

RUNES AROUND THE NORTH SEA AND ON THE CONTINENT AD 150-700; TEXTS & CONTEXTS

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This book is dedicated to Prof. Dr. A.D. Kylstra, since he was my first 'Master of Runes' and to Dr. D. Stapert, for introducing me to the delicate joy of science.

Colofon

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List of Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
BM	British Museum
Bret.	Bretonic
Celt.	Celtic
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
comp.	comparative
conj.	conjunctive
dat.	dative
dem.	demonstrative
Du	Dutch
f.	feminine
FM	Fries Museum
Fris.	Frisian
Gall.	Gallic
GM	Groninger Museum
Gmc	Germanic
Go	Gothic
GN	god's name
h.	half
Hitt.	Hittite
IK	Ikonographischer Katalog
imp.	imperative
impers.	impersonal
ind.	indicative
inf.	infinitive
Lat.	Latin
m.	masculine
med.	medium
MHG	Middle High German
ms.	manuscript
mss.	manuscripts
n.	neuter
NIc	New Icelandic
ODan	Old Danish
OE	Old English
OFrank	Old Frankish
OFris	Old Frisian
OHG	Old High German
Old Ind.	Old Indic
ON	Old Norse (Old Icelandic)
opt.	optative
OS	Old Saxon
part.	participle

pers.	personal
PG	Proto-Germanic
pl.	plural
PN	personal name
prep.	preposition
pres.	present
pret.	preterite
pron.	pronoun
Run.	Runic
sg.	singular
subj.	subjunctive
th.	third
UFO	unbekannter Fundort [unknown findspot]
voc.	vocative

nsm.	nominative singular masculine
npm.	nominative plural masculine
gsm.	genitive singular masculine
gpm.	genitive plural masculine
dsm.	dative singular masculine
dpm.	dative plural masculine
asm.	accusative singular masculine
apm.	accusative plural masculine

nsf.	nominative singular feminine
npf.	nominative plural feminine
gsf.	genitive singular feminine
gpf.	genitive plural feminine
dsf.	dative singular feminine
dpf.	dative plural feminine
asf.	accusative singular feminine
apf.	accusative plural feminine

nsn.	nominative singular neuter
npn.	nominative plural neuter
gsn.	genitive singular neuter
gpn.	genitive plural neuter
dsn.	dative singular neuter
dpn.	dative plural neuter
asn.	accusative singular neuter
apn.	accusative plural neuter

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I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Aim of this study

1.1. This study offers an edition of inscriptions found in England, The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Hungary and Rumania, dating from the period 150-700 AD. The book has been divided into two parts; the first part contains essays on early runic writing and the historical and archaeological contexts of runic objects. The second part of this study contains a catalogue of the early runic inscriptions found in the regions mentioned above. The inscriptions of Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Hungary have been listed together as the Continental Corpus¹. One found in Hungary and two found in Rumania are listed among the Danish and Gothic Corpus. The catalogue offers readings, interpretations and limited graphic, orthographic and linguistic analyses of the inscriptions from the above mentioned corpora. A concordance of the runic texts, an index on sites, and maps will facilitate the use of the book. The basic principle underlying this investigation is *comparison*. Other important issues are the origin and initial spread of runic knowledge, and the aim and use of early runic writing.

1.2. Definition of the problem: This study aims at a comparison of the earliest runic traditions in the countries around the North Sea (England, The Netherlands, Denmark) and on the Continent, i.c. predominantly Germany. Thus, the geographical point of departure is not Scandinavia, as is mostly the case when studying the early runic traditions. The choice for an unorthodox approach stems from the expectation that in doing so some answers might be found to questions concerning the essence of runic script in the first few centuries of our era. When focusing on the function of runic writing, one automatically has to face the questions: why was this special script designed at all, and who first used it? It seems logical to look for the origin of the runic script not in Scandinavia, but near the Roman *limes*. This point of view is contested, but it still seemed interesting enough for further investigation. The issue of the first runographers and their social context has also been dealt with. It appears imperative to reconsider the contents of the early runic inscriptions with a fresh view. It turned out that the changing of perspective leads to unexpected insights.

The runic texts are treated in the Catalogue, which contains concise linguistic information and the most important data with regard to the objects and datings. The overall aim has been to provide the reader with a practical survey of the oldest inscriptions from the aforementioned areas, together with relevant archaeological and cultural-historical data. Within this framework there was, unfortunately, no room for extensive linguistic considerations, although in compiling the catalogue quite some information from various sources has been used.

Below a survey will be given of the procedures followed in this investigation, including a summary of the methods used. Attention will also be paid to necessary/logical restrictions.

¹ This corpus is also known as South Germanic, but I prefer the term Continental.

2. Points of departure

2.1. Runic writing started at a time that a large part of Europe was under Roman imperial sway. Therefore, the impact of Roman culture on Germania and the Germanic - Roman relations during the first two centuries of our era were among the first subjects to be investigated. A separate chapter has been dedicated to questions concerning the identification of both the early runographers and the location of the original region of runic writing. In my opinion, any runologist must take up a position in this field, in order to create a point of reference for further runic research.

2.2. The oldest datable runic find (*ca.* 160 AD, cf. Ilkjær 1996^a:68,73) is a comb with the legend **harja**, found in the bog of Vimose on the Danish island of Funen. Ambiguous (runic or Roman) is the inscription on a brooch from Meldorf, North Germany, dated around 50 AD (Düwel & Gebühr 1981). From the 2nd century onwards, runic items have regularly been recorded, albeit in small numbers, and with findless intervals both in space and in time. Attestations from the 2nd - 4th centuries have been found in present-day Denmark, Sweden, Norway, North Germany, Poland, Russia and Rumania. From the 5th century onwards, runes appear in The Netherlands, England, and South Germany. A substantial number of inscribed objects are weapons, parts of weapons and jewellery. The material used is mostly (precious) metal, but objects of wood and bone have also survived.

2.3. Nearly two hundred gold bracteates inscribed with runes, dating from the 5th-6th centuries, constitute a large category. They form a substantial and separate group among the objects with runes from the Migration Period. Bracteates must not be overlooked in any study of early runic texts. The fact that these precious objects were manufactured during a rather short period (of some generations) may be due to a rise in power of an elite, or to the emergence of power-centres, like Gudme on Funen. Therefore, attention has been paid to these historical developments.

2.4. The initial aim of the present study was to focus on the countries bordering the North Sea, i.e. to investigate the Danish, Frisian and Anglo-Saxon runic traditions, but soon the need for an extension to a larger area was felt. Therefore the Continental inscriptions were also included, being most fit for comparison with the North Sea group, especially as regards the combination and relation of objects, runes and texts, and also because of the cultural/political background in the Early Middle Ages². The intention, therefore, is to detect possible similarities and differences between the runic traditions of England, The Netherlands, Denmark and the Continent, and to find out if it is possible to speak of a common runic tradition, to be traced all over West and Central Europe and springing from one central source. Such deliberations lead to the question whether through the inventarisation and subsequent comparison of texts, objects and their archaeological and historical contexts, information can be obtained about the use, spread and aim of runic writing in the period under discussion. If the nature and status of runic usage approximately can be established, insofar this can be deduced from the inseparable triad: objects, texts and (archaeological) contexts, one might gain some insight in why people created runic script.

² A substantial part of the regions (apart from Denmark) from where early-medieval runic writing is recorded was politically and culturally subdued by Merovingian influence.

2.5. The study has been restricted to a group of runic inscriptions dating from the earliest period of recorded runic writing, from *circa* 150 to 700³, i.e. from the Roman Imperial Period via the Migration Period (from 350-500) to the Merovingian Period from 500 - 725. This restriction is a logical consequence of the fact that initially the Frisian and Anglo-Saxon inscriptions were taken as a starting point. This necessitated the study of the preceding runic culture of Denmark and North Germany. The inscriptions from the period of the older *futhorc* are considered to be the most puzzling of all. Some of the reasons for their unintelligibility are that basic questions concerning origin and purpose of the runic alphabet have still not been solved. Therefore, the initial question should be: why and by whom were the runes introduced in Germanic society? One cannot start studying the oldest inscriptions without pondering over these questions and without trying to offer an acceptable solution concerning the problem of the origin of the runes. The observation that the greater part of the earliest runic objects has been found in a context with clear connections to the Roman Empire, showing obvious relations to the military and economic elite of Germanic society, has led me to think that the art of writing in an otherwise oral society may have been introduced in the North by Germanic people who had connections with the Roman empire, such as mercenaries (cf. Rausing 1987; Axboe & Kromann 1992; Rix 1992).

2.6. To trace any influence of archaic mediterranean alphabets on early runic writing is another subject of this study. Proceeding on the above mentioned primary runological question concerning the origin of the runic alphabet, one wonders *which* Mediterranean alphabet must have been the forerunner of the runes and *when* and *where* the take-over took place. Many views have been proposed on this matter and still a consensus has not been reached. No exactly fitting, all-covering matrix alphabet has been found yet. At this stage one group of runologists considers the Latin alphabet most likely the forerunner; another group prefers the theory of an origin based on the Greek or North Italic/Etruscan alphabets. The time of borrowing will probably have been the 1st century AD. On the strength of the present data, propositions will be forwarded as to the questions *how* a certain collection of graphs came to the north, and *who* took them there. This subject will be treated more elaborately in chapters II and III of this study.

2.7. The runic objects discussed in this study have been found in different regions, but they show several similarities and a possible coherence as regards texts and contexts. Restricting myself to a discussion of these finds only, gives me the possibility to focus on a group of comparable items, in this case almost all portable, precious, objects. Besides, it has been possible to date most of the objects with reasonable accuracy by means of archaeological data. Furthermore, the selection of this group offers the possibility of studying mutual contacts, the possible status of runic writing and the status of owners, commissioners and makers of runic objects in a gift-exchanging society, such as existed in the period under study. Legible texts of 48 rune-bracteates from the second half of the fifth century will be included in this study. The study of the bracteates has been based on descriptions, photos and drawings

³ The datings are relative because they are based on the find context of the runic objects. Actually, runic writing in a specific area may have begun at least a generation earlier. Runic objects may have circulated a long time before they were deposited in the ground. The exact beginning and end of a runic period actually cannot be determined, especially when additional circumstantial evidence is lacking.

from the six volumes of the *Ikonographischer Katalog* (ed. Axboe et al. 1984-1989). Bracteates with as yet unintelligible sign-sequences have been omitted, as no certainty about the transliteration can be obtained in these cases. For instance, a rune that apparently has to be transliterated as **l** occurs in at least five different forms: ᚠ ᚡ ᚢ ᚣ ᚤ (cf. the remarkable differences in the number of **l** and **u** runes on bracteates when compared with other objects in the study by Müller 1986, p. 452-467, esp. p. 459).

2.8. I must explain why I have confined myself to the period before 700 AD, and why I have decided not to treat younger inscriptions, with the exception of the Frisian Corpus, in which the upper limit is difficult to determine. I admit that such a division is rather arbitrary, hence the year 700 is, to some extent, an imaginary borderline. The main reason for drawing this line is that runic writing in the older *futhorc* appears to have stopped in Scandinavia and on the Continent by then, hence the 'archaic' period had come to a definite end. In Frisia and England the older *futhorc*-set of 24 characters was in use from the 5th c. onwards and continued to be used, but additions and alterations were made. In inscriptions from around 500 onwards, certain specific runic variations occur that are common to Anglo-Saxon England and Frisia. In the course of time English runic writing underwent new developments. The only exactly datable runic object, St. Cuthbert's coffin (698), shows a typical Anglo-Saxon runic innovation: the so-called 'bookhand-s'. Therefore the borderline between the older, Anglo-Frisian tradition and the younger, Anglo-Saxon tradition in England can be drawn close to 700 AD. Page (1973, 1985 and 1987^b) divided runic usage in England into periods before 650 and after. I stretched the first period to 700, because I wanted to include two inscriptions (St. Cuthbert's coffin and the Whitby Comb), dated close to 700, to show some contrast with the earlier 'archaic' runic period. After 700, the runic script went its own insular way in England, a way hardly comparable to developments in other regions. Only for Frisia the year 700 as a *terminus ante quem* is unfit. Here one cannot distinguish a clear boundary that marks an earlier and later period, and, besides, I intended to include the whole, small, corpus. The end of runic writing in Frisia was probably around 800.

2.9. As to the older Danish tradition, which was recorded from the second century AD onwards, I chose the year 700 as the finishing point, in order to treat a relatively long runic period, covering the earliest inscriptions (2nd c. - 5th c.), the bracteate period (around 500) and the Blekinge inscriptions (supposedly 7th c.). This last group, consisting of 4 monumental stones with relatively long texts, may be looked upon as an example of the transition period between the older and younger *futhorc* writing system. Blekinge was part of Denmark in the Early Middle Ages; therefore the Blekinge inscriptions have been listed under the 'Danish' runic corpus. In this study, the inclusion of the Blekinge group is meant to demonstrate the changes in runic writing in the course of the 7th century and the considerable contrast to the earlier, 'archaic', inscriptions. The gap in the Danish tradition (no finds are known from most of the later 6th and the 7th centuries) might be explained by accident (find circumstances). Moor-offerings stopped at around 500, and moor-finds represent an important category of runic objects. Some political and economical change may have been involved, but no christianization process.

2.10. Runic writing on the Continent, predominantly in Germany, occurred from the 2nd c. to the 7th c.⁴. This includes the Thorsberg finds and the Dahmsdorf, Kowel and Rozwadów spearheads, although Kowel (with the inscription **tilarids**) may be interpreted as Gothic. Actually, there is no real distinction between the large weapon-deposits such as those in the moors, and the deposits of the above mentioned spearheads. In my opinion these spearheads are unlikely to have been 'lost'. Their deposition must have been an intentional act, for example symbolizing a claim of the soil or land. They do not need to be products of a local runic tradition, but they may have been deposited by migrating Germanic tribes for some reason. The establishment of indigenous runic writing in a certain area is mostly determined by a combination of factors, provided by the objects, the language of the texts and the forms of the runes.

Some inscriptions may bear witness of the oncoming of Christianity, as is shown by the inscriptions of Oberflacht, Kirchheim Teck and perhaps Osthofen and Nordendorf I. The end of recorded epigraphic runic writing in South Germany is determined by a change of funerary customs: the deceased did not obtain any gravegoods anymore. In England, people also ceased to provide the dead with funerary gifts, but this had no consequences for the recording of runic writing.

2.11. Inscriptions from Sweden and Norway have not been included, unless when used in comparisons with the corpora treated in this study. A large number of the Swedish and Norwegian inscriptions appear on the surface of undatable stones, therefore, in most cases, an archaeological dating of the runic texts is impossible; they can only be dated (approximately) with the help of linguistic/runological arguments. Logically, they are less suitable for comparison in the context of this study⁵. My research may have provided a possibility of dating some of these texts on historical bases, see chapter III.6. Apart from the decision to select a limited group of runic texts, another reason for not including these items is that I had to draw a line somewhere, since within the limits of this project there was neither enough time nor financial means to investigate all runic inscriptions from the older *fubark*.

2.12. Another aim was the compilation of 'diagnostic' runeforms⁶. It remains to be seen how useful it is to try to establish a chronology of runeforms, and, subsequently, draw far-reaching conclusions, as we do not even know how representative our surviving runic texts are for all runic writing from a particular period. It is an accepted fact that an unknown, but probably low percentage of what was produced has survived unto our days. What has been retained

⁴ The Thorsberg runic objects (200 AD) appear to originate from the region between Lower Elbe and Rhine. Other early inscriptions of the Continent are on iron spear heads, found in Germany (Brandenburg), Poland and Volhynia (all *ca.* 200 AD).

⁵ They concern the following items (non-alphabetically): the stones of Möjbro, Årstad, Vettelund, Einang, Opedal, Kalleby, Rö, Tune, Myklebostad, Kylver, Nordhuglo, Tørvika, Barmen, Skärkind, Elgesem, Stenstad, Kjøllevik, Rosseland, Reistad, Eidsvåg, Amla, Noleby, Bratsberg, Järsberg, Møgedal, Vånga, Skåäng, Berga, Saude, Tomstad, Belland, Bø, Sunde, Tanem, Kinneve, By, Krogsta, Ellestad, Rävsaal, Tveito and the cliffs of Veblungsnes, Himmelstalund, Kårstad and Valsfjord, furthermore the Setre comb, Eikeland clasp, Etelhem clasp, Bratsberg clasp, Fosse bronze plate, Førde weight, Strøm whetstone, Nedre Hov scraper, Fløksand scraper. For information about these items, see Krause & Jankuhn 1966 and Antonsen 1975.

⁶ Diagnostic runeshapes display characteristics for a special region or regions, or for a special period. These are the runes for, e.g., **h**, **s**, **k**, **j** and **e**.

may just be an accidental pack. Runic material that has survived from the early centuries of recorded runic writing is extremely scarce. Any investigation based on what might be called an 'ad hoc group' necessarily has its limitations, but these few remains are the tools one has to work with. On the other hand, a typological inventarisation and comparison of runeforms and varieties may reveal some interesting results. An investigation based on the comparison of runeforms has been carried out by Odenstedt (1990). His study concerned the origin and development of runes. However, his work is far from complete as regards the runeforms of the North Sea and Continental inscriptions. In this respect I intended to supplement Odenstedt's work. A survey of deviating, or 'diagnostic' runes is included in Chapter IV of this work.

2.13. A graphic and linguistic analysis has been made of the texts of the inscriptions. On the whole, a general knowledge of runic graphology is indispensable in determining which rune was carved, not only in the case of hardly legible runes but also in the case of lookalikes such as **r** and **u**, **l** and **u**, **w** and **p**, **s** and **j**, **d** and **m**, **g** and **n**, **l** and **k**. *Spiegelrunen*⁷ or mirror-runes also belong to the enigmatic category. For instance one graph: \diamond may be transliterated either as **(i)ng** or as (mirrored) **w**. The admission that *Spiegelrunen* may play an important role in identifying what was written can lead to surprising solutions (Pieper 1987; Looijenga 1995^a). The linguistic problems have been analysed with the help of descriptive grammars, etymological dictionaries and studies by e.g. Antonsen, Braune/Ebbinghaus, Braune/Eggers, Campbell, Gallée, Gordon, Hines, Holthausen, Clark Hall/Meritt, Kluge, Krause, Lehmann, Luick, Makaev, Markey, Meid, Noreen, H.F.Nielsen, Ramat, Schützeichel, Seebold, Steller, Stoklund, Syrett, De Vries. Names are discussed with the help of books and articles by, e.g., Förstemann, Gottschald, Kaufmann, Peterson, Reichert, Schönfeld, Weisgerber.

3. Methods

3.1. Runology is, basically, supported by two types of information: palaeography and historical linguistics (Antonsen 1995). Supplementary, but indispensable information has to be obtained from archaeology and history, and from Germanic mythology, sagas and the like. A problem here is the question of continuity, since sagas and mythological stories were recorded in much later centuries than in the period during which the runic inscriptions of this study were carved. This dissertation aims at a combination of recent archaeological and runological views.

A useful list of methodological criteria has been composed by Barnes (1996:26f.). For a runologist practical fieldwork is an absolute prerequisite. Hence I have examined the inscriptions together with the objects on which they had been carved, in order to collect all possible evidence such a combination may give: the general lay-out of the inscription, the particular way the runes were carved on the surface of the object, the occurrence of ornaments on the same surface, and, of course, the object itself. Moreover, one has to study a considera-

⁷ *Spiegelrunen* are runes that are in fact double-sided versions of one rune. Sometimes they consist of one hasta with equal sidetwigs to both sides, pockets or loops in such a way that the rune makes the impression of being mirrored, such as \diamond . Others show the same shape twice on the upper and lower part: \square or to the right and left: \updownarrow . Such a rune must be read as one rune, not as two. I regard these peculiar runeshapes as a kind of 'ornamental runes'. Not all runes consisting of one hasta with equal twigs to both sides are mirrored runes, such as: \uparrow Υ \downarrow .

ble number of runic artefacts, to 'get the hang of it' and to train one's eyes. To become a runologist, one needs practice.

3.2. An inventarisation was made of the recorded runic material. Since most objects are kept in museums, information on the archaeological context of the object, e.g. location, dating, and related finds could be obtained fairly easily and quickly. In order to get a proper understanding of the relevant runic periods and areas I used both general and specific archaeological background information. I used magnifying glasses and a microscope. I made drawings and photographs of the runes. Unfortunately, these could not all be included in this book, due to insufficient financial means.

In several cases I re-examined the objects several months or even a year later to check my findings, especially in those cases my readings deviated from those by others.

In some cases only photographs or drawings could be used, for instance, when an object was not available for inspection, or lost. In most cases I was not the first person to look at the inscriptions, and I could consult the descriptions and analyses by others. Handbooks, studies, compilations, anthologies and articles I used are, for instance: Arntz & Zeiss 1939, Jacobsen & Moltke 1942, Elliott 1959/1989, Jänichen 1967, Düwel/Tempel 1968/70, Krause 1966 and 1971, Page 1973 and 1995, Antonsen 1975, Opitz 1977, 1982 and 1986, *Michigan Germanic Studies* 1981, Düwel 1983, Moltke 1985, Axboe et alii 1985-1989, *Runor och runinskrifter* 1987, *Fra Stamme til Stat* 1988, *Britain 400-600* 1990, Ilkjær 1990, 1991, 1993, 1996^{a&b}, Odenstedt 1990, *Old English Runes and their Continental Background* 1991, *Samfundssorganisation og Regional Variation* 1991, *The Age of Sutton Hoo* 1992, Hedeager 1992^a, *Runische Schriftkultur* 1994, Birkmann 1995, Lund Hansen et alii 1995, several articles by Antonsen, Axboe, Barnes, Derolez, Düwel, Heidinga, Hines, Krause, H.F. Nielsen, Odenstedt, Opitz, Page, Peterson, Rausing, Seebold, Stoklund, Theuws, Van Es, and numerous others. There was no information about every object. Sometimes there were no publications at all, in other cases they were not accessible to me at the time. 'Virgin territory' (at the time I inspected them, e.g. 1993-1996), because they were only recently discovered, and therefore not inspected or published before, are Neudingen-Baar I, 'Kent'⁸, Harford Farm, Pforzen, Schwangau, Bernsterburen, Wijnaldum B, Leţcani and Bergakker. Marie Stoklund kindly provided me with information about recent, still unpublished new-finds from Denmark, for which I am very grateful.

Occasionally I have arrived at readings differing from those of other runologists. Sometimes this was due to the decay and corrosion of the surfaces on which the inscriptions were carved. Apparently, corrosion does not stop after an object has been preserved and put in a showcase. Sometimes the runes are vague and multi-interpretable. In these ambiguous cases I have chosen to record the results of my personal inspection.

I read publications beforehand, but not too close before my own inspection of the runic texts, because I did not want to be prejudiced in any way. This does not imply that I have ignored earlier readings. My first and foremost intention has been to try to establish which runes were used and how they were carved. In the second place I have tried to establish the meaning of the inscription and to compare my findings with those of other runologists. I have tried to do this as unbiased as I possibly could, which means that I tried to exclude any suppositions

⁸ The object is also known as the 'Bateman brooch'. Page mentions it a few times (Page 1995:172 and 158), but states that it "has an undoubted but uninterpreted runic inscription which could be either Anglo-Saxon or Continental Germanic" (p. 172f.).

regarding possibly magical, religious, or whatsoever sort of purport the texts might bear. In the case of apparently senseless rune sequences, such as **aisgzh** on the Thorsberg shield-boss there are two possibilities: either one gives up any attempt to interpret the runes, or one tries to find a reasonable interpretation. The former option is unsatisfactory and the latter is dangerous, because one may easily be tempted to merely speculate.

As an example of the difficulties encountered when trying to find an explanation for **aisgzh** the following interpretations may be instructive: Krause (1971:168) inserted two vowels to get **ais[i]g[a]z h** 'der Dahinstürmende - Hagel'. I also feel inclined to read the sequence as an abbreviation, and to read it as **aisg[a]z**, or even as **aisg[isala]z**, in analogy with **asugisalz** on Kragehul. Antonsen (1995:132) proposed a different reading, based on the principle that "we have no basis for assuming that writers in runes ever intentionally left out vowels"⁹. Antonsen interprets the spelling **-sg-** as an alternate rendering of **-sk-**, which then gives **aisk-z** 'seeker'. He considers the **h** an ideographic rune **h** = **hagala-* 'hail', a metaphor for 'shower of spears and arrows'.

Personally I have difficulties determining when and if an ideographic rune (or *Begriffsrune*) was used, since the runewriters' criteria for using them are unknown to us¹⁰. There is at least one clear instance of the use of an ideographic rune: the single **j** rune on the Stentofte stone, representing its name **jāra* meaning 'good year' = harvest. The peculiar use of this ideograph is further emphasized by the fact that it was carved in an archaic fashion. The **h** in Thorsberg **aisgzh** may or may not be such a *Begriffsrune*, there is no graphic peculiarity (**h** has no archaic forerunner), but, in Antonsen's interpretation, it could symbolize its name on syntactic grounds. In some other cases, isolated runes may be read as abbreviations, such as the **r** in the Sievern bracteate, which apparently denotes **r[unoz]**. Single runes may have been read as abbreviations in the oldest inscriptions, and may later on have come to represent the symbolic meaning of the rune's name.

3.3. The material as presented in this study, is based on a total of 204 inscribed objects. These are listed in the catalogue under the headings 'Danish and South-East European Inscriptions', 'Bracteates with Runes', 'Continental Inscriptions', 'Early Runic Inscriptions in England' and 'Runic Inscriptions in or from the Netherlands'. I have listed the Danish and South-East European, also known as 'Gothic', inscriptions together for convenience sake, since only three 'Gothic' objects have been included here (Leţcani, Pietroassa, Szabadbattyán). Besides, it is not possible to establish the pure 'Gothicity' of all three texts. Listing the inscriptions among the Continental Corpus might have been an acceptable consideration, but then one decisive feature fails: the double-barred **h**, characteristic for the Continental and Anglo-Frisian inscriptions. Both Leţcani and Pietroassa show the occurrence of a single-barred **h**. Szabadbattyán might be either Continental or Gothic. Since there were close contacts between the Danish and Gothic peoples in the fourth century (Werner 1988), it seemed, for the purpose of this study, logical to list the Danish and Gothic objects together.

⁹ Perhaps unintentionally, but at least in one instance a runewriter did omit a vowel, in Charnay **uþf[i]nþai** 'may he/she find out, get to know'. But Antonsen (1975:77) reads the sequence as **uþfapai** 'to (my) husband', taking the **n** rune as a writing error for **a**.

¹⁰ Düwel (1992^b:355) proposes two criteria for determining the presence of ideographic runes, also known as *Begriffsrunen*: a syntactic argument and a graphic argument.

3.4. I subdivided the inscriptions into a legible and interpretable part and an illegible and/or uninterpretable part. Furthermore there are the categories 'possibly runic', 'non-runic' and 'falsifications'. The legible items are described more extensively than the illegible ones. Data concerning findspot, context, sort of object, material, dates and depository are provided. Ambiguous or deviating runeforms are discussed. Furthermore, one or more possible readings, c.q. transliteration(s) are proposed. A linguistic analysis of the text is made. Limited references to other authors' readings and interpretations are given. The catalogue-entries contain computerized runographic presentations of the inscriptions. A list of so-called diagnostic runeforms has been compiled. Since there is no absolute certainty as to the 'normal' or 'standard' forms of the runes, 'abnormal' only means *deviating from other runes we know*.

4. A Division into two Runic Periods

4.1. Generally speaking, it is possible to distinguish at least two main periods in the history of early runic writing. Both these periods span several centuries. To divide the corpora into two Periods appeared to be useful, in order to show the differences between the initial use of runes and the later developments. The initial use of runes appears to be more or less the same everywhere, which may point to a common source.

Period I, the 'archaic' period, stretches in all regions from the very beginning of runic writing to the 7th century, and it coincides everywhere with the pre-Christian era or with a transitional phase to Christianity. In historical terms this concerns the Roman and Merovingian periods. The exact beginning of Period I varies locally. In Denmark Period I lasts from the 2nd c. to the 6th c. In England Period I starts in the 5th and goes on to the 7th c. Continental runic writing stretches from the 2nd c. to the 7th c. From The Netherlands the whole runic period has been included, from the 5th c. to the 9th c. Period II, when runic writing appears to have become more integrated in society, began in Denmark and England somewhere during the 7th century.

4.2. There may be enough evidence from The Netherlands to distinguish two periods; the difficult thing here is to determine when one period ends and another begins. At any rate, the coins seem to represent a specific runic application, comparable to the English runic coins. Perhaps the existence of runic coins may be labelled a common North Sea speciality¹¹ A younger period may be distinguished, when peculiar developments occur and other runes appear, differing from those of the older *fupark* and the Anglo-Frisian runes. The causes for this phenomenon are unclear. The undated Westeremden B text is long, cryptic, and shows some Scandinavian runes from the period of the younger *fupark*. This definitely points to a development in the Frisian runic system. The inscription on the Bernsterburen staff also points to a later period, which tallies with the dating of the staff: *circa* 800. The two possible periods in the Dutch runic corpus may be defined as follows: the 'archaic' period presents inscriptions with runes from the older *fupark*, and also those including the Anglo-Frisian additional runes; the second period presents inscriptions with an extended use of runes from the older *fupark*, Anglo-Frisian runes and Scandinavian runes.

11. Also from Ribe (Jutland) numerous *sceattas* are known.

The only inscription in The Netherlands from outside the *terp*-area in the North is Bergakker, in the Betuwe, an island in the river estuary of the rivers Rhine and Meuse. This inscription belongs to the 'archaic' period.

The Continental corpus shows only the 'archaic' use of runes. On the basis of the texts, the rune-types and the kind of objects, it can be concluded that only Period I is represented here. Finds are scattered over a large part of West-Central Europe. The majority dates from 500-700; the largest find-area is South Germany. The attestations from Hungary and Switzerland are outliers; the finds from Belgium and France may also be considered outliers, although the presence of a Frankish runic tradition cannot be discarded. The few remains from the centuries before 500 offer an interesting picture: a line may be drawn between the finds of Fallward, Liebenau, Bergakker and Aalen on the one hand and another line from North Germany to the South-East, with the finds of Dahmsdorf, Rozwadów and Kowel.

Period II will be dealt with very cursorily; only a few finds from the 7th century will be discussed. Crucial changes in the writing system occurred in England and Blekinge. In order to show the contrast to the older period, I have included these (late?) 7th c. inscriptions.

4.3. The runic finds are described according to the following criteria:

object: sort of object, material;

context: find circumstances (grave, bog, peat, hoard, isolated find, settlement etc), date;

inscription: kind of runic alphabet; additional runes or runic innovations; any diverging runic forms; legibility; any use of pseudo-runes or script-imitation; direction of writing;

text: contents; length; linguistic analysis; intention of text (private or public); contents obscure or clear; connection between text and object.

relation: to other runic objects and texts; to other find-contexts; to texts other than rune-texts.

Characteristics of the inscriptions and texts of Period I

- a) the use of the older *fupark* with local variations; Anglo-Frisian extension of the *fupark* with two extra characters;
- b) runes and texts that are difficult to read and/or interpret; cryptic texts;
- c) the occurrence of script-imitation and pseudo-runes;
- d) the texts are mostly short;
- e) the texts consist of names (e.g the owner's name), makers', givers' or writers' formulae, naming object or material;
- f) the texts have individual, private, intimate and ritual meanings;
- g) sometimes the meaning of the texts and runes is seemingly religious or magical. It is remarkable that memorials, political and administrative texts should be lacking, whereas the later medieval Scandinavian runic tradition contains so many of these.

Characteristics of Period II

- a) more variation in runes, inscriptions and texts, perhaps due to increased use of runic script;
- b) strong changes in the *fupark*, independent regional developments, emerging of new, c.q. additional runes; disappearance of runes from the 24-letter *fupark*;
- c) increased legibility and therefore more possibilities for interpretation;
- d) longer and more substantial texts;
- e) monumental and legible texts for public purposes;

- f) obscure and enigmatic texts for private purposes;
- g) the emergence of cryptic runes, manuscript runes;
- h) the occurrence of Christian texts.

5. On the graphic rendering of runes, findplaces, transliterations etc.

All transliterations of runes, also called readings, in the present study are given in **bold** Roman lettering, all linguistic (phonetic and phonemic) transcriptions of runic texts are in *italics*. The interpretation is given between 'single' quotation marks. For instance: **runoronu** *rūnōrōnū* 'runerow'. The location or catalogue-entry of this inscription, which is treated in this study, is in underlined italics: *Björketorp*. If, on the other hand, a runic inscription is mentioned for some reason, but not discussed, e.g. if it has no entry in the catalogue, it is written in small capitals: NOLEBY. Information about the latter category can be obtained in e.g. Krause & Jankuhn 1966, Antonsen 1975 and Page 1973 and 1995.

A *transcription* includes punctuation and diacritical marks. All linguistic data and derivations like *Go satjan*, *Gmc *sitjan* are also given in italics. Quotations are between "double" quotation marks. Illegible or damaged runes are represented by ?; runes that were omitted by the runewriter and that are inserted by the runologist, are written between square brackets: [n]. Damaged or partially legible runes are given between round brackets: (m). Runes that were lost, but which can be reconstructed from the context, are represented like this: [dæ]us or, if they are fairly legible: wihgu. Single runes that can be interpreted as an abbreviation of an entire word are represented thus: r[unoz]. Bindrunes are written bold and underlined: **ga**, **me**. The so-called (i)ng rune: \diamond or \blacklozenge is referred to as (i)ng or ng in identifiable words and in *futhark's*.

6. Anomalous runes and doubtful cases

There is one specific problem in runic studies that needs some attention. Because of the paucity of runic material there are relatively little reliable data to build theories on and draw conclusions from. It is, therefore, good to remember what may be called: *Derolez' warning*¹². This means that only a very small percentage of the inscriptions may have survived, there being an enormous number that was lost and which we do not know anything about. In view of the 200 odd surviving objects (bracteates with runes not included) with inscriptions in the older futhark from five centuries of recorded runic writing, it is logical to conclude many more must have existed. Hence, any conclusions at all about runic writing can only be tentative. Absolute statements about the chronology and spread of runic forms are no more than inspired guesses, since the basis is so small. This also implies that runes showing

¹² Derolez describes a remarkable phenomenon in his 1981 article *The Runic System and its Cultural Context* on pp. 19 and 20 as follows: "1. The total number of inscriptions down to the year 450 or so amounts to no more than between 10 and 20 in a century, or one in every five to ten years; 2. Those inscriptions are spread over a fairly wide area comprising large parts of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, with a much thinner sprinkling on the Continent; 3. Yet they show a remarkable uniformity and stability, (...)". Derolez' warning can be formulated as follows: an unknown number of runecarvers must have been at work in this vast area at any given time during the period under consideration. They must have produced thousands of inscriptions in three centuries. What has survived then, is no more than a few percent of what has been carved.

unusual forms may be looked upon with suspicion, but on the other hand they may just be remnants of an enormous mass of lost (or as yet undiscovered) runic products. An instance of hitherto unknown runic practices, which may be regarded as unusual and (therefore) possibly false, are the Weser bones (Continental Corpus). Uncommon runic practices might gain some credibility when set alongside the host of inscriptions that was probably lost in the course of time. Thus the deviants need not instantly be dismissed. Besides, investigations into the genuity of the Weser runic bones (Pieper 1989) could not prove them false. As regards the Stetten rivet¹³, it is not so much the authenticity that is at stake in the first place, but the exceptionally small size of the object and the still smaller size of the scratches. It has not been included in this study.

With reference to Derolez' dictum¹⁴, I have included the Weser-inscriptions, but only because I wanted to give them the benefit of the doubt. Notwithstanding Pieper's profound and impressive research I am not convinced of the authenticity of the inscriptions. The runes are so different from all other known inscriptions in bone that I am reluctant to accept them as genuine. Pieper's thorough examinations of the Weser bones (some bear runes, some have drawings) have yielded no traces of falsification as regards the *runic* bones (whereas other bones with drawings appeared to be falsifications), although his research was intended to prove them false. Yet, some doubts remain, which are aroused especially because of the suspicious find-history and find circumstances. The texts of the bones consist of words that could easily have been taken from Gallée's *Altsächsische Grammatik*, for instance. Furthermore the way the runes were carved and the childlike drawings on the bones strengthened my impression that something was wrong here. Such irregularities would normally lead to the conclusion: suspect, probably false, but in this particular case falsification could not be proved yet.

A peculiar item is the stone pillar from Breza, found in 1930. According to the records of the find, published in the *Novitates Musei Sarajevoensis* nr. 9 (not available to me), several pieces of one or more pillars were found in a field. On one of these fragments a rune-alphabet appeared to have been cut. The excavators declared that this fragment belonged to a pillar that may have stood in or in front of a church, which was destroyed by fire. There was some confusion about the nature of the church, some sources speak of a church built by Goths (Jellinek 1931:32), others speak of an early Christian church, probably destroyed by fire as a

13. The Stetten rivet is a very small piece of weapon equipment, dated 7th c. The object seems too small (\varnothing 1.3 cm; height max. 0.7 cm; cf. Pieper 1991^b:309) for a deliberate inscription; in my opinion neither inscribing nor reading is possible without the use of a microscope. Yet, runic shapes can be distinguished (under the microscope), and Pieper interpreted the signs as: **afmelkud**, partly carved in bindrunes, which he took to represent a female PN *Amelgu(n)df*, interpreting the **k** in **amelkud** as a product for the OHG soundchange. The **f** might be an abbreviation of **f[ahi]** 'he/she draws' or it might be a *Begriffsrune* for **f[ehu]** 'property, wealth'. After rereading my own notes made during personal inspection of the Stetten inscription, I decided not to include this doubtful item. The object is covered with scratches and damages; the fact that some of these look like runes does not convince me of their runic identity. Altogether there are too many uncertainties to accept this item as a runic object.

14. Derolez' dictum is a warning for runologists not to draw too many conclusions from the little material we have; regarding the paucity of material one must assume that an unknown, but possibly large, number of inscriptions has gone lost, which on the one hand must make the runologist cautious, but which, on the other hand enables him to include anomalous-looking runic inscriptions, although these look spurious at first sight.

result of a Byzantine or Slavic attack (Arntz & Zeiss 1939:144). Arntz & Zeiss date the inscription on the basis of a possible presence of Langobards or Alamanni in the area. Arntz (1939:144) quotes a certain Oelmann, who saw the pillars himself in 1935, and who said that they were too small to have belonged to the church; the pillars were probably part of a canopy, perhaps situated inside the church. Besides the *fupark*, other signs were detected on different stone pieces. Arntz reproduced these fragments (with marks) and the stone piece (with the *fupark*) in his 1939 book. As far as the single signs or marks are concerned, I fail to recognize any runes among them. The *fupark*, though, seems genuine enough on the photograph. It is on a loose object of portable size, contrary to Zeiss' claims (1939:146). The dimensions are 19 cm x 30 cm x 14 cm. The confused find-history, however, and the impossibility of inspecting this item, combined with the circumstance that it turned up at such a peculiar and isolated place in 1930, makes one wonder whether this may be a hoax. Recently new information appeared. It appears that the building may have been a late-antique *aula*, which may have been the residence of an East Goth, perhaps a *comes* (Basler, 1993: 28f.). Analysis of the architectural fragments pointed to a public function of the building. A runic alphabet was carved on one pillar and a Roman alphabet was carved on another. The builders may have been East Goths, according to Basler. I have concluded that the object needs inspection, which at the moment (1997) seems not yet possible. I have not included it in this study.

Map 1. The Roman Empire and Germania Libera in the second century AD.



II. HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY AND RUNES

1. Introduction

1.1. Runes and rune-carrying objects cannot be studied without giving them their proper place within the society that produced them. Establishing the outlines of this context forms an important part of the present study.

Artifacts exhibiting runes are recorded from the second century AD onwards. About 400 odd artifacts (including nearly 200 runic bracteates), inscribed with runes from the older *futhork*, produced over the period of *ca.* 150 - 650, are recorded. From around the year 200, we already know some 25 attestations, found in an astonishingly large area: from Scandinavia and North Germany to Eastern Europe. The earliest attestations are mostly found on precious and portable objects. Whether these surviving items are representative for all runic script from the oldest, or archaic, period, is questionable. It is not clear when, where and for what reasons Germanic people developed their own writing system. A combination of philology, archaeology and history may be helpful in detecting the origin of runic writing and in understanding more about the society that used runes. Objects with runes generally emerge as a result of archaeological activities, hence in many cases a context is available. In recent years, quite a lot of new finds have produced a *hausse* of articles, mostly focusing on the new find and its immediate connections only. Therefore an in-depth comparison with older finds is necessary, followed by an update.

1.2. Through migration and acculturation, runic writing spread to large parts of Europe, along with members of the social and political upper classes and also with craftsmen, who travelled either in the retinue of their lords or as individuals. The propagation of runic knowledge may have been favoured by the custom of exchanging prestige-goods among the Germanic elite of North-, West- and Central Europe. Indigenous runic traditions emerged in Scandinavia, Germany, The Netherlands and England, each more or less distinct from the others. This is illustrated partly by the sort of objects¹⁵ found in a distinct area and the way of depositing these objects, but especially by the language of the texts and the use of typical runic forms. The Goths in the Black Sea-region may have practised runic writing, although as yet very few remains of this activity have been found. It remains uncertain whether in this part of Europe ever existed an indigenous runic tradition.

On the other hand, the various runic traditions had many features in common, which would imply that runes were *en vogue* among people who had something in common and who lived in a similar *milieu*. The German archaeologist Roth points out that among certain families it was customary to make runic inscriptions, especially on metal. These families probably formed a small elite, a 'middle-class' or 'upper middle-class', according to Roth (1994:310f.). His findings concerned South Germanic runic writing, but the situation may have been similar in other regions where runic writing was practised during roughly the same period. It was the supposition that one or more specific groups were concerned, that provided the stimulus to investigate the character of such groups. It appears that these groups emerged in a society

¹⁵ In Denmark and Germany runes mainly occur on brooches and weapon(part)s, in Frisia mainly on coins, combs, pieces of wood and bone; in Anglo-Saxon England mainly on coins, brooches, weapon(part)s, pots and urns.

with small power centres, as members of an elite controlling each other by way of a gift-exchange policy. They could afford to employ craftsmen, such as weaponsmiths and jewelers, who may have qualified to be among the first to possess runic knowledge.

Some of the oldest runic inscriptions are signatures of weaponsmiths, who, by signing their products, imitated a Roman practice. In a largely oral culture, such as that of the Germanic peoples, writing was not primarily a means of communication, but rather a status symbol, because the addition of runes to an object increased its value. An attempt at mystification through inscribing letters on the object may also have played a role.

Later on, runographers can be located among bracteate-designers, although Moltke (1985:80, 114) considered metal-workers illiterate, especially because of the many faulty and corrupt runes on bracteates. This, however, does not prove that all smiths were unable to write anything meaningful in runes. Artisans qualify as runewriters because of the so-called 'makers' formulae that have been found on all sorts of objects. They could easily pass their knowledge on to others, since some of them may have travelled in the retinue of some high-placed person, or they may have gone from market to market in a group of merchants and other craftsmen. This would explain why the practice of rune writing spread so quickly over a large area.

1.3. During the entire runic period up to the High Middle Ages, runes were used to formulate all sorts of texts, but in the early texts especially personal names are found. We find expressions of ownership, signatures of makers and writers; dedications from one person to another, and also the names of the objects themselves. Runes were supposedly also used within a ritual context, as sometimes appears to be the case with amulets, gravegifts and objects deposited in bogs or hoards. Whether this required specialized rune writers, such as priests, is unknown. Any evidence of religion in early runic texts is ambiguous (perhaps apart from certain texts on bracteates, e.g. **uīū** 'I consecrate', sometimes followed by 'the runes'). One may wonder about the possible function of the consecration of runes, but apparently this referred to the use of certain, possibly formulaic, texts, in connection with a hitherto unknown ritual. The Stentofte rune stone from (assumably) the 7th century bears a text that clearly refers to an act of offering: 'with nine steeds, with nine he-goats, Hapuwulf gave **j**' (Santesson 1989). If **j** represents its rune-name **jāra* 'good year, harvest' this may be interpreted as an instance of a symbolic use of runes, pointing to a function of runes in a context of a fertility ritual.

1.4. In scholarly works of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the runographers of the past are often referred to as *Runenmeister*. This suggests a highly skilled and extraordinary professional, who would have performed in a cultic or religious setting, as a kind of 'priest'. However, from the first centuries of recorded runic writing, evidence of priests propagating runes is lacking. I prefer to refer to the runographers in more neutral terms. Wulf (1994:31-44) states that there is no proof of any religious or magical connotation of runemasters' names in runic inscriptions. He presumes that many of those names are just ordinary personal names.

1.5. The practice of offering and depositing war-booty in bogs suggests the involvement of some official religious ceremony. Especially weapons and bracteates were used for ritual deposition, so if the religious character may be inadequately expressed by the texts, this may have been symbolized by or integrated in the act of offering. Even if it may not always be possible to reconstruct the character of any cult, a sacred motive for the writing of runes at

certain occasions cannot be excluded. It may very well be that the very act of writing had a function as a means of communication with the gods or the supernatural. Since only a few of the hundreds of deposited objects bear runes, these may have had a *pars pro toto* function. Some words like **laukaz** 'leek', **alu** 'ale', **lapu** 'invitation' on bracteates may point to the use of intoxicating herbs and drinks, possibly in connection with a cult.

2. From the pre-Roman Iron Age to the late-Germanic Iron Age

2.1. In the pre-Roman Iron Age (500-100 BC), Northern Europe is characterized by unpretentious cremation graves with gravegifts such as simple fibulae and girdle buckles, remarkable only in their uniformity (Parker Pearson 1989:199). There is evidence of offering practices in which a special, privileged caste may have been involved. Offerings in bogs and lakes continued through the centuries. It was not just agricultural items such as wooden ploughs that were deposited, but pots, iron and bronze arm- and neckrings and human beings as well.

2.2. At around 200-150 BC, a remarkable development in burial practices took place in the North German Plain, in Denmark and in Southern Scandinavia (Parker Pearson 1989:202). In certain cremation graves, situated at some distance from other graves, Celtic metalwork appears: brooches and swords, together with wagons, Roman cauldrons and drinking vessels. The area of these rich graves is the same as the places where later (first century AD) princely graves are found. A ruling class seems to have emerged, distinguished by the possession of large farms and rich gravegifts such as weapons for the men and silver objects for the women, imported earthenware and Celtic items. This process continued throughout the beginning of this era and is especially noticeable in Jutland and on Funen. The first historical contacts with the Romans took place during this period. The journey of the Cimbri and Teutons from Jutland, at the end of the second century BC, possibly resulted from different motives: e.g. internal struggles for power, overpopulation, climatic changes and long-distance trade, which included the import of prestige goods. The pre-Roman Iron Age Germanic society hardly knew any private property (perhaps apart from cattle), and certainly no privately owned land, since this was common property (Hedeager 1992^a:245). The agriculture of the Celtic field-system could not expand much and an increase of agricultural production was not possible, which put a strain on society. The first four centuries AD saw a reorganisation of the villages, the redistribution of land, improved tools and a larger produce of the fields. Hedeager (1992^a:245) conjectures that the early weapon deposits, and perhaps also the bog offerings of people in the north of Jutland, bear witness of internal conflicts. The differentiation process that may have started at around 150 BC continued till the development of royal power centres centuries later (Hedeager 1992^a:244ff.).

With the increase of the number of landowners (and private property), new tensions and conflicts could originate within the community. The accumulation of property produced a new elite. Social status became important, which was expressed by the possession of prestige goods (Hedeager 1988^a:137ff.). Literacy, used for spiritual or profane purposes, may be expected to have developed among high-placed persons or privileged groups.

The fact that the oldest known runic inscriptions were carved on weapons and on jewellery, and overwhelmingly bear names that can be interpreted as an expression of a ruling class can

hardly be seen as accidental. In this society, the runic script may have filled a need in which writing of some sort was required to express ownership or prestige on the one hand, and a cultural identity on the other.

3. The emergence of an elite

3.1. During the first few centuries of our era a new funerary custom emerged: inhumation alongside the existing cremation rite. The inhumation graves (especially in North Jutland, Sealand, North Poland and the Upper Elbe region) contain gravegifts such as Roman drinking vessels, and are further characterized by the absence of weapons. These graves, of both men and women, are known as *Fürstengräber*, deviating in their gravegifts from Germanic graves in regions that were at war with the Roman Empire. Hedeager (1988:131) makes a distinction between graves with weapons and graves without weapons. Graves containing weapons are related to active warriors. Older men were never buried with weapons, but with gold grave-goods and sometimes with Roman imports and spurs. Both weapons and spurs have been found in the graves of quite young males, indicating that the right to be a warrior and the access to wealth were not achieved but inherited.

3.2. Agricultural reform, the emergence of a wealthy class, the growth of the population and the presence of a large group of young men initiated the rise of professional armies, i.e. the rise of a new class and a new elite, based on the bond between the leader and his retinue: the *hirð* or *comitatus*. Wars were fought for strategical reasons, for trading places and routes, for raw materials such as iron-ore from Jutland, for land and for the right to raise taxes (Hedeager 1992^a:247). The reorganisation of power developed into a military system in which raiding and trading alternated, through the Viking Age up to the high Middle Ages. Power became centralized, such as at Stevns on Sealand. A kingdom with a network of vassals emerged. Hedeager (1988:131ff.) remarks that "Roman prestige goods now circulated among the new elite in a regional system of redistribution. Thus Roman prestige goods were part of a process in which power and influence were built up; they were used as a means of sustaining and legitimizing new power structures that cut across earlier local social structures. The old tribal structure based on ties of kinship and clan transformed gradually into permanently class-divided states".

3.3. At the end of the second century AD a sudden crisis brought about important changes: the population of the hitherto mighty and rich western part of Funen, eastern Jutland and the coastal parts of the Baltic states strongly diminished, nearly disappearing. Parker Pearson (1989:212) observes that "all over the Baltic and North-Western Europe settlement retreated away from the coastal areas into separated and nucleated blocks. The centre of prosperity shifted eastward to eastern Funen and Sealand". In The Netherlands, too, especially in the coastal areas and the adjacent sandy grounds, this disturbance was felt in these times. Van Es (1967:535f.) observed that maximum coin importation from the Roman empire into Drenthe ended shortly after 200 AD. Coin hoards such as those in Drenthe show three centres of concentration at about 200 AD, the other two were in the Lower Elbe region and in the area between the Lower Oder and Vistula, from where, at that time, the Langobards and Goths began their southward migrations (Van Es 1967:535). The hoarding shows a breach in relations, which was caused by some kind of disturbance. The Chauci were pressed westward

by the Langobards, who, after their initial westward movement, turned south to the Danube region. At any rate the whole coastal region was in a state of turmoil at about 200 AD, the causes of which may have been numerous: pressure from the north and the east, a deterioration of natural conditions such as a marine transgression, real or imaginary overpopulation, or a combination of several factors, according to Van Es (1967:537).

3.4. This change is related to wars; the period of disorder lasts from ca. 200 to the 5th century. Weapons appear as burial gifts again and also the votive offerings of weapons in bogs and lakes increase. Instances of offering deposits have been found in the bogs of Thorsberg, Nydam, Illerup and Vimose. The Danish archaeologist Ilkjær (1991:281) mentions invaders in Denmark from the area north of Skåne and from the Baltic. The weapons of the enemy, before their deposition in bogs, were first deliberately destroyed. This points to a religious practice. A firm line must be drawn between the gods and the people; what belonged to the gods, or was offered to them, should never be used again by men, therefore the objects offered were made unfit for human use. According to Ilkjær (1991:281) until Period C1b (250/260 AD) "both attackers and defenders apparently had connections with the Kattegat-area, while the Baltic, that is South-East Jutland, the southern shores of Funen and Sealand, South Sweden and Öland, was the connection in period C2 (250-320), while the areas that were subject to earlier attacks, go free".

3.5. The war booty that was offered contains an enormous number of Roman weapons. It is not exactly clear how these entered the Germanic area, perhaps via trading or looting. They may also have been imported from Roman weaponsmiths, although this was strictly forbidden by Roman authorities. Curiously enough, the blades are Roman, but the handles are Germanic. According to the Danish archaeologist Lønstrup (1988:96), warriors in Scandinavia, where no locally produced swords are known, and in Germany, carried Roman swords. So many swords have been found that it is acceptable to conclude that during the later period of the Roman Empire, most Germanic warriors were equipped with swords.

The elite graves of the third and early fourth century on Sealand and Funen contained Roman goods, witnesses of an appreciation of a Roman lifestyle, according to Parker Pearson (1989:218-220). Similarly lavish burials in the rest of fourth-century Europe are unknown. Jutland, however, showed a decline in population and in wealth during the fifth century, possibly because of intensive land-exploitation and a transgression of the North Sea. These events may have been partially responsible for the migration to Britain, but Jutland was not left uninhabited. Bornholm, Öland and Gotland grew in wealth and all the evidence points to an easterly shift of the trade centres.

3.6. From the second and third centuries, two periods of raids by pirates are recorded along the North Sea coast of Holland, Belgium and France. The first was launched on Gaul by the Chauci at the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The raids continued during the last quarter of the second and the first half of the third century, and culminated in invasions into the reign of Gallienus and the Gallic emperors. The invaders were then no longer called Chauci but Franks, who, according to Van Es (1967:543), were the same people under a different name. The Betuwe was an area under constant pressure from tribes living across the Rhine. Van Es (1967:548) suggests that Chamavi from the adjacent Veluwe settled in the Betuwe as Roman *foederati* to help protect the border. Later, Constans (337-360) introduced new Franks into

this region, and Van Es thinks these Franks were Salii. The Chamavi may have pushed the Salii southwards towards Toxandria, but Julianus (360-363) and later Valentinianus (364-375) apparently supported the Salii against the Chamavi, and the Rhine frontier was restored (Van Es 1967:549). From then onwards, the Salian Franks penetrated deeper into Roman territory. The Lower Rhine was maintained as the empire's frontier, for it was essential to safeguard the line of communication between Britannia and the Upper Rhine region. Franks may have been among the troops that in 368 and 398 were transferred to Britain to help protect the population against the Saxon raids (Van Es 1967:542f.). The Salii were to play an important part in history, since from their ranks the Merovingian realm would spring, with Clovis as the first real king of a new state (Heidinga/Offenberg 1992:27). But before this, a well-known Merovingian Frank was Childeric, perhaps the last of the *foederati*. He was buried in 481 as a Roman commander and *rex* of his people. His gravegoods consisted of Roman military insignia, weapons and jewellery, and some dozens of horses also accompanied him on his journey to the next world. The same custom was observed in Wijster (Drente), where the grave of a Germanic-Roman soldier (5th c.) has been found, surrounded by horse-graves. The Sutton Hoo (7th c.) and Fallward (early 5th c.) ship burials contained also a mixture of Germanic, Roman and Byzantine gravegifts.

3.7. In the Central Netherlands in the 5th and 6th centuries, settlements were concentrated at the south of the Veluwe, the Utrechtse Heuvelrug and (the eastern part of) the Betuwe. Especially the surrounding area of Rhenen appears to be "the most suitable site for exercising political and economic powers in about AD 400" (Heidinga 1990:13). Here at least two hoards, two cemeteries¹⁶ and an unusual large ring-fort have been found. In that period there was a tribal pact of Chamavi, Bructeri, Chattuarii in the Lower Rhine area between Cologne and the Central Netherlands. One of the hoards near Rhenen was discovered in 1938. It contained two gold torques and a fragment of a third, dated into the Migration Period (Heidinga 1990:14ff.). The third torquis, which was inlaid with precious stones, can be attributed to a Roman workshop. The torques of the Velp¹⁷ type were made in a Lower Rhine workshop (Heidinga 1990:19). Torques, according to Heidinga (1990:16) circulated within the narrow circuit of chieftains or kings. There is one torquis with runes, a stray find near Aalen, Baden-Württemberg. The Bergakker runic find, a silver scabbard mount, originated from the (Lower) Rhine area, or North Gallia.

The wealth of the region of the Lower Rhine did not have an economic cause, but a military-political one. Here was the original homeland of the Frankish leaders with their *comitatus*, who first served in the Roman army and later made a career in Gaul and who amassed enormous fortunes (Heidinga 1990:18). To these warlords distributing large amounts of gold

¹⁶ Unfortunately, one of the two cemeteries and the hill-fort have not received the professional treatment they earned. The cemetery of the Donderberg contained 800 inhumations and *circa* 300 cremations, and was in use from the 4th c. until the first half of the 8th c. The other cemetery (the Laarse Berg) was discovered in 1892, but has never been investigated. Only a few pots and sherds are retained. The Betuwe area is almost a blank map; only the double cemetery of Lent opposite Nijmegen has been excavated (Heidinga 1990:33).

¹⁷ Especially the Velp hoards were very rich, one included 8 torques and three gold rings, the other (at Het Laar) contained gold medallions, numerous gold coins and a torquis. The Beilen hoard consisted of 6 torques, 1 bracelet and 22 solidi (Heidinga 1990:16). A second hoard near Rhenen was discovered in 1988. It consisted of at least 237 coins, including 97 gold tremisses and 140 silver sceattas. The deposits can be interpreted either as the *thesaurus* of a chieftain or as votive offerings.

was essential for the recruitment of (and preservation of) their retainers, for alliances (with the gods as well) and for the maintenance of their status in general (Heidinga 1990:19).

The Frankish elite may have had landed property, according to Theuvs (1990:45), but also lived on the surplus extraction and tribute levied from the population, without claiming the land itself. In this way a Frankish leader was not tied to the soil, which may explain the high mobility of the elite in the 6th c. In the course of the 6th c. the elite transformed claims on a surplus into claims on the land, and thus became a land-based elite. They were able to participate in trade networks, according to Theuvs (1990:46), who adds that artisanal centres, already in existence in the 5th and 6th centuries, produced prestigious items which circulated mainly among the upper echelons of society, and which may not have been 'trade objects'. In that case these 'prestige objects' may have formed an integral part of a gift and exchange policy.

3.8. The combination of a rising (new) elite and the manufacture of bracteates after the Roman fashion in Scandinavia and elsewhere may be compared to the custom of the Frankish nobility of the 5th and 6th centuries to establish themselves in regions where some Roman culture and population remained. Early Frankish elite burials have been found in combination with late Roman burials in the vicinity of Roman towns (Theuvs 1990:45). The Frankish leaders could only flourish in Romanized surroundings (Van Es 1994:80). Frankish kings, like Chilperic, had long, braided hair, a symbol of their magic power. The 'Germanization' of the image of the Roman emperor is reflected by the long, braided or knotted hairstyle on nearly all bracteates that show a head (esp. A and C types).

The Frankish kings Childeric and his son Clovis took possession of the political vacuum that had been left behind by the fall of the Roman empire. The Franks actually inherited the West Roman empire, imitating the Roman emperors' customs. One may wonder to what extent such an imitation was also emulated by the commissioners of the bracteates, in the sense that both Franks and inhabitants of the Danish Isles were looking for an ideological model to build their state on.

3.9. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire gradually (and in waves) affected large parts of *Germania Libera*. The influx and influence of Roman prestige goods and the return of soldiers from the Roman army slowed down and eventually stopped. In *Germania*, the result may have been a temporary power vacuum, with fights and uncertain social and political relations. This situation marks the Migrations Period, beginning in some parts of *Germania Libera* in the third century and lasting at least to the sixth century. In the period that followed there were probably territorial fights between small kingdoms in Denmark until the establishment of a central power by Harald Bluetooth in the tenth century. In the meantime, sacral deposits eventually disappeared and the number of princely graves decreased - power centres arose elsewhere in North and West Europe. Armies served other purposes than the consolidation of power at home; they directed their attention elsewhere. Archaeological data show that there was no increase in farming nor in the cultivation of land. Probably only one child inherited the ancestral farm; other sons had to look for another way of living. In the army one could earn wealth and honour. At first actions were still based on the old credo of *trading and raiding*. It was not until the Viking Age that colonies overseas were founded.

4. The votive deposits in the Danish bogs

4.1. From 100 BC to 500 AD the practice of offerings continued in all large bogs: Thorsberg, Nydam, Ejsbøl, Porskær, Illerup, Hedelisker in Jutland; Vimose and Kragehul on Funen (Lønstrup 1988:97). It appears that substantial offerings took place, sometimes at long intervals. It is remarkable that bog deposits date predominantly from periods with few imports, which means from periods of war. This situation is comparable to the Viking age, in which periods of trade alternated with periods of plunder and civil war (Randsborg 1988:12).

4.2. According to Ilkjær (1996^a: 66ff.), in the period 200-250 AD, objects offered in the Illerup, Thorsberg and Vimose bogs originated from other regions than the immediate surrounding area. The provenance of the objects is the region around the Kattegat, whereas a significant number of offerings from ca. 300 AD comes from the Baltic Sea region (Ilkjær 1996^a:66). The objects are considered spoils of war. The spearheads found in Illerup and Vimose are of Scandinavian origin; the finds from Thorsberg may have come from a southerly region (Düwel 1992:346ff., with ref.), which is emphasized by the presence of Roman shieldbosses, helmets and armour. In the Vimose bog Roman military goods have also been found among the deposits of around 160 AD, e.g. from the transitional period from the older to the younger Roman Iron Age (Ilkjær (1996^a:68ff.). This is also the site where the oldest known runic object, the **harja** comb (160 AD) was found, which is said to have come from an area near Vimose: from Funen, southern Jutland or North Germany (Ilkjær 1996^a:68,73). With regard to the gravegoods of around 200 AD, it seems plausible to suppose that these were provided by the local inhabitants. These gravegifts are precious brooches, among which five runic rosette brooches and one runic bow fibula (Stoklund 1995:319). Such precious brooches have been found in women's graves in Skåne, Sealand and Jutland. The names were carved into the silver back of the needle-holder and can all be men's names, for instance the maker's signature.

4.3. The origin of one of the oldest runic finds, the Thorsberg shieldboss, is mainly inferred from the fibulae and other shieldbosses that were part of the same votive offering. Nine specimens of the shieldbosses (23% of the total amount) are of Roman provenance or come from an area under Roman influence. The fibulae generally occur in the northern part of the Elbe region and the Rhine/Weser area. So, the origin of the army whose equipment was deposited as a votive offering of war-booty was the area between Lower Elbe and Rhine (cf. Lønstrup 1984:99.).

In most instances, one may assume that the runes were inscribed at the same time as the production of the object, such as is evident from the runic stamp **wagnijo** on one of the Illerup spearheads. In the case of the Thorsberg shieldboss there are two possibilities: either the runes were carved by the weaponsmith during the manufacturing process, or they were added after the ritual destruction and shortly before the deposition of the object in the Thorsberg bog. This assumption is based on the impression that the runes seem to cross a scratch or groove caused by the destruction. However, this is so arbitrary that the possibility of the runes being cut when the shieldboss was made, cannot be discarded. The rim of the shieldboss is twisted due to the deformation, but not in such a way that the runes clearly overlap the rim's edge. In my opinion the overlap is dubious, since the runes curve around the corner of the edge in a natural way and it cannot be proved that the runes were made after the damage. On the other hand, the runes are at the *inside* of the shieldboss and, thus, invisible when the boss was still attached to the shield, so it might be reasonable to assume that the

runes were carved after the shield had been taken apart. But if the inscription should be a maker's signature, it would not be so dramatic that the runes were on the inner side of the boss. The maker's signature, however, is mostly placed in sight, or it is written in clear, ornamental, runes: on weapons (Illerup, Wurmlingen, Steindorf, Ash Gilton, Chessel Down II, Schretzheim III, Øvre Stabu, Kowel, Dahmsdorf, Thames Scramasax, a.o.); on an amulet box (Schretzheim I); on several brooches (such as Udby, Nøvling, Meldorf, Donzdorf); on a wooden box (Garbølle), and on the gold horn from Gallehus. This makes the hidden place of the Thorsberg inscription exceptional. But since no further evidence for the inscription of objects just before offering is available¹⁸, and as it cannot be determined that the Thorsberg runes indeed cross a scratch, I assume the inscription was added at the place of production, that is in the region between Lower Elbe and Rhine. The Thorsberg runic finds are therefore included in the Continental Corpus.

4.4. The motive for depositing appears to have been connected with the fact whether objects have been re-excavated or not. In the former case it concerns the hoarding of precious goods, in the latter it may concern an offering. In the Viking period people buried gold to take it with them to the realm of death, together with horses, dogs, ships, weapons and wagons. Another aim was to present it to the gods, in order to propitiate them when arriving in the hereafter. Hoarding treasures is something entirely different, in this case the intention is to return one day to retrieve one's possessions (Hedeager 1991:206f.). Gaimster (1993:5) states that "In early medieval Europe the hoarding of precious metals was an act of some significance in itself. Apart from burying objects in times of war or political commotion with a view to regain the hoard in better days, personal possessions carried some of the owner's power and fortune and were therefore worthy of being stored for magical reasons or for the afterlife". This indicates that writing names on special objects had a special function, too. The receiver will always remember who gave the object plus inscription to him. The object and its inscription emphasize the importance of both giver and receiver, and their special relationship.

It is useful to make a distinction between individual offerings and communal offerings, whose rituals took place in public, whereas individuals probably made deposits in secret and preferably at a rather inaccessible place (Hedeager 1991:209ff.). Offering might be based on the conviction that in case someone owed something to someone else, the following rules of gift-symbolism should apply: if the receiver of a precious object were more powerful than the giver, the receiver had to pay back with favours. If both were of equal standing, the gifts had to be similar. If the receiver was of lower standing, it was his duty to pay back with services (Hedeager 1991:208f.). Offering might be interpreted in a similar way: the offerer, of course of lower standing than the gods, gave gold and beautiful objects to flatter the gods, in order to receive favours. Individual offerings consisted of objects that could be used as payment, here and in the hereafter. Bracteates, however, were never used as currency, but may have been the ultimate diplomatic gifts. If this is so, they formed an important part of a religious system, in which the concept of the 'sacral kingdom' should certainly not be overlooked (Seebold 1992).

5. Bracteates

¹⁸ For instance, the inscriptions **lagubewa** and **nijjo tawide** on the Illerup shield handles had been made while the handles were still fastened onto the shield; the runes avoid the ornamental discs and rivets (Stoklund 1995^b:336).

5.1. Gold bracteates were manufactured in large quantities approximately during the second half of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th. Bracteates belong to a context of offerings, hoards and gravegifts. Specialists of the bracteates' iconography see them as amulets, but they may also be interpreted as regalia and as political or diplomatic gifts. The term 'magical amulet' originated from the idea that the Roman gold medallions had that particular function. Another aspect of the bracteates is their reflection of high social status (Gaimster 1993:12). In a gift-exchanging network these might have served as special gifts, although it remains unclear at what sort of occasions.

5.2. The bracteates are imitations of imperial coins and medallions of the Constantinian dynasty, which ended in 363 (Axboe et. al. IK 1,1 *Einleitung*, 1985:21). The manufacture of Germanic imitations of medallions started somewhere during the second half of the 4th c. Therefore it is difficult to understand why the bracteate-period should be dated in the 5th or even 6th c. Axboe's explanation is that, if bracteates occur in datable contexts, this is always in the 5th - 6th centuries. Dating is also possible on typological grounds, according to the so-called Germanic Animal style or Nydam style¹⁹ (Axboe, personal communication). The animals of the C-bracteates²⁰ are closely connected with early Animal style I; the A-bracteates need not be dated significantly earlier than the C-bracteates. Therefore, Axboe presumes that the production of the gold bracteates started at about 450 and went on until about 530 (personal communication).

In this way the chronological discrepancy of one century or more between the manufacturing of the Germanic medallion-imitations and the rise of the bracteate-production is still not explained. Moreover, it is doubtful whether one should rely heavily on the bracteates' contexts, since the bracteates might have been worn by generations before they got deposited, just as the medallion imitations appear to have been in use long enough to inspire the bracteates' iconography. At Gotland bracteates were found together with Roman coins dating from the first century AD! Coins and bracteates may have circulated a long time before their deposition. Ulla Lund Hansen (1992:183-194) thinks the bracteates were produced during a very short period of perhaps only one or two generations.

5.3. However difficult, some sort of chronology can be established, according to Axboe (1994:68-77). M(edallion)-type bracteates are supposed to be the earliest examples, because of their great resemblance to their model, the imperial medallion. The only M-bracteate inscribed with runes is therefore dated to the 4th century, an exception, since all other bracteates are dated to the 5th and 6th centuries. The M-types are followed by A- and C-bracteates. D-bracteates are commonly accepted as the youngest. The development of the inscriptions supposedly moved from Roman capitals to capital imitation, and eventually runic writing evolved, finding its culmination on C-type bracteates. D-type bracteates do not show runes anymore. The last runebearing bracteates are five F-type bracteates.

5.4. Some scenes from Nordic mythology may be detected among the pictures and ornaments pressed into the thin goldfoil (see numerous publications by Hauck, for instance 1992^{a&b}).

19. For elaborate information on dating the bracteates and the Animal-style etc. see Birkmann 1995.

20. The additions A, B, C, D, F to the bracteates refers to their type; more information can be found in the chapter on Bracteates with Runes).

Also, the concept of an 'ideal king' might be presumed, especially among the types presenting human being, horse/stag and bird (Seebold 1992:299ff.). An interpretation of the bracteates as active media in social, political or religious transactions, as a 'special purpose money' is forwarded by Gaimster (1993:1), which is quite plausible. Besides, the iconography has some military features. The picture of the Roman emperor might very well suit the concept of medallions and bracteates as military insignia. The urge to germanize the emperor's countenance appears to be inversely proportional to the custom of Germanic imperial horsemen (*equites singulares*) in the Roman army to adopt the name of the current emperor as their own *cognomen* (Bang 1906:10, 19).

5.5. There are instances of Roman connections: **walhakurne** on Tjurkö (I)-C is 'Welsh corn'²¹, referring to Roman or Gallic gold, obtained by melting solidi. Darum (II)-A, Revsgård-A/Allerslev show signs that may be interpreted as Roman numerals. The Haram medallion-imitation bears the text DN CONSTANTIVS PF. Broholm-A/Oure bears a picture of two heads and the corrupt text TANS PF AUG. Part of the legend of Seeland (III)-A can be read as NUMIS. This bracteate also has several signs that may be interpreted as numerals. In my opinion, Fünen (I)-C bears the name of the Roman emperor M. Aurelius Carus (Looijenga 1995^a). Especially the many C-bracteates depicting horsemen may be reminiscent of the important role Germanic auxiliaries (*equites, alae*) played in Roman military history from Caesar's days onwards. Further on we see persons that have helmets, swords and spears. In spite of the rather random way these examples have been selected, I would like to suggest some sort of military or class insignia as the bracteates' origin (insignia which, eventually, may have been given some other function). The fact that they were found in hoards, among offerings, in graves (even in the graves of women), need not contradict such a supposition. These objects, precious in various aspects, were perfectly suitable for use in the hereafter, or as gifts to the gods, for whatever reason. Besides, gods often combine the divine functions of war, death, healing and fertility.

The Roman medallions and Byzantine coins were strictly exempted from trade; outside the Empire they were mainly used as a tribute or as gifts within a political and symbolic context. Hedeager (1991:212) summarizes their function thus: "a new elite was consolidated, and it was this that communicated with gods and ancestors on the part of the community. Precious gifts were intended to place the gods and ancestors under an obligation to support the existing order in the world, while the life of the private individuals in the other world was ensured by burying one's means of payment".

5.6. Large bracteate deposits, with more than three items, are always accompanied by other precious objects like brooches, beads and coins, whereas small bracteate deposits of one or two pieces are mostly found alone, or sometimes together with some goldfoil. As Hedeager (1991:211f.) puts it: "Other large bracteate deposits are included in a quite different context of seemingly much more accidental combinations like ring gold, cut gold, mounts from the mouths of scabbards, etc. There is hardly a basis for maintaining that all gold finds are hidden and forgotten hoards; in all events the large bracteate hoards with fibulae and beads, and most of the arm- and neckrings may be buried with some sacrosanct motive. It is in these finds that

²¹ In Wales were some of the biggest gold mines known in that period.

we find the massive gold rings and the very fine craftsmanship lacking in other finds".

5.7. There seems to be a connection between the residence and offering places of the elite, as at Gudme. There, especially, an enormous wealth of bracteates has been found, although curiously with relatively few runes [but interestingly enough, one of them is bracteate Broholm-A/Oure, with the legend TANS PF AUG (see above), another one, Gudme II-B, shows a Victoria or Fortuna figurine with two other (Roman?) figures (and the runic legend **undz**)]. The rise of the new elite coincided with the bracteate period. We find, according to Fabech (1991:302): "with the breakthrough of the Scandinavian animal style at the beginning of the Migration Period, pictorial representations that clearly stand for an ideological/religious symbolic language. For this reason we may assume that the bracteates had a place in some of the religious acts and cultic rituals. It seems possible to connect them with settlements of special character like Gudme, Lundeborg, Odense, Sorte Muld, Vå or Helgö. The fact that these sacral objects (bracteates and goldgubbar: goldfoil figurines) were found in connection with settlements indicates that religious rites took place in or near buildings at these settlements or power-centres. This supports the idea that the aristocracy of the Migration Period had sufficient power and influence to institutionalize sacrificial customs so they no longer were performed in bogs and lakes, but in settlement contexts".

The question is what kind of 'aristocracy' may have arisen in Denmark at that time. In my opinion this was a group that differed from the initial group(s) of runewriters (or at least had other purposes). On the basis of the existing evidence it looks as if these people used runes on bracteates exclusively, since from that period (second half of the 5th c. - beginning 6th c.) no other 'Danish' runic objects are known. Or, perhaps the bracteates need to be dated earlier, in the 4th and 5th centuries?

5.8. The bracteates are evidence of a lively exchange of objects and ideas between groups in Germania, but also between Romans and Germanic people. Bracteates can be looked upon as subjects in the gift-exchange-system between elites of Scandinavia, England and the Continent. Early runic writing may not have been used as a means of communication in the modern sense of the word. Some of the runic legends on bracteates seem to have served specific purposes. The runes support the iconography in some symbolical concept, which either shows scenes from mythology or has a 'political' connotation, perhaps denoting ideal leadership. The 'Roman' connection is reflected in the use of Roman symbols of power and Roman lettering. According to Axboe (1991:202), this attests the familiarity of a Germanic elite with aspects of Roman society, and their ability to adapt this knowledge to their own conditions and purposes. The social and political position of privileged families was legitimated by genealogy, the *stirps regia*. A mythological ancestor (a god, a hero) was at the origin, the *apex*.

Royman (1988:55) states that "gods, myths and rituals are important in the integration of society and the legitimation of values and norms. Religion provides for coherency, stability and continuity". Hedeager (1992^a:289) asserts that "bracteates formed a political medium, used in contexts where politics were in evidence, such as at the great feasts connected with religious ceremonies and the taking of the oath of loyalty".

In fact, this points to the rise of a leadership based on religion and secular power in a rather complex society. Although there must have existed some legislation and issuing of rules which may have required the use of a writing system, nothing of the kind has survived, if ever anything like this was written down. One has to assume that oral tradition still prevailed and

that in this time writing was confined to other functions than that of communication.

5.9. From the total of over 900 bracteates, around 140 bracteates are known from outside the area of their production; most of them have been found in Germany, but finds are scattered south as far as Hungary and east as far as Russia. The largest concentration in the west is in Britain. There is a significant change in find-contexts, though: bracteates in Denmark, South Sweden, around the Oslofjord and along the North-Sea coast of North Germany and Frisia, have all been found in hoards or deposits, whereas in England and further south in Germany they are stray finds or gravefinds, mainly from women's graves (cf. fig. 2 in Gaimster 1993:4, and fig. 3 in Andrén 1991:248). One explanation may be that in the one area the deposition of bracteates was connected with some cult or ritual that was not practised in the other area, where bracteates were merely seen as women's adornments. This could be the result of a gift-exchanging network, in which bracteates served as precious gifts only.

5.10. Interesting is the explanation Andrén (1991:253) offers for the phenomenon that outside the first-mentioned area most bracteates have been found in women's graves: they were regarded as symbols of a Scandinavian identity, used to signal allegiance. According to Düwel (1992^a:56f.) only 20 of the 211 inscribed bracteates have been found in graves. Of these 20 items only 8 bear runes and capitals. Of these 8 items only 5 are purely runic. Düwel suspects that in general rune bracteates were meant for the living, rather than for the dead. Sometimes bracteates and coins are used as a 'Charon's obol', an adoption of a purely classical idea (Axboe & Kromann 1992:276). A similar context is observed in a small group of bracteates deposited in male graves on Gotland (Gaimster, 1993:9). Special coin-like bracteates were made for this purpose in southern Gotland (Axboe & Kromann 1992:276). On Gotland and along the west coast of Norway, bracteates were deposited both in graves and in hoards. Remarkable is the use of four, probably formulaic, words²²: **alu**, **laþu**, **laukaz** and **auja**, the use of which, according to Andrén (1991:256) might have been inspired by four frequently repeated words or abbreviations on Roman medallions: *dominus noster, pius, felix, augustus*. The Germanic words are no translation of the Latin, but may reflect an adaptation of an ideological concept, in the sense of a 'cult of the ruler'. The four Germanic words mean, respectively, 'ale', 'invitation', 'leek, chives, garlic' and 'good luck'. *Pius* points to 'correct behaviour towards gods and men' and this concept may have been taken over by **alu**; *felix* means 'happy' and this may be echoed by the term **auja**, signifying a desirable quality or condition. *Dominus* is a general word for a person with power and might be connected with **laþu**, because **laþu** refers to some act - an invitation to take part in the ruler's (*Augustus*) cult? Most bracteates with **alu**, **laukaz** etc. on them have been found in Denmark, further on in Skåne, Gotland and around the Oslofjord. One, showing **laþ**, was found in England. These bracteates all are stray finds or parts of deposits, apart from the English one, which was found in a woman's grave.

6. Denmark and the Goths in South East Europe

²² Another possibly formulaic word **ota** occurs on three bracteates with the same iconography. They have been found in three different find spots: SCHONEN-C (Skåne) IK 152, TJURKÖ-C (Blekinge) IK 185, FJÄRESTARD-C (Skåne) IK 55. No satisfactory explanation has been found so far, it might be related to ON *ótti* < Gmc **ōhtan* 'fear'. Recently, two more bracteates with the legends **alu** and **ota** were found in a graveyard near Donaueschingen (Germany).

6.1. By far the richest inhumations are women's graves on Funen, at Sanderumgård, Årslev and Brangstrup. Their material shows connections with the Black Sea region²³; the so-called Gothic 'monstrous' brooches and the rosette fibulae from the Danish islands show a mutual relation. Both Brangstrup and Gudme were centres of wealth with sacral functions. The 4th-century coin hoard from Gudme consists of East Roman coins. Other hoards from the Ringe-area on Funen (Ringe, Brangstrup, Eskilstrup, Bolting, Årslev) are dated from the second part of the 4th century to the end of the 5th, a time which coincides with the bracteate deposits of Gudme II (Henriksen 1992:43). Lundeberg harbour, at the eastcoast of Funen, was in use from the third century onwards and is seen as the import harbour for South European products.

In the relations with the Gothic Černjachov-culture north of the Black Sea, Funen is most important because of the finds of Brangstrup, Årslev and the Møllegård funeral site near Gudme. The finds from Rumanian Moldavia, and from a graveyard of the Černjachov-culture near Kiev correspond with contemporary finds from Denmark and North Germany, especially from Funen, Sealand, Bornholm and the estuary of the river Oder. This guide material consists of rosette fibulae, certain iron combs, glassware and gold lunula-shaped and square pendants. Some of the rosette fibulae, found in Denmark, bear runic inscriptions. This kind of brooch was either imported into the Černjachov area, or locally manufactured after Scandinavian models. The rosette fibula was a status symbol, found exclusively in rich women's graves, and it may be compared to *Silberblech* fibulae, characteristic of aristocratic women's graves from the later phase of the Černjachov-culture at the end of the 4th c.

Only a few 'Gothic' runic inscriptions have survived. The objects have been found in today's Rumania and Hungary. In the 1960s, the graveyard of Lețcani, 30 km west of Iași in Rumanian Moldavia was excavated. In a woman's grave a *Silberblech* fibula was found, next to an earthenware spindle whorl with a runic inscription. The finds have been dated to the second half of the 4th c. In the 4th century, the area around Lețcani was settled by Goths; their culture is listed archaeologically as Sîntana de Mureș/late Černjachov-culture.

I think it highly unlikely (Looijenga 1996^b) that the spindle whorl is an import, because it is a simple earthenware object, even though it has a runic inscription. Of course, the runic style might ultimately originate from Denmark. Since there was a lively exchange of objects, like glassware, iron combs and brooches (cf. Werner 1988), there must also have been an exchange of knowledge and people. The Goths were of Scandinavian descent; some of them (the elite?) may have wanted Scandinavians for husbands and wives (Stoklund 1991:60, Hedeager 1988:213-227 and notes 359-362).

6.2. The Szabadbattyán buckle has been dated to the early 5th century, it was found in Hungary and purchased *via* an exchange of goods from an antiquary²⁴; the exact original location of the object is unknown, as is the tribal origin of the owner, cf. Krause (1966:310): "Stammeszugehörigkeit ungewiss". The German archaeologist J. Werner (in a letter d.d. 30.7.1993) suggested that the buckle could be "die Arbeit eines romanischen Goldschmieds

²³ Especially the double grave of Årslev, with gold lunulae and a crystal bullet with a gnostic Greek inscription, show there were connections with South East Europe.

²⁴ The find complex, obtained by the Hungarian Museum, consisted of the following pieces: 4 fragmented big fibulae, 1 *Schnallenbügel*, 2 *Beschlägplatten mit Schnallen*, further on *silberne Gussklumpen und gewickelte Silberplatten*, according to the description in Kiss (1980:105).

(erste Hälfte 5. Jh.), vielleicht für einen germanischen Adligen im mittleren Donaauraum, der vielleicht ein Ostgermane gewesen sein könnte". It cannot be excluded that the buckle belonged to a Goth. The buckle might have been inscribed by a Gothic speaking person. Especially the legend **marings** may relate to the *Mærings*, the royal house of Theodoric (454?-526), king of the Ostrogoths, and founder of the Ostrogothic monarchy in Lombardy. Moreover, **marings** reminds of the Rök (9th c.) legend **skati marika** 'the first among the Mærings', which means this same Theodoric. What Germanic tribe lived in Pannonia in the early 5th c.? It cannot have been the Langobards, because they came to Pannonia in the 6th c. and the buckle has been dated ca. 425. According to Kiss (1980:112) the buckle is typologically later than the *Pannonische Hunnenepoche* (433/439 - 454) and dates from the time the East-Goths lived in South East Pannonia (456 - 473). However, in the 5th century the Carpathian Basin was a transit area for Germanic tribes, where they settled for only a limited period of time. So much happened in the sphere of trade, plunder, change and 'gift-exchange' that an ethnic assignment of the buckle seems almost impossible to attribute, unless it can be agreed upon that the language of the runic text is Gothic, and that the legend refers to Theodoric's kin.

6.3. The Pietroassa neckring belonged to a hoard, found in 1837 near the village of Pietroassa, nowadays called Pietroasele. (Description and photographs of some of the artifacts were published in the catalogue *Goldhelm* (1994:230ff.) The finds, gold plates, cups, vases, bowls and jewellery, all have a definitely ceremonial character. The high quality of the work is in the late-Roman tradition and was made in Byzantine workshops. The goods should most probably be seen as political gifts to allied barbarian princes, according to the catalogue text (1994:230, with references). The hoard has been dated in the first half of the 5th c. and therefore it may have belonged to some East Goth. Earlier it was thought there was some link with King Athanarich and it was therefore dated to the 4th c. Another theory, mentioned in the catalogue text, suggested that the hoard belonged to a Goth named Ganais, who was a general in the Roman army and who was killed by the Huns around 400. Initially, the hoard contained two neckrings with runes, but it was hidden by the finder, who intended to sell the objects. Soon, however, the hoard, or rather what was left of it, was impounded by the authorities, but by then one neckring with runes had gone lost, and the remaining one had been cut into two parts, thus damaging at least one rune. The runes are on the outside of the neckring, which in itself is unusual.

7. The Continent

7.1. From about 500 onwards, the appearance of a massive runic corpus in Central and South Germany showing the double barred **h** as diagnostic feature, has long been considered the starting point of the South Germanic or Continental runic tradition. But knowledge of runes may have been present much earlier in the Rhine area (see chapter III: On the Origin of the Runes).

Continental rune-writing is attested from about 200 onwards. The Thorsberg finds, generally included in the Danish runic corpus, were found in a bog in Schleswig-Holstein, but originate from southerly regions (see above). A rune-inscribed spearhead was found in a cremation grave near Dahmsdorf, Brandenburg, North-East Germany, reading **ranja** 'router'. A third spearhead was found in a field near Kowel, Volhynia, Ukraina, reading **tilarids** 'goal-pursuer' (among other interpretations). A fourth spearhead is known from a cremation grave

in Rozwadów, Poland, reading **???krlus** (no interpretation). Kowel lies near the vast *Pripjat* bog area and near the border with Poland, about halfway *en route* from the Baltic coast to the Black Sea. The Kowel spearhead may be regarded Gothic, for instance because of the language of its inscription (a nominative masculine singular, ending in *-s*). It may have been deposited as an offering. The Liebenau (Niedersachsen) silver disc dates from the 4th century. The Nebenstedt (Niedersachsen) and Sievern (at the mouth of the Weser) bracteates may be dated to the second half of the 5th century. The Fallward (near Sievern) footstool has been dated *circa* 425. The Aalen (at the north border of Baden-Württemberg) neckring dates from the mid 5th century. The Fallward find was excavated from an exceptional ship burial that contained Roman military equipment and peculiar wooden gravegifts; the Liebenau find is from an exceptional inhumation grave. The Aalen find has no find context. The Nebenstedt and Sievern bracteates are both hoard finds from a former bog.

7.2. Early 6th c. continental attestations encompass a central region: Baden-Württemberg²⁵, radiating to the North, East and West. The emergence of the Continental or South Germanic tradition coincides with the Merovingian period. There are geographical gaps, leaving great parts of Germany findless. This might be due to preservation problems, such as sandy soil, or, perhaps, certain parts of Germany may not have been inhabited in the Early Middle Ages. The funeral customs among the Germanic tribes of the pre-Migration period did not facilitate the preservation of runic gravegoods, because of the cremation custom, which did not leave many gifts intact. Sometimes the dead did not even obtain gravegifts at all (see *Reallexikon: Alemannen*)²⁶. The survival of runic objects from the 6th and 7th centuries appears to be largely connected with a change in burial customs. The practice of inhumation in row-gravefields arose during the second part of the 5th century and was introduced to Germany at around 500 AD, when the Merovingians won supremacy over the Germanic tribes in Middle- and South Germany. From then on, the graves are remarkable for their rich, elaborate gravegifts. Cosack (1982:20) conjectures that gravegifts were thrown onto the pile, but taken back again after the burning, since the deceased was supposed to have been satisfied and not in need of any objects anymore. The objects were often broken or destroyed before they were deposited on the pile. If, afterwards, people gathered pieces of melted metal, they were not very choosy, since many *Brandgruben* contained relatively many precious metal parts. The Merovingian period was rich from an archaeological point of view, but even here many objects have disappeared, since grave robbery flourished: sometimes up to 80% of the graves were robbed from the middle of the 7th c. onwards.

²⁵ Roth (1994:311) assumes that the runic inscriptions of the *Weingarten* finds, for instance, were made at about 490, one generation before the deposition of the object in the grave.

²⁶ The funerary custom of either cremating the body on a pile, and subsequently burying the remains of wood, body and objects in a so-called *Brandgrube*, or burying the remains in urns, was widely observed among all Germanic tribes. The gravegift custom was not always and everywhere observed. Probably the Alamanni and the Franks buried their dead with hardly any gravegifts in the 4th and 5th centuries (*Reallexikon* I:145). Many urnfields from the Migration Period were deficient in gravegifts.

8. England

8.1. At the beginning of the 5th century, the Roman forces had withdrawn from Britain, where the *Pax Romana* had ruled for about 400 years. The Romans left behind a cultivated, literate, and partly christianized country. During the 5th century (and perhaps yet earlier), Germanic speaking peoples from abroad settled in Britain. Their *adventus* is 'sagenumwoben'; the Britons and their king, Vortigern, are said to have invited them and to have welcomed some of them as heroes. Soon, however, Germanic tribes took over and the country came under 'barbarian' sway.

In the second half of the 5th century several areas in England had crystallized into tribal settlements: the Jutes in Kent and on the Isle of Wight, the Angles in East Anglia and in the Midlands, the Saxons in Wessex, Essex and Sussex. This geographical spread corresponds nicely with Bede's description (731) in *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* [i, 15]. Whether there were Frisians among the early immigrants cannot be established with certainty, as they are difficult to trace archaeologically in England and because there seems to be no placename evidence to support their presence. The placename argument is not a very strong one, in my opinion, since it is not unlikely that the settlements already had a name, when the new inhabitants took over. Secondly, the Frisians may have named their newly founded dwelling-places after local geographical or geological features. The hypothesis that there were no Frisians among the immigrating Germanic peoples (Bremmer 1990:353ff.), cannot longer be upheld, as a certain type of 4th c. earthenware, called after the Frisian *terp Tritzum* (situated south of Franeker, Westergoo), has also been found in Flanders and Kent (Gerrets 1994:-119ff.). Besides, Procopius states that Britain was inhabited by three races: *Brittones*, *Angiloi* and *Phrissones*, although neither Bede nor the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* mention Frisians in connection with the Anglo-Saxon settlement.

There may also be another explanation for the supposed lack of Frisian placenames in Great Britain: there is virtually no information about the language and identity of the *Fresones* that migrated from Frisia in the centuries preceding and during the Migration Period. The depopulation of Frisia already started in the third century. During the early fifth century, when Anglo-Saxons supposedly crossed the Frisian coastal region, they found Frisia almost uninhabited. Thus, in the fifth century there may have been no Frisians among the emigrants to Britain, since they might well have migrated earlier, though there is no certainty as to where they went: perhaps southwards to Flanders and from there to Kent, according to the Dutch archaeologist E. Taayke (personal communication).

Van Es (1967:540f.) mentions that Britain was subject to pirate raids during the third and fourth centuries. Among the pirates were Franks and Saxons, according to Eutropius (third quarter of the fourth century). Around 290 AD Constantius Chlorus mentioned Frisians among the invaders. During the fourth century the invaders were called Saxons (Van Es 1967:451). At the end of the fourth century Roman troops were transferred to Britain to defend the country against the Saxon raiders. Among these troops were Germanic *laeti* or *foederati*, and it is highly probable that they came from the regions near Tongeren and Doornik, and that they were almost certainly made up of Franks, according to Van Es. In some early, probably Saxon, graves in Dorchester (Hawkes & Dunning 1962) some brooches were found that indicated that the deceased women came from the Frisian coast (Van Es 1967:542). On the other hand, Hines (1990:22) states that the brooches were early Saxon or Anglian.

There appears to be a link between the gravegoods from the Fallward boatgrave (which also contained the footstool with runes), a Frankish grave near Abbeville, and a grave near Oxford (Hawkes & Dunning 1962:58ff.). The resemblance is in the ornamentation of belt-fittings and buckles of the military equipment. There is also a strap-end from Fallward that has its counterpart in a strap-end from an Anglo-Saxon site at North Luffenham (for the latter: Hawkes & Dunning 1962:65ff.).

8.2. A group from southern and western Norway landed on the east coast of Britain at the beginning of the last quarter of the fifth c., according to Hines (1990:29), who adds that these immigrants led the way for widespread Scandinavian influence in the sixth c. The royal house of East Anglia in the sixth c., the Wuffingas, may have been of Swedish origin. Scull (1992:5) claims that the Scandinavian connections of East Anglia were particularly strong, because of the widespread practice of ship burial. Since the discovery of the Fallward graveyard, which contains many individual ship burials, the connection between Scandinavia and North Germany has been established in this way, too. One may draw a line from Scandinavia *via* North Germany to England, and another line from North Germany *via* North France to England. The Frisian coast is in between and was certainly not left out of the relations.

Bede (*Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ii, 15) records that the Wuffingas took their family name from Wuffa, suggesting that he was regarded as the founder of the royal line. Wuffa began his rule c. AD 570. Clarke (1960:138f.) suggests that the Wuffingas were an offshoot of the Scyldings, the royal house of Uppsala. Wuffa appears in the genealogy as the son of Wehha and the father of Tytil and, so, as the grandfather of Redwald († 624/25), the king who was probably buried in the ship burial at Sutton Hoo (cf. Evison 1979:121-138, Werner 1982:207; Carver 1992:348ff.). Newton (1992:72f.) elaborates: "The patronymic Wuffingas seems to be a variant of Wulfingas or Wylfingas. The East-Anglian dynasty sought to 'signal allegiance' with one or more of the aristocracies of southern Scandinavia. There may be more than an etymological connection between Wuffingas of East Anglia and the Wylfingas of Beowulf. Queen Wealhþeow of Beowulf may have been regarded as a Wuffing forebear²⁷".

8.3. Merovingian influence in England was exercised through royal marriage, religion and law in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, which is also illustrated by the fact that Erchinoald, a relative of the Merovingian king Dagobert, was identical with bishop Eorcenwald of London, who appears to have played a significant role in the development of the Anglo-Saxon Charter, according to Wood (1992:24).

The Merovingians exercised supremacy over parts of South England in the early 550s, as is shown by the correspondence between Merovingian kings and the emperor in Byzantium. There were marriages between English kings and Merovingian princesses. The marriage of the Merovingian princess Bertha with Æthelberht of Kent illustrates the relation between both countries. Bertha's father was a certain Charibert, brother of King Chilperic who ruled from 561-584. She belonged to the group of "secondary Merovingian women who were usually placed in nunneries, or were married to the leaders (duces) of peripheral peoples as Bretons, Frisians, continental Saxons, Thuringians, Alamans and Bavarians. (...) Saxon women brought no prestige to Merovingian men, but Merovingian women will have enhanced the status of Anglo-Saxon kings", according to Wood (1992:235-241).

²⁷ This assumption might be complicated, since the queen's name can be translated as 'servant of a foreigner, e.g. a Welshman, or a Roman'.

Puzzling is a 6th century Merovingian brooch with a runic inscription, in the possession of the British Museum, Continental Department. According to the Museum records, its provenance is Frankish, but it was probably found in Kent. The runes show no typical Anglo-Frisian features, hence it might be a Continental import²⁸, possibly from Germany. I have, therefore, listed it in the Checklist of Continental Inscriptions under the name 'Kent'. Page (1995:158) calls it "the Bateman brooch".

An import from Francia may be the 6th c. Watchfield leather case (found 27 km west of Oxford), containing a balance and weights, with copper-alloy fittings, which bear a runic inscription. The inscription, though, may have been produced in England. It reads **hæriboki wusæ**, the **h** is single-barred, which is characteristic of English inscriptions from Period I. Therefore a Continental origin of the runic text seems unlikely. Besides, **æ** in **hæriboki** shows seriffes, typical of some Anglo-Saxon runic inscriptions. The case itself may be regarded a witness of Merovingian contacts, according to Scull (1993:97-102).

The earliest surviving English law-code, promulgated by Æthelberht of Kent (the Frankish princess Bertha's consort) before the establishment of Anglo-Saxon coinage may be relevant. It records fines and compensations in terms of money: *scillingas* and *sceattas*. It has been suggested that the *scilling* was a weight of gold equivalent to the weight of contemporary Merovingian *tremisses*, Scull (1993:101).

8.4. Since the oldest runes in England were written on portable objects, any conclusion as to the provenance of an object plus inscription is based on circumstantial evidence and specifications such as the language and runeforms used. Certain objects like pottery and brooches were probably produced in England. The origin of the early runic objects (from both England and Frisia) is difficult to establish, even on an archaeological and linguistic basis, especially if the inscriptions do not show any of the typical Anglo-Frisian features. Possibilities to establish a provenance occur when a mixture of Anglian and Saxon styles is present, such as is the case with the Spong Hill urns (Hills 1991:52ff.). It may be concluded these urns were produced by Anglo-Saxons in England, and, in consequence, the runes, too. The Loveden Hill urn is also a local product. The Welbeck and Undley bracteates may also have been manufactured in England, although Undley may originate from the Continent, e.g. one of the homelands of Angles or Saxons (Hines & Odenstedt 1987).

The oldest runic inscription found in England was scratched on the surface of a roe's astragalus, which has been dated, on the basis of the urn in which it was buried, to the 4th or 5th century. This knucklebone comes from a cemetery where, according to Page (in Scull 1986:125), clear signs of Scandinavian influence have been detected. A knucklebone is a toy,

²⁸ It is difficult to establish the inscription's dialect and provenance; it was declared 'Continental' and has never been included in any Anglo-Saxon runic survey. The catalogue of the British Museum gives the following description: "No. 235, 93, 6-18,32. Gilt-silver radiate-headed brooch: semicircular, flanged head-plate with seven applied ovoid knobs, moulded, with stamped decoration; subtrapezoidal foot-plate expanding to rounded end with opposed, profiled, bird head terminals; chip-carved, geometric and linear decoration; collared garnet, garnet disc and niello inlays; runic characters incised on back of foot-plate. Pair with no. 236, 93, 6-18, 33: Gilt-silver radiate-headed brooch, pairing with, but inferior to match, no. 235. Both: 6th.c. Merovingian. Provenance unrecorded; register records that in Bateman's MS catalogue, now in Sheffield City Museum, it is called Frankish without locality; sale catalogue information "said to have been found in Kent" has no independent corroboration and may have been the basis of the statement that the runic brooch was found in Kent by Stephens (1894), repeated more questioningly in Stephens (1901): "Most likely, to judge from the type, they [i.e. the pair] may have been found in Kent". In effect the true provenance remains unknown".

which may have belonged to a North Germanic immigrant; there is no runological or linguistical reason for assigning an Anglo-Saxon provenance to the object or the inscription, apart from the findspot.

As regards urns with knucklebones, similar finds from the Migration Period are known. For instance an urn with a knucklebone has been found in Driesum (Friesland). Five urns with knucklebones come from the cemetery of Hoogeteintum (Friesland); one of the urns is an Anglo-Saxon vessel of the late 4th - early 5th century. Further finds are known from Westermann on the North German coast, from Tating(-Esing) on the South-West coast of Schleswig-Holstein, and from Sörup, also in Schleswig-Holstein. Knucklebones have also been found in graves from cemeteries in Poland and in East Germany (Knol 1987). None of these astragali has a runic inscription, although many of them are decorated with dots and/or circles. The interesting thing is, of course, that of all the knucklebones we know, many are decorated, but only one has runes. The piece is therefore special, but in what way? The meaning of the inscription seems not very helpful: **raihan** 'of a roedeer'; one can only speculate about the intention of this announcement. The **h** is single-barred, the rune transliterated with **ï** is the rare yew rune and here it is part of the diphthong *ai*. This does not give an indication as to its provenance, but there is a striking similarity with the Pforzen find from South Germany, which has a legend **ailrun**. The diphthong has been rendered in the same manner as in **raihan**. One may think of a common source or of a common pronunciation of the sequence **ai** for this peculiar graphic realization. Against a common graphic source speaks the single-barred **h** of **raihan**, which may be ultimately Scandinavian. The Pforzen inscription has a double-barred **h**. **raihan** may be either Proto Norse or Proto OE. Actually, it depends on when and where one considers Old English to have come into being. I suppose this must have happened after the *adventus* of the Germanic tribes to Britain. What should their language be called on the moment they set foot on British soil? Proto OE? Or West Germanic?

The second extension of the runic alphabet, to 33 characters, during the post-conversion period may be due to Christian clerics, since the complementary runes occur almost exclusively in ecclesiastical contexts, e.g. in manuscripts and on big stone crosses with Christian texts, such as Ruthwell Cross, Bewcastle Cross. The Church in England was certainly not adverse to runes. Small reliquaries or portable altars containing the extreme unction were provided with pious inscriptions in runes, even together with Roman lettering. Some texts bear witness of historical, legendary or mythological events (Franks Casket). Monks from Lindisfarne or Jarrow may have composed the rune-text of the Ruthwell Cross. Runic writing was incorporated in the Latin of the manuscripts; the runes *thorn* þ and *wynn* ð were added to the Latin script from the 7th c. onwards and remained in practice until late in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, manuscript features can be found in runic epigraphy, for instance in the seriffes that are attached to the ends of sidetwigs (e.g. **hæriboki** in the 6th c. Watchfield inscription).

9. The Netherlands

The Roman encyclopedist Pliny (AD 23-79) gave a description of the people living in pityful

circumstances on the marshes of the Frisian coast. In his *Naturalis Historiae Liber XVI.1.3-II.5* we find the following:

"...in the east, on the shores of the ocean, a number of races are in this necessitous condition [i.e. people living in an area without any trees or shrubs, TL]; but so also are the races of people called the Greater and the Lesser Chauci, whom we have seen in the north. There twice in each period of a day and a night the ocean with its vast tide sweeps in a flood over a measureless expanse, covering up Nature's age-long controversy and the region disputed as belonging whether to the land or to the sea. There this miserable race occupy elevated patches of ground or platforms built up by hand above the level of the highest tide experienced, living in huts erected on the sites so chosen, and resembling sailors in ships when the water covers the surrounding land, but shipwrecked people when the tide has retired, and round their huts they catch the fish escaping with the receding tide" (translation H. Rackham, Vol. IV, pp. 387ff.).

9.1. The coastal area along the North Sea consisted of marshes and fens, which were subject to daily inundations. The inhabitants raised artificial mounds on which they built their houses and farms. This practice lasted until the 11th century, when dyke-building began. These mounds are called *wierden* (in Groningen) or *terpen* (in Friesland).

The mounds were extensively quarried for soil during the second part of the 19th century until the thirties of the 20th century. These commercial excavations brought many antiquities to the surface among which were objects with runes. It may seem logical to consider all runic finds in Frisian soil Frisian, but this is not the general opinion. H.F. Nielsen (1986) wrote: "Rigourously speaking, a runic inscription should be considered Frisian only if it exhibits linguistic developments characteristic of that language, i.e. the language first attested in the Old Frisian manuscripts". But there is a gap of several centuries between the runic period and the manuscript period, runes being in use from the 5th century till about the 9th; the manuscript tradition starting from the 12th century onwards. When reasoning from a linguistic point of view, we must conclude that only three inscriptions are Old Frisian: Westermenden A **adujislu me[*b*] jisuhidu**, the coin with the legend **skanomodu**, and Hamwic **kataë**, all of which have OFris $\bar{a} <$ Germanic *au*.

9.2. In the course of the past hundred years about 17 objects with runic inscriptions have been found in the Dutch provinces of Groningen and Friesland. In the early Middle Ages these regions were a part of Greater Frisia that once stretched from the Zwin (on the border with Belgium) to the estuary of the Weser. Archaeologists hold different views about the situation of central Frisia; this may have been the region of the Rhine delta and the central river-area of Rhine and Waal, with the important *emporium* of Dorestad. Another view opts for the location of central Frisia along the sea-shore of present-day Friesland.

Under the legendary leaders Aldgisl and Redbad, the power of the Frisians extended across Utrecht and Dorestad, thus threatening Frankish connections with England and Scandinavia. "In about 680 Frisia became part of the monetary continuum with the central part of the Merovingian kingdom" (Van Es 1990:167). After the death of Redbad in 719, the Franks defeated the Frisians and in 734 the Frisian territory was incorporated in the Frankish kingdom. The Frankish conquest had no adverse effects on Frisian trade. Frisian mintage got under way again in 730 with all kinds of *sceattas* (Van Es 1990:168). Dorestad was in the hands of the Frisians for a short time only, and that time was a period of minor importance in Dorestad's trade-career. (Van Es 1990:166ff.).

There were contacts with South-East England, South-West Norway, South-East Norway or South-West Sweden and the Weser area. The written sources are able to supplement the archaeological data to some extent: from Rimbert's *Vita Anskarii*, for instance, it is possible to trace relations between Dorestad, Birka, Haithabu and, more indirectly, Hamburg and Bremen. Dorestad's period of prosperity lasted for a century at the most: from about 725 until about 830. During this period Dorestad was part of the Frankish realm, but the Frisians dominated the river and sea trade routes of North-West Europe to such an extent that it is customary to speak of Frisian trade across the North Sea, which was called the Frisian Sea at the time.

9.3. To what extent the *mercatores* and *negotiatores* from Dorestad were all Frisians cannot be established. The term 'Frisian' was synonymous with 'merchant'; the noun 'Frisian' indicated a function in society rather than ethnical descent. In modern times the patronymic De Vries is among the most frequent in the Netherlands and these people are certainly not all Frisians. Two runestones at Sigtuna, U 379 and U 391, refer to 'Frisians': **frisa kiltar letu reisa stein þensa eftiR þur[kil], [gild]a sin kuþ hialbi ant hans þurbiurn risti** (U379) and **frisa ki[ltar] ... þesar eftiR albod felaha sloþa kristr hia helgi hinlbi ant hans þurbirn risti** (U391). 'The guild-members of the Frisians had this stone set up in memory of Torkel, their guild-member. God help his soul. Torbjörn carved' and 'The guild-members of the Frisians had these runes cut in memory of Albod, Slode's associate. Holy Christ help his soul. Torbjörn carved'. The language is Swedish and so are the names Torkel, Torbjörn and Slode. Albod may be a Frankish name.

It seems in the Early Middle Ages, Frisians were not so much concerned with their cultural 'Frisian' identity as they are today. How Frisian are the Frisian runic inscriptions? How Frisian are the Frisian *sceattas*? I am inclined to say: just as Frisian as the Frisians were in those days: they were *negotiatores*, merchants, travellers, as a professional group entitled to bear the name 'Frisians', but originating from various parts of the Low Countries and from the marshes near the Frisian Sea. This name-giving custom, in order to establish an ethnic definition to different groups of merchants, has an equivalent in the ancient merchants of amber. Greek geographers seem to have used the appellation Celto-Scyths for people that traded amber and who may have been neither Celts nor Scyths.

9.4. In the second quarter of the fifth century, a rapid growth in population took place in Frisia, witnessed by a substantial import of brooches, probably originating from easterly regions bordering the North Sea. The growth in population continued during the sixth and seventh centuries, but there are a few questions with regard to the identity of this new 'Frisian' population; they were obviously not the same as the historical *Fresones* from Roman times. The fact that their language, called Old Frisian, or Runic Frisian by modern linguists, is nearly identical with, or rather undistinguishable from Old English and Old Saxon, may point to a common origin.

I propose the following scenario: the people that settled in the nearly devastated coastal regions of Frisia during the fifth and sixth centuries, came from the easterly shores of the North Sea and were probably an offshoot of the host of Angles, Saxons and Jutes, who had made their way westward and eventually colonized Britain. The new inhabitants of Frisia could easily have overwhelmed the small remainder of the *Fresones* and provided them with a new cultural and linguistic identity. Politically, Frisia came under Frankish sway from the eighth century onwards, which is mirrored in the renaming of almost all Frisian placenames

(including the *terp* names! cf. Blok 1996). It is significant that in Frisia no prehistoric placenames have survived, whereas there are so many in adjacent Drenthe.

The linguistic and runological innovations, as mentioned above, may have taken place in Frisia or in the home-lands of the Anglo-Saxons on the Continent, before their migration to Britain in the fifth century. When passing through Frisia, travellers and merchants from easterly North-Sea shores may have transferred their runic knowledge to the few Frisians who had stayed behind. On the other hand, there may have been a period of Anglo-Frisian unity in which distinctive rune forms were developed. The tribes that departed from (South) Jutland and North Germany in order to migrate westward, are likely to have split up and settled either in Frisia or in England. Among these tribes were people who knew runes; some of them stayed in Frisia, which was almost uninhabited in the 4th and 5th centuries, some moved along to Britain. This would explain the linguistic and runological similarities between Old English and Old Frisian (and Old Saxon). Since one must assume the continuation of contacts across the Frisian Sea (North Sea), runic developments are very difficult to locate. A concept such as an 'Anglo-Frisian unity' probably refers to the multiple contacts that existed during the Early Middle Ages.

9.5. In 1996 a gilt-silver scabbard mount with a runic inscription was found in Bergakker near Tiel in the Betuwe. This former *habitat* of the *Batavi* is situated in the river estuary of Rhine and Meuse. The front side of the mount is decorated with half circles and points, ridges and grooves. Parallels for this type of decoration can be found on late Roman girdle mounts such as the one from Gennep (province Limburg), dating from the second half of the fourth century AD. Parallels for the mount are hard to find. In general, late Roman weapons are scarce, only small parts have been found in fortresses. Weapons have very rarely been found in cemeteries. In fact, this object is the first weapon-part with a runic inscription found in the Netherlands. The runes are of the older *fupark*-type; one character is anomalous and hitherto unattested. The Bergakker inscription does not show any Frisian runic features, because it may be too old for that. Moreover, the Betuwe did not belong to Frisian territory. The area was controlled by a Romanized population, which incites new views on the spread of runic knowledge at the early 5th c.

At the same site a Roman altarstone was found, when a part of the field was excavated in the 1950s. The stone, from the second half of the second or first half of the third century AD, was dedicated to the indigenous (Batavian) goddess *Hurstrga*. The toponym 'Bergakker' suggests that the site is higher than its surroundings. This may have been caused by riverain deposits. The site may have functioned as a ritual centre during the Roman period. A parallel can be found at the temple site Empel (province Noord Brabant), which was dedicated to the Batavian god *Hercules Magusanus*. According to Markey (1972:372f.), the semantic features of *hurst* are (1) elevation, and (2) undergrowth, usually on a sandy mound. The goddess *Hurstrga* may be regarded as a special goddess, who was venerated in a grove on a small hill. Markey (1972:373) suggests that the name *hurst* may be connected with cult-places of fertility goddesses. At Empel a temple was erected in an oak-grove on a *donk*, which is a sandy mound and characteristic of the river landscape of the Betuwe (Derks 1996:115) On such a *donk* the sanctuary of *Hurstrga* at Bergakker may have been situated. The interesting thing of Empel was the occurrence of oaks, whereas elsewhere the area was dominated by a vegetation of willow. Together with the runic scabbard mount, a great number of metal objects were found, among which were many coins, fibulae, all sorts of bronze fragments and two objects that may be characteristic for cult-places, namely a small silver votive plate


showing three *matrones* and a silver box for a stamp. The latter type of objects have often been found in Gallo-Roman sanctuaries (Derks 1996:186). It may, therefore, have to be that the find-complex to which the runic scabbard mount belonged should be connected with the sanctuary of Hurstrga. The objects should then be interpreted as votive gifts.

9.6. What is really surprising is the apparent knowledge of runic writing in this area. The Betuwe has never before yielded objects with runes, and was certainly not expected to. The region was situated south of the *limes* until about 400 AD, when the Romans withdrew. In the turbulence that followed, the region was overrun by several Germanic tribes, such as Chatti, Franks, Saxons and Frisians.

Not until more finds turn up, will it be possible to determine how extensive or limited runic activities in this area were. Judging from the nature of the inscription, Bergakker is a clear parallel to any other inscriptions on metal.

The object has been ornamented in a way also found in the Lower- and Middle Rhine area, North Gallia and North Germany (cf. Werner 1958:387, 390, 392). It is of provincial-Roman manufacture, which is shown by the type of decoration. It has parallels in objects from nearby Gennepe, a fourth century Germanic immigrant settlement on the river Niers, south of Nijmegen (Heidinga/Offenberg 1992:52ff. and Bosman/Looijenga 1996:9f.). The Gennepe finds are said to have been produced in Lower Germany. An interesting observation is that developments in the left Rhine area (Werner 1958:385) affected the material culture of the North German coastal area in the first half of the fifth century. Werner observes that the preference of Saxon warriors for late-Roman military *Kerbschnitt* belt equipment in the fourth c. equals that of Franks living in the Lower Rhine area of Krefeld-Gellep and Rhenen (near Bergakker). When writing this, Werner could not know that a boat-grave from Fallward, near the Weser mouth, contained many objects decorated in *Kerbschnitt*. Among these objects was a footstool with runes. The grave was that of a Germanic soldier who had served in the Roman army. The *Kerbschnitt* style is of Mediterranean origin, as is shown by its motives of meanders and swastikas.

The similarity in the ornamentation of belt buckles, found in Fallward, Abbeville and Oxford points to contacts between people living near the North Sea coast of Germany, in North Gallia and Wessex in England. The existence of contacts is also shown by the spread of runic knowledge, attested in the (Lower) Rhineland, Belgium and England from the fifth c. onwards) and from around 200 onwards in North Germany. Strangely missing in this chain is North Gallia; runic finds may be expected to emerge one day in the North of France.

9.7. The Bergakker inscription shows a hitherto unattested rune for **e**. A parallel may be the **e** as used in **leub** on a melted brooch from Engers in the Rhineland (see Continental Corpus). The ductus of the two headstaves of both attestations looks more or less the same, in the way the staffs slant towards each other: \ / . I assume these forms are a variety on the 'standard' **e** rune: .

Varieties in the forms of the runes occur quite frequently, and can be expected to turn up anywhere. The fact that as yet so few varieties are known to us, is due to the little material we have. For instance: the Illerup and Spong Hill inscriptions with their mirrored runes were at first not understood, because no one knew of the existence of mirror-runes. The Chessel Down scabbard mount has an unidentified fourth rune (unless my proposal of taking it as representing **I** is accepted, cf. the so-called 'bracteate **I**' in some bracteate legends). Still another runic variety of **I** occurs in the inscriptions of Charnay and Griesheim. Intriguing and

baffling problems that are often connected with the Frisian Corpus, apply to all other early runic corpora. So questions such as "were runes ever a serious and useful script" will still for some time provide an interesting subject for conversation among runologists. For the present time I intend to take it for granted that there was an indigenous Frisian runic tradition as well as an English and a Continental one. The one Bergakker find is not enough proof for the existence of a runic tradition in the Rhine and Meuse estuaries. It might be an indication for the existence of a Frankish runic tradition, when the other attestations from Belgium and France are also taken into account. In that respect the Bergakker inscription can be regarded as a missing link in the chain that typologically connects a certain group of people (a warrior-class?) from the Rhineland, North Germany, North Gallia and England, with the Rhine estuary in the middle.

9.8. The Merovingian Franks had won supremacy over the peripheral regions (seen from Francia as centre) of Alamannia, Bavaria, Thuringia, England and Frisia; in these regions runes were used. The Merovingians, however, do not seem to have not developed an indigenous runic tradition, after they settled in former Gallia. Moreover, runes are defined as 'foreign', although they were not unknown. One may conclude, that the real powers of those days apparently did not use runes, but the Roman script.

Remarkably enough, runologists never seriously considered the existence of a Frankish (Merovingian) runic tradition, although some runic objects are recorded from Frankish territory (Bergakker, Charnay, Arlon, Amay, Chéhéry, and maybe 'Kent' too), all, not coincidentally, from the periphery of the Frankish realm. Runes were known in sixth-century Francia, as is shown by the well-known and often quoted line by Venantius Fortunatus, 6th century bishop of Tours: *barbara fraxineis pingatur rhuna tabellis, quodque papyrus agit virgula plana valet* 'The foreign rune may be painted on ashen tablets, what is done by papyrus, can also be done by a smooth piece of wood'. The Frankish king Chilperic († 584) proposed the addition of four letters to the Roman alphabet, thus showing his knowledge of runes, since one of the four new letters, described: *uui*, was shaped after the runic *w*.

Map 2. Alphabet tabel.

	Latino alfabeto	neo- strucico	strucico	osco umbro sabellico	etruscico	osco umbro sabellico	diversi	Colasacco 1	Colasacco 3	Tono
a	AAA	A	A	AAA	A	AAA		AAAAYV	AAFAA	AAAANNA
c	<C))	>	<>)			<	>><
ch		V			Y			VV	↓	↓
e	EE	E	E	EE↑	E	E	E	EEAA↑	EEFAE	EEFAE
f	FF	F	F	F	F	F	F	↓F↑		↓F↑
h	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H		H
i	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
k	KE			K	K	K	K	KKK	K	KKKK
l	LL	J	J	L	L	L	L	L	L	L
m	MW	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
n	NW	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
o	OO			V				OO	OO	OOOO
p	PP	1	1	P	P	P	P	PP	PP	PP
ph		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙			
r	RR	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
rs				R	R	R	R			
s	S	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	Z	S	Z	S
s'			M	M	M	M	M	X	M	M
t	T	†	†	T	T	T	T	XY	XY	XY
th		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
u	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
v	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	↓V	↓V	↓V
z	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	↓V	↓V	↓V

III. ON THE ORIGIN OF THE RUNES

1. Introduction

From a Scandinavian, or rather a Danish point of view, it seems the runic script had its origins in a region that was encompassed by the coasts of the German Bight, South Norway, the area around the Kattegat to the South West coast of the Baltic Sea, with Denmark as its centre. This is a vast area, and it seems appropriate to suppose runic writing had been well under way before the time of our first known attestations dating back to the second century. The aim of this chapter is to show that runes were not necessarily created in this particular area. To investigate the origin of runic writing it would be best to study the origin of runic objects (and runographers), since the place where a particular object is found must not be automatically equated with the place of origin. Both objects and literate people could move and travel. Some clues may be found when answering the question: *who* were the rune-writers, and where did *they* come from. Tracing the provenance of the objects and the names with which the objects were inscribed will appear to be of crucial importance.

According to Ilkjær (1996^a:74), the oldest runic object (160 AD), the **harja** comb from Vimose, may have been made in regions south of the Baltic. Some of the runic objects found in the Illerup and Vimose bogs may originally have come from Norway or South-West Sweden. The runic objects found in the Thorsberg bog originate from an area between the Lower Elbe and the Middle or Lower Rhine (Lønstrup 1988:94). The runic brooches, found in Denmark and South Sweden, may have been local products. Other early runic attestations have been found in Norway and Sweden. This, however, does not guarantee that runic writing *originated* in Norway, Sweden or Denmark. It only *seems* logical to suppose runic writing had its origin somewhere in those regions. Especially the observation that there are objects from North West Germany and North Poland among the earliest attestations points in another direction. And the origin of two weaponsmiths, who signed their work: **wagnijo** and **nipijo** appears to be the Rhineland.

2. The quest

What constitutes a major problem is the enormous distance between the sites where the oldest known objects were found and the places that could provide an eligible matrix alphabet. It would be more natural to try and trace the origin of runic writing near e.g. the borders of the Roman Empire, especially along the Rhine²⁹. If one assumes that there were contacts and relations between Germanic tribes of *Germania Superior* and tribes living near the northern coasts of the North Sea, these contacts could have taken the route along the Rhine, or along the Elbe to the North. Goods and culture could easily have spread from the Rhine estuary to the coasts of the North Sea, or over land, from the Rhine to the Elbe and further on to the Baltic and the North.

²⁹ This theory was recently discussed, by Antonsen (1996), who argued against this "Rhenish fans" idea, and Quak (1996), who advocated the idea.

Theoretically, the rune alphabet may have been developed by members of a Romanized tribe, living in regions near the Rhine, possibly in the first or second century AD³⁰. Another probability is to try and find the origin of the runic writing system among Germanic mercenaries, serving in the Roman army, who were more or less literate, when returning home after 25 years of service (Rausing 1987, Axboe & Kromann 1992). Merchants may have constituted a third category. These three possibilities will be discussed below.

There were longstanding contacts between the Germanic world and the Mediterranean. Germanic mercenaries worked in Macedonian and Celtic armies; Germanic soldiers served in Caesar's army. The runes resemble archaic alphabets; Greek, Etruscan, archaic Latin and North Italic alphabetic traces can be observed. The archaic Italic alphabets gradually fell into disuse during the last century BC or first century AD, when the official Roman alphabet became the standard. It may be, that Germanic soldiers learned an archaic specimen and introduced this to their homelands.

As the oldest runic attestations have been found far away in the North, the people that passed on the art of writing might be expected to have come from there, but no trace of any northern mercenaries are found. The North has submitted no military diplomata; there are no epigraphic or written sources that point to a Scandinavian origin of Germanic *peregrini* in the Roman army. Nearly all Germanic soldiers were recruited from areas near the *limes*; we find attestations of *alae* and *cohortes* Ubiorum, Batavorum, Canninefatum, Frisiavonum, Breucorum etc. However, if the indication *Germania Inferior* as the place of origin for many mercenaries is interpreted a bit more freely, and if the enormous number of Roman goods in Denmark and Scania is taken into account (Lund Hansen 1987 and 1995; Ilkjær 1996^b), it may be concluded that there were lively contacts between North and South. These contacts may have been dominated by merchants and craftsmen.

Not only material goods were exported to the North. Roman influence can be seen in many fields, such as dress, arms and armour and also in the names of the seven days of the week, introduced in Rome during the reign of Augustus and possibly exported to the North by Germanic mercenaries, according to Rausing (1995:229f.). Especially *dies Mercuri* is of interest, since its translation is Wednesday, the day of Wodan/Odin. Both Mercury and Odin were inventors of the art of writing (Bremmer 1989:45ff.). Mercury was also the god of trade and merchants, even the god of the dead. It cannot be accidental that Odin, the god of war and warleaders, was his counterpart. We find a merger of several elements that were in evidence at the beginning of our era and that mark the relations between the Romans and the Germans: war, trade and literacy.

An unknown number of Germanic people living in *Germania Libera* had Roman civil rights as a result of serving in the Roman army. The right to obtain Roman citizenship for auxiliary soldiers was introduced by Claudius (41-54 AD). Before Claudius citizenship may have been offered to *decuriones* and perhaps also to *centuriones* (Alföldy 1968:107f.). This citizenship was hereditary. Sons of Germanic soldiers had Roman civil rights and were able to make a

³⁰ To establish a rough date for the emergence of the runic alphabet, one is inclined to opt for the first century AD, an inclination prompted by the Meldorf brooch, dated 50 AD. Its legend may be Roman or 'proto-runic'. The main thing is that *script* of some sort was recorded in the first century AD on an object of Germanic manufacture. After this it may have taken quite some time to develop the runic writing system, since the first attestations date from the second century AD.

military career in the Empire; they could even become high-ranking officers (Axboe & Kromann 1992:272). These Germanic soldiers and civilians doubtlessly enjoyed great respect in their homelands. They were also better educated than their fellow countrymen; they had seen the world and were acquainted with a highly developed power structure. Such veterans accelerated the development toward central power in certain Germanic tribes. If bracteates are to be interpreted as class insignia, wearing them may have been instigated and stimulated by the veterans. This group also had the financial means: the gold of *solidi* and *aurei*, and they knew examples of Roman writing on coins, medallions and diplomata. Veterans from the first century onwards may well have been at the basis of the weapon-trade from Rome to the North.

From the beginning of the imperial period the Rhine was the *limes* of the Roman empire (Map 1.). The borderzone, where Roman and Germanic cultures met and were able to amalgamate, would seem to be an eligible region for Germanic peoples to adopt and adapt an Italic alphabet, in order to develop a suitable writing system for the Germanic languages. Germanic mercenaries also had the opportunity to get acquainted with a writing system, but they would probably have adopted Latin. This also applies to merchants in Germanic and Roman goods. Artisans, such as weaponsmiths and jewellers are eligible to have used a stock of signs, perhaps inspired by an Italic or Raetian alphabet.

Moltke (1985:63f.) supposed runic writing to have been developed far from the *limes*, because, according to him, relations between Romans and Germanic tribes were hostile in the border regions. There are, however, many instances of a good mutual understanding between Romans and Germanic tribes on the Rhine. There were also wars and rebellions, and this may explain why people felt the need to develop a writing system that suited their own culture and language. The fact that they did not use the Roman script may be interpreted as a wish to deviate from the Romans, to express a cultural and political/military identity of their own. Anyway, the urge for writing came up in the period that Romans and Germanic peoples maintained relations. A Roman practice was imitated by the Germanic people in the epigraphical use of runes.

The use of a metal die, such as is apparent from the weaponsmith's name **wagnijo**, which is stamped in one of the Illerup spearheads, is Roman-inspired. In peacetime, soldiers in the Roman army had to practise all sorts of crafts. There are striking resemblances between the ways in which Roman and Germanic weaponry was inscribed, hence a Roman influence on Germanic runic practices cannot be denied. It was a widely observed custom among Roman and Germanic soldiers to write one's name on one's own weapon. But since we have three lanceheads with the legend **wagnijo**, this cannot be anything else but the signature of a weaponsmith.

The reasons for the development of a specific Germanic alphabet and writing system may find a parallel in much later medieval English epigraphical and manuscript evidence. It appears that runes were a much better medium for rendering the Germanic vernacular than the Roman alphabet (Fell 1994:130f.). This inadequacy of the Roman writing system might have been one of the factors that led to designing the runic alphabet.

3. Runes and Romans on the Rhine

Runes may first have been designed in the Rhine area, since that would fit better from a geographical and cultural point of view. Here conditions were favourable for the adoption of a writing system. Situating the development of a runic writing system in far-away Denmark is literally a far cry. The Germanic North of Europe had an illiterate culture and apparently no need for a communicative system that required writing of any sort, since in the first few centuries of recorded runic writing nothing has been found that may be labelled 'letter', 'record', 'charter' or the like. The fact that the host of runic objects has been found in regions far away from the Roman empire, but also far away from the Germanic provinces of that empire is virtually incomprehensible, unless one assumes there existed special contacts between Germanic groups living near the *limes* and groups living far to the North of Germania. Through these contacts the custom of writing could be transferred, such as carving one's name onto objects. The nature of these contacts will be treated below, in the West Germanic Hypothesis.

The oncoming of the Danish elite in the first centuries AD (see chapter II) seems to be irrevocably connected with runic history. In Denmark (and probably also in South Norway) emerged a society, in which, among other purposes, writing in runes was probably used for increasing value, to objects as well as to one's status. In this way one could aim at uniqueness, and the forming of an elite. It appears that writing in the North was a rare feature, which was much less so in the neighbourhood of the *limes*, where the art of writing (in Latin) was widespread.

An alphabetic system is borrowed by individuals "who have learned the language of the literate culture and then the writing system of that culture, and only then they, or CAN they, attempt to adopt and adapt this foreign writing system to the unwritten language", as is stated by Antonsen (1996:7). I do not expect such an opportunity and such a strategy took place at a great distance from the literate world; instead I suggest adoption took place in a cultural climate such as existed near the Rhine border in the first century AD. Mutual understanding between Romans and Germans flourished from Augustus onward (alternated with occasional depressions), therefore the development of a Germanic writing system should probably be placed in the first century AD. The runic alphabet shows many similarities with archaic Italic alphabets, including archaic Latin. About some of the similarities and differences, see Map 2.

If the knowledge of runes emerged somewhere along the Rhine, one would expect some of the oldest runic objects to have been found there. However, the earliest known runic attestations from the Lower Rhine, the Rhineland and South Germany, formerly the *Agri Decumates* (named after the 10th legion), date from the 4th and 5th centuries. If the place of origin of the Thorsberg objects (*circa* 200 AD) is taken into account: the region between Middle or Lower Rhine and Lower Elbe³¹, we may have a link between the *limes* area and the northerly parts of Germania.

³¹ Some Germanic tribes that lived in this region were Chatti, Langobardi and Cherusci; the latter tribe is well-known from their wars with the Roman army in the first half of the first century AD. The Romans fought under their commander Germanicus; the leader of the Cherusci was Arminius, once an officer in the Roman army (Tacitus, *Annales* II.6-10). Arminius, the victorious war-lord and conqueror of Varus' three legions (9 AD, Teutoburger Wood) still had a brother in the Roman army, Flavus, who fought at Germanicus' side.

From these intermediate parts we have the 4th century Liebenau silver disc from Niedersachsen. Fallward, Bergakker and Aalen are all dated to the early fifth c. This is not enough evidence to support the assumption that runes were developed by tribes living near the Rhine. If, however, the fact that the two second-century weaponsmiths **wagnijo** and **nipijo** (see Chapter V. Early Danish and South-East European Runic Inscriptions, nrs. 2 and 4; both inscriptions are found on objects deposited as war-booty in the Illerup bog, dated *circa* 200 AD) may have come from the Rhineland is taken into account, the probability increases. Furthermore there is the name **harja** on the oldest known runic object (160 AD); this name may point to the tribe of the *Harii*, who, as a sub-tribe of the *Lugii*, lived in North Poland. Peterson (1994:161) mentions **harja** among a group of names "not met with in later Scandinavian but found in West Germanic, esp. in the Lower Rhine region".

The manufacturer of the Illerup and Vimose spearheads, **wagnijo**, who signed his work, (once stamped, twice carved) supposedly came from the Middle Rhine area, to the south of present-day Frankfurt am Main. Here lived the Germanic tribe of the *Vangiones*, to whom **wagnijo** clearly refers. The name **nipijo** on a mount for a shield handle, also found in the Illerup bog, also points to the same region. This weaponsmith appears to originate from the tribe of the *Nidenses*, who were neighbours to the *Vangiones*³². (See map 3). The *Vangiones* were probably a sub-tribe of the *Suebi*.

There is a time-gap of about two centuries between the attestations of the Thorsberg objects and the Liebenau, Fallward and Bergakker objects. Apart from the fact that finding runic objects is subject to chance, I suggest the lack of any finds from the early period is largely due to depositing customs, which made it difficult for objects to survive (see Chapter II.7, The Continent).

Very few graves from that period have been excavated. The Germanic peoples observed cremation as the major burial rite, and therefore burial gifts did not remain intact. The later Merovingian custom of inhumation created better circumstances under which inscribed objects could survive (unless the grave was robbed, which was quite customary). It is striking that from 500 AD onwards, i.e. from the beginning of Merovingian rule in Germany, a relatively large number of runic artifacts, deposited in graves, have survived. One thing that may have caused runic writing to be practised rather late in South Germany, is the presence of a barrier: the *limes* that separated the *Agri Decumates* from northern parts of Germany. The South was Romanized to a large extent. After the *limes* broke down in the 3rd c., the Alamanni (coming from the North) settled there, but perhaps they did not (yet) use runes. Subsequently, from that time onwards more Germanic peoples immigrated as a result of the Migrations. Some of these peoples (Franks?) must have had runic knowledge. These two complementary explanations could account for the sudden and relatively massive appearance of runes in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. The idea that the Franks knew how to write in runes is based on the fact that at least two famous Franks are known to have been able to write and read runes: the bishop of Tours, Venantius Fortunatus, and King Chilperic, both 6th c. Anyway, it is remarkable that the appearance of runic script coincided with the establishment of Merovingian rule.

³² The establishment of some of the names on the Danish bog-finds being derived from tribes' names, was prompted by a map of Germania Superior in Weisgerber (1966/67:200). Here we find the *Nidensis* near the *Vangiones*.

The paucity of runic finds may be explained by the fact that many of the inscribed objects were burnt with their owners on cremation piles, or, if afterwards gathered, were melted and reused. Besides, runes on perishable material like wood and bones will have disappeared. After all, the oldest runic inscriptions that have survived, have mostly been found on metal objects. On the whole, objects of other material than metal have seldom been preserved, since these tend to decay. "Anyway, we have to be aware of the possibility that the arbitrary chances of survival have led us to study a rather trivial group of texts that existed as spin-offs of a much more formal and purposeful tradition, for which the evidence does not survive" as Page (1996:145) has warningly put it.

The Rhine-*limes* extends over a large area. Perhaps it is possible to indicate one or two regions that combined all the conditions needed for a cultural climate that eventually led to the emergence of an indigenous Germanic writing system. I opt for the Middle and Lower Rhine area, the dwelling places of a.o. Ubii, Chatti and Batavi, with the important towns of Colonia Agrippinensium (Cologne), Ulpia Traiana (Xanten) and Ulpia Noviomagus Batavorum (Nijmegen). The tribes living there, generally maintained good relations with Rome. Especially the Ubii and Batavi were held in high esteem in Rome. This is a favourable starting-point for cultural fertilization, since an alphabet is unlikely to be borrowed from enemies under wartime conditions, as happened often in the first half of the first century AD between Romans and Germans, or during the Marcomanni wars (161-175 AD).

The Batavi and Ubii constituted an important part of the Julio-Claudian imperial *corporis custodes*³³ from the time of Augustus (31 BC - 14 AD) onwards until the reign of Galba (68-69), according to Bellen (1981:36), hence we may presume that the loyalty of the Batavi had been well-known in Rome for some time. The Batavi were renowned for their talents as horsemen and for their amazing swimming skills, even in full weaponry, and on horseback. They were considered friends of the Roman Empire; from Germanicus onwards they served the Roman army with outstanding fidelity (Bang 1906:32ff. with ref.). Tribes like these would be brilliant candidates for the transmission of Roman culture and writing. But the Batavian revolt (AD 70) under Julius Civilis should be mentioned here to show that the relationship was not always good. Perhaps the Rhineland of the Ubii is the most suitable place for situating the origin of the runes.

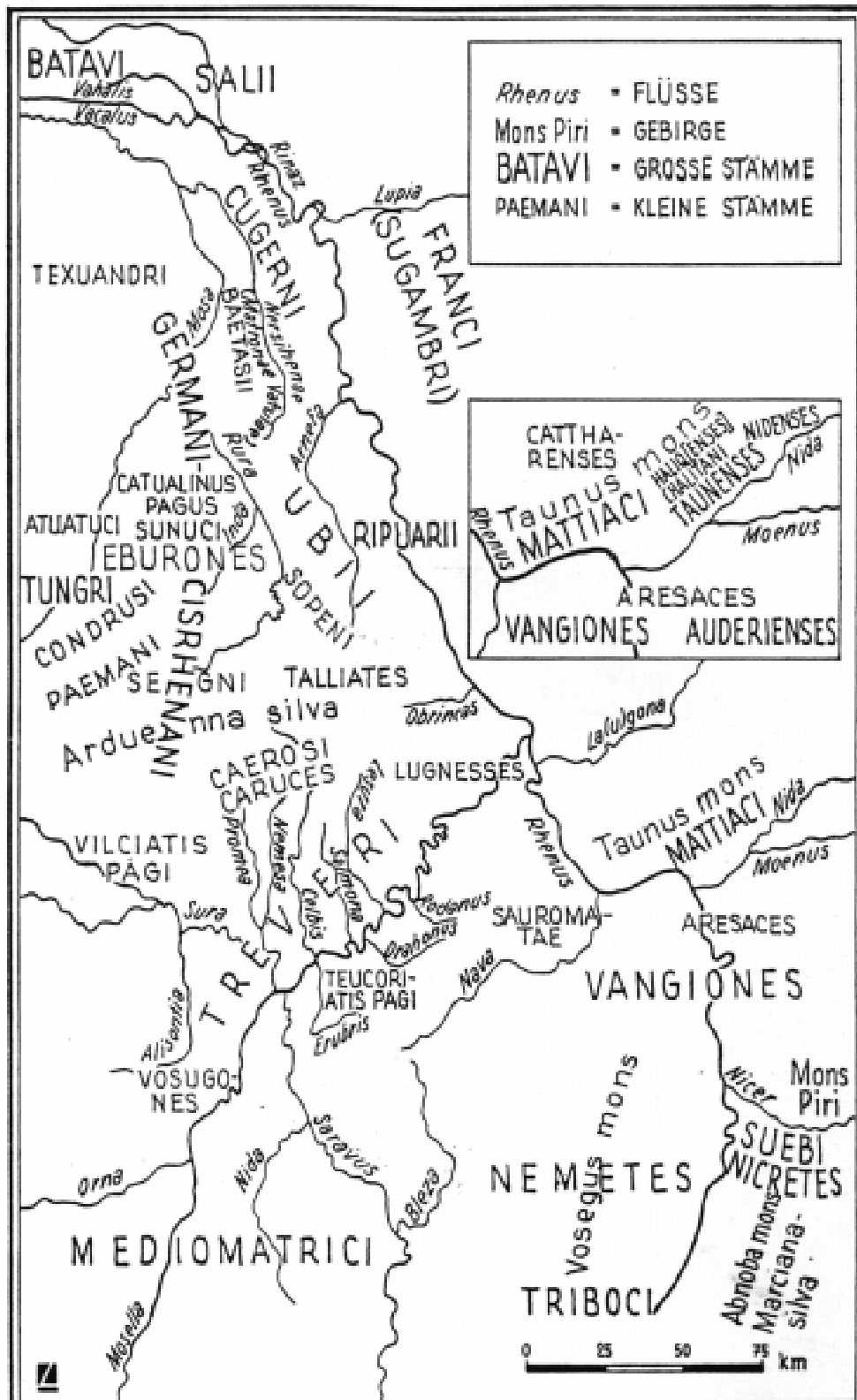
During the reign of Caligula or Claudius the members of the imperial body-guard became united in the *Collegium Germanorum*, and it is generally assumed they were no slaves, but free *peregrini* (Bellen 1981:29ff., 36, 67ff.). After their service, which seemed to end at the age of 40, some veterans returned to their homelands. Their *commoda* (= *praemia militiae*) consisted of civilian rights and money (Bellen 1981:78f.). Among them were literate persons, but, in view of their long stay in Rome, they will most probably have used Latin.

An archaic North Italic alphabet may have been the precursor of the runes. Borrowing this alphabet may have taken place in North Italy or Raetia, where e.g. the Chauci, Batavi and other Germani served as *Cohortes Germanorum* in Germanicus' army in 15, 16 and 69 AD (Bang 1906:58, with ref.). But, theoretically, Germanic mercenaries may have learned to write anywhere during their tour of duty.

³³ The imperial body guard consisted of *circa* 500-1000 men. It existed already under Caesar and was dissolved by Galba in 69 AD. Their duty was twofold: safeguarding the emperor and acting as crack troops in times of crisis.

Map 3. Names of tribes, mountains and rivers in the Rhineland, Roman Imperial Period.

RÖMERTZEITLICH BEZEUGTE GEBIRGS- FLUSS- u. STAMMESNAMEN



Recently, elaborate information concerning certain first century connections between the Rhineland and the Roman empire became available in the dissertation of Derks (1996). He discusses the indigenous cult of the *matres* in the Rhineland, especially popular among the Ubii. Derks (1996:103f.) points out that there were parallels between the cults of the *matronae* in North Italy and the cult of the *matres* in the Rhineland. Veterans from the Roman army, for the greater part originating from the mountainous parts of Piemonte and Lombardy (e.g. North Italy) settled in the region near Cologne in the first century AD. Soon they became integrated in the local population. Ubian and Italic elements were intermingled in the common cult of *matres* and *matronae* (Derks 1996:104). The indigenous *matres* cult of the Rhineland knew no votive inscriptions; this custom of writing dedications was introduced by soldiers of Italic and Germanic origin (Derks 1996:75). Here we may find a clue as to how an archaic North Italic alphabet came to the Rhineland. In the first century AD, several letters, known from North Italic archaic alphabets, are still in use in the Rhine area (Quak 1996:174ff.).

4. More Roman connections.

All runic finds from the Danish bogs and graves, approximately dating from the period 160-450, have been found in a context that clearly shows Roman connections³⁴. The bog-deposits contain Roman goods, as do the graves. Runic finds thus emerged either from a military context or a luxurious, aristocratic, context. In both cases the objects were prestige goods. The runes on the bogfinds were carved on objects that may be linked to the top of the military hierarchy (Ilkjær 1996^a:70). It appears that Germanic weapons were inscribed in a similar way as Roman weapons (Rix 1992:430-432).

At the time of the Marcomanni wars (161-175), contacts were established between the area of the Lower Elbe and the area of the Marcomanni. An elite from the Lower Elbe region migrated southwards and settled in the Marcomanni region (Lund Hansen 1995:390). The Danish elite from that same period must be seen in relation to Germanic vassal kings, who were, highly Romanized, living near the *limes* of Upper Germany/Raetia (Lund Hansen 1995:390), the region of the Marcomanni, Quadi and Iuthungi. The presence of *Ringknauf* swords in a warrior grave on Jutland and in deposits of the Vimose bog indicates that there were contacts with Central Europe. These second century swords are typically provincial-Roman products, and the owners, like the man from the Jutish grave of Brokær, must have taken part in the Marcomanni wars. The swords in the Vimose bog belonged to attackers from the South. The sites where these swords were found show that the route was from the Danube northwards along the Elbe (thus crossing the region of Harii and Lugii). At the same time Himlingøje (Sealand) emerged as a power-centre. Here, silver bocal with depictions of warriors holding *Ringknauf* swords point to the connection with the Marcomanni region (Lund Hansen 1995:386ff.).

Ilkjær (1996^b:457) mentions the princely grave from Gommern (Altmark, near Magdeburg, the region of the *-leben* placenames), which, although about a century younger, can be seen as

³⁴ An interesting instance of amalgamation of cultures may be the (partly translated, partly misspelled) name of the Roman emperor *Aurelius Carus* in runes on bracteate Fyn 1 (Looijenga 1995^a, and Chapter VI. Bracteates with Runes, nr. 11).

a parallel to the rich Illerup deposits. Parallels can also be detected between deposits in the Vimose and Illerup bogs concerning the collections of silver shield-buckle fragments, the pressed foil ornamentation, face-masks, weapons and military equipment. These objects mark the high military rank of the owners. Outstanding silver shield-accessories emphasize the extraordinary rank of the Germanic elite. The same custom can also be observed in late-antique Gallia, in the warrior grave of Vermand, who, by the look of his shield-accessories, was a Germanic princeps in Roman service (Ilkjær 1996^b:475).

Among the Illerup material of bronze and iron shield-buckles, Ilkjær notices parallels with finds from Vimose and gravegoods from Norwegian graves (Ilkjær 1996^b:475). These belonged to warriors of a lower standing.

An analysis of the pressed foil ornaments on the silver shields proves the close connection; the shields must have been produced in the same workshop, by *Nipijo*, according to Ilkjær (1996^b:475). Shield-accessories like these can only be found in excessively rich graves, such as those from Gommern (Germany), Musov (Czechia), Avaldsnes (Norway) and Lilla Harg (Sweden). Therefore, the *Prachtschilde* from Illerup represent the very top of the elite (Ilkjær 1996^b:476). He assumes this elite conducted the trade in Roman military goods (Ilkjær 1996^b:477). Without these Roman goods, the extensive wars that preceded the huge offerings in the bogs, would not have been possible. The elite that organised these wars proliferated themselves by 'barbarizing' the Roman equipment and by decorating them in a Germanic way, which was done in Germanic workshops (Ilkjær 1996^b:478). Thus, although the goods make a thoroughly Roman impression, the ornamentation is indigenous, producing a splendid combination of Roman and Germanic culture.

Lagubewa was one of the leading princes, according to Ilkjær (1996^b:485), because of his shield with gilt-silver pressed foil and precious stones; a rich horse's garment probably belonged to him as well. *Wagnijo* and *Nipijo* were war-leaders, too, according to Ilkjær (1996:485), a statement I cannot agree with, since they were most probably weaponsmiths.

The runes on several bog finds are not only found on the most precious objects, but also on humbler things such as the wooden handle for a fire-iron (Illerup V) and the comb (Vimose V). The inscriptions on the lanceheads can directly be connected with the elite, since they controlled the production of these weapons (Ilkjær 1996^b:481). From analyses of the pressed foil and pearl-wire ornamentations, it was concluded, on the basis of their highly artistically uniform nature, that there must have been extensive communication with jewellers in Central Europe. The quality of the Thorsberg finds, for instance, points to strong Roman influence. This influence is shown by the use of certain precious stones and the use of mercury (Ilkjær 1996^b:481f.).

In the meantime, in the Danish areas of eastern Sealand and Funen wealth and power accumulated and the possession of gold and silver coins increased. Roman luxury goods were imported, probably over sea via the Lower Rhine, through the Vlie along the North Sea coast, through the Limfjord and so on to the north coast of Sealand (Lund Hansen 1995:389, 408f. and the map on page 388). The commissioners who had sent for the luxury goods knew what they wanted; it was no matter of mere chance what came to the North. This also points to close contacts between the clients in the North and the elites living on the border with the Empire.

During the second century, tension grew in the North Sea regions, because of pirate raids by the Chauci. One wonders how safe the route by sea-way really was, but perhaps there were treaties between the Sealand aristocrats and Chauci (and Fresones?), who controlled the North Sea coast.

Most probably there was a relation between political events at the borders of the Roman Empire and several weapon-offerings in South Scandinavia (Ilkjær 1996^b:339). The first big attack on South Scandinavia coincides with the Marcomanni wars. The offerings in the Vimose bog (Funen), of which the **harja** comb formed part, were contemporaneous. The attack on Funen came from the South. Further offerings in Vimose and Illerup of around 200 AD coincide with Germanic attacks on the *limes*. Now the attackers came from the North, from across the Kattegat. All over Scandinavia, many graves are found that contain a similar inventory of weapons. These graves are contemporaneous with the fall of the *limes* in the 3rd c. This was no coincidence, according to Ilkjær (1996^b:339). The initial period of manufacturing weapons on a large scale was at about 200 AD, coinciding with the organisation of armies consisting of hundreds of warriors. We may suppose there existed a powerful and structural organisation at the time. The aim was not merely raiding for loot, there must have been a real struggle for power (Ilkjær 1996^b:337ff.). Among the goods in the Illerup bog was an enormous amount of Roman equipment; this of course could not originate from Scandinavia. The wars, predominantly on Jutland, were fought between Scandinavians. All swords were Roman imports and may be interpreted as evidence for the existence of connections between Scandinavia and the Rhineland, according to Ilkjær (in a letter dd. 16 December 1996).

To sum up: in the 2nd c., Germanic groups from the Lower Elbe region moved South, due to the Marcomanni wars in the region north of the Danube. Van Es mentions the Langobardi and the Goths who moved from regions near the Lower Elbe, the Lower Oder and Weichsel respectively (Van Es 1967:537). At the same time an attack was launched upon Denmark from southerly, continental, regions. Booty from these wars was deposited in the Vimose and Thorsberg bogs. Apparently these southerly attackers had contacts with tribes from Sealand (Lund Hansen 1995:406), which may have had something to do with a conflict between Sealand and Funen. The alliance between Sealand and continental Germanic tribes may also explain the route of import goods: via the Rhine estuary and the North Sea, since the route over land and via the Baltic will not have been safe.

In this way the route (of the propagation) of the runes can also be explored. There were contacts between the Rhine region and the North. One must assume the existence of alliances between several Scandinavian elites and continental Germanic ones, living along the Rhine- (and Danube-) *limes*, in the region between lower Elbe and Rhine, and south of the Baltic. The intermediaries of certain crafts and knowledge must have been individuals. Ilkjær locates Wagnijo, Nipijo's workshop and Lagupewa somewhere in the south of Norway. They belonged to a political alliance of peoples from several regions along the coast and inland valleys, according to Ilkjær (personal communication). This does not exclude the fact that they may have come from elsewhere, from the Continent. Their coming to the North may have been the result of the weapon trade between the Rhineland and Scandinavia. They belonged to the top of the military elite, as was stated by Ilkjær (see above), and it was the elite that controlled weapon import and weapon production.

A chronology of the origin of runic objects (from major find-complexes) may illustrate these contacts:

1. Vimose, Funen, ca. 160 AD, from the South.
2. Thorsberg, Schleswig-Holstein ca. 200, from the South.
3. Illerup, Jutland, ca. 200-250, from the North (but made by southern weaponsmiths!)
4. Sealand, Jutland, Skåne, gravefinds, 200-275, luxury goods, indigenous. The grave-contexts, though, were Roman.

The runic brooches (of nr. 4) are indigenous, so we may assume the inscriptions were made on the spot. Even here the contacts with continental Germanic tribes may also have played a role. The greater part of the names on the brooches appear to be West Germanic: **hariso**, **lamo**, **alugod**, maybe also **widuhudaz** (Makaev 1996:63).

The Danish armies and the enemy from across the sea, from Sweden and Norway and from North-West Germany, fought each other with the same Roman weapons³⁵. It is not unlikely that this was stimulated by Roman diplomacy. It is a well-known fact that the Romans donated subsidies and privileges to barbarian leaders, the *foederati*, to keep them in power - with the intrinsic purpose to keep them under control. In exchange for money and goods, the allied Germanic leader had to keep other barbarians away from the borders of the Empire, in order to create a bufferzone. Wars were preferably fought far away from Rome, far away from the *limes* and without Roman troops (Braund 1989:14-26).

It appears that the knowledge of the production of strong iron weapons was not very widespread among the Germanic tribes (Much 1959:84ff.). This probably prompted the import (or the robbing) of Roman swords. Lønstrup (1988:95ff.) states that over 100 Roman swords have been found in the Illerup bog. One part carries stamps and other Roman markings, the other part has no marks, but both typologically and technologically it equals the first part; therefore these were also made in the Empire. These swords may have been bought, captured or obtained as a gift. This last possibility only applies to Germanic *foederati* near the *limes*, because they were involved in the defence of the Empire. The hundreds of brand-new swords which have been found in Scandinavia and Germany, and partly also in Poland, must have been obtained as merchandise (Lønstrup 1988:96).

It is unclear to what extent the Germanic warriors were equipped with swords at the beginning of our era. Behmer (1939:15) informs us that the Germans knew three types of swords: the one-edged hew-sword, the two-edged short Roman *gladius* and the long Roman two-edged sword, the so called La Tène III type, which was used by the Roman cavalry. This sword-type was the basis for the Germanic Migration Period sword (Behmer 1939:18). The one-edged sword was actually a big knife, a *sax*. The *gladius* is of Roman origin and was imitated by the Germans.

Perhaps the puzzling word **kesjam** on the Bergakker scabbard mount may be explained by the assumption that the weapon designations for both swords and spears were confused. At the time the Bergakker inscription was made (early 5th c.), the word **kesja** may have denoted a

³⁵ The enormous weapon export to the northern barbarians may have been the result of a Roman divide-and-rule policy, in order to let the Germanic tribes fight among themselves to satisfy their land-hunger. The wealth of some leaders may have been based on relations with high-placed persons in Rome. The gift-exchange system of precious objects belongs also to this atmosphere. Roman soldiers were not allowed to own their weapons - they were state-property. Contrary to this, Germanic mercenaries did own their weapons. Yet, very few weapons have been found in graves; apparently a weapon was a heirloom that stayed on in a family for generations. Captured weapons were dedicated to the gods and deposited in bogs.

certain sword-type; at a (much) later period the word got the meaning of 'javelin' (for another interpretation see the Checklist of Runic Inscriptions in The Netherlands). A (vulgar) Latin word for sword was CESA, the equivalent of Germanic **gaizaz* (I guess the source was ultimately Celtic). An element such as *Gesa-* is found in the names of the *Gaesatae* and the *Matronae Gaesahenae* and *Matronae Gesationum*. A soldier of the *Cohors I Vindelicorum* was called *Cassius Gesatus*. According to Alföldy (1968:106) the name *Gesatus* is a cognomen, referring to the man's weapons. Probably, the Germans took over some special type of sword together with its foreign name. As to the tribe of the *Gaesatae* (recorded in 236 BC in the Alps), these people may have been Celts, so perhaps *gaes-* is a Celtic name for a Celtic La Tène sword.

The lanceheads of the Illerup bog were of Scandinavian origin, made in Norway, according to Ilkjær, since an analysis of the iron points to iron ore from North Trondelag (personal communication). However, Roman know-how may have been wished for, a knowledge which may have been provided by Germanic weaponsmiths from among the *foederati* of the Rhine area. The obvious connection, then, is that **wagnijo** and **nipijo** learned their craft as weaponsmiths either in their homelands, or as mercenaries in the Roman army, where they also learned to sign their work. Where did they learn to do this in runes? In Norway? Unlikely. They probably learned this together with their craft. A runographic analysis shows a close resemblance between the runic graphs on the lanceheads (**wagnijo**) and the graphs on the shield handles (**nipijo** and **lagubewa**), which points to the same background of the runographers. Nipijo, as is mentioned above, had a workshop, where many of the Roman-inspired items, found in the Illerup bog, were manufactured (Ilkjær 1996^b:440f.). According to Ilkjær (1993) the lanceheads of the *Vennolum*-type³⁶, to which the runic lanceheads belong, were widespread in Scandinavia. The runic spearhead from Øvre Stabu (2nd half of the 2nd c.) also belongs to the *Vennolum* type. Ilkjær states that only a few lanceheads from the Continent show some similarity, and that only one item from Poland is of the *Vennolum* type (personal communication).

5. The first runographers

Who could read and write runes in an almost illiterate society is subject of an often recurring debate. If one abandons the idea of a purely symbolical, magical or religious purpose of adding runes to objects, the answer is that at least the former mercenaries had learned to read and write, especially the officers. On the other hand there must have been literate people, more specifically craftsmen, among the *foederati*. The literate officers and soldiers must have constituted a small group. This would tie in very well with the observance that runic objects are sparse and emerge from widely separated places. Runic writing may have started as a soldiers' and/or craftsmen's skill. This might explain the curious meaning of the word 'rune': *secret, something hidden from outsiders*. The runic legends show very simple information, but it may be that the *art* of writing was sort of 'secretive', the prerogative of a specific group only, and not necessarily linked to magic or religion. The application of writing, especially on precious objects points to special artisans. Signing one's name marks the pride of the author, who knows an extraordinary skill. He stands out in society because of his knowledge, and

³⁶ Vennolum is a place in Norway, the findplace of the eponymous lance head.

therefore obtains a special status. Naturally, he would be very reluctant to pass this knowledge on to others, which would make it more common. Perhaps this also (partly) explains the extreme rarity of objects exhibiting runic writing, dating from the early ages.

6. The West Germanic hypothesis

An indication for a West Germanic origin of runic writing is the presence of West Germanic name forms on some of the oldest artifacts: **wagnijo** and **nipijo** (see above), **harja** (cf. Peterson 1994:161), **swarta**³⁷, **hariso**, **alugod**, **lepro**, **lamo** (cf. Syrett 1994:141ff.), and also **lagupewa**. These attestations are from *circa* 200 AD and somewhat later, found in bogs and graves in Jutland, on Funen and on Sealand. Stoklund (1994^a:106) points to the remarkable fact that all inscriptions that show West Germanic forms or which have West Germanic parallels are on weapons that originate from the area around the Kattegat, Scandinavia or North Germany and which were deposited in the Illerup and Vimose bogs.

Few would claim that a West Germanic speaking people lived in those areas around 200 AD. But individuals such as weaponsmiths and other craftsmen, descending from a West Germanic speaking area, may very well have been present there. Especially the names ending in *-ijo* seem to point to the region of the Ubii in the Rhineland, since this was a productive suffix in Ubian names (Weisgerber 1968:134f.). The problem of the **a-** and **o-** endings, present in the nominative forms of apparently masculine names in runic inscriptions found in Denmark, has long been the subject of discussion. Syrett (1994:151f.) concludes that the early evidence, e.g. up to c. 400, "clearly indicates that **-o** and **-a** could be used side by side to represent the masculine *n-* stem nom. sg., but in the later period, as exemplified (...) by the bracteates, **-a** predominates". Herewith the case has not yet been cleared. Perhaps the problem should be tackled from a different angle. An examination of the recorded names of Germanic soldiers in the Roman army shows that the endings *-a* and *-o* are quite frequent. It may very well be that names featuring these endings were introduced to the North by veterans and craftsmen, such as weaponsmiths.

As has been argued above, **wagnijo** and **nipijo** may have originated from the Rhineland, from the tribes of the *Vangiones* and *Nidensis*. The owner of the Vimose comb (with runic inscription) may have been a member of the tribe of the *Harii*, a sub-tribe of the *Lugii*.

The descent of the man who wrote **harja** on his comb, is supported by a runic inscription on the Skåäng stone in Sweden, reading **harijaz leugaz**, evidently pointing to both *Harii* and *Lugii*. The reading **harijaz** is based on the assumption that the 7th rune is the **z**, corresponding with the 'Charnay' rune X representing **z**. Its ornamental form has as yet not been recognised as the rune for **z** in this Swedish rune-text³⁸. **harja** reflects a West Gmc dialect, with loss of final *-z* in the nominative.

Just as in **wagnijo** and **holtijaz** the elements **ijo** and **ija** may be interpreted as an indication of someone's descent, **harja** can be interpreted as referring to someone belonging to the tribe of the *Harii*. A more extended form is the spelling **harijaz** of the Skåäng stone. Above I

³⁷ Syrett (1994:141) proposes to view **swarta** and similar instances, such as **lagupewa** as West Germanic strong nouns with loss of final **-z*.

³⁸ Here one apparently felt inclined to read the later Scandinavian **h** or **A** rune, and even a 'repaired' **n** rune has been suggested (see Krause 1996:191, with ref.).

suggested that the second part of this inscription **leugaz** was derived from the tribal name *Lugii*. Apparently Krause (1971:163) and Antonsen (1975:66) were not aware of the possibility of finding a tribal name here. The name *Lugii* appears to be related to Go **Lugjōs* (Much 1959:378) and Go. *liugan* 'to marry', actually 'to swear an oath'. The root **leugh-*, **lugh-* 'oath' is only attested in Celtic and Germanic (Schwarz 1967:30). The *Lugii*, according to Much (1959:378), were a group of tribes, probably unified by an oath.

The *Harii* lived in North Poland, not far from the Baltic. The comb may well have originated in that area, because of its find-context, which, according to Ilkjær (1996^a:68), consisted of a combination of certain Polish fire-equipment "Indslag af pyrit og evt. polske ildstål", buckles with a forked thorn, and combs consisting of two layers, such as is the case with the **harja** comb (cf. the map in Ilkjær 1993:377 and further on the text on pp. 376-378).

7. Conclusions

The Skåång inscription supports the interpretations of **wagnijo**, **nipijo** and **harja**, as being appellativa referring to certain tribes, and not just personal names. According to Bang (1906:-48f., note 419), Germanic PNs are often derived from tribal names. Other instances are the Hitsum (Friesland) bracteate (approximately around 500 AD), with the legend **fozo**, a PN, which may have been derived from the tribal name of the *Fōsi* (cf. IK, nr. 76, and the Checklist of Bracteates with Runes in the Catalogue), and the Szabadbattyán brooch, with the legend **marings** (see nr. 36 in the Checklist of Early Danish and Gothic inscriptions).

As to tribal names (attested in the Roman period) on Scandinavian stones, we have the forms **haukopuz** (Vånga), **hakupo** (Noleby). It may be useful to investigate once again the possibility, whether here the *Chauci* are referred to. Further there is **ekaljamarkiz baij?z** (Kårstad), perhaps pointing to the Bavarians? **swabaharjaz** (Rö) may refer to the Suebi, living on the right bank of the Rhine, **iupingaz** (Reistad) to the Iuthungi (South Germany, north of the Danube), **saligastiz** (Berga) perhaps to the Salii (near the lower Rhine). Birkhan (1970:170, note 243) suggests the patronymic **wagigaz** on the Rosseland stone may contain the PN *Vangio*³⁹. If these assumptions are correct, the inscriptions on the above mentioned stones may be dated rather early, on historical grounds, to between 200 and 500 AD.

If **wagnijo** is exactly to be pronounced as *Vangio*, one has to accept the fact that the sequences of **-gn-** and **-ng-** both represent the sound [ŋ]. In Roman ears the Germanic cluster *gn* may have sounded like *ng*. At any rate, the spelling of the tribal name *Vangiones* is in accordance with Latin practice. The same applies to the Roman spelling of the folk name *Nidenses*. Since the Romans did not know the graph *þ*, they most likely would write a *d* between vowels. Therefore, *Nith-* may be rendered *Nid-* in Roman orthography.

³⁹ The runes **fir?a** on Illerup VI may refer to the tribe of the *Firaesi* (Schönfeld 1965:88). Furthermore, one may speculate as to whether the name **harkilaz** of the Nydam sheath plate contains a scribal error; perhaps it should represent **haukilaz**, provided the third rune should be read as **u**, not **r** (its shape, however, is that of an 'open' **r** rune: **ᚱ**). If so, it could be interpreted as a reference to the *Chauci*. Besides, ON *hark-* 'tumult' is difficult to explain as a name-element.

At some time in runic history there existed a rune \uparrow to represent the sound [ŋ], but it is not used to represent the sequence **gn** in **wagnijo**. Moreover, the carver applied \uparrow to render **w**: hence the (*i*)ng rune \uparrow may not yet have been present in the runic alphabet of around 200 AD.

Masculine names ending in *-io*, *n-* and *jan-* stems, were especially frequent in the region of the *Ubii*, who were neighbours to the *Vangiones*. The names ending in *-io* reflect Germanic morphology representing the Latin ending *-ius*. The suffix *-inius* was reflected by Germanic *-inio-* (Weisgerber 1968:135, 392ff. and Weisgerber 1966/67:207). Weisgerber mentions the fact that within the *n-* stems of all IE languages we also find the *on-* type, which occurs in specific cases such as *ion-*, a type that is often met with in personal (Germanic) names (Weisgerber 1968:392). "Das Naheliegen von *-inius* bestätigt auch für das Ubiergebiet die Geläufigkeit der germanischen Personennamenbildung gemäß der *n-* Flexion. Mit dieser ist im ganzen germanisch-römischen Grenzraum zu rechnen. Die angeführte Reihe *Primio* usw. ist herausgehoben aus einer Fülle von Parallelbeispielen: *Acceptio, Aprilio, Augustio, Faustio, Firmio, Florio, Hilario, Longio, Paternio* usw." (Weisgerber 1968:394). In fact, in this way the question of the problematic ending **-ijo** in masculine PNs may be solved⁴⁰. The awkward ending **-a** of **lagupewa** (cf. Syrett 1994:44f.) can be solved by accepting the fact that the name may indeed be West Germanic. Syrett states that even weak masc. forms such as **swarta** may be taken as West Germanic strong nouns, the "precursor of ON *Svartr*" (Syrett 1994:45). There is no need to postulate the presence of a runic *koiné*, such is suggested by e.g. Makaev (1996:63). He stated that: "Therefore the runic material, [...] provides important and elegant, albeit indirect, support for our hypothesis on the West Germanic-Scandinavian dialectal base of the runic *koiné*". One may simply change the term 'runic *koiné*' for 'West Germanic origin of runic writing'.

I cannot yet estimate the implications of the fact that the frequent occurrence of runic **leub** (and **leubo**, **leuba**, **leubwini**, **lbi**, **leob**, **liub**) in 6th century Germany may be connected with the many *Leubo*'s in the area of the *Ubii* in the Roman period (Weisgerber 1968:150f., 167, 374f.). The name is also found among the *Tungri* and along the Lower Rhine. A runic attestation of the name is found in Västergötland, Sweden, on the SKÄRKIND stone: **skipaleubaz**. This may refer to a Rhenish merchant of skins (containing the element *ski(n)pa-* 'skin'). Another example is **liubu** (OPEDAL), but this may be no PN, but an adjective, or a verbform.

To sum up:

In view of the presence of (1) West Gmc name forms on the oldest runic attestations, and (2) the provenance of some of these objects, in combination with (3) the origin of the weaponsmiths **wagnijo** and **nipijo**, one may conclude that runic knowledge was first known on the Continent. (4) The inscriptions **harja** on the Vimose-comb and **harjaz leugaz** on the Swedish Skåäng stone confirm a connection between the North and the continental tribes of the *Harii* and the *Lugii*. (5) The presence of certain elite-weapons and -equipment in the Danish bogs is indicative of a network of contacts between elites from Scandinavia and the

⁴⁰ Cf. also the cognomen *Sinnio*, a Germanic member of the *corpore custos Drusinianus* (Bellen 1981:73ff., note 105; and Weisgerber 1968:135, and 393f.). It may be that *Sinnio* shows West Gmc consonant-gemination, but on the other hand it might just reflect the name of the Roman gens *Sinnius*.

Continent, and especially with provincial-Roman regions. The use of runes is closely linked to these relations. During the second century runic writing must have spread to the North. This is demonstrated by the runic brooches of Sealand, Jutland and Skåne, which were local products. The inscribed Vennolum-type lanceheads, including the lanceheads from Øvre Stabu and Gotland point to the possible presence of runic knowledge in Norway and Sweden, presumably taken there by Rhenish smiths. The weapon-trade between the Rhineland and the North may serve as evidence for close connections. I suggest the runic script was first developed in Romanized regions along the Rhine.

8. Some thoughts about the development of the runic writing system

It has been argued (most recently by Williams 1996:216f.) that the runic alphabet must have developed its odd sequence of the *fupark* in isolation, undisturbed by any other alphabet using society. This may be right, but it may be doubted if the runic alphabet had this odd sequence from the very beginning. The rune-order may have been developed far away from the literate world, but the runes themselves must have been adopted and adapted in the neighbourhood of a literate culture. The *fupark* sequence has nothing to do with the ABC and will therefore have been developed separately, i.e. at a later stage than the adoption of the characters. (See Seebold 1996 for an elaborate proposition as to the origins of the curious *fupark*-order). But even for writing minor texts such as *A. fecit*, the writer must have become acquainted with the link between the phonological and orthographic system.

Rausing (1992) and Quak (1996) suppose the runes developed from a provincial italic variety of the Latin alphabet. Quak states that writing in both directions can still be observed in the first century AD, whilst archaic characters such as those found in the North-Italic alphabets also occur (Quak 1994:73f.). In accordance with this view, I suppose several tribes along the Rhine in Germania Superior and Inferior were in a position to learn an archaic Italic alphabet (see also above, 3).

Quak (1996:175) suggests that not all runes, as we know them from *fupark*-inscriptions that were recorded in later times, were initially present. He takes a Latin alphabet of 21 characters as a starting point. For 19 runes the derivation is clear, according to Quak (1996:176f.) and Williams (1996:211ff.).

I take as a starting point the following set: A B C D E F G H I L M N O R S T V X, that is 18 characters, all of which have graphic and phonologic counterparts in the runes. For 6 runes a derivation will have to be sought. Problematic runes are those representing **d**, **p**, **w**, **i**, **z** and **(i)ng**. It appears that some runes have a joint origin.

1. The runes **d** and **p** have a joint origin: the Roman D. In single form this letter yields D , in doubled, or mirrored form one gets D^{D} .

2. The ancient runographers knew how to spell, and had graphic insight, which is illustrated by the creation of the rune **p** D^{D} , quite a creative variation of the rune **b** D . The rune **w** D^{D} is another variation on **b**. The designer of these graphs apparently was aware of the link between phonology and orthography, since *b*, *p*, and bilabial *w* are homorganic consonants.

3. The **(i)ng** rune D^{D} and the yew rune **i** D^{D} may have been created at a later stage. I believe both of them are bindrunes in origin, perhaps later interpreted as a separate phoneme, hence their inclusion in *fupark*'s. The yew rune **i** is a combination of **i** and **j**: $\text{D} + \text{D}^{\text{D}} = \text{D}^{\text{D}}$ (see also

Chapter IV, Summary & Conclusions, 11). The **(i)ng** rune's square form \square or \diamond without a hasta only occurs in the fupark-inscriptions of Kylver and Vadstena; in the Opedal inscription its presence is uncertain.

In semantically intelligible texts, it always appears with a headstaff, representing a bindrune, combining the **i** and $\diamond = \phi$ ⁴¹. Instances of texts containing the sequence **(i)ng** are: **kingia** (Aquincum), **marings** (Szabadbattyán), **inguz** (Wijnaldum A), perhaps **witring** (Slemminge) and **ingo** (Køng). The one exception (just ng) is **rango** (Leṭcani)⁴².

4. The letter G is clearly the base for **j** ^e. G must have been present in the matrix alphahabet. In Rome a sign for the sound g was introduced in the mid-third century BC, so here is no problem.

The rune **g** was represented by χ . The pronunciation of the Roman X may have resembled the pronunciation of Gmc *g*, which may be demonstrated by Go. *reihis* = Latin *rex*.

5. The form of the **z** rune Υ is found in the Etruscan and some North Italic alphabets, where it also denotes the sound *z* (see Map 2).

I propose the runic alphabet to be derived from a North Italic alphabet, in the first century AD.

⁴¹ See also: Arntz/Zeiss 1939:357f., and Antonsen 1975:12. Westergaard 1981:136-188 regards it as a single rune; see for a discussion of his material Odenstedt 1990:104f.

⁴² I have not much to add to Odenstedt's chapter on the **(i)ng** rune, except for the 4th c. inscription of Leṭcani. During my examination of the inscription I could definitely establish that the inscription does contain a rune ϕ (for a lengthy discussion about the **(i)ng** rune, see also Barnes 1984:66ff.).

IV. SUMMARY AND SOME MORE CONCLUSIONS

1. Classification of contents

1.1. In this study I have discussed over 200 items with runic inscriptions from five Corpora. Apart from the Bracteates, I have divided each Corpus into a legible and (partly) interpretable part and an illegible, c.q. uninterpretable part. For 50 inscriptions new or additional readings and/or interpretations out of a total of about 170 legible inscriptions are provided. For summaries and conclusions of each separate corpus, see the Catalogue. At the end of each checklist there is a paragraph called Summary & Conclusions. A survey of deviating and so-called diagnostic runeforms has been included in this chapter, together with two separate studies on the **j** rune and the yew rune.

Continental: 65 items, 50 legible and 15 illegible/uninterpretable.

Danish and South-East European: 43 items, 33 legible and 9 illegible/uninterpretable.

Bracteates: 48, totally or partly legible.

England: 23 items, 16 legible, 7 illegible/uninterpretable.

The Netherlands: 22 items, 19 legible and (partly) interpretable, 3 legible, but not interpretable.

Besides 47 gold bracteates and 1 silver one, and some 40 gold coins and several silver ones, there were 96 objects made of metal, largely silver or gilt-silver (together 55 pieces), 11 objects were made of gold, 12 of bronze, 9 of iron, there were 7 copper-alloy objects and 2 objects were made of gilt-bronze. Further there were 17 objects made of wood, 13 of bone, 6 of antler, 2 of ivory, 2 amber objects and 1 made of jet, and 5 stones. In some cases the material tallies with its provenance; such as jet from Whitby; bone, whale-bone, antler and wooden objects from the Frisian *terp*-area; earthenware with runic stamps in England; stones in Blekinge and England. The provenance of the metal objects is more difficult to establish.

1.2. The table⁴³ below gives a random classification of the contents of early runic inscriptions of Period I. There is a separate table for the bracteates, but one must keep in mind that here the results may give a biased picture, since the legends have been selected on legibility and intelligibility. The sentences contain a verbform and a subject, occasionally also an object. The names in the sentences, such as 'Boso wrote (the) runes, Dapina greeted you', have not been listed separately under PNs, although the sentences contain many proper names. The category 'dedications and well-wishes' contains many names, as does the category 'makers' and writers' formulae'; both categories have been listed as sentences, too, unless they are not recognizable as 'sentences'. Such is, for instance, the case with the text on the woman's brooch of Bulach: **frifridil du afd**, which can be regarded as some sort of dedication: 'husband, you', but which cannot be regarded as a real sentence. The occurrence of two personal names, plus the word 'love' may be regarded as a well-wish or as a dedication, but not as a sentence. The category of PNs can contain one PN or more PNs, and, generally speaking, they can be regarded as denoting ownership or as makers' signatures. The category

⁴³ Cf. Odenstedt 1990:171f.

‘**ek** + PN etc.’ has been listed separately, but also under the heading ‘sentences’ if a verb(form) is present.

In the table of bracteates, a separate category is ‘invitations’, e.g. texts that either contain the word **lapu** or, if not, can still be interpreted as an invitation. The number of the so-called ‘magical’ words is striking, which can be interpreted as dedications or well-wishes, bracteates being regarded as amulets. One must keep in mind though, that the bracteates treated in this study, are also selected on the occurrence of ‘magical’ words (like **alu** etc.). In the first table, these words occur in a variety of combinations.

<i>Contents</i>	<i>Number of inscriptions</i>
1. one or more PNs	45
2. sentences	37
3. dedications & well-wishes	18
4. naming of object	18
5. makers’ & writers’ formulae	16
6. ek + PN or adj. etc.	7
7. ‘magical words’ etc.	5
8. <i>fupark</i> inscriptions	3
<i>Bracteates:</i>	
1. ‘magical’ words	30
2. sentences	10
3. invitations (with lapu or likewise)	10
4. <i>fupark</i> inscriptions	6
5. makers’ & writers’ formulae	6
6. ek + PN or adj. etc.	4
7. dedications	2
8. naming of object	2

The Danish Corpus and the Bracteates Corpus contain relatively many words and expressions that might have a magical, mythological and/or ritual connotation. The Danish Corpus shows names that are derived from tribal names. Verbforms derived from the infinitive Gmc **taujan*, (to do, make), Gmc **faihjan* (to draw, to paint) and Gmc **talgjan* (to carve, to cut) only occur in the Danish Corpus and the Bracteates Corpus. Apparently, runes were drawn and painted, next to being carved and cut. The Danish and Gothic Corpora do not contain any well-wishes and dedications, which is very surprising. The Danish corpus contains relatively many makers’ formulae (which may not always be identical with writers’ formulae). The Continental Corpus contains relatively many verbforms, and a lot of dedications and well-wishes and hardly any names of objects. The Continental and the English Corpora contain some writers’ & makers’ formulae. Here the verbforms expressing the carving of the runes, are derived from Gmc **wrīan*. In the Dutch and Continental Corpora we find verbforms expressing either writing or making (runes or object); the forms used are **dedun**, **ded** and **deda** (West Gmc **dō-*). In the Continental Corpus also *worgt(e)* ‘worked, made’ is found, referring to the carving of runes (Arlon, nr. 3). A form of the same verb (Gmc **wurkjan*) occurs in a bracteate legend, **wurte** (Tjurkö-I, nr. 44). As concerns reading runes, **rada** (read) and **upfnpai** (find out) are worth mentioning here (both Continental, resp. Soest, nr. 40, and Charnay, nr. 11). Britsum (The Netherlands, nr. 14) contains **bæræd** which may refer to the

carving (preparing) or the reading of the runes. The English and Dutch Corpora contain relatively many names of objects. The Dutch Corpus contains a relatively high number of sentences: 9 on a total of 22 inscriptions. The Danish Corpus contains 10 sentences on a total of 36 inscriptions.

It appears that runic writing gradually evolved through the centuries, from short inscriptions (one or a few words) to longer texts, and the changes were not very substantial at first. This might at least be partly due to the size of the objects. Some graphic variation can already be observed in the earliest known attestations, but on a small scale and in a restricted area only. Actually, it is more striking that runic script and the contents of the texts should have remained so uniform over a vast area for such a long time. In my opinion this can only be explained by assuming that the use of runes was spread by individuals or groups that had contacts over a large area.

2. Some backgrounds of early runic writing

2.1. The inscriptions from the first few centuries of recorded runic writing are found on:

- a.) objects that were excavated from former bogs or lakes, and were deposited on purpose.
- b.) objects found in graves, also purposely deposited.
- c.) objects that belonged to hoards, deposited either for religious purposes or to be regained afterwards. In these cases, too, the deposition was deliberate.
- d.) casual finds without a find-context.

We have here four categories of find circumstances or contexts of runic objects. However, we do not know whether we have categorised herewith all possibilities where we might expect to find runic objects. Runic finds are generally chance hits, mostly found by modern archaeologists. However, the objects were certainly not intended to be excavated by later generations in the 19th or 20th century. Therefore, it remains an open question whether we have now a reliable picture of the aim and use of runic script in the days of yore. Objects with painted runes have never been found.

Judging from the oldest attestations, we must conclude that nothing points to an extensive use of runic writing, such as letters, charters or records. At least one whole category is hardly represented: objects from settlements, on which one might expect to find script for every-day use. This category may have contained a type of information that has not survived and is therefore unknown. I am not sure that any such elaborate communicative writing existed at all in the oldest runic period. Bæksted (1952:134) pointed out that lost inscriptions cannot be expected to have had contents that were quite different from those that have been preserved. I would plead some caution with regard to this statement. The number of finds has been accumulating since the use of metal detectors, and I think we may expect some unusual and surprising finds in the future.

As regards the actual state of affairs, there is still not much that points to a communicative function of writing in Iron Age and Early Medieval Germanic society. The possibility to express oneself by inscribing an object was limited, for the size of the objects restricted the runographer to the use of short texts. Among these are many names, of owners, makers, writers, commissioners, givers and receivers. Sometimes the writer or maker stresses his or her activity, often by using phrases like: *Boso wrote the runes; Feha writes; Lamo carved; I, Fakaz painted; Aib made the comb for Habuke*. It is unclear whether someone who wrote:

hagiradaz tawide ‘H. made’ meant that he carved the runes or that he made the object (or did both these things). This problem of ambiguity especially concerns the Danish corpus, which contains forms of the Gmc verbs **taujan* ‘to do, to make’, and the Frisian and Continental Corpus, which contains forms from West Gmc **dō-* (Kluge/Seebold 1989:744).

Another important category is formed by the substantives that name the object itself, such as **kobu, kabu** ‘comb’ (Oostum, Toornwerd), **katae** ‘knucklebone’ (Hamwic) and **sigila** ‘brooch’ (München-Aubing and Harford Farm). A related category is naming the material the object was made of: **walhakurne** ‘foreign, Welsh gold’ (bracteate Tjurkö I), **raihan** ‘of a roe’, **hronæs ban** ‘whale bone’ (Franks Casket) and **horn hiartaR** ‘deer's antler’ (Dublin).

In a few cases more information is given, e.g. about the origin of the object: **wagagastiz sikijaz** ‘flameguest, coming from a bog’ depicting the axe made of melted bog-iron⁴⁴ (Nydam I). The purpose of the writer or commissioner is expressed in: **uþf[i]ndai iddan liano** ‘may Liano get to know Idda’ (Charnay). Texts such as **ek unwodz** and **ek ungandiz** (Danish Corpus; see also Odenstedt 1990:173) and **ek u[n]mædit oka** (Rasquert, Dutch Corpus) appear to render someone's epithet. The custom of using an epithet may be connected with Roman onomastic principles. Germanic soldiers in the Roman army usually had only one name. When becoming civilians, they often took on a patronymic and/or a cognomen (Bang 1906:17ff.). They liked the use of nicknames, such as *Rufus*, *Flavus* (Red-head and Blonde-head), according to Bang (1906:20). The names **swarta** ‘Blacky’ and **laguþewa** ‘Seaservant = Sailor’ (Illerup I and III) probably fall into the same category.

2.2. Objects with runes have survived in surprisingly small numbers, but they were probably not made in huge quantities. This may be illustrated by the Illerup bog finds. Only nine items out of hundreds of deposited objects bore runes. Apparently, inscribed objects were extremely scarce and this in itself points to one of the specific functions of runic inscriptions: it gave extra value to the object, it added to the object's uniqueness. This impression is strengthened in those cases in which the inscriptions seem to contain no legible or comprehensible text. The custom of writing names, dedications and makers’/writers’ formulae has a twofold aim: it increases the value of already prestigious objects, and it makes the object special for both the giver and the receiver. The receiver will always be reminded of the person who gave the object to him and he will thus be aware of the special relationship between them. An inscribed object has a distinct function in the gift and exchange policy and the client system of leader and comitatus. This practice corresponds with the use of writing in ancient civilizations, such as the Etruscan and the early Italic cultures of the middle of the first millennium BC. There the art of writing in its initial phase appears to be closely related to the possession of precious objects and prestige goods. It is remarkable that this phenomenon should have occurred in the Germanic world, too.

The possession of runic objects and their commissioning appears to have been reserved to an elite. The oldest known objects are related to a high military elite that controlled the weapon trade and weapon production. The runic texts themselves, though, reveal next to nothing about status (unless the expression **ek erilaz** points to some rank or status). The bracteates, as high-value commodities, would serve quite well in an exchange network of an elite.

In a predominantly illiterate society, the art of writing is of little use. Hence writing, as is shown by the oldest runic monuments, remained restricted to short texts, mostly names,

⁴⁴ Ore for the production of bog iron was found in huge quantities in Iron Age Jutland. The ore was melted in field furnace and the fluid iron could be moulded into an axe, for instance.

during the first five centuries (!). If only a few people were literate, elaborate, informative texts would be rather useless, which largely explains the curious fact that especially names, dedications and formulaic expressions have been found.

2.3. One cannot claim that runic writing was in everyday use from the beginning, since such a statement lacks evidence. The assertion that runes were preferably used on wood, because of the properties of wood that determined the angular forms of the runes, is also an empty argument, since all archaic alphabets show angular-formed characters. This is a characteristic feature of e.g. ancient Greek, Etruscan, ancient Latin, Raetian and Venetian writing, which was certainly not restricted to wood, but, as in the case with runes, was executed on all sorts of material.

During the whole runic era, runic writers were limited in expressing themselves due to the technique of painstakingly carving or cutting runes one by one in all kinds of material, apparently first in metal, bone, wood and antler, and later mostly in stone. The instruments and tools for cutting runes in stone may at first not have been adequate enough for this purpose. And everybody possessed a knife, hence cutting runes in wood and soft metal, such as silver and gold, was no problem. As far as is known, no italic variety for a quicker, easier way of writing, e.g. on birch bark, was developed. A problem that still remains unsolved - concerns the curious order of the runic alphabet. Since the oldest *fupark* inscriptions we know date from the fifth century (some bracteates, the Kylver stone), this order may have emerged later (and for unknown reasons)⁴⁵.

However, within these boundaries of epigraphic use, runewriters were apparently inclined to adapt their script to their needs. Curiously enough, in one part of the runic world this attitude is shown by increasing the number of runic characters, whereas in an other part the writers decreased the number of runes. Both complicated and less complicated forms were designed. This probably had to do with an effort to ensure the proper rendering of the sounds of the language and it had to do with the target group one had in mind. It may be that the very purpose of writing underwent changes, presumably caused by influences from the Latin-writing world, and by political and religious developments. Literacy among larger groups of people spread slowly. From the 7th and 8th centuries onwards the number of more or less rune-literate people increased, in England as well as in Scandinavia.

2.4. During the first few centuries of runic writing, the practice was approximately the same in all rune-using societies. The propagation of the runic script was linked to the migrations of Germanic tribes in the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries. Some runic traditions remained conservative, as can be seen in the Continental Corpus; sometimes there were rather spectacular developments, such as in England and Scandinavia, both from about the 7th c. onwards, although of a quite different character. Suddenly, texts with literary qualities appear. In England texts get a Christian purport; in Scandinavia the Blekinge stones show elaborate texts containing heavy curses and warnings. Memorial texts also appear. This type of text is found very rarely in the archaic period. In the course of time, runes appear to be used for writing all sort of texts, just like any other alphabet.

2.5. Although there is very little material to go by, I am convinced that runes were designed to write meaningful texts, albeit that *we* may not always understand their meaning. Actually, I

⁴⁵ A proposition about the curious *fupark*-order has been put forward by Seebold 1986.

have reached this conclusion because of the bracteate-legends. Many of these are notorious for their difficult or incomprehensible runic sequences, but since there are also quite a lot of bracteates that bear fully legible and understandable texts, I suppose that *this* was basically the general intention of the runewriters, the only problem being the fact that they did not always succeed. This may be due to the circumstance that some, or many of them, were illiterate to some degree. The less literate they were, the more their inscriptions will look like script-imitation.

3. Runes and rituals

3.1. The objects that were offered and buried may have been inscribed to serve some ritual function, but this is difficult to prove, since we do not have any unambiguous texts that would confirm such a function. It is impossible to identify, beyond any doubt, texts that are undisputedly religious, or that refer to the supernatural. Some scholars believe that at least part of the runic texts are magical, simply because in their opinion runes were basically be a magical script. Runes were certainly used in texts that had magical purposes, such as is perhaps shown by seemingly meaningless sequences like **aaaaaaaaazzznnn?bmuttt** on the Lindholm bone piece. Magic? But of what nature? Sometimes it is possible to see the light through a blur of runic signs, as is the case in **bwseeekkkaaa** on the Chessel Down bronze pail. Remembering the **þþþmmmkkkistil** = *þistil*, *mistil*, *kistil* formula, known from for instance the Gørlev stone, we may solve the Chessel Down mystery by applying the same principle, and thus read: *bekka*, *wekka*, *sekka*, all recorded names (see Chapter VIII: Early Runic Inscriptions in England).

An instance of an offering may be the text of the Vimose sword-chape, if I have interpreted this correctly as ‘may the lake have all sword(s)’ **mari ha aala makija**, referring to the object's destination: to be deposited as war-booty. Texts such as ‘I consecrate the runes’ **uüu r[u]n[o]z** (Nebenstedt bracteate) and **wihgu** (‘I fight’ or ‘I consecrate’) on the Nydam axe handle suggest some sacred act, but it is unclear what sort of act is alluded to.

One category of objects that may have had a ritual or religious function were the bracteates. They are considered amulets, since their models, Roman medallions and coins had that function. That they were special is expressed by the context in which they were found: in bogs, peat-layers, hoards, post-holes and graves. On the basis of (a) the material they were made of, gold, (b) their Roman connection and (c) their inscriptions that often contain either Roman lettering or runes, or a combination of both, one is inclined to regard them as symbols of wealth and power. A possible relation to either Germanic mythology or symbolic leadership may be deduced from their iconography.

3.2. As regards a possible ritual function, one may think of the coming of age of both boys and girls, or of initiation ceremonies of a cultic association, such as a warrior league. This would especially concern bracteates with the text **frohila** and **niujila**, **niuwila**, resp. ‘Young Lord’ and ‘Little Newcomer’. The very act of inscribing an object might imply that some magic was aimed at, in the sense that adding lettering to an object would increase its intrinsic power. This mainly concerns amulets, but this is also implied by some texts on weapons found in bogs, such as on the Nydam axe: ‘Flameguest, coming from a bog, **alu**, I, Oathsayer, consecrate/fight’; and the Kragehul spear-shaft: ‘I, Eril of Asugisalaz, I am called Muha **gagaginuga**’. These texts do not create the impression of being simply everyday messages,

but they seem to have some supernatural connotation. Some bracteates seem to bear the right sort of words for magic, such as charms or spells, **luwatuwa, salusalu, tanulu, hagela ala asulo, gibu auja, gagoga** (see also Page 1995:154). Apart from the fact that it is awkward to establish, with any certainty, the magic load in runic legends, it seems to me that if any runemagic were involved, it would especially be found in the early inscriptions. In the later Middle Ages several 'magical' texts do occur, but in a context of Christianity and alphabet-magic.

As regards burial gifts, it is not easy to distinguish between a dedication made for a burial and a similar sort of inscription made for a living person. Perhaps objects with inscriptions that still look 'fresh', were made for depositing or for the 'afterlife' of a deceased person, such as seems to be the case with the Beuchte and Bulach brooches (Continental Corpus), the Chessel Down scabbard mount (Early English Corpus) and the Lețcani spindle whorl (Danish and Gothic Corpus). However, many of the objects that were found in hoards, sacred deposits and graves show traces of wear. Bracteates and gravefinds mostly show abraded legends; these objects had been used for rather a long time before they were deposited or buried with their owners and thus seem to have no relation with the burial as such. However, grave rituals mirror a social structure, but also a wished-for imaginary reality. The grave inventory may be regarded as a metaphor to express certain changes in society.

4. Comparing the corpora⁴⁶

4.1. Page (1995:304f.) gloomily observes: "From all this it is clear that runic inscriptions can comprise (a) texts meaningless to us, (b) unpronounceable sequences, or those unlikely to be plain language, (c) texts containing errors, (d) texts with apparent errors, (e) groups of pseudo-runes, characters that appear to be runes but aren't. There are also, rarely, texts that are comprehensible".

Does this sad depiction of the runic state of affairs hold good for all Dark Age runic legends from Denmark, the Continent, Frisia and England? Apart from the fact that Page is absolutely right in his observation concerning the early English runes, I intend to show that the study of runes is not so hopeless as might be concluded from the above statement, that there is a lot that is comprehensible and, moreover, that it is possible to draw general and more specific conclusions from "this incoherent mass of material", albeit at the risk of being called a "rash scholar" (Page, *ibid.*).

4.2. Compared with the early English and Frisian traditions, the Continental tradition appears to have been much more productive and much more substantial. The early period, Period I (see Chapter I: General Introduction), was also quite productive in Denmark, if only as regards the many runic bracteates. Period II is the heyday of the English tradition; in Denmark Period II starts with a transitional stage, during which substantial changes take place in the *fupark*. Long, substantial texts appear in both England and Denmark. Stone, which probably had already been in use in Norway and Sweden for some time, was introduced as inscription-bearing material. These bolders were covered with monumental texts, also previously unusual. In Period II, a runic revival took place in England, strangely enough within an

⁴⁶ Note that some data concerning comparison between several corpora are given at the end of each separate Checklist in the Catalogue, under the heading: Conclusions.

ecclesiastical context. Clerics introduced a profound change in runic writing, which touches upon the purport and contents of the texts. The fact, that runic writing ‘came out of the closet’ e.g. the intimacy of personal statements, may have something to do with a different view on writing, which emerged in monastic circles in the 7th c. Books became important. What was committed to the parchment was transferred from the memory of an individual to the realm of the written word, thus escaping transitoriness. What was written down could be read by other people, it became public, it could be passed on, copied, translated, propagated; in a sense the text was saved. Books were meant to support the memory and to stimulate associations. Anglo-Saxon runic writing became part of this intellectual development and runic texts acquired a different character. Parchment and styli served as writing equipment for runes. Large stone monuments with runic texts were erected. Even the runic alphabet underwent adaptations and extensions. The phenomenon of manuscript runes is specifically Anglo-Saxon, in contrast with the purely epigraphical traditions elsewhere.

In Denmark there was also a new impulse, which resulted in an adaptation of the futhork to a simpler, easier and eventually more popular usage. The causes and results of these changes were not the same in the two regions. In Denmark runic writing appears to have become ‘democratic’, but not so in England, where monastic use predominated. One may conclude, though, that in both regions there was an increase in the number of people who could read runes and also used them.

4.3. In 7th century England and Frisia, especially the coins with runic legends appear to bridge the gap between a diffuse use of runes with or without specific purposes and a manifestation of public use in daily life and commerce. The English use of runic coins, according to Page (1996:142) was a real contrast with the Frisian way of handling the material. This may be so, but one has to keep in mind that an extensive use of runes is in contrast with the early English material as well! The numerous ‘Frisian’ *sceattas* seem to point to a widespread use of runic coins. However, it is not yet clear if there was a numismatic context for the four gold solidi in the Frisian *terp*-area. Perhaps investigations concerning the leading political role Westergoo seems to have played, may throw some light onto this matter. Page opines that the use of runic script on coins was more common in England, especially in southern and eastern England (Page 1996:138f.). One might even plead for a Merovingian influence, both on English and Frisian coinage. But the question which of the two first started the addition of runes to the coins is difficult to answer. The **hada** and **weladu** coins are cast, which may point to their not being used as money but as jewellery (cf. Page 1996:136).

4.5. From the evidence we have, we may conclude that analogous runic traditions emerged in 6th c. Frisia and England. Runic writing remained on a modest scale and on a basic level. The contents and syntax of the texts, as well as the nature of the inscriptions, are comparable with the earliest attestations of runic writing anywhere else. A puzzling exception is Westeremden B, which might qualify as a Period II inscription. Remarkable, though, is the total of 9 sentences in the Dutch Corpus, whereas, for instance, the Early English Corpus has only 3 (until 700 AD). After all, two Periods might be represented in the Dutch Corpus, an archaic one and one more sophisticated (see Summary and Conclusions of Chapter IX: Runic Inscriptions in The Netherlands).

Frisians carved runes on material they found nearby their dwelling-places, they used yew-wood, antler, bone, whalebone. This would point to an indigenous tradition.

Nevertheless, my observation from the runes on the Bernsterburen staff (Looijenga

1990:231): "as so often with Frisian runic inscriptions ... the runes on the Bernsterburen staff may be derived from several *fupark's*" has led Page (1996:147) to exclaim "we must wonder whether there *was* a Frisian runic tradition, or only a confused scatter of different, mixed and hazy traditions". It is useful to look at some more features Page mentions in his bewilderment with regard to the Frisian runes: (a) there is only a small number of inscriptions, (b) they show a remarkable range of unusual forms, which makes him wonder if runes were ever a serious and useful script at all in Frisia. As to (a), I would think that the small numbers of surviving inscriptions impede runic studies everywhere. As to (b), some runic forms on objects from the area of the *terpen* are indeed anomalous. These may look mixed and hazy, but they may also be relicts of a rich and old tradition.

Page's cautious remarks on the Frisian corpus has inspired me to look more critically at delineations of definite runic traditions based on nationalities and to reckon with mixed traditions and influences that are more dependent on individual contacts and on travellers with runic knowledge. The purpose of inscribing objects with runes may be different in the separate regions. As regards the Continental tradition this may be true; it differs from the Frisian, English and Danish traditions in that it contains more dedications, well-wishes and writers' signatures. On the whole the Continental, or South Germanic, inscriptions create the impression of being aimed at strictly private, profane, purposes, a communication between some people who knew each other intimately. There seem to be no sacral or ritual functions, such as can be found in the early Danish corpus. The Continental runic legacy shows a clear picture, which is more difficult to detect in the English and Frisian corpora. However, both in the English and Frisian corpora plain messages, apparently made by craftsmen, occur such as: 'Luda repaired the brooch' and 'Aib made the comb for Habuke'. The Danish corpus contains weaponsmiths' and jewellers' signatures, as well as inscriptions expressing ownership, next to inscriptions that may have had a purely symbolic or magical purpose. Here especially personal names derived from tribal names turn up, a feature that is missing in other corpora.

4.6. Nielsen (1996:127) raised serious objections against the interpretation of several items as 'Frisian'. Especially in cases where no typical Anglo-Frisian features, such as the $\bar{a}c$ and $\bar{o}s$ runes, are present, he questioned the provenance of the inscriptions. The criterium 'findspot' is, according to him, not enough to establish a specific 'Frisian' provenance. He (1996:124) pointed to the fact that Wijnaldum A and Britsum show close connections to the Lindholm amulet and the Kragehul spearshaft, because they all exhibit multiple-line runes. The linguistic criterium of assigning the ending *-u* as typical for Runic Frisian has also been discarded (Nielsen 1996:129). He suggested that there are no decisive factors for accepting the existence of a runic Frisian corpus at all, if I have understood him well. He illustrated this startling observation by pointing out that there is a "hotchpotch of geographical, archaeological, numismatic, runological and linguistic criteria underlying the purported Frisian runic corpus" (Nielsen 1996:128). But this serious criticism also applies to all other early runic corpora, with an exception of the Continental Corpus.

Yet, these considerations might set us thinking. It might be that the survival of runic objects has depended to a large extent on accidental, geological and cultural circumstances. Waterlogged soil in the *terpen*, bogs in Denmark, Merovingian row-graves in Germany, graves in England, all offer relatively favourable conditions for the preservation and excavation of runic objects. But the overall picture of the surviving runic objects is distorted and unbalanced. Except perhaps for some of the Frisian ones, no known early runic objects emerged from settlements, apart from some bracteates at Gudme. But the *terpen* were settlement sites, because the elevated platforms were the only places fit for habitation in the

coastal area. If people made deposits outside their *terp*, these may have disappeared under layers of clay. There were grave fields on *terpen*, such as at Hoogeteintum, and the only certain runic find from a grave in the *terp*-area is the Hoogeteintum comb. Of all other objects the find-context is uncertain or lost.

One may wonder to what extent the Frisian objects that are assumed a rather mysterious lot ("baffling" is the word Page uses) represent a type of runic practice not known from other sites. This is contrary to the assumption made by Baeksted (1952:134), who thinks that any lost inscriptions will not have had contents that were different from those that have been preserved. The inscriptions on combs, the antler, wooden and bone objects perhaps reveal something of an otherwise unknown runic practice. An instance of an until 1955 unknown practice is expressed on the hundreds of wooden chips from Bergen and Trondheim, showing colloquial texts. Surprisingly, the tiny Frisian Corpus contains relatively many full-fledged sentences, as compared to the contemporaneous Continental and English Corpora, which excel in the use of single words and names, wordgroups, namegroups and the like.

4.7. Compared to the Danish and Continental runic objects, most Frisian inscribed objects are simple, i.e. not made of precious material, except for the four gold coins. This needs some consideration. Does this mean that the occurrence of objects of wood, bone, antler and whalebone in Frisia is evidence of the general custom of using simple material to write runes on, a custom which apparently has not been recorded from elsewhere? Or is the Frisian tradition simply quite different from anywhere else? The Frisian *terp*-area seems, from an archaeological point of view, to have been rather rich. But the rune-finds do not witness any sumptuousness, except for the gold coins (which, by the way, did not emerge from any *terp*). It may be that writing in itself was important. The coins, of which only one is said to have been found in Frisia, may perhaps be English, an assumption that has also been forwarded by Page (1996). In Frisia itself only 16 objects from a period of probably three centuries are attested. The other five 'Frisian' objects were found outside Frisia (in England and Ostfriesland in Germany), which is remarkable in itself. This may be due to the following facts: (1) the Frisian *terp*-area is the smallest runic area of all and (2) the Frisian trade covered a large area. This makes it understandable that runic objects became shattered outside their homeland. The only Dutch find from outside the *terp*-area is the Bergakker object. It is rather reminiscent of the Continental and English tradition, which both contain rune-inscribed silver scabbard mounts.

4.8. The English material is a little more precious than the Frisian objects and in this respect it resembles the Danish and Continental attestations. But also humble objects, such as earthenware urns with runes are recorded from England: Spong Hill and Loveden Hill. The only other known earthenware object with runes is the spindle whorl from Lețcani (Rumania). The quantity of recorded items is notable: from a period of more than two centuries about 25 runic objects are attested, whereas on the Continent, from a period of less than two centuries about 70 objects have survived.

4.9. The Charnay brooch and the Arlon box should be reconsidered in the light of the Bergakker find, which may indicate that the Franks, too, knew and used runes. On the other hand, Charnay can be linked, runologically, with Griesheim, and, linguistically, with an East-Germanic dialect. (The Bergakker inscription may have been written in an East-Germanic dialect, too). The Arlon box belongs to a series of similar boxes in the Middle-Rhine area. The other find from present-day Belgium, Chéhery, is difficult to classify because of its

problematic legend. It exhibits a combination of Roman lettering and runes. The part DEOS may point to Christianity. The inscription on the Merovingian ‘Kent’ brooch may have been made either on the Continent or in England. The Watchfield purse mount also has a Merovingian connotation, but the inscription seems to have been made in England. This illustrates a general problem: inscriptions may be added anywhere; they do not have to have the same origin as the object. Moreover, runographers may have travelled around, thus leaving their dialectal and typological traces in foreign regions.

5. The Early English and Frisian corpora

5.1. Whenever a new inscription turns up in England or The Netherlands, the first thing one has to do is to see whether $\bar{a}c$ or $\bar{o}s$ occurs in the inscription. Unfortunately, not all English and Frisian runic inscriptions contain the vowels *a* or *o* represented by the new runes \bar{a} and \bar{o} , in which case we are not only faced with the impossibility of establishing the sound value of the rune \bar{a} , but also with the question of the provenance of the object. As to provenance in general, not only the Frisian objects are portable, but those of other corpora as well. Provenance will always be problematic in any of the early runic objects (except perhaps for the runic stones).

The so-called Anglo-Frisian innovations in runic writing, especially the development of two new runes $\bar{a}c$ and $\bar{o}s$, may have taken place on the Continent, in the homelands of Angles and Saxons, probably somewhere in the 5th c. The runes may have been introduced to Frisia from there, or perhaps from England, either by Frisians or Anglo-Saxons or by both. One can think of other scenarios; at this moment there is no certainty about the place of origin of Anglo-Frisian runic writing.

The new runes are recorded from Frisia and England at various points in time - possibly due to scanty evidence from a disturbed tradition. Another reason may be that the occurrence of phonetic and phonemic developments in both regions did not coincide.

In the Frisian inscriptions $\bar{a}c$ is present around 600 and denotes both long and short *a*. The oldest Frisian $\bar{a}c$ runes are found on the runic solidi and the Amay comb (6th c.). In England the oldest attestation of $\bar{a}c$ may be Loveden Hill **hlaw**, 5th or 6th c.; the second oldest is Caistor-by-Norwich II: **luda** 610-650 (Hines 1991^b:6-7), followed by the coins: **desaiona** and **pada** 660-670.

The $\bar{o}d\bar{i}lan$ rune is attested in **skanomodu** (575-610), denoting \bar{o} , and in Westeremden B (no date) for \bar{a} , both in the same name-element: $m\bar{o}d-/m\bar{a}d$. The $\bar{o}s$ rune is attested late in OFris, in the 8th c., in Toornwerd, Westeremden B, Rasquert and Arum.

In Britain, the earliest $\bar{o}s$ rune has been found in Suffolk, on the Undley bracteate (ca. 475). The second-oldest $\bar{o}s$ is in the Chessel Down I inscription, found on the Isle of Wight, dated to the 6th century. So England has a lead in the attestations of $\bar{o}s$ runes, starting as early as the 5th c. The $\bar{a}c$ runes appear in both England and Frisia at approximately the same time, the 6th c. Tentatively, it may be assumed that the runes $\bar{a}c$, $\bar{o}s$ and $\bar{a}sc$ emerged in England in the fifth century and came from there to Frisia, but again, there is no ultimate certainty, as one of the sound-changes (monophthongization of Gmc $*au$ and $*ai$) that made the creation of new runes necessary, also occurred in Runic Frisian, from the 6th c. onwards, that is: from the earliest known inscriptions onwards.

5.2. Until the Bergakker find, it was considered strange that runic writing in The Netherlands was only recorded from the *terp*-region and not from the 7th/8th century Frisian/Frankish centre of power: the important trading town of Dorestad and the royal residence at Utrecht in the central river-area. The fact that the *terpen* presented so many finds may be due to the water-logged *terp*-soil that was sufficiently fit to preserve runic objects. Perhaps Frisians living in Frisia citerior (roughly Utrecht and the river estuary of the Rhine) from the 7th century onwards, did not use runes, because the region and culture had become more Frankish, e.g. Romanized, in character. Runes, at that time, may have been regarded as a kind of regional folklore, of a lower status than writing in Latin and the use of the Latin alphabet.

5.3. Eventually, the English and Frisian languages developed in different ways. No further Anglo-Saxon runic innovations seem to have been adopted by the Frisians. But there are indications that the Frisians adopted Scandinavian runes from the younger *futhork*, possibly through their trade-contacts with places like Haithabu and Ribe in Denmark and Birka in Sweden. Instances of mixed Frisian and Scandinavian use of runes are Westeremden B and Bernsterburen. Scandinavian influences can be traced in Wijnaldum A, Britsum and the Hitsum bracteate.

6. North Sea coastal links: ornamental runes, rune-crosses, double runes and mirror-runes⁴⁷

6.1. There may be some specific runic links connecting the Danish, Frisian and English traditions, along and across the North-Sea coast. Links can be observed in special runic forms (see also Page 1985). The tiny coastal group of Frisia has always been notorious for its unusual runeforms, especially in the inscriptions from Britsum and Westeremden B. Westeremden B deserves a price for the most curious collection of exotic runeforms: mirror-runes, Anglo-Frisian runes, a rune from the younger *futhork* and the *Sternrune*. This rune occurs also in Westeremden A and in English inscriptions, where it forms an integral part of syllables beginning with *ji-*, denoting the sequence of palatalised *g + i*. This characteristic, together with the presence of *āc* and *ōs*, confirms that, basically, Westeremden B belongs to the Anglo-Frisian tradition. The presence of younger *futhork*-runes may indicate a connection with Denmark.

Britsum and its variation between single and multi-lined runes is often compared to the Lindholm amulet (Skåne) and the Kragehul spearshaft (Funen). The Kragehul knifeshaft may have a parallel in Wijnaldum B: **hiwi**, the first hasta of the **h** being doubled, like **b** in Kragehul: **bera**.

Another connection along the North-Sea coast is the parallel between Fallward and Oostum in the use of 'ornamental' runes: the **a** with three sidetwigs of Fallward and the **h** and **b** with three bars and three hooks in Oostum. These are varieties that are unique (so far).

The rune-cross appears to be typical of connections between Denmark, England and Germany. The basis is a **g** rune \times which has extra runes attached to the ends of the cross. It

⁴⁷ Mirror-runes have equal side-twigs on either side of the headstaff, or, if there are two headstaffs, equal bars run between the tops and the bases. The existence of mirror-runes, or "Spiegelrunen", has convincingly been demonstrated by Pieper 1987.

occurs on the Undley bracteate, the Kragehul spearshaft, the Soest (Westfalen) brooch, the Schretzheim sax and the Kirchheim Teck brooch (both Baden-Württemberg). It is questionable whether a 5th c. earthenware pot from Liebenau (photo in Genrich 1981), showing an ornament that resembles a rune-cross, also belongs to this tradition.

6.2. The Gallehus (Jutland) inscription (5th or 6th c.) has runes in double and single lines. The Wijnaldum A antler piece (no date) contains single and double runes. Together with Britsum (see above), it has often been compared to the Lindholm bonepiece and the Kragehul spearshaft, that both contain double- or triple-lined runes. The Bergakker inscription has single runes⁴⁸ and four double **s** runes and a single-barred **h**. The double **s** in Bergakker has a parallel in bracteate Svarteborg-M (4th c.), reading **sigaduz**. Here, the double **s** at the beginning is usually transliterated as **ss**, but now we can be fairly certain that the double form is only a variety, and should be transliterated as one single **s**.

Double-lined runes may have arisen from the technique of inlaying runes with silverthread or niello, such as can be gathered from the now empty impressions of once inlaid runes of the Steindorf, the Wurmlingen and the Schretzheim saxes and the Dahmsdorf, Kowel and Rozwadów spearheads. The outlines are still visible, but the silver inlay is gone. These contours may have been the source of inspiration for the creation of double-lined runes and thus go back to a technique used by (weapon)smiths.

6.3. Mirror-runeforms are e.g. known of: **a**, **æ**, **w**, **þ**, **d**, **e**, **p**, **m**. The double-barred **h** might be considered a mirror-rune, but it is equally possible to regard it as a double form. Mirror-runes may be fossils from the boustrophedon way of writing (which does not apply for the **h** rune). Eye-openers were the famous mirror-runes representing **w** and **þ** on the lanceheads found in Illerup (Jutland) and Vimose (Funen), dated *circa* 200 AD⁴⁹. At any rate the Illerup II and III inscriptions (**wagnijo** and **nþijo tawide**) must belong to the same runographers' 'school'. The Spong Hill urns (East Anglia, 5th or 6th century) have stamped mirror-runes (discovered by Pieper 1987). The Boarley brooch has a mirror-rune **æ**. A fair number of bracteates (2nd half 5th - beginning of the 6th centuries) bear ornamental and mirror-runes.

Westeremden B has mirror-runes for **b**, **d**, and **p**, which may be compared to the bracteate Fünen (I)-C, which has mirror-runes for **a** and **e**. Detecting the value of mirror-runes often depends on the context of those runes in the rest of the text.

The fact that double runes, mirror-runes and ornamental runes occur relatively often in Denmark, North Germany, The Netherlands and England may point to a North-Sea runic tradition (cf. also Barnes 1984:67). If ornamental runeforms and rune-crosses are also taken into account, 'West Germanic' runic tradition might be a suitable term.

If mirror-runes are characteristic of the West Germanic runic tradition, one must assume that the 'lantern-shaped' runes \uparrow in Szabadbattyán and Leţcani are no mirror-runes, but instead denote the sequence (i)ng in **marings** and **rango**.

⁴⁸ The deviating rune representing **e** in Bergakker is neither a double rune nor a mirror-rune. It is a runic variety that has become known only recently (Bosman/Looijenga 1996). This peculiar **e** rune may have a parallel on a brooch with the inscription **leub**, found at Engers (Rhineland), dated 6th c.

⁴⁹ At first the runes were not recognised as mirror-runes, but thought to represent single rune forms.

7. The influence of Latin

A direct influence of the Latin or the Roman alphabet on runic writing in the initial period is hard to establish. Attestations are scarce and sometimes arbitrary. From the 5th c. onwards the rune **u** is regularly used instead of **w**, which may be due to Latin influence. Seebold (1991:-462) sees the loss of the **w** rune as a result of the loss of initial *w* before back vowels in Proto-Norse, as is shown by the rune name **wunjō > unja*. This is supposed to have happened before the bracteate period, i.e. before the end of the 5th c. The **w** rune, however, does occur in bracteate legends and it was further retained in Frisia, England and on the Continent.

Among the earliest group of inscriptions (200-650) Latin-influenced words seem to appear in Denmark, the Betuwe, Germany and England, e.g. **asula** (Vimose bronze buckle, 3rd c., Overhornbæk III-C, 5th c.), **ksamella** (Fallward footstool, 5th c.), perhaps **kesjam:logens** on the Bergakker scabbard mount (5th c.), **sigila** (München-Aubing, 6th c.) and **sigilæ** (Harford Farm, 7th c.). In some texts of the bracteates Latin words and personal names may be hidden, e.g. the emperor's name *Aurelius Carus* in **aeraalius horaz** on bracteate Fünen-C I (see Bracteates nr. 11). In the Early English Corpus, I have included two instances of the influence of a partly Latinized society on runes ([**dæ**]us **mæus** on the 7th c. Whitby comb, and the Saints' and apostles' names on St. Cuthbert's coffin). In Continental runic writing, too, some Latin influence might be detected; for instance in Kirchheim Teck (6th c.) **badagihiali d[o]mi[n]u[s]**. This influence is exclusively due to the introduction of Christianity and can be noticed from the 7th c. onwards.

A quite different aspect of Latinity can be observed in the fact that in England runes were used in manuscripts, whilst epigraphic rune-carving was continued, too, which is the opposite of the situation in Germany, where an epigraphic use of runes is not known to have been adopted by the Latin writing clergy. Because of the many early medieval manuscripts containing (Anglo-Saxon) runerows and mnemonical rune-poems such as the *Abecedarium Nordmannicum*, individual signatures, and texts, which are sometimes carved in the parchment with a stylus, runic writing as such appears to have been preserved in Germany. In one or two cases a runic *Vorlage* seems to trickle through Old German vernacular texts (the enigmatic *duoder* in the Merseburg charm must probably be read: *muoder*; the runic **d** and **m** bearing great resemblance (Hofstra, personal communication).

8. Syntaxis and division marks.

In a few cases some interesting observations can be made as to the relation of syntaxis (if deliberately meant as such by the old runographers) and division marks. Sometimes the verb and the object are written together, in: **boso:wraitruna** (Freilaubersheim), **lu-da:gibœtæsigilæ** (Harford Farm) and **blipgu[n]þ:uraitruna** (Neudingen Baar II). A variation is **da?ina:golda** (Freilaubersheim), **hagiradaz:tawide** (Garbølle) and **feha:writ** (Weingarten I). In **alagu[n]þleuba:dedun** (Schretzheim I) we find two names of the subject written together. In all these cases the subject is separated from the verb form by division marks. The 1 sg. pres. ind. 'I give' and object *auja* are separated in **gibu:auja** (Raum Køge-C). Furthermore there are instances of subject and verb written together as one word; in Raum Køge **hariuhahaitika** and Nydam I **wighusikijaz**. In Aquincum we find subject and verb written together, separated from the object by marks **xlaig:k(i)ngia**. In Charnay we find a

verb, object and subject, all separated by division marks, **uþf[i]nþai:id dan:liano**. The same division can be noticed in Gallehus **ekhlewagastiz:holtijaz:horna:tawido** and in Bergakker **halepewas:ann:kesjam:logens:**.

Finally we find texts consisting of names, separated by marks, such as **kolo: agilabrup** (Griesheim) and **ida:bigina:hahwar:** (Weimar I) and Neudingen Baar: **lbi:imuba:hama-le:blipgu[n]þ:uraitruna**. In a few cases we have an ‘I, so-and-so’ formula, written together, **ekhlewagastiz** (Gallehus), **ekunwodz** (Gårdlösa), **eku[n]mædit** (Rasquert). Kragehul and Lindholm have strikingly similar texts **ekerilazasugisalasmuhahaite** and **ekerilazsawilag-azhateka**. The runic legend of Chessel Down II may be transliterated **æko:lori** *Æko -loss*, containing a name and an (indirect) object.

9. About the significance of runeforms

In my opinion, the compiling and cataloguing of all different runeforms in order to establish a presumed chronology, is deceptive. Any new find may alter a chronology. Notwithstanding this relatively value, I have made a list of so-called ‘diagnostic’ runes for reasons of convenience. There is still some sense in collecting all different forms of individual runes, since it may come in handy as a checklist when new inscriptions are found, if these show forms that at first sight look a bit out of the way. It also appears that in some cases the value of a rune can be identified by comparing its form to other occurrences in identified words. Any statements about a typological chronology of runeforms should only be made tentatively, because far-reaching conclusions might easily lead the investigator astray.

Runes on bracteates deserve a special, separate, study, since many runic forms on bracteates appear to be deformed and to have a deviating design. This is probably due to way they were manufactured, but, on the other hand, bracteates may show current runic varieties.

10. Diagnostic runeforms: k, j/g, s, h, l, e.

10.1. The forms are listed independent of their direction of writing. No reference has been made to hooked or rounded forms either. Rounded forms occur for instance with **o** runes: in Køng, Udby, Harford Farm, Illerup II and IV, Vimose IV. And also with **j** runes, e.g. in Skodborghus-B, Vadstena-C, Illerup II and IV (see above), Vimose III. A rounded **k** in the form of a C (!) is found in Vimose II.

k appears in 6 forms: roof \wedge , hook $<$, staff + twig upwards \Uparrow , staff + twig downwards \Downarrow , staff + hook below \wedge , staff + hook above \Uparrow .

j/g appears in 5 forms: bipartite, hooks vertical \sim , bipartite, hooks horizontal \diamond , bipartite closed \mathfrak{h} , three-strokes \mathfrak{h} , Sternrune \mathfrak{k} .

s appears in 4 forms: zig-zaglines of three strokes \mathfrak{h} , zig-zag of four strokes \mathfrak{z} , zigzag of five strokes or more \mathfrak{s} , staff + upper twig \Uparrow .

h appears in 2 forms: one bar \mathfrak{H} , double bar \mathfrak{H} .

l appears in six forms: staff + twig downwards from the top \lrcorner and \lrcorner , staff + twig from the middle downwards \lrcorner , staff + twig upwards \Uparrow and \Uparrow , staff + twig downwards \lrcorner

e appears in 3 forms: two staves + straight bar \sqcap , two staves + hooked bar \sqcap , a hooked bar and two slanting staves \sphericalangle .

k [^] : München-Aubing, Neudingen-Baar I, Pforzen, Watchfield, Raum Køge-C, Börringe-C, Dischingen.

< : Gallehus, Fallward, Vimose II, Gårdlösa, Nydam I, Nydam II, Bergakker, Aquincum, Charnay, Balingen, Freilaubersheim, Loveden Hill, Grumpan-C, Hammenhög-C, Lyng Gyde-C, Maglemose (II)-C, Seeland (I)-C, Tjurkö (I)-C, Vadstena-C, Års (II)-C, Åsum-C, Dänemark (I)?-C, Halsskov Overdrev-C, Sønder Rind-B, Raum Sønderby-C, Heilbronn-Böckingen, 'Kent'.

┘ : Nordendorf II, Hailfingen, Griesheim.

┘ : Toornwerd, Oostum, Hamwic, Whitby, St. Cuthbert, Westeremden B.

λ : Kragehul I, Lindholm, **skanomodu**, Hantum, Chessel Down I and II, Skrydstrup-B, UFO-B/Schonen (I)-B.

Υ : Björketorp, Stentofthen.

j/g [~] : Dahmsdorf, Thorsberg I, Nøvling, Vimose IV, Vimose III, Vimose II, Vimose V, Vimose I, Illerup II, Illerup IV, Nydam I, Grumpan-C, Stentofthen.

ϣ : Gallehus, Øvre Stabu.

⚡ : Bergakker, Beuchte, Darum (V)-C, Skodborghus-B, Vadstena-C.

⚡ : Kragehul I, Charnay, Oettingen.

⚡ : Westeremden A, Westeremden B, Trossingen II, Eichstetten, Hohenstedt.

A in Björketorp, Gummarp and Stentofthen has been rendered by ⚡ whereas **A** in Istaby has been rendered by a three-stroked zigzag form \wr . Both types of runes that are transliterated **A** are linguistically and graphically related to the older digraph or bipartite form of **jāra j*.

s [┘] : Gallehus, Lindholm, Björketorp, Fallward, Nydam I, Charnay, Weimar III, Beuchte, Bergakker, Schretzheim I, Watchfield, Steindorf, Pforzen, Loveden Hill, Westeremden A, Freilaubersheim, Chessel Down I, Whitby II, Overhornbæk (III)-C, Raum Køge-C, Lindkær-C, Halsskov Overdrev-C, Svarteborg-M, Vadstena-C, Stentofthen, Gummarp, Björketorp, Bezenye II.

⋈ : Kragehul I, **skanomodu**, Leţcani, Nydam I, Thorsberg II, Næsbjerg, Schretzheim I I, Szabadbáttyan, Trossingen II, München-Aubing I, Ash Gilton, Boarley, Arlon, Næsbjerg, Illerup I, Bezenye II, Weimar II.

⋈ : Kragehul I, Møllegårdsmarken, Vimose III, Harford Farm, Vimose IV, Nieder stotzingen, Himlingøje II, Schretzheim I and II.

┘ : Westeremden B, Britsum?, Chessel Down II, **desaiona**, St. Cuthbert.

h [┘] : Nydam I, Garbølle, Leţcani, Vimose IV, Vimose V, Himlingøje I, Himlingøje II, Thorsberg II, Vimose II, Illerup VI, Møllegårdsmarken, Loveden Hill, Caistor-by-Norwich, Watchfield, Wakerley, Cleatham, Pietroassa, Wijnaldum B, Bergakker, Peigen, Stentofthen, Björketorp, Gummarp, Istaby.

𐌺 : St. Cuthbert, Whitby, Weimar I, Weimar II, Weimar III, Weimar IV, Wurmelingen, Kirchheim Teck, Pforzen, Neudingen-Baar II, Weingarten I, Charnay, Harlingen, Hantum, Westeremden A, Westeremden B, Trossingen II.

h 𐌺 Oostum, b 𐌺 Oostum, a 𐌺 Fallward.

l general, common forms: 𐌺 𐌺, exceptions see below.

𐌺 𐌺 : Gurfiles (?) -C, Hesselagergårds Skov-C, Fünen (I)-C, Maglemose (III)-C, Overhornbæk (III)-C, Raum Trollhättan-A, Skonager (III)- C.

𐌺 𐌺 : Hammenhög-C, Lynge Gyde-C, Maglemose (II)-C, Seeland (I)-C, Chessel Down II.

𐌺 : Griesheim, Charnay.

e 𐌺 : Strårup, Westeremden A, Ferwerd, Hoogeteintum, Illerup II, Illerup III, Thorsberg I, Garbølle. Leţcani has a mixed form (see page 94).

𐌺 : Overhornbæk (III)-C, Lindkær-C, Fünen (I)-C, Gallehus, Kragehul II, Kragehul I, Åsum-C, Allesø-B, Lindholm, Björketorp, Eskatorp-F, Grumpan-C, Halsskov Overdrev-C, Hesselagergårds Skov-C, Raum Sønderby-C, Tirup Heide-C, Tjurkö (I)-C, Undley-A, Vadstena-C, Britsum, sceattas, Rasquert, Arum, Westeremden B, Amay, Oostum, Schweindorf, Charnay?, Osthofen, Freilaubersheim, München-Aubing I, Fallward, Schretzheim II, Donzdorf, Weingarten I, Schwangau, Neudingen Baar II, Nordendorf II, Nordendorf I, Schretzheim II, Neudingen Baar I, Niederstotzingen?, Cleatham, Whitby I, West Heslerton, Chessel Down I, Whitby II, Vimose IV, Björketorp, Stentofen, Istaby, Gummarp.

𐌺 Bergakker, Engers.

10.2. I also checked the form that may be either **r** or **u**: 𐌺, found in: Nebenstedt (I)-B, Fünen (I)-C, Grumpan-C, Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F, Dahmsdorf, Britsum, Bernsterburen, Balingen, Charnay, Osthofen, Aquincum, altogether in twelve inscriptions. In legible inscriptions this rune form mostly indicates **r**. Therefore, the reading **horaz** instead of **houaz** in the Fünen-I bracteate should be preferred.

It appears that the **e** with a straight bar and the rounded runeforms never occur in the Continental Corpus, but only in Denmark and around the North Sea.

11. The yew rune.

11.1. The question of the original sound value of the yew rune: 𐌿 is a most interesting one, and the problem has been treated by many scholars, although without finding a definite answer. According to Odenstedt (1990) there are no examples of 𐌿 in the oldest Scandinavian and Gothic inscriptions (175-400). After 400 AD, instances are found in several *fuþark* inscriptions, such as are carved on the Kylvær stone and the Breza column, according to Odenstedt. But both cannot be dated accurately. There are instances of 𐌿 on several bracteates, which are dated to the late 5th c. and the early 6th c. A well-known inscription is bracteate Nebenstedt (I)-B (Niedersachsen), reading: **gġiaugiz uīu rnz**, showing two instances of the yew rune, both times transliterated **ī**. The legend is: *gġiaugiz wī(h)ju rīmōz* which is

interpreted as: 'Gliaugiz. I consecrate (the) runes'. The sound value represented by **ī** is uncertain. In *Gliaugiz* it may represent something like *-ī-*. **uiū** may reflect *wī(h)ju*, 3 sg. pres. ind. of the Gmc infinitive **wīhjan*, which may or may not have been pronounced with a velar fricative in the middle. I presume it may have been *-ī-*.

11.2. In at least two instances the yew rune is part of the runic sequence **ai**. Both inscriptions are from a rather early date. One is found in England, but probably originates from Scandinavia; the other is found in southern Bavaria (Pforzen).

The first is an astragalus from Caistor-by-Norwich, East Anglia, dated circa 425 - 475 (Hines 1990^b:442); the runes read **raihan** 'roedeer', OE *rāha*. The astragalus was a roedeer's bone. This inscription may well be our oldest attestation of the yew rune in an interpretable text. The yew rune has probably been used here only as a variety of the **i** rune, since OE *ā* < Gmc **ai* (see Chapter VIII, nr. 12). Another Anglo-Saxon instance of the yew rune, transliterated **ī** is in the inscription **sīpæbæd** on the Loveden Hill urn, dated 5th or 6th c. (see Chapter VIII, nr. 7). Note that also in this inscription, the yew rune probably has been used as a variety of the **i** rune.

The second attestation of the sequence **ai** is on a buckle, found in 1991 near Pforzen in Bavaria, and dated to the second half of the 6th c. The inscription is transliterated **aigil andi ailrun l tahu gasokun**. Clearly two people, Aigil and Ailrun quarelled about something, which might be **l**. The names of the two persons, a man and a woman, are well-known, they appear in the ON *Vǫlundr* saga as Egill and Qlrun.

Another attestation from Germany (Freilaubersheim, 3rd th. 6th c.) shows the yew rune also as a variety of the **i** rune in **da?ina**. Uncertain, but possible, is an instance of **ǃ** on a square fitting with rivets, dated 3rd third 6th c., from Heilbronn-Böckingen. The initial rune has been perforated by the rivets, but I conjecture **ǃ** may have been carved, since some remains of the sidetwigs can be seen. I read **ik arwi** 'I, Arwi'.

A sixth instance of the yew rune is found on the Charnay fibula (2nd th. 6th c.), which has a nearly complete *fupark* containing a yew rune, and furthermore the legend: **upfnpai iddan liano ïia**. This part **ïia** has not been explained.

11.3. Apart from denoting a vowel, the yew rune could also denote a consonant, and it was used as such exclusively by Anglo-Saxon runewriters. The oldest known inscription that shows the yew rune denoting a consonant, (transliterated as **3** to avoid confusion with **ī** and **h**) is Ruthwell Cross, in the word **alme3ttig** 'almighty'. The inscription is dated 700-750 AD. Other instances are **eate3nne** 'Eategn' in Thornhill, and **toro3tredæ** in Great Urswick, North Lancashire, dated 750-850. The yew rune represents [ç] in all cases. It is interesting that [ç] in **alme3ttig** is rendered by the yew rune. The same inscription also contains a word **hlafard**, using the rune **h** to represent [ɣ]. It is remarkable how scrupulously the runographer was in his orthography.

Finally, the Brandon pin from the 9th c. should be mentioned. It exhibits **g, h, j, and ī (3)** in a *fuporc*-quotation: **fuporcghwnijipxs**. The **g** is rendered by the *Sternrune*: **ǃ**, the **j** has its so-called 'epigraphical form' **ϕ** (known from manuscripts only) and the **s** has the so-called 'bookhand' **ʃ** form. This would point to ecclesiastical influences (cf. Parsons 1994^a). The **ǃ** is in its usual place in the *fuporc*. Its sound value cannot be deduced from this inscription.

11.4. The Pforzen legend **aīlrun** presents a baffling situation and severely troubles a solution. It appears that we run into etymological problems if we want to connect *Aīlrun* with the later -NHG *Alraun* ‘mandrake’, although *Alraun* may very well be the (linguistic) counterpart of the ON *Qlrún*, partner of Egill (**aigil** in the Pforzen inscription). Her name literally means ‘alerune’⁵⁰. One should expect **Alurūn* as the forerunner of both *Alraun* and *Qlrún*, but this is simply not what was carved in the Pforzen inscription. I refer to Chapter VII, nr. 34, for further discussion of this inscription. I suggest it is either a scribal error, or **aī** denotes a sound that cannot be reconstructed (yet).

11.5. In my opinion the problem is connected with both the linguistic value and the graphic representation of the yew rune. It is commonly taken to represent a vowel, although Moltke (1985:64) postulates that it originally stood for [ç]. I transliterate it as **ī**, Antonsen prefers the transliteration **æ**, representing $\bar{a} < \text{Gmc } \bar{e}^{\prime}$, Krause transliterates **ī**, Arntz & Zeiss **é**, to mention just a few instances. Analysing the sparsely recorded runic texts containing the yew rune, I am inclined to assume that it may have been developed graphically from a bindrune, consisting of **i** and **j**: | and $\text{ᚷ} = \text{ᚷ}^{\downarrow}$ ⁵¹. The pronunciation might have been something like $-\bar{j}$ - or $-j\bar{}$ -. If so, the yew rune may be a later graphic development that was not yet present in the initial runic alphabet.

The two earliest inscriptions, from England (Caistor-by-Norwich) **raīhan**, and the Continent (Nebenstedt) **uīu**, show ᚷ^{\downarrow} probably used to render a sound such as long palatal *jj*: *ij* or *ji*(\bar{i}). I think that the value [ç] is secondary, used only at a rather late date, and in an ecclesiastical context, in Anglo-Saxon England⁵². The name of the rune in OE, *eoh*, represents both sounds, [e] and [ç]. On the other hand, in ON the name was *ýr* < Gmc **īhwaz*, **eihwaz*; the initial sound (cf. the acrophonic principle of the rune names) is that of a front vowel, which is followed by a labiovelar. On the whole it appears that *e* and *i* could and did interchange. But if the yew rune rendered a sound in between [ei] and [i:], which could not be represented by the runes ᚱ **e**, OE *e(o)h*, Gmc **ehwaz*: or | **i**, OE *īs*, ON *ís*, Gmc **īsa-*, it might have been [æ], like Antonsen argued. It is remarkable, though, how similar the rune names of **e** and **ī** are!

Summary: In the oldest attests ᚷ^{\downarrow} should be transliterated **ī** and never **h** or **3**. One may conclude that the yew rune originally represented a vowel, or a combination of one vowel, *i*, and a semivowel *j*. The sequence *-ij-* is known from the oldest runic attestations, e.g. **talijo** and **wagnijo**. The following step might have been to combine **i** and **j** into one rune. Thus, **ī**

⁵⁰ *Qlrún* appears in the Edda as a Swanmaiden or Walkyrie in the *Völundarqviða*. As far as ‘ale-runes’ are concerned, we find information in the Eddaic verse *Sigrdrífumál* 7: *Qlrúnar scaltu kunna, ef þú vill, annars qvæn vélit þic í trygð, ef þú trúir; á horni skal þær rísta oc á handar baki oc merkia á nagli Nauð* “Learn ale runes eke, lest other man’s wife betray thee who trusted in her: on thy beer horn scratch it, and on the back of thy hand, and the Nauth rune on thy nails” (translation Hollander 1964:235).

⁵¹ A bindrune consisting of the **i** rune and some other rune, commonly are *per definitionem* excluded, since in that case all runes with one staff might be considered a bindrune. Only in this case, and in the case of the Sternrune ᚷ one must assume that the development of these runes is based on a combination of **i** and ᚷ and **i** and ᚷ . This agrees both graphically and phonologically.

⁵² This may be connected with the manuscript-runes tradition. The problem is too complex to discuss the peculiarities here.

rendered a glide, \bar{j} , or $j\bar{i}$. A little later perhaps, the \bar{i} appears to have been used to denote just [i] and [i:]. In the cases that \bar{i} denotes the sound [ç], this occurs before nasal and dental. One may describe it as a sound that tends to a velar or palatal unvoiced j -like sound.

Both graphically and phonologically, it appears that \bar{i} combined the sounds j and $i(\bar{i})$.

12. The fate of the j rune, Gmc $*j\bar{a}ra$, OE $g\bar{e}r$, $j\bar{a}r$

12.1 The later Scandinavian name of the j rune was $\bar{a}r < *j\bar{a}ra < \text{Gmc } *j\bar{e}ra$; its name in the OE Rune Poem is *ior* or *iar*, rendering a sound which in Frisia and England completely coincides with palatalized g before front vowels. The Scandinavian rune name $\bar{a}r$ is cognate with *iar*, both being derived from Gmc $*j\bar{e}ra$ (Derolez 1987; Parsons 1994^a:200ff.). The meaning of $*j\bar{a}ra$ was 'harvest, (good) year', OE *gear*, OFris *jēr*, OS *gēr*, *jār*, OHG *jār*, ON *ár*. But the runeforms are rather different; the Scandinavian j shows a development that may have been like this: $\text{𐌵} > \text{𐌶}$; whereas the Anglo-Frisian j is rendered 𐌶 , i.e. it is clearly a bindrune of X g and $|$ i (cf. Derolez 1987:62), which is not surprising, since it is often used to represent the syllable $gi-$, with a palatal realisation of g . One may argue, however, that after palatalization took place, neither the Anglo-Saxons nor Frisians felt a special need for a j rune, since the standard g rune *gyfu* could be used to render the initial palatal sound value. But, of course, they still needed a g rune for rendering the voiced stop [g], for instance. The *iar* rune appears to have been given another function: that of an ornamental rune, also known as *Sternrune*, especially in the name-element $j\bar{i}s(l)-$, such as can be found in Dover **jislheard** and Thornhill III **jilsuip**; in Frisia Westeremden A **adujisl** and **jisuhldu** (cf. Parsons 1994^a:203).

12.2. In later centuries 𐌶 came to stand for a in Scandinavia, usually transliterated **A** (to distinguish it from the nasal \bar{a}). **A** is first attested in the inscriptions of the Blekinge stones, ca. 7th c. There is only one Scandinavian attestation of this rune denoting j : Noleby (Västergötland). All other recorded Scandinavian (including the Danish) *Sternrunen* denote **A** or **h**.

12.3. In England there existed another variety: 𐌶 , denoting palatalised g , attested especially in manuscript runerows and once, epigraphically, in the *fuforc* inscription on the Brandon pin (late 8th, early 9th c., cf. Parsons 1991:8). This inscription shows the *Sternrune* 𐌶 in the place of g , and 𐌶 in the place of j . The name of the latter is $g\bar{e}r$, *gear* and is derived from $*j\bar{e}ra$. Besides, the g in $g\bar{e}r$ clearly shows its function in OE: that of an initial palatalised g (pronounced j) before a front vowel, which is not the case with *iar*, the a being a back vowel and therefore not causing palatalization. In England the rune kept its sound value j , therefore the name was analogically extended to *iar*. The name *iar* or *ior* is known from manuscript runerows, the initial vowel is written in the Latin way: *i*, a solution which would naturally have been chosen by a Latin educated cleric (who was no rune-expert). It might be that *iar/ior* got a place outside the basic *fuforc* and was used on special occasions (Parsons 1994^a:205). If the theory is correct that runes could be used for special occasions, this might tally with the occurrence of 'ornamental runes' in some Frisian inscriptions, such as triple-barred **h** and triple-barred **b** on the Toornwerd comb and **a** with three sidetwigs on the Fallward footstool (North Germany).

In Hickeys' edition of the OE rune poem⁵³ the *iar* rune is on place 28. The meaning of its name is described thus:

*(iar, ior) byþ eafix, and ðeah a bruceþ
fodres on foldan, hafap fægerne eard,
wætre beworpen, þær he wynnnum leofap*

"*Iar, ior* is a riverfish, and it always
takes its food on land; it has a pleasant home
surrounded by water, where it lives happily"

The text of the rune poem can be taken as an educated riddle. "*Iar, ior* is usually interpreted as 'eel' or 'newt'" (Halsall, 1981:157). Obviously the 'riverfish' was thought to represent some amphibious creature. Sorell (1990:111, note 35) speaks of "a late, non-epigraphic⁵⁴ rune, and in a learned context an exotic referent such as 'hippopotamus', would not be out of place". The meaning 'hippopotamus, Nilehorse', may be right, since the rune name *ior* seems to denote 'horse', cf. the Scandinavian rune name **ehwaz* > *jór* 'horse'. A horse living in a river, like a 'riverfish' and above all in 'happy surroundings' points to Arabia. Thus, a meaning 'hippopotamus' cannot be excluded, although it seems farfetched for a rune name. Remarkably, the rune has two names, *iar* and *ior*. In my opinion, the 'riverfish' must be a boat, a sort of barge that takes on goods on land ('food') and which, of course, quite suitably has a 'dwelling place surrounded by water'.

I presume there existed a kind of ship that was called a *ior* or *iar*. It turns out that quite a few ship-kennings existed in ON that contained the word *jór* 'horse'; actually their number amounts to 49% of the basic words in the ship-kennings (Simek 1982:246). Simek has listed several ship-kennings containing *jór*, as for instance: *jór Glamma, jór hlyra, jór ífu, jór ísheims, jór landabands* etc. (Simek 1982:225f.). Therefore, it seems more than likely that the rune-name *ior* 'horse = (river)fish' was used symbolically to denote a ship. It is curious that *ior* has an alternative: *iar*. The Anglo-Saxons may have known that their *iar* rune had been given the name *ár* in Scandinavia, a homonym with OE *ār* 'oar, rudder'⁵⁵. It may have been used as *pars pro toto* for the whole ship.

⁵³ Rendered in J.M. Kemble: *Anglo-Saxon Runes*, an essay that was first published in the journal 'Archaeologia' in 1840.

⁵⁴ This is obviously a mistake, as the *Sternrune* appears fairly often appears in epigraphic rune inscriptions and not specifically 'late'. Anglo-Frisian instances are Westeremden A & B, Gandersheim, Dover, Brandon. In Scandinavia the rune is a common phenomenon. On the Continent the *Sternrune* occurs thrice: in Trossingen, Hohenstedt and Eichstetten, see Continental Corpus.

⁵⁵ ON *ár, ór* f. 'oar, rudder' < Gmc. **airō* = OE *ár* 'oar, rudder'. A mix-up is not unlikely, since ON *ár* n. means 'year, fertility' < Gmc. **jēra* = OE *gear*, OFris *jēr*.

CATALOGUE

V. Early Danish and South-East European Inscriptions from ca. 150-650 AD

1. Introduction.

Det var engang et Europa, hvor tre slags samfund indgik et partnerskab: I syd skabtes et imperium, som forfaldt; i nord forvandlades imperiets gaver simple samfund til kongedømmer; og til slut opstod en sammenhæng mellem magt og jordejerskab, fra hvilken fremtiden skulle rejse sig (Klavs Randsborg 1988:9).

This chapter deals with the greater part of the oldest known runic inscriptions, largely found on Danish territory (comprising present Denmark, Skåne and Blekinge) and dating from the first centuries of our era. The word 'Danish' is merely used here as a geographical term; a coherent Danish state did not yet exist in the early centuries AD.

The oldest known runic attestations were not only found in Denmark; one of the oldest items from outside Denmark is the Norwegian ØVRE STABU spearhead of the Vennolum-type (see Chapter III, 4 and further), dated to the second half of the second century. The runes read **raunijaz** (nsm. *ja*-stem 'tester'). The spearhead was found in a cremation grave in a barrow. Other gravegifts were a sword with a figure of Victoria on it, and weapons similar to those found in the Vimose bog (Haavaldsen 1991:23,45). The runes are carved in tremolo-style. Another second century spearhead with a runic legend has been found in a grave on the island of Gotland: MOS, reading **gaois** (no interpretation). Other runic spearheads (found on the Continent) from around 200 AD are discussed in Chapter II, 7.

Since the provenance of the Thorsberg finds (*circa* 200 AD) appears to be the region between the lower Elbe and Rhine, it seemed more appropriate to me to incorporate these items in the Continental Corpus (see there, nrs. 42, 43).

From South-East Europe some runic objects from the third, fourth and fifth centuries have been recorded, which can be connected with Gothic tribes that settled in the coastal area of the Black Sea at the beginning of the third century AD. I have listed three possibly 'Gothic' inscriptions as a supplement to this chapter. The fourth may be the lancehead from KOWEL, with the legend **tilarids**. Because of its nominative ending -s it is considered Gothic. I have not been able to inspect this item. For elaborate information about the type of spearhead I refer to Hachmann (1993:373ff.), furtheron see Krause (1966:77ff.) who interpreted either "Hinreiter" or "Zielrat". Antonsen (1975:74) interpreted **tilarids** as "Goal-pursuer".

The fact that few runic objects have come to light in South-East Europe may be attributed to several circumstances, such as grave-robbery on a large scale and corrosion of the soil. Runic knowledge among the Goths, if there was any, was most likely tied to Scandinavia, because the Goths originated from there, and because there were continuous contacts between Denmark and the Black Sea region in which the Goths had settled. Besides, the use of the single-barred **h** may point to the Scandinavian runic tradition rather than to the Continental, although the 'Gothic' attestations precede the inscriptions that exhibit double-barred **h**.

It appears to be characteristic of one part of the early 'Danish' inscriptions to be found on objects that were deposited in lakes and bogs, which eventually turned into the present-day peat-layer. The objects can be associated with a warrior class. Another category of runic objects has been found in the graves of rich women. Some precious objects were stray finds,

perhaps belonging to former hoards. Since these ways of depositing are typical of the Danish runic objects, I regard it as useful to list them according to their find circumstances: bog/peat finds, gravefinds, stray finds; all in alphabetical order. Exceptions in more than one way are the Blekinge stones.

Both in runological and historical terms, the runic objects found in Danish regions belong to the oldest recorded runological items; they have been described and commented on by numerous scholars. Handbooks that still prove their qualities are Jacobsen/Moltke 1941/42, Krause/Jankuhn 1966, Moltke 1985. Most recently, Birkmann 1995 edited a useful survey with elaborate references. Over the past few years many articles on new finds have been published by Marie Stoklund and a number of other scholars. Especially the finds from the Illerup-bog have profoundly stirred the runological world. The inscriptions exhibited mirror-runes, which initially looked unintelligible. Mirror-runes were identified as such by virtue of the **alu** stamps of Spong Hill (England, cf. Pieper 1987). After this eye-opener, the legends of the Illerup finds could be properly interpreted. Other peculiarities are runes made in tremolo-style (e.g. Øvre Stabu, Næsbjerg and Donzdorf [Germany]), which is basically a decoration style for metal objects. Further there are some rune sequences that might have had a magical purpose, a practice that can be found also, and perhaps especially, in bracteate legends.

Several useful and updated articles on the early Danish inscriptions, illustrated with high-quality photographs, have been published by Marie Stoklund (1994, 1995^{a&b}). As regards the backgrounds of the Illerup bog finds, I rely on the exhaustive presentation and description of the archaeological context by Ilkjær (1990, 1993 and 1996^{a&b}). In *Runische Schriftkultur* (ed. Düwel 1994) both Stoklund and Seebold discuss several early runic finds from Denmark; in the same volume, Lena Peterson (1994^b) discusses especially the names. In my survey I shall try to integrate their opinions.

All Illerup finds are at the Museum Moesgård, Højbjerg, near Århus. The Thorsberg and Meldorf finds are in the Museum Gottorf, Schleswig, Schleswig-Holstein. The Vimose, Nydam, Himlingøye, Udby, Værløse, Kragehul, Garbølle, Strårup, Næsbjerg, Køng and Slemminge finds are in the Danish National Museum at Copenhagen. The Gårdlösa brooch and the Istaby stone are at Statens Historiska Museum Stockholm. The Lindholm bone piece is at the Museum Kulturen Lund, the Nøvling brooch is at the Ålborg Museum, North Jutland. The Lețcani spindle whorl is at the Palatul Cultural, Iași, Rumania. The remains of the Pietroassa gold neckring are at the Rumanian National Historical Museum in Bucarest. The Szabadbattyán buckle is at the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum in Budapest. The Stentofte stone is in the church of Sölvesborg, Blekinge, South Sweden and the Björketorp stone is *in situ*, near Ronneby in Blekinge, South Sweden.

Map 4. Findspots of early runic objects in Denmark.



2. CHECKLIST OF EARLY DANISH AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS

PERIOD I, legible and (partly) interpretable inscriptions.

BOG-FINDS CA. 160-350 AD

1. *Illerup* I (Jutland), mount for a shield-handle, bronze. The runes read **swarta**. The last rune: **a** is written horizontally under **swart**.

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PN nsm. *a*-stem, Gmc **swartaz* 'Black One'. *Blacky* seems to me a suitable name for a weaponsmith, but an owner's name is equally possible. Seebold (1994^a:70) takes it as an accusative of the strong form of the adj. 'black'⁵⁶, and he proposes to emend the legend by extending it with a supposed form of the verb 'to protect', thus getting '(protect the) Black One'. According to Seebold, this would be in analogy with *Illerup* III, below, **lagupewa**, which, considering its ending, might be an accusative of a strong masculine noun. However, a nominative (or appellative) is more plausible, see below. Both names **swarta** and **lagupewa** show West Gmc forms, with loss of final *-z (see also Syrett 1994:141). The same seems to apply for **harja**, see below, nr. 12.

2. *Illerup* II (Jutland), mount for a shield-handle, silver, runes run left, **nipijo tawide**.

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At first sight, **nipijo** looks like a female PN, nsf. *jō*-stem, but since weapons are commonly associated with a man's world, *Nipijō* assumingly is a man's name and the text a maker's formula, because of the combination with **tawide** 'did, made'. As regards the name, there are two possibilities: a) it is a West Gmc man's name, *n*-stem < IE *-*ōn*, or *-*ō* (Krause 1971:51; Stoklund 1987:292); b) it is an epithet or nickname of feminine gender. The first option is preferred, because "it combines masculine reference with masculine gender" (Nielsen 1993:91, with a lengthy discussion on the gender of the suffix **-ijo** in **nipijo** and **wagnijo**). *Nip-* may be connected with ON *nidr*, Go. *nipjis* 'relative, member of the clan', or with Gmc **nīpa-* "Kampf, Streit" (Seebold 1994^a:69). I associate the name with the tribe of the Nidenses, who lived in Tacitus' time near the rivers Nida and Main (Germany). The ending **-ijo** appears to be West Gmc, and to occur especially often in man's names in the region of the Ubii (see chapter III, On the Origin of the Runes).

⁵⁶ If so, one would expect a form like **swartana*, therefore I don't consider it likely to have a strong adj. in the accusative here.

tawide 3 sg. pret. ind. *tawidē* 'did, made', cf. Go. inf. *taujan* 'to do, make'. **tawide** is also on *Garbølle*, **tawido** is on *Gallehus*.

3. *Illerup* III (Jutland), mount for a shield-handle, silver, runes run left, **lagupewa**.

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I consider this a masculine PN, consisting of two name-elements, the first: *lagu-* 'sea, water' *u*-stem, cf. ON *lōgr* 'liquidity' m., and OE, OS *lagu* 'sea, water', Gmc **laguz*. An association with ON *lōg*, OE *lagu* 'law', an *a*-stem, must shatter because of the composition vowel *-u-*. The second element is *-pewa*, which at first sight looks like an accusative of Gmc **þegwaz* 'servant', nsm. *wa*-stem. However, an accusative without any other contextual support does not make sense. A nominative or appellative seems more obvious. When compared to *ow-lþupewaz* on the *Thorsberg* chape, it appears that the nominative marker *-z*, common to North Gmc forms, is missing. Therefore I suggest **lagupewa** to be a West Gmc form. Several proposals are made concerning the missing *-z*; Antonsen (1987:24) interpreted the name as West Gmc, Moltke (1985:101) thought the *-z* had just been forgotten to write, Nielsen (1993:86, 93) proposed the possibility of a weak form and Seebold considers it as an accusative form. A fact is, that there was enough room to cut the **z** rune. A West Gmc name form seems obvious, in coherence with *Swarta*, *Nipijo* and *Wagnijo* (see below). **lagupewa** means 'Seaservant', e.g. a sailor. It is most probably the name of the owner of an exceptionally beautiful shield that was found in the Illerup bog and to which the handle belonged. According to Ilkjær (1996^b:485) he was an important commander-in-chief.

4. *Illerup* IV (Jutland), two iron lanceheads; the runes run left, **wagnijo**.

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The legend is stamped on one and incised on the other. The lanceheads are of Illerup Type 15, called "Vennolum" (Ilkjær 1990). Over 300 items of this type are found in the Illerup bog. **wagnijo** is probably a West Gmc man's name in the nominative, *n*-stem, cf. **nipijo** nr. 2. *Wagnijo* may be connected with either ON *vagn* 'waggon', or the tribe's name of the *Vangiones*, cf. the cognomen *Vangio* in CIL VI 31149, c 5, and the Suebian chief *Vangio* (Schönfeld 1965:256f.), and the *cohors Vangionum*, Tacitus, *Annales* xii, 27. Since the name is recorded from three lanceheads (a third was found in the Vimose bog, see below, nr. 8), I regard it as the name of a weaponsmith, who originated from the region south of nowadays Frankfurt am Main (Germany), the area in which the *Vangiones* lived (see map 3). Seebold (1994^a:68) regards **wagnijo** as a weapon-name, denoting a group of weapons, maybe in a religious sense. (About the problems of the nominative sg. of masculine *a*- and *n*-stems, see Syrett 1994:45 and 137ff.).

5. *Illerup* V (Jutland), wooden handle for a fire iron; the runes read **gauþz**.

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The **þ**-rune has a big loop from top to bottom, so that it looks like a Roman D. A similar sign is on the MELDORF brooch. **gaupþz** might denote a PN or epithet, possibly nsm. *a/i*-stem, with the nominative ending *-z* present, but the stem-formant missing, which may indicate an occurrence of syncope or the presence of an unknown root-stem. If **gaupþz** is related to Gmc **gautaz*, it might be connected with ON *gautr* ‘someone who was dedicated to be offered to a god = Odin’ (one of Odin's many names was *Gautr*), or one belonging to the tribe of the *Gautar*, OE *Gēatas*. The *Gautar* lived in the region that nowadays is called Östergötland and Västergötland (Sweden). Schönfeld (1965:103) lists *Gapt* PN (king of the Goths), and explains: *Gapt* = **Gaft* = **Gaut* by interference of Greek writing: *Gavt*. He states that *Gapt* = Go. **Gauts*, ON *Gautr*, OE *Gēat*. Förstemann lists *Gautr* as the mythical ancestor of the tribe of the Goths. Stoklund (1992:256) and Seebold (1994^a:71) connect **gaupþ[a]z** with the ON verb *geyja* (< Gmc **gaujan*) ‘to bark, to mock’ and the ON substantive *gaud* f. ‘barking, mocking’.

6. *Nydam* I (Jutland), wooden axe-handle, found in 1993. Date: ca. 300-350 AD. Runes on both sides; running right is **wagagastiz**, running left is **alu:??hgu sikijaz:aiþalataz**. (See Stoklund 1994^a:104 and 1994^b:4-5 with ref.). Stoklund (1994^a:104) proposes to read thus: **alu:wihgu sikijaz:aiþalataz**.

𐀃𐀄𐀅𐀆𐀇𐀈𐀉𐀊𐀋𐀌𐀍𐀎𐀏𐀐𐀑𐀒𐀓𐀔𐀕𐀖𐀗𐀘𐀙𐀚𐀛𐀜𐀝𐀞𐀟𐀠𐀡𐀢𐀣𐀤𐀥𐀦𐀧𐀨𐀩𐀪𐀫𐀬𐀭𐀮𐀯𐀰𐀱𐀲𐀳𐀴𐀵𐀶𐀷𐀸𐀹𐀺𐀻𐀼𐀽𐀾𐀿𐀰𐀱𐀲𐀳𐀴𐀵𐀶𐀷𐀸𐀹𐀺𐀻𐀼𐀽𐀾𐀿

wagagastiz is probably a PN. The first part, *wāga-*, may be connected with ON *vāgr*, m. ‘wave’, or, in a poetic sense ‘flame’. Second element is *-gastiz*, nsm. *i*-stem, ‘guest’. Since the axe itself (not preserved) might have been made of bog-iron ore, the depiction **wagagastiz** ‘flameguest’ or ‘fireguest’ would be appropriate when taken in connection with the meaning of **sikijaz** ‘coming from a bog’. On the other hand, a ‘waveguest’ and the object, an axe, might point to a means of gaining divine knowledge, which went by consultation of the waves, such as is referred to in Norse and Irish sources. One waded into the sea and thrust the axe at the waves, and some significant sign would happen (Ellis Davidson 1988:151f.).

alu is generally considered a formulaic word with some cultic connotation, or a well-wish (more about **alu** in the chapter on Bracteates).

wihgu strikes as an intertwined verbform, perhaps rendering either of two meanings, a) *wīgu* 1 sg. pres. ind. ‘I fight’, cf. Gmc **wīgan* ‘to fight’; or b) *wīhju* 1 sg. pres. ind. ‘I hallow, consecrate’, cf. Gmc **wīhjan* ‘to hallow’. Both interpretations might agree, for an axe was a weapon and had a sacrificial connotation. **sikijaz** PN, nsm. *ja*-stem; ON *sīk* (Modern Danish *sig*) ‘small bog, swamp’; the suffix **-ijaz** indicates descent: ‘coming from a bog’, cf. *Gallehus holtijaz* ‘coming from (the place) Holt’. **aiþalataz** may be a PN or an epithet, consisting of *aiþa-* ‘oath’, cf. Gmc **aiþaz*, Go *aiþs*, ON *eiðr*; and *-lāta-*, nsm. *a*-stem, ‘sayer’, cf. Gmc **lētan* ‘to let, to allow, to leave behind’, ON *láta* ‘say, declare’. Weapons were used to take one's oath, according to the Eddic *Havamál*. The text may be ‘Flameguest, coming from a bog, **alu**, I, oathsayer, consecrate/fight’. If the reference to the iron axe, made of smelted bog-iron, is correct, this would place this text among a wide-spread type of runic texts, naming the object or the material (see below, *Leṭcani*, nr. 36).

7. *Nydam* II (Jutland), a bronze strap end (“den ene af bronze-rembøjens to spidser”), dated circa 250-320. The rune-inscribed strap end belonged to a rich sword sheath of leather and wood with a gilt-silver scabbard mount and sword-chape (Stoklund, personal commu-

nication). The runes read from right to left, **harkilaz ahti**.

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harkilaz is most probably a PN, nsm. *a*-stem *Harkilaz*. The name might initially have been an *n*-stem, if the first part of the name were *Harki-* (maybe connected with ON *harkr* ‘uprour, tumult’), followed by the diminutive suffix **-ilan-* such as in **frohila** and **niuwila** on the *Darum* (I)-B and (V)-C bracteates (nrs 7 and 8 in this edition). Since we have a strong form *Harkilaz* here, I suggest a case of analogy with strong masculine *a*-stem names, otherwise very popular. The meaning of the name may be something like ‘Little squirt’, a petname probably.

ahti seems to indicate a 3 sg. pret. ind. of **aigan* ‘to have’, but a meaning ‘Harkilaz had (this)’ seems inappropriate. I take it to mean ‘possession’; cf. Seebold (1970:70), who lists **aih-ti-z* f. ‘possession’. A problem is that the name is in the nominative, whereas a genitive would be more suitable. An ownership-expression, though, includes the inscription in a widespread type of texts.

8. *Vimose* I (Funen), iron lancehead of the same type as the Illerup ones; the runes also run left, **wagnijo**.
Cf. nr. 4.

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9. *Vimose* II (Funen), sword-chape, bronze, the runes read **mariha aala makija**. The part **aala** runs from right to left.

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On one side of the chape is **mariha**; when turning the object halfway round, the inscription proceeds on the same side with **aala**. The initial **a** is a *Sturzrunne* (upside-down rune) in my opinion, but most runologists read **i**. On the other side of the object is **makija**. Antonsen's reading (1975:32) **marida** cannot be right, as there is quite clearly an **h** and no **d**. In the sequence **mariha** one might distinguish two parts: **mari ha**. The first part might be a shortened name, either for the sword or the owner: *māri* < **māriz*, nsm. *i*-stem, ‘famous’ cf. **niwajemariz** of the *Thorsberg* chape (Continental Corpus). However, I suggest to interpret **mari** as ‘sea, water’, cf. Gmc **mariz*, ON *marr* ‘lake, sea’, OS, OHG *meri*, OE, OFris *mere* ‘lake, moor’. This would be fitting, since the object was found in a former lake, and was probably part of a deposit of war booty. **ha** may be opt. sg. **ha(bē)* of the verb **habēn* (> ON *hafa* ‘to have, possess’). **aala** adj. cf. the ON prefix *al-* ‘all’. A double *aa* in *aala* is not strange, as we have, also from *Vimose*, **aadagasu** (see below).

makija asm. *ja*-stem *mākija* ‘sword’.

The meaning of the text would be: ‘may the lake have all - sword’. If ‘all’ refers to all weapons that were deposited in the bog, the singular **makija** ‘sword’ could be regarded as *pars pro toto* for all those swords. Thus it would become clear why among so many similar objects, deposited all together, only one has been inscribed.

labelled 'Scandinavian' = South Sweden (Seebold 1994^a:68, 70). He interprets: "die Opfergaben dem geschützten Ort widme ich" and "Hobel. Dem G. Odal Jahr". I am of the opinion that the inscription displays too many runological uncertainties, hence an interpretation seems not possible.

12. Vimose V (Funen), comb, bone, the runes read **harja**

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The comb is dated by Ilkjær (1993:297-299) to ca. 160 AD, which makes it about the oldest known runic inscription, together with the Norwegian spearhead of ØVRE STABU (MELDORF not included, see Continental Corpus, the introduction). The inscription may be a PN or epithet, *harja*, nsm. *ja*-stem, Gmc **harjaz* 'warrior', cf. Go. *harjis*. Seebold (1994^a:71) suggests a connection with 'hair', Proto Norse **hāra*. The comb may be used for combing wool, which was also done by men. Peterson (1994^b:161) lists the name **harja** under the heading "Group IV. Names not met with in later Scandinavian but found in West Gmc, esp. in the Lower Rhine region". She compares **harja** with OFranc *Herio*. However, Schönfeld lists the *Harii* as a tribal name, belonging to the larger tribes' alliance of the *Lugii*, as is mentioned by Tacitus (Germania § 43; see for references Much 1959:378,390). There is one other inscription that is of great interest in this context, i.c. the SKÅÄNG stone from Sweden, with runes reading **harjaz leugaz**, mentioning both *Harii* and *Lugii*, see chapter III 'Origin'. I suggest **harja** to refer to a member of the tribe of the *Harii*.

GRAVEFINDS CA. 200-300 AD

13. Gårdlösa (Skåne), stirrup fibula, silver, the runes read **ekunwodz**

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ek person pron. 1 sg. 'I'. **unwodz** may be a PN or epithet. *wōdz* is according to Antonsen (1975:31) a root consonant stem, cf. Go. *wōps*, adj. 'raging', *unwōdz* may be interpreted as 'not raging'. Was the brooch part of a recompensation? Antonsen interprets: 'I, the calm one'. Seebold (1994^a:63) supposes the inscription might have been made on the occasion of the burial, to prevent the dead woman from "Wiedergängertum". Stoklund (1994^a:99) declares the occurrence of a PN as disputed. But since it follows the person pronoun *ek* it may very well be a name, most likely a man's name, because of the ending *-z*. A parallel is the Rasquert (The Netherlands) inscription, which reads **ek u[n]mædit oka** 'I, Oka, not (made) mad'.

14. Himlingøje I (Sealand), rosette fibula, silver, dated 2nd half 3rd c. (Stoklund 1995^b:318). The runes read **widuhudaz**

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This may be a masculine PN, consisting of *widu-*, *u*-stem 'wood', and *-hu(n)daz* nsm. *a*-stem 'hound'. Sign for nasal is missing before homorganic consonant. a common practice in runic

script. *widuhu(n)daz* ‘woodhound’ = wolf. Stoklund warns that some runes preceding **w** may be missing, and that the nature of a name ‘Woodhound’ is disputed. Makaev (1996:63) points to the fact that names with a second element *-hundaz* are attested in OHG sources, but completely unknown in Scandinavia.

15. *Himlingøje* II (Sealand), bow fibula, silver, the runes read **hariso**

HRIRIΣ

This is probably a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, or nsf. *ōn*-stem, *Harisō* (cf. Antonsen 1975:35 and Peterson 1994^b:157f.). Stoklund (1994:98) points to the fact that it might be a masculine name, in concordance with **wagnijo** and **nipijo** on the *Vimose* and *Illerup* objects, and the recorded name *Flavius Hariso* in a Venetic funerary inscription (cf. Peterson 1994^b:157f., who discusses the name at great length and supposes that it might be a continental import). Also Seebold (1994^a:75) considers the name to be masculine. Considering the fact, that Himlingøje was an exceptionally rich graveyard, I wonder whether *hārisō* may be a compound name of a distinguished woman. The name may consist of *hār-*, Gmc **haira-*, ‘grey, lofty, distinguished’, and *-isō*, showing the well-known *-s-* suffix in personal names, cf. *Beuchte* (German Corpus) *Burisō*, which is considered to be a PN nsf. *ōn*-stem. On the other hand, there is the Frankish masculine PN *Hrōdso*, Gmc **Hrōpiso* with an *s*-suffix as *Koseform*, which was “besonders beliebt im Westfränkischen”, according to Kaufmann (1965:246). The suffix was not only common in West Franconian, but in all West Gmc languages (cf. also Peterson 1994^b:158). Thus, names ending in *-iso* (including *Buriso* and *Hariso*) may be West Gmc men's names.

As to *Hariso*, one may wonder, whether this name is connected too with the tribal name of the *Harii*, as appears to be the case with the *Vimose* comb, nr. 12.

16. *Nøvling* (Jutland), rosette fibula, silver, the runes read **bidawarijaztalgdai**

BIMPPRISFYTTXIMFI

bidawarijaz is probably a PN, consisting of *bīda-* ‘to long for, to wish’, cf. ON *bíða*, Go *beidan*, and *-warijaz* nsm. *ja*-stem, ‘protector’. **talgdai** 3 sg. pret. ind. ‘carved’. The ending **-ai** has been interpreted as a misspelling or a reverse spelling for *-ē* (Krause 1971:158, Antonsen 1975:5); this is rejected by Stoklund (1991:96 and 1994^a:98). Seebold (1994^a:62) regards the ending as an **a** rune followed by an ending sign |. As regards a discussion on the pro's and contra's of the runewriters' spelling skills, see Syrett (1994:252ff.). The spelling error became possible after the shift Gmc **ai* > *ē*. Since there are no word dividing signs, perhaps **talgida i**: ‘carved in’ might be read, in which case we have a parallel to the verbform in *Udby* (below).

17. *Udby* (Sealand), rosette fibula, silver, the runes read **talgida : lamo**

TTXIMFI:ΣMII

lamo is written from right to left, whereas **talgida** has been written from left to right. **lamo**

may be a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, or nsf. *ōn*-stem *Lamō*: 'Lame One'. In case one prefers the female name, one must assume that she made the inscription, which points to the existence of female rune-writers. If *Lamo* is a man's name, it would reflect a West Gmc form, cf. **wagnijo**, **hariso** and **nibijo** (see also Syrett 1994:141ff.).

talgida 3 sg. pret. ind. 'carved', cf. ON *telgja* 'to carve, to cut' (cf. Stoklund 1991:95-99). Cf. **talijo** 'plane' *Vimose* IV, nr. 12, and **talgidai** Nøvling, nr. 16. The ending *-da* of the verbform **talgida** might reflect an East Gmc dialect (Stoklund 1994^a:107). Grønvik (1994:46f.) postulates that **talgida** cannot be a verb form, because of the ending **-da**. He argues that it must be a substantive, nsm. *n*-stem 'carver'. This sounds reasonable enough, but since we may have **talgida i** in *Nøvling* (see above) I would prefer the verb form. The inscription would thus qualify as a common form of a maker's formula. The co-occurrence of a West Gmc name and an East Gmc verbform seems surprising.

18. *Værløse* (Sealand), rosette fibula, silver, the runes read **alugod**

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The presence of **alu** suggests that the text may be some well-wish. **alu** is a formulaic word, which occurs relatively often on bracteates (see above, nr. 6). As to the part **god**, this may be an adj. meaning 'good', cf. ON *góðr*. **gōð-* often appears as a name-element in both male and female names, cf. **godagas** in VALSFJORD, but is uncommon as second element in a name (Peterson 1994^b:145 and 163). One may think of ON *god* < Gmc **gudā* 'god'. Seebold interprets: 'offering with beer', "Festopfer" (1994^a:62f.), which, perhaps, points to the pouring of a libation, because of the derivation of ON *god* < IE **ǵheu-* 'to pour' (cf. Kluge/Seebold 1989:273 "Gott", "Ursprünglich also 'Gießen, Opferung', dann übertragen auf den Gott, zu dessen Ehren das Opfer stattfindet"). Stoklund (1994^a:98) mentions that it is possibly an "Abschreibefehler" for the woman's name *Alugodo*. Antonsen (1975:75f.) prefers a West Gmc man's name without nominative ending. Considering the striking amount of possible West Gmc men's names among the runic attestations found in Denmark, I would also opt for *Alugod* being a West Gmc man's name.

BOG/PEAT-FINDS CA. 400-550 AD

19. *Garbølle* (Stenmagle, Sealand), yew-wooden box, the runes read **hagiradaz|tawide**:

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The dating is uncertain, according to Stoklund (1994^a:99f.).

hagiradaz is a PN, a compound consisting of *hagi-*, ON *hagr*, adj. 'suitable', and *-rādaz* 'adviser' nsm. *a*-stem, cf. ON *rād* n. 'advice'. **tawide** *tawidē* 3 sg. pret. ind. 'made', cf. inf. Go *taujan* 'to do, make'. **tawide** is also on *Illerup* II, above.

20. *Kragehul* I (Funen), spear-shaft, wood, the runes read **ekerilazasugisalsamuhahaitegagagaginuga** ????? (the runes on the last part are illegible)

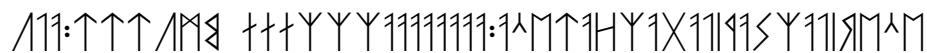
now).



The runic text is very elegantly cut in triple strokes alternating with single strokes. **ek** pers. pron. 1 sg. 'I'. **erilaz**, probably an epithet or a title, nsm. *a*-stem, etymology obscure (see Krause 1971:141; Antonsen 1975:36), although Syrett (1994:170, note 12) sees a possibility to connect **erilaz** as a representative of the tribe of the *Heruli* and to represent a more general job or title. Makaev (1996:36ff.) presents an exhaustive treatment of occurrences of **erilaz** etc. and many references. He also thinks a connection with the *Heruli* possible (1996:39)⁵⁷.

asugisalas, PN, gsm. *a*-stem (see above, nr. 11). It is a compound consisting of *a(n)su-* 'god', and *-g̃salas* 'sprout, shoot, offspring'. **muha** may be either a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, or a substantive, cf. (*ga*)*mūha* 'retainer' (Krause 1971:152). **haite** 1 sg. pres. med. (Antonsen 1975:36): 'I am called', cf. ON *heiti*, inf. *heita*, Go. *haitan*. Instead of **muha** Antonsen reads: **em uha**; *em* = 1 sg. pres. ind. 'I am', *Uha* = PN nsm. *n*-stem 'the highest'. According to Peterson (1994^b:144) "no proof of the existence of a Proto-Scandinavian man's name *Ūha* has come to light". The sequence 'I erilaz of Asugisalak, I am called Muha' is followed by some sort of battle-cry: *gagaga gin(n)u ga* 'many times *ga*'. The runes of **gagaga** are displayed as a row of three rune-crosses; the base is the rune **g**, with sidetwigs attached to its extremities, thus forming bindrunes **ga**, cf. the *Undley* bracteate (Bracteate Corpus) with nearly the same sequence, reproduced in the same fashion: **gægogæ**.

21. *Lindholm* (Skåne), bonepiece with a possible function as amulet. It was said to be found in a lump of peat (Jacobsen & Moltke 1941/42:315). The runes run left and read **ekerilazsa-wilagazhateka:aaaaaaaaazzznnn?bmuttt:alu:**



Runes are cut in triple lines, like on *Kragehul*, above. Both inscriptions start with **ek erilaz**. **sawilagaz** is a PN or epithet, perhaps nsm. *a*-stem, cf. Go. *sauil* 'sun' n. *a*-stem, e.g. the name means 'Sunny One' (Antonsen 1975:37). Krause (1971:155) divides thus: **erilaz sa wilagaz**, nsm. *a*-stem; taking **sa** to be a demonstrative pronoun with deictic function, followed by a PN **wilagaz**. He interprets: 'I, the Runemaster here, am called Cunning'; cf. ON *vél* < **wīlu-* 'cunning' (Krause 1971:108). Also Peterson (1994^b:141) prefers to read the name as *Wīlagaz*. **hateka** = *ha(i)t(e)-eka* with enclitic *-eka* 'I am called'; cf. above, nr. 20 **haite**, inf. *heita* 'to be called'. The sequence **aaaaaaaa** is interpreted as a magical formula; the eight **a** runes would render eight times the **a**-rune's name **ansuz*, e.g. eight gods, ON *átta æsir*. Such a charm is known from Icelandic: *rísti eg þér ása átta, nauðr nú* 'I carve for you eight *æsir*, nine needs', by which probably eight times **a** and nine times **n** are meant. The **a** runes are followed by three **algiz* runes, perhaps symbolizing something that is expressed by its name 'elk'. Then thrice **n**, perhaps symbolizing its name *nauð* 'need', which may have something to do with the so-called 'needs' (*nauðr*) that appear in medieval recipes and charms and in a 14th-century runic inscription from RIBE. The Eddic poem *Sigrdrífomál* 7

⁵⁷ Bracteates *Eskatorp-F* and *Väsby-F* have e[k]erilaz. ETELHEM clasp: **mkmlawrta** (= ek erla wrta), BRATSBERG clasp: **ekerilaz**, VEBLUNGSNES: **ekirilaz**, ROSSELAND: **ekwagigazerilaz**, JÄRSBERG: **ekerilaz**, BY: **ekirilaz**.

is found on the rune stones of BØ and KJØLEVIK (both Rogaland, Norway). **holtjaz** may be a patronymic, nsm. *a*-stem 'son of Holt'; or a locative, 'coming from the place Holt'; **tawido** *tawidō* 1 sg. pret. ind. 'did, made'. **horna** asn. *a*-stem 'the horn' (Antonsen 1995:41). Venne-mann (1989:355-368) conjectures **horna** to be a rare dualform, acc. 'the two horns'.

25. Strårup (Jutland), golden diadem or neckring, the runes read **lepro**

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This is probably a PN, nsf. *n*-stem *leprō* 'Leathery One', perhaps the name of the owner, an old woman? This seems a bit unlikely. It might be West Gmc man's name, nsm. *n*-stem, cf. **wagnijo** and **nipijo**. Another neckring with a runic inscription is Aalen (Continental Corpus, nr. 1), exhibiting the legend **noru**.

3. Illegible and/or uninterpretable inscriptions.

All Illerup, Vimose and Kragehul finds are bog-finds and dated to 200-250. The gravefinds are dated 200-300.

26. Illerup VI (Jutland), circular sword-chape, bronze, surface eroded and damaged (Stoklund 1987:295), **f**-rune reversed, the legend reads **fir?a**.

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The damaged rune, here transliterated ? might be **h**. Schönfeld (1965:88) lists the *Firaesi*, and adds that it is the name of a Scandinavian tribe. In view of the derivations of tribal names that appear in the Danish runic Corpus, this inscription might perhaps point to a member of the otherwise unknown *Firaesi*.

27. Frøslev (Jutland), stray find (?), wooden stick, runes unclear.

28. Illerup VII (Jutland) plane, wood, the runes read **afila???**

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Moltke (1985:89f.) and Stoklund tentatively read *afilaiki* but the reading **iki** is far from certain (Stoklund 1987:286).

29. Illerup VIII (Jutland), hornfitting, bronze, the runes read **fu??z fra**

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30. Kragehul II (Funen), knifeshaft, bone, runes running left, **...uma | bera||....?(a)u**.

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The runes are cut in double strokes. **bera** may be a PN nsm. *n*-stem 'Bear'.

31. Køng (Funen), bronze figure, stray find (?), the runes read **(i)ngo**, or, when taking the initial rune as a mirror-rune, one may read **wo** or **po**.

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The initial runeform occurs also in Letcani ng (below, nr. 35) and Wijnaldum A (i)ng (The Netherlands), and, slightly different, in Slemminge (above, nr. 23). **(i)ngo** might be (part of) a PN.

32. Møllegårdsmarken (Gudme, Funen), iron knife, found in a woman's grave, date *circa* 300 AD. **hth shi(?)o**.

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33. Næsbjerg (Jutland), rosette fibula, found in a woman's grave, silver. It is conjectured, that **warafnis** or **warawnis** may be read, but actually only **?ara?nis** can be perceived with any certainty.

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Runes are cut in tremolo-technique and run from right to left. The upper parts of the runes are rather abraded, therefore any interpretation seems impossible.

34. Vimose VI, sheath-mount, rune-imitation? running left, **awurs?** Stoklund (1995:333, with a photo).

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4. Gothic or South-East European runic finds

35. Letcani (Moldavia, Rumania). Spindle whorl, found in a woman's grave, Dated second half 4th c. Almost all runes are clearly legible. The runes appear to have been added after the firing. The inscription runs from left to right. The conic form of the object allows to distinguish two parts: one inscription of four runes on the top half and one consisting of nine runes on the lower half.

Krause (1969) proposed the following transliteration (1969:156) **idonsufthe :rango:** and interpreted this as *Idōns uft hā(r)*. - *Raŋ(n)ō*, "Idos Gewebe (ist das?) hier. - Rangno".

After personal examination of the inscription in 1994 (Looijenga 1996^b) I established the reading **rango** (or **rawo**) :**adonsufhe**.

Rfƿƿ :†Wƿ†EN†H M

The upper part of the initial rune of the second part of the inscription is damaged. The rune shows a headstaff and one sidetwig to the right †; the other sidetwig of presumably an **a** rune has gone lost.

The Leţcani spindle whorl showing the runes f, h and the anomalous e.



The rune † is mostly transliterated (**i**)ng, here I propose to transliterate **ng**. It may, on the other hand, be taken as a mirror-rune representing **w** (cf. the *Illerup* inscriptions nrs. 3 and 4, with a similar rune for **w**), then the reading **rawo**⁵⁸ is possible.

The last two runes of the lower half had to be pressed close together. An **h** with one bar is followed by **e** or **m**. The runes are connected by a slanting stroke of which it is unclear whether it is a deliberate stroke and part of the inscription, or whether it is just a scratch, a damage. If the stroke should be taken as a third

runic sign, the sequence may be taken for a triple bindrune: rendering **hum**, **hem** or **hee**, **hue**. I consider this not very likely, though, and propose to read **he**. The ultimate rune has an unorthodox form; it is an **e** rune with a horizontal stroke underneath the e's bar, touching the hook, thus rendering something that resembles an **m**:

M

There is definitely no **t** rune in this sequence, as Krause (1969:155) thought and which led him to an interpretation that cannot be held upright. Also Seebold's (1994^a:75f.) reading: ***rapo idon sufnu[h]e**, is not correct; the last part is certainly not **nu[h]e**; neither is there **n** nor **u**, but the **h**, on the contrary, is there.

When taking † to represent **ng**, we read **rango**, *rangō*, Go. nsf. *ōn*-stem. This may be a PN, denoting the female owner of the spindle whorl or a close relative (an interpretation put forward by Krause 1969:157). But, as there may be a second name in the genitive: **adons**, Go. gsf. *ōn*-stem, 'Ado's', I wondered whether *rangō* might denote something else, perhaps the very object, the spindle whorl? That would fit into a well-known type of runic texts that explicitly mentions the object or the material⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ A reading **rapo** (Seebold 1994^a:76) is unlikely, because the 'lantern' is at the top of the headstaff.

⁵⁹ For instance: **kobu**, **kabu** 'comb' on a comb (Oostum and Toornwerd, Groningen), **kabr** 'comb' on a comb (Elisenhof, Schleswig-Holstein). Furthermore there is **horn hjartaR** 'deer's horn' on a piece of antler, found in Dublin, and **hronæsban** 'whale's bone' on Franks Casket. The Vimose (Funen) plane has **tal[gl]ijo** 'plane'. And there is **kŋia kingia** 'brooch' on the Aquincum fibula. Furthermore there is the recently found footstool of Fallward, near the Weser mouth, with the word **ksamella**, NHG *Schemel* 'footstool'.

Unfortunately there are no attestations of a *rango* in any Germanic language, but as a spindle whorl has the form of a ring, the nearest parallel to look for would be Crimean Gothic *ringo* 'ring', cf. ON *hringr*, OE, OFris, OS and OHG *hring* < Gmc **hrenga-z*. The etymology is unclear, according to Kluge/Seebold (1989:601). Pokorny (1959:936) postulates IE **krengh-* 'circle, belt'; Old Church Slavonic has *krqgъ* < **(s)krong(h)-* 'circle' (Trubačev 1987:25-27). Therefore, *rango* and Crimean Gothic *ringo* may reflect the frequent IE Ablaut *e ~ o* (Gmc *e ~ a*, before nasal + consonant *i ~ a*).

In Gothic, one would expect **hring-s* (spelled as **hriiggs*), but it is not attested in biblical Gothic. Apparently the *h* has been lost in initial position before consonants, as is seen in Crimean Gothic *ringo*. Yet the fourth century may be a little early for the loss of initial *h*, although this might be due to an already weakened articulation.

When reading **rango adons**, this might mean: 'ring, (e.g. spindle whorl) (possession) of Ado'.

However, when taking the lantern-shaped rune for **w**, we get **rawo**. OHG has *rāwa* 'rest, peace, place to rest'; in other words 'a grave'. That would be interesting, as the spindle whorl was a gravegift. Thus we obtain a sentence like **rawo adon sufhe**: in which **adon** is a PN, dsf. Go. *ōn*-stem 'for Ado'. Although the language of the inscription is most likely to be Gothic (cf. also Grønvik 1985:171), it cannot definitely be excluded that South Germanic speaking persons were present in South-East Europe in the fourth century. As regards **adon**, an OHG dative sg. weak feminine ending *-on* is attested, but quite seldom (Braune/Eggers 1975:205). Concerning **sufhe** I propose, inspired by Seebold (1994^a:76), 3 sg. optative *sufhē* of the verb **sufa-* 'to sleep', cf. Modern Swedish *sova*⁶⁰. When connecting this verbform in the meaning 'may (she) sleep' with the reading **rawo rāwo** dsf. *ō*-stem, 'for the restingplace' of the upper part of the inscription, I obtain a semantically acceptable phrase. This includes a runic liberty: one rune is enough for reading twice the same letter. The sequence of the text would then be: **rawo adon(s) sufhe**: 'for the restingplace of Ado, may (she) sleep', which would be a sort of RIP dedication.

However, one would expect an East Germanic dialect being spoken in this Gothic area, and my above interpretation of *rāwo* is according to a South Germanic (Pre-OHG) coloured dialect. Gothic has no long *ā*, except *āh* < Gmc **arh*, e.g. *fāhan*, and in loanwords. If we should keep to East Germanic, another solution is wanted. Krause took his refuge in a somewhat artificial solution - but worth trying. In runic inscriptions it appears to be allowed to transliterate beyond any divisions in the text. In doing this, one may take the initial **r** from the upper part of the object's inscription and consider this to belong to the text of the lower part - Krause (1969:157) read thus **her** Go 'here'. When reconstructing our runic scribe's cosmetic move⁶¹, we obtain **awo :adons uf her**.

awo is Go. *awō* 'grandmother'. **uf** is Go. prep. + dative/acc. 'under'. The whole sentence is then: 'grandmother of Ado (is) under here', e.g. in her grave.

When returning to the first reading **rango : adons uf he**, the same cosmetic move can be carried out, *plus* admitting for another runic feature: the same letter needs not to be written

⁶⁰ Seebold proposes to read **sufnu(h)e**, with **(h)** as *Hiattrenner*, referring to Gmc **suf-nō-*, ON *sofna*, an inchoative verb: 'to go to sleep', but a sequence **-nu-** is not there.

⁶¹ There is a parallel though: the inscription from *Fallward* (Continental Corpus), reading **ksamella lguskapi** = *skamella [a]lguskapi* 'footstool (depicting) Elkhunter'. The initial *a* of *[a]lguskapi* must be borrowed from the ultimate rune of *skamella*. The requested 'cosmetic movement' in the Lețcani inscription is herewith not an isolated feature.

twice. We may then read **rango : adons uf he(r)**, which means 'Ado's ring (= spindle whorl) (is) down here'. The purport of the inscription is expressed with reference to the object as a gravegift: *down here*. The object and the inscription may have been made especially for Ado's afterlife, and subsequently been deposited with her in her grave.

36. *Szabadbattyán* (Hungary). Dated first half 5th c.

The inscription is on the back of a silver buckle. The front is decorated after an antique ornamental style (description and photograph in Krause 1966). The inscription may be read **marings** = *marings*, nsm. *a*-stem.

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The † rune is transliterated **ing** in **marings**, and has a similar lanternshape as in, e.g., *Leṭcani* and *Køng*. Antonsen (1975:74) transliterates **marings**, "Marings [i.e. descendent of Mar(h)s; or: horseman]" and considers the language East Gmc. (*Thorsberg* has **mariz**). Krause (1966:-311) interprets: *marings* < **marhings* "Kurzform zu Namen mit *marha-* 'Pferd'", presenting a short *a*, thus producing a Gothic PN, nsm. *a*-stem, 'Horseman'. Since runes do not show vowel length, one may read *māring-s* with long *ā*, which would present some Germanic dialect other than Gothic, e.g. Langobardic. This, however, is not very likely (see below). I agree with Antonsen that the symbol that accompanies the inscription is a malformed swastika and no **d** rune. I prefer to interpret the inscription as Gothic, because this is most plausible in view of the combination findplace, decoration and the ending *-s*.

In my opinion, **marings** is another instance of a tribal name, namely of an East Gothic tribe. It can be connected with the text on the Rök stone: **skati marika** *skati mæringa* 'the first among the Mærings', e.g. King Theodoric. The text is part of the so-called "Theodoric-strophe" on the Rök stone (Östergötland, Sweden, dated appr. 9th c.; for a description and pictures, see Jansson 1987). The word *Mæringa* denotes the royal house of Theodoric, and might have been constructed after a personal name with the element *mār*, *mēr*, and a suffix *-ing*, such as can be found in the names of Theodoric's father *Theodomērs*, and his brothers *Walamērs* and *Widumērs*.

37. *Pietroassa* (Rumania). Dated first half 5th c., according to the text in the Catalogue of the exhibition *Goldhelm* (1994:230). The inscription is on a gold neckring, which has been cut right through the middle of the inscription, so the rune that was there is badly damaged or has disappeared. The runes read **gutani?wihailag**.

𐌶𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺 𐌹𐌺 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺

A lot of guesswork about which rune has vanished has been done; see a recent list by Nedoma (1991-93). A new reading and interpretation has been put forward by Reichert (1991-93). I studied the object myself in April 1994, in the *Schirn Kunsthalle* at Frankfurt am Main, where the object was part of the exhibition *Goldhelm* in the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte. If only one rune was lost when the neckring was cut, in my opinion that rune may have been an **s** or **j**. The upper part is still visible left of the cut. To the right of the cut it seems as if also a part of a rune can be distinguished, but I think this is damage, a scratch, maybe made by the cutter.



*The two pieces of the neckring
of Pietroassa.*

These traces have been interpreted as the remains of an $\hat{\chi}$ (**ōđilaz*) rune, but this cannot be correct (cf. Reichert). As there obviously is the little hook on the left side, one may choose between the runes **s** or **j** (Reichert prefers to read **j**). In both readings, the lower part of the rune, which in either way should have had the form of a hook, is lost. Both **gutani wi hailag** or **gutani j wihailag** may offer something meaningful.

When choosing the last reading, one must consider the **j** rune as a *Begriffsrune* for **jēra* ‘good year, harvest’ (cf. *Stentofen*, below, nr. 42), also Reichert's interpretation (1991-93:239), who comments: "in wulfilanischer Orthographie (...): *gutane jer weih hailag*".

As to the reading of **gutani**, I suggest to consider to take this as *gutaneis* ‘Gothic’, adj. nominative sg. masculine **wi[h]** may be taken as Go. *weih* nsn. ‘sanctuary’; **hailag** adj. ‘holy’. The inscription therefore may be interpreted: ‘Gothic (object). Sacrosanct’.

5. PERIOD II, Monumental inscriptions on stone: the Blekinge inscriptions.

38-41. *Björketorp*, *Gummarp*, *Istaby*, and *Stentofen* (Blekinge, Sweden).

Most handbooks treat these four inscriptions on stone together, since their texts seem to have had a common source, or at least show striking similarities and relations, both semantically and runologically. Sometimes also the SÖLVESBORG stone is included. The stones all were erected in Blekinge in the South East of Sweden, in former times Danish territory. Only the Björketorp stone still stands *in situ* (near Björketorp, Leråkra and Listerby), the other stones have been removed to different places. For elaborate information and references, cf. Birkmann (1995:114-142) and Krause (1966:203-220). My transliteration is based on personal investigation of the stones (except for Gummarp, which has gone lost in the Fire of Copenhagen, 1728). In order to make clear what the mutual similarities in runes and texts look like, to increase interpretability and to provide a comfortable base for interpretation, I present the texts, which have no division marks, divided into words.

The **A** in the transcription represents the open vowel (non-nasalized) *a*, rendered by the former **jāra* rune † , which had changed its name into **āra*, due to the Proto Norse loss of initial *j*. Björketorp and Gummarp both contain exclusively **A** runes, independent of the quality of the vowel; they have no **ansuz* runes. Stentofen and Istaby both contain **ansuz* and **A**, Istaby shows the latter in a different form: ᚱ , though.

The **ansuz* rune (there is only one) in Stentofen represents a nasalized *ã*. The **ansuz* runes in Istaby render unstressed *a*; the distinction of **A** and **a** in Istaby expresses the opposition stressed - unstressed. The **a**-runes in Istaby denote svarabhakti vowels and two times *a* in unstressed syllables.

For the use of **z** denoting an $r < \text{Gmc } r$ in **Afatz** (Istaby) and **hAidz** (Björketorp) see Antonsen (1975:17): "The reverse spellings (...) indicate that PG */r/ (originally a uvular trill) and PG */z/ have coalesced in an apical trill after apicals".

38. *Björketorp*, a composition of three monoliths. Huge *bauta* stones like these are known in Scandinavia from prehistoric times onwards, and were probably used as grave-monuments. It is impossible to say whether this was the case with these three monoliths. Only one stone of the Björketorp monument, the middle one, bears a runic inscription. When walking around the monolith, it appears that the text on the back (Side B) immediately joins that part of the text of Side A, that starts with **utiAz**. I suppose this is no coincidence. The sequence from top to bottom runs thus:

Side A: **sAz þAt bArutz**

Side B: **uþArAbA sbA** Side A: **utiAz welAdAude**

hAerAmA lAusz

inArunAz ArAgeu

fAlAh Ak hA[i]derAg

hAidz runoronu

𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌰𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹
𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌰𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹
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𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌰𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹
𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌰𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹

Moltke (1985:142) read the text starting from the bottom line up, which makes sense, because it turns out that the **g** at the end of **hAiderAg** actually belongs to **[g]inArunAz** at the beginning of the third line from below.

I guess the text actually is a poem:

haidz rŭnōrōnū falah ak haidera
(ra)ginarŭnāz arageu haeramalaus
ūþaraba spā ūtiaz wēladaude
saz þat barutz

hAidz *haiðz*, cf. Gmc **haiðra-* 'clear, shining, bright', ON *heiðr*.

runoronu, consisting of *rŭnō-* 'rune-', using *-ō-* for connective vowel (Antonsen 1975:19), and *-rōnū < *rōnōn* or **runōn* 'row, sequence', asf. *ōn-*stem (Krause 1971:52; Antonsen 1975:87f.).

fAlAh Ak with svarabhakti second **A** in **fAlAh** *falh ak* 1 sg. pret. ind. 'I buried', cf. ON *fela*, Gmc **felhan* 'to hide, to bury', here probably meant to render the act of carving runes into the stone surface. It is remarkable, that the first person singular is expressed twice: in the verbform and in the pers. pronoun. I suppose this is done when the inscription, besides the oblique verbform, also contains the name of the one who emphasizes himself as 'I', like e.g.

in *Gallehus*, *Lindholm*, RÖ, TUNE, KJÖLEVIK, NOLEBY, JÄRSBERG, EIKELAND, *Seeland (II)*-C bracteate. The name or epithet referred to in this inscription may be **hAerAmAlAusz**, see below.

Ak pers. pron. 1 sg. 'I'.

hA[i]derAginArunAz *haidera ginarūnāz*, in which *haidera* (with svarabhakti **e**) means 'here', cf. ON *heðra*. *gi(n)na-* is an adj. meaning 'wide', cf. the Eddic *gap var ginnunga* (Voluspá 3) 'wide crevice'; OE *ginn* 'wide, spacious', and the ON verb *gina* 'to yawn'. *rūnāz* apf. *ō*-stem 'runes', which can be taken to denote the whole inscription. Together this means: 'here wide(-cut) runes'. I suggest to take the text with the middle sequence **rA** double, in order to obtain alliteration in *[ra]ginarunaz*. The meaning may be: 'the message, determined by fate', cf. *ragina*, cf. Go. *ragin* 'counsel', OS *regan-*, *regino-*, OE *regn* 'determined by fate', ON *regin*, *rōgn* 'ruling gods' (Antonsen, 1975:55). See also NOLEBY **raginakudo** and Hávamál 80: *regin-kunnum* dpf. '[runes], coming from the gods'. This interpretation 'determined by fate' would not seem farfetched, regarding the purport of the rest of the text.

ArAgeu, with svarabhakti second **A**: *argeu*, dsf. *jōn*-stem, < **argijōn* (Krause 1991:119), ON *argr* < **argaz* 'cowardly', 'unmanly', 'performing sorcery', 'showing indecent behaviour'; OHG *ar(a)g*, OE *earg* 'cowardly' (Antonsen 1975:86).

hAerAmAlAusz, with svarabhakti second **A**: *haerma-* < **herma-* 'rest' (Krause 1971:61); *lausz* < **lausaz*, ON *lauss* 'without', adj. *a*-stem, see above *Vimose* nr. 11. The meaning may be 'restless'; Antonsen (1975:86) suggests 'protectionless'.

haeramalaus(a)z can be a PN or epithet, *a*-stem, stemvowel lost, an occurrence of syncope. I suggest this 'Restless' identical with the 'I' from **fAlAh Ak**, who carved the runes.

The spelling *-ae-* in *haeramalausz* denotes the product of breaking *e > ae*; cf. also *haeruwulafiz* in *Istaby* (see below).

Side B: **uþArAbA** is usually connected with something unfavorable, something bad. The word probably consists of the negative particle *ū-* and *þarba = þarfa*, cf. the ON verb *þurfa* 'to require, to need'; *þarf* impers. 'it is necessary'; as a substantive ON *þorǫf*, cf. Gmc **þarbō-*, 'want, need, necessity'. *ūþarba* might mean 'something unwanted'. The second **A** is a svarabhakti vowel.

sbA, cf. ON *spá* f. 'prophecy' or 1 sg. pres. ind. 'I foresee', ON inf. *spá*. In this case I prefer the last interpretation, since it can be connected with the former mentioned 'I' (who carved the runes, and who also might be called 'Restless'). Thus the text gets more coherence.

utiAz, cf. ON *útar* adv. comp. 'farther away, to the south'.

welAdAude, compound, consisting of: *wēl-*, cf. ON *vél* f. 'treachery, trick'; the *-a-* is the connective vowel in the compound; and: *-daudē*, dsf. *a*-stem, of **daudā-* 'death': together this means: 'a death by treachery'. The second **d** of **dAude** renders *ḍ*, product of voicing *b > ḍ* between vowels.

sAz, ON *sá* dem. pron. nsm. 'he, who', *sa -z* < **-ez* is the relative particle 'he who, which' (Antonsen 1975:88).

þAt, ON *þat* dem. pron. asn. 'this'.

bArutz, *barut(i)z* 3 sg. pres. ind. with the ending of the 2nd sg.; cf. ON *brýtr* 'breaks'. The **A** in *barutz* is a svarabhakti vowel.

The text as a whole runs thus:

'A clear runerow I, Restless, buried (dug, carved) here, wide (divine) runes (or a fate-predicted message), I foresee bad things: because of cowardly behaviour a death by treachery far away; he who breaks this'. The demonstrative pronoun 'this' has been presumed as referring to the monument itself, but I do not think this likely. The most significant part of the

text is, in my opinion, 'somebody will die of treachery'. This would happen in case somebody cowardly breaks 'this', which might regard a treaty or a an agreement, possibly made by three persons, which is symbolised by the three standing stones. It is tempting to suggest that these three persons might be Haþuwolf, Haeruwolf and Hariwolf, and that the three staves **fff** from the *Gummarp* inscription (see below) symbolize their agreement, concerning livestock (the name of the rune **f** means 'cattle') or other (mutual?) precious possessions. Even an offering has been carried out, in order to obtain prosperity (Stentoften). The four runic monuments might have been erected to indicate the borders of their property: Gammaltorps socken, Mjällby socken and Listerby socken (see Jacobsen & Moltke 1942:399-413).

39. *Gummarp*, lost, but there exists a drawing by Skonvig (1627), published in *Danmarks Runeindskrifter* (Jacobsen/Moltke 1941/42).

(h)AþuwolAfA sAte stAbA þria fff 'Haþuwolafa[z?] cut three staves **fff**'.



According to Jacobsen & Moltke (1941/42:406) the inscription provides the possibility of different interpretations. It appears that **(h)AþuwolAfA** either misses its nominative ending -z (but compare **lagupewa**, *Illerup* III), or is in the accusative, in which case the inscription would be incomplete, since a subject is lacking. One may interpret the legend thus: '(In memory of) Haþuwolafa (somebody) cut three staves **fff**'.

sAte *sattē* 3 sg. pret. ind. of a verb like Go. *satjan* and ON *setja* 'to set', Gmc **satjan* 'to set'.

stAbA *staba* apm. *a*-stem 'staves', e.g. runes.

þria apm. *ja*-stem, 'three'.

fff are mostly conjectured to represent three *Begriffsrunen*, indicating the rune name for **f** **fehu* 'livestock, wealth'.

I think Haþuwolafa is not in the nominative, since then he would be the runecarver of this inscription. This does not seem likely, since he certainly was the runecarver of *Istabu*, below. The point is that there another stock of runes has been used, which definitely points to two different runecarvers.

40. *Istabu*, in Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Side A: **Afatz hAriwulafa hAþuwulafz hAeruwulafiz**

Side B: **warAit runAz þAiAz**



As has been mentioned above, the form of the rune denoting **A**: ᚦ is actually that of the **jāra* rune that elsewhere denotes **j**. It is remarkable that the runecarver used here this graph to denote about the same sound as the one that has been rendered by ᚦ, transliterated **A**, in the

other Blekinge inscriptions. Besides, he used the *ansuz 𐌺 rune in all three **wulaf** nameparts, to represent a svarabhakti vowel or in an unstressed ending, such as in **-wulafa**.

It may be, that in the name **hAeruwulafiz** the pronunciation of **A** was palatal, considering the development of the breaking of *e > ea > ja > jq* by *u*-mutation; rendering the later attested ON name *Hjqrólfr*, and *Hjörulf*.

Afatz is misspelled for *aftaz = aftar* 'to the memory of', 'for'. According to Antonsen (1975:84) "with neutralization of contrast *z ≠ r* after apicals".

hAriwulafa *Hariwulafa* PN asm. *a*-stem. The name consists of *Hari-* 'warrior', m., and *-wulafa* asm. *a*-stem, cf. Gmc **wulfaz*, 'wulf', a name-element all three names in this inscription share.

hapuwulafz PN nsm. *a*-stem, subject. The second element *-wulafz* shows syncope of the stemvowel. The first element of the name, *Hapu-* 'battle', is a nominative *u*-stem. A parallel case is the OHG *Hildebrandslied*, where two relatives with a common second name-element, preceded by *heri* resp. *hadu* occur: *Heribrant* and *Hadubrant*, Hildebrand's father and son.

hAeruwulafiz is presumably the patronymic with the ending *īz < *-ijaz*; the first name-element is *haeru-*, cf. ON *hjorr* 'sword', Gmc **heru-*, Go. *hairus*.

warAit 'wrait' 3 sg. pret. ind. 'wrote', inf. Gmc **wriān* 'to carve, to write'. The **a** is again a svarabhakti.

runAz *rūnāz* apf. *ō*-stem, 'runes'; similar spelling in *Björketorp*, different in *Stenoften*.

þAiAz *þa-iāz* demonstrative pron. apf. 'these' (Antonsen 1975:84).

'Hapuwulf, son of Haeruwulf, wrote to the memory of Hariwulf these runes'.

41. *Stenoften*, in the church of Sölvesborg.

niu hAborumz niu hagestumz hApuwolAfz gAf j hAriwolAfz mA??usnuh?e hidez runono felAh ekA hederA [rA]ginoronoz herAmAlAsAz ArAgeu welAdud sA þAt bAriutiþ

𐌺𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌸𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌺
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𐌺𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌸𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌺 𐌺𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌸𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌺 𐌺𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌸𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌺 𐌺𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌸𐌺𐌹𐌿𐌺

For an elaborate account of a variety of interpretations, proposed by different scholars, I refer to Birkmann (1995:125-137). As regards reading and interpretation of the first part of the text, I prefer the ingenious solution published by Santesson (1989:221-229). The inscription starts with what looks like a chant, maybe a spell. The rest of the text, from **hidez** onward, is almost similar to *Björketorp*, only the spelling of some words differs.

Santesson's reading and interpretation of the initial part of the text is entirely based on the phonological differences displayed by the runes for **A** (open *a*) and **a** (nasalised *ā*) in: *niu hAborumz*, *niu hāgestumz*. She takes *niu* to mean 'nine'. The *-o-* in *hAborumz* is a svarabhakti vowel; the ending *-umz* is dative plural *a*-stem. Santesson postulates Gmc **habraz* 'bock', ON *hafr*, Latin *caper*. In **hagestumz** she grasps the possibility of taking the **ansuz* rune **a** for

representing nasalized \tilde{a} in order to reconstruct *hangestumz*, which she assumes to be a dative plural 'with (nine) steeds'; the nominative sg. then would be **hangistaz* < Gmc **hanhistaz*, with reference to Verner's law, cf. ON *hestr* < **hanhistaz*. The use of an **e** rune to denote an *i* sound of *hangistumz* seems to be a peculiarity of the Blekinge inscriptions. The other words that show this are: **hidez** = *h(a)idir* and **arageu** = *aragiu* (Santesson 1989:226).

hApuwoLAfz *HapuwoLAfz*, cf. Istaby: **hApuwoLAfz**, nsm. *a*-stem. Of course the Stentoften carver had to use **A** in **-woLAfz**, since an **a** would render a nasalized \tilde{a} , and that would not be adequate here.

gAf *gaf* 3 sg. pret. ind., cf. the ON verb *gefa* 'to give'.

The sentence is then: 'With nine he-goats, with nine steeds, *HapuwoLAfz* gave **j**' = **jāra*, **jēra* which is the rune's name, here used as *pars pro toto* for its intrinsic meaning 'a good year = a fruitful harvest' (cf. *Skodborghus-B*, nr. 37, Bracteates Corpus). This obviously refers to some offering to obtain prosperity, although the phrase 'gave' seems strange from the mouth of the sacrificer. Does this mean that he gave a part of his harvest = the offering of eighteen animals? The repetitive offering of nine male animals is well-known from medieval Uppsala, described by Adam of Bremen.

The text continues with:

hAriwoLAfz, PN nsm. *a*-stem; compare *Istaby* **hAriwoLAfa**. The vowels **o** and **u** interchange in the 'wolf/wulf'-names in Gummarp, Istaby and Stentoften. Contrariwise to Björketorp the name of the rune-carver might be mentioned here: *HariwoLAfz*.

The part between **hAriwoLAfz** and **hidez** is illegible to me (but see Birkmann 1995:125ff.).

hidez cf. *Björketorp* **hAidz** 'clear, bright'.

runono cf. *Björketorp* **runorono**, the carver omitted a syllable. The ending of *rūnō[rō]nō* differs from the ending *-ū* in *Björketorp*, both derived from Gmc **rōnōn*, **rūnōn* 'row, sequence'.

felAh ekA, 1 sg. pres. ind., *Björketorp* **fAlAh Ak** 1 sg. pret. ind., inf.: Gmc **felhan*, ON *fela* 'to bury, to hide', e.g. 'to carve'.

ekA = *Björketorp* **Ak**, 1 sg. enclitic pronoun 'I', cf. **hateka** in *Lindholm*. The person pronoun **ek** < Gmc. **ek*, **ekan* is attested in, for instance, *Gårdlösa* **ek unwodz**.

hederA cf. *Björketorp* **hAiderA**, cf. ON *heðra*, 'here'.

[rA]ginoronoz and *Björketorp* **[rA]ginArunAz** show variation in *-rōnōz* against *-rūnāz* and *ginA* against *gino*, which may be due to different dialects (on the forms, see Antonsen 1975:19f.). Orthographic differences between *Stentoften* and *Björketorp* can also be observed in some other features: *i* ~ *ai*, *e* ~ *ai*, *e* ~ *a*.

herAmAlAsAz cf. *Björketorp* **hAerAmAlAusz**, which may depict a slight difference in pronunciation, or a difference in spelling skills.

ArAgeu cf. *Björketorp* **ArAgeu**.

welAdud cf. *Björketorp* **welAdAude**.

sA nsm. dem. pronoun *sá* 'he'.

þAt cf. **þAt** 'this'.

bAriutiþ cf. *Björketorp* **bArutz**, which actually is the ending of the 2 sg. pres. ind.; the 3 sg. pres. ind. ending *-iþ* is correctly spelled in *Stentoften*.

The text can be interpreted thus: 'With nine he-goats, with nine steeds, *HapuwoLAfz* gave **j**. *HariwoLAfz* (something illegible) a clear runerow I (e.g. *HariwoLAfz*?) bury (carve) here, wide (divine) runes (or a fate-predicting message); restless because of cowardly behaviour, a death by treachery, he (who) destroys this'.

6. Summary and Conclusions

Period I has a total of 36 runic objects, represented as 34 entries; there are 3 objects from South-East Europe (or 4, if Kowel is included). Period II counts 4 items (the Blekinge stones). Although listed as one number in the Catalogue, some entries consist of more than one object, such as the lanceheads from Illerup and the arrows from Nydam.

Material: Period I:

metal: 25; bronze: 6, silver: 11, gold: 2; iron: 4.

other than metal: 12; wood: 9, bone/antler: 4.

Material Period II:

stone: 4.

Period I, Denmark: 25 texts are legible, 9 are not legible or interpretable. 15 inscriptions show only one word, mostly a name. 5 inscriptions consist of two words; 7 inscriptions consist of more than two words. I have counted 20 men's names, of which at least half may be West Gmc. In a few cases women's names may occur (**lebro**, **witro**) but these names are probably also West Gmc masculine names. 6 times the object itself is referred to. Furthermore there are 10 verbforms. There are 10 sentences.

Names on bog-finds are sometimes accompanied by a verbform: **tawide** (twice), **wihgu**, **ahti** (?), **ha**, **haite**, **hateka** 'made', 'fight (consecrate)', 'owned', 'have', 'am called' (twice). The brooches (gravefinds) bear names and twice a verbform **talgida**, **talgidai** 'carved, cut'. The two stray finds of 400-550 bear names and one verbform: **tawido** 'made'. Some objects are explicitly mentioned, also metaphorically: **wagagastiz sikijaz** 'flameguest coming from a bog' = the iron axe; **rango** 'ring' = spindle whorl; **makija** 'sword' = many swords; **talijo** 'plane'.

4 times **ek** 'I' is used. 5 times **alu** and once **auwija** may point to some 'formulaic' use of well-wishes.

Bog-deposits form the largest find-category of the 'Danish' Corpus. The depositioning of large (weapon)deposits appears to have stopped at around 400. The next category of objects with runes are the bracteates (late 5th c. - early 6th c., with one exception of the 4th c.). Bracteates were also deposited in bogs, or buried as hoards, or given as gravegoods. The war-booty deposited there was apparently replaced by the depositing of symbolic, possibly cultic objects. One may wonder if these two categories (the war-booty and the bracteates) are in some way connected⁶², e.g. as concerns the ideology that may have existed behind the custom of depositing. At any rate both categories belonged to a male warriors' society. The runic gravegoods on the other hand can nearly always be associated with women.

The Illerup bog provided 9 runic objects; the Vimose bog 6 objects; the Nydam bog 4 objects, the Kragehul bog 2 objects (the two objects from the Thorsberg bog are listed among

⁶² The recent publication of Bazelman's dissertation (1996) opens up a vista on a possible use of bracteates in a warriors' cult, especially among the young retainers at a royal court. The coming of age, or the introduction of young men into the warriors' society, the *comitatus*, may have been accompanied by some special rites, crowned by an inauguration and the confirmation thereof by way of a bracteate.

the Continental Corpus). Garbølle and Lindholm produced 2 more bog-finds. From graves 8 objects are recorded. 4 objects are stray finds. The total number of bog-finds is 25 objects (including the Thorsberg items). It is remarkable that bog-finds should only occur on former Danish territory (including Schleswig-Holstein and Skåne), although hardly any bog-finds are recorded from Sealand. This may be so, because bogs were not available everywhere; in other regions people will have offered runic objects, too, but probably in other wetlands, like lakes and rivers. These objects will be much more difficult to retrieve. Many runic objects were found while digging for peat in the former bogs, as can be observed from the Bracteate Corpus. Objects that were deposited in rivers etc. almost only come to light as a result of dredging activities.

The bog-finds are men's ware: weapons, weapon parts, personal equipment, a comb, an amulet, tools. The gravefinds are women's objects. The stray finds are made of gold; they may have been hidden hoards. The straight division of runic objects that were found in either bogs or graves is remarkable. No men's graves are known that contained runic objects and in the bogs no runic women's objects have been found. The provenance of the objects turns out to be in defiance of the linguistic character of the runic texts, especially in the case of the Vimose, Illerup and Thorsberg finds. The Illerup and Vimose finds were nearly all made in Scandinavia or Denmark, but the inscriptions show West Gmc linguistic features. The Thorsberg finds were probably manufactured in a West Gmc area, but the inscriptions show North- or North West Gmc linguistic features. The oldest runic object, the **harja** comb, appears to come from North-West Poland, but the name is probably West Gmc.

The question is whether it is possible to mark clear dialectical boundaries in runic usage and link archaeological and linguistic data (cf. also Stoklund 1994:106f.). In accordance with the provenance of the oldest runic objects, from the Rhine-Weser area to Poland to the Kattegat area and even stretching as far as North of Oslo, runic knowledge was extended over an astonishingly large area. This can only be explained by assuming that individuals, tribes and groups travelled around a lot during the first few centuries of our era. The oldest known runic objects can be associated with war and the accumulation of wealth and power. Both had to do with relations between certain families (belonging to a military elite), and also between the Germanic elite and high-placed people within the Roman empire.

Period I, South-East Europe: 4 inscriptions (including KOWEL, see introduction to this chapter), all are legible. Two inscriptions contain more than two words (the Pietroassa neckring and the Lețcani spindle whorl), two display one word (KOWEL and the Szabadbattyán brooch). One woman's name, one man's name, an object's name **rango**, and a verbform **sufhe** occur. Perhaps **tilarids** on the Kowel spearhead is to be understood as the weapon's name. There is one sentence. Two texts were obviously made for special occasions, such as a burial and a sanctuary (which may have been the reason they were retained). The inscription on the brooch, bearing a name, belongs to a wide-spread text-type, as does the inscription on the spindle whorl, both denoting the objects itself.

Material: gold: 1; silver: 1; iron: 1; earthenware: 1.

Period II. Only the four Blekinge stones are discussed, bearing relatively long or very long texts, which were cut in big stones with large runes, clearly legible. A quite different runic tradition appears to have emerged during an unknown lapse of time following the epoch of the archaic inscriptions and the bracteates. One is tempted to suppose the existence of an elaborate runic tradition already during the archaic period, although no other contemporary inscriptions that are comparable to the Blekinge ones have turned up yet (at least not from the

areas that were investigated for this project). The Blekinge inscriptions are especially interesting because of their peculiar use of runes. According to the runic stock, the inscriptions belong to the assumed transitory stage from the older 24-letter alphabet to the newer Scandinavian 16-letter *futhork*. The other remarkable fact is that the texts were written on huge stone memorials, a practice that differs from the older runic practices of writing runes on small, precious objects, such as is known from the early Danish, Continental, English and Dutch inscriptions.

There can be no doubt that the men, mentioned by their names on the four Blekinge stones, are related. The fact that the names show some variety in spelling, may be due to several factors, such as dialectal or phonological differences (e.g. a slightly different pronunciation). Stentoften might be older than Björketorp. But in my opinion the interval cannot be very large, maybe one generation, or two, which might be indicated by the three names of son, father and grandfather.

Name-forms denoting the same person are *Hapuwolafz* on Istaby and Stentoften, and *Hapuwolafa* on Gummarp. *Hariwulafa* = *Hariwolafz* on Istaby and Stentoften. Together with *Haeruwulafiz* (Istaby) these persons apparently belong to one family or clan, because of the similarity of the second part of the names and the alliterating first part. Besides, they refer to each other in the texts. At any rate *Hapuwulafz* was the active runecarver of Istaby, he gave **j** on Stentoften, and he was commemorated on Gummarp. This creates the impression that he was an important person. None of these names appears in Björketorp, although I wonder whether the postulated epithet *Haeramalaus* may be that of one of the 'wolves', like *Haeruwulafiz*, for instance, because of the alliteration. The first name-element contains **A** in all names, the endings vary: **A** in Gummarp and Stentoften; **a** in Istaby. The use of a special rune **†** in the initial syllable may have something to do with the emphasis that is put on the first syllable, and with the alliteration. One question remains: why did the runecarver of Istaby use another runic graph for **A**, namely **‡**, whereas on the other stones **†** has been used for **A**. It may be that *Hariwolafz* was the carver of Stentoften. He either used the Björketorp text as example, or he was the author of this text too.

The Blekinge runecarvers applied three different forms of the **jāra/āra* rune. The ancient **j** rune in Stentoften symbolizes its name: **jāra* 'good year', and it is realized in an old-fashioned form: **↵**, which was probably done in order to avoid confusion with the rune denoting **A** **†**. Obviously a distinction was made between the mnemonical use of runenames, being a tool that enabled carvers to determine which sound a runic symbol had, and the meaning and use of symbolic runes, used as *pars pro toto* for some special purpose.

It looks as if two separate developments can be detected in the Blekinge inscriptions. The differences are between the Björketorp, Stentoften and Gummarp group on the one hand, all using **†** to denote non-nasal **A**, and the Istaby inscription, using **‡** to denote **A** in contrast to svarabhakti and unstressed **ǿ**.

The graph **†** **A** occurs more frequently in Scandinavian inscriptions, as can be seen on the map in Derolez (1987:59). The rune lived on in Scandinavia, but at some later time it became to render **h**.

The graph **†** **j** occurs in Scandinavia in NOLEBY **tojeka** only, but it occurs relatively often in England and Frisia, denoting **j**.

The graph **‡** **j** occurs on the Continent, in *Charnay*, *Bezenye* and *Oettingen*. It clearly shows

its graphic relation with the presumed original rune for **j** \mathfrak{J} . Such a graphic relation cannot easily be seen between \mathfrak{J} and \mathfrak{S} . Since $*j\bar{a}ra > \bar{a}ra$, both \mathfrak{J} and \mathfrak{H} could render oral *a*, but \mathfrak{H} did this in Istaby only (as far as I know).

p also disappeared from the runic alphabet at this stage. The sound *p* is represented by **b** in **sba** *spá*. Thus the Björketorp inscription shows some stage in the process of the reduction of the 24-letter *futhork*.

The enigmatic **niuhagestumz** (Santesson: *niu ha(n)gestumz* 'with nine steeds') was formerly interpreted as 'nine guests': *niuha gestumz* (cf. Krause 1966:212), showing *i*-mutation in *gest* < $*gastiz$. In Santesson's solution there is no trace of *i*-mutation. Syncope, though, does occur in several words.

The greatest surprise is that in the Blekinge inscriptions we suddenly find *literature* in runes, which leads to the conclusion that at some time in runic history people started to use runes for other purposes than inscribing names on special objects. Just like any other script runes could be used to write literary and memorial texts. This is all the more interesting, as the Blekinge inscriptions clearly point to the existence of a powerful family, who openly manifested their convictions by way of these audacious texts on huge stones.

VI. BRACTEATES WITH RUNES

1. Introduction.

Contrary to my practice of runic investigations, I have not personally checked all bracteates that have been included here. Instead, and as a supplement to my own inspections, I used the meticulous drawings of the *Ikonographischer Katalog*, further abbreviated IK. This monumental work, also known as *Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit*, edited by Morten Axboe et alii (1984-1989) has proved to be a good source for investigations of the bracteate corpus.

According to Düwel (1992^a:32), 907 bracteates are known (in 1988), representing 566 dies. The earliest find was in the 17th century. The bracteates were first methodically studied in 1855, by Thomsen. Mackeprang (1952:25ff.) produced a typology of bracteates, based on Montelius' initial division and Salin's system of cataloguing according to the ornamentation in the so-called Germanic animal styles, dividing them into A, B, C, D, F-types (see for more references and elaborate information Birkmann 1995). Recent research of the material has yielded a revised sequence of the several types, adding the M(edailon) type and otherwise maintaining the A, B, C, D and F sequence.

- 1). M-type: medaillon-imitations;
- 2). A-type: man's head en profile;
- 3). B-type: man's figure, often together with animals;
- 4). C-type: man's head above horselike animal, often together with birds and other animals;
- 5). D-type and F-type: no human beings, but animals in the so-called 'Germanic animal style I'.

The C- and D- bracteates dominate the material. Runes are found on A-, B-, C-, and F-types, and on one M-type. The medallion-imitations predate the actual bracteates by more than a century. They show Roman capitals, capital-imitation, mixed runelike signs and capitals. The one M-bracteate with the runic inscription is *Svarteborg sigaduz* (on the reverse capital-imitation). A-type bracteates show capital-imitations, runes, and mixed runes/capitals. The largest number (95%) of rune-inscribed bracteates are found among the C-type.

The overall impression of bracteate ornamentation is that the makers were suffering from a severe case of *horror vacui*. The whole gold-foil surface is filled in, hence the difficulty of deciding what was meant to be writing and what not. If a stroke, dot or line resembles a writing sign, this may just as well be an ornament, or a symbol for something unknown. Furthermore, initials and abbreviations based on letter sequences on Roman coins were used, next to Roman lettering and capital-imitation. The association with the paraphernalia of Roman emperors, such as the royal diadem with its central imperial jewel, and the Victoria statue, is rather strong. Seebold (1992, 1994^b, 1995) investigated connections between the symbolism of the bracteates and Roman coins showing the emperor with his diadem (with a *terminus post quem* of 325, cf. Seebold 1992:270). Through a profound analysis of the development of Germanic symbolism emerging from the Roman background, Seebold seeks to unravel the meaning of the iconography of the bracteates and the connection with the text, i.e. the runes. By relating bracteate types to their places of origin and their texts he is able to

distinguish certain groups, such as the group Undley, Sievern and Hitsum (Seebold 1996:-194). These are included in this study.

The IK treats 182 rune-bracteates, representing 105 models. When taken together with bracteates exhibiting capital-imitations and runes, the total number of inscription-bearing bracteates is 211, pressed out of 127 stamps. The number of runic inscriptions on bracteates is about the same as the total number of inscriptions in the older futhark on other objects: ca. 190 à 200 specimens (over a period of some four centuries! Cf. Düwel 1992^a:34 and IK 3,1, *Teil G*).

48 legends are treated here. They have been chosen because of the relative ease with which their runes may be read, transliterated and interpreted, which does not imply that the purport of the texts can be *understood*. For instance: I have included all **alu**, **laþu**, **laukaz** texts, even the abbreviated forms, although nobody *really* knows what these words refer to and why they frequently appear on bracteates. These so-called formulaic words only appear on B- (emperor's head) and C- bracteates (man, horselike creature, bird), and possibly refer to the "ideal Germanic king" (Seebold) or "Odin" (Hauck). Elaborate information concerning the so-called formulaic words **alu**, **laukaz**, **auja** and **laþu** is given below. Furthermore I have included some more or less interpretable texts and the legends containing a *fupark*, also when abbreviated.

The act of inscribing runes on bracteates may have served a purpose different from the use of runes in general, as has been suggested by Düwel (1992^a:40f.), who proposes that the vowel and consonant sequences on bracteates may have served magical purposes, such as communication with the supernatural. He points to the importance of writing in an oral society: "die Macht der Schrift" (Düwel 1992^a:36).

A typological division of bracteate types with respect to the runic legends is still under discussion. The exact relation between picture and text is subject to conjecture. Only in exceptional cases is it possible to connect text and picture, as may for instance be expressed by the figurines with a raised hand, holding up some small round object (a bracteate?) and the accompanying text which contains the word **laþu** 'invitation' - to some festivity?

Not only the object, the bracteate, is exceptional, but the runeforms also often deviate from runes in 'normal' inscriptions on other objects. The anomalous runeforms themselves could very well be worth a separate study. Yet the reason that it is possible to identify a divergent rune, for e.g. **l**, is due to its frequent occurrence in a well-known word such as **laukaz**. The variety in forms is at least partly caused by the technique used for inscribing them. The runes were made with a matrix die (showing the motif in negative), which was placed against the obverse of the gold flan and subsequently struck. Many of the ill-formed, reversed and reverted runes may be the result of this technique.

Contrary to what I have done in the case of the other corpora in this study, I have not grouped the bracteates according to their geographical occurrence or way of deposition. The criterium 'material' does not apply here, the bracteates are all made of gold, except for Welbeck Hill (England), which is made of silver. The bracteates listed here have been found all over North-West Europe, including Scandinavia, Denmark, Germany, England and Frisia.

Since the most recent, elaborate and updated work on bracteates has been published in the six volumes of the IK, I have adopted the terminology used by its authors. The sequence UFO means *Unbekannter Fund Ort* = 'Unknown Findplace'. Likewise, the names of the findplaces, for instance *Südfinen*, are retained. All bracteates are more or less named after their findspots. The placename in the IK list is connected with A, B, C, D, F or M, which points to the iconographic type of bracteate. Thus it becomes immediately clear to which group a certain text belongs. The IK-abbreviation Taf. means *Tafel* 'Plate'. The remarks in the texts about items being 'related' refers to the iconography, and sometimes also to the runic text. Map 5 shows the spread of bracteates including one or several of the words **laþu**, **laukaz**, **alu**. Map 6 shows the find context for gold bracteates. 1: depot, 2: grave, 3: approximate border-line between depots and graves. Map 7 shows the spread of bracteates with long meaningful inscriptions. 1: inscriptions comprising at least four words, 2: comprising at least three words, 3: correct or partly correct rune-alphabet, 4: approximate border-line between depots and graves. Drawing of all maps: Christina Borstam. The maps have been copied (with permission) from Andrén's article 'Guld och makt' (1991: 245-256), which was published in *Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter XXVII*.

Of the 55 bracteates, described and listed here as 48 numbers, 26 are from hoards, 20 are stray finds, 5 are from unknown findplaces, 4 (possibly) from a grave. Bracteates showing **laukaz** emerge from a hoard 5 times, 4 are stray finds, 3 are from unknown findplaces. **alu**: 6 are from hoards, 3 are stray finds, 1 from an unknown findplace⁶³. **laþu**: 4 are from a hoard, 1 stray, 1 grave, 1 unknown. **auja**: 2 are from a hoard. **fupark**: 5 are from a hoard, 1 is a stray find. Most runes run from right to left, some occur mirror-wise. Since the runes were stamped into the goldfoil, it may be that mirror-forms were the result of a deliberate technique. One may have wanted to avoid too many reverted forms.

All bracteates found in Denmark are at the National Museum, Copenhagen, apart from Denmark (I)-C, which is lost; all bracteates found in Norway are at Oldsaksamlingen, Oslo; all bracteates found in Sweden and Gotland are at the National Museum, Stockholm, apart from Åsum-C, Kläggerod-C and Tirup-Heide-C, which are at the Historisk Museum, Lund. As regards bracteates found in Germany: Heide-B is lost, Nebenstedt (I)-B is at the Landesmuseum Hannover, Sievern is at the museum Bremerhaven. The Undley bracteate, found in England, is at the British Museum; the Hitsum bracteate, found in Friesland is at the Fries Museum.

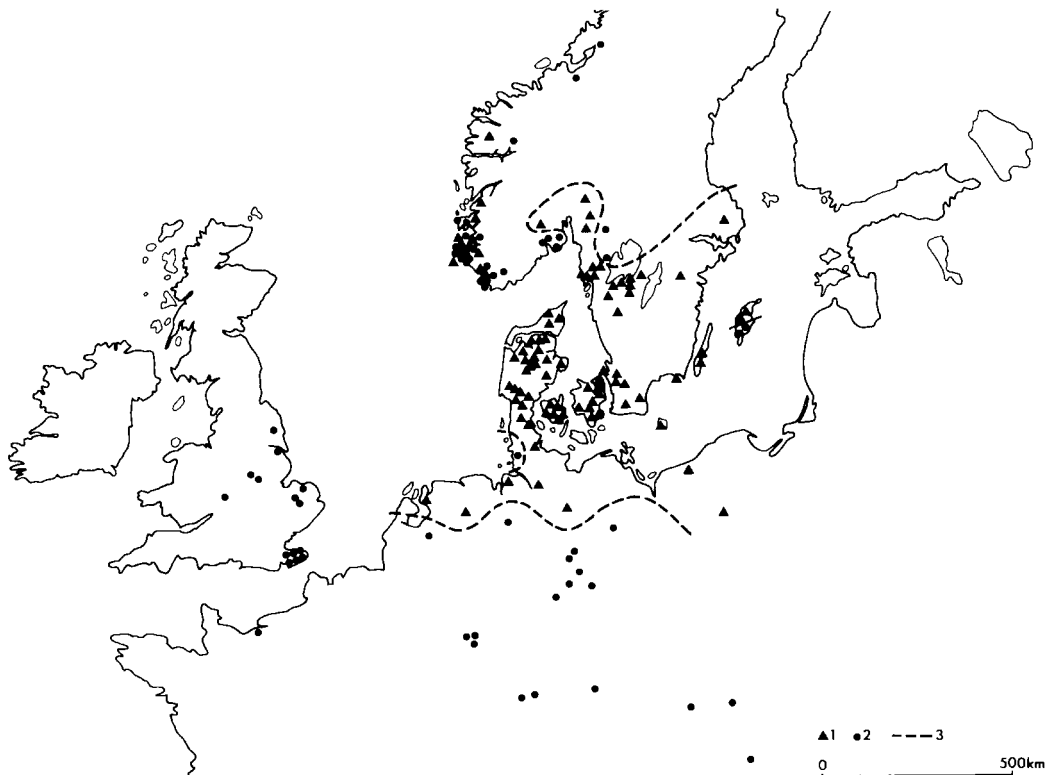
According to Peterson (1994^b:161) names or bynames occurring in bracteate legends have counterparts in West Germanic, especially in the Lower Rhine area. They are not met with in later Scandinavia. Among them are: Alawin, Alawid, Frohila, Kunimu(n)duz, Niužil(a), Niuwila, Sigaduz.

⁶³ Recently two bracteates with the legend **alu ota** were found in a grave in Doanaueschingen, Black Forest, Germany.

Map 5. Spread of bracteates including one or several of the words *laþu*, *laukaz*, *alu*.



Map 6. The find context for gold bracteates. 1. depot, 2. grave, 3. approximate limit between depots and graves.



2. ALU

The literal meaning of the word **alu** is 'ale', but its meaning or function in runic texts, and its occurrence, especially on bracteates, is enigmatic. The interpretations run from 'magic' via 'extasy' to 'intoxicating drink'. A connection of **alu** with IE **alu-* 'bitter' and the mineral *alum* cannot be excluded, although this has been disputed by Høst Heyerdahl (1981) and Polomé (1996). The mineral was used as a medicine, as a prophylactic and as an amulet in Antiquity and in the Middle Ages (cf. Saltveit 1991:139, 141). Besides, alum is found in Scandinavia, and might have served as precious merchandise. Just as **laukaz** 'garlic, leek' will have been of interest because of the smell, **alu** may have derived its importance from the taste, according to Saltveit. Since both words (also) denote an antidote or a medicine, this might be a reason for their occurrence on bracteates = amulets (Saltveit 1991:140).

Recently, Polomé (1996:103) returned to his former (and later abandoned) statement that *alu* can be linked to Hittite **aluwanza-* 'affected by sorcery'; stating that "the comparison of Run. *alu* with Hitt. **aluwanza-* remains apparently a valid Anatolian-Germanic isogloss in the archaic magico-religious vocabulary". It does not seem unlikely to relate 'affected by sorcery' with an ecstatic state of mind, caused by drinking beer or ale.

The ELGESEM rune stone (Norway) bears only one word: **alu**. The stone was found in 1870 at a site which contained a large boat-shaped stone setting and 18 mounds. The stone was dug up from a mound with the inscription face down (Haavaldsen 1991:8). Later several graves were discovered in the same area, according to Haavaldsen. Antonsen (1984:334f.) considers it a cultstone, marking the cultplace; according to him **alu** does not only mean 'ale' but also depicts the situation of a person in trance, perhaps as the result of drinking beer. On amulets **alu** may refer to religious activities, initiation rites or a death-cult (see below), or symbolize the transitory state between the world of the living and the dead. Finally, ale may have been the liquid used for libations.

Objects with **alu** have been found on the Danish Isles, in Jutland, Gotland, Skåne and South Norway. Objects found outside that particular area are the *Heide*-bracteate, from the westcoast of Schleswig-Holstein, and two bracteates with **alu** from Donaueschingen (Black Forest, Germany). Finally **alu** is stamped mirror-wise in the clay surface of the three *Spong Hill* urns from East Anglia in England. These are cremation urns, dated fifth or sixth c., e.g. they were manufactured in the bracteate period. The occurrence of **alu** in both Schleswig-Holstein and East Anglia need not come as a surprise in the light of the *adventus Saxonum* to Britain in the 5th c.

As has been suggested, there may be a connection between **alu** and death. Deceased people were often given drinking vessels, such as Roman glassware, in their graves to symbolize their partaking at the eternal feast (Van Es 1994^b:68). The word **alu** may have been used to replace or symbolize a missing drinking vessel. Ale was used in ritual toasting to confirm a (new) situation, e.g. when a person had died and his heirs had come to drink *erfiøl* 'grave-beer'. Markey (1972) associates fire and ritual in a grove or temple with the goddess Freya. Werner (1988) suggests that bracteate-deposits may have been part of a fertility cult. Either way, some sacred cult - a fertility cult or a cult of the dead, or a combination of both - may have been involved.

A sacred and profane use of ale can be regarded complementary. The drinking of ale may have played a role during rites, such as the communication with spirits or gods. Enigmatic is the word *ealuscierwen* in the Old English heroic poem *Beowulf*, line 769. It may mean 'mortal fear', but 'robbing of beer' or 'distribution of beer' are possible translations, too (cf.

Lehmann 1992:365ff.). This word concerns the state of mind of the warriors of the hall of Heorot, when they witness Beowulf's struggle with Grendel. There is a serious threat of losing Beowulf, their final hope. About the ritual connotation of 'beer', cf. Høst Heyerdahl (1981:35-49), Grønvik 1987:135-143), Düwel in IK I, Text, p. 54, and Seebold (1994^a:63).

In my opinion, the meaning of runic *alu* in a cult context can perhaps be understood in connection with the so-called 'ale-runes': the Eddic *ql-rúnar* in *Sigrdrífomál* 7 and 19. I suppose *ql-rúnar* should not be translated literally with 'ale-runes'. I think the Eddic verse refers to the actual *writing in runes* of the formulaic word **alu**. Writing in itself may have been considered a magical act. The combined use of written charm and magical medicine is well-known from the antique and later medieval sources (see Gladigow 1992:12-31).

Bracteates with **alu**, also shortened, are found in Norway, Skåne, Denmark, Gotland, Schleswig-Holstein. They are: *Bjørnerud-A* (IK 24), *Börringe-C* (IK 26), *Darum (V)-C* (IK 43), *Djupbrunns-C* (IK 44), *Fünen (I)-C* (IK 58), *Heide-B* (IK 74), *Hjörlande Mark-C* (IK 78), *Kjellers Mose-C* (IK 289), *Kläggerod-C* (IK 97), *Lellinge-Kohave-B* (IK 105), *Maglemose (III)-C* (IK 300), *Ølst-C* (IK 135), *Skrydstrup-B* (IK 166), *UFO-B* (IK 149,2), *Schonen (I)-B* (IK 149,2).

3. AUJA

auja n. *ja*-stem, may have a symbolic connotation in the sense of 'divine protection' (cf. IK 1, Text, p. 178f.), or generally 'hail' or 'good luck' (Krause 1966:242; Antonsen 1975:66). Andersen discussed the possible meanings of **auja** (1970:180-205, with many references). The word **auja** eventually disappeared in the mists of time; its meaning can only be guessed at. Part of it, the name-element *au-*, appears to have been retained in placenames and personal names as *Ey-*, *Øy-*. Names with the element *aw-* are related, such as in **awimund** (Weimar III) and **awa** (Nordendorf I). The first part of the name **aujab[i]rg** (Oettingen) can also be regarded as related to **auja**. The Vimose buckle has **auwija** instead of **auja**, showing the West Germanic gemination of *w* before *j*, cf. Antonsen (1975:17, § 5.5) and (1987:23), who derives *auwija* < PG **aw-ja*. In his *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* Pokorny (1959) gives the following roots: *au-*, *aē-*, *auē-* 'to like', possibly meaning 'to long for', or 'to favour, to help'. This would explain the interpretation of **auja** as 'luck', 'fortune', 'wealth, possession'. Andersen (1970:200) suggests a meaning 'protection' and 'lee', since the name-element *Øy-* appears to have had that meaning. Being an amulet, the bracteate would allow for a text **gibu auja** meaning 'I give luck' or 'I give protection', translations which are both equally acceptable (see below, nr. 33).

auja occurs on the following bracteates: *Raum Køge-C* (IK 98), *Skodborghus-B* (IK 161), both Denmark.

4. FUPARK

Bracteates with a complete *fupark*, or part of it, are: *Grumpan-C*, *Motala-C (Raum Marie-dam)*, *Vadstena-C*, *Lindkær-C* and *Overhornbæk III-C*, *Schonen II-C* and *Gudme II-C*. One has been found in a bog, one is a stray find; the others come from hoards. All bracteates with *fupark*'s have been found in Sweden and Denmark and they are all C-bracteates.

Other *fupark* inscriptions are on the stone slab from KYLVER, found in 1903 near a farm called Kylver, on Gotland, Stånga parish. Since it was found in the surroundings of a grave, it is often thought to have belonged to that grave, which is dated in probably the fifth century. According to the find history, however, it is uncertain that the slab was indeed part of the sarcophagus (according to Anne Haavaldsen, personal communication).

From much later times, several finds from medieval Bryggen and Trondheim bear *fupark*'s, but these are probably connected with learning how to write (Fjellhammer Seim 1991:129f.). In view of the idea that *fuparks* might have had a magical connotation, it is interesting to note that these younger *fuparks* were mostly written on wooden chips. The meaning or function of a magical connotation (cf. for instance Krause 1966:10ff.) attributed to a *fupark* has been the topic of some hot debate (Düwel 1992^c:91ff., and also IK 1, Text, p. 194). The abbreviated *fupark* can be understood as *pars pro toto* for the whole sequence of the runic alphabet and may therefore stand for "Ordnung, Vollständigkeit" (Düwel 1992^c:98). The context, though, of objects with the older *fupark* does not seem to point to a specific magical purpose.

From the Continent four *fupark* inscribed objects are known:

BREZA, pillar of a ruined (6th c.?) building near Sarajewo.

Aquincum, brooch found as part of a hoard under the entrance of the former Roman theatre at Budapest. Only **fuparkgw**.

Beuchte, brooch found in a woman's grave, context disturbed, but the runes may have been inscribed a short time before depositing the brooch, according to Düwel (see Continental Inscriptions). Only **fuparzj**.

Charnay, brooch found in a row-gravefield in Burgundy, France, context unknown. Complete *fupark*, of which the final runes are abraded.

From England two *fupark* inscriptions are known:

THAMES, a scramasax, 9th c., found at Battersea in the river.

BRANDON, a pin, 8th c., found at a settlement site in Norfolk, East Anglia.

5. LAPU

lapu f. *ō*-stem 'invitation, summons' (which might refer to the act of an offering, or the initiation to a cult), cf. ON. *lqð*, OE. *laðu* f. 'invitation'; IK translates "Zitation", i.e. the calling of supernatural forces. The word **lapu** only appears on bracteates, also in a shortened form: *Darum (I)-B* (IK 42), *Skonager (III)-C* (IK 163), *Højstrup-C* (IK 83), *Gurfiles-C* (IK 264), *Fünen-I-C* (IK 58), *Schonen (I)-B* (IK 149). *Welbeck Hill* has **law** or **lap**, probably short for **lap(u)**. **lapodu** on *Raum Trollhättan-A* reflects a *u*-stem and is masculine (Antonsen 1975:20).

6. LAUKAZ

laukaz seems to have magical or ritual connotations, possibly in connection with fertility and growth. In this sense, a word like this on an amulet might add to the concept of protection against evil or destruction. In several manuscript runerows the name of the rune **l** appears to refer to *laukaz* (although often the ms. rune names are obscure or distorted). A few manuscripts record for **l** the name *līn* (Heizmann 1992:370ff.). One is irresistibly inclined to associate this with the formulaic text on FLØKSAND **lina laukaz** 'linen & garlic, allium',

referring to the supposed preserving qualities of the combination of linen and garlic, as is suggested in the *Völsa þáttr* (see Krause 1966:85f.). **laukaz** is connected with fertility, sexuality, invocations and charms (Heizmann 1992:375 with ref.). Thus, Krause (1966:246f.), Antonsen (1975:63) and several others have proposed the intrinsic meaning 'prosperity'. Garlic was used as an antidote or medicine (cf. Saltveit 1991:138). **laukaz** is sometimes accompanied by other words, and appears (also abbreviated) on relatively many bracteates: *Års (II)-C* (IK 8), *Skrydstrup-B* (IK 166), *Börninge-C* (IK 26), *Schonen-(I)-B* (IK 149), and also on the FLØKSAND scraper. Shortened on: *Danmark (I)(?)-C* (IK 229), *Seeland (I)-C* (IK 330), *Allesø-B*, *Bolbro (I)-B* and *Vedby-B* (IK 13, 1, 2 and 3), also on *Hesselagergårds Skov-C*, *Hesselager-C*, *Südfünen-C* (IK nrs. 75,1, 2 and 3), *Maglemose (II)-C* (IK nr. 301), *Lynge Gyde-C* (IK nr. 289), and *Hammenhög-C* (IK nr. 267); maybe on *Nebenstedt (I)-B* (IK 128). Uncertain is: RYNKEBYGÅRD-C (IK 147: **lzolu**).



The Hitsum bracteate.

7. CHECKLIST RUNIC BRACTEATES

1. *Allesø-B*, *Bolbro (I)-B* and *Vedby-B*, Odense Amt, Funen, IK nrs. 13,1, 2 and 3, Taf. 15-16. All stray finds, turned up by a plough. The three bracteates are found on three separate spots near Odense. Related items are BIFRONS, IK nr. 23, *Nebenstedt (I)*, *(II)*, IK nrs. 128 and 129,1, DARUM (IV), IK nr. 129,2 and UFO IK nr. 361. The greater part of the runes run left. There are two segments, (a) running left: **lauz**, followed by a swastika, then: **owa**. (b) ; running left, **eapl**, followed by a division sign of two dots, then, running right, **tulz**, **l** reversed.

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The **l** of **lauz** shows only its upper part, due to lack of space. **lauz** is assumingly short for *laukaz* nsm. *a*-stem, 'leek, chives, garlic'. For the other runic sequences I can offer no interpretation.

2. *Års (II)-C*, Ålborg Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 8, Taf. 9-10. Hoard find, turned up by a plough. The hoard consisted of seven similar bracteates, two B-types, three C-types and three D-types; six ring-shaped goldpieces and one half of a glass bead. A related item is SCHLESWIG, IK nr. 325. The runes are on a base line, running right, **laukaz**.

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3. *Åsum-C*, Skåne, IK nr. 11, Taf. 11-12. Stray find, turned up by a plough. Related item is *Raum Sønderby*, IK nr. 340, here nr. 41. Swastika followed by runes running left between framing lines: **(e)heikakazfahi**.

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Krause (1966:268) interprets: **(e)he**, *ehē* 'for the horse', dative of **eh(w)az*, cf. *Tirup Heide*, nr. 43. **(e)he** reminds of *æhæ* in *Hantum*, (The Netherlands). **ik** 1 sg. personal pron.; the form **ik** may be Gothic or West Gmc. **akaz** nsm. *a*-stem, 'driver', ON *aka* 'to move, to drive, to lead'. It might be a PN, related names are ODan *Aki*, OE *Aca*, and ON *Aka-þórr*, which is an epithet of the god Thor. **fahi** 1. sg. pres. ind. 'I paint, draw' (the runes), inf. Gmc **faihjan*. *Sønderby* (nr. 41) has **ekfakazf**, interpreted as 'I, *Fakaz*, paint'. ON *fákr* means 'horse'.

4. *Bjørnerud-A*, Vestfold, IK nr. 24, Taf. 27-28. Stray find (?). Related items are MAEN and HAUGEN, IK nrs. 120, 1 and 2, SKÅTTEKÄR, IK nr. 160, TOSSENE, IK nr. 187; UFO IK nr. 196, HOLMETORP, IK nr. 279. Runes run left in segment near the head: **alu**.

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5. *Börringe-C*, Skåne, IK nr. 26, Taf. 29-30. Hoard find of four C-bracteates. Related item is ASMUNDSTORP, IK nr. 18. Runes run left below the horse's legs and behind figurine, reading **laukaz tanulu:al**.

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According to the photograph and drawing in the IK the reading **tanulu** is correct; there is no ***-nt-** in ***tantulu**, as proposed by Antonsen (1975:60). IK considers the etymology of ***tanulu** as uncertain; a nsf. *ō*-stem is proposed and tentatively a meaning 'protection, thrive'; **-ulu** might be a diminutive suffix. **al** is assumingly short for **alu**.

6. *Dänemark (I)-C*, IK nr. 229, Taf. 17-18. Find circumstances unknown. Related item BERESINA-RAUM, IK nr. 217. Runes run left between framing lines **lkaz**.

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Short for **l[au]kaz**.

7. *Darum (I)-B*, Ribe Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 42, Taf. 45-46. One of three similar bracteates. Hoard find from a bog consisting of eleven A-, B-, C- and D- bracteates, gold sword-sheath equipment, glass beads and a gold pendant. Related items are MADLA, IK nr. 117,1 and DJURGÅRDSÄNG, IK nr. 234. Runes run left, in two segments before and behind the head: **frohila** and **lapu**.

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IK is of the opinion that **frohila** is the name of the runemaster, a PN with suffix ***-ilan-**, cf. ON **Fraujila*, Go *Froila*, OHG *Froilo* 'little young lord', with **-h-** as hiatus marker. Might **frohila** be a sacral name for Balder? (Müller 1975). I guess the text refers to an initiation rite of a young warrior, just like the related text on the Darum (V)-C bracteate (below, nr. 8) and the Skonager (III)-C bracteate (below, nr. 38). Darum and Skonager are near Ribe and in both places large bracteate hoards were found. One is tempted to assume the existence of a cultplace there. **lapu** means 'invitation' (see above).

8. *Darum (V)-C*, Ribe Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 43, Taf. 47-48. Hoard find (see above, nr. 7). Runes run right; before the head is **alu**. Behind the horse is **niužil** < Gmc **niuja-* 'new' + *-ila*, diminutive suffix; Go *niujis*, OHG, OS *niuwi*.

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Compare also with the text **niuwila** on *Skonager (III)-C*, IK nr. 163, here nr. 38. According to Müller (1975:164f.) the name *niužil(a)* might concern Balder (see above; **frohila**), or otherwise it is an initiation name 'young newcomer'. Yet, *niužil(a)* might just be a PN, cf. OHG *Niwilo*. Antonsen (1975:59) reads *niu-jil-(a)*, nsm. *n-*stam 'little newcomer'. **niužil** reflects an East Gmc dialect, but it is remarkable that in the same region (westcoast of Jutland) an East Gmc and a West Gmc dialect (**niuwila**) appear to have been used side by side. Possibly,

15. *Halskov Overdrev-C*, Slagelse Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 70, Taf. 85-86. Hoard find from a gravel pit near the coast, found together with three gold spiral rings and several parts of gold rings. Related item is SJÖÄNDAN, IK nr. 159. Runes run left along the edge, partly abraded. The text probably starts in the top left-hand corner, first a swastika, then: **???**eturfahidelapo w (or þ, or Roman D) mhlsiiaeiaugrþnbkeiaz

Y 11M > 8 4 5 8 X / 11M 111 5 1 H M 4 8 4 11M 111 H 1 1 4 8 1 1 M

The first part can be divided into **???**etur fahide lapo 'Jetur (last part of a PN?) wrote the invitation', *fāhidē* 3 sg. pret. ind., the infinitive is Gmc **faihjan* 'to paint, to draw' (cf. *Åsum-C* nr. 3); *lapō*, asf. *ō*-stem, 'invitation'.

16. *Hammenhög-C*, Ingelstad, Skåne, IK nr. 267, Taf. 57-58. Stray find from a field. Runes run right in framing lines; the initial sign of the inscription resembles runic s. **lkaz**

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lkaz is assumingly short for **l[au]kaz**. The **l** has the form of the younger Danish **k**-rune.

17. *Heide-B*, Schleswig-Holstein, IK nr. 74, Taf. 91-92. Turned up by a plough. The bracteate probably originated from a grave mound. Related item is HAMBURG, IK nr. 71. Runes run right, **alu**.

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18. *Hesselagergårds Skov-C*, or *Fredskov-C*, *Hesselager-C* and *Südfünen-C*, Svendborg Amt, Funen. IK nrs. 75,1,2, and 3. Taf. 93-94. Three equal specimens found in three different find spots, all stray finds. Related item is *Maglemose (III)-C*, nr. 27. Five runes run widely separated along the edge **t e d o k**. A complex running right has **luzpa**. **luz** might be an abbreviation of **l[a]u[ka]z**. For the other runic sequences I have no interpretation.

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19. *Hitsum-A*, Friesland, IK nr. 76, Taf. 95-96. Related items are *Sievern*, here nr. 36, and *Undley*, here nr. 45. Unlocated find from a *terp*. Runes run left in two segments **fozo groba**.

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Fōzō might be a North Gmc female PN, nsf. *ō*-stem, or else it may reflect a connection with the tribal name of the *Fosii*. If the language is West Gmc (i.e. some Frankish dialect), the name may be a masculine PN, *Fozo*, nsm. *n*-stem. The form **groba** (ON *gróf*) reflects a West Gmc dialect, perhaps OS or OFris n/asf. *ō*-stem, cf. OHG *gruoba* 'groove, furrow'; possibly meaning 'belonging to a grave' (Seebold 1996:196), connected with Gmc **graban* 'to dig, make grooves', pret. **grōb-*. Seebold suggests a connection with a funeral rite.

20. *Hjørlande Mark-C* or *Slangerup* (now: Jørlande), Frederiksborg Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 78, Taf. 99-100. Hoard find with another three C-bracteates and a gold fingerring. Related item is BOLBRO, IK nr. 29. Runes run right: **alu**.

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21. *Højstrup Strand-C*, Præstø Amt, Sealand IK nr. 83, Taf. 105-106. Stray find, runes run left between framing lines, **laþu** 'invitation'.

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22. *Kjellers Mose-C*, Ringkøbing Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 289, Taf. 77-78. Related items are HOLMSLAND, IK nr. 84 and SEJERSLEV KLITTER, IK nr. 155. Hoard find from a bog; runes are partly illegible and run from left to right. IK reads **ll?? iualu**, which might be a combination of **alu** and, when reading from right to left: **ui** = $v\bar{i}$, cf. ON *vé* 'sanctuary, temple', OS *wīh* 'temple' and OHG, OS *wīh* 'holy'.

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If this were so, it would be another instance of a combination of **alu** and a religious concept, like there seems to be the case with the cult stone of ELGESEM (see above, in the introductory part).

23. *Kläggeröd-C*, Slimminge, Skåne, IK nr. 97, 1 and 2, Taf. 123-124. Hoard find from a field, consisting of four or five similar bracteates; on the same spot six or seven bracteates and a gold pendant were found later. Related item is KLÄGGERÖD-C, IK nrs. 96,1 - 4. The inscription has an upper line; the sidetwigs of the **a** run very low. Runes run left **alu**.

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24. *Lellinge Kohave-B*, Præstø Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 105, Taf. 131-132. Stray find. Related items are OBERMÖLLERN, IK nr. 132, RAVLUNDA, IK nr. 143 and SCHONEN (I)-B, IK nr. 149. Runes run left along the edge; triskele and swastika. The runes read **salusalu**.

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It appears that the **s**-like sign might be just a word divider, so probably one should read **alu** repeated twice. Also, the etymology and meaning of **salusalu** is obscure. Lundeby (1982) suggests a connection with Nynorsk *soll*, *søl*, an edible type of alga *Rhodomenia palmata* (see below, *Vadstena* nr. 47). There might be a connection with FLØKSAND **lina laukaz** (Lundeby & Williams 1992:19-21) concerning the nourishing qualities of **salu** = *alga* and **lina** 'linnen, flax' = edible part of flax, e.g. the seeds. This point of view may be applied to the enigmatic **alu** and **laukaz**, both referring to edible ware: 'ale' and 'leek, garlic, chives'. Antonsen interprets **sala** as 'offering', obviously inspired by the Gothic verb *saljan* 'to sacrifice'. Since on bracteates the occurrence of Latin (-inspired) words must be taken into account, I think Latin

salus ‘sound or whole condition, health’ or ‘a wish for one's welfare, greeting’ cannot be discarded. **salus alu** might be taken in the sense of a mixed Latin-Germanic text, as a result of cultural influence such as seems to be the case with *Fünen (I)-C*.

25. *Lindkær-C*, Randers Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 110, Taf. 139-140. Stray find from a field. Related item is *Overhornbæk (III)-C*, IK nr. 140. Runes run left along the edge **fuparkgwhnelatb?suao?u**.

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Approximately the same sequence of runes is found in *Overhornbæk (III)-C*, see below, nr. 31. **k** has the form of an upside-down **t** rune, also found in *Overhornbæk III*. The fact that this rune is regarded to present **k**, is prompted by its place in the *fupark* order. The whole sequence is taken as a *fupark* quotation, until **n** in the normal order. What follows are degenerated signs, according to IK.

26. *Lynge Gyde-C*, Frederiksborg Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 298, Taf. 83-84. Related items are mentioned below, nr. 28. Stray find near former gravemound. Runes run right, in framing lines: **lakz**; **l** retrograde.

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Short for **la[u]k[a]z**.

27. *Maglemose (III)-C*, Præstø Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 300, Taf. 87-88. Hoard find from a bog, containing a similar C-bracteate, *Maglemose II-C*, nr. 28 below, and one C-bracteate without runes. Furtheron the hoard consisted of four A-bracteates with runes, one big silver brooch and beads. Related items are *Fünen (I)-C* above nr. 10, and RANDERS, IK nr. 142. Runes running left under the horse's head, **ho.z**. To the right, runes running right: **all**. = **alu**. A third part has: **tk/lp?mhi?**, runes running left.

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IK interprets **ho.z** as an abbreviation for **houaz**, cf. *Fünen (I)-C*. Both bracteates are very similar indeed, although the legends differ. I would opt for the reading **ho[ra]z**, cf. nr. 11.

28. *Maglemose (II)-C*, Præstø Amt, Sealand, IK nr. 301, Taf. 87-88. Hoard find from a bog, containing three C-bracteates and four A-bracteates, a silver brooch and beads. Related items are AVERSI-C, IK nr. 215, FREDERIKSSTAD, IK nr. 244, *Hammenhög-C*, IK nr. 267, KJØLLER GÅRD, IK nr. 95, *Lynge Gyde-C*, IK nr. 298, *Seeland (I)-C*, IK nr. 330, SNESERE OVERDREV, IK nr. 175, RAUM TVED, IK nr. 357, and UFO IK nrs. 199 and 364. Runes run left (**k** reversed) between framing lines, **lkaz**, short for **l[au]kaz**.

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The **l**-rune has the typical bracteate form.

between framing lines along the edge: **rwrilu**, which assumingly is a misspelling for **rwrITU**, to be divided in **r**[unoz], apf. *ō*-stem ‘runes’, and **writu** 1 sg. pres. ind. ‘I write’. Note that the abbreviation **r** stands for ‘runes’, hence the **r** does not denote its name but has a semantical function, contrary to the symbolic use of **j** in the next item, below, nr. 37.

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37. *Skodborghus-B*, Haderslev Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 161, Taf. 207-208. Hoard find, which was turned up by a plough, together with three D-bracteates and a gold brooch with filigree and precious stones. A second hoard from the same spot has disappeared. Related item is SÆDDING, IK nr. 148. The runes run left along the edge between framing lines: **aujaalawinaujaalawinjalawid**.

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auja n/asn., see above, nr. 33. **alawin** PN or epithet, consisting of *ala* ‘all’ and *win(i)* ‘friend’, nsm. *i*-stem. **alawid** might be a PN too; Antonsen (1975:76f.) considers *-wid* as a nsm. or vocative *ja*-stem and compares with Go *ga-wadjon* ‘betroth’. He interprets the name as “All-leader”. The endings are lacking in *Alawin* and *Alawid*, likewise as in **alugod** on the *Værløse* brooch. This may be considered to reflect a West Gmc dialect. Otherwise *Alawin*, *Alugod* and *Alawid* should be taken as appellatives. The **j** before **alawid** appears to refer to the rune name of **j** **jāra*, meaning ‘year, harvest’, cf. **j** in *Stentoften* (Danish Corpus).

38. *Skonager (III)-C*, Ribe Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 163, Taf. 211-212. Hoard find, see above *Darum (V)-C*, nr. 8 and *Darum (I)-B*, nr. 7. The bracteate is found together with two similar items. They were part of a hoard, which was found while digging for peat. The total find consists of three C-bracteates with runes, one C-bracteate without inscription, seven D-bracteates, five A-bracteates of which four bear runes: SKONAGER (II)-A, DARUM (III)-A, IK nrs. 162,1 and 2; DARUM (II)-A and SKONAGER (I)-A, IK nrs. 41,1 and 41,2. Two bracteates are melted, so of the originally fifteen pieces thirteen are left. The *Skonager (III)-C* inscription consists of two segments with runes. Running right, under the horse's chin is: **niuwila**. Running left, under the man's foot is: **lþl**, which assumingly means *lþu*.

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niuwila = **niwjila*, < Gmc **newja-*, **niuja-* ‘new’, plus diminutive suffix *-ila*, cf. **niužil** in *Darum (V)-C*, nr. 8, and the OHG name *Niwilo*. Antonsen (1975:76) interprets **niuwila** as derived from PG **new-ja* + *-il-ōn* ‘little newcomer’ (see above, nrs. 7 and 8), showing gemination of *w* before *j* and therefore classified as West Germanic. Possibly the texts of *Darum (I)-B*: **frohila lþu**, *Darum (V)-C* **niužil alu**, *Skonager (III)-C* **niuwila l[a]þu**, all point to some sort of festivity (cf. Seebold 1996:196) in the neighbourhood of a cult-place. The sort of festivity may very well have concerned ‘rites of passage’, initiation rites for young warriors.


39. *Skrydstrup-B*, Haderslev Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 166, Taf. 215-216. Stray find in a marlpit. The iconography shows a man in full length, surrounded by a deer, a bird, two snakes and

another animal, maybe a wolf. There are two colons, runes running right: **laukaz**. Running left: **alu**.



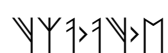
The man appears to hold his hand in the wolf's wide open mouth, a scene that may refer to the god Týr.

40. *Sønder Rind-B*, double bracteate, Viborg Amt, Jutland, IK nr. 341, Taf. 125-126. Hoard find, consisting of two similar double-bracteates. The runes are part of the ornamentation: a stylized image of a man with spear and sword. The runes are near the beast's tail, on a base line is **uinizik**.



The initial **i** may as well be part of the frame, hence the runic legend is **uinizik**. The text may be divided into **uiniz** and **ik**. I take it that here again we find a spelling **u** for *w*. *winiz* nsm. *i*-stem, **ik** 1 sg. personal pron., hence we get: *winiz ik* 'Friend (am) I' (cf. Düwel 1975:158f.). As to the sequence, see *Eskatorp*, nr. 10, **uuigaz** [e]k.

41. *Sønderby-C*, Femø, Maribo Amt, IK nr. 340, Taf. 123-124. Stray find at the beach in the water. Runes running left in framing lines: **ekfakazf**.



f might be an abbreviation for **fāhi* 1 sg. pres. ind. 'paint', inf. Gmc **faihjan*. The text is almost a parallel to *Åsum* nr. 3. There **fahi** is written in full, hence we have again an indication that abbreviations were used in runic texts. IK interprets: *ek fākaz f(āhi)*. *Fākaz* PN, nsm. *a*-stem, 'horse', cf. ON *fákr*; compare with **akaz** 'driver' and **(e)he** 'horse' in nr. 3. 'I, Fakaz, paint (the runes)'.
 42. *Svarteborg-M*, Bohuslän, IK nr. 181, Taf. 235-236. This fourth-century medallion-type predates the other bracteates by at least a century. Moreover, it is the only medallion-imitation bearing runes. It was found in a gravemound together with an urn with cremation, and this too is peculiar, since all other bracteates from that part of Scandinavia were deposited as hoards, or are stray finds. On the frontside are runes; the backside has capital-imitation and runelike signs.

The runic legend before the head runs left: **sigaduz l**.



The **s** rune is written in double lines, similar to the double **s** in *Bergakker* (The Netherlands, nr. 19, dated *ca.* 425). **sigaduz** may be a hypocoristic PN: **Sigi-haðuz*, or **sigaduz** may be taken as *sig(a)n(duz)* 'magician'. Düwel took the double-lined **s** as representing two times **s** (1975:144-157), and interpreted *S(i)sig(a)n(duz)* 'magician of *sisu*', which means some sort of magic concerning death rituals, cf. OS *siso* 'feierliche Klage, Leichenklage', or 'magical

incantation' (Syrett 1994:181f.). Parallel to Bergakker, it may be assumed that only one *s* should be read.

43. *Tirup Heide-C or Schonon (V)*, Skåne, IK nr. 352, Taf. 133-134. Related item is Broholm, IK nr. 35. Find circumstances unknown. The bracteate is quite worn, but the runes are legible, running right, **ehwu**, nsf. *wō*-stem, 'mare'.

ᚱᚻᚹ

44. *Tjurkö (I)-C or Målen*, Östra hd. Blekinge, IK nr. 184, Taf. 239-240. Hoard find of several bracteates and solidi of Theodosius II (408-450). Runes run left along the whole edge, between framing lines: **wurterunozanwalhakurne..heldazkunimudiu...**

... 𐌿𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹

The dots are division marks. **wurte** = **wurhtē*, 3 sg. pret. ind., inf. Gmc **wurkjan* 'to work, to make'; (cf. TUNE: **worahto**, ETELHEM: **wrte**, BY: **worte**). **runoz** = *rūnōz* apf. *ō*-stem 'runes'. **an** prep. 'on', cf. ON *á*. **walhakurne** *walhakurnē*, consisting of *walha*, cf. OHG *walh*, ON *Valir*, 'Romans, Celts, strangers anyhow', and *kurnē* dsn. *a*-stem 'granule' pointing to the strange (= imported gold) granule = the gold bracteate. **heldaz** PN, nsm. *a*-stem, cf. Proto-Norse **heldaz*, ON *hjaldr*, 'fight(er)' (De Vries 1962:230). **kunimu[n]diu** is the name of the receiver *Kunimu(n)duz*, a compound of: *kuni-* 'tribe, family', and: *mu(n)diu* dsm. *u*-stem, cf. OS, OE, ON *mund*, OHG *munt* 'hand, protection', Lat. *manus* 'hand'. Gmc **kunjamunduz* is 'protector of the gens', so the name might be a metaphor. There is another possible interpretation of *walhakurnē*. This concerns the meaning of Gmc **walha-* 'deep sleep', *vale(n)* in Old Swedish and Norwegian dialects (Kluge/Seebold 1989:484). A connection with Swedish *vallmo* 'poppy', may be involved, especially considering the associations with medicinal and possibly religious practices. It appears that poppies were cultivated from prehistory onwards. Since other texts on bracteates might point to edible and drinkable ware, such as **laukaz** and **alu**, a translation of *walhakurnē* as 'poppyhead, i.c. opium' cannot be discarded, in my view. Especially because of the intoxicating quality of opium, a ritual function might be involved, like seems to be the case with **alu**. The semantics of someone working runes on an opium seed box is no more difficult to understand than someone writing runes on a gold granule. 'Heldaz made the runes on the gold granule (= the bracteate, or the poppyhead) for the protector of the gens'.

45. *UFO-B and Schonon (I)-B, 1 and 2*, resp. IK nr. 149,2 and IK nr. 149,1, Taf. 191-192. Three similar items from two different find spots. *Schonon (I)-B, 1 and 2*, originate from a hoard, together with an A- and a C- bracteate. Related items are LELLINGE, IK nr. 105, RAVLUNDA, IK nr. 143, OBERMÖLLERN, IK nr. 132, and 3 items from GUDME. The runes run right and are on a base line: **lapulaukazga kazalu**.

𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹

One may read this as *lapu laukaz gakaz alu*. Twice **ka** and once **ga** are written in bindrunes, cf. above nrs. 45 and 39. **ka** occurs in *Skrydstrup-B*, IK nr. 166; **ga** is in *Kragehul* and *Und-*

ley. ga(u)kaz, nsm. *a*-stem, might denote a bird, but Düwel (1984:332) thinks an interpretation of **gakaz** as *gaukaz* ‘cuckoo’ (cf. Krause 1966:256f.) not very convincing. He considers a PN also unlikely, since an ‘I-formula’ and/or a verbform is lacking. The legend appears to me an enumeration of formulaic words with a positive intent.

46. *Undley-A*, Suffolk; England, IK nr. 374b, Taf. 151-152. The bracteate is an unstratified and unassociated find made by a farmer on his land (Hines 1987:74; a drawing of the runes in Hines 1990^b:440). Seen in the BM, London. The runes run from right to left, rendering **gagoga maga medu**.

AMM̄·1X1M̄·X̄⇒XX

The part **gagoga** is written with three rune-crosses, nearly similar to **gagaga** in *Kragehul* (Danish Corpus). Since the language may be pre-Old English, the transliteration probably should be: **gægogæ mægæ medu**. **ga-* became **gæ-* in pre-OE through fronting. The unaccented final vowel in **gægogæ** may be *æ*, as unaccented *a* > *æ* (Campbell § 333). The transliteration of the second colon is more difficult, it could be **maga** according to the rule of restoration of *ā* before back vowels, cf. Campbell § 157, § 574 (analogous to *daga*). *maga* gpm. *u*-stem: ‘of the kinsmen’. **medu** nsf. *ō*-stem ‘reward’, cf. OE *mēd*, *meord* < Gmc **mezdō* (Campbell § 585, 588). The text would then be: ‘*gægogæ* reward of the kinsmen’.

The Undley inscription may show the very instance of the rune f representing both sounds *æ* en *a* (cf. Odenstedt 1991:53-69). The sequence **gægogæ** should be considered as an echo of the obscure **gagaga** in *Kragehul*. However, Eichner (1990:317, note 20) draws attention to a remarkable parallel in *Beowulf*, which he chooses not to relate with the Undley text: "Fern bleibt freilich *Beowulf* 247 *māga gemēdu* ‘die Zustimmung der Stammesgenossen’ (...)". It would seem to me, though, that there may be something in this. The text in *Beowulf* concerns the landing of the *Wederas* on the Danish coast, where they are met by *Hrothgar*'s thane, who powerful shakes his mighty spearshaft in his hand and says, among other things, "Never have warriors bearing shields made their approach more openly, and yet you had no knowledge of the warriors' password agreed on by our kinsfolk". This is the translation by Garmonsway/Simpson (1980:9) of the sentence *nē gē lēafnes-word gūð-fremmendra gearwe ne wisson, māga gemēdu*. The translation by Wrenn/Bolton (1973:107) is: "nor did you make certain of having the permission, the consent of the warlike kinsmen"; Wrenn/Bolton add: "*Lēafnes-word* is parallel variation to *gemēdu*". I conjecture: if Undley contains a similar text, albeit in a shortened version, would it be possible to take **gægogæ** as the *password*? After all, the inscription is in runes on a bracteate, which can be considered an important object in gift-exchanging networks among the Germanic elite of the Migration Period. If the Undley text is taken as *māga (ge)mēdu* the meaning would be: *māga* ‘of the kinsmen’; *gemēdu* apn. *ja*-stem ‘consent’; hence: ‘*gægogæ* = the password, the kinsmen's consent’.

47. *Vadstena-C*, Östergötland, IK nr. 377,1 and *Motala = Raum Mariedam*, IK 377,2, Taf. 157-158. These are similar bracteates from two different find spots, *Vadstena* comes from a hoard, the other is an UFO. The *Vadstena* original has been stolen in 1938; IK used a copy for the description. Related items are NORRA TORLUNDA, IK nr. 130, RAVNSTORP, IK nr. 313, SILLEBY MELLANGÅRDEN, IK nr. 334, VIBY, IK nr. 381.

VII. CONTINENTAL RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS (from ca. 200 - 700)

1. Introduction

The Continental Runic Corpus contains mainly inscriptions from Germany, complemented with attestations from France, Belgium, Hungary and Switzerland. The bracteates from Nebenstedt and Sievern (5th c.) are listed among the Bracteate Corpus (nrs. 29 and 36). The Thorsberg (Schleswig-Holstein) objects are included here, since these objects originate from a region between Lower Elbe and Rhine, i.e. the Continent. The inscriptions are probably made during the production process (see Chapter II, 4.3). The runic items from the Netherlands are treated in a separate Chapter (nr. IX), although, from a geographical point of view, one might want to list them among the Continental Corpus (cf. Arntz & Zeiss 1939). The reason they are not included in The Continental Corpus is their *status aparte*, and their being linked especially to the English runic tradition, although they can be linked to the Danish and the Continental traditions, too.

The Continental inscriptions are also known as the South-Germanic Runic Corpus.

Epigraphical runic writing on the Continent is recorded from *circa* 200 - 700. Although its runic character is disputed, the oldest item might be the Meldorf fibula (first half first century, found in Schleswig-Holstein). This brooch shows an inscription that can be interpreted as Roman: IDIN 'for Ida', or as runic: **hiwi** 'spouse'. Seebold (1994^a:64) regards the lettering as 'untypical' but apparently runic, since he transliterates in bold lettering **idin** 'for Ida', although runologically this cannot be defended; for instance the form of Roman N cannot be transliterated **n**, but should be **h** in runic terms. The sign in the form of a Roman D may be a rune representing **w** or **þ**. Stoklund (1994^a:96) agrees with Düwel & Gebühr (1981:166,169) that the inscription was meant only as an ornamental filling in of the surface. I think it is writing of some sort. In the area around Meldorf near the westcoast of Schleswig-Holstein many Roman artifacts have been found, dating from the first half of the first century AD⁶⁶. The brooch itself is of local manufacture, and so is the inscription, made in the so-called tremolo-style⁶⁷.

The host of inscriptions date from *circa* 500-700, well within the Merovingian period. The runic stock belongs to the older *fupark* exclusively. Characteristic is the almost exclusive use of double-barred **h** H . A runic variety is a **k** rune resembling the younger Scandinavian *fupark* **k** K , used to render either *k* or *ch* in Griesheim *Cholo* and Nordendorf II *elch*. A peculiar variety of the **l** rune L , known from bracteate-legends, is found in Griesheim and Charnay. Furthermore the *Sternrune* **g** G appears in Eichstetten, and an ornamental form of the **z** rune Z in Charnay and Balingen. Bindrunes in uncommon combinations occur, for instance in

⁶⁶ At the beginning of the first century AD, the Roman empire reached its largest expansion. On the continent the troops came as far as the mouth of the river Elbe, which is quite near the later village of Meldorf on the North Sea coast.

⁶⁷ Tremolo-style is a decoration-style. Letters or runes are made by way of zig-zag lines instead of straight lines. This decoration pattern can be found fairly often on all kinds of metal objects; for instance on Øvre Stabu, Næsbjerg, Donzdorf. One may conclude from this that runes were known among metal-smiths, not only as ornamentation signs, but, since the runes form words, also as a script.

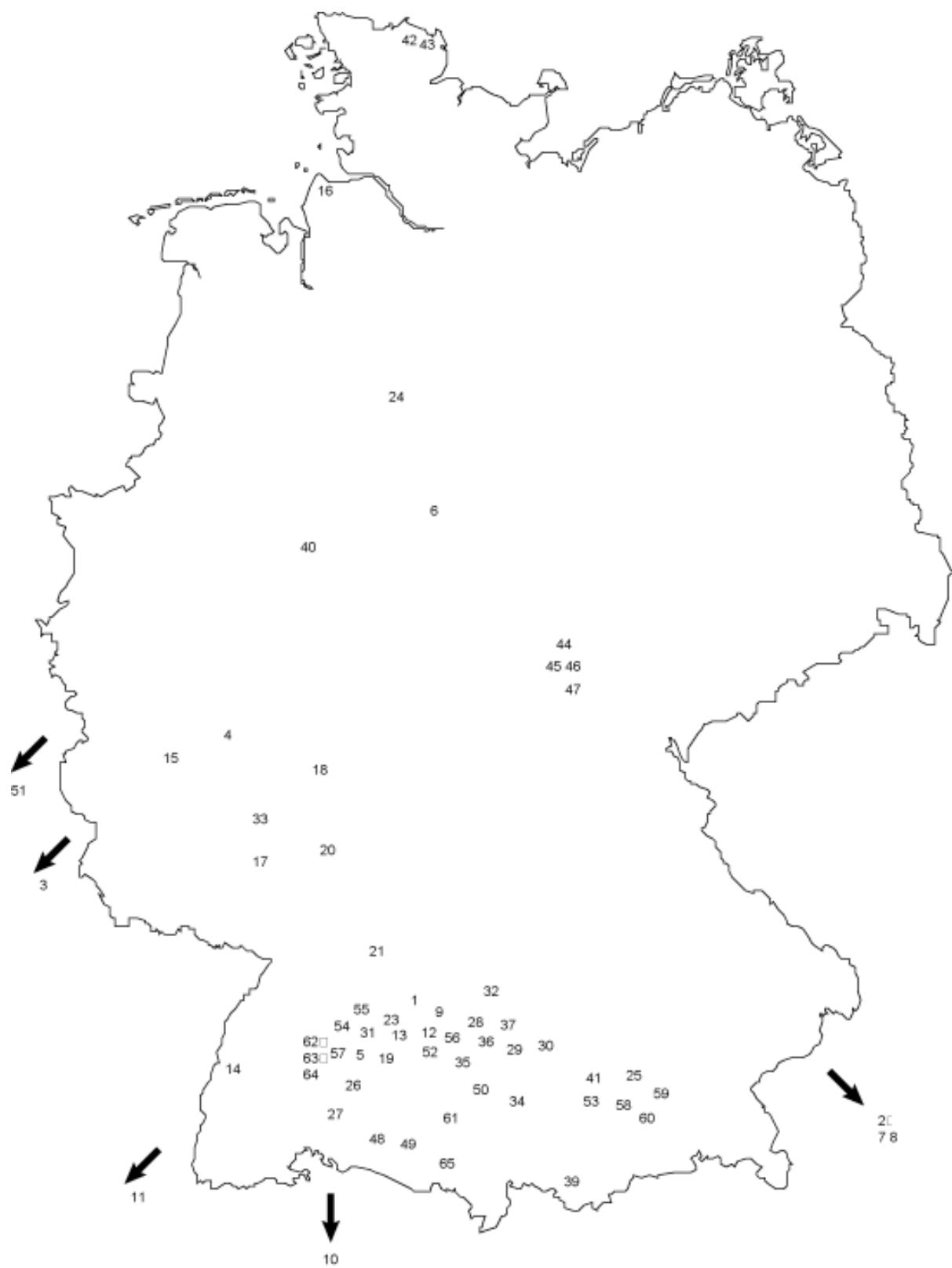
Kirchheim Teck and Neudingen-Baar I; 'rune-crosses' occur for instance in Soest and Schretzheim III. The loops of the **b** rune are mostly widely separated, which occurs fairly often in Continental and Frisian inscriptions (cf. also Odenstedt 1990:93-96), but less frequently in early English inscriptions. I wonder whether this way of writing with relatively long hasta's has been influenced by Merovingian manuscript-writing in the so-called Rhine-Frankish script type, with angular, high and narrow letterforms. Another characteristic feature is that the runic items are all precious objects with only one exception: the wooden stave of Neudingen-Baar, which is probably part of a weaving loom and, therefore, the only utensil. Geographically, the greater part of the objects has been found in Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, less frequently in the Middle-Rhine area and Thuringia and only a few in North Germany. The objects from Hungary, Belgium, Switzerland, France and England ('Kent') may be referred to as outliers from a runic centre, which seems to have had its nucleus in South and Central Germany. On the other hand, the possible existence of a Frankish runic tradition may not be overlooked (see for instance Chapter III, 9.8.).

Runic objects found in North Germany belong to the oldest attestations. The two Thorsberg finds date from *circa* 200 AD. Others date from the Migration Period, such as Fallward near Cuxhaven (early 5th c.), which was dug up from among the remains of an exceptional ship burial in a graveyard. The runic inscriptions (if genuine!) from the Weser estuary cannot be dated, since the inscriptions were made on subfossile bones (Pieper 1989; Stoklund 1994:95). Furthermore there are the silver disc from Liebenau (4th c.) and the bracteates from Sievern and Nebenstedt (5th c.), all in Niedersachsen. The only Migration Period item from southern Germany is the silver neckring from Aalen (5th c.), an unlocated find.

Falsifications are the items known as: Rubring, Trier, Kärlich, Arguel, Kleines Schulerloch. (About Kärlich and Kleines Schulerloch see Düwel in *Hoops Reallexikon*: 'Fälschungen'). I have not inspected these items, but find-histories and photographs were self-evident.

Recent surveys of the South Germanic or Continental Corpus: Opitz 1977, 1979, 1982, 1986; Düwel 1991 and 1994. Older surveys: Arntz & Zeiss 1939, Krause & Jankuhn 1966, Jänichen 1967. The datings of the objects are based on Roth 1981, and on personal communication with individual archaeologists, e.g. Dr. Wamers (Aalen), Dr. Czysc (Pforzen) and Volker Hilberg (Griesheim). I have personally examined most inscriptions, but in some cases I had to rely on photographs (Aquincum, Bezenye, Dischingen (lost), Engers (lost), Friedberg (lost), Gammertingen, Heilbronn-Böckingen, Schretzheim II (not available for inspection), Weimar III (lost), Chéhéry (not available for inspection), Weingarten III (not available for inspection). The objects are listed alphabetically.

Map 7. Findspots of runic objects in Germany.



2. CHECKLIST OF CONTINENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

Legible and (partly) interpretable inscriptions.

1. Aalen (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), silver neckring with almandine-inlay, dated 1st half 5th c.; the almandines are added in the 6th c. Said to be found in 1945 near Aalen. Seen in the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Frankfurt am Main. It has four runes **noru** scratched onto the inner edge opposite of the catch.

†XRN

This may be the name of the owner. **noru** < Gmc **nōruz*, nsm. *u*-stem *Noru*. Torques ornamented like the Aalen one are known in an area that stretches from Scandinavia to Rumania, with a centre around the Main. They are classical Roman in origin, and belong to the "elbgermanisch-alamannischen Horizont der ersten Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts" (Wamers 1986:20f.). Such neckrings seem to be a sign of the ruling status of a prominent man (Düwel 1991:282).


2. Aquincum (Budapest, Hungary), Langobardic or Suebic gilt-silver bow-fibula, one of a pair. Dated 1st h. 6th c. The pair was found in 1940 as part of a hoard near the entrance of the Roman theatre of Aquincum. Now in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest.

The runes read **fuparkgw ?laig : kingia**.

ƿNÞfIN<XÞ fflX : <ϕlf

The first part is a *futhark*-quotation, followed, in my opinion, by an owner-formula. The initial runes: **?l** immediately follow upon the needle holder and assumingly were part of a longer inscription, which may have contained a name. Hence, the needle-holder is a later addition. The inscription may therefore have been made during the production process of the brooch. The rune, which I transliterate as **g** has been read as **n** by Krause (1964:357), but since both strokes are about equally long, I suppose a **g** must be read. Thus emerges a verbform: **aig** 1 or 3 sg. pres. ind. 'own', cf. Go. *aih*, inf. Gmc **aigan* 'to own'. **kingia** = *kingia* asf. *jō*-stem, (Krause 1964:357f.; Gering, 1887:94: *kinga* "Henkelmünze von frauen als schmuck getragen". The sound value of the rune \uparrow apparently is [iŋ] here, but might as well be [ŋ] (Odenstedt 1990:103ff. with ref.). This rune is followed by **i**, but if the sequence is reversed, it reads *kinga*, *ō*-stem. This would be more suitable, since there is a semantical difference between *kingia* and *kinga* (Düwel 1992^a:80). ON and NlC *kinga* means 'brooch', while NlC *kingja* is a sort of buckle. 'I owns the brooch'.

3. Arlon (Luxembourg, Belgium), silver bulla, dated 1st th. 7th c. Found in 1936 in Frankish row-gravefield (Roosens & Alenus-Lecerf 1965:119-127). Seen in Musée Luxembourgeois, Arlon. The runes read: **godun o e srasuwa(m)ud wo?gt**

XOMN† Ɱ M ꝛ RƿENPF NMP 

The spare parts indicate the lost runes that have vanished together with parts of the bulla. **godun** is a PN, dsf. *n*-stem: 'for Goda'. **rasuwa(m)u[n]d** is probably also a PN, nsm. *Rasuw-amund*; the first element is **rasuwa-**, cf. OE *ræswa* 'leader, ruler'. The (**m**) in **rasuwa(m)u[n]d** has weathered away. The [n] in *-mund* has been omitted before the homorganic *d*, a common practice in runic writing. The second element *-mund*, < Gmc **mundō* 'hand, protection, security', is originally a feminine *ō*-stem. However, names ending in *-mund* are masculine among the Franks (cf. Gregory of Tours' *Historiae Francorum*). The centre of manufacture of *bullae* was Mainz, but Franconian names would not have been out of the ordinary, since Mainz had a Rhine-Franconian dialect in OHG times. The last rune might be **t**, although its sidetwigs are missing. The third rune in **wo?gt** may be a damaged **r**, in view of what is left of the rune. **wo(r)gt** may be taken as a verbform: *worgt* = *worhta*, 3 sg. pret. ind. of OHG *wurken* 'to work, to make'. The inscription would thus be a maker's formula. Nedoma (1992:6) offers another proposal. Inspired by the recorded name *Votriilo* he suggests to read a PN *wōpro*.

4. *Bad Ems* (Hessen, Germany), fragment of a gilt-silver bow-fibula, dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1878, probably Frankish (Werner 1935:329f.). Now in Römisches-Germanisches Museum, Köln.

The runes are clearly legible and inscribed in two parts opposite each other on the footplate, which is the only part of the brooch that is left. The runes read:]**madali**+ **ubada**].

MFMF|+ NBFMF

There may have been more runes preceding]**madali** and following **ubada**]. The left half of the **m** is broken away with the rest of the brooch, the **l** is smaller than the preceding **a** and the next **i**. The little cross following **madali** may be a word-divider (Krause 1935:331ff.), or a Christian marking, cf. *Osthofen*, nr. 32. **madali** is according to Krause (1935:332) a PN nsm. based on Gmc **maþla-* 'redenswerte Sache', with svarabhakti *-a-*: **maþala*, **maðala*. Cf. also OHG *mahal* 'Gerichtsstätte, Versammlung' (Gottschald 1982:337). The **d** rune in the inscription denotes the voiced allophone of *þ* according to Krause. *Arum* (The Netherlands) shows a parallel: **edæ** = *ēðæ* = *ēthæ* 'oath'. **madali** could be a man's name, nsm. *ja*-stem *Madali*; or a woman's name derived from *Madala*, nsf. *ō*- or *n*-stem (Kaufmann 1965:97). In **ubada** the nasal before homorganic **b** may be omitted: Krause (1935:332f.) reads *umbada*; a merger of *umbi* 'around' and (*gi*)*bada* 'consolation'. Another possibility may be a hypocoristic woman's name: *U-bada* nsf. *wō*-stem; *-bada* cf. ON *bǫð*, OE *beadu* 'battle', cf. *Loveden Hill* (English Corpus, nr. 7) *Sipæbaed*.

5. *Balingen* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), golden disc-brooch with almandine-inlay. Date 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1872 in a row-gravefield. Seen in Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart. The runes run from right to left between two concentric circles and read:
a u/r zdnloamiluk.

<AUMIUXI+MXXII

The **k** is retrograde and has the form of a little hook, which is also found on *Aquincum*, *Charnay* and *Kent*. **z** has the elaborated Charnay-form, with one sidetwig missing. The initial rune **a**, is followed by an enigmatic runeform, it might be a failure of **u** or **r**, or even **i** and **s**. Opitz (1977:9) suggested to read *a(ns)uz*, but this is conjecture to my mind. The sequence that follows, is **dnlo** = **d[a]n[i]lo**? *Danilo* is probably a PN, cf. Gothic PNs like *Danus*, *Danila*. *Danilo* is nsm. *n*-stem, with diminutive *-l-* suffix; *Amilu(n)k* may be a patronymic, according to Krause (1966:303) and Opitz (1977:9). The root **am* and its elaboration **amal* (Gottschild 1982:87) may point to a connection with the East Gothic royal family of the *Amalians*.

6. *Beuchte* (Niedersachsen, Germany), gilt-silver relief bow-fibula, date mid 6th c. Found in 1955 in a woman's grave in a claypit. Seen in Braunschweigisches Landesmuseum, Wolfenbüttel. The brooch is of a Scandinavian type, though its provenance may be the Middle-Rhine area. The other gravegifts come from Thuringia and the Lower-Elbe region. According to Düwel (1983:124; 1991:278f. and 1992^b:355) the brooch was inscribed shortly before depositing.

Two rune sequences on the backside read: **fuparzj buirso**.

𐌺𐌺𐌱𐌹𐌺𐌵𐌶𐌰 𐌲𐌺𐌹𐌶𐌶𐌰

On the footplate are some ornamental lines. **fuparzj** is a *fupark*-quotation. The function of *fupark*-quotations is unclear (see Corpus Bracteates). **buirso** = *buriso*, which may be a female PN, *n/dsf. ō*-stem, or a masculine PN, nsm. *n*-stem *Buriso*.

7, 8. *Bezenye I, II*, also known as Paltersdorf (Komitat Mosony, Hungary), a pair of silver bow-fibulae, both with runes. Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1885 in a woman's grave in a row graveyard. Now in the Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest. (Arntz & Zeiss 1939:326; Opitz 1977:11). The runes read:

I: **godahid unj?**

𐌺𐌴𐌸𐌳𐌹𐌺𐌵𐌶𐌰 𐌺𐌶𐌶𐌰

godahid is a PN., a compound of *Goda-* (see above, nr. 3) and *-hi(l)d* < Gmc **hildjō*, dsf. *jō*-stem, ending has dropped, 'to Godahi(l)d'. The second word Krause (1966:300) tentatively read as **unja**; the **a** is uncertain. Krause supposed **unja** to be miswritten for *wunja* *n/asf. jō*-stem, "Wonne" = 'joy'. But initial *w* is retained before vowels in OHG (Braune/Eggers § 106).

II: **?arsiboda segun**.

𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌶𐌴𐌸𐌶𐌰 𐌶𐌺𐌶𐌶𐌰

arsiboda might be preceded by a **k** in the roof form: \wedge like in *Pforzen* (see below), but seems incomplete (on the photograph); the stroke may be an ingress sign. **arsiboda** PN *gsf. ō*-stem *Arsiboda's*. The **b** only shows one loop (Düwel 1994:234). **segun** = OHG *segun*, nsm. *a*-stem, 'bless', which points to Christian influence (Düwel 1982:40). There is variation in **s**-runes: one has four strokes, one three. 'To Godahi(l)d, (with) sympathy (?), Arsiboda's bless'.

9. Bopfingen (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), golden(?) disc-brooch with runes. Dated end 6th c. Found in a woman's grave. Seen in Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart. The runes read **mauo**.



This may be taken either as *mauō* or *mawō*, in the latter case **u** is used for *w*. In OHG manuscript orthography the use of *u*, *uu* for *w* is common, cf. also **urait** for *wrait*, below, nr. 27, and bracteates *Nebenstedt* and *Raum Køge* (Bracteate Corpus, nrs. 29, 32) with, resp. **uū** and **farauisa**. *Mawō* dsf. *ō*-stem, 'for the girl', cf. OHG **mau(w)a*, cf. Go. *mawi* f. 'girl'. A brooch is a typical woman's adornment, often obtained at a young age. Another interpretation could be an Alamannic or Frankish man's name, *Mauo*, nsm. *n*-stem.

10. Bülach (Kanton Zürich, Switzerland), Alamannic silver disc-brooch with almandine-inlay. Dated 3rd th. 6th. Found in 1927 in a woman's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, Zürich.

The runes are carved in three rows below each other and read: **frifridil du aftmu**.



Both in this inscription as in those from Bezenye (above, nrs. 7 and 8), the **d** rune has been realised by cutting the vertical strokes first and then the cross in between: |X| **frifridil** nsm. *a*-stem, 'husband', or it is a PN, *Frifridil*, a petname. **du** 2 sg. pers. pron. 'you', although instead of *du* one would have expected a spelling *bu* in the 6th c. In the third row I read an **a** and a retrograde **f**, carved at some distance from each other, followed by **tmu**. Initial **f** of **frifridil** is also retrograde. There is an **l**-looking form to the right hand bottom and some scratches. Perhaps **aft** may be interpreted as 'after, later', see also *Oberflacht* **afd**. (Other interpretations: Opitz 1977:14; Krause 1966:307f.; Arntz 1939:171). An interpretation of the whole text seems impossible.

11. Charnay (Burgundy, France), silver bow-fibula. Dated 2nd th. 6th c. Found in 1830 in a Frankish row-gravefield (Düwel & Roth 1981:372-375 and Düwel 1994:278f.) on the bank of the Saône. Seen in Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye, France.

The runes are carved between framing lines on the headplate: **fuparkgwhnijpztblem :upfnpai:id dan:liano**



On the footplate is: **īia**. The fibula is broken; the cracks have damaged the **h** rune; some other two runes on the footplate are invisible now (see the photograph in the *Reallexikon*, entry Charnay, Tafel 20; and the drawing in Krause 1966:21). The runic text consists of a nearly complete *fupark*; the final runes: **d** and **o** are abraded. **p** has the form of an upside down **e** rune: ʞ .

The text continues with *uþf(i)npai*, reflecting an East Germanic dialect, 3 sg. pres. opt. 'may he/she find out, get to know', inf. **uþfinþan*. **iddan** is a PN asm. *n*-stem *Idda*, which must be the object of the sentence. Subject is then **liano**, PN nsm. *n*-stem *Liano*, or PN nsf. *ō*-stem *Liano*. The **I** in **liano** is a rare variety, it has the form of the Anglo-Saxon *cēn* rune 𐌺 and is also found in *Griesheim* below, nr. 20. Curiously enough, the **I** in the *fupark* on the same brooch has the common form 𐌺 . The **k** rune in the *fupark* is rendered 𐌿 . For **īia** I have no interpretation. (Arntz 1939:173, 192; Krause 1966:20f.; Antonsen 1975:77). 'fupark. May Liano get to know/find out Idda'.

12. *Dischingen I* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), one of a pair of silver bow-fibulae with almandine-inlay. Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1954, now missing.

Both brooches are inscribed.

I: **wigka** or **winka**.

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II: **ea** or **el**, see below nr. 52.

wigka is probably a PN, nsf. with diminutive ending *-ka*, *ō*- or *n*-stem, first part *wīg-* < Gmc **wīg-*, OHG *wīg*, *wīc*, m. or n. 'battle', inf. OHG *wīgan* 'to fight'. The strokes of the **g**-rune are not equally long, so an **n**-rune might be read as well. Thus we get **winka**, *win-* cf. OHG *wini* m. 'friend'. The **k** rune has the form of a 'roof' \wedge , which is also found in *Pforzen*, *München-Aubing III*, *Watchfield* (England), and possibly *Neudingen-Baar*.

13. *Donzdorf* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), a pair of Scandinavian silver bow-fibulae, in all likelihood imported from Jutland. Dated 1st h. 6th c. Found in 1964 in a rich woman's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart.

One of the brooches bears runes, reading **eho**.

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Runes and decoration are carved in tremolo-technique, otherwise known from ØVRE STABU (Norway), MELDORF (Schleswig-Holstein) and *Næsbjerg* (Denmark). The **h** rune is single-barred, which may point to Scandinavian influence. According to Düwel (1994^b:237, 265) this is an instance of the very rare makers' inscriptions in the German corpus (the others are, according to Düwel, *Wurmlingen* and *Schretzheim III*). The **eho** inscription is part of the overall ornamentation of the back of the brooch. **eho** may be a feminine PN, nsf. *ō*-stem *Ehō*. Otherwise it could be a masculine PN, nsm. *n*-stem *Eho*. The **h** may represent [x] or [ç]. OS has *ehuscalcos* 'horsegrooms'. Germanic PNs with an element 'horse' are quite rare, according to Stanley (1990:61), but there are the mythological brothers *Hengest* and *Horsa*: 'Stallion' and 'Horse', and the moneyer's name on hundreds of *sceattas*: **epa** or **æpa**, a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, *Epa*, *Æpa*, based on Celtic *Epo* 'horse' (Kaufmann 1965:14). Wulf (1994:32) is of the opinion that horse designations as element in PNs are quite common (and not only in Germanic). Also **æhæ** *Hantum* (Dutch Corpus), (**e**)**he** (*Åsum*) and **ehwu** (*Tirup Heide*) belong to this name category (taken they are names). (Jänichen 1967:234; Düwel & Roth 1977:410; Peterson 1994^b:144f.).

14. *Eichstetten* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), silver mouthpiece of a spatha. Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1980 in a man's grave. Seen in Museum für Ur- und Frühgeschichte 'Colombischlössle', Freiburg.

The runes read: **fiaginþ muni wiwogan**.

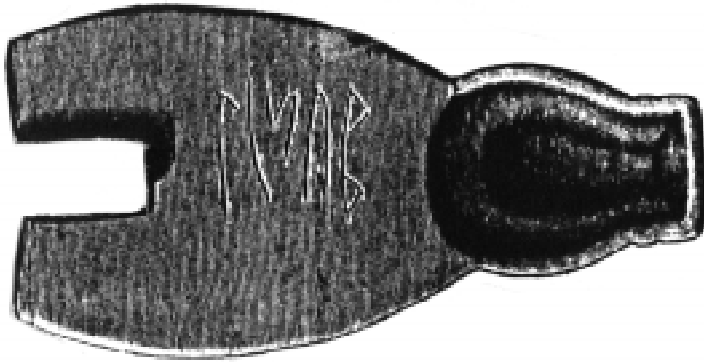


The **w** runes have exceedingly large loops, like in *Schweindorf* (see Dutch Corpus). Such a runic form for **w** appears particularly on runic coins. The **g** in **wiwogan** is rendered \times ; the **g** in **fiaginþ** is the so-called *Sternrune* †, otherwise in Germany known from Anglo-Saxon runerows in manuscripts and the GANDERSHEIM box (Schwab 1973). The *Sternrune* is epigraphically attested in England: DOVER **jislheard** and THORNHILL III **jilsuiþ**, and in the Netherlands *Westeremden A* **adujislu jisuhil[1]du**. The rune appears in these five cases in the same sequence $j\bar{i}/g\bar{i}$ (see also Parsons 1994:201-204). In **fiaginþ** the last two runes **þ** are written as a bindrune. The feature bindrune is also well-known from Anglo-Saxon inscriptions on the Continent, e.g. from the pilgrims' names at Monte St. Angelo in Italy. **fiaginþ** I take to be a PN nsf. $j\bar{o}$ -stem *Fiaginth*, cf. *Fiaspurc* (Förstemann 1990:504); *-ginth* may be a misspelling for *-gunth*, OHG *-gund* nsf. $j\bar{o}$ -stem 'battle', a frequent suffix in women's names, cf. *Schretzheim I*. (Note that both *-birg* and *-burg* occur as second name-element).

wiwogan may be a PN too, asm. n -stem. Other names with initial $w\bar{w}$ - in runic inscriptions are: **wiwaz** (TUNE) 'the darting-one' (Antonsen 1975:44f.) and **wiwila** (VEBLUNGSNES). The element **wi-** might be connected with OHG *wīgan* 'to fight', especially because of the *-g-* in *wiwogan*, taken that the name is a variation on OHG *wīgant* 'warrior'. A connection with *wīhen* 'to consecrate' is less probable. Wulf (1994:36ff.) is of the opinion that in cases like these a connection with 'to fight' is likely, since all runic attestations of 'consecrator, consecrating' are doubtful (perhaps except for bracteate inscriptions; about the problem of who consecrates and what is to be consecrated, see Seebold 1994^b:612ff.). $W\bar{w}o-$ may be a variation on OHG names like *Wīwa*, *Wīwila*. Förstemann (1990:1626) mentions VIV as an enigmatic root; Peterson (1994^b:147-149, with ref.) says about *Wīwaz* etc.: "an extremely tricky group of names". **muni** 3 sg. opt. 'may F. remember', cf. Go. *ga-munan* 'to remember'. As a whole, the text can be taken as: 'may Fiaginth remember Wiwoga'. The graphic representation of the **w** rune and the use of the *Sternrune* may point to an English or Frisian (-influenced) runographer. (Another reading and interpretation: Opitz 1982).

15. *Engers* (Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany), gilt-silver bow-fibula. Found in a woman's grave in a Frankish row-gravefield near Kaltenengers in 1885. Dated 3rd th. 6th c. Melted. The runes read **leub**.

Two interpretations are possible: 1. noun., nsn. a -stem 'love'. 2. adj. nsm./f./n. a -/ \bar{o} -stem 'dear, beloved' (see also *Niederstotzingen*, here nr. 28). According to the drawing in Henning (1889:156) the form of the **e** rune resembles the peculiar form of **e** in *Bergakker*, (The Netherlands). Both objects may have belonged to Franks, living in the Rhine area. The name-element *Leub-* is typical for the Rhine region (Weisgerber 1966/67:220).



Engers fibula. (Taken from R. Henning - Die deutschen Runendenkmäler, Strassburg 1889, fig. 19).

16. *Fallward* (Niedersachsen, Germany), a wooden footstool, richly decorated in *Kerbschnitt* after Mediterranean fashion. It was found in 1994 during excavations of a graveyard near Wremen, 4 km. south of the well-known *terp* of Feddersen Wierde (Düwel 1994^a:14ff.). Seen in Museum Bederkesa.

The stool has on one side a sketch of a dog chasing a deer or elk, and on the other side a runic inscription: **ksamella lguskapi**. The runes run left.

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The first **a** in **ksamella** has three sidetwigs, which reminds of the so-called ornamental forms of the *Oostum* inscription (The Netherlands), showing a **b** with three loops and an **h** with three bars. The **s** runes are in three strokes. The **k** rune has been rendered as a little hook, such as in *Balingen*, *Charnay*, *Aquincum* and *Kent*. **ksamella** is a misspelling for *skamella*, cf. Latin *scamellus*, German *Schemel* 'footstool'. **lguskapi** can be read either *l(a)guskapi* (cf. *Illerup lagupewa*) or *(a)lguskapi*. Its initial **a** is the ultimate rune of *skamella*. Presumably, *Alguskapi* is a name. The second element *-skapi* may be 2 sg. imp. of **skapjan* 'to hurt, to damage' (Antonsen 1975:54), cf. **hahaskapi** on the STRØM wetstone; in Krause's (1966:112) transliteration and interpretation *hāhā skapi*, 3 sg. opt. 'damage the growth'. Other possibilities: a nomen actionis 'hurt', or a nomen agentis 'hurter', either male or female, *i*-stem (compare the Dutch name *Tesselschade*, daughter of a ship-owner who lost part of his fleet in a terrible storm near the island Tessel). *Skaði* is also known as the name of the giantess whom *Njǫrðr*, god of the sea, married. **algu-** 'elk', ON *elgr*. If there is a connection between the drawing and the inscription, *Alguskapi* may be the dog's name 'Elkhurter = Elkhunter'. If nomen agentis, the language may be West Gmc, masculine nom. with loss of the nominative marker *-z* < **skapiz*.

The footstool was part of rare and precious gravegifts in a rich ship burial. Among these was a wooden chair, also richly decorated in *Kerbschnitt* with meanders and swastikas, after Mediterranean fashion. The deceased was buried with his Roman military equipment. The elk was not yet extinct in North Germany in the early Middle-Ages and there existed a special breed of dogs for chasing elks. The text can be interpreted as: 'footstool (depicting) *Alguskaþi*', since this might refer to the picture of the dog on the footstool.

17. *Freilaubersheim* (Rheinhessen, Germany), gilt-silver bow-fibula, one of a pair, probably Frankish. Found in 1872/73 in a woman's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in Landesmuseum, Mainz. Date 3rd th. 6th c. The runes are carved in two rows: above and below the needle. The upper row reads **boso:wraetruna**. The lower row has **pkda?ina: golida**.

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boso is an Alamannic or Frankish PN, nsm. *n*-stem *Boso* (cf. the Frankish duke Boso in Gregory of Tours' *Historiae Francorum*). **wraet** 3 sg. pret. ind. 'he wrote', inf. Gmc **wrītan* 'to write', with *ae* for older *ai*, cf. *Neudingen-Baar II*, *Schwangau* and *Weingarten I*. **runa** apf. *ō*-stem, *runā* 'the runes'. The lower row starts with some heavily abraded runes; the first most likely is a *thorn*, but the loop is nearly at the bottom of the headstaff, and vaguely another loop higher up the headstaff can be perceived. Probably by mistake a **b** was carved first, perhaps due to a confusion with the **b** of **boso** right above, and then changed into a *thorn*. It is followed by a large hook < **k**, in order to get **pk**, cf. OS *þ(i)k* 'you', pron., acc. of the 2nd. pers. **da?ina** PN nsf. *ō*-stem, *Da?ina*. The third rune is illegible now, but earlier read as representing **þ**. **golida** 3 sg. pret. ind. '(she) greeted', inf. Gmc **gōljan*, Go. *gōljan*, 'to greet'. (Krause 1966:47; Ebel 1963:14, 107f.; Antonsen 1975:58). 'Boso wrote (the) runes; Dapina greeted you'.

18. *Friedberg* (Hessen, Germany), silver disc-brooch with almandine-inlay, one of a pair. Dated 3rd th. 6th c. (Arntz & Zeiss 1939:232 ff.). Found in 1885 in a woman's grave; lost in World War II.

The runes read: **þuruphild**.

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This may be a PN, with a svarabhakti first *-u-*; nsf. *jō*-stem *Thruphild*, cf. the attested OHG name *Drūdhilt*. OHG *thrūt*, *drūd* 'force, fierce'; ON *þrúðr* f. 'force, woman, daughter of Thor'. *hild* < Gmc **hildjō*, OHG *hiltia* 'battle', nsf. *jō*-stem, a well-known name-element in female names. A svarabhakti vowel is rare in the Continental Corpus. The rune **r** has a special form, similar to *Weingarten I*, *Nordendorf II*, *Wurmlingen*, *Niederstotzingen*, *Griesheim*, *Bülach* and *Soest*. I guess it was a typical name for a Walkyrie-like woman (the skeleton was that of an extremely strong-built woman).

19. *Gammertingen* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), ivory box. Dated 1st h. 6th c. Found in 1901/2 in a very rich child's grave, situated near a princely grave (Stein 1991). Now in Fürstlich Hohenzollernsche Hofkammer, Sigmaringen.

Twice is carved: **ado**.

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This may be a PN nsm. *n*-stem, *Ado*, which is a shortened version of a name like *Adalbertus* (Kaufmann 1965:17, 86, 90).

20. *Griesheim* (Hessen, Germany), silver bow-fibula, one of a pair. Dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1975 in a woman's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Darmstadt.

The runes read: **kolo:agilaprup**.

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kolo is a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, *Kolo*, perhaps to be connected with ON *kollir* 'helmet' (Gottschild 1982:297). **agilaprup** is also a PN, n/asf. *jō*-stem *Agilaprup*. *Agila-* may be connected with Go. *agis*, OHG *egīf*. 'scare, fear' (Kaufmann 1965:88, 89), or with Gmc **agjō* 'sword, edge', like in **agilamudon** on the ROSSELAND stone, Norway, and the name of a Langobardic king *Agilimund* (cf. Antonsen 1975:51). A Bavarian family of dukes bore the name *Agilolfing*. About the second name-element *-prup*, cf. *Friedberg*. The **k** rune Ʒ of **kolo** has the form of the **k** from the younger Danish *fupark*. The runeform is also attested in *Nordendorf II* and *Hailfingen*. I wonder whether this divergent rune form might denote *ch*, product of the OHG soundshift of *k*. In that case we may read *Cholo*. The soundshift *k* > *kχ*- (*ch*-) occurred only in Alamanic and Bavarian. The findplace, Hessen, need not debar the possibility of the soundshift in this inscription. Both object and runographer were moveable.

Another curiosity is the **l** rune: Ʒ, which has the form of the Anglo-Saxon *cēn* rune. This peculiar **l** rune is on the Continent otherwise only attested in *Charnay* (once, in **liano**). Until the Griesheim inscription turned up, a reading **liano** or **kiano** in *Charnay* was arbitrary. Especially its occurrence in *Agilaprup*, where it only can denote **l** and certainly no **k**, was decisive. *Kolo* or *Cholo* is a Frankish or Alamannic man's name, because of the ending *-o*, cf. *Boso*, *Freilaubersheim*. The **r**-rune is similar to the **r** in *Weingarten I*; other parallels are: *Nordendorf II*, *Wurmlingen*, *Niederstotzingen*, *Friedberg*, *Bülach* and *Soest*.

21. *Heilbronn-Böckingen* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), silver belt-trimmings with a square fitting with rivets. Dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1954 in a man's grave, seen in Museum Heilbronn.

On the square fitting are runes, running left, partly damaged by the perforations made for the rivets. The runes run from right to left **īkarwi**.

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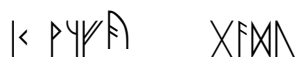
In my opinion the initial rune is a yew rune, which has retained one sidetwig; the other got lost in the perforation. Krause 1966:295ff. and Düwel 1994^b:264f. read **l**. The second rune is a small hook, carved rather low, and is partly damaged by the same perforation that took the lower part of the preceding yew rune away.

īk might be taken for *ik*, 1 sg. pers. pron. 'I'. Obviously the yew rune was used to denote *i* or *ī*, cf. **uū** *wū* in the *Nebenstedt* bracteate, and **sīpæbæd** (*Loveden Hill*, English Corpus, nr.7). **arwi** may be a PN, nsm., derived from **arwa*, *wa*-stem, cf. OS *aru*, ON *qrr* and OE *earu* < Gmc **arwaz* 'ready for harvesting, mature, ripe'. Otherwise one may consider a connection with OHG *arbi* 'inheritance' (Gottschild 1982:173), cf. the name of the Langobardic bishop *Arbeo*. A third possibility may be to take the name as a compound of **arw-* plus the ending *-wī* = *-wi(g)*, 'battle', cf. **wigka** nr. 12 and **ra[u]zwi** nr. 24.

22. '*Kent*' I, or '*the Bateman brooch*' (England), one of a pair of gilt-silver radiate-headed brooches, dated 6th c., said to be 'Merovingian' and to originate from the Continent. Provenance unknown; bought at a sale (see for more information Chapter II, 8.3.). Seen in the British Museum, London.

The runes are carved rather clumsy, and the lay-out of the inscription is in a slipshod style.

Tentatively I propose a reading **ik w?fau** or **w?far gadu**. Whether there is a final rune after **gadu** is uncertain.



The **k** rune has the form of a little hook [◊], cf. *Heilbronn* and *Balingen*. The inscription starts with **ik** (OS, OHG) or **ic** (OE), 1 sg. pers. pron. 'I'. **w?fau** or **w?far** seems at first unintelligible; especially an ending (?) *-au* is enigmatic. The last two runes are written as a bindrune. This feature is not unusual in Continental inscriptions, and occurs in uncommon combinations. Probably we should read **r** instead of **u**, since sometimes the runeforms **r** and **u** appear nearly identical, cf. Charnay (above, nr. 11) and the readings **houaz** or **horaz** on the *Fünen I-C* bracteate (see Bracteate Corpus). Thus I opt for **w?far**. The second rune looks like a reversed younger **k** rune: [∫]. Since this letter is in between two consonants, it might denote a vowel. The rune is a parallel to [∫] and [∫] in *Britsum* (The Netherlands, nr. 14), transliterated **æ**. Thus we obtain **wæfar**, which may be a PN, a *nomen actionis* of a verb such as OE *wæfan* 'to wrap' and ON *veifa* 'to swing, sway' and 'to throw'. Perhaps the name refers to the profession of weaver? **gadu** may be nsf. or dsf. *ō*-stem 'companion', here 'wife', or: 'to my wife', cf. OE *gada* m. 'companion'; Dutch *gade* 'husband', 'wife'; MHG *gate* 'Genosse, Gatte' (Holthausen 1963:121). The inscription may read: 'I Wæfar, to my wife'.

23. *Kirchheim Teck* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), gilt-silver bow-fibula. Found in a woman's grave in 1972. Date mid 6th c. Seen in Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart. The runic inscription is very much abraded, since the brooch was used for a long time before it was deposited with its owner in the grave. Part of the runic inscription can still be read: **badagihiali dmiu**.



The part **gi** is written as a cross with four sidetwigs attached to the cross' extremities, thus forming four times the rune for **i**. I take the cross plus **i** to represent **gi**. This combination is carved on top of the double-barred **h** rune. (Opitz (1979:366) prefers to interpret the cross as X, referring to Greek X[PICTOC] or as the sign of the Christian cross. One may as well interpret the sign as a swastika. **bada** PN nsf. *ō*-stem, *Bada*, cf. *Bad Ems*. **gihiali** = *gihaili* 2 sg. pres. imp. 'you must make well', inf. OHG *heilen*, *gi-heilen* 'to heal, to save, to rescue'. If the legend and cross as a whole is taken as Christian (there was a *Goldblattkreuz* in the same grave) one may interpret the text as follows: **bada** 'consolation', **haili** 'salvation', cf. OHG *heilīf*. 'hail, bliss, salvation'; **dmiu** = **d[o]mi[n]u[s]** 'Lord'; '(my) hail (and) salvation (is the) Lord'. In OS, *gibada* is recorded twice in the Heliand: 3161 and 5828, meaning: 'comfort, reassurance' or even: 'new life in Christo' (Opitz 1978:21).

24. *Liebenau*, (Niedersachsen, Germany), silver disc, possibly part of a swordbelt. Dated 4th c. Found in 1957 in a rich man's grave. Seen in Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover. The runes are on the front side, and very difficult to identify. The surface has been damaged and the runes are of unequal size.

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Düwel (1972:134-141) read and interpreted **ra[u]zwi** < Gmc **rauzwīh* "der Rohr (=Speer)-Geweihthe"; cf. Gmc **rauza/rausa* 'tube, hollow stem'.

rauz- may mean 'spear' or 'sword', cf. ON *reyr* 'reed', in metaphorical sense 'spear, sword'. The second part *-wī* may either be connected with OHG *wīhen*, OS *wīhian* 'to consecrate' (cf. above, Eichstetten, nr. 14), or *-wī* may be derived from **wīgan* 'to fight' (see also nrs. 12 and 21, above). If it is a PN, it is perhaps short for *Rauzwī(gaz)*, nsm. *a*-stem, which may mean either 'The One who is consecrated to the spear' or 'Spear- c.q. Swordfighter'. A name connected with some warrior's cult? *Raus* is also known as the name of one of the Hading brothers.

25. München-Aubing I, (Bayern, Germany), a pair of Langobardic? gilt-silver *Fünfknopf-fibeln*. Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1939 in a woman's grave, nr. 304, in a row-gravefield. Seen in the Prähistorische Staatssammlung, München.

Both brooches have runes, the inscription of nr I contains two words: **segalo sigila**.

ᚱᚱᚹᚹᚱ ᚱᚱᚹᚹᚱ

For the inscription on the other brooch see below, München-Aubing II, nr. 59.

segalo may be a PN, nsm. *n*-stem, *Segalo*. **sigila** may be interpreted in several ways; it might be a male PN, nsm. *a*-stem *Sigila* (attested in Gregory of Tours' *Historiae Francorum*), or it is a female PN nsf. *ō*-stem. The names contain a well-known name-element: OHG *sigu* 'victory' followed by an *l*-suffix, common for names. Another interpretation of **sigila** is to take it as a word denoting the object itself: nsf./n. 'brooch', cf. OE *sigle*, *sigel* 'brooch'. The inscription of Harford Farm (English Corpus) reads: **luda gibœtæ sigilæ** 'Luda repaired the brooch'. Both *segalo* and *sigila* are related to Latin *sigillum*, since the Latin ending *-um* can be rendered by both *-a* and *-o* in OHG. But Latin *-i-* in the initial syllable remains *-i-* in OHG. Therefore *sigila* is most likely to render Latin *sigillum*. The text may run thus 'brooch, Segalo'. It would be the third object of the Continental Corpus (with Aquincum and Fallward), which is named in the text.

26. Neudingen-Baar I (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), gilded bronze bow-fibula, possibly Frankish, dated late 6th c. Found in 1988 in a woman's grave. Seen in Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Freiburg.

The inscription is carved in three rows below each other and is partly abraded, due to weathering and oxidization of the surface. The tinned surface of the back has nearly corroded away, but the runes left their impressions in the bronze layer underneath.

Part of the runes can be read, row 1: **s? u? d ??**. Row 2: **midu** Row 3: **k/ulefil þa**.

ᚱᚱᚹᚹᚱ | ᚱᚱᚹᚹᚱ ᚱᚱᚹᚹᚱ

The last two runes are written as a bindrune **þa**. The runes of the first row cannot all be reconstructed. The second row is clear: **midu**, pre-OHG **mīda*, **mēda*, OHG *miata* < Gmc **mezdō* 'reward' nsf. *ō*-stem. This 'reward' may denote the very brooch, cf. the legend of the Undley bracteate (Bracteate Corpus), which has: **maga medu** 'reward of the kinsmen'.

inscription might be read from right to left *de(d)u(n)*, which would point to a maker's formula. Trying to make sense of the rest inevitably will lead into speculation. (See also Düwel 1992^a:55).

29. *Nordendorf I* (Bayern, Germany), gilt-silver bow-fibula, dated mid 6th c. Found in 1843. Seen in Römisches Museum, Augsburg.

The runic inscription consists of two parts, carved on the back of the headplate. One part is written in three rows of runes below each other; when the object is turned 180°, another row near the edge of the headplate can be perceived. These runes are much more abraded than those of the other part, which is probably due to the fact that the edge of the brooch was more exposed to attrition.

The first part reads: **logapore wodan wiguponar??**. The second part: **awa (I)eubwini??**.

ᚠᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱ ᚠᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ

First row: **logapore**, npm. *ja*-stem *logapore* 'intriguers' or 'magicians' (Düwel 1983:128 and 1991:278). This interpretation is based on a word found in OE glosses: *logper*, *logeper*, used to translate two Latin words: the Greek loanword *cacomicanos* 'mischiefplotting', and *marsius* 'snake-charmer' (Schwab 1981:42ff., with ref.). Second row: **wodan** GN nsm. *a*-stem *Wōdan*. Third row: **wiguponar** GN nsm. *a*-stem, *Wīguthonar*. The part *wīgu-* is commonly associated with OHG *wīhen* 'to hallow', which may have something to do with one of the god's roles: to hallow runes or marriages a.o. (Cf. GLAVENDRUP, Fyn, Denmark: **pur uiki** 'may Thor hallow'). But, again, Wulf (1994:37, with ref.) considers a consecrating function of Thor contested. When considering *wīgu-* derived from OHG *wīgan* 'to fight', a more suitable epithet would arise: *fighting-Donar*. There is a scratch that looks like **I** attached to the top of the **o** rune of **ponar**.

When turning the brooch 180°, a second inscription can be read, although the runes are nearly invisible. It starts with **awa**, which obviously is a PN nsf. *ā*-stem *Awa*, cf. the diminutive PN *Awila* (Kaufmann 1965:90), which may be connected with **auja** (see below, nr. 32 *Oettingen aujabrg*).

As a result of the fact that the brooch has been broken and mended, the initial rune of the next part is damaged: the assumed **I** rune of **(I)eubwini** is invisible now. The word ends in a confusion of signs, probably because **(I)eubwini** imminently coincides with the end of **wiguponar**. Between both words are several lines, and whether or not there is a yew rune among those lines, I am not sure. I take the lines as division marks. *Leubwini* is a PN or epithet, nsm. *i*-stem 'dear friend'. The whole text is interpreted by Düwel (1982) as an abolition formula concerning the pagan gods Wodan and Wiguthonar: 'intriguers are Wodan and Wiguthonar', signed by two people: Awa and Leubwini. It seems a strange text for a brooch, especially since it has been worn for a long time.


Polomé (1989:140ff.) rejects Düwel's hypothesis, a) on linguistic grounds: the ending *-e* of *logapore* is anomalous; b) on stylistic grounds: a triad of names would conform better; and c) on historic grounds: the early 7th c. (actually mid 6th c. TL) may be too early for a Christian runic inscription; and d) on mythological grounds: magic and deceit may characterize Wodan, but that cannot be said of Donar! (But see Düwel 1992^b:358ff.).

I would not exclude the possibility that the text mentions a *Göttertrias*, including the mysterious *Logapore* next to Wodan and Donar. Schwab (1981:45) interprets *logapore* as a

dative singular of a personal name, the name of the receiver of the brooch. I regard her remark about the meaning of *marsius* very interesting: "in the OE glosses to Aldhelm's *De Laudibus Virginitatis* the plural *marsi* is interpreted by *incantatores* and is glossed *þyrsa(s)* 'demons, sorcerers' and *wyrmgalera(s)* 'snakecharmers'". There is one Germanic god who is associated with snakes, and who is of a demonic nature: *Loki* (cf. De Vries 1957:262f. and Dumézil 1973:63). Schwab (1981:43) and Düwel (1982:80ff.) provide several interpretations of and references to *logapore*. Schwab suggests that in the gloss *marsius = logeþer* in Cotton MS Cleopatra A III in the immediate vicinity of the entry *mars = tiw*, there might be a possible confusion of the scribe. In other words, *mars(ius) = logeþer = tiw*, so the mysterious first name on the brooch may refer to Týr?⁶⁸

30. *Nordendorf II* (Bayern, Germany), gilt-silver bow-fibula, dated mid 6th c. Found in 1844, seen in the Römisches Museum, Augsburg.
The runes read **birlnioelk**.

𐀀𐀃𐀆𐀇𐀉𐀊𐀋𐀌

The text is clearly legible, but difficult to interpret. The last rune may strike as enigmatic, but it has the form of the **k** rune from the younger Scandinavian *fubark*, and it is similar to the **k** rune of *Griesheim* in **kolo**. I propose to divide the sequence **birlnioelk** in **birl[i]n io elk**. **birlin** may be a masc. PN nsm. *n*-stem, a diminutive based on OHG *bero* 'bear' (cf. Gottschald 1982:100, 101). This is followed by **io** *jo(h)* 'and'. **elk** should be read **elch** < Gmc **elha*- 'elk'. Presumably, the rune form , here transliterated **k**, must have had the value [kχ] from *scratch*, and thus would be no product of the OHG sound shift of *k > ch*. One may wonder, whether this graph was a local (South Germanic) runic invention, and no import from the North.

Bear and elk seem to have had a mythological connotation (cf. Birkhan 1970:431ff. and 448ff.).

31. *Oberflacht* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), silver *Sieblöffel*, dated 3rd th. 6th c. (Düwel 1994^b:244). Found in the 19th century by Freiherr von Ow-Wachendorf on his property, and kept in the family's archaeological collection at Wachendorf. Seen there. There is no find-report. A *Sieblöffel* is a Christian liturgical object. Runes on the back cover about the whole length of the handle, in unusual, relatively wide and large forms.

The runes read: **gba:dulþafd**.

𐀆𐀇𐀉:𐀃𐀆𐀇𐀉𐀊𐀋𐀌

The **g** is a clear cross; the first **a** is reversed. The **b** rune is quite gross. The sidetwig of the **l** is almost lost in a crack. The sidetwigs of both **f** runes are extremely long and set far apart. **dulþ** is a well-known word, nsf. *i*-stem/rootnoun, 'religious feast', cf. OHG *tuld*, MHG *dult*, Go. *dulþs*. The first part may be **g[e]ba** 'gift' nsf. *ō*-stem. The sequence **afd** might be interpreted as **aft** adv. 'after, later' (see *Bülach*, nr. 10), taken that the rune **d** is chosen because of the

⁶⁸ One may think of the runic text of the RIBE cranium (early 8th c.), which contains the invocation of three gods: *UlfR auk Óðinn auk HótiuR* (cf. Stoklund 1996). The last name might point to Týr, OHG *Zū*, OE *Tiw*.

initial sound of its name, which had become *tag* (with OHG sound shift), instead of older *dag* < **dagaz*. Would the text mean as much as: ‘gift - feast - hereafter’ indicating *this is a gift on the occasion of the feast*? I realize that the syntax is inadequate, but this may be due to the lack of space. (Other interpretations: Klingenberg 1974:81-94, and Opitz 1977:35).

32. *Oettingen* (Bayern, Germany), silver disc-brooch, one of a pair, dated 2nd h. 6th c. Found in 1975 in a woman's grave. Seen in the Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Schwaben, Augsburg.

The runes read: **aujabrg** or **auisabrg**.

𐌱𐌴𐌶𐌸𐌹𐌺

The first rune is a damaged **a** 𐌱 with only the two sidetwigs visible, part of the headstaff is missing. The fourth rune may represent **s** or **j**. Compared to the form of the **j** rune in *Charnay* and to several other **s** runes of the Continental inscriptions, the transcription **j** is most plausible. **aujab**[i]rg PN nsf. *Awijab(i)rg* or *Auijab(i)rg*, consisting of *Awija-* or *Auija-* and *-birg*. For the first part of the name cf. *Awa*, *Nordendorf I*, nr. 29. The second part *-birg* is nsf. *jō*-stem, ‘protection, guard’. If **auija** should be equalled with **auja** on bracteates, it may be connected with ‘hail, good luck’: cf. **gibu auja** on *Seeland-II-C* (see Bracteate Corpus). The sequence **auwija** is recorded on the *Vimose* buckle (Danish Corpus). Antonsen (1975:75) reads and interprets this as *auw-ija*, with West Gmc gemination of *u = w* before *j*. (Betz 1979:241-245; Düwel 1991:280).

33. *Osthofen* (Rheinhausen, Germany), gilded bronze disc-brooch, 2nd h. 7th c. Found in 1854 in an ancient Frankish cemetery near Osthofen. Seen in Landesmuseum, Mainz. Runes are cut between concentric lines. The brooch is broken, a large part is lost and the surface from what is left has badly eroded, therefore an indefinite number of runes is illegible now. One may perceive only **go furadi di le+**.

𐌸𐌺 𐌴𐌴𐌶𐌸𐌹𐌺 𐌸𐌹 𐌴𐌺+

The last rune has a little cross fastened to it. The first word may be emended to **got** or **god** ‘God’, or emended to a fem. PN like *Goda*, cf. *Arlon* nr. 3. **fura** is a preposition, ‘before’; **di** = *dih*, 2 sg. pers. pron. acc. ‘you’; or *dir*, 2 sg. pers. pron. dative. This is followed by **di** and **le**, which might, with some fantasy, be emended to *di(ofi)le* ‘devil’ (cf. Opitz 1979:36).

34. *Pforzen* (Bayern, Germany) silver belt buckle with runes on the frontside, which is rare (cf. Liebenau, above, nr. 24). Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1991 in a man's grave. Seen in the Bayerisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Schwaben, Augsburg. The runes are distinctly carved in two rows below each other, ending in ornamental lines.

They read: **.aigil.andi.aïlrún l.tahu:gasokun.**

·𐌱𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌺·𐌱𐌴𐌶𐌸𐌹𐌺· 𐌴𐌶𐌸𐌹𐌺
𐌴·𐌴𐌶𐌸𐌹𐌺:𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺

I take the dots between the words as word-dividers. The **h** in **tahu** belongs to the oldest attestations of the double-barred **h** rune. The **a** rune in **ailrun** has very long sidetwigs, it seems as if the lower one is elongated since it has a twist halfway. The end of the twig crosses the bottom line on which the runes stand. The upper sidetwig crosses the headstaff of the following rune. The elongated part of the lower sidetwig looks like if it actually is part of the next rune, apparently a yew-rune. One would then get the sequence **ai** in **ailrun**. This presumably is a female PN, because of the second element *-rūn*. One may wonder whether the diphthong *ai* in **ailrun** is pronounced differently from the diphthong in **aigil**.

aigil is a PN too, nsm. *a*-stem *Aigil*, connected either with Gmc **agjō* 'sword, edge' (cf. De Vries 1962:94f., who derives ON *Egill* and OHG *Agilo* < Gmc **agilaz*), or with Go. *agis* 'scare, fear'. See also *Agila* in *Griesheim*. The spelling of **aigil** is interesting; in later OHG *ai* > *ei*, which would render **Eigil*. FRANKS CASKET (8th c., probably Northumbrian) has **ægili**; it may be that the initial rune of **aigil** was meant by the carver to render an *æ*-like sound, an intermediate stage of *a* > *æ* > *e*.

andi conj. 'and'. **ailrun** PN nsf. *ō*-stem *Ailrūn*. The supposed yew rune **ī** presents a problem. One would expect **Alrūn*. The names *Aigil* and *Alrūn* (*Ailrūn*) remind of the much later recorded ON *Vǫlundr* story, in which *Egill* is his brother, and *Ǫlrún*⁶⁹ < **Alrūna* is one of the swanmaidens. She is the one who becomes *Egill*'s partner. *Egill* helps his brother to get away from imprisonment by giving him wings to fly from the island on which he is kept prisoner. Furthermore, *Egill* is known as an exceptionally skilled archer (Marold 1996). Etymologically, **ailrun** would not render the later OHG name *Alrūn*, nor the ON *Ǫlrún*. I suggest tentatively two solutions: (1) the runecarver made a graphical mistake. He actually wanted to carve **alrun**, but made an **I** too many and subsequently elongated the sidetwigs of the preceding **a**, or he carved a yew-rune indeed, but could not erase the graph. Anyhow, I think the sequence **ai** is a scribal error. Or, and this is very speculative, the forerunner of the name, represented here as **ailrun**, is the mysterious *Albrunam*, *Albriniam* or *Aurinium* (Much 1959:119), from Chapter 9 of Tacitus' *Germania*.

The second line starts with **I**. The text proceeds with **tahu**. I connect this word with either Go. *tahjan* 'tear apart, scatter', or Go. **tāhus* < Gmc **tanhuz*; OHG *zāh*, adj. *u*-stem 'tough' (Köbler 1989:520). The third word is **gasokun** 3 plur. pret. ind. of a verb like Go. *ga-sakan* 'to quarrel, to dispute', or OHG *ga-sahhan* 'to condemn, to fight'. Clearly both persons, *Aigil* and *Ailrūn*, strongly condemned or fought something; the object presumably is **I**, whatever that may be⁷⁰. Another solution may be to take **I** as the first letter of a name, e.g. the name of a person who was fought by A. and A.

⁶⁹ *Ǫlrún* was the daughter of King *Kiár* of *Valland*. *Kjárr* = *Caesar*, according to De Vries (1962:312). *Valland* is the land of the Romans or the Merovingians. *Vǫlundr* is the name of a famous smith, a hero's name, according to De Vries. So, if I understand this well, the story is about a relation between a daughter of a Roman emperor and the brother of a famous weaponsmith. She came disguised as a swanmaiden, e.g. a Valkyrie, from the South. The second part, *-run* may be either of Celto-Germanic or of Celtic origin (Schönfeld 1965:196). The name element may mean 'secret'. It is remarkable that the name-element *-run* is otherwise not attested in the surviving names of any of the early runic traditions (see Peterson 1994 for instance).

⁷⁰ Düwel (1994^b:290f.) proposes to regard the sidetwig of the **I** rune to be connected with the left sidetwig of the following **t** - although the twigs do not meet - and thus take this as a bindrune **el**. Thus he obtains: **elahu** 'elk'. However, this is problematic, as there even is a dot between **I** and **t**, which, because of the presence of other dots in the inscription, must be a word divider.

37. *Schretzheim III* (Bayrisch Schwaben, Germany), iron ring-sword, dated 2nd h. 6th c. Found in 1894 in a man's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in the above mentioned (nr. 35) museum. The runes are made by way of silverthread inlay; this would point to the smith as the maker (the same practice as in *Wurmlingen*, see below).

The inscription consists of a rune-cross (the rune **g**) and four runes: **a b a r** which are attached to the extremities of the cross. (Klingenberg & Koch 1974). Thus one may read **gabar** or **abar g**.



Other rune-crosses occur in *Soest*, *Kirchheim*, *Undley*, *Kragehul*. **gabar** is perhaps a hypocoristic PN, nsm. *Gabar* < **Gabahari*, consisting of *gaba-* f. 'gift' and *hari* or *heri* m. 'warrior' *ja*-stem, Gmc **harjaz*. With Saxo Grammaticus we find a personage with the name *Gevarus*, which, according to Simek (1984:127), may be derived from an earlier Saxon PN *Geb(a)heri*.

A ring-sword was a typical prestige sword, used among the Merovingian elite and granted to a faithful warrior by his leader or king.

39. *Schwangau* (Bayern, Germany), gilt-silver *Scheibenfibel* or *S-fibel*, dated around 600. Found in 1981 in an Alamannic woman's grave. Seen in the Prähistorische Staatssammlung, München. The runes have a vertical long-stretched form, are carefully and clearly carved. They read **aebi**.



The **b** has its loops far apart. **aebi** is a PN nsm. *i-* or *ja*-stem *Aebi*. In OHG, the spelling *ai* is older than *ae* (cf. *Pforzen*, *Freilaubersheim*, *Weingarten I*) and becomes in later OHG *ei*.

40. *Soest* (Westfalen, Germany), gold disc-brooch with almandines, dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1930 in a rich woman's grave in a row-gravefield. Seen in the Soester Burgmuseum.

The runes read: **rada:dapa gatano**



gatano is written as a rune-cross \times with four runes: **a t a n** attached to the extremities of the cross (cf. *Schretzheim III*, nr. 37 and *Kirchheim* nr. 22). An **o** is written separately. The first two words are separated by a division mark. **dapa** is a PN, nsf. *ō*-stem *Datha*. **rada** might be a PN nsf. *ō*-stem *Rada*, but since the middle dental is written **d** and not **þ** as in *Dapa*, I suggest **rada** to be a verbform, actually *rādē(e)* (with ending *-ē* < *-ai*), cf. OHG *rātan*, OS *rādan* 'to guess, to read', 3 sg. pres. opt. 'may Datha guess (read)'. The final **a** in **rada** may be intended as analogy to the first **a** (vowel harmony) or to rhyme with *Datha*. **gatano** may be a PN, nsm. *n*-stem. Obviously, *Datha* should guess the name that was hidden in the rune-cross. A parallel case may be the Charnay-inscription, in which Liano had to find out (the name of) *Idda*.

41. *Steindorf* (Oberbayern, Germany), sax, dated 2nd h. 6th c. (Düwel 1994:271). Found in 1929 in a man's grave as the only gravegift. Seen in the Prähistorische Staatssammlung, München. The iron sax is badly corroded; parts of the runes and of the ornamentation are gone. The runes were carved in double lines and probably nielloed with silver inlay. The opening sign is a kind of triangle. The initial rune **h** and the following **u** form a bindrune; the third rune could be **i**, the fourth an **s**. Two strokes follow. One is **i**, the next has been damaged by corrosion and cannot be reconstructed. The last runes can be deciphered as **a**, **l** and **d**. Tentatively I read **huisi?ald**.



This may denote *Huisiwald*, a name that reminds of a Bavarian noble family: the *Huosi*, which are mentioned in the *Lex Baiuvariorum*. The second part of the name may be *-wald*, inf. *waldan* 'to rule'. Another interpretation has Düwel (1994^b:271, with ref.).

42. *Thorsberg I* (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany), bronze sword-chape. Seen in the Museum Gottorf at Schleswig. This object and the Thorsbjerg shieldboss belong to a votive deposit of war booty. The objects' provenance is somewhere between Lower Elbe and Rhine. There are runes on both sides of the object, one side: **owlpupewaz**; other side: **niwajemariz**.



owlpupewaz is probably a PN, nsm. *a*-stem *Wolpupewaz*, with reverse writing **ow-** for **wo-**; cf. *Fallward ksamella* for *skamella*. *Wolpu-* cf. Go *wulpus* 'exuberance, sumptuousness'. This is followed by *-pewaz* 'servant', nsm. *a*-stem. **niwajemariz** may be taken as an epithet or cognomen *ni-waje-māriz*, nsm. *i*-stem, "of immaculate repute" (Antonsen, 1975:30) or, literally, "nicht-schlechtberühmt" (Krause 1971:167; Seebold 1994^a:73). A root vowel *-o-* instead of the expected *-u-* in *wolpu-* < **wulp-u* is an arbitrary spelling alternation *u/o* (cf. Antonsen 1975:13). The language would be Proto Norse or North West Germanic, according to Stoklund (1994^a:106f.).

43. *Thorsberg II* (Schleswig-Holstein, Germany), shieldboss, bronze, **aisgzh**. Seen in the same museum as the above, nr. 42. The inscription is on the inner side of the shieldboss. The runes run left, and read: **aisgzh**.



The part **aisgz** may be emended to **ais[i]g[a/i]z**, and interpreted as a PN: *Aisigaz* or *Aisigiz* nsm. *a-* or *i-* stem. Krause (1971:72) read *ais(i)g(a)z* "der Dahinstürmende". If so, the stem-vowel may be missing, though the nominative ending *-z* is present; cf. **gaupz**, (*Illerup V*, Danish Corpus). Another possibility may be to take the sequence as a compound, of *ais(i)-* 'come storming in', cf. ON *eisa* 'to rush forward'; and **g[aisa]z** = Gmc **g(aiza)z* 'spear', nsm. *a*-stem, cf. ON *geirr*. The meaning might be 'come, storm in, spear' (as defiant device of the shield). For **h** at least two possibilities may exist; it is either an ideographic rune **h** representing its name **hagala-* 'hail', or an abbreviation. Antonsen (1975:30 and 1995:131f.) takes **aisgz** to be representing *aisk-z* 'seeker', and **h** for **hagala-* 'hail', thus he gets: 'seeker of hail',

an "eminently suitable designation for a shield when we realize that 'hail' is a metaphor for 'shower of spears and arrows'" (Antonsen 1995:132). This is certainly true, but during my research I became more and more convinced that the ancient runographers were particularly precise in their orthography, and I cannot imagine why they would choose a **g** for rendering a *k*. I take it that the object, the shield, with a shieldboss made of *ais*, Lat. *aes* 'bronze' is addressed.

44, 45. Weimar I, II (Thüringen, Germany), a pair of gilt-silver bow-fibulae, dated 1st h. 6th c. Found in a woman's grave. The graveyard was excavated between 1895 - 1902. (Arntz & Zeiss 1939:360ff.). All Weimar finds have been seen in the Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte Charlottenburg, Berlin. With Weingarten the oldest attestations of double-barred **h**. The runes are meticulously cut by a skilled carver. According to Arntz & Zeiss 1939:364ff. and Opitz 1977:46, another knob carries runes reading **leob**. This inscription is very difficult to perceive now.

Brooch I. **haribrig liub leob**

𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚 𐰚𐰚𐰚 𐰚𐰚𐰚

On the footplate is **haribrig**. This is a PN, nsf. *jō*-stem *Haribrig*, consisting of *hari-* 'army', and *-brig* = *-birg*, 'protection', cf. Oettingen. The brooch has three knobs left of a total of seven. On one of the knobs is carved **liub**, if substantive, it is an *a*-stem 'love', if adjective, it is a nsm./f./n. *a-* or *ō-*stem 'dear, beloved' (cf. **liub** in Niederstotzingen, nr. 28). **leob** may be a PN, nsm. *a*-stem (compare to **leubo** in Schretzheim II, nr. 36, and **leub** in Engers, nr. 15).

Brooch II. The runes read: **sigibl/ad hiba bubo**

𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚 𐰇𐰏𐰚 𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚

sigibl/ad is on the footplate. The runes are vague and abraded. The penultimate rune may be either **a** or **l** in *Sigib(a)ld*, a PN nsm. *a*-stem, consisting of *sigi-* 'victory', and *-ald* 'bold, quick', adj. *a*-stem. The last rune, **d**, is carved on the concave side of the bottom of the footplate and only half of the rune can be perceived: 𐰚. The brooch has five knobs left of the original seven. One of the knobs bears neatly carved runes, reading **hiba**, which may be a female PN. Kaufmann (1965:12, 14, 141) lists *Hibo*, a petname for *Hildibert*, a masc. PN. I wonder whether **hiba** might be an alternative spelling for *hīwa* 'spouse'. Another knob has **bubo**, probably a man's petname, see for instance Kaufmann 1965:132).

46. Weimar III (Thüringen, Germany), bronze belt buckle, dated 1st h. 6th c. Found in a woman's grave, during the same excavation period as Weimar I and II.

Runes on the middle bar of the buckle read: **ida:bigina:hahwar:**

𐰚𐰏𐰚:𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚:𐰇𐰏𐰚𐰚𐰚𐰚:

ida is a PN, nsf. *ō*-stem or nsm. *n*-stem 'Id(d)a', cf. Charnay. **bigina** is also a PN, n/asf. *jō*-*ō*-stem, *Bi(r)gina*, consisting of *bi(r)g-* 'protection', (cf. Oettingen and Weimar I), and the

I suppose the pres. ind. is meant, 'F. writes', inf. Gmc **wriþan*. For **ia** I have no interpretation. Curiously, also *Charnay* (above, nr. 11) has a sequence **ia**. The **h** rune with a double bar belongs to the oldest attests.

49. *Weingarten-II* (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), gilt-silver S-fibula. Dated mid 6th c. Found in 1955 in a woman's grave. The runes read **dado**.

𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳

This is a PN, nsm. *n*-stem *Dado*.

50. *Wurmlingen*, (Baden-Württemberg, Germany), iron spearhead, dated around 600 or a little later. Seen in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart. Ornaments and runes were inlaid with silver. The runic part is preceded by a sign with unknown meaning: ʀ. It reminds of the Anglo-Saxon **beonna** coins. The legends contain the sign ʀ, meaning 'rex'. Upon the opening sign of the Wurmlingen inscription follows a word-divider, then runes **:dorih**, which may be (part of) a PN nsm. *a*-stem *Dorih*, possibly second part of a PN like *Theodorich*.

ʀ 𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳

3. Illegible and/or uninterpretable inscriptions

The finds of Dischingen, Hailfingen, Hohenstadt, Peigen, Tannheim, Trossingen, Bopfingen are in the Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart. The Herbrechtingen brooch is in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg. The Gräfelfing and München-Aubing finds are in the Prähistorische Staatssammlung, München. Weingarten III is in the hands of the excavator.

51. Chéhéry, disc-brooch, 2nd h. 6th c. (private owner) DEOS DE **htid:E sumngik** (Düwel 1994^b:235f.).

52. Dischingen II, bow-fibula, mid 6th c. **el/a** 𐌳𐌳

53. Gräfelfing, spatha, 1st h. 7th c. **d/m w** 𐌳𐌳

54. Hailfingen I, sax, 2nd h. 7th c. (Düwel 1994^b:234).

𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳

55. Hailfingen II, S-fibula, mid 6th c. **??daana/l** 𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳

56. Herbrechtingen, bow-fibula. 3rd th. 6th c. **fpae** 𐌳𐌳𐌳 (Düwel 1994^b:234).

57. Hohenstadt, bow-fibula, 3rd th. 6th c. **u g/n n d/m h (ah?) j ugn/a ll**

𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳𐌳

58. München-Aubing II, five-knob-fibula, mid 6th c. **bd** 𐌳𐌳

59. München-Aubing III, disc-brooch, date unknown, **nm?u/k** ᚠᚱᚱᚱ

60. Peigen, disc-brooch, 2nd h. 6th c. **eh - udo fh h** ᚱᚱ - ᚱᚱ ᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ
h single-barred.

61. Tannheim, hinge, date unknown, **??dui** ᚱᚱᚱ

62. Trossingen I, bow-fibula, 3rd th. 6th c. **fl/a** ᚱᚱ

63, 64. Trossingen II, two pairs of gilt-silver strap ends, 3rd th. 6th c. (Düwel 1994^b:264).

II. **maisdi(?)** ᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ

III. **hj/g** ᚱᚱ

65. Weingarten III, amber pearl, mid 6th c. (Düwel 1989^b:10). Illegible.

The Weser inscriptions (Niedersachsen, Germany)

These inscriptions were carved on fossilized bones, which were found in 1927/28 along the banks of the Weser-mouth. The bones are kept in the Staatliches Museum für Naturkunde und Vorgeschichte Oldenburg.

Pieper (1989) dated the runic bones to the 5th c., possibly the first half. Antonsen (1993:4f.) dates them no later than 400 AD. Dating the inscriptions is awkward, since they were made on yet subfossil bones. Provenance and context are suspicious; the bones are said to have been dredged up and found scattered along the banks of the river Weser; the runic inscriptions, however, seem, judging from their forms, to be closely connected. The runes have deviating, unique forms, not at all resembling known runes on bone objects. They are reminiscent of wide-cut runes on stone, such as on the Haithabu stones, formerly exposed at Kiel, nowadays at Schleswig. Kiel harbour was the place where the finder of the Weser bones worked for some time as a member of the *Kriegsmarine*. Since part of the Weser bones turned out to be falsifications, one must allow for the fact that the whole lot could be forged. In his investigations based on material science and criminological methods, the German archaeologist Pieper (1989) showed that part of the finds was doubtlessly forged, but the carvings in four subfossilized bones could in no way be proved to be recent carved and therefore false. These were the only bones out of a total of seven bearing runelike inscriptions and pictures. The wear and tear the incisions would be expected to show after aged about 1500 years, were present; moreover, some of the weathering could not have been forged. (See Pieper 1989; and Antonsen 1993).

According to Pieper's transcription, the runic text on bone 4988, which also shows a depiction of a man with a 'feather' or 'horn' on his forehead, carrying an axe and holding a lance toward a horned animal, may be read **latam ing hari kunni ing we hagal**.

ᚠᚠᚠᚠ ᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱ ᚱᚱᚱᚱ

Pieper took the sign \gg to represent the so-called *ing*-rune, and transliterated likewise **ing** (see above). Otherwise the sign could be taken as a word-divider. Pieper interprets the text as *latam : inghari kunni : ingwe / hagal* "Lassen wir Inghari. Geschlecht des Ingwe. Verderben".

The text on bone 4990 (showing a depiction of a Roman sailing vessel, having its mainsail on the wrong side of the mast) may read **lokom : her**.

𐌲𐌺𐌵𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸

Pieper interprets *lokom her* "Ich schaue hier".

A bone artifact, nr. 4991, with a hole in one end, has a geometrical drawing and the following text: **ulu hari dede**.

𐌸𐌸𐌸 : 𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸 𐌳𐌺𐌳𐌺𐌳𐌺

Interpreted by Pieper as *uluhari dede* "Uluhari machte".

For an elaborate discussion of the interpretations, see Antonsen 1993.

Antonsen (1993:12ff.) proposes new readings and interpretations. His transliteration is the same as Pieper's, only the sign \gg is taken as a word division sign. *lokom : her / latam < > hari / kunni < > we / hagal / uluhari dede*. "I see here [a Roman vessel]. Let us, fighting kin, unleash woe-hail [i.e., battle]. Uluhari did (this) [i.e. executed this message]".

The language, according to Antonsen (1993), is West Germanic, on account of the gemination in **kunni** and the presence of the verb **dede**.

4. No runes

Bopfingen ring and one of the bow-fibulae from Trossingen. Both display a cross-like sign, probably scratches, deliberate or not.

5. The shift *ai > ae*; the interchange of **u** and **w**, and of **b** and **w**.

If the orthography *ai* is older than *ae* (cf. Braune/Eggers §43,44), we may, in view of the archaeological dating of the objects, date the shift *ai > ae* to the first half of the 6th c. *Neudingen Baar II* with **urait** is dated to the 1st half of the 6th c. *Freilaubersheim* with **wraet** is dated to the 3rd th. 6th c. *Weingarten I*; **aergup** is dated mid 6th c., *Schwangau* with **aebi** is dated around 600.

The writing of *u* for *w*, such as in **uiu wihju** (bracteate Nebenstedt (I)-B), is found on other Continental objects from the first half of the 6th c.: possibly in *Oettingen aujabrg* and certainly in *Neudingen-Baar II urait*. Possible spellings of **b** for **w** and vice versa, may be found on *Heilbronn-Böckingen*: **arwi** instead of *arbi*, and *Weimar I*: **hiba** instead of *hiwa*, both 6th c.

6. Summary and Conclusions

The Continental Corpus consists of 65 runic objects⁷¹. I have listed a total of 50 legible and interpretable items; 15 runic inscriptions are uninterpretable or illegible. All inscriptions are carved on loose, relatively small, personal objects, nearly all of which survived as gravegifts. Most objects can be defined as prestige- and luxury goods, because of the material (gold, silver, almandine-inlay) and type of object, such as ring-swords. Nearly all runic objects have been found in rich to very rich graves, even princely graves of men, women and children.

The lay-out and the contents of the texts show great similarities. There is little variation in the type of texts, which mostly consist of names. As to the verbs referring to the practice of writing runes, we find **urait**, **wraet**, **writ** 'wrote, writes' and, if the verb 'to do' refers to runic writing, **de(d)u(n)** 'did, made' can be found twice. The verbform **wo(r)gt** 'made' is found once and is apparently a maker's formula. Furthermore, with regard to verb forms, there is **aig** 'I own', **uþf[i]nþai** 'may he/she find out, get to know', **muni** 'may she remember', **golida** 'greeted', **gihaili** 'you must make well', **klef** 'fastened', **gasokun** '(they) condemned, fought', **rada** 'may guess', **isd** for *ist* 'he/she is'.

I have counted 31 masculine names, 27 feminine names, and 5 names that can be either masculine or feminine. One name is that of a dog. Further there are 15 verbforms. There are 15 sentences, containing a subject, a verbform and/or objects. 13 inscriptions consist of one word; 12 inscriptions have two words; 22 consist of more than 2 words with a maximum of 6. There are 3 *fubark*-quotes.

The overall impression is that runic writing was restricted to a private atmosphere, in which especially personal names were of interest, presumably with a somewhat secretive, intimate purpose. One may wonder, whether in these inscriptions it is also the 'gift-and-exchange' policy that is in evidence. The giving-away of objects with someone's (pet)name in runes upon it may have been some special privilege within certain families. The fact that the inscriptions are invisible to the public eye in nearly all cases (which was certainly done intentionally, as may be inferred from the extremely tiny lines on the back of nearly all objects), strengthens this impression. In contrast with runic material from other areas, the Continental tradition shows a remarkably limited, one-sided picture. The fact that we are dealing almost exclusively with gravefinds, consisting of mostly precious, small personal belongings, points to the fact that only one application of runic writing has become known to us. Objects and texts are confined to a particular category: of the owners (the deceased) and their closest relatives or relations. This may explain the enormous number of personal names. Texts that relate to more mundane practices would of course show more variety, such as can be found (although sparsely) in the Danish, Dutch and English traditions.

⁷¹ Shortly before closing this manuscript, seven new-finds, from 1995 and 1996, were brought to my attention. New-finds from 1995, published in *Nytt om Runer 1996 (publ. 1997)*, p.13, are: (1) a silver disc-brooch with almandines from Gomadingen (Baden-Württemberg), dated 2nd th. 6th c., reading **iglug** or **iglun**; (2) a silver disc-brooch with almandines from Kirchheim-Teck (Baden-Württemberg), dated 2nd h. 6th c., reading **arugis**. A third gilt-silver bow-fibula (not yet published) is from Lauchheim, dated 2nd h. 6th c., found in a rich woman's grave in 1995. The runic legend is **aonofada**. In 1996 another find from Pforzen turned up. The object is an ivory ring, which belonged to a bronze disc. It is dated around 600. The runes read **???aodliþurait:runa:**. In a grave field near Donaueschingen two bracteates were found in a grave, dated 2nd h. 6th c. The runic legend is **alu ota**. I thank Prof. Düwel for mentioning the latter finds to me in a letter of June 1997.

The Continental runic inscriptions are found on the following artefacts:

- 39 brooches, all found in or considered to originate from women's graves.
- 11 weapons, or weapon-parts, all men's belongings
- 4 fittings and belt-buckles, belonging to men's gear
- 3 strap ends, both men and women's gear
- 2 amulet-caskets, from women's graves
- 2 amber pearls, from women's graves
- 1 ivory box, from a child's grave
- 1 neckring, provenance unknown, probably a man's adornment
- 1 wooden stave, weaving-implement, from a woman's grave
- 1 silver spoon, provenance unknown

It appears that the Continental runewriters were weaponsmiths and jewellers, who carved the inscriptions by order of someone belonging to the elite or upper middle-class. The limited vocabulary is also partly due to the small proportions of the objects. The texts belong to a category that is most frequent in runic heritage: owners', makers' and writers' formulae, and dedications. It appears that the texts were generally spelled correctly, which may mean that both client and artisan knew how to spell. This suggests an elaborate use of runes, an assumption not supported by substantial evidence. Texts like: Boso wrote the runes, or Blithgunth wrote the runes, suggest that the *runecarver* signed the inscription (cf. also Page 1995:307). Yet, I do not believe that in these exclusively personal, often intimate inscriptions the presence of the name of the artisan would have been appreciated. I am inclined to think that Boso or Blithgunth are the names of the commissioners, who did not personally write the text, but who ordered the inscription.

VIII. EARLY RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS IN ENGLAND

1. Introduction.

The early English and Frisian runic traditions used a *futhork* of 26 letters, i.e. the common Germanic *futhork* extended with two additional runes: ƿ and ƿ̅. The new graphemes were obviously needed to represent phonemes developed from the allophones of long and short *a*, the results of Ingvonic soundchanges. This Anglo-Frisian *futhork* remained in use in Frisia and England throughout their runic period, in both regions supplemented with several varieties. From the 7th century onwards, runic writing in England underwent a separate development, and the *futhork* was extended to over 30 characters. Runic writing became closely connected with the Latin scriptoria, which is demonstrated by ecclesiastical runic monuments and an abundant use of runes in manuscripts.

Two 7th c. inscriptions from the post-conversion period, or Period II (see Introduction), are included in this chapter: St. Cuthbert's coffin and the Whitby comb. Both items bear texts with a clearly Christian content. St. Cuthbert's coffin is interesting from a runological and historical point of view, because it shows some runic peculiarities and it can be dated accurately. The Whitby comb has a Christian text, partly in Latin. Examples of later Anglo-Saxon rune-writing have been found in Germany, France and Italy, as a result of travelling Anglo-Saxon clerics and pilgrims.

The phonemic changes known as monophthongization, fronting and nasalization, may have taken place independently in OFris and OE (Looijenga 1996^b:109ff.) Monophthongization concerns Gmc **ai* > OE *ā*⁷²; OFris *ā*, *ē*⁷³ and sometimes *ā*; Gmc **au* > OE *ēa*, in OFris *ā*. Fronting concerns a shift from *a* > *æ* when not followed by a nasal consonant. Nasalization concerns *a* > *o* before nasal consonant and *a* + *n* > *ō* before voiceless spirant. Monophthongization, fronting and nasalization took place in all Old English dialects and also in Old Frisian (and neighbouring languages). According to Campbell (1959:50) "the evidence for the dating of these changes is tenuous, though obviously they all belong to the period between the Germanic invasion of England c. 450, and the oldest surviving texts *circa* 730-50". The oldest surviving text can now be dated to the 5th c.

The linguistic developments affected the (Gmc) monophthongs and diphthongs *a*, *ai* and *au* and induced a change in the use of the **ansuz* rune ƿ̅, which, apparently, could not be used for the products of the soundchange: the allophones developing into phonemes *æ*, *ā* and *o*, *ō*. It is puzzling that these were not rendered by the **ehwaz* and **ōðilan* runes, and that the allophones induced changes in the graphic system, which resulted in graphic variations on the old **a** rune (Looijenga 1996^b:109).

The additional Anglo-Frisian runes ƿ̅ *āc* and ƿ̅ *ōs*, were recorded at different dates in England, the earliest one, *ōs*, in the 5th century on the Undley bracteate. The double-barred **h** ƿ̅ which

⁷² The OE developments of Gmc **ai* and **au* took place, according to Luick (§ 291), in the 2rd - 4th c.

⁷³ A sound which according to Campbell (1959:52) "might well develop from *æi*. It is accordingly possible that *a* > *æ* before the monophthongization of *ai* to *ā* in OFris".

occurs on the Continent and in England, but not in Scandinavia, is attested rather late in England, on St. Cuthbert's coffin (698). Before this date the single-barred **h** was used in England, perhaps as a result of the Scandinavian descent of many English inhabitants.

In the present study, the first group of inscriptions comprises legible and (partly) interpretable texts; the second group consists of those inscriptions that are hardly legible and therefore hardly interpretable; some are not decipherable at all. Neither the legends of St. Cuthbert's coffin nor the Whitby comb present any specific runological difficulties. Here the problems are merely caused by damage and wear. The bracteates of Welbeck and Undley are listed among the Bracteates, Chapter VI.

Within the first group the inscriptions appear according to the type of inscribed object. I have examined most inscriptions personally, but in some cases I had to rely on photographs or drawings (Boarley, Watchfield, the coins, Selsey, Sandwich stone, St. Cuthbert's coffin⁷⁴). The abbreviation BM indicates the British Museum. The information concerning the runic coins has been extracted from Blackburn (1991).

Surveys of English runic inscriptions have been published by Page (1973 and in an anthology of his numerous articles in 1995), Bruggink (1987), and Elliott (1959/1989). A handy checklist of the early inscriptions including drawings and a selected bibliography is presented by Hines (1990^b). Quite some useful information is compiled in *Old English Runes and their Continental Background*, edited by Bammesberger (1991).

⁷⁴ The coffin can be seen in the Cathedral Museum Durham, but its present state does not allow for personal inspection.

Map 8. Findspots of early runic objects in England.



2. CHECKLIST OF EARLY ENGLISH RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS

PERIOD I, legible and (partly) interpretable inscriptions.

SWORD EQUIPMENTS

1. Ash Gilton, (Kent). Pyramidal gilt silver sword pommel, no find-report. Dated 6th c. Seen in the Liverpool City Museum.

The runic inscription is surrounded by ornamental, incised and nielloed lines. The runes are difficult to read since the upper part of the inscription is rather abraded. The first and last parts of the inscription may consist of just some ornamental lines; the central part may be transliterated **??emsigimer????**.

𐌺𐌰𐌶𐌿𐌺𐌰𐌿𐌺

Page (1995:301) regards "most of the forms as attempts to give the appearance of an inscription without the reality". Although script-imitations do occur from this period (the legend reminds especially of *Hohenstedt*, Continental Corpus), in this case I consider it not unlikely that the carver meant to cut runes and that it is possible to decipher (some of) them.

em 1 sg. pres. ind. 'I am'. **sigimer** is a PN, nsm. *i*-stem, consisting of two well-known name-elements: OE *sige* 'victory', OS *sigi*, and *mēr* < Gmc **mēriz*, cf. OE *māere*, Go. *mērs* 'famous', cf. *Thorsberg niwajemariz*, and the PN *Segimerus* (Schönfeld 1965:204f.). Elliott (1989:50) read **sigimer**. Odenstedt (1981:37-48) read *sigi m(ic) ah* 'Sigi has me'. According to Odenstedt, the **h** is of the double-barred type. In my opinion only the part **em sigimer** stands out clear and a possible presence of a double-barred **h** is very doubtful. The runes for **e** have a peculiar form; something in between 𐌺 and 𐌿. The **s** has four strokes.

2. Chessel Down II, (Isle of Wight). Silver plate attached to a scabbard mouthpiece of a ring-sword. Dated first h. 6th c. It was found in a rich man's grave. Seen in the BM, London.

At the back of the mouthpiece a repairstrip with runes is attached, hence the strip with the inscription "is a secondary addition to the mount, and perhaps the latest feature on the sword", according to Hawkes & Page (1967:17). They proceed by saying that "the repairs to the back of the mount, and the cutting of the runes, must have taken place shortly before burial". The presence of an *ōs* rune points to an English provenance of the inscription, although there are strong Scandinavian influences in the ornamentation of the mouthpiece (Hawkes & Page 1967:13f.). The Gilton, Sarre and the Faversham ring-swords belong to a homogeneous group of Kentish ring-swords, according to Hawkes & Page (1967:10). The runes are engraved very neatly and read **æko:ori**.

𐌶𐌰𐌿:𐌺𐌰𐌿𐌺

The first rune of the first part may be transliterated **æ** in **æko**, as fronting of West Gmc *a* in pre-OE probably had taken place before the 6th c. I suppose it is a PN; it reminds of *Akaz*, bracteate *Āsum-C*, (see Bracteates Corpus, nr. 3). If the same name is involved (which may very well be so, cf. De Vries 1962:4, who reconstructs *akr* m. PN on the basis of runic **akaR**

and OE *Aca*, and OHG *Aho*), the final *-az* would have become *-a* in West Gmc (cf. **swarta** < **swartaz* in *Illerup I*, Danish Corpus). West Gmc masculine names ending in *-a* and *-o* are declined weak, hence **æko** is a nsm. *n*-stem (possibly Frankish/Merovingian influence because of the ending *-o*, cf. *Boso* in *Freilaubersheim*, Germany. Anglo-Saxon masculine names of the weak declension mostly end in *-a*). It is remarkable that the final **o** is written with the Anglo-Frisian *ōs* rune ᚲ, which developed from the older **ansuz* rune.

Since the inscription exhibits two different **o**-runes: the Anglo-Frisian *ōs* in **æko** and the older **ōðilan* ᚷ in **?ori**, I suppose this was done to reflect a different pronunciation. The **o** in **?ori** may represent something in between *o* and *æ*, although *i*-mutation may not yet have taken place or may not have been completed at the time the inscription was made.

The value of the initial rune ᚱ in the second part of the inscription is obscure. It has the form of the later Anglo-Saxon **s**, also called bookhand-**s**, but this inscription is dated too early to expect influence from bookhand. It probably does not represent **k**, since the other **k** rune in the same inscription has another form: ᚲ, like in *Chessel Down I* and *Hantum* (Dutch Corpus). It might denote **l**, such as can be found in bracteate legends (see Bracteates Corpus). In that case the word should be transliterated **lori**, perhaps dsn. *a*-stem *lori* 'loss' (cf. Campbell § 571, 572).

BROOCHES

3. *Boarley*, (Kent). Cast copper alloy disc-brooch. Dated late 6th, early 7th c. Found near Maidstone, now in the BM, London (Parsons 1992:7-8).

The runes are in an arc defined by framing lines. One might read **atsil** or **ætsil**

ᚱᚱᚱ

The **a** or, in view of the dating, **æ** is a mirror-rune. When taking the medial rune for a insecurely carved **s** in four strokes, one may read **ætsil**. **ætsil** can be divided in two words: **æt** prep., OE *æt* 'at, to, with', and **sil**, short for OE *sigil*, *sigel* f. (later *n*.) 'sun', or 'brooch', see below: *Harford Farm*. When reading **æt sil** the interpretation may be 'to/at/with the brooch'. Presumably the carver did not finish the intended text.

4. *Harford Farm*, (Caistor-by-Norwich, Norfolk). Composite brooch with gold and garnets. Dated ca. 650. Found in a grave. Seen in the BM, London. According to Hines (1991^b) the brooch has typical parallels from Milton, Oxfordshire and Ixworth, Suffolk.

The runes are clearly legible: **luda:gibœtaesigilæ**.

ᚱᚱᚱ:ᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱᚱ

Considering the date of the brooch, around 650, *i*-mutation might have taken place, therefore the transliteration of the **ōðilan* rune is *æ*. The inscription is preceded by a slanting stroke, which I take for an ingress-sign, not unlike the one in *Bernsterburen* (The Netherlands). A word-divider consisting of 6 dots follows **luda**, thus severing the subject - the name of the repairer - from the rest of the sentence, which are verb and object written together.

This practice reminds of *Freilaubersheim* (Continental Corpus) **boso:wraetruna**.

luda may be a PN *Lud(d)a* nsm. *n*-stem (Searle 1897); *lud*- cf. OE *lēod*- m. 'prince, man' OS *liud*, OFris *liōd*.

gibœtæ is 3 sg. pret. ind. 'repaired', cf. the later OE inf. *gebētan* 'to repair'. *gi*- instead of earlier *gæ*-, later OE *ge*- (Campbell § 369). The final inflectional ending *-æ* is regular for this form of the verb at this date (Campbell § 750). **sigilæ** 'brooch' asf. *ō*-stem, *sigle* or *sigel*, *n*-stem in later OE. This word may descend from Latin *sigillum* (cf. Hines 1991^a, 79f). Another instance of **sigila** on a brooch appears in a Continental inscription: *München-Aubing II* (Continental Corpus): **segalo sigila**.

Besides the **desaiona** and **pada** tremisses, dated ca. 660-670, this inscription shows one of the earliest attestations of the *āc* rune in the English Corpus (apart perhaps from *āc* in *hlāw*, *Loveden Hill*, below nr. 7, however uncertain). The **s** rune is a rare variety on the vertical zig-zag line; the example in this inscription has five strokes, so far unparalleled in England. (Hines, 1991^a:79f.). *Ash Gilton* and *Boarley* have **s** in four strokes. 'Luda repaired (the) brooch'.

5. *West Heslerton*, (North Yorkshire). Copper-alloy cruciform brooch. Dated first h. 6th c. (Hines 1990^b:446). In the possession of the excavator.

One can read either **neim** (read from right to left) or **mien** (from left to right).

A short runic inscription consisting of five characters: a cross-shaped character, followed by three vertical zig-zag characters, and a final character that is a vertical zig-zag with five strokes.

The brooch was found in a woman's grave and can be regarded typical of the general area in which it was found, according to Hines (1990^b:446). Page (1987:193 & 1995:301) disputes the transliteration of rune 4; he reads **neim**, or, less likely, **neie**. Hines (1990^b:445f.) presents a drawing from which **neim** or **mien** can be read. I suggest to take **mien** as an (ortho)graphical error for *mene* 'necklace, collar, ornament, jewel' (cf. Roberts 1992:198). Holthausen (1963:219) lists OE *mene* m. 'Halsband, Schmuck', OS *meni*, OHG *menni*, ON *men*. This inscription belongs then to a well-known and wide-spread group of runic texts that name the very object, e.g. *Caistor-by-Norwich* and *Harford Farm* (English Corpus), *Aquincum* and *Falloward* (Continental Corpus) and the combs from *Oostum* and *Toornwerd* (The Netherlands).

A BRONZE PAIL, POTS AND URNS.

6. *Chessel Down I*, (Isle of Wight). A copiously decorated bronze pail. Dated 520-570 (Hines 1990^b:438). Found in a rich woman's grave. Seen in the BM, London. The pail may have been an import from the eastern Mediterranean. The runes are cut over the original decoration, thus they are a later addition. There is no clue as to when and where the runes were carved.

The runes were cut between framing lines and are partly damaged by corrosion, but the end of the legend is clear: **???bwsееkkkaa**.

A runic inscription consisting of 13 characters: a cross-shaped character, followed by four vertical zig-zag characters, then three vertical zig-zag characters with five strokes, and finally four vertical zig-zag characters with five strokes.

The **s** is in three strokes; the **k** has a similar form as in *Chessel Down II*, above nr. 2, *Hantum*, **skanomodu** (both Dutch Corpus), and the *Vimose* plane (Danish Corpus). The sequence reminds of the medieval Scandinavian runic *pistil, mistil, kistil* formula (as for instance is cut on the GØRLEV stone, Sjælland, Denmark, showing the sequence **pmkiiisssttiiiilll**). When operating in the same way, we would get here: **bekka, wekka, sekka**, three masculine personal names, all nsm. *n*-stem. Two of the names are known from the Old English travelogue Widsith 115: *Seccan sohte ic ond Beccan*. Both names are here in the acc. sg. *Becca* was the name of one of Eormanric's followers, ruler of the Banings. In Widsith, his full name was *Peodberht* (Malone 1962:196). In legend, he was the evil counsellor who advised Eormanric to murder Sunilda. The *Secca* of Widsith is the hypocoristic form of Sigiwald (cf. Malone 1962:131f. and 196f.). *Wecca* reminds of the name of Wehha, the father of Wuffa, king of East Anglia, who started his reign in 570 AD.

If the *Becca* and *Secca* on the pail are the same as the historical *Becca* and *Secca*, this might explain the exotic origin of the pail, since *Secca* had to flee and live in exile in Italy (Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum* iii, 13, 16, 23f.).

7. *Loveden Hill*, (Lincolnshire). Cremation urn. The dating cannot be any more close than 5th - 6th c. (Hines 1990^b:443). The urn was found in a great urnfield. Seen in the BM, London. The runes are carved in a slipshod style; some lines are cut double. The division marks consist of double vertical lines. Especially the middle and last part of the inscription are difficult to read.



The somewhat jumpy style allows no absolute statements (such as "zweifellos vorzuziehende Lesung **w**", according to Nedoma 1991-1993:116) about the identity of the runes, or about the impossibility of having a hook-shaped **k** < in the inscription (because there would be no further attestations of that form in the English Corpus, according to Nedoma 1991-1993:117). Apart from the fact that one cannot base such firm statements on so little surviving material, there is a near parallel in *Watchfield*: the 'roof'-shaped **k** ^. Besides, the 'Kent' or 'Bateman' brooch (see Continental Corpus nr. 21) has a **k** in the form <. This brooch is regarded as "either Anglo-Saxon or Continental Germanic" (Page 1995:172f.).

𐌺𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹𐌸𐌹 || 𐌸𐌹𐌸 || 𐌺𐌹𐌸

The first part, consisting of seven runes, is relatively easy. The initial rune is an **s**, carved in three strokes; the second rune is the yew rune which obviously denotes a vowel, transliterated **i**. The sixth rune may be a double-carved **l**, or an **æ** with a double headstaff **sīpæbld** or **sīpæbæd**. Although an ending is lacking, I conjecture a female PN is meant, nsf. *wō*-stem, a compound consisting of **sīpæ-** cf. OE (*ge*)*sīd* ‘companion’ and **bæd** *beadu* f. ‘battle, war’, ON *bōd*, OS *Badu* in female PNs. But when reading **sīpæbld** *Sīpæb(a)ld* we have a masc. PN, with a second element *-bald*, OE *beald* ‘bold’, nsm. *a*-stem.

The second part consists of four runes. The first and last runes may be both *thorn*'s, or the first one is a *thorn* and the last one a *wynn*, since this graph has, in comparison to the first rune, its hook nearly at the top of the headstaff. The two runes in between could be **iu** or **ic**, hence one may read **þiup** or **þiuw** or **þicþ**. A reading **þiuw** ‘maid’ has been proposed by Bammesberger (1991^b:127). An interpretation **þiup** as ‘good’, cf. Go. *þiup* n. ‘something good’, presents semantical difficulties. Odenstedt (1991:57) proposed to read **þicþ** 3 sg. pres. ind. ‘gets, receives’ < **þigip*, cf. OE *ðicgan* ‘to take, to get’ (Holthausen 1963:364). The third part consists of four runes; the first rune may be a single-barred **h**; it looks like Latin N. A similar N-shaped sign can be found on the *Sandwich* stone (nr. 19). The last two runes are rather obscure; they appear to be partly intermingled. I read them as *āc* followed by a somewhat unclear **w**. Thus I take the word to be **hlaw**, asm/n. *wa*-stem ‘grave’.

The whole sentence may be read: **sīpæbæ/ld** || **þicþ** or **þiuw** || **hlaw**. The text concerns either a man: *Sīpæbald* or a woman: *Sīpæbæd*, who ‘gets (a) grave’. When reading **þiuw** for the second part, we obtain: ‘*Sīpæbæd* (the) maid (her) grave’.

8. *Spong Hill*, (Norfolk). Three cremation urns, dated 5th c. (cf. Hines 1990^b:434). Seen in the Castle Museum, Norwich.

The urns are decorated with runic stamps, exhibiting mirror-runes, also known as *Spiegelrunen*.

𐌺𐌹𐌸

The runes can be read either way: from right to left and vice versa (Pieper 1987:67-72). They represent the well-known word **alu**, which is a frequent used ‘formula-word’ in Scandinavian inscriptions, literally meaning ‘ale’ (see Bracteates Corpus). Since the runes are stamped in the weak clay, there might be a connection with the manufacturing of bracteates, which also bear stamped runic legends, such as **alu**. On the whole, **alu** may be taken as a word indicating some cult or ritual, in which the use of *ale* may have played a central role, perhaps in connection with a death cult.

THE EARLY GOLD AND SILVER COINS

9. *Kent II*, more than 30 specimens of the Pada coinage, the last of the runic groups of gold-coinage. There are five distinct types, four of which include the name **pada**, PN nsm. *n*-stem.

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According to Blackburn (1991:145) "Two of the types (..) are struck in base gold (..) and may be dated c. 660-70, while the other two (..) are known in both base gold (..) and fine silver. They thus span the transition from base gold shillings to new silver pennies (*sceattas*) and were probably struck c. 670-85". *Pada* is regarded as the moneyer, and the coinage is thought to be Kentish. The name *Pada* < *Bada* may originally be a Saxon name, OS *Bado*, **Pado*, *Patto* (Kaufmann 1965:37), showing *Anlautverschärfung* *p* < *b*. *Bada* < Gmc **bađwō*- nsf. *wō*-stem, 'battle', cf. above, *Loveden Hill*. Names ending in *-a* are weak masculine names in OE.

10. *Kent III, IV*, the earliest silver *sceattas* with the legends **æpa** and **epa** appear in Kent at the end of the 7th c. (the Frisian *sceattas* and those from Ribe, Denmark, are mainly dated to the 8th and early 9th centuries).



To the primary or intermediate types belongs the early variety with the legend **tæpa** ᚠᚥᚦᚦ, the prototype for the Frisian runic issue, according to Blackburn (1991:175f.) The first East Anglian specimens of **æpa**, **epa** belong to a secondary group dating from ca. 720 or somewhat earlier.

The soundchange reflected in the transition from *Æpa* to *Epa* is as likely to have occurred in the Kentish dialect as in an Anglian one, according to Blackburn⁷⁵ (1991:152). *Tæpa* as well as *Epa*, *Æpa* probably are moneyers' names, nsm. *n*-stems.

11. *Suffolk*, three gold shillings (one from St. Albans, two from Coddendam in Suffolk); all struck from the same pair of dies. Dated circa 660.

The runes read from right to left: **desaiona**.



According to Blackburn (1991:144f.), the coins probably are from the same mint as the coinage of *Pada*, since the earliest *Pada* types take their obverse design from the *desaiona* coins, and these two issues are the only ones from the second half of the 7th c. employing runic script. I have no explanation for the legend **desaiona**, nor have I found one elsewhere.

MISCELLANEOUS

12. *Caistor-by-Norwich*, (Norfolk). An astragalus found in an urn. Dated to circa 425-475 (Hines 1990^b:442). Seen in the Castle Museum, Norwich. The urn included 35 to 38 knucklebones, which were used as gaming pieces; all but one are of sheep. The exceptional one is of a roe and bears a runic inscription, according to Knol (1987:284). The object plus inscription could be an import from Scandinavia.

⁷⁵ Other personal names on *sceattas* are: **æpiliræd** (19 pieces, early 8th c.), **tilberçt**, the penultimate rune being the yew rune, here indicating a guttural sound (10 pieces, dated early 8th c.), and **wigræd** (Blackburn 1991:155-158).

roofshaped **k** and a seriffed **æ** seems to point to a mixed runic tradition: partly Scandinavian, partly Continental and partly Anglo-Saxon. The compound name *Hæribōki* may literally be the name of a soldier: 'Armybeech', or 'Battletree', no bad *kenning* for a warrior. *Wusæ* may be a woman's name, g/dsf. *ō*-stem. The unaccented final vowel is written with the *æsc* rune and denotes unaccented *a > æ* (cf. Campbell § 333 and § 587). The meaning might be 'for Haribok, from Wusæ'. On the other hand, I think **wusæ** may be read as **pusæ** 'this one', cf. *Westeremden B* **pusa**, the accusative of a demonstrative pronoun, cf. Seebold (1990:422). One may interpret the text as follows: 'Hariboki's (possession), this one', an owner's formula, cf. *Westeremden B* 'Wimœd has this'.

A third possibility is to suppose that the *wynn* of **wusæ** has been carved incompletely, and actually a **b** was meant, in *bu(r)sæ* f. 'purse' (cf. *Bezenye*, Continental Corpus, which has a **b** rune with only one pocket in **arsiboda**). A semantically similar solution has been put forward by Odenstedt (1991:62), who suggested one may read **pusa** 'bag', the *wynn* taking for a *p* instead of *w*. Since the inscription is carved on a purse, a naming of the object: 'H's purse' is not unlikely. Either way, the inscription can be included in a well-known and wide-spread group of runic texts: two names, or an owner's formula, or the naming of the object in combination with the name of the owner.

14. *Wakerley*, (Northamptonshire). Copper-alloy square-headed brooch, found at a cemetery site. Now in the Museum at Northampton. Date: 525-560 (Hines 1990^b:440). The runic brooches found in England are mostly indigenous. The Wakerley brooch belongs to a group of Anglo-Saxon square-headed brooches, according to Hines. The runes may be read **buhui**.

ᚸᚱᚱᚱ

The second and fourth runes denote probably **u**; they have rather short sidetwigs. The **h** is single-barred. I wonder whether **buh-** is cognate with OE *bēag* m., OS *bōg* 'ring, piece of jewellery etc.', OE *boga*, OS *bogo*, ON *bogi* 'bow', inf. OE *būgan* 'to bend'. The **h** in internal position might represent a velar or glottal spirant (Campbell §50, note 3 and §446). The text of the inscription might present a synonym for 'brooch'.

3. Illegible or uninterpretable inscriptions and single-rune inscriptions.

15. *Dover*, (Kent). Composite brooch, found in a woman's grave. The brooch is of a well-known Kentish brooch type, made of gold, silver, garnet and shell (Page 1973:29, Hawkes & Page 1967:20); dated late 6th, early 7th c. (Hines 1990^b:447). Seen in the BM, London.

ᚸᚾ ᚸᚱᚱᚱᚱ

Two clusters of runes are set in framing lines, as if the manufacturer wanted to imitate stamps. One inscription has **pd**, the other can be read from either side: the first three runes are possibly **bli**, after turning the object 180°, one may read **bkk** or **bll**, since the rune with the form ᚱ may denote **l**, like it is sometimes found on bracteates. I have no interpretation.

16. Upper Thames Valley, a group of four gold coins, struck from two pair of dies, emerged from two findplaces in the Upper Thames Valley. Dated in the 620s. The runic inscriptions on the reverses have found no satisfactory explanation, according to Blackburn (1991:144). One group has: **benu:tigoii** or **tigoii/benu:**. The other has **benu:+:tidi** or **+:tidi/benu:**.

||M|X|I|↑:|H|M|B

I have no interpretation.

17. Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, (Nottinghamshire). Copper-alloy bowl. Date: late 5th or 6th c. Possibly an import from the Rhineland.

Single rune **a** † at the bottom of the interior. This type of bowl especially turns up in rich graves. The grave contained some amber beads and a small-long brooch 5th or 6th c.

18. Cleatham, (South Humbershire). Copper-alloy hanging bowl, found in a woman's grave in a cemetery. Now in the Borough Museum, Scunthorpe. The bowl belongs to a tradition apparently derived from the Roman Period and maintained in Celtic areas. As Anglo-Saxon gravegoods, these bowls are datable to the late 6th and 7th centuries, according to Hines (1990^b:444).

The runes are faint and surrounded by probably intrusive scratches: **??edih** or **hide??**.

M|H|H

The **h** is single-barred. No interpretation, though one might consider an object's name, or a PN.

19. Sandwich/Richborough, (Kent). Stone. Now in the Royal Museum at Canterbury. According to Evison (1964:242-244) the runic text might yield ***ræhæbul** 'stag', showing a single-barred **h**, which resembles a Latin N. Only the middle part of the inscription **?ahabu?i** can be perceived.

†H|B|N |

Evison dated it ca. 650. The inscription is in framing lines, and exceedingly worn. Others thought the object to be undatable (cf. Hines 1990^b:448), but according to some new evidence, it can perhaps be dated to the period of the oldest English inscriptions (Parsons 1994^b:318 with many references).

20. Whitby I, (Yorkshire). Jet disc, spindle whorl, three runes: **ueu**. No date. Seen in the BM, London.

M|M

21. *Selsey*, (West Sussex). Two bits of gold found on the beach between Selsey and Bognor (Hines 1990^b:448). Now in the BM, London. Date: late 6th - 8th c. One can read **brnrn** on one, **anmu** on the other (Hines); Page (1973:29, 163) reads tentatively **anmæl/r**. No interpretation.

BRTRT FM

4. Possibly runic, non-runic and ornamental signs.

Willoughby-on-the Wolds, (Nottinghamshire). Brooch, which carries three **d** motives at various intervals on its circumference. Another **d**-motive can be noticed on a cruciform-brooch from *Sleaford*, Lincolnshire (Hines 1990^b:450). A runic **d** motive can be just an ornamental sign, contrary to the **a** rune in nr. 17, above.

Barrington, (Cambridgeshire). A polished bone with perhaps just scratches. 5th or 6th c. Summer 1997 a parallel turned up in the Betuwe. This is also a piece of polished bone, with similar scratches. The Barrington bone piece is known as a pin-beater, for use in weaving, according to Hines (personal communication 26 Sept. 1997). He supposes the scratches are pseudo-runes, i.e. definitely not real runes, but imitations.

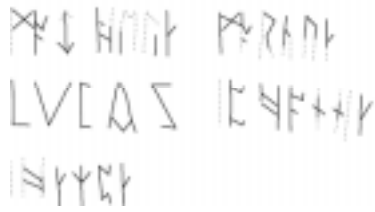
Sarre, (Kent). A sword pommel. It has some lines that might be interpreted as runic **t**, but it probably is an ornamental sign. Date late 5th, early 6th c.

Hunstanton Brooch, (Norfolk). A copper-alloy swastika brooch, dated 6th c. The brooch is an Anglian type of the 6th c. according to Hines (1990^b:450). One of the 'arms' of the swastika bears a crosslike sign, which may be runic **g**. The cross has a sidetwig attached to one extremity, so a bindrune **gi** may be read, comparable to other inscriptions like **ga** in *Kragehul* (Danish Corpus), **gæ** and **go** in *Undley*, **gi** in *Kirchheim Teck* (Continental Corpus) and an ornament (or bindrune **ga**?) on an *Ebergefäss* from Liebenau, Niedersachsen, Germany (cf. Looijenga 1995^b:102-105).

5. PERIOD II.

22. *St. Cuthbert*, (Durham). Wooden coffin, inscribed with runes and Roman lettering. Dated 698, the year of St Cuthbert's death. Seen in the Cathedral Museum, Durham. The wood of the coffin has suffered much of weathering; the coffin itself is incomplete. According to Page (1988: 257-263) one can read some of the many names of apostles and saints that are written on the coffin, but most of the names are abraded to such a degree that they cannot be identified anymore. Therefore, only a part of the inscriptions is presented here; for a detailed account, see Page (1988) and Derolez (1983:83-85). What is left of the runes can be guessed at: **ihs xps mat(t)[h](eus)**

ma and possibly also **eu** are in bindrunes, the **t** is inverted ↓. The part **[h](eus)** is nearly vanished.



Then follows: **marcus**, LUCAS, quite clear and angular. **iohann(i)s**, the initial rune is **i** (!). Then (R)(A)(P)(H)AEL and (M)A(RI)(A).

The names of the apostles Matthew, Marc and John are in runes, whereas the names of Luke and Mary are written in Roman letters. The Christ monogram is in runes. The **h** of **ih̄s** is a double-barred **h**, the first attestation so far of the English tradition. The **h mat(t)[h](eus)** and H (RAPH)AEL are not reconstructable.

The **s** runes are in the so-called "bookhand" fashion. The names of the apostles are in classic orthography. The spelling of the nomen sacrum is **ih̄s xps** *Ie(so)s Chr(isto)s*, curiously enough written after a Roman instance of a partly latinized Greek original; XPS = XPICTOC; the Greek P *rho* has been interpreted as the Latin capitalis P and subsequently rendered by the rune **p**! Another remarkable fact is, that the 15th rune, the old **z** rune Υ , is used to render **x**. Page (1988:264) concludes that the clerics who wrote the text had no idea of the epigraphical application of the runic alphabet, but that instead they used runes picked out of manuscript runerows. Why the scribes wrote Roman and runes in one text, is unknown; a casual mixture of the two scripts, however, is not uncommon in Anglo-Saxon England. Another instance is FRANKS CASKET with a vernacular text mostly in runes, but on one side of the casket a Latin text appears, partly in runes and Roman lettering: HIC FUGIANT HIERUSALEM **afitatores** 'here the inhabitants flee from Jerusalem' (see also Page 1995:311f. on this "sophisticated attitude to language").

The context, according to Page (1988:263), is both local (East Northumbria) and learned. The use of runes and capitals together shows that runes had lost any (- if ever -) pagan association, some two generations after king Edwin of Northumbria accepted Christianity in 627.

23. *Whitby II*, (Yorkshire). Bone comb, date 7th c. Seen in the Whitby Museum, Whitby. The 7th-century comb was found in a rubbish dump of the former double-cloister, founded by abbess Hilda at *Streoneshalh*, now Whitby.

The runes read: [**dæ**]us **mæus** godaluwalu **dohelipæ** cy[.



Instead of **aluwaludo** one may read: **aluwaluda**. The comb is broken, therefore the initial two runes and the last runes of the inscription have disappeared. Yet there is no doubt as to the reading: [**dæ**]us followed by **mæus**. The **s** is in three strokes. The runes are carefully carved before and between the bolts. After **cy**[the comb is broken, but it is doubtlessly the beginning of a PN, e.g. *Cynewulf*. The **ōs** rune in **aluwaludo** is unclear, it could be **a**. The form *walud-* does not yet show the OE diphthong as in *wealdan* 'to rule'. The text reminds of OS Heliand *alowaldo*, adj. 'allruling'. The second *u* of *aluwaludo* is a svarabhakti vowel, which may be analogous to the first *-u-*, perhaps rhyming for the sake of rhythm. *helipæ* also has a svarabhakti *-i-*; *helpæ* 3 sg. pres. subj. 'may he help', inf. *helpan*. The text would be: 'My God, may God allmighty help Cy....'

6. Summary and Conclusions

I have listed 21 items from Period I; the three urns from Spong Hill are counted as one entry. Likewise, the gold and silver coins are categorically counted as one entry. 14 inscriptions are legible and (partly) interpretable, 7 are legible but uninterpretable, or altogether illegible. 4 objects (not numbered) bear non-runic or ornamental signs. Of the 14 legible inscriptions from Period I, 7 consist of one word, 4 contain 2 words, 3 contain 3 words. There are 10 men's names and 2 women's names. The object itself is named 5 times. There may be 2 verbforms: **gibœtae** and perhaps **þicþ**. There are 2 sentences: Harford Farm and Loveden Hill. I have counted 4 objects that belonged to a man and 8 objects that belonged to a woman.

Of Period II, 2 legible objects are listed. The inscriptions on St. Cuthbert's coffin exhibit Saints' and Apostles' names; the text on the Whitby comb heaves a deeply Christian sigh in a clear sentence.

Out of a total of 23 items from both Periods, at least 17 show a private context. 13 objects can be associated with graves; the coins are from hoards; the comb is a casual find from a rubbish heap. Of 6 objects the context is unknown (at least to me). It is difficult to draw conclusions from so little material. The most striking feature is the relative poor quality and small quantity of the early inscriptions in England, when compared with the wealth of runic texts of the post-conversion period from 700 till the 11th c. However, if one includes the 'Kent' brooch and the bracteates of Undley and Welbeck, there would be 26 items. Anyhow, the early English tradition is not out of the ordinary (see the General Introduction for the criteria of the two runic periods).

On the whole, the English runic tradition from the pre-Christian period is remarkably meagre. The increase of runic usage coincides with internal and external political developments and international contacts, with Merovingians and Frisians, for instance.

Of the 21 items belonging to Period I, 11 are made of metal (gold, silver, copper-alloy, bronze), 4 are of earthenware, 1 of bone, 1 of jet and there is 1 stone. Moreover there are about 40 gold coins and hundreds of silver *sceattas*, listed as 4 items. There are 2 pieces of weapon-equipment, 5 brooches; 4 bowls or pails, 4 urns. No wooden or antler objects have been recorded.

Approximately the same number of runic objects have survived in England from a period of three centuries as there has been found in The Netherlands from a period of four or five centuries. Two centuries of runic practice in Germany and surrounding countries have produced over three times as many runic survivors. So, during the 6th and 7th centuries, runic writing seems to have been thriving on the Continent, but the difference might be accidental. The runic gold and silver coins are characteristic of England and Frisia.

In Period I, runic writing in England was confined to the eastern parts south of the Humber, and to Kent and Wight, but seemed not to have been practised in Essex, Wessex and Sussex. This suggests that the Saxons did not write runes. But, the *Altsachsen* did, as is shown by the Fallward inscription! From the 5th and 6th centuries, we can observe certain links between Frankish (Merovingian) areas (North Gallia), North Germany, the Lower Rhine area and South England, which is shown by the exuberant inventory of some warrior-graves. (See also Chapter II). From the same period, runic writing is recorded from all those areas, except from North Gallia.

During the 7th c. runic writing spread to North England, especially to Northumbria. Initially, runic objects were sparingly found in East Anglia. But from the 7th c. onwards, the area provides interesting finds, such as the Harford Farm brooch, and, later on, objects from a settlement site such as Brandon (9th c.). A specific rich category are the runic coins. A linguistic link between England, Germany and Norway is demonstrated by the use of the word **sigila** for 'brooch' (Harford Farm and München-Aubing I). The Norwegian attestation is **siklisnAhli** (**sikli** = 'brooch') on the Strand brooch (Sør Trøndelag, dated around 700, see Krause 1966:48f.). Another link is demonstrated by the, supposedly syntactical, use of division marks, such as in **luda:gibœtæsigi-læ** and **boso:wraetruna** (resp. Harford Farm and Freilaubersheim).

There are significant similarities with Danish inscriptions: the most striking are occurrences of mirror-runes, stamps and the word **alu** in one inscription: Spong Hill. Furtheron there is the sequence **gagoga** (or rather **gægogæ**) in Undley (GB), compare with **gagaga** in Krahehul (DK). These occurrences all date from the 5th and/or 6th centuries. Another remarkable link between England and Denmark may be the use of the *þistil, mistil, kistil* formula in *bekka, wekka, sekka* (Chessel Down I).

The atypical 4th rune of the Chessel Down II legend might be read as **l**, when compared with bracteate legends. The same rune form occurs in South Germany (Griesheim, Nordendorf B, both denoting **k** or **ch**), in Hailfingen with an unidentified value, and in Frisia denoting **æ** (Britsum). These differences can only be explained by assuming the existence of regional runic traditions.

The English tradition exploits two different **s**-runes, a zig-zag **s** ζ and the so-called bookhand **s** \uparrow . Period I exhibits the zig-zag form in a three- or more partite form known from the elder *fupark* in Loveden-Hill, Watchfield, Harford Farm and perhaps on the Dover composite brooch.

Bookhand **s** appears to have been derived from the *insular miniscule*, a long *s*, used by Irish scribes. The fact that this **s** also occurs (and double-barred **h**) on St. Cuthbert's coffin together with the (partly latinized) Greek spelling of the *nomina sacra* XPS and IHS points to a learned interest in strange letter and language combinations. The seriffed runes may also have been the product of ecclesiastical influence. I think it probable that runic bookhand **s** and double-barred **h** were introduced by Irish scribes, possibly first in Northumbria. Double-barred **h** may have been imported by them from the Continent. Continental runic writing, especially in South Germany, seems to have been influenced by manuscript-writing, such as may be detected from the long-stretched forms of the runes. This aspect needs more investigation.

Bookhand **s** is furthermore found on the Kingmoor amulet ring, in the *futhorc*'s of the Brandon-pin and the Thames-scramasax (both 9th c.). It is also present in some manuscript runerows from the 9th c. The occurrence of the 'common' **s**-shape on a ring from Bramham Moor (9th c.) is remarkable, since ring and inscription are similar to Kingmoor.

IX. RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS IN OR FROM THE NETHERLANDS

1. Introduction

Until 1996 runic attestations from The Netherlands were known only from the *terp*-area of the provinces of Groningen en Friesland, and the runic Corpus was called the Frisian Corpus. In April 1996 an object with runes was found in the river estuary of the Rhine, on a site called Bergakker, in the Betuwe, the former *habitat* of the Batavi. This find, dated in the early fifth c., exhibits runes from the older *fupark* plus an anomalous rune. It has no typical Anglo-Frisian runic features. Finds from the *terp*-area exhibit runes from the older *fupark* plus, in some cases, the two additional runes that are common to the early English and Frisian inscriptions. This stock of runes is called the Anglo-Frisian *fupork*. Characteristic of this *fupork* are two new runes ƿ and ƿ̅ for *o* and *a* sounds, and a new value for the old *a* rune ƿ̅, which came to render the sound *æ*. This development is associated with Ingveonic sound-changes specifically concerning the Gmc phoneme *a* and the diphthongs beginning with *a* (see also Chapter VII, Early Runic Finds in England).

The Frisian runic corpus has been edited by several scholars in different compilations (for a brief survey of editors, see Nielsen 1996). The first edition, treating 9 inscriptions, was published in 1939 by Arntz & Zeiss. In 1951, Boeles included the then known runic objects in his major study of Frisian archaeology *Friesland tot de elfde eeuw*. W.J. Buma published about several objects with inscriptions; his inaugural speech (1957) at the Groningen university was devoted to the Frisian runic corpus. W. Krogmann discussed the authenticity of some Frisian inscriptions in his 1953 pamphlet *Zur Frage der friesischen Runeninschriften*. Sipma (1960) published a survey of 16 Frisian runic inscriptions, including items that later on appeared to be falsifications or which exhibit no runes; these are the so-called ‘hila-modu’ and ‘agu’ items, Westeremden C, and Jouswier. Düwel & Tempel (1968/70) were able to extend the number of the Frisian Corpus by their discovery of four inscriptions on combs (Kantens, Hoogetintum, Oostum and Toornwerd). Moreover, they (Düwel/Tempel 1968/70:376ff.) proved that two items were falsifications (‘Jouswier’ and ‘hila-modu’); one item (‘agu’) did not have any runes. It only shows some scratches on a bronze book-mounting, which, according to Buma (1957:29) were runes. The bone plate from Jouswier is kept in the *Oudheidkundige Kamer* at Dokkum. Westeremden C is in private possession, ‘hila-modu’ is missing; ‘agu’ is at the Fries Museum at Leeuwarden.

An elaborate survey and linguistic description of 16 Frisian inscriptions was edited by Miedema (1974). Gijsseling (1980) included 16 Frisian inscriptions (including the Uden stone and the bracteate of Hitsum) in his edition on the Middle Dutch texts. Quak (1990) compiled 20 Frisian inscriptions (including Eenum and Doijem, but without Wijnaldum B and Hamwic). Nielsen scrutinized the complicated linguistics of Runic Frisian in several articles (1984^{a&b}, 1991^a, 1993, 1994 and 1996). The present author has treated 20 Frisian inscriptions (without Eenum, Hitsum, Uden and Doijem) on the occasion of the First International Symposium on Frisian Runes at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden 26-29 January 1994 (Looijenga 1996^c). The present study contains 22 inscriptions (including the Midlum *sceat* and the Bergakker new-find).

Close examination has demonstrated that the scratches on a bone-piece of a horse's leg (Buma 1975), found near Eenum (Eenum), are no runes. The carvings may be slaughter-

marks. The marks on the Doijem piece of bone may have been cut recently (Pieper 1991^a, Looijenga 1991^b). The Uden stone was also recently provided with 'runes'. The examination of the stone was carried out by the present author in cooperation with the geologist G.J. Boekschoten on 5th November 1996, at the Streekarchiefdienst Brabant-Noordoost, Veghel. The incisions ('runes' reading 'wot') on the surface of the stone have not been weathered in the same degree as the rest of the surface, hence the scratches must have been made recently. Moreover, the carver used a modern tool. The find history of the stone is spurious; it is said to have been part of the foundation of the local church, but there are no traces of cement. On the contrary, the surface shows a veneer of humus, which cannot possibly have formed around a stone in a foundation. Therefore, both find history and 'runic' inscriptions are false.

About the runic text or runes (if any) of the inscription of Westeremden C, described in a publication only once (Kapteyn, 1934), nothing can be said. The object is not accessible for inspection. Non-Frisian, but authentic, is the Hitsum bracteate; the object may be related to the Sievern (North Germany) bracteates (see Bracteate Corpus).

The combs, coins and symbolic swords are clustered; three objects are listed according to material (yew wood); the remaining objects are listed as 'various objects, various material'. As in the Anglo-Saxon Corpus, this division is made to show the variety of objects and material. The order is in accordance with the numbers/quantity in which certain objects or materials occur, and within this order the date (starting with the oldest) is the determining factor.

Except for Amay and Hoogeteintum, which are gravefinds, the majority of the objects have been found in a *terp* or *wierde* during commercial digging of the soil at the end of the 19th century and at the first third of the 20th. Other objects were casual finds, such as Schweindorf (Page 1996:137). The other gold coins have no known findplaces and therefore have no find-context. Page (1996:139f.) suggests that all four gold coins could be either English or Frisian. Wijnaldum B was found with a metal detector in 1990 and Bergakker was also found with the help of a metal detector in 1996.

In general it can be said that 'Runic Frisian' cannot be analysed very well with the help of existing grammars and descriptions of Old Frisian, such as have been published by Steller, Markey and Ramat, since they merely describe 'Manuscript Old Frisian' of much later centuries. Reconstructing Runic Frisian is therefore a laborious task. Old English, which has been recorded from much earlier onwards is an indispensable help for the analysis of Runic Frisian, as is Old Saxon, and, to a lesser degree, Old High German.

Abbreviations: FM = Fries Museum; GM = Groninger Museum; BM = British Museum. When a findplace has delivered more runic objects, this is indicated here Wijnaldum A, or B; and Westeremden A, or B. The indication A, B, C, is the current practice for the Frisian inscriptions.

Map 9. Findspots of runic objects in The Netherlands.



2. CHECKLIST OF RUNIC INSCRIPTIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Legible and interpretable inscriptions

THE COMBS

1. *Ferwerd* (Friesland), combcase, antler, found in 1916 in the *terp* Burmania I, during commercial digging. Seen at the FM, Leeuwarden. Date: 6th c. The runes run from right to left and read **me ura** or **me uræ**.

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There are no particular Anglo-Frisian runeforms in this inscription. The ultimate rune may be transcribed either **a** or **æ**, but as there is no $\bar{a}c$ rune in the inscription, the sound value of ᚱ cannot be determined. The inscription starts with a bindrune **me** which has another ductus than the rest. OE *me*, OFris *mi* is a pers. pron. 1 sg. dat. 'to me'. **ura** may be a masculine PN, nsm. *n*-stem. **uræ** may be taken too as a woman's name, nsf. \bar{o} -stem. The text can be interpreted as: '(this comb belongs) to me, Ura, Uræ', an owner's formula.

2. *Amay* (Liège, Belgium), comb, bone, bought in 1892 from an antiquary at Liège, Belgium. Seen at the Museum Curtius, Liège. Date: ca. 575-625. Said to be found in a row-gravefield near Amay, which lies on the Meuse between Huy and Liège. The gravefield was in use from the end of the 6th c. till the beginning of the 7th c. The comb is broken; the runic inscription (or what is left of it) starts from the break and reads from right to left: **jeda**.

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The ultimate rune is $\bar{a}c$. **eda** is probably a PN nsm. *n*-stem, showing monophthongization of Gmc **ai* > OFris \bar{e} . $\bar{e}da$ < **aid-* < **haið-* < **haiþi-* 'clear', cf. OE *hādor*, OS *hēdar*; or $\bar{e}da$ < **haidu-*, cf. Go *haidus* 'way, manner' (Kaufmann 1965:200, 201). In OFris, normally Gmc *h* is retained in the *Anlaut*, but in some cases it disappeared, for instance before *a* or \bar{e} (Steller 1928:33). On the other hand, the fact that *h-* has dropped may point to Romance influence (Kaufmann 1965:196), which, in view of the findplace, will not surprise.

3. *Oostum* (Groningen), two halves of a comb, antler, found in 1908 in the *terp*. Seen at the GM, Groningen. Date: 8th c. On both sides are runes. Side A: **aib ka[m]bu**; side B: **deda habuku**.

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The runes have so-called ornamental forms: the **b** has three pockets, the **h** has three bars. These graphic variations are unique so far. A parallel may be the recently found inscription from *Fallward* (Continental Corpus, nr. 15), which shows an **a** with three side-strokes.

Aib is a PN, *i-* or *ja*-stem. The ending is lost, which occurs frequently in Runic West Gmc.,

certainly at this date. **ka[m]bu** asm. *a*-stem, Gmc **kambaz* 'comb'. The omission of a nasal (here *m*) before a homorganic consonant is a typical feature of runic writing (although not without exceptions, such as can be seen in **awimund**, *Weimar III*, Continental Corpus). Another instance that shows omission of the nasal is **umædit** = *u(n)mædit* (see below, *Rasquert*). The nom. and acc. ending *-u* of a masculine *a*-stem (*kambu*) can only be a reflex of Gmc **-az* (Düwel/Tempel 1968/70; Nielsen 1991^a:300).

Side B: **deda** 3 sg. pret. ind. 'did, made' (Nielsen 1991^a:299, Bammesberger 1991^c:305ff.), OFris inf. *duā*. **habuku** < **habukaz*, PN nsm. *a*-stem. The text runs thus: 'Aib made the comb. Habuku'. However, a female PN *Habuke* is equally possible, here dsf. *ō*-stem (cf. Nielsen 1984^b:13f., Düwel/Tempel 1969/70:366), hence we get the text 'Aib made the comb for Habuke'. Last but not least *Habuku* may be in the nominative, nsf. *ō*-stem, and is thus subject. 'Habuku made the comb (for) Aib' (cf. Düwel/Tempel, 1970:367). The syntax is then VSO. In the first interpretation the syntax is SOV. The ending *-u* < Gmc **-ō* is not restricted to Runic Frisian, but occurs also in the North and West Gmc languages, like for instance in **lapu** 'invitation', nsf. *ō*-stem (cf. Nielsen 1984b, 1991^a and 1994). As regards the name *Habuku* 'hawk', cf. **haukopuz** on the VÅNGA stone (Östergötland), which has been interpreted by Krause (1966:148) as an agent noun of the verb **haukōn* < **habukōn* 'being like a hawk'.

4. *Toornwerd* (Groningen), comb, antler, found in 1900 in the *terp*, dated 8th c. Seen at the GM, Groningen. It bears four runes **ko[m]bu**.

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ko(m)bu nsm. *a*-stem, Gmc. **kambaz* 'comb', cf. above *Oostum kabu*. According to Steller (1928:9) Gmc *a* > *o* before nasal in Old East-Frisian and it became *a* or *o* in Old West-Frisian. Toornwerd lies east of Oostum, the places are separated by the river Hunze.

The interchanging of *a* and *o* in words with the same meaning may have led in earlier times, probably the 5th c., to the development of the *āc* and *ōs* runes (Looijenga 1996^a:111).

An excavation of the Viking-age settlement near the *terp Elisenhof* at the Eider mouth in Schleswig-Holstein revealed a non-inscribed comb similar to the Toornwerd one. Another comb from *Elisenhof*, dated to the end of the 10th c., bears the inscription: **kabr** 'kam', which shows the North Gmc development **kambaz* > *kambr*.

THE COINS

5. *Skanomodu* is the runic text on a struck gold solidus. Date 575 - 610. Findspot is unknown, the solidus belonged to the coin-collection of the English king George III (also Kurfürst of Hanover and Ost-Friesland). The runic solidus came in 1820 in the possession of the BM, London. The legend reads **skanomodu**, which might be taken as a dithematic PN (cf. Bammesberger 1990^a, with ref.).

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The first element is Gmc **skaun-* 'fine, beautiful'; the second element may be derived from Gmc **-mōðaz* nsm. *a*-stem, or **-mōðō* nsf. *ō*-stem (cf. Nielsen 1993:81-88); OFris *mōd* m.

'mind'. Because of monophthongization of Gmc **au* > OFris *ā*: **skaun-* > *skān-* and the ending nsm. *-u* < Gmc **-az* the text is regarded OFris. If the name were a female PN nsf. *ō*-stem, the name need not be OFris, as *-u* < *-ō* is common to all West Gmc languages and to North Gmc as well. **skanomodu** probably was the name of the moneyer, therefore a woman's name is not likely. However, the coin might have been made to serve as a piece of jewellery and in that case a woman's name is appropriate. The **a** is represented by the *āc* rune, together with *Harlingen* and *Schweindorf* the earliest attestations of *āc* in the Frisian tradition.

6. *Harlingen* (Friesland), a cast gold solidus, in 1846 bought by the FM, Leeuwarden, from a Harlingen silversmith, who obtained the solidus from a terpdigger. Date 575 - 625. The runes read **hada**. The **h** is double-barred, both **a**'s are *āc* runes.

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Blackburn (1991:141-143) links the **hada** and **weladu** (see below, nr. 7) solidi together because they are cast pieces, not struck like the **skanomodu** one. Whether the three runic solidi are to be regarded as a coherent group and whether they are Frisian or represent different traditions are matters of speculation, according to Page (1994:187). But the iconography of the three rune-solidi agrees to such a degree that they may originate from the same source. Page (1995:160) wonders "whether the cast **hada** and **weladu** specimens should be defined as coins, or rather considered as cast ornaments". In any case the coins may have served as jewellery or precious gifts. The provenance of the coins is difficult to establish; from their runic legends they seem to be Frisian, but from their context they point to England. **hada** may be a PN, with the element **hapu-* 'battle', nsm. *n*-stem. Otherwise the base may be Gmc **hadaz* 'restraint, confinement', according to Beck (1981:75). A third possibility is to postulate a rare case of monophthongization of Gmc **ai* > OFris *ā*: *hāda* < **haið-*, cf. Go *haidus* 'way, manner' or **haiþi-* 'clear' (Kaufmann, 1965:17, 200). If this were so, it would be the only instance of monophthongization of Gmc **ai* > OFris *ā* in Runic OFris, represented by the *āc* rune. Therefore this rune may not necessarily have been imported by the Old Frisians, as is suggested by Nielsen (1994:121) and Seebold (1991:507f.) on the assumption that monophthongization of Gmc **ai* only partly took place in OFris and would not be found in Runic OFris.

7. *Schweindorf* (Ostfriesland, Germany), a cast gold solidus, found in Schweindorf near Aurich in 1948. Now in the Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum, Emden. Date 575 - 625. Runes run left: **weladu** or **peladu**.

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The initial rune has a large loop, from the top of the headstaff to the bottom, so either **w** or **p** may be read. As **peladu** does not render something meaningful, generally the reading **wela[n]du** is preferred. This is a PN *Wēla(n)du*, cf. OE *Wēland*, ON *Vǫlundr*, NG *Wieland* < **wēla-handuz*, nsm. *u*-stem, 'trickster'. (Düwel/Tempel 1968/70; Beck 1981:69ff. with references). The first part of the compound is **wēl-* 'trick, ruse' cf. ON *vél* 'artifice, craft, device' followed by the suffix *-and* < Gmc **handuz*. The name might refer to the well-known legendary smith *Weland*.

8. *Folkestone* (Kent, England), a gold *tremissis* or *shilling*, found in 1732. Date ca. 650. Unfortunately the object got lost in the BM. A few years ago a similar authentic specimen turned up in the coin collection of the Hunterian Museum at Glasgow. The coin came from the same die as the lost BM one and thus bears the same legend **æniwulufu**⁷⁷.

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This may be taken as a PN nsm. *a*-stem. The language may be OFris: *āni* < *āni*- < **aun-i*-. The **æ** is in that case not a product of fronting, but of *i*-umlaut. One may assume that *i*-umlaut had taken place by 650 (Insley 1991:173). The etymology of Gmc **aun-* is obscure, according to De Vries (1962). Nielsen (1993:84) is of the opinion that **aniwulufu** should be read, without a sign of *i*-mutation. He may have come to this conclusion prompted by a wrong dating: 6th c., of the *tremissis*. Blackburn (1991:143f.) now dates the coin mid 7th c. **-wulufu** < **wulfaz* has an interconsonantal svarabhakti vowel.

The iconography is copied from a Merovingian *tremissis* from South West France. The iconographic history and the findplace in Kent would not exclude a Frisian origin, but one may consider a strong Frankish element.

9. *Midlum* (Friesland), a silver *sceat* of the Frisian, or Continental, type⁷⁸ was found at Midlum in 1988 and is now at the FM, Leeuwarden. Date ca. 750. The runic legend is **æpa**.

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Hundreds of this type of *sceat* are known, which has been defined as "at its best, a careful copy of the English primary C type, with runic 'Æpa' or 'Epa' in front of the head" (Op den Velde et al. 1984:136). These *sceattas* may not be purely 'Frisian' in the sense of 'originating from the *terp*-area', as they are rarely found north of the Rhine, but their find distribution suggests an origin along or south of the Lower Rhine (Grierson & Blackburn 1986:508). The runes are copied along with the rest of the iconography. **æpa** PN nsm. *n*-stem, *Æpa*, based on Celtic *Epo* 'horse' (Kaufmann 1965:14). Probably the name of the monetarius. (See also the *sceattas* of the English Corpus, Chapter VIII).




⁷⁷ The text may have some connection with the legendary *Wylfings* of East Anglia, since their ancestor was called *Aun(n)*, which, according to Ingveonic sound-changes would regularly develop to *ān-*, *ān-*, after *i*-umlaut took place, thus forming the first element of the compound *āniwulufu*. It is interesting that this specific development is considered a typically Old Frisian or Old Saxon feature. The name-element 'wolf' appears to have been particularly popular among Germanic leaders; cf. the Alamannian/Bavarian *Agilolfings*, a family of dukes, and the Franconian *Arnulfing* family of stewards. As to the pedigree of the *Wuffingas* from South Sweden, it is tempting to think of the *-wulf-* family from Blekinge: Haduwolf, Haeruwolf and Hariwulf, mentioned on the *Gummarp*, *Istaby* and *Stentoften* stones (see 'Danish' Corpus).

⁷⁸ Over 2000 *sceattas* were found in The Netherlands. In 1988 for instance, about 140 *sceattas* came to light, in what was called 'The Remmerden hoard'. These all had a runic legend, reading **epa**, **æpa** or **apæ**.

> OFris \bar{a} > \bar{a} > \bar{e} , in which case we would have another attestation of monophthongization of Gmc $*ai$ > OFris \bar{a} . The same rune also occurs in $\text{æ}h$ and in $\text{æ}mluþ$.


The **a** in **upduna (a)le** is the Anglo-Frisian $\bar{a}c$, written once but meant to be read twice in **upduna (a)le**. (This occurs more often; in *Fallward skamella (a)lguskapi*).

As has been said above, the inscription contains some mirrored runes, such as **p**  in **upduna** based on the form of single **p** in **ophæmu**.



Yew-wooden stick of Westeremden.



The rune  might be taken as a mirror-rune **b** in **jibada** (instead of Seebold's **givēda**; the *Sternrune* † should be transliterated **j**, see above, nr. 12). The middle rune † I transliterate **a**, rendered in a rune form known from the younger Danish futhark. Also in **þusa** it is transliterated **a**, although the sidetwig slants to the right, whereas it slants to the left in **jibada**. It might seem strange that we would have two different runeforms both transliterated **a** in one

Odenstedt took the signs for runes. **borod**, according to Odenstedt (1989:159), can only be the 3rd pers. sg. pres. of a verb like OE *borian* (< **borōian*) 'bore, perforate, make a hole in'. There is, however, no hole in the stick, therefore this reading must be rejected.



The Britsum Yew-wooden stick.

A solution may be, to take it to represent **æ**, a variant on the Danish **æ** †. I suggest to transliterate: **þæn i a beret dud]n bæraed mi.**

þæn dem. pron. acc. sg. 'this'.

i refers probably to the piece of yew wood, also in the acc. sg. masculine. This part of the text must be the object.

beret is plural imp. 'bear' of OFris inf. *bera*.

When interpreting **a** < **aiwi* 'always', we find an instance of monophthongization of Gmc **ai* > OFris *ā*, represented by the **ansuz* rune, or the Anglo-Frisian *æsc* rune, which, accordingly, should be transliterated **æ**. If so, it should represent another sound value than *æ* in **bæraed**. To avoid confusion, I transliterate it **a**, although this might be misleading.

dud has several interpretations, such as a PN, according to Gijsseling (1980:7). Bugge (1908:179) interpreted **dud** as 'virtue', **dud** would be a contraction of *dugub*. Arntz (1939:1-67) proposes 'Kraft' or 'Betäubung'. Buma (1951:316 ff.) connected **dud** with OE *duguð* 'the warriors who sit near the king in the hall', 'the tried warriors' (Beowulf 359), which means the king's *comitatus*, see also Campbell (§ 345 and 588,5).

bæraed I read as *bæ-raed* 3 sg. pres. ind. of the inf. *bæ-rædan* 'to prepare' (Holthausen 1963:252 lists OFris *bi-rēda*), perhaps in the sense of carving the runes? It could otherwise be 3 sg. pret. ind. of the strong verb Gmc **rēdan*, OFris *rædan* 'to guess'.

mi is dat. sg. pers. pron. 'me'.

LID is in Roman lettering and means 'ship' (Holthausen 1963:201), or 'retinue', according to De Vries (1962:354). The text may be interpreted as: 'warriors: bear always this yew stick (on the) ship (or in the retinue, a metaphor for 'on the warpath?'); ...]n prepares me, or]n guessed = read me'. Possibly the stick is a kind of amulet.

VARIOUS OBJECTS, VARIOUS MATERIALS

15. *Hantum* (Friesland), a small decorated plate made of (sperm whale?) ivory. Found in 1914. Seen at the FM, Leeuwarden. No date. Any function of the object is unknown. Several sorts of decoration motives seem to be practised on it. One side bears runes. The other side has in Roman letters ABA. The runes read **?:aha:k[** or **?:æhæ:k[**

17. Hamwic (England), knucklebone of a horse found in a medieval waste-pit in Hamwic near Southampton, England. Now in the God's House Tower Museum, Southampton. Dated between 650 and 1025 (Page 1973:171). The runic text is: **katæ**.

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kātæ is nsf. *ōn*-stem, 'knucklebone', Dutch: *koot* (id.), < Gmc **kautōn*. *kātæ* has *ā* < Gmc **au*. This would point to a Frisian provenance of the inscription (Hofmann 1976). According to Nielsen (1991^a:301), ... "-æ(-) < Gmc *-a(-), which crops up after short syllables (*edæboda*, *umæ*), or derives from IE *-ā/-ō + nasal (*katæ*, *umæ*)".

18. Wijnaldum B (Friesland), a gold pendant, found with a metal detector in 1990. In the FM, Leeuwarden. Dated ca. 600. This type of pendant is known from 6th-century women's graves in Mittelfranken, Germany, and East-Gothic cemeteries in Lombardy; the origin may be (east) Mediterranean. On the back is a runic inscription, which can be read **hiwi**.

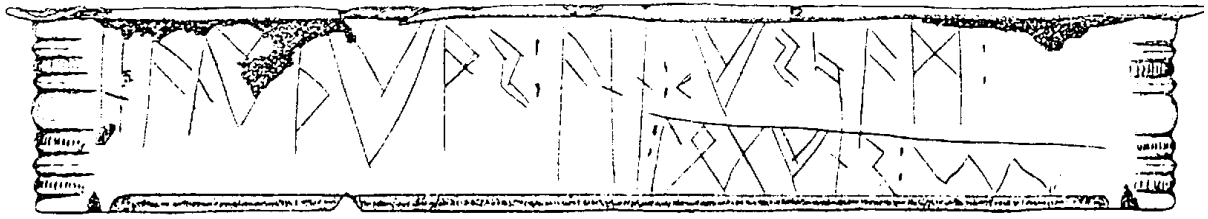
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The **h**-rune has one bar, which is unique in OFris inscriptions, so the inscription may have been added either outside Frisia or was made by a non-Frisian runic artist. The **w** rune is drawn in one stroke; the pocket is not closed. *hīwi* dsf. *i*-stem, 'to the mater familias', cf. OS and OHG *hīwa* f. *n*-stem, 'spouse'; cf. also OS *hīwiski* 'family', OS *hīwian* 'to marry'. The inscription on the MELDORF brooch (dated ca. 50 AD) can be read as *hiwi*, which, according to Düwel (1981^c:12) is a "fairly well-known etymon, which occurs, for instance, in Gothic *heiwa-frauja* 'landlord, master of the house'". The ÅRSTAD (Norway) stone has an inscription **hiwigaz** nsm. *a*-stem 'one with strong familial ties' (Antonsen 1975:34f.).

19. Bergakker (Gelderland), a gilt-silver scabbard mount, found with a metal detector in 1996. It is dated early 5th c. In the Museum Kam, at Nijmegen.

The ornamentation is in provincial-Roman style and might be compared to objects from nearby Gennep (North Limburg), a 4th c.-settlement of Frankish immigrants into a region which was situated within the *limes* (Bosman & Looijenga 1996). In general, according to the type and ornamentation, the scabbard mouth belongs to a group of swords from North Gallia up to the lower Rhineland of Germany and the Netherlands. The runes could have been added anywhere, but I do not think it likely that that has happened outside the above mentioned area, and that the object subsequently has been brought back to its area of origin. Bergakker site probably was a settlement site, although there existed a shrine of the goddess Hurstrga on the same spot. The scabbard mount was part of a large find-complex, which may have belonged to a local smith, or, in view of the sanctuary, it may as well have been part of a votive deposit. The scabbard mount does not show traces of wear, hence it may never have been collected by the commissioner (personal communication from the finder, Mr. D. Jansen, Wychen). Among the many other finds from the same spot, is a stylus, a small silver votive sheet, showing three ladies, probably Matrones, and a bronze seal-box, typical for votive deposits.

In the first, preliminary publication (Bosman & Looijenga 1996) the inscription was transliterated as **habebewas:ann:kesjam:logens:**

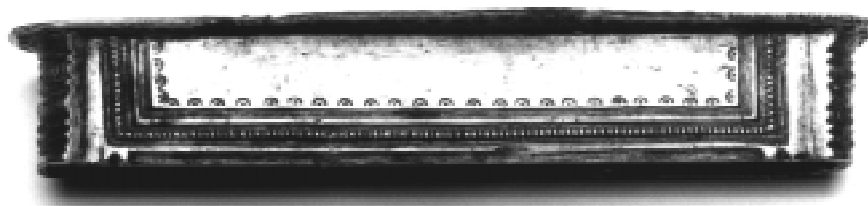


Drawing by D. Jansen, Wychen, The Netherlands.



Photo by courtesy of the Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, Holland.

Photo by courtesy of the Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, Holland.



One character is anomalous and hitherto unattested. It has the form of a double-lined Roman capital V and occurs four times in the inscription. One other character, **s**, appears twice in double lines, and once in single lines. The **s** is in three strokes. It is remarkably small, shorter than the other runes (apart from **k**, which is carved very small). There is one bindrune, forming **wa**, an unusual combination.

The runes run from left to right. The words are separated by division marks: three times composed of two dots and one time of four dots. The inscription contains four words. The last word is followed by a zig-zag line, filling up space. A similar technique can be found for instance on the *Pforzen* (Continental Corpus) silver belt buckle.

The first rune is a single-barred **h**. The second rune is **a**, the **ansuz* rune. The third rune has only one sidetwig to the right, at the middle of the headstaff. I think the rune has been inserted afterwards, since it is smaller and tucked in between the preceding and following runes. In that case it is most probably **l**. At first I took it for an incomplete *thorn*. The fourth character is anomalous, at first sight it resembles no known rune. I contemplated the possibility of a double **u** rune, executed upside-down. But, if it should be considered a writing sign, and part of the text, its value may be established by the context (i.e. the rest of the text). The fifth rune is clearly a *thorn*. The sixth character is similar to the fourth one, only rendered somewhat larger. The following character appears to me as a bind-rune of **w** and **a**. The **w** was cut first, since the lower sidetwig of the **a** cuts through the lower part of the hook of the **w**. The last rune is an **s**, rendered in double lines.

Thus we have **hal?þ?was**.

The sequence **þ?was** reminds of a well-known Germanic name-element, nominative *þewaz*, such as occurs in **owlþupewaz** of the Thorsberg (Schleswig-Holstein) bronze sword-chape. Therefore I take it that the mysterious sign that looks like a double V must represent **e**. When comparing its form to the well-known runic **ǀ**, both characters share the upper part. Normally the two hastas of the **e** rune run vertical, and here we find two slanting lines that touch at their ends. There is a parallel in the lost inscription of *Engers* (Continental Corpus), reading **leub** (see there, nr. 15). Here the hastas of the **e** rune slant towards each other, without touching, though.

haleþewas I take as a personal name in the genitive, masculine *a*-stem. The first part of this compound might be *hāle-*, < Gmc **hail-*, adj. 'whole, safe, unhurt', or, if *hale*, it may be connected with ON *hali* (and Middle Irish *cail* De Vries 1962:204), the meaning might be 'spear'. The second part is *-þewas*, gsm. *a*-stem, 'thane, retainer, warrior'.

After the division dots follow three runes **ann**. This is a verbform, 1 or 3 sg. pres. ind. 'grants', cf. Seebold 1970:79f., who lists ON *ann* 'grants', inf. *unna* 'to grant'.

The next part of the inscription has a remarkable lay-out, probably caused by lack of space. The upper part reads **kesjam**. The lower part reads **logens**.

De Vries (1962:307) lists ON *kesja* f. 'javelin'. This strikes as puzzling; the scabbard mount belonged to a sword, not a spear.

Fritzner (1891:279) lists ON *kesja* f. 'spjót' and gives examples of attestations: in Gammelnorsk bibelhistoria, Fornmanna sögur, Egils saga, Sturlunga saga and Flateyjarbók. These attestations are of a much later date than the Bergakker inscription. Since the meaning 'javelin' is recorded at least six centuries later, I wonder, (a) whether *kesja* had another meaning in the early fifth century, and (b) what could be the weapon's background. In the centuries that have elapsed, a change in the naming of weapon-types might have taken place.

I investigated the possibility whether **kesjam** might be a loanword. In that case it may have been the name of a certain kind of weapon that was adopted from Celts or Romans into Germanic society. If *kesja* initially were a designation of a sword, one may assume that much later a confusion in the naming of weapons might have taken place⁷⁹ somewhere in Germanic history. Much (1959:84ff.) observed in his description of the kind of weapons used by Germanic tribes that a sword was a rare type of armament. It seems plausible for Germanic warriors to have adopted a Celtic sword, since the Celts had a long and famous history of forging swords.

A confusion can be noticed in the meaning of the weapon that is recorded in Latin as GESA, CESA, GÆSUM (Du Cange 1954:62, 278), and which could be either a "hastas Galli, vel jaculum" (= javelin) and a "gladius" (= sword)⁸⁰.

According to Schmidt (1983:761), *gaesum* is a loan from Celtic. Latin *gaesum*, Gallo-Greek *gaisos* or *gaison* 'light javelin' is, according to Walde-Hofmann (1930-1956:575f.), to be connected with Old Irish *gai*, *gae* 'spear; *gaide* = *pilatus*; in OHG, OS we have *gēr*, in OE *gār*, in ON *geirr* 'spear' < Gmc **gaizaz*; cf. De Vries 1962:161f.: 'heavy iron javelin'⁸¹. Gmc **gaizaz* m. *a*-stem, should be equalled with Latin *GAESUS. Latin has GAESUM, so the Gmc word might have been borrowed directly from Gallo-Celtic. Together with the

⁷⁹ There exists another instance of a confusion of sword and spear in a runic inscription. The *Liebenau* inscription (Continental Corpus, 4th c.) may be read **ra[u]zwi**. Gmc **rauza-* means 'tube', 'hollow stem', cf. ON *reyr* 'reed', metaphorically 'spear', perhaps also meaning 'sword'. The inscription is on a silver disc that may have been part of a swordbelt (Düwel 1972).

⁸⁰ A well-known word for 'sword' in Latin is *gladius*. Schmidt (1967:159) states that Lat. *gladius* can be verified as a Gallic loan with help of the Island-Celtic languages. Island-Celtic words for 'sword' are Cymrsh *cleddyf*, Bret. *klézé*, Irish *claideb*; these may be united together with *gladius* under **kladi-*. The fact that *gladius* is a loan and no inherited word, is proved by two data: a) the change of initial *k* > *g* occurs in Latin only with loanwords; b) Ennius (239-169 BC) already attests *gladius*, which by then has dispelled the old Latin hereditary *ēnsis*, Old Ind. *asiḥ*, which got used only in a poetic sense (Walde-Hofmann 1930-1956:406). The motive for the discarding was the adoption of the two-edged Celtic sword by the Romans. The *ēnsis* was short, more like a dagger. As to the time of the adoption one may think of the first invasions by Celts into Italy (fourth century BC), according to Schmidt (1967:163).

⁸¹ According to De Vries (1962:161f.), the Germanic word has been considered a loan from Lat. Gall. GAESUM, but he states that it appears to be the other way round, since there existed a Germanic tribe, the *Gaesatae*. This, however, is disputed. Schwarz (1956:46f.) states that a people named GAESATEIS are recorded in 236 BC living in the Alps. They fought in the service of North-Italic Celts against the Romans in 225 BC. Their swords were of Celtic make. According to Schwarz (1956:46) *Gaesatae* is no tribal name, but a Celtic definition of soldiers, named after Celt. **gaison* 'spear'. Schwarz presents arguments for and against the *Gaesatae* being some Germanic tribe. In the Alps in those times, one would rather expect Ligurian tribes who eventually became celticized. Schönfeld (1965) lists no *Gaesatae* in his book on Germanic personal and tribal names. As cognomina, *Gesatus* and *Gaisionis* are known from Celtic and Germanic mercenaries, resp. from Vindelica and lower Germany. In fact, these names point to the armament of the soldier (Alföldy 1968:106f.).

introduction of the Celtic sword into Germanic society, the name of the sword was adopted too. I suggest the form CESA, GESA etc. to be vulgar Latin, cf. vulgar Latin *carra*, *cerasa*, *pruna*, *pira*, *pisa* against classic Latin *carrum*, *cerasum*, *prunum*, *pirum*, *pisum* (Kluge 1913:28, b, Anm.). This would explain the co-existence of GESSUM and GESA. If we find in the early fifth c. a form *kesja* in a formerly occupied Roman area, this might indeed reflect a vulgar Latin word such as GESA or CESA. One way or another, **kesjam** seems to be connected or related to a root GAES- or perhaps better CAES-. In the latter case I suggest an early or secondary (and perhaps later lost) connection with Lat. *caesim* [caedō] adv. 'by cutting, with cuts', 'with the edge of the sword', as opposed to *punctim* 'with stabs, to prod, to pierce'. The basic meaning of the Latin verb *caedō*, *caedere*, *cecīdī*, *caesum* is 'to strike, beat, cut, kill'. The form **caesia-* might be a nomen agentis, with a root *caes-* + the suffix *-jan* (Meid 1967:97). If the word is borrowed from Latin, it should have been done so before the 6th c., when the *c* was still pronounced *k*. The meaning would then be 'cutter', e.g. a person fighting with a certain weapon, such as a *gladiator*, only here the weapon is not a *gladius*, but some different type of sword. One may also think of the tribe known as *Gaesatae*, who were called after their special weapon, the *gaison*.

After being borrowed into Gmc, *kesja* would have been declined after Germanic standards. The ending *-am* in *kesjam* indicates then a dative plural, and might thus be the indirect object of **ann** + dative, which would render '(he) grants the sword-fighters **logens**'.

logens appears enigmatic; its ending *-ens* as well as the ending *-am* of **kesjam** (acc. sg. of Lat. *a*-stem) makes (in the light of the foregoing deliberations) the impression of (vulgar) Latin influence. It might be the nominative of a part. pres. of *lūcere* 'to shine, to flame'; *logens* 'shining' is then an adj. in the nominative. However, **o** for *u* and **g** for *k* is remarkable.

In OS we find *logna* 'sword', f. *ō-* or *n*-stem. De Vries lists ON *log* n., or *logi* m. 'sword'. The weak declension has in Gothic the genitive singular and acc. plural ending in *-ns*. Hence, **logens** may be gen. sg. or acc. plural of **loge* 'sword'. I suggest we have here in the endings of both **kesjam** and **logens** a relic of an older stage of Gmc, which is attested in Gothic, but not in West Gmc. Anyway, when interpreting the text in this manner, we get a semantically perfect sentence: 'possession of H., he grants the sword-fighters a sword (swords)'. I can imagine that the weaponsmith wrote this text on the scabbard mouth as a sort of promotion for his work. Or the text refers to a leader, who bestows certain precious swords on his *comitatus*.

Summary: both *gaesum* and *gladius* end up in Latin as loanwords from Celtic. It stands to reason that at least one of these words could and did turn up in Germanic as well, borrowed either from Celtic or Latin. The borrowing went with the adoption of a certain sword.

3. Legible but uninterpretable inscriptions.

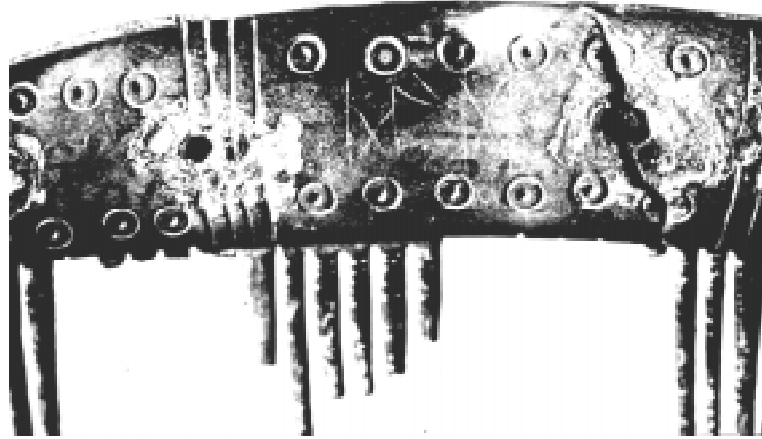
20. *Kantens* (Groningen), combcase, bone, found in 1903 in the terp. Seen at the GM, Groningen. The comb is dated in the early 5th c. which makes it the oldest rune find of the Frisian *terp*-area. Only two runes can be distinguished: **li**.

┆ |

The **i** has a dash at its foot, so a **w** might be read. No interpretation.

21. *Hoogebeintum* (Friesland), comb, antler, found in 1928 in an inhumation grave in the *terp*. Seen at the FM, Leeuwarden. Date ca. 700. The comb is broken and badly damaged. According to Düwel/Tempel (1968/70:368) some runes can be read on one half of the comb: **?nlu**.

††† MMM



The Hoogebeintum comb.

The other half of the comb shows a few lines which may be taken for a bindrune consisting of three runes. Two **d** runes are connected by a zig-zag line, perhaps rendering **ded**, possibly 1 or 3 sg. pret. ind. 'did, made', OFris pret. *dede*, inf. *duā* 'to do, make'. The regular form would be *dede*, cf. Bammesberger 1991^a:305-308.

22. *Wijnaldum A*, piece of antler, found in 1914. Seen at the FM, Leeuwarden. No date. On two sides the antlerpiece is inscribed, on one side with ornaments such as crosses, squares and triangles; the other side has runes in a cartouche ending in some ornament. One end of the antlerpiece is badly weathered and so are the runes that were carved there. If some of the runes would be mirror-runes, a reading could be, from right to left, **zwfuwizw???**

Y ↓ ◊ // † | Y ↓

I have no interpretation for this sequence. At least two runes, **f** and **u**, are in double lines. At least one rune is upside-down. If taken as single runes, it is possible to read **z n g z u n g i z n g ???** which, when read from right to left may be interpreted as *?ngz inguz ngz*, which might be the name of the Germanic god *Inguz*, repeated thrice (Sipma 1960:70).

4. Summary and Conclusions

The runic finds described in this Chapter concern 22 objects, of which 21 are considered to belong to the Frisian Corpus, although they are not all found in Frisia. One object turned up in the river-estuary of Rhine and Meuse. This object and its inscription apparently does not to

belong to the Frisian runic tradition. Five inscriptions have been found outside Friesland; in Belgium, Ostfriesland (Germany) and England.

Of the 22 listed inscriptions, 19 are legible and interpretable; 10 consist of one word, 2 have two words, 7 consist of more than two words. Totally I counted 17 personal names, of 13 men and 4 women. 6 times the object is mentioned. There are 9 verbforms. There are 9 sentences.

I did not differ between two runic Periods, although this might be possible. Period II would then include Westeremden B (no date), Britsum (no date), Bernsterburen, Rasquert (*circa* 800), Oostum, Toornwerd, Arum (all 8th c.).

Material: **metal**: gold: 5; silver: 2.

other than metal: antler: 5; bone: 3; yew wood: 3; whale bone: 2; whale ivory: 1.

Sixteen objects have been found in the provinces of Groningen and Friesland, all excavated from *terpen* and *wierden*. They are therefore difficult to date, due to a lack of context. Two Frisian runic objects have been found in a grave: the combs of Hoogeteintum and Amay. The symbolic swords, the coins, combs and the Bernsterburen staff can be dated approximately, on the basis of stylistic or iconographic characteristics. Although the corpus is small, there is quite some variety of texts and objects, in the use also of material.

The fact that one of the oldest inscriptions turned up in the Betuwe, is highly interesting. The object belongs to a provincial Roman context, that might be labelled Frankish, regarding the date: early 5th c. One may wonder, if ever a Frankish runic tradition was in existence, since the runic *sceattas* (7th c.) have a Frankish connotation, too. The provenance of the *sceattas* could fit into a Frankish numismatic context, since they were struck in the regions near the estuary of the Scheldt (Page 1996:136f.). In the 5th century, there were several connections between the Rhineland, the central and southern parts of the Netherlands, North Gallia and South England, which may indicate a Frankish sphere of influence. Runes may never have entered that sphere, but it does not seem unlikely, certainly not since the Bergakker find.

The beginning of runic writing in the Netherlands may be dated shortly after 400 AD. The runic tradition probably ended because of a political change: the definite conquest of the Central Netherlands and Frisia by the Franks in the course of the 8th century.

Twelve objects exhibit Anglo-Frisian runes and/or the double-barred **h**. The latter was common to the Anglo-Saxon, Frisian and Continental traditions. Two inscriptions exhibit single-barred **h** (Bergakker and Wijnaldum B). Generally, single-barred **h** points to Scandinavia, but both the Bergakker and Wijnaldum B objects have continental connotations rather than Scandinavian. Of course, one may consider whether both single and double-barred **h** have existed from the beginning of runic writing and therefore should be labelled Common Runic. Thus the diagnostic nature of single-barred **h** should be questioned.

Four inscriptions may show links with Scandinavia: multiple-line runes in Wijnaldum A and Britsum, the 'I so-and-so' formula in Rasquert, and the appearance of younger *fupark* runes in Westeremden B, Bernsterburen and perhaps Britsum. On the whole this may point to nothing more than that there were contacts between Scandinavia and the Low Countries in the early Middle Ages. But on the other hand, this may imply that at least around 800 (Bernsterburen and Rasquert; Britsum and Westeremden B have no date, but both may be 9th c.) there existed a substantial Scandinavian influence on Frisian rune-writing, possibly due to Viking-activities. A recently found Viking silver hoard from around 850 on the former island of Wieringen points to contacts. The Viking Rorik had obtained certain privileges in Holland and Dorestad from 840 onwards. If the rune-Swedish rd **kiripu** *gærðu* 'did, made', is indeed recorded on the Bernsterburen staff, this would indeed point to contacts between Frisian and Scandinavian runic writers, because the form **kiripu** is rune-Swedish, according to Lena Peterson's *Svenskt Runordsregister* (1989 and 1994^a).

Oostum, Toornwerd, the silver and gold coins, Rasquert, Arum, Westeremden A and B, Bernsterburen and Hamwic exhibit Anglo-Frisian runes, or witness of Anglo-Frisian contacts. It has been assumed that the Frisian runic objects were not indigenous to Friesland, but were imported, for instance from England. This idea is based on linguistic ambiguities, and on the fact that occasionally the find-contexts of the objects are obscure and the dating is arbitrary. Some significant linguistic features are not only characteristic of Runic-Frisian but of Anglo-Saxon as well. It is possibly best to speak of a mixed tradition in the Low Countries, which, in view of the geographical position need not surprise. One may conclude that Frisia reflected its geographical position as an intermediary between England and Scandinavia in the nature of its runic inscriptions.

Finally, it may seem strange that my readings and interpretations differ in some ways from my earlier findings, such as published in Looijenga 1996^c. The results such are presented here now, are based on the conclusions of this researchproject, which aimed at a comparison of runic traditions from North-West, West and Central Europe. This method of comparison has led to a greater understanding of the Frisian Corpus, and thus, I hope, to better interpretations.

CONCORDANCE

- ⇐ = read from right to left, runes running left
⇒ = read from left to right, runes running right
* = see other reading(s), c.q. other spellings, c.q. other interpretations
→ = see there
? = an illegible rune
? = just a questionmark, to indicate that the reading or meaning is uncertain.

Most inscriptions run from left to right; when the inscription runs from right to left, this is marked ⇐. When both directions: left - right, right - left are mixed in one inscription either direction is marked. In case the inscription runs exclusively from left to right, or contains a single reverted rune, there is no marker.

- a** Britsum ⇒ *adv.* 'always'
aaaaaaa Lindholm ⇐ *assumingly eight times a means eight times* *ansuz
aala* Vimose II ⇐ *adj. asm.* 'all' → **ala**
aa[n]dag Vimose III *PN? nsm.*
ado Gammertingen *PN nsm.*
adon Leṭcani *PN dsf.*
adons Leṭcani *PN gsf.*
adujislu Westeremden A *PN nsm.*
aebi Schwangau *PN nsm.*
aeraalius Fünen (I)-C = *Aurelius, nsm. Roman emperor*
aergu[n]þ Weingarten I *PN nsf.*
Afatz Istaby ⇒ *prep. aftar* 'in memory of'
afd* Oberflacht *prep.* 'after'? 'later'? → **aft**
aft* Bülach *prep.* 'after'? 'later'? → **afd**
agilaþrup Griesheim *PN nsf.*
æh* Westeremden B *3 sg. pres. ind.* 'owns' → **aig**
aha* Hantum *PN? nsm.* → **æhæ**
æhæ* Hantum *PN? nsm.* → **aha, (e)he, eho**
ahti Nydam II ⇐ *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'owned' or *nsf.* 'possession'
aib Oostum *PN n/dsm.*
aig* Aquincum *3 sg. pres. ind.* 'owns' → **æh**
aigil Pforzen *PN nsm.*
ailrun Pforzen *PN nsf.*
aisgzh* Thorsberg II ⇐ *aisk-z h[agala-]?* 'seeker of hail'
aipalataz Nydam I ⇐ *PN? or epithet nsm.*
Ak* Björketorp *1 sg. pers. pron.* 'I' → **ek, ik, ik, eka, ekA, ika**
akaz Åsum-C ⇐ *PN nsm.*
æko Chessel Down II *PN nsm.*
al* Børringe-C ⇐ = *alu* → **alu**
ala* Overhornbæk (III)-C ⇐ *adj. nsm.* 'all' → **aala**
alagu[n]þ Schretzheim I *PN nsf.*
alawid Skodborghus-B ⇐ *PN? voc./nsm.*

alawin Skodborghus-B ← *PN? voc./nsm.*
[a]lle Westeremden stick 3 *sg. pres. opt.* 'may it grow'
[a]lguskapi Fallward ← *dog's name nsm.*
alu* Spong Hill, Nydam I ←, Lindholm, Nydam III, Bjørnerud-A ←, Djupbrunns-C ←, Heide-B ⇒, Hjørlunde Mark-C ⇒, Kläggeröd-C ←, Ølst-C ←, Fünen (I)-C ⇒, Magle mose (III)-C ⇒, Kjellers Mose-C ⇒, Darum (V)-C ⇒, Lellinge Kohave-B ←, UFO-B ⇒, Schonen (I)-B ⇒, Skrydstrup-B ← *n/asn.* 'ale', 'hail', 'alum', 'luck'? 'offering'? 'battle-cry'? → **lua, al**
æludu* Bernsterburen *PN? nsf./m.*
alugod Værløse *PN? nsm./f.*
aluwaludo/a Whitby *adj. nsm.* 'almighty'
amiluk Balingen *patronymic? nsm.?*
æmlup Westeremden B 3 *sg. pres. ind.* 'stays'
an Tjurkö (I)-C ← *prep.* 'on'
andi Pforzen *conj.* 'and'
æniwulufu Folkestone tremissis *PN nsm.*
ann Bergakker 1 or 3 *sg. pres. ind.* 'grant(s)'
a[n]su Overhornbæk (III)-C ← *voc. sg. m.* 'one of the Æsir'
a[n]sugisalas Kragehul I *PN gsm.*
a[n]sula* Vimose III *nsm.* 'ring, buckle', *cf. Latin ansula* → **a[n]sulo**
a[n]sulaas Vimose III *epithet nsm.* 'godless'
a[n]sulo* Overhornbæk (III)-C ← *asm.* 'ring, bracteate', *cf. Latin ansula* → **a[n]sula**
æpa* Kent III and Midlum sceattas *PN nsm.* → **epa**
ArAgeu Björketorp, Stentofte = *argeu, adj. dsf.* 'cowardly, unmanly'
arogisd Schretzheim I *PN nsm.*
arsiboda Bezenye II *PN gsf.*
arwi Heibronn-Böckingen ← *PN nsm.*
æt Boarley ⇒ *prep.* 'at, to, with'
auijab[i]rg* Oettingen *PN nsf.* → **auja, auwija**
auja* Raum Køge-C ←, Skodborghus-B ← *nsm.* 'hail, good luck'? → **auijabrg, auwija**
auwija* Vimose III = *auja n/asm.* 'good luck'? → **auja, auijabrg**
awa Nordendorf I *PN nsf.*
awimund Weimar III *PN nsm.*
awo Leṭcani *nsf.* 'grandmother'
æwudu* Bernsterburen *asf.* 'presentation, evidence', or *asm/apm.* 'oathhel per(s)'

bada* Kirchheim Teck *PN nsf.* or *(gi)bada* 'consolation' → **jibada, u[m]bada**
bæræd Britsum ← 3 *sg. pres. ind.* 'prepares', or 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'guessed'
bAriutiþ* Stentofte 3 *sg. pres. ind.* 'breaks' → **bArutz**
bArutz* Björketorp 2 *sg. pres. ind.*, but intended is 3 *sg.* 'breaks' → **bAriutiþ**
bekka Chessel Down I *PN nsm.*
bera Kragehul II ← *PN? nsm.*
beret Britsum ⇒ 2 *pl. pres. imp.* 'bear'
bidawarijaz Nøvling *PN nsm.*
bi[r]gina Weimar III *PN n/asf.*
birl[i]n Nordendorf II *nsm.* 'little bear'
bliþgu[n]þ Neudingen-Baar II *PN nsf.*

boda* Arum *nsm.* 'messenger' → **edæ:boda**
boso Freilaubersheim *PN nsm.*
bubo Weimar II, *PN, nsm.*
buhui Wakerley *nsm.* 'ring, piece of jewellery, brooch'
buirso Beuchte *PN nsf./m.*
bu[r]sæ* Watchfield *asf.* 'purse' → **wusæ, þusæ**

dado Weingarten II *PN nsm.*
d[a]n[i]lo? Balingen *PN? nsm.*
daþa Soest *PN nsf.*
da?ina Freilaubersheim *PN nsf.*
[dæ]us Whitby *Lat. nsm.* 'God'
ded* Hoogebeintum 1, 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'did, made' → **deda**
deda* Oostum 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'did, made' → **ded**
de(d)un Niederstotzingen, Schretzheim I 3 *pl. pret. ind.* 'did, made'
desaiona Suffolk shillings *no interpretation*
di Osthofen 2 *sg. pers. pron. dat./acc.* 'you'
d[o]mi[n]u[s]? Kirchheim Teck *Lat. nsm.* 'Lord'
dorih Wurmlingen *PN? nsm.*
du Bülach 2 *sg. pers. pron.* 'you'
dud Britsum ⇒ = *duguđnpm.* 'warriors, comitatus'
dulp Oberflacht *nsf.* 'religious feast'
duna Westeremden B *asf.* 'dune, hill, terp'

eda Amay *PN nsm.*
edæ* Arum *gsm.* 'oath' → **edæ:boda**
edæ:boda* Arum *nsm.* 'return-messenger' → **edæ, boda**
(e)he* Åsum-C ⇐ = *ehēdsm.* 'to the horse' → **eho, æhæ**
eho* Donzdorf *PN nsf./m.* → **(e)he, æhæ**
ehwu Tirup Heide-C *nsf.* 'mare'
ek* Kragehul I, Gårdlösa, Lindholm ⇐, Gallehus, Rasquert, Sønderby-C ⇐, Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F, 1 *sg. pers. pron.* 'I' → **ekA, Ak, ik, ik, eka, ika**
ekA* Stentofte 1 *sg. pers. pron.* 'I' → **eka, ika, ek, Ak, ik, ik**
elk Nordendorf II *nsm.* 'elk'
em Ash Gilton 1 *sg. pres. ind.* 'am'
epa* Kent III sceattas *PN nsm.* → **æpa**
erilaz Kragehul I, Lindholm, Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F ⇐ *nsm.* a title, rank or tribal name?
f* Sønderby-C ⇐ = *fāhi* 1 *sg. pres. ind.* 'draw' → **fahi**
fahi* Åsum-C ⇐ = 1 *sg. pres. ind.* 'draw' → **f**
fahide Halskov Overdrev-C 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'drew'
f(a)hidu Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F *fāhidō* 1 *sg. pret. ind.* 'drew'
fakaz Sønderby-C ⇐ = *PN? nsm.* 'horse'
fAlAh* Björketorp 1 *sg. pret. ind.* 'buried' → **felAh**
farauisa Raum Kjøge-C ⇐ = *fāra-uisa nsm.* 'knowing of danger' or *fara-uisa nsm.* 'knowing to travel'
feha Weingarten I *PN nsf.*
felAh Stentofte 1 *pret. sg. ind.* 'buried' → **fAlAh**

fff Gummarp *assumably three times f means three times* *fehu = 'property, cattle'
fiaginþ Eichstetten *PN nsf.*
[f]ilþa Neudingen-Baar I *asm?* 'woolen garment, cloak'
fozo Hitsum-A ← *tribal name nsm/f.*
frifridil Bülach *nsm.* 'husband' or *PN nsm.*
frohila Darum (I)-B ← *PN? nsm.* 'little young lord'
fura Osthofen *prep.* 'before'
fupar Gudme (II)-C *fupark-quotation*
fuparkgw Aquincum *fupark-quotation*
fuparkgw ← **hniþip??** ⇒ **tbeml(i)ngod** ←, Grumpan-C *complete fupark in three ættir*
fuparkgw:hniþibzs:tbeml(i)ngo(d) Vadstena-C ← *complete fupark in three ættir*
fuparkgwhn Lindkær-C ← *fupark-quotation*
fuparkgwhniþipzstbem(lrød) Charnay *fupark*
fuparþj Beuchte *fupark-quotation*
fupi/u Schonen (II)-C ← *fupark-quotation*

gabar Schretzheim III, *PN nsm?*
gadu Kent I *n/dsf.* 'companion, wife'
gAf Stentoften *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'gave'
gagaga* Kragehul I *battle cry?* → **gægogæ**
gægogæ* Undley ← 'password'? → **gagaga**
gakaz UFO-B ⇒, Schonen (I)-B ⇒ *ga(u)kaz? nsm.* a bird?
gasokun Pforzen *3 pl. pret. ind.* 'quarreled', 'sought' or 'condemned'
gatano Soest *PN? nsm.*
gaupþ Illerup V *PN? nsm.* or 'someone dedicated to be offered' or *tribal name*
gibœtæ Harford Farm *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'repaired'
gibu Raum Køge-C ← *1 sg. pres. ind.* 'give'
gihiali* Kirchheim-Teck = *gihaili 2 sg. pres. imp.* 'make well' → **hiali**
ginA* Björketorp *adj.* 'broad, mighty, very' → **gino, ginu**
gino* Stentoften *adj.* 'broad, mighty, very' → **ginA, ginu**
ginu* Kragehul I *adj.* 'broad, mighty, very (many)' → **ginA, gino**
gisaiøj Vimose IV *scribal error for PN Gisaijo?, nsm.*
gliaugiz ← Nebenstedt (I)-B *PN? or epithet, nsm.*
god Whitby *GN nsm.*
godahi[l]d Bezenye I *PN dsf.*
godun Arlon *PN dsf.*
golida Freilaubersheim *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'greeted'
groba Hitsum-A ← *n/asf.* 'groove, furrow', or 'belonging to a grave?'
gutani[s] Pietroassa *adj. nsm.* 'Gothic'
g[e]ba Oberflacht *nsf.* 'gift'

h Thorsberg II = *hagala, nsn.* 'hail' → **hag alu, hagela**
ha Vimose II = **ha[bē]* *3 sg. pres. opt.* 'may have'
hAborumz Stentoften *dpm.* 'with he-goats'
habuku Oostum *PN dsf. or nsf./m.*
hada Harlingen *PN nsm.*
hAerAmAlAusz* Björketorp *adj. nsm.* 'without rest' → **herAmAlAsAz**

hAeruwulafiz Istaby *patronymic nsm.*
hag alu* Ølst-C \Leftarrow *nfn.* 'hail'? \rightarrow **h, hagela, alu**
hagela* Overhornbæk (III)-C *nfn.* 'hail' \rightarrow **h, hag alu**
hagiradaz Garbølle *PN nsm.*
hahwar Weimar III and IV *PN nsm.*
hA[i]derA* Björketorp *adv.* 'here' \rightarrow **hederA, her**
hAidz* Björketorp *adj.* 'clear, shining, bright' \rightarrow **hidez**
hailag* Pietroassa *adj.* 'holy'
haite Kragehul I 1 *sg. pres. ind. med.* 'I am called'
ha[i]teka* Lindholm \Leftarrow 1 *sg. pres. ind. med.* + *enclitic eka* 'I am called' \rightarrow **haitika**
haitika* Raum Køge-C \Leftarrow 1 *sg. pres. ind. med.* + *enclitic ika* 'I am called' \rightarrow **ha[i]teka**
halepewas* Bergakker *PN gsm.* \rightarrow **halepewas**
hamale Neudingen-Baar II *PN dsm.*
hæmu Westeremden stick *dsf.* 'homestead'
ha[n]gestumz Stentofte *dpm.* '(with) steeds'
hari Raum Køge-C \Leftarrow *nsm.* 'army', 'battle'
haribrig Weimar I *PN nsf.*
hariso Himlingøje II *PN nsm./f.*
hariuha* Raum Køge-C \Leftarrow *PN? nsm.* or 'the first among warriors'? \rightarrow **hari, uha**
hAriwolAfz Stentofte *PN nsm.*
hAriwulafa Istaby *PN asm.*
harja Vimose V *PN, tribal name, nsm.*
harkilaz Nydam II *PN nsm.*
halepewas* Bergakker *PN gsm.* \rightarrow **halepewas**
(h)ApuwolAfA Gummarp *PN nsm. or asm.*
hApuwolafz* Stentofte *PN nsm.* \rightarrow **hApuwolafz**
hApuwolafz* Istaby *PN nsm.* \rightarrow **hApuwolafz**
hæriboki Watchfield *PN g/dsn.*
hederA* Stentofte *adv.* 'here' \rightarrow **hA[i]derA, her**
heldaz Tjurkö (I)-C \Leftarrow *PN? nsm.* 'free man, warrior'
helipæ Whitby 3 *sg. pres. subj.* 'may help'
her* Letçani *adv.* 'here' \rightarrow **hA[i]derA, hederA**
herAmAlAsAz* Stentofte *adj.* 'without rest' \rightarrow **hAerAmAlAusz**
hiali* Kirchheim Teck = *haili nsf.* 'salvation' \rightarrow **gihiali**
hiba Weimar II *PN nsf.*
hidez* Stentofte *adj.* 'clear, bright' \rightarrow **hAidz**
hiwi Meldorf, Wijndaldum B *dsf.* 'mater familias = spouse'
hlaw Loveden Hill *asm./n.* 'grave'
hleuno Vimose IV *nsf.* 'protection'
hlewagastiz Gallehus *PN nsm.*
holtijaz Gallehus *nsm.* 'coming from the place Holt' or *patronymic* 'son of Holt'
horaz* Fünen (I)-C *adj. nsm.* 'beloved' \rightarrow **ho.z**
horna Gallehus *asn.* 'horn' or *dualis acc.* 'the two horns'
ho.z* Maglemose (III)-C = *horaz adj. nsm.* 'beloved' \rightarrow **horaz**
huisi?ald Steindorf *PN nsm.*

i Britsum ⇒ *asm.* 'yew'
ida Weimar III and IV *PN nsf./m.*
iddan Charnay *PN asm.*
iduni Weimar III ⇐ *PN nsf.*
ihs St. Cuthbert *Greek nomen sacrum Ie(so)s*
ik* Åsum-C ⇐, Sønder Rind-B ⇒, Kent I *1 sg. pers. pron.* 'I' → **ik, Ak, ekA, ek, eka, ika**
ik Heilbronn-Böckingen ⇐ *1 sg. pers. pron.* 'I' → **ik, Ak, ek, ekA, eka, ika**
(i)ngo Køng *PN? nsm.*
inguz (i)ngz Wijnaldum A ⇐ *GN? Inguz? nsm.*
imuba Neudingen-Baar II *PN nsf.*
iohann(i)s St. Cuthbert *Greek PN nsm.*
isd Weimar III *3 sg. pres. ind.* 'is'
iwi Westeremden B *locative or instrumental sg. m.* 'yew'
io[h] Nordendorf II *conj.* 'and'

j Pietroassa, Stentoften, Skodborghus-B = *jāra n/asn.* 'good year, harvest'
jibada* Westeremden B *nsf.* 'fate, luck, good fortune' → **u[m]bada, bada**
jisuhi[l]du Westeremden A *PN dsf.*

ka[m]bu Oostum *asm.* 'comb'
kataæ Hamwic *nsf.* 'knucklebone'
kesjam Bergakker *dsm.* 'sword fighters'
kinga* Aquincum *asf.* 'brooch' → **kingia**
kingia* Aquincum *asf.* 'brooch' → **kinga**
kiripu* Bernsterburen *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'made' → **kiuspu**
kiuspu* Bernsterburen *2 sg. pres. imp.* 'you choose' → **kiripu**
klef Neudingen-Baar I *1 or 3 sg. pret. ind.* 'fastened'
ko[m]bu Toornwerd *nsm.* 'comb'
kolo Griesheim *PN nsm.*
ksamella Fallward ⇐ = *skamella, Lat. nsm.* 'footstool'
kunimu[n]diu Tjurkö (I)-C ⇐ *dsm. PN? or epithet* 'protector of the gens'

l* Svarteborg-M, Nebenstedt (I)-B = *laukaz* → **laukaz**
lagupewa Illerup III *PN nsm.*
lakz* Lyngø Gyde-C = *laukaz* → **laukaz**
lamo Udby ⇐ *PN nsm.*
laukaz* Skrydstrup-B ⇒, Børringe-C ⇐, Schonen-(I)-B, UFO-B *nsm.* 'leek, chives, garlic'
 → **l, lakz, lauz, lkaz, luz**
laus* Vimose III *adj.* 'being without' → **a[n]sulaus**
lauz* Allesø-B ⇐, Bolbro (I)-B ⇐, Vedby-B ⇐ = *laukaz* → **laukaz**
lap* Welbeck Hill = *lapu nsf.* 'invitation' → **lapu, lapa, lpu**
lapa* Gurfiles (?) -C ⇐ *nsf.* 'invitation' → **lapu, lap, lpu**
lapo* Halskov-Overdrev-C ⇐ *asf.* 'invitation'
lapodu* Raum Trollhättan-A *lapōdu asm.* 'invitation' → **lapu**
lapu* Darum (I)-B ⇐, Højstrup Strand-C ⇐, Schonen (I)-B, UFO-B, Fünen (I) -C *nsf.*
 'invitation, summons' or *1 sg. pres. ind.* 'I invite' → **lapa, lpu, lap**
lbi* Neudingen-Baar II *nsf.* 'love' or *adj. nsm./f./n.* 'dear, beloved' → **leob, leub, liub**

leob*, Weimar I, *PN? nsm.* → **leub, liub, lbi**
leub* Engers *nsm.* 'love' or *adj. nsm./f./n.* 'dear, beloved' → **leob, liub, lbi**
leuba Schretzheim I *PN or petname, nsf.* 'love'
leubo Schretzheim II *PN or petname, nsm.* 'love'
leubwini Nordendorf I *PN n/asm.*
lepro Strårup *PN nsm.*
liano Charnay *PN nsm./f.*
LID Britsum ⇒ *asn.* 'ship, retinue'
liub* Weimar I, Niederstotzingen *nsm.* 'love' or *adj. nsm./f./n.* 'dear, beloved' → **leub, leob, lbi**
lkaz* Danmark (I)(?) ⇐, Seeland (I) ⇐, Maglemose (II) ⇐, Hammenhög = *laukaz* → **laukaz**
logapore Nordendorf I *npm.* 'intriguers' or *PN nsm.*
logens Bergakker *apf./m. or gsm.* 'sword(s)'
lori Chessel Down II *dsn.* 'loss?'
lua* Nydam III = *alu* → **alu**
luda Harford Farm *PN nsm.*
luwatuwa* Vadstena-C ⇐ *uninterpretable* → **tuwa**
luz* Hesselagergårds Skov-C, Hesselager-C, Südfünen-C = *laukaz* → **laukaz**
lpu* Skonager (III)-C ⇐ = *lapu* → **lapu, lapu**

madali Bad Ems *PN nsm./f.*
maga Undley *gpm.* 'of the kinsmen'
makija Vimose II ⇒ *asm.* 'sword'
marcus St. Cuthbert *Greek PN nsm.*
mari Vimose II ⇒ *nsm.* 'lake, water'
marings Szabadbattyán *PN, tribal name nsm.*
mauo Bopfingen *mawō dsf.* 'to the girl' or *PN nsm.*
ma(t)[h](eus) St. Cuthbert *Greek PN nsm.*
mæus Whitby *Lat. 1 sg. pers. pron.* 'my'
me Ferwerd *pers. pron. d/as.* 'me'
medu* Undley *nsf.* 'reward' or *(ge)mēdu apn.* 'consent' → **midu**
me[b] Westeremden A *prep.* 'with'
mi Britsum ⇐ *pers. pron. d/as.* 'me'
midu* Neudingen-Baar I *nsf.* 'reward' or *adj. sf./m./n.* 'in the middle' → **medu**
mien West Heselerton = *mene? nsm.* 'ornament, jewel'
muha Kragehul I *PN? nsm. or (ga)mūha* 'retainer'
muni Eichstetten 3 *sg. pres. opt.* 'may remember'

niu Stentofte *numeral dpm.* 'nine'
niujil* Darum (V)-C *PN? nsm.* 'young, little newcomer' → **niuwila**
niuwila* Skonager (III)-C ⇒ *PN? nsm.* 'young, little newcomer' → **niujil**
niwajemariz Thorsberg I *epithet nsm.*
nipijo Illerup II ⇐ *PN, tribal name nsm.*
nnn Lindholm ⇐ *three times n* assumingly means *three times naudt̥z* = 'need'
noru Aalen *PN nsm.*

ok Westeremden B *adv.* 'also'
oka Rasquert *PN nsm.*
op Westeremden B *prep.* 'at, upon'
owlpupewaz Thorsberg I = *Wolpupewaz PN nsm.*

pada Kent II coins *PN nsm.*

r* Sievern-A \Leftarrow = *r(ūnōz)*, *npf.* 'runes' → **rnz**, **ronoz**, **runAz**, **runa**, **runoz**
rada Soest 3 *sg. pres. opt.* 'may guess'
rAginArunAz* Björketorp 'a fate-predicted message' → **rAginoronoz**
rAginoronoz* Stentoften 'a fate-predicted message' → **rAginArunAz**
raihan Caistor-by-Norwich *g/d/asm.* 'roe, of a roe'
rango* Leţcani *nsm.* 'ring, spindle whorl'? → **rawo**
ranja Dahmsdorf *nsm.* 'router'
rasuwa(m)u[n]d Arlon *PN nsm.*
raunijaz Øvre Stabu *nsm.* 'tester'
rawo* Leţcani *dsf.* 'for the restingplace'? → **rango**
ra[u]zwi? Liebenau *PN? nsm.* 'consecrated to the spear'?
rnz* Nebenstedt (I)-B \Leftarrow = *r(ū)n(ō)z*, *apf.* 'runes' → **r**, **ronoz**, **runAz**, **runa**, **runoz**
ronoz* Stentoften *apf.* 'runes' → **r**, **rnz**, **runAz**, **runa**, **runoz**
runa* Freilaubersheim, Neudingen-Baar II *apf.* 'runes' → **r**, **rnz**, **ronoz**, **runAz**, **runoz**
runAz* Björketorp, Istaby *apf.* 'runes' → **r**, **rnz**, **ronoz**, **runa**, **runoz**
runono* Stentoften *asf.* 'runerow' → **runoronu**
runoronu* Björketorp *asf.* 'runerow' → **runono**
runoz* Tjurkō (I)-C \Leftarrow *apf.* 'runes' → **r**, **rnz**, **ronoz**, **runa**, **runAz**

sa* Lindholm *dem. pron. nsm.* 'who' → **sawilagaz**, **sA**, **sAz**
sA* Stentoften *dem. pron. nsm.* 'who, which' → **sAz**, **sa**
salusalu Lellinge Kohave-B *edible alga? or salus alu? or twice alu?*
sAte Gummarp 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'put'
sawilagaz* Lindholm \Leftarrow *PN nsm.* → **sa**, **wilagaz**
sAz* Björketorp *sa-ez, dem. pron. + relative particle nsm.* 'he who'
sbA Björketorp 1 *sg. pres. ind.* 'foresee'
segalo München-Aubing I *PN nsm.*
segun Bezenye II *nsm.* 'bless'
sekka Chessel Down I *PN nsm.*
sig[n]duz Svarteborg-M *PN? nsm.*
sigib[a]ld Weimar II *PN nsm.*
sigila* München-Aubing I *PN nsm./f., or nsf.* 'brooch' → **sigilæ**, **sil**
sigilæ* Harford Farm *asf.* 'brooch' → **sigila**, **sil**
sigimer Ash Gilton *PN nsm.*
sikijaz Nydam I \Leftarrow *nsm.* 'coming from a bog'
sil* Boarley \Rightarrow = *sigil asf.* 'brooch' → **sigilæ**, **sigila**
siþæbæd* Loveden Hill *PN nsf.* → **siþæb[a]ld**
siþæb[a]ld* Loveden Hill *PN nsm.* → **siþæbæd**
si[n]pwag[j]a[n]din Schretzheim II *PN? nsf.* 'female travel companion'
skanomodu solidus *PN nsm./f.*

stAbA Gummarp *apm.* 'staves'
sufhe Leţcani *3 sg. pres. opt.* 'may she sleep?'
swarta Illerup I *PN nsm.*

tahu Pforzen *adj.* 'tough?'
talgida Udby ⇒ *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'carved' → **talgidai**
talgidai Nøvling *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'carved', or *talgida i* 'carved in' → **talgida**
talijo Vimose IV *nsf.* 'plane'
tanulu Børringe-C ⇐ *nsf.* 'protection, thrive?'
tæpa Kent III sceattas *PN nsm.*
tawide Illerup II ⇐, Garbølle *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'made'
tawido Gallehus *1 sg. pret. ind.* 'made'
tawo Raum Trollhättan-A ⇒ *1 sg. pres. ind.* 'make'
tilarids Kowel *nsm.* 'goal-pursuer'
ttt Lindholm ⇐ *assumingly three times t means three times* '*tīwaz = Tyr'
tuda Bernsterburen *PN nsm.*
tuwa* Vadstena-C ⇐ *something spun, e.g. linnen and/or wool?* → **luwatuwa**

þAiaz Istaby *dem. pron. apf.* 'these'
þAt Björketorp, Stentofen *dem. pron. asn.* 'this'
þicþ* Loveden Hill *3 sg. pres. ind.* 'gets, receives' → **þiuw**
þk Freilaubersheim *pers. pron. asf.* 'you'
þæn Britsum *dem. pron. asm.* 'this'
þiuw* Weimar IV, Loveden Hill *nsf.* 'maid, servant' → **þicþ**
þria Gummarp *numeral apm.* 'three'
þrkgwh Overhornbæk (III)-C ⇐ *fubark-quotation*
þu Bernsterburen *pers. pron. nsm.* 'you'
þuruphild Friedberg *PN nsf.*
þusa* Westeremden B *dem. pron. asm.* 'this one' → **þusæ**
þusæ* Watchfield *dem. pron. asm.* 'this one' → **þusa, wusæ, bu[r]sæ**

uf Leţcani *prep.* 'under'
uha* Raum Kølge-C ⇐, Kragehul I *u(n)ha* or *ūha?* 'young' or 'the first (among warriors = leader)?' → **hariuha**
ui* Kjellers Mose-C ⇐ *vī* 'sanctuary, temple' → **wi[h]**
uiniz Sønder Rind-B *winiz nsm.* 'friend'
uū* Nebenstedt (I)-B ⇐ *1 sg. pres. ind.* 'consecrate' → **wihgu**
u[m]bada* Bad Ems *PN? nsf. or compound of umbi* 'around' + *(gi)bada* 'consolation'
→ **jibada, bada**
u[n]mædit Rasquert *adj. nsm.* 'not made mad'
unwodz Gårdlösa *PN or epithet? nsm.* 'not raging'
up Westeremden B *prep.* 'upon'
urait* Neudingen-Baar II = *wrait* *3 sg. pret. ind.* 'wrote' → **warAit, wraet**
ura* Ferwerd *PN nsm.* → **uræ**
uræ* Ferwerd *PN nsf.* → **ura**
utiaz Björketorp *adv.* 'farther away, to the south'
uuigaz Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F = *wīgaz nsm.* 'warrior'

uulald Eskatorp-F, Väsby-F = *wīald* *asm.* 'work of art'
uþArAbA Björketorp *asm.* 'something unwished for'
uþf[i]nþai Charnay 3 *sg. pres. opt.* 'may find out, get to know'

wagagastiz Nydam I ⇒ *PN nsm.*
wagnijo Illerup IV, Vimose I ⇐ *PN, tribal name, nsm.*
walhakurne Tjurkö (I)-C ⇐ *dsn.* 'strange, imported granule of gold'
warAit* Istaby 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'he wrote' → **wraet, urait**
wekka Chessel Down I *PN nsm.*
welAdAude* Björketorp *dsm.* 'death by treachery' → **welAdud**
wela[n]du Schweindorf ⇐ *PN nsm.*
welAdud* Stentofen *dsm.* 'death by treachery' → **welAdAude**
widuhu[n]daz Himlingøje I *PN nsm.*
wigka* Dischingen I *PN nsf.* → **winka**
wiguponar Nordendorf I *GN nsm.*
wi[h]* Pietroassa *wī[h], weih, nsn.* 'sanctuary' → **ui**
wihailag Pietroassa 'sacrosanctum'
wihgu Nydam I ⇐ *1 sg. pres. ind.* 'fight' or 'consecrate' → **uüu**
wilagaz* Lindholm *PN nsm.* → **sawilagaz**
wimœd Westeremden B *PN nsm.*
winka* Dischingen I *PN nsf.* → **wigka**
witring* Slemminge *PN. nsm.* → **witro**
witro* Slemminge *PN. nsm.* → **witring**
wiwogan Eichstetten *PN asm.*
wodan Nordendorf I *GN nsm.*
wo(r)gt Arlon = *worht(e), 3 sg. pret. ind.* 'worked, made'
wraet* Freilaubersheim 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'wrote' → **warAit, urait**
wrilu Sievern-A ⇐ = *wrītu 1 sg. pres. ind.* 'write'
writ Weingarten I 3 *sg. pres. ind.* 'writes'
wurte Tjurkö (I)-C ⇐ 3 *sg. pret. ind.* 'worked, made'
wusæ* Watchfield *PN g/dsf.* → **bu[r]sæ, þusæ**
wæfar? Kent I *PN? nsm.*

xps St. Cuthbert *partly Romanized Greek nomen sacrum* 'Christos'

zzz Lindholm ⇐ *assumingly three times z means three times *algiz* 'elk'

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NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

Het onderzoek naar de oudste runeninscripties van het Europese continent, Engeland en Denemarken voerde onderzoekster van Liverpool aan de Ierse Zee naar Constanza aan de Zwarte Zee; van Zürich naar Bergen; van Parijs naar Stockholm. In dit enorme gebied kende men reeds bij het begin van de vroege middeleeuwen het runenschrift (rond 500 AD). Ergens in dit gebied moet een kern gelegen hebben, waar het begon - vermoedelijk in de eerste eeuw AD. Het localiseren van dat oorsprongsgebied begon me in de loop van het onderzoek te intrigeren.

Het doel was in eerste instantie het inventariseren, het beschrijven en analyseren van runenteksten uit de oudste periode: 150-700 AD. Als onderzoekscorpus waren de runentradities rondom de Noordzee en van het continent uitgekozen. Het uitgangspunt was nadrukkelijk niet Scandinavië, zoals bij runenstudies meestal het geval. Ik meende, dat een verandering van perspectief nieuw licht op oude runologische vraagstukken zou kunnen werpen - en daardoor wellicht bijdragen tot oplossingen. Bovendien wilde ik me niet op één land of traditie vastleggen, maar door middel van het vergelijken van diverse runentradities proberen meer inzicht te krijgen in doel en wezen van het runenschrift. Waarom ontwikkelde men dit schrift, met welk doel werd het gebruikt, en door wie? Om dit soort vragen te beantwoorden, was het nodig om inzicht te verkrijgen in de cultuur-historische context van de inscriptiedragers. Archeologie en historie bleken onmisbare informatiebronnen; ook de (plaats)naamkunde leverde belangrijke gegevens ten aanzien van het relatief enorme aantal namen in de runencorpora.

Runologie heeft in principe twee poten: paleografie en historische taalkunde. Eerst inspecteert men persoonlijk de objecten en hun inscripties en vervolgens ontcijfert men de runen. Daarna verkrijgt men één of meer lezingen, weergegeven als transliteraties, die dan taalkundig worden geanalyseerd. Deze teksten kunnen niet zonder hun archeologische en historische contexten begrepen worden, vandaar de titel 'Runes around the North Sea and on the Continent AD 150-700; Texts and Contexts.

Het boek bestaat uit twee delen; eerst een viertal hoofdstukken met algemene en specifieke vraagstukken; het tweede deel is de Catalogus van alle onderzochte runenobjecten. Het eerste hoofdstuk betreft een algemene inleiding, het tweede hoofdstuk behandelt de cultuur-historische achtergronden. Hier was het doel recente inzichten uit archeologie en runologie te combineren. Deze combinatie resulteerde o.a. in een zoektocht naar de oorsprong van het runenschrift. In hoofdstuk drie wordt een nieuwe theorie over deze oorsprong gepresenteerd met een voorstel over de ontwikkeling van de runen uit een archaisch Italiaans alfabet. Hoofdstuk vier bestaat uit een algemene samenvatting en conclusies. Aan diverse aspecten van individuele runen en inscripties is aandacht besteed, maar ook en vooral is gezocht naar overeenkomsten van en verschillen in teksten en inscripties. Zo valt bijvoorbeeld inzicht te verkrijgen in de verbreiding van het runenschrift, en, daaruit voortvloeiend, in de contacten tussen verschillende Germaanse volkeren. Tevens is gekeken naar de plaats en betekenis van het runenschrift in de Germaanse samenleving.

De catalogus behandelt vijf corpora: (1) de vroege Deense en Zuidoost-Europese inscripties, (2) de Bracteaten, (3) de Continentale inscripties, (4) de vroege Engelse en (5) de Nederlandse inscripties. In zogenaamde "checklists" wordt informatie geleverd over de objecten, de vind- en bewaarplaats, de datering, de runenvormen, de leesrichting, de taal, de lezing en transliteratie, de interpretatie(s), etc. Er zijn ruim 200 inscripties behandeld. De corpora zijn verdeeld in leesbare en (gedeeltelijk) interpreteerbare inscripties en onleesbare, c.q.

oninterpreteerbare. Dan is er nog de categorie pseudo-runen of geen runen, en zijn er de onvermijdelijke falsificaties. Van de 170 leesbare en interpreteerbare zijn er 50 waarvoor een nieuwe interpretatie en/of lezing wordt voorgesteld.

In het eerste deel van het boek wordt vrij uitgebreid aandacht besteed aan de vroege runentijd: de Romeinse keizertijd, de Volksverhuizingstijd en de Merovingische tijd, met nadruk op gegevens uit de archeologie. Vervolgens wordt ingegaan op de vraag waar en waarom het runenschrift ontstaan zou kunnen zijn. Deze vraag kwam niet voort uit een primaire behoefte om het oorsprongsgebied te zoeken, maar werd ingegeven doordat het opviel dat er zoveel West-Germaanse namen in het oudste materiaal voorkomen. Dat wil zeggen, de uitgangen van de namen waren moeilijk vanuit het Noord-Germaans te verklaren, maar eenvoudig indien men aannam, dat ze West-Germaans waren.

Al in eerder onderzoek was de gedachte opgekomen, om het ontstaan van het runenalfabet in de buurt van een andere schriftcultuur te zoeken, langs de *limes*, bijvoorbeeld. Bovendien bleken de ingeritste persoonsnamen opvallend vaak afgeleid van namen van stammen die op het continent woonden. Vooral de namen van twee wapensmeden uit het noorden wijzen op afkomst uit het Rijnland: **wagnijo** en **nipijo**, afgeleid van de Vangiones en de Nidenses. Een derde naam, **harja**, wijst op verwantschap met de Harii, een sub-stam van de Lugii, wonend in Noord-Polen. Afleidingen van *Harja* komen in het latere Scandinavië niet voor, maar worden wel veel aangetroffen in het West-Germaans, vooral in het Neder-Rijngebied. Toen ik deze gegevens vergeleek met archeologische bevindingen omtrent de herkomst van de inschrift dragers, bleek dit in het geval van de kam met het inschrift **harja** te kloppen. De kam was gevonden in het Vimose moeras op het eiland Funen. Dit depot (ca. 160 AD) bleek afkomstig uit de regio zuidelijk van de Oostzee. De runenobjecten uit het Thorsberg moeras (Schleswig-Holstein) bleken afkomstig uit West-Germaans gebied. Met betrekking tot de objecten uit het Illerup moeras in Jutland was de weg iets ingewikkelder: de wapens uit dit depot (ca. 200 AD) kwamen uit het noorden, maar de namen wezen op zuidelijke, West-Germaans-sprekende streken. Toen duidelijk was geworden dat er wapenhandel tussen de Rijnstreek en het noorden is geweest, kon ik een link leggen. Het Illerup-onderzoek van de Deense archeoloog Ilkjær (1990, 1991, 1993, 1996^{a&b}) was van zeer grote waarde voor mijn eigen onderzoek.

De naam **harja** en zijn afkomst kon nog eens bevestigd worden door een tweede inscriptie, uit Zweden, op een steen (Skåång): **harijaz leugaz**, wijzend op zowel de Harii als de Lugii. Zoals gezegd, viel op dat veel namen een West-Germaanse vorm hadden, alhoewel de objecten waarop de namen voorkwamen, waren gevonden in Deense moerassen en graven. Tot ongeveer 500 AD bestond de gewoonte om krijgsbuit te offeren in een moeras. Deze buit was afkomstig van de verliezers, die uit een andere streek kwamen. Archeologen konden in een aantal gevallen vaststellen waar de opeenvolgende depots (een depot is een geheel van tegelijkertijd geofferde voorwerpen) vandaan kwamen. De objecten met runen in rijke Deense vrouwengraven, zoals die van Himlingøje, waren inheems, maar droegen ook vaak West-Germaanse namen.

Zo wees veel op een West-Germaans gebied als leverancier van personen die runen schreven. Dan ligt het voor de hand te kijken welk gebied het meest in aanmerking kon komen. Dat bleek naar mijn mening het gebied van de Ubiërs te zijn, in het Rijnland. In dit grensgebied tussen het Romeinse rijk en het vrije Germania leefden Romeinen en Germanen over het algemeen in goede verstandhouding. Hier kon zich een cultureel amalgaam ontwikkelen, gunstig voor de adaptatie van een schrift. De Romeinse invloed blijkt niet alleen uit de gelijkenis van het runenalfabet met Noord-Italische alfabetten, maar ook uit de toepassing van het schrift: de

runeninscripties geven vooral namen van eigenaars en makers. Een archaisch Italiaans alfabet zou als voorbeeld kunnen hebben gediend voor het runenalfabet. Derks (1996) heeft in zijn proefschrift aangetoond, dat de matronencultuur van het Rijnland en die van Noord-Italië grote overeenkomsten kenden. Personen afkomstig uit Noord-Italië integreerden in het (schriftloze) Rijnland en introduceerden daar schrift, i.c. votiefinscripties op de matronenbeelden. Het is niet uitgesloten dat deze veteranen uit het Romeinse leger, afkomstig uit Piemonte en de Po-streek, een Noord-Italiaans alfabet kenden en dat meebrachten naar hun nieuwe woongebied. In Noord-Italië zijn diverse varianten van het oude Etruskische alfabet overgeleverd. In de eerste eeuw AD zullen deze archaische alfabetten in Italië zijn verdrongen door het officiële Romeinse alfabet. Maar misschien mag men aannemen dat het runenalfabet in de eerste eeuw AD is ontwikkeld, en dat een archaisch Noord-Italiaans alfabet tot in de eerste eeuw heeft kunnen voortbestaan in bepaalde uithoeken van het Romeinse Rijk. Inderdaad zijn de officiële Romeinse teksten in het Latijns alfabet, maar maakt dit de mogelijkheid ondenkbaar dat (een) bepaalde bevolkingsgroep(en) nog een tijdlang een ouderwets schrift gebruikte? Hoe dan ook, de runen zelf dragen het kenmerk van een archaisch alfabet; hun voorbeeld moet daarom ook een archaisch alfabet zijn geweest. Andere verbreiders van Romeinse cultuur waren de Germaanse soldaten, die jarenlang in Romeinse dienst hadden doorgebracht, en als geletterden en Romeinse burgers terugkeerden naar hun Germaanse vaderland.

Wat betreft de vermelding van de conclusies van het onderzoek is gekozen voor de volgende opzet. Aan het eind van hoofdstuk III staan de conclusies over de oorsprong van het runenschrift. In hoofdstuk IV, Summary and Some More Conclusions, is een algemeen en uitvoerig overzicht van de resultaten van het onderzoek in zijn geheel opgenomen. In het tweede deel, de Catalogus, wordt ieder afzonderlijk corpus voorafgegaan door een korte inleiding en afgesloten met een korte samenvatting en conclusies. Wat betreft de inhoud van de inscripties, is een classificatie gemaakt naar de volgende categorieën: 1. één of meer persoonsnamen; 2. zinnen (met werkwoordsvorm); 3. opdrachten (giften); 4. naam van het object, of het materiaal; 5. makers en schrijvers formulae; 6. **ek** (ik) plus naam, of adjectief, etc.; 7. 'magische' woorden etc.; 8. *fuþark* inscripties.

In de Concordance vindt men alfabetisch de getranslitereerde runenvocabulaire, gevolgd door de naam van het object, meestal tevens de vindplaats. In de Index of Inscriptions staat de naam c.q. vindplaats voorop, gevolgd door de getranslitereerde tekst van de hele inscriptie en daarachter de pagina waarop object en runen worden beschreven.

In het algemeen kan worden gezegd dat inscripties vooral worden aangetroffen in een context die wijst op een gebruik van het runenschrift in de hogere echelons van de samenleving. Wat betreft de oudste inscripties, die vooral in Denemarken gevonden zijn, is de context die van hoge militairen en rijke vrouwen. In vrijwel alle gevallen wordt de exclusiviteit benadrukt door de aanwezigheid van prestigieuze Romeinse voorwerpen. Dit beeld blijft zo gedurende enkele eeuwen, tot in de Volksverhuizingstijd. Nog korte tijd daarna blijven met runen beschreven objecten, zoals wapens en juwelen, voornamelijk beperkt tot de elite, maar verdwijnt de Romeinse connotatie. Vooral de Merovingische rijengravingen in Zuid-Duitsland leverden relatief veel runenobjecten op uit vrijwel uitsluitend rijke graven. In Friesland en Engeland is de context wat schraler: de objecten zijn niet altijd van kostbaar materiaal en de eigenaars van runenobjecten lijken van eenvoudiger komaf. De context: graven (in Engeland) of losse vondsten uit terpen (Friesland en Groningen) wijst lang niet altijd op luxueuze omstandigheden. De runentradities van Scandinavië, Duitsland, Nederland

en Engeland kenden alle een eigen ontwikkeling, die voortbouwde op een initieel langdurig consistent blijvend systeem, waardoor men wel eens het bestaan van een runen-koine heeft verondersteld. Dergelijke specifieke overeenkomsten in de runentradities wijzen op contacten tussen een kleine groep. Deze groep zal gelieerd zijn geweest aan de politieke top, degenen die de verschillende stammen tot staten opbouwden, hetgeen al begon in de tijd van het Romeinse Rijk. Runen konden zich, wellicht mede daardoor, ook nog handhaven na de Volksverhuizingstijd. Gezien het soort objecten, hebben de inscripties (ook) een functie gehad in de bevestiging van bepaalde relaties binnen een kleine, geprivilegieerde groep, behorend tot de maatschappelijke top.

Gedurende de Volksverhuizingstijd (vierde - zesde eeuw) werd het runenschrift verspreid over een groot deel van West- en Midden-Europa. De aard van de teksten blijft dezelfde. De runen zelf worden in meer of mindere mate aangepast aan de tongval in de verschillende gebieden. Pas na ongeveer de zesde eeuw vinden we inscripties met geheel andere soort teksten, lang, informatief, soms poëtisch van aard. Deze ommekeer maakt tevens duidelijk dat inmiddels het lezen en schrijven van runen bij meerdere lagen van de bevolking bekend is geworden. De teksten worden dan ook meer gebruiksteksten, voor diverse doeleinden. De toepassing blijft onveranderd epigrafisch, behalve bij de Angelsaksen, die runen, naast het Latijnse schrift, in hun manuscripten opnemen. Handelscontacten tussen Engeland, Friesland en Jutland blijken uit de runenmunten, zoals de *sceattas*.

In Zuid-Oost Europa blijken de weinige runenobjecten aan de (Oost-)Goten te kunnen worden toegewezen. De weinige vondsten in Hongarije en Zwitserland wijzen vermoedelijk niet op inheemse runentradities. De enkele runenvondsten uit België en Frankrijk kunnen daarentegen getuigen van mogelijke runenkennis bij de Franken. Het is opvallend dat, gezien hun datering, de eerste Zuid-Duitse runenobjecten samenvallen met het begin van de Merovingische suprematie (ca. 500 AD). De overheid van Engeland en Friesland was sterk Merovingisch beïnvloed, hetgeen bijvoorbeeld blijkt uit de numismatiek. En dan zijn er twee historische 6-eeuwse Merovingers, die getuigen van hun runenkennis: Venantius Fortunatus en koning Chilperic. Het recent gevonden zwaardschedebeslag met runen in de Betuwe heeft een Frankische connotatie. Toekomstig runologisch onderzoek zou zich dan ook moeten richten op de mogelijkheid van een Frankische runentraditie, en de teloorgang daarvan.

Al met al kan men concluderen, dat de diverse runentradities uit de periode 150-700 AD niet wijzen op een schrift dat vooral communicatief van aard was. Eerder lijken de oudste inscripties te duiden op een gebruik dat beperkt werd tot een ornamentele toevoeging. De teksten bestaan over het algemeen uit korte mededelingen: makers- en schrijversformules, opdrachten, namen van object en materiaal, onbekende woorden waarvan men aanneemt dat ze een magische of religieuze betekenis hadden.

Men signeerde, men benoemde, men hield iets belangrijks vast met letters, met woorden, met taal. Voor zover we de teksten kunnen beoordelen, zijn ze sterk formulatief en vertonen grote overeenkomsten over een groot gebied. De orthografie is zeer nauwkeurig; men hechtte er kennelijk grote waarde aan de klanken van de taal goed te onderscheiden en weer te geven. Juist deze zorgvuldige behandeling en het formulatieve karakter wijzen op vakmanschap. Het lijkt voor de hand te liggen om de runenschrijvers onder bepaalde handwerkslieden te zoeken, zoals wapensmeden en juweliers. De artistieke inspiratie en de hoogstaande techniek zullen, net als de runen zelf, zijn voortgekomen uit de belangrijkste cultuur van het Europa uit het begin van de jaartelling: de Romeinse. Het meest intrigerend en verbazingwekkend is, dat de Germanen zowel de kunst als het schrift naar hun eigen hand hebben gezet.

De runentradities gaan uiteindelijk steeds sterker van elkaar verschillen. In het Fries-

Groninger terpengebied wordt de *crossroads* positie van het gebied in de runen weerspiegeld: diverse invloeden uit Engeland en Denemarken zijn in de Friese inscripties te traceren. Een algemener gebruik van runen blijkt ook uit een grotere diversiteit van materiaal en soort objecten, maar ook omdat er steeds meer echte zinnen voorkomen, terwijl bijvoorbeeld in het Continentale Corpus vaak volstaan werd met een paar namen en hooguit wat toevoegingen. Runenvarianties zoals verdubbelingen, gespiegelde runen, ornamentale runen etc. lijken thuis te horen in de Noordzee-traditie, te weten de Deense, Nederlandse en Engelse corpora.

Een aparte groep vormen de gouden runen-bracteaten (uit omtrent 575-625), die voor dit onderzoek geselecteerd zijn op leesbaarheid. Alhoewel enige voorzichtigheid betracht moet worden met bracteaten-runen, die notoir zijn wegens hun afwijkende vormen, zijn de bracteaten als groep onmisbaar vanwege het relatief grote aantal: er zijn bijna evenveel bracteaten met runen bekend als andere objecten met runen uit de eerste vier of vijf eeuwen. Bovendien zijn de bracteaten belangrijk voor het bestuderen van de sociale rol van het runenschrift. Bracteaten zijn amuletten, geïnspireerd op Romeinse keizermedaillons en dus interessant vanwege de bestudering van de Romeins-Germaanse betrekkingen. Bracteaten dienden waarschijnlijk ook als insignia, die bij initiatieriten van jonge krijgers hoorden. Uit de iconografie blijkt een bepaalde leiderscultus, maar er kunnen ook mythologische aspecten in gezien worden. De bracteaten hadden een ideologische, dan wel religieuze waarde. Bij het onderzoeken van mogelijk magische, of symbolische connotaties van objecten met runen, spelen de bracteaten een grote rol.

Runen en prestigegoederen zijn onlosmakelijk verbonden in de Germaanse samenleving van de Romeinse tijd en de vroege middeleeuwen. Dit alles hangt samen met een maatschappelijke structuur, die bekend is als het *gift-and-exchange* systeem, waar een leider en zijn comitatus aan elkaar verbonden zijn door een subtiel systeem van geven en nemen. Kostbare objecten benadrukten de band tussen heer en volgeling; een object met runen verhoogde niet alleen de waarde van het object, maar vooral de intrinsieke waarde van de relatie tussen gever en ontvanger.

Een waarschuwing is op zijn plaats. We hebben te maken met runenobjecten, die puur toevallig bekend zijn geraakt. Deze objecten worden gevonden bij archeologische opgravingen, die ook een mate van toevalligheid kennen. Voorts zijn er nogal wat 'losse vondsten', al of niet met een context. Het is daarom heel wel mogelijk dat het materiaal dat we hebben, een scheef beeld geeft van het destijdse runengebruik. Alle conclusies kunnen dus alleen onder voorbehoud zijn. Het opstellen van runenchronologieën is dan ook van beperkte waarde. Het dateren aan de hand van bepaalde runenvormen is vrijwel onmogelijk. Iedere nieuwe vondst kan de hele perceptie veranderen. Toch is het van groot belang om de runenobjecten en hun context te blijven bestuderen. Niet alleen vanwege de grote cultuur-historische waarde, maar ook omdat het onze oudste taalmonumenten zijn. Dit onderzoek heeft op basis van de taalkunde in combinatie met archeologie kunnen wijzen op de sterke West-Germaanse inslag van de oudste runenobjecten. Tot nu toe werd altijd aangenomen dat Scandinavië de bakermat van de runencultuur was. Ik hoop dat beeld iets te hebben bijgesteld. Het inzien van de mogelijke West-Germaanse oorsprong van het runenschrift heeft consequenties voor de interpretaties en wellicht ook voor de datering van sommige runenteksten.

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ABBREVIATIONS: JASS - Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter.

JASP - Jutland Archaeological Society Publications

ERGA - Ergänzungsbände zum Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde

ABäG - Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik

FmaS - Frühmittelalterliche Studien

BAR - British Archaeological Reports

NoR - Nytt om Runer

ROB - Rijksdienst voor Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek

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.."Men kan hieruit zien, dat, hoewel omtrent dit vak in de vroegere eeuwen reeds veel gedaan was, het evenwel voor den tegenwoordigen tijd schijnt bewaard gebleven te zijn, den sluier van die geheimen op te tillen. Mogten ook wij eens, even als men nu elders doet, onze onderzoekingen tot dat vak bepalen, dan houd ik mij verzekerd, dat wij in Drenthe, Noordbrabant en elders in ons land, ook duidelijke sporen van dit Runeschrift moeten vinden, en daardoor dan ook van onze zijde, de Rune-literatuur kunnen helpen verrijken."

Leeuwarden, Mei 1843, Jhr. Mr. M. de Haan Hettema.

.."Ten minste, wij zouden liever die oude sagen zien opgerakeld uit de asch der vergetelheid, dan een bevredigend antwoord ontvangen op de prijsvraag, uitgeschreven door sommige oudheidsvrienden aan de Groninger hoogeschool: of de oude inwoners van *Hunsow* zich bediend hebben van Runen of wèl van Gotisch letterschrift?"

Drenthe in vlugtige en losse omtrekken geschetst door drie podagrissen, 1843-1845.

*þat er þá reynt, er þú at rúnom spyrr,
þá hefir hann bazt, ef hann þegir.*

Hávamál 80.