

Catarina Røjder, Hugo Karlsson & Roger Wadström, *Ortnamnen i Göteborgs och Bohus län. XIII. Ortnamnen i Stångenäs härad. 1. Bebyggelsenamn*, Göteborg: Institutet för språk och folkminnen. Dialekt-, ortnamns- och folkminnesarkivet i Göteborg 2021, ISSN 02841908; ISBN 9789186959746, XXXVII + 208 pp.

This volume in the series *Ortnamnen i Göteborgs och Bohus län* [‘Place-names in the County of Gothenburg and Bohus’] has a long previous history. Initially, Roger Wadström (1906–2020) compiled a primary manuscript consisting of two parts, one treating of settlement names and the other of natural names. Hugo Karlsson (1929–2020) then took over the work with the current volume, which has now been completed by Catarina Røjder.

The disposition of the current volume is similar to that of the earlier volumes previously reported in this chronicle. The volume begins with the authors providing an account of the ecclesiastical district’s divisions, demographics, natural landscapes, plant and animal life, and industry and commerce, in the course of which they make references to, among other things, place-names containing the names of plants and animals. Older place-name types are also briefly discussed, for example names ending in *by/bø*, *hem*, *land(a)*, *sta(d)* and *vin*, as well as some other common elements such as *hed*, *hog* and *kärr*. This discussion focuses mainly on the latter element. Some younger place-name types are also treated of, albeit quite briefly, as well as the local dialect and linking morphemes between elements in compound names. A few short sections, which ideally could have been a bit more detailed, relate to records of pronunciation forms and the Swedish cadastral records.

The place-name *Stångenäs* is interesting. It has been suggested that *stång* might refer to a boundary or a navigation mark, but it is also possible that it denoted an elongated formation in nature, in this case perhaps an elongated island. There are three parishes in the ecclesiastical district—Brastad, Bro and Lyse. As evidenced by older writing forms, *Brastad* is originally a village name deriving from *säter*. The question is whether this refers to *säter* ‘woodland, forest land, etc.’ or *säter* ‘summer mountain pasture land.’ The authors seem to favour a connection with the latter meaning (p. 9). The first element includes the name of a stream, which could be regarded as a formation based on a word corresponding to Norw. *braga* ‘shine, twinkle.’ However, the authors also point to Swed. dial. *braga* ‘tremble, vibrate, etc.’ as a possible alternative interpretation. *Bro* is named after a bridge over Broälven (p. 63), while *Lyse*—originally the name of a village—was formerly the name of a stream or a branch of a cove (p. 182); as is well known, place-names deriving from *lysa* ‘shine’ can be found in many parts of the Nordic countries.

The volume contains several noteworthy name interpretations. An interesting example is that *Blådjuperöd*, rather than being associated with a lake name, **Bladiupi* ‘the deep blue,’ could be interpreted as ‘the clearing located deep in the dark forest’ (p. 67). Another interesting interpretation is discussed in connection with *Dyrhusmon*. Here, it is suggested that the first element is derived from dial. *dyrhus* ‘dolmen, cairn,’ but the question is what the background to this might be. An alternative that immediately suggests itself is of course *dyr*, ‘animal,’ often ‘deer, cervid.’ However, in connec-

tion with the name *Dyrsten(en)*, there is a legend about a troll woman who is said to have been carrying around a stone in her apron. As linking this creature to *dyr* seems a bit far-fetched, the authors present an attractive alternative interpretation of the name as deriving from an original **Gyghrasten*, which would thus contain an element corresponding to Old Norse *gygr* ‘giantess.’ This is quite conceivable and worthy of a deeper investigation.

The authors have a laudable ambition to question previous, more conventional interpretations. As for the element *kärr* in Bohuslän place-names, the authors note that the meaning of ‘dense forest thicket, dense shrubbery, thicket of trees’ has often been proposed in the past, while the meaning of ‘marsh’ has been disregarded without good reason (p. XXXII, p. 32). In connection with *hult*, a name element that has often been regarded as meaning ‘a grove of trees, wooded hillside,’ they point out that a word denoting a height is also a plausible interpretation (p. 79). Regarding *nöt* in *Nöteberg* (pp. 39 f.), the fact that “certain interpretations are inherited as a matter of course” (p. 39) is pointed out, and that “*nöt* ‘cattle’ is usually the favoured interpretation of the second element, *berg*; the mountain in question may have been used as pasture land for cattle” (pp. 39 f.). However, the earliest recorded name of *Nöteberg* is *Notaberg*. This indicates that the name is derived from *hnot* ‘(hazel)nut,’ which might be due to the mountain having been likened to a nut. There is good reason to consider such an interpretation. Regarding *Kopperöd* (pp. 103 f.), the authors discuss a connection with dial. *kopp*, *koppe* ‘something dome-shaped, roundish or unwieldy, a round hill etc. or a depression in the terrain’; corresponding names can be found in several places in Sweden and Norway, where they are often associated with *koppare* ‘cup and bowl maker, turner,’ or with *koppare* ‘a person whose occupation is a cupper.’

Quite naturally, terrain words can be found in a large number of names in the district, not least a rich repertoire of words denoting heights: in *Bornö* (from *borgund*, ‘a steep height’; pp. 23 f.), in *Bräcke* (from *bräcka* ‘a wide slope’; p. 11), in *Fjäll* (from *fjäll* ‘vast, bare mountain land, especially formerly: only covered with heather; vast, barren mountain land’; p. 81), in *Hamre* (from *hammar* ‘protruding steep mountain part’; p. 164 with an illustrative photo p. 165), in *Häller* (from dial. *häller* ‘a hollow in a rock under a protruding rock edge, large hole or cave in a rock’ etc.; p. 94 with an illustrative photo p. 95), in *Ryk* from a counterpart to Old Norse **hrjúkr* ‘a thrown-up heap, pile,’ etc.; pp. 41 f.), as well as in *Sköllungen* (from *sköld* referring to heights having the shape of a curved shield; p. 46). Other terrain words found in the district’s settlement names are *bringa* ‘steep protruding mountain side,’ *gel* ‘narrow valley, gorge,’ *gilja* ‘narrow valley, gorge, grassy depression between mountains,’ *godda* ‘holloway, narrow field or road between two stick fences, narrow glen’ (cf. Icel. *gota*), *skår* ‘crevice, depression in a rock’ and *skupp* ‘a place under a rock ledge overhanging water.’

Sometimes, however, the authors could have taken their analysis further and also presented additional material. For example, a river name **Íma* (from *imma*) is discussed in connection with *Immestad* (p. 28); here, one would have expected to find references to other corresponding Scandinavian watercourse names. The arguments presented regarding the connection of the first element in *Färlev* with **före* ‘waterlogged meadow, flooded area’ etc. (p. 85) could have been further substantiated, not least on the basis of the information found in note 40 (ibid.). As for *Tromängen*, the authors suggest a connection with dial. *trumm* ‘log, tree trunk, chopped-off firewood

log,’ and another meaning of the word is said to be ‘cow muzzle’ (p. 53). I am unclear as to which meaning is the most likely one in this case, and how this meaning might be justified. Nor does the relationship between the names *Kornö* and *Bygget* (pp. 176 f.) seem to be fully clarified, and further investigation is required here. When it comes to the possible *vin*-name *Skådene* (pp. 122 f.), it could also have been made clearer whether or not the name is to be considered a transfer name.

The volume concludes with a number of well-crafted indexes of place-names, first names, bynames, soldier and boatman names, as well as of lexemes and cultural- historical circumstances. The latter index, in particular, is commendable.

The current volume is a valuable addition to this series of place-name surveys. Parts that provide particularly stimulating reading are those where the authors have allowed themselves to discuss and question handed-down “truths,” i.e., interpretations that have automatically been passed on from one place-name publication to the next, and the concrete manner in which these issues are discussed is commendable. In addition, illuminating photographs supporting the interpretations—some of which are mentioned above—are found in several places in the volume, and these, too, deserve praise.

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Jan Rüdiger, *All the King’s Women. Polygyny and Politics in Europe, 900–1250* (The Northern world 88), Leiden: Brill 2020, ISBN 9789004349513, 452 pp.

This book is an English translation of Jan Rüdiger’s “Habilitation,” published in 2015. English-speaking readers will have to put up with an original form of *Der König und seine Frauen*, which has not been revised or updated. This is a profound study that examines the fitness of the concept of marriage for the socio-political strategies of high medieval elites. Rüdiger argues that “full marriage” (the *matrimonium iustum/legitimum*) was just one form of couple relationship that existed alongside many other forms of liaisons between men and women. He is careful to avoid the term *concubinage* because it is so closely associated with its juridical and Augustinian meaning, i.e., a reprehensible relationship, as opposed to marriage, which was considered a commendable union. With the notion of polygyny, Rüdiger develops a functional concept that is in many ways better suited to analyze various aspects of medieval sociopolitical practices. He argues that “polygyny is not a form of marriage, but marriage can be a form of relationship within general polygyny.” The main objective, therefore, is to examine the meanings and uses of polygyny in elite political culture, focusing on narrative sources from twelfth and thirteenth centuries Northern Europe. These findings are thereafter compared with explicit and presumed polygynous practices in the Anglo-Norman sphere, France, and the Iberian Peninsula.