The supposed analogical levelling in favour of /fin(d)r/ seems not to have reached the runic carvers to the same extent as the literates.

Conclusion

The oldest literary language is traditional. The writers did not write according to their speech but according to their education. There must have been an awareness of a difference between spoken and written language. This awareness was not equally profound in relation to runic script. It is questionable as to what extent the runic script was orthophonic, and runecarving was not void of tradition and spelling conventions. There are, however, not so many intermediaries that have to be taken into account in evaluating the linguistic evidence of a runic form as a form in a manuscript.

The text of a runic inscription is not very extensive, and if we transliterated consecutively all the Scandinavian medieval runic inscriptions, the text would reach some 15 pages. And that is not much compared to the manuscript evidence. By virtue of its distinctive characterstic, however, the linguistic evidence of this material is indispensable for the study of the language history of medieval Scandinavia.

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Runic Inscriptions as Sources of Personal Names

HENRIK WILLIAMS

Runic inscriptions are as important to anthroponomy as personal names are to runology. This dyadic statement is intended to illustrate the fact that personal names in runic inscriptions constitute very substantial material for anthroponomy not only because of their age and diversity, but also because personal names make up such a large proportion of the words in runic inscriptions – and a majority of their lexemes –, anthroponymical study is an important part of runological work.

Much of the discussion on runic inscriptions during the last century and a half has indeed been centered on the personal names found, or thought to be found, in the runic texts. The material is so rich and so complicated, however, that there still remains an enormous amount of work to be done, especially within the field of more general anthroponomy. A vast number of individual runic records have been investigated, but very few attempts at summarizing these separate studies, outlining the principle results, and presenting a survey of general conclusions and remaining problems have been made.

The total number of known runic inscriptions in Europe from the middle of the second to the end of the fifteenth century is almost 6 000. At present (April 1996) I can compose statistics based on the 5 304 inscriptions in the computer text data base in Uppsala (cf. Peterson 1994b), but several hundred texts await inclusion. The total number of words in the computer texts is at present more than 45 000. In Swedish runic inscriptions on stone from the Viking Age there are approximately 1 000 personal names[1] recorded about 6 000 times and about 500 other lexemes with some 19 000 records (cf. Williams 1990: 14). The total number of records referring to personal names is at present 10 287 (in 3 694 inscriptions). If the same proportions are valid for the entire runic corpus as for the Swedish runestone corpus, the former should contain circa 1 000 non-onomastic lexemes and almost 2 000 individual personal names. However, these figures may be exaggerated since many of the records may refer to the same names and lexemes as those already established in the Runic Swedish inscriptions. Until more careful counts have been made we can only be certain that there are between 1 000-2 000 different personal names in the runic inscriptions, with over 10 000 separate records to investigate.

Not only do personal names in runic inscriptions make up a significant proportion of the total anthroponymical material in the Germanic languages, the runic names comprise, as a rule, the oldest records of their respective languages or stages of languages. In the very oldest inscriptions, with reasonably safe datings, personal

[1] Due to an error, my original statement reads "tusentals" instead of the correct "tusentalet".

names even dominate among the texts that lend themselves to interpretation (cf. Odenstedt 1990: 171 f.). The inscriptions on two of the very earliest runic items, **harja** on the Vimose comb from ca. 160 A.D. (Illkjær 1993: 297) and **raunijaz** on the Stabu lancehead from 150-200 A.D. (Krause 1966: 76; but cf. Haavaldsen 1991: 23, 56, 59) consist of a personal name, *Harja*, and the name of the artefact, *Raunijaz* 'tester, prober', respectively. But this is no unexpected feature: one's name is of the utmost importance and it is presumably typical of primitive stages of writing, as well as for primitive stages in an individual's writing acquisition, to write one's own name.

Barbro Söderberg (in Söderberg & Larsson 1993: 67-77) has made an interesting comparison of runic writing and the literacy evidenced by children. According to Söderberg's model (loc. cit. p. 72) children at the first stage of literacy invent letters and imitate the act of writing, while the second stage includes real writing of initials and proper names. The study of children's writing is likely to prove very important to the understanding of the writing and contents of runic inscriptions.

Runic inscriptions are thus extremely important sources of personal names. Making an inventory of these names is difficult, however, for the above-mentioned reasons: there has yet been too little general research done on this subject. This article is therefore neither a summary of runic anthroponymical research nor an attempt at a general study of its own, but rather an inventory of the types of problems within runic anthroponomy and an assessment of what needs to be done within the field.

One must first begin by acknowledging the fact that there are no dictionaries of runic personal names. One is forced to resort to the individual corpus editions of the Scandinavian countries: *Danmarks runeindskrifter*, *Norges innskrifter med de yngre runer*, *Norges Indskrifter med de ældre Runer*, and *Sveriges runinskrifter* (SRI), where individual names are listed and discussed. Such treatments are also to be found in books dealing with parts of the material, for example Bæksted 1942, Krause 1966, Johnsen 1968, Opitz 1980 (up-dated by Düwel 1991), Page 1973 (up-dated by Page 1991), to name just a few that present studies of runic corpora of some size.

There are also many publications dealing with individual names. Denmark, for example, offers articles by Harry Andersen and Karl Martin Nielsen, Kristian Hald's handbook on personal names (Hald 1971), and John Kousgård Sørensen's work on patronymics (Kousgård Sørensen 1984). In Sweden the vastly productive Evert Salberger has identified scores of runic personal names in more than 100 articles. The best over-all treatment of Old Scandinavian personal names is still found in the Nordisk Kultur volume *Personnamn*.

A general treatment of runic anthroponymics *per se*, however, does not exist. One is forced to consult anthroponymical dictionaries of individual ancient Germanic languages, such as those by Erik Henrik Lind for Old West Nordic names (Lind 1905-15, 1920-21, 1931), DGP for Old Danish names, and SMP for Old Swedish names. The dictionary by Magnus Lundgren (Lundgren et al. 1892-1934) is out of date, but still used for Old Swedish personal names since SMP only covers forenames (i.e. not bynames) up to those beginning with *h*. Common to all these works is an incomplete and inconsistent listing of the personal names occurring in runic inscriptions. The dictionary by Hermann Reichert (Reichert 1987-90) may be used for the oldest inscriptions.

There is thus a great need for a dictionary or at least a list of all personal names in runic inscriptions, as well as for more studies on individual names and, more importantly, more theoretic work on onomastic aspects such as name formation and name types.

A name may be regarded as an extremely short text. One may question what such a text contains, and what value the study of runic personal names has.

A first answer to these questions might focus on the sociological and historical importance of anthroponomastics. The study of personal names will yield results pertaining to most facets of society. Names of historically attested persons are sometimes found in runic inscriptions, occasionally linked with otherwise unknown information (see section 1). Theophoric names may provide some information about religious beliefs and customs, whether Christian or not (see section 2). Names with a regional distibution indicate the delineation of specific areas (see section 3). The different types of names in runic inscriptions have even been seen as reflecting distinctive social strata (cf. Williams 1990:15), and there are interesting aspects to the question of name gender identification (see section 4).

Secondly, the study of personal names will tell us much about language in general and onomastics in particular. There are otherwise unknown personal names in the runic corpus (see section 5), which make it especially valuable. Rare types of personal names are sometimes more common in the runic inscriptions (see section 6), and the origin of parental names are best discussed in a runic context (see section 7). Finally, we sometimes find records of personal names in a more original form in the runic texts than from better known periods (see section 8), and anthroponymic morphology is also a rich research field (see section 9).

1. Names in runic inscriptions attested in historical sources

Adam of Bremen mentions in his history of Hamburg-Bremen diocese that a King *Olaf* of *Sueonia*, presumably a Swede, became ruler in Denmark by force. His successors were, among others, a son of his named *Chnob*, and another person named *Sigerich*. At the ancient site of Haithabu, near today's Schleswig, four Viking Age runestones (DR 1-4) were erected which carry legends mentioning, i.a., *Gnúpa* and a son of his, King *Sigtryggr* (see Williams 1996b: 438 and Williams forthcoming). It is fairly safe to assume that these two men are identical to the kings mentioned, albeit in a corrupt form, by Adam. In the runic inscriptions we receive the further piece of information that Gnúpa is the father of Sigtryggr, and we are also given the name of Gnúpa's wife, viz. *Ásfríðr*, and the name of her father, *Óðinkǫr*.

There are other historically known persons that appear in Danish runic inscriptions: for example King Gormr, Queen Þyri, and their son King Haraldr (DR 41-42). An occasional reference to a person attested in historical sources also appears in a Norwegian inscription. In the church at Vinje there is an inscription by Sigurðr Jarlsson, who is mentioned in the saga of King Sverri recorded around 1200 (Niyr 170). From Sweden there is no certain record of a historical figure in a runic inscription. While the name *Knútr* may refer to the well-known Danish king Knútr the Great, it could also be seen as a reference to other people with the same name

(see Williams 1990: 131).[2] A possible allusion to the Swedish king Eymundr is problematic (see SRI 15: 89–107). The well attested name *Ingvarr* seems to refer to the raiding prince in *Ingvars saga vittfarni* (see Williams 1990: 129 with footnote), but the saga and its dependent sources may also be based on the Swedish material. *Haraldr* is a frequently occuring name, and there were several kings bearing that name. Hence the King Haraldr on one Swedish stone cannot be positively identified (SRI 4: 130–135). Finally, *Biǫrn*, brother of Saint Bótviðr may be mentioned on one runestone (SRI 3: 251–257).

The runic inscriptions sometimes provide us with references to, and additional information on, otherwise attested people. However, these are the exceptions to the rule that almost everybody mentioned in a runic context is known only from the respective source. Sometimes there is a good chance of identifying a person in one inscription with that of another (Williams 1990: 136f.; loc. cit. p. 185–188 for such links in Swedish runestone inscriptions), but there is still no connection to historical sources.

One must finally add that a number of well-known "religious persons" are referred to in the inscriptions: God, mainly as the Christ *persona*; the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary; and a number of saints from Saint Michael to more local saints.

2. Theophoric names

The role played by personal names containing theophoric elements is a much discussed topic. A single example should suffice. On one side of the Thorsberg chape (Krause 1966: 53–55) is a runic inscription which almost unanimously has been read as a personal name, *Wulþuþewaz*. Its first element is cognate with Germanic **wulþuz* 'glory, splendor', which appears in the Old Norse god's name *Ullr*. The second element is clearly *þewaz* 'servant' and the name as such may be meaningfully interpreted as 'glorious servant' or 'he who has glorious servants' or as simply containing two name elements: 'glory-servant'. A connection with the god's name has been suggested, 'the servant of *Ullr*', but the name is best understood as a secular man's name (Williams forthcoming).

It is in principle highly questionable whether personal names had any clear relationship to Germanic religion at all. At any rate, any such ties could not have been very strong since the Christian church obviously had few or no objections against the indigenous Scandinavian names. Even though there have been claims to the contrary – see for example Assar Janzén's statement: "The old Nordic names had the most intimate connection with the ancient religion. They were, as it were, imbued with heathenism. Therefore the champions of Christianity had to combat and

[2] Tribute money paid to a Viking from Sweden by Tosti, Þorkell, and Knútr are mentioned on one runestone (see SRI 7:79-86). These three names may be given different identifications, as has been discussed by Bernd Lücke, Tübingen, in an unfortunately unpublished paper (Lücke Ms.)

exterminate them with all power, as well as all other heathen witchery."[3] – such assertions are founded on mere conjecture (cf. Williams 1996c: 74-78). In Scandinavia as well as in England and Germany, it took almost 500 years until the Christian names came to dominate (ibid.). Although the vast majority of Swedish runestones from the Viking Age are carved within a Christian tradition, only a handful of the personal names that appear have non-Scandinavian roots (ibid.).

3. Geography of personal names

Under this category we find the occurrence of certain names with an obvious regional distribution. That individual names are linked to specific areas is well known, although this phenomenon has generally been very poorly analyzed. Names with a regional distribution include the rare *Triónn* in Jämtland (cf. Williams 1996a: 54) and the better known *Illugi* along the Central Swedish Baltic coast (Williams 1993a: 92f.). Name elements may also be included; *-fastr* is thus considered as typically Swedish (*Personnamn* p. 119).

Problems to be studied include the definition of regionally exclusive names. This should be done in the larger context of dialect geography. Another aspect would be the isolated occurrence in one place of a name which is thought to belong to another area. Foreign names are one example: the Slavic *MistiwiR* in Denmark for instance. More interesting is the occurrence of names from nearby, but distinct, language or dialect areas. How should one explain the typically Danish *Óðinkǫr* occurring once in Norway? Does the presence of seemingly non-Danish names on the royal runestones in Haithabu signify a foreign ruling dynasty (Williams forthcoming a)? Finally, one may bring in the very important discussion of the provenance of the oldest runic inscriptions: is there a strong West Germanic stratum in their personal names (Peterson 1994a)?

It may also be noted that other onomastic phenomena show local variations. Why, for example, are hapax names (see section 5a below) very rare in Norway from the Viking Age onwards, but conspicuously common in the nearby Swedish province of Västergötland?

4. Gender issues

The ratio between male and female names in the runic texts is hard to establish without a careful study of the material. It is clear, however, that male names dominate in all parts of the corpus, but also that this dominance varies according to geographical area and type of inscription. For some reason there is a much higher proportion of women being mentioned on commemorative runestones in central

[3] "De gamla nordiska namnen stodo i det innerligaste samband med den gamla religionen. De voro så att säga genompyrda med hedendom. Därför måste kristendomens förkämpar med all kraft sträva att motarbeta och utrota dem liksom allt annat hedniskt otyg" (*Personnamn* p. 239).

Sweden than elsewhere, in the province of Uppland in almost 40 % of the inscriptions (Gräslund 1995: 459). Women seem to be especially connected to incriptions mentioning the Mother of God (the Virgin Mary) and the construction of bridges, which has been interpreted as an indication that women were in the forefront of the Christianization process.

There seems to be a certain dominance of women writers in the German runic inscriptions (Düwel 1989), which should have interesting effects on the discussion of literacy in older times.

A most intriguing onomastic problem is the question of name gender identification. Quite a few names can be ambiguous in this respect, at least in the Viking Age, due to the unsophisticated runic orthography. The second elements *-gerðr* and *-geirr* are often hard to identify in the inscriptions. It is interesting to note that the editors of for example *Sveriges runinskrifter* not infrequently make claims about the gender of a certain name that are based on preconceived notions about the roles of men and women in the Viking Age. This erroneous methodology, which can only be condemned as sexist, sometimes leads to mistakes in name gender identification (Jesch 1994).

The above sections have dealt with personal names mostly from the socio-political angle. A more onomastic approach may be discerned in the following sections.

5a. Otherwise unattested names

The very opposite of historically attested names (see section 1 above) would be names attested exclusively in runic inscriptions. This category is numerous in all types of runic inscriptions. A few examples from different periods and geographical areas should suffice. The oldest runic inscriptions abound with otherwise unattested names, some of which are of extraordinary interest: *Alukō* (hypocorism of *Alu-*) and *Leþrō* 'the leathery one' are both fascinating examples (Krause 1966: 109 f. and 95-97, respectively). We may question what their respective semantic content is, what kind of person they denote, whether they refer to men or women, and how we should see the formation of these names?

Old High German *Awimund* and *Arsiboda* (Krause 1966: 289 f. and 308-310, respectively), Runic Danish *Uflaʀ* and *Olfun* (DR 123 and DR 287, respectively) and Runic Swedish *Glōa* and *Rauðkārr* (Salberger 1978: 91-98 and 117-125, respectively) are other examples. Such otherwise unrecorded names also occur in periods with Latin literacy, but are much rarer then. Old English *Hadde* (Bammesberger 1991: 131-134) and Medieval Runic Norwegian *Lokarr* (Niyr 392) may be examples, but the latter is about the only hapax name that I have been able to ascertain in the published volumes of *Norges innskrifter med de yngre runer*.

5b. "Fictional" names

The reason I group categories 5a and 5b together is that "fictional" names are in one respect only a variant of otherwise unattested names, since fictional names are regarded as "real" names in some respect. That this is an over-simplified attitude becomes obvious when one notes that a not insignificant number of fictional names actually occur in the runic sources. Names such as *Rōta* (SRI 3, no. 227) and *Hiorvarðr* (SRI 8, no. 668-669) are used as everyday personal names in Runic Swedish inscriptions but do not occur elsewere, except as fictional names in Old West Nordic sources. That some types of fictional names in these latter sources are not truly meant as actual personal names of human beings is easily demonstrated. But the difference between fictional names such as the remarkable Old Icelandic giant's name *Blapþvari* (Lind 1905-15: 148) and *Welandu*, which has been identified with the master smith Wieland (Beck 1981), in the tiny Frisian Corpus should on the other hand receive more attention. A comparison with runic records is a superior means of telling whether a name is truly "fictional" or not.

6. Bynames

The use of true bynames in runic inscriptions, i.e. when a person is mentioned as having both a main name and an auxiliary name, is quite rare. Some such examples are readily available, e.g. *Þórir Fagr* (Niyr 648). This type of "proper" byname is not without complications. Sometimes it is most difficult to tell whether an attribute is a true byname or just a noun modifier. There is no doubt that 'father' in *Svein faður* is an example of the latter and *Ōfæigʀ Øpiʀ* of the former, since that famous runographer usually gives his name as *Øpiʀ*. But there are other, more problematic, examples. What about *Þyri ... Danmarkaʀ bot* 'the improvement of Denmark'? This has been regarded by some as the byname, not of Þyri, but of her son Haraldr (see Nielsen 1974: 159-169). Even if it is related to Þyri, as seems very likely, the question remains, however, whether it is to be understood as a byname or merely as simple praise. The fact that Þyri is mentioned in other sources with her epithet makes it probable that it served as a byname.

Other interesting aspects of bynames in runic inscription include the dominant use of absolute bynames, that is bynames with no main name, and the different types of bynames.

That negative bynames abound is not surprising in itself, since that type is also common in later medieval sources. One should not, however, forget that the character of the sources differ. In the latter type the names are usually "allotted" by someone else, often in an official function. It is not strange to find someone called *Ingridh Thiuvafinger* 'thieves' finger' in a court record. In runic inscriptions, however, the names used are most likely chosen by the commemorated person or the relatives, thus the common use of quite negative bynames is startling. Why is a respected father and probably wealthy land owner called *Ōþvaginn* 'the unwashed' (see Williams 1993b)?

7. Patronymica / Metronymica

There has been intense discussion of the patronymic character of some names in the runic texts. Is *HoltijaR* of the same type as *HaeruwulfiR* (see Kousgård Sørensen 1984: 32-51)? Are there "true" patronymics in the Viking Age inscriptions: was the runographer *Ásmundr* called *Kárasun* or was he simply the son of *Kári* (cf. Johannessen 1993)? Do persons designated as offspring of their mothers evidence early examples of metronymica (cf. Kousgård Sørensen 1984: 123-144)?

Finally, one may concentrate on the linguistic aspects of anthroponomy.

8. Personal names as etymological sources

Names may contribute important information about etymology in general and about the onomastic material in particular. Without the **stainawarijaz** record on the runestone from Rö (Krause 1966: 167-170), we could not as easily ascertain the etymology of Old Norse *Steinarr*, which could as well contain for example *-harjaz* as its second element.

Somewhat later runic records allow us to choose from the alternative etymologies of the personal name element *Há-*; in Viking Age inscriptions the *os*-rune is occasionally used to represent the vowel, thus proving that it must have been nasalized and that the etymology more likely is **Hanha-* than for example **Hauha-* (Williams 1990: 49, but cf. Melefors 1993: 69-75).

9. Morphology

One might finally make a thorough study of the morphology of runic personal names, preferably from a semantic angle. An interesting study could be made of the three morphological categories of personal names: simple, derived, and compound, their proportions and constituent subgroups. Are simple names older, more meaningful and of higher or lower social status than other names? As for derived names, are abbreviated forms, hypocoristic names, marked stylistically? Are compounded names originally meaningful, and why do certain composition elements become very productive, whereas others remain rare?

As a conclusion one may say that the study of runic anthroponomy is only in its infancy. Much remains to be done and many results are expected from this discipline.

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Runeninschriften als Quelle der Ortsnamenforschung

JOHN KOUSGÅRD SØRENSEN

Die beste Grundlage für die Deutung der Ortsnamen sind die ältesten bekannten Formen der Namen, die am besten überlieferten Formen der Namen und die Formen der Namen, die in den örtlichen, mündlichen und schriftlichen Quellen vorliegen, demnach in den Quellen, die nahe Anknüpfung an die betreffenden Orte haben.

Das *Alters*kriterium (1) ist aus folgendem Grunde wichtig: Je länger man einen Namen in schriftlicher Form in der Zeit zurückverfolgen kann, um so näher kommt man in die Zeit der Namengebung. Und je kürzer der Zeitabstand zwischen der Namengebung und der ältesten Überlieferung ist, um so weniger wird die ursprüngliche Form von Namen sprachlich verändert und um so leichter ist es, die sprachlichen Bestandteile zu identifizieren, die der Namengeber benutzte, als er oder sie dem Orte einen Namen gab.

Die älteren Formen eines Namens können dennoch in verschiedener Weise überliefert sein. Eine wichtige Gruppe von älteren Quellen unserer Ortsnamen bilden die sogenannten Urkunden, also rechtsgültige Dokumente, Übertragungsurkunden, Testamente usw. Eine andere besteht aus Amtsbüchern, das sind Urbare, Rechnungsbücher, Zinsverzeichnisse usw. Diese Quellen können uns im Original überliefert sein. Die ursprünglichen Akten lassen sich dann unmittelbar auch heute noch studieren. In den meisten Fällen jedoch sind die originalen Urkunden verschwunden, verbrannt, verbraucht, zerstört, und wir kennen ihren Inhalt nur von Kopien, die zur rechten Zeit vorgenommen wurden, eventuell nur von Kopien der Kopien. Im Verfahren des Abschreibens liegen Fehlermöglichkeiten verborgen. Die Kopisten haben mitunter den Text des Originals nicht in allen Einzelheiten entziffern können oder haben falsch gelesen. Oder sie haben sich oft dem Original nicht verpflichtet gefühlt und haben die Orthographie und die Formen des älteren Textes modernisiert, so daß sie denjenigen ihrer eigenen, damaligen Zeit entsprachen. Die *Überlieferung* (2) der Texte ist also wichtig für die Interpretation der Ortsnamen. Eine Originalurkunde z.B. von 1253 enthält die Formen der Ortsnamen, wie sie Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts waren. Eine Kopie derselben Urkunde aus dem 16. Jahrhundert hat oft modernisierte Formen dieser Zeit.

Was schließlich das *Provenienz*kriterium (3) betrifft, so ist der Ort, an welchem eine Ortsnamenquelle abgefaßt wurde, in bezug auf die Qualität der Formen als Grundlage für die Deutung des Ortsnamens nicht gleichgültig. Man muß grundsätzlich annehmen, daß Formen der lokalen Quellen, in der Nähe von den Orten abgefaßt, deren Namen genannt werden, eine sicherere Interpretationsbasis sind als Namenformen in Quellen, die weit von den betreffenden Stellen entstanden sind,

Ergänzungsbände zum
Reallexikon der
Germanischen Altertumskunde

Herausgegeben von
Heinrich Beck, Dieter Geuenich,
Heiko Steuer

Band 15

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Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York
1998

Runeninschriften als Quellen interdisziplinärer Forschung

Abhandlungen des Vierten Internationalen Symposiums
über Runen und Runeninschriften in Göttingen
vom 4.–9. August 1995

Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium
on Runes and Runic Inscriptions in Göttingen,
4–9 August 1995

In Zusammenarbeit mit
Sean Nowak

herausgegeben von
Klaus Düwel

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1998