

*Finnveden, Lerike och Replösa. Tre småländska ortnamnsstudier*

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Three Småland place-name studies

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The name *Finnveden*, referring to one of the old ‘lands’ (*folkland*) of Småland, is probably a compound, containing the stem form of the word *finn(e)* in its first and *ede* in the sense of ‘way, road’ in its final element. The overall meaning, it is suggested here, is ‘the way leading up to the territory of the hunters/nomads’ or, alternatively, ‘of the Sami’ (if the economic boundary through southern central Sweden during the Iron Age is regarded as an ethnic boundary between Germanic peoples and ‘Finns’, i.e. Sami). The reference is to Lagastigen, an important communication route north through southern Sweden. The name was subsequently transferred from the road to the tribal area, the ‘land’ by the road.

The village of Lerike in Tjureda parish in the district (*härad*) of Norrvidinge, Småland, is on the northern shore of the large lake Helgasjön, by an inlet known as *Lerviken*. The author proposes that *Lerike* can be traced back to a Runic Scandinavian dative form *\*LæiRwiku*, with early loss of the *w* of the final element. The name was originally transferred from the inlet to the village. The difference between the two names can be attributed to the fact that settlement names have a higher degree of properness than nature names and can therefore more easily be altered, independently of any associations with the appellative word elements they contain.

*Replösa* is the name of a village in Ljungby parish in Sunnerbo *härad*, Småland, now best known for a Viking Age rune stone. Most of the evidence suggests that the village and the place-name go back to the Iron Age and that we are concerned here with a ‘genuine’ old name in *-lösa* ‘glade; meadow’, and not a later one indicating a lack of something. The interpretation ‘the farm lacking rope’ can thus be discounted. Instead, the author explains the first element as a noun, OSw. *\*rōp* ‘call, cry’, formed from the verb OSw. *rōpa* ‘to call’. The extralinguistic background to the name is the fact that the old road immediately to the north of the site of Replösa village crossed the river Lagan. There was once a bridge here. Before it was built, people must have been dependent on a boat to cross the river, and may therefore have had to call for a ferry. There are parallels in a great many place-names around Sweden with *Rop-*, *Rops-* or *Ropare-* as their first element, referring precisely to ferry places.