

## *Inscriptions from the second period (Viking period), 750-1025 presented by Moltke*

It is important to understand that there was a transition period, between 650 and 800, where new and old Futhark forms coexisted. The following inscriptions start from this period of transition. We have already seen many old inscriptions where only the name of the rune master was given, I do not believe that it is necessary to present new inscriptions of the same type.

147. Flemlose Stone 2:

**ruulfRsis:**

the name Roulf followed by the palindrome **sis**, certainly a magical formula.

148. Glavendurp Stone:

carries a long classic inscription that ends with:

**þur uiki þasi runaR // at rita sa uarþi is stainþansi ailti iþa aft anan traki**

‘Thor hallow these runes! // Let him become *reti* the one who damages this stone or displaces it (in order that it stands) in memory of another.’

We shall find four inscriptions using *reti* or *retti* as an insult in conjunction with the practice of *seidr*. We can thus conjecture as Krause does that it means ‘sorcerer’


149. Glemminge Stone:

**uirþi at missed huuas ub briuti:**

‘Let him become *reti* the one who this monument destroys.’

150. Gorlev Stone (9<sup>th</sup> century):

**þiaupui / risþi / stinþansi / aftupinkaur / fuparkhniastbmlR / niut ualkums // þmkiisssttiiiill / iaksataru(na)ri(t) / [written by another hand]: kuniarmutRkru(b)**

This inscription is interesting for several reasons. Note that the Futhark now contains two **a** that I said I would confuse (on purpose) for reasons of simplicity. The second is written  as I said in the beginning of this chapter, while the **a** of the rune Ansuz represents a sound similar to French ‘an’. This stone contains a classical message of who raised the stone for whom, followed by a Viking Futhark of 16 elements, and then followed by ‘Make good use of the monument’. On the other side of the stone, the following formula is found: thmkiiisssttiiiill. By taking the first three runes and making them the initial letter of the words using one of the following triplets, one obtains the three words *thistil* (thistle), *mistil* (mistletoe), *kistil* (a small box). This formula is also found in all Nordic countries.

The rest of the inscription is more standard: **þiaupui** = a name (translated as Thjodvi by Moltke); **risþi** = ‘raised’; **stinþansi** = ‘this stone’; **niut** = ‘make good use’; **ualkums** = ‘of this monument’; **iaksataru(na)ri(t)** = ‘I placed the runes right’; **kuniarmutRkru(b)** = two names (translated by Moltke as: ‘Gunne’ and ‘Armund’).

151. Gravlev Stick:

**kukukuburRikikiki / i(k)a(a)lh(n)i(f)ka : uiRisiue**

This inscription was not interpreted. The two repeated triples are certainly there to release the magic of the whole inscription.

152. Haddeby Comb (beginning of 9th century):

**husut**

as read by Krause, but Moltke reads it as **ausat**. Neither of them interpreted the inscription.

153. Hällestad Stone 1 (around year 1000):

In the middle of a long standard inscription we find the words:

**stin a biarki stuþan runum**

‘a stone on the hill, made firm with runes.’

The runes are not only decorating the stone, but they help it to remain standing.

154. Hemdrup Stick:

**uanþikiba . fiukati . asaauaabi**

**uan** = ‘won’; **pik** = ‘you’; **iba** = ‘never’; **fiukati** = ‘the storming one’; **asa** = feminine first name, Ase, or genitive plural of ‘Aesir’ (= ‘of the Aesir’); The rest of the inscription is hardly understandable, it has been translated by N. A. Nielsen as: ‘has luck in struggle’.

#### 155. Jelling Stone:

Between 950 and 1025 in Denmark, a bit later in Sweden, we find the ‘great’ period of monumental stones carved with runes. They have an artistic interest and a historical one certainly, but, for the most part, few are of interest for runic magic. Some would even conclude that runic handwriting is a writing system like any other, since these inscriptions contain no magic at all. One of the most famous and most beautiful is the great Jelling Stone that has three sides:

One is dedicated to a long inscription, another to a drawing of Christ on the cross, and the third a ‘monster’ surrounded by a snake.

The inscription side carries:

**haraltr: kunukR: bath: kaurua / kubl: thausi: aft: kurmfathursin / aukaft: thaurui: muthur: sina: sa / haraltr ias: saR. uan. tanmaurk**

The side with the beast has:

**ala. Auknuruiaik**

The side with Christ:

**aukt(a)ni(karhi)kristna**

Inscription side:

‘Harald the king ordered made / these testimonies after (= in memory of) Grom father his / and after Thorvi mother his this / Harald of-him that won Denmark’

Beast side:

‘whole and Norway’

Christ side:

‘and the Danish made Christian.’

#### 156. Karlevi Stone (around 1000):

It contains a classical text:

**stain sasi ias satr aiftir siba kuþa sun fultars inhans liþi sati at u tausaiþ**

‘This stone is placed in memory of Sibbe the Good, son of Foldar. And his followers placed on the island this (memorial) of death.’

The following runes constitute a skaldic poem their rhythm and alliterations show. The verses as below make them easier to read.

<b>fulkin likr hins fulkþu</b>	Folginn liggr hinn’s fylgðu	Hidden lies he whom
<b>flaistr uisi þat maistar</b>	(flestr vissi þat) mestar	- most knew it - the greatest
<b>taipir tulka þrupar</b>	dáðir dolga þrúðar	virtues, of the warrior,
<b>traukr i þaimsi huki</b>	draugr í þeimsi haugi.	in this mount.
<b>munat raip uipur raþa</b>	Mun-at reið-Viðurr ráða	No warrior will rule
<b>ruk starkr i tanmarku</b>	rógstarkr í Danmorku	in Denmark a better
<b>a(i)ntils iarmun kruntar</b>	Endils jormungrundar	stronger in battle sea-warrior
<b>urkrantari lanti</b>	ørgrandari landi	rightly (on this) land

The expression *reið-Viðurr* is understood as ‘Odin of the chariot’ because Viðurr is one of Odin’s names, this alludes to Odin’s wild hunt.

*draugr* means ‘tree’ in the poetical language, *dolgr* means ‘battle’, and *þrúðr* is the name of one of Thor’s daughters.

*Endils* is the genitive form of the name of a sea-king, *jormungrund* means ‘far spreading land’, i.e., the sea.

It follows that **tulka þrupar traukr** = ‘tree of the Thrud of the battles’ = the warrior.

In the same way, *Endils jormungrundar reið-Viðurr* = ‘Odin of the chariot the sea king of the far-spreading land’ = ‘Odin of the sea king of the sea’ = ‘Odin of the battleship’ = ‘sea-warrior.’

#### 157. Lund Weaving-tablet:

An inscription meaning ‘Ingemar Sigvor’s son (or: Ingemar Sigvors) shall have my misfortune’, i.e., a curse from a rejected girl, followed by the magical: **aallatti**. This last formula seems to be here to free the magic, in other words to consecrate the curse.

#### 158. Randbol stone:

This inscription consists of two sentences. The first one with

**tufi bruti rispi stin þansi aft lika brutia**

is translated by Moltke by ‘Tue the overseer set up this stone in memory of the equal match (his wife)’. The second sentence can be read as three verses of a skaldic poem :

<b>þiR stafaR munu</b>	þeR stafaR	These staves for
<b>þurkuni</b>	þorgunni	Thorgun
<b>miuk liki lifa</b>	miok længi lifa	Will live very long.

The first sentence contains the repetition **bruti, brutia** (cf. Old Icelandic *bryti* = overseer, manager), which is very badly rendered in Moltke’s translation. I suggest, for this first sentence, a translation that is closer to the original:

<b>tufi</b>	<b>bruti</b>	<b>risþi</b>	<b>stin þansi</b>	<b>aft</b>	<b>lika</b>	<b>brutia</b>
Tue,	overseer,	set up	stone this	after	a like	(female)-overseer

159. Ribe cranium (c. 800) :

**ulfuR auk upin auk hutiuR / hialb buris / uipR / /þaima uiarki auk tuiR / kuniu** [*here a perforation*]  
**buur**

**auk** = ‘and’; UlfuR = name of a God containing the root ‘wolf’; **Upin** = Opin = name of the God Odin; **HutiuR** = name of a God called Hydyr by Moltke; **hialb** = ‘help’ (imperative); **Buris** (a name) [or: **hialb** = ‘help’ (noun) and **Buris** = a name, genitive; which gives: ‘the help of Buris’]; **uiþR** = ‘against’; **þaima** = ‘this’; **uiarki** = ‘pain’; **tuiR** = ‘dwarf’; **kuniu** = ‘knock’ (Moltke first read **kunig**, but he admits that the interpretation **kuniu** is more likely); **buur** = Bur, name of the rune master.

There is some discussion about the meaning of **hialb** because it should be plural since three entities are called. This problem disappears if we accept that it is a trinity of Gods, called as such to help.

‘Ulfur and Odin and Hydyr help Buris against pain and dwarfstoke’

It is obviously a charm to protect against a kind of sickness. Pain evokes a type of arthritic ailment. Dwarfstroke, in view of the future of the Anglo-Saxon word, *dweorh* (dwarf) becoming ‘fever’, can be understood as strokes of fever. Thus, the entire inscription can be translated as:

‘Ulufur and Odin and Hydyr! Help Bur against the pain and bouts of fever. (signed) Bur’

160. Saleby Stone (Sweden):

Neither Moltke nor Krause give the runes, but they both translate:

‘He shall become a *retti* (Krause: sorcerer) and an *arg* woman who breaks it!’

Krause comments on ‘*arg* woman’ by saying it means ‘a perverted witch’ and Moltke says: ‘*arg* in this context means one dealing with black magic, the woman is a witch’. It is very amusing to see how these nice scholars cannot take into account elementary facts of our sexual life, facts that must have been true since the beginning of humanity. I explained that when Freya ‘had to fart’ after having had sex with Frey, as the Lokasenna reports, it means ‘obviously’ that they had anal sex, simply because no woman would especially fart after ‘normal’ sex, while she does usually after anal sex. This is true today, and was certainly true a few thousand years earlier. Similarly, what can an ‘*arg* woman’ be? From all we said already, it means a woman who practices anal sex. Used as an insult as it is here, and, again, using the ‘eternal’ knowledge that only sexually very excited women draw a large pleasure from anal sex, it means that the woman alluded to has very strong sexual needs, that she is very excited. A modern equivalent could be: lecherous, or constantly horny, or the like with cruder words. Insulting someone of the male sex in that way, is a way of calling him ‘nothing but a lecherous woman’, that is, to need and like to receive anal sex. I explained why I think that a kind of ‘feminization’ must have been done to the sorcerer before his *seidr*, by bugging him. Now, the curse says: ‘not only you will have to do it (for practicing your *seidr*), but on the top of it, you will like it’. Well, this is such a classical ‘macho’ insult that I hope it does not need more explanation now.

(note: I apologize for insisting on this matter but the prudery (or complete innocence?) of the scholars has been confusing these simple topics so much that I want to show that this kind of insult still exists nowadays. I once overheard a joke told by a Russian who was making fun of the Eskimos. It told of an Eskimo describing the otherwise inexpressible delicious taste of an orange as being as good as the pleasure of being buggered. In other words, in this joke, Russians mock Eskimos by saying that they are all ‘*arg* women’.)

161. Skabersjö Buckle (buckle itself not later than year 700 but inscription dated c. 1025):

**...(RR)RRRRRRRRRRRRRR(r)api(tu)kfaukafiaRsisinaiakasapuilaunat ...**

Moltke says that there might be up to 24 R-runes here (while he sees only 13 to 15), this set of runes can thus be understood as a representation of the R rune followed by the Futhark (similar to # 22). **(r)api** = a name?; **tuk** = took; **fauka** =? ‘stroke’, ‘onslaught’ [*not translated by Moltke*]; **fiaR** = property; **sis** = his; **in** =? ‘to’ ; **a** = ‘in’;

**iak** = 'I'; **asa** = first name 'Åse', or 'of the Aesir'; **þui** = 'this one', 'that one'; **launat** = 'paid, rewarded'. Hence, Moltke's translation:

'Rade took fauka of his property and with that I, Åse, have rewarded (someone).'

Krause sees only 16 R-runes [which does not change my understanding since the Nordic Futhark contains 16 runes], and he translates the sentence as:

'Vadi took increase of his money. I, Asa, have rewarded (something) with that.'

Obviously, Moltke has been reading an **r** while Krause read a **w** as the first letter of the name. Moltke's reading has the advantage that the name can be linked to the word 'rider' (see, for instance # 105), even though he does not say so. Both choose to translate **asa** by the female name Åse, and not by 'of the Aesir'. I want to discuss this choice because it is typical of what I call 'the religion of rationalism' which leads people to systematically translate by the most casual version, when possible. This inscription begins with a large number of 'senseless' **Rs**. Even if I am wrong about this set being an image of the Futhark, this accumulation cannot have but a magical interpretation, as in the other runic inscriptions that show also these 'senseless' repetitions. In this context, and since the inscription is obviously from one hand only (the **Rs** of the beginning are exactly the same as the **R** of **fiar**, for instance), I claim that not attributing a magical meaning to the whole formula is irrational: the beginning would be magic, and the end casual, supposing a very unstable writer. This is why I suggest translating **iakasa** by 'I of the Aesir', which might sound a bit strange in English unless you think of it as 'I, child of the Gods', or something like that. One must recall also that, here, the rune **R** is no longer the Algiz of the Older Futhark, but the rune Yr of the Younger one, thus designating the yew. The Icelandic runic poem says that 'Yr is the Farbauti of the arrow' (see detailed description of rune Ihwaz), and Farbauti is a *Thurse* (a Giant) who is the father of Loki. I am quite aware that I am stretching the thread of logic very thin here, but speaking of Loki and 'possessions taken by onslaught' immediately brings forward the famous myth of the otter's ransom, the one upon which the malediction of the Rhine's gold is based. Odin, Loki and Honir wander together, and Loki kills an otter who happens to be Regin's son, and Loki has to steal a treasure as a ransom to be paid to Regin in compensation of his son's death. Fafnir kills Regin to steal this ransom, and is killed in turn by Sigurdr ('Siegfried' in the German version of this myth). Loki started this long story which ends with the curse attached to the Volsung family. It is not at all contradictory to see this curse as the 'reward' of the runic inscription since it fits well with their style to say 'reward' meaning 'curse'.

The whole inscription can thus be understood as:

'FARBauti Futhark. The rider took by violence the treasure. I of the Aesir rewarded (them = the Volsung) with that'

162. Skern stone 2:

a standard inscription followed by:

**siþi sa manr is / þusi kubl ub biruti**

'Let him practice *seidr* the man who this monument destroys !'

Moltke translates **siþi** by 'sorcerer'.

163. Snoldelev stone:

It has a swastika and a triskele made of three drinking horns, that were also seen as a *heart of Hrungrnir* and it carries the following runes:

**kun / ualstain / sunaR // ruhalts / þular / asalhauku(m)**

**kun / ual** = a name ('Gunvald'); **stain** = 'stone'; **sunaR** = 'son'; **ruhalts** = 'of Roald'; **asalhauku(m)** = 'on the Sal-mounds'; **þular** = 'thul'. The title carried by Gunvald, *thul* is like the Old Norse word, *þula* meaning 'a litany', and the Anglo-Saxon *ule*: 'announcer', 'reciter'. The presence of magical signs associated with this inscription leads us to believe that Gunvald was a singer (a skald) specialized in incantations.

164. Sonder Kirkeby stone:

**un þur uik(i) (r)unaR**

'Thor hallows the runes!'

Note that Thor's name is written **þur** (Thur), as in # 168 and 171 below, which perhaps explains a later confusion, between Thor and the Giants (*Thurses*). In spite of this surface similarity, the two names have very different ethymologies. In inscription # 171, the *Thurses* are designated by **þrs**.

165. Sonder Vinge stone 2:

**sarþi auk siþ r[a]ti saR manR ias auþi mini þui**

'Witch and *seidr-retti* the man who destroys this memorial'

Moltke doesn't really translate **siþ**, which Krause interprets as *seidr*, as in Skern stone 2 above.

166. Sonderby stone:

**þuarmutR / niaut kubls**

**þuarmutR** = 'Thormund'; **niaut** = 'make good use'; **kubls** = 'of this monument'

167. Tryggevoelde stone:

On one side it carries a long classic inscription and on the other two faces contain this inscription:

**sauarþi at rita isailstainþansi ipaiþantraki**

'Let him become a *reti* the one who damages this stone or displaces it from here.'

168. Verring stone:

Has a standard inscription ending with:

**þur uiki þisi kuml**

'Thor hallows this monument!'

169. Winchester stone (Danish runes):

The inscription is not understandable, but it is noticeable that the runes contained traces of red paint. Hence the legend, very popular among scholars, that all runes would have been reddened by paint, instead of blood, contradicting each description found in the texts, sagas and Edda.

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