

## NFI1100 - Runology – General Introduction + Sensorveileding

### Fall 2023

NB: there was an issue with the symbols, and in some questions, some of the students were not able to type in runes (the fault was reported, but could not be fixed).

Students were advised to:

- Copy paste runes from other sections, if possible (not required since time consuming, but possible.)
- Use the rune names
- Use the transliteration of the rune between hooked brackets, for example: <a>.

All three options are to count as equally acceptable.

In addition, students used þ\* for ð.

### Grading Scale

#### NFI4100:

A 50 - 55  
B 44.5 -49.5  
C 39 - 44  
D 33,5-38.5  
E 28-33  
F 0-27,5

#### NFI100

A 46.5-51  
B 41.5-46  
C 35.5-41  
D 30.5-35  
E 25.5-30  
F 0 – 25 ( In my grading, three students got a grade between 21 and 25, I am inclined to give them an E.)

### Examen

1. Kjølevik Stone
  - a) Transliterate and translate the inscription. Remember to use the correct conventions for the transliteration. (6p)
  - b) Bonus point: where can the inscription be found today?

hadu(l)aikaz

ek hagustadaz

h^(l)aaiwido magu minino

”Ha(n)dulaikaz (lies here). I, Hagustaldaz, buried my son.”

- Bold for the transliteration
- Consistent spacing/absence of spacing
- Consistent marking of line division
- R or z for algiR-rune
- Bindrunes by bow, =, or ^

- 0.5 bonus point for the exhibition at the library.

3 p for transliteration, 3 for translation -1/ (big) mistake.

## 2. Origin of the runes

- To which alphabets (mention at least three) has the invention of runes been connected? (3p)
- Give a concise overview of the current scholarly debate, mentioning arguments in favour and against a connection to each of these alphabets. (6p)

- 3 of the following: Greek alphabet, roman alphabet, etruscan, celtic alphabets
- The overview should contain (parts of) the following:

Greek: + contact by black sea AD 200; similar layout rules; runes are older than we think (~fits the older Greek tradition) – runic inscriptions older than the known contact, but younger than the layout similarities; black sea is far away from Scandinavia; not all letters fit.

Etruscan/celtic: + known contact around 0AD; fitting forms, - not a high status context, romanized early; no 1-1 relation to 1 celtic alphabet; no runic inscriptions from germania that fit the time.

Roman: + known contact, continued contact – no 1-1 relationship in form and in sound.

## NFI4100

Give three reasons given in previous research for the change from the elder to the younger futhark. (3p)

- Cultural decline (not accepted today)
- Magic (not accepted today)
- Syncope, mutation & loss of 1-1 relation
- Changes in the rune names
- Conscious reform in shapes of runes: single stave with branches/twigs
- Conscious removal of g,d,p

## 3. Sö 179 Gripsholm

- Transliterate, translate and normalize the commemorative formula in this inscription. (7p)
- Which characteristics can be used to date this stone? (2p)
- Which date do you suggest, and why? (2p)

**× tula : lit : raisa : stain : pinsal | jat : sun : sin : haralt : brupur : inkuars**

*Tóla lét reisa stein þenna at son sinn Harald, bróður Ingvars.*

OR: *Tola let ræisa stæin þensa at sun sinn Harald, broður Ingvars.*

Tóla had this stone raised in memory of her son Haraldr, Ingvarr's brother.

Note: some students had issues with the accents in inspera, lack of accents (length) is accepted (wrongly placed ones not). Students were allowed to transliterate the whole inscription if they desperately wanted to, but had to make sure to mark the commemorative formula.

Note: I see many students have read the question badly and transliterated, normalized and translated everything. I gave them -1 for not knowing what the commemorative formula is, but checked only the commemorative formula in their transliterations, normalisations and translations. (the rest of the inscription is harder, and most had issues there)

#### Dating the stone

- Shape of the ornamentation
- Possibly the mention of Ingvar
- The use of long branch runes in uppland area
- The traveling in the content of the inscription
- Style FP, 1010-1050. (poss. also, but not for all points: 11<sup>th</sup> C due to rune forms and content of inscription)

#### 4. N 648

- Transliterate and translate the first sentence of this inscription (all shown runes). (6p)
- On what type of object is this inscription found? (1p)
- In which area(s) are these kinds of inscriptions typically found? (1p)

~ hau~grimi : felag ~ sinum ~ sen~dir ~ þorer ~ fagr ~ (k)æip~iu ~ guþs ~ ok ~ si~nn^a ~  
san:na^n : flaskap ~ ok uinato

Þórir the Fair sends to Hafgrímr his partner his own and God's greeting, and true partnership and friendship

- A rune stick
- Towns, especially in trade contexts, but not unknown from other areas. The use/preservation of wood seems esp. good in western Norway & coastal conditions.

**NFI1100** Are these types of inscriptions new to the medieval period? Concisely give arguments both in favour and against. (4p)

- New that we find them in this amount
- The phrasing of the inscription is new, common to the medieval period.
- Liestøl argues for similar use of runes already in the viking age
- Preservation may play an equally large role as production
- ...

**NFI 4100** a) What do we know of changes in literacy from the Proto-Norse to the medieval period? Focus on how wide-spread the knowledge of reading and writing was. b) What were the big changes in the medieval period attributed to? (4p)

- Proto-norse period: assumed low literacy, high status contexts, magical use of runes.
- But: argued by some: there must be a wider spread than just on monuments for it to survive
- Viking Age: boom in production of runestones, increased literacy. Liestøl argues that tradesmen used runes in daily life, not accepted by all scholars.

- Medieval period, boom in types of writing runes are used for, increase in literacy
  - Attributed to Christianity and the use of the roman alphabet.
5. Give at least 3 traits of runic writing conventions and how they have changed from the Proto-Norse through the Viking Age to the medieval period. You can use the three inscriptions above as inspiration. (9p)
- Bindrunes (common – not common – very common)
  - 1-1 relationship (yes – no – yes)
  - No spacing in any of the periods
  - Word division by markers increasingly common
  - Increased standardisation of reading direction
  - No double spelling of runes until medieval period
  - No dotting of runes until viking age, and novel forms in medieval period
  - ...
6. Unknown runic inscription.
- a) Transliterate the inscription. (3p)
  - b) Which variant(s) of the futhark do you find here? (1p)

**auintr : risti : stin : þina aftir : kunuat : sun sn**

- Younger futhark, short twig

**NFI4100** What can this tell us of the context of the inscription? (1p)

- More likely Norway than Sweden/Denmark. Because of the use of short twig runes, and short twig s
- Must be Viking Age, since not elder futhark, but no medieval innovations.
- ...