

Summary

The lake name *Skagern* and a group of Norwegian and Swedish *-vin* names

By Lennart Elmevik

Lake Skagern is Sweden's eighteenth largest lake, situated on the boundary between the provinces of Västergötland, Värmland and Närke. The Old Swedish form of its name was *Skapur*. According to Jöran Sahlgren's more or less generally accepted interpretation from 1912, the name is to be understood either as a primary lake name formation, derived with the suffix *-ur* from a Proto-Germanic stem **skap-* 'well forth', and with the sense 'the one that wells forth, purls, rushes or swells'; or as containing an appellative meaning 'lake', formed with the same suffix from the same stem. The present author, like Sahlgren, assumes such a stem to have existed, but regards *Skapur* as formed from an old name, Proto-Scandinavian **Skapō*, for what is now the Letälven, the largest watercourse entering Lake Skagern. This **Skapō*, he believes, is to be understood as containing or derived from a word, formed from **skap-*, with the sense '(large) watercourse'.

According to the author, who thus rescues from oblivion a suggestion made by Sahlgren in his 1912 work, the stem **skap-* also occurs in a word for 'spring' forming the first element of a number of Norwegian and Swedish place-names in *-vin* 'meadow, pasture'. The author is of the view, moreover, that the stem is probably to be found in the word *skadd(a)*, *skodd(a)* 'fog', known from the West Scandinavian languages, with offshoots into western and southern Sweden. This word has previously been linked, *inter alia*, to Gothic *skadus* 'shade, shadow'.