

## Personal Names of proto-Norse origin on the island of Gotland: how long do they remain in use during the Middle Ages?

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The Baltic island of Gotland has been the subject of runological scholarship for decades but there are still areas where research is sorely lacking. A conspicuous such lacuna is the study of the personal names in the island's runic inscriptions. Today we know of more than 600 names from the period 400–1500 (*Samnordisk runtextdatabas*; not counting names such as *Iesus*, *Kristr* and *Guð*). Thorgunn Snædal (2002) has investigated how the Gotlandic language changes over time in runic inscriptions; she does not, however, include personal names in her research. Lasse Mårtensson (2017), too, excludes Gotlandic material from his study of personal names in Medieval runic inscriptions, and the dictionary *Sveriges medeltida personnamn* is primarily based on manuscripts, not on runic inscriptions. My postdoctoral project "Personal names in Old Gotlandic runic inscription from 750 to 1520" aims at studying the names as a system and thus filling this gap.

In my paper, I discuss for how long personal names of proto-Norse origin remained in use during the Middle Ages and how they differed from anthroponyms in East Scandinavia. Thorgunn Snædal's paper (2004) provides an overview of the anthroponymic situation on Gotland during the Viking Age, and in Lena Peterson's *Nordiskt runnamnslexikon* 2007 we find two lists of proto-Norse personal names on the island during the Viking Age; one for male names and another for female (p. 279 f.).

One of the themes discussed in the paper is the structure of female names of proto-Norse origin on medieval Gotland. The total number of securely identified female names in runic inscription on the island is 120. These include 69 names of proto-Norse origin, of which as many as 50 can be dated to the Middle Ages. If we compare these to East Scandinavian names during the same period, a glaring difference is revealed. On Gotland we do not find any two-stem names containing those female second elements which were the most popular in Sweden, such as *-hildr*, *-biörg/-borg*, or *-vǫr*. Nor do we find any short forms or simplex names whatsoever, although these were quite common in East Scandinavia. It furthermore turns out that some second elements became particularly widely used during the 14th century, such as *-hæiðr*. It is shown that the two most popular first elements on the island are *Bōt-* and *Hrōð-*, and this is true from the Viking Age until the 16th century. However, the paper does not confine itself to female names but turns also to male names and to questions of the longevity of certain elements in dithematic names (both first and second) during the Middle Ages, focusing on the origin of the most popular first element in Gotlandic dithematic names, e.g. *Bōt-*.

Mårtensson, Lasse. 2017: *Personnamnen i de medeltida svenska runinskrifterna*. (Manuscript, accepted for publication by Institutionen för språk och folkminnen, Uppsala).

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Snædal, Thorgunn. 2002. *Medan världen vakar. Studier i de gotländska runinskrifternas språk och kronologi*. Uppsala: Uppsala universitet. (Runrön 16.)

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