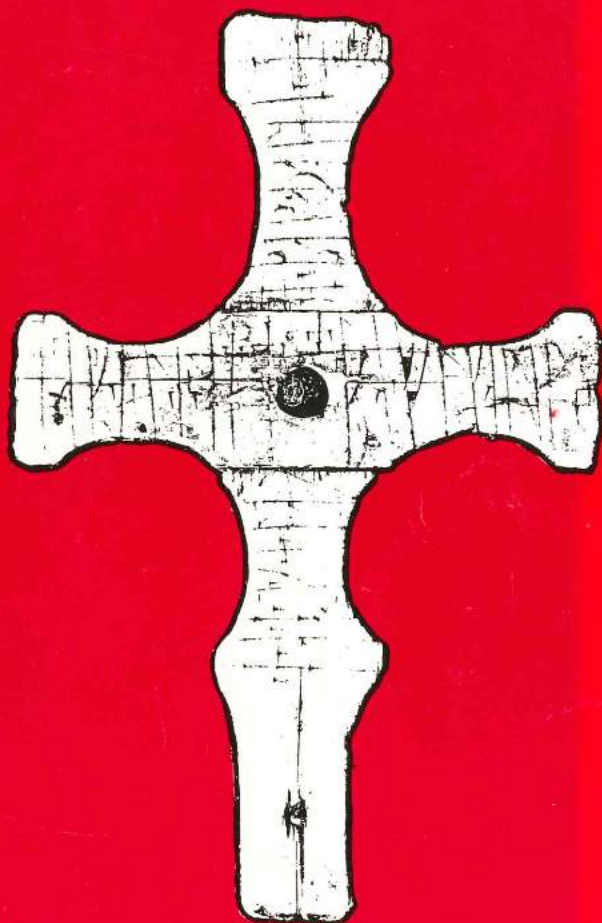


# THE BRYGGEN PAPERS

*Supplementary series No 2*



NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

# THE BRYGGEN PAPERS

*Supplementary series*

**The Bryggen Papers**

give a scholarly presentation of the archaeological finds from the excavations at Bryggen – The German Wharf – in Bergen.

The Papers consist of two series, *the main series* and *the supplementary series*.

Editorial Board appointed by the University of Bergen:

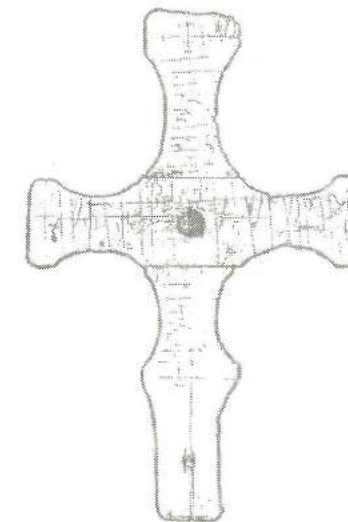
Professor Knut Helle  
Senior Curator Asbjørn Herteig  
Senior Curator Svein Indrelid

Asbjørn Herteig acts as Chief Editor for both series.

# THE BRYGGEN PAPERS

## *Supplementary series*

NO 2



NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

© UNIVERSITETSFORLAGET AS 1988  
(Norwegian University Press)

ISBN 82-00-02562-4

Published with a grant from the Norwegian Research Council for  
Science and the Humanities

*Distribution office:*

P.O. Box 2977 Tøyen  
N-0608 Oslo 6, Norway

Printed in Norway by  
A/S JOHN GRIEG, BERGEN

## CONTENTS

<i>Helge Dyvik</i> Addenda runica latina Recently Found Runic Inscriptions in Latin from Bryggen	1
<i>Karin Fjellhammer Seim</i> A Review of the Runic Material	10
<i>Karin Fjellhammer Seim</i> Runic Inscriptions in Latin A Summary of Aslak Liestøl's Fascicle (Vol. VI, 1) of Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer	24
<i>Axel Grandell</i> Finds from Bryggen Indicating Business Transactions	66



## FOREWORD

When the excavations at Bryggen began in the autumn of 1955, nine medieval runic inscriptions were known from the limited urban area of Bergen. When the excavations finished in the autumn of 1968, some 500 new inscriptions had been found. Later excavations have caused this figure to be increased to over 600, and new ones continue to be found, though not at the same tempo as previously.

Of all the extensive finds from Bryggen the runic inscriptions make up perhaps the most exclusive and versatile group. Cut into wood, bone, soapstone and leather they provide a rich and somewhat unusual insight into the many different aspects of the life and the atmosphere in a medieval sea-trading town. Some deal with purely personal relationships such as friendship, love or hate, others are of a magico-religious character, while a large number reflect aspects of the local trade in the form of labels, letters, messages, notes, etc. A group of runic inscriptions in Latin reveals the social breadth within the local milieu who made use of this form of communication. There are also cryptic runes, as well as examples which must have been used in instruction.

The late Aslak Liestøl at Universitetets Oldsaksamling (the University Collection of National Antiquities) at Oslo was the first who read and interpreted these inscriptions from Bryggen. He also illustrated the various texts and their associated problems in a number of short articles in both Norwegian and foreign journals.

Before his death in 1983 he completed his thesis on the runic inscriptions in Latin. This was published in 1980 as the first part of Fascicle 6 of The later runic inscriptions from Norway (*Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer*).

In order to collect all the studies of the Bryggen material together in the same English-language publication, we present in this volume of our Supplementary Series of The Bryggen Papers a slightly edited, shortened and up-dated version of Liestøl's thesis by Karin Seim. She has also written a general introduction to the runic material from Bryggen. Professor Helge Dyvik has studied some of the Latin runic inscriptions which have been found since Liestøl completed his work. The final article is a contribution by Professor Emeritus Axel Grandell from Åbo, Finland, on that related and hitherto relatively little known group of commercial finds, the tally-sticks, which have played a significant role in the mercantile history of North Europe. He has also provided a note on the very unusual find of shop-mascots.

The series is published by the University of Bergen and financed by the Norwegian Research Council for Science and the Humanities.

The papers by Karin Fjellhammer Seim and Axel Grandell have been translated by Clifford Long.

The Editorial Committee responsible for the publication of the series consists of Professor Knut Helle from the Department of History, Bergen University, Senior Curator Asbjørn E. Herteig, Department of Archaeology, Medieval Collection, Historical Museum, Bergen University and Senior Curator Svein Indrelid, Department of Archaeology, Historical Museum, Bergen University.

Asbjørn E. Herteig  
Chief Editor

## Addenda runica latina

### *Recently Found Runic Inscriptions in Latin from Bryggen*

BY HELGE DYVIK

After the completion of Aslak Liestøl's edition of the Latin inscriptions from Bryggen, summarised in Seim's article in this issue, several additional runic inscriptions have come to light during excavations in Rosenkrantz gate, Dreggsalmenning and Finnegården, as well as in other locations on Bryggen. Eleven of these are, or appear to be, wholly or partly in Latin and will be presented below with attempted interpretations. All except two are recorded in the Runic Archive in Universitetets Oldsaksamling in Oslo and will be identified by their numbers in the Archive (B numbers). The remaining two, from Finnegården, are identified by their numbers in the Bryggen Museum archive.

#### *B582 (DREGGSALMENNING)*

Flat, pointed piece of wood, 140 × 25 mm. A 10 × 10 mm indentation in the upper edge has damaged runes 11–12. The lower parts of runes 13–15 are also damaged.

c d e f g h i k l m n o p k r s t u x .  
1            5            10            15

The inscription is exceptional in having the runes in the order of the Latin alphabet instead of the normal futhark order found in a large number of inscriptions. Runes in alphabetical order are known from a couple of other Norwegian inscriptions, one from Nordland (NIyR V no. 539) and one from an unknown place in Norway (NIyR V no. 547). N539 is a small steatite (soapstone) spindle-whorl with runes carved around the edge. It differs from the present inscription in having *p* instead of *d* (dotted *t*), and in lacking runes for *q* and *x*. N547 is only known from drawings from the 18th century. It is known as "King Olaf's wafer iron", a circular iron plate decorated with figures and with runes along the edge. Apart from being more complete, the alphabet in N547 differs from the present one in the *x* rune, which is not distinguished from the *h* rune.

Inscriptions of this type illustrate some of the influence of the Roman alphabet on runic writing – not so much on the shape of the individual rune as on the number and kinds of distinctions drawn. Thus, even Roman letters without corresponding phonemes in Old Norse, such as *c* and *x*, had runes corresponding to them. The rune for *x* (R19) was assimilated to the pattern of the Younger Futhark by the addition of a vertical stave to the Roman form, and



in order to maintain a distinction from the *h* rune, short perpendicular cross-strokes were added to the four ends of the diagonal cross-strokes: ✠. The rune for *c*, *h*, is originally a variant of the *s*-rune.

### B583 (DREGGSALMENNING)

The inscription is carved on three sides of a wooden stick, 150 × 20 × 10 mm. The runes are generally carefully carved, clear and easy to read.

(a) suaeromitskyldtilsl

(b) sa·tôr·âre·po·tenet·opera·rotas·  
pags·pôrtan·ntibussalusaben·ntibus·a·g·

(c) 1·a·iohannes·lukas·mabeus·markus

Normalised:

Svá eru mit skyld til Sl...  
SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS  
Pax portantibus, salus habentibus.  
AGLA  
Johannes, Lucas, Mattheus, Marcus.

Translation:

We (the two of us) owe Sl... as follows  
SATOR etc.  
Peace to those who carry (it), salvation for those who have (it).  
AGLA  
John, etc

The interrupted Old Norse inscription on side (a) is the beginning of a specification of debts and is in a different hand from the rest. The runes are squeezed together near one end of the stick, leaving about three-quarters of the side blank. The 1st person dual pronoun *mit* shows that there are two debtors, and the neuter plural participle *skyld* (not *skyldar* f. or *skyldir* m.) indicates that they are a man and a woman. The name of the person to whom something is owed appears to begin with *Sl*.

However, the rune-carver was interrupted before finishing the name, and the stick has later been used for a different purpose, probably as an amulet for protection against some evil. Sides (b) and (c) contain well-known formulae for that purpose. The *sator-arepo* palindrome, which can be read in four directions when written as a word-square, can be found in two other inscriptions from Bryggen (see N636 and N640 in Seim's article). We notice that the palindrome is slightly disturbed by the spelling *tenet* instead of *tenet* of the central word. This reflects contemporary Norse pronunciation of Latin: a *t* at the end of an unstressed final syllable was pronounced as a fricative.

The participle forms in the Latin formula which follows (*portantibus* 'carrying', *habentibus* 'having') probably refer to whoever carries or has the amulet. There is perhaps more than a chance similarity between this formula and the

nonsense (?) formula which ends one of the heathen Old Norse magical inscriptions from Bryggen (B257). After a lengthy metrical passage in Old Norse (with Eddic echoes), which is intended to inflict various evils on some girl unless she gives the rune-carver her love, the inscription ends in the formula: *beirist:rubus:rabus:ep:arantabus:laus:abus:rosa:gaua?<--->*. A comparison suggests that part of this may be a corruption of the "pax portantibus" formula of the present inscription:

pax portantibus salus abentibus  
... rubus rabus ep arantabus ...

Part of the formula also occurs in an unpublished inscription on an amulet from Lom, Norway: (...) *pax portan,dis salus* (read by Aslak Liestøl). The form *portandis* (literally, 'for those who should be carried') is probably a corruption of *portantibus*. The Lom inscription also contains the names of the four Evangelists.

At the end of side (b) and the beginning of side (c), between quincunxes and with similar marks between the runes, we find the AGLA formula, well known from many runic inscriptions and other magical contexts. It is assumed to be an abbreviation of a Hebrew sentence, *Attah gibbor leolam Adonai* 'You are strong in eternity, Lord', and was ascribed protective power, as were the names of the four Evangelists which end the inscription.

### B593 (ROSENKRANTZGATE)

This is a wooden amulet, 57 × 7–10 × 6–10 mm, probably carried on a string through a hole in one end. The amulet is worn down along the edges, which indicates that it has been worn for a long time.

(a) + g e s s u k a m t s o g e s s u k a e

(b) p a g i s s u n a r n u i i +

(c) s u n a i f a n u u i i f u i +

(d) u i p æ l k i n e n e a l m a t e æ s s i

It is hard to find any meaning in this inscription. In some cases amulets are covered in runes which are obviously not intended to make any sense, the runes themselves being ascribed some function. However, in this case the syllabic structure in conjunction with the repetition of certain sequences indicates that some text is intended, unintentionally or intentionally corrupted. I have no coherent interpretation to propose, but some possibilities deserve to be mentioned.

We may note that the sequence *nuii* on side (b) (also *nuuii* on side (c)) is found in another difficult inscription, B596 below. B596 also contains corrupted versions of some of the names of the *Seven Sleepers*, known from the *Legenda Aurea* (see N637 in Seim's article) and it may not be too imaginative to read fragments of these names in the present inscription. N637, an amulet with a hole similar to the present one, contains *inter alia* the name of Maximianus in the form *masifianesus*, where *m* may have become *f* by a mistake in the copying of a runic original. The sequence *sunai* beginning side (c) in the



present inscription reads *finanus* backwards and continuing to read from right to left we also find *makus* on side (a), reminiscent of *Malkus*, another of the *septem dormientes*. If these connections are more than accidental, they suggest that the inscription may be a careless copy of a text containing some of these names written from right to left. Other inscriptions bear witness to the practice of copying texts unintelligible to the rune-carver for magical purposes, eg N632 in Seim's article. The *Seven Sleepers* were assumed to be able to cure insomnia and fever.

#### B594 (ROSENKRANTZGATE)

BRM 76/6195

This inscription, too, was probably worn as an amulet. It is carved on a smoothened wooden stick, 133 × 15 × 8 mm, with a hole through one end. The runes are carved on the two broad sides.

(a) † gordin:kordan:inkorþar

(b) u æ l k a k r

(a) can be recognized as a variant of a formula which is sometimes used on protective amulets. One example is an inscription on a convoluted leaden plate found in a church-yard in Odense, Denmark which among other formulae contains the sequence + *khorda* · + *inkhorda* + *khordai*. (Cf Moltke 1976:395.) The origin is uncertain.

I have no interpretation to offer for side (b).

#### B596 (ROSENKRANTZGATE)

Wooden stick, 144 × 14-15 × 8-9 mm, inscribed on all six sides, ie, including the ends.

(a) p i s i e l a p r i u d t r o t e s l a m æ d u x : i x t l u t r p i :  
 1 5 10 15 20 25 30  
 n a a l  
 35

(b) m a u k r s · k k m a æ s a m i a n u s · m a n m a r t i l i i t n u s  
 40 45 50 55 60 65 70  
 m u i n t t t l o i l u i i  
 75 80 85

(c) o k ? ? ? ? k p æ d i r o g e t o m a n e d e o i m e o s  
 90 95 100 105 110  
 k o n s o m a t m æ s t n a a l  
 115 120 125 130

(d) t i u n e t r e e e r o f r a e o h n s s i k u a t o i h m a r k u s  
 135 140 145 150 155 160 165  
 t l h f a s o a f a n s s  
 170 175

(e) n a a l  
 180

(f) n a a l

The text is much corrupted and appears to have been copied by someone who has understood little or nothing of his original (which, of course, may also have been corrupted). This is indicated by the grave mistakes in the passages that can be interpreted with reasonable certainty. Least open to doubt is the sequence R115-R126 on side (c), which must read *consummatum est*, 'It is finished'. Christ's words on the cross were much used in Christian magic. One example is a long Icelandic formula from the 16th century (Lindquist 1921,24), meant to be "carried in all kinds of danger, from water, sea, and weapons, and to be read just before one sees one's enemies". In the middle it contains the passage, "Helio, Heloy, Lamasabactanj, Consummatum est" (Is it possible that fragments of these words hide behind R18-R21 and R79-R85?). The words *consummatum est* also occur in formulae for stemming blood.

The sequence R95-R114 just preceding *consummatum est* is probably a corruption of "Dirige, Domine, Deus meus" 'Govern, O Lord, my God'. Runic i | (R110) is easily confused with s l.

Side (b) contains some of the names of the Seven Sleepers, cf B593 above, and N637 in Seim's article. The *Legenda Aurea* gives the seven names as follows: *Dionysius*, *Johannes*, *Serapion*, *Malchus*, *Maximianus*, *Constantinus*, *Marcianus*. The Norse version of the legend in AM 623 4° has the last name in the form *Martinianus*, and this must be the reading of R60-R71 (*martiliitnus*) on side (b). l for n (R65) and t for a (R68) is readily explained if we assume a tendency on the part of the rune-carver to let cross-strokes depart from the top rather than the middle of the main stave, thus obliterating the distinction between l † and n †, and between t † and a †. Having thus identified *Martini(i)anus*, we may safely assume that R46-R56 (*maæsamianus*) contain the name of another of the seven: *Maximianus*. It is unclear whether the preceding sequence (R38-R43) *maukrs* should be considered a corruption of *Marcus* (the evangelist) or *Malchus* (another of the Seven Sleepers). The name *Marcus* occurs on side (d) (R160-R165).

The reading *martiniianus* on side (b) suggests that other l's and t's in the inscription should be replaced with n's and a's. If that is done in the sequence R25-R33 on side (a) (*ixtlutrpi*), we obtain *ixanuarpi*, which can be interpreted as *I(esus) X(ristus)*, *hann varði* 'Jesus Christ, may he guard (it)'.

The same kind of replacement in the sequence R82-R85 *luii* yields *nuii*, a sequence which also occurs in B593 above (but for which I have no interpretation).

The beginning of side (d), R131-R154, may be read as the Old Norse sentence *Tiu nætr eru frá Jónsvöku* 'It is ten nights since St John's vigil', in which case it indicates the tenth day after June 23rd, ie July 3rd.



On the whole, however, no coherent interpretation of the inscription seems possible in the absence of parallel texts. Still, the interpretable parts suggest that this inscription, too, has been carried as protection against some evil.

### B598

Broken wooden stick,  $82 \times 9 \times 5$  mm, inscribed on the two broad sides. Only part of the inscription is preserved, the end part being lost with the missing fragment of the stick.

(a)  $\hat{d}\hat{u}m \cdot d\hat{a}s : k\hat{a}r\hat{u}s \cdot \hat{e}r\hat{i}s : d\hat{a}r\hat{e} : d\hat{i}s$

(b)  $r\hat{e}s :$

This can be identified as the beginning of a hexameter verse preserved in a British Museum codex, BM Cott Jul A VII:

"Dum das, carus eris", 'When you give, you are dear', is registered in Hans Walther: *Alphabetisches Verzeichnis der Versanfänge Mittellateinischer Dichtungen*. Unfortunately it turns out that the reference given by Walther is incorrect, since the page referred to by him does not contain the verse. As a consequence it has not yet been possible for me to study the entire text of the verse; hence I will postpone further comment on the inscription.

### B601

Piece of wood with traces of decoration,  $176 \times 30 \times 7$  mm. The runes are carved on a slightly raised surface along one edge.

$g\hat{l}a\hat{r}i\hat{a}i\hat{n}e\hat{k}s\hat{a}l\hat{s}i\hat{s}d\hat{e}o$

Normalised:

Gloria in excelsis Deo

The omission of a cross-stroke yields  $a \downarrow$  instead of  $o \downarrow$  in *gloria*.

### B611 (ROSENKRANTZGATE)

BRM 76/6197

Broken stick,  $181 \times 15-17 \times 8$  mm.

$a\hat{u}e\hat{m}a\hat{i}$

This seems to be an interrupted inscription. The rune-carver was about to write *auemaria* 'Ave Maria', but was interrupted while carving the *r*-rune, the completed vertical stave accidentally forming an *i*-rune.

'Ave Maria', or just 'Ave', are very common texts among the Bryggen inscriptions, cf 110/1641 below.

### B616 (ROSENKRANTZGATE)

Flat wooden stick,  $136 \times 2 \times 5-6$  mm.

(a)  $f\hat{a}k : m\hat{e}i\hat{t} \hat{t}(1)u : p\hat{e}r\hat{a}r\hat{e}t\hat{e}$   
1 5 10 15  
n

(b)  $n\hat{o}n : u\hat{e} : r\hat{e}$   
20

Because of a missing chip on side (a) only the tops of R5 and R6 are visible, plus traces of a dot in R5. This makes the reading *e* of R5 fairly certain, whereas R6 may be *i*, *e*, *a*, or *n*. The small stave on R7 which makes it look like a bind-rune *tl* may be accidental.

A possible reading would be: (a) *fac me (v)ituperare te* 'make me reproach you', (b) *non vere* 'not true'. I have no textual parallels or further interpretation to offer at present.

### 110/373 (FINNEGÅRDEN)

=(B619)

Wooden stick with a hole through one end,  $118 \times 10 \times 8$  mm, now in two pieces. Five sides, all inscribed with runes. One of the sides is only 3-4 mm broad and the runes are almost illegible in some places.

(a)  $i\hat{m}a\hat{n}u\hat{e}l\hat{s}\hat{a}b\hat{a}o\hat{t}\hat{a}d\hat{o}n\hat{a}i\hat{i}f\hat{o}n\hat{s}e\hat{t}o\hat{r}i\hat{g}o\hat{b}$   
 $o\hat{n}i\hat{s}p\hat{a}r\hat{a}c\hat{l}i\hat{t}u\hat{s}a\hat{c}m\hat{i}t\hat{i}a\hat{r}$   
e

(b)  $i\hat{n}m\hat{e}n\hat{s}u\hat{s}p\hat{a}t\hat{e}r?n\hat{m}e\hat{n}s\hat{u}s\hat{f}i\hat{l}i\hat{u}s\hat{i}n\hat{m}e\hat{n}s\hat{u}s$

(c)  $s\hat{p}i\hat{r}i\hat{t}u\hat{s}s\hat{a}n\hat{c}t\hat{u}s \dots$

(d)  $\dots o\hat{s}\hat{k}\hat{a}m\hat{i}i\hat{i}i\hat{s}u\hat{c}l??t? \hat{a}\hat{k}\hat{u}\hat{e}\hat{a}\hat{p}i\hat{r}u\hat{i}t$   
 $o\hat{c}u\hat{l}i\hat{s}c\hat{a}c\hat{i}sm\hat{i}?c\hat{l}u\hat{a}o\hat{c}u\hat{l}i\hat{s}$   
t

(e)  $i\hat{s}t\hat{i}u\hat{s}h\hat{o}m<--->c\hat{u}m\hat{t}u\hat{a}m\hat{i}s\hat{e}r\hat{i}c\hat{o}r\hat{d}i\hat{a}$   
 $i\hat{s}m\hat{s}s\hat{k}i\hat{u}\hat{o}\hat{k}\hat{t}i\hat{r}$   
e k

Normalised:

(a) Emanuel, Sabaoth, Adonai; fons et origo boni, paraclitus ac mediator

(b) Immensus pater, immensus filius, immensus

(c) spiritus sanctus.

(d) <---> Qui aperuit oculos caeci <---> oculis

(e) istius hom(inis) cum tua misericordia. <--->



Translation:

Emanuel, Sabaoth, Adonai; Source and Origin of Goodness, Comforter and Mediator. Immense Father, Immense Son, Immense Holy Ghost. The One who opened the eyes of the blind <---> the eyes of that man with Thy mercy.

The text on side (a) is taken from the sequence *Alma Chorus Domini*, which mostly consists of an enumeration of names for God. The various names for God were assumed to give an amulet healing or protective properties, and passages from *Alma Chorus* are found in many runic inscriptions. King Sverrir is reported to have sung *Alma Chorus* during the battle near Nordnes (close to Bergen) in 1181. *Alma Chorus* is preserved in a letter from c 1450 (Diplomatarium Norvegicum VII, 441; see also Bang 1901-02, 472 f) which apparently was carried around as an amulet. The text begins as follows:

"Alma chorus dominj dei pangat nomina summi: Messias, sother, emanuel, sabaoth, adonay est vnigenitus, via, vita, manus, homo, vsyon, principium, primogenitus, sapientia, virtus, alpha, caput, finis, qui filius vocitatur, et esto fons et origo boni, paraclitus ac mediator, agnus, ouis, (...)"

*Paraclitus* and *Mediator* refer to the Holy Ghost.

The text on sides (b)-(e) occurs with small variations as parts of known formulae against eye-illness. One example is a long (more than 200 words) text "ad oculos" from Denmark, dating from c 1350 (AM 187 8<sup>vo</sup> 50, cf Ohrt 1917, 220 f), which contains the following passage:

"(...) Qui aperuit oculos ceci nati per sanctam misericordiam suam, oculos istius famuli dei N. illuminare dignetur, amen! Increatus pater, increatus filius, increatus spiritus sanctus. In mensus pater, jn men<sus> filius, in mensus spiritus sanctus. Eternus pater, eternus filius, eternus spiritus sanctus. (...)"

It seems clear that the stick has been worn as an amulet on a string by someone with an eye-illness.

110/1641 (FINNEGÅRDEN)

Fragment of flat wooden stick, 105 × 20 × 7 mm. The runes are carefully carved with double lines and dots between the lines. Circles indicate dotted runes. There are runes on both sides; the runes on side (b) are upside down in relation to the runes on side (a).

(a) a ; d o m i n u s t e

(b) b e n e d i c t u s ;

These are two fragments of the Ave Maria, of which parts occur in many inscriptions from Bryggen. The entire prayer, carved with the same type of runes as here, is found in an inscription from Gullskoen (see N617 in Seim's article). The present inscription probably also contained the entire prayer. The full text is as follows, with the preserved fragments italicised:

"Ave Maria, gratia plena. Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui. Amen."

Translation:

'Hail, Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with Thee. Blessed art Thou among women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb. Amen.'

REFERENCES

- Bang, A Chr 1901-02 *Norske Hexeformularer og Magiske Opskrifter*. Kristiania  
Lindquist, N, 1921 (ed) *En isländsk svartkonstbok från 1500-talet*. Uppsala  
Moltke, E, 1976 *Runerne i Danmark og deres oprindelse*. Copenhagen  
Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer (NIyR) I-V, 1941-60, Olsen, M(ed). Oslo  
Ohrt, F, 1917 *Danmarks trylleformler I-II*. Copenhagen and Kristiania



## A Review of the Runic Material

BY KARIN FJELLHAMMER SEIM

"On the site of Bugården we dug for weeks in thick deposits of twigs and wood-chips and bits of wood of all shapes and sizes. There were shoes and pottery and other more or less recognisable objects in abundance and we did not feel obliged to investigate the masses of wood-chips particularly closely. It was discovered, however, that they contained a new and exclusive group of finds, leading us into the distant, secretive world of runes. The first discovery of a stick inscribed with runes was greeted with great enthusiasm... Excitement was still high when we had increased the collection with at least three more inscriptions after only a couple of days."

This is how Asbjørn E Herteig (1969, 59f) describes the first finds with runes which came to light during the excavations at Bryggen in 1957. The excitement was understandable – in the course of a few days the number of known runic inscriptions from the Bergen area had almost doubled. Although some 500 medieval runic inscriptions were known at that time from the whole country, the majority (c 370) were connected in some way with churches, usually cut or scratched into the woodwork. The deposits of wood-chips on the site of Bugården on the other hand had no such ecclesiastical associations and in contrast to most of the church inscriptions and in fact to the vast majority of the medieval runic inscriptions found anywhere in Norway, these new finds were from an urban environment. The perspectives which were revealed were indeed exciting.

It is no secret that the leader of the excavations valued this new group of finds extra highly in both senses of the word – runic inscriptions were the only finds from Bryggen which qualified for *bakhshish*. Herteig writes that a reward of five crowns per inscription was introduced in order to sharpen the powers of observation among the diggers, a sum which at that time almost equalled a day's wages for the young men working on the excavations as an alternative to military service.

Subsequent excavations of a more limited character in other parts of the Bryggen area have increased the total number of inscriptions from Bryggen to approximately 650, and the urban excavations in Oslo, Tønsberg and Trondheim have produced well over 100 medieval inscriptions of the same type as those from Bergen. If we include just the collection of inscriptions from Bergen, the Norwegian corpus of later runes has more than doubled. When the fifth volume of *Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer* (Later Runic Inscriptions from Norway, referred to hereafter by the usual abbreviation NIyR) appeared in 1960, too soon for any of the finds from Bryggen to be included, the latest entry was N602. The published material comprised c 100 Viking inscriptions (c AD 800–1050) and c 500 from later than c 1050. The four towns

of Oslo, Tønsberg, Bergen and Trondheim were represented with 25 inscriptions in all, excluding the 40 from the cathedral in Trondheim. Bergen had produced only nine.

One of the Bergen inscriptions was quite different from the later finds from Bryggen, both geographically and in content. It was carved on two fragments of a marble grave-stone, one of which was in fact from the Bergenhus area, immediately north-west of the main excavation site, but the other fragment was dug up on Strandsiden, the opposite side of the harbour. The remaining eight finds were all from the Bryggen side of the harbour: three from the Bergenhus area, three from the Kjøpmannstuen site to the south of the main excavation area, one from the site of the Bratten tenement further south again, while the last inscription is only recorded as having been found "at Bryggen". These eight inscriptions which were known previously, plus the finds from the smaller sites which have been excavated later, demonstrate that runic inscriptions can be found anywhere on the Bryggen side of the harbour.

Two of the eight inscriptions were on objects of bone or antler and six either on wooden objects or on sticks which had been neatly shaped. They are therefore no different from the c 650 more recent finds which for the most part are on slips of wood cut especially for this purpose or else on wooden objects. Only a very few are on bone, antler, leather (shoes) or pottery, or in one case on stone. Nor do the previous finds differ in content from the more recent discoveries. All nine of the earlier finds are in Old Norse.

The over 650 new finds include texts in both Latin and Old Norse. There are c 50 Latin inscriptions, ranging from texts written with the most correct literary orthography through texts strongly reflecting contemporary Latin pronunciation to a borderland of very confused inscriptions where the original Latin can perhaps just be detected at some distant point in time as the text has been handed down. A few finds have inscriptions in both Latin and Old Norse and one (N627) is in Greek, while Greek words are occasionally found in the Latin texts.

The rest of the material does not, however, simply fall into the category of *Norse* inscriptions. In many cases the form of the language cannot be determined. Some inscriptions consist only of one or two signs. Others are more extensive but do not make much sense: they may have been passed on in a fragmentary state or they may contain unclear or damaged runes, or perhaps have runic signs which are clear and easy to recognise but which make meaningless syllables or long rows of only consonants. A third group, admittedly small, consists of uncertain inscriptions, and are recorded as having "runelike signs". Whether the original intention was to cut runes or just to make a few scratches is difficult to say. It is impossible to draw a definite line but I would estimate that over a third of the material defies interpretation.

So far only the majority of the Latin inscriptions, plus the inscription in Greek, have been published in NIyR (1980).

Another group containing some 120 inscriptions concerning trade or commerce have been studied by Dr philos Ingrid Sanness Johnsen and are now in press. These inscriptions include letters about trade, accounts, a couple of notes which have been enclosed with goods and by far the largest group, comprising 113 items, labels indicating ownership which had been attached to various articles and goods. This last group are stereotypes of the form "NN owns", some with just a personal name but which can be identified as labels from their shape. Most of the labels have a hole or notch cut into the piece



of wood so that they could be tied or fixed to the articles. Five of them even indicate which goods were involved: yarn, thread, wood and, in two instances, a sack. Runic inscriptions which indicate ownership have been known previously but always carved directly on the article involved. There are also examples of these at Bryggen, such as the walrus-skull with the text "Johan owns" and a part of a key marked "Gyrd owns the key". This group has not been included with the mercantile inscriptions, since the text does not really refer to a commercial transaction. The other labels, as well as the rest of the mercantile inscriptions, clearly show that merchants knew and used runes in their daily work and that the writing equipment of the time was a knife and a fillet of wood.

That other groups in society, which we know would otherwise use parchment and quill-pen and Latin characters, could also resort to runes cut with a knife can be seen from the Latin inscriptions with correct literary orthography, which presupposes a certain amount of bookish learning in the writer. These were perhaps members of the clergy. We have at any rate no knowledge of any centres of learning other than those concerned with the training of priests and we certainly know nothing of the way in which runic script was taught. Yet there are inscriptions from Bryggen which probably derive from some educational situation. Whether this was formalised in any way is unknown, but we do know that both merchants and to some extent also the clergy could understand runes. This latter group do not only give themselves away through inscriptions written in Latin but also through Norse texts such as "God who knows all things, bless Sigurd the priest who owns me" or "Sira Jon sends Gunnar Hvit God's and his own greeting" (the title *Sira* was used first and foremost for members of the clergy).

The latter inscription is the opening phrase of a letter. We can recognise the formula from surviving letters written in Norse on parchment and this is not the only find with this standard phrase. It also occurs on two of the mercantile inscriptions and on a letter written by Sigurd Lavard, son of King Sverri. That such a person of rank could master runes is hardly surprising: we already had an inscription (N170) carved on the wall of a Norwegian stave-church by Sigurd, son of Earl Erling and half-brother of King Magnus, Sverri's main contender to the Norwegian throne. Other leading men in the Civil War period around 1200 may also have been responsible for an inscription in runes from Bryggen, unless it had been carved by a person or persons unknown in order to ridicule those mentioned: "Jon *silki fuð* owns me and Guthorm *fuð-sleikir* carved me and Jon *fuðkúla* reads me". If we remove the syllable *fuð* (which are the first three signs in the futhark, but which is also used to denote the female pudenda) from the bynames, we are left with the names of three men who are also mentioned elsewhere, two of them in sagas and the third one in a runic inscription on a gravestone from Ringerike in E Norway. They may well have been contemporary and have been together in Bergen at some time.

We can say very little about the other people who cut the inscriptions found at Bryggen. Apart from the signatories of letters and the texts denoting ownership, names are seldom mentioned and on the few occasions they do occur, they can tell us very little when all they simply say is "Hedin carved runes" or "Svein cut these runes and asked Lucia to read them". At least the latter example indicates that women were also capable of understanding runes, otherwise such inscriptions would be meaningless. Further examples involving females are: "Thora, tell me ...", "God bless you, Rannveig" and one of the

letters which is addressed to a woman. Some inscriptions may actually have been cut by women, particularly such labels as "Lucia Grim's daughter owns" and "Solveig owns this thread" and a bone spoon with "Sigrid owns me" cut into the handle. According to Aslak Liestøl's interpretation the following two inscriptions are also directed at women: "The Fana belt augmented your beauty" (Fana is a region in Bergen) and "Such as you are, I would like mine to be".

It is difficult to come any closer than this in placing the writers of the runes in particular social groups. It is not known how widespread the knowledge of runes was among the social groups which are mentioned, nor how far down the social scale this knowledge went, but it certainly seems that among those – of either sex – engaged in trade, knowledge of runes was quite widespread. This is shown particularly by the labels.

I have so far dealt briefly with the mercantile inscriptions and have given a few interesting examples from the rest of the material written in Old Norse. Before I go on to my main theme, the inscriptions written in Latin, let us look at some of the major categories among the inscriptions which are not of a mercantile character.

There is a relatively large group which reflects human relationships on a private level, especially friendship and love, including some of a more erotic nature. A couple of fairly innocent examples have already been given; others are rather less discreet: "Ingeborg made love with me when I was in Stavanger" and "The smith lay with Vigdis ...". Some take the form of an exhortation: "Make love with me, I love you, Gunnhild. Kiss me, I know you well".

Another group invokes the powers that can intervene in life and death and are believed to help man obtain his ends. These ends, however, often involve a relationship of the same "private" nature as expressed in the first group, so the categories are not totally discrete. As an example I have chosen a lengthy but incomplete incantation which was probably intended to conjure up love: "I cut runes for penitence, I cut runes for salvation. Once against the elves, twice against the trolls, thrice against the evil spirits ... I send you the she-wolf's lust and unendurable anguish(?). May unbearable anguish and *iolun's* (?) wretchedness pour down upon you. You shall never sit, you shall never sleep ... Love me as your very self ...".

The whole formula reminds us of some of the Eddic verse, both in its metrical arrangement and in its vocabulary and content. In addition to the section quoted, there is a reference to a "*malicious valkyria*", a creature known in Norse mythology, a handmaiden of the god Odin. Two other inscriptions actually mention pagan gods. One is a lengthy exhortation to Odin with the aim of revealing the identity of a thief. The chief of the heathen gods has apparently here joined the ranks of devils who can be appealed to in such cases. The purpose of the other inscription which is in verse is more uncertain: "Hail to you and be of good cheer! May Thor receive you, may Odin own you!" This may be a quotation from an otherwise unknown poem of the Eddic type. It is less likely that a text dating from the end of the twelfth century would actually be a sincere expression of heathendom, a genuine intercession to these gods for the soul of the departed. On the other hand, if Thor and Odin have been transferred to the category of devils in the Christian meaning, as we know they were in the Middle Ages, then the text would appear to be self-contradictory.

The next example is less ambiguous in its magical intention, being quite devoid of any kind of intention: "May Imi heat the stone so the smoke from the hearth shall stifle. Never shall the meat be cooked! Away with the heat and let



in the cold! May Imi heat the stone". The inscription is in metre. Who or what Imi is, we do not know for sure, but Aslak Liestøl assumed it could be a kitchen-sprite associated with cooking or responsible for the fire.

We also encounter pious Christian appeals. One inscription begins with no less than nine saint's-names and continues: "All holy men, watch over me night and day, my life and my soul. God keep me and bless me! ...". This is not the only Christian inscription in Old Norse, but this type of religious inscription is usually in Latin, where we also encounter meaningless magical formulae such as the palindromic *sator-arepo* type. A Norse equivalent, admittedly not a palindrome, was found at Bryggen. It is a variation of the *mistill-pistill-kistill* formula, known from rune-stones in both Sweden and Denmark, from stave-churches and from the Icelandic *Bósa saga*.

Instead of dividing the material according to content (trade and commerce, private life and relationships, religion/magic), it is also possible to divide it into prose, comprising the majority of texts, and verse consisting of c 20 inscriptions in metre, many of which are very fragmentary. The latter category includes inscriptions of varying subject matter, except that there are no mercantile texts in metric form – naturally enough. The two major Norse verse-forms are both represented, the relatively simple Eddic type and the more complex scaldic verse. Very little metrical verse from this period was known from Norway and it was therefore thought that Iceland was the only place where the people had retained a feeling for and a knowledge of this versification in the Middle Ages. It seems that this assumption must now be revised.

The three inscriptions in verse mentioned earlier are all of the simple Eddic form. A greater part, but by no means all, of the inscriptions written in the scaldic verse-form are erotic. Some are succinct and vulgar: "Foul is the one who fills the hole with drink" (the word used here can denote either anus or vulva). Others are longer, more refined and artistic, such as one of the complete strophes found at Bryggen which have been composed in court metre (*dróttkvætt*), the first part of which when translated into prose says: "For me love turned early towards the beautiful dangerous woman". A modern translation cannot do justice to a verse composed in court metre, either to the rich vocabulary or to the artistic form. Here the whole machinery of rhymes and kennings has been brought into play, as it should be in such compositions "of royal measure" which are best known in some extant examples of eulogistic verse to princes. The inscription ends with the Latin quotation from Virgil: "*Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori*" ("Love conquers all, let us yield to love").

Very little Norse love-poetry has survived from the Middle Ages. Much of the scaldic verse which is found in the various manuscripts consists of eulogies to princes and other great men and usually takes war and conquest as the main themes. This verse has survived and has been written down because it formed important source-material for the medieval Icelandic historians. Verse of a less "official" nature had a poorer chance of surviving for posterity, but that scaldic poets could also write about women and love can be seen both from occasional verses in the Sagas of the Kings and from numerous verses in some of the sagas dealing with Icelanders, where it forms a central theme. Even though perhaps not all this love poetry belongs to that period or was even composed by the scalds to whom it is attributed in the sagas, we can at least see that verse of this nature was not entirely unknown in the Norse language. At Bryggen it seems that love was a central theme (cf also the Latin

inscription N603). We even meet illicit love referred to quite openly: "Thus do I love a man's wife that even fire seems cold to me". We find the same opening phrase in another inscription, but it continues differently and the text is both longer and rather more difficult to understand. Part of it reads: "Thus do I love a man's wife ... we hold such a love for each other that the world is rent asunder ...". The versification is simpler here than in most scaldic verse; perhaps the poet felt so involved in the subject matter that the desire for correct versification took second place. Or maybe it was not a shattering personal experience at all, but some foreign influence, some conception of what fashionable poetry should be dealing with which lies behind this text, with the Provençal troubadour's declaration of love to married women as the model. Some scholars think that a great deal of the Norse love poetry which has survived in Iceland is in fact influenced by Provençal and French literature. Exactly what the background of the two inscriptions from Bryggen was is not easy to tell, but they cannot be called typical scaldic poetry such as we know it.

This description, however, can certainly be applied to the only Old Norse inscription in verse for which a direct parallel is known. It was originally composed not *for* a prince, but *by* one, if we understand the Icelandic saga correctly here. The inscription contains a fragment of verse in court measure supposedly composed by the Norwegian king Harald Hardradi (the Stern), who has a reputation in the historical tradition of Iceland both as a connoisseur of scaldic verse and as one who composed it. The fragment concerns his place of birth: "I was born where the men of the Uplands tautened their bow-strings ...".

There is a group of runic inscriptions in which the futhark or runic "alphabet" is reproduced. The Bryggen finds include c 60 futharks, either complete or fragmentary. Some contain more than just the futhark, but a great number simply have the row of sixteen runes one or more times. One of the futhark inscriptions carved on a piece of wood bears testimony of an interest in and knowledge of runic writing far beyond that which we would believe was usual. In addition to an incomprehensible sequence of consonants written with the usual Norwegian rune signs there are sections of the futhark written in Hålsinge runes, a sort of runic shorthand where the vertical strokes are mostly omitted and which was in use in parts of Sweden in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and a sequence of remarkable "runes" with double strokes reminiscent of Anglo-Saxon runes which had gone out of regular use probably in the tenth century. Knowledge of Anglo-Saxon runes was kept alive by monks with an interest in antiquarian matters and they reappear in both English and Continental manuscripts, often in association with material dealing with the history of alphabets, cryptograms and other exotic forms of writing, including the Scandinavian runes. These manuscripts, however, never include Hålsinge runes. If the Bryggen inscription is a genuine attempt to carve Anglo-Saxon runes, in addition to the two versions of Scandinavian runes, then this may well demonstrate that learned churchmen in Bergen not only mastered the runic script in use in the town at the time for practical – and magical – purposes, but perhaps also had the same interest in the history of writing and cryptography as their counterparts elsewhere in Europe.

It is a fact that runic cryptography was known in medieval Bergen, although we cannot say for certain that it was the clerics who possessed this knowledge. Secret writing based on the row of sixteen runes is known from manu-



scripts elsewhere in Europe and from Scandinavian runic inscriptions at least from the beginning of the Viking period. The system is relatively simple. Each rune has its fixed place in the rune sequence, which is divided into three groups or *ættir*. By giving the number of the group in which a rune falls (usually numbered backwards to make the system more confusing) plus the position of the rune within its group, it is possible with just two numbers to define each rune. These two numbers can be written in various ways. At Bryggen we have several inscriptions with cryptic runes in the form of twig-runes where the *ætt*'s number and the position within the *ætt* are indicated by side-strokes to the left and right respectively of the rune-sign's main stem or stave. Thus three strokes to the left and five to the right will indicate the fifth rune in the third *ætt*, ie the *r*-rune, assuming that the *ættir* are numbered backwards. Using this basic rule it is possible to introduce many variations, such as replacing the stave or stem of the rune by a face with a forked beard, the number of whiskers to right and left indicating the rune, or by a human figure with strokes hanging from the two outstretched arms, or by fish with the appropriate number of fins on each side.

This interest in cryptic runes is indubitably one of the reasons why so many examples of the sixteen-rune futhark have survived from a time when runic script included in fact many more than sixteen runes (see below, p 20). Cryptic writing was based directly on the sixteen-rune futhark and never went beyond this even though the system of writing underwent changes. What might seem strange is that apparently only one futhark from Bryggen is clearly divided into *ættir*, but this is in fact quite in keeping with what is generally known about futhark inscriptions: a division into the three groups occurs only exceptionally.

Evidence for another form of cryptic writing which is based on the names of the runes has also been found at Bryggen. All the runes have names which are more or less ordinary words in Old Norse and which usually begin with the sound which the rune represents. It is therefore possible to denote a sequence of runes by spelling out the name of each rune in turn. From Bryggen we have a find on which the man's name *Ásmundr* has been written by spelling out the names of the seven runes: *arsolmaþrurnauþturæþ* = *ár sól maðr úr nauð Týr reið* = *Ásmundr*. A similar example is known from Trondheim where the man's name Ivar has been written on a rib-bone with the names of the four runes spelt out in full.

It has been suggested that the system of cryptic writing was one of the reasons for so many futhark inscriptions, but we cannot expect that all those who cut a futhark did it for the same reason. Nevertheless, it used to be quite usual to classify all futhark inscriptions as "magical", as indeed were almost all inscriptions which were not immediately intelligible. However, it is reasonable to believe that there can be a number of reasons and presumably more prosaic ones behind all these futhark inscriptions. We cannot entirely exclude futhark magic, but it is possible that some futhark inscriptions are evidence for a teaching situation, while others may simply be reminders, fulfilling a useful purpose in a society where writing was not as dominant in people's lives as it is today. We also know that the futhark was used in the calendar. The sixteen-rune futhark with the addition of three other rune signs functioned as Golden Numbers in the Easter tables, while the first seven runes were used as Dominical Letters. At least two of the Bryggen inscriptions contain just these seven runes, *f* - *h*, with no evidence that the object on which they were

written was broken or damaged. There seems to be no example of the Golden Letter sequence of nineteen runes.

In addition to the large group of futhark inscriptions we also have a single example of runes placed in the same order as the letters of the Roman alphabet (a,b,c,d etc). A similar alphabetic sequence has also been found in Trondheim.

## THE RUNES

Futhark inscriptions are not peculiar to the Bryggen material, nor indeed to the Middle Ages. Several examples of the older runic sequence of twenty-four runes, which was in use throughout the whole of the Germanic world from around the time of the birth of Christ until the Viking period, are known and always with almost the same sequence of runes. Runic script went through a number of changes involving not only the order and number of the signs but also their shape, and around AD 800 the so-called younger or later futhark consisting of sixteen runes appeared in Scandinavia, cut on objects of stone, wood and bone. Both rune-rows are known as futharks from the sound-values of the first six signs in the sequence, in exactly the same way as the word alphabet is derived from the Greek names of the first two characters in that letter sequence. The name futhark is also occasionally used for the younger rune-row, since the sound-value of the fourth rune changed from /a/ to /o/ probably during the eleventh century. Both words, however, are modern inventions, first coined by runologists in the mid-nineteenth century.

The Viking script system functioned with its sixteen symbols, yet the spoken language had more than sixteen sounds and it must have been something of a handicap that several signs had to have two or even more sound-values. The only answer was to extend the inventory of symbols again and this gradually began to happen at the end of the Viking period. Eventually the runic script system contained as many symbols as the competing Roman alphabet. The new symbols, however, were never actually added to the futhark, but there are a couple of futhark inscriptions from Bryggen where a few of the extra symbols have been added at the end.

A normal sixteen-rune futhark from Bryggen looks like this:

ƿ	ᚠ	ᚢ	ᚦ	ᚨ	ᚫ	ᚭ	ᚱ	ᚴ	ᚷ	ᚺ	ᚾ	ᛀ	ᛃ	ᛆ	ᛈ
f	u	þ	o	r	k	h	n	i	a	s	t	b	m	l	y

It has been divided into the three *ættir* with the mark which is usually used in inscriptions as a word-divider. The runic symbols have been transliterated with a Roman letter for each sign, plus the Old English letter *þ* for *th*. This is the conventional transliteration and it can be justified in that each rune's sound-value corresponded to the initial sound in the name of the rune-sign and these names are known. But it conceals the fact that as long as only these sixteen symbols existed, several runes had more than one sound-value, one corresponding to the name of the rune, plus one or more secondary values.

The signs for the consonants *k*, *t* and *b* had, in addition to the primary value denoted in the transliteration, secondary values as /g/, /d/ and /p/ respectively. The written or cut rune had no mark to show whether it was voiced or unvoiced, as can be seen from the way the man's name *Ásmundr* was written in the example quoted earlier.



With vowels the situation is more complicated, but we can say briefly that the *i*-rune had a secondary value as /e/ and the *a*-rune a secondary value as /æ/. In Viking times the *u*-rune had at least three secondary values: /y/, /o/ and /ø/, but in the medieval futhark given above, it can be seen that both /o/ and /y/ had by now got their own symbols in the rune-row, symbols which incidentally had had other sound-values previously.

What happened from the end of the Viking period onwards was that where a sign had two or more values, an attempt was made to separate these, either by adding one or two diacritical marks to the original rune-sign or by introducing a different sign. It is extremely seldom, however, that completely new rune forms appear. The three ambiguous consonant symbols and the *i*-rune were each divided: the original rune-form retained its primary value, commensurate with the name of the rune, while the secondary value was indicated by the addition of points or dots: ᚛ /d/, ᚛᚛ /g/, ᚛᚛᚛ /p/ and ᚛᚛᚛᚛ /e/. These are known as pointed or dotted runes. Later a new sign ᚫ was used to denote /p/. For the other runes with more than one sound-value some variation was adopted. Some runic signs appear in several variations during the Viking period, but we shall not go into further details here. Two variations of the *a*-rune subsequently received their own separate sound-values: ᚠ /a/ and ᚠ᚛ /æ/, while two of the *o*-rune variations, ᚢ and ᚢ᚛, became fixed as the signs for /o/ and /ø/ respectively, though both signs could also render /q/ (see next paragraph).

With this gradual reform the phonetic system of Old Norse was covered, each sign representing one sound. The only exception was the vowel /q/ which in the majority of inscriptions is rendered in the same way as either /o/ or /ø/. In practice, however, the addition of dots or points is not consistent in the Bryggen material. Even in fairly late inscriptions the undotted *k*-rune can be used for /g/, the undotted *t*-rune for /d/, etc, sometimes consistently, sometimes sporadically. Whether this is due to forgetfulness or whether it is a hangover from an earlier script tradition is an open question. Considering the number of futharks with only sixteen runes which have been found, it is reasonable to assume that the earlier script tradition retained its place as the basic system and that the new signs were optional and not obligatory. On the other hand it is only the dotting of signs which is omitted – all the other new signs derived from variations are consistently used in the inscriptions where dotted runes are lacking (there is one possible exception, N614, but this can be read in various ways). This may support the argument that it is due to carelessness, since a dot can easily be forgotten when writing quickly, but dots are also sometimes missing on inscriptions which have been carefully cut and are otherwise correct. Another possibility is that the dot, a mere prick with the point of the knife, could easily disappear in the course of time and some of the inscriptions are in such bad condition that it is difficult to decide whether a rune is dotted or not.

There are a couple of other irregularities or archaic phonetic features which are worth mentioning here. A small number of inscriptions from Bergen, for example N614, has the *u*-rune for /o/ and the same phenomenon has been noticed on a couple of inscriptions found in recent excavations in Trondheim and also on some from Greenland. We have also seen how the rune-name *Týr* which was used in the *Ásmundr* inscription had been spelt with a *u*-rune for the /y/, in spite of the fact that in the eleventh century the futhark already contained both a separate *o*-rune and a *y*-rune. It was therefore not even necessary to look beyond the basic futhark to find signs for /o/ and /y/.

A couple of labels or ownership inscriptions from Bryggen use the earlier variation of the *a*-rune, ᚠ, to represent /a/, whereas this sign in the Middle Ages was used for /æ/. These inscriptions have no word with the vowel /æ/, so we are unable to see how it would have been written or distinguished in this case. Moreover, in one of the futhark inscriptions ᚠ is used in the position of *a*. One of the ownership inscriptions, however, has other features which indicate a source outside the Norwegian area, perhaps Gotland, and so there may be regional variations in Scandinavia which are reflected in this inscription. What conclusions can be drawn from the other inscriptions, however, is less certain. To ascribe all deviations to foreign hands in Bergen is perhaps treating the problem a little too lightly, considering the other archaisms present.

As well as new signs to cover the phonetic system of Old Norse, we also find in the medieval inscriptions rune equivalents of the letters *c*, *q*, *w*, *x*, and *z* in the Roman alphabet, but there has clearly been very little agreement either on the need for special signs or on the content and form of the sign.

A separate *q*-rune occurs extremely rarely in rune material anywhere, usually the *k*-rune is used for the Roman letter *q*, even in Latin inscriptions. In the Bryggen material there are, moreover, two or three modifications of the *k*-rune for denoting *q*.

In the Old Norse manuscripts the Roman letter *z* is used for /ts/ or just /s/, and *c* is often used for /k/. In the runic inscriptions in Old Norse the *c*-rune never represents /k/, while the sequence *t*-rune + *s*-rune alternates with a separate *z*-rune for denoting /ts/. At Bryggen the sign for *z* is the same as that used for *c* in Latin texts and names. This sign, ᚠ, with slight variations, was originally an alternative *s*-rune and is still found occasionally used for /s/ at Bryggen. Once again, we find two variations of the same sign being divided into two signs each with its own sound-value. The short *s*-rune, ᚠ, is used in the Norwegian area to denote the Roman letter *s* and the long sign, ᚠ᚛, corresponds to *z* or *c*, but in Danish medieval runes it is the exact opposite and one Latin inscription from Bryggen, N632, follows in fact the Danish system.

In the Latin inscriptions from Bryggen the letter *c* is sometimes represented by the *s*-rune in front of front vowels and by the *k*-rune in other positions. This may reflect an assumed difference in the pronunciation of *c* depending on the following sound. A possibly alternative pronunciation [ts] when followed by a front vowel may be the reason why the same rune is used for both *z* (= *ts*) and *c*. It does seem that the special *c*-rune is used more consistently before front vowels and that *c* in other positions (pronounced [k]) is more often written with the *k*-rune, but this is not an absolute rule.

A special *x*-rune seems to occur only once in the Bryggen material, in the inscription where the runes are arranged alphabetically. The last sign which has survived in this inscription is a modified *h*-rune with short horizontal lines at the ends of the crossed staves. Another Norwegian inscription with the runes in alphabetical order has an unmodified *h*-rune in both the *h* and the *x* positions. It must be the similarity between the Roman letter and the rune form which lies behind this. In the Latin inscriptions from Bryggen we find neither the modified nor the unmodified *h*-rune used directly for *x*. On one inscription *x* is denoted by ᚠ᚛ (= *hs/xs*?), elsewhere it appears as ᚠ, ᚠ᚛ (= *cs*) or ᚠ᚛᚛ (= *ks*) and except for ᚠ all these may be an attempt at phonetic spelling.

Equivalents of *c*, *q*, *x* and *z* are found in the several alphabetical rune sequences in Icelandic manuscripts, usually added in the margin or in other gaps in post-medieval times. The forms are sometimes very different from the forms



at Bryggen or other places in Norway. Runic equivalents for the Roman letter form *w*, however, are totally lacking in these manuscripts and are in fact more or less absent in runic script generally. As a matter of fact, medieval Latin script did not use the letter forms *u* and *v* in the same way as in modern script, ie as two different signs (with different sound values). The letter forms *u*, *v* and *w* were used indiscriminately for both the vowel [u] and the consonant [v], and *w* sometimes also for the sequence [vu]. Consequently the runic form [v], conventionally transcribed as *u*, in fact corresponds to both *u* and *v* (and *w*). Apart from an inscription from Bryggen (N632), which also has the Danish variation for differentiating *s* and *c*, I know only of some Danish inscriptions in which the rune-carver uses both a normal *u*-rune and a runic form that must be interpreted as an equivalent of a Roman letter form *w*. The Bryggen text and one of the Danish inscriptions has the same runic form for *w*, a *u*-rune with two parallel side-strokes (see N632 below). The other Danish examples have a dotted *u*-rune for *w*, a rune form which appears sporadically in inscriptions from all over the Nordic area, including Greenland, and which varies somewhat in its sound or letter value. It occurs twice at Bryggen: in a Latin inscription (N603) it represents *ph* and in a Norse example it stands for /o/ (or perhaps /y/).

We are now able to present a complete rune alphabet for the inscriptions from Bryggen. As already mentioned, one such alphabet was found during excavation but the piece of wood has been cut at both ends so that some signs are missing both from the beginning and from the end. From what has survived it can be seen that the alphabet has had no sign for *q* or *w*. How many signs are missing from the end is not known but by supplementing it with signs found in other inscriptions in Bryggen, it has been possible to complete it. Some variations which have also been found are given, but the list is far from exhaustive:

## THE ORTHOGRAPHY

In certain respects the orthography of the runic inscriptions differs from that in the manuscripts. We have already mentioned some of the conventions used in Viking script which have survived in the Bryggen material as polyphonic signs and the medieval attempts to render in runic script the Roman letters *c*, *q*, *w*, *x* and *z*. We shall now consider some orthographic peculiarities of a different type.

In pre-Viking inscriptions written with the older or Germanic runes, it was already possible to omit the sign for the nasal consonant (/n/ and /m/) in front of a homorganic plosive. This means, for example, that the *t*-rune from the Viking period onwards not only denotes both /t/ and /d/ but can also stand for /nt/ and /nd/. This is occasionally found at Bryggen as late as the fourteenth century.

In traditional runic orthography the quantitative value of a consonant is not indicated by doubling the sign (gemination). The words *bana* and *banna* will therefore be written alike. But due to the influence of the orthography in manuscripts, double consonants do appear in carved inscriptions. Vowel length, however, is as a general rule not indicated in manuscripts or in runic inscriptions.

Division into words is indicated in one of two ways, either by a gap as in manuscripts, or by a special mark between words, usually consisting of two or more dots one above the other. In the transcription of the Latin inscriptions which follows, word divider marks of more than two dots are denoted with a standard colon. Many inscriptions, also at Bryggen, are not divided into words, while on the other hand divider marks are sometimes found between the individual syllables of a word.

From the earliest periods of runic script ligatures or bind-runes have been used in order to save space and energy, with two, or in rare cases more than two, runes written together on a common stem. The most usual bind-runes are naturally enough combinations of a rune with a side-stroke to the left and one with a side-stroke or an arc or arcs to the right, which in the majority of cases would be read in that sequence, from left to right. Other combinations do occur and there can sometimes be doubt about the order in which the runes should be read. Instead of two runes on a common stem there are also cases where the right-hand part of the rune (usually *u*, *p* or *r*) functions as the stem for another rune with side-strokes to the right. In these cases the sequence is clear.

Although an exact count of the occurrences of bind-runes has not been undertaken with the Bryggen material, I should think that bind-runes occur about as frequently as runes cut separately. There is a great difference, however, from one inscription to the next as to how often the possibilities are utilised.

In the transcriptions of the Latin inscriptions below and in publications generally, bind-runes have been separated into their individual runes but are indicated with a tie-mark over the signs.

Finally a couple of orthographic peculiarities should be mentioned which only occur in the medieval inscriptions. In those written in Old Norse we often find the *h*-rune used for a medial /g/ in certain contexts. This can be explained on phonetic grounds, as it would have been pronounced as a fricative, not as a plosive. In a frontal position, after /n/ or when doubled (/gg/), it would have been a plosive and so is always written with a *g*-rune (or *k*-rune).

In the Latin inscriptions *p* is often used for *t* in an unstressed position, indicating that it was pronounced as a fricative.

## DATING

In principle, runic inscriptions can be dated on four different grounds: content, language, rune form and find-spot. In addition it should be possible to use physical dating methods for inscriptions on organic material, such as bone and wood, but as far as I know this has not been done.

Very few runic inscriptions actually contain an exact indication of their date. In the whole of the Norwegian corpus of younger runes consisting of some 1300 inscriptions, there is only one (N179 on an iron mount from a door from Rauland in Telemark) which includes exact information about when it was cut, by referring to the feast day and the year of the king's reign. The closest we get to any indication of time in the Bryggen material is a text "Eirik cut this ... at night", which cannot be described as very helpful. If the inscription is to be dated from its content, it must be by reference to events or people. Historically known events are not mentioned in the Bryggen inscriptions, but people



known from other sources are encountered in a few texts: Gunnar Hvit, presumably the same man who was the king's treasurer in Bergen 1340–43, and Sigurd Lavard, King Sverri's son, who died in 1200 at the age of 25. Two or three other inscriptions also mention persons who are possibly identifiable and/or can be dated.

The dating of runic texts on linguistic grounds presents in practice rather large problems as the shorter the text, the fewer the diagnostic features. No firm chronology has been established for the development of the Norwegian language in the Middle Ages which would enable one to date a particular linguistic feature. Innovations which can be detected in runic inscriptions from as early as the eleventh century can be absent in texts from the early fourteenth century. Variation in the relationship between approximation to the spoken language and an attempt to conform to the written standards which have been learned, is to be expected in runic inscriptions, just as it is in manuscripts with Roman letters, depending on the writer's level of training. Regional variations in the spoken language will occur in addition to chronological variations. So far, the Bryggen inscriptions have been subjected to very little linguistic analysis.

Dating on the basis of the rune forms involves some of the same problems met with when dating on linguistic grounds: it presupposes an already established and relatively reliable set of data. If the date of some innovation, such as a dotted rune, can be established, then this will at least provide a *terminus post quem* for new inscriptions containing this rune form. Going in the opposite direction, i.e. using it as a *terminus ante quem* for inscriptions which lack this rune form, is immediately more risky, as will be obvious from what has already been said about runic script in the Middle Ages.

The *terminus post quem* for all dotted runes except the dotted *i*-rune and for the separate *ø*-rune in the Norwegian rune material prior to the more recent extensive urban excavations was somewhere around the end of the twelfth century. The earliest evidence of a dotted *i*-rune for /e/ is c 1070. This dating is based on some coin inscriptions and on fifteen "historical" inscriptions (NIyR 5,245).

For very many medieval inscriptions the possibilities of dating are exhausted with these methods, but for the Bryggen inscriptions we are in the fortunate situation of being able to date most of them archaeologically, partly supported also by physical dating methods. They were found below, in or overlying layers of burnt detritus which can be associated with historically recorded fires. Even though neither the connection between the fire-layers and the historically known fires nor the conclusions that can be drawn about the date of an inscription from its relationship with the fire-layers are without their problems, there are nevertheless greater possibilities here than perhaps anywhere else in Scandinavia for dating runic inscriptions. A detailed account of the chronology at Bryggen and the associated problems will be found in Herteig 1985. The details of the location on the site for most of the runic inscriptions and their relationship to fire-layers have now been put on computer. There has so far been no systematic analysis of the distribution of the inscriptions with regard to the various periods or any other chronological studies. The earliest inscriptions available so far on computer were found under Fire 6 and are therefore earlier than 1198, while the latest were found between Fires 3 and 2 and are therefore probably later than 1413 but earlier than 1476. The majority of the inscriptions are from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Another advantage with the Bryggen inscriptions is their large number. It is possible here to compare inscriptions which are archaeologically dated to the same period and arrive at a more detailed picture of which variations were acceptable from the point of view of both linguistics and rune forms within the same period of time. It will perhaps be possible to adjust the chronology of the rune forms and be more precise about their date when the analysis of the Bryggen inscriptions is complete. However, as most of them are from after c 1200, they will scarcely be able to contribute anything new to the problems concerning the transition from the shorter futhark to the extended runic alphabet.



## Runic Inscriptions in Latin

*A Summary of Aslak Liestøl's Fascicle (Vol. VI, 1)  
of Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer*

BY KARIN FJELLHAMMER SEIM

*N603 (BRM 31265)*

The inscription has been cut in a well-finished square-sectioned piece of wood  $114 \times 9 \times 9$  mm which was found in deposits under the 1332 fire-layer in N Gullskoen. The inscription can be dated to the second half of the thirteenth century or *c* 1300. Both ends are broken. There are clear and well-formed runes on three sides. Some runes at the broken edges are damaged.

- a) --.]R<sup>5</sup>ŕ<sup>10</sup>ŕ<sup>15</sup>ŕ<sup>20</sup>ŕ<sup>25</sup>ŕ<sup>30</sup>ŕ<sup>35</sup>ŕ<sup>40</sup>ŕ<sup>45</sup>ŕ<sup>50</sup>ŕ<sup>55</sup>ŕ<sup>60</sup>ŕ<sup>65</sup>ŕ<sup>70</sup>ŕ<sup>75</sup>ŕ<sup>80</sup>ŕ<sup>85</sup>ŕ<sup>90</sup>ŕ<sup>95</sup>ŕ<sup>100</sup>ŕ<sup>105</sup>ŕ<sup>110</sup>ŕ<sup>115</sup>ŕ<sup>120</sup>ŕ<sup>125</sup>ŕ<sup>130</sup>ŕ<sup>135</sup>ŕ<sup>140</sup>ŕ<sup>145</sup>ŕ<sup>150</sup>ŕ<sup>155</sup>ŕ<sup>160</sup>ŕ<sup>165</sup>ŕ<sup>170</sup>ŕ<sup>175</sup>ŕ<sup>180</sup>ŕ<sup>185</sup>ŕ<sup>190</sup>ŕ<sup>195</sup>ŕ<sup>200</sup>ŕ<sup>205</sup>ŕ<sup>210</sup>ŕ<sup>215</sup>ŕ<sup>220</sup>ŕ<sup>225</sup>ŕ<sup>230</sup>ŕ<sup>235</sup>ŕ<sup>240</sup>ŕ<sup>245</sup>ŕ<sup>250</sup>ŕ<sup>255</sup>ŕ<sup>260</sup>ŕ<sup>265</sup>ŕ<sup>270</sup>ŕ<sup>275</sup>ŕ<sup>280</sup>ŕ<sup>285</sup>ŕ<sup>290</sup>ŕ<sup>295</sup>ŕ<sup>300</sup>ŕ<sup>305</sup>ŕ<sup>310</sup>ŕ<sup>315</sup>ŕ<sup>320</sup>ŕ<sup>325</sup>ŕ<sup>330</sup>ŕ<sup>335</sup>ŕ<sup>340</sup>ŕ<sup>345</sup>ŕ<sup>350</sup>ŕ<sup>355</sup>ŕ<sup>360</sup>ŕ<sup>365</sup>ŕ<sup>370</sup>ŕ<sup>375</sup>ŕ<sup>380</sup>ŕ<sup>385</sup>ŕ<sup>390</sup>ŕ<sup>395</sup>ŕ<sup>400</sup>ŕ<sup>405</sup>ŕ<sup>410</sup>ŕ<sup>415</sup>ŕ<sup>420</sup>ŕ<sup>425</sup>ŕ<sup>430</sup>ŕ<sup>435</sup>ŕ<sup>440</sup>ŕ<sup>445</sup>ŕ<sup>450</sup>ŕ<sup>455</sup>ŕ<sup>460</sup>ŕ<sup>465</sup>ŕ<sup>470</sup>ŕ<sup>475</sup>ŕ<sup>480</sup>ŕ<sup>485</sup>ŕ<sup>490</sup>ŕ<sup>495</sup>ŕ<sup>500</sup>ŕ<sup>505</sup>ŕ<sup>510</sup>ŕ<sup>515</sup>ŕ<sup>520</sup>ŕ<sup>525</sup>ŕ<sup>530</sup>ŕ<sup>535</sup>ŕ<sup>540</sup>ŕ<sup>545</sup>ŕ<sup>550</sup>ŕ<sup>555</sup>ŕ<sup>560</sup>ŕ<sup>565</sup>ŕ<sup>570</sup>ŕ<sup>575</sup>ŕ<sup>580</sup>ŕ<sup>585</sup>ŕ<sup>590</sup>ŕ<sup>595</sup>ŕ<sup>600</sup>ŕ<sup>605</sup>ŕ<sup>610</sup>ŕ<sup>615</sup>ŕ<sup>620</sup>ŕ<sup>625</sup>ŕ<sup>630</sup>ŕ<sup>635</sup>ŕ<sup>640</sup>ŕ<sup>645</sup>ŕ<sup>650</sup>ŕ<sup>655</sup>ŕ<sup>660</sup>ŕ<sup>665</sup>ŕ<sup>670</sup>ŕ<sup>675</sup>ŕ<sup>680</sup>ŕ<sup>685</sup>ŕ<sup>690</sup>ŕ<sup>695</sup>ŕ<sup>700</sup>ŕ<sup>705</sup>ŕ<sup>710</sup>ŕ<sup>715</sup>ŕ<sup>720</sup>ŕ<sup>725</sup>ŕ<sup>730</sup>ŕ<sup>735</sup>ŕ<sup>740</sup>ŕ<sup>745</sup>ŕ<sup>750</sup>ŕ<sup>755</sup>ŕ<sup>760</sup>ŕ<sup>765</sup>ŕ<sup>770</sup>ŕ<sup>775</sup>ŕ<sup>780</sup>ŕ<sup>785</sup>ŕ<sup>790</sup>ŕ<sup>795</sup>ŕ<sup>800</sup>ŕ<sup>805</sup>ŕ<sup>810</sup>ŕ<sup>815</sup>ŕ<sup>820</sup>ŕ<sup>825</sup>ŕ<sup>830</sup>ŕ<sup>835</sup>ŕ<sup>840</sup>ŕ<sup>845</sup>ŕ<sup>850</sup>ŕ<sup>855</sup>ŕ<sup>860</sup>ŕ<sup>865</sup>ŕ<sup>870</sup>ŕ<sup>875</sup>ŕ<sup>880</sup>ŕ<sup>885</sup>ŕ<sup>890</sup>ŕ<sup>895</sup>ŕ<sup>900</sup>ŕ<sup>905</sup>ŕ<sup>910</sup>ŕ<sup>915</sup>ŕ<sup>920</sup>ŕ<sup>925</sup>ŕ<sup>930</sup>ŕ<sup>935</sup>ŕ<sup>940</sup>ŕ<sup>945</sup>ŕ<sup>950</sup>ŕ<sup>955</sup>ŕ<sup>960</sup>ŕ<sup>965</sup>ŕ<sup>970</sup>ŕ<sup>975</sup>ŕ<sup>980</sup>ŕ<sup>985</sup>ŕ<sup>990</sup>ŕ<sup>995</sup>ŕ<sup>1000</sup>ŕ<sup>1005</sup>ŕ<sup>1010</sup>ŕ<sup>1015</sup>ŕ<sup>1020</sup>ŕ<sup>1025</sup>ŕ<sup>1030</sup>ŕ<sup>1035</sup>ŕ<sup>1040</sup>ŕ<sup>1045</sup>ŕ<sup>1050</sup>ŕ<sup>1055</sup>ŕ<sup>1060</sup>ŕ<sup>1065</sup>ŕ<sup>1070</sup>ŕ<sup>1075</sup>ŕ<sup>1080</sup>ŕ<sup>1085</sup>ŕ<sup>1090</sup>ŕ<sup>1095</sup>ŕ<sup>1100</sup>ŕ<sup>1105</sup>ŕ<sup>1110</sup>ŕ<sup>1115</sup>ŕ<sup>1120</sup>ŕ<sup>1125</sup>ŕ<sup>1130</sup>ŕ<sup>1135</sup>ŕ<sup>1140</sup>ŕ<sup>1145</sup>ŕ<sup>1150</sup>ŕ<sup>1155</sup>ŕ<sup>1160</sup>ŕ<sup>1165</sup>ŕ<sup>1170</sup>ŕ<sup>1175</sup>ŕ<sup>1180</sup>ŕ<sup>1185</sup>ŕ<sup>1190</sup>ŕ<sup>1195</sup>ŕ<sup>1200</sup>ŕ<sup>1205</sup>ŕ<sup>1210</sup>ŕ<sup>1215</sup>ŕ<sup>1220</sup>ŕ<sup>1225</sup>ŕ<sup>1230</sup>ŕ<sup>1235</sup>ŕ<sup>1240</sup>ŕ<sup>1245</sup>ŕ<sup>1250</sup>ŕ<sup>1255</sup>ŕ<sup>1260</sup>ŕ<sup>1265</sup>ŕ<sup>1270</sup>ŕ<sup>1275</sup>ŕ<sup>1280</sup>ŕ<sup>1285</sup>ŕ<sup>1290</sup>ŕ<sup>1295</sup>ŕ<sup>1300</sup>ŕ<sup>1305</sup>ŕ<sup>1310</sup>ŕ<sup>1315</sup>ŕ<sup>1320</sup>ŕ<sup>1325</sup>ŕ<sup>1330</sup>ŕ<sup>1335</sup>ŕ<sup>1340</sup>ŕ<sup>1345</sup>ŕ<sup>1350</sup>ŕ<sup>1355</sup>ŕ<sup>1360</sup>ŕ<sup>1365</sup>ŕ<sup>1370</sup>ŕ<sup>1375</sup>ŕ<sup>1380</sup>ŕ<sup>1385</sup>ŕ<sup>1390</sup>ŕ<sup>1395</sup>ŕ<sup>1400</sup>ŕ<sup>1405</sup>ŕ<sup>1410</sup>ŕ<sup>1415</sup>ŕ<sup>1420</sup>ŕ<sup>1425</sup>ŕ<sup>1430</sup>ŕ<sup>1435</sup>ŕ<sup>1440</sup>ŕ<sup>1445</sup>ŕ<sup>1450</sup>ŕ<sup>1455</sup>ŕ<sup>1460</sup>ŕ<sup>1465</sup>ŕ<sup>1470</sup>ŕ<sup>1475</sup>ŕ<sup>1480</sup>ŕ<sup>1485</sup>ŕ<sup>1490</sup>ŕ<sup>1495</sup>ŕ<sup>1500</sup>ŕ<sup>1505</sup>ŕ<sup>1510</sup>ŕ<sup>1515</sup>ŕ<sup>1520</sup>ŕ<sup>1525</sup>ŕ<sup>1530</sup>ŕ<sup>1535</sup>ŕ<sup>1540</sup>ŕ<sup>1545</sup>ŕ<sup>1550</sup>ŕ<sup>1555</sup>ŕ<sup>1560</sup>ŕ<sup>1565</sup>ŕ<sup>1570</sup>ŕ<sup>1575</sup>ŕ<sup>1580</sup>ŕ<sup>1585</sup>ŕ<sup>1590</sup>ŕ<sup>1595</sup>ŕ<sup>1600</sup>ŕ<sup>1605</sup>ŕ<sup>1610</sup>ŕ<sup>1615</sup>ŕ<sup>1620</sup>ŕ<sup>1625</sup>ŕ<sup>1630</sup>ŕ<sup>1635</sup>ŕ<sup>1640</sup>ŕ<sup>1645</sup>ŕ<sup>1650</sup>ŕ<sup>1655</sup>ŕ<sup>1660</sup>ŕ<sup>1665</sup>ŕ<sup>1670</sup>ŕ<sup>1675</sup>ŕ<sup>1680</sup>ŕ<sup>1685</sup>ŕ<sup>1690</sup>ŕ<sup>1695</sup>ŕ<sup>1700</sup>ŕ<sup>1705</sup>ŕ<sup>1710</sup>ŕ<sup>1715</sup>ŕ<sup>1720</sup>ŕ<sup>1725</sup>ŕ<sup>1730</sup>ŕ<sup>1735</sup>ŕ<sup>1740</sup>ŕ<sup>1745</sup>ŕ<sup>1750</sup>ŕ<sup>1755</sup>ŕ<sup>1760</sup>ŕ<sup>1765</sup>ŕ<sup>1770</sup>ŕ<sup>1775</sup>ŕ<sup>1780</sup>ŕ<sup>1785</sup>ŕ<sup>1790</sup>ŕ<sup>1795</sup>ŕ<

[Virginis e]gregie ignibus calesco eius cotidie in amore cresco ... | ... agam tene-  
ri virgo sic agamus ambos sumus ... | ... lucis agone. Philomena querule Terea  
r[etractat ...]

"I am becoming inflamed with the fires (of love) for the exquisite maiden, and grow daily (more) in love with her. -- -- --. ... with life's (?) despondency. Philomena lamenting struggles with Tereus."

The rune sign which is transliterated as *f* in line c is a dotted *u*-rune, a rare sign in Norwegian inscriptions. Even though the phoneme-value of the sign is usually /y/ or /o/, in this inscription it should be read as /f/ for reasons obvious from the text.

From the state in which the inscription has survived, it would have been difficult to comment on it, had it not been for the existence of parallels. The inscription contains in fact fragments of two love poems which are known from the *Carmina Burana*, the famous collection of Goliardic poems from the Benedictine monastery of Benediktbeuern in Bavaria, probably written early in the thirteenth century. In lines a and b there are fragments of *Amor habet superos* (CB 88) and line c contains fragments of *Axe Phebus aureo* (CB 71).

Despite the known parallels it is not possible to reconstruct the whole inscription, since it deviates a great deal in some places. Moreover line b defies translation, as words and lines in the original have been changed around and partly altered as we shall see.

In line a it is possible to recognise the first four lines of the fourth stanza in *Amor habet superos*, given here in the version published by Hilka and Schuman:

Virginis egregie  
ignibus calesco  
et eius cotidie  
in amore cresco;  
sol est in meridie,  
nec ego tepesco.

This stanza in fact is not in the Burana codex; it has survived only in a manuscript in Florence. For line b, which is from the ninth stanza in the same poem, we must also turn to the Florence manuscript as this gives the better meaning, although this stanza has survived in the Burana codex:

Florence:

Quicquid agant alii  
virgo, sic agamus,  
ut, quem decet fieri,  
ludum faciamus  
ambo sumus teneri;  
tenere ludamus.

CB:

Quicquid agant alii  
ergo nos ludamus  
et, quem decet fieri,  
ludum faciamus;  
ambo sumus teneri;  
tenere ludamus.

We can recognise the second line of the Florence version in our line b, and the runic quotation can thus be given in the following verse-form:

... agam teneri  
virgo sic agamus  
ambos sumus ...

The Florence version can be rendered as: "No matter what others do, my love, let us do it so that we play the game which is befitting. We are both young; let us play gently." The runic version, however, is so distorted that it is difficult to find any sense in the syntax and an attempt at translation is impossible.

Line c seems to have wandered even further from the original, but there can be no doubt that it is connected with *Axe Phebus aureo*. Compared with the Hilka/Schuman version, fragments from two different stanzas can be recognised in our line:

Stanza 2 b  
Philomena querule  
Terea retractat,  
dum canendo merule  
carmina coaptat.

Stanza 3 b  
Iamque Dione  
iocis, agone  
releuat, cruciat      corda suorum.



*Axe Phebus aureo* is a lament over love's tribulations, but it opens with a description of spring as in so many of the Goliardic poems. As usual Nature is described in images taken from classical mythology and we find one of these in verse 2 b and thus in the end part of our line c. It has been taken from the Greek myth concerning the beautiful Philomela who was ravished by Tereus, after which he cut out her tongue. Nevertheless, Philomela succeeded in telling what had happened by weaving her story into a tapestry thus getting her revenge on Tereus, whereupon they were both changed into birds. Philomela became the nightingale with the lamentful song. Verse 2 b can be translated as: "Philomena in lament struggles with Tereus, whilst, singing, she imitates the blackbird's song." (*Philomena* is the usual medieval form of the name).

The part of the inscription which does make sense is correctly written in good medieval Latin. The division or joining of words is not unusual in runic script and is not an indication of poor linguistic knowledge. The spelling, however, suggests that this was written down by ear and not copied from a written text. The most unusual orthographic feature is the use of the dotted *u*-rune for *ph* in Philomena, where we would have expected the standard *f*-rune. In works which deal with the pronunciation of medieval Latin there are indications that some scholars at any rate recommended that *ph* and *f* should be pronounced differently, although we cannot be certain how they thought *ph* should be pronounced. Our rune-carver must have been following this recommendation: he was writing by ear and his problem was therefore to find a rune which represented the sound he heard. Something about the pronunciation must have reminded him of the voiced labial [w] which he thus wrote with a *u*-rune. This sound must in fact have been unvoiced since he dotted the rune. He was following the same principle as when the *b*-rune which is used for the voiced bilabial stop /b/ is dotted to represent the corresponding *unvoiced* consonant /p/.

To discover fragments of Goliardery in contemporary medieval Scandinavia is most surprising. Only one other occurrence is known; two stanzas of the Arch-poet's work have survived in a manuscript from c 1550. Goliardic verse was popular among students and scholars who were used to using Latin as their common language, and it has always been assumed that Scandinavia lay outside the area where this poetry was read or sung in the Middle Ages. But we know that in medieval Bergen there were clerics who had spent much of their lives studying abroad, particularly in France, but also in England and

*N604 (BRM 30315)*

a)  $\hat{u}^5 \hat{u}^{10} \hat{u}^{15} \hat{u}^{20}$   
 ducite diskrete uitam kue [...]<sub>n</sub>...

b) uæstra salus mete sib næcia [- -

"Lead a life discreetly, which --- ... . May your (good) health know no bounds ..."

The text is in perfectly correct medieval Latin and was probably a couplet written in hexameters with a mid-caesura and internal rhyming, but it has not been possible to trace any parallels. There is little point in suggesting how the couplet may have finished. Its content is reminiscent of the saying *quicquid agas prudenter agas et respice finem*, "Whatever thou doest, do it prudently and consider the end", which can be traced back to the *Gesta Romanorum*. It is mentioned in a letter written by Bishop Håkon of Bergen (1330–1342). This saying may have been included in a florilegium or collection of sayings used for teaching purposes in Bergen, although we cannot be certain, in which case the text in our inscription could also have come from such a book. Rhyming hexameter couplets are not unknown among runic inscriptions: N632 is another example from Bergen.

*N605 (BRM 13033)*

The inscription is on a *rúnakefli* or rune-stick with a hole at one end. It is 182 mm long and  $11 \times 13$  mm in cross-section. It was found beneath the hori-







The expression *Roma, caput mundi* is known from Classical times, apparently first used by Lucanus. It was later used on coins by both the Roman Senate in the High Middle Ages and the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. It also occurs in two poems in the *Carmina Burana* (see N603). It has not been found in Scandinavian material previously, but pilgrims would easily have met the phrase as it was common on coins circulating in Rome in the Middle Ages.

Line b seems to be in Old Norse. The adverb *út* was often used for journeys to the Mediterranean, but was used more often for voyages westwards (*fara út* ie to Iceland, *fara útan* ie from Iceland to Norway). If, in association with line a, we consider that a journey to the Mediterranean is indicated, then the closing words ... *i gær*, 'yesterday', are rather unexpected. It can hardly be a genuine pilgrimage to Rome, but it can be a vision that the rune-carver had the previous day, which he is writing about, feeling that he had visited one of the most important medieval pilgrimage centres.

If we read **kær** as a place-name, it could be referring to an actual journey, but it is difficult to prove the existence of such a place.

*N608 (BRM 15203)*

The inscription is on a square stick,  $85 \times 22 \times 11$  mm, which was found in the passage between Engelgården and Søstergården and which probably dates from second half of the fourteenth century. There are runes on one narrow face (a) and one broad face (b). The other narrow side has rune-like signs, while the fourth side has one cross-stroke at each end. The piece of wood is in good condition and the runes are clear. Nevertheless it is difficult to make any sense of the text.

a)  $\overset{5}{Y|111:*\dot{N}h}$   
midet huc

b)  $\begin{array}{c} | \text{ } \text{ } | : \\ \cdot \\ \text{ion} \end{array}$

*Medet (?) huic (?). | Jón (?)*  
 “Heal this. Jon (?)”

In line a it is uncertain how the seventh rune should be read: **u** has been suggested but the sign is atypical with an additional curved stroke outside the usual side-stroke. It is similar to the first rune in line c of N632, which probably represents **w**. The eighth rune has been transliterated as **c** on the basis of it probably being a Latin text. The sign can also represent **s** or **z**, as well as **c**, in medieval runic inscriptions. Whichever way it is read, the whole text is still obscure. The first word could possibly be read as a mistaken form of the word *medeor*, "I heal, cure, correct" (cf *medicus*, *medicina*). **huc** could be the adverb *huc*, "hither, to this place, so far", but as *medeor* takes the dative, it would make better sense if it were *huic*. Line a would then mean "cure this", "heal this".

The transliteration of line b is very uncertain and must simply be regarded as an attempt to make some sense out of the signs. In order to read the first rune as **i**, a stroke going up to the left of the stave must be ignored. If this stroke is included and assumed to be a cross-stroke, then this might be the relatively rare sign for **q**, but this would make no sense. With great reservation the

sequence has been interpreted as the man's name *Jón*. If this stick had been an amulet for protection from sickness, etc, it could perhaps be the name of the owner.

N609 (BRM 41163)

The inscription is cut on an irregularly shaped stick which at its widest point is 14 mm. It is 9 mm thick and 72 mm long. It was found in Gullskoen just above the 1198 fire-layer. It must have got its present shape after the runes were cut, as the upper parts of the central 6-8 runes have been cut away. There is therefore some doubt about the transliteration of some of the signs. As the inscription begins with a typical opening sign consisting of four dots made with the point of the knife and as the runes only take up half the length, nothing else has been lost of this inscription.

$\therefore \hat{A} \hat{B} \hat{C} \hat{D} \hat{E} \hat{F} \hat{G} \hat{H} \hat{I} \hat{J} \hat{K} \hat{L} \hat{M} \hat{N} \hat{O} \hat{P} \hat{Q} \hat{R} \hat{S} \hat{T} \hat{U} \hat{V} \hat{W} \hat{X} \hat{Y} \hat{Z}$   
 $\text{onnopdeo}[\dots]\text{en}[\dots]\text{apmeo}$

*Honor (?) Deo -- -- -- meo*  
 "Honour to God -- -- --."

The sequences **deo** and **meo** suggest that the text is in Latin. As they also rhyme, it is reasonable to assume that the text is a proverb or saying. If we read **r** instead of **p** in the first damaged part, which would not be unreasonable, the opening words would be *Honor Deo* ... , with the *h* omitted as it often was. **meo** could be a pronoun referring to *Deo*, but the rest is difficult to make any sense of. The inscription is too short and too damaged to allow for a suggested reconstruction, but it is interesting to note that some guilds had mottoes which resemble our text, eg *Deo honor et gloria* and *Honor Deo* (Dielitz 1884,64,136).

*N610 (BRM 12886)*

This inscription is on a stick found in N Bugården, in the back-filled area of the harbour below the 1332 fire-layer. It has been cut very unevenly, also after the runes were carved. But even though some signs are damaged, it is fairly certain that there has not been any more either in front of or following the runes which have survived.

<sup>5</sup>  
 𐌿𐌰𐌱𐌰𐌹𐌳𐌰𐌽𐌰𐌹  
 fæcitmisi

*Fecit mise* [*ricordiam*] (?)  
 "[... who] showed compassion"

With æ representing a short /e/ as in other medieval Latin inscriptions from Norway, we can read the perfect tense of *facio*. The rest could be the perfect



*N611 (BRM 29305)*

+ f<sup>5</sup>r<sup>z</sup>i<sup>10</sup>n<sup>15</sup>sui<sup>t</sup>a<sup>i</sup>l<sup>i</sup>s<sup>p</sup>a<sup>r</sup>i<sup>t</sup>i<sup>r</sup>  
f<sup>i</sup>r<sup>i</sup>n<sup>i</sup>n<sup>s</sup>u<sup>i</sup>a<sup>i</sup>l<sup>i</sup>s<sup>p</sup>a<sup>r</sup>i<sup>t</sup>i<sup>r</sup>

The inscription can also be corrupt Latin, of which there are many other examples. In this case it could be a garbled spell or incantation against thieves, cf Latin *fur*, "a thief". *talis* might also be the "goddess" Dalix/Dalis/Dallix who is mentioned in many sorcerers' books (Bang no.1381 c, Ohrt no. 939) and who reigned over all thieves. But without the help of a less corrupt parallel it is not possible to get anything more out of this text.

*N612 (BRM 29751)*

32

1111  
 uenit

It is difficult to comment on such a short inscription, even though it can easily be read as the Latin verb *venit*, "he comes". If we consider the possibility that the inscription is unfinished, perhaps the intention was to write one of the antiphons or anthems, such as *Venit lumen tuum hierusalem* or *Venit Maria nuntians*, or even one of the scriptural phrases in the Mass, such as Matth. 3,13-17; 16,13-19 or Rev. 21,9-11. If this interpretation is correct, then the writer has used the usual Latin orthography and not *p* for /t/ following a vowel, such as we find in a number of other inscriptions (cf N607).

N613 (BRM 19326)

oleæ

Our inscription may have functioned as a label on a delivery of oil, probably olive-oil.



*N614 (BRM 35508)*

The inscription is cut on both sides of a flat, smoothly-trimmed stick, 65 × 23–26 × 5 mm. It is broken at one end and the other is cut at an angle. It was found in S Søstergården under the 1198 fire-layer.

a) 1R11

aria

*Ari á | sendi Ólaf[r]*

or

[M]aria | ... sancti Olav[i] ...

"Ari owns. Olaf sent"

OR

"[M]ary ... Saint Olaf's ..."

There is a relatively wide space from the edge of the stick to the first rune in line a, so that it is unlikely that there is anything missing here, nor after the last rune. Line b could have been longer at both ends, since the runes on this side fill the whole surface from edge to edge. After the last rune there are traces of another sign.

This inscription can be interpreted in two ways. It can be either a secular text in Old Norse on both lines, or a religious text with a Latin word and two sacred names.

Let us take the Old Norse alternative first. Line a can be an ownership formula, a very common type of inscription at Bryggen, and be read thus: *Ari á*, "Ari owns". The male name Ari is not otherwise recorded in Norway in the early part of the Middle Ages, but it was very common in Iceland. However, the amount of material containing Norwegian names which has survived from the twelfth century is – to put it mildly – rather sparse and hardly representative for the entire inventory of popular names current in Norway at that time, so that the owner in this case could easily have been Norwegian. On the other hand it is not unreasonable that a discarded label found in a trading town like Bergen could be referring to an Icelandic.

Line b can be read as a complete sentence: *sendi Ólafr*, "Olaf sent". The slip of wood could have been an enclosure with some goods belonging to Ari which Olaf had sent.

In order to interpret the line in this way, three runes must be read in a somewhat unusual way: 1. **santi** = *sendi* – here the vowel in the stem is written with the *a*-rune, which is an earlier spelling: in the Middle Ages we would expect the *e*- or *æ*-rune, but in the twelfth century an *a*-rune would not be unreasonable, even though there are no other parallels at Bryggen. 2. **ulab** = *Ólaf(r)* – there are two peculiarities here: the vowel /o/ is written **u** and there is a *b*-rune for /f/. In Viking times /o/ was regularly written as **u**, because the futhark only had sixteen signs and several vowels had to be denoted by the same rune-sign. But a separate *o*-rune had already come into use in the eleventh century and continued in general use throughout the whole of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, we find some inscriptions at Bryggen with the old-fashioned spelling with **u** for /o/ from the twelfth century until well into the

b)  $\overset{5}{\text{H}}-\text{C}(\text{CH}_3)_2-\text{CH}-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_3$

santi ulabf. --

fourteenth (cf N717, N718, N743). The same phenomenon also appears in medieval inscriptions from Greenland. Could it be Greenlanders who carved runes while they were staying in Bergen or is it a common feature in the runic orthography in areas which are geographically far apart, but which nevertheless were in frequent contact?

The peculiar choice of the consonant in *Ólafr* raises the same problems. This is also a conservative spelling and it also has parallels in Greenland. It has not been noticed in any other inscriptions from Bryggen, but we find a closely related phenomenon in the use of a *p*-rune for /f/ in a couple of inscriptions from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (B368, B257). The *p*-rune is also used for /f/ in the inscription cut on the door from Valþjófsstaðir, the only Icelandic example.

It is not easy to find a simple and acceptable explanation for such orthographic peculiarities and it will not be discussed further here.

The presence of the man's name *Ari*, the use of the *u*-rune for /o/ and the *b*-rune for /f/ all point in a westerly direction, towards Iceland and Greenland, but not exclusively. It may simply be a case of a locally traditional name and a local orthography. This inscription is moreover one of the earliest from Bryggen and it is not unexpected that earlier forms are encountered.

The other interpretation of N614, the Latin version, takes us from the world of commerce to that of religion. Line a can be read as *Maria*, if it is assumed that the first rune is missing. This name at that time in Scandinavia would only refer to the Virgin. However, as it is unlikely that anything is missing from line a, it is only the alternative reading of line b which lends any support to this interpretation: **santi** can be a form of *sanctus*, so that we have the genitive form of St Olaf. With this interpretation, one of the orthographic peculiarities associated with the first rendering disappears, but we are left with the two irregularities in the name. This alternative reading of line b can be accepted, independently of how line a is read: both *sendi Ólafr* and *santi Olavi* are reasonable renderings of this line and it is not easy to choose between them. The reading of line a as *Maria*, however, is not acceptable without the support of a religious interpretation of line b, and there is, in fact, no reason why line a should not be read as *Ari á* and line b as *sancti Olavi*.

*N615 (BRM 33747)*

The inscription is on a thin sliver of wood, probably split from a thick square stick. It is 190 mm long which is also the original length of the stick but it is now only 5 mm thick. The inscribed surface is 12 mm wide but the full width has only survived for the first third; along the length of the sliver increasingly more of the upper part of the inscription is missing. However, most of the signs can be identified. The object was found in S Søstergården under the 1198 fire-layer.

5      10      15      20      25      30      35      40      45      50  
 B 411R: T 411R: Y N I I T I T 4: T 11 W I 11 N R: T 4 Y T 1 N Y: T P I T I T P R I T 4 Y  
 pater noster kuisinselo santafisetur nomentum apfeniabrenom

*Pater noster, qui es in celis. Sanctificetur nomen tuum, adveniat regnum...*  
 "Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. (Thy) kingdom  
 come ..."



The inscription contains the beginning of the Lord's prayer in Latin. There was room for just under a quarter of the prayer on what had survived of this stick and perhaps it had been intended to write the whole prayer over the four sides, but the plan was never completed as there is no trace of any runes on the surviving parts of the side surfaces. There may, of course, have been a continuation only on the reverse which is now totally missing, but there would not have been room for the whole prayer.

As with other contemporary *Pater Noster* inscriptions, ours reflects the Latin pronunciation of the time. The use of the *f*-rune for *v* in *adveniat* is rather unusual but there are similar examples in Latin inscriptions from Denmark (DR I, 810–11). This may indicate an influence from the German tradition.

#### N616 (BRM 11214)

The inscription is on a square stick, 185 × 16 × 13 mm, found in N Bugården in deposits below the 1198 fire-layer. It is broken at one end. Along one edge there are a thirty-three marks or notches and there are runes on three faces. Judging from the form of the signs, three different hands seem to be represented, one for each row.

a) <sup>5</sup> þ <sup>10</sup> þ <sup>15</sup> þ <sup>20</sup> þ <sup>25</sup> þ  
þ þ æ r þ i t : n i t þ i n b r : y þ i n : i þ n r þ r : þ i r þ i r : [ . . . ]  
þ o r g i s l u t l a u b r m a n u s s i h u r þ r h a r o l d r [ . . . ]

b) -- : <sup>5</sup> i r t n þ r : <sup>10</sup> i r t n þ r : <sup>15</sup> i r t n þ r : <sup>20</sup> i r t n þ r : <sup>25</sup> i r t n þ r :  
-- : a r n u þ r s i h u r þ r i o n s i h u r þ r k l u m r

c) B B i t t r : t þ i t r  
b b a t æ r n o s t æ r

*Þorgisl, Úthlaupr* (?), *Magnús, Sigurðr, Haraldr* ... | ... *Arnviðr, Sigurðr, Jón, Sigurðr, Glúmr* | *Pater Noster*

Lines a and b are a list of men's names; line c contains the first two words of the Lord's prayer in Latin.

The names Magnus, Sigurd, Harald, Jon and Glum are easily recognised and are except for Glum, still in use today, while *þorgisl* corresponds to the modern Norwegian name Torjus. The remaining two names, *utlœaubr* and *arnuþr*, are more difficult to identify, although the latter would be recognisable as the still-current Arnvid if we assume that an *i*-rune has been forgotten: *Arnviðr*. The other word, however, does not resemble any previously recorded name or personal epithet. It can be read in a number of ways: 1 *útlaupr* which makes no sense; 2 with a "correction": *ull-laupr*, "wool-basket", perhaps a nickname; 3 *úthlaupr*, "robber, plunderer", possibly a cognomen or a nickname. This final suggestion is perhaps the most probable, either being applied to *þorgisl* or, having once been a nickname, now used as a name in its own right. It would thus be a hitherto unrecorded noun or adjective associated with the abstract noun *úthlaup*, neut, literally: "a run, a run out" ie a journey, especially a raid on a foreign country. The corresponding verb *hlaupa út* is used in Old Norse law texts meaning to raid by ship at home or abroad. The term was

later used to describe the activities of bands of rebels when they plundered and pillaged, and in an Icelandic text from the thirteenth century a horde of villains is variously described as *víkingar* and *úthlaupsmenn*. The word in our inscription would thus be a nickname for someone who had taken part in raids of some kind.

The reason behind this list of men's names on a notched rune-stick could be that it was a ship's crew which for some reason was to be recorded. The marks are surely the result of some calculation, perhaps the profits which are to be shared or some other payment. What the function of line c was in this connection is less clear, but it may have been intended as a protection for those whose names are listed.

To reconstruct the events associated with this *rúnakefli* is impossible, but some points about the inscription should be mentioned. The shapes of some of the runes in the text may indicate a mixed Nordic crew, possibly including men from Gotland, even though the forms are not absolutely unambiguous. Liestøl also considered two of the names mentioned in the inscription to be more common in Eastern Scandinavia than in Norway: *Haraldr* in Denmark and *Arnviðr* in Sweden, and therefore he concluded that the men might be of Danish and Swedish nationality. However, the inventory of Norwegian names known from the twelfth century, as already mentioned, is very limited and it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions about the owner's country of origin on the basis of the name alone, and both these names are in fact known in Norway in the Middle Ages.

#### N617 (BRM 68064)

The inscription is on a rune-stick 271 mm long and 14 × 14 mm at its thickest point. It was found beneath the stone foundations of a building in Gullskoen. Its date is uncertain, but it is probably dated to shortly before or after the fire of 1332. The runes fill two whole sides and two-thirds of the third side. Most have been double-cut with dots between the double lines.

a) <sup>5</sup> a <sup>10</sup> u <sup>15</sup> e <sup>20</sup> m <sup>25</sup> a <sup>30</sup> r <sup>35</sup> i <sup>40</sup> a <sup>45</sup> g <sup>50</sup> r <sup>55</sup> a <sup>60</sup> c <sup>65</sup> [ c < s ] <sup>70</sup> i <sup>75</sup> a <sup>80</sup> p <sup>85</sup> l <sup>90</sup> e <sup>95</sup> n <sup>100</sup> a <sup>105</sup> t <sup>110</sup> o <sup>115</sup> m <sup>120</sup> i <sup>125</sup> [ i < e ] <sup>130</sup> n <sup>135</sup> u <sup>140</sup> s <sup>145</sup> t <sup>150</sup> e <sup>155</sup> k <sup>160</sup> o <sup>165</sup> m

b) <sup>5</sup> b <sup>10</sup> e <sup>15</sup> n <sup>20</sup> e <sup>25</sup> d <sup>30</sup> i <sup>35</sup> k <sup>40</sup> t <sup>45</sup> a <sup>50</sup> t <sup>55</sup> u <sup>60</sup> [ t u < u ] <sup>65</sup> i <sup>70</sup> n <sup>75</sup> m <sup>80</sup> u <sup>85</sup> l <sup>90</sup> i <sup>95</sup> e <sup>100</sup> r <sup>105</sup> i <sup>110</sup> b <sup>115</sup> u <sup>120</sup> s <sup>125</sup> æ <sup>130</sup> p <sup>135</sup> b <sup>140</sup> e <sup>145</sup> n <sup>150</sup> e <sup>155</sup> d <sup>160</sup> i <sup>165</sup> c <sup>170</sup> t <sup>175</sup> u <sup>180</sup> [ t u < u ] s

c) <sup>5</sup> f <sup>10</sup> r <sup>15</sup> u <sup>20</sup> c <sup>25</sup> t <sup>30</sup> u <sup>35</sup> s <sup>40</sup> u <sup>45</sup> e <sup>50</sup> n <sup>55</sup> t <sup>60</sup> r <sup>65</sup> i <sup>70</sup> s <sup>75</sup> t <sup>80</sup> u <sup>85</sup> i <sup>90</sup> a <sup>95</sup> m <sup>100</sup> e <sup>105</sup> n

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum* | *benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus* | *fructus ventris tui. Amen.*

"Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord be with Thee; blessed art Thou among women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb. Amen."



The inscription contains the whole *Ave Maria* in the form the prayer had during most of the Middle Ages. The text is the same as that on one of the bells from Gjerpen church in Telemark (N142) which also lacks the final words *Jesus Christus* which were added by Pope Urban IV (1261–64). At the end of the fifteenth century the prayer was extended with the words: *Sancta Maria, Mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus nunc et in hora mortis nostrae*, “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death”.

#### N618 (BRM 18094)

The inscription is on a fragment of a rune-stick, 86 × 10 × 9 mm. It was found in S Engelgården in the filling of a caisson below the 1332 fire-layer. The runes are on the two broad faces.

a) -- ]<sup>1</sup> : + <sup>5</sup> 1 : <sup>10</sup> B : <sup>15</sup> H : <sup>20</sup> I : <sup>25</sup> T : <sup>30</sup> N : <sup>35</sup> R : <sup>40</sup> N : <sup>45</sup> T : <sup>50</sup> N : <sup>55</sup> T : <sup>60</sup> N : <sup>65</sup> T : <sup>70</sup> N : <sup>75</sup> T : <sup>80</sup> N : <sup>85</sup> T : <sup>90</sup> N : <sup>95</sup> T : <sup>100</sup> N : <sup>105</sup> T : <sup>110</sup> N : <sup>115</sup> T : <sup>120</sup> N : <sup>125</sup> T : <sup>130</sup> N : <sup>135</sup> T : <sup>140</sup> N : <sup>145</sup> T : <sup>150</sup> N : <sup>155</sup> T : <sup>160</sup> N : <sup>165</sup> T : <sup>170</sup> N : <sup>175</sup> T : <sup>180</sup> N : <sup>185</sup> T : <sup>190</sup> N : <sup>195</sup> T : <sup>200</sup> N : <sup>205</sup> T : <sup>210</sup> N : <sup>215</sup> T : <sup>220</sup> N : <sup>225</sup> T : <sup>230</sup> N : <sup>235</sup> T : <sup>240</sup> N : <sup>245</sup> T : <sup>250</sup> N : <sup>255</sup> T : <sup>260</sup> N : <sup>265</sup> T : <sup>270</sup> N : <sup>275</sup> T : <sup>280</sup> N : <sup>285</sup> T : <sup>290</sup> N : <sup>295</sup> T : <sup>300</sup> N : <sup>305</sup> T : <sup>310</sup> N : <sup>315</sup> T : <sup>320</sup> N : <sup>325</sup> T : <sup>330</sup> N : <sup>335</sup> T : <sup>340</sup> N : <sup>345</sup> T : <sup>350</sup> N : <sup>355</sup> T : <sup>360</sup> N : <sup>365</sup> T : <sup>370</sup> N : <sup>375</sup> T : <sup>380</sup> N : <sup>385</sup> T : <sup>390</sup> N : <sup>395</sup> T : <sup>400</sup> N : <sup>405</sup> T : <sup>410</sup> N : <sup>415</sup> T : <sup>420</sup> N : <sup>425</sup> T : <sup>430</sup> N : <sup>435</sup> T : <sup>440</sup> N : <sup>445</sup> T : <sup>450</sup> N : <sup>455</sup> T : <sup>460</sup> N : <sup>465</sup> T : <sup>470</sup> N : <sup>475</sup> T : <sup>480</sup> N : <sup>485</sup> T : <sup>490</sup> N : <sup>495</sup> T : <sup>500</sup> N : <sup>505</sup> T : <sup>510</sup> N : <sup>515</sup> T : <sup>520</sup> N : <sup>525</sup> T : <sup>530</sup> N : <sup>535</sup> T : <sup>540</sup> N : <sup>545</sup> T : <sup>550</sup> N : <sup>555</sup> T : <sup>560</sup> N : <sup>565</sup> T : <sup>570</sup> N : <sup>575</sup> T : <sup>580</sup> N : <sup>585</sup> T : <sup>590</sup> N : <sup>595</sup> T : <sup>600</sup> N : <sup>605</sup> T : <sup>610</sup> N : <sup>615</sup> T : <sup>620</sup> N : <sup>625</sup> T : <sup>630</sup> N : <sup>635</sup> T : <sup>640</sup> N : <sup>645</sup> T : <sup>650</sup> N : <sup>655</sup> T : <sup>660</sup> N : <sup>665</sup> T : <sup>670</sup> N : <sup>675</sup> T : <sup>680</sup> N : <sup>685</sup> T : <sup>690</sup> N : <sup>695</sup> T : <sup>700</sup> N : <sup>705</sup> T : <sup>710</sup> N : <sup>715</sup> T : <sup>720</sup> N : <sup>725</sup> T : <sup>730</sup> N : <sup>735</sup> T : <sup>740</sup> N : <sup>745</sup> T : <sup>750</sup> N : <sup>755</sup> T : <sup>760</sup> N : <sup>765</sup> T : <sup>770</sup> N : <sup>775</sup> T : <sup>780</sup> N : <sup>785</sup> T : <sup>790</sup> N : <sup>795</sup> T : <sup>800</sup> N : <sup>805</sup> T : <sup>810</sup> N : <sup>815</sup> T : <sup>820</sup> N : <sup>825</sup> T : <sup>830</sup> N : <sup>835</sup> T : <sup>840</sup> N : <sup>845</sup> T : <sup>850</sup> N : <sup>855</sup> T : <sup>860</sup> N : <sup>865</sup> T : <sup>870</sup> N : <sup>875</sup> T : <sup>880</sup> N : <sup>885</sup> T : <sup>890</sup> N : <sup>895</sup> T : <sup>900</sup> N : <sup>905</sup> T : <sup>910</sup> N : <sup>915</sup> T : <sup>920</sup> N : <sup>925</sup> T : <sup>930</sup> N : <sup>935</sup> T : <sup>940</sup> N : <sup>945</sup> T : <sup>950</sup> N : <sup>955</sup> T : <sup>960</sup> N : <sup>965</sup> T : <sup>970</sup> N : <sup>975</sup> T : <sup>980</sup> N : <sup>985</sup> T : <sup>990</sup> N : <sup>995</sup> T : <sup>1000</sup> N : <sup>1005</sup> T : <sup>1010</sup> N : <sup>1015</sup> T : <sup>1020</sup> N : <sup>1025</sup> T : <sup>1030</sup> N : <sup>1035</sup> T : <sup>1040</sup> N : <sup>1045</sup> T : <sup>1050</sup> N : <sup>1055</sup> T : <sup>1060</sup> N : <sup>1065</sup> T : <sup>1070</sup> N : <sup>1075</sup> T : <sup>1080</sup> N : <sup>1085</sup> T : <sup>1090</sup> N : <sup>1095</sup> T : <sup>1100</sup> N : <sup>1105</sup> T : <sup>1110</sup> N : <sup>1115</sup> T : <sup>1120</sup> N : <sup>1125</sup> T : <sup>1130</sup> N : <sup>1135</sup> T : <sup>1140</sup> N : <sup>1145</sup> T : <sup>1150</sup> N : <sup>1155</sup> T : <sup>1160</sup> N : <sup>1165</sup> T : <sup>1170</sup> N : <sup>1175</sup> T : <sup>1180</sup> N : <sup>1185</sup> T : <sup>1190</sup> N : <sup>1195</sup> T : <sup>1200</sup> N : <sup>1205</sup> T : <sup>1210</sup> N : <sup>1215</sup> T : <sup>1220</sup> N : <sup>1225</sup> T : <sup>1230</sup> N : <sup>1235</sup> T : <sup>1240</sup> N : <sup>1245</sup> T : <sup>1250</sup> N : <sup>1255</sup> T : <sup>1260</sup> N : <sup>1265</sup> T : <sup>1270</sup> N : <sup>1275</sup> T : <sup>1280</sup> N : <sup>1285</sup> T : <sup>1290</sup> N : <sup>1295</sup> T : <sup>1300</sup> N : <sup>1305</sup> T : <sup>1310</sup> N : <sup>1315</sup> T : <sup>1320</sup> N : <sup>1325</sup> T : <sup>1330</sup> N : <sup>1335</sup> T : <sup>1340</sup> N : <sup>1345</sup> T : <sup>1350</sup> N : <sup>1355</sup> T : <sup>1360</sup> N : <sup>1365</sup> T : <sup>1370</sup> N : <sup>1375</sup> T : <sup>1380</sup> N : <sup>1385</sup> T : <sup>1390</sup> N : <sup>1395</sup> T : <sup>1400</sup> N : <sup>1405</sup> T : <sup>1410</sup> N : <sup>1415</sup> T : <sup>1420</sup> N : <sup>1425</sup> T : <sup>1430</sup> N : <sup>1435</sup> T : <sup>1440</sup> N : <sup>1445</sup> T : <sup>1450</sup> N : <sup>1455</sup> T : <sup>1460</sup> N : <sup>1465</sup> T : <sup>1470</sup> N : <sup>1475</sup> T : <sup>1480</sup> N : <sup>1485</sup> T : <sup>1490</sup> N : <sup>1495</sup> T : <sup>1500</sup> N : <sup>1505</sup> T : <sup>1510</sup> N : <sup>1515</sup> T : <sup>1520</sup> N : <sup>1525</sup> T : <sup>1530</sup> N : <sup>1535</sup> T : <sup>1540</sup> N : <sup>1545</sup> T : <sup>1550</sup> N : <sup>1555</sup> T : <sup>1560</sup> N : <sup>1565</sup> T : <sup>1570</sup> N : <sup>1575</sup> T : <sup>1580</sup> N : <sup>1585</sup> T : <sup>1590</sup> N : <sup>1595</sup> T : <sup>1600</sup> N : <sup>1605</sup> T : <sup>1610</sup> N : <sup>1615</sup> T : <sup>1620</sup> N : <sup>1625</sup> T : <sup>1630</sup> N : <sup>1635</sup> T : <sup>1640</sup> N : <sup>1645</sup> T : <sup>1650</sup> N : <sup>1655</sup> T : <sup>1660</sup> N : <sup>1665</sup> T : <sup>1670</sup> N : <sup>1675</sup> T : <sup>1680</sup> N : <sup>1685</sup> T : <sup>1690</sup> N : <sup>1695</sup> T : <sup>1700</sup> N : <sup>1705</sup> T : <sup>1710</sup> N : <sup>1715</sup> T : <sup>1720</sup> N : <sup>1725</sup> T : <sup>1730</sup> N : <sup>1735</sup> T : <sup>1740</sup> N : <sup>1745</sup> T : <sup>1750</sup> N : <sup>1755</sup> T : <sup>1760</sup> N : <sup>1765</sup> T : <sup>1770</sup> N : <sup>1775</sup> T : <sup>1780</sup> N : <sup>1785</sup> T : <sup>1790</sup> N : <sup>1795</sup> T : <sup>1800</sup> N : <sup>1805</sup> T : <sup>1810</sup> N : <sup>1815</sup> T : <sup>1820</sup> N : <sup>1825</sup> T : <sup>1830</sup> N : <sup>1835</sup> T : <sup>1840</sup> N : <sup>1845</sup> T : <sup>1850</sup> N : <sup>1855</sup> T : <sup>1860</sup> N : <sup>1865</sup> T : <sup>1870</sup> N : <sup>1875</sup> T : <sup>1880</sup> N : <sup>1885</sup> T : <sup>1890</sup> N : <sup>1895</sup> T : <sup>1900</sup> N : <sup>1905</sup> T : <sup>1910</sup> N : <sup>1915</sup> T : <sup>1920</sup> N : <sup>1925</sup> T : <sup>1930</sup> N : <sup>1935</sup> T : <sup>1940</sup> N : <sup>1945</sup> T : <sup>1950</sup> N : <sup>1955</sup> T : <sup>1960</sup> N : <sup>1965</sup> T : <sup>1970</sup> N : <sup>1975</sup> T : <sup>1980</sup> N : <sup>1985</sup> T : <sup>1990</sup> N : <sup>1995</sup> T : <sup>2000</sup> N : <sup>2005</sup> T : <sup>2010</sup> N : <sup>2015</sup> T : <sup>2020</sup> N : <sup>2025</sup> T : <sup>2030</sup> N : <sup>2035</sup> T : <sup>2040</sup> N : <sup>2045</sup> T : <sup>2050</sup> N : <sup>2055</sup> T : <sup>2060</sup> N : <sup>2065</sup> T : <sup>2070</sup> N : <sup>2075</sup> T : <sup>2080</sup> N : <sup>2085</sup> T : <sup>2090</sup> N : <sup>2095</sup> T : <sup>2100</sup> N : <sup>2105</sup> T : <sup>2110</sup> N : <sup>2115</sup> T : <sup>2120</sup> N : <sup>2125</sup> T : <sup>2130</sup> N : <sup>2135</sup> T : <sup>2140</sup> N : <sup>2145</sup> T : <sup>2150</sup> N : <sup>2155</sup> T : <sup>2160</sup> N : <sup>2165</sup> T : <sup>2170</sup> N : <sup>2175</sup> T : <sup>2180</sup> N : <sup>2185</sup> T : <sup>2190</sup> N : <sup>2195</sup> T : <sup>2200</sup> N : <sup>2205</sup> T : <sup>2210</sup> N : <sup>2215</sup> T : <sup>2220</sup> N : <sup>2225</sup> T : <sup>2230</sup> N : <sup>2235</sup> T : <sup>2240</sup> N : <sup>2245</sup> T : <sup>2250</sup> N : <sup>2255</sup> T : <sup>2260</sup> N : <sup>2265</sup> T : <sup>2270</sup> N : <sup>2275</sup> T : <sup>2280</sup> N : <sup>2285</sup> T : <sup>2290</sup> N : <sup>2295</sup> T : <sup>2300</sup> N : <sup>2305</sup> T : <sup>2310</sup> N : <sup>2315</sup> T : <sup>2320</sup> N : <sup>2325</sup> T : <sup>2330</sup> N : <sup>2335</sup> T : <sup>2340</sup> N : <sup>2345</sup> T : <sup>2350</sup> N : <sup>2355</sup> T : <sup>2360</sup> N : <sup>2365</sup> T : <sup>2370</sup> N : <sup>2375</sup> T : <sup>2380</sup> N : <sup>2385</sup> T : <sup>2390</sup> N : <sup>2395</sup> T : <sup>2400</sup> N : <sup>2405</sup> T : <sup>2410</sup> N : <sup>2415</sup> T : <sup>2420</sup> N : <sup>2425</sup> T : <sup>2430</sup> N : <sup>2435</sup> T : <sup>2440</sup> N : <sup>2445</sup> T : <sup>2450</sup> N : <sup>2455</sup> T : <sup>2460</sup> N : <sup>2465</sup> T : <sup>2470</sup> N : <sup>2475</sup> T : <sup>2480</sup> N : <sup>2485</sup> T : <sup>2490</sup> N : <sup>2495</sup> T : <sup>2500</sup> N : <sup>2505</sup> T : <sup>2510</sup> N : <sup>2515</sup> T : <sup>2520</sup> N : <sup>2525</sup> T : <sup>2530</sup> N : <sup>2535</sup> T : <sup>2540</sup> N : <sup>2545</sup> T : <sup>2550</sup> N : <sup>2555</sup> T : <sup>2560</sup> N : <sup>2565</sup> T : <sup>2570</sup> N : <sup>2575</sup> T : <sup>2580</sup> N : <sup>2585</sup> T : <sup>2590</sup> N : <sup>2595</sup> T : <sup>2600</sup> N : <sup>2605</sup> T : <sup>2610</sup> N : <sup>2615</sup> T : <sup>2620</sup> N : <sup>2625</sup> T : <sup>2630</sup> N : <sup>2635</sup> T : <sup>2640</sup> N : <sup>2645</sup> T : <sup>2650</sup> N : <sup>2655</sup> T : <sup>2660</sup> N : <sup>2665</sup> T : <sup>2670</sup> N : <sup>2675</sup> T : <sup>2680</sup> N : <sup>2685</sup> T : <sup>2690</sup> N : <sup>2695</sup> T : <sup>2700</sup> N : <sup>2705</sup> T : <sup>2710</sup> N : <sup>2715</sup> T : <sup>2720</sup> N : <sup>2725</sup> T : <sup>2730</sup> N : <sup>2735</sup> T : <sup>2740</sup> N : <sup>2745</sup> T : <sup>2750</sup> N : <sup>2755</sup> T : <sup>2760</sup> N : <sup>2765</sup> T : <sup>2770</sup> N : <sup>2775</sup> T : <sup>2780</sup> N : <sup>2785</sup> T : <sup>2790</sup> N : <sup>2795</sup> T : <sup>2800</sup> N : <sup>2805</sup> T : <sup>2810</sup> N : <sup>2815</sup> T : <sup>2820</sup> N : <sup>2825</sup> T : <sup>2830</sup> N : <sup>2835</sup> T : <sup>2840</sup> N : <sup>2845</sup> T : <sup>2850</sup> N : <sup>2855</sup> T : <sup>2860</sup> N : <sup>2865</sup> T : <sup>2870</sup> N : <sup>2875</sup> T : <sup>2880</sup> N : <sup>2885</sup> T : <sup>2890</sup> N : <sup>2895</sup> T : <sup>2900</sup> N : <sup>2905</sup> T : <sup>2910</sup> N : <sup>2915</sup> T : <sup>2920</sup> N : <sup>2925</sup> T : <sup>2930</sup> N : <sup>2935</sup> T : <sup>2940</sup> N : <sup>2945</sup> T : <sup>2950</sup> N : <sup>2955</sup> T : <sup>2960</sup> N : <sup>2965</sup> T : <sup>2970</sup> N : <sup>2975</sup> T : <sup>2980</sup> N : <sup>2985</sup> T : <sup>2990</sup> N : <sup>2995</sup> T : <sup>3000</sup> N : <sup>3005</sup> T : <sup>3010</sup> N : <sup>3015</sup> T : <sup>3020</sup> N : <sup>3025</sup> T : <sup>3030</sup> N : <sup>3035</sup> T : <sup>3040</sup> N : <sup>3045</sup> T : <sup>3050</sup> N : <sup>3055</sup> T : <sup>3060</sup> N : <sup>3065</sup> T : <sup>3070</sup> N : <sup>3075</sup> T : <sup>3080</sup> N : <sup>3085</sup> T : <sup>3090</sup> N : <sup>3095</sup> T : <sup>3100</sup> N : <sup>3105</sup> T : <sup>3110</sup> N : <sup>3115</sup> T : <sup>3120</sup> N : <sup>3125</sup> T : <sup>3130</sup> N : <sup>3135</sup> T : <sup>3140</sup> N : <sup>3145</sup> T : <sup>3150</sup> N : <sup>3155</sup> T : <sup>3160</sup> N : <sup>3165</sup> T : <sup>3170</sup> N : <sup>3175</sup> T : <sup>3180</sup> N : <sup>3185</sup> T : <sup>3190</sup> N : <sup>3195</sup> T : <sup>3200</sup> N : <sup>3205</sup> T : <sup>3210</sup> N : <sup>3215</sup> T : <sup>3220</sup> N : <sup>3225</sup> T : <sup>3230</sup> N : <sup>3235</sup> T : <sup>3240</sup> N : <sup>3245</sup> T : <sup>3250</sup> N : <sup>3255</sup> T : <sup>3260</sup> N : <sup>3265</sup> T : <sup>3270</sup> N : <sup>3275</sup> T : <sup>3280</sup> N : <sup>3285</sup> T : <sup>3290</sup> N : <sup>3295</sup> T : <sup>3300</sup> N : <sup>3305</sup> T : <sup>3310</sup> N : <sup>3315</sup> T : <sup>3320</sup> N : <sup>3325</sup> T : <sup>3330</sup> N : <sup>3335</sup> T : <sup>3340</sup> N : <sup>3345</sup> T : <sup>3350</sup> N : <sup>3355</sup> T : <sup>3360</sup> N : <sup>3365</sup> T : <sup>3370</sup> N : <sup>3375</sup> T : <sup>3380</sup> N : <sup>3385</sup> T : <sup>3390</sup> N : <sup>3395</sup> T : <sup>3400</sup> N : <sup>3405</sup> T : <sup>3410</sup> N : <sup>3415</sup> T : <sup>3420</sup> N : <sup>3425</sup> T : <sup>3430</sup> N : <sup>3435</sup> T : <sup>3440</sup> N : <sup>3445</sup> T : <sup>3450</sup> N : <sup>3455</sup> T : <sup>3460</sup> N : <sup>3465</sup> T : <sup>3470</sup> N : <sup>3475</sup> T : <sup>3480</sup> N : <sup>3485</sup> T : <sup>3490</sup> N : <sup>3495</sup> T : <sup>3500</sup> N : <sup>3505</sup> T : <sup>3510</sup> N : <sup>3515</sup> T : <sup>3520</sup> N : <sup>3525</sup> T : <sup>3530</sup> N : <sup>3535</sup> T : <sup>3540</sup> N : <sup>3545</sup> T : <sup>3550</sup> N : <sup>3555</sup> T : <sup>3560</sup> N : <sup>3565</sup> T : <sup>3570</sup> N : <sup>3575</sup> T : <sup>3580</sup> N : <sup>3585</sup> T : <sup>3590</sup> N : <sup>3595</sup> T : <sup>3600</sup> N : <sup>3605</sup> T : <sup>3610</sup> N : <sup>3615</sup> T : <sup>3620</sup> N : <sup>3625</sup> T : <sup>3630</sup> N : <sup>3635</sup> T : <sup>3640</sup> N : <sup>3645</sup> T : <sup>3650</sup> N : <sup>3655</sup> T : <sup>3660</sup> N : <sup>3665</sup> T : <sup>3670</sup> N : <sup>3675</sup> T : <sup>3680</sup> N : <sup>3685</sup> T : <sup>3690</sup> N : <sup>3695</sup> T : <sup>3700</sup> N : <sup>3705</sup> T : <sup>3710</sup> N : <sup>3715</sup> T : <sup>3720</sup> N : <sup>3725</sup> T : <sup>3730</sup> N : <sup>3735</sup> T : <sup>3740</sup> N : <sup>3745</sup> T : <sup>3750</sup> N : <sup>3755</sup> T : <sup>3760</sup> N : <sup>3765</sup> T : <sup>3770</sup> N : <sup>3775</sup> T : <sup>3780</sup> N : <sup>3785</sup> T : <sup>3790</sup> N : <sup>3795</sup> T : <sup>3800</sup> N : <sup>3805</sup> T : <sup>3810</sup> N : <sup>3815</sup> T : <sup>3820</sup> N : <sup>3825</sup> T : <sup>3830</sup> N : <sup>3835</sup> T : <sup>3840</sup> N : <sup>3845</sup> T : <sup>3850</sup> N : <sup>3855</sup> T : <sup>3860</sup> N : <sup>3865</sup> T : <sup>3870</sup> N : <sup>3875</sup> T : <sup>3880</sup> N : <sup>3885</sup> T : <sup>3890</sup> N : <sup>3895</sup> T : <sup>3900</sup> N : <sup>3905</sup> T : <sup>3910</sup> N : <sup>3915</sup> T : <sup>3920</sup> N : <sup>3925</sup> T : <sup>3930</sup> N : <sup>3935</sup> T : <sup>3940</sup> N : <sup>3945</sup> T : <sup>3950</sup> N : <sup>3955</sup> T : <sup>3960</sup> N : <sup>3965</sup> T : <sup>3970</sup> N : <sup>3975</sup> T : <sup>3980</sup> N : <sup>3985</sup> T : <sup>3990</sup> N : <sup>3995</sup> T : <sup>4000</sup> N : <sup>4005</sup> T : <sup>4010</sup> N : <sup>4015</sup> T : <sup>4020</sup> N : <sup>4025</sup> T : <sup>4030</sup> N : <sup>4035</sup> T : <sup>4040</sup> N : <sup>4045</sup> T : <sup>4050</sup> N : <sup>4055</sup> T : <sup>4060</sup> N : <sup>4065</sup> T : <sup>4070</sup> N : <sup>4075</sup> T : <sup>4080</sup> N : <sup>4085</sup> T : <sup>4090</sup> N : <sup>4095</sup> T : <sup>4100</sup> N : <sup>4105</sup> T : <sup>4110</sup> N : <sup>4115</sup> T : <sup>4120</sup> N : <sup>4125</sup> T : <sup>4130</sup> N : <sup>4135</sup> T : <sup>4140</sup> N : <sup>4145</sup> T : <sup>4150</sup> N : <sup>4155</sup> T : <sup>4160</sup> N : <sup>4165</sup> T : <sup>4170</sup> N : <sup>4175</sup> T : <sup>4180</sup> N : <sup>4185</sup> T : <sup>4190</sup> N : <sup>4195</sup> T : <sup>4200</sup> N : <sup>4205</sup> T : <sup>4210</sup> N : <sup>4215</sup> T : <sup>4220</sup> N : <sup>4225</sup> T : <sup>4230</sup> N : <sup>4235</sup> T : <sup>4240</sup> N : <sup>4245</sup> T : <sup>4250</sup> N : <sup>4255</sup> T : <sup>4260</sup> N : <sup>4265</sup> T : <sup>4270</sup> N : <sup>4275</sup> T : <sup>4280</sup> N : <sup>4285</sup> T : <sup>4290</sup> N : <sup>4295</sup> T : <sup>4300</sup> N : <sup>4305</sup> T : <sup>4310</sup> N : <sup>4315</sup> T : <sup>4320</sup> N : <sup>4325</sup> T : <sup>4330</sup> N : <sup>4335</sup> T : <sup>4340</sup> N : <sup>4345</sup> T : <sup>4350</sup> N : <sup>4355</sup> T : <sup>4360</sup> N : <sup>4365</sup> T : <sup>4370</sup> N : <sup>4375</sup> T : <sup>4380</sup> N : <sup>4385</sup> T : <sup>4390</sup> N : <sup>4395</sup> T : <sup>4400</sup> N : <sup>4405</sup> T : <sup>4410</sup> N : <sup>4415</sup> T : <sup>4420</sup> N : <sup>4425</sup> T : <sup>4430</sup> N : <sup>4435</sup> T : <sup>4440</sup> N : <sup>4445</sup> T : <sup>4450</sup> N : <sup>4455</sup> T : <sup>4460</sup> N : <sup>4465</sup> T : <sup>4470</sup> N : <sup>4475</sup> T : <sup>4480</sup> N : <sup>4485</sup> T : <sup>4490</sup> N : <sup>4495</sup> T : <sup>4500</sup> N : <sup>4505</sup> T : <sup>4510</sup> N : <sup>4515</sup> T : <sup>4520</sup> N : <sup>4525</sup> T : <sup>4530</sup> N : <sup>4535</sup> T : <sup>4540</sup> N : <sup>4545</sup> T : <sup>4550</sup> N : <sup>4555</sup> T : <sup>4560</sup> N : <sup>4565</sup> T : <sup>4570</sup> N : <sup>4575</sup> T : <sup>4580</sup> N : <sup>4585</sup> T : <sup>4590</sup> N : <sup>4595</sup> T : <sup>4600</sup> N : <sup>4605</sup> T : <sup>4610</sup> N : <sup>4615</sup> T : <sup>4620</sup> N : <sup>4625</sup> T : <sup>4630</sup> N : <sup>4635</sup> T : <sup>4640</sup> N : <sup>4645</sup> T : <sup>4650</sup> N : <sup>4655</sup> T : <sup>4660</sup> N : <sup>4665</sup> T : <sup>4670</sup> N : <sup>4675</sup> T : <sup>4680</sup> N : <sup>4685</sup> T : <sup>4690</sup> N : <sup>4695</sup> T : <sup>4700</sup> N : <sup>4705</sup> T : <sup>4710</sup> N : <sup>4715</sup> T : <sup>4720</sup> N : <sup>4725</sup> T : <sup>4730</sup> N : <sup>4735</sup> T : <sup>4740</sup> N : <sup>4745</sup> T : <sup>4750</sup> N : <sup>4755</sup> T : <sup>4760</sup> N : <sup>4765</sup> T : <sup>4770</sup> N : <sup>4775</sup> T : <sup>4780</sup> N : <sup>4785</sup> T : <sup>4790</sup> N : <sup>4795</sup> T : <sup>4800</sup> N : <sup>4805</sup> T : <sup>4810</sup> N : <sup>4815</sup> T : <sup>4820</sup> N : <sup>4825</sup> T : <sup>4830</sup> N : <sup>4835</sup> T : <sup>4840</sup> N : <sup>4845</sup> T : <sup>4850</sup> N : <sup>4855</sup> T : <sup>4860</sup> N : <sup>4865</sup> T : <sup>4870</sup> N : <sup>4875</sup> T : <sup>4880</sup> N : <sup>4885</sup> T : <sup>4890</sup> N : <sup>4895</sup> T : <sup>4900</sup> N : <sup>4905</sup> T : <sup>4910</sup> N : <sup>4915</sup> T : <sup>4920</sup> N : <sup>4925</sup> T : <sup>4930</sup> N : <sup>4935</sup> T : <sup>4940</sup> N : <sup>4945</sup> T : <sup>4950</sup> N : <sup>4955</sup> T : <sup>4960</sup> N : <sup>4965</sup> T : <sup>4970</sup> N : <sup>4975</sup> T : <sup>4980</sup> N : <sup>4985</sup> T : <sup>4990</sup> N : <sup>4995</sup> T : <sup>5000</sup> N : <sup>5005</sup> T : <sup>5010</sup> N : <sup>5015</sup> T : <sup>5020</sup> N : <sup>5025</sup> T : <sup>5030</sup> N : <sup>5035</sup> T : <sup>5040</sup> N : <sup>5045</sup> T : <sup>5050</sup> N : <sup>5055</sup> T : <sup>5060</sup> N : <sup>5065</sup> T : <sup>5070</sup> N : <sup>5075</sup> T : <sup>5080</sup> N : <sup>5085</sup> T : <sup>5090</sup> N : <sup>5095</sup> T : <



tween the fires of 1413 and 1476 and N624 was found in a poorly-defined situation in S Engalgården, possibly below the 1332 fire-layer.

𐌰𐌆𐌺𐌵𐌶𐌿𐌺𐌰  
auemaria

a) 𐌰𐌆𐌺𐌵𐌶𐌿𐌺𐌰  
auemaria

b) 𐌰𐌵

𐌰𐌆𐌺𐌵𐌶𐌿𐌺𐌰  
aue ma

*Ave Maria*

"Hail, Mary"

Cf the preceding inscriptions.

N622 has a single rune stave which can be read as an *i*-rune, preceding *Ave Maria*. It may have been added later to improve the aesthetic appearance, as the inscription was otherwise asymmetrically placed.

On the underside of the base containing N623 are two signs which can be read either as runes or Roman letters: 𐌰𐌵, but regardless of which way they are read, the first sign is reversed. They may be an ownership mark.

N624 lacks the last three runes of *Maria*.

#### N625 (BRM 12883)

This inscription is on a stick which has been trimmed to a thin sliver 120 × 11 × 2 mm. It was found in N Bugården in back-filled deposits in the old harbour basin. The deposits lay below the 1332 fire-layer.

𐌰𐌆  
aue

*Ave*

"Hail"

Cf the preceding inscriptions.

Nothing of the inscription is missing, but it is possibly unfinished, the intention being to carve the full *Ave Maria*, for which there would certainly have been room on this piece of wood.

#### N626 (BRM 1244)

The inscription is on the base of a stave-tankard of the same sort as N622, N623 and N624. It measures 104 mm in diameter and is 2 mm thick. It was found in the drainage channel outside the southern side-wall of Bugården, but it cannot be placed chronologically.

𐌶𐌿𐌺𐌰  
maria

*Maria*

"Mary"

The inscription must be an invocation to the Blessed Virgin, in the same way as *Ave Maria*. It cannot denote the owner of the object, as the name *Maria* was not used in Norway in the Middle Ages, except for royalty.

## PATER NOSTER AND AVE MARIA INSCRIPTIONS

At least twelve examples of Pater Noster inscriptions written in runes were previously known in Norway. The whole prayer is found only on a plaque of lead from Ulstad in Lom, Gudbrandsdal (N53). Most of the others have only the opening two words. In five cases they form part of a memorial inscription, including some with a direct appeal to the observer to say the prayer for the soul of the deceased. Five others are in churches, carved on walls or pillars. Only two of the Pater Noster inscriptions previously known were on small objects comparable to the two Pater Noster finds from Bryggen. They are both on lead, the plaque from Ulstad mentioned above, which also includes the names of the four evangelists, and a lead cross from Osen in Gaular, in the district of Sunnfjord in W Norway, on which the first part of the prayer is inscribed together with a number of magico-religious formulae or spells in Latin (Maal og Minne 1980, 6–12). Both the choice of material and the text clearly indicate that these have been amulets. The two Bryggen Pater Nosters are on wooden sticks and do not contain any magical formulae. N616 with all the names, however, could perhaps be regarded as an amulet to protect those mentioned, but there may be other reasons for inscribing Pater Noster with this list of names. It is difficult to add any further comments about N615, the other Pater Noster inscription from Bryggen.

Of Ave Maria inscriptions, twelve were previously known from medieval Norway. Ten or eleven have ecclesiastical associations, being carved either on the church building itself or on objects in the church, such as a bell or a door-handle. Only one inscription contains the whole prayer, appearing in the same form as N617, and that was on the church bell from Gjerpen in Telemark. A couple of others are quite long but the majority contain the first three words or even less from the beginning of the prayer. The eleven inscriptions from Bryggen (N617–626 and N638) have not altered this pattern. Only two of the previously recorded Ave Marias belong to the same type as the Bryggen finds: one has ecclesiastical associations (N135), since it was found beneath the floor of a church and was most likely used as a lesser rosary, even though it consisted of a wooden stick. As well as the inscription *Ave Maria gratia*, it had 50 notches along the edge which have been interpreted as corresponding to the smaller beads in a lesser rosary. The other object (N27) was found in a field and consisted of a flat bronze ring with a partly damaged runic inscription. Not much more than *Ave Maria* can be deciphered and the function of the object cannot be determined. It has been suggested that it was an amulet.

Ten of the Bryggen inscriptions are cut on wooden objects: four tankard bottoms, one round stick or skewer and five triangular or rectangular sticks. The remaining one, N638, is on a strip of lead and the Ave Maria here forms part of a lengthy inscription in Latin, part of which is incomprehensible. It may have been an amulet, even though it does not include any known magical formulae. But what about the others? The four bases belong to an extensive group of objects, comprising vessels for food or drink on which magical signs have been cut, usually on the base, either inside or underneath. There are several from Bryggen. Some have the first runes of the futhark, others have various signs, such as a cross. The reason for marking vessels in this way could be the thought that the sign or formula protected the contents from harmful powers. It seems that similar markings have been used on vessels, tools and other items of equipment right up to the present day (Weisser-Aall



1947, 117 ff). Some marks have had a decorative function, or they have indicated ownership, but many of them must have had a protective function. At any rate, the Ave Maria and the sign of the cross must be regarded as part of – and indeed the tangible remains of – some ritual blessing, a *benedictio*, of the vessel or its contents. Perhaps the round sticks, such as N621, can be explained in the same way, if they were used as skewers. Like the tankard bases these can have both Ave Maria and futhark inscriptions.

The other Ave Maria sticks are more difficult to explain. Some of them may be interpreted as amulets for protection from unnamed dangers and powers.

Some of the inscriptions, both Pater Nosters and Ave Marias, have been left unfinished, whereas it seems that the intention had been to write the whole prayer. This fact may provide a clue as to their origin. The Credo and the Pater Noster have always been the central elements in the Christian faith. Parent, godparent and priest were all obliged to make sure that everyone knew them. At the end of the twelfth century the Ave Maria also began to be regarded as one of the essential elements and by the end of the thirteenth century it had become a compulsory part of religious education (KLN 1,285). This fits in with the distribution in time of the Ave Maria inscriptions from Bryggen.

The Latin in these inscriptions is on the whole correct, but certain features of the spelling reflect the contemporary pronunciation of Latin. The religious education gave all adult members of the society oral knowledge of certain prayers in Latin, but only a few were trained in reading and writing Latin texts. Between the learned class at one end of the scale and those who were totally illiterate at the other we may imagine a group who wanted to learn the runic writing and thus needed instruction in this art. The Christian prayers which everyone knew by heart would have provided easy material for teaching purposes. It is not improbable that some of the Ave Maria and Pater Noster inscriptions cut in wooden sticks can be explained simply and rationally in this way, but we should not discount the possibility that some were cut with the idea that they could be useful in some supernatural way.

#### N627 (BRM 30711)

The inscription is on a rectangular stick, 126 mm long and of varying thickness. It is 20 × 7 mm at its thickest point and at the narrower of the two ends is a constriction, perhaps for attaching a cord. The stick was found in disturbed deposits in Gullskoen and cannot be dated with certainty. At any rate it is later than the fire of 1248. The runes are on the broad face.

YIRI<sup>5</sup>IR<sup>10</sup>IR<sup>15</sup>IR<sup>20</sup>IR<sup>25</sup>IR<sup>30</sup>IR<sup>35</sup>IR<sup>40</sup>IR<sup>45</sup>IR<sup>50</sup>IR<sup>55</sup>IR<sup>60</sup>IR<sup>65</sup>IR<sup>70</sup>IR<sup>75</sup>IR<sup>80</sup>IR<sup>85</sup>IR<sup>90</sup>IR<sup>95</sup>IR<sup>100</sup>IR<sup>105</sup>IR<sup>110</sup>IR<sup>115</sup>IR<sup>120</sup>IR<sup>125</sup>IR<sup>130</sup>IR<sup>135</sup>IR<sup>140</sup>IR<sup>145</sup>IR<sup>150</sup>IR<sup>155</sup>IR<sup>160</sup>IR<sup>165</sup>IR<sup>170</sup>IR<sup>175</sup>IR<sup>180</sup>IR<sup>185</sup>IR<sup>190</sup>IR<sup>195</sup>IR<sup>200</sup>IR<sup>205</sup>IR<sup>210</sup>IR<sup>215</sup>IR<sup>220</sup>IR<sup>225</sup>IR<sup>230</sup>IR<sup>235</sup>IR<sup>240</sup>IR<sup>245</sup>IR<sup>250</sup>IR<sup>255</sup>IR<sup>260</sup>IR<sup>265</sup>IR<sup>270</sup>IR<sup>275</sup>IR<sup>280</sup>IR<sup>285</sup>IR<sup>290</sup>IR<sup>295</sup>IR<sup>300</sup>IR<sup>305</sup>IR<sup>310</sup>IR<sup>315</sup>IR<sup>320</sup>IR<sup>325</sup>IR<sup>330</sup>IR<sup>335</sup>IR<sup>340</sup>IR<sup>345</sup>IR<sup>350</sup>IR<sup>355</sup>IR<sup>360</sup>IR<sup>365</sup>IR<sup>370</sup>IR<sup>375</sup>IR<sup>380</sup>IR<sup>385</sup>IR<sup>390</sup>IR<sup>395</sup>IR<sup>400</sup>IR<sup>405</sup>IR<sup>410</sup>IR<sup>415</sup>IR<sup>420</sup>IR<sup>425</sup>IR<sup>430</sup>IR<sup>435</sup>IR<sup>440</sup>IR<sup>445</sup>IR<sup>450</sup>IR<sup>455</sup>IR<sup>460</sup>IR<sup>465</sup>IR<sup>470</sup>IR<sup>475</sup>IR<sup>480</sup>IR<sup>485</sup>IR<sup>490</sup>IR<sup>495</sup>IR<sup>500</sup>IR<sup>505</sup>IR<sup>510</sup>IR<sup>515</sup>IR<sup>520</sup>IR<sup>525</sup>IR<sup>530</sup>IR<sup>535</sup>IR<sup>540</sup>IR<sup>545</sup>IR<sup>550</sup>IR<sup>555</sup>IR<sup>560</sup>IR<sup>565</sup>IR<sup>570</sup>IR<sup>575</sup>IR<sup>580</sup>IR<sup>585</sup>IR<sup>590</sup>IR<sup>595</sup>IR<sup>600</sup>IR<sup>605</sup>IR<sup>610</sup>IR<sup>615</sup>IR<sup>620</sup>IR<sup>625</sup>IR<sup>630</sup>IR<sup>635</sup>IR<sup>640</sup>IR<sup>645</sup>IR<sup>650</sup>IR<sup>655</sup>IR<sup>660</sup>IR<sup>665</sup>IR<sup>670</sup>IR<sup>675</sup>IR<sup>680</sup>IR<sup>685</sup>IR<sup>690</sup>IR<sup>695</sup>IR<sup>700</sup>IR<sup>705</sup>IR<sup>710</sup>IR<sup>715</sup>IR<sup>720</sup>IR<sup>725</sup>IR<sup>730</sup>IR<sup>735</sup>IR<sup>740</sup>IR<sup>745</sup>IR<sup>750</sup>IR<sup>755</sup>IR<sup>760</sup>IR<sup>765</sup>IR<sup>770</sup>IR<sup>775</sup>IR<sup>780</sup>IR<sup>785</sup>IR<sup>790</sup>IR<sup>795</sup>IR<sup>800</sup>IR<sup>805</sup>IR<sup>810</sup>IR<sup>815</sup>IR<sup>820</sup>IR<sup>825</sup>IR<sup>830</sup>IR<sup>835</sup>IR<sup>840</sup>IR<sup>845</sup>IR<sup>850</sup>IR<sup>855</sup>IR<sup>860</sup>IR<sup>865</sup>IR<sup>870</sup>IR<sup>875</sup>IR<sup>880</sup>IR<sup>885</sup>IR<sup>890</sup>IR<sup>895</sup>IR<sup>900</sup>IR<sup>905</sup>IR<sup>910</sup>IR<sup>915</sup>IR<sup>920</sup>IR<sup>925</sup>IR<sup>930</sup>IR<sup>935</sup>IR<sup>940</sup>IR<sup>945</sup>IR<sup>950</sup>IR<sup>955</sup>IR<sup>960</sup>IR<sup>965</sup>IR<sup>970</sup>IR<sup>975</sup>IR<sup>980</sup>IR<sup>985</sup>IR<sup>990</sup>IR<sup>995</sup>IR<sup>1000</sup>IR<sup>1005</sup>IR<sup>1010</sup>IR<sup>1015</sup>IR<sup>1020</sup>IR<sup>1025</sup>IR<sup>1030</sup>IR<sup>1035</sup>IR<sup>1040</sup>IR<sup>1045</sup>IR<sup>1050</sup>IR<sup>1055</sup>IR<sup>1060</sup>IR<sup>1065</sup>IR<sup>1070</sup>IR<sup>1075</sup>IR<sup>1080</sup>IR<sup>1085</sup>IR<sup>1090</sup>IR<sup>1095</sup>IR<sup>1100</sup>IR<sup>1105</sup>IR<sup>1110</sup>IR<sup>1115</sup>IR<sup>1120</sup>IR<sup>1125</sup>IR<sup>1130</sup>IR<sup>1135</sup>IR<sup>1140</sup>IR<sup>1145</sup>IR<sup>1150</sup>IR<sup>1155</sup>IR<sup>1160</sup>IR<sup>1165</sup>IR<sup>1170</sup>IR<sup>1175</sup>IR<sup>1180</sup>IR<sup>1185</sup>IR<sup>1190</sup>IR<sup>1195</sup>IR<sup>1200</sup>IR<sup>1205</sup>IR<sup>1210</sup>IR<sup>1215</sup>IR<sup>1220</sup>IR<sup>1225</sup>IR<sup>1230</sup>IR<sup>1235</sup>IR<sup>1240</sup>IR<sup>1245</sup>IR<sup>1250</sup>IR<sup>1255</sup>IR<sup>1260</sup>IR<sup>1265</sup>IR<sup>1270</sup>IR<sup>1275</sup>IR<sup>1280</sup>IR<sup>1285</sup>IR<sup>1290</sup>IR<sup>1295</sup>IR<sup>1300</sup>IR<sup>1305</sup>IR<sup>1310</sup>IR<sup>1315</sup>IR<sup>1320</sup>IR<sup>1325</sup>IR<sup>1330</sup>IR<sup>1335</sup>IR<sup>1340</sup>IR<sup>1345</sup>IR<sup>1350</sup>IR<sup>1355</sup>IR<sup>1360</sup>IR<sup>1365</sup>IR<sup>1370</sup>IR<sup>1375</sup>IR<sup>1380</sup>IR<sup>1385</sup>IR<sup>1390</sup>IR<sup>1395</sup>IR<sup>1400</sup>IR<sup>1405</sup>IR<sup>1410</sup>IR<sup>1415</sup>IR<sup>1420</sup>IR<sup>1425</sup>IR<sup>1430</sup>IR<sup>1435</sup>IR<sup>1440</sup>IR<sup>1445</sup>IR<sup>1450</sup>IR<sup>1455</sup>IR<sup>1460</sup>IR<sup>1465</sup>IR<sup>1470</sup>IR<sup>1475</sup>IR<sup>1480</sup>IR<sup>1485</sup>IR<sup>1490</sup>IR<sup>1495</sup>IR<sup>1500</sup>IR<sup>1505</sup>IR<sup>1510</sup>IR<sup>1515</sup>IR<sup>1520</sup>IR<sup>1525</sup>IR<sup>1530</sup>IR<sup>1535</sup>IR<sup>1540</sup>IR<sup>1545</sup>IR<sup>1550</sup>IR<sup>1555</sup>IR<sup>1560</sup>IR<sup>1565</sup>IR<sup>1570</sup>IR<sup>1575</sup>IR<sup>1580</sup>IR<sup>1585</sup>IR<sup>1590</sup>IR<sup>1595</sup>IR<sup>1600</sup>IR<sup>1605</sup>IR<sup>1610</sup>IR<sup>1615</sup>IR<sup>1620</sup>IR<sup>1625</sup>IR<sup>1630</sup>IR<sup>1635</sup>IR<sup>1640</sup>IR<sup>1645</sup>IR<sup>1650</sup>IR<sup>1655</sup>IR<sup>1660</sup>IR<sup>1665</sup>IR<sup>1670</sup>IR<sup>1675</sup>IR<sup>1680</sup>IR<sup>1685</sup>IR<sup>1690</sup>IR<sup>1695</sup>IR<sup>1700</sup>IR<sup>1705</sup>IR<sup>1710</sup>IR<sup>1715</sup>IR<sup>1720</sup>IR<sup>1725</sup>IR<sup>1730</sup>IR<sup>1735</sup>IR<sup>1740</sup>IR<sup>1745</sup>IR<sup>1750</sup>IR<sup>1755</sup>IR<sup>1760</sup>IR<sup>1765</sup>IR<sup>1770</sup>IR<sup>1775</sup>IR<sup>1780</sup>IR<sup>1785</sup>IR<sup>1790</sup>IR<sup>1795</sup>IR<sup>1800</sup>IR<sup>1805</sup>IR<sup>1810</sup>IR<sup>1815</sup>IR<sup>1820</sup>IR<sup>1825</sup>IR<sup>1830</sup>IR<sup>1835</sup>IR<sup>1840</sup>IR<sup>1845</sup>IR<sup>1850</sup>IR<sup>1855</sup>IR<sup>1860</sup>IR<sup>1865</sup>IR<sup>1870</sup>IR<sup>1875</sup>IR<sup>1880</sup>IR<sup>1885</sup>IR<sup>1890</sup>IR<sup>1895</sup>IR<sup>1900</sup>IR<sup>1905</sup>IR<sup>1910</sup>IR<sup>1915</sup>IR<sup>1920</sup>IR<sup>1925</sup>IR<sup>1930</sup>IR<sup>1935</sup>IR<sup>1940</sup>IR<sup>1945</sup>IR<sup>1950</sup>IR<sup>1955</sup>IR<sup>1960</sup>IR<sup>1965</sup>IR<sup>1970</sup>IR<sup>1975</sup>IR<sup>1980</sup>IR<sup>1985</sup>IR<sup>1990</sup>IR<sup>1995</sup>IR<sup>2000</sup>IR<sup>2005</sup>IR<sup>2010</sup>IR<sup>2015</sup>IR<sup>2020</sup>IR<sup>2025</sup>IR<sup>2030</sup>IR<sup>2035</sup>IR<sup>2040</sup>IR<sup>2045</sup>IR<sup>2050</sup>IR<sup>2055</sup>IR<sup>2060</sup>IR<sup>2065</sup>IR<sup>2070</sup>IR<sup>2075</sup>IR<sup>2080</sup>IR<sup>2085</sup>IR<sup>2090</sup>IR<sup>2095</sup>IR<sup>2100</sup>IR<sup>2105</sup>IR<sup>2110</sup>IR<sup>2115</sup>IR<sup>2120</sup>IR<sup>2125</sup>IR<sup>2130</sup>IR<sup>2135</sup>IR<sup>2140</sup>IR<sup>2145</sup>IR<sup>2150</sup>IR<sup>2155</sup>IR<sup>2160</sup>IR<sup>2165</sup>IR<sup>2170</sup>IR<sup>2175</sup>IR<sup>2180</sup>IR<sup>2185</sup>IR<sup>2190</sup>IR<sup>2195</sup>IR<sup>2200</sup>IR<sup>2205</sup>IR<sup>2210</sup>IR<sup>2215</sup>IR<sup>2220</sup>IR<sup>2225</sup>IR<sup>2230</sup>IR<sup>2235</sup>IR<sup>2240</sup>IR<sup>2245</sup>IR<sup>2250</sup>IR<sup>2255</sup>IR<sup>2260</sup>IR<sup>2265</sup>IR<sup>2270</sup>IR<sup>2275</sup>IR<sup>2280</sup>IR<sup>2285</sup>IR<sup>2290</sup>IR<sup>2295</sup>IR<sup>2300</sup>IR<sup>2305</sup>IR<sup>2310</sup>IR<sup>2315</sup>IR<sup>2320</sup>IR<sup>2325</sup>IR<sup>2330</sup>IR<sup>2335</sup>IR<sup>2340</sup>IR<sup>2345</sup>IR<sup>2350</sup>IR<sup>2355</sup>IR<sup>2360</sup>IR<sup>2365</sup>IR<sup>2370</sup>IR<sup>2375</sup>IR<sup>2380</sup>IR<sup>2385</sup>IR<sup>2390</sup>IR<sup>2395</sup>IR<sup>2400</sup>IR<sup>2405</sup>IR<sup>2410</sup>IR<sup>2415</sup>IR<sup>2420</sup>IR<sup>2425</sup>IR<sup>2430</sup>IR<sup>2435</sup>IR<sup>2440</sup>IR<sup>2445</sup>IR<sup>2450</sup>IR<sup>2455</sup>IR<sup>2460</sup>IR<sup>2465</sup>IR<sup>2470</sup>IR<sup>2475</sup>IR<sup>2480</sup>IR<sup>2485</sup>IR<sup>2490</sup>IR<sup>2495</sup>IR<sup>2500</sup>IR<sup>2505</sup>IR<sup>2510</sup>IR<sup>2515</sup>IR<sup>2520</sup>IR<sup>2525</sup>IR<sup>2530</sup>IR<sup>2535</sup>IR<sup>2540</sup>IR<sup>2545</sup>IR<sup>2550</sup>IR<sup>2555</sup>IR<sup>2560</sup>IR<sup>2565</sup>IR<sup>2570</sup>IR<sup>2575</sup>IR<sup>2580</sup>IR<sup>2585</sup>IR<sup>2590</sup>IR<sup>2595</sup>IR<sup>2600</sup>IR<sup>2605</sup>IR<sup>2610</sup>IR<sup>2615</sup>IR<sup>2620</sup>IR<sup>2625</sup>IR<sup>2630</sup>IR<sup>2635</sup>IR<sup>2640</sup>IR<sup>2645</sup>IR<sup>2650</sup>IR<sup>2655</sup>IR<sup>2660</sup>IR<sup>2665</sup>IR<sup>2670</sup>IR<sup>2675</sup>IR<sup>2680</sup>IR<sup>2685</sup>IR<sup>2690</sup>IR<sup>2695</sup>IR<sup>2700</sup>IR<sup>2705</sup>IR<sup>2710</sup>IR<sup>2715</sup>IR<sup>2720</sup>IR<sup>2725</sup>IR<sup>2730</sup>IR<sup>2735</sup>IR<sup>2740</sup>IR<sup>2745</sup>IR<sup>2750</sup>IR<sup>2755</sup>IR<sup>2760</sup>IR<sup>2765</sup>IR<sup>2770</sup>IR<sup>2775</sup>IR<sup>2780</sup>IR<sup>2785</sup>IR<sup>2790</sup>IR<sup>2795</sup>IR<sup>2800</sup>IR<sup>2805</sup>IR<sup>2810</sup>IR<sup>2815</sup>IR<sup>2820</sup>IR<sup>2825</sup>IR<sup>2830</sup>IR<sup>2835</sup>IR<sup>2840</sup>IR<sup>2845</sup>IR<sup>2850</sup>IR<sup>2855</sup>IR<sup>2860</sup>IR<sup>2865</sup>IR<sup>2870</sup>IR<sup>2875</sup>IR<sup>2880</sup>IR<sup>2885</sup>IR<sup>2890</sup>IR<sup>2895</sup>IR<sup>2900</sup>IR<sup>2905</sup>IR<sup>2910</sup>IR<sup>2915</sup>IR<sup>2920</sup>IR<sup>2925</sup>IR<sup>2930</sup>IR<sup>2935</sup>IR<sup>2940</sup>IR<sup>2945</sup>IR<sup>2950</sup>IR<sup>2955</sup>IR<sup>2960</sup>IR<sup>2965</sup>IR<sup>2970</sup>IR<sup>2975</sup>IR<sup>2980</sup>IR<sup>2985</sup>IR<sup>2990</sup>IR<sup>2995</sup>IR<sup>3000</sup>IR<sup>3005</sup>IR<sup>3010</sup>IR<sup>3015</sup>IR<sup>3020</sup>IR<sup>3025</sup>IR<sup>3030</sup>IR<sup>3035</sup>IR<sup>3040</sup>IR<sup>3045</sup>IR<sup>3050</sup>IR<sup>3055</sup>IR<sup>3060</sup>IR<sup>3065</sup>IR<sup>3070</sup>IR<sup>3075</sup>IR<sup>3080</sup>IR<sup>3085</sup>IR<sup>3090</sup>IR<sup>3095</sup>IR<sup>3100</sup>IR<sup>3105</sup>IR<sup>3110</sup>IR<sup>3115</sup>IR<sup>3120</sup>IR<sup>3125</sup>IR<sup>3130</sup>IR<sup>3135</sup>IR<sup>3140</sup>IR<sup>3145</sup>IR<sup>3150</sup>IR<sup>3155</sup>IR<sup>3160</sup>IR<sup>3165</sup>IR<sup>3170</sup>IR<sup>3175</sup>IR<sup>3180</sup>IR<sup>3185</sup>IR<sup>3190</sup>IR<sup>3195</sup>IR<sup>3200</sup>IR<sup>3205</sup>IR<sup>3210</sup>IR<sup>3215</sup>IR<sup>3220</sup>IR<sup>3225</sup>IR<sup>3230</sup>IR<sup>3235</sup>IR<sup>3240</sup>IR<sup>3245</sup>IR<sup>3250</sup>IR<sup>3255</sup>IR<sup>3260</sup>IR<sup>3265</sup>IR<sup>3270</sup>IR<sup>3275</sup>IR<sup>3280</sup>IR<sup>3285</sup>IR<sup>3290</sup>IR<sup>3295</sup>IR<sup>3300</sup>IR<sup>3305</sup>IR<sup>3310</sup>IR<sup>3315</sup>IR<sup>3320</sup>IR<sup>3325</sup>IR<sup>3330</sup>IR<sup>3335</sup>IR<sup>3340</sup>IR<sup>3345</sup>IR<sup>3350</sup>IR<sup>3355</sup>IR<sup>3360</sup>IR<sup>3365</sup>IR<sup>3370</sup>IR<sup>3375</sup>IR<sup>3380</sup>IR<sup>3385</sup>IR<sup>3390</sup>IR<sup>3395</sup>IR<sup>3400</sup>IR<sup>3405</sup>IR<sup>3410</sup>IR<sup>3415</sup>IR<sup>3420</sup>IR<sup>3425</sup>IR<sup>3430</sup>IR<sup>3435</sup>IR<sup>3440</sup>IR<sup>3445</sup>IR<sup>3450</sup>IR<sup>3455</sup>IR<sup>3460</sup>IR<sup>3465</sup>IR<sup>3470</sup>IR<sup>3475</sup>IR<sup>3480</sup>IR<sup>3485</sup>IR<sup>3490</sup>IR<sup>3495</sup>IR<sup>3500</sup>IR<sup>3505</sup>IR<sup>3510</sup>IR<sup>3515</sup>IR<sup>3520</sup>IR<sup>3525</sup>IR<sup>3530</sup>IR<sup>3535</sup>IR<sup>3540</sup>IR<sup>3545</sup>IR<sup>3550</sup>IR<sup>3555</sup>IR<sup>3560</sup>IR<sup>3565</sup>IR<sup>3570</sup>IR<sup>3575</sup>IR<sup>3580</sup>IR<sup>3585</sup>IR<sup>3590</sup>IR<sup>3595</sup>IR<sup>3600</sup>IR<sup>3605</sup>IR<sup>3610</sup>IR<sup>3615</sup>IR<sup>3620</sup>IR<sup>3625</sup>IR<sup>3630</sup>IR<sup>3635</sup>IR<sup>3640</sup>IR<sup>3645</sup>IR<sup>3650</sup>IR<sup>3655</sup>IR<sup>3660</sup>IR<sup>3665</sup>IR<sup>3670</sup>IR<sup>3675</sup>IR<sup>3680</sup>IR<sup>3685</sup>IR<sup>3690</sup>IR<sup>3695</sup>IR<sup>3700</sup>IR<sup>3705</sup>IR<sup>3710</sup>IR<sup>3715</sup>IR<sup>3720</sup>IR<sup>3725</sup>IR<sup>3730</sup>IR<sup>3735</sup>IR<sup>3740</sup>IR<sup>3745</sup>IR<sup>3750</sup>IR<sup>3755</sup>IR<sup>3760</sup>IR<sup>3765</sup>IR<sup>3770</sup>IR<sup>3775</sup>IR<sup>3780</sup>IR<sup>3785</sup>IR<sup>3790</sup>IR<sup>3795</sup>IR<sup>3800</sup>IR<sup>3805</sup>IR<sup>3810</sup>IR<sup>3815</sup>IR<sup>3820</sup>IR<sup>3825</sup>IR<sup>3830</sup>IR<sup>3835</sup>IR<sup>3840</sup>IR<sup>3845</sup>IR<sup>3850</sup>IR<sup>3855</sup>IR<sup>3860</sup>IR<sup>3865</sup>IR<sup>3870</sup>IR<sup>3875</sup>IR<sup>3880</sup>IR<sup>3885</sup>IR<sup>3890</sup>IR<sup>3895</sup>IR<sup>3900</sup>IR<sup>3905</sup>IR<sup>3910</sup>IR<sup>3915</sup>IR<sup>3920</sup>IR<sup>3925</sup>IR<sup>3930</sup>IR<sup>3935</sup>IR<sup>3940</sup>IR<sup>3945</sup>IR<sup>3950</sup>IR<sup>3955</sup>IR<sup>3960</sup>IR<sup>3965</sup>IR<sup>3970</sup>IR<sup>3975</sup>IR<sup>3980</sup>IR<sup>3985</sup>IR<sup>3990</sup>IR<sup>3995</sup>IR<sup>4000</sup>IR<sup>4005</sup>IR<sup>4010</sup>IR<sup>4015</sup>IR<sup>4020</sup>IR<sup>4025</sup>IR<sup>4030</sup>IR<sup>4035</sup>IR<sup>4040</sup>IR<sup>4045</sup>IR<sup>4050</sup>IR<sup>4055</sup>IR<sup>4060</sup>IR<sup>4065</sup>IR<sup>4070</sup>IR<sup>4075</sup>IR<sup>4080</sup>IR<sup>4085</sup>IR<sup>4090</sup>IR<sup>4095</sup>IR<sup>4100</sup>IR<sup>4105</sup>IR<sup>4110</sup>IR<sup>4115</sup>IR<sup>4120</sup>IR<sup>4125</sup>IR<sup>4130</sup>IR<sup>4135</sup>IR<sup>4140</sup>IR<sup>4145</sup>IR<sup>4150</sup>IR<sup>4155</sup>IR<sup>4160</sup>IR<sup>4165</sup>IR<sup>4170</sup>IR<sup>4175</sup>IR<sup>4180</sup>IR<sup>4185</sup>IR<sup>4190</sup>IR<sup>4195</sup>IR<sup>4200</sup>IR<sup>4205</sup>IR<sup>4210</sup>IR<sup>4215</sup>IR<sup>4220</sup>IR<sup>4225</sup>IR<sup>4230</sup>IR<sup>4235</sup>IR<sup>4240</sup>IR<sup>4245</sup>IR<sup>4250</sup>IR<sup>4255</sup>IR<sup>4260</sup>IR<sup>4265</sup>IR<sup>4270</sup>IR<sup>4275</sup>IR<sup>4280</sup>IR<sup>4285</sup>IR<sup>4290</sup>IR<sup>4295</sup>IR<sup>4300</sup>IR<sup>4305</sup>IR<sup>4310</sup>IR<sup>4315</sup>IR<sup>4320</sup>IR<sup>4325</sup>IR<sup>4330</sup>IR<sup>4335</sup>IR<sup>4340</sup>IR<sup>4345</sup>IR<sup>4350</sup>IR<sup>4355</sup>IR<sup>4360</sup>IR<sup>4365</sup>IR<sup>4370</sup>IR<sup>4375</sup>IR<sup>4380</sup>IR<sup>4385</sup>IR<sup>4390</sup>IR<sup>4395</sup>IR<sup>4400</sup>IR<sup>4405</sup>IR<sup>4410</sup>IR<sup>4415</sup>IR<sup>4420</sup>IR<sup>4425</sup>IR<sup>4430</sup>IR<sup>4435</sup>IR<sup>4440</sup>IR<sup>4445</sup>IR<sup>4450</sup>IR<sup>4455</sup>IR<sup>4460</sup>IR<sup>4465</sup>IR<sup>4470</sup>IR<sup>4475</sup>IR<sup>4480</sup>IR<sup>4485</sup>IR<sup>4490</sup>IR<sup>4495</sup>IR<sup>4500</sup>IR<sup>4505</sup>IR<sup>4510</sup>IR<sup>4515</sup>IR<sup>4520</sup>IR<sup>4525</sup>IR<sup>4530</sup>IR<sup>4535</sup>IR<sup>4540</sup>IR<sup>4545</sup>IR<sup>4550</sup>IR<sup>4555</sup>IR<sup>4560</sup>IR<sup>4565</sup>IR<sup>4570</sup>IR<sup>4575</sup>IR<sup>4580</sup>IR<sup>4585</sup>IR<sup>4590</sup>IR<sup>4595</sup>IR<sup>4600</sup>IR<sup>4605</sup>IR<sup>4610</sup>IR<sup>4615</sup>IR<sup>4620</sup>IR<sup>4625</sup>IR<sup>4630</sup>IR<sup>4635</sup>IR<sup>4640</sup>IR<sup>4645</sup>IR<sup>4650</sup>IR<sup>4655</sup>IR<sup>4660</sup>IR<sup>4665</sup>IR<sup>4670</sup>IR<sup>4675</sup>IR<sup>4680</sup>IR<sup>4685</sup>IR<sup>4690</sup>IR<sup>4695</sup>IR<sup>4700</sup>IR<sup>4705</sup>IR<sup>4710</sup>IR<sup>4715</sup>IR<sup>4720</sup>IR<sup>4725</sup>IR<sup>4730</sup>IR<sup>4735</sup>IR<sup>4740</sup>IR<sup>4745</sup>IR<sup>4750</sup>IR<sup>4755</sup>IR<sup>4760</sup>IR<sup>4765</sup>IR<sup>4770</sup>IR<sup>4775</sup>IR<sup>4780</sup>IR<sup>4785</sup>IR<sup>4790</sup>IR<sup>4795</sup>IR<sup>4800</sup>IR<sup>4805</sup>IR<sup>4810</sup>IR<sup>4815</sup>IR<sup>4820</sup>IR<sup>4825</sup>IR<sup>4830</sup>IR<sup>4835</sup>IR<sup>4840</sup>IR<sup>4845</sup>IR<sup>4850</sup>IR<sup>4855</sup>IR<sup>4860</sup>IR<sup>4865</sup>IR<sup>4870</sup>IR<sup>4875</sup>IR<sup>4880</sup>IR<sup>4885</sup>IR<sup>4890</sup>IR<sup>4895</sup>IR<sup>4900</sup>IR<sup>4905</sup>IR<sup>4910</sup>IR<sup>4915</sup>IR<sup>4920</sup>IR<sup>4925</sup>IR<sup>4930</sup>IR<sup>4935</sup>IR<sup>4940</sup>IR<sup>4945</sup>IR<sup>4950</sup>IR<sup>4955</sup>IR<sup>4960</sup>IR<sup>4965</sup>IR<sup>4970</sup>IR<sup>4975</sup>IR<sup>4980</sup>IR<sup>4985</sup>IR<sup>4990</sup>IR<sup>4995</sup>IR<sup>5000</sup>IR<sup>5005</sup>IR<sup>5010</sup>IR<sup>5015</sup>IR<sup>5020</sup>IR<sup>5025</sup>IR<sup>5030</sup>IR<sup>5035</sup>IR<sup>5040</sup>IR<sup>5045</sup>IR<sup>5050</sup>IR<sup>5055</sup>IR<sup>5060</sup>IR<sup>5065</sup>IR<sup>5070</sup>IR<sup>5075</sup>IR<sup>5080</sup>IR<sup>5085</sup>IR<sup>5090</sup>IR<sup>5095</sup>IR<sup>5100</sup>IR<sup>5105</sup>IR<sup>5110</sup>IR<sup>5115</sup>IR<sup>5120</sup>IR<sup>5125</sup>IR<sup>5130</sup>IR<sup>5135</sup>IR<sup>5140</sup>IR<sup>5145</sup>IR<sup>5150</sup>IR<sup>5155</sup>IR<sup>5160</sup>IR<sup>5165</sup>IR<sup>5170</sup>IR<sup>5175</sup>IR<sup>5180</sup>IR<sup>5185</sup>IR<sup>5190</sup>IR<sup>5195</sup>IR<sup>5200</sup>IR<sup>5205</sup>IR<sup>5210</sup>IR<sup>5215</sup>IR<sup>5220</sup>IR<sup>5225</sup>IR<sup>5230</sup>IR<sup>5235</sup>IR<sup>5240</sup>IR<sup>5245</sup>IR<sup>5250</sup>IR<sup>5255</sup>IR<sup>5260</sup>IR<sup>5265</sup>IR<sup>5270</sup>IR<sup>5275</sup>IR<sup>5280</sup>IR<sup>5285</sup>IR<sup>5290</sup>IR<sup>5295</sup>IR<sup>5300</sup>IR<sup>5305</sup>IR<sup>5310</sup>IR<sup>5315</sup>IR<sup>5320</sup>IR<sup>5325</sup>IR<sup>5330</sup>IR<sup>5335</sup>IR<sup>5340</sup>IR<sup>5345</sup>IR<sup>53</sup>



Our inscription from Bryggen is cut on a part of something whose function is unknown. The other line of runes provides no help here, either in understanding what the object was or why it carried a quotation from the Psalms. The text in line a makes no sense and has no immediate parallels. The nearest is a second inscription from Bryggen (B404) in which the syllable *si* is repeated several times, but in this case the text continues differently – and intelligibly. Mainly on the basis of the first part of the text, the inscription has been placed in association with a third text from Bryggen (B524) and with an inscription from Narssaq in Greenland, which both have a meaningless string of syllables, *se* and *sa* respectively. Whether there is any connection between these and our present inscription is doubtful.

The six-armed star which follows the runes does not contribute to our understanding of this piece. It may be a variation of the Christ monogram. Similar devices are found on other rune-sticks and they have also been used in later times as magic symbols for various purposes. With this device and the incomprehensible formula in line a, our inscription becomes even more strongly associated with magic than the other known inscriptions from the Psalms.

#### N629 (BRM 31525)

The inscription is on a square rune-stick which was found in N Gullskoen just above the 1248 fire-layer. It is 94 mm long and now measures 8 × 7 mm in cross-section. There are runes on all four sides but the surfaces on two opposing sides have peeled slightly, so that there are only traces of some of the runes at one end of the stick. Side a begins with a cross.

a) + <sup>5</sup> <sup>10</sup> <sup>15</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>30</sup>  
 𐀀 𐀁 𐀂 𐀃 𐀄 𐀅 𐀆 𐀇 𐀈 𐀉 𐀊 𐀋 𐀌 𐀍 𐀎 𐀏 𐀐 𐀑 𐀒 𐀓 𐀔 𐀕 𐀖 𐀗 𐀘 𐀙 𐀚 𐀛 𐀜 𐀝 𐀞 𐀟 𐀠 𐀡 𐀢 𐀣 𐀤 𐀥 𐀦 𐀧 𐀨 𐀩 𐀪 𐀫 𐀬 𐀭 𐀮 𐀯 𐀰 𐀱 𐀲 𐀳 𐀴 𐀵 𐀶 𐀷 𐀸 𐀹 𐀺 𐀻 𐀼 𐀽 𐀾 𐀿 𐁀 𐁁 𐁂 𐁃 𐁄 𐁅 𐁆 𐁇 𐁈 𐁉 𐁊 𐁋 𐁌 𐁍 𐁎 𐁏 𐁐 𐁑 𐁒 𐁓 𐁔 𐁕 𐁖 𐁗 𐁘 𐁙 𐁚 𐁛 𐁜 𐁝 𐁞 𐁟 𐁠 𐁡 𐁢 𐁣 𐁤 𐁥 𐁦 𐁧 𐁨 𐁩 𐁪 𐁫 𐁬 𐁭 𐁮 𐁯 𐁰 𐁱 𐁲 𐁳 𐁴 𐁵 𐁶 𐁷 𐁸 𐁹 𐁺 𐁻 𐁼 𐁽 𐁾 𐁿 𐂀 𐂁 𐂂 𐂃 𐂄 𐂅 𐂆 𐂇 𐂈 𐂉 𐂊 𐂋 𐂌 𐂍 𐂎 𐂏 𐂐 𐂑 𐂒 𐂓 𐂔 𐂕 𐂖 𐂗 𐂘 𐂙 𐂚 𐂛 𐂜 𐂝 𐂞 𐂟 𐂠 𐂡 𐂢 𐂣 𐂤 𐂥 𐂦 𐂧 𐂨 𐂩 𐂪 𐂫 𐂬 𐂭 𐂮 𐂯 𐂰 𐂱 𐂲 𐂳 𐂴 𐂵 𐂶 𐂷 𐂸 𐂹 𐂺 𐂻 𐂼 𐂽 𐂾 𐂿 𐃀 𐃁 𐃂 𐃃 𐃄 𐃅 𐃆 𐃇 𐃈 𐃉 𐃊 𐃋 𐃌 𐃍 𐃎 𐃏 𐃐 𐃑 𐃒 𐃓 𐃔 𐃕 𐃖 𐃗 𐃘 𐃙 𐃚 𐃛 𐃜 𐃝 𐃞 𐃟 𐃠 𐃡 𐃢 𐃣 𐃤 𐃥 𐃦 𐃧 𐃨 𐃩 𐃪 𐃫 𐃬 𐃭 𐃮 𐃯 𐃰 𐃱 𐃲 𐃳 𐃴 𐃵 𐃶 𐃷 𐃸 𐃹 𐃺 𐃻 𐃼 𐃽 𐃾 𐃿 𐄀 𐄁 𐄂 𐄃 𐄄 𐄅 𐄆 𐄇 𐄈 𐄉 𐄊 𐄋 𐄌 𐄍 𐄎 𐄏 𐄐 𐄑 𐄒 𐄓 𐄔 𐄕 𐄖 𐄗 𐄘 𐄙 𐄚 𐄛 𐄜 𐄝 𐄞 𐄟 𐄠 𐄡 𐄢 𐄣 𐄤 𐄥 𐄦 𐄧 𐄨 𐄩 𐄪 𐄫 𐄬 𐄭 𐄮 𐄯 𐄰 𐄱 𐄲 𐄳 𐄴 𐄵 𐄶 𐄷 𐄸 𐄹 𐄺 𐄻 𐄼 𐄽 𐄾 𐄿 𐅀 𐅁 𐅂 𐅃 𐅄 𐅅 𐅆 𐅇 𐅈 𐅉 𐅊 𐅋 𐅌 𐅍 𐅎 𐅏 𐅐 𐅑 𐅒 𐅓 𐅔 𐅕 𐅖 𐅗 𐅘 𐅙 𐅚 𐅛 𐅜 𐅝 𐅞 𐅟 𐅠 𐅡 𐅢 𐅣 𐅤 𐅥 𐅦 𐅧 𐅨 𐅩 𐅪 𐅫 𐅬 𐅭 𐅮 𐅯 𐅰 𐅱 𐅲 𐅳 𐅴 𐅵 𐅶 𐅷 𐅸 𐅹 𐅺 𐅻 𐅼 𐅽 𐅾 𐅿 𐆀 𐆁 𐆂 𐆃 𐆄 𐆅 𐆆 𐆇 𐆈 𐆉 𐆊 𐆋 𐆌 𐆍 𐆎 𐆏 𐆐 𐆑 𐆒 𐆓 𐆔 𐆕 𐆖 𐆗 𐆘 𐆙 𐆚 𐆛 𐆜 𐆝 𐆞 𐆟 𐆠 𐆡 𐆢 𐆣 𐆤 𐆥 𐆦 𐆧 𐆨 𐆩 𐆪 𐆫 𐆬 𐆭 𐆮 𐆯 𐆰 𐆱 𐆲 𐆳 𐆴 𐆵 𐆶 𐆷 𐆸 𐆹 𐆺 𐆻 𐆼 𐆽 𐆾 𐆿 𐇀 𐇁 𐇂 𐇃 𐇄 𐇅 𐇆 𐇇 𐇈 𐇉 𐇊 𐇋 𐇌 𐇍 𐇎 𐇏 𐇐 𐇑 𐇒 𐇓 𐇔 𐇕 𐇖 𐇗 𐇘 𐇙 𐇚 𐇛 𐇜 𐇝 𐇞 𐇟 𐇠 𐇡 𐇢 𐇣 𐇤 𐇥 𐇦 𐇧 𐇨 𐇩 𐇪 𐇫 𐇬 𐇭 𐇮 𐇯 𐇰 𐇱 𐇲 𐇳 𐇴 𐇵 𐇶 𐇷 𐇸 𐇹 𐇺 𐇻 𐇼 𐇽 𐇾 𐇿 𐈀 𐈁 𐈂 𐈃 𐈄 𐈅 𐈆 𐈇 𐈈 𐈉 𐈊 𐈋 𐈌 𐈍 𐈎 𐈏 𐈐 𐈑 𐈒 𐈓 𐈔 𐈕 𐈖 𐈗 𐈘 𐈙 𐈚 𐈛 𐈜 𐈝 𐈞 𐈟 𐈠 𐈡 𐈢 𐈣 𐈤 𐈥 𐈦 𐈧 𐈨 𐈩 𐈪 𐈫 𐈬 𐈭 𐈮 𐈯 𐈰 𐈱 𐈲 𐈳 𐈴 𐈵 𐈶 𐈷 𐈸 𐈹 𐈺 𐈻 𐈼 𐈽 𐈾 𐈿 𐉀 𐉁 𐉂 𐉃 𐉄 𐉅 𐉆 𐉇 𐉈 𐉉 𐉊 𐉋 𐉌 𐉍 𐉎 𐉏 𐉐 𐉑 𐉒 𐉓 𐉔 𐉕 𐉖 𐉗 𐉘 𐉙 𐉚 𐉛 𐉜 𐉝 𐉞 𐉟 𐉠 𐉡 𐉢 𐉣 𐉤 𐉥 𐉦 𐉧 𐉨 𐉩 𐉪 𐉫 𐉬 𐉭 𐉮 𐉯 𐉰 𐉱 𐉲 𐉳 𐉴 𐉵 𐉶 𐉷 𐉸 𐉹 𐉺 𐉻 𐉼 𐉽 𐉾 𐉿 𐊀 𐊁 𐊂 𐊃 𐊄 𐊅 𐊆 𐊇 𐊈 𐊉 𐊊 𐊋 𐊌 𐊍 𐊎 𐊏 𐊐 𐊑 𐊒 𐊓 𐊔 𐊕 𐊖 𐊗 𐊘 𐊙 𐊚 𐊛 𐊜 𐊝 𐊞 𐊟 𐊠 𐊡 𐊢 𐊣 𐊤 𐊥 𐊦 𐊧 𐊨 𐊩 𐊪 𐊫 𐊬 𐊭 𐊮 𐊯 𐊰 𐊱 𐊲 𐊳 𐊴 𐊵 𐊶 𐊷 𐊸 𐊹 𐊺 𐊻 𐊼 𐊽 𐊾 𐊿 𐋀 𐋁 𐋂 𐋃 𐋄 𐋅 𐋆 𐋇 𐋈 𐋉 𐋊 𐋋 𐋌 𐋍 𐋎 𐋏 𐋐 𐋑 𐋒 𐋓 𐋔 𐋕 𐋖 𐋗 𐋘 𐋙 𐋚 𐋛 𐋜 𐋝 𐋞 𐋟 𐋠 𐋡 𐋢 𐋣 𐋤 𐋥 𐋦 𐋧 𐋨 𐋩 𐋪 𐋫 𐋬 𐋭 𐋮 𐋯 𐋰 𐋱 𐋲 𐋳 𐋴 𐋵 𐋶 𐋷 𐋸 𐋹 𐋺 𐋻 𐋼 𐋽 𐋾 𐋿 𐌀 𐌁 𐌂 𐌃 𐌄 𐌅 𐌆 𐌇 𐌈 𐌉 𐌊 𐌋 𐌌 𐌍 𐌎 𐌏 𐌐 𐌑 𐌒 𐌓 𐌔 𐌕 𐌖 𐌗 𐌘 𐌙 𐌚 𐌛 𐌜 𐌝 𐌞 𐌟 𐌠 𐌡 𐌢 𐌣 𐌤 𐌥 𐌦 𐌧 𐌨 𐌩 𐌪 𐌫 𐌬 𐌭 𐌮 𐌯 𐌰 𐌱 𐌲 𐌳 𐌴 𐌵 𐌶 𐌷 𐌸 𐌹 𐌺 𐌻 𐌼 𐌽 𐌾 𐌿 𐍀 𐍁 𐍂 𐍃 𐍄 𐍅 𐍆 𐍇 𐍈 𐍉 𐍊 𐍋 𐍌 𐍍 𐍎 𐍏 𐍐 𐍑 𐍒 𐍓 𐍔 𐍕 𐍖 𐍗 𐍘 𐍙 𐍚 𐍛 𐍜 𐍝 𐍞 𐍟 𐍠 𐍡 𐍢 𐍣 𐍤 𐍥 𐍦 𐍧 𐍨 𐍩 𐍪 𐍫 𐍬 𐍭 𐍮 𐍯 𐍰 𐍱 𐍲 𐍳 𐍴 𐍵 𐍶 𐍷 𐍸 𐍹 𐍺 𐍻 𐍼 𐍽 𐍾 𐍿 𐎀 𐎁 𐎂 𐎃 𐎄 𐎅 𐎆 𐎇 𐎈 𐎉 𐎊 𐎋 𐎌 𐎍 𐎎 𐎏 𐎐 𐎑 𐎒 𐎓 𐎔 𐎕 𐎖 𐎗 𐎘 𐎙 𐎚 𐎛 𐎜 𐎝 𐎞 𐎟 𐎠 𐎡 𐎢 𐎣 𐎤 𐎥 𐎦 𐎧 𐎨 𐎩 𐎪 𐎫 𐎬 𐎭 𐎮 𐎯 𐎰 𐎱 𐎲 𐎳 𐎴 𐎵 𐎶 𐎷 𐎸 𐎹 𐎺 𐎻 𐎼 𐎽 𐎾 𐎿 𐏀 𐏁 𐏂 𐏃 𐏄 𐏅 𐏆 𐏇 𐏈 𐏉 𐏊 𐏋 𐏌 𐏍 𐏎 𐏏 𐏐 𐏑 𐏒 𐏓 𐏔 𐏕 𐏖 𐏗 𐏘 𐏙 𐏚 𐏛 𐏜 𐏝 𐏞 𐏟 𐏠 𐏡 𐏢 𐏣 𐏤 𐏥 𐏦 𐏧 𐏨 𐏩 𐏪 𐏫 𐏬 𐏭 𐏮 𐏯 𐏰 𐏱 𐏲 𐏳 𐏴 𐏵 𐏶 𐏷 𐏸 𐏹 𐏺 𐏻 𐏼 𐏽 𐏾 𐏿 𐐀 𐐁 𐐂 𐐃 𐐄 𐐅 𐐆 𐐇 𐐈 𐐉 𐐊 𐐋 𐐌 𐐍 𐐎 𐐏 𐐐 𐐑 𐐒 𐐓 𐐔 𐐕 𐐖 𐐗 𐐘 𐐙 𐐚 𐐛 𐐜 𐐝 𐐞 𐐟 𐐠 𐐡 𐐢 𐐣 𐐤 𐐥 𐐦 𐐧 𐐨 𐐩 𐐪 𐐫 𐐬 𐐭 𐐮 𐐯 𐐰 𐐱 𐐲 𐐳 𐐴 𐐵 𐐶 𐐷 𐐸 𐐹 𐐺 𐐻 𐐼 𐐽 𐐾 𐐿 𐑀 𐑁 𐑂 𐑃 𐑄 𐑅 𐑆 𐑇 𐑈 𐑉 𐑊 𐑋 𐑌 𐑍 𐑎 𐑏 𐑐 𐑑 𐑒 𐑓 𐑔 𐑕 𐑖 𐑗 𐑘 𐑙 𐑚 𐑛 𐑜 𐑝 𐑞 𐑟 𐑠 𐑡 𐑢 𐑣 𐑤 𐑥 𐑦 𐑧 𐑨 𐑩 𐑪 𐑫 𐑬 𐑭 𐑮 𐑯 𐑰 𐑱 𐑲 𐑳 𐑴 𐑵 𐑶 𐑷 𐑸 𐑹 𐑺 𐑻 𐑼 𐑽 𐑾 𐑿 𐒀 𐒁 𐒂 𐒃 𐒄 𐒅 𐒆 𐒇 𐒈 𐒉 𐒊 𐒋 𐒌 𐒍 𐒎 𐒏 𐒐 𐒑 𐒒 𐒓 𐒔 𐒕 𐒖 𐒗 𐒘 𐒙 𐒚 𐒛 𐒜 𐒝 𐒞 𐒟 𐒠 𐒡 𐒢 𐒣 𐒤 𐒥 𐒦 𐒧 𐒨 𐒩 𐒪 𐒫 𐒬 𐒭 𐒮 𐒯 𐒰 𐒱 𐒲 𐒳 𐒴 𐒵 𐒶 𐒷 𐒸 𐒹 𐒺 𐒻 𐒼 𐒽 𐒾 𐒿 𐓀 𐓁 𐓂 𐓃 𐓄 𐓅 𐓆 𐓇 𐓈 𐓉 𐓊 𐓋 𐓌 𐓍 𐓎 𐓏 𐓐 𐓑 𐓒 𐓓 𐓔 𐓕 𐓖 𐓗 𐓘 𐓙 𐓚 𐓛 𐓜 𐓝 𐓞 𐓟 𐓠 𐓡 𐓢 𐓣 𐓤 𐓥 𐓦 𐓧 𐓨 𐓩 𐓪 𐓫 𐓬 𐓭 𐓮 𐓯 𐓰 𐓱 𐓲 𐓳 𐓴 𐓵 𐓶 𐓷 𐓸 𐓹 𐓺 𐓻 𐓼 𐓽 𐓾 𐓿 𐔀 𐔁 𐔂 𐔃 𐔄 𐔅 𐔆 𐔇 𐔈 𐔉 𐔊 𐔋 𐔌 𐔍 𐔎 𐔏 𐔐 𐔑 𐔒 𐔓 𐔔 𐔕 𐔖 𐔗 𐔘 𐔙 𐔚 𐔛 𐔜 𐔝 𐔞 𐔟 𐔠 𐔡 𐔢 𐔣 𐔤 𐔥 𐔦 𐔧 𐔨 𐔩 𐔪 𐔫 𐔬 𐔭 𐔮 𐔯 𐔰 𐔱 𐔲 𐔳 𐔴 𐔵 𐔶 𐔷 𐔸 𐔹 𐔺 𐔻 𐔼 𐔽 𐔾 𐔿 𐕀 𐕁 𐕂 𐕃 𐕄 𐕅 𐕆 𐕇 𐕈 𐕉 𐕊 𐕋 𐕌 𐕍 𐕎 𐕏 𐕐 𐕑 𐕒 𐕓 𐕔 𐕕 𐕖 𐕗 𐕘 𐕙 𐕚 𐕛 𐕜 𐕝 𐕞 𐕟 𐕠 𐕡 𐕢 𐕣 𐕤 𐕥 𐕦 𐕧 𐕨 𐕩 𐕪 𐕫 𐕬 𐕭 𐕮 𐕯 𐕰 𐕱 𐕲 𐕳 𐕴 𐕵 𐕶 𐕷 𐕸 𐕹 𐕺 𐕻 𐕼 𐕽 𐕾 𐕿 𐖀 𐖁 𐖂 𐖃 𐖄 𐖅 𐖆 𐖇 𐖈 𐖉 𐖊 𐖋 𐖌 𐖍 𐖎 𐖏 𐖐 𐖑 𐖒 𐖓 𐖔 𐖕 𐖖 𐖗 𐖘 𐖙 𐖚 𐖛 𐖜 𐖝 𐖞 𐖟 𐖠 𐖡 𐖢 𐖣 𐖤 𐖥 𐖦 𐖧 𐖨 𐖩 𐖪 𐖫 𐖬 𐖭 𐖮 𐖯 𐖰 𐖱 𐖲 𐖳 𐖴 𐖵 𐖶 𐖷 𐖸 𐖹 𐖺 𐖻 𐖼 𐖽 𐖾 𐖿 𐗀 𐗁 𐗂 𐗃 𐗄 𐗅 𐗆 𐗇 𐗈 𐗉 𐗊 𐗋 𐗌 𐗍 𐗎 𐗏 𐗐 𐗑 𐗒 𐗓 𐗔 𐗕 𐗖 𐗗 𐗘 𐗙 𐗚 𐗛 𐗜 𐗝 𐗞 𐗟 𐗠 𐗡 𐗢 𐗣 𐗤 𐗥 𐗦 𐗧 𐗨 𐗩 𐗪 𐗫 𐗬 𐗭 𐗮 𐗯 𐗰 𐗱 𐗲 𐗳 𐗴 𐗵 𐗶 𐗷 𐗸 𐗹 𐗺 𐗻 𐗼 𐗽 𐗾 𐗿 𐘀 𐘁 𐘂 𐘃 𐘄 𐘅 𐘆 𐘇 𐘈 𐘉 𐘊 𐘋 𐘌 𐘍 𐘎 𐘏 𐘐 𐘑 𐘒 𐘓 𐘔 𐘕 𐘖 𐘗 𐘘 𐘙 𐘚 𐘛 𐘜 𐘝 𐘞 𐘟 𐘠 𐘡 𐘢 𐘣 𐘤 𐘥 𐘦 𐘧 𐘨 𐘩 𐘪 𐘫 𐘬 𐘭 𐘮 𐘯 𐘰 𐘱 𐘲 𐘳 𐘴 𐘵 𐘶 𐘷 𐘸 𐘹 𐘺 𐘻 𐘼 𐘽 𐘾 𐘿 𐙀 𐙁 𐙂 𐙃 𐙄 𐙅 𐙆 𐙇 𐙈 𐙉 𐙊 𐙋 𐙌 𐙍 𐙎 𐙏 𐙐 𐙑 𐙒 𐙓 𐙔 𐙕 𐙖 𐙗 𐙘 𐙙 𐙚 𐙛 𐙜 𐙝 𐙞 𐙟 𐙠 𐙡 𐙢 𐙣 𐙤 𐙥 𐙦 𐙧 𐙨 𐙩 𐙪 𐙫 𐙬 𐙭 𐙮 𐙯 𐙰 𐙱 𐙲 𐙳 𐙴 𐙵 𐙶 𐙷 𐙸 𐙹 𐙺 𐙻 𐙼 𐙽 𐙾 𐙿 𐚀 𐚁 𐚂 𐚃 𐚄 𐚅 𐚆 𐚇 𐚈 𐚉 𐚊 𐚋 𐚌 𐚍 𐚎 𐚏 𐚐 𐚑 𐚒 𐚓 𐚔 𐚕 𐚖 𐚗 𐚘 𐚙 𐚚 𐚛 𐚜 𐚝 𐚞 𐚟 𐚠 𐚡 𐚢 𐚣 𐚤 𐚥 𐚦 𐚧 𐚨 𐚩 𐚪 𐚫 𐚬 𐚭 𐚮 𐚯 𐚰 𐚱 𐚲 𐚳 𐚴 𐚵 𐚶 𐚷 𐚸 𐚹 𐚺 𐚻 𐚼 𐚽 𐚾 𐚿 𐛀 𐛁 𐛂 𐛃 𐛄 𐛅 𐛆 𐛇 𐛈 𐛉 𐛊 𐛋 𐛌 𐛍 𐛎 𐛏 𐛐 𐛑 𐛒 𐛓 𐛔 𐛕 𐛖 𐛗 𐛘 𐛙 𐛚 𐛛 𐛜 𐛝 𐛞 𐛟 𐛠 𐛡 𐛢 𐛣 𐛤 𐛥 𐛦 𐛧 𐛨 𐛩 𐛪 𐛫 𐛬 𐛭 𐛮 𐛯 𐛰 𐛱 𐛲 𐛳 𐛴 𐛵 𐛶 𐛷 𐛸 𐛹 𐛺 𐛻 𐛼 𐛽 𐛾 𐛿 𐜀 𐜁 𐜂 𐜃 𐜄 𐜅 𐜆 𐜇 𐜈 𐜉 𐜊 𐜋 𐜌 𐜍 𐜎 𐜏 𐜐 𐜑 𐜒 𐜓 𐜔 𐜕 𐜖 𐜗 𐜘 𐜙 𐜚 𐜛 𐜜 𐜝 𐜞 𐜟 𐜠 𐜡 𐜢 𐜣 𐜤 𐜥 𐜦 𐜧 𐜨 𐜩 𐜪 𐜫 𐜬 𐜭 𐜮 𐜯 𐜰 𐜱 𐜲 𐜳 𐜴 𐜵 𐜶 𐜷 𐜸 𐜹 𐜺 𐜻 𐜼 𐜽 𐜾 𐜿 𐝀 𐝁 𐝂 𐝃 𐝄 𐝅 𐝆 𐝇 𐝈 𐝉 𐝊 𐝋 𐝌 𐝍 𐝎 𐝏 𐝐 𐝑 𐝒 𐝓 𐝔 𐝕 𐝖 𐝗 𐝘 𐝙 𐝚 𐝛 𐝜 𐝝 𐝞 𐝟 𐝠 𐝡 𐝢 𐝣 𐝤 𐝥 𐝦 𐝧 𐝨 𐝩 𐝪 𐝫 𐝬 𐝭 𐝮 𐝯 𐝰 𐝱 𐝲 𐝳 𐝴 𐝵 𐝶 𐝷 𐝸 𐝹 𐝺 𐝻 𐝼 𐝽 𐝾 𐝿 𐞀 𐞁 𐞂 𐞃 𐞄 𐞅 𐞆 𐞇 𐞈 𐞉 𐞊 𐞋 𐞌 𐞍 𐞎 𐞏 𐞐 𐞑 𐞒 𐞓 𐞔 𐞕 𐞖 𐞗 𐞘 𐞙 𐞚 𐞛 𐞜 𐞝 𐞞 𐞟 𐞠 𐞡 𐞢 𐞣 𐞤 𐞥 𐞦 𐞧 𐞨 𐞩 𐞪 𐞫 𐞬 𐞭 𐞮 𐞯 𐞰 𐞱 𐞲 𐞳 𐞴 𐞵 𐞶 𐞷 𐞸 𐞹 𐞺 𐞻 𐞼 𐞽 𐞾 𐞿 𐟀 𐟁 𐟂 𐟃 𐟄 𐟅 𐟆 𐟇 𐟈 𐟉 𐟊 𐟋 𐟌 𐟍 𐟎 𐟏 𐟐 𐟑 𐟒 𐟓 𐟔 𐟕 𐟖 𐟗 𐟘 𐟙 𐟚 𐟛 𐟜 𐟝 𐟞 𐟟 𐟠 𐟡 𐟢 𐟣 𐟤 𐟥 𐟦 𐟧 𐟨 𐟩 𐟪 𐟫 𐟬 𐟭 𐟮 𐟯 𐟰 𐟱 𐟲 𐟳 𐟴 𐟵 𐟶 𐟷 𐟸 𐟹 𐟺 𐟻 𐟼 𐟽 𐟾 𐟿 𐠀 𐠁 𐠂 𐠃 𐠄 𐠅 𐠆 𐠇 𐠈 𐠉 𐠊 𐠋 𐠌 𐠍 𐠎 𐠏 𐠐 𐠑 𐠒 𐠓 𐠔 𐠕 𐠖 𐠗 𐠘 𐠙 𐠚 𐠛 𐠜 𐠝 𐠞 𐠟 𐠠 𐠡 𐠢 𐠣 𐠤 𐠥 𐠦 𐠧 𐠨 𐠩 𐠪 𐠫 𐠬 𐠭 𐠮 𐠯 𐠰 𐠱 𐠲 𐠳 𐠴 𐠵 𐠶 𐠷 𐠸 𐠹 𐠺 𐠻 𐠼 𐠽 𐠾 𐠿 𐡀 𐡁 𐡂 𐡃 𐡄 𐡅 𐡆 𐡇 𐡈 𐡉 𐡊 𐡋 𐡌 𐡍 𐡎 𐡏 𐡐 𐡑 𐡒 𐡓 𐡔 𐡕 𐡖 𐡗 𐡘 𐡙 𐡚 𐡛 𐡜 𐡝 𐡞 𐡟 𐡠 𐡡 𐡢 𐡣 𐡤 𐡥 𐡦 𐡧 𐡨 𐡩 𐡪 𐡫 𐡬 𐡭 𐡮 𐡯 𐡰 𐡱 𐡲 𐡳 𐡴 𐡵 𐡶 𐡷 𐡸 𐡹 𐡺 𐡻 𐡼 𐡽 𐡾 𐡿 𐢀 𐢁 𐢂 𐢃 𐢄 𐢅 𐢆 𐢇 𐢈 𐢉 𐢊 𐢋 𐢌 𐢍 𐢎 𐢏 𐢐 𐢑 𐢒 𐢓 𐢔 𐢕 𐢖 𐢗 𐢘 𐢙 𐢚 𐢛 𐢜 𐢝 𐢞 𐢟 𐢠 𐢡 𐢢 𐢣 𐢤 𐢥 𐢦 𐢧 𐢨 𐢩 𐢪 𐢫 𐢬 𐢭 𐢮 𐢯 𐢰 𐢱 𐢲 𐢳 𐢴 𐢵 𐢶 𐢷 𐢸 𐢹 𐢺 𐢻 𐢼 𐢽 𐢾 𐢿 𐣀 𐣁 𐣂 𐣃 𐣄 𐣅 𐣆 𐣇 𐣈 𐣉 𐣊 𐣋 𐣌 𐣍 𐣎 𐣏 𐣐 𐣑 𐣒 𐣓 𐣔 𐣕 𐣖 𐣗 𐣘 𐣙 𐣚 𐣛 𐣜 𐣝 𐣞 𐣟 𐣠 𐣡 𐣢 𐣣 𐣤 𐣥 𐣦 𐣧 𐣨 𐣩 𐣪 𐣫 𐣬 𐣭 𐣮 𐣯 𐣰 𐣱 𐣲 𐣳 𐣴 𐣵 𐣶 𐣷 𐣸 𐣹 𐣺 𐣻 𐣼 𐣽 𐣾 𐣿 𐤀 𐤁 𐤂 𐤃 𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇 𐤈 𐤉 𐤊 𐤋 𐤌 𐤍 𐤎 𐤏 𐤐 𐤑 𐤒 𐤓 𐤔 𐤕 𐤖 𐤗 𐤘 𐤙 𐤚 𐤛 𐤜 𐤝 𐤞 𐤟 𐤠 𐤡 𐤢 𐤣 𐤤 𐤥 𐤦 𐤧 𐤨 𐤩 𐤪 𐤫 𐤬 𐤭 𐤮 𐤯 𐤰 𐤱



b) <sup>5</sup> N I T R <sup>10</sup> H I <sup>15</sup> A T <sup>20</sup> I U <sup>25</sup> I B <sup>30</sup> I A <sup>35</sup> I N <sup>40</sup> I T <sup>45</sup> I T <sup>50</sup> I T  
ueneracione sis absoluta æcsi inkalue dominuste uacat ad lu

*Maria peperit Christum; Elisabet peperit Johannem Baptistam. In illarum veneratione sis absoluta! Exi, incalve! Dominus te vocat ad lucem (or lumen).*  
"Mary bore Jesus; Elisabeth bore John the Baptist. Receive redemption in veneration of them. Go out (child). The Lord calls you into the light."

This is a variation of a well-known incantation used for women during a difficult childbirth. Examples are known from all the Scandinavian countries and from Germany and Britain (Bang no. 1073; Ohrt nos 232, 233 and 1141; Linderholm no. 112; Franz II, 198 ff; Storms no. 45). The closest parallel is an early sixteenth century Icelandic manuscript (AM 687 d 4°, see Lindquist 1920). It is much longer than our text, but the first third contains parallels to all the elements in our inscription. Only one of these causes problems: *æcsi* : *inkalve*. The manuscript contains the phrase *exi calve*, the second word of which can be construed as the vocative of *calvus*, "bald, hairless". It is obviously the foetus which is to be enticed out and which is addressed in this way. In the runic inscription this word has the prefix *in-* giving it the opposite meaning, which incidentally is more suitable for most new-born children. The other known variations have different expressions here and cannot be used to determine the correct rendering. The word is also the only one in the text with a *k*-rune where the Latin has *c* and this might indicate that an original runic version has been mis-read and that it may be a corruption of quite a different word. It does not, however, seem possible on this basis to suggest any better or more correct version of the text.

The versions which have survived are quite varied, considering the way the formula was used in practice. As a rule it would be written down on something to be placed on the belly of the woman giving birth, or it would be written on something which she could eat. No tradition has survived anywhere that the incantation was to be written in runes on a *rúnakefli*. The nearest thing we find to this ritual is an Icelandic remedy for heavy menstruation, where an incantation to stem the flow of blood was cut on a rune-stick which was then tied to the woman's thigh. It is not impossible that our rune-stick was used in the same way, but another possibility comes to mind. On both the surfaces used for the inscription there are traces of earlier runes which have been cut away. To judge from the traces left behind, the text was identical with the one which has survived and it is possible that the slivers of wood with the original text were eaten or swallowed in same way.

The Latin in the text is correct apart from a couple of writing errors at one end. The spelling corresponds to the literary tradition, except for the fact that the rune-carver did not know of any *x*-rune, choosing instead the digraph *cs*. There is every reason to believe that the writer had learnt Latin and was perhaps a priest. That the clergy would have no qualms about resorting to magic is known from other sources.

N632 (BRM 27316)

The inscription is on a square stick, 106 × 9 × 9 mm, which was found in the thoroughfare known as the Old Church Road, just below the log paving

which was covered by the 1413 fire-layer. The stick has a triangular hole cut with a knife at one end and there are runes on all four sides.

There are several atypical signs which cannot easily be transliterated: these are enclosed in square brackets. The writer seems to be somewhat inconsistent and careless: several signs have been corrected in a slipshod manner during cutting and others are clearly wrong for intrinsic reasons.

a) <sup>5</sup> I T <sup>10</sup> I T <sup>15</sup> I T <sup>20</sup> I T <sup>25</sup> I T <sup>30</sup> I T <sup>35</sup> I T  
in:nomnepatrisæþfiliaþ[æþ<s]spritusantiamen curraa

b) <sup>5</sup> K I <sup>10</sup> I R <sup>15</sup> N <sup>20</sup> T <sup>25</sup> B <sup>30</sup> K <sup>35</sup> I <sup>40</sup> I R <sup>45</sup> I T <sup>50</sup> I T  
piacrusæþpaciocriste[.]imapasmauitæþsacrobat

c) <sup>5</sup> [.] <sup>10</sup> I T <sup>15</sup> I T <sup>20</sup> I T <sup>25</sup> I T <sup>30</sup> I T <sup>35</sup> I T  
[.]a[r[.]i[.]edeis[s<c]inmedicinasinmedicinamiio

d) <sup>5</sup> I T <sup>10</sup> I T <sup>15</sup> I T <sup>20</sup> I T <sup>25</sup> I T <sup>30</sup> I T <sup>35</sup> I T  
saginelauitfebrasadikouiadfuimauessarelr

With the assistance of the two quotations given below and by reading the text in the sequence a-c-b-d, the inscription can be reconstructed as follows, with apparently irrelevant sequences in square brackets.

*In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti, Amen [...] | Vulnera quinque dei sint medicina (mei). Sint medicina mei | pia crux et passio Christi. Qui me plasmauit et sacro [...] | sanguine lauit. Febres depellat qui me vexare l(aborat).*

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. May God's Five Wounds be my medicine. May the Holy Cross and Christ's suffering be my medicine. He who moulded me and washed me with Holy Blood. May he expel the fever which strives to torment me."

Without a parallel most of the inscription would have been quite incomprehensible, but there are fortunately several extant versions of the text. The most important in this context is a fairly lengthy formula against malaria in a manuscript in Copenhagen (Thott 710 4°, quoted in Ohrt, no. 266). The part containing the formula was written c 1450 and begins with a double appeal to the Trinity, followed by a series of hexameters with internal rhymes.

Qui me plasmauit et sacro sanguine lauit  
febres compellant, qui me vexare laborant  
vulnera quinque dei sint medicina mei  
Sint medicina mei pia crux et passio Christi  
Vulneribus quinis me Christi salua ruinis.



There then follows a blessing of the sick person, followed by a repeat of two of the previous lines with a slight alteration:

Febris depellant, qui me vexare laborant  
vlnera quinque dej sunt medicina mej.

Finally there is a list of seven names, presumably the names of the evil spirits responsible for the fever, and the spell concludes with a renewed appeal to the Trinity twice and the blessing of the patient.

As we can see, our text is very corrupt in some places. In the reconstruction which is suggested, *depellat* in line d has been chosen instead of *compellat* on the basis of the two runes *di*. Even though the manuscript version has both the verbs in the final sentence in the plural, our text is presumably based on an original with verbs in the singular. Runes 24 and 25, *ad*, could indicate an original form *depellat* and the singular forms of both verbs are supported by other versions of this incantation. If Aslak Liestøl was correct in presuming that the superfluous rune sequence at the end of line a, *curraa*, is a bad distortion of the closing words of the formula, then the sequence *raa* (for *-rat*) may be indicating a singular verb-ending. Liestøl suggested that in the original – which must also have been written in runes – the last part of the last word had been inserted in a possible gap at the end of line a, due to lack of space in line d. This sequence is separated with a word dividing sign which is not used anywhere else in the inscription.

There are several reasons for suggesting that the inscription was copied from another square *rúnakefli*. Firstly, there is the unusual sequence in which the lines must be read; then there is the division of the verb *laborat* over two lines and the subsequent corruption of the part of the word which was not understood. Moreover, a number of errors can more easily be explained if the original was written in runes, for example, *fui* for *que* in line d. The rune-carver could scarcely have understood much of the text he had in front of him and in several places it seems that he has copied quite mechanically what he thought he could see of staves and cross-strokes.

Behind the runic original we can perhaps detect a basic text in Roman characters. Two of the atypical runes in lines b and c represent *q* and *w* (= *vu*, *u*) respectively in the Roman alphabet and obviously have the Roman letters as a model. Whoever first transliterated the text into runes apparently tried to replace the original ligatures and abbreviations with complicated self-composed bind-runes. Moreover, both the runes and the spelling contain some unusual variations which probably go back to the original runic transliteration, such as the *d*-rune with a dot on the stem instead of in the angle between stem and cross-stroke and the signs for *c* and *s* which are here used in the opposite way to the normal practice in Norway. These features could point towards Denmark. The manuscript which is the closest parallel is in Denmark and contains moreover a text in Danish on the same page as the formula. In addition the sickness against which the spell is directed, malaria, was more widely spread and troublesome in Denmark than in Norway (on malaria in Norway, see also N637 below). There are thus several things which point to a Danish tradition, and it is not improbable that the transliteration of the text from Roman characters to runes took place in Denmark.

The verses in this spell must have been very popular. Fragments of the incantation have survived in several versions, both in Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe, but it has apparently not been recorded in Norway before. What was

supposed to give the formula its particular strength was the reference to Christ's suffering on the cross and his five wounds. In the late Middle Ages the *Passio Christi* was increasingly emphasized both in literature and in pictorial and sculptural art. The concept of the five sacred wounds gained a central place in the mystery of the passion and special altars were consecrated to them, such as one in the Church of the Cross in Oslo. The five wounds also became the symbol of the members of the Brigittine Order and Aslak Liestøl suggested that there may be a connection between the runic inscription and the transference in 1426 of Munkeliv Abbey in Bergen from the Benedictines to the Brigittines. He maintained that their presence in Bergen could have contributed to the special popularity which the Devotion to the Five Wounds enjoyed in the area and that this could be the reason why this particular formula found its way to Bergen. The first of these hypotheses may well be true, but there must be another explanation for the inscription. Liestøl had overlooked the fact that the Brigittines did not take over Munkeliv Abbey until thirteen years after the fire in 1413 which forms an absolute *terminus ante quem* for this *rúnakefli*. In fact the circumstances of the find (below an unburnt log pavement which itself lay beneath the detritus from the fire) would suggest that the rune-stick may be as early as c 1350, which takes us back to the time of the foundation of the Order of the Brigittines (perhaps as early as 1346, confirmed by the pope in 1370), and therefore earlier than anything they may have influenced.

But even if the Devotion to the Five Wounds did not reach its peak until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the glorification of the wounds and the mystery of the Passion generally goes back much further. In pictorial representations we find that the suffering of Christ is stressed in the Gothic crucifixes from the late twelfth century onwards, with an ever-increasing emphasis on the actual suffering as time goes on. In this respect names as central as Bernhard of Clairvaux and St Francis of Assisi immediately come to mind. If, like Liestøl, we want to look for a connection between our runic inscription and a specific religious house in Bergen, it would not be anachronistic to consider the Franciscans who were established in the town at the end of the thirteenth century. But it is hardly necessary to seek out any particular source for the distribution of these ideas. Liestøl himself noted that the Devotion to the Five Wounds was widespread in the Late Middle Ages and that it soon found its way into the magic formulae associated with healing. References to the five wounds are indeed found in Norwegian formulae (Bang, nos 1159, 1177, 1202 and 1282) but in different contexts from our runic inscription.

These formulae connected with the five wounds seem to have had a fairly wide area of application, being used for injuries and sickness, as well as for protection from sorcery, weapons and thieves and for tracing missing people. It should also be mentioned that the five sacred wounds were invoked especially at times of famine and plague in Europe, and it is tempting to stress the latter in view of the fact that our inscription can be dated to around the time of the Black Death (c 1350). However, it need not have such a dramatic background, especially as fever is not the most obvious symptom of Bubonic Plague. Malaria or other fevers would appear to be more relevant and the parallel in the Danish manuscript is in fact expressly concerned with malaria. The theological reasoning behind the application of the five wounds to such a variety of ends is far from clear, but it could be associated with the thought that as Jesus was not affected by his wounds, may it be the same for this sufferer (Ohrt 1922, 159, 197)!




The inscription is on a flat rune-stick, 188 × 14 × 7 mm, which was found in the thoroughfare known as the Old Church Road just over the 1332 fire-layer. There are runes on both broad faces.

- a) 未 NIB[NIB<NB]ININ Y: 14B|I: 14T4T: 47NRN: 14144YIT|I 𐌺[.] 𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹  
uip[uip<up]auhum tobias sannat okulus istasominnis f[.] fau fao
- b) 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹: Y|I 𐌺𐌹: 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹: B|I 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 Y 𐌺𐌹 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹: 𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹 NIBB𐌺𐌹𐌺𐌹  
sidrak missak æþog benagog myl ōgum eomos uipbloþ

*Við augum. Tobias sannat oculos istius hominis. F [...] (?)fau(?)fao(?) (?) | Sidrak. Misak et og benagog myl ogum eomos. Við blóð.*

"For the eyes: Tobias heals the eyes of this person. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (?) - - - For blood (= the bleeding?)"

Side a begins with a sign resembling a double cross with three legs. In a late Icelandic manuscript this sign is called a *tvísteyptr maðr* or *harðsól* ("twice-turned *m*-rune" or "heavy *s*-rune") (Jónsson 1910,308), but there is no explanation either for this sign or for the names. The symbol occurs on another stick from Bryggen (B214), this time with an incomprehensible formula. There are several examples of a similar sign with only one cross-stroke. On a lead strip found on the site of the medieval settlement at Borgund in Sunnmøre in W Norway (A5) there is a whole row of them, ten in all, together with a corrupt text which includes at least the tetragrammaton for Yahveh (Jehovah) and the names of the evangelists. Both symbols are also found in rune-rows in Icelandic manuscripts but their value is uncertain (*x?* *y?*). On a calendar-stick from Lödöse in Sweden (Vg233, Svärdström 1982,33 ff.) the sign  is used as the symbol for *kalendae* (the calends or first day of the month) and when this date was a special feast-day, the sign was given a cross-stroke, like the signs on the strip of lead from Borgund. None of these uses or occurrences appears to have anything in common which may help to explain the use of the symbol in our inscription. Perhaps it is only meant to be a "Christ's cross", like the normal simple cross which precedes other runic inscriptions and alphabets.

The text is somewhat corrupt, but on the whole it is possible to recognise the different parts from which it has been put together. It is written in both Old Norse and Latin, possibly with some Greek. The first part of line a can be regarded as a sort of heading. It is in Old Norse and is paralleled in old medical manuals or as a prefix to magic spells. There then follows a Latin sequence which is rather distorted but there is no doubt as to its meaning. In the Book of Tobit in the Apocrypha it is related how the pious but poor and blind Jew Tobit from Nineveh recovers his sight, after the archangel Raphael has taught his son Tobias to spread fish-gall on his father's eyes (in the Vulgate Tob 6,8 and 11,4-15). This story has been the source for many formulae

against eye-infection. They are all fairly similar but the one which is closest to our text is from Denmark: *Sana, quaeso domine, oculos istius, cui benedicimus, sicut sanasti oculos tobie ...* (Ohrt, no. 1157), "Heal, I beseech Thee, O Lord, the eyes of this man whom we bless, just as Thou hast healed the eyes of Tobit ..." Our text must go back to some similar incantation, but it has been misunderstood and compressed to a poor statement in the present tense.

Side A finishes with a sequence of normal runes and "magic" symbols of the same type as those on the Kingigtorsoak stone from Greenland. The second and third runes in this sequence are damaged and illegible, but are most likely two vowels. If we ignore the first sign in the sequence, which is a "magic" symbol separated from the rest by a gap, we get the following pattern, repeated three times: *f*-runes, two vowels, a "magic" sign. Similar sequences, but without the symbols, are also found elsewhere: **fau-fao**, and presumably go back to a form of alphabet magic using the names of the Hebrew characters. A distorted list of Hebrew character-names is found in an Icelandic formula dealing in fact with ophthalmia (Kålund 1907, 11). The names of the Hebrew characters could be learned from Psalm 119 (118 in the Vulgate). In our inscription there are only variations of the character *vau*. No explanation is offered for the "magic" signs.

The first part of line b includes the names of the three men whom King Nebuchadnezzar cast into the furnace but who with God's help remained unharmed by the flames: Shadrach, Meshach and Abdenago (Vulgata Dan 1,7-3,97). This last name is written in a very corrupt form, but the **benago** can be relatively easily explained as a result of mis-reading an original written in runes. The two signs preceding this sequence can possibly be read as a repetition in Norse of the Latin conjunction *et* (*ok*). The story of this miracle was very popular in the Middle Ages and the song of praise which the three men, according to the Vulgate, sang while in the fiery furnace, was used in the liturgy. The divine deliverance from the flames naturally enough was used in magic formulae against fires and conflagrations, as well as against inflammatory infections, such as shingles (Herpes zoster). A Danish spell against shingles, *ignis sacer*, from the mid-fifteenth century (Ohrt, no. 315) uses both the names of the Hebraic characters and those of the three men. When used in a formula against ophthalmia, as in our text, the men's names convey the idea both of deliverance from the burning sensation and of a miracle which may come about with God's help.

The rest of line b has large gaps between the groups of runes. It is difficult to make any sense of the first two groups **myl** and **ogum** : **eomos**, and they are perhaps corruptions of something in Greek. **myl** may originally be associated with a form of *mylphe* (pl) which according to a glossary from 1652 meant "eye-ointment" (Latham 1965,310), and **eomos** may be a corruption of the medicinal plant *ameos* (ibid 18; Larsen 1931,191). However, this is only guess-work.

The final sequence is again in Old Norse. It cannot be an integral part of the actual formula and is perhaps the introduction to the next formula in the original which could have contained several formulae. We can complete it as *við blóð-rás* or *blóð-lát*, as the heading of a spell to stop bleeding. The writer could not have understood the original and thought that this was part of the spell for eye-infection. In this inscription, as in the previous one, some mistakes in the text may indicate a whole series of transliterators who have used originals in both Roman characters and runes.



*N634 (BRM 16904)*

The inscription is on a rectangular stick,  $75 \times 13 \times 6$  mm, which was found in S Engelgård just below the 1413 fire-layer. One end has been shaped and perforated so that the stick could be suspended on a cord. There are runes on all four sides, arranged so that the two broad faces (a and b) are read before the narrow faces (c and d).

a)  $\overset{5}{\text{aalfakristu}} \overset{10}{\text{seta}} \overset{15}{\text{alfaie.}}$

b)  $\overset{5}{\text{N}}\text{I}\text{I}\text{Y}\overset{10}{\text{R}}\text{I}\text{Y}\overset{10}{\text{R}}\text{I}\text{N}$   
 susetmariamarcus

c)  $\begin{matrix} & 5 & & 10 \\ Y & 1111 & 1 & 1111 \\ \text{mateus} & & & \text{lucas} \end{matrix}$

d)  $\begin{array}{ccccc} & 5 & 10 & 15 & \\ \text{d)} & | \ddagger | \vdash | \vdash | & \Upsilon | \vdash | \vdash | & | \vdash | \vdash | & \\ & \text{iohannes} & \text{mateus} & \text{lucas} & \end{array}$

*O Alpha, Cristus et Alpha Je | sus et Maria. Marcus, | Mattheus, Lucas, | Johannes, Mattheus, Lucas*  
 “O Alpha, Christ and Alpha Jesus and Mary. Mark, Matthew, Luke, John, Matthew. Luke”

The text consists of a series of divine and holy names. **oalfa** ... **alfa** in line a is presumably a corruption of *Alpha et Omega*, the Divine title taken from the Book of Revelations and much used in poetry, benedictions and magical formulae.

The rune-stick must have been an amulet which was sewn to the clothing or tied on in some way. This inscription belongs to a large group of inscriptions in which the names of the four evangelists are mentioned – there are two more from Bryggen, N635 and N638 – and this type of text demonstrates the unclear boundary between normal religious use and purely magical application. The names of the evangelists often occur together with other Christian texts, such as the Pater Noster or a Divine title. Some of the inscriptions are on lead, such as N638 from Bryggen, and the vast majority are of a protective nature, such as our inscription here.

*N635 (BRM 68384)*

The inscription is on a gold ring made from a strip 5.5 mm wide and 0.8 mm thick. The specific weight is 18.85 or c 23.5 carat, in other words very pure gold. The ring was found in deposits overlying the 1332 fire-layer, to the south of the remains of St Lawrence's church (Lavranskirken) and it is not impossible that the ring ultimately came from a grave (Herteig 1969, 103ff). All round the ring majuscules and runes have been chased but the work is not particularly well done and in many places there is some doubt as to which letter or sign is intended.

M1THEUꝛM1RCUSLUS [...] ꝛNNEꝛ  
MaTHEUsMaRCUSLUS [...] aNNEs

*Mattheus, Marcus, Lucas, Johannes*  
 "Matthew, Mark, Luke, John"

Only five of the signs are runes and these are transliterated with lower case letters. The remainder are majuscules or attempts at these and are here transliterated with upper case characters. The goldsmith was probably not literate in either script and he has copied an original in a fairly careless way.

A mixture of majuscules and runes is rather unusual, but not without parallels, and we have in fact another runes example from Bryggen, B454.

Several medieval rings with similar inscriptions are known both in Norway and elsewhere in Scandinavia. Rings were very suitable as amulets, since it was thought that a vein went directly from the ring-finger to the heart. Strengthened with the names of the four evangelists, this ring would have been a particularly good amulet (cf N634).

N636 (BRM 37293)

The inscription is on a rune-stick found to the west of N Gullskoen beneath the 1248 fire-layer. The stick is broken and the surviving part is  $127 \times 13 \times 11$  mm, measured at its widest point. There are runes on three of the sides, but the end of each line is missing.

a)    ⋯⋮⋯⋮⋯⋮<sup>5</sup><sup>10</sup><sup>15</sup>  
         a g l a gupt sateor are[—]

b)  $\begin{matrix} & 5 & & 10 & & 15 \\ R[R < K] & 1 & 11 & : & 1 & B[B < R] & 11 & : & 1 & Y[... - - \\ r[r < p] & a & f & a & e & l & g & a & b[b < r] & r & i & e & l & m[... - - \end{matrix}$

c)  $\begin{matrix} 5 & 10 & 15 & 20 \\ \text{N} & \text{T} & \text{I} & \text{Y} & \text{R} & \text{T} & \text{:} & \text{Y} & \text{T} & \text{R} & \text{I} & \text{N} & \text{T} & \text{:} & \text{Y} & \text{T} & \text{I} & \text{Y} & \text{I} & \text{T} \end{matrix}$   $\begin{matrix} \text{Y}[- \\ \text{f}[- \end{matrix}$   
uasuskrst mariua gætmin

*Agla. Guð. Sator, are[po, tenet, opera, rotas] | Raphael, Gabriel, M[ichael] | Jesus Krist. Maria, gæt mín! F...*

"Agla. God. Sator, arepo, tenet, opera, rotas. Raphael, Gabriel, Michael.  
Jesus Christ. Mary, watch over me! F..."

There does not seem to be any connection among the three sides. The *rúnakefli* contains a collection of formulae, whole or fragmentary, which are otherwise known from other inscriptions. Line a begins with the "magic" word *agla*, well known from spells in both early and late sources. Here it is written with a cross both in front and between the runes, in the same way as in N642 and N643. The word is an acronym made from the initial letters of the Hebrew sentence *attah gibbor leolam, adonai*, "Thou art strong in eternity, O Lord".

The word following *agla* is probably the Norse word *Guð*. Both in this word and further on in the inscription one gets the impression that the writer was not too sure in his recognition of the sounds and that he did not have a written original to copy from. There then follows the first part of the well-known sator-arepo palindrome which is found all over Europe and which has been in



use since classical times. This palindrome can also be written in a square, known as the Devil's Square, giving the same reading in all four directions:

S A T O R  
A R E P O  
T E N E T  
O P E R A  
R O T A S

Our writer could not have been aware of this, as he has written the first word wrongly. Incidentally, the same is true of the other example from Bergen with this formula (N640). Many theories have been advanced concerning the sator-arepo formula in an attempt to find a hidden message in this otherwise meaningless group of words. The most famous interpretation is a suggestion that the formula is based on a rearrangement of the letters of Pater Noster twice but sharing a common N, to which A and O (Alpha and Omega) have been added twice. This explanation is contradicted by the fact that the palindrome is found in pre-Christian Pompeii. There is in fact really no reason to believe that it conceals any linguistic message; its origin is most probably due to sheer intellectual joy at intricate symmetries, in the same way as the number-squares based on the same principles, such as the ancient Chinese Lo shu:

4 9 2  
3 5 7  
8 1 6

The step from here to mysticism and magic was not great. For medieval Scandinavians the palindrome probably meant no more than other charms and spells with no linguistic sense. From the various records of both early and late Scandinavian spells it is clear that the palindrome was known, sometimes appearing in a corrupt form.

In line b we find the names of the archangels Raphael and Gabriel, and as the last rune before the break can be *m*, the name Michael probably followed.

Line c contains the only sentence in the inscription and it is in Old Norse: *Maria, gæt mín*. The sequence preceding this sentence may be a mis-written *Jesus Krist*.

#### N637 (BRM 31413)

The inscription is on a smoothly carved piece of wood shaped like a flat-bottomed rowing-boat, 83 mm long and 26 × 12 mm at its widest and thickest point. It was found in a passage between buildings in Gullskoen just above the 1248 fire-layer. There is a hole at one end of the object through which a cord or leather thong could be threaded. There are runes on the two broad faces and on one of the narrow sides.

a)  $\overbrace{\text{ᚼᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^5 \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{10} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{15} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{20}$   
teōnesius iohānes\ s/erafihoñ

b)  $\overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^5 \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{10} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{15} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{20}$  4  
[.]usmasifianesus tenisiu[u < r]s o

c)  $\overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^5 \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{10} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{15} \overbrace{\text{ᚠᚠᚠᚠᚠ}}^{20}$   
sussbissusbirumæpanole

*Dionysius, Johannes, Serapion, | [Malch]us, Maximianus, Dionysius(?) | suss-*  
*bissusbirumæpanole*

The first two lines contain without question names from the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, *septem dormientes*, but in a somewhat corrupt form. One of the names, *Dionysius*, has moreover been split into two different versions in our inscription, so that two of the seven, *Constantinus* and *Marcianus*, are in fact missing. That it is *Malchus* who begins line b is clear from the amount of space available. Line c makes no sense and cannot be translated.

The legend of the Seven Sleepers was widely known throughout medieval Europe. The most famous version is in the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus a Voragine, written c 1260, in other words a little later than our inscription which can be dated to c 1250. The normalised versions of the names given above have been taken from the *Legenda Aurea*. All seven names have survived in some form or another in other Nordic material, including Norse translations of the legend, a Swedish runic inscription (Ög248) and in an Icelandic magic formula. As already mentioned, our inscription lacks two of the names and has split one of the others into two. The corrupt forms of *Serapion* and *Maximianus* may partly be due to a mis-reading of an original in runes, where *p* and *m* have become *f*. The first name may also have been mistakenly confused with the lower order of angels, called *Seraphim* in the plural. In the Icelandic spell this name is in fact written with *ph*: *Seraphion*.

In line c we are faced with an incomprehensible formula which appears to resemble corrupt Latin. No likely original has so far been identified, but there are parallels in other runic inscriptions, including two from Bryggen (N638 and N639) and a partially parallel text on a *rúnakefli* from the stave-church at Lom in Upper Gudbrandsdal (A71). The ends of the three Bryggen inscriptions are again similar to three Anglo-Saxon runic inscriptions of Late Viking date (Page 1964,73ff; ibid 1973,113f). These inscriptions are also nonsense, but some of the forms of the runes in one of them suggest a connection with Scandinavian runes. All these similarities cannot be dismissed as coincidence, even though there is a wide range in both time and space for some of the inscriptions and even though the common original has not been identified.

The shape of the piece of wood containing our inscription suggests that it has been an amulet and the text reinforces this impression: an invocation to the Seven Sleepers and an unintelligible formula certainly suggest magic. There is most likely a connection here with healing or the curing of a particular illness, even though the formula does not actually indicate this. From various sources we know that the *septem dormientes* were regarded as being of help in cases of insomnia (Icelandic tradition) or of fever, probably malaria (Anglo-Saxon and Continental traditions). As mentioned above in connection with



N632, malaria was not as common in medieval Norway as it was further south in Scandinavia. We have no definite examples in our literature of the sickness but the symptoms were well known and there were doubtless many cases of malaria also in Norway. We know that Norwegian soldiers caught the disease in Southern Scandinavia and Germany and in a port like Bergen with its lively contacts with abroad there is every reason to believe that malaria was known in the Middle Ages.

N638 (BRM 65550)

The inscription is on a strip of lead,  $69 \times 25$  mm and c 0.75 mm thick, which was found in Engelgårdén beneath the 1476 fire-layer. The strip had been folded and some runes are damaged at the bends. There are four lines of runes, two on each side, and they are separated with a horizontal line.

[illegible]

**suspiispiriuresnoli** ok árr | etōn. *Johannes, Marcus, Mattheus, Lukas. Ora-  
te! (?) | þoysoipieæþnkoapnacsia | Ave Maria, Jesus Kristr, Ave Maria.*  
“ -- -- -- and árretōn. John, Mark, Matthew, Luke. Pray! -- -- --  
Hail, Mary. Jesus Christ. Hail, Mary.”

As with most of the inscriptions on lead, the runes are imprecisely written and some of them may be wrongly identified especially in line c. In line a we have a parallel to the undecipherable formula in N637 which is also found in other inscriptions. Exactly where this formula stops is not easy to decide, but the final **ar** in line a should go with the first three runes in line b in front of the cross, so that we get the word **ar|ton** which almost certainly is the Greek adjective *árretōn* meaning "the unsayable, the secretive, the most sacred". It was used as a name for God, for example in the poem *Deus pater piissime* (Gjerløw 1954,90). In runic inscriptions it has been found *inter alia* on a lead cross from Bru in Rogaland in SW Norway (N263). In front of *árretōn* we can perhaps read the Norse conjunction *ok*, "and".

After the cross in line b come the names of the four evangelists which are continually met with in spells and incantations both in the Middle Ages and later (cf N634). The end of the line may possibly be a corruption of *orate*, perhaps an appeal to the evangelists to intercede.

For line c it is not possible to suggest any interpretation. Line d is clear, except for one sign which is written wrongly.

Pieces of lead with runes on them are, probably correctly, regarded as amulets for protection from danger and plagues. In our inscription nothing in par-

ticular is specified; the invocations which can be deciphered are of a general nature, but the undecipherable formulae may contain specific references. The strip of lead has most likely been an amulet providing general protection from any danger.

*N639 (BRM 61702)*

The inscription is on a flat, well-carved rune-stick which is 79 mm long, ranges from 10 to 13 mm broad and is 6 mm thick. It was found in Dreggen above the 1332 fire-layer. There are runes on both broad faces.

a)  $\overset{5}{1} \overset{10}{N} \overset{15}{B} \overset{20}{I} \overset{25}{R} \overset{30}{I} \overset{35}{N} \overset{40}{Y} \overset{45}{I} \overset{50}{P} \overset{55}{A} \overset{60}{T} \overset{65}{I} \overset{70}{N} \overset{75}{Y}$   
suebsciuieubiriumepônlium

The inscription is nonsense, apart from the mystical acronym *agla* which can be recognised in line b (cf N636).

Line a is a variation of the undecipherable text discussed above in connection with N637. Two signs which may be ambiguous have been transliterated here on the basis of the similar texts in N637 and N638. The last six runes in line b may be a word of the same type as *agla*, a magical expression with no linguistic sense.

The stick has no hole or constriction by which it could be suspended or attached to clothing but it may nevertheless have been a protective amulet, considering the text.

*N640 (BRM 36584)*

The inscription is on a rune-stick  $109 \times 10 \times 10$  mm, narrowing to 4 mm at one end. It was found in S Søstergården at the bottom of the deposits in front of the quay which was built in 1170. The runes run along all four sides. Lines d and e are on the same side but begin at opposite ends and are therefore upside down to each other.

a) <sup>5</sup>1 <sup>10</sup>11 <sup>15</sup>12 <sup>20</sup>13 <sup>25</sup>14  
sator arebo tenep[p<t] obero rotas

b) <sup>5</sup>1 <sup>10</sup>2 <sup>15</sup>3 <sup>20</sup>4 <sup>25</sup>5 <sup>30</sup>6  
æekrær kreærmannumænsiknumtæram r

c) <sup>5</sup>1 <sup>10</sup>2 <sup>15</sup>3 <sup>20</sup>4 <sup>25</sup>5 <sup>30</sup>6  
æekrær kreærmannumænsiknumtæram



d)  $\overset{5}{Y} \overset{10}{Y} Y Y Y Y Y Y Y$   
konsummatumæst

e)  $\begin{matrix} & & 5 \\ & & \uparrow \\ \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow \\ \text{klasa} & & & \end{matrix}$

Sator, arepo, tenet, opera, rotas | ækrær kreærmannumænsiknumtæram r | æk-  
rær kreærmannumænsiknumtæram | consummatum est | Klas á (?)  
“Sator, arepo, tenet, opera, rotas. — — — . It is fulfilled. Claus owns.”

Line a contains the palindrome we have met in N636, but once again the point that it could be a magic word-square is lost, since *tenet* has been written according to the normal Latin pronunciation with *p* for the final *t*.

Lines b and c are identical, apart from the single *r*-rune on its own at the end of line b. The text is gibberish and has no known Scandinavian parallels. We must turn to magical texts in Old English of which there are several examples from the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. Parallels are found first and foremost in manuscripts. Moreover, the three Anglo-Saxon runic inscriptions mentioned in connection with N637 also contain a short series of runes which are similar to our present inscription. None of these texts, however, makes any sense and there are also great variations among them. It is no longer possible to establish the original meaning of the text, if it ever had a clear meaning (Storms 1948, 243). Some "words" which appear more or less unchanged in all the versions have been associated with the Old Irish word *ar*, "courage" and *cró*, "blood". Two of the Old English texts are spells for stemming the flow of blood and this may have been its original function, but the spells are otherwise described as being effective against quite a range of ills. Our inscription may have been partly altered by introducing meaningful Latin words: *numen*, "divine majesty, divine will"; *signum*, "sign, token, signal, omen"; *terra*, "earth, world". In this part of the formula it is difficult to see any connection with the parallels which are quoted, nor do these Latin words make any coherent sense.

As already mentioned, lines b and c in the formula may originally have been a spell for stopping the flow of blood. If we see it in association with line d, *consummatum est*, then it is very likely that the whole text has been used for this purpose. The words of Jesus on the cross are a fairly common ingredient in both early and late Scandinavian spells of this type. We also have an Icelandic formula for serious menstrual bleeding mentioned in connection with N631, which was to be cut on a *rúnakefli* and tied to the woman's thigh. This also contained the sator-arepo formula which we have in line a of the present inscription.

Line e seems to be a standard ownership inscription in Old Norse: *Klas á*, "Claus (ie Nicholas) owns". The name *Nikolás* is well known in the Norse material and also the German shortened form *Klaus* is not unknown. *Klas* is a Frisian shortened form of the same name, but never attested in Norway in the Middle Ages. The interpretation is therefore offered with a slight reservation.

The shape of the rune signs in the five lines suggest that the inscription is not one man's work. Lines a and c, and possibly also line e, may be the same hand, while lines b and d appear to be cut by two different people. But even though the inscription may represent an incidental juxtaposition of various elements, each of the lines a, b/c and d has some association with the stemming of blood and the stick has presumably been used for this purpose. The inscrip-

tion is otherwise different from other Scandinavian spells of this kind in that it clearly has associations westwards with the British Isles. In Bergen with its lively trade connections with towns in Eastern England this is not unexpected.

*N641 (BRM 23504)*

The inscription is on a stick with a rectangular cross-section,  $15 \times 11$  mm. It has been broken into three and a small part at one end is also missing. The surviving parts together measure 190 mm in length. It was found in S Søstergården below the 1332 fire-layer. There are runes on three sides. The beginning of lines a and b are missing and some parts of all three lines are damaged so that several runes are difficult or impossible to decipher.

a) --...<sup>5</sup><sub>10</sub><sup>15</sup><sup>20</sup><sup>25</sup><sup>30</sup><sup>35</sup>  
--...[a[.]npantkno kae ameningn̂inikolaia nknaa

b)  $-]t[\cdot]\cdot n\dot{a}[\cdot]t\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}\dot{i}$   
 $-]n[\cdot]\cdot ua[\cdot]eteindomino$

— -- a [..] npantkno kae *Amen ingninikolaia nknaa* | [— —] n [.] *Valete*  
*in Domino* | onalcuilia  
 “ — — — — Amen. — — — — Fare well in the Lord! — — — — ”

In line a there are three word dividing signs, apparently consisting here of a pair of vertical lines or rune-staves with five or six dots between them. The inscription is at least partly derived from a Latin text and in addition to the recognisable sequences which have been translated, there is possibly an attempt to render the name *Nicolaus* in line a. This line also has sequences which are reminiscent of Greek: the short word **kae** between dividing marks may be the Greek conjunction "and", and the preceding word may be a corruption of *pantocrator*, "the almighty". But if there is any connection here with Biblical quotations in Greek, for example, then it must lie at some distant point in the succession of previous transcripts.

With the obvious Christian Latin elements, it must be assumed that the inscription belongs to the large group of benedictory and invocatory spells which were used in the Middle Ages for protection from sickness and danger.

N642 (BRM 7529)

The inscription is on a small wooden cross which was found in N Bugården in the timber substructure burnt in the 1332 fire, at the same place as N630. It consists of two parts, the upright which is 170 mm long and the cross-arm which is 110 mm. They are both 11 mm thick. The foot narrows slightly and has originally been fixed to something else, presumably with an iron nail. The cross



The runes on this cross are on both the front and the back of the arms (inscription 1) and of the main stem (inscription 2). There are also twenty small crosses between the rune-signs.

[illegible]

The text is not coherent and is only partly comprehensible. The well-known magical acronym *agla* (cf N636) occurs four times, and apart from this only line 1a makes sense, giving the vernacular forms of the saints' names *Benedictus* and *Margareta*. **benatit** could be an adjective, but it is just as likely that it is St Benedict who is intended. He was an important saint, also in Norway, and both the day of his birth and that of his death were celebrated. The woman must be St Margaret of Antioch who was in particular the patron saint of women in childbirth. The cross plays an important part in the legend about her and there may be a connection between this fact and the rich distribution of crosses cut between the runes on this inscription.

The undecipherable part of the text may ultimately be derived from some comprehensible text or texts but it clearly made no sense to our writer. The point has presumably been to increase the protective power of the cross, in the same way as the magical expression *agla* and the invocation of the two saints' names did.

It is not easy to say what this cross has been used for. It has obviously been fixed to some – now unknown – object. A number of other wooden crosses, such as those from Greenland mentioned above and the small lead crosses from various places in the Nordic world have a more or less clear association with burial. They were presumably intended as a protection from evil spirits, to help the soul of the deceased or even maybe to protect those still living. But our cross, and also the arm from another cross already discussed, N630, were found in deposits filling the timber substructure beneath the buildings of a waterfront tenement and with no connection with burials. It is therefore more likely that they had some more ordinary function in daily life, perhaps of a protective nature. Or they may simply have marked a place of prayer used for personal worship, as they still do in many homes today.

The inscription is on a rectangular stick, 79 mm long and 13 × 7 mm at its widest point. It was found in S Søstergården among debris from the 1332 fire. There are runes on the two broad faces, while on each of the narrow faces the double-armed Patriarchal cross (cross of Lorraine) has been cut. All the runes in line a and the first three in line b are separated with crosses.

a)  $\begin{matrix} & & 5 & & & & \\ & & \uparrow & & \uparrow & & \uparrow \\ \text{a)} & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow \\ & \text{a} & \text{g} & \text{l} & \text{a} & \text{a} & \text{g} & \text{l} & \text{a} \end{matrix}$

b)  $\begin{matrix} & & 5 & & 10 & & \\ & & \uparrow & & \uparrow & & \uparrow \\ \text{b)} & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow & \uparrow \\ & \text{a} & \text{g} & \text{l} & \text{a} & \text{u} & \text{a} & \text{l} & \text{o} & \text{a} & \text{h} & \text{k} & \text{i} \end{matrix}$

*N644 (BRM 12090)*

The inscription is on a stick *c* 11 mm in diameter which has been split lengthways. It is broken at one end and now measures 110 mm long. It was found in N Bugården in deposits overlying the 1248 fire-layer and is presumably from the period immediately following the fire. The flat side of the stick has been smoothed and most of the runes are cut here (line b). It is impossible to say how many runes are missing beyond the break. Moreover, some marks in the wood make the reading of some of the surviving runes uncertain. Line a is cut on the rounded surface and appears to be complete.

a) þNIR1fR  
þuirtør

b) B4B1t-1fRB4B+1+1fRB4[-  
bobinafibobæshafibo[-

*pú ert ór(r).* | **bobinafibobæshafibo**  
 “You are crazy! | — — — ”

Line a can be read as a complete sentence in Old Norse. Similar comments are found in several places in the Eddic verses eg *Órr ertu, Loki, ok ørviti*, “You are crazy, Loki, and out of your mind!” (Lokasenna 21). The expression is used in these poems about people – or is said to them – when they are in situations where some violent reaction might be expected. What kind of situation applied in this example is impossible to say and line b offers no further help.

Line b makes no sense but there is in fact a parallel on an amulet from Borgund church in Sogn (N349): **bonobenafinbonabena | bæiofæ**. This text is just as puzzling.

The two lines of runes on the stick are very different in content. They may of course derive from two quite different situations, but it is possible to imagine a situation where one person has written the magical formula and someone else, who thought it was rather a foolish thing to do, has said so.



N645 (BRM 41612)

The inscription is on a flat stick,  $106 \times 12 \times 3$  mm, which was found in Gullskoen in the debris from the 1198 fire. It has been neatly made, but one end is now broken. On one of the broad faces there are two inscriptions written from either end, while on the other broad face there are some lines and marks which may be the remains of an earlier inscription which has been cut away.

a) 1) --]R<sup>5</sup>4<sup>10</sup>1<sup>15</sup>1<sup>20</sup>:N·N4<sup>10</sup>·R·B4<sup>10</sup>:Γ4<sup>15</sup>4<sup>20</sup>Γ:Υ4<sup>20</sup>1<sup>15</sup>N4<sup>10</sup>1<sup>5</sup>  
 --]roas u uas r bas lauare mariuas

2)  $\overline{1 \wedge 1}$   
 $\overline{naub}$

Line a1 makes no sense. Line a2 is possibly the Norse word *nauð(r)*, "need, necessity, compulsion, distress".

Some of the groups of runes in line 11 can be read as Latin words, eg *vas*, "vessel (for holy water), aspersorium", and *lavare*, "to wash". This makes one think of the Eucharist, where the priest washes his hands before the consecration of the bread and wine. If there has been any connection in the text on this basis, then the association has been greatly misunderstood and altered before it ended up on our *rúnakefli*. The last word is reminiscent of **mariua** in N636, meaning *Maria*, but even this does not help us to make any sense of the inscription. It is most likely that the rune-carver has regarded the text as a series of unintelligible incantations with magical powers and the repetition four times of the runes **as** strengthens this hypothesis, as does the inclusion of the Norse word *nauðr*. This is found in several magical formulae and has a special connection with runes, being also the name of the *n*-rune.

*N646 (BRM 28771)*

The inscription is on a neatly trimmed stick,  $85 \times 11 \times 3-4$  mm, found at the boundary between the thoroughfare known as the Old Church Road and N Søstergården, lying in deposits below the 1332 fire-layer. There are runes on both broad faces.

a)  $\begin{matrix} & 5 & 10 & 15 \\ 1Y & 4b: & 4b4: & 4bN & Y: & R & 4Y & 1 \\ amop & opo & opum & roma \end{matrix}$

b)  $\overset{5}{\text{r}}\overset{10}{\text{n}}\text{:}\text{r}\text{r}\text{r}\text{:}\text{r}\text{r}\text{:}\text{y}\text{n}\text{:}$   
lus rota kyua mus

The text is gibberish.

Line a might ultimately be derived from the Amor-Roma palindrome, similar to the sator-arepo formula. Line b has a certain similarity to a series of runes in another Bryggen inscription, B257, but as this is also incomprehensible, it does not help us. It is impossible to suggest what the stick was to be used for.

*N647 (BRM 29706)*

The inscription is on a rune-stick, 11 × 11 mm at its thickest point. There is a break at one end and the surviving part is 117 mm long. It was found in N Søstergården, in the foundations of a new row of buildings erected after the 1198 fire. There are runes on one side only. Some of them are damaged so that there is some doubt about the reading.

-- .jāŗīđđ bti:ŋiʔnŋđʔnbi:điʔđbtibbi'đʔi'

-- .joreaa pni tsimutomuinok ioigannisabsicamsic

The inscription makes no sense, but it could be derived from a Latin text or one supposed to be in Latin, as it seems to contain a separate rune for *c*. Some words like *sic* can be distinguished and after the last word divider it is possible with a certain amount of imagination to make out the name *Johannes*. But the text is so distorted that it cannot be reconstructed.

ABBREVIATIONS, SIGNS, etc

The following signs have been used in the transcription, transliteration and normalisation of the inscriptions:

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| —       | (tie-mark over rune signs): runes were originally written as a ligature or bind-rune.  |
|         | (vertical stroke in the normalised text): indicates a break in the inscription between lines or sides of the object on which it was written. |
| .       | (dot below a rune sign): uncertain reading or a special rune form.   |
| [. .]   | illegible traces of a rune or runes.   |
| [— — —] | lacuna in the inscription.   |
| [<]     | correction of preceding rune.  |
| ‘ ‘     | insertion  |

Used in the text generally:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| <i>a</i> | (Roman letter in italics): the Roman letter form.  |
| <b>a</b> | (heavy type): the rune sign which has been transliterated.   |
|          | Heavy type and italics are generally used to distinguish between a transliteration and a normalised version (Old Norse or Latin) of individual words and longer texts. |
| [a]      | (letter enclosed in square brackets): phonetic script, ie an attempt to reproduce the simple concrete sound.   |
| /a/      | (letter enclosed between a pair of oblique lines): phonemic script, ie reproduction of the functional values or phonemes (sound units) of a given language.            |



- A + no. refers to unpublished Norwegian inscriptions (except those from Bergen).  
 B + no. refers to unpublished inscriptions from Bergen.  
 N + no. refers to Norwegian inscriptions published in *Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer* (NIyR).  
 Vg + no. } refer to Swedish inscriptions published in *Sveriges Runinskrifter* vol V (Västergötland) and vol II (Östergötland) respectively.  
 Ög + no. }

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bang, A Chr, 1901-02 *Norske Hexeformularer og Magiske Opskrifter*. Kra 1901-02 (The texts are quoted by number)  
 CB see Hilka *et al*  
 Dielitz, I, 1884 *Die Wahl- und Denksprüche*. Frankfurt  
 DR Jacobsen, L, & Moltke, E, 1942 *Danmarks Runeindskrifter*. Copenhagen  
 Franz, A, 1909 *Die Kirklichen Benedictionen im Mittelalter I-II*. Freiburg  
 Gjerløw, L, 1954 "Deus pater piissime." *Stavanger Museums Årbok* 85-109  
 Herteig A E, 1969 *Kongers havn og handels sete*. Oslo  
 Herteig, A E, 1985 The Archaeological Excavations at Bryggen, "The German Wharf", in Bergen, 1955-68. Excavation, Stratigraphy, Chronology, Field-documentation." *The Bryggen Papers, Main series, Vol 1, 9-46*  
 Hilka, A, Schumann, O, & Bischoff B, 1930-70 *Carmina Burana*. I-II, Heidelberg  
 Jacobus a Voragine, 1846 *Legenda aurea*. (ed Th Greasse) Leipzig  
 Jónsson F, 1910 Runerne i den norsk-islandske digtning og litteratur." *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*, 284-308  
 KLNK Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for Nordisk Middelalder. I-XXII. Oslo 1956-78  
 Kålund, K, *Den islandske lægebog (AM 434a 12mo)*. Det Kgl Danske Vidensk Selskabs Skrifter, 6. Række, Hist og filos Afd VI.4, Copenhagen  
 Larsen H, 1931 *An old Icelandic medical miscellany*, Oslo  
 Latham, RE, 1956 *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List*. London  
 Liestøl, A, 1964 Runer frå Bryggen, *Viking* 27, 1963, 5-53 (Slightly expanded version, ed The Temporary Bryggemuseum, Bergen)  
 Liestøl, A, 1966 The Runes of Bergen. Voices from the Middle Ages." *Minnesota History*, Vol 40, no. 2 (Summer 1966), 49-59  
 Liestøl, A, 1968 Correspondence in Runes." *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 1, 17-27  
 Liestøl, A, 1973 Runeninschriften von der Bryggen in Bergen (Norwegen)., *Zeitschrift für Archeologie des Mittelalters* 1, 129-139  
 Liestøl, A, 1974 Runic Voices from towns of Ancient Norway, *Scandinavica* XIII, 19-33  
 Liestøl, A, 1980 *NIyR VI, 1 Bryggen i Bergen*, Kjeldeskriftfondet. Oslo  
 Linderholm, E, 1917-40 *Signelser och Besvärjelser från medeltid och nytid*. Svenska Landsmål och Svenskt Folkliv, series B, 41, Stockholm (The texts are quoted by number)  
 Lindquist, I, 1920 En skinnhandskrift från Flatey som beskriver Rökstensrunor. *Göteborgs Högskolas Årsskrift*, band XXVI, 114-121  
 Lindquist, N, 1921 *En isländsk Svartkonstbok från 1500-talet*. Uppsala  
 MM 1980, Knudsen, A M, & Dyvik, H J J, Et runekors fra Sogn og Fjordane." *Maal og Minne* 1980, 1-12

- NIyR *Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer*. I- , ed Kjeldeskriftfondet by M Olsen (I-V), A Liestøl (I-V), Aslak Liestøl (VI, 1), & I S Johnsen (VI,2, forthcoming), Oslo 1941  
 Ohrt, F, 1917-21 *Danmarks Trylleformler I-II*, Copenhagen (The texts are quoted by number)  
 Ohrt, F, 1917 Et «Kors» mod onde Vætter, *Danske Studier*, 141-49  
 Ohrt, F, 1922 *De danske Besværgelser mod Vrid og Blod*, Det Kgl Vidensk Selskab, Hist-filol Meddelelser VI, 3. Copenhagen  
 Page, R I, 1964 The Inscriptions. Appendix in D M Wilson, "Anglo-Saxon ornamental metalwork 700-1100 in the British Museum," *Catalogue of Antiquities of the later Saxon Period*, 1, 67-90  
 Page, R I, 1973 *An Introduction to English Runes*, London  
 Storms, G, 1948 *Anglo-Saxon Magic*, Haag (The texts are quoted by number)  
 Svårdström, E, 1982 *Runfynden från Gamla Lödöse*, Stockholm (*Lödöse Västsvensk Medeltidstad IV, 5, Kungl Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien*)  
 UOÅ Universitetets Oldsaksamlings Årbok, Oslo 1927-.  
 Vulgata *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgata versionem*, (ed R Weber *et al*), Stuttgart 1969 (Württembergische Bibelanstalt)  
 Weisser-Aall, L, 1947 Magiske tegn på norske trekar? *Norsk Folkemuseums årbok*, By og bygd 117ff



## Finds from Bryggen Indicating Business Transactions

BY AXEL GRANDELL

The archaeological excavations at Bryggen in Bergen on the site of the fire in 1955 brought to light a rich collection of wooden objects, many of which are articles concerned with or indicative of various kinds of commercial transactions.

The finds in question belong to the period 1130–1350, a time when paper was still unknown in Scandinavia. Parchment would have been available for important official documents, but this material was too costly for daily use. As a consequence, wood and a knife were used for most of those transactions where today we would use paper and pen.

The largest group of finds in this category have been recorded and catalogued under the heading of tally-sticks (Norw *tellepinner*). A second group consists of rune-sticks or *rúnakefli*, ie fillets of wood on which messages have been cut using runic script. Finally, there is one other object which should be included in this category of finds denoting business transactions, a small wooden figure in the form of a serpent or dragon, which is interpreted as a shop-keeper's mascot or a shop charm.

These finds will now be discussed in detail.

### TALLY-STICKS

This group comprises approximately 600 accession numbers, probably the largest collection of this kind of objects from the medieval world. There is a wide variation within the group as far as the size and shape of the objects in concerned, as well as the way they have been made and the markings on them. There does not seem to have been any standard model and each stick has been fashioned individually, reflecting its particular mission. Even though some of the tally-sticks may have been used to simplify the daily affairs of housekeeping, the majority were presumably associated with transactions of a purely commercial nature. Commerce is used here to include shipping, as well as general trade and crafts. It must not be forgotten that Bergen at that time had lively trade connections with all the countries around both the North Sea and the Baltic, and that Norwegian vessels also plied the coast of Norway as far north as Finnmark.

Many of the tally-sticks have been used for checking the cargo during loading and unloading. When unloading the cargo from a ship, for example, the person receiving the goods would have a stick on which he would cut a notch for each item as it came ashore, and there was presumably a tallyman on the ship itself also keeping account with his own tally-stick. When the whole cargo had been unloaded, the number of marks in the two sticks should agree.



Fig 1 Tally-stick, probably used to check the cargo during unloading. From the middle of the 14th century

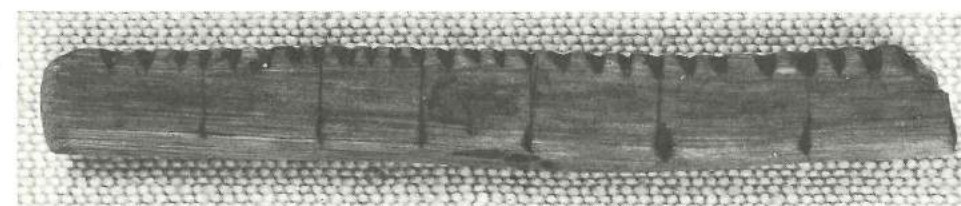


Fig 2 Tally-stick, probably used in connection with the export of furs or sealskins. Dated to c 1200

Even today loading and unloading the cargo is cross-checked in the same way, except that the stick of wood and the knife have been replaced by pen and paper. It is interesting to note that in international shipping circles the person checking the cargo is still called a tallyman, the word tally being derived ultimately from the Latin word *talea*, meaning a stick or slip of wood. The Bryggen finds are a perfect illustration of the origin of the word.

One of the tally-sticks from Bryggen (no. 8085, fig 1), [which is dated to mid 14th century], is in the form of a club, narrowing at one end to a handle. The notches marking the items of cargo have been cut into the head of the club. Each group of ten is separated with a cross to facilitate the final calculation.

Another tally-stick, dated to c 1200 (no. 17428, fig 2), is now 22 cm long but was probably longer originally, as there is a break at one end. There are 17 notches along the upper edge and every fourth notch continues as a long groove across the surface of the stick, indicating that the stick has been used for checking furs. When buying and selling skins and furs, the Old Norse term *dekur* or *dikur* was used for a bundle of ten skins, for example beaver or seal, and four *dekrar* (ie forty skins) were called a *timbr*. The terms are found, for example, in the Bergen by-laws of 1282 (Norges gamle Love III pp 13–14) and in the lists of imports from Bergen to England in the first decade of the fourteenth century, where they are mentioned in the Customs Rolls.

This method of calculating skins and furs was probably in universal use throughout Scandinavia at this time. The archaeological excavations in 1978–80 on Helgeandsholmen in the centre of Stockholm produced a tally-stick, dated to 1300–1350, on which every eighth notch was extended, presumably indicating that it had been used for checking hides, which had been in bundles of five, so that eight bundles made a *timbr*. The finds from Bryggen and Helgeandsholmen show how widespread the use of tally-sticks was at this time and how similarly they functioned.





Fig 3 One half of a split tally, possibly the circulating half of an English Exchequer tally. Dated to c 1300

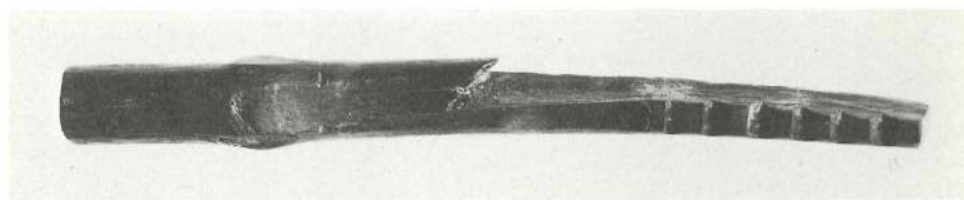


Fig 4 One half of a split tally, with a projection to ensure the correct positioning of the two halves when the marks were being cut. Dated to the first half of the 14th century

A third tally-stick from Bryggen, dated to c 1300 (No. 53424, fig 3), is of special interest. The notches have been cut into the two narrow sides, but there are no marks on either of the broad faces. This would suggest that it was half of a split tally, ie a tally-stick which had been split lengthwise after the notches were cut so that the two parties involved each had a record of the transaction until the account was settled. The notches are of different depths which brings to mind the English Exchequer tallies. From 1186 onwards, the English Crown officially used split tallies when calculating debts, marks of different sizes being used to indicate various units (£1000, £100, £20, £1, 1s, 1d). At the time of the transaction, the two halves were held together and the appropriate number of notches of different sizes to denote the total sum were cut across them. One part was given to the payee or creditor, the other was retained by the Exchequer.

One problem with split tallies was to get the two halves exactly in position when the notches were being cut across both halves. This was particularly the case with tally-sticks used in the delivery of goods, as the notches could not all be cut at the same time, but only after each stage in the transaction had been completed. The usual solution was not to split the whole tally, but to leave one end intact as a kind of socket against which the split half could be positioned when more notches were to be cut across both halves. By holding both sticks firmly with one hand while cutting the notches with the other, it was possible to get them to match exactly. Among the Bryggen finds is a tally-stick with a projecting socket (no. 15 551, fig 4). It is dated to first half of 14th century and is now 10 cm long but is clearly broken. There can be no doubt that it is half of a split tally and, with its projecting section which would facilitate the correct positioning of the two halves, it has presumably been used in the consignment of goods.

This method of using a projection on one of the two halves in order to get them correctly in position (in some cases there was a projection on both halves) was in use practically all over Europe. Similar objects are known from Sweden, Finland, England, Germany and Switzerland, though not of the same date as the Bryggen example: some are from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. The Bryggen find shows, however, that this type of split tally was already in use in Scandinavia in the thirteenth or fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

It might be asked why the tally-stick which is interpreted as the circulating half, or stock, of an English Exchequer tally does not have the projection for getting the two halves in the correct position. The answer is simple: the notches on an Exchequer-stock were all cut at one time, not on various occasions, and the two halves were therefore kept together, perhaps being tied together, until the marks had been made.

## RUNE-STICKS

Among the Bryggen finds there is a very large number of pieces of wood on which inscriptions or messages have been cut using runic script. These rune-sticks or *rúnakefli* include three main groups:

1. *rúnakefli* containing only runic script,
2. tally-sticks which also contain runic script,
3. labels, usually wide flat strips of wood containing a personal name written in runes.

All these were studied by Aslak Liestøl who published some of his results in a number of journals. It was also Liestøl who coined the Norwegian term *eiermerke* (literally, owner's mark) for these objects.

The second of the three groups mentioned above clearly shows the close connection between tally-sticks and rune-sticks. It is also clear that runic script in its various Scandinavian forms was in the same tradition as that used on tally-sticks with their cut marks. It was the tally-stick and the rune-stick which were the mainstay of daily intercourse in this and the following century.

One aspect which causes some surprise is that our rune-sticks were intended for ordinary working people, implying that the ability to read and write was generally widespread even in the lower social classes. In fact the question even arises whether reading and writing were not more widespread in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Scandinavia than in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The general conception that runic script was only mastered by a few people in the Viking and later periods is perhaps based on the fact that runic inscriptions in stone often include the rune-carver's name. If given a little more thought, however, it might simply be that the rune-carver was emphasising the artistic and technical completion of his work by adding his signature. The finds from Bryggen have clearly demonstrated that the knowledge of runic script was not confined just to the learned.



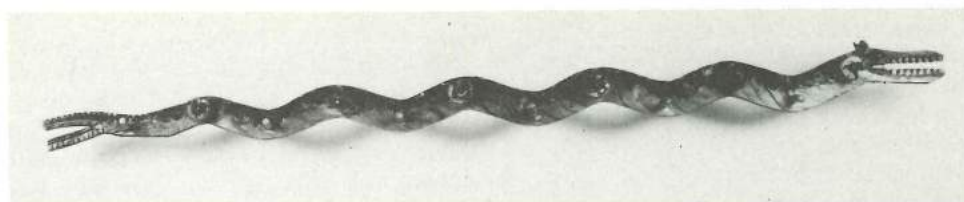


Fig 5 Shop-dragon from Finland. In 1874–79 it was in a country shop in Finby parish, near Turku (Åbo), S W Finland. Photo P J Lundsten

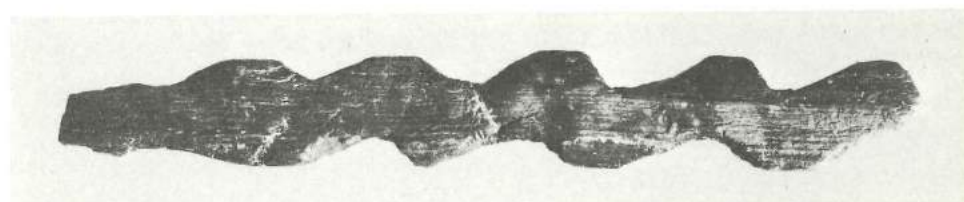


Fig 6 Miniature shop-serpent from Bryggen, from the first half of the 13th century

## SHOP MASCOTS

Among the general equipment and furnishing of a shop in certain parts of Scandinavia earlier was a mascot or charm carved in wood which always hung over the counter. It could be in the form of a dragon, but was more often shaped like a snake, or rather a sea-serpent, with a long looping body rising as it were from the waves.

According to certain written Swedish sources, "shop-dragons" could still usually be found in town-shops in the mid-nineteenth century. When the strict shop-trading laws were relaxed in Sweden in 1846, making it possible to open general stores also in rural districts, the "shop-dragon" began to disappear from town shops, only to re-appear in shops in the country.

Very few examples, however, have survived. In Sweden nine are known, in Denmark also nine (all now in museums) and two are known in Finland. They are unknown in Norway, but in all probability also occurred here, as there have been similar cultural traditions among the Scandinavian countries throughout the ages.

It is not known what these objects were called when they were in current use. In Denmark the term "counter-wand" (Dan *diskestang*) has been coined, while in Sweden they are now referred to as a "shop-dragon" (Sw *boddrake*) or "shop-serpent" (*bodorm*).

The symbolism of the dragon itself has been interpreted in various ways. In the ancient cultures of the orient, the dragon was regarded as bringing good fortune. Also in pre-Christian Scandinavia the dragon, and also the serpent, were considered to bring good luck and were duly venerated, finding expression in the writhing intertwined dragons carved on Viking memorial stones and in the dragon-shaped stem-posts of Viking ships.



Fig 7 Tally-stick from the second half of the 13th century

It is possible that the shop-dragon was also regarded as a lucky symbol or mascot, in the same way as the hanseatic merchants in Bergen later adopted as their lucky symbol the leading cod-fish, *kongetorsken*, which always hung in the Office and symbolically led the shoal in to the merchants of Bergen.

That the shop-dragon in the nineteenth century was always found hanging over the counter in the general store, visible to all customers, surely shows that it had acquired another symbolic value, for the dragon was also a symbol of justice or fairness. Scales were sometimes decorated with a dragon's head, and the shop-dragon could symbolically watch over the shop-keeper and guarantee the correctness of the scales. It would be his mark of honour, a trade-mark of an honest shop-keeper.

This is clearly expressed in one of the two shop-dragons from Finland, illustrated here (fig 5). It bears a crown on its head, thus emphasising that justice not only reigned over the scales and their weights, but also over the shop-keeper who handled the scales.

As mentioned earlier, the shop-dragon was unknown in Norway. I was therefore delighted to find an example of one in miniature among the finds from Bryggen (no. 16035, fig 6), dated to the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>2</sup> It is 11,6 cm long and its form is very reminiscent of the shop-dragon from Finland described above (fig 5). From this it can be concluded that shop-dragons and shop-serpents which are known from certain parts of Scandinavia in the nineteenth century belong to a tradition going back to the Middle Ages.

That the object is a miniature shop-dragon is beyond dispute. Its small format can, of course, be interpreted in various ways. The most obvious reason would be that in the thirteenth century, which after all was not so very distant from the Viking period, the dragon was regarded as a symbol of protection and good fortune. This shop-serpent was therefore the shop-keeper's personal mascot and it was not necessary to display it to his customers in the shop. Whichever way it is interpreted, the shop-dragon or -serpent must be regarded as one of the most remarkable finds in this rich collection of material.

## COMMENTS BY ASBJØRN E HERTEIG

### Note 1

Since Grandell's article was written, five more tally-sticks with projecting sockets have come to light, the dates of which are as follows:

No. 2081/02 From the first half of the 14th century

No. 11628 From c 1300 AD

No. 24951/02 From the second half of the 13th century (fig 7)



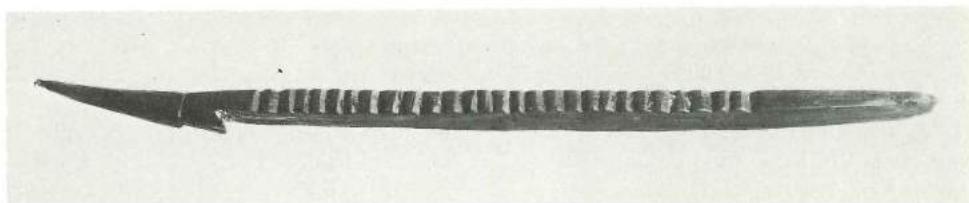


Fig 8 Tally-stick c 1300 AD (Photos 1-4 and 6-8 Middelaldersamlingen, Bryggens Museum)

No. 39063 From c 1300 AD  
 No. 53394 From c 1300 AD (fig 8)

#### Note 2

Recently four, possibly five objects have come to light, which may be miniature versions of similar shop-dragons, dated as follows:

No. 11220 From c 1300 AD  
 No. 24354 From c 1250 AD  
 No. 27939 From c 1300 AD  
 No. 34472 From the last quarter of the 12th century

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Grandell, Axel, 1982 *Karvstocken. En förbisedd kulturbärare* (The Tally stick. A neglected bearer of cultural tradition)
- 1984 Helgeandsholmens karvstocksfynd (The Helgeandsholmen tally stick), *Fornvännen* 79, 1984 242-246
  - 1985 Om skårskrifter (Notch writing), *Rig* 1985, 1, 7-15
  - 1985 Boddraken. Den gamla handelsbodens äremärke (The Shop Dragon. The Trading Store's Mark of Honour), *Finskt Museum* 1985, 114-127
- Liestøl, Aslak, 1980 *Norges Innskrifter med de yngre Runer*, *Norsk historisk kjeldeskrift-institutt*.



**THE BRYGGEN PAPERS** is a series of publications giving a scholarly presentation of the archaeological finds from the excavations at Bryggen – The German Wharf – in Bergen, which took place between 1955 and 1968. Bryggen was the economic centre of the old Norwegian capital. Later – in Hanseatic times – Bergen became one of the largest and most important seaports and commercial centres in Northern Europe. The excavations at Bryggen have revealed extensive material which gives valuable information about the development of the city as well as European cultural history in general.

In this volume three authors present important finds of runic inscriptions at Bryggen. When the excavations began in the autumn of 1955, only nine medieval runic inscriptions were known from the limited urban area of Bergen. Thirteen years later, when the excavations were terminated, some 500 new inscriptions had been found, and since then the number has risen to over 600. Of all the extensive finds at Bryggen, the runic inscriptions make up perhaps the most exclusive and versatile group. Cut into wood, bone, soapstone, and leather they provide a rich and somewhat unusual insight into the many different aspects of life in a medieval sea-trading town. The late Aslak Liestøl of the University Museum of National Antiquities, Oslo, was the first to interpret these inscriptions. Karin Fjellhammer Seim's contribution is based upon Dr. Liestøl's work.

**Authors in this volume:**

**Karin Fjellhammer Seim:** Cand. phil. University of Bergen 1982. Research assistant, Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature.

**Helge Dyvik:** Mag. art. University of Bergen 1976. Dr. philos. University of Bergen 1981. Professor, Department of Linguistics and Phonetics.

**Axel Grandell:** Dr. econ. – C.G.R., Professor emeritus, High School of Economics, Åbo, Finland.

ISBN 82-00-02562-4



9 788200 025627