

everywhere, while in Lewis *laimrig* can also have the sense of 'clear passage through water'; however, the developed senses 'landing-rock' and 'quay' also occur.³¹

The modern reflexes of Pictish **pett* and **lanmerc*, then, are a rich source of evidence for the language contact that one can assume to have existed between speakers of Pictish and Gaelic and, indeed, Old Norse too, and represent a very different picture of the nature of that contact than the limited one drawn from the point of view of *Pit*-names.

³¹ Watson, *Rosg Gàidhlig*, p. 284, 'landing-rock'; Borgstrøm, *Dialects of Skye and Ross-shire*, p. 33, 'a rock on the shore used as a landing-place'; MacLennan, *loc. cit.*, 'landing-place, natural quay, pier'; MacBain, *loc. cit.*, 'landing-place, harbour'; MacKillop, *loc. cit.*, 'landing-place, quay'; Gillies, *loc. cit.*, 'landing-place, harbour'; Dwelly, *loc. cit.*, 'Landing-place, shore, natural landing-place on the shore. 2. Quay. 3. Harbour. 4. Ford.'

The Names of Medieval Towns in Finland

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Until the time of the Vikings Finland was what could be called a political no man's land, the inhabitants of which spoke Finnish, Karelian, Sami (Lappish) or Old Swedish. After the Viking period there was, for a time, a strategic and commercial vacuum on the shores of the Baltic, but during the twelfth century new powers emerged—the Swedish kingdom, Denmark, the Order of the Brothers of the Sword, and Russian Novgorod—which were supported in their thirst for expansion by the Holy See or the Orthodox Church.¹ The Swedes undertook three crusades to various parts of Finland between about 1155 and 1293, and the Novgorodians responded by attempting to capture the fortresses and trade centres which the Swedes had established. In 1318 the Novgorodians burnt down the Finnish bishop's residence near Turku, and, since most written records were kept in the episcopal archives, they were destroyed by fire. Thus the written history of Finland begins around the year 1320. From the twelfth century onwards Finland was integrated step by step into the Swedish kingdom, the Roman Catholic world and Nordic society. Before 1500 six settlements had achieved the status of towns, all of which were to be found in the south or south-west, with harbours on the Baltic Sea. They are known in the two national languages of Finland (Swedish and Finnish) as Åbo or Turku, Borgå or Poryoo,

This is a version of a paper given to the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland at its annual conference in Durham, April 1995. Although its subject-matter falls outside the scope of papers usually published in *Nomina*, it is desirable to publish it here, both because it was an invited paper given at the annual conference, and because its subject provides a valuable parallel to situations that have occurred frequently in Britain and Ireland, and will therefore be of particular interest to many readers of *Nomina*.—Editors.

¹ For a survey of Finnish history, see Matti Klinge, *A Brief History of Finland*, 10th edn (Helsinki, 1994).

Viborg or Viipuri, Rauma or Raumo, Ulfsby or Ulvila, and Nådendal or Naantali respectively (see the map, p. 65). Ulfsby, it should be noted, was the northernmost medieval town of the Swedish kingdom.

Where two languages meet, there tends to be some kind of mutual interaction between them. In the case of Finnish place-names the following contact-patterns occur:²

(a) A name is borrowed from language *A* into language *B*, usually adapting itself to the phonetic rules of language *B*. This is the old, natural, way of making use of a foreign nomenclature.

(b) Where a greater degree of bilingualism exists, part of a name is translated, usually the latter part describing the geographical setting, or the whole name might be translated, or merely an explanatory element added. Authorities tend to resort to these translation-patterns more than individuals.

(c) Finally, a word may be borrowed from language *A* into language *B*, and later a name is formed in language *B* from this loanword.

These loan-mechanisms may be traced also in the medieval town-names of Finland when one studies the origin of the names and their use in Finnish and Swedish. Since Swedish was the administrative language of the Swedish realm, place-names of bilingual settlements tended to appear in a Swedish form in medieval documents, even in a Latin context. Place-names appeared in Finnish when there was no Swedish equivalent, which was the case with most names referring to places in the interior of the country which did not have Swedish minorities of any significance.

In this discussion of town-names I shall begin with the oldest, that of the former Finnish capital, which is today called Turku in Finnish and Åbo in Swedish. Here we meet straight away the situation in

² Loan-patterns in place-naming in Finland have been studied by, amongst others, Lars Huldén, 'Finsk-svenska blandnamn i Österbotten', *Namn och bygd*, 50 (1962), 113-34; Peter Slotte, *Sjönammen i Karlebynejden*, Acta Academiae Aboensis, Series A, Humaniora, 55 (Åbo, 1978); and Ritva Liisa Pitkänen, *Turunmaan saariston suomalainen lainanimistö* ['Finnish loan-names in the archipelago around Turku'], 2nd edn, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran toimituksia, 418 (Helsinki, 1986).

which a place in a bilingual community is referred to by two different names. The Finnish name Turku does not appear in written documents before 1548, but it must have been in oral use much earlier. It is formed from a noun *turku*—still in use in phrases such as *maailman turuilla* 'in the markets of the world'—which was borrowed from an Old Slavonic word *turgu* 'market-place, trade'. Since only hard (voiceless) consonants may occur at the beginning of a syllable in Finnish, there is a /k/ in *turku* and not a /g/ as in the lending language. In later Russian the word evolved into the form *torg*, which was borrowed into Swedish as *torg*, into Danish as *torv*, and for a second time into Finnish as *tori*.³ The Swedish variant, Åbo, is possibly mentioned in a twelfth-century report on the Baltic countries by the Arab geographer Idrisi, and a Latin papal document of 1259 refers to the town indirectly in the phrase *capitulum Aboensi*. The Swedish name has been interpreted as 'the courtyard at the river': the town lies beside the river Aura.⁴

Further east lies Viborg, Finnish Viipuri, the former Finnish Karelian capital. The Swedish version of the town- and castle-name occurs in the Latin form *castrum Wiborg* found in a document of 1295.⁵ No rune-stones have so far been discovered in Finland, but a few names of places in Finland are found on stones raised in Sweden. On a stone in Uppland (no. U 180) there occurs a phrase which has been interpreted either as *in uiburkum* or *in uibiarkum*.⁶ Finnish scholars are unwilling, of course, to allow the possibility that the place

³ The name Turku is discussed by Viljo Nissilä in *Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid*, 22 vols (Malmö, 1956-78) (hereafter *KL*), XVI, cols 678-80, s.v. *stadsnamn*.

⁴ See Carl-Eric Thors in *KL*, XVI, cols 680-81, s.v. *stadsnamn*, and in an essay 'Ortnamn och bebyggelse i Åboland', *Folkemålsstudier*, 21 (1972); cf. also C. J. Gardberg, *Turun kaupungin historia, kivikaudesta vuoteen 1366* ['The history of the town of Turku, from the Stone Age to 1366'] (Turku, 1971), pp. 140-42.

⁵ See Nissilä in *KL*, XVI, cols 678-80, s.v. *stadsnamn*, and in *Viipurin kaupungin historia* (Lappeenranta, 1982), I, 19-23.

⁶ *Upplands runinskrifter*, edited by E. Wessén and S. B. F. Jansson, 2 vols in 4, Sveriges runinskrifter, 6-7 (Stockholm, 1940-46), I, 278-81; *Danmarks stednavne*, IX (København, 1948), pp. 1-2. Since this paper was given two years ago, part of a genuine runic inscription, the first ever in Finland, has been found in the archipelago near Turku (summer 1997).

here referred to is other than the settlement in Karelia. It is a fact, however, that the Karelian trading centre had a more famous competitor in the Danish *Viberg*, later Viborg, and this is a more likely reference. The only certainty is that the Karelian town- and castle-name consists of the Old Norse elements *vi* 'holy site' and *borg* 'stronghold' (as in Borgå). The name is undoubtedly older than the castle, which was erected at the end of the thirteenth century at the time of the third Swedish crusade. The vowel /u/ occurring in the Finnish Viipuri has been widely discussed by scholars. The most likely explanation is that the Finns have preserved an older Norse form of the word *borg*, perhaps reinforced by a later Hanseatic pronunciation.

The next oldest town is Borgå, also on the south coast. Here the Swedish name is the primary one, the Finnish Porvoo being borrowed from it and adapted to the Finnish sound-system.⁷ The parish of Borgå is mentioned in 1327 in the form *in borga*, but the place is thought to have been granted town privileges only in 1346. Borgå must at first have been the name of the river (Swedish *å* 'river'), and only later of the settlement on its banks. Today the river is called in Swedish Borgå å, with *å* 'river' added a second time. The age of the name is unclear, but the element *borg* very probably refers to a prehistoric earthen stronghold at the mouth of the river. In the Swedish dialects of this area the consonant /g/ occurs as a stop after /r/. That is why the name is pronounced [borgo], not [borjo] as it would be in the standard language. As for the Finnish Porvoo, there are records showing its development to the present-day form: *Borghon* (genitive) 1548, *Borwo* and *Porwo* 1787. (Here is another example of how a voiced consonant at the beginning of a syllable becomes a voiceless one in Finnish; compare Turku and Viipuri, above.)

If we go north from Turku, we come to the remaining three towns to be discussed here, the oldest of which is Rauma. The Finnish name Rauma, Swedish Raumo, looks very Nordic. It was not, however, borrowed as a name but as an appellative (common noun). A loanword *rauma* 'strait, small stream' is still in use in the West Finnish dialects, and other place-names have been formed from it. It appears also in the Finnish name for Öresund, the strait between Denmark and Sweden, which is Juutinrauma 'the strait of the Jutlanders'. The origin of the

⁷ See Åke Granlund, *Studier över östnyländska ortnamn* (Helsingfors, 1956), pp. 66–69, and Thors and Nissilä in *KL*, XVI, cols 678–81, s.v. *stadsnamn*.

Finnish *rauma* is Old Norse *straumr* 'stream', not in the nominative form but in the accusative form *strauma*. Since Finnish phonotactics allow only a single consonant at the beginning of a word, the loanword has initial *r-* alone. A Swedish letter of privilege of 1444 speaks of *borgara i rawma i finlandh*.⁸ The ending *-o* of the Swedish form Raumo needs explanation. The word seems to have followed the inflection-pattern of weak feminine nouns in Swedish, the nominative of which ended in *-a* and the oblique cases in *-o* (or *-u*), such as *kyrka*, *kyrko* 'church'. In the Finland-Swedish dialects, however, the oblique form established itself as the base-form. Onomastic analogy could also have played a role, since there are other names of Finnish origin in the neighbourhood which in Swedish end in *-mo*, like Kumo and Vemo, although they are etymologically distinct. The *o*-form occurs as early as the fifteenth century: *raumo borgare, j Rawmo*.

The northernmost town along the west coast was called Ulfsby in Swedish, but today it is only a rural community. Mainly because of the rising land-level, the town was moved closer to the sea in the sixteenth century and was given a new name, Björneborg or Pori. The village, later parish and town, is in medieval records known only in its Swedish form: *Vlpsby* 1334, *Ulfsby* 1352. The Finnish form, Ulvila, is first documented from the time when the name once again denoted a parish. The specific element is the common Swedish forename *Ulf*, which may have been a short form of *Stigulf* and, in that case, have been named after a dean of that name in the mother parish who is known to have played an important role when the parish of Ulfsby was created. The generic is the very frequent Swedish word *by* 'village'. Finnish settlement-names are often created by means of the suffix *-la* or *-lä*, and the form Ulvila seems to be a partial translation of the Swedish name, with Swedish *by* rendered by Finnish *-la*.⁹

The youngest town-name to be discussed is Swedish Nådendal 'valley of grace', Finnish Naantali, Latin *Vallis graciae*. This was originally the name of a Brigittine monastery, the foundation charter

⁸ The loanword *rauma* and the town-name Rauma are discussed by A. Lähteenoja, *Rauman kaupungin historia*, I (Rauma, 1946), pp. 82–84; by Nissilä in *KL*, XVI, cols 678–80, s.v. *stadsnamn*; and by Pitkänen, *Turunmaan saariston suomalainen lainanimistö*, pp. 123–25.

⁹ See Nissilä and Thors in *KL*, XVI, cols 678–81, s.v. *stadsnamn*; and *Suur-Ulvilan historia*, I (Pori, 1967), 25–31.

of which dates from 1438. The monastery was later moved, but the place-name remained and was applied to the town which grew up there. It has a clear parallel in Germany, as Olav Ahlbäck showed in a study of 1939 in which he drew attention to the name of the Bavarian Brigittine monastery of Gnadenberg (German *Gnade* 'grace'), Latin *Mons graciae*, which was founded some ten years before the Finnish house.¹⁰ Before 1500 the name of the Finnish place was usually written in Swedish *Nadhenda(a)l*, with only a few instances of *Naadennedaal*. The connective *-en-* seems to be of German origin, probably by analogy with Gnadenberg. The genitive singular definite form of the Old Swedish feminine noun *nadh* was *nadhenna*, but according to Ahlbäck there is no need to reckon with an original Swedish name-form **Nadhenna-dal*: the forms in *Naadhenne-* were merely attempts to make the name look more Swedish. In records from the fifteenth century the vowel of the first syllable of the Swedish name is usually spelt with *a* or *aa*, and only twice with *o*: *Nodhendall* 1463, *Nodendal* 1470. The fact that the name was borrowed into Finnish as Naantali (< **Naadhintali*), with a long /a:/, is an indication that the Swedish-speaking population in and around Turku pronounced the name with [a:]. That, however, would have been phonologically irregular, since, according to the historical grammars, long Swedish /a:/ should have developed into /o:/ at the latest at the beginning of the fifteenth century—in other words before the monastery was founded! The survival of /a:/ for much longer in this case must, says Ahlbäck, be due either to German influence or to retarded development in Finland-Swedish.

In conclusion, we may observe that the medieval town-names of Finland show how the country has been a borderland between east and west. The major linguistic and cultural influence has come from the west, particularly from Sweden, of which Finland became an integral part during the Middle Ages, but also from the Catholic church, from Germany, and possibly from Denmark. Contacts go much further back in time than is revealed by written historical sources. Place-names like Turku and Rauma bear witness, once again, that names form a significant link with a distant past.

¹⁰ Olav Ahlbäck, 'Nådendal, fi. Naantali', *Budkavlen*, 18 (1939), 87–90.



Blomqvist: medieval towns in Finland
The positions of the six towns discussed