PAPER PRESENTATIONS

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The interaction between *Runica manuscripta* and epigraphy

The relationship between epigraphic and manuscript runes was originally characterized by a clear unidirectional development, progressing from inscriptions to book production. A case in point is the *Abecedarium Nordmannicum*, which—in the middle of the 9th century—precisely reproduces the newly developed runic row attested on the Danish stones of Gørlev and Malt. The question of whether these phenomena represent a single tradition or two distinct aspects—first raised several decades ago by Réné Derolez and Ray I. Page—has been the subject of considerable scholarly debate and continues to yield important insights.

Notably, during the post-Reformation period, the direction of influence was at times reversed, with manuscript traditions shaping epigraphic expression. A brief runic inscription in the crypt of Lund Cathedral exemplifies the extent to which early modern runological treatises shaped the use of runes in epigraphic contexts. Significantly, this interaction was not confined to Scandinavia but extended beyond its cultural and linguistic boundaries.

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Skånes epigrafiska områden

Den epigrafiska skriftkulturen i Skandinavien kännetecknades som bekant av den samtidiga förekomsten av inskrifter på folkspråk och med runor samt inskrifter på latin med det latinska alfabetet. Dessutom var andra kombinationer av språk och skriftsystem också möjliga och likaså bruket av flera språk och skriftsystem i samma text. Förhållandet mellan de två traditionerna har särskilt studerats ur ortografiska perspektiv och delvis också vad gäller textuell komposition (t.ex. Knirk, 1998; Palm, 1992; Palumbo, 2022; Steenholt Olesen, 2021), särskilt i syfte att identifiera möjliga latininfluerade drag i runmaterialet. Runinskrifter har dock främst jämförts med en idealiserad latinsk skriftsspråkstandard, alltså utan att ta särskild hänsyn till faktiska inskrifter med det latinska alfabetet, deras spridning och den variation som de uppvisar.

I detta föredrag presenteras resultaten från en undersökning av förhållandet mellan runsk och latinsk epigrafik i det tidigmedeltida Skåne. Med utgångspunkt i monumentala inskrifter i de två skriftsystemen, syftar vi till att besvara tre frågor om etableringen och utvecklingen av dessa två skrifttraditioner: 1) i vilka geografiska områden förekom runsk resp. latinsk epigrafik och i vilken utsträckning överlappade de? 2) hur förändrades de båda traditionernas geografiska spridning under tidigmedeltiden? 3) hur förhåller sig de två traditionerna till varandra när det gäller sociokulturell kontext, inskriftstyper och ristarnas litteracitetsnivå?

Studien bygger vidare på tidigare studier om "epigrafiska områden" (Blennow & Palumbo, 2021, 2022), som använder geografiska informationssystem (GIS) som analytiskt verktyg, i kombination med epigrafiska analyser och sociolingvistiska perspektiv. Förutom analysen av Skånes medeltida epigrafiska områden, jämförs dessa också med tidigare vikingatida epigrafiska områden och med samtida epigrafiska områden särskilt i Västergötland.

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Inscribed Tombstones in Medieval Sweden and their Layout

Abstract: Inscribed Tombstones in Medieval Sweden and their Layout During the Scandinavian Middle Ages, memorial monuments in Sweden become increasingly similar to continental equivalents through the use of recumbent tombstones rather than standing cenotaphs, as well as through changes in language, script and layout. To better understand this development and its implications for medieval literacy, this investigation analyses the layout of inscribed tombstones in medieval Sweden, in relation to the script(s) used, and the diachronic and geographic distribution of the monuments. Focus is placed on the 12th and 13th C, when tombstones are engraved with both the runic and Roman alphabet. The investigation shows an increasing visual separation of script and imagery, but there is no one to one relation between layout and script choice, nor between the degree to which the Roman alphabet is used in a region, and the use of new types of visual organisation. There was, instead, much room for local and individual variation. For example, the early Christian grave monuments in Östergötland (11th C) are inscribed with runes, but are organised similarly to later Roman alphabet monuments. The early Roman alphabet inscriptions in Västergötland (c.1200) follow typical Scandinavian designs, while in Uppland, late in introducing the Roman alphabet, 13th C designs are typically continental. Nonetheless, with the 14 th C and the consolidation of the Roman alphabet, also the layout of the monuments becomes more standardised according to common European patterns. The layout of inscribed tombstones indicates an increasingly linear and directional understanding of writing, contrasting it with and separating it from ornamentation and imagery. Initially, the monuments reflect local and remarkably individual

approaches to the new script and layout, while the 14th C shows standardisation, possibly reflecting an increasingly institutionalised production of the monuments.

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Simris 1 (Sk 46) revisited: Graphematic Evidence in the Debate over Torgöt Fotsarve's Attribution

The attribution of rune-stone inscriptions is far from trivial, especially when inscriptions lack a carver's signature. Traditional methods of attributions – comparing rune-forms, orthography, and ornamentation – risk yielding uncertain results. This is partly because such methods rarely account for collaboration, where different individuals may have been responsible for, for example, ornamental and orthographical features. Moreover, distinct ornamental features do not necessarily indicate different carvers (cf. Kitzler Åhfeldt/Imer 2019:10). Archaeological approaches such as 3D-scanning and analysis of the grooves have provided more reliable insights (cf. Kitzler Åhfeldt 2002, Kitzler Åhfeldt/Imer 2019), though at high resource costs. A recent graphematic study of the Scanian corpus, however, suggests that orthography offers the most dependable evidence, as carvers typically follow consistent writing strategies (cf. Heier forthcoming).

The Scanian corpus comprises about 50 inscriptions, belonging to the Danish rune-stone tradition with two exceptions: Simris 1 (Sk 46) and Simris 2 (Sk 47). These differ in their ornamentation, displaying the rune snake motifs typical of the Mälar region, which has led scholars to suggest an Upplandic origin (cf. Lerche Nielsen 2001: 145). Torgöt Fotsarve has been suggested as a possible carver for Simris 1 on ornamental grounds (cf. Stille 1999:168).

This paper re-examines the Simris 1 inscription using a graphematic approach, comparing its writing strategies with inscriptions signed by Torgöt. The analysis argues that the attribution to Torgöt should be rejected, at least with regard to the creation of the runic text. This reassessment not only clarifies the authorship of Simris 1 but also demonstrates how orthography can reveal carver's mostly consistent strategies across regions. In doing so, it situates Simris 1 within the broader linguistic landscape of Viking Age Scania and highlights the methodological potential of graphematics for studying dialectal variation and mobility in the runic tradition.

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The Rök and Sparlösa inscriptions in mythological, multimodal and landscape context

The inscriptions of Rök (Ög 136) and Sparlösa (Vg 119) hold prominent positions among the early Viking Age runestones. From a linguistic point of view they are both complex texts with great challenges for interpretation at different levels, and visually we are facing two impressive monuments with artful carvings covering all sides. In this presentation we discuss how the two monuments may be related. Already in early research similarities have been pointed out on graphematic and linguistic levels. In terms of content and function most scholars have however followed separate lines of interpretation of the two runstones, although some similarities have been suggested between the Rök stone's supposed Theodoric theme and some of the images of Sparlösa.

In this presentation we revisit the comparison from new angles. We first explore Staffan Fridell's proposal that both inscriptions activate the same mythological context, in which both inscriptions allude not to Theoderic but to a deceased son's role of fighting with Odin at Ragnarök (Friedell forthcoming cf. Holmberg, Gräslund, Sundqvist and Williams 2020). We then consider how this parallel may be reinforced by links between the Rök stone's riddles and the Sparlösa stone's imagery. Finally, we highlight further potential correspondences concerning the monuments' placement in the landscape. Both Rök and Sparlösa are examples of places with very long lines of sight, which may have been crucial for a cosmological reading where the content of the inscriptions was related to what could be observed in the landscape. The study has been carried out as part of the project *The Linguistic Landscape of Runestones,* funded by the Swedish Research Council. https://www.gu.se/forskning/runstenarnas-sprakliga-landskap

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Landscape as semiotic resourse for runestone meaning making: The case of Västergötland
It is obvious that a runestone instantiates several semiotic resources. The characters of the futhark were chosen, organized according to a certain principle, and carved on the surface of a stone of a particular shape, size, and materiality. Equally clear is that each runestone also drew upon a semiotic potential activated by being erected in a specific place in the landscape. This place semiotics is difficult to grasp, partly because landscapes change, but also because we have lost knowledge of which features of the landscape were most relevant. Runological and archaeological research has

debated whether Viking Age runestones were primarily erected by roads, waterways, boundaries, or burial sites, but it has been hard to reach conclusions that clarify the monuments' function.

The study we present here aims to assess whether a systematic analysis of place semiotics for thirty Viking Age runestones in Västergötland, Sweden – all of which probably still stand in their original locations – can provide new clues to how runestones were erected. The runestones in the landscape can be understood as nodes within place-semiotic networks. This approach discourages searching for a single determinative factor, and instead opens for investigating recurring interactions between different aspects of the landscape.

A preliminary result is that although most runestones seem to have been visible from a passing road, traveling along the road generally did not allow for reading them. Another tentative conclusion is that runestone readers were often led to pay attention to the boundaries of the farm, its former burial grounds, and the running water adjacent to its land. In the presentation we will discuss how this may be interpreted in the context of the Christianization of the region. The study has been carried out with the project team of *The Linguistic Landscape of Runestones,* funded by the Swedish Research Council. https://www.gu.se/forskning/runstenarnas-sprakliga-landskap

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Dissemination of runes at school
Children in Norway encounter representations of the Viking Age and runes in many arenas today, and Vikings have been popularized through bestselling comic book series such as *Nordlys* by Malin Falch and *Ragnarok* by Odin Helgheim. The dissemination of knowledge about runes—often linked to the Viking Age—also sparks great enthusiasm. At the same time, the current school curriculum (LK21) is vague about what and how much students should learn about early Nordic history. As a result, much is left to individual teachers and textbook authors.
This presentation will discuss two questions:
   1) What is conveyed in teaching materials for Norwegian students in upper primary school (ages 10–12) about runes and the historical periods in which runes were used?
   2) How can teaching material present runes to children in a meaningful and engaging way within the framework of the Norwegian curriculum?
I will demonstrate that although the main focus of dissemination is directed toward the Viking Age, both fiction and textbooks tend to mix runes from different historical periods, and it is often the older futhark which is being presented to students. In some cases, this may lead to misunderstandings that hinder the exploration of authentic runic inscriptions. The educational materials also vary greatly in terms of which inscriptions are chosen and how runes are presented and used. In the presentation, I will show examples of this variation and discuss how children's interest in Vikings and runes can be met not only through imaginative fiction but also with knowledge.

Formidling av runer i skolen
Barn i Norge møter framstillinger av vikingtid og runer på mange arenaer i dag, og vikinger er gjort populære gjennom blant annet bestselgende tegneserieserier som *Nordlys* av Malin Falch og

Ragnarok av Odin Helgheim. Også formidling om runer, som gjerne knyttes opp mot vikingtida, vekker stor entusiasme. Samtidig er den nåværende læreplanen for skolen (LK21) vag på hva og hvor mye elevene skal lære om eldre nordisk historie i skolen. Dermed er mye overlatt til den enkelte lærer og lærebokforfatter. Presentasjonen tar utgangspunkt i to spørsmål:

1) Hva formidles i læreverk for norske elever på mellomtrinnet (10-12 år) om runer og om de historiske periodene der runene ble brukt?
2) Hvordan kan læreverkene formidle runer til barn på en god og engasjerende måte innenfor rammene av den norske læreplanen?

Jeg vil vise at selv om hovedvekten av formidlingen er rettet mot vikingtiden, blander både skjønnlitterære bøker og lærebøker sammen runer fra de ulike tidsepokene, og det er særlig den eldre fuþarken som formidles til elevene. I noen tilfeller kan denne formidlingen gi grobunn for misforståelser som stenger for utforskning av autentiske runeinnskrifter. I læreverkene er det også stor variasjon i hva slags innskrifter som løftes fram, og hvordan runene formidles og brukes. I presentasjonen vil jeg vise eksempler på denne variasjonen, og diskutere hvordan barnas interesse for vikinger og runer kan møtes, ikke bare i fantasifull fiksjon, men også med kunnskap.

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Bindrunes in inscriptions with Dalecarlian runes

Bindrunes occur in inscriptions with Dalecarlian runes from the 16th through the late 19th century. Their occurrence is limited to roughly one tenth of a little over 300 known inscriptions; however, one and the same inscription often contains more than one instance. The most common bindrunes are **e^n** and **e^r**, each with around 20 instances, while most other bindrunes are considerably rarer. In addition to bindrunes, Latin letter ligatures are also common in inscriptions from the Ovansiljan region, and ligatures consisting of a rune and a letter occur as well. It does not seem unlikely, however, that the use of bindrunes goes back at least partly to medieval runic tradition. The paper reviews the overall material, taking into account, among other things, chronological variation, and comparing it with the medieval Nordic runic material and with letter ligatures in contemporary inscriptions.

Bindrunor i dalruneinskrifter

Bindrunor förekommer i dalruneinskrifter alltsedan 1500-talet och fram till slutet av 1800-talet. Förekomsten är begränsad till runt en tiondel av de drygt 300 kända inskrifterna, varvid en och samma inskrift inte sällan innehåller flera fall. De vanligaste bindrunorna är **e^n** och **e^r**, med vardera runt 20 belägg, medan de flesta andra bindrunor är betydligt sällsyntare. Vid sidan av bindrunorna är även bokstavsligaturer vanliga i inskrifter från Ovansiljan, och även ligatur bestående av runa och bokstav förekommer. Det förefaller dock inte osannolikt att bruket av bindrunor åtminstone delvis går tillbaka på medeltida runtradition. I föredraget görs en genomgång av det samlade materialet med hänsyn till bland annat kronologisk variation och under jämförelse dels med det medeltida nordiska runmaterialet, dels med bokstavsligaturer i samtida inskrifter.

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Hybridity in epigraphic inscriptions from England

Very few of the 'Scandinavian runic inscriptions' from England, identified as such in the corpus edition by Barnes and Page (2006), are wholly Scandinavian in a strict sense. Some, like the Lincoln comb-case (E 4), do seem to have been both made and inscribed in Scandinavia. The majority of inscription-bearers, however, are most likely to have been made in an insular context rather than imported from Scandinavia. Furthermore, quite a few of the 'Scandinavian runic inscriptions' on these objects are hybrid in one or more of several ways. In some inscriptions, the language has features that suggest English rather than or in addition to Scandinavian, or the inscription contains names that are not typically Scandinavian. Some inscriptions mix Scandinavian runes with characters from the Old English rune-row and/or the roman alphabet. And the converse is also true. There are Old English runic inscriptions on objects with Scandinavian associations, and Old English roman alphabet inscriptions which have Scandinavian linguistic features. Several finds made since the 2006 corpus also have indications of some of these kinds of hybridity. Hybridity is also a feature of some of the inscriptions from the wider insular world, such as the runic monuments with both runes and ogham from Ireland and the Isle of Man, and these will also be considered, albeit briefly.

The paper will seek to identify some chronological, geographical and cultural contexts for hybridity in inscriptions from the Scandinavianised insular world in both the Viking Age and later, and reflect on the implications of this hybridity.

Michael P. Barnes and R. I. Page, *The Scandinavian Runic Inscriptions of Britain*, Uppsala 2006.

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Special Greenlandic runic forms and their appearance elsewhere: Dotted u and Greenlandic b.
There are two Greenlandic runic forms that were traditionally considered to be specifically Greenlandic: dotted u for /o(:)/ and two forms of "Greenlandic" b. These special runes have also been found elsewhere and are in general no longer considered to be that specifically Greenlandic. However, their use in other places is still often connected by scholars to their use in Greenland. This presentation will examine their employment in Greenland and elsewhere, including particularly in Iceland and in Norway. The runic inscriptions from Trondheim found since 1971 have been central in much of this discussion and that will be the case also here. An attempt will be made to determine – or provide suggestions concerning – the probable background for their use in various cases.

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The frustrating font of Bingley: The story of a 'retired' runic object
The weathered and fragmentary font of Bingley (West Yorkshire) once carried at least three lines of runic text – an inscription of promising length in the Old English runic corpus. It received significant attention in the 19th century and enticed fanciful readings upon which local histories were built, and it both intrigued and frustrated modern scholars who tried to determine its date and function. But because its inscription is no longer legible, Bingley has (necessarily) been 'retired' from text-based runic corpora.

The stone has been subject to many interpretations. It was first studied by D.H. Haigh in 1855 (publ. 1869-70), and documented in drawings, and later casts, rubbings, and photographs. In 1884, George

Stephens noted that "this precious relic, hundreds of years neglected, is now so shattered and worn as almost to make us despair" and "[t]he best men may differ, and widely differ, as to its meaning." Despite these uncertainties, J.H. Turner's *Ancient Bingley* (1897) elevated the stone to a key textual witness of historical events and royal alliances. Subsequently, Collingwood (1915), Page (1969, 1973, 1999), and others had no success in deciphering its inscription, although they agreed that the lettering was in runes. Page (1999) noted that Bingley was connected to a group of runic monuments in West Yorkshire, and Bailey (1980) proposed that it could, interestingly, belong to the Viking period.

The Bingley stone provides a compelling case study of the ever-changing significance of inscribed monuments and our methodological approaches to interpreting them. It also demonstrates how, in the absence of legible text, context and materiality can help us evaluate objects as witnesses of runic literacy. To that end, this paper will discuss the possibilities and challenges of determining the date, function, and context of the Bingley stone and explore its post-medieval biography.

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Towards a linguistically annotated Runic corpus

At the moment, Runor.se is the go-to digital research platform providing direct access to approximately 7,000 runic inscriptions from various regions of Europe. Its data source consists of the monumental *Samnordisk runtextdatabas*, currently curated by Prof. Henrik Williams at the University of Uppsala. The platform provides key information, including object type, location, and proposed dating. The inscriptions are transliterated, translated, and assigned a linguistic affiliation, giving access to a uniquely valuable dataset.

However, Runor.se currently does not offer historical-linguistic information, most crucially, the phonological and morphological changes identifiable in the inscriptions. To address this gap and facilitate future research into the evolution of the North Germanic languages, over 500 inscriptions from Northern Europe have been scrutinized, resulting in a database that traces the temporal and geographic distribution of about one hundred phonological and morphological features between the Northwest Germanic and Old Norse periods. In addition, the linguistic dataset has been scanned for cultural references to Christianity.

In this talk, we will illustrate the potential of a linguistically annotated Runic corpus and explore ways of making it accessible to both the general public and the research community. In addition, we will see how the same dataset can be exploited for the identification extra-linguistic features, such as cultural references to Christianity.

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Det runristade blyblecket från Binge i Alva på Gotland – En ny ledtråd till övergången mellan den äldre och yngre runraden

(The rune-inscribed lead plate from Binge in Alva on Gotland. – A new clue to the transmission of the older to the younger *futhark*)

A lead plate with runes was unearthed in September 2010 during an investigation with metal detector at the farm Binge in Alva parish on southern Gotland, but the inscription was not recognized as runic until the object was registered at the Historical museum in Stockholm in June 2023.

The plate is folded and carries runes and rune-like symbols in three parallel rows on both sides. Lead plates with runic inscriptions are not uncommon in the Scandinavian countries and they normally date to the Middle Ages. What makes the lead plate from Binge special is that it contains several characters belonging to the older futhark as M m, A ą, h ᴀ, S s and E e. There is also a character Š, which seems to denote /h/, not /d/ as might be expected. This rune form is previously only attested on a runestone fragment with an early version of the younger *futhark* from Finsta in Skederid parish in Uppland (U ATA3916/47), an inscription which has been the subject for some debate.

The runes on the plate belong to a late version of the older futhark, but from what can be read of the text a sequence like hᴀimtᴀ resembles more of Viking Age language (probably Rune-Swedish *hæmta* 'fetch') than of Proto-Norse. This indicates that the inscription belongs to the Vendel period (*c*. 600-750) and that it is probably of the same age as the Eggja stone in Norway.

The plate is folded twice, which means that only one third of the potential inscription is accessible. In spring 2026 the specimen will be examined using Neutron tomography at Institut Laue-Langevin (ILL) in Grenoble. Hopefully, this will give us access to the now hidden parts and make it possible to say something more about the runes and the language in the inscription.

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A new runic inscription from The Netherlands
Finding a new runic inscription in The Netherlands is extremely rare, especially when it is found outside the Frisan *terp*-region. During an excavation campain in the estuary of the Rhine a small object with a runic inscription turned up, dating from about AD 400. This newly found object (2024) may relocate our view on the spread of runic knowledge and especially its context may lead to unexpected conclusions. We would like to discuss the inscription and its impact with other scholars. (The find has not yet been published and its findplace cannot yet be unveiled).

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Modern Runes in Context: Methodology, Reception, and Cultural Reuse

Abstract in English: This joint presentation outlines methodological approaches to assess the diverse practices surrounding the reception of runes and rune-like characters in the modern era. We argue that "modern" runes must not be examined in isolation but within the broader network of their cultural functions and contexts of production, and situated within the disciplines of runology and medievalism studies. Drawing on the outcomes of the international workshop *The Modern Reception of Runes: 19th–21st Century* (Munich, 3–5 December 2025), which we co-organized, we present a working methodology for analyzing the reuse, adaptation, and politicization of runes and rune-like characters since the 19th century. This workshop brought together leading scholars from runology, medieval and medievalism studies, history, and folklore, and focused explicitly on the modern afterlives of runes. Our presentation will also reflect on scholarly responsibility: How can researchers engage more effectively with the public, and how should we respond to harmful appropriations of runic heritage?

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Creating Runes in a Roman Script Environment
This paper examines the development of new runic characters in post-reformation Norway. Most runic inscriptions from the 17th to 19th centuries draw on runeforms reproduced in printed works such as Arild Huitfeldt's Danmarckis Rigis Krønnicke (1603, 1652). However, some inscriptions introduce additional runes to represent letters such as V and Ø. In certain cases, knowledge of several of the printed runeforms appears to have been lost, resulting in the invention of new symbols to replace these. And occasionally, almost the entire inventory of characters seems to have been created anew. This study seeks to identify some of the principles guiding the formation of these characters and considers whether these principles may also shed light on the creation of runes in earlier periods.

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Danish Viking-Age runestones as sources for the ritualisation and embodiment of runestone carving
This paper will present part of the (future) research project, Hugget i granit, in which we plan to conduct 3D scans of all Danish Viking-Age runestones. Building on previous research by Laila Kitzler Åhfeldt and Lisbeth M. Imer (Kitzler Åhfeldt and Imer 2019; Imer et al. 2023), the project aims to expand past perspectives by including suggestions on the role of these monuments in the social and mental landscapes of the Viking Age. Although runestones are textual products, for instance the rhyme and rhythm that is often part of the inscriptions reveal link to an oral culture (Nygaard 2025). There is also much evidence that rituals took place in connection with the erection of the runestones (Mitchell 2013). Traces of such an intangible cultural heritage are, for example, preserved in the Norse poems and on the runestones, and therefore the runestones constitute an important link between oral and written culture, which is central to understanding the monument group as a

whole. An unexplored aspect of the runestone culture is the possible ritualization of and embodiment associated with the physical act of carving runes. The 3D scans will be able to give us unique insight into these aspects of rune carving. Inspired by research into the ritualisation of crafts in the Bronze and Iron Ages (Østigaard and Goldhahn 2007) and incorporating research into the production and handling of, for example, religious and ritual objects in other traditions (Schleicher 2017), we will examine the extent to which rune carvers can be seen as ritual actors. Using already scanned stones used in past publications, like those on Bornholm (fx DR 379, 402, 380 and 389; (Kitzler Åhfeldt and Imer 2019) and in the area around Bække (fx DR 29, 40; Imer et al. 2023), some initial analyses will be presented.

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The distribution of runic and roman script across potentially apotropaic inscriptions on objects from early medieval England

This paper will analyze and discuss the distribution of runic and roman script across object inscriptions that might have been apotropaic, or otherwise magical or supernaturally effective, for their makers and users in early medieval England (c. 450 – 1100). First, the paper will establish the two most significant patterns within this corpus: 1. Runes were used for apotropaic/magical inscriptions before the Anglo-Saxons' conversion to Christianity, while roman script was more often used for such inscriptions afterward. 2. The content of many surviving runic inscriptions made before and after Christianization is often cryptic, sometimes taking the form of indecipherable character strings, while the surviving roman-script apotropaic/magical inscriptions are generally decipherable words and phrases, frequently quotations or references to Christian scripture or figures. Both of these patterns underline the close association in Anglo-Saxon culture of the roman (rather than runic) script with Christian beliefs, practices, and texts. While there is, therefore, a rather predictable pattern of early runic usage and later roman usage, this paper will highlight some continuities in runic usage for apotropaic/magical inscriptions before and after the conversion, and it will consider implications. For example, there are four inscriptions dated to the period after the conversion that spell out, in full or in part, the Old English fuþorc: these are the Thames scramasax (Page 1999:80), Thames ring or mount (Gosling 1991), Brandon pin (Page 1999:81), and Malton/Vale of Pickering pin (Page 2006:219). These four inscriptions are paralleled in roman script by the partial alphabet

inscription on the Flixborough ring (Okasha 2003). Together, this set of five sequential inscriptions may indicate a continuing association between apotropaic/magical power and writing itself in both scripts, runic and roman. Overall, the paper aims to complicate our understanding of script choice for potentially apotropaic/magical inscriptions among the Anglo-Saxons in early medieval England. Works Cited: Gosling, K. "Recent Finds from London," Old English Runes and their Continental Background, ed. A. Bammesberger. (Heidelberg: 1991), 191-194. Okasha, E. "Anglo-Saxon Inscribed Rings." Leeds Studies in English 35 (2003): 29–45. Page, R. I. An Introduction to English Runes. 2 nd ed. (Woodbridge: 1999). Page, R.I. "Rune Rows: Epigraphical and Manuscript," in Das fuþark und seine einzelsprachliche Weiterentwicklung, eds. A. Bammesberger and G. Waxenberger. (Berlin and New York: 2006), 216-232.

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Runes in Contemporary Heathenry: Identity, Authenticity, and Cultural Heritage in the Digital Age
Runes have long fascinated scholars, practitioners, and the wider public due to their layered history and use in both sacred and secular contexts. Originally devised as an epigraphic writing system, they gradually acquired magical and spiritual dimensions—a development further amplified by the modern revival of Norse-inspired religions. Within contemporary Paganism, particularly reconstructionist movements such as *Ásatrú* and *Forn Siðr*, runes function not only as ritual tools but also as markers of identity and vehicles for reinterpreted cultural heritage.

This revival, however, presents complex challenges. Divinatory uses—lacking historical attestation—have become the most widespread form of engagement with runes. Reconstructionist reliance on Unverified Personal Gnosis (UPG) legitimizes subjective truths beyond scholarly verification, while in digital spaces authority is frequently established through visibility and self-presentation rather than historical accuracy, contributing to processes of commodification and manipulation.
Runes also serve as potent identity symbols, sometimes fostering exclusivist ideologies. The notion of a spiritual elite—introduced by Guido von List and later exploited by Nazi propaganda—persists in Folkish Paganism, where ethnicity and legitimacy can be asserted through practices as DNA testing. Yet these tendencies coexist with counter-movements that actively promote inclusivity and ethical engagement with cultural heritage.
While scholarship has extensively examined philological origins and extremist appropriations of runes, far less attention has been given to inclusive branches of modern Heathenry. This study addresses that gap by analyzing how contemporary Pagan communities negotiate authenticity, authority, and heritage in both ritual and digital contexts. Drawing on direct accounts from practitioners actively engaged in runic practices, this paper highlights inclusive approaches to spirituality and underscores the potential of runes to serve as a bridge between academic scholarship and spiritual communities in the digital age.

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Multiscriptality and Multilingualism during the Middle Ages on the British Isles
The Vikings were first recorded as present on the British Isles in 793 A.D. after the raid on Lindisfarne, their presence continuing until the 11th c. carrying with them a strong epigraphic tradition with the runic futhark script (Redknap 2000). The Anglo-Saxons – with their own runic

futhorc – had by that time long since established kingdoms within modern England and were expanding further into territories where Celtic peoples used the Ogam script (Morris 2022; MacAlister 1945 xi–xiv). The Romans had already come and gone on the Isles hundreds of years before this, though the Latin language and Roman Alphabet script remained in use (Snyder 2003, 105–137). The presence of all these different languages and scripts significantly impacted and shaped the linguistic landscapes of the Isles during the Middle Ages and beyond. Inevitably, linguistic hierarchies would have been formed and changed depending on geographical context on the Isles during the Middle Ages. These conditions constitute a need for a new research project to explore these dynamics.

The project draws from a corpus of 1,000 monuments carrying inscriptions, mainly focusing on about 63 multiscriptal monuments. The project's research method views the inscriptions as multimodal texts which need to be analysed based on geographic location, text content, layout and spelling (Palumbo 2023, 76–80; Sebba 2013).

While multiscriptality and multilingualism have been considered in research regarding these scripts and languages before (Bunčić et.al. 2016, 76–78; Okasha 2018; McManus 1991, 61), we are still missing a larger picture of the linguistic landscapes and linguistic hierarchies on the British Isles. Using a sociolinguistic framework and this multimodal approach to the relevant corpus, we will provide insight into how Scandinavian runic inscriptions fit into this larger, interconnected system.

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Norse Women, Trade, and Power in the Middle Ages: Insights into Social Strata from Small Inscribed Objects

This paper presents partial results from a master's dissertation conducted by M.Litt. Archaeological Studies student Jaron Rochon, supervised by Ragnhild Ljosland.

This presentation will examine the epigraphical and archaeological interpretations of trade- and commerce-related runic inscriptions dated 1050–1450, linking them to the broader social and economic processes of the Scandinavian Middle Ages. Small, inscribed runic objects were fundamental to daily communication, often by non-elite individuals (Grandell 1988; Hagland 2011; Liestøl 1966, 1968, 1971). They therefore provide a uniquely intimate perspective into the lives and social dynamics of these medieval people. Using digital datasets, such as the Scandinavian Rune-text Database (Runor) and Magin (2020), analysed in Microsoft Power Query, this research identified geographic, material, social, emotional, and economic patterns in a dataset of 254 medieval business letters and ownership tag inscriptions from 25 municipalities across Denmark, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Among the results, the analysis revealed that women were deeply integrated into trade and the wider economic framework of the period. Using a digital database allowed for a broader understanding of the social and economic interactions of medieval women across the region. Combining runological and archaeological methods, these identified inscriptions were individually and comparatively analysed to understand the roles and contributions of women to the trade network and economy of medieval Norse society, including as merchants in family-run businesses, lenders, or stallholders.

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**Die Sprache der älteren Runeninschriften im Überlieferungskontext:
Urnordisch, Nordwestgermanisch oder noch etwas anderes?**

Die einflussreiche linguistische Position vertreten durch Hans Kuhn, Herbert Penzl (modifiziert auch durch Elmer Antonsen und Hans Frede Nielsen) und zahlreiche internationale Forscher sieht in der Sprache der älteren Runeninschriften ein "Nordwestgermanisch", wobei ausdrücklich von

"Runennordwestgermanisch" oder sogar "Runengermanisch" (Penzl) gesprochen wird. Indes sieht die Gegenposition Grønviks und anderer skandinavischer Forscher in diesen Denkmälern bis 450/500 n.Chr. eine nordische Sprachform. Wer nun hat die besseren Argumente und hat schließlich Recht? Wie ich in diesem Beitrag argumentiere, muss die Periode der sprachlichen Einheit innerhalb des "nordwestgermanischen Kontinuums" recht kurz gewesen sein und den ältesten, das heißt archaischen, Runeninschriften im älteren Futhark noch vorausgehen. Ich stütze mich in meiner Argumentation auf verschiedene Arten von Indizien: die Rekonstruktion, die komparative Methode und Belege der älteren Runeninschriften sowie der südgermanischen (sprachlich: westgermanischen) und anglo-friesischen Runeninschriften.

Dabei soll gezeigt werden, dass die dialektale Ausdifferenzierung des Nordwest-germanischen früher stattfand, als es allgemein angenommen wird. Diese Spracheinheit dürfte nach Ausweis der analysierten Daten also schon sehr früh begonnen haben zu zerfallen. Ein wahrscheinliches Datum der einsetzenden Ausgliederung ist das erste nachchristliche Jahrhundert, das heißt, eine Zeitstufe, die der ältesten Runenüberlieferung noch vorausgeht. Zwei wesentliche Indizien, auf die ich aufbaue, sind die Monophthongierung in velaren Kontexten (Belege zum Verb *faihijan) und der Verlust von sigmatischen Endungen im Westgermanischen. Die zentrale westgermanische Form kaba für *kamba* (< germ. *kambaz) auf dem Kamm von Frienstedt (3. Jh.) gibt uns einen *Terminus ante quem* dieser westgermanischen Innovation. Diese Isoglosse kann nicht später entstanden sein als die Inschrift auf dem Frienstedter Kamm. Tatsächlich gibt es weitere (sogar frühere) runische Indizien, nicht zuletzt in den Neufunden von Hole/Svingerud. Ausserdem wird die finnische Lehnwortevidenz berücksichtigt, um den zentralen nordwestgermanischen Wandel von $\bar{e}_1 > \bar{a}$ zu datieren. Ein weiteres zentrales Indiz ist der *a*-Umlaut. Der Beitrag schließt mit einer Chronologie der Ausdifferenzierung, die verschiedene Lautwandelprozesse früher datiert, als es allgemein Praxis ist.

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Analyzing spelling variation in runic personal names and common appellatives using NLP methods
This study aims to achieve twofold objectives: a comparison of spelling variation between personal names and appellatives in runic inscriptions, and methodological advancement in the application of Natural Language Processing (NLP) methods. We apply NLP methods to analyze graphemic variation in frequently occurring personal names and common appellatives extracted from the Scandinavian Runic-text Database. Through this comparison, we seek to enhance the understanding of whether spelling practices for names and appellatives exhibit significant differences, as most recently discussed by Palumbo (2020). Additionally, our research addresses methodological questions focusing on the implementation of various NLP techniques, including statistical models, distance metrics, and entropy (Lüschow, 2021), to quantify spelling variation. Specifically, we investigate which computational methods can effectively automate and quantify variation in the low-resource scenario of runic inscriptions, identify the necessary pre-processing steps for these analyses, and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of these methods in comparison to traditional philological approaches.

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The Digital Piraeus Lion Project

In 2021 a 3D digital replica of the Piraeus Lion, now situated in Venice, was created by a team of archaeologists from Gothenburg University and the Swedish Institute at Athens (Potter et al. 2023), using the photogrammetric method Structure from Motion (SfM). A digital replica of the plaster copy of the lion at the Historical Museum in Stockholm was also created. These two digital copies are now being used for a renewed study of the three runic inscriptions, carved on the lion by Varangians in the 11th century.

The study has several aims. From a runological perspective, we wish to provide a basis for more secure readings. The digital model makes it far easier to examine, share, and discuss problems in the inscription. A comparison between the original in Venice and the plaster copy in Stockholm may help us to assess the degree of weathering over the last century as well as damage to the plaster copy. We will also analyse the carving technique and compare the lion with runestones from different regions, i.e. on the islands Öland and Gotland, as well as on the Swedish mainland.

At the same time, we endeavour to better understand what attracted the Varangians to this particular sculpture. As the lion was about 1300 years old when the Varangians used it for memorial inscription, we question whether they perceived the lion as an ancient object and if they knew that it was originally situated as a prominent guardian on a warrior grave.

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Between Tradition and Individualism: Self-Commemoration in the Swedish Runestone Corpus
This presentation examines self-commemorative runestones, on which the commissioner of the text is identical with the commemorated person. The aim of this research has been to evaluate possible functions of self-commemorative runestones and to determine how they compare to the broader runestone tradition. To achieve this, a self-commemorative formula has been established, from which a catalogue of self-commemorative runestones in Sweden has been assembled. Through thematic analysis, the major functions of self-commemorative runestones are identified to relate to Christianity, kinship, and identity. Self-commemorative runestones are demonstrated to belong to broader runestone tradition, rather than constituting a separate phenomenon. However, there is an abundance of variation within the self-commemorative catalogue, and it is clear that each self-commemorative runestone served special purposes to the commissioner(s). Nonetheless, self-commemorative runestones are unified in their demonstration of self-agency.

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The Old English runic inscriptions found in the dialect area of Mercia
The relatively small Old English Runes Corpus (ca. AD 650 – 11th cent.) has steadily increased over the past years. The two major Old English dialect areas where runic inscriptions have been found are Northumbria and Mercia. In my paper, I will analyze the Mercian corpus according to Old English dialect criteria, such as phonology and morphology. I will also look at the graphemic level, e.g. the)**ea**-rune **Å** for the Old English diphthong *ea*. This rune was probably designed in the Northumbria as it occurs on the Ruthwell Cross (mid 8th cent.) for the first time but it is later also found in Mercia (Eyke Pendant: probably late 8th-mid 9th cent.). This rune must have travelled south and been integrated into the Mercian rune-row as well.
I will also look at the kinds of objects found in this area and also at the text-types on these objects. It is my aim to define the Mercian corpus based on a dialectal, graphemic and also on a text-type level for two reasons: firstly, this corpus has expanded to a greater extent in the recent years and secondly, in order to detect possible Scandinavian influence in the area of the *Danelaw*.

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Material evidence of social status conveyed by runic inscriptions on Scandinavian gold bracteates

Abstract:
In this paper, I will examine whether Scandinavian Migration Period bracteates with runic inscriptions indicate higher status of their bearers/wearers than similar objects that lack inscriptions. Through the years, as part of my focus on the materiality of the technology of bracteates, I found that many such objects had been damaged and repaired, presumably after being worn for a long time. While examining around 900 of the over 1000 extant bracteates, I recorded various kinds of damage to them—some that occurred during production and some that was post-production.
The most common evidence of bracteate wear is damage or loss of suspension loops and edge wires. A suspension loop takes the brunt of wear and could be torn away if a pendant hanging around the neck with a bracteate got caught on something. Sometimes damage could be repaired, particularly by fastening a new loop onto the disc of the bracteate. In other cases, possible loss of a loop could be prevented by reinforcing the reverse of the bracteate behind the loop with a patch.
Witnessing such heavy use, damage, and repair, I became curious about how bracteate mutilation and repair relate to various find contexts and the presence of runic inscriptions (and furthermore, what kind of inscriptions). I propose that bracteates that have been repaired were especially venerated. After examining how the presence of runes on bracteates correlates with the presence of repairs, I suggest that bracteates with runes were afforded special social status and were a manifestation of power.

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The importance of Runology in Runic Studies

The project "The reading and interpretation of runic inscriptions: the theory and method of runology" was conducted at Centre for Advanced Study, Oslo, in 2013–14 (Knirk 2022, p. 6). The project title gives the "narrow" definition of runology (cf. Peterson 1996, p. 41; Williams 2013, p. 61–61). In the published version of his 2010 plenary lecture at the seventh runic symposium, Michael Barnes (2013, p. 10) writes:

I would also suggest that the reading of runic inscriptions is more central to runology than their interpretation. The reading must be done first and must be undertaken by someone with experience in the field. Thereafter come attempts at interpretation, which may in some circumstances be made by historians, archaeologists and others — provided they possess the requisite linguistic knowledge, understand how the reading was arrived at, and have a proper grasp of all the caveats the reader has expressed.

That reading is fundamental goes without saying, but a skilled runologist must also be involved in the primary interpretation of a runic text, not least because it sometimes has a bearing also on the reading itself. This requires a competence in general linguistics and especially language history, as well as often in onomastics since many inscriptions contain names. In my presentation, I will address why bordering disciplines must never lose track of what runologists present as the best reading and primary interpretation of a runic inscription, and I will show some disturbing examples of what happens when this is not the case.

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Language: Swedish

A high-ranking lady, royal household and landed property as a background for a renewed discussion of the Hedeby runestones, DR2 and DR4

The Baltic formed a borderland between two Viking realms, that of the Svear and the Danes, both particularly expansionist. These were multi-regional maritime realms that relied on tributary lands and levy to keep the important trade routes open on which they depended. This included protection of ports of trade that the kings could support and guard, as well as harbour sites which tradesmen could visit safely. The ports of trade were multi-ethnical, complex milieus situated at the border zones between groups of peoples, and early kingdoms. Hedeby was the most important one, set in the borderland between Scandinavia and the Continent. In the early Viking Age described as a Danish port but later shifted hands several times. In the early 10th century, it is stated that Hedeby was conquered in an attack led by a prince from the land of the Svear. However, how far the "svenskevaeldet" stretched is debated among scholars.

Two rune stones from the mid-tenth century mention a high-ranking lady, Asfrid, connected to Hedeby (DR 2, DR 4). They have since long been connected to the family of Olaph from the land of the Svear. One of the rune stones is an ordinary commemorative rune stone addressing close family relations without titles or ancestral ties. While the other stone addresses Asfrid as a royal mother, her son as king, ancestry and the name of the rune carver. In this presentation it will be argued that if a rune stone was erected at a royal official estate belonging to the crown, titles and social positioning were needed. But if commemoration took place on the family's own land, only close family relations were addressed without titles.

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More than one face: Working with different sides of runic script-bearers

Matters related to the materiality and spatiality of writing are essential to runological documentation practices and thinking, regardless of how one defines – or has previously defined – the main objectives of runology as a field. Although not all such thinking has been explicitly grounded in distinctive theoretical paradigms or analytical tools, there is a shared, long-term understanding of the importance of considering objects, materials and environments as part of the runological study. This paper is motivated by both analytical and practical considerations regarding

runic objects that bear (or have the potential to bear) inscriptions on several accessible surfaces (sides). Its purpose is to discuss the epigraphic and material properties of some such multi-faced runic script-bearers and the challenges they may present in the documentation and analysis of runic inscriptions. Regarding inscriptions, we must assess, for example, the presence of multiple inscriptional sequences – whether seen as joint components, connected assemblages or distinct inscriptional acts (including reuse). Regarding artefacts, it is useful to think about the accessibility and varying capacities of writing supports, their circumstances of production and use by rune-carvers, and the (presumed) primary and secondary features of objects in the course of their reception. These questions are addressed with the help of selected case studies of smaller, portable runic objects in the Scandinavian runic writing traditions of the Viking Age and the Middle Ages.

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Classification of formal variation: Challenges of a comprehensive description of runic graph types and variants

The formal variation of runic graphs has been described in runological research from various perspectives and with different research objectives.

The research conducted as part of the *RuneS* project and completed this year focused, among other things, on the development of a comprehensive, integrative description and classification system for runic graphs, which would enable the comparison of runic shapes from the four major runic corpora (i.e. the inscriptions in (1) the older *fuþark*, (2) the Anglo-Frisian *fuþorc*, (3) the younger *fuþark*, as well as the *runica manuscripta*) which are interrelated in different ways. The developed description and classification system is digitally based, thus offering research opportunities for various questions concerning the distribution and variation of graphs and graph types.

The paper discusses some of the challenges involved in developing a comprehensive formal runic typology and, based on the functions of the RuneS-database website, presents some possibilities for research using various questions on the distribution and variation of runic shapes and graph types.

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The Illerup-Vimose-Øvre Stabu connexion, a case of weapons mass-production in runic epigraphy?

The Illerup and Vimose deposits, both located in Denmark, are quite interesting for archaeologists because they provide important insights about weaponry and craft activities in mid-3rd century CE, as well as information on the socio-cultural context in Scandinavia. Another major points is concerning runic epigraphy. Among 11 runic inscriptions found in Illerup and 7 in Vimose, there are 2 lance heads in Illerup and 1 in Vimose bearing exactly the same name, wagnijo, which is quite unusual, especially for a brand new script. Another important fact is that the typology of the 3 lances is also similar, they are all of Vennolum type. Items of this type are mainly found in graves from Sweden, Öland, Gotland, and Norway. And the last significant thing, is that these 3 lances also have various ornaments on the blade, just like 175 others of Vennolum types in Illerup and a bit less in Vimose. By considering these ornaments and the typology of the lance heads, we can find another similar case in a grave from Norway, the Øvre Stabu lance head, with analogies in ornaments but with a different name, raunijaz. This connexion between several and distant objects could however

highlight a mass-production of lances and raise a central question : does these 4 lances initially come from the same region and, possibly, from the same worskshop ?

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

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Epigraphic centres of medieval Scandinavia: Latinization and re vernacularization of the linguistic landscape 1050–1550 (EpiCentres)
EpiCentres is a newly started 5-year project funded by the European Research Council. It investigates the development of written culture in medieval Scandinavia (1050–1550), a context uniquely characterized by centuries of interactions between different languages and alphabets. While the evolving relationship between Latin and the vernacular influenced the development of all western European literate societies, in Scandinavia, Latin and the Latin alphabet were introduced in the 11th century into a pre-existing 900-year-old written tradition comprising thousands of inscriptions in the local vernacular languages and in the runic alphabet. Rather than replacing this native tradition, the Latin one coexisted with it for 400 years, resulting in a written culture shaped by overlapping processes of spread of Latin alongside the runic tradition, increased Latinization and decline of the runes, and 'rE-vernacularization', the increasing use of the Scandinavian languages but written in the Latin alphabet. EpiCentres will analyse these processes by studying an almost entirely overlooked body of texts comprising approximately 2000 Latin alphabet inscriptions, together with the runic inscriptions from the same period.
The project pursues three aims: 1) Mapping the evolving production of inscriptions in different languages and alphabets through geospatial analyses and making the vast corpus of Latin alphabet inscriptions publicly and digitally available for the first time; 2) Developing a holistic methodology for studying Scandinavian epigraphy, focusing on the intersections of textual, orthographic, palaeographic, and visual practices of epigraphic traditions in different languages and scripts; 3) Proposing a new explanatory model for the use of Latin and the vernacular, reinterpreting their relationship within a sociolinguistic and social semiotic framework to understand the sociocultural premises and implications of evolving language and script choices.

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Reading the Piraeus Lion: a prototype of a 3D digital edition of its runic inscriptions
The marble statue of the Piraeus Lion at the Venetian Arsenal bears three runic inscriptions dated 10th–11th century, of varying lengths and legibility, and most likely carved by Varangian mercenaries serving in Byzantium (Simone 2001; Snædal 2016). To date, no updated digital scholarly edition exists that incorporates a level of "transrunification" (Barnes 2015) of the text. This project examines the three inscriptions and highlights their textual peculiarities through a dual methodology: (1) ecdotic analysis conducted *in situ*, supported by primary and secondary sources for

preparing the edition; and (2) application of digital epigraphic-philological methods for the codification and visualization of the texts. As a first step, a 3D model was created using Agisoft Metashape to document the current state of the statue and its inscriptions. The inscriptions were then encoded following the TEI-EpiDoc guidelines for epigraphic encoding. Eventually, the aim is to visualize the 3D model and the encoding combined in a digital edition using EVT 2.0 (Edition Visualization Technology), as it allows the visualisation of 3D object thanks to the integrated 3DHOP viewer (Leoni et al. 2015).

This research is part of the PNRR-funded CHANGES-Crest (Cultural Resources for Sustainable Tourism) project (2022–2025), led by Ca' Foscari University of Venice. The research team supervised by Marina Buzzoni (Ca' Foscari) developed also an accessible exhibition on the Piraeus Lion to be included in the *Museo Storico Navale Venezia*, which will link to the digital edition of the inscriptions.

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The application "Runstenar" (Runestones): an easy way to find runestones around you
We would like to present a poster with information and QR codes for the new version of the *Runstenar* ("Runestones") application. We also want to encourage everyone to download the application and try it out. We would like to discuss with our users how the application could be improved to become more user-friendly, and we also want to talk about the future of the application. We are planning to apply for further funding in order to incorporate AR features in the application, which will allow us to digitally restore missing or damaged runestones in their original locations and to add colour to runes where it is now missing.

More details about the project can be found here:

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AI in the service of Runology: An easy way of searching for information in The Scandinavian Runic Database

We want to present a poster with information about new possibilities to search for information in The Scandinavian Runic Database with help of AI. Also, we want to allow everyone to come to our poster, where we will sit with our computers, and suggest a search for us and then see how we get the answer. In this way we hope to learn scholars to use these new functions and simultaneously help us find bugs or limitations in our work aimed at making runological searches easier for the public.

More details about our project "AI in the service of runology" can be found here (in Swedish):

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"Runeposten" - a digital runology newsletter
With new runic finds being published in a range of different media – from academic databases to social media (e.g. Facebook groups) and local newspapers – there is a rising need for (re)centering communication between runologists on an international level.

We propose the launch of a digital newsletter similar to the former 'Nytt om runer' (News about Runes), with short entries by colleagues working on runes and runic inscriptions, covering new finds and projects according to a standardised publication form. The goal is to spread awareness of new

runic finds and to facilitate communication between runologists and specialists of related disciplines everywhere – quickly, efficiently, professionally.

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A Pilot Study on Textual Restoration of Medieval and Viking Age Runic Inscriptions Using Natural Language Processing Methods

This paper presents a pilot study exploring the use of Natural Language Processing (NLP) to support the restoration of incomplete Medieval and Viking Age runic inscriptions. Many inscriptions survive only in fragmentary form, with damaged runes complicating restoration and often producing multiple competing scholarly readings (Barnes, 2012). To provide a systematic alternative, this study applies statistical language models (n-grams) alongside a modified Minimum Edit Distance algorithm adapted for runic data.

The model was trained on 4,278 inscriptions from the Scandinavian Runic-text Database (Peterson et al., 2020) and tested on both synthetically generated fragments and a small set of authentic inscriptions. Results show prediction coverage of 84.97% and accuracy up to 86.96%, suggesting that probabilistic models can generate plausible reconstructions even with limited data. Human evaluation by Dr Johan Georges P Bollaert, University of Oslo, further confirmed the method's potential, highlighting its ability to account for attested orthographic variation beyond normalized forms.

Limitations remain, particularly reliance on predefined word boundaries and the inability to restore completely missing tokens. Nonetheless, this study establishes a proof of concept for integrating computational methods into runology. The proposed approach is lightweight, transparent and replicable, offering a tool that can accelerate interpretation, reduce subjective bias and extend textual criticism. More broadly, it demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary collaboration between digital humanities and runology, pointing toward future advances in computational epigraphy.

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