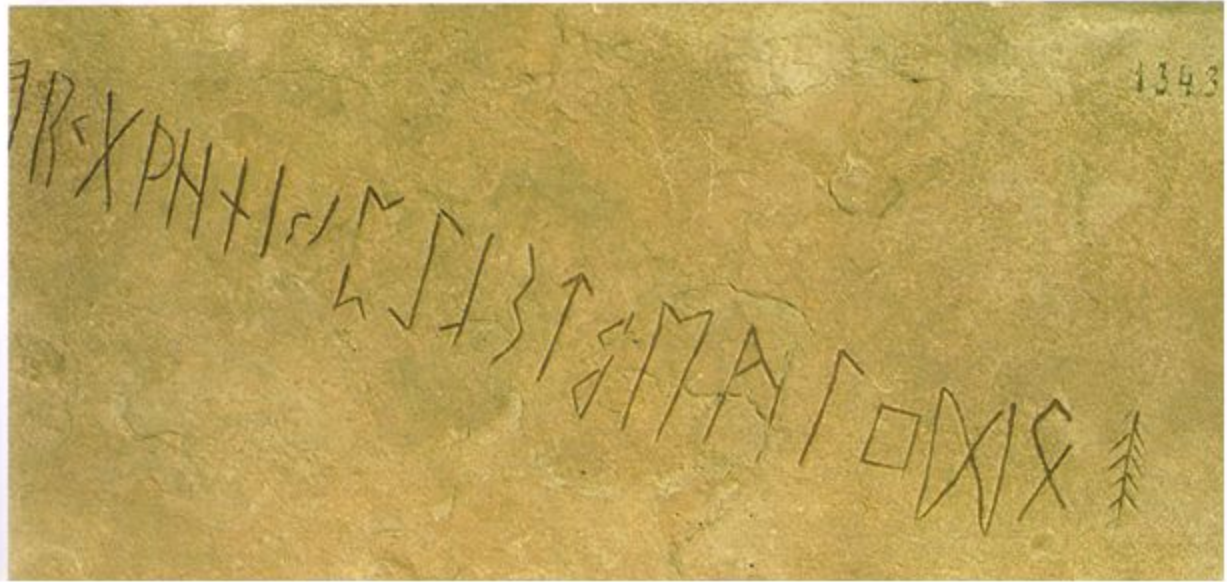


The Runes:

In Study and Application



“Knowest thou, how to write,
Knowest thou, how to color,
Knowest thou, how to bid,
Knowest thou, how to send
knowest thou, how to read?
knowest thou, how to carry out?
knowest thou, how to bless?
knowest thou, how to put to sleep?”
--Hávamál, The Poetic Edda

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East Coast Thing, 2016

Outline:

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I. Brief Origins of the Runes

Historical Rune Origins “Quickie”:

North-Italic/Etruscan Theory by C.S.J. Marstrander (1928), strengthened & modified by Wolfgang Krause (1937) is the strongest. With alterations to the original theory, the Raetic (Bolzano) seems most likely according to Bernard Mees (2000). It theorizes that Germanic peoples living in the Alps region adopted North-Italic scripts as early as 300BC when Cimbri came in contact with the writing system, adopted it to a degree, and then passed onto the Suebi which then in turn spread it up through the Rhineland, to the North Sea, into Jutland, and thus into Scandinavia. No finds of runic script that early (earliest is Meldorf Brooch 50 CE) occur, but the Helm of Negu inscription uses North-Italic to write in a Germanic language! It is believed to be a combination of North-Italic script with indigenous symbols that has existed since the Bronze Age. Some of these ideographic symbols show similarities to the various runestaves, but were probably used to convey ideas and concepts rather than an actual form of writing. **Note: The “notae” of Tacitus (Ch. 10, *Germania*) on the carved strips of wood would have occurred around 98 CE.

***Only examples of FULL Elder Futhark rows are on the Kylver Stone (400 CE), the Vadstena and Motala bracteates (450-550 CE), the Grumpan bracteate (450-550 CE), the marble column of Breza (500 CE). Particals include the Beuchte Fibula (450-550 CE), the Charnay fibula (550-600 CE), and the Aquincum fibula (550 CE).

Magic will be defined as; the practice of using charms, spells, or rituals to influence the metaphysical and physical (subjective) world in such a way as to produce desired effects in the physical, objective world, either internally or externally.

Mythic Rune Origins “Quickie”:

According to various myths, legends, and specifically to the Elder (or Poetic) Edda, the god, Óðinn hangs himself on Yggdrasil (the cosmic world tree) for 9 nights in a form of (and almost shamanic) runic initiatory self-sacrifice where on the edge of death he is able to recognize, codify, and communicate the concepts in which the rune staves represent. **Note: Óðinn did not “create” them, they were already in existence.

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Veit ek, at ek hekk vindgameiði á
nætr allar níu,
geiri undaðr ok gefinn Óðni,
sjalfur sjalfum mér,
á þeim meiði er manngi veit
hvers af rótum renn.

139.

Við hleifi mik sældu né við hornigi,
nýsta ek niðr,
nam ek upp rúnar, æpandi nam,
fell ek aftr þaðan.

I know that I hung, on a wind swept tree
for all of nine nights,
wounded by spear, and given to Odin,
myself to myself,
on that tree of which no man knows
from what root it rises.

139.

They dealt me no bread, nor drinking horn.
I looked down, I drew up the runes,
screaming I took them up,
and fell back from there.
--Havamal, Chisholm transl.

III. Archeological Evidence:

A. Examples of Bracteates



B. Examples of Rune Stones



IV. The Runes Themselves

Old English Rune Poems

For the Elder FUPARK:

[Wealth] is the comfort
to everyone
although everyone ought
to deal it out freely
if he wants to get approval
from the lord.

[Aurochs] is fearless
and greatly horned
a very fierce beast,
it fights with its horns,
a famous roamer of the moor
it is a courageous animal.

[Thorn] is very sharp;
for every thane
who grasps it; it is harmful
and exceedingly cruel
to every man
who lies upon them.

[God/Mouth] is the chieftain
of all speech,
the mainstay of wisdom
and a comfort to the wise ones,
for every noble warrior
hope and happiness.

[Riding] is in the hall
to every warrior
easy, but very hard
for the one who sits up
on a powerful horse
over miles of road.

[Torch] is to every living man
known by its fire,
it is clear and bright
it usually burns

when the athelings
rest inside the hall.

[Gift] is for everyone
a pride and praise
help and worthiness;
and of every homeless adventurer
it is the estate and substance
for those who have nothing else.

[Joy] is had
by the one who knows few troubles
afflictions and sorrow,
and to him who himself has
power and blessedness,
and a good enough home.

[Hail] is the whitest of grains,
it comes from the high heavens
showers of wind hurl it,
then it turns to water.

[Need] is constricting on the chest
although to the children of men it often becomes
a help and salvation nevertheless,
if they heed it in time.

[Ice] is very cold
and exceedingly slippery;
it glistens, clear like glass,
very much like gems,
a floor made of frost
is fair to see.

[Harvest] is the hope of men,
when god lets,
holy king of heaven,
the earth gives
her bright fruits
to the nobles ones and the needy.

[Yew] is on the outside
a rough tree
and hard, firm in the earth,
keeper of the fire,
supported by strong roots,
it is joy on the estate.

[Lot box] is always
play and laughter
among bold men,
where the warriors sit
in the beer hall,
happily together.

[Elk's] sedge has its home
most often in the fen,
it waxes in the water
and grimly wounds
and it burns
any man who,
in any way,
tries to grasp it.

[Sun] is by seamen
always hoped for
when they fare far distant
over the fishs' bath
until the brine-stallion
they bring to land.

[Tir] is a star,
it keeps faith well
with athelings,
always on its course
over the mists of night
it never fails.

[Birch] is without fruit
yet it still bears
limbs without fertile seed;
it has beautiful branches,
high on its crown
it is finely covered,
loaded with leaves,
touching the sky.

[Horse] is, in front of the earls
the joy of athelings,
a charger proud on its hooves;
when concerning it, heroes
and wealthy men on warhorses
exchange speech,
and it is always a comfort
to the restless.

[Man] is in his mirth

dear to his kinsmen;
although each shall
depart from the other;
for the lord wants to commit,
by his decree,
that frail flesh
to the earth.

[Water] is to people
seemingly unending
if they should venture out
on an unsteady ship
and the sea waves
frighten them very much,
and the brine-stallion
does not heed its bridle.

[Ing] was first,
among the East Danes,
seen by men
until again eastward he
went over the wave;
the wain followed on;
this is what the warriors
called the hero.

[Day] is the lord's messenger,
dear to all men,
the rule's famous light;
it is mirth and hope
to the rich and poor
and is useful for all.

[Estate] is very dear
to every man,
if he can enjoy what is right
and according to custom
in his dwelling,
most often in prosperity.

[Oak] is on the earth
for the children of men
the nourishment of meat;
it often fares
over the gannet's bath:
The sea finds out
whether the oak keeps
noble troth.

[Ash] is very tall,
and very dear to men
firm on its base
it holds its place rightly
although it is attacked
by many men.

[Yew bow] is for athlings
and noble alike
a joy and sign of worth,
it is excellent on a horse,
steadfast on expedition-
it is a piece of war gear.

[Serpent] is a river fish
although it always takes
food on land,
it has a fair abode
surrounded by water,
where it lives in joy.

[Grave] is hateful
to every noble
when steadily
the flesh begins-
the corpse- to become cold
to choose the earth
palely as a bedmate;
fruits fall
joys pass away,
bonds of faith dissolve.

Old Norwegian Rune Poems
For the Elder FUPARK:

[Wealth] causes strife among kinsmen;
the wolf grows up in the woods.

[Slag] is from bad iron;
often the reindeer runs on the hard snow.

[Thurs] causes the sickness of women;
few are cheerful from misfortune.

[Estuary] is the way of most journeys;
but the sheath is the one for swords.

[Riding] is said to be the worst for horses;
Regin forges the best sword.

[Sore] is the curse of children;
grief makes a man pale.

[Hail] is the coldest of grains;
Hroptr shaped the world in ancient times.

[Need] makes for a difficult situation;
the naked freeze in the frost.

[Ice], we call the broad bridge;
the blind need to be led.

[Good Harvest] is the profit of men;
I say that Fróði was generous.

[Sun] is the light of the lands;
I bow to the holiness.

[Týr] is the one-handed among the Æsir;
the smith has to blow often.

[Birch] is the limb greenest with leaves;
Loki brought the luck of deceit.

[Man] is the increase of dust;
mighty is the talons' spread of the hawk.

[Water] is that which falls from the mountain;
as a force; but gold things are costly.

[Yew] is the greenest wood in the winter;
there is usually, when it burns, singeing.

Old Icelandic Rune Poems

For the Elder FUPARK:

[Wealth] causes strife among kinsmen,
and the fire of the flood-tide,
and the path of the wrym.

[Drizzle] is the weeping of clouds,
and the diminisher of the rim of ice,
and the object of the herdsman's hate.

[Thurs] is the torment of women,
and the dweller in the rocks,

and the husband of Varðrúna.

[Ase] is the olden-father,
and Ásgarð's chieftain,
and the leader of Valhöll.

[Riding] is a blessed sitting,
and a swift journey,
and the toil of the horse.

[Sore] is the bale of children,
and a scourge,
and the house of rotten flesh.

[Hail] is that cold grain,
and a shower of sleet,
and the destroyer of snakes.

[Need] is grief of the bondmaid,
and a hard condition to be in,
and toilsome work.

[Ice] is the rind of the river,
and the roof of the waves,
and a danger for fey men.

[Good Harvest] is the profit of all men,
and a good summer,
and a ripened field.

[Sun] is the shield of the clouds,
and a shining glory,
and the life-long destroyer of ice.

[Týr] is the one-handed god,
and the leavings of the wolf,
and the ruler of the temple.

]Birch] is a leafy limb,
and a little tree,
and a youthful wood.

[Man] is the joy of man,
and the increase of dust,
and the adornment of ships.

[Wetness] is churning water,
and a wide kettle,

and the land of fish.

[Yew] is a strung bow,
and brittle iron,
and Farbauti of the arrow.

The Abecedarium Nordmanicum:

Fee first,
Aurochs after,
Thurs the third stave,
The Ase is above him,
Wheel is written last,
Then cleaves cancre;
Hail has need
Ice, year, and sun.
Tiu, birch and man in the middle
Water the bright
Yew holds all.

The Modern Swedish Rune Poems:

Property is a comfort to kinsmen.
Drizzle is the worst weather.
Thurs is the torment of women.
A mouth is in every river.
The rider is the ruin of horses.
A sore is worst in the flesh.
Hail is best when in the house.
Need is the only choice.
Ice is the broadest bridge.
Tyr is worst among specters.
Year is widest in leaf.
A birch stand is the greenest grove.
Sun is highest in heaven.
Law is the honor of the land.

V. Magical Implications

Where did they get that?

Facts:

**Meldorf Brooch (50 CE) is the earliest runic archeological find.

**Caesar: *The Conquest of Gaul*, Book I, 53; writes of the Germanic tribes, “consulting the lots three times” (58 CE)

**Tacitus: *Germania*, Chapter 10; writes, “For omens and the casting of lots they have the highest regard. Their procedure in casting lots is always the same. They cut off a branch of a nut-bearing tree and slice it into strips; these they mark with different signs and throw them completely at random onto a white cloth. Then the priest of the state, if the consultation is a public one, or the father of the family if private, offers a prayer to the gods, and looking up at the sky picks up three strips, one at a time, and reads their meaning from the signs previously scored upon them.” (98 CE)

***The Poetic Edda, Havamal*, stanza 80

Þat er þá reynt, er þú að rúnum spyrr	It is found when you ask the runes
inum reginkunnum,	which are known to the Regin
þeim er gerðu ginnregin	made by the Ginnregin
ok fáði fimbulpulr;	drawn by Fimbulthul
þá hefir hann bazt, ef hann þegir.	it is best to keep silent.

(Codex Regis 1643 CE, language of 700-1050 CE)

***The Poetic Edda, Havamal*, stanza 111

Mál er at þylja þular stóli á	It is time to sing on the sage's seat
Urðarbrunni at,	at Urth's well.
sá ek ok þagðak, sá ek ok hugðak,	I saw and was silent, I watched and thought.
hlydda ek á manna mál; of rúnar heyrða ek dæma,	I heard the speech of men, I heard talk of runes.
né um ráðum þögðu	They were not silent at council.
Háva höllu at, Háva höllu í,	At Har's hall, in Har's hall
heyrða ek segja svá:	I heard them speak.

(Codex Regis 1643 CE, language of 700-1050 CE)

**We all know Stanzas 138 through 164 (“I know that I hung.....hail they who heed them.”)

***Galdr* = “magic” or “incantation” derived from *gala* = describes the call of a raven or crow.

**Most theories derived from 19th century German Magicians!

Magical Formulas:

ALU- Duel theory “Protection/Defense/Power” and “Ale”; found on Bjornerud gold bracteate, Årstad rune stone, Elgsem rune stone, the Setre comb, and Fosse bronze fittings.

EK ERILAR- “I am the Runemaster”, “I am the Heruli”; found on the Bratsberg Buckle, Veblungnes in Romsdal, Norheimsund at the Hardangerfjord and at Valsfjord in South-Trøndelag, all from before 500 AD. The inscription is also found in Denmark and Sweden, **ek erilaR** is also found in younger versions.

EGGJA RUNIC FLAGSTONE – A whole incantation warning for no one to ever move the stone as it is a holy marker. “The stone (the place) has not been hit by the sun and the stone has not been carved with (iron) knife. No man shall lay the stone bare while the moon is waning. No strange men shall remove the stone. This stone the runemaster sprinkled with blood, scraped with the blood the oarlock in the worn out boat. As whom came the army god with the boat here to the Goth's land? As the fish, swimming out of the horror (?) river, as the bird crowing. Defense against the evil-doer(?)”

STRAND RUNIC BUCKLE – “The jewel is a protection against the dead.”

BJORKETORP RUNESTONE - “Here, I have hidden the secret of powerful runes, strong runes. The one who breaks this memorial will be eternally tormented by anger. Treacherous death will hit him. I foresee perdition.” Similar to the STENTOFTEN RUNESTONE which states, “The settlers, the newly arrived gave Hapuwulfz a good harvest, generously gave Hapuwulfz riches. This is a deep secret. Here I have hidden deep secrets. The one who breaks this memorial will be eternally tormented by anger. Treacherous death will hit him.”

VAERLOSE BROOCH- “alu-god” followed by a swastika. (200 CE)

SIEVERN BRACTEATE – “I carve the runes” w/ a head depicting breath coming from the mouth.

GUMMARP STONE – “Hathuwulf set three staves” followed by three Fehu runes.

***Random Info: Of around 900 bracteates found, 130 have runic inscriptions.

***Sweden boasts the most (by far) runic inscriptions, over 3000.

***Only examples of FULL Elder Futhark rows are on the Kylver Stone (400 CE), the Vadstena and Motala bracteates (450-550 CE), the Grumpan bracteate (450-550 CE), the marble column of Breza (500 CE). Particals include the Beuchte Fibula (450-550 CE), the Charnay fibula (550-600 CE), and the Aquincum fibula (550 CE).

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