

TOPONYMY AND SEAFARING: INDICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF NAVIGATION ALONG THE ÅLAND ISLANDS

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Perhaps the most emblematic feature of the Viking Age (AD 800–1050) is seafaring. Indeed, the term *viking*, attested already in (probably) ninth-century runic inscriptions was used with reference to expeditions across the seas. Later, sources from thirteenth-century Iceland unambiguously use the expression *fara í viking* [‘to go on a freebooting voyage’] in connection with sea-raiding and the word for a person conducting such activities, *vikingr*, hence meant ‘freebooter’. Thus the Viking Age can be said to take its name from seafaring activities.

The use of the word *vikingr* to refer to a pirate is, however, an outcome of a long semantic chain. In Old English, the word *wīcingas* (m.n.pl.) is attested before the period of Viking raids and the oldest meaning of the noun was probably not associated with raiding. The long-dominant view was that the term originally referred to a seafarer from *Vik(in)* (f.) [‘The Norwegian Skagerrak coast’] (VAEO, s.v. *Viking*; S. Hellberg 2008). The arguments are, however, strong that a masculine Scandinavian noun **wīkingr* [‘seafarer’], which formally could even have been cognate with OE *wīcing* (m.), is best understood as having been derived differently and that the word originally had a meaning associated with long distance seafaring in some more general sense (Heide 2005; T. Andersson 2007). Even if this interpretation seems to gain ground, the debate is still ongoing whether the masculine noun was derived from the abstract feminine **wīking* [‘voyage performed in rower-shifting turns’] (Daggfeldt 1983; Heide 2008) or directly from some nautically specialized meaning that may have developed for the strong verb **wīk(w)ā* [‘to give way; to turn (away)’] (Mees 2012). The precise semantic and derivational sequencing

will probably continue to be debated, as will the particular stage of which Germanic language the word was initially derived from. Within this discussion, however, the nineteenth-century attestation cited by Thorsten Andersson (2007: 10ff.), according to which the Swedish verb *vika* has carried the meaning of ‘give way [to a new shift of rowers]’¹ should be given due attention. Whatever the history of this term’s semantics, it underwent a shift that linked it to quite a specific field of activity which in many respects directly mirror’s the narrowing of attention in thinking about the Viking Age itself.

The emblematic role of seafaring in this period is certainly valid. This role was an outcome of the sophisticated application of seafaring technologies that Scandinavians had developed during the two previous centuries. The light, lean Viking ships had a shallow draught. This made them suitable for rowing as well as sailing the open sea. They could be used to navigate shallower inland water routes as well as sail directly onto gentler shores and row out again without difficulty. (HEININEN et al.) These developments were gradual, without a simple break in continuity from earlier periods: rather than any single development or innovation, it was a series of developments and their combination (cf. Johnstone 2001: 115–117). However, the onset of the Viking Age might be described as a watershed produced from a constellation of factors that affected how seafaring technologies were used and how they were perceived (see also Ahola & Frog 2014). Raiding was only one small part of Viking Age nautical mobility, which more generally led to the development of networks of contact, trade and communication that defined Northern Europe as a unified space for the first time (Heininen et al. 2014). Probably raiding and freebooting was even less dominant along the so-called *austrvegr* or Eastern Route, where hit and run tactics was not as viable due to the topography of rivers.

The situation of the Åland Islands in the Baltic Sea roughly midway between Roslagen of coastal Sweden and the south-western tip of Finland places it in a key position for navigation. Aspects of seafaring and its significance for populations in Åland are discussed elsewhere in this volume (GUSTAVSSON et al.; AHOLA et al.; FROG), as is the geopolitical situation of Åland in the Baltic Sea region and in Northern Europe more generally (HEININEN et al.). The present chapter turns attention to evidence of the significance of Åland for Germanic language seafarers as reflected in some place names associated with the Åland Islands.

¹ “veko från sin plats och lemnade roddbänkarne åt en ny afdelning”.

The Toponymy in Geographical and Historical Context

The Åland Islands are situated roughly forty kilometres from the coast of Sweden and, in the Viking Age, the easternmost of Åland's major inhabited islands was separated from the mainland of Finland by some 80 kilometres through an archipelago. Sailing routes from the coast of Sweden across the channel known as the Sea of Åland and from there via the archipelago seem to have been established already in ca. 1500 BC (Siiräinen 2003: 58–59). It is probable that such routes in the Viking Age ultimately have at least some degree of continuity since that time rather than being periodically 'rediscovered'. Once across the Sea of Åland, it is probable that there were two major sea routes: one along the southern parts of the archipelago branching also towards the Gulf of Finland, and the other shortcutting across the north-western parts of Åland and the archipelago toward the Ostrobothnian coast of Finland (HEININEN et al., esp. *Maps 4 & 5*). Although the sailing routes themselves may have had long-term continuity, the degree of activity along the routes fluctuated considerably over time. Shortly prior to the Viking Age, there appears to have been a significant rise in economic activity in the Ladoga region of Karelia, which became a centre for contact and trade through networks extending to the east, west, north and south. Scandinavians played a central role in connecting these networks to the rest of Northern Europe as the Eastern Route became an open channel of trade.

The opening of these trade networks was not exclusive to Scandinavians: it appears to have motivated immigration from western Finland to the shores of Lake Ladoga already across the eighth century (Uino 1997: 174–179). These immigrants can be assumed to have followed indicators of potential economic or social gain to the east. The precise nature of this emerging environment remains uncertain, but Scandinavians clearly played a significant role in the founding of the trading centre Staraya Ladoga (Old Norse *Aldeigjuborg* ['Fortified Town of Ladoga']²), which can be given a *terminus ante quem* of AD 753 according to dendrochronological evidence (Kuz'min 2008). The Scandinavians seem to have traded mainly in furs and weapons. However, changing situations to the south led to a rather rich and rapid opening of fur trade networks which carried a flow of Islamic silver into the Baltic Sea region at roughly the beginning of the Viking Age (Talvio 2014; HEININEN et al.; cf. Kovalev 2001). This became complementary to other trade of the Scandinavians and may have been an additional draw to the east during the Viking Age (Duczko 2004: 61–64).

² In the Old Norse toponym *Aldeigja* could be etymologically related to 'Ladoga', assuming a metathesis in the first syllable (*La-* > *Al-*), but there is as yet no consensus regarding the etymology of this hydronym (e.g. Janhunen 2009: 204–207).

The opening of the Eastern Route had an invigorating effect on mobility along trade routes via the Gulf of Finland. As an example of this activity, an etymology which can probably be associated with it may be mentioned. The Finnish word *reitti* [‘route’] is first attested as referring to ‘sea routes’ (Häkkinen 2007, s.v. *reitti*; SSA, s.v. *reitti*). As stated in *Suomen sanojen alkuperä* (1992–2000, SSA hereafter) [‘The Origins of Finnish Words’], nautical and maritime connotations are also present in compounds known from the west Scandinavian area, namely the cognate Old Norse *áreitr* [‘section of river course’] and *sjóreitr* [‘confined nautical or lacustrine area’]. As no such maritime use of the Old Swedish cognate *vrēter* [‘furrow, partitioned/delimited area’] (cf. Hofstra & Hahmo 1999: 383) is attested and the significant difference in meaning also indicates that the word may have developed independently for some time, the semantics may be used to suggest a prehistoric dating. With a dating to the Viking Age, the word *reitti* should thus be considered as one of the very oldest Scandinavian loanwords, where an Old East Scandinavian *æi* has been substituted by Early Finnish **ei*.

SSA indicates that the Estonian word *reit* would probably be a separate borrowing from Finnish or from a Swedish dialect. This assessment is probably correct. As shown elsewhere (Schalin 2014c; cf. Hofstra 1985: 48ff.), a substitution with *ei* (rather than Gulf of Finland Finnic **ēi*) of a borrowed Scandinavian *æi* < *ai* cannot be shown to have been productive before the Viking Age in any analogous borrowing. Or in other words, no Proto-Finnic etymology is known to exist, where the reflex of this Scandinavian diphthong would be a correspondence of the Finnish diphthong *ei* and the Estonian diphthong *ei* (rather than *õi*). On the other hand, substitution of Swedish (dial.) *æi*, *ei* and (standard) *ē* with Finnish *ei* became totally dominant from the Middle Ages onwards up until modern times. The probability is therefore high that this loanword *reitti* is neither (much) older nor (much) younger than the Viking Age, a fact that illustrates well the geo-economic context of maritime mobility in those times.

The main sea route from the east via the Gulf of Finland can be assumed to have continued from the Finnish coast along the archipelago and the Åland Islands to the coast of Sweden across the Sea of Åland. Navigation along this route was linked to being able to name and distinguish features of the landscape. Consequently, toponymy can be assumed to have been significant to those sailing this route and to the communication of this route to individuals who had not sailed them before. Put another way, place names were essential to talking about the places that marked the voyage. For example, although Old

Norse saga literature does not offer a single reference to islands of Åland, there is a single reference to *Allanzhaf* ['Sea of Åland'] in the description of a journey sailing from the north-eastern coast of the Gulf of Bothnia through the Sea of Åland and along the coast of Sweden, contained in the version of *Fundinn Noregr* (probably datable to the thirteenth century) that functions as a preface to *Orkneyinga saga*. As far away as Iceland, toponymy of this area was significant to presenting accurate descriptions and information about the events and activities that took place there (cf. AALTO).

As discussed elsewhere in this volume, the language or languages spoken in Åland during the Viking Age present a riddle that may never be resolved (AHOLA et al.). Surprisingly enough, most topographic place names of types that are known to resist change well are demonstrably medieval: for example, the hydronyms of Åland are not very old (L. Hellberg 1987: 233). Toponymy used in seafaring along the Eastern Route could of course be older than the settlement names and those topographic names that were of little use for outside speech communities. Such toponyms would be harbours, stations for naval support and formations visually helpful for navigation (L. Hellberg 1987: 289). It is not self-evident that such names would reflect the terms for these places that were used by the local inhabitants. The names passed on to later generations may have had a primary social use in spatial/geographical orientation rather than being primarily associated with and potentially adapted from local inhabitants. We do not know exactly when the use of pilots started, but it would be reasonable to attribute the need for pilots to later medieval types of cargo ships with a greater draught and see it as a motivator for the later and the settlement of the hazardous archipelago east of mainland Åland. Whatever the case may be, this toponymy still has potential to produce information about the perceptions of people who used it. In the present case, this information will be considered for its potential indications of the significance of the Åland Islands in seafaring and navigation and its historical continuities.

Early Toponyms of Åland and Perceptions of Åland from the Sea

All four names of naval stations mentioned in the in the thirteenth-century 'Danish Itinerary', contained in the *Liber census Danie* by king Valdemar II (Schalin 2014b), would qualify as good candidates for old names. *Linaböta* (now *Lemböte*) was a navigational station and early medieval harbour site. This site visually provides a crucial landmark for the navigational approach from the open sea. The names *Lemböte* and associated island-name *Lemland* present

complex and important issues that will be left aside for concentrated discussion in a separate section. *Fyghelde* (now *Föglö*) was also a navigational station, while *Thiycækækarl* (now *Kökar*) was a landmark navigational station and early medieval harbour site. The fourth is *Iurima* (now *Jurmo*), an island incorporated in modern times into *Korpo* in Åboland, which was a visible landmark and sheltered harbour that provided an alternative access to/from the open sea, bypassing mainland Åland. The Danish Itinerary also mentions *Mare Alandh* [‘The Sea of Åland’]. The ‘Sea of Åland’ is later attested as *Ålands hav* and *Abvenmeri*, now *Abvenanmeri*. The Icelandic example noted above shows the form with *haf* roughly synchronous with the Danish Itinerary, although the phonetic structure of the first syllable behind the transcription is uncertain.³ In any case, customary habits for the formation of names allow us to infer that the later established toponym *Alandh* (attested 1376; cf. Latin *Alandia* 1281), cognate with *Åland* as known today, presumably referred to the islands or an island already at the time when ‘Sea of Åland’ became established. The compounding genitive *-s* in this nautical name testifies to the fact that *-land* in the insular name *Alandh* is grammatically singular, rather than plural. The complexities surrounding the toponym *Alandh* will also be left for a concentrated discussion in the penultimate section. All together, the Danish Itinerary therefore presents us with four relevant naval stations, the hydronym of the channel separating Åland from the coast of Sweden, and – by implication – a macrotoponym for Åland as an island or otherwise geographically (and perhaps politically) defined space.

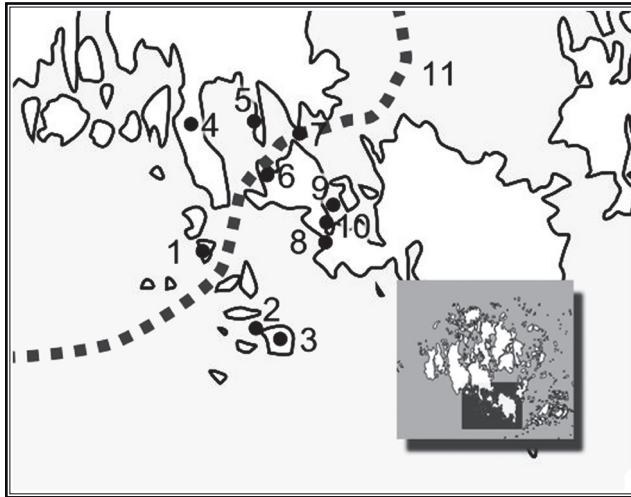
In addition to the names in the Danish Itinerary, we should mention a few more, all discussed by Lars Hellberg (1987: 238ff.), namely *Eckerö*, *Geta*, *Hammarland*, *Lemland* and *Slemmern* as well as *Järsö*, *Skedholm* and *Styrö*. The

³ Vowel length was not normally marked and it cannot be certain that the doubling of the following consonant was phonetically significant or if so in what way, thus “Allannzhaf” could potentially be read as, for example, *Alands haf*, *Allands haf*, *Ålands haf*, *Allands haf*, or possibly even *Qlands haf* or *Qllands haf*. This problematizes the use of this attestation in etymological investigation of Åland. However, even if the phonetic reconstruction were secure, the example would be methodologically problematic because it appears as an exceptional toponym in a more generally exceptional text. *Fundinn Noregr* presents general geographical knowledge of the Gulf of Bothnia region and also includes the only use in Old Norse saga literature of the ethnonym *Lappir* [‘Lapps’] (associated with use in eastern language areas) with reference to the inhabitants of the Scandinavian Peninsula where *Finnar* [‘Finns’ (= Sámi)] is expected in West Norse (cf. AALTO). The exceptional features of this text leave it uncertain even whether the content knowledge was in fact established in Icelandic culture or linked somehow to the east (e.g. acquired through contacts from travel or trade). If the toponym was unusual for Icelanders, its recorded form could reflect folk-etymologization or even mythologization that could make a peculiar or unrecognizable element meaningful (e.g. *Al-lands haf* [‘Sea of Everything-Land’], *Á-land* [‘River-Land’] or *Q(l)lands haf* [‘Sea of Ale-Land’]; cf. *Kven-land*, interpreted owing to homonymy as ‘Land of Women’).

last three of these have potential etymologies with archaic content. A possible etymology for the first part of *Järsö* would be *Jarl-* [‘earl; noble chieftain’], although the name could also have arisen later from a person’s by-name (FSB, s.v. *Järsö*, three occurrences in Lemland, Föglö and Kyrkslätt). Judging from other toponyms and Old Icelandic poetry, **stýrir* is Old East Scandinavian for ‘captain’ and an OESc **skaiþ* was a Viking Age naval ship (well known from Icelandic literature as *skeið*). In Old Swedish, the first word was substituted for *stýrmaþar* [lit. ‘steer-man’] and the *skaiþ* ship-type gave way to new types of ships. If *Styrsö* was just an island to *steer* towards (OSw. *styra*), it would be difficult to explain the compounding in genitive case. However, one *Skedö* (*Sked Holmen* 1706) in Ekenäs has been interpreted in quite a different way (Westman 1935, s.v. *Skedö*) so the etymology remains uncertain.

The fact that would favour the older alternative etymologies for some of these names is that they are concentrated in a small area (south of present day Mariehamn) where a ship approaching from the Mälaren region coming from the southwest would have to pass in order to continue past the stations of *Lemböte*, *Föglö* and *Kökar*, and then further past *Aspäsund*, *Ørsund* and *Hangethe* into the Gulf of Finland and towards Staraya Ladoga off of Lake Ladoga. A route towards Vakka-Suomi (an area in the north of Finland Proper, roughly the mainland of Finland adjacent to the main archipelago to the north) and on to the west coast of Finland would also, before turning to the northeast, have passed these three islands leaving the bay *Slemmern* to the north. *Slemmern* is also one of the few names in Åland that, according to Lars Hellberg (1987: 235ff.), could be from the Iron Age. The large island *Lemland*, which appears to share the first part of its name with *Lemböte* hill, chapel and harbour, would then be seen to the south (for arguments that the route passed north of Lemböte, see Zilliacus 1994: 55ff.). When approaching this archipelago from the southwest on the open sea of the Sea of Åland, important landmarks for a helmsman to sight on his left would have been the southern tip of another large island of that time, where the parish of *Hammarland* is today situated. The characteristic south point qualifies well as an Old East Scandinavian *hamarr* [‘protruding rocky cape’] and is today called *Hammarudda*. Within a relatively small area, there are thus a few names that are all relevant to seafarers, all situated by the same sea lane, and more than one of them (especially *Hammarland*, *Styrsö*, *Lemböte*, *Lemland*) could be older than the twelfth century.

Of the names mentioned in the Danish Itinerary *Thiycækær* has a near-transparent etymology based on a perceptibly characteristic thick (or ‘fat’) *-kær* [‘round cliff’] (FSB, s.v. *Kökar*). There is, however, no consensus on which cliff



Map 1. Selected toponyms along the approach from Mälaren to Lumparn according to a reconstructed Viking Age shore line (following Tomtlund 2005: 15).

Key: 1. Styrösö; 2. Skedholm; 3. Järsö; 4. ‘Longnes’; 5. Kalmarnäs; 6. Lemböte; 7. Lemström; 8. Älvik; 9. Västerviken; 10. Labbsund; 11. Lumparn.

this would refer to (for a discussion, also on some Estonian names, see Zilliacus 1994: 60ff.). The name *Fyghelde* is quite obscure and without a convincing interpretation. The first element could contain an Old East Scandinavian word **fygli* derived from *fugl* [‘bird’]. The cognate derivative is attested in West Scandinavian with a meaning of ‘bird trapping’ (FSB, s.v. *Föglö*). The residual element *-de* is reminiscent of notoriously difficult dental suffixes in a number of coastal and archipelago names, including attestations for names such as *Jersijda* for *Järsö* and *Hangethe* for *Hangö*, mentioned later in this chapter (other relevant names *Narigeth* - *Naissaar* and *Dageida* - Gutnish *Dagaiþ* - Estonian *Hiumaa* are mentioned in Schalin 2014b). The first element of the name *Jurmo*, a name which also occurs in another location in Eastern Åland, defies interpretation. The similarities with Baltic *jura* [‘sea’] are perhaps coincidental, especially as the name is used for two very different locations, and the possibility that it contains a short form of the name *Georgius* is impossible to verify or refute (FSB, s.v. *Jurmo*; Schalin 2014b cf. HEIKKILÄ, *Map 1*).

The name *Geta* refers to the northernmost island of Åland, which most importantly exposes some of the highest hills in the region, reaching an altitude of 107 metres above sea level. There are two competing interpretations that

have been under discussion. The primary one is a place where goats (OSw *gēter*) graze. The suffix could be Iron Age or medieval (L. Hellberg 1987: 211ff.). Lars Huldén has discussed the possibility that the same appellative present in the name *Vargata* in northern Åland (attested in oblique case as *Wargatto* in 1367) could be behind the name. On the basis of early attestations like *Getu* (appr. 1325), *Ghoto*, *Goto* (1328) he assumes a weak feminine derivate from OESc *gat* [‘hole’], known from Icelandic and East Scandinavian dialects (FSB, s.v. *Geta*). This would be a seafarers’ name like many of the other old names in Åland and would make perfect sense if the naming basis was a narrow passage, such as the one that at the time separated today’s Geta from Åland proper at Höckböle. Yet, while this explanation solves the phonological difficulties concerning the oldest attestations, it creates others regarding the younger ones. These difficulties may well be solved by assuming a folk etymological levelling with the word for ‘goat’ (FSB, s.v. *Geta*). This interpretation is undoubtedly the most powerful presented so far.

Concerning the name *Eckerö*, suffice to say that it contains the Old East Scandinavian word **æik* [‘oak’] in genitive case and this reflects an archaic non-syllabic form of the genitive ending belonging to originally monosyllabic stems. According to Lars Hellberg (1987: 210ff.), it need not, despite this, be older than the twelfth century. Considering that the island is large, visible and relevant to navigation and that the compositional genitive ending is not attested in Old Swedish, it is however probably more economical to accept the indication of old age (Edlund 1988: 167).⁴

Although it is possible that all of these terms *could* be as old as the Viking Age, the individual toponyms can only be assessed according to relative degrees of probability. When looking across these names, however, certain points become observable. First, the term ‘Sea of Åland’ is doubtless relevant to seafarers. It may be hypothesized that the beginning of the Sea of Åland could be recognized by some type of landmarks when sailing along the coast of Sweden, at which point ships could steer onto open water with reasonable hope of reaching Åland. A concentration of arguably older names can be identified with a particular seafaring route that penetrates the Åland Islands from the southwest around the north of the island of Lemland. The names in the Danish Itinerary maintain references to major islands relevant to a sailing route along the south

⁴ The name of *Ekerö* village in the province of Nyland is in any event likely to be younger. On the basis of its first attestations, it must be reconstructed as **Eke-ryd*, which highlights the possibility that whole names may be transferred by settlers from Sweden (FSB, s.v. *Eckerö*, ‘Ekerö’). The reconstruction of the compositional suffix would in this case depend on dialectal considerations.

of Åland and along the south side of the archipelago (*Föglö, Kökar*) while other toponyms thought to be of great age are for *Hammarland* and *Eckerö*, which would potentially be the first parts of Åland sited when approaching from the southwest or more directly from the west. *Geta* stands out among these names as associated with a promontory on the northern coast of Åland that can be inferred by its natural features to have been relevant to seafarers, but which would have been associated with a different sailing route (see HEININEN et al.), and *Jurmo* holds potential as an alternative approach from the open seas of the central parts of the Baltic Sea to mainland Finland. Although only some of these names may be datable to the Viking Age, it warrants an initial observation that these names have potential for especial significance for seafarers.

The Case of *Lemböte* and the Island of *Lemland*

The second element in *Lemland* certainly means ‘large island’ or ‘land mass visible from the open seas’ exactly as in the names *Hammarland* and *Lumparland*. The name *Lemböte* has certainly received its second element from one of its characteristic high cliffs (*böte* means ‘a site for lighting a beacon’⁵). We should be able to accept as reasonable the assumption that the naming of the island *Lemland* has a causal relationship with the naming of *Lemböte*, which, with its harbour and chapel, was very important for navigation. This relationship puts a big question mark on the spelling of the three attestations of *Lynæbotæ*, *Linæbotæ* and *Lynabeta* in the Danish Itinerary (for the text, see Gallén 1993: 51). In addition to the more general doubts regarding the reliability of the spelling attributed by Lars Huldén (1982: 101) to Ivar Modéer, it should be stressed that, while the name *Lemböte* could of course have arisen from a form with an *-n-* in the second syllable, the name *Lemland* cannot be explained in the same way. The expected outcome of an *-n-* in **Linaböte* should, after syncope of the second syllable and the assimilatory effect of the following *-b-*, indeed be an *-m-* and would conform to the attestations *Lymböth* (1492; *Lemböte* 1537). However, the oldest attestations of *Lemland* unambiguously show that the nasal was *-m-* already before the syncope of the medial syllable and as early as 1431: *Lymeland*, cf. *Lemmalanda* 1492, 1499, 1505, *Lymmalanda* 1492, *Lemeland* 1537, *Leemeland* 1539 *Lemland* 1544 (Huldén 1982: 101; FSB, s.v. *Lemböte*, *Lemland*).

To interpret the two names in mutual isolation would be methodologically flawed, but a slight chance must be left open for an additional possibility of

⁵ For a discussion of *böte* as a naming element, see Huldén 2012: 238ff.

some kind of levelling between two, previously distinct elements (i.e. *Lem-* and **Lim(ma)-* or **Lin(na)-*). The observation that the syncope has not affected the two names synchronously seems to be new: *Lymböth* seems to have lost its medial syllable in 1492 at the (very) latest, whereas the spelling of *Lemland* is definitely not bisyllabic before the 1540s. This chronological difference of two human generations could be consistent with an assumption that **Lim(ma)böte* or **Lin(na)böte*, either had a heavy root syllable, with the well-known automatic consequence that the medial syllable was weaker and more prone to syncope, or no medial syllable at all, whereas **Limaland* had a light root syllable, with the well-known automatic consequence that the medial syllable carried stronger emphasis and was less prone to syncope. This would mean that **Limaland* most likely contained an Old Swedish word *limber* [‘branch, twig; member, limb’ (in the transferred sense of ‘peninsula’ or of ‘inlet’)] in genitive plural (where no intrusive *-b-* occurs): ‘the island of the many peninsulas’ or ‘the island of the many inlets’. By contrast, *Lemböte* either contained the same word in a so-called ‘stem compound’ corresponding to ‘inlet island’ or ‘peninsula island’, or it contained a completely unrelated word with a heavy root syllable.

The latter alternative for *Lemböte* would open up a possibility that the first element is a reminiscence of the Finnish word *linna* [‘hill fort’], as once suggested by Lars Huldén. This possibility is, however, as narrow as a needle’s eye because neither the attestation in the Danish Itinerary nor subsequent attestations have any reflex of the etymological cluster *-tn-*, which is preserved in Vepsian and Ludic (SSA, s.v. *linna*) and which requires a reconstruction **litna* at least up until North Finnic, probably with preserved pronunciation into the medieval period. As seen from Huldén’s (1982: 100ff.) presentation, this is by no means the only Finnish word that may come to mind, but it is without doubt a most intriguing one. Other possibilities mentioned are *lehmä* [‘cow’], *lemi* [‘mire’] and *lemme* (dial.) [‘waterlily’], some of which may or may not have reflexes in the borrowed names *Lemnäs* (in Kimito), *Lemlax* (in Pargas) and *Lemmon* (in Houtskär). Interpretations based on these borrowed elements unfortunately carry the same difficulties as the autochthonous interpretation but add no new economy with regard to the assumptions around the naming. In fact, they have the drawback that they do not allow for the variation between *limb-* and *lima-* which neatly conforms to the attested data and provides a better parallelism between the two names. The autochthonous interpretation also fits better in the picture of seafaring names in the area.

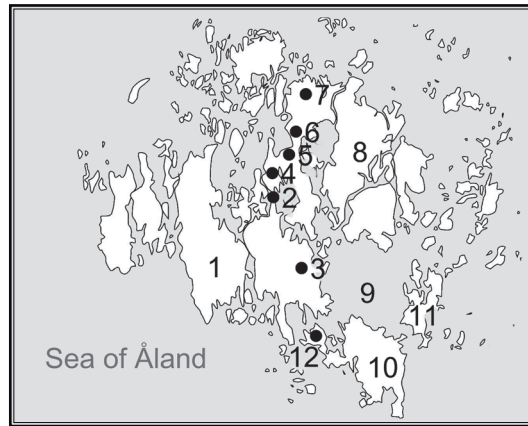
When considering *Lemland* and *Lemböte*, the best economy of assumptions would undoubtedly be achieved if we assume that **Limaland* has its first

element in plural, because it has many inlets used by seafarers as harbours in its essential north-western parts (see *Map 1* above for a map with an approximation of Viking age shorelines) and *Limböte* was the ‘inlet beacon hill’. In that case, a logically interdependent naming basis is more easily conceivable if at least either of the two cognate names (whichever is the younger one of the two) was given at a time after the smaller island, where the important harbour, chapel and *Lemböte* beacon hill were situated, was perceived as having merged with the main island, called *Lemland*. Even with due consideration given to all the uncertainties around the uneven rise of the sea level and the exact pace of the postglacial lift of the bedrock, one might state with a sufficient margin of confidence that the perceived merger of the two islands could not have happened before the last quarter of the first millennium. Ekman (1996: 117–118) estimates that the shore displacement in the Lumparn area has in one millennium amounted to 5.5 mm annually with an error margin of +/- 0.8 mm.⁶ According to the recently published elevation model raster of the National Land Survey of Finland, the isthmus between *Västerviken-Labbsund* and *Älvik* (see *Map 1* above) hardly reaches an elevation of 6 metres above sea level today. With the assumption of a 5.6 mm rise +/- 0.8 mm, this would give a *terminus post quem* for the naming at a point in time somewhere between AD 700 and AD 1050. The naming is therefore hardly conceivable in the context the sixth-century settlement and more plausible in the context of the navigation needs on the sailing route to Staraya Ladoga, founded in the mid-eighth century and a burgeoning center for trade by the beginning of the Viking Age.

The Name *Jomala* and the Missing Name for the Largest Island

Studying the elevation curves for this sea lane area, it becomes evident that only one major island does not have a name that has been identifiable in extant

⁶ The more recent pace for the last century at *Lemström* by the modern shipping channel in the corner of the Lumparn area is, according to Ekman (1996: 116), only 4.57 mm annually, an order of magnitude that is well in line with contemporary and newer publications (Kakkuri 1997: 101–102; Kylli 2001: 25–28; Saaranen 2005: 203). The maps presenting 4–5 mm annually for Åland are not to be confused with maps containing numbers in the range of 6 mm annually, which consistently applies to the crustal uplift that is measured against the Earth’s center of mass as opposed to the sea level. For the last millennium, however, the rate of shore displacement exceeded the pace during the last century, the difference amounting quite neatly to some 1 mm annually, measured against the sea level. This is due both to a gradual slowing down of the crustal uplift (as measured against the Earth’s center of mass) and a more recent speeding up of eustatic sea level rise. An average of 5.5 mm/annum in the last millennium for the Lumparn area, which is given by Ekman (1996: 116), and which would correspond to 5.6 mm for *Lemböte*, can be checked against a more updated theoretical analysis by Pässe (2001, *passim*; see in particular illustrations applied to Stockholm and Olkiluoto near Åland, p. 24) and subsequent discussions on refining his model (Pohjola et. al. 2011, *passim*).



Map 2. An outline of the Åland archipelago with shorelines variably⁷ approximating the situation in the Viking Age (Source: Tomtlund 2005: 15).

Key: 1. Hammarland; 2. Åttböle; 3. Jomala; 4. Finström; 5. Åsbacka; 6. Kroklund; 7. Pettböle; 8. the 'main island' in Saltvik; 9. Lumparn; 10. Lemland; 11. Lumparland; 12. Lemböte.

historical records. This one island was the largest and most central in the framework of the whole Åland archipelago, consisting of three land masses connected by two narrow isthmuses and reaching a north–south extension of more than 34 kilometres. The largest of the three landmasses extended far south and covered most of the central and eastern parts of the modern parish *Jomala*, including the isthmus *Näset*, which ends in the modern *Lemström* shipping channel, the peninsula *Kalmarnäset*, opposite *Lemböte*, and the peninsula where *Mariehamn* is situated today.⁸ The two latter peninsulas enclose the bay *Slemmern* and the

⁷ The map in most locations is close to the 5 metre elevation curve, corresponding to the late Viking Age shoreline. One should however note that, at the time, the largest land mass discussed here and the 'main island' in Saltvik were connected by an isthmus south of Strömma hamlet, which does not show well on this map. The isthmus, which today reaches an elevation of almost eight metres above sea level, must have risen from the sea around the sixth century. Thus almost the whole of Saltvik had merged with the main landmass. This isthmus is also discussed by Olav Ahlbäck (1952: 170ff.). In addition, the island between Hammarland and Åttböle had in the Viking Age merged with the main island to the southeast.

⁸ In the beginning of the first millennium, the southernmost landmass became connected in the north by an isthmus reaching today's Åttböle in *Finström* and accreting that way to most of the southern, central and eastern parts of that parish. At approximately the same time, these parts of *Finström* were connected to a large island reaching north to present day *Stålsby*, *Pettböle* and *Toböle* over the heights between *Kroklund* and *Daglösa* in the western parts of present day *Saltvik*. This happened when a sound connecting the opposite bays named *Vandöfjärden* and *Ödkarviken* today dried as result of the uplift.

last of these is adjacent to the three islands with old names discussed above (compare *Map 1* and *Map 2*).

For this huge, quite twisted and indented but contiguous island, no names have survived, neither names referring to it as a whole, nor names for any of its three main land masses. A seafarer sailing along the route past *Lemström* and *Lemböte* would definitely have needed a name for that ‘land’, regardless of whether the name would have referred to the southernmost land mass only or to the extended complex uniting the three land masses.

The only surviving naming element on the southernmost landmass with a good claim to be older than the twelfth century is the name of the parish *Jomala*. The name may be explained as deriving from hypothetical Scandinavian elements only after making unparalleled combinations of language material that is remote in both time and space (Granlund 1982: 81; L. Hellberg 1987: 42). Most relevant arguments on the question of whether or not *Jomala* ultimately has its name from the Finnish word *jumala* [‘god’], have been extensively discussed in an article by Åke Granlund (1982). Many of the parallels for using the element *jumala* in Finnish names indicate abnormal formations in nature, supposedly with divine connotations (Granlund 1982: 82).

In addition to several names containing the element *Jomal-* in two north-western parishes in Åland itself, there are four very interesting parallels on the south coast of Finland, which indicate narrow inlets or passages in the archipelago. Two of these are the Swedish names *Jomalvik* in Snappertuna and *Jomalsund* in Ruotsinpyhtää. Two are identical Finnish names *Jumalniemi*, both in the Kymi archipelago, where Swedish has also been used in the past. The apparent semantic differences with relation to many attestations in the inland Finnish language area might indicate that the Swedish names were directly transferred derivatives from Åland (S. Andersson 1964–65: 299). A more fascinating but complicated hypothesis, however, is that the element *Jomal-* had been (or was occasionally) borrowed from Finnish and, in the coastal regions, acquired a specialized function as a technical appellative in the Swedish language, perhaps referring to a type of signpost used in navigation to mark inlets. In such a case, the loan would be suggestive of the technical uses having some type of connection to Finnish religion.⁹ The word would for some limited period of time have

⁹ The religion of speakers of dialects of Early Finnish presents a number of complex problems. The changes in burial practices ca. AD 1000–1150 (cf. Huurre 1979: 224 and discussion in Sjöstrand; Ahola & Frog 2014) could reflect a vernacularization of Christianity – i.e. assimilating elements and systems of elements considered ‘Christian’ into the vernacular religion rather than displacing one religion with another as exclusive categories (see Frog). Consequently, it is impossible to anticipate how such a hypothetical loan might relate to religious practice: it could

been productive as a naming basis for such sites in navigation (Huldén 2012: 243ff.; FSB, s.v. *Jomala*). This possibility is stimulating for its possible religious connotations of how such sites were used by the Finns (or at least concerning those sites from which the naming practice would have derived).

The possibility that a Finnic language theonym or noun associated with religion could have been applied as a naming element is not unreasonable. Scandinavian familiarity with the term *jumala* is attested as a loan treated as a proper name *Jómali* (with manuscript variants “*Jómáli*”, “*Jómale*”) in the thirteenth-century *Ólaf’s saga helga* [‘The Saga of St. Ólafr’] (Aðalbjarnarson 1945: 294) and in the later *Bósa saga ok Herrauðs* [‘The Saga of Bósi and Herrauðr’] (Jiriczek 1893: 25, 29). The attestations are identified with the so-called ‘Bjarmians’ on the White Sea (cf. AALTO), but it is within a narrative plot that can be described as a legend type (cf. af Klintberg 2010) to which it may have been attached (Frog 2014). In practical terms, this means that the theonym *Jómali* could be a loan from potentially any Finnic group and used with reference to any appropriate-seeming group without necessarily giving an accurate representation of how that group referred to a particular god (or even what language they used). Both narrative accounts describe raids on temples of the god *Jómali*. These accounts should be considered fictionalized.

For the present discussion, this is relevant because it demonstrates a loan of a Finnic **jumala* > Norse *Jómali* and that this term was used in discourse surrounding Finnic religions. Moreover, these accounts designate the idol of the temple as *Jómali* (e.g. as though embodying the god). The representations of temples in these accounts may be modelled on Christian Icelanders’ imaginings of pre-Christian Scandinavian religion rather than offering an ethnographic representation of Finnic religion. However, the lexical identification of the idol with the theonym reflects a Scandinavian perspective that is relevant here: the symbolic object of Finnic worship could be designated by the theonym *Jómali*. Consequently, it becomes quite conceivable that, where that symbolic object was a natural feature, it could – at least hypothetically – be designated *Jómali* by Scandinavians (equating to identifying it as a sacred place). Such use could easily manifest a generative usage in referring to sites with a relevant perceivable feature irrespective of whether the particular feature was in fact linked to local religious practice. Unfortunately, however, there is no way to test such a hypothesis and it therefore remains at a level of speculation.

reflect a usage connected with the common noun *jumala* [‘god’] or could also reflect a distinctive use of a theonym *Jumala* [‘God’], possibly under influence from Christianity (Frog 2014).

A hypothesis of a permanently borrowed appellative is problematized, however, by the fact that a similar phone [u] or [ʊ] is used in Swedish dialects in all three regions. Contrary to expectation, these phones do not represent a regular set of correspondences. The phone [ʊ] in the pronounced name *Jöm:ala* in Åland would require the correspondence ***Ju:malsund* in Snappertuna and ***Ju:malsund* in Ruotsinpyhtää, whereas attested *Jömsund* in Ruotsinpyhtää would require ***Jömalvi:k* in Snappertuna and ***Jöm:ala* in Åland. This last set of correspondences has been extensively discussed and demonstrated recently (Schalin 2014a, *passim*). The first element of the attested form *Jömalvi:k* in Snappertuna in fact corresponds to nothing among inherited words and must therefore be either a young borrowing from Finnish or an adaptation either to a known Finnish word or to a known transferred name from Åland. In addition, the oldest attestations for the Ålandic name do not correspond to modern pronunciation. Therefore no Swedish appellative can be reconstructed for Old Swedish and the name must have been repeatedly and separately borrowed from or adapted to Early Finnish relatively late, say in the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries.

Most interpretations of the name *Jomala* in Åland depart from a group of names within that parish containing that same element *Jomal-* as a first element. The names are located in a peripheral location of that parish around a village *Jomalby* ['Jomala Village']. The parish has potentially received its name either after a larger village, one part of which still carries that name (L. Hellberg 1987: 41), or ultimately from one of the terrain names, which in a parallel development gave name to the village (Granlund 1982; FSB, s.v. *Jomala*; for a more detailed discussion and an original new suggestion see SJÖSTRAND).

All the solutions above seem to call for an explanation of some further archipelago names *Jomale-/Jomala-* to the west across the Sea of Åland as somehow secondary to the names discussed here that are in more eastern locations. These names are found clustered in a group in the north of Gräsö socken, Östhammar kommun, in Northern Roslagen just opposite Åland. The primary name in Gräsö seems at first sight to be a sheltered harbour (very much analogous to the above cases) also called *Jomala* or *Jomalestrand*. If this micronym (or one of the other names in Gräsö) would turn out to be more significant than its first appearance and was to receive a good primary etymology of its own, all the Swedish names east from there could certainly be explained as derivatives transferred with settlers from Roslagen. PER OLOF SJÖSTRAND points out that the route between Southwest Finland and Roslagen did not involve mobility and settlement only from west to east: Roslagen exhibits a concentration of

toponyms with the element *Finn-*, not found generally distributed through Sweden, which suggests that Finnic populations also resettled in Sweden. Precisely when this occurred might be questioned when the route of contact has such a long history. This should not be misconstrued as indicating the Finnic speakers carried the *Jomale-/Jomala-* element into the toponymy of Roslagen, but it at least warrants consideration that the presence of Finnic populations, however marginal, may have given relevance to the toponym in this area – if, that is, the element was associated with Finnic linguistic-cultural groups. This would, however, be consistent with the attestation of the toponymic element precisely here rather than being found more widely along sailing routes, for example along the coasts of Sweden. The limited distribution of the term also raises the question of whether, following the hypothesis of a connection to a Finnic religion, it may have been associated with Finnic groups quite broadly or was more closely linked to a narrower ethnic identity of ‘Finns’. A quite logical naming basis could also simply be that the landing site *Jomalestrand* was associated with ‘people from Jomala’. The questions surrounding the parallel toponyms in Roslagen have not received much attention, if any, so far.

The Names *Åland* and *Abvenanmaa*

The large island of Åland which has no recorded name of its own is precisely alongside the Viking Age sea route and must have been well known to Viking Age seafarers. As Lars Huldén has pointed out (FSB, s.v. *Jomala*), it is unexpected that the name of the island could have fallen into oblivion without leaving a trace (even in a single micronym). The vanished name of the whole island could hardly have been *Jomala* originally, because the village *Jomalby* [‘Jomala Village’] should not have been named after either a parish or an ancient island, to which its location is peripheral. This problem brings us to the origins of the names *Åland* and *Abvenanmaa*, which JS has discussed in two other articles (Schalin 2008; 2014b). There are three main problems regarding this pair of names and their solutions are in a way intricately intertwined, which make solving the riddle of these names a case study in economizing unnecessary assumptions.

The first question is whether there is a phonetic relationship between the first element in each of the two names. This has commonly been assumed as nearly certain because these two names are a more or less perfect phonological match, assuming that one name was phonologically adapted from the other well before the Viking Age. Sound laws in Scandinavian account well for the drastic shortening in *Å-land* as well as for the precise quality of the long vowel. However,

taking this perfect match as a starting point leads to two other problems that lack an elegant solution. Firstly, the early date required by phonology would situate the loan in a period when the latter part *-land* would have meant ‘large island’ or ‘land mass visible from the open sea’. A naming basis like ‘province’, which would correspond to the referent of the name today, seems anachronistic for a time significantly prior to the Viking Age (Ståhl 1964: 13). Secondly, the first element of the name would have had a primary meaning ‘river’ in Germanic. However, the Åland Islands are characterized by anything but rivers, either as a whole or considering its constituent islands individually. This word has taken a meaning of ‘stream, brook’ in Faroese and Dalecarlian (Kroonen 2013, s.v. **ahwō-*; cf. also the meaning ‘stream’ in Old English), but even this sense does not seem to serve well as a naming basis in the Åland Islands.

The problem of reconciling the name with a semantic field related to rivers may be solved by assuming that the borrowing direction is from North Finnic rather than the reverse. JS has elaborated this possible basic solution elsewhere (Schalin 2008; cf. Heikkilä 2014: 145ff.; HEIKKILÄ), based on an idea first put forward by Lars Huldén (1976),¹⁰ but which he later has set aside in favour of his preferred alternative. JS there explained the Finnic loan original, namely the precursor of the name *Ahveen-maa*, attested in 1833, as an early borrowing into an appellative meaning ‘islands, archipelago’ from a Proto-Germanic lexeme today represented by Sw. *ö* [‘island’] ~ Icl. *ey* [‘island’]. The borrowing would have occurred before the development of PGmc **g^w* > *-w-* in this word. Naming based on this Germanic appellative (or in some cases its synonymous weak stem), which in plural appears to have meant ‘a cluster of islands’, is attested at least in Scandinavian languages for many localities, one further north along the west coast of Finland and several occurrences across Sweden, always appearing in the plural (*Öja*), as well as (*Vestmanna*)*eyjar* off the coast of Iceland, colloquially called *Eyjar*.

The Middle Proto-Finnic suffix **-eš* > **-efj* > *-eh* may well have been added as a reflex of the plural ending, or spontaneously as in the name *Häme*, resulting in (late) MPF **Afjvefj*. The suffix is certainly attested in (1833) *Ahveen-maa* whereas the earlier attestation of *Ahuen maa* is ambiguous as vowel length was not marked in spelling at that time. A reborrowing of early Northern Finnic **Ahveh-* [‘the archipelago region’] around the sixth century could have resulted in OSw. *Ålandh*, on condition that the substitution of the second syllable

¹⁰ Huldén himself (1982: 95) gives some of the credit retroactively to Heikki Ojansuu.

(probably **Ahwa-* with accommodation to the most common stem vowel for compounds), would not trigger *i*-mutation.

JS has recently reviewed all of the problems involved at greater length elsewhere (Schalin 2014b). His summary concerning the economy of assumptions may be configured as follows.

- (1) If we want to maintain that the phonological match is not a coincidence, this requires accepting that the name is older than just about all the other names in the region.

There of course always remains the possibility that proposition (1) should be rejected, taking the position that the phonological resemblance is more or less coincidental and that the name is not necessarily older than most of the other names in Åland. However, if proposition (1) is pursued, it becomes necessary to:¹¹

- (2a) Accept and explain the unlikely naming basis ‘creek island’ (Ståhl 1964; S. Andersson 1964–65: 290ff.; FSB, s.v. *Jomala*), as well as an additional assumption of a differential treatment of the first element (sound substitution) in relation to the latter (translation)
- (2b) Accept the assumption of a (re)borrowing from Finnish and explain how and when the Finnish name originated, as well as the later annexation of the elements *-land* and *-maa* respectively (Schalin 2008; Heikkilä 2014: 145ff.)
- (2c) Postulate a hypothetical word, derived with a suffix from the same etymon, which might allow a number of the other necessary assumptions to be disposed of (Pipping 1917: 84ff.; Greule 2004: 75ff.)

Or:

- (2d) Postulate an even earlier Pre-Roman Iron Age borrowing, with the shorelines of those times, thus reducing the postulated borrowing events from two to one.

Option (2a) is problematized by the fact that in the myriad of named islands of Sweden and Finland, there is not a single example of a name in which the lexeme Sw. *Å-* or Fi. *Joki-* as a first element would refer to a watercourse on that island (see further Schalin 2008: 26). As already mentioned, this also lacks a good semantic fit as there are no proper rivers on the Åland Islands. Watercourses there are rather brooks than creeks, and these would have been still smaller in

¹¹ References are to sources that defend the respective solutions, not to difficulties implied in this text.

the Iron Age, when they drained smaller watersheds. It is noteworthy that of the three scholars, who have defended that hypothesis each has proposed a different favoured rivulet behind it (Ståhl 1964; S. Andersson 1964–65: 290ff.; FSB, s.v. *Jomala*). In his monograph on toponyms in Åland, Lars Hellberg (1987: 233) deems it “very unlikely” that the name Åland is based on any known stream in that province.

Options (2b) and (2c) suffer from the disadvantage that they require the necessary postulation of extinct appellatives, which is always costly in the economy of assumptions. At a minimum, such an appellative should be backed up by parallels in other toponyms. Option (2b) remains highly dependent on whether an extinct appellative in North Finnic can be derived from other place names or through conjecture from an interpretive reading of one attestation from the late sixteenth century CE of *abuen maan miehett* as the ‘archipelago’s men’ (Schalin 2008: 29ff.; Heikkilä 2014: 145–150; HEIKKILÄ). Some arguments for the hypothetical Finnic appellative have been presented by Mikko Heikkilä (2014: 49; HEIKKILÄ, note 5). An essential part of that argument is a rather hypothetical etymology, namely *Abborrfors* < Old Swedish *Abborafors* (in 1357 CE) < Runic Swedish *Åbhora* < PScand **Aχwebburχōn* ← Early Finnish¹² **Ahveppurha* < Early Finnish **Ahveh-purha*. At least the antiquity of this etymology for a micronym far in the east sticks out somewhat and the sound substitution of the geminate seems *ad hoc*. The gemination itself, postulated for an Iron Age stage of Finnic seems early. For option (2c), Hugo Pipping (1917: 85ff.) has looked for other toponyms with a view to reconstruct a suitable Proto-Scandinavian appellative, but his explanations of two toponyms in Sweden are no longer mentioned in two standard handbooks on the matter (SOL, s.v. *Enåker* & *Jönköping*; Pamp 1988: 62). For the same purpose and working with the same suffix, Albert Greule has compared the name with toponyms in the West Germanic area, which is methodologically farfetched.¹³ Neither option (2b) or (2c) can be complemented by compelling support.

Option (2d) presents the possibility to explore a very different solution to the problem here. This solution can build from the hypothesis that the Scandinavian naming basis included the word meaning ‘island(s)’ for the first element without resorting to an assumption of a borrowing and reborrowing to account for the etymology of the Finnish and Swedish names. At first glance,

¹² Heikkilä here uses “Early Finnish” for a language contemporary with Proto-Scandinavian, it would, in the terminology of this chapter, be approximately the developmental stage called Gulf of Finland Finnic (see Schalin 2014b, following Kallio 2014).

¹³ For some observations on the attempt by Greule, see Schalin 2014b, n. 14.

this could solve much of the semantic problem because islands are abundant and characteristic for the area in the same way that rivers are not. Despite its apparent tautology, a naming basis ‘island of islands’ is plausible in the Baltic where the post-glacial uplift has resulted in shoreline displacement and caused islands to merge into larger entities over time. In the *Ekenäs* archipelago, a formation *Skärlandet* is found: this name literally means ‘Skerry (Is)land’ and its semantics could be elaborated as ‘the large island characterized by accreting skerries’ or ‘the large island of the archipelago (skärgård)’. Another possibility would be a naming basis such as the ‘island of peninsulas’ or the ‘island of the watery meadows’, based on various other well-known meanings of this particular word for island (SEO, s.v. *ö*; VAEO, s.v. *øy*; Kroonen 2013, s.v. **aujō-*).

Following this line of reasoning, the problem that must be solved is the absence of so-called *i*-mutation, which would have to be explained. In theory, there are well-known cases where the expected compositional Proto-Scandinavian suffix *-ja-* is attested as a simple *-i-*, which after a light syllable would not cause *i*-mutation. Whether the known Runic attestations¹⁴ (represent regular or irregular outcomes of sound laws is however controversial (Syrett 1994: 70ff.). It is correspondingly controversial whether the missing *i*-mutation in the Norse name *Haraldr* (ultimately from **Harjawalda-*) is due to a regular shortening into **Hariwalda-* (Janzén 1947: 77ff.). If it is assumed that the correct explanation for these parallels is indeed phonological, as argued by Heikkilä (2014: 117), and that a toponym could have behaved like a personal name, one could in any event not exclude the possible emergence of a Proto-Scandinavian form **awi-landa-*. The expected outcome of this form would have been Åland rather than Öland. An almost perfect parallel is the Jylland-Danish word for ‘female lamb’, namely *ålam* (Nielsen 1985, s.v. *ålam*), which must originate from **awi-lambaz*.¹⁵

The question remains whether there are enough bases to assume the emergence of the form **awi-landa-*. Many compounded names containing this appellative as a first element show another front vowel, regular with regard to *i*-mutation. A major island/province in Sweden carries the name Öland (SOL, s.v. *Öland*) and the ancient Scandinavian name for *Saaremaa* in Estonia is Icelandic *Eysýsla*, Sw. *Ösel*. These names effectively constitute counter-examples to the explanation for the missing *i*-mutation attempted above, unless the name

¹⁴ KJ 136 Tjurkö **kunimu(n)diu**, KJ 96 Stentoften **hAriwoLAfr** KJ 98 Istaby **hAriwolafa**.

¹⁵ The Swedish word *Åda* ‘adult female of *Somateria mollissima*’ most probably originates from a parallel phonologic environment **awipōz* (Bjorvand & Lindeman 2007, s.v. *ær*).

for Åland would have been compounded significantly earlier than the counter-examples. Hence, given a sufficiently high age of the name and considering in particular that the first element in a compound would have to be in so-called stem form (T. Andersson 2012: 42), it is not at all clear which outcome of the sound law called Verner's Law would be expected here. This opens up the first element to be reconstructed as **axi-* < **ax^wja-*, but this sound law would not provide a good original for a Finnic borrowing with *-hv-* and would also require a date for the naming significantly prior to the Roman Iron Age.¹⁶

A slightly less ancient alternative would be provided by a remarkable new contribution on this lexeme published by Sverre Stausland Johnsen. According to Stausland Johnsen (2009: 205ff.), the origin of the derived noun is not denominal and bisyllabic as it has been construed so far. Instead, the noun is based on the feminine form of a now extinct trisyllabic genitival adjective, early Proto-Germanic **ag^w-ia-l* **ag^w-iō-* ['pertaining to water'].¹⁷ Flowing from this, a compounding before the sound law called Sievers' Law would result in the trisyllabic **aw-ia-landa-*. This form would certainly, more than a bisyllabic **awja-landa-*, be exposed to the wear and tear known to affect toponyms, and a shortening to **aw-V-landa* (where 'V' stands for a short vowel of unknown quality) would be likely to occur. Thus, this opens up to a possibility that *Åland* would be compounded before the sound change of Sievers' Law while *Öland* and *Ösel* would be compounded thereafter. However, this model does not provide a good loan original for the Finnic name as the sequence *-g^w-* must have been lost very soon after Verner's Law took effect. The Finnish name *Ahvenanmaa* would, in this case, also have been adapted to conform with the name of the fish species *Ahven(a)* [*perca fluviatilis*] to quite a significant degree. Even with the latter interpretation, the name would be much older than the sixth-century settlement of Åland associated with immigration from Scandinavia (GUSTAVSSON et al.). Considering that the dates of the vast majority of toponyms in Åland are from the medieval period and those with potential to

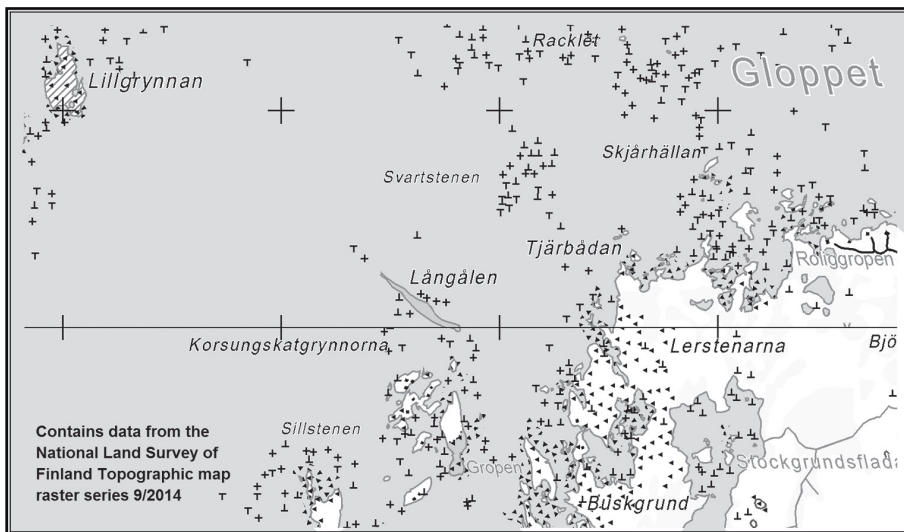
¹⁶ The topography to match would rather than the 7.5 m or even 10 m elevation curve be the curve for (12.5 m or) 15 m. In this case, the naming basis could have been the rather extensive and distinctive 'watery meadows' in front of present-day *Överby*, *Kyrkoby* and *Ingby* on the original southernmost island in *Jomala*. Seafarers would have spotted the distinctive shore to their west after passing some sounds near *Lemström* into the bay *Lumparn*.

¹⁷ Stausland Johnsen argues that the *jō-* suffix as such is not used to form genitival formations but rather abstracts. The meaning of **awjō-*, however, is clearly not an abstract 'waterness', but a regular genitival 'pertaining to water'. Therefore one should take into account that genitival formations are well attested with the similar suffix **-ja-*. These nouns in **-ja-* are originally adjectives that have been substantivized by ellipsis of the noun. If an eclipsed noun was a feminine, the feminine form seems occasionally to have been substantivized. (Johnsen 2009: 205ff.)

be older do not give reason to assume that they significantly antedate the Viking Age (if at all), all interpretations under option (2d) are thus generally rendered highly hypothetical due to their otherwise unparalleled antiquity for this area.

Options (2a–d) all appear problematic in establishing proposition (1), it warrants giving serious consideration to whether proposition (1) is the problem as a base assumption that the relationship between the names must significantly antedate all other names in the region. When this proposition is questioned, the best available Viking Age etymology can be explored without the assumption that the Swedish and Finnish names are phonologically related. Elements for such an etymology are given by Sven Andersson (1964–65: 287ff.; cf. Schalin 2008: 27, n.4), who argues for the significance of the above discussed ancient sailing route stretching from the southwest into the bay of *Lumparn* and for a naming basis analogical to the names *Hammarland*, *Lemland* and *Lumparland*: the very characteristics that have served as a naming basis are visibly displayed to the seafarers on that route. Andersson (1964–65: 296ff.) concludes that the island Åland may have been named after a large esker (or kame) – i.e. a gravel ridge of glaciofluvial origin – and/or a chine (ridge, crest). The element *Ål-* with a reconstructed meaning of ‘esker’ has, according to his sources, given names to at least six parishes in Uppland. Because Andersson makes an attempt to link the same element to the latter part of the name *Jom-ala*, an attempt that may be characterized as quite futile, he is looking for the characteristic esker only in the high grounds of the island. In order to justify the plural declension **Ålaland*, which he deems necessary in order to assume a haplology to **Åland*, he also identifies a second chine, which inconveniently is not an esker at all. In this endeavour, he also fails to mention that in Ostrobothnia the etymologically identical element is known as a naming basis for long narrow reefs, or for skerries of sand and gravel (Karsten 1921–23: 414–416). The name *Laxbådålen* [‘the reef of the salmon skerry’] makes it very difficult to assume a connection to the homonymous ‘eel’ species (FSO-LEX, s.v. *ÅL*) and the etymology for *Ård-* [‘stony capes in Gotland’] also does not compare well. While it would fit the consonants in Ostrobothnia, where *-rd* merges with [-ɽ] postvocally, the vowel is a poor match since the Gutnish element derives from Proto-Scandinavian **-urþ-* (Olsson 1959: 49ff.; 1979: 38ff.) and would therefore have developed into [ōɽ] rather than [ōɽ].¹⁸

¹⁸ Lars Hellberg (1987: 232ff.; cf. Edlund 1988: 168) therefore probably advances a false etymology for the name *Rankgården* as proof of Gutnish settlement, unless that name is a borrowing from Gutnish occurring very late in the Middle Ages.



Map 3. Långålen in Korsnäs.

An extensive and detailed analysis of the etymon *ål-* in some Swedish and Norwegian toponyms was recently published. There, Thorsten Andersson (2012: 40, 49) argues that the correct reconstruction of this element in Scandinavian toponyms is Proto-Scandinavian **anhulō-*.¹⁹ As also represented by Kroonen (2013, s.v. **anhula-*, **anhulō-*), this lexeme derives from the Indo-European root **ank-* < **h₂enk-* [‘bend’], present in the Greek adjective *ανκωλος* [‘bent’] and the noun *ανκωλη* f. [‘strap’] and is cognate with Old Norse *áll/ól* (f.) [‘strap’].²⁰ The oldest meaning assumed on this basis for toponyms has according to Andersson been something extending in a convex shape. In his view, Old Norse *áll* [‘underwater trench; stripe on the back of an animal’] has another etymology, possibly PGmc **ēla*.

The large island in the south of Åland is situated in an area south of the higher rocky hills of the northern islands. During the end of the Ice Age, this has been conducive for the formation of glaciofluvial eskers in the direction of the movement of the glacier.²¹ These are discernible in *Figure 1* as ridges with

¹⁹ The possibility that Finns would have adapted a late Proto-Scandinavian form like **Åbulaland* into *Ahvenanmaa* is of course highly unlikely.

²⁰ The English abstract on p. 27 is somewhat confusing on this point. The original text must be consulted.

²¹ The direction of movement in Åland has been from slightly west of north to slightly east of south, which is different from that in Ostrobothnia, which is seen in *Map 3* as being northwest to southeast.

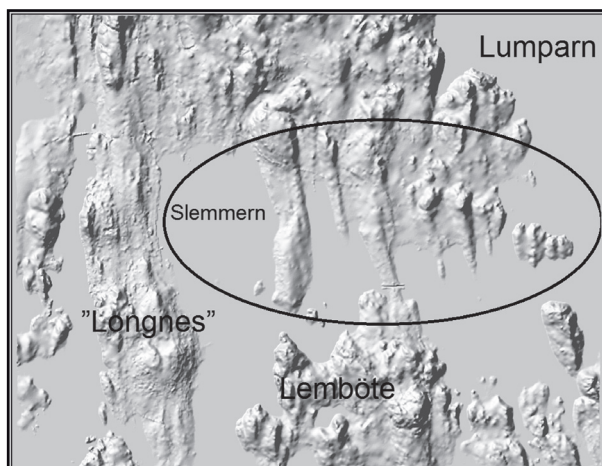


Figure 1. A shaded elevation relief shows the eskers named by the element *Ål*-. (Figure contains data from the National Land Survey of Finland Shaded relief raster series 9/2014.

soft even contours (circled). This map shows that all three peninsulas extending from the large island in the vicinity of *Lemböte*, *Slemmern* and *Styrsö* (the names discussed above in connection with the sailing route) are of this type and there are other smaller ones east of Kalmarnäset. Each of these peninsulas is inclined towards the sea, which is important, because it means that all of them have had underwater partitions during all stages of shore displacement. In fact, most of the reefs in Ostrobothnia, like *Grundålen* i Korsnäs, (FSO-LEX, s.v. *ÅL*), are still submerged reefs probably named not too many centuries ago, while the rapid shore displacement rate in Ostrobothnia strongly suggests that those like *Långålen* have also been named under water. For a seafarer passing between *Åland* and *Lemland*, it must have been important to keep these gravel reefs at a distance when passing through the straits into *Lumparn*. Therefore, this is a most serious candidate for a Viking Age naming basis of *Åland*.

Perspectives

The preceding discussion suggests that Scandinavian languages had an established vocabulary of toponyms associated with the *Åland* Islands that dates back to at least the Viking Age. In addition, there are indications that this vocabulary was enriched during that period. Reservations of uncertainty and probability on many etymologies must, however, be acknowledged, particularly considering the

methodological limitations regarding all ancient place names (Schalin 2014b). Nevertheless, the oldest toponymy linked to the Åland Islands that exhibits archaic content co-occurs with the rise in seafaring activity and the increased significance of trade routes to the Lake Ladoga region in or near the Viking Age. This suggests a ‘big picture’ in which the establishment of major toponymy for this region was in connection to precisely that mobility and trade. This ‘big picture’ remains conditional on the probable dating of individual place names and must be interpreted with equal caution. However, the review here suggests that many of these toponyms were developed by seafarers and continued to be used through the later settlement of these areas. One appellative *reitti* [‘sea or lake route’] borrowed into Finnish from OESc has been addressed, and if not attributable to Åland itself, it warrants discussion here on the merits of being datable approximately to the Viking Age and testifying to the seafaring context so relevant to Åland. The model has a cohesiveness that can be considered to reciprocally support the relative probabilities of individual etymologies discussed.

Whether the oldest names discussed here reflect place names used by inhabitants of Åland already in the Viking Age is an inspiring but open question. It has been argued above that, unlike the big picture in Åboland (and the name *Jurmo*) and further east, none of these older names are of Finnish origin. In addition, an autochthonous origin for the name Åland itself seems probable, even if a sixth-century borrowing from North Finnic cannot be excluded. If autochthonous, it could in fact be a product of the Viking Age, potentially as a testament to its significance to seafaring during this period. The most important name of demonstrably Finnish origin is the name *Jomala*, which is paralleled by some other Finnish names and some referring to ‘Finns’, meaning persons originating from Finland Proper that are discussed by JOONAS AHOLA, FROG and JOHAN SCHALIN and PER OLOF SJÖSTRAND. They are scarce, they typically cluster further north and northeast and nothing suggests that they be older than the twelfth or thirteenth century.

References

Abbreviations

FSB = Finlandssvenska bebyggelsenamn.

FSO-LEX = Finlands svenska ortnamn/namnledslexikon.

KJ 96 = Runic inscription DR 357 (DR357) - Stentoften stone. Available at: <https://abdn.ac.uk/skaldic/db.php?table=mss&cid=15227&view=&val=&cf=runic> (last accessed 1.12.2013).

- KJ 98 = Runic inscription DR 359 (DR359) - Istaby inscription. Available at: <https://abdn.ac.uk/skaldic/db.php?id=19176&if=runic&table=mss&val=&view=> (last accessed 1.12.2013).
- KJ 136 = Runic inscription DR IK184 (DRIK184) - Tjurkö 1 (DR BR75, KJ136). Available at: <https://abdn.ac.uk/skaldic/db.php?id=21757&if=runic&table=mss&val=&view=> (last accessed 1.12.2013).
- SEO= Hellqvist 1980 [1922]: *Svensk etymologisk ordbok*.
- SOL = Wahlberg 2003: *Svenskt ortnamnslexikon*.
- SPNK = Paikkala 2007: *Suomalainen paikannimikirja*.
- SSA = *Suomen sanojen alkuperä* (1992–2000).
- VAEO = Björvand & Lindeman 2007 [2000]: *Våre arveord*.

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