 'The interpretation *Jarp* is certainly plausible, but whether it can be supported by the examples the author [Salberger] cites seems highly doubtful.' (Westlund 1980, p. 132: 'Tolkningen *Jarp* är förvisso plausibel, men om den kan stödjas med de av författaren åberopade skrivningarna förefaller i högsta grad ovisst.')

> to lend support to the supplemented form **ia⟨r⟩b**, in my opinion one has to demonstrate a *system*, graphic or phonological, behind the spellings. Can **r**, in accordance with a defined rule, be omitted after a vocalic rune, or do the cited examples reflect a loss of *r* in the pronunciation? I get the impression that all of this is accidental.[7]

To spell out the practical implications of this objection: How was the reader of the Hånningby rune stone to know that an **r**-rune had to be supplied in the sequence **iab**? There seems to be no phonological or graphical motivation for this. And even if Salberger's parallel on the Västergötland rune stone (see above) holds up (which is not necessarily the case), the Uppland reader could not be expected to know of this single instance in a far-away province. The only explanation possible, if the name on the Hånningby stone really was *Iarpʀ*, is that this was known to the local reader. That is perfectly possible, of course. But, even if a Viking Age reader knew this, how should we? Adding an **r**-rune is a completely arbitrary way of coming up with a way of interpreting the sequence **iab**. Other capricious but perhaps less drastic measures are equally capable of producing names no less genuine than *Iarpʀ*.

The **i**-rune consists only of a vertical. If we posit an unmarked nasal before the **b**-rune, a perfectly permissible practice (see above), and assume that not an entire rune, but only a branch on the **i**-rune is missing, we could come up with at least two bona fide solutions: **kab**, which could be a form of the man's name *Kanpʀ* (cf. Peterson 2007, p. 146), and **lab**, cf. the byname *Lamb* attested in Old Danish, Old Swedish and Old West Norse (Hellquist 1912, p. 97; DGP 2, pp. 650 f.; Lind 1920–21, p. 234). Admittedly, there seem to be no examples of an initial **i**-rune standing for either /k/ or /l/, but on the other hand such an oversight would by its nature be a fluke, and of the same type as the solution proposed by Salberger. Other possibilities present themselves if we allow ourselves to follow Salberger's lead in randomly supplementing the runic sequence to produce an 'acceptable' name, with the excuse that such an unjustified supplementation seems to be called for in a completely unrelated inscription.

However, not only is such a method arbitrary, it also violates a very sensible principle which Salberger himself was the first to discover.

There is a distinction between different types of words in a runic text, an important principle of rune-stone communication. It means that words with a high functional load, or communicative weight if you prefer, are written more carefully than words with a merely formal function (Salberger 2001, pp. 83 f.; Williams 2010). It thus follows that common words like *raise* and *stone* may be written almost any way you please, whereas unexpected words have to be

[7] Westlund 1980, p. 132: 'Den överhoppning av **r** som i så fall skulle föreligga i inskriften söker författaren göra trolig genom hänvisning till en stor mängd belägg av typen **asbion** för **asbio⟨r⟩n**, **meki** för **me⟨r⟩ki**, **skuba** för **sku⟨r⟩ba**. Men för att sådana skrivningar skall kunna lämna stöd för en supplering **ia⟨r⟩b**, krävs enligt min mening att man påvisar ett s y s t e m, grafiskt eller fonologiskt, bakom skrivningarna. Kan **r**, i enlighet med någon bestämd regel, utelämnas efter vokalruna, eller avspeglar de anförda exemplen ett *r*-bortfall i uttalet? På mig gör det hela närmast intryck av tillfälligheter.'

carved correctly enough for the contemporary reader to make them out. Names, of course, are in many respects the most unexpected words there are, since no one can know beforehand what someone will be called.

The lesson here is to take the way names are written at face value and see where it leads. Sometimes that will mean that you end up with some strange, at first glance even unthinkable, names. Not until you have exhausted every other possibility of producing a credible name out of the existing runic sequence are you entitled to assume a carving error. But perhaps Jansson and Salberger thought they had done so before the former judged **iab** to be uninterpretable and the latter resorted to assuming a miscarving?

The results of a search for a possible Scandinavian counterpart to **iab** are indeed meagre. As far as I can see there is just one alternative, Old Icelandic *japr* 'a kind of snake' (Norr. ordb., p. 329), and at first glance this word does not seem very promising, since we are dealing with a lexical item only attested in a *þula*, a list of poetic synonyms contained in manuscript fragments of the *Edda* of Snorri Sturluson. *Japr* is only attested once (Finnur Jónsson 1912, p. 685), and so is its possibly feminine variant *japra* (op. cit., p. 684).

The etymologists have had trouble tracing the origins of the words *japr* and *japra* 'snake'. Jan de Vries (1962, p. 290) writes:

> Dunkel. Viell. verwandt mit nisl. *japla* 'kauen, mummeln', vgl. shetl. *japl* 'geschwätzig sein' und nisl. *jappa* 'immerfort wiederholen', nnorw. *jappa* 'schwätzen'; weiter nnorw. *jafsa* 'verschlingen, schlucken, unsicher sprechen', ndä. dial. *hjappe* 'stammeln, schelten' … Die bed.verschiebungen sind aber durchaus unklar.

Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (1989, p. 429) discusses *japra* and *jap(u)r* under the form *japi* m. 'ormur, slanga' ('worm, snake'):

> Origin unclear, but conceivably related to *japla* ['to chew, ruminate, munch'] and *jappa* ['to repeat constantly, quarrel, squabble'] (see these), initial meaning then possibly 'the one which bites, hisses or opens its mouth', cf. *japla*, Middle Low German *japen* 'to open one's mouth, gasp for breath', Old Frisian *jappen* 'to open one's mouth, shout or cry from greed, craving or desire for something'.[8]

It thus seems that *jap-* is reasonably well attested in West Scandinavian, at least in more recent times. The root has been expanded by the addition of various suffixes: *-ōn* (*jappa*) and one containing *l* (*japl*, *japla*). *Japra* probably derives from **japrōn*, but whether *japr* derives from **japraʀ* or **japaʀ* is uncertain. If it is indeed to be identified with the Runic Swedish accusative form *Iap*, the latter of course needs to be the case. However, the fact that there are derivatives without *-r-* seems to indicate that the root was **jap-* rather than **japr-*. Even if that were not true, the word *iapr* may have been reinterpreted as deriving from **japaʀ* if it were only known in the nominative form from a list of synonyms.

As far as I have been able to ascertain, there seems to be no trace of a root

[8] Magnússon 1989, p. 429: 'Uppruni óviss, en hugsanlega sk. *japla* og *jappa* ..., upphafl. merk. þá e.t.v. "sá sem bítur, hvæsir eða gapir", sbr. *japla*, mlþ. *japen* "gapa, súpa hveljur", afrísn. *jappen* "gapa, hvía eða skrækja af græðgi í e-ð".'

**jap-* in Peninsular Scandinavian dialects, nor of a root **ep-* in Germanic languages generally. The Middle Low German form *japen* with its initial /j/, listed by Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon (see above), actually indicates that we should not be looking for an ancient Germanic origin for *japr* and the other words (since they would have no *j-* in Scandinavian); many of these words in fact seem like later innovations. More likely we are dealing with onomatopoeic formations (cf. Melefors 1985, pp. 53 f.). But this is not the place to delve deeper into the exact origin of the word *japr*; suffice it to say that it did exist in early medieval Scandinavian and that it may be identical to a Runic Swedish **iapʀ*.

Given the difficulty in establishing an etymology for the Icelandic word, and especially considering that even in Icelandic the word seems to be restricted in the earliest period to a single source, that of the enigmatic *þula*, would it not be prudent to question whether or not this really is a suitable identification for the Runic Swedish man's name? And even if we do accept this identification, how would a name like *Iapʀ* fit into a Runic Swedish onomasticon?

What we must not forget here, and what constitutes the main point of this paper, is that there is a direct connection between Icelandic *þula* vocabulary and Viking Age rune stones.

We already know, of course, that skaldic poetry existed in Viking Age Sweden. After all, this is where the world's first *dróttkvætt* stanza is preserved in the original, on the famous late 10th-century Karlevi stone on Öland (Öl 1, DR 411, see Larsson 2005, pp. 408 ff.). The fact that this is a regular memorial stone, erected on a mound, makes it likely that its message was meant for public consumption. And this is not the only trace there is in Sweden of the *dróttkvætt* genre. On the 11th-century copper box of a pair of scales, found in Sigtuna, another half-stanza is found (op. cit., p. 410). These poems abound with skaldic vocabulary, well attested also on the wonderful Rök stone from the 9th century (op. cit., pp. 405, 407, 410).

It should not surprise us that this is so. The Old Norse word for a poet, *skald*, is attested in Runic Swedish in the bynames of three men: *Uddr skald* (Vg 4), *Þōrbiǫrn skald* (U 11, U 532), and *Grīmʀ skald* (U 916?, U 951). There is also a man's name *Skaldi* (U 1107). But there is no indication that these individuals were very poetic themselves (Larsson 2005, p. 405).

The famous Icelandic poet Sighvatr skáld is mentioned as 'seguatt*er* skol' (= *skoll* < *skold* < *skald*) in the little-known Old Swedish *Historia sancti Olai* in a manuscript from 1523, which is a summary of Snorri Sturluson's *Olafs saga helga*. Erik Noreen (1941, p. 6) concluded that the form *skol* proves that the word *skald* did not die out in Runic Swedish times, but rather survived in later spoken Old Swedish. Gun Widmark (1994, pp. 842 f.) writes that this is a tempting conclusion, but that the word may have been preserved in the very combination *Sigvatr skald*, that this could be because his reputation had spread to Sweden where he himself had been, and that his fame was tied to that of the royal saint Ólafr Haraldsson, whose saga became so popular that the byname spread, too. In either case, it seems to be known in late medieval Sweden.

We must not, however, forget that Sighvatr skáld was also employed by the Swedish king Ǫnundr Ólafsson (Anund Jakob), although most likely only for a short period. But he was far from the only skald working at the Swedish court in the late Viking Age. From *Skáldatal* (Edda, pp. 251–286), we know of no fewer than seven skalds practising their trade for four Swedish kings:[9]

Table 1. Icelandic skalds who visited Swedish kings in the late Viking Age.

Swedish king	**Icelandic skald**
Erik Segersäll (*Eirīkr sigrsæli*) ?–995	Þorvaldr Hjaltason
Olof Skötkonung (*Óláfr sænski*) 995–1022	Gunnlaugr omstunga Hrafn Ǫnundarson Óttarr svarti Gizurr svarti
Anund Jakob (*Ǫnundr Óláfsson*) 1022–50	Sighvatr skáld Þórðarson Óttarr svarti
Inge the Elder (*Ingi Steinkelsson*) 1080–84, 1088–1100	Markús Skeggjason lǫgsǫgumaðr

The influence of West Norse skalds on Swedish rune-stone texts is largely unexplored. Only the textual genre itself seems to have been of interest. This means that the existence of genuine skaldic verse has been acknowledged and more indigenous memorial poems have been brought into the picture. But the role of poetry as such has not been investigated, nor has there been any study of the poetic lexicon itself and its roots. The same is true of personal names and their possible relationship to skaldic verse.

That the word *japr* is known only from Old Norse *þulas* does not necessarily mean that it cannot appear in a name on a Swedish rune stone. Two explanations offer themselves. On the one hand, it may be that the lexicon in both cases is distinctly archaic and thus preserves words not extant in other genres such as sagas or even Eddic poems, other than as names for mainly mythological figures. There are indeed indications that this is at least sometimes the case. But here I will concentrate on the other alternative, that in fact the Runic Swedish vocabulary was directly affected by Old West Norse skaldic poetry.

I realise, of course, that this is a daring thought, perhaps even provocative, and I would straight away like to declare that as yet it is only a hypothesis. I will, however, point out one or two indications that might make it worthwhile to consider it.

There is, in fact, at least one certain example of a Runic Swedish man's name which is identical to a word otherwise only attested once in an Icelandic *þula* and once as the second element of a word in *Þórsdrápa* (Jónsson 1931, p. 500). It is the previously uninterpreted sequence **s[i]oli**[10] on the Högsta rune stone (U 1085) in the parish of Bälinge, just north of Uppsala. Thorgunn

[9] This information is compiled from various sources, some non-scholarly. I have found no comprehensive discussion of this important text, but cf. Guðrún Nordal 2001 (especially pp. 144–195).
[10] There is no reason to doubt this reading, since older records of the undamaged inscription concur on this point.

Snædal has explained this most convincingly as the same as Old Icelandic *sjóli*, attested in a *þula* as a word for 'prince' or 'king'.[11] She continues:

> This interpretation is supported by the fact that in this very environment another name with the same meaning has its main area of distribution, viz. *Iofurr*, Old West Norse *jǫfurr* 'prince, king'. This name has been found on the now lost stone U 1086, which in the 17th century stood in the vicinity of U 1085, and on the likewise lost U 1073 in Bälinge Church. The name is also recorded as the first element of the women's names *Iofurfast* and *Iofurfrið* which, *inter alia*, occur on the rune stones U 1089 Marsta and U 1098 Sundbro in the parish of Bälinge.[12]

The fact that a word occurs exclusively in the Icelandic skaldic vocabulary and that no trace of it is to be found in Old Swedish or later Swedish dialects does not necessarily constitute a conclusive argument against an interpretation of a certain name. What we have here is the possibility that people in Viking Age Sweden, too, found inspiration in the common poetic vocabulary of Scandinavia. The language of the skalds and their rather free creation of words may very well have affected name-giving in Old Norse society. The origins of the words may be non-regional, even foreign, but the process of adapting them to indigenous naming practices is the same as with native words.

That poetry and name-giving have something in common is old news. In his classic study from 1957, Gottfried Schramm (p. 106) writes that 'die altgermanischen Männernamen spiegeln uns in eigenartiger Brechung solche Heldenbezeichnungen wider, wie wir sie aus einer Reihe uns erhaltener Dichtungen kennen'. Schramm (p. 11) also writes: 'Immer deutlicher wird sich schließlich abzeichnen, daß die zweigliedrigen Namen recht eigentlich spielerisch gestaltet sind', and talks further (ibid.) of 'die Schöpfung der zweigliedrigen Namen als spielerische Variation poetischer Wortbildung'. Rüdiger Schmitt (1973) later confirmed and expounded on Schramm's results.

Both Schramm and Schmitt concentrate on the Eddic poetry, primarily the heroic poems, and they discuss dithematic personal names as a category of kennings. But this is not the genre nor the type of names primarily associated with skalds. The most typical feature of skaldic poetry in contrast to Eddic is the use not only of kennings, but also of *heiti*. The ties between skaldic poetry and name-giving have been much less noted, but there is at least one important contribution, that of Else Mundal in 2004. In her article 'Nomen est omen. Umgang und Spiel mit Namen in der altnordischen Skaldendichtung', she stresses the deep consciousness of the skalds when dealing with names. The use of archaic forms is one feature (pp. 570 f.), the substitution of names is another (pp. 571 ff.). One of the characteristics of skaldic poetry is its love of subtlety and complexity, the goal being to make the identification of a personal name more difficult (p. 571). Mundal writes (ibid.): 'Diese Technik nennt sich [*o*]*fljóst* und wird in vielen Fällen gerade dazu angewandt, Personennamen zu verschlüsseln.' Her examples include *Grjótvǫr* for *Steinvǫr* and *Gramr ok brattir hamrar* for *Ingibjǫrg* (p. 572).

Mundal, too, restricts her discussion to dithematic names, but it is not difficult to apply her results to the more *heiti*-like monothematic names. The name patterns of Old Norse have still to be fully identified, but as Thorgunn Snædal points out in her discussion of *Siōli* and *Iǫfurr*, within a certain area names may have been chosen with a common semantic denominator. Around Bälinge, this denominator was obviously words for princes and chieftains. Perhaps *Siōli* is a unique but consciously variational form of *Iǫfurr*.

A similar process seems to be in play in the parish of Orkesta, north of Stockholm. Helmer Gustavson points out: 'Names of the type *Utter* ["otter"] – i.e. animal names as personal names, either primary names or hypocoristic names – are remarkably common in runic inscriptions from the parish of Orkesta.'[13] And he goes on to list more than a dozen names consisting of or containing words denoting animals. Then he writes: 'Faced with this multitude and concentration, one might ask oneself if we are dealing here with a set name-giving principle applied within a small area, a fashion within a limited circle or even within a family.'[14]

Might snake terms constitute a similar semantic group, of which *Iapr* is a unique example? Assar Janzén (1947, p. 46), to be sure, only mentions *Ormr* as his single instance of reptile terms, but that there have been quite a few more is evident from even a superficial survey of the Old Norse onomasticon. Among snake designations used as personal names I have also noted *Lindormr* (Lind 1905–15, col. 739), *Naðr* (col. 780) and *Snákr* (col. 932). Of interest in this connection is the famous name *Grettir*. Finnur Jónsson (1905–12, p. 101) points out that both *Linni* and many other snake synonyms are used to denote *Grettir* in the *rímur*. And going back to the *þulas* in which *japr* and *japra* were found, I find, in the four stanzas listing snake synonyms, no fewer than 13 that are used elsewhere in Old Icelandic literature as names for humanoids: *Áll*, *Grímr*, *Hringr*, *Langbarðr*, *Liðr*, *Náinn*, *Ófnir*, *Óinn*, *Óri*, *Snillingr*, *Strykr*, *Sváfnir* and *Trani*.

These words are used metaphorically and are not primary snake designations, but they are also personal names, after all.

[11] Snædal 2004: 'Enligt min mening råder det dock ingen tvekan om att runorna återger ett personnamn *Siōli* och att detta namn är identiskt med det fornvästnordiska ordet *sjóli*, belagt i de så kallade namnramsorna i Snorres Edda som en poetisk benämning (*heiti*) för furste/kung.'

[12] Snædal 2004: 'Denna tolkning styrks av det faktum att just i dessa trakter har ett annat namn med samma betydelse sitt huvudsakliga spridningsområde, nämligen *Iofurr*, fornvästnordiska *jǫfurr* ["furste, kung"]. Detta namn fanns bl.a. på den numera försvunna stenen U 1086, som på 1600-talet stod i närheten av U 1085, och [på den] likaledes försvunna U 1073 i Bälinge kyrka. Namnet är dessutom belagt som förled i kvinnonamnen *Iofurfast* och *Iofurfrið*, som bl.a. förekommer på runstenarna U 1089 Marsta och U 1098 Sundbro i Bälinge socken.'

[13] Gustavson in Svärdström & Gustavson 1975, p. 170: 'Namn av typen Utter – dvs. djurnamn som personnamn, det må vara primära namn eller kortnamnsbildningar – är påfallande vanliga i runinskrifter från Orkesta socken.'

[14] Gustavson (ibid.): 'Inför denna mängd och koncentration kan man fråga sig om det här rör sig om en bestämd namngivningsprincip tillämpad inom ett smärre område, ett mode inom en begränsad krets eller rent av inom en släkt.'

My belief is that *Iapʀ* as a personal name cannot be rejected out of hand and that it must definitely be preferred to the alternative *Iarpʀ*, suggested by Evert Salberger. At any rate, I believe that contemporary readers of the Hånningby rune stone must have come to that conclusion.

But the purpose of this paper has been not so much to put the case for an interpretation of a particular runic name, or even to discuss a previously unattested lexical item in East Scandinavian, as to direct attention to a potential gold mine of further such discoveries: names and other words in runic vocabulary testifying to the ties between Icelandic skalds and Swedish rune stones.

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