

**Signs and symbols
represented in Germanic,
particularly early Scandinavian, iconography
between the Migration Period and
the end of the Viking Age**

Peter R. Hupfauf

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
University of Sydney, 2003**

Preface

After the Middle Ages, artists in European cultures concentrated predominantly on realistic interpretations of events and issues and on documentation of the world. From the Renaissance onwards, artists developed techniques of illusion (e.g. perspective) and high levels of sophistication to embed messages within decorative elaborations. This development reached its peak in nineteenth century Classicism and Realism. A Fine Art interest in 'Nordic Antiquity', which emerged during the Romantic movement, was usually expressed in a Renaissance manner, representing heroic attitudes by copying Classical Antiquity. A group of nineteenth-century artists, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Holman Hunt and Everett Millais founded the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. John Ruskin, who taught aesthetic theory at Oxford, became an associate and public defender of the group. The members of this group appreciated the symbolism and iconography of the Gothic period. Rossetti worked together with Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris. Morris was a great admirer of early Scandinavian cultures, and his ideas were extremely influential for the development of the English Craft Movement, which originated from Pre-Raphaelite ideology. Abstraction, which developed during the early twentieth century, attempted to communicate more directly with emotion rather than with the intellect. Many of the early abstract artists (Picasso is probably the best known) found inspiration in tribal artefacts. However, according to Rubin (1984), some nineteenth-century primitivist painters appreciated pre-Renaissance European styles for their simplicity and sincerity – they saw value in the absence of complex devices of illusionist lighting and perspective.

The strong Post-Modernist focus in Western society, particularly on aesthetic values of the Renaissance, seemed to disregard stylistic features and aesthetic aspects of the early Middle Ages. The relative lack of discussion of Germanic and, in particular, early Scandinavian art and artefacts, encouraged me to investigate these phenomena.

I have found that a great range of literature exists regarding the development of early Nordic styles. However, analysis of the images and ornamentation appearing on items/artefacts is overdue in order to clarify whether certain elements such as shapes and patterns were applied for specific reasons other than decoration. In order to discover a wider range of elements relevant to this research, it was necessary to develop a method, not previously applied in this field, for analysing objects and images. Principles from the psychological concept of visual perception were applied, in analysing images from selected objects. The results have shown that this method is a valuable tool for further investigation. In the case of this research it appears very likely that considerable knowledge existed in early Scandinavian culture about the suggestive power of shapes in signs and symbols which were used for sacred and secular reasons.

I should like to acknowledge with deepest gratitude the excellent advice, encouragement and guidance given by my supervisor Professor Margaret Clunies Ross. Her sharp mind and fine humour were invaluable tools for the completion of this dissertation. I am also grateful to Professor Dr. Rudolf Simek, who was my supervisor for one semester, during which he helped me tremendously to develop a deeper understanding of early Nordic iconography. I should like to thank Dr. Colin Clifford for his advice on psychological aspects, particularly visual perception.

I am also indebted to Professor Dr. Klaus Düwel, who has been an extraordinary friend and mentor, providing me with great insight into the world of runes.

I also like to thank Mrs. Gabrielle Singleton for her generous contribution by assisting in language matters and proof-reading.

I should also like to thank my family for their generosity, allowing me to spend so much time writing this thesis. Particularly I thank my wife Mrs. Uta Herzog for her encouragement and her professional advice regarding issues of visual perception.

This project was assisted by funds from the University of Sydney Postgraduate Award (co-funded) 2000 - 2.

Contents

Preface	i
Contents	iv
1 Introduction	1
Mediaeval sources of information	1
Time-frame covered by this research	1
Culture-specific symbolism	2
Analytical methods used	3
Scope of investigations	4
2 Signs and Symbols	6
Definition of signs	6
Definition of symbols	11
History	12
Applications	16
Aesthetics	21
Signs and symbols of relevance in contemporary 'Western' society	22
3 Visual perception	28
Introduction	28
The visual pathway	29
Colour perception	31
Object recognition	32
Horizontal/vertical line preferences	34
Form definition/Gestalt	34
Perception of depth	36
Motion adaptation and after-effect	37
Shading	38
Summary of perception	39
Application of perceptual principles in order to identify images from the tenth and early eleventh centuries	48
Application of perceptual principles in analysing the object from Larmøya, Kaupang, Larvik, Vestfold in Norway, to identify parts of its design not previously defined.	52
Hypnosis	53
Summary of hypnosis	58
4 Styles	62
Animal Style	64

		69
	Animal Images and Shamanism	72
	A - E Styles	76
	The Oseberg find	81
	Animal designs from Broa	83
	The gripping beast	84
	Borre Style	86
	Jellinge Style	90
	Ringerike Style	95
	Urnes Style	99
	Summary on styles	
5	<i>Guldgubber</i>	113
	The hoard from Sorte Muld	116
	Symbolic elements	124
	Application of perceptual principles in identifying symbolic values in <i>guldgubber</i>	131
6	Bracteates	136
	Associated signs	142
	Symbolic elements in main depictions on bracteates	146
	Symbolic expressions of associated signs on bracteates	151
	Application of perceptual principles in identifying symbolic elements in bracteates	154
7	Runes	160
	Definition	160
	The origin of runes in mythological perspective	161
	Development of runic letters	162
	Runes compared with the Etruscan alphabet	165
	History	
166		
	Runic inscriptions	168
	Symbolic significance of runes	179
8	Gotland picture stones	187
	1. Shapes	194
	Group 'A'	195
	Group 'B'	198
	Group 'C'	198
	Group 'D'	201
	Group 'E'	201
	2. Images	204
	Images on group 'A'	205

	Images on group 'B'	205
	Images on group 'C'	206
	Images on group 'D' and 'E'	207
	Men's garments	209
	Women's garments	210
	Pictures of riders and horses	211
	Buildings	211
	Furniture and household items	212
	Snakes and fetters	212
	Animals	213
	Birds	214
	Miscellaneous natural objects and elements	215
	Abstract depictions	215
	Mythological pictures	217
	Summary	222
	Symbolic elements in depictions on Gotland picture-stones	225
	Application of perceptual principles in identifying symbolic values in images of Gotland picture-stones	233
9	Conclusion	238
10	Appendix	248
	A Objects and images on objects from early Scandinavian culture, discussed in this thesis, which have signifying qualities or are likely to carry symbolic qualities	249
	B A detailed analysis of <i>guldgubber</i> of the hoard from Lundeberg	260
	C Paintings representing love or marriage by two people holding each other	298
11	Bibliography	301

1. Introduction

Mediaeval sources of information

This document focuses predominantly on signs and symbols from Germanic, particularly early Scandinavian, society between the Migration Period and the end of the Viking Age. Although the symbolism of contemporary Western society is well documented, no early medieval documentation exists about the meanings, symbolic or otherwise, of iconic representations in early Scandinavian society. Runes are known as to have been used in northern Europe since the beginning of the first millennium; however, all early inscriptions and most of the later ones are short and do not necessarily document events of the time. The majority of runic inscriptions, according to Quinn (2000, 30), are of “memorialising, ownership and magic quality”.

Many literary sources from medieval Scandinavia indicate that a rich native oral tradition existed before the introduction of the Roman alphabet, which appeared with the conversion to Christianity. The conversion took place, according to Foote (1993, 106), first in Denmark (960 AD), “when Harald Gormson was baptised by Poppo, a German cleric”. Norway was converted “in the reign of Óláfr Tryggvason (995 AD – 999/1000 AD)”. Members of the ruling dynasty in Sweden converted to Christianity from about 1000 AD onwards. However, pre-Christian, early Scandinavian culture, according to Quinn (2000, 31) is reflected in “skaldic praise poetry, eddic mythological and heroic poetry, mnemonic lists and genealogies, narrative prosimetra and oral sagas”. Skaldic poetry from the Viking Age, is a valuable source of information for the identification of symbolic values of objects and items from early Scandinavian cultures. Snorri Sturluson compiled the so-called Prose *Edda* which is assigned to the 1220s AD, and the Codex Regius collection of eddic poems is thought to have been written c.1270 AD in its present form. Even if these texts were written by authors who were Christians, they provide an insight into earlier poetic traditions and preserved knowledge about many early Scandinavian practices, moral and ethical. This is also, to a certain extent, reflected in the iconography of this culture.

Time frame covered by this research

Significant attention has been given to the period 400 AD - 1000 AD, the Earlier Germanic Iron Age, the Migration Period (400 - 600 AD) and the later Germanic Iron Age (600 - 800 AD), which is also defined in Sweden as the Vendel-period, in Denmark as *yngre germansk jernalder*, in Norway *merovingertid*, and in Central Europe the Merovingian period. The Viking period (end of the eighth century AD to the eleventh century AD) is also included

because of its significance for this study. Some investigation and discussion refers to items and objects created during the time regarded as the Earlier Roman Iron Age (1 – 200 AD).

This time span is of great relevance because people from various places of origin moved to Central and North Europe during the Migration Period, bringing their individual pictorial expressions with them. These pictorial expressions can in many cases be regarded as signs and in some instances as symbols.

Culture-specific symbolism

Every culture has its own variety of symbols. They are of linguistic or pictorial realisation; if they are pictorial they are called 'icons'. Frank (1966) suggested that cultures are represented by their symbols. This representation can be of a technical, religious or social/political nature. "Through the three traditional symbol systems of art, science and theology, we have attempted to rationalise the non-rational, and make it possible for each individual to develop his own psycho-logic and his own religion" (Frank, 1966,13-4).

According to Haseloff (1981, vol.1, 10-7), the creation of art and craft in Germanic culture started during the early fifth century. The few objects produced before this time were, Haseloff considered, independently designed, not continuing and unfolding into a particular style. Artistic expression created within the Roman empire, which reached northwards up to the rivers Rhine and Danube and westwards as far as Britain, belonged, according to Haseloff, to the Roman culture. Specific depictions, according to Haseloff, had little relevance to the Germanic people. It is not known in detail to what extent Germanic people were influenced by Roman culture. The adoption of some imagery (e.g. dolphins) from Roman iconography indicates the possibility of a flexible approach.

The situation changed after 375 AD when the Huns conquered the eastern part of western Europe. This caused the Visigoths to move into Roman territory, south of the lower Danube, where they were integrated into the Roman confederation. However, in 401 AD, the Visigoths appeared in Italy. There they were defeated by Stilicho. Because of the permanent threat of the Visigoths against the Romans in Italy, the Roman emperor Honorius withdrew troops from Britain and the Rhine/Danube border area in order to protect Italy. Even after this strategic change, Alaric and his troops succeeded in entering Italy again and in the year 410 AD they conquered Rome. Because of this struggle which engaged the Romans in their own country they were less protected in the north of their empire. This gave the Franks the opportunity to move into Gaul and the Saxons, together with the Angles, to conquer Britain.

Haseloff (1981, vol.1) explained that it was within this newly developed power position, in which the Germanic peoples probably developed a new identity, that the creation of art/craft began to develop more continuously. This development did not take place everywhere simultaneously. The Goths spread their particular style, which was influenced by Hellenistic and Oriental elements, into the Danube area, to Italy, Gaul and Spain. Evidence of this can be found in the objects which were placed in the grave at Tournai of Childerich, King of the Franks, who died in the year 482 AD.

A second birthplace for a Germanic art was, according to Haseloff (1981), continental Saxony, at the now German coast of the North Sea and in particular Scandinavia, which became “the real carrier of the art of the Germanic migration-period” (p.4).

The further developments between the Migration Period and the beginning of the Middle Ages were of particular significance to northern countries because this was the dawn of modern Europe. Countries were formed which are still relevant in modern Europe, and societies developed then which contribute now with their cultural history towards a politically, economically and socially united continent.

Analytical methods used

Images and ornaments have been identified, analysed and defined by various authors for their cultural origins and stylistic particularities. It seems that scholars have in their analyses focused predominantly on the geographical, historical and sometimes linguistic aspects (if text is involved) of objects. However, since visual perception is an elementary component in viewing objects and images, it seems essential in analysing pictorial material of any kind to take visual perception into consideration. A study relating to perception was conducted in the course of this project, in order to investigate and indicate the potential of the concept of visual perception as an application for the analysis of pictorial images and to identify shapes which may express symbolic values. A number of authorities was referred to for this study, Max Wertheimer's ‘gestalt theory’ appearing to be an important element for the recognition of pictorial elements.

Visual perception has, until now, not been formally applied in research concerning artefacts from Germanic and early Scandinavian cultures to identify elements in their design, in which symbolic values are embedded.

Scope of investigations

Styles are a culture's aesthetic representation. Within this thesis, styles are mentioned because of their relevance as signs, indicating, for example, a certain time period or a particular place of origin. In combination with other elements, styles occasionally become symbols. The identification of specific styles in early Scandinavian art and craft follows predominantly the outlines of David M. Wilson and Ole Klindt-Jensen (1966), referring also to other authors such as Morten Axboe (1999) and Lennart Karlsson (1983), who identified more than a hundred different styles in which objects from early Scandinavian culture were created.

Guldgubber (see p. 112), bracteates (see p. 135) and Gotland picture-stones have been selected from a variety of possible kinds of artefacts, to be analysed for their symbolic expressions. Several examples of each object have been chosen, in order to identify the symbolic meaning of what is depicted on them. The objects should be understood as examples, representing a wider range produced at different times, from different materials and in different sizes. Objects such as fibulae, rings and weapons could not be included within the scope of this research. For the same reason it was also not possible to analyse a greater number of items within the chosen range. Runes were included in this study because they were identified as signs developed upon a base of Mediterranean scripts, and are often integral parts of objects such as bracteates and rune-stones.

Large numbers of *guldgubber* has been found at Sorte Muld, on the island of Bornholm. The descriptions of Margarethe Watt (1992) are predominantly used for this text. Sixty-four *guldgubber* which were found in Lundeborg, east of Gudme (Fyn), have been surveyed in particular detail because of the manageable size of the find and the presence of a variety of styles and applications.

For the research on bracteates, the work of Karl Hauck (1985) provided the main underlying source of information. However, the work of Günther Haseloff and others has also been invaluable for this study. The application of methods of visual perception in analysing bracteates has resulted in the detection of images which have not been recognised before.

The structure of the study of the Gotland picture-stones basically follows the outlines of the work of Sune Lindqvist (1945). Despite more recent research, Lindqvist's work is still the most comprehensive literature on this subject. In 2002 I undertook a journey to Gotland, which had the aim and fulfilled the purpose of clarifying a few issues which were not quite clear from the information gained to that point.

Because runic letters were used on numerous inscriptions, and in the context of the researched material (e.g. in reference in Old Norse mythology), a brief investigation was undertaken of the possible origin of the runic letter system and its introduction to the Germanic peoples. Runes are regarded in this study as signs but, like styles, they can combine with other elements to form what could be described as symbols. The work of Klaus Düwel (1983 and 2001), Wolfgang Krause (1961) and Erik Moltke (1981) forms the basis for this study.

In June, 2002 I had the pleasure of being the guest of the Schleswigholsteinisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, in Schleswig, Germany. There I was able to view a number of moulds of brooches and pendants, one of which had come to my attention earlier, depicted in the catalogue of the exhibition *Viking og Hvidekrist* which toured in Europe in 1992.

Also in June, 2002 I visited the University Museum of Cultural Heritage in Oslo, Norway, where one of the items on display caught my attention. It was a brooch designed in an animal shape, depicting some clearly recognisable shapes, but also other shapes which appeared quite confusing. It was the great discrepancy between some easily recognisable parts and some shapes that were difficult to interpret in this object that caught my attention, and this is the reason the analysis of this object is also included in Chapter 3, p. 52 of this thesis. The fact that I had the opportunity to analyse some images, not only from photographs but from the actual artefacts, encouraged me to include them in this document.

Objects of great diversity have been selected to permit discussion of a range of examples of the early Scandinavian pictorial culture. A major aspect of this dissertation is the attempt to develop a method which can be applied to detect elements within early Scandinavian iconography that are most likely to articulate symbolic qualities. It was necessary to investigate whether the method could be applied to objects from different time periods, of different formats, materials and applications, to gain evidence of its value under different circumstances. Other objects of no less importance, such as fibulae, weapons and belt-mounts, were not included because of the length limitations of this dissertation.

The following chapter defines the terms ‘sign’ and ‘symbol’ and explains their application.

2. Signs and Symbols

Definition of signs

When it rains, worms crawl to the surface to make sure they are not drowned by water filling their holes. Anglers observed this behaviour and hit the earth's surface with objects, to simulate the sound of rain. If worms perceive the vibration created by the anglers, they believe it may rain and so appear on the surface. Here they are collected etc. This little story demonstrates how signs and symbols have relevance on all levels of existence. The vibration on the earth's surface signals rain – danger. This creates a reaction, because the signal (sign) has been understood. Frank (1966) referred to more highly developed animals, for example a dog, being fed regularly when a church bell rings. This trains a dog to feel hungry whenever a bell rings. The biological signal to feel hungry has been replaced by the church bell's sound. This process is called conditioning and the church bell's sound becomes a symbol for food, which may soon arrive.

Humans, during the course of their lives, encounter a vast amount and variety of information. To survive the challenges of existence, it is necessary to memorise a considerable portion of this knowledge and also comprehend a certain quantity of it. Because of the vast quantity of information existent, it is essential to apply structures of relations and associations in order to remember and communicate. Even complex information can be conveyed by signs and symbols as very brief messages. A driver of a car should be warned not to drive ahead because traffic from the cross street may enter the intersection at any moment, which could lead to a dangerous situation or even an accident. If the driver ignores the warning, he or she would not only face the problem of a damaged car, personal injury, loss of income because of the time spent on the whole event, but also a hefty fine, which may include the loss of the driver's licence. All this is signalled by a red traffic light.

The Germanic word *taikna* and the Old Norse word *teikn*, both representing the concept sign, are cognate with the Greek word *taikns* which meant sign and wonder. (Düwel [1997] referring to Lehmann [1986].) The author cited Grimm and Grimm (1956), who defined *Zeichen* (sign) as:

ein unkörperliches, aber sinnlich wahrnehmbares Abbild eines Dinges oder einer Sache, woran die Sache erkannt oder auf sie hingewiesen wird; also auch etwas, was willkürlich als Erkennungszeichen oder Merkmal bestimmt ist (p.476).

(an abstract but sensibly perceptible, representation of something by which that can be recognised or can be addressed; therefore also something meant purposely to be used as identification and for recognition).

It would be difficult to extract specific information from a large volume of writing without a table of contents. For this reason, books are segmented into chapters. The division into chapters allows the author to categorise particular aspects and summarise them with a title. This title, ideally, indicates generally the content which it summarises. As such, the title is an essence of the text: in only a few words it symbolises an elaboration of often considerable length.

Signs are quite similar to symbols. However, signs show less complexity than symbols. While symbols may be compared with a book's headings as found in a table of contents, signs could be compared with the words and sentences which are used to create the text which is announced in the headings. A sign is a single element, usually placed in context with others.

Letters, which can be seen as signs, sometimes possess the capacity to represent an item, place or happening (e.g. from a to b, as seen in example a, and so forth). Some words consist of a single letter only (like I and a, in English). However, most letters have little representation on their own; they are arranged to form words, sentences, paragraphs, etc. In this case, the letters are used within a system which is usually related to language.

Melville and Readings (1995) explained that a book must be seen as neutral. Its content is not necessarily trustworthy. It is a volume made up of numerous sequences, interacting with each other and overlaying each other. No boundaries exist between the written material and its interpretations. "...vision is plugged into textuality, and vice versa" (p. 7). Melville and Readings continued, "Poetry aims to paint a world upon the mind's eye, just as painting seeks to represent the mute objects of the world in a framework that will make them speak. The mimetic analogy between painting and poetry is symmetrical with the mimetic analogy between life and art" (p. 8). Signs are found not only in text. Düwel (1997, 803) mentioned that nonverbal signs were often used for communication with "supernatural beings, such as deities, daemons and spirits". Innis (1994) described how signs have application in nearly all aspects of existence. In order to differentiate between any shape and a sign, one must be aware that shapes need to be used in a socially agreed order to become a sign. In the case of letters, this order might be the particular language in which the words are formed. Traffic signs have value only if they are known by the society which is expected to recognise them. Such rules are established by learning by experience and observation. Semiotic frameworks in human consciousness are necessary to

model and schematise in a distinctive way... and to relate, with nuance and analytical precision, perceptual consciousness to other forms of consciousness without reducing the one to the other or opposing one irreconcilably to the other. Perceptual consciousness, in fact, makes up the body of semiosis and roots the play of signification in an embodied subject (Innis, 1994, 4).

Paintings can often be interpreted by analysing the signs placed on the canvas. The signs may tell the story of a painting, utilising, for example, postures and facial expressions as well as colours which represent a particular mood and elements which indicate a certain position in time. As with the analysis of a painting, the perceptual process applies in literature, music and performance. These examples, all relating to art, of course, may be similarly translated into all the functions of society, such as personal relationships, business, advertising, traffic, sport, war, etc.

De Saussure (1922 [1964]) stated that the linguistic sign, which represents a concept, creates a sound–image. It is, according to the author, this sound–image which makes an imprint on our senses. He concluded that concept and sound–image are an unit. As an example, de Saussure used a tree as a concept and the Latin word *arbor* as the sound–image. De Saussure declared this combination to be a sign. The terms concept and sound–image are replaced by signified and signifier, respectively. The author preferred these terms because he did “not know of any word to replace it, the ordinary language suggesting no other” (p. 67).

In criticising de Saussure’s theory of signifiers and signified, Melville and Readings (1995) also chose the tree as an example. The tree, according to Melville and Readings, could be both the signifier and the signified. Melville and Readings interpreted abstract qualities of a tree, such as age and sturdiness, as the signified, when deciphering the tree as a signifier. De Saussure, however, used the word tree, to signify one that exists in reality. In this regard de Saussure used a word as a sign, to represent a concrete concept (the tree, roots, branches etc.). Barthes (1986), in interpreting de Saussure, stated that the signified (the content) is not necessarily what we obviously see, but rather “it is a mental representation of it” (p. 42). A signifier is a mediator, which should clearly distinguish between the image itself and the concept it represents. The signifier (expression) should primarily be created by selecting all the relevant aspects and facts which represent a concept. Secondly, all elements representing the item but not its mental representation must be eliminated. The remaining material should be categorised and finally selected as a signifier, or else it should be removed from consideration. According to this interpretation of the Saussurean view of language, the tree would represent concepts such as age, life and steadiness, rather than a plant. Barthes (1986) defined semiology as “the science of signs” (p. 9). This interpretation includes words as well as images, gestures, musical sounds, objects and “the complex association” (p. 9) of these

elements. Items such as food or clothing may be included because they not only provide nourishment or protection, but also function as signs. A raincoat, for instance, does not just give protection from the rain; it also represents a certain weather condition.

Melville and Readings seemed to be concerned that the signifier could outweigh the signified. This may be a danger when the above discussion relates to text, because words allow the expression even of abstract elements, whereas in pictorial communication, metaphors must be used to express abstract concepts.

The complexity of signs is demonstrated by Paul (2000), who analysed Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. Here Paul aimed to define the terms nature and culture as precisely as possible. Paul decided to focus on the human world and conceptualise it as "people, genes and signs" (p. 1). This was done to distinguish those concepts more precisely and determine them more accurately. Paul referred to Bruno Latour's (1993,) theory of "networks and conceptual hybrids" (p. 1) when he described the three above-mentioned components, which, in his opinion, should be regarded as equal in status. Paul believed that the first nineteen of Shakespeare's one hundred and fifty-four *Sonnets* are poems addressed to a young man, suggesting to him to become interested in the opposite sex in order to become a father. Paul highlighted the strong symbolic value of the work in its representation of eternity. Eternity could be achieved by writing poems, as well as by becoming a father. Paul associated this with the production of genetic links into the future.

With three of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, Paul (2000) explained neatly their expressive qualities and their link to eternity.¹

¹ The progression encapsulated in these three sonnets concerns the relations between sexual reproduction, on the one hand, and reproduction by symbolic means (in this case, linguistic signs), on the other. In the first moment, sexual reproduction is represented as being the real thing, capable of producing new life, while poetry - a thing fabricated of words, ink markings on paper or patterns of sound waves spoken into the air - can only be a counterfeit, a barren imitation of life. In the second moment, sexual and symbolic reproduction are represented as coequal, the product of the first - a child - serving as the redeemable value of the symbols of it in the second: because the child of the beautiful youth is also beautiful, those in the next generation who read the poem will be guaranteed that the symbols are worth what they claim to be worth by checking up on the reality the poem claims to represent. The specie of a symbolic form, in this moment, is as good as the gold backing it up in the Fort Knox of living reality. Finally, in the third moment, the symbol declares its independence from the product of sexual procreation and asserts its right to stand on its own, with or without the compliance of "living reality."

Paul (2000) schematised the sonnets 16, 17 and 18 as following:

1. I could try to save you from Time's ravages by portraying you in verse with my pen, but that would be barren counterfeit. Only you, with your own living sexual substance, bestowed on some 'maiden garden,' can create a new version of yourself that is truly alive. (Sonnet 16)
2. If I write poetry that is as good as I think it is and in it describe your beauty, nobody will believe me. But if you will breed and create a child to bear witness, then together that child and my verses will keep you alive. (Sonnet 17)
3. You can do what you like about having children; if you are going to be remembered at all it is only because of my poetry. (Sonnet 18) (p. 5).

Paul (2000, 5) drew the following conclusions from the text above:

1. Signs depend on people.
2. Signs and people can stand for each other.
3. People depend on signs.

These three *Sonnets* are, according to Paul (2000), linguistic signs. The sum of several sonnets produces a symbol. The author stated that human reproduction equals the reproduction of genes. This would, as he speculated, reproduce symbols as well, "becoming initialised or used by a person her/himself" (p. 6). He further argued that there may be symbols which are not recognised, "understood or communicated with by humans" (p. 6), because they are undiscovered or hidden. He compared this situation with genes, which, although they can now be isolated, are not functional as "replicators of living organisms" (p. 7). They are somewhat similar to a blueprint of a house; however, they cannot build the house. Paul conceived symbols as having a similar role to that of genes.

Paul (2000) concluded that these three of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* represent the human being in the form of the poet himself, the genes, which are suggested by the poet to the young man who is the subject of the sonnets, to be further contributed by sexual reproduction and by symbols, which are used by the author throughout the sonnets to convey his message. The author particularly emphasised the importance of the signifier's interaction with other signifiers. This should not be confused with the relation between the signifier and the signified. The author identified aesthetic delight in observation of the symbols' interaction with each other, by reading poems. The symbolic value is the essence which is necessary to make the word alive.

Skaldic poetry applied *kenningar* (kennings). *Kenningar* are periphrastic phrases for some person or thing. Clunies Ross (1994, 27-8) mentioned that many *kenningar* refer to Old Norse myths. To understand literature which includes *kenningar*, one should therefore be familiar with Old Norse mythology. Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* includes *Skáldskarpamál* (the language of poetry), which is the second part of the work. The second half of *Skáldskarpamál* appears to be a set of instructions on how to interpret *kenningar*. *Kenningar* share the characteristic of the above described Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in that they are also linguistic signs. They often represent the ingredients necessary to add symbolic value to a sentence.

Definition of symbols

A symbol is the simplified representation of something which is originally more complex. The signifier must be known within the society where it is applied, otherwise misunderstandings occur (Jung, 1964). For example, the dollar sign (\$) is a monetary definition used in the USA, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc. However, it is commonly accepted that the same sign (\$) may also represent wealth, capitalism and, to a certain extent, power. In this case the dollar sign can be regarded as a symbol because it not only denotes a currency, it represents everything which relates to the possession of currency.

A major part of Jung's research focused on symbols. He concluded that certain symbols appeared repetitiously in his patients' dreams. He recognised these as universal, calling them the 'collective unconscious'. These symbols, according to Jung, are based on the experiences and knowledge of our ancestors. He labeled them archetypal symbols, representing particular aspects of the human psyche, such as the male and female principles, fear, guilt, desires, etc.

Jung (1964) differentiated clearly between a sign and a symbol. He asserted that a sign is less than the item which it represents. A symbol is more; it is the essence of the item. Jung believed that symbols cannot be designed by people, that they are "natural and spontaneous products" (p. 55). This position seems to be logical within Jung's theory of a collective consciousness; however, this belief seems to be questionable, since artists are not only able, but specifically aim, to take known psychological, sociological, cultural and aesthetic aspects into account to create symbols of such conceptual standing that the result represents the essence of an item or idea. Barthes (1986) criticised Jung, citing Levi-Strauss' contention that it is not the content of speech, but the form, how it is presented, which has a symbolic function.

Jung believed it is important to know the appropriate code with which to translate particular

symbols, otherwise misinterpretations may easily occur, particularly if the symbols derive from an alien social/cultural or historical background. An example of such a misinterpretation is outlined by Jung (1964) in the following episode:

A Native American who has been brought to England has seen pictures of eagles, lions and oxen in a church (symbolising the Evangelists St. John, St. Mark and St. Luke). Back home in America, this young man told his people that the English worship animals. Freud, as quoted by Todorov (1982), agreed with Jung in highlighting the importance of understanding the keys to symbols to interpret them correctly.

Jung stated: “Because of the many and complex things which are beyond the range of human understanding, symbols are applied to represent such concepts” (p. 20). This would be the reason all religions employ symbols. Jung further explained that many items and events which have passed from our conscious reality are yet present at all times. “In moments of intuition one might remember or just know about it” (p .21).

Upon viewing a piece of art, one can be deeply touched because elements used within a painting, for example, are a reminder of something experienced in the past.

Todorov (1982) described the importance of symbols in Freud’s work. Freud, particularly in his dream analysis, categorised images and happenings as symbols which represent far more than the obvious. These symbols could be deciphered like hieroglyphs. Freud, as described by Todorov (1982) as well as by Jung (1964), stated that content is preserved in the unconscious mind and might be unlocked through dreams and their interpretation. Such material might also be unlocked through the presentation of appropriate symbols.

History

Aristotle (384–322 BC), according to Todorov (1982), stated:

“Spoken words are the symbols of mental exercise and written words are the symbols of spoken words. Just as all men have not the same writing, so all men have not the same speech sounds, but the mental experiences, which these directly symbolise, are the same for all, as also are those things of which our experiences are the images” (p. 16).

Aristotle referred only to words, in keeping with his particular focus on rhetoric and philoso-

phy expressed through words. A similar position was taken by Sextus Empiricus (approx. 300 BC), who included other elements as well as words that may function as symbols. Todorov (1982) cited:

[The Stoics say] that ‘three things linked together, the thing signified and the thing signifying and the thing existing’; and of these the thing signifying is the sound (Dion, for instance); and the thing signified is the actual thing indicated thereby, and which we apprehend as existing in dependence on our intellect, whereas the barbarians although hearing the sound do not understand it; and the thing existing is the external real object such as Dion himself. And of those, two are bodies - that is the sound and the existing thing - and one is incorporeal, namely the thing signified and expressible [the lekton], and this too is true or false (p. 19)¹.

Sextus Empiricus called the signified the thing, a construct which can include anything, not only words. His position therefore related also to pictorial representations. An even clearer statement concerning visual symbolism is made by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519 AD), who was cited by Todorov (1982):

We may say that there is the same relationship between the sciences of painting and poetry that there is between a body and its derivative shadow. There is an even closer relationship, for at least the shadow of such a body achieves sensory perception through the eye, but in the absence of function of the eye the image of that body [in poetry] does not become known to the senses, but remains where it originates (p. 130)².

Melville and Readings (1995) state that a “painting is seen all at once, the text read over time” (p. 10). Leonardo da Vinci placed the pictorial representation in a higher position than the word. According to him the word can only describe what the picture originally shows. Luchert, cited in Melville and Readings (1995), agreed with this by defining the relation between seeing, writing, hearing and understanding. To write, Luchert argued, one has to have seen first. She further stated that the closeness (she named it ‘confusion’) between seeing and the word can be recognised already in ancient text. Even the Old Testament states that the prophets see the words. Luchert quoted Isaiah 13:1: “because God’s words make him see”. The author suggested that art can be more than just something to look at – it would also have the power to intervene in society. Luchert stated that writing was most relevant in the development of human thought and “provided a critical regime that favoured intellectual activity” (p. 253).

The urge to create symbols to represent complex conceptual material seems to be as old as

¹ Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians*, II, 11-12.

² Leonardo da Vinci in *Treatise on Painting*, trans. A. P. McMahon (Princeton, 1956), p. 14.

humanity. On October 18, 1996, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported that arrangements of cupules, possibly between 58,000 and 75,000 years old, were found at Jinmium rock shelter in Western Australia. Dr. Tacon, an archeologist/prehistorian, was quoted as stating that “even those apparently simple motifs were used in complex designs by prehistoric people”.

Jaffe (1964) stated that cave painting dates back to between 60,000 and 10,000 BC. Cave images were executed with great artistic skill. The cave paintings are believed as have been created within a religious context; hunting magic may have been performed by drawing the animals image on the wall and then ‘slaughtering’ the image with arrows and spears. This ritual killing may have been meant to ensure the hunters of greater success in reality. The illustrated image was not necessarily a realistic copy of the animal, but was supposed to represent the animal’s soul. Nomads in North Africa still present offerings to rock paintings when they pass them.

Ucko (1977) asserted that prehistoric artists chose abstraction so as to focus on the essence, emphasising that what mattered was not the shape of the subject but its spiritual core. Furthermore, it would be possible that in the case of secret or sacred material, abstraction was used, as it is sometimes still demonstrated in contemporary tribal artwork, to conceal its meaning from the uninitiated.

At the end of the upper palaeolithic period (approx. 30,000 BC), two directions in rock painting can be recognised:

1. The skill to interpret images realistically and naturalistically developed to a high degree.
2. Images were produced which were very stylised. Ucko (1977), as well as Rosenfeld (1977) claimed their observations indicate that a great diversity of styles applied in Palaeolithic art, in the sense of abstraction and schematisation as well as partial representations.

Lorblanchet (1977, 55) stated: “Since the beginnings of art, more or less all modes of artistic expression have been exploited. Any cyclical theories in which abstraction, realism and schematisation are seen as successive stages of all artistic evolution have been seen to be false, at least in the case of upper palaeolithic art”.

In recent times and up to the present day, similar directions have been taken by artists. Some choose to work realistically to achieve images which copy as closely as possible represented objects or themes. During the 1970s and early 1980s the Hyper-Realists – also called Super-Realists and Photo-Realists – impressed audiences with artwork which was realistic to the finest detail. Richard Estes’ *Michigan Avenue with View of the Art Institute* (1984) and Chuck Close’s *Portrait of Bob* (1970) are fine examples of this style. Others, such as

Paul Klee and Keith Haring, chose various levels of abstraction as a means of expressing elements which seemed too complex to be shown in any realistic style. Paul Klee's painting *Ludus Martis* (1938) was strongly inspired by the textiles of the Kuba-people of Zaire in Central Africa. Harings paintings, often comparable in their composition with paintings by Klee, are, according to the artist, as described in Schauer (1985), some kind of automatic script or gestic abstraction, where the artist appears as a medium, translating the world into signs.

As discussed earlier, symbolic references in the visual arts of European society have existed since the early stages of the Upper Palaeolithic era. The cave paintings from Lascaux (c. 17000 BC) are famous and many of them are of abstract and semi-abstract quality. The Mesolithic culture (c. 8000 – 7000 BC) left notable artistic evidence of symbolism as did the Neolithic, particularly in the Balkan region (c. 7000 – 5000 BC). Approximately 3000 BC the Egyptian cultures (of course not European, but relevant in this context) began to flourish and their symbolic depictions were developed into hieroglyphs which were a base for a subsequent alphabet. Northern European cultures developed a rich pictorial and symbolic arsenal of objects during the Bronze Age (c. 2500 – 1300 BC). The finds of Hallstadt in Upper Austria are of great importance (Hallstadt epoch) as also is the cave art which was found in Scandinavia, for example the rock drawings from Bohuslän in Sweden. The Celtic art which developed from the fifth century BC onwards also left a great source of evidence of symbolis. Work was produced in a great variety of materials and the cultural influence of the Roman culture in particular can be seen in many Celtic artifacts. It is possible that, due to intensive contact with the Romans, people in northern Europe too decided to develop a writing system. Moltke (1981) suggested that trade between Scandinavians and Romans may have created the urge to communicate in writing. Runes appeared at the beginning of the first Millennium and they were used as a letter system. They were applied, according to Düwel (1997, 809), on the whole European continent, with a concentration in Scandinavia. The author called them “a phenomenon of the upper social class”. Single runes were also occasionally used as symbols, representing for example terms such as movable property, (good) new year or leek. Runes were carved into rocks, bones, wood and objects, to release magical forces.

Christian belief enlarged the number of symbols used in Europe. Medieval visual art, with its enormous number of religious themes, was rich in symbols encoding sacred material. The Christian cross might be one of the best known symbols of all. During the late nineteenth century AD Symbolism achieved a peak in the arts, particularly in France. Two of the most important representatives were Gustave Moreau and Odilon Redon, with Paul Gauguin being regarded as the innovator of French Symbolism. It was not until the twentieth century AD, however, that Western artists for the first time since the Middle Ages applied abstract shapes

as symbols. Pablo Picasso once remarked that “since the time of the cave paintings nothing important has happened in art” (Evers, 1985,17).

Applications

Applications of symbols are so diverse that it seems appropriate to categorise them. A great number of symbols represents religious and mythological ideas. This is illustrated by the large number of symbols shown and described by Ferguson (1961). The author defined 230 items symbolising various aspects of Christianity. Of these, 59 symbols are animals, birds or insects, 60 are flowers, trees and plants, 35 relate to earth and sky, and 13 are parts of the human body. Ferguson (1961) also names 38 radiances, letters, colours, numbers and geometrical patterns, and 25 religious dresses, 32 religious objects and 72 artefacts complete the list. Ferguson (1961) described the Christian cross in its varieties: the Latin cross has its cross-bar positioned above the centre of the vertical bar; the Greek cross has four arms of equal length and, according to Ferguson, represents the church, not the cross on which Jesus was crucified; a cross in the shape of an X is called the St. Andrew’s cross. The martyr St. Andrew, when condemned, requested to be crucified differently from Jesus because he believed he was “unworthy to approach the likeness of his Redeemer” (p. 165); a T-shaped cross is called the Tau cross. This originated in Egypt and is also known as the Old Testament cross. It is said that it was used by Moses when he raised the serpent in the wilderness. The author mentioned that it is also seen as a prophecy of Christ’s crucifixion.

Ecclesiastical crosses are variations of the Christian cross, used to signify different ranks in the hierarchy of the church. An Ecclesiastical cross carries a small additional cross on each side of the cross-bar. An Ecclesiastical double-cross signifies patriarchs and archbishops and a triple-cross is used only by the Pope. Koch (1984) asserted that the majority of signs in the occidental world are based on the shape of the cross. Binder (1972, 23) proposed that the swastika “symbolises the movement of the seasons”. She described the swastika’s movement from left to right as fruitful and fertilising, representing the action of the growing seed. Anti-clockwise, as the swastika was used by the German Nazi regime, it is regarded as black magic. It was used in Tantric cults in the worship of Kali, the goddess who destroys demons. Hitler was advised by his occultists to select this symbol for his power.

The ancient Egyptian sky goddess Nut is depicted on a piece of papyrus, shown in Bruce-Mitford (1996), as a woman touching the ground only with her toes and the tips of her fingers. The arch-shaped body represents the arch of heaven. The stars drawn on her body signify the Milky Way. In Greek mythology, Zeus is shown with a thunderbolt, the symbol of his power. Poseidon, as does his Roman counterpart Neptune, carries a trident, which is

regarded as a symbol of thunder and lightning. The Nordic god Þórr is represented carrying a hammer, named Mjöllnir. Celtic mythology includes a ram-headed serpent, which symbolised fertility (Bruce-Mitford, 1996). Mistletoe was also associated with fertility and immortality in Celtic culture. Mistletoe, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) was harvested with a golden sickle, representing the new moon. The new moon represented the female element and was also associated with rain and fertility. For thousands of years the fig tree was a symbol of fertility in Mediterranean cultures.

Jewish folkloric design includes simple patterns referring to much older beliefs associated with the deity Jehovah. According to Graves (cited by Binder, 1972) the sacred star of David – the intersecting double triangle representing God’s love for humanity and humanity’s love for god – is an Egyptian symbol of fertility. It represents the sexual union of the pagan goddess Ashtaroth with Adonis. In Hebrew culture the twining vine is a symbol of eternal life. The spiral hairstyle of the ancient Hebrews reminded the wearers of their relationship to their god Jehovah. The pillars of Solomon’s temple were designed in the shape of spirals. Binder (1972) related them to the main altar of St. Peter’s in Rome, the columns of which also have a spiral form. However, this altar was created during the Baroque period when the spiral element was important for aesthetic reasons. The spiral shape was meant to create the illusion of capacity to lift heavy masses, and was regarded as the ideal of beauty at the time. Maori decorations and tattoos, mentioned by Binder (1972), are also based on spirals. The individual variations in their design, however, give the owner spiritual identification in the ‘after-life’.

The Chinese dragon, shown during performances in a winding motion, is a rain-bringing symbol; the dragon also represents a waterspout. The serpent Jormungandr, son of Loki, as mentioned in *Gylfaginning* by Snorri Sturluson, was thrown in the ocean by Óðinn, and encircled Miðgarðr thereafter. Australian Aboriginal people regard Womabi, the giant rainbow serpent, as a water symbol. Rain, rivers and snakes are symbolised with the same sign in Walpiri culture. A similar double meaning may be recognised in the rain dance of the Hopi culture. This dance is also called the Rattlesnake Dance.

In most cultures, a circle symbolises the sun (Binder, 1972), which is an important sign because it can be seen all over the world. The sun is of particular importance in places where winters are long and harsh. Rituals are still held in northern Europe to welcome the sun after the dark winter months. In China the sun represents the male and the Yang principle; the moon represents Yin and the female principle. This association is enhanced by reference to the female monthly menstrual cycle. The rod, stick, staff and sceptre are all phallic representations; the Hindu god of love, Krishna, plays a flute, as does the Greek god Pan. Witches, who ride a broomstick or hold a magic wand, according to Binder (1972), hold a certain

power over masculinity.

Symbols were used in alchemy to a great extent. In medieval times, Bruce-Mitford (1996) explained, the alchemists sought to discover the philosopher's stone (*lapis philosophorum*), which was meant to work as a catalyst to change elements into more precious substances. This was also regarded as the key to immortality. To achieve this aim they tried to combine the opposing primary elements, water, fire, earth and air. The spirit was regarded as the fifth element or 'quintessence'. Alchemy competed with and sometimes opposed medieval Christian belief. Perhaps the great complexity of the matter or the fear of the inquisition led alchemists to develop "a complex vocabulary of symbols to convey their knowledge" (Bruce-Mitford, 1996, 108). Thorndike (1929, 766) mentioned that references to parts of animals, in ancient and medieval alchemist texts, should not be taken literally because they were often used symbolically "and are cryptic designations for common mineral substances". The author suggested regarding such symbolism as concealment of information in order to impress later readers "with an exaggerated notion of the importance of what was written rather than because the writer really had any great discovery that he wished to conceal" (p.766).

In astrology, according to Liungman (1991), forty to fifty different signs are used. The central symbols are usually the "pattern of the natal chart. The signs of the Zodiac are partly symbols for the month-long periods when the sun moves through the respective signs and partly symbols for that part of space against which the sun, moon and planets move, as seen from the earth, during this time" (p. 32). Bruce-Mitford (1996) claimed that even ancient Mesopotamian cultures recorded the movements of the stars as early as 3000 BC. The recently discovered cupules at Jinmium rock shelter in Western Australia, which are between fifty eight thousand and seventy eight thousand years old, may also document sightings of celestial qualities.

Occult and magic symbolism is derived to a great extent from Christianity, alchemy and astrology. As the centrepiece of magic symbols, the Seal of Solomon seems to carry more complexity than does any other sign. The Seal of Solomon is a six-pointed star consisting of two crossing equilateral triangles, one triangle pointing to the top and the other to the bottom. Goodman (1989) explained that in alchemy, the triangle pointing to the top represents fire with its "upward striving motion of the flames" (p. 77). The downward pointing triangle represents water, with its natural flow downwards. By overlaying the two triangles, a section occurs at the top of the upward-pointing triangle and this symbolises air. According to Goodman, the air representation is added to the fire sign because of the fire-nurturing quality of oxygen. A section of the downward pointing triangle represents earth. Earth is understood to be in harmony with water, because it contains and channels water. The inner

space of the two combined triangles is a hexagon, depicting the quintessence, the fifth element. This results from the unification of the two opposing elements, fire and water. Liungman (1991, 301) stated it also represents “the essence of spiritus, in wine: alcohol”.

The Seal of Solomon was a symbol for the Jewish kingdom during antiquity. Jews in Europe used this sign again during the Middle Ages, and Zionists adopted it in their attempt to create the Jewish state of Palestine (Liungman, 1991). Goodman (1989) observes that seven scripts, which were used in a magical context, appear in a Medieval Sieneese painting of the Virgin and Child (by an anonymous painter, collection of the Pinacoteca, San Gimignano, Italy). Although Christian as well as other symbols were used in occult magic, this example demonstrates the opposite also occurred: occult symbols relating to Hebrew spirituality were applied in a Christian context.

Symbols which were used in medieval *grimoires* (collections of rites and rituals for conjuration) appear of comparable shape to the symbols of the seven secret scripts. However, they appear bizarre and chaotic; Goodman (1989, 156) considered that they “well accord with the demons’ renowned love of chaos and disorder”.

It appears that key elements from Old Nordic mythology, as well as objects which had considerable importance in early Scandinavian cultures, have the potential to be regarded as symbols representing customs, law and religious/mythological matter. In some cases, one can observe that such elements were presented in such a fashion that they become recognisable chiefly due to some of their dominant features, suggesting a stereotyped significance.

Key elements from mythology, with the potential, to symbolise the essence of a story are, for example, Þjazi’s eyes, as described in Snorri Stuluson’s story of Iðunn and Skaði (*Skáldskaparmál*), in which Óðinn placed the eyes of the giant Þjazi as stars in the sky. This was a part of a compensation arrangement with Þjazi’s daughter Skaði for the killing of her father by the Æsir.

Þórr (fig. 1) is one of the Æsir, son of Óðinn and Jörð. He was described by Snorri Stuluson as a figure of great physical strength. He is in possession of three special items: a hammer (Mjöllnir), a pair of iron gloves and the girdle of might. The girdle is said to have doubled Þórr’s enormous strength. The gloves were necessary for wielding Mjöllnir. The hammer itself never failed its target and, when it was thrown at some person or thing, would always come back. Mjöllnir could also shrink in size, if necessary, in order to be hidden conveniently.



fig. 1

Mjöllnir’s handle (fig. 2) appears too short to be perfect. This is explained,

by Orchard (1988), as having occurred when Loki, transformed as a gadfly, distracted the dwarf Brokk from pumping the bellows properly while his brother Eitri was working the forge.



The eddic poem *Prymskviða* is based on the circumstances that led to the disappearance of Mjöllnir while Þórr was sleeping. The events narrated in this poem caused great unrest among the gods and would have nearly cost Þórr's manhood. However, with the help of Loki's cleverness, Þórr was able to get possession of his hammer again and immediately killed Þrymr (who had stolen his hammer) and many of the giant's kinspeople. The description of cross-dressing in this story indicates that Mjöllnir may be understood as a phallic symbol.

The name of Mjöllnir, the hammer of Þórr, may derive, as Cleasby (1874) suggested, from the Old Norse words *mala* or *mola*, which may be translated as to crush. Mjöllnir represents not only a devastating weapon. The hammer is also mentioned as a tool for consecration, as at Baldr's funeral and in *Prymskviða*. Because most of Þórr's power related to the magical characteristic of Mjöllnir, his hammer became regarded as symbol for Þórr himself.

Þórr could be compared with the Greek god Hephaistos, the son of Zeus and Hera. Hephaistos was the god of the smiths, which may indicate a link to Mjöllnir, Þórr's hammer.

After Ragnarök, when Þórr was killed, like most of the other Æsir, it says in *Gylfaginning* that Mjöllnir was inherited by Þórr's sons Móði and Magni and probably used by them.

In ancient northern Europe, runes were believed to have magic powers. Some esoteric circles still believe that runes have divine as well as other magical qualities. According to Krause (1970, 49), it was believed that runes, deriving from the gods, were not merely simple letters. They were seen as supernatural powers which could even be understood as living beings. Krause cited the Icelandic *Bósa saga*, in which the magician Busla, in her magic oaths against the king (Hring), speaks of six warriors. These six warriors are in fact six runes. Pennick (1992), in his recent publication *Rune Magic*, wrote that modern society, which depends so much on technology and is based so strongly on materialism (he appears to focus on the industrially developed Western world only), "has been tested and proven to be psychologically and spiritually bankrupt" (p.7). Pennick advised society to believe in the powers of runes, because they are "symbols of natural truth" (p.8).

Aesthetics

The aesthetic value of symbols relates directly to the time and the culture from which the symbols originate. It seems that there is no universal aesthetic applied to the development of symbols. Symbols are part of a particular culture; they reflect this aesthetically in the same manner as do any other items from the culture. However, because symbols often represent items of 'higher value', one may observe that they, or the objects to which they are attached, are often produced with greater care than are other ordinary less-valued items. The aesthetic distinction between symbols and/or symbol-carriers develops through the availability of certain materials and colours. The state of technological development in a culture is also of major importance. Binder (1972) wrote that, since poor people usually make things for themselves, simple designs are often the result, their creation less defined than that of those of a privileged society. Ordinary people, like innocent children, are said to prefer clear and strong colours and shapes. Binder queried whether such people believe that spirits would have difficulty in understanding more sophisticated designs; the shapes they created were often a simplification of more complex items. However, one must consider that, since poor people are unable to commission well-trained craftspeople, they must accept the next best option, which is usually the home-made object. Young children are unable to achieve sophisticated tones of complementary colours by mixing primary colours. This does not necessarily mean that they would not appreciate a variety of tonal values.

Fashionable preferences influence the aesthetic development of symbols as they do other representations in a culture. Beauty, according to Melville and Readings (1995), (citing Kant, 1978)³ is something which seems to be acceptable naturally, without hesitation. This observation is important because it rationalises the particular care needed if an artefact is to communicate as successfully as possible. However, provocatively, Melville and Readings also compared aesthetic judgement with science. They describe science as truth, while aesthetic judgement is regarded as something needless, because "there is no intellectual or practical profit in it" (p. 12). One wonders what the authors regard as useful.

³ Immanuel Kant, 1978, translated by James Meredith, *The Critique of Judgement*. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Signs and symbols of relevance in contemporary Western society

In twenty-first century Western society one can find symbols applied in all aspects of everyday life, such as:

- religion
- art (fine arts, performance arts, literature, music)
- science (chemistry, physics)
- medicine (medicaments, technical equipment, applied treatment)
- engineering (mechanical, electronic, computing)
- politics (communication within parliament and towards the electorate)
- housing (social and architectural)
- homelessness (hobo-signs)
- trade (industrial [wholesale] and retail, including marketing and distribution)
- traffic (land, air, sea, outer space)
- leisure (sport, walking, dancing, viewing)
- fashion (clothing, hairstyle, jewellery)
- information (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet)
- farming
- hunting
- fishing
- mining
- warfare.

Signs and symbols may be seen as the essence of the society which applies them. The quantity of symbols known and applied to a particular subject may reflect that subject's significance in that society.

As already mentioned, religious symbolism is presented in twenty-first century Western society predominantly in a Christian idiom. The Christian religion applies a vast range of symbols. Ferguson (1961) defined 230 items symbolising various aspects of Christianity (here discussed on p. 16). Among religions of the East, Buddhism (even when regarded as philosophy not religion) and Islam apply a great number of symbols. Bruce-Mitford (1996, 22) showed the footprint of Buddha (fig. 3) which is “marked with one hundred and eight auspicious signs”. These include the swastika, the mace, fish, and a flower vase symbolising wisdom.



fig. 3

The author presented also numerous images from Islam. The five fingers of the hand of Fatima (fig.4), according to Bruce-Mitford (1996, 24), symbolise “the five essential practices of Islam”. These are commitment to Islam (*Shahada*), daily prayers (*Salat*), charity (*Sakat*), feasting in Ramadan (*Sawm*), pilgrimage to Mecca (*Hajj*).



fig. 4

Contemporary visual art, particularly abstract and semi-abstract, applies a great variety of symbols with which to communicate. Between 1913 and 1921 Johannes Itten used predominantly Goethe's colour-theory from the late eighteenth and beginning nineteenth century, and developed it further, incorporating psychological findings of the early years of the twentieth century. Dreyfuss (1972, pp. 234-237) refined Itten's work and presented a chart of colour associations which represent the current symbolic understanding of colours in Western society:

RED

Positive: blood (life), fire (warmth), passion, sentiment, valour, patriotism, revolution, Christ, liberty.

Negative: blood (spilled), fire (burning), death throes and sublimation, wounds, surging and tearing emotions, passions, war, anarchy, revolution, martyrdom, danger, the devil.

YELLOW

Positive: the sun, light, illumination, dissemination and comprehensive generalisation, magnanimity, intuition, intellect, supreme wisdom, highest values, divinity, ripening grain.

Negative: treachery, cowardice, debauchery, male violence, impure love.

BLUE

Positive: the sky, light blue connotes day, the calm sea, thinking, religious feeling, devotion, innocence, truth, constancy, justice, charity, the cold.

Negative: dark blue connotes night and the stormy sea, doubt and discouragement.

GREEN

Positive: vegetation, nature, fertility of the fields, sympathy, adaptability, prosperity, hope, life, immortality, youth, freshness, auspiciousness, recognition of soul, wisdom.

Negative: death, link between black mineral life and red animal life; anger, envy, jealousy, disgrace, sinister darkness, opposition, moral degradation, madness.

PURPLE

Positive: power, spirituality, royalty, love of truth, loyalty, empire, patience, humility, nostalgia, memories.

Negative: sublimation, martyrdom, mourning, regret, penitence, resignation, humility.

BROWN

Positive: the earth.

Negative: barrenness, poverty.

ORANGE

Positive: fire and flames, marriage, hospitality, benevolence, celestial fruit, pride and ambition, earthly wisdom.

Negative: malevolence, Satan.

BLACK

Positive: might, dignity, starkness, sophistication; regality, lack of pomposity; fertilised land, grim determination, night, solemnity, humility.

Negative: morbidity, nothingness, despair, night, evil, sin, death, sickness, negation.

WHITE

Positive: day, innocence, purity, perfection, rectitude, wisdom, truth.

Negative: spectrality, ghostliness, cold, blankness, void.

GOLD

Positive: mystic aspect of the sun, majesty, riches, honour, wisdom.

Negative: idolatry

SILVER

Positive: purity, chastity, test of truth, the moon

Negative: not mentioned

This list of colour associations, according to Dreyfuss (1972), is based on research on historical, sociological and cultural levels. The author particularly emphasised the close association between forms and colours, which were also discussed by Itten (1970).

Similar to the artists Paul Klee and Keith Haring, here discussed on pages 14-5, in historical context, the contemporary artist R. R. Penck, particularly, focused on various levels of abstraction as a means of expressing elements too complex to be shown in any realistic style. Penck's *Primitive Computer* (1968) (fig. 5)



fig. 5

is described by Yau (1993) as follows: "Looking at

Primitive Computer, the viewer senses there is an underlying narrative logic to the signs and symbols, but cannot discover what it is" (p.49). The work expresses criticism of modern technology and human dependence on it. Yau's expression "but cannot discover it" recalls Jung's statement (1964) that it is important to know the appropriate code to translate particular symbols, otherwise misinterpretations may occur; particularly when the symbols derive from an alien social/cultural or historical background.

Performance art, particularly dance, applies a great range of symbolic gestures. Emotions are represented through positions and movement of bodies. Similarly to this, some music tries to translate, for example, impressions from nature into musical sound, in order to guide the listener into a particular world at a particular season.

Signs have been and still are used to symbolise certain trades and professions. Since the Middle Ages, when European cathedrals were erected, the stonemasons' guild traditionally marked the work of a particular master's workshop with a sign. This sign corresponds with the rules of the stonemasonry guild (Koch, 1984). Like the practice of these craftspeople of symbolising their distinctive work with an abstract sign, modern commercial enterprises too use symbols (logos), which are meant to represent the distinctive nature and philosophy of a company.

In order to design the perfect logo, research is undertaken to gain information about consumers'/customers' preferences (Swann, 1991). Psychologists develop appropriate questionnaires and analyse the responses to them; answers are sought from as many people as possible. Designers, often specialising in corporate identity/design, usually develop hundreds and sometimes thousands of preliminary designs. Those designs that the designers, psychologists and company management consider show the greatest potential are usually selected for further research.

A less commercial aspect was envisaged by Luchert (in Melville & Readings, 1995), who compared Bender's⁴ penetrating gaze with the Stoics' definition of *logos* "as the manifestation of God's omniscience: in the opinion of the Stoics, *logos* was the divine principle penetrating the world and holding it together" (p. 254).

Science has a long tradition of using symbols. It is not necessary to describe the whole complexity of formulae in science, while presenting a project or dealing with a particular scientific task. Because the most important formulae are widely known in scientific circles, it is often enough to refer to them by using a sign. Symbolism in science developed from that of alchemy in medieval Europe. While signs were used to denote various substances and processes, a more complex depiction was required to represent holistic ideas and complex implications.

⁴ John Bender, *Imaging the Penitentiary. Fiction and Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth Century England*. (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. xv.

Credits for the images in Signs and Symbols: Applications

Fig. 1: Statuette of Þórr: photography by C. M. Dixon, in Adamson, Stephen (ed.), 1997. Reykjavik, National Museum.

Fig. 2: Mjöllnir, amulet from Odesög, Ostergotland, Sweden: photography Hannesson, Gudmundur, National Historical Museum, Stockholm.

Credits for signs and symbols of relevance in contemporary Western society

Fig. 3: Buddha's footprint: after Bruce-Mitford, Miranda, 1996.

Fig. 4: Fatima's hand: after Bruce-Mitford, Miranda, 1996.

Fig. 5: Primitive Computer: painting by R. R. Penck: after John Yau, 1993. (Private collection).

3. Visual perception

Introduction

Almost all the items discussed in this study, such as picture-stones, bracteates and *guld-gubber*, were intended to be perceived predominantly visually. Many illustrative elements depict objects, for example animals featured in mythology. Most of these illustrative depictions have been deciphered for their referential qualities and for their relationship to mythology. Interpretation of the abstract shapes and signs from early Scandinavian culture, however, is to a large extent left to the viewer to interpret in one way or another, or to decide whether to include them in an interpretation at all. The cultural background of some abstract shapes is known, enabling the modern viewer to detect related, often mythological, meanings. In many cases, however, particular shapes do not necessarily allow a mythological interpretation because the cultural background is unknown, and it must also be allowed that shapes may have been used within the frame of general perception to highlight one object against another or, for example, to beautify an object by application of symmetry and repetition.

The hypothesis of this thesis is that many of the images and shapes discussed in this study probably represent symbolic values or are symbols in themselves. Empirical evidence shows that humankind utilises certain shapes for visual expression, based on rules which can be extrapolated from the faculty of perception, as discussed in Chapter 2, *Signs and Symbols*. For a better understanding of early Scandinavian cultures, it is desirable to recognise shapes and images which are symbols or which incorporate symbolic qualities. In order to identify such symbols it is necessary to investigate not only the nature and history of the objects, including possible symbolic elements, but also the process of perception of visual imagery as it is understood by modern scientific research. Investigation of the process of perception indicates that normally selection of what will be perceived takes place internally, by the observer, as well as being imposed externally, by the manner or style in which an image or sign is presented.

Perception has been defined by Hehlmann (1959, 343) as encompassing both recognition and the state of general awareness. Hehlmann mentioned that the German term *Wahrnehmung* (which is translated in English as perception) was first used in this sense by Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716), the philosopher, scholar and politician who served Ernest Augustus, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, later Elector of Hanover, and George Louis, Elector of Hanover, later George I, King of England. The term *Wahrnehmung* is a compound of the two words *wahr* 'true' and *Nehmung* 'taking'. Leibnitz hypothesised that the world exists in human imagination and the world's centre is a creation from humans' inner experi-

ences. According to Rock (1973, 195), “in psychology, the field of perception is the study of the determinants of sensory impressions, such as those of size, shape, direction, orientation, distance, and movement”. Rock explained that the sensory process (the physiological mechanisms, e.g., in the sense organs and nerve cells) is distinguished from perceptual processes. This clear distinction appears rather facile, as the use of drugs, alcohol or psychological practices may change the mechanical process of a sensory impression within the nerve cells. This may result in altered perception. Because of the nature of the present study, it seems unnecessary to discuss this particular issue further. Reference to mind-altering substances and practices may be understood in the context of shamanic practices (Eliade (1987)). One must also consider mind-altering processes in brain function with respect to hypnosis, which is of considerable importance in relation to parts of this study. In this case, Rock’s statement must be seen as too narrow a definition of the topic.

Sekuler and Blake (1994, 143), referring to Frisby (1980) and Johnson-Laird (1988), defined perception thus: “Perceiving is a biological process wherein the brain, using information gathered by the senses, derives descriptions of objects and events in the world. Those descriptions can be construed as symbolic representations of the visual scene”. They further cited Marr’s (1982) definition as “representations that themselves result from a series of ever more refined computations performed on the image of that scene” (p. 143).

The visual pathway

Visual perception takes place, according to Rock (1973), within a complex physiological procedure. Various sources of sensory information are processed; for example, the size of an object, appearing on the retina, is compared by a person or animal with other objects, in order to define its size and distance from the viewer, as well as its distance from other objects. Constellations and existing features in reality, are perceived, as well as features which are only illusions. Humans are able to learn to discriminate illusory perceptions from real ones and take such learning into account while perceiving new information.

Zusne (1970) described the processing of an image from its appearance to its recognition by the brain. Firstly, he explained, an object needs to be illuminated and to possess a light reflective surface in order to be seen by humans. The lens of the human eye and the optical projection of an object on the retina are, according to Zusne, of such poor quality that even the most basic cameras are far superior. Sekuler and Blake (1994, 40) described the retina as “a very thin meshwork” consisting of a complex structure of a layered organisation. Light rays pass through a complex of neural elements before reaching the photoreceptors. According to Sekuler and Blake two kinds of photoreceptors, comprising about one

hundred and twenty million rods and eight million cones (in humans), convert light into neural signals. This molecular process, underlying the transduction of light into neural signals in the photoreceptors, is called 'isomerization'. The information passes collector cells, from where it is transported to about one million retinal ganglion cells. By reducing the information from nearly one hundred and thirty million photoreceptors to only one million retinal ganglion cells, a drastic editing process takes place. An electrophysiological

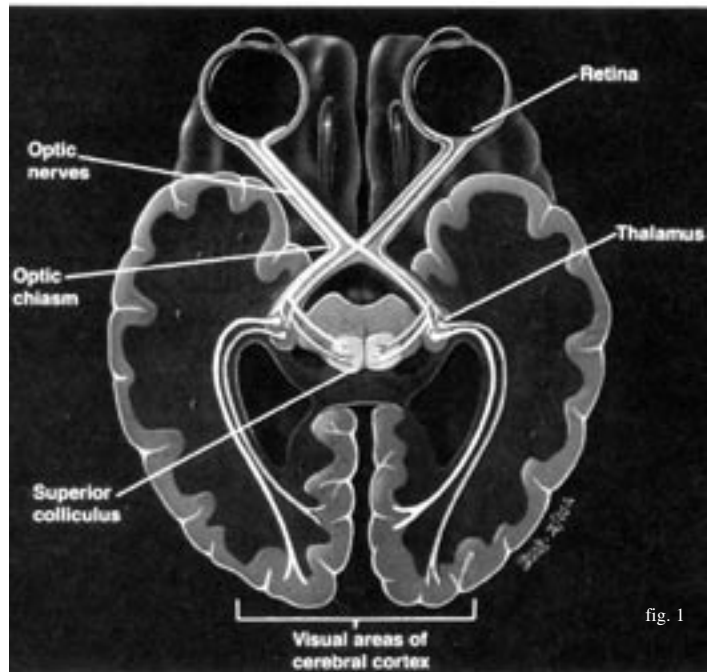


fig. 1

process occurs in which chemicals and electrical current interact with one another (Kaiser, 1996). According to Sekuler and Blake (1994, 69), ganglion cells are inactive if no light is detected. If light stimulation occurs, however, ganglion cells become alerted by chemicals to switch on and submit impulses. After passing on information they switch off. This produces an electrical current. Changing visual information forces the nerve cells to switch on and off constantly. Constant information allows some nerve cells to switch off and remain in this resting position. This resting position is also recognised and understood as 'informative material'. After the optical information passes the ganglion cells it reaches the optic nerve. The optic nerve, consisting of bundles of axons, transports the information through the optic chiasm to the superior colliculus (fig. 1), which forms, together with the lateral geniculate nucleus, the visual midbrain. The optic chiasm is a crossover of information received by both eyes. Images formed on the right side of each eye are seen in the left half of the visual space. In this process, according to Zusne (1970, 21-2), further compression of the information takes place. The superior colliculus is, to a large extent, involved with the eye's movement. Sekuler and Blake (1994, 105) noted that the superior colliculus also receives sound information, which also causes the eyes to react. Some of the information is also transported to the lateral geniculate nucleus. This nucleus contains six layers, each representing a map of the retina (retinotopic map). A retinotopic map preserves the spatial organisation of the retina, and produces an image recognisable by the visual cortex. Like the rest of the cerebral cortex, the primary visual cortex (also defined as Area 17) "consists of a layered array of cells about 2 millimetres thick. In all, there are approximately 100 million cells in this Area 17 of each hemisphere" (Sekuler and Blake, 1994, 111). From the visual cortex, connections with other parts of the cortex and other parts of the brain exist, creating a network for the flow of visual information and appropriate bodily reactions.

Based upon the visual information received, the brain creates a mental image, which is obtained in the way described above. Upon this information, as well as stored information from previous experiences, a vision of great complexity is generated in the human mind.

Colour perception

Some of the cortical cells register information about colour. Sekuler and Blake (1994, 125) described colour-sensitive cells which are concentrated in “blob-like regions regularly spaced throughout the upper layers of the visual cortex”. However, according to Sekuler and Blake, citing Lennie, Krauskopf and Sclar (1990), some colour-receivers are also outside this field. Kalat (1990) noted the importance of different wavelengths of colours for individual recognition by humans. This author explained that a combination of three theories is necessary to explain the phenomenon of colour vision: trichromatic theory, opponent-process theory and the retinex theory.

According to trichromatic theory, three kinds of cones exist in the retina (at the back of the eye), which react sensitively to light of different wavelengths. In instances where a short wavelength is received, certain cones become activated, resulting in the perception of the colour blue. Medium wavelengths are perceived as green and long wavelengths are perceived as red. Yellow is perceived if medium and long wavelength cones are equally active and short wavelength cones are inactive or less active. If all cones are equally active, the received image appears grey. The perception of black was described by Kalat (1990, 136) as if “a group of cones is inactive and is bordered by an area where all three types of cones are active. The contrast is necessary for the perception of black”.

The opponent-process theory of colour vision was described by Kalat (1990, 138) as an additional stage of processing of chromatic information. This theory is based on the importance of colour contrasts. The intensity of a colour, according to this theory, is measured against the amount of contrast which exists against the most opposing colour (red versus green, blue versus yellow/orange and vice versa). This kind of interaction takes place in the ganglion cells. A practical exercise demonstrates the opponent-process well. One must look intently at a particular primary colour, then take this colour away and look at a plain white surface. The complementary colour seems to appear on the surface. Kalat called this an ‘after-effect’.

The retinex theory, according to Kalat (1990, 139), is necessary to explain phenomena which are not covered by the other two theories. Kalat presented an example demonstrating the perception process. In this example, the author suggested looking at a full-colour picture

under a green light, wearing green-tinted glasses. The picture would be perceived as greener than it would be without the green light. However, objects in other colours, such as yellow, red, blue, etc. would still be recognisable. The condition whereby an object still appears in its original colours, even under a variety of colour-light effects, is called colour constancy. According to Kalat (1990, 140), information from the retina, combined with information from the cortex, creates a response to the relativity of the situation by comparison with colours which remain in the image. However, if a monochrome object (e.g. a yellow lemon) is placed under green light against a black background, the cortex does not receive sufficient information to maintain colour constancy and the object (the lemon) appears white.

Object recognition

As mentioned above, illumination is a prerequisite for recognition of an object. The amount of light reflected by an object itself is secondary. The important factor is the intensity of the contrast between the object and the background. Sekuler and Blake (1994, 142) mentioned stars, which are perceived as shining brightly in the night sky. The same stars are in the sky during the day as well. However, because during the day the sky appears with the same brightness as the stars, no contrast exists between them and one cannot perceive them. Sekuler and Blake noted that sometimes, in difficult situations, contrast alone would not be enough to recognise an object. In this case it would be necessary to know the shape of an object in order to recognise its presence. Then one would need to know “the spatial arrangements of the contrast” (p. 142) to be able to define an object.

Day (1969) described the results of tests conducted to distinguish shapes which are easily identifiable, not withstanding a distracting background, but also shapes which are simple to discriminate against others of similar appearance (fig.2). The results showed, according to Day (1969, 49), that shapes which appear similar to others, e.g. having the same number of corners or similar angles, are far more difficult to distinguish than shapes which are very different, such as a cross in comparison with a square or a pentagon compared to an Y-shape.

Bruce and Green (1985) suggested a complex interaction of positive/negative observation, including the segmentation

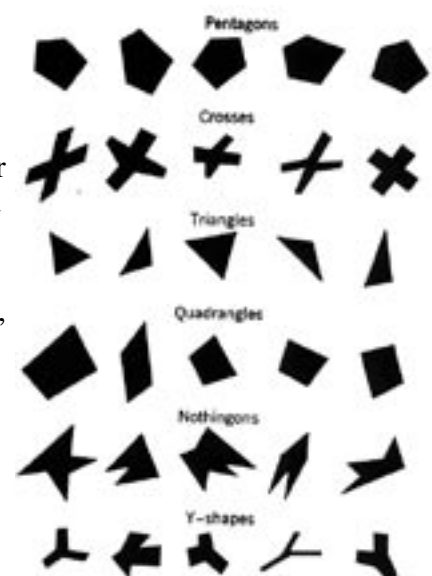


fig. 2

of shapes as well as identification of component axes within object recognition. They cited Marr and Nishihara (1978), who used the picture of a toy donkey to demonstrate the procedure of object recognition (fig. 3). The outline of the toy donkey (a), according to Marr and Nishihara (1978), would be viewed as a positive shape and compared with the remaining negative background (b). Strong segmentation points are identified (c) and, by using these segmentation points, the initial outline is divided into smaller parts (d). A basic internal structure is found through identification of the direction of the basic components (e) and together with the identified segmentation points, a constructive internal structure of the toy donkey is established.

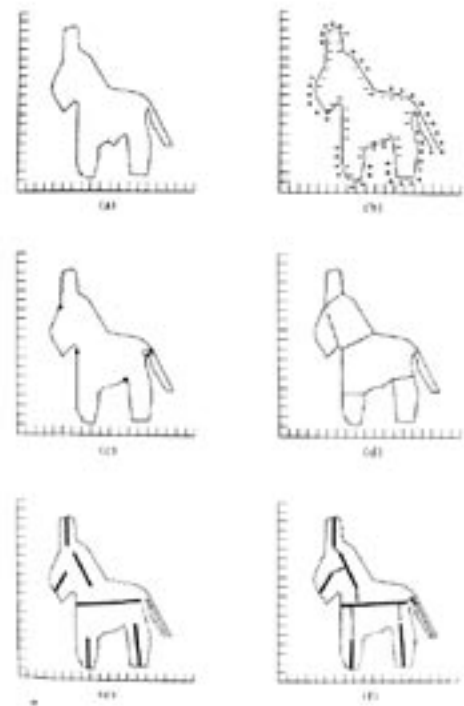


fig. 3

In describing caricatures, Hochberg (1972, 74) particularly emphasised the simplification of an object, as in many cases caricatures are drawn in outline only. A caricature exaggerates predominantly physical attributes; however, simplification too is used to achieve the expression of the ‘essence’ of something or someone. Hochberg presented the depiction of a hand (fig. 4) as a photograph and two variations of simplification and one caricature, to explain the effect of simplification on perception.

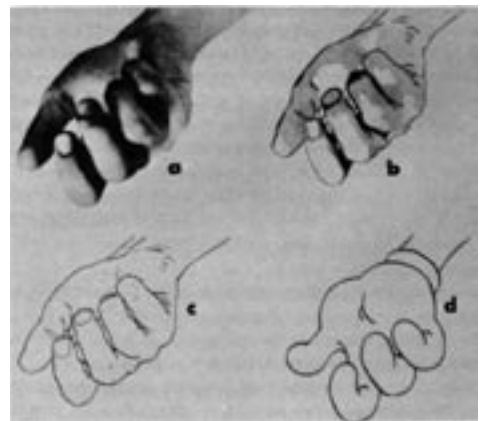


fig. 4

Hochberg (1972, 74) also pointed out that the picture of a hand as caricature (d) is much more rapidly and still correctly perceived than the picture of a hand as a high fidelity photograph (a). The author observed that irregular lines have here been replaced by smooth ones. Since with smooth lines the picture appears more redundant, it needs fewer fixations, and undefined areas in grey shadowy zones do not need to be corrected or encoded. Particularly when casually viewed (peripheral recognition) the object is far more easily recognisable than the photograph. The slight simplifications in (b) and (c) already indicate how a contour is more accurately discriminated from a neighbouring one. The decision of the artist to reduce the number of fingers from five to only four (according to Hochberg 1972), increases the space between the fingers. This helps the viewer to identify the remaining fingers better. The fact that the hand as caricature shows only four fingers does not greatly disturb the viewer’s perception, because the hand’s proportion is retained and the general shape still resembles that of a known hand to a great extent.

Horizontal/vertical line preferences

Sekuler and Blake (1994) discussed the preference of cortical cells for horizontal and vertical lines over lines which occur diagonally. They referred to Mansfield's (1974) experiments with monkeys which resulted in this conclusion.

Sekuler and Blake (1994, 121) assumed that the preference for vertical and horizontal lines results from an exposure to an environment where diagonal lines are rare. The majority of humans, in recent times, grow up in an urban environment, which consists predominantly of vertical and horizontal lines. Even the monkey(s) in Mansfield's (1974) experiments most likely lived in cages offering no variety of shapes to influence the development of the brain. The issue of horizontal/vertical preference has not been satisfyingly settled, according to Sekuler and Blake (1994, 122). They emphasised the effect of this phenomenon on "visual pattern perception and cortical physiology".

Form definition/Gestalt

Form refers to the outer shape of an object, as well as to shapes within an object. Form is determined by length, width and, in the case of a three-dimensional object, height. Until approximately 1920, it was believed that perception functioned only physiologically, where an image is recognised by the eye and then disassembled and translated into tiny independent components, sent to the brain to be encoded and interpreted as what human beings understand as an 'image'. This theory of perception was, according to Sekuler and Blake (1994), called 'structuralism'. However, in 1912 Max Wertheimer introduced the 'Gestalt' theory (Sekuler and Blake, 1994, 145). It was based on the assumption that the amount of tiny components necessary to store received information would be too great to be memorised one by one. Wertheimer (1923/1958) suggested the possibility that the many single elements comprising the information may be grouped and stored as a *Gestalt*, a German term, translated into English as 'form/shape'. According to Sekuler and Blake (1994), it is now accepted that a combination of structuralism and Gestalt occurs in the process of perception.

The experiment of trying to recognise a face created from grey squares of different tones was introduced by Kalat (1990, 164). The image of a face (fig. 5) was made up from 226 squares of the same size but varying tonal values. One single square constituted less than 1/226 of the face.

Sekuler and Blake (1994) referred to Wertheimer's (1923/1958) observation that within the Gestalt-principle, sub divisions exist. Such sub-



fig. 5

divisions are important for information organisation. Wertheimer described proximity, similarity, closure, good continuity and figure/ground organisation as principles of Gestalt. These are defined below.

1. **Proximity** describes the effects that occur when objects positioned near to each other are perceived not individually but as unit (fig. 6). Several dots, for example, equally spread, can be seen as rows, vertically, horizontally or diagonally, as well as a square shape (A). If the distance between neighbouring dots is shortened horizontally, the shape of a vertical rectangle appears (B). A shortening of the distance vertically results in the appearance of a horizontally positioned rectangle (C).

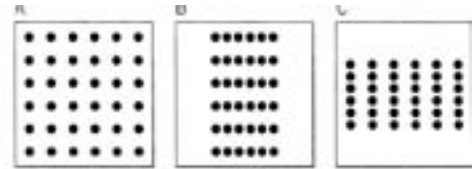


fig. 6

2. **Similarity** relates to objects of one kind appearing amongst others (fig. 7). Equal objects are recognised and distinguished from others and grouped together to form a united shape.

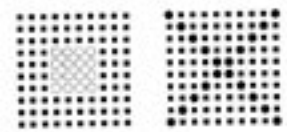


fig. 7

3. If contours are positioned close to one another, they tend to be seen as united (fig. 8). This effect is called **closure**. The example shows a handwritten version of the word 'men'. The word was copied and placed upside down, close below the 'ordinary' version. In the result one seems to recognise an ornament of heart-shaped forms.



fig. 8

4. Objects or elements with **good continuity** are those which are close to another and are positioned in a straight, or slightly curved line.

To recognise the photograph of a girl behind bars, all four factors discussed above are applied: proximity (grouping of regions which adjoin each other), similarity (light and texture), closure (extended contours, such as the bars) and good continuity (the bars again).

5. Recognition of the picture of a girl behind bars (fig. 9), according to Sekuler and Blake (1994, 146), also applies the **figure/ground** principle. In order to see the girl behind the bars, rather than a girl's face with a strangely formed moustache and long tube-like hairs, one must be able to separate the bars in the front from the girl's face behind. Zusne (1970, 113) explained that a background is called a 'ground', and a 'figure' consists of whatever is positioned in front of the background. Several objects with considerable similarity are grouped and placed into one or the other category.



fig. 9

In addition to this kind of grouping, according to Sekuler and Blake (1994, 147), further information about material surfaces and previous experiences is combined with proximity, similarity, closure, good continuity and figure/ground (this occurs within and between cortical areas). The result of all this creates a “pattern of electrical activity within the brain” which is called isomorphism. In this regard, it is necessary to acknowledge functions which reach beyond Gestalt theory.

Perception of depth

An important element in the ability to recognise distance is the fact that we see through two eyes. Kalat (1990, 168) emphasised the term 'retinal disparity', which defines the apparent position of an object seen by the two eyes. An object positioned close to the eyes forces them to turn in a cross-eyed manner, creating a particular angle which is different from that which occurs with an object positioned at a greater distance. In the latter case the eyes look more in parallel, straight ahead. Even without moving the eyes at all, it is the positioning of the images of objects on the retinas of both eyes which creates the stimulus that allows to gauge distance.

Depth can also be perceived with only one eye. Kalat (1990, 168) described several cues which are used to perceive distance without the aid of retinal disparity. The author showed a picture of a landscape with a road winding into the distance (fig. 10), a person roller-skating in the foreground, mist in the distance and several rocky cliffs in the water. He pointed out that objects in the foreground appear more detailed, as can be seen in the roller-skater. Objects fill more of the space on the retina if they are closer. This can be observed in the width of the road, which appears much wider at the front than at the back. Objects closer to the viewer, like some rocky cliffs, obscure more distant objects. The foreground usually looks sharper and has more contrast than the background because there is no haze blurring the picture.



fig. 10

Lines of rectangular objects appear to be arranged obliquely, due to the law of perspective. This refers again to the space used on the retina, due to the cone of vision, which widens the further away the object is and creates a different ratio between an object of a certain size in the foreground and the same sized object in the distance (fig. 11a & b).

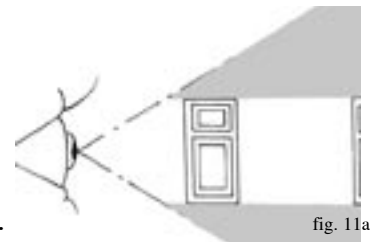


fig. 11a



fig. 11b

Misjudgments can occur if known effects from perspective perception are assumed but, on purpose or incidentally, unexpected new situations arise. Kalat (1990, 173) gave the example of a model airplane nearby which could be mistaken for a large airplane flying at a great distance. The author also showed an illusionist drawing which includes three cylinders (fig. 12), all of the same size.

Because of their experience with perspective, human viewers believe the cylinder on the left to be smaller and the one on the right to be bigger than the one in the middle.

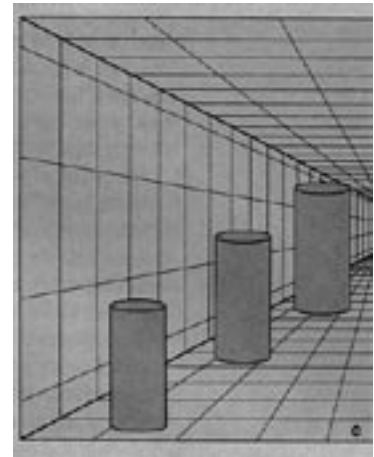


fig. 12

Motion adaptation and after-effect

Day (1969, 154) described a phenomenon whereby objects or shapes seem to move in the opposite direction, after they have been seen moving for a period but have stopped. The author presented four images which represent this effect well (fig. 13).

While viewing the round objects, one may observe that they appear to be radiating, even if they have not moved at all. This occurs because the eyes try to follow a potentially rotating path suggested by the object's shape. The few vertical lines do not create this effect, most likely because the line of bars is not long enough to allow the eyes to scan along it to establish the illusion of passing shapes. Zusne (1970, 29) explained the illusionary effect of movement as the result of "very rapid tremor" of the eyes. The author explained, "this phenomenon is associated with the grid-like structure of the retinal mosaic".

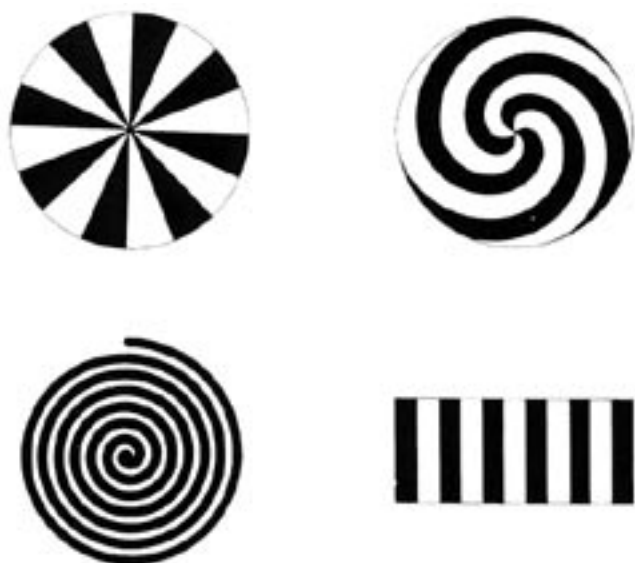


fig. 13

Shading

Shading is regarded by Sekuler and Blake (1994, 242) as a clue to depth recognition. After the observer has found or assumed the direction of the light and the light source, then shading can be used to gain information about surface structures, textures and the depth of objects. Shading can provide information as to whether an edge is soft and rounded or whether it is a sharp corner. Sharp edges or corners create a much stronger contrast than, for example, curved edges. Strong contrasts, as mentioned before, are far easier to recognise than soft gradations. Sekuler and Blake showed an example of a square with three rows of dimples which seem to bulge out. Two other rows of dimples appear as cavities (fig. 14). If the image is turned upside down, the rows appear exactly the opposite. The reason is, according to the authors, that humans are accustomed to seeing light coming from above, creating a shadow at the bottom.

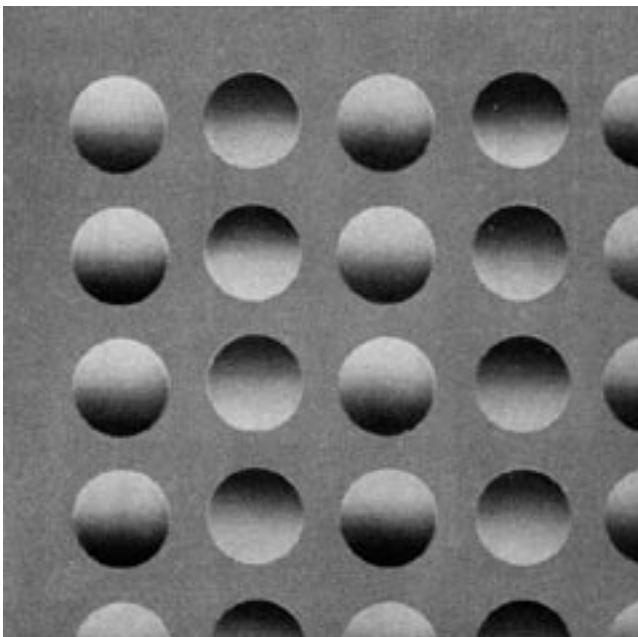


fig. 14

Summary of perception

The action of seeing can take place 'in the blink of an eye'. Therefore it is astonishing what immense activity takes place behind the retina, in order to process a seen image. It appears that Leibnitz was not completely wrong with his hypothesis that the world is a construction of the human imagination. A great amount of that which humans perceive is made up in their minds.

Images perceived on the retina are, due to the low quality of the eye lenses, quite blurred. Light rays are converted into neural signals in photoreceptors, which have, in humans, about one hundred and twenty million rods and eight million cones. These neural signs are transported to only about one million ganglion cells. This represents an enormous reduction of information. The information has to pass the optic chiasm, the superior colliculus and the lateral geniculate nucleus, before it reaches the visual cortex within the cerebral cortex.

Visual perception is based, as stated by Zusne (1970), on reflection of light, and the greater the contrast of images or objects, the more easily they can be recognised. This is why a few clearly defined lines are much more easily recognised than diffused tones or several lines from which the leading ones must be selected.

Information which is perceived by humans should be regarded as a "symbolic activity", because "each of your percepts is associated with some characteristic activity in your brain (hence we say that perceptual states are produced by brain states)" (Sekuler and Blake, 1994, 3, citing Frisby, 1980). Therefore one may assume that the symbolic format enables the human brain to categorise perceived material and link it, or store it appropriately and fast.

If a message is formatted as a symbol, preferably as a picture, as already assumed by Leonardo Da Vinci (cited by Todorov, 1982, as mentioned in Chapter Two), the information, will most likely be processed faster than information which is perceived in another (non-symbolic) format. Because of the convenient digestibility of symbols, they may possibly be stored in the memory, mostly in their original form, and may not suffer as much as other information from changes due to accidental confusion or natural mutation.

Gregory (1974, 612) assumed that there must be certain objects or patterns which are recognised by humans as symbols, while others do not have this significance. By referring to the fact that people in many cases can assess, for example, the consistency of materials judging by their visual appearance, the author hypothesised that humans have a sense for this, which might have evolved at very early stages of human development. Information like this of the presented example, may be regarded, according to Gregory, as being symbolic. However, for

the study of signs and symbols in early Scandinavian society it is of minor relevance whether certain parts of perceived information, may be identified because the human brain developed an ability to recognise such elements in early stages of evolution or whether this ability was gained on account of experiences during a person's lifetime. Gregory concluded that it is most likely that certain kinds of sensory information (lines, shapes, colours, or a combination of some or all of them or even additional elements), once a valuable association in human life, became symbols, quite often representing complex qualities conceived by people unconsciously as facts. Such symbols, which may be regarded as the result of previous experiences, are used by humans unconsciously, as Gregory (1974, 613) argued, "to suggest or test visual hypotheses of prevailing external reality". This, according to the author, enables people to depend less on impulsive reactions resulting from external influences. The symbolic visual information enables one to predict a more complex happening and, most likely, includes a suggestion for an appropriate reaction. Gibson (1966, 93) identified this as a visual 'surrogate'. The author defined the term surrogate as a "stimulus produced by another individual which is relatively specific to some object, place, or event not at present affecting the sense organs of the perceiving individual". According to this definition, it may be possible that images or even only shapes create particular associations. Round shapes may create the association of warmth and cosiness, in contrast to sharp pointed shapes, which may suggest hostility and coolness. Gibson stated that a surrogate has to relate to an object in order to be identified. However, an abstract element such as a simple line or unrealistic shape can also act as a visual surrogate. "The more nearly a surrogate is projective or replicative, the less does associative learning need to occur" (Gibson 1966, 97).

Certain surrogates are culture-specific. Jung (1964) discussed the situation in which symbols may not be interpreted appropriately by cultures other than the one to which they belong. They may, however, become an imprint in the minds of people of one specific culture and contribute to the evolution of the following generations. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989, 673-4) mentioned that certain environmental images may be regarded as reflecting Jung's theory of the "archetypical memory" (1989, 673). Eibl-Eibesfeldt described the preference of Dutch painters for "romanticized cloud-covered landscapes" and the "mountain landscapes of the southern German local artists". In contemporary interior design, he recognised a certain disposition towards floral designs. The depiction of floral images, as well as of flowering plants in pots, represents, according to Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "a deeply rooted preference for a particular environment". He referred to many examples of aesthetic practices which were/are practised by different tribal cultures, such as face painting or the tradition of wearing particular decorative items. One could assume from Eibl-Eibesfeldt's text that concepts perceived as essential for survival may be genetically imprinted in humankind. Concepts of lesser importance may be learned at different stages in life, according to their immediate importance. Examples of cultural diversity provided by Eibl-Eibesfeldt resemble images and objects which are pro-

duced by adult craftspeople or artists who have been taught the application of shapes, colours and materials by older generations. Because of the impossibility of interviewing newborn babies, it would be extremely difficult to determine whether they would perceive a particular shape, such as a pointed zig-zag line, as indicating danger or aggression, and whether they would interpret rounded shapes as comfortable and non-threatening. Adults, most likely, would interpret these forms in this manner. It appears, according to Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989, 674), that colours are similarly interpreted by people of different cultural backgrounds. The author cited Itten (1961), who stated that a room painted red-orange was judged by subjects as three to four degrees warmer than a room of the same temperature but painted blue-green. Warm colours, according to Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989, 674), citing Birren (1950), increase pulse rate and blood pressure.

Itten (1961) compared the quality of colour with the sound of music, which, in his opinion, can be translated into form and subsequently can be formulated as words. The illumination of the *Book of Kells* is explained by Itten as follows: (the) “logic of chromatic execution and organic rhythm of line are as magnificent and pure as a Bach fugue” (1961, 14). Itten emphasised Romanesque and early Gothic artists’ technique of applying predominantly well-defined, unclouded spaces of colour for their symbolic expression. Mary’s gold brocade dress in the fifteenth century painting, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, by Enguerrand Charonton, is described by Itten as signifying an “ennobled, purified corporeality” (1961, 40).

Itten (1961) made only a small reference to ‘gold’ in his colour theory. However, because of the great similarity between gold and yellow (gold is yellow with a metal sheen), it seems appropriate to consider Itten’s elaborations on yellow as also representative of gold. “Golden yellow suggests the highest sublimation of matter by the power of light, impalpably radiant, lacking transparency, but weightless as a pure vibration” (1961, 132). Yellow was also interpreted by Itten as enjoyable and radiating, when placed on a dark background.

Directly referring to gold, Itten (1961, p.132) stated: “Gold was formerly much used in painting. It signifies luminous, light-emitting matter. The common expression ‘to see the light’ means to be brought to a realisation of previously hidden truth. To say that someone is ‘bright’ is to credit him with intelligence. So yellow, the brightest and lightest colour, pertains symbolically to understanding, knowledge”.

The red on the 12-hue colour-circle, according to Itten (1961, 133), is neither yellowish nor bluish. Its irresistible radiance is not easily eclipsed, and yet is extraordinarily flexible, with diverse characteristics. It is very sensitive where it shifts into yellowish or into bluish hues. Both yellowish red and bluish red unfold a great capacity for modulation. Red-orange is dense and opaque, glowing as if filled with inner warmth. The warmth of red is intensified to

fiery strength in red-orange. It is symbolically comparable to vitalised earth. If red-orange is well composed, it becomes the expression of feverish fighting passion (1961, 133). Associated with the planet Mars, red is bound to the burning worlds of war and demons. It was worn as a sign of martial occupation by warriors in combat. It has been the badge of revolutions (1961, 133). “Passionate physical love glows forth in red-orange; blue-red purple connotes spiritual love.” (1961, 134). “Unlike yellow, red has a great wealth of modulations because it can be widely varied between cold and warm, dull and clear, light and dark, without destroying its character of redness. From demonic, sinister red-orange on black, to sweet angelic pink, red can express all intermediate degrees between the infernal and the sublime. Only the ethereal, transparent, aerial is barred to it, for there blue reigns supreme.” (1961, 135).

It is, according to Itten (1987, 89) extremely difficult to create a purple, that is exactly balanced between red and blue. Purple, wrote Itten, represents unconsciousness and secrecy. It appears joyful and depressing, depending on the surrounding, contrasting colours. Itten (1987, 89) cited Goethe (1791) who stated that a purple light in the landscape suggested the horror of the end of the world. The lighter tones of purple were defined by Itten as representing the joyful and lighter sides of life. The darker tones signify death, darkness, elevation, loneliness, passion, heavenly love and spiritual leadership.

Blue was described by Itten (1987, 89) as passive, if seen from a materialistic three-dimensional perspective. Spiritually, however, Itten defined blue as active. Blue is regarded as cold. It facilitates introspection. Blue tends to appear shady and represents depth. Itten’s further interpretations of the colour blue are very philosophical and appear highly speculative.

Further interpretation of the most common colours is presented within the definition of symbols in this study.

In his famous colour theory, Itten (1961) presented analogies between colours and shapes. He associated them as follows:

red – square	white – semi-sphere
yellow – triangle	gold – convex
blue – circle	silver – concave.
green – hexagon	
purple – oval	
brown – diamond	
orange – rectangle	
black – trapezoid	

Kasenova, Mistry and Kozareff (2002) stated (on a web-site of Pomona College, Claremont, California) that human beings respond to shapes emotionally. Kasenova et al. associated the circle with the sun, defining it as warm and protective. They claimed that the same feeling is associated with all kind of curved forms, these forms being regarded also as calm, pacific, assured, sensuously relaxed and optimistic.

The square was associated by Kasenova et al. (2002) as being dull, straight-forward, honest, lacking imagination, stable and less natural than a circle. They interpreted the triangle as representing action, agitation, conflict, tension and aspiration, finding further correspondence with fire, splinters, thorns, arrowheads, twisted metal and cracked ice.

In relation to the application of shapes in contemporary society, Kasenova et al. (2002) described the utilisation of particular shapes in the advertising industry. They stated that the emotional value of shapes is used particularly for the promotion of perfume, noting that perfume bottles usually show more a tendency towards curved, circular and triangular shapes. Apart from representing a body, curves may reflect feelings of warmth, continuity and security. Triangular perfume bottles, on the other hand, suggest risk, challenge and excitement. Bottles containing cologne were described as being generally bigger, more solid and usually square in shape. The square shape, as stated by Kasenova et al., may be associated with strength, honesty and reliability.

Art, particularly abstract art, applies symbolic expressions, not only of colours, but also of shapes. Kandinsky (1979, 115) described the square as balancing coldness and warmth equally. As such it could represent death. He defined the horizontal lines of a square as 'above' and 'below'. 'Above' was interpreted as lightness, emancipation and freedom. 'Below' was described as representing condensation, heaviness and constraint. The left vertical line of a square was described as suggesting "looseness, a feeling of lightness, of emancipation and, finally, freedom" (p.119). Kandinsky used similar terms as in describing 'above'. He stated that the left vertical line stands with its weight behind 'above', but compared with 'below' it would weight far less. Just as the 'left' was regarded by Kandinsky as being strongly associated with 'above', so was 'right', in his opinion, strongly connected with the interpretation of 'below' (condensation, heaviness and constraint decrease). However, Kandinsky considered that 'left' was weaker in these expressions than 'below'. The shape of a circle, according to Kandinsky (1979, 142) could be described similarly to that of a square. The terms 'above', 'below', 'left' and 'right' could also be related to a circle; however, he mentioned that the change of direction from one side to the other appears gradually.

Because every painting begins with points and lines, Kandinsky regarded these elements to be of great importance. These elements, within a plane or in combination with planes, are

essential to create a composition and/or create signs to communicate. This perception relates not only to paintings, but can be applied to a range of visual art and craftwork. Even if Kandinsky is predominantly known as an avant garde artist who had an enormous influence on abstract art in the early twentieth century, his interpretations of basic elements such as point, line and plane are relevant to works produced at any time, including the period when gold bracteates and *guldgubber* were created.

Kandinsky (1979) suggested investigating individual aspects in isolation, then observing the effect of the researched elements on each other in combination, and drawing conclusions from the above observations and interpretations.

According to Kandinsky (1979), it is important to be aware of the distance between a plane shape and a picture border. If a shape is created and placed in the middle of a picture, it remains as a solitary element. He called this a “lyrical sound to the construction” (p.137). The closer a shape is placed to a picture border, the more the tension in the composition increases, because the shape competes with the picture border for dominance. This is what Kandinsky called “the dramatic sound of the construction” (p.137). If a shape becomes connected with the border, the tension weakens and the shape together with the border become one unit. Angles of planes within a picture border need further attention. As Kandinsky described, it is relatively easy to position a rectangular plane within a rectangular border. Tension and harmony can easily be increased or decreased according to the plane positioning. However, when the plane within a border is not rectangular, or when several shapes together create a multi-angular plane, the situation becomes more complex. Kandinsky considered planes with a great number of different angles on their outer edges as similar to the shape of the circle. The circle gains a great extent of its force from the centre which, through the nature of the circle, is positioned at the same distance from the outer edge in any direction.

Verstockt (1982) also investigated basic shapes, interpreting them by referring to commonly known interpretations and applications.

A dot, according to Verstockt, can represent:

- the immovable centre
- the axis of the world
- fertility
- seed, sperm
- the divine principle
- nothing and everything
- a primaeval form of glyphs

Verstockt (1982, 46) stated that according to Proclus (fifth century AD), the point has a “cosmic power and rank first order among signs.” He also mentioned Leibniz’ position that a distinction has to be made “between metaphysical points and geometrical points” (p.46).

A description of Lines (Verstockt [1982] concentrated on scratched lines)

A **line** is the simplest way to create a mark, maybe by scratching it into a material. All forms apart from a point are made by applying a line. The simplest shape created with a line is a short straight motion. If this motion is executed at an angle, then it can be varied by applying a different angle. The strokes created in different angles can be overlaid cross-wise to create a cross-hatching effect. Verstockt also demonstrated the effect of multiple short strokes which create the illusion of a textured plane. One short stroke vertically placed over a horizontal short stroke results in a cross-shape.

If **short strokes** are positioned to appear like the gable of a house, they form the shape of an arrow. If two of these ‘v’ shapes are drawn with their open sides together, a square or diamond is created (depending on the angle). Several of these ‘v’ shapes can create a range of new patterns, such as a horizontal or vertical zigzag-line. Several ‘v’ shapes drawn along a centre line, all pointing in the same direction, create a fishbone pattern. This is seen, for example, in branch-runes, where short angular strokes on one side of a vertical centre line mark the line in the futhark (e.g. 24 runes in 4 lines = 6 runes per line), and angular strokes on the other side mark the position of the runic letter on this particular line.

Verstockt (1982) also mentioned that the **fishbone crosshatching** technique was in vogue in Ireland from the seventh to the twelfth century AD. In another variation, one short stroke applied diagonally over another diagonal short stroke results in an ‘x’ shape.

Verstockt furthermore **combined straight lines with points**. Firstly he depicted a line with a point on each end, secondly a line with a point at the end but no point at the beginning. Not shown by the author but relevant in this regard would be a line with a point at the beginning but no point at the end. Also shown was a line without a point at either end.

Vertical lines divide a space into a left and right area. **Horizontal lines** divide a space into an area above and an area below. Straight lines also have symbolic values. Verstockt mentioned that a vertical line could signify the tree of the world, a phallus, a spear, a sceptre, a column, life, power, an axis, the centre of time and the world.

Groups of dots, strokes or lines can create patterns. These patterns can be rhythmically arranged by placing clusters of such forms within a composition.

Verstockt referred to the Ogham alphabet from pre-Christian Ireland, which consisted entirely of straight strokes of different lengths and angles. So-called branch runes are similar to the Ogham system. They are based on a vertical stroke, indicating, by a particular number of short strokes on one side, which line in the Futhark is indicated, and on the other side of the vertical line the number of the letter that is counted in that particular line.

Another important basic shape of a line is the 'U'. 'U' shapes can be placed next to each other sideways, or above and below each other, or all together. Like straight lines or dots, they can be positioned in clusters to create rhythmic patterns. By placing 'u' shapes upright and upside down next to each other, a wave shape can be constructed. By radiating semi-circles in different sizes around a centre, 'U' shapes are placed inside each other, creating a florescent quality of appearance.

Lines are extended strokes. They can be bent in any direction. However, it is necessary to appreciate the straight line as well as other more complex forms. The straight line can be drawn in different lengths as well as in different widths, or in combinations of both different lengths and widths within a group of lines. Several straight lines can be positioned (composed) vertically parallel and equidistant from each other, or vertically parallel with varying spacing, as well as horizontally parallel and equidistant from each other or horizontally parallel with varying spacing, or all the above incorporating different lengths and/or widths. Additionally, lines can be placed as described above but with the application of different angles to the lines.

Several lines can also be placed crossing each other, creating a **grid**. This can also be done with varying widths vertically and horizontally. It is also possible to apply different line widths and different angles to create compositions.

If square shapes, which emerge through vertical and horizontal crossing of lines, are filled in a sequence such that every second square appears dark, vertically as well as horizontally, then a pattern as of a **chessboard** is created.

The square is, according to Verstockt (1982), a constructed shape – in contrast to a circle which he described as originating “spontaneously out of mechanical movements of the human hand” (p.99). He called the square “a quaternary product arising from a rational process of construction, namely, connecting up of four points, or placing four lines squarely (orthogonally) on top of one another; these are either two vertical and two horizontal lines, or four corners joined up (90 degrees). The centre-point originates from crossed diagonals” (p.99).

The centre-point of the square has an importance similar to that of the centre-point of the circle. Because all four sides are equidistant from the centre, as are all four corners, the centre-point has an extremely balanced position. It also attracts great attention. Squares placed inside other squares appear as a radiant element with certain hypnotic qualities.

Squares have strong symbolic values, of which Verstockt mentioned a number. He described the square as chthonic, relating to the underworld, being static, representing the directions, north, south, east and west, as well as north-west, etc. "The anti-dynamic square can have nearly as many symbolic meanings as the circle: God-body-earth-cosmos (Christianity); world-nature (astrology); matter-reality-man (biology); thorax (biology); masculine-nimbus-matter-horizon-lodge (freemasonry); new moon (astronomy); salt (Paracelsus); light (alchemy); quadrature-the four elements (fire, air, water, earth); sensory perception-intuition-feeling-thinking (Jung); solidity-stability-protection-organisation-construction-ratio-harmony (Plato); enclosure (enclos); eye of God (ojo de dios); frame-window-coin (Chinese: Jen, gateway-soul (Pythagoras); truth (Japanese: Shin)..."(Verstockt, 1982, 101-102).

The circle, the square and the triangle are, according to Verstockt (1982), shapes which are used as "religious, magical, astrological and cosmic symbols" (p.93). Particularly the circle is described by Verstockt as the shape which is applied to represent a vast amount of ideas and concepts such as "GOD-SUN-COSMOS-UNIVERSE-EARTH-HEAVEN-ALL-NOTHING".

Application of perceptual principles for the identification of images on objects from the tenth and early eleventh century.

A visit to the Schleswigholsteinisches Landesmuseum in Schleswig, Germany, afforded me the opportunity to view a number of original objects found together in a leather bag in Haithabu (Hedeby), near Schleswig (fig.15).



As far back as 1897, the Danish archaeologist Sophus Müller proposed that Haithabu (Hedeby) may have been a Viking settlement. When the first excavations were undertaken in 1900, under the direction of Johanna Mestorf, Müller's speculation was proven right. A large settlement with many artefacts was found. Among the items found in Haithabu (Hedeby) were 41 patrices for the production of fibulae, pendants and other decorative metal pieces.

According to Armbruster (2002) the patrices were dated to between the tenth and the early eleventh century AD. The 41 patrices were most likely originally placed together in a bag and, Armbruster hypothesised, belonged to a goldsmith. Among these patrices fifteen are round, ten are in the shape of birds' or animals' paws, twelve are shaped like three combined crosses and five are of various shapes.

The sharp contour of the ornamentation of the patrices determines the shapes of primary importance in the object to be produced. After the process of embossing a thin metal sheet, further decoration was applied by soldering on gold wires which were artistically manipulated by twisting, pressing them into moulds and using a file to give them a pearl-like appearance. All these manipulations added more sparkle, three-dimensionality and drama to the object; however, the original main contours sometimes disappeared behind the decoration.

The depictions on the round patrices, which were most likely used to produce brooches, consist in most cases of entwined lines, which seem to allow interpretation, in case of F7.15 (fig. 16, 18 and 27), of some of them as horses' legs (fig. 16) and hammer shapes (fig. 17), towards the centre of the patrice. The horse leg-shapes were probably indeed exactly what they were supposed to represent on the finished brooch. The hammer-shape, however, does not seem to be intended, originally, to represent Þórr's hammer. It is, as is more easily recognisable in the patrices of the birds, discussed later in this chapter, an animal's head seen from the front. The additional final decoration transformed the hammer shape into a head.



The objects (eg. fig.18) were viewed initially following the Gestalt principle (law of perception). Predominantly typical features were analysed and compared with characteristics of



fig.18
original



fig.19
hammer and legs

known shapes. This led to the result described above. An illustration (fig. 19) may show this more clearly. Another shape, however, was identifiable on the brooch from Vester Vedsted in Jylland (fig.22). There it appears as if animal heads, such as those of lizards, were depicted in

the centre of the object. Following the rules of 'object recognition' from the principles of 'visual perception', segmentation points were established, which looked



fig.20

as though they would provide some relation to a possible animal. The result appeared as the illustration shown in fig. 20. It looks as if three animals have their heads together in the centre of the brooch. If this image is blended into the rest of the design, the result seems to be that the three animals



fig.21

dominate the interlaced leg-like shapes (fig. 21). The brooch from Vester Vedsted in Jylland (fig. 22), however, offers another clue. Applying the

figure/ground principle from the perceptual concept, one can find a further



fig.22

and very interesting variation. This occurs if attention is given to certain parts of the image only. In this case an animal appears (fig. 23), occupying almost the entire brooch. If both the patrice as well as the finished brooch made from the patrice could be viewed, one could, for example, combine the drawing which was made following the segmen-



fig.23

tation points on the patrice, with the image deriving from the figure/ground principle of the finished brooch. Elements which are not recognisable on the patrice may be identifiable from the finished object and vice versa. A result could look like the figure constructed here from two different objects, because of the lack of a adequate counterpart (fig. 24).



fig.24

The smaller patrices, like F7. 22 (fig. 25) are approximately 35 mm in diameter. This patrice does not depict a hammer-shape and horse legs, but shows



fig.26

an abstract ornament which may express eternity, similar to the quatrefoil loop, discussed in the section about symbolic qualities in depictions on Gotland picture-stones (p. 223). The largest of the patrices (F7.11, fig. 26) measures 69 mm and several patrices, like F7.15 (fig. 18 and 27) measure approximately 50 mm in diameter. The example above shows that it is extremely difficult to analyse the shapes of patrices for



fig.25



fig.27

development in the final stages of jewellery production adds significant elements that may be very different from the original patrice. As mentioned before, it would be ideal to be able to view both the patrice and the finished object.

Among the patrices found in Haithabu, twelve are shaped in the form of three combined crosses, vaguely forming the shape of a larger cross. Because the images found in Haithabu belong, according to Armbruster (2002), partly to heathen and partly to Christian iconography, one may assume that the crosses are intended to carry a dual meaning, as the upper part (eyelet) is designed like the basic shape for the bird heads on the patrices for the bird head pendants.

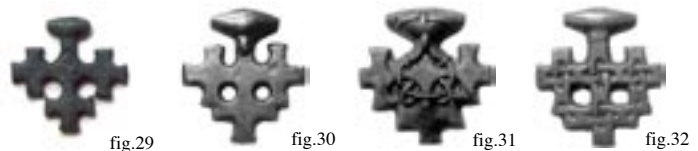
Following the principles of Gestalt theory, one can identify the head of an animal in the combinations of crosses. The two holes appear like eyes, other elements could be interpreted as ears, nose and whiskers. The shape in general has similarities with that of the head of a fox or wolf (fig. 28).



fig.28

Apart from the cross shape, with a smaller cross attached to three of its arms, like F7.47 (fig. 29) and F7.32 (fig. 30), the pendant F7.25 (fig. 31) indicates some simple entwined ornamentation, which appears very sophisticated

on F7.29 (fig. 32). The entwined motive with its endless line may be understood as similar to the patrice F7.22 (fig. 25) and



the quatrefoil loop from the picture-stone from Habingbo Havor, as a symbol of eternity. Fig. 33 shows several, finished cross-shaped objects, arranged as a necklace. It indicates how, in a row, the single pieces lose their strong image as a cross and the whole arrangement appears as an integrated new design. (This is what was identified, on page 35, as proximity.)



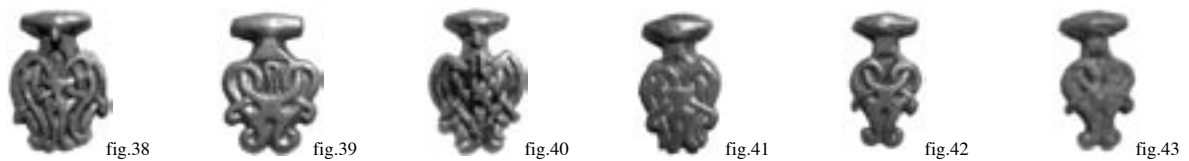
fig.33

Patrices which seems to have been created to produce pendants shaped like animals' paws, appear on closer observation to be bird-shaped objects. It seems that the part where the eyelet was meant to be represents a relatively large bird-head, the feathers of the wings ending in five smaller bird heads. Object F7.46 (fig. 34) depicts a bird head looking ahead as seen from above, and the wings are of rectangular shape. In the object F7.34 (fig. 35) however, the larger bird head on top appears to be shown from the front and the wings are spread out in a trapeze shape, reinforcing the claw-like look. At the end of the wings appear, as in object F7.46, five smaller bird heads. Two further objects of great similarity (F7. 35 and F7.406), have only three smaller bird heads.



The object F7.35 (fig. 36) depicts also a larger head, where an eyelet may be supposed to be mounted. Object F7.406 (fig. 37) depicts a shape which can only vaguely be described as a bird head. These bird head images, which most likely represent birds of prey, may be meant to be eagles, which are associated with Óðinn. It is possible that the craftsman intended to add a second meaning to the objects, maybe that of a claw.

Six other patrices in bird shapes which were found in Haithabu appear stylistically different from the objects just mentioned. These bird-shaped objects, also most likely pendants, with the catalogue numbers F7.36 (fig. 38), F7.37 (fig. 39), F7.38 (fig. 40), F7.39 (fig. 41), F7.40a (fig. 42) and F7.41b (fig. 43), were created by applying an entwining knot design. The objects depict a bird's head at the point where an eyelet may be supposed to be mounted but, in contrast to the objects discussed earlier, there are no bird heads added at the end of the wings.



Together with the objects discussed above, four further objects were found, which seem to be patrices created to produce gold or silver mounts that could be used as decorations on other objects such as swords, belts or textiles. The objects numbered F.7.41a (fig. 44), F 7.42 and F 7.44 appear as abstract ornamentation. These patrices are very detailed; to identify the symbolic content one must apply the range of interpretations of basic shapes. Because these objects were found together with items which are stylistically different, as described earlier, one must assume that they belong to the same time period.



Three patrices (fig. 45 a, b, c), without catalogue numbers were also found in Haithabu. However, they were not part of the collection of patrices discussed earlier. These objects are patrices which were created with Terslev-ornamentation. These cross-shaped interlaced designs were commonly used as pendants. After embossing of the golden foil, pearl-like golden wires were soldered onto the surface, as in the objects discussed earlier, to enhance three-dimensionality and to add a more precious sheen. The cross-like ornamentation indicates a certain Christian influence. However, the continuous line still indicates the heathen traditional representation of eternity.



Six pieces of jewellery found in Haithabu, according to Armbruster (2002, 152), were produced using the patrices described above.

Application of perceptual principles in analysing the object from Larmøya, Kaupang, Larvik, Vestfold in Norway, to identify parts of its design not previously defined.



fig. 46

This brooch (fig. 46) appears to belong stylistically to the Ringerike style. It also shows elements of the Jellinge style, such as a double-contour, but this, according to Klint-Jensen (1966) is not unusual because objects elsewhere created in the Ringerike style also adopted elements from the Jellinge style.

The object is striking for its generally clear lines and shapes. This, however, does not apply to the front area which most likely resembles curled up front legs, in accordance with the Ringerike style. The shape of the animal's back appears even more confused. With careful observation, however, one can identify a horse's back leg and the hoof of the second back leg. There are lines which most likely represent the horse's tail.

Nevertheless, additional shapes need further investigation. For this reason I have applied the 'figure/ground' principle in combination with Gestalt theory. By isolating the controversial shapes on the back from the rest of the animal a new arrangement of lines/shapes became dominant.



fig. 47

This new shape looks very much like a newborn horse (fig. 47). A head is lying on the



fig. 48

ground, looking upward, four long legs appear, the body is elongated, a tail may be that of the foal or part of the tail of the mother animal. A round line may represent the burst trophoblast (the bag in which the embryo of a mammal is kept). The trophoblast is more recognisable if the little animal is taken away from the picture (fig. 48).

Assuming that the brooch does depict the birth of a horse, one has to consider the relevance of this scene in Old Norse culture. It is possible that the image refers to the birth of Sleipnir, Óðinn's horse. The birth of an animal of this significance may have been important enough to be utilised as an image on a piece of jewellery.

Hypnosis

Hypnosis is generally regarded as a sleep-like condition which occurs upon someone's suggestion. Hull (1933, 5) stated that hypnosis is a normal phenomenon that can be studied in exactly the same way as any other mental capacity, varieties of which are recognisable from one person to another. Hypnosis, according to Hull, has sleep-like aspects, including the fact that the hypnotised person has her/his eyes closed and appears passive; however, the hypnotised person is able to move and respond to stimuli such as commands. As it is known now, hypnotised people do not necessarily close their eyes. According to Zangwill (1987), electroencephalograms (reflecting the electrical rhythms of the brain) of hypnotised persons do not resemble those of people who are asleep, but rather show the same patterns as those of a wakeful person. Therefore, Zangwill considered that a hypnotised person must be regarded as awake.

Hull's work (1933) focused predominantly on the distinction of spectacular, exaggerated claims of hypnosis from facts which could be identified, tested and proved to be real. He found that hypnotised persons are unable to do things beyond human capacity. However, his investigations showed that certain enhancements of physical and mental capacities occurred. Coon (1986, 137) defined hypnosis as "a trancelike, altered state of consciousness, characterised by narrowed attention and an increased openness to suggestion". He stated that about 80 percent of human beings could be hypnotised. Milechnin (1967) described two opposite methods of inducing hypnosis. The first method uses shock, in which someone is given a sharp command. This kind of shock relates to war situations, such as where exploding grenades cause shock to people nearby, or to less drastic events such as the sudden appearance of a mouse. People may be unable to react immediately because they are paralysed by the impact of the event. The second method is far gentler, being based on a comfortable, reassuring situation in which repeated verbal messages, often in combination with tactile or visual support, induce hypnosis. Coon suggested that a person who is to be hypnotised should be relaxed and feel comfortable. A person can be hypnotised more easily if sensory deprivation takes place. A weary voice and repetition of commands are usually applied to induce hypnosis.

Hypnosis does not need to be induced formally. Yapko (1995, 20) stated that a hypnotic induction occurs while somebody is drawn into a communication which is directed externally. This can be a speech, a story in a book, a movie, and other elements. According to Yapko, it is not necessary for the person to be in a relaxed situation while being hypnotised. Hypnosis can be triggered under a great variety of conditions, even if a person is anxious.

Visual aids may be applied also, in order to reinforce the induction procedure. Gordon (1967, 65) stated that such visual aids may be even more effective than verbal methods. However, images

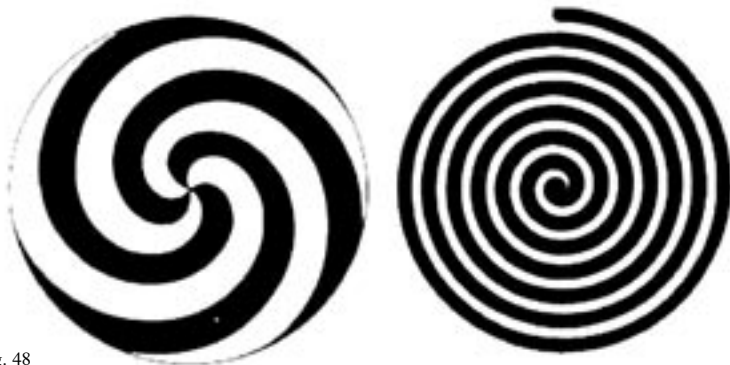


fig. 48

used for hypnotic induction should be of high contrast, in order to stand out from the surrounding environment. Rhythmic repetition, as mentioned by Gordon, is also important. A common visual aid used to induce an altered state of consciousness, according to Gordon, is a 'hypnodisc' (fig. 48).

This is a disc with a spiral painted on it, which is steadily revolved.

It was noted earlier that the shape of a spiral best demonstrates the 'motion adaptation and after-effect'. Day (1969) described how an object may seem to be moving even although it is stationary. This sensation, according to Zusne (1970), is caused by very rapid tremor and is based on the grid-like structure of the retinal mosaic. The scanning procedure along the line of the spiral creates, due



fig. 49

to its repetition, a tiring effect which can be used to induce hypnosis. It was also mentioned earlier that a row of vertical lines is most likely to create a similar effect if the row is long enough to engender a tiring repetition (fig. 49).

The restriction of acoustic and visual stimuli causes parts of the brain of the hypnotised person to rest, which encourages the few still-functioning parts of the brain to be in a state of high alertness. A diagram by Van Pelt (1950) depicts this well (fig. 50).

Yapko (1995, 24) described hypnosis as a process of dissociation. He explained that various cognitive systems, which usually work synergistically together under a primary controlling system, dissociate from each other to various degrees "and are thus capable

WHY SUGGESTION IS MORE POWERFUL UNDER HYPNOSIS.

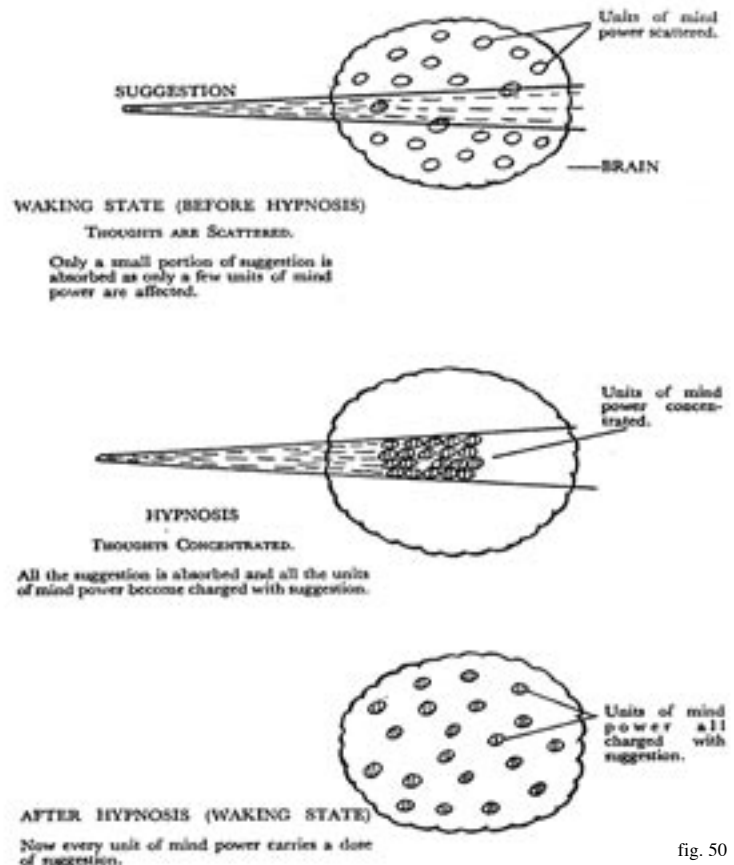


fig. 50

of independent and multi-level responses to the suggestions of the hypnotist". While the conscious mind is occupied with hypnotic procedures, "the unconscious is actively searching for symbolic meanings, past associations, and appropriate responses" (1995, 58). The dissociative nature of hypnosis was regarded by Yapko as the key to the increased responsiveness to suggestion. A hypnotised person responds to commands in expectation of gaining advantage from this. The state of consciousness can change, according to Coon (1986), under a number of circumstances. Coon described sources which can cause a change of the state of consciousness as:

sensory overload (for example, a light show, Mardi Gras crowd, or disco), monotonous or restricted stimulation ('highway hypnotism' on long drives is a good example), religious and mystical experiences (revivals and religious conversions), unusual physical conditions (high fever, hyperventilation, dehydration, sleep loss), and too many other possibly to mention (p. 137).

As described by Milechnin (1967, 25), receiving a number of varied stimuli is not sufficient to maintain alertness. The author asserted, "there must also be a non-specific sensory affluence that keeps up a functional tonus of the cortex through the stimulation of the reticular system. This is happening, if simple shapes are seen in repetition. There is a background of subliminal, unperceived sensations that contribute to give a certain affective tone". Milechnin stated, "The elimination of certain subliminal stimuli that might disturb the functioning of the higher nervous centres constitutes an important function of the multisynaptic reticular substance in all its extent" (1967, 26). This sensory deprivation narrows the general attention, generating a predisposition to the state of hypnosis.

It appeared to Yapko (1995) that simple suggestions had a much greater success than complex ones, which require some concentration in a conscious state of mind. Suggestions made during hypnosis can be of a metaphorical nature. That allows the introduction of material which belongs not directly to the hypnotised person's environment but relates in certain aspects to it. The success of metaphorical suggestions, according to Yapko, depends on the hypnotised person's field of knowledge. Automatic functions of which humans are capable exist at least on three levels: motoric, affective and sensory. Coon (1986) stated that hypnosis seems to be most effective in influencing the senses, such as smell, vision, hearing and the perception of time. Information gained in the state of hypnosis, according to Kalat (1990, 115), is selectively referred to the nervous system. There it persists over a period of time and influences the person's behaviour, even if the hypnosis itself has ended and the hypnotised person cannot remember having seen or heard any suggestions.

Moss (1970) conducted tests of the sub effect of the human perception of symbolic imagery. Twenty-two subjects were asked, initially in a waking state, to interpret magazine advertisements for their meaning. Subsequently the subjects were hypnotised, and then asked again to state their

opinion. The results showed that the subjects interpreted the images far more subjectively while hypnotised. In this regard it seemed that the images appeared much more personally meaningful to the subjects than when they were in a waking state.

Hypnotic depth can vary. Milechnin (1967) discussed the appropriateness of different stages of depth in hypnosis in relation to the desired outcome. The author explained, “to have a lasting effect, a suggestion given in the form of an emotionally acceptable asseveration, rationalisation, etc., must necessarily be incorporated into the affective-rational systems of the recipient. Such an incorporation is only possible in a light hypnotic state, where there is no alteration in the senses or

Hypnotism gets the truth on advertising

By JANE SCHULZE
in Melbourne

The Brisbane-based advertising group The Agency, formerly part of John Singleton Advertising, has been conducting trials with the market and social research company, Mindtec Diagnostics, hypnotising people in an attempt to improve information gained from focus groups.

The Agency's managing director, Mr Denis Lee, said the results were “earth shattering” and they intended using the approach within six weeks.

“It will never replace quantitative research as you'll always need the hard data but, in terms of qualitative research, we would definitely see this as a replacement,” he said.

Unlike information gained from focus groups, Mr Lee said that gleaned from hypnotised people was not influenced by social expectations, the money they were being paid to participate, or the opinions of other people nearby.

“When the guys [from Mindtec] rang and said they were contemplating undertaking research using hypnosis, I thought it was somebody in the industry pulling my leg but the more we talked about it, I sat up and listened,” he said.



You are feeling sleepy, very sleepy . . . now tell us what you really like about the product.

The Agency gathered eight television advertisements — some it had created and some made by others — and tested the responses of eight people initially in a conscious state and then under hypnosis.

Mr Lee said the differences in the responses were remarkable, with people's recollection of a company and brand improving by 75 per cent when hypnotised compared with when in a normal state.

“It shows they are registering in the subconscious what these commercials were about, but from the top of their mind it wasn't there so much,” he said.

“That's what happened all the way through — they are storing opinions and attitudes about products which, asked about consciously they may not recall, but at the point of purchase there are all those subliminal things stored in the memory that influence the purchasing process.”

A Mindtec co-founder and clinical hypnotherapist, Mr David Kennedy, said the company had completed eight major projects for advertising agencies and their clients.

In one example, he said, an ad for a fruit juice cordial had used an image that under hypnosis 80 per cent of people associated with an image used by a competitor five years previously.

“The subjects attributed ownership of the product to the company's opposition, so that has meant that commercial has had to be reworked,” he said.

Mindtec uses its patented altered states elicitation technique, abbreviated to ASET, that Mr Kennedy said put people in a “very gentle day-dreamy-like state”.

He said the company had used ASET for police forensic work and management training groups, then ventured into advertising after recognising the general dissatisfaction the industry had with focus groups.

Mr Lee expected that to gain access to deep-seated memory and emotional responses about 15 people must be individually hypnotised and assessed at a cost of \$1,800 for each.

the functions” (p. 123).

fig. 51

“The influence of advertising. Why do you buy the products you buy when you shop? How did you come to choose one brand over another?” Yapko (1995, 38) asked these questions and con-

cluded that advertising creates an 'urge' by suggesting that it would be an advantage to prefer a particular product over an other. The advertising industry makes great use of hypnotic techniques to be successful in its undertakings (fig.51).

Vance Packard, a journalist specialising in human behaviour, stated in 1957, with reference to marketing strategies, that a product which is supposed to be for sale must not only be good technically and practically, it also has to "appeal to our feelings, deep in the psychological recesses of the mind" (p. 34). Packard reported that hypnosis had been used by Ruthrauff and Ryan, an advertising agency in New York, which employed a prominent hypnotist and a panel of psychologists and psychiatrists to gain information which lay beyond mental barriers and was usually difficult to reach when we are conscious. He stated, "the agency has found that hypnosis sharpens our power to recall" (p. 41). This assertion was supported by the experience of an Australian advertising agency, with the name *The Agency*, which employed a hypnotist to improve the efficacy of its advertisements. It was found that, in response to an image used for an advertisement for a juice cordial, a majority of hypnotised people found elements which they associated strongly with advertisements run some years earlier by a competing company. These elements were not detected by the same people when they were not in a state of hypnosis.

Packard described several cases in advertising, where a target group was asked about the impact of an advertisement on their opinion of a product. Analysis demonstrated that in several cases the viewers perceived different messages from what the advertisers tried to proclaim. The reason was that the advertisements included subliminal images which had a strong impact on the people tested. Because the subliminal images conveyed messages concerning fear, ethics and morality which were incorporated deeply in the minds of viewers, they appeared to be more powerful than the main pictures, which were thought to advertise the products clearly.

It is, particularly for this study, important to be aware that hypnosis is not necessarily induced only by a hypnotist, standing or sitting in front of the subject, staring into that person's eyes, swinging a pendulum or spinning a hypnodisc and repeating endlessly some tiring phrases. Biddulph (1984) recounted a little episode about the most highly regarded hypnotist Milton H. Erickson. A man who suffered great pain because of advanced cancer could not be helped with pain killers. The man refused to have hypnosis. However, Erickson briefly dropped in to the patient's room to have a little chat with him. They talked about gardening and in particular the man's hobby of growing tomatoes. Until the man's death five days later, he had no more pain. Erickson had incorporated suggestive vocabulary into the talk, applying a technique which enabled him to hypnotise the man unconsciously.

Certain procedures or signs (such as a spiral) which were used to induce hypnosis, may, according to Gordon (1967), be used again for future inductions with the same person. Gordon stated that reinduction on a later occasion occurs far more rapidly if the same technique is applied again.

Summary of hypnosis

A comfortable environment which creates a relaxed atmosphere is desirable to induce hypnosis. However, hypnosis can be induced under a variety of conditions, even under stress.

A hypnotised person is not asleep. Van Pelt (1950), Milechnin (1967) and others agree that different stages of hypnosis exist, and only a few people reach the state of a deep trance. According to Van Pelt, it is quite sufficient for medical and therapeutical purposes if a person reaches only a light state of hypnosis.

“Susceptibility to suggestion is the chief phenomenon of hypnosis” (Hull, 1933, 285). Suggestive commands perceived during a hypnotic state of mind can be successfully carried out and can even influence behaviour as an ongoing process. However, suggestion itself can induce hypnosis.

Shock can induce hypnosis, which may act therapeutically as a clear command. However, gentle, rhythmic repetitions are employed within commonly suggested techniques. The use of visual aids, which should appear in high contrast and brightly lit, is highly recommended by Gordon (1967).

To apply these findings to objects/artefacts from early Scandinavian cultures, it is necessary to translate the above formulae to a certain extent. One cannot assume that early Scandinavian artists and craftspeople would have applied particular techniques, styles and shapes to achieve suggestion, along the same lines as the findings of psychologists and psychiatrists from the early twentieth century and later.

The stone from Jelling (fig. 52) presents an inscription consisting of a great amount of narrow, vertically orientated, runes, creating lines which seem to achieve a result similar to rows of straight lines, which can create, as discussed earlier, a certain hypnosis-inducing effect upon human perception.

The text engraved on one of its three sides, of the stone from Jelling reads, according to Düwel (2001, 105):

*haraltr : kunukR : baþ : kaurua / kubl : þausi :
aft : kurm faþur sin / auk aft : þaurui : muþur :
sina : sa / haraltr [:] ias : saR · uan · tanmaurk.*



fig. 52

Sawyer (2000, 158) translated this as: “King Harald commanded this monument to be made in memory of Gorm, his father, and in memory of Thorvi (Thyre), his mother – that Harald who won the whole of Denmark”.

Due to the compressed style of writing, it may be possible that an effect was created similar to that of a comfortable, reassuring talk, which allows the perceiving person(s) to take on information in a less distracted and more open frame of mind than usual.

Picture credits for Perception

Fig. 1: Brain (cross-section): after Kalat, James, W., 1990, *Introduction to psychology*. 2nd ed., p.135, fig. 5.7.

Fig. 2: Shapes: after Day, R. H., 1969, *Human Perception*. p. 49, fig. 2.11.

Fig. 3: Drawing of toy-donkey: after Bruce, V. and Green, P. R., 1985, *Visual Perception Psychology, Physiology and Ecology*. p. 185, fig. 7.20.

Fig. 4: Hand: after Hochberg, Julian, 1972, 'The representation of Things and People' in: Gombrich, E. H., Hochberg, Julian and Black, Max, *Art, Perception and Reality*. p. 48, fig. 8.

Fig. 5: Lincoln: after Kalat, James, W., 1990, *Introduction to psychology*. 2nd ed., p.164, fig. 5.39.

Fig. 6: Square dots: after Sekular, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. 3rd ed. P.145, fig. 5.2.

Fig. 7: Squares with similar shapes: after Sekular, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. 3rd ed. P.146, fig. 5.3.

Fig. 8: Squares with similar shapes: after Sekular, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. 3rd ed. P.147, fig. 5.5.

Fig. 9: 'Men'/bars: after Sekular, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. 3rd ed. P.146, fig. 5.4.

Fig. 10: Landscape: after Kalat, James, W., 1990, *Introduction to psychology*. 2nd ed., p.169, fig. 5.48.

Fig. 11: Perspective: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 11a: Perspective door: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 12: Cylinders: after Kalat, James, W., 1990, *Introduction to psychology. to psychology*. 2nd ed., p.175, fig. 5.75.

Fig. 13: Moving shapes: after Day, R. H., 1969, *Human Perception*. p. 154, fig. 7.9.

Fig. 14: Dimples: after Sekular, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. 3rd ed. p.242, fig. 7.22.

Picture credits for application of perceptual principles in order to identify images on objects from the tenth and early eleventh century.

Fig. 15: Bronze patrices from Haithabu: photography by the archive of the Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 16, 17 and 18: Bronze patrices: photography Hupfauf, Peter 2002
Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 19, 20 and 21: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 22: Brooch from Vester Vedsted, Jylland: photography Kit Weiss, Danish National Museum.

Fig. 23 and 24: Brooch (detail) from Vester Vedsted, Jylland: photography Kit Weiss, Danish National Museum.

Fig. 25, 26 and 27: Bronze patrices: photography Hupfauf, Peter 2002
Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 28: Wolf: after Stegemann, 1978, photography Angermayer, Toni.

Fig. 29, 30, 31, and 32: Bronze patrices: photography Hupfauf, Peter 2002
Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 33: Objects from Hiddensee, Rügen: photography by Iserhardt, V.
Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mainz

Fig. 34 to 45 (a,b and c): Bronze patrices: photography Hupfauf, Peter 2002
Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 45: Pendant: photography Möllner, Hans-Helmut, Archäologisches Landesmuseum,
Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Fig. 46, and 48: Animal shaped brooch from Larmøya, Kaupang, Larvik, Vestfold in Norway: photography Johnsen,
Eirik, Irgens, University Museum of Cultural Heritage, Oslo.

Fig. 47: Animal shaped brooch (detail) from Larmøya, Kaupang, Larvik, Vestfold in Norway: photography Johnsen,
Eirik, Irgens, University Museum of Cultural Heritage, Oslo.

Picture credits for images used for shapes creating hypnosis effects

Fig. 48: Disks: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 49: Strokes: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 50: Why suggestion is more powerful under hypnosis (diagram): after Van Pelt, S. J. 1950, *Hypnotism and the power within*. p. 206.

Fig. 51: Hypnotism gets the truth on advertising (article and photograph): article written by Schulze, Jane, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1999.

4. Styles

Decorations on objects discussed within this study, such as bracteates, *guldgubber*, fibulae, weapons, and also wood-carvings on ships and stone-monuments, are created in particular styles which represent the changing taste of Germanic/early Scandinavian society from the fifth century AD, until the eleventh century AD.

Styles in art and craft may be defined as visual representations of the fashions and tastes within a culture. Because of its emphasis on certain elements, such as elongated shapes, entwined lines or preference for great detail, the style in which an object is created also helps to emphasise certain aspects of a culture, allowing features of lesser importance to be placed in secondary position. A particular style is often born from the invention or adoption of certain materials or techniques. For instance the technique of colouring glass for the creation of stained glass windows had to be perfected before the magnificent designs of Gothic facades could be created. The sometimes breath-taking steel/glass constructions of the nineteenth century could not have been realised without the invention of the steam engine, which operated hammers powerful enough to bend heavy steel beams into desired shapes. The preference for certain ornamentation or imagery, such as plant or animal shapes, can also define a style as the variation of individual elements, as for example the applications of lines. Lines, when used as contours, can be thin, medium or bold and even double lines, like those introduced in the sixth century and an element of Style I, as defined by Salin (1904). Such double-lined contours place a strong emphasis on a particular shape. A combination of bold and fine lines within the imagery of the one object may indicate which part of the image is of highest significance.

Particular stylistic expressions allow us to place the imagery of the early Nordic culture in a wider context. Visual influences from Mediterranean areas suggest symbolic expressions different from those of the Eurasian Steppes. The former would, most likely, be best understood if associations with Classical Antiquity are drawn on. The latter may refer to a symbolic world which had its origin in Mongol society. In order to interpret the symbolic expression of Old Nordic iconography correctly, it is important to identify its chronological and geographical origin.

My interpretation of early Scandinavian styles follows predominantly the publication of David Wilson and Ole Klindt-Jensen (1966), *Viking Art*, because of their comprehensive description of a large number of objects as well as of all styles relevant to this study. Karlsson (1983) too selected objects which represent typical stylistic features which he analysed in great detail. About a hundred style variations were recognised by Karlsson and categorised accordingly within the appropriate time period. It appears, however, that many

samples he discussed represent fashions applied by different workshops and not necessarily styles which identify visually a larger cultural area and/or period. Additional authors were consulted to gain more detailed or updated information.

The period between 500 BC and 700/800 AD was identified by Hedeager (1992) as the Iron Age. Iron Age society could, according to the author not be called ‘tribal’ any more. Hedeager described it as a ‘chiefdom society’ which was in the process of state formation. She presented a chart which identifies the stages of the Iron Age in detail:

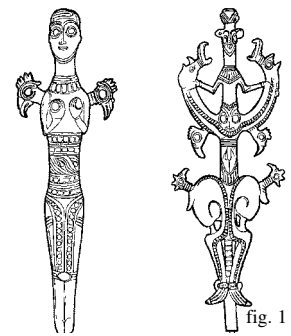
Period	Phase	Dates		
I	Pre-Roman Early Iron Age	1	500 – 300 BC	Earlier pre-Roman Iron Age
II		2	300 – 150	Earlier pre-Roman Iron Age
III		3	150 – 0	Later pre-Roman Iron Age
IV	Roman Early Iron Age	1	1 – 200 AD	Earlier Roman Iron Age
V		2	200 – 400	Later Roman Iron Age
VI	Migration Period	1	400 – 600	Earlier Germanic Iron Age
VII		2	600 – 800	Later Germanic Iron Age

Hedeager (1992) stated that stylistic study of fine metalwork has been of great importance in defining items in the context of the Germanic Iron Age and it would be the “basis for the chronological phasing” (p.13). Images on bracteates, *guldgubber* and other items quite often offer an insight into a society’s values and beliefs. Power and religion were, according to the author, (and most likely, still are) in the hands of a small elitist group in society. Power does not simply exist, according to Hedeager (1992), it has to be created and reinforced, it has to be “institutionalised and legitimised through rituals which are a special form of formalised communication involving, for example, songs, dances and material symbols” (p.28). The material symbols are these which can usually be found on many items, particularly from culturally important areas.

Cultural, political and economic centres existed in early Scandinavia, and places where major finds have been made may have been such places of importance. Gudme on the island of Fyn is one such location. Between 1989 and 1992, as stated by Müller-Wille (1999), in Lundeborg, Gudme, the largest amount of items made from gold, silver and bronze was found. A settlement existed there from the third to the seventh century AD (Later Roman Iron Age and Earlier Germanic Iron Age). It was regarded by Müller-Wille as equivalent to a royal residence. A great number of stones decorated with pictorial images was found on the island of Gotland, Sweden. It was in Oseberg, Norway, that an important ship burial site was discovered. Many of the Scandinavian artefacts were found in England, Ireland and the British Isles, due to pre-Viking contacts and Viking settlement in the early Middle Ages.

Animal Style

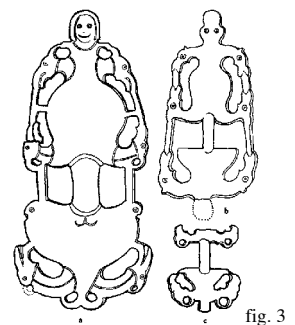
László (1974, 124) believed that the Germanic Animal Style had “Scythian and Roman antecedents”. He further considered that “the Germanic animal ornament represents the Great Goddess and partly the divine male ancestor”. László referred to two Luristan bronze figures which date back to the turn of the first millennium BC (fig. 1). One of the figures depicts Ashti, the goddess of fertility, who was created with rooster-heads appearing from her shoulders. The second figure depicts Sraosha, the God of Justice. This figure too, combines human and animal features. The birds also show great similarity to roosters. László speculated that the roosters might have been replaced by birds of prey in subsequent periods.



A Greek depiction of the Great Goddess Potnia Théron (fig. 2) on a vase of c.7 BC (according to J. R. Green), was discussed by László because of its accompanying animals. The separate addition of the animals was seen as a juxtaposition to the goddess in contrast to the Luristan figure which represents a hybrid.



Germanic and Slavic fibulae from the Ukraine and Rumania (fig. 3) show an approach to combining animals and human-shaped figures similar to that in the Luristan depiction. László compared these fibulae with the Avar illustrations of the Tree of Life, which was also depicted in combination with animals. He concluded that this would be a subsequent development from the Luristan and Greek Great Goddesses. László referred to Tacitus, who observed the belief of Germanic



peoples in the female’s sacred strength and power of prophecy, which would have led them to worship Nerthus, Mother Earth (*Agricola and Germany*, chapt. 40). However, it would have been unusual to represent the gods in human form. According to László the personal representations of Germanic deities were vaguely defined and every god had an animal attendant. This provided the opportunity of symbolising each god by its particular animal (Freyja’s cat, Freyr’s boar, Óðinn’s raven, etc.). Ornamentation featuring these animals would consequently represent the symbolic divine world of the post-Migration Period.

Noting comparisons with artefacts from southern Russia, Salin (1904) also assumed that the Animal Style emerged from an area near the Black Sea. In accordance with László’s theory and Salin’s assumption that the animal style originated in the wide plains north of the Black sea, Pischl (1966), suggested that a large body of the inhabitants moved north across the

Danube and the Volga, emerging there as the “Cimmerians, upon whom in the seventh century BC the power of the Scythians and later the Sarmatians was based” (Pischl, 1966, 21). Another group “went eastwards, across Kazakhstan and Siberia, mingling with the Mongols”. In the eighth and seventh century BC they made up the confederation of the Huns, which began to move westwards only in the fourth century AD. The author stated that these people created bronze statuettes (fig. 4), shield bosses, brooches, handles for weapons, ornaments for helmets and harnesses which were characterised by their extensive application of animal motifs (see p. 72). Plant representations and human figures were very rare, according to Pischl who referred to the migration period which brought about (most likely) the beginning of the Animal Style to Europe.



fig. 4

A horse (fig. 5) presented by Pischl (1966) (without dating the object) originated in Asian Russia. The positioning of its legs reminds one a good deal of animal depictions known from Style II, such as the decoration from Valsgärde (fig. 6).



fig. 5

Salin (1904)¹ divided the animal style into three main categories: Style I, occurring during the Migration Period (sixth century), Style II, covering the Merovingian Period (seventh century), and Style III which fell into the beginning of the Viking Period (eighth century).



fig. 6

¹Salin (1904) structured his work in two volumes, as outlined below:

First book Development, distribution and relative chronology of several forms of Old-Germanic objects of the Migration period.

Introduction.

chapter one: The south Germanic fibulae
chapter two: Shapes of the north-Germanic fibulae
chapter three: Objects other than bow-fibulae
chapter four: Relative chronology

Second book Germanic ornament on metal-objects; the absolute chronology of the Irish ornament

chapter one: Punched and niello ornaments
chapter two: Ornamental animal heads on north- and south-Germanic territory
chapter three: Ornamental animal depictions in Nordic territory
chapter four: Ornamental animal depictions in south-Germanic territory
chapter five: Anglo-Saxon and Irish animal-ornaments
chapter six: The absolute chronology; conclusion.

However, according to Haseloff (1981), the first defined style after the Migration Period is the Nydam Style. This was named after the place of a peat-bog find in North Slesvig, Germany, where in 1888 a large oak boat was found which once contained about a hundred silver-mounts for sword-sheaths, buried, most likely, as a sacrificial offering in a moor. The Nydam Style emerged in the early fifth century AD and lasted until approximately 475 AD. A typical element for this style is the chip-carving technique (Haseloff, 1981, 8) This technique, as well as most of the ornamentation was identified by the author as originating in late Roman art. The ornaments are usually geometric and based on spirals. A range of formal ornaments from Classical Antiquity is recognisable within the Nydam Style. A human figure together with two animals, which form part of a fibula found in Hol, North-Trøndelag, Norway (fig. 7), were used by Haseloff to introduce this style. A sword-mount from Åmdal, Lista, Vest-Agder in Norway depicts human figures with distinctive pear-shaped upper arms (fig. 8). This style element appears later again in variations in Style E (see p. 74).

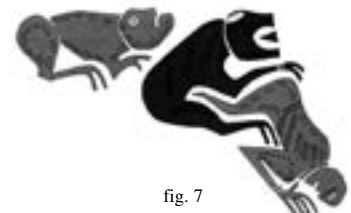


fig. 7

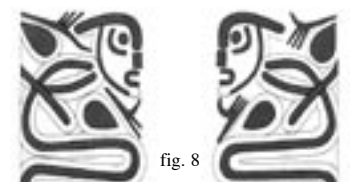


fig. 8

A fibula from Vallstenarum (fig. 9) presents a particularly beautiful ornamentation of a horned animal, a human figure, a bird-head and a human head. Haseloff (1986) placed particular emphasis on the depiction of the human figure, which is shown in profile with the left hand in front of the face, the thumb under the chin. This, according to the



fig. 9

author, represents a common gesture depicted on a number of objects (particularly bracteates) of the time. On one of two fibulae found in Grönby, Skåne, Sweden (fig. 10) two human figures are shown which seem to represent early attempts at entwining ornamentations.



fig. 10

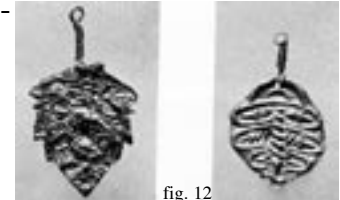
According to Axboe (1999) the early Germanic animal style emerged during the fifth century AD. The depictions in soft relief and lines were used to contour the individual parts of the animal's body. Haseloff (1981, 17) stated that it would be very difficult to define a particular date as the beginning of Style I. However, he suggested the year 475 AD as a hypothetical date to work with. During the 11th Saga Conference, held in Sydney (2000), Hedeager called this, in her presentation *Skandinavisk dyreornamentik: Symbolsk repræsentation af en før-kristen kosmologi*, "a new symbolic language of signs". The early representations of the animal style, up to the end of the sixth century AD, are called Style I. Axboe (1999)



fig. 11

stated that this style most likely developed in the Southern Scandinavian area, although, representations of this style have been found, predominantly on bracteates and fibulae, outside Scandinavia. The fibula of Gummersmark, Sjælland (fig. 11), represents a fine example of the application of Style I.

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) referred to the influence of Romano-Celtic art, as in pictures of leaves, made from gold foil, found in Brangstrup, Fyn, Denmark (fig. 12). Some of these leaves were imported from the Danube region and some were produced locally.



The plant design alone seemed not to satisfy the Scandinavian artist,

who added animal heads to the leaves to make them more meaningful. Style II, according to Hedeager (2000), became a style which was identically applied on artefacts of most Germanic peoples.



Haseloff (1986) mentioned that Style II emerged in the mid-sixth century and can be observed on fibulae in Alemannic, as well as in Frankish, areas. The style features predominantly a pleated ribbon ornament, in which other depictions are embedded. These style elements with a strong Byzantine character were, according to the author, most likely introduced into Central Europe by the Langobards. The first objects known to be created in the manner of Style II defined by Haseloff (1986, 597) are the pair of fibulae from Klepsau, in the area of Buchen in Germany (fig. 13).

Meehan (1992) described the ship burial of Sutton Hoo (seventh century AD), where several items were found which show evidence of adaptation of the Scandinavian animal style. This can be seen by comparing the eagle head on the Silver Gilt Buckle of Aker (S.E. Norway) (fig. 14) and the eagle head on the great gold buckle from Sutton Hoo (fig. 15). Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) considered that the curved beaks which became so typical of Scandinavian art had their origin in some Eastern European cultures.



fig. 14



fig. 15

Meehan (1992) also recognised serpents in the gold buckle from Sutton Hoo as being of Byzantine origin. He drew another comparison between a falcon on a sporran (fig. 16, a), most likely created in the early seventh century AD by a master at the court of East Anglia, and four eagles decorating the Sutton Hoo shield (fig. 16, b), and two eagles decorating a harness from Gotland (fig. 16, c).

While Meehan alluded briefly to some Byzantine style-elements, Axboe did not mention any outside influence in the development of the animal style. However, influences from further eastern/south-eastern areas are indisputably possible, considering the movement of the Danube-Heruli (early sixth century AD) and their relationship with the West-Heruli.

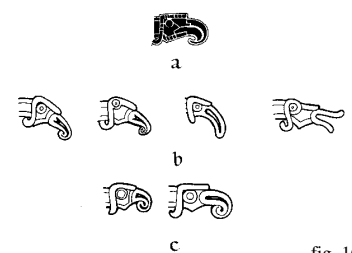


fig. 16

Düwel (1997) proposed the development of the Animal Style as taking place in three steps: Style I: fifth century AD until 600 AD; Style II: 600 AD until 650 AD; Style III: 650 AD until 800 AD. He mentioned that some scholars compared the changing styles on artefacts to the developments in Germanic poetry (alliterative style, etc.). However, the only recognisable stylistic similarity accepted by Düwel is that between the late Style III (e.g. Oseberg) and skaldic poetry, which was regionally isolated in Scandinavia. In both skaldic poetry and visual style, he recognised a comparable representation of reality. Originally describing or depicting a particular object realistically, the focus changed with Style III towards a general and abstract unrealistic representation. The most important elements in this kind of representation are signs. According to Düwel, artists as well as audience had to know, in order to understand, a system of signs which occurred in skaldic poetry (*kenningar*), as well as in ornamental representation, where only certain elements are identifiable within an elaborate work. In the case of a simple, two-part *kenning*, the referent is replaced by a base-word plus a determinant in the genitive, as in “the horse of Ekkil (sea-king) = ship” (p. 816). Similar to semi-abstract ornaments in visual expressions, *kenningar* indicate a certain delight in verbal obscurity. The origins of the *kenningar*, as suggested by Düwel, may be seen in word magic or in a linguistic environment accessible to initiated persons only.



fig. 17, Gudme-D

Three main reasons were given by Düwel (1997, 816), citing Müller (1970, 201), to explain the archaic veneration of animals. “1. the belief that an animal has physical/psychological abilities which are not, or are only minimally attributable to humans; 2. function in cult and mythology (sacrificial animal, attribute animal, daemon animal, etc.) 3. a human desire to be like this animal or belief in being related to an animal (animal-origin and animal-transitions, masquerade, being honourably named after an animal, heraldic image symbolic etc.)”. Hedeager (2000) argued that the attention which animals received in the iconology of Old Norse culture may be embedded in possible shamanic practices in Old Norse religion¹. She referred to the images on many bracteates where, in her opinion, Oðinn is depicted, “accompanied by his guardian spirits, the large, often horned, four-legged animal and a bird that will make the journey to the realm of the dead possible” (fig. 18).



fig. 18, Börninge-C

Animal images and Shamanism

Several aids and techniques are available to alter consciousness. Scharfetter (1992, 427) wrote of “pharmacological and non-pharmacological induction methods” Non-pharmacological induction methods include movement and singing, breathing (particularly hyperventilating), fumigation, fasting, physical exhaustion, torture, and isolation. Two kinds of abilities, according to Eliade (1987, 202), are essential for a shaman: “(1) ecstatic (dreams, trances, etc.) and (2) traditional (shamanic techniques, names and functions of the spirits, mythology and genealogy of the clan, secret language, etc.). This twofold course of instruction, given by the spirits and the old master shamans, is equivalent to an initiation”.

Shamans, according to Eliade (1987) are usually accompanied by guardian spirits; these were described by Hedeager (2000) as “anthropomorphic” (conference notes). These supernatural beings become the shaman’s helpers through his/her initiation. Such spirits may be given by some other (older) shamans or may be newly found/selected by the novice. Eliade (1987), stated that a shaman must have the ability to turn spiritually into an animal, because this would be one of the powers of the spirits with whom the shaman wants to communicate. Scharfetter (1992) explained that this guardian spirit would take on the shape of an animal mother and as such eats the shaman’s soul, in order to rebirth it as an animal. This process would be the birth of the new shaman’s guardian spirit. During a shamanic event, these spirits would be placed in a secondary position and may be invoked or dismissed by the shaman at any time (Hedeager, 2000). Guardian spirits are always regarded as being zoomorphic and have functions which relate to their competence as living animals. According to Hedeager (2000), large animals such as the bull, elk or stallion would protect the shaman’s soul on its journey, against bad spirits or other shamans. Birds are said to be watching spirits which give the shaman advice, while fish and snakes are said to guide the shaman on the way to the underworld. Animal spirits in totemic environments, according to Hedeager (2000), would have the ability to cross the borders between the real world and the supernatural world. The human soul, transformed into an animal spirit, develops abilities which a person not in a trance or ecstasy could never experience.

¹ Shamanism, according to Eliade (1987), is a Siberian term for religious and ethno-medical beliefs practised in Asia, Africa, aboriginal America, Indonesia, Oceania and elsewhere. A "shaman" was defined by Scharfetter (1992) as a person who brings him/herself into a state of mind in which she/he could be a medium between the real world and the "other-world". Seymour-Smith (1986) mentioned sensory-deprivation and the use of hallucinogens as techniques to reach an altered state of consciousness. A shaman has the ability to help people in many variations of problems of daily life. The word shaman may have originated from the Sanskrit word *Sramana*, the religious practice of asceticism. The shaman’s functions are various. Eliade (1987) stated that the main function of a shaman in Siberia and inner Asia would be healing. He/she may also be involved with impregnation, initiation, birth and death. The shaman also cares for the souls of the deceased. “The shaman is teacher and holds the guardianship for cosmology, religion and mythology”. (Scharfetter, 1992, 425)

Polomé (1992) adopted a cautious position towards shamanic practices in Germanic religions, declaring them purely speculative. He gave examples which he stated were regarded by some fellow scholars as of shamanic quality. These examples are: Óðinn's hanging on a tree, denied food and drink and being wounding by a spear; King Víkarr's ritual death by hanging and spearing; the awaking of the *Völva* in *Baldrs Draumar*; the re-vitalisation of Mimir's head; and *Hávamál* stanza 158:

Þat kank tolpta:
 ef sék á tré uppi
 váfa virgílná
 svá ek ríst
 ok í rúnum fák,
 at sá gengr gumi
 ok mælir við mik.

I know a twelfth one
 if I see, up in a tree,
 a dangling corpse in a noose:
 I can so carve
 and colour the runes
 that the man walks
 and talks with me.

(Translated by Carolyne Larrington)

ed. Jónsson, F. 1927

Polomé also mentioned a passage in *Ynglinga saga*, chapter 7, in which Óðinn's body "lay down, sleeping as if dead, but he was transformed into a bird or a wild animal, a fish or a dragon and travelled in a moment to a land, far away" (Polomé, p.410). Two shamanic qualities in this sequence are recognised by Polomé: the soul's journey and the transformation into a bird. Lindow (2001, 25) too referred to this passage and stated that Óðinn was regarded as master of *seiðr*, which "surely refers to the shamanic arts". Lindow mentioned that the practice of shamanism ceased in Scandinavia by the conversion to Christianity. In Sámi culture, however, among those who were not converted at this time, shamanism continued to be practiced.

It is debatable whether what is described in Old Norse literature, and probably also what is depicted within Old Norse iconography, would necessarily fulfil all the requirements of a very tight definition of shamanism. However, in light of the fact that considerable variation still exists in what could be regarded as some sort of shamanic practice, it would be reasonable to accept the possibility of shamanic practice to a certain degree and in one variation or another. It is not relevant whether practices in early Scandinavian cultures relating to the symbolic representation of images for spiritual reasons were performed according to a modern strict formula constructed approximately one thousand five hundred years later. The depiction of animals does seem to reflect a spiritual practice which included animals and, because of the chronological and geographical circumstances in which the artefacts discussed were created, it seems most likely that they depict symbolically the transformation of a soul into an animal spirit.

Christianity, according to Hedeager (2000), placed humans, believed to be created in the image of god, above all other creatures, and everything had to serve these humans. This point of view made it impossible for believers in Christianity to 'lower' their souls in order

to become one with an animal spirit. Therefore it would have been difficult for shaman practices to survive in Christian society. The Germanic Animal Style, however, continued after Christian iconography replaced heathen images (fig. 19). The Irish/Anglo-Saxon mission began in 678/79 AD in Friesland and spread during the following fifty years all over the Germanic area. Meehan (1992) asserted that the artwork in seventh century Celtic Christian manuscripts, such as in the *Book of Durrow* or the *Book of Kells*, derived from Northern European art which was introduced to the Anglo-Saxons. During the reign of Cnut, the Ringerike style mixed with the contemporary Winchester style in southern England, as can be recognised in book illuminations. Scandinavian Viking society allowed the animal-style to develop further and to include some Anglo-Saxon/Celtic plant ornamentation in the designs. It was after 1100 AD that the Nordic animal style ceased to develop and it ended around 1200 AD, when the Romanesque style with its Christian iconography succeeded.

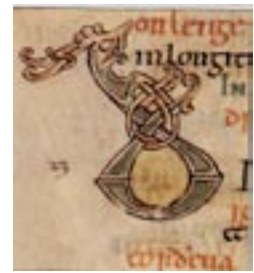


fig. 19, the initial letter 'd' from the manuscript Ff.1.23, University library, Cambridge

A - E Styles

Ornaments which include animals, or are based on the image of animals, became an important element in northern European art between the Migration period and the High Middle Ages. This was particularly the case in Scandinavia, where individual styles originated which must be mentioned in this context.

The first animal style in northern Europe developed during the second half of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century. The early style developments, according to Haseloff (1981, 706), were based on the late Roman technique, the *Kerbschnitt* (chip carving) which created a sharp edge on the top surface of the artefacts. Ornaments were geometric. Animals were shown only at the edge of the objects and were not created in *Kerbschnitt*-technique. The animals depicted represented the range of animal imagery from Classical Antiquity.

During the fifth century the Nydam Style emerged (see p. 66). Haseloff (1981) mentioned that during this time, a rich production and great artistic development occurred particularly in southern Scandinavia. Spirals and geometric pattern were the preferred designs. However, the depicted animals of the Nydam Style, according to the author, represent predominantly sea animals, indicating their origin in Roman culture.

In about AD 500, according to an explanatory chart at the National Museum in København, 2002, the true Animal Style emerged. Animal motifs covered most of the objects' surfaces. Detached arms and legs often alternated with animal heads, and complete animal figures, like humans, were separated into various parts and re-assembled to form a definitive composition (see p. 68).

During the last quarter of the fifth century, according to Haseloff (1981), sea animals were applied less often in the creation of artefacts. In the position they formerly occupied, animals with four legs occurred. These animals were now contoured with a line which was an artistic feature that had not been applied previously. The contours were not only drawn around an animal's outer shape, they were also used to accentuate different body parts. These elements, according to Haseloff, were features which defined Salin's Style I. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) stated that this style was brought to perfection in Scandinavia and influenced, in particular, artists in Poland, Hungary and England.

Salin's Style I, as defined by Haseloff (1981), is divided into four phases, called A, B, C and D. A is represented by the round shape of bodies and a characteristic (Vimose) head shape. Phase B is also characterised by a round-shaped but flat body with cross-hatching between the contour (see also p. 45). In phase C the naturalistic body lost importance and the contour

became more dominant. In phase D the contour is so important that it is drawn as a double line, which is the base for the ribbon ornaments.

A new variation of the Animal Style emerged between the middle and the end of the sixth century, and was classified by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), following Salin's structure, Style II. The style elements, which show a strong Byzantine influence, were, according to Haseloff (1986), most likely introduced into what is now known as southern Germany by the Langobards. In Style II, the depictions of animals became integrated in "plaits, scrolls and knot-motifs" (p. 30). Also geometric patterns were given animal characteristics. These semi-abstract ornaments no longer had much in common with realistic animal interpretations. Knotted lines, much favoured in Scandinavia, were, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), most likely influences from southern Europe. Style II, refined in Scandinavia, expanded over the whole European continent. Jewellery and weapons of this time, of geographically diverse origins, show great similarity, as for example swords found in Imola (Italy), Herbrechtingen (Germany) and Endrabacke (Gotland, Sweden).

The found objects which originated in Norway at the same time represent an exception. Here artists created designs as if they had taken a motif and ripped it apart. The remaining design appears as a chaotic, restless surface.

Style II (fig. 20) flourished in Uppland and Gotland. In particular the finds from the grave fields in Vendel and Valsgärde in Uppland, from between the seventh to the tenth century, appear of great significance, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966).

Sune Lindquist, who discovered the find of the grave field at Valsgärde, and his assistants Greta Arwidsson and Pär Olsén, created a further detailed categorisation of style variations. They developed a classification from Style A to Style E.



fig. 20, Vallstenarum

Style I was identified and left as it had been defined by Salin before. Style A was identified, it seems, to be stylistically between Salin's Styles I and II. Style B is identical with Style II (fig. 21). It can be identified by the ribbon-shaped bodies which interlace gracefully (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, 32) and by depictions of heads which in most cases point backwards. The chin is pointed and the eyes relatively large. The mouths, if closed, are depicted like beaks; when they are open they show pointed teeth. The bodies are usually drawn with a parallel double line and the feet often appear triangular, slightly curved and sometimes with feathers.

The animals in Style C (fig. 22) are no longer necessarily depicted as looking backwards, and the bodies quite often seem to be based on a triangular shape. Some of the animals' mouths still appear beak-shaped; however, quite often they are designed in a more realistic shape and sometimes in a bell-shape. The bodies are also often drawn with parallel double lines, in order to contrast with an often restless background. The animals usually have a horse-like body. However, within Style C one finds for the first time depictions of snakes, and snakes in combination with other animals.



fig. 21, bronze mount from Valsgärde (C)

Style D developed in southern Scandinavia. Characteristic of this style are the ribbon-shaped bodies, drawn by two and sometimes three parallel lines. The shape of the head is variable; however, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), heads also appear often in the same shape as the bodies. The pointed chin (typical of Style B) no longer appears. The eyes are almond-shaped and the mouths appear quite often like horses' mouths, particularly in regard to the front teeth.



fig. 22, brooch from Koberg (D)

The most outstanding element of Style D is the symmetry of its composition. The animals depicted are often drawn in the shape of a figure on its side. Also two animals are often represented in such an arrangement (fig. 23). The sword guard from Böda, Öland in Sweden represents this style rather well. The bronze brooch from Koberg, Bornholm, however, represents a variation of this style, where naturalistic features are strongly represented.



fig. 23, Sword guard from Böda (D)

Style E shows the Animal Style, commonly regarded in its most developed stage (fig. 24). Style E originated a short time before the Viking period in Gotland. The new trend showed regularity and the animal bodies consisted of bands of various widths. The animal heads showed defined jaws, eyes and eyebrows. The pear-shaped thighs sometimes resembled a human face.



fig. 24, brooch fr. Othemars (E)

The depictions appear rather abstract and the compositions represent an interaction of symmetry and asymmetry. The ornamentations which surround or integrate the animals are usually graceful, often filigree, highly stylised, vein-like interlacings. The animals themselves often have pear-shaped eyes. The mouths are usually shown in profile. The hips in many cases appear as heart-shaped openings in the body, allowing the use of a strategic element for the interlocking lacework of the whole design. Feet and toes are depicted as long and bodies slender. Many objects show two interlaced animals. As additional features human masks (fig. 25) can also be seen (which were popular during the Vendel period), singularly or in combination with other elements within Style E. Style E is considered by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) to have had the strongest influence on the art of the Viking period.



fig. 25, mask from Valsgärde (E)

In the eighth-century AD Style II (works created in the early eighth century are also identified as Baroque Style), which was common in continental Europe, changed through the influence of Anglo-Saxon (Anglo-Hibernian) art. In Ireland, Scotland and Northumbria a style developed which can be recognised in the books of Durrow, Kells and Lindisfarne. The stylistic repertoire of missionaries and artists from the British Isles, who were active on the European continent, influenced artefacts of the Carolingian period. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) claimed that this distribution of Anglo-Saxon style elements would make it difficult to determine whether the subsequent style developments in Scandinavia were a direct result of involvement in the British Isles or an indirect result through continental influences.

An example of eighth-century AD Scandinavian design influenced by Carolingian style elements can be seen in the brooch from Gudhjem, Bornholm, in Denmark (fig. 26). The main design of the brooch depicts two animals with legs which form an interlaced knot-work. The necks are long and the heads difficult to identify; however, Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966, 41) described them as having “a pointed beak-like mouth” pointing backwards. These creatures were identified by the authors as being similar to English and Anglo-Carolingian designs. The triangular shapes between the animals as described above and the mid-rib, as well as the left and right semi-circular end-pieces, however, are filled with depictions of creatures which seem to have predominantly Scandinavian style elements embedded.



fig. 26

The Oseberg find

The burial mound from Oseberg was raised approximately in the middle of the ninth century. Carbon dating of the wood resulted in a date c. 835 AD. A beautiful ship, a cart, several sledges and other items buried in this mound represent a continuation of Styles A to E which were discussed in the previous section. The objects found in Oseberg are also important for this study, because they are executed primarily as woodcarvings. This complements the range of other materials and techniques discussed, such as metal and stone.

In 1904, a ship burial was discovered by Gabriel Gustafson at Oseberg in Vestfold, on the Oslo Fjord, in Norway. The burial mound was 6.5 metres high and 40 metres long. It covered a clinker-built ship which was, according to Müller Wille (2001), 21.64 metres long, equipped with mast, sail and rowlocks for thirty oarsmen. The timber, of which the ship was built, was, according to Müller Wille, cut in 820 AD approximately. The mound was the grave of two women. One of the two was between 50 and 60 when she died, the other between 20 and 30. Orchard (1998) suggested that at least one of these two women may have been connected with the Yngling dynasty. The other may have been a servant, sacrificed along with several animals.

The Animal Style, as executed on the Oseberg ship's stem and stern (fig. 27), with its emphasis on pure, elegant lines, was carved in relatively flat fashion. An example of this style can also be found on the academic animal-head post. (The archaeologist Haakon Shetelig called one of the wood carvers the Academic.) One of the craftspeople, who created two sledge poles and two animal head posts, according to -Sjøvold (1985), was called by Shetelig the Baroque Master. The work of the Baroque Master was regarded by Sjøvold as a radical stylistic change. The very three-dimensional approach of the Baroque Master's carving, creating a strong plastic effect, reflects the influence of Central European styles.

The ship itself was, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), most likely the private boat of a wealthy family used probably only for coastal journeys because it appears too low and beamy to be useful in high seas. It is decorated with carvings of the highest quality. The carvings consist predominantly of interlaced animal patterns. The animals appear very similar in style; however, in detail they present many individual features.



fig. 27



The prow of the ship was designed in the shape of a coiled snake.

Ornaments on the stem- and stern-posts (fig. 28) were carved, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, most likely by the same artist (the Ship-Master). The authors pointed out that the designs had often been compared to Hiberno-Saxon motifs. However, they considered it more likely that parallel stylistic developments in Scandinavia and Hiberno-Saxon areas resulted in similar designs. They also mentioned the possibility that the artist may have applied the general structure of an insular ornament and filled it with images of Scandinavian origin.

fig. 28



fig. 29a

Five carved animal heads were found on the ship. The styles in which they were executed conform with the different styles of carvings with which the sledge was decorated. Müller-Wille

(2001) depicted a detailed drawing of the Academician's head post (fig. 29a and 29b). This illustration demonstrates the complex and sophisticated ornamentation, with which the head is decorated. In the style of gripping beast (see below), the entwined animals appear gripping and biting each other.

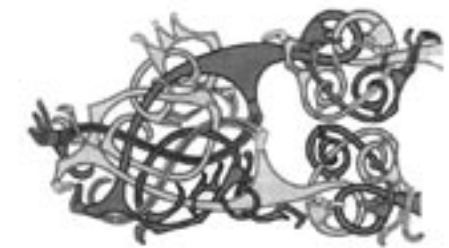
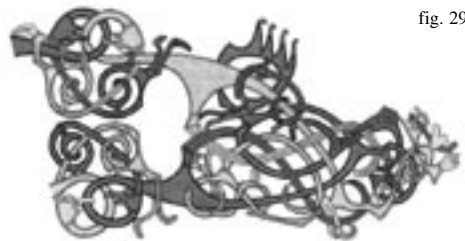


fig. 29b



The head post created by the Baroque Master (fig. 30) appears as a dog-like mask. It is decorated with birds, in Style E manner. Most of its neck is covered with carvings of animal patterns interlaced in ovals. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) suggested that this post is the more interesting one. The carvings are undoubtedly far more elaborate than those of the Academician's animal-head post; however, the voluminous, slightly overdone Baroque approach does not necessarily represent a better artistic solution compared with the sophisticated and elegant creation of the Academician's animal-head post.



fig. 30

The ship's *tingl* (a wooden board to cover openings on the ship) represents carvings of animals (fig. 31) which belong to the group of the gripping beast (see p. 83). They feature "round heads, small mouths, gross noses, popping eyes, pigtails and beards" (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen,

1966, 50). A similar ornament can be found on top of the stem. The sides of the stem and the long friezes are carved in a slightly different manner. Two of the depicted creatures have beards and one has a pigtail, giving them the appearance of “thoughtful elderly men” (p. 50). Wilson and Klindt-Jensen believed that these various designs were created by the same artist. They considered them examples of the first application of the style of the gripping beast.



fig. 31

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) described two bed-posts (fig. 32) which appear to be in the shape of animal heads. They were executed “in slight relief, with a fine, long neck, a small head, an imposingly curved beak and a large round eye” (p.52). A zig-zag band forms the borders, and the neck and parts of the body are decorated with crosshatching. The animals generally appear to be executed in Style E; however, “its sub-triangular shape is more reminiscent of Style C” (p.52). The authors emphasised the elaborate carvings and extraordinary designs of both bed-posts, where the artist extended conventional ornamentation to a level not previously known. It is remarkable in that smaller designs were used as patterns within larger ones, creating ornamentation of great complexity.

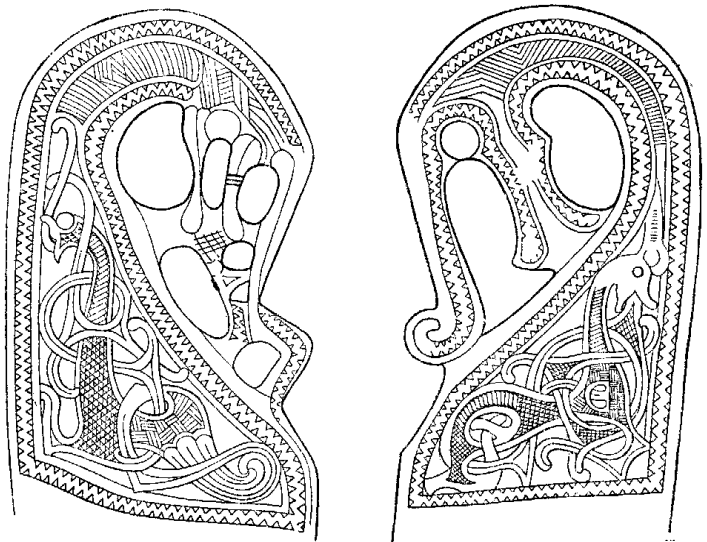


fig. 32

A cart (fig. 33) was placed at the stern of the ship. Two curved pieces of wood holding the cart have at their four ends carvings depicting semi-naturalistic masks of human faces. The body of the cart is richly decorated. Most of the ornamentation, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), is narrative. In this it is different from the designs on other objects from Oseberg.



fig. 33

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) suggested that this composition could represent the story of Gunnar in the serpent pit (fig. 34) as represented in the eddic poem *Atlamál*, 32:



fig. 34

Lifanda gram
lagði í garð,
þanns skiðinn vas,
skatna mengi,
innan ornum,
en einn Gunnarr
heiptmóðr hörpu
hendi kníði;
(glumðu strengir,
svá golli skal
frœkn hringdrifi
við fira halda).

ed. Jónsson, 1927

The living prince they placed in the pit
– a crowd of men did it – which was crawling
inside with snakes; and Gunnar alone,
furiously struck his harp with his hand.
The strings resounded;
so should a brave ring-giver
guard his gold from enemies.

(translation by Carolyne Larrington, 1996, 215)



fig. 35

The side panels of the cart are decorated with serpent-like animals (fig. 35), similar to the ribbon-shaped animals of Style D.

The depicted animals clasp each other in the manner of the gripping beast, and also have its characteristic pear-shaped thighs. The carvings on the back and front panels of the cart depict a man fighting with snake-like animals, which could also be birds, animals and snakes.

The pole of Gustafson's sledge (see p. 80) was designed in the same style as the cart described above. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), however, compared the carvings with those of the bed-posts described earlier, and concluded that the sledge pole, even if it is of remarkable quality, lacks the vibrant dynamic which is present in the carvings of the bed-posts. One of the poles (damaged) represents two distinctive animal designs (fig. 36). The designs on the first pole are described by the authors as having an "almost ribbon-shaped body and strange, elongated head set in profile, a large eye, a plaited pigtail and accentuated legs and tail" (p.62). The original shape of the animal belongs to Style E; however, the finely patterned surface is characteristic of the Oseberg style.

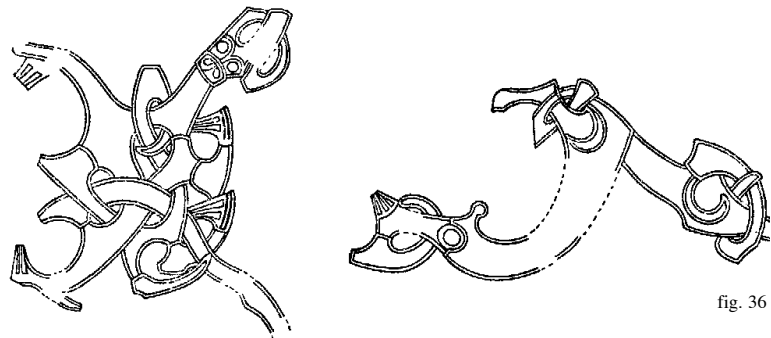


fig. 36

The second animal was described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen as a “tailed quadruped with a mask-like face and a pigtail: its limbs become involved in an intricate plait-work of limbs and in a less well-defined type of offshoot” (p.62). This second animal shows some similarity, with its long toes and the ‘en face’ (p.62) appearance, to depictions of the gripping beast. This, together with the application of a double contour, is suggestive of the later developing Mammen style.

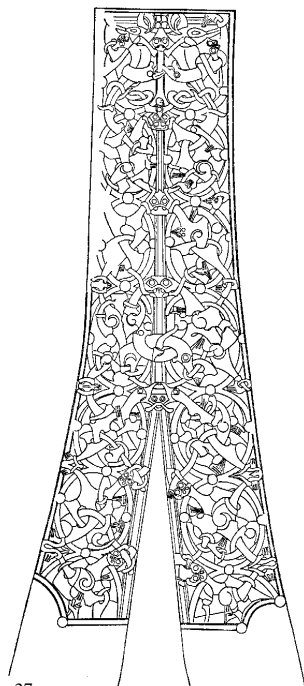


fig. 37

A sledge pole appears similarly complex in design (fig. 37). The ornaments were created from a “complicated pattern of interwoven and contorted animals to produce two double rows of ovals, filled with complemented animal ornament... The rhythm of the pattern is more noticeable on this pole than on the damaged one” (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, p. 64).

Like the damaged pole, the complete one also shows two different types of animals (fig. 38). One features “a head in profile, sharply defined limbs and foliate-formed feet, lapped and epauletted. The other in the uppermost row, is similar, but has a head *en face* and one gripping foot. The limbs and necks of both animals are long and carefully delineated and the bodies are without emphasis” (p. 64).

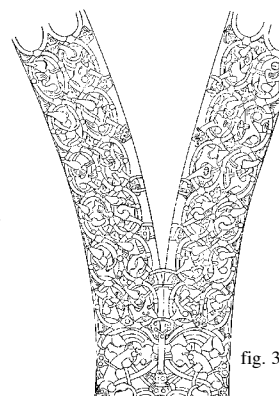


fig. 38

The authors elaborately described the high quality and the refinement of the artwork. The artist who created these carvings was called, as stated earlier, the Baroque Master.

Another artist was called by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), citing Shetelig (no date), the Careful Eclectic. His work is represented on the runner of Shetelig’s sledge and on Gustafson’s sledge (figs. 39a and 39b).



fig. 39a

The designs of the Careful Eclectic are less distinctive than those of the Ship Master and the Baroque Master. The Careful Eclectic seems to have borrowed elements from both of the others mentioned.

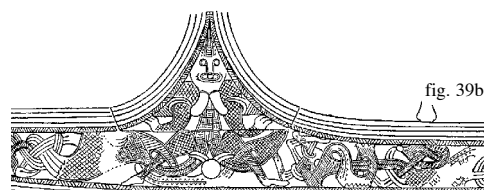


fig. 39b

The drawings (fig. 40) of the ornamentation of the Baroque Impressionist’s sledge demonstrate neatly the underlying structure of the very opulent and complex artwork of this style.

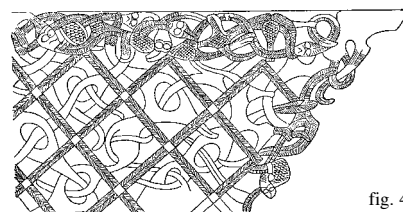


fig. 40

Animal designs from Broa

The mounts found in Broa, Gotland were produced, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), at the beginning of the Viking period, which would have been around 800 AD.

The mounts depict various animal motifs. The first (fig. 41), according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), relates closely to Style E. It shows two animals with strongly ornamental displaced legs and typically curved claws. The bodies are shown in double-contour. Above these main depictions a human face and a pair of birds is recognisable.



fig. 41

The second example (fig. 42) depicts six more animals of similar style. Every animal is placed in a space framed by surrounding metal work. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966, 72) described this second item as a “dragonesque creature”.



fig. 42

Above these two mounts there appears to be a face or mask.

The illustration of the following mount (fig. 43) was unfortunately presented upside down by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen. It represents birds and is clearly recognisable as such.



fig. 43

Wilson (2001, 133) described the bridle-mount of cast gilt bronze from Broa (fig. 44) in great detail. In referring to the serpent on the top the author stated: “The ear is produced as a frond to the left, while the snout takes the form of two small tendrils and an irregular extension above the knot to the right of the eye.” Wilson continued: “The body of the animal is embellished with punched circles. It is caught up in an interlace which appears to bear no organic relationship to the animal itself, save that it forms a simple open knot with the neck of the animal and produces there a wing-like extension.”



fig. 44

Wilson's (2001) description might be right, however, it might also be the case that the shape on top left what was identified as ears by Wilson would be a beak or a beak-shaped mouth. Another beak-shape is crossing this discussed shape. Applying the figure/ground principle from the gestalt theory, this beak, together with a tendril and a wing-like shape forms to some extent the shape of a bird, similar to that shown on the shield from Sutton Hoo (see p. 67). This bird has no organic relationship to the serpent but has a position in this bridle-mount like the serpent on the top and two smaller fabulous animals which are placed at the lower end of the bridle-mount.



fig. 44a



fig. 44b

The next mount (fig.45) is trapezoidal and the designs are more stylised than those of the first five mounts. It shows, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966, 73), four birds. The authors describe them as follows: "The leg appears a little to one side in a flurry of ribbons and offshoots and the hips are spiral hooks. The fan-like feature of the animal to the right presumably represents the tail of the birds – in its centre a curved line terminates in a spiral."



fig. 45

The animals represented in fig. 46 appear unrecognisable. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) believed that the shape of the object on which the images were created determined the outcome of the design remarkably.



fig. 46

The gripping beast

At the time Style E was popular, during the ninth century AD, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), another motif developed, which has been termed the gripping beast.



fig. 47

The gripping beast is a relatively naturalistic expression of a fantasy creature, as shown on an ornament from a strap-end and a brooch found in Sjælland, Denmark (fig. 47). Gripping beasts are usually depicted in a very three-dimensional fashion. In contrast to the style from Broa, the gripping beasts have clearly defined limbs. The creatures usually show a slim neck and waist. The gripping beast has a cat-like face and bristling ears. It occurs alone or in flocks and grips everything in its vicinity: itself, its neighbour or other ornamental elements. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen stated that this motif may have developed in Carolingian art but could not find any relevant examples. However, they found a gripping animal on an item that appears to have originated in an Anglo-Saxon environment, the 'Lindau' book cover.

The brooch from Lisbjerg, Jutland (fig. 48), depicts images of gripping beasts which are paralleled by some amber-carvings which, according to the authors, were found at various sites in Scandinavia (fig. 49).



fig. 48



left: fig. 49a, right: fig. 4b

- a. Jet animal figure from Haugsten, Rade, Østfold, Norway.
- b. Jet animal from Inderøen, N. Trøndelag, Norway

The 'disc-on-bow brooch' from Gumbalde, Stånga conveys an example of an item where the decoration represents a combination of Style E ornamentation and the gripping beast (fig. 50).



fig. 50

Borre Style

According to Müller-Wille (1986), the Borre Style was named after the decorated metal artefacts found in a ship burial at the mound-grave field at Borre in Vestfold, at the Oslofiord in Norway. Masks and gripping beasts are common within the Borre Style; however, gripping beasts appear more slender than in their original style. This style, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), should be seen as the successor of the art of Oseberg. The hoard from Hon in Norway, containing a number of objects created in the Borre style, has been dated,



through coins deposited at the same time, to the year 860 AD. Typical examples of this style are the silver-gilt and gold objects from Hon (figs. 51, 52 and 53).

The Borre style developed at the same time as the Jellinge style. Two hoards, one from c. 940 AD, deposited at Vårby, Södermanland, Sweden, the other from c. 953 AD, deposited at



Gnezdovo, Russia, contain objects created in the Borre style as well as some in the Jellinge style. Some objects of the Gnezdovo hoard even display aspects of both styles.



The gilt bronze mounts (fig. 54) from Borre represent the typical shapes and surface decorations of this style.

The particular element with which to identify the Borre Style is, according to Wilson (2001, p.145), “the ribbon plait consisting of a symmetrical interlaced pattern, each intersection of which is bound by an interlacing circle overlaid by lozenges (or in a few cases by hollow-sided squares or triangles)”. Müller-Wille (1986) stated that the designs from Borre represent



strongly the tradition of the gripping beast which can be well observed on the clover-shaped fibula from Norway whose precise find spot is not known. Clover-shaped fibulae (fig. 55) are also of significance for the Borre Style. They were distributed from South and East Scandinavia, including the islands in the Baltic Sea, to Southern and Middle-West Scandinavia, as well as in Iceland.

The elevated line-work in particular and the strong application of straight lines on Borre-Style artefacts, seems to have generated a unique appearance. A strong filigree technique was observed by the authors, which is easily recognisable in the objects shown above. The gilt

bronze mounts from Borre seem even to display fake filigree, through the application of a series of what the authors call “transverse nicks on the interlacing band” (p.89). The backward-looking animals which feature in many of the designs are, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), most likely influenced by the design of the three-dimensional animals usually found on silver brooches from central Sweden. The use of the filigree technique represents a desire to create more shine – a sparkle on the object, similar to that recognisable on *guldgubber* from the sixth century, which often were created with a frame of little dots. Müller-Wille (1986) pointed out that the ornaments of the Borre-Style quite often emerge though being positioned in a frame.

Jellinge Style

The Jellinge Style was named after the decoration on a small silver beaker from the tenth century AD, which was found at the Danish village of Jelling, in Jylland. An accident of spelling introduced the term Jellinge, which has become the common archaeological description for the style of tenth-century objects from Jelling.

Two rune stones (the Gorm- and Harald-stones) were set between the grave mounds of the king Gorm and his wife Thyra. The northern mound was raised for Thyra who died before Gorm. Gorm, according to Müller-Wille (1986), may have died about 1040 AD. He too most likely was laid to rest in the northern mound. When the burial-mounds were opened in the nineteenth century AD, it was discovered that the wooden burial chamber had been plundered. However, a few items were left.

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) noted that the Jellinge Style shows a great variation of expression, and therefore is sometimes difficult to define. They presented objects which represent the style well, with all its variety. The silver cup from Jelling (fig. 56) was found in the burial chamber of the north mound. The authors describe the animal depicted on the cup “of poor quality” (p. 95), and the animal shown on the stone as “atypical” (p. 95).



fig. 56

The stone funerary monument at Jelling, (figs. 57a and 57b) “was set up probably after 983, by Harald Bluetooth in memory of his parents” (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, 95). The images depicted on the stone from Jelling are



fig. 57a



fig. 57b

of great symbolic significance. Originally, it was not envisaged to include Christian iconography in this study. However, it must be mentioned that an image of great religious importance, such as in this case Christ, represents the wholeness of the particular religion, and contributes to the rest of the message, in this instance, the runic inscription. The depicted figure should not simply be seen as any figure. It is not even enough to recognise Christ in the depicted figure. The engraved picture of Christ on the stone from Jelling symbolises Christianity; the religion as a whole with

all its aspects, including the life of Christ, not only the life of Christ what could be assumed by the prominent depiction of Christ on this stone. According to Sawyer (2000, 165), Harald Bluetooth, the son of Gorm and Thyra, was converted to Christianity. He erected a memorial stone to state his position as legitimate heir of Gorm and Thyra. The depiction of Christ was most likely meant to gain support for his claim from other converted people and to enforce his position in this new, upcoming religion. History showed, however, that Harald's intention did not succeed. According to Sawyer a rebellion led to Harald's fall and it was his son Sven, who finally won the kingdom of Denmark back.

The depiction of the four-footed animal and a snake, according to Fuglesang (1986, 189) should not be interpreted as decoration only. The author argued this because the text, as well as the iconography of crucifixion, carries a strong symbolic character. Therefore one must assume that the lion/wolf-snake combination would also have a symbolic expression. Assuming the four-footed animal represents a lion, Fuglesang suggested that one should consider one of many possible interpretations in a theological context. Alternatively, Fuglesang mentioned the possibility that the imagery may represent Harald's power, symbolising it by depicting a strong and a dangerous animal, as on the coats of arms of later heraldry.

The lion, not being a native animal in northern Europe, may have been introduced from Roman traditions. In discussion of the Jellinge style, it has also been stated, that Widukind (958–966 AD) mentioned a lion as being part of the Saxons' insignia during the war against the Thuringians, during the rule of Harald Bluetooth.

On the stone from Jelling, ornamental interlaced shapes which form the frame of the depictions, as well as being part of it, appear to have multiple applications, as symbol in themselves and by increasing the symbolic qualities of the stone as a whole.

Other examples of the Jellinge Style are the tortoise brooch from Morberg, Røken, Buskerud, Norway (fig. 58), the fabulous beasts on the casket from the treasury of the cathedral of Bamberg (figs. 59a and 59b), Germany, and the sword guard from Sigtuna, Sweden (fig.60).

fig. 58



fig. 59a

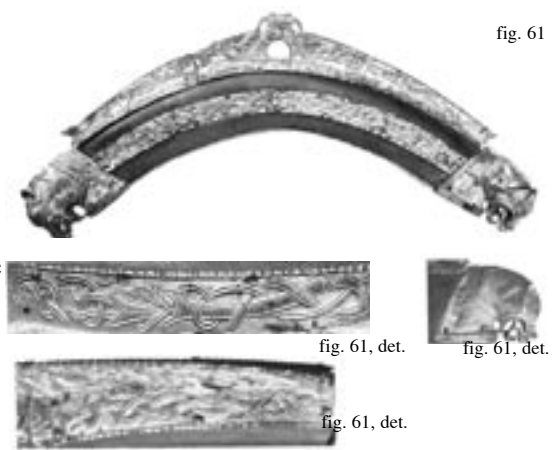


fig. 59b



fig. 60

The Jellinge Style includes many features of Style E; however, it is best represented in the ribbon-shaped animal designs which became the leading style in Scandinavia. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) referred to the horse collar from Mammen (fig. 61), which they considered a “typical example of the style” (p.97). They described this object in detail but did not specify why this is such a fine example of the style. The horse collar from Søllested, Fyn, Denmark (fig. 62), was described by the authors as an artistically much more appealing object. They did not state if the horse collar from Søllested represented the Jellinge Style or not, and did not date the object. However, one may assume that the horse collar from Søllested may represent a variation of the Jellinge Style, because of a certain similarity in appearance with the horse collar from Mammen.



A wide range of objects designed in the Jellinge Style shown by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) were produced during the first half and the middle of the tenth century AD in England and the Hiberno-Saxon area (e.g. fig. 63). Certain similarities are obvious by comparison. Müller-Wille (1986) mentioned, for example, the stone work, which contains designs depicting typical Mammen style elements, such as wide body expanses, bold upper hind leg thighs and palleting.

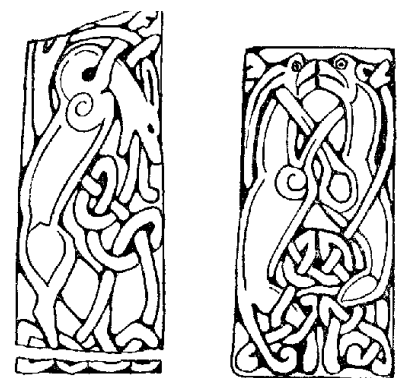


fig. 63, Ornament from a cross-shaft in the parish church at Collingham, Yorkshire

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) mentioned the debate about whether the animal ornaments produced in England during the Viking period would have originated in England and re-emerged during Viking settlement, or whether the animal ornaments would have been an indigenous Scandinavian development. It seems, according to this study, that the animal style most likely developed in Scandinavia and had much influence on Anglo-Saxon stylistic development.

The Mammen Style was defined as a sub-Jellinge style. As Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) pointed out, the Jellinge Style depicts animals in a more heraldic stance (p.96). They referred to a stone from Jelling on which the depicted animal seems to represent a lion with large claws and a mane. The Mammen Style is represented on one side of the ceremonial axe from Mammen (Jutland) (figs. 64a and b) probably created approximately 970 AD at a workshop of King



fig. 64a



fig. 64b

Harald Bluetooth. The Mammen Style is described by the authors as some kind of exaggeration of the Jellinge Style. The design includes a Jellinge Style-like double contour, spiral hips and lip-lap-pet. The double contour seems drawn more firmly than in the Jellinge Style and the hips form a more elaborated spiral. The animal's head is much smaller than that on the stone from Jelling. The most important differentiation from the Jellinge Style is "the more substantial body of the animal and the pelleting which fills it" (p.119). On the Mammen axe (fig. 64a and 64b) the interlaced body that represents most likely a bird appears snake-like. The other side of the axe-blade from Mammen was described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen as reflecting the Ringerike Style.

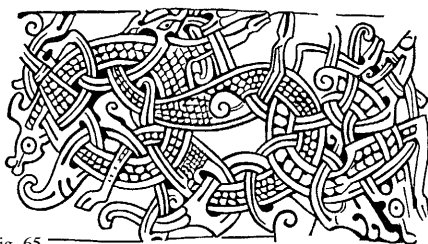


fig. 65

A bone sleeve was found at Arnes, Nordmøre, in northern Norway (fig. 65), in 1962. It was covered with carving in low relief. The ornament represents three animals with bodies interlaced. They are filled with pelleting and show a spiral hip. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) described this design as being close to the Ringerike Style. The

authors referred in particular to some of the leaves, which no longer have "flashy qualities... but have instead an elongated tautness, not seen before in this art" (p.128). A further similarity to the Ringerike Style was noted by the authors in a weather-vane from Källunge, Gotland, in Sweden.



fig. 66a



fig. 66b

The weather-vane (figs. 66a and 66b), still on the spire of the Källunge church, was described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen as having almost lost its Mammen Style elements, appearing much more as an example of the Ringerike Style.

Ringerike Style

Ringerike is a district not far north of Oslo. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) described several stones found in the area, carved with images which are regarded as typical of the



fig. 67

Ringerike Style which emerged towards the end of the tenth century AD and flourished during the first half of the eleventh century AD. The stones are from Vang, Alstad, Tanberg, Strand and Dynna. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen raised the possibility that the lion-like motifs which appear in the Ringerike Style may have been adopted from images known from the Jellinge stone. They stated that the main influence in stone-carving came from the British Isles. The stone from Väsby, in Sweden (fig. 67), is depicted by the authors as an example of such influence.

In contrast, a stone-slab from the churchyard of St. Paul's Cathedral in London (fig. 68), "perhaps, part of a stone sarcophagus" (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, p.135), is a great example of outstanding Viking Age stone carving. The execution of the design is described as reminiscent of the use of a technique on the Gotlandic stone from



fig. 68

Grötlingbo. The stone from St. Paul's Cathedral is described as having "a plain flat border with a pear-shaped lobe [according to the authors a common Ringerike feature] terminating in a knot in the border at the two top corners" (p.135). The stone depicts an animal looking backward, entwined by a snake-like creature. The animal has spirals engraved at the hips. The ears have the shape of long tendrils with curled ends. The body of the snake, which interlaces with the main animal, divides into multiple endings, similar to the main animal's tendrils. The carving was originally painted but much of the colour has now deteriorated. The best preserved is an umber (brownish) colour, which may have been used as some kind of gesso (a primer, or base, to fill the porous stone and smooth the surface). The main colours were most likely blue and black, with details like the teeth, eye, tongue, spiral hooks and lappet painted in a brown/yellow colour. The body and the head of the animal were decorated with white spots.

The lion/snake motif was regarded by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) as an important element of the Ringerike Style, appearing on the above-mentioned stone slab from St. Paul's Cathedral and also on the weather-vane from Källunge (figs. 69a and 69b) in Gotland, on a weather-vane from Söderala, Hälsingland (fig. 70) and on a stone



fig. 69a



fig. 69b



fig. 70



fig. 71

from Vang, in Norway (fig. 71). The lion/snake motif was, according to the authors, very popular in Scandinavia during the eleventh century. It formed, together with the depiction of sometimes fleshy tendrils, the main image of the Ringerike style. The lion, sometimes also called the ‘Great Beast’, is well presented on the weather-vane from Heggen. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen noted the animal depicted on the stone from Vang, as mentioned above, and

the animals on stones from Stora Ek (fig. 72) and Norra Åsarp, in Västergötland (fig. 73), in Sweden, describing the Ringerike Style as far more developed than the Jellinge Style or the Mammen Style.

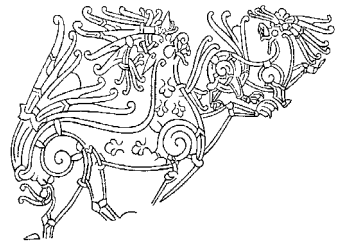


fig. 72



fig. 73

In the Ringerike Style the snake has an importance similar to the lion’s. The application of its image was described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966, 136) as a *Leitmotif*. They described several snake-head variations (fig. 74) to demonstrate the great variety of expression portrayed by the tenth century artists, creating an impressive range of differentiation.

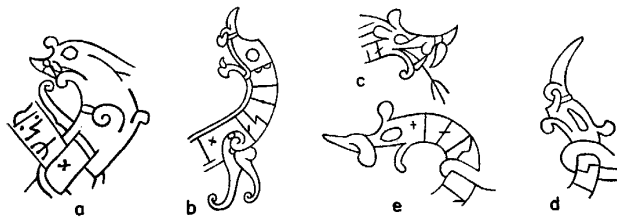


fig. 74, Snakes’ heads from Swedish rune-stones. (a) Boge, Gotland, (b) Ockelbo, Gästrikland, (c) Strängnäs, Södermanland, (d) Strängnäs, Södermanland, (e) Vallentuna, Uppland.

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen suggested a reason for the preference for these two animals: that the lion and the snake both symbolise evil. The snake was recognised by the authors also as the serpent “Midgardsorm, which, according to Norse mythology, encircles the earth and which has an important function at the end of the world – it is therefore of some significance on a memorial stone” (p.137).

The tendrils were described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) as an elongated, fleshy scroll, often with an angular or scrolled thickening half-way along its outer contour and with a tightly curled end. This style element “derived from the acanthus elements of the Mammen Style but has its origin in the Ottonian or Anglo-Saxon world” (p.138). It was used in book illuminations, particularly in southern England, and some of these manuscripts arrived in Scandinavia where they inspired local artists to adopt it. The wood-carvings from Flatatunga in Iceland (fig. 75) depict this style-element, as well as the stone from Vang, in Norway (fig. 65).



fig. 75

The wooden panels from Flatatunga (carved during the eleventh century AD) are particularly interesting, according to Selma Jónsdóttir (1959), because they depict scenes from the biblical story of Jonah and the whale. The author referred to Eldjárn, who suggested that the carvings might also “show the day of Judgement” (p.11). In this case, Selma Jónsdóttir continued, “the whole composition would be an illustration of the revelation of St. John the Divine” (p.11). Selma Jónsdóttir (1959) compared the images with depictions of the Last Judgement in Byzantine art from St. Ephrem and noticed stunning similarities which suggest influences on Icelandic woodcarving from Byzantine art.

Figures, animals and plants depicted in Ringerike Style narrative scenes demonstrate the characteristic of being treated separately within an including composition. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) presented photographs of the Sigurd-carving from the Ramsund rock, (fig. 76) and the Gök stone, from Härad, both in Södermanland, Sweden (fig. 77), which appear as good examples of this unique composition.



fig. 76



fig. 77

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen mentioned that many of the runestones were originally painted. The colours which were preferred in Sweden were, according to the authors, brown, red, blue and black. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen referred particularly to the find in the church at Köping, on the Swedish island of Öland, where 60 stone fragments were built into the wall of the church. The stones, with their carved lines as well as the surrounding area, were painted red and black. Where a stone was carved in low relief, the line-work was usually painted red and the background black.

After the second half of the tenth century AD, Christianity was gradually introduced in Scandinavia. This changed the tradition of placing objects like jewellery with corpses at burials. For this reason, far fewer objects have been found decorated in the Ringerike Style,



fig. 78

than for example, objects in the Jellinge Style. The Ringerike Style, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, is now proportionally far more represented on memorial-stones, ivory carvings, weapons and buildings. However, they presented a silver brooch from the Swedish Espinge hoard (fig. 78). This brooch depicts an engraving which the authors regard as "most completely typical" (p.140) of the Ringerike Style.

Another brooch, found in a hoard at Græsli, in Norway (fig. 79), depicts a crested bird which appears very different but also belongs to the same style. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen refer to the pear-shaped lobe of the tail, which represents its stylistic characteristic.

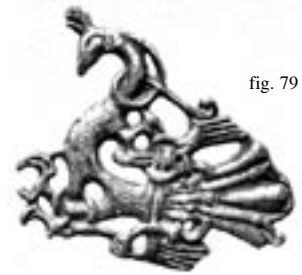


fig. 79



fig. 80

A brooch from Hornelund in Denmark (fig. 80) was also recognised as representing the Ringerike Style, by virtue of the tendrils and the pear-shaped central lobe of the leaf ornament.

A fluted silver bowl from the Lilla Valla, Rute, in Gotland (fig. 81) was described as an outstanding piece, representing the Ringerike Style, even if the vessel may partly be regarded as an "Urnes object" (p.141). (See p. 95).



fig. 81a

81b detail



fig. 82

A bronze strip found at Winchester, England (fig.82), is a Ringerike Style artefact which was probably produced in England during the reign of Canute the Great. Viking culture had a strong influence on English styles. Therefore, it is not always possible to recognise whether a piece is of Scandinavian or English origin. The bronze strip has no recognisable zoomorphic elements; however, it presents a spiral form, like the typical depiction of a Ringerike Style animal's hip, tendrils and pear-shaped lobes.

The design, drawn up on a spare piece of the Caedmon manuscript, Bodleian MS Junius II (fig. 83) is, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), the work of an Anglo-Saxon scribe, and represents the skillful application of the Scandinavian Ringerike Style.

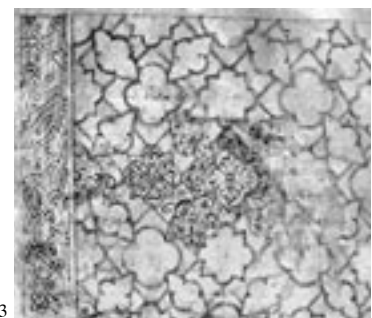


fig. 83

The initial letter d from the manuscript Ff.1.23 (fig. 84), in the University library in Cambridge, is described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) as “the most accomplished piece of drawing in a rather second-rate manuscript” (p.142).

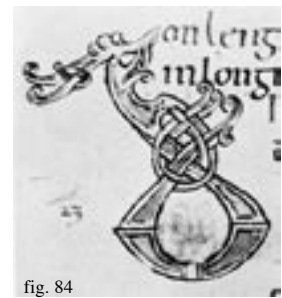


fig. 84



fig. 85a

fig.85b detail

The metal casing of the crozier of the Abbots of Clonmacnoise in Ireland (fig. 85) is regarded by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), as “the finest example of the Irish facet of the Ringerike Style” (p.143). The ornamentation has a great similarity to that of the weather-vane from Källune (fig. 86), demonstrating neatly the Scandinavian influence on this Irish artwork. The design, however, is described as lacking some of the “raggedness of the high Ringerike Style” (p.144) and the smoothness of the lines has much in common with the succeeding Urnes Style.

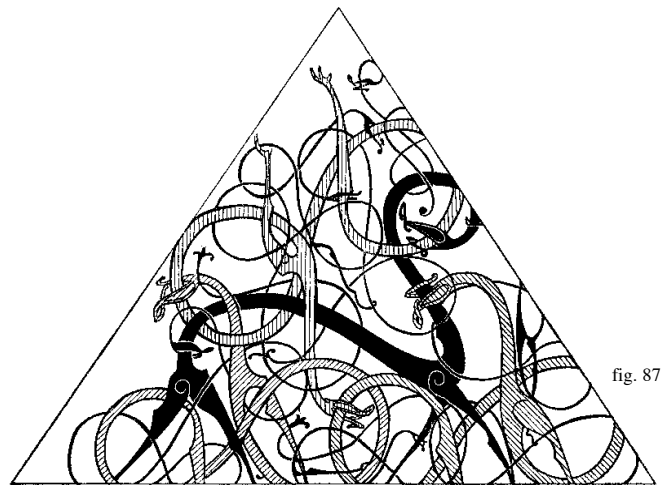


fig. 86

Urnes Style

Urnes is a town in the province of Sogn, in Norway. The name 'Urnes Style' does not necessarily mean that this style originated in Urnes or even in Norway. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) believe this style to be far more represented in Sweden. However, a small stave church was constructed in the middle of the twelfth century AD in Urnes. The building features some carved items which were part of an older church that may have been built during the second half of the eleventh century AD. These older items are "the portal, the door, two planks in the north wall of the church, the north-west corner post and the gables at the eastern and western ends of the church" (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, p.147).

The carvings of the Urnes church (figs. 87 and 88) present three motifs: a standing creature, a serpent with a single foreleg and a hind-leg, and a thin interlacing ribbon, sometimes terminating in an animal head. The carved animals are depicted as biting each other at the neck, a feature known from the Mammen Style. The application of spirals at the hips and lip-lappets are derived from the Jellinge Style. As new features, Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) mentioned "the delicate treatment of the feet, and the hook-like extension of the lower jaw, which at Urnes provide the chief reflections of the extended tendril of the Ringerike Style. The interlace is rarely fussy, but forms large loops of even, almost monotonous curves" (p.147).



A number of wooden churches in Norway are decorated with carvings similar to those at Urnes. Fragments of carvings have been found at Hopperstad, Sogn, Torpe, in Hallingdal and Bjölstad in Heidalen, in Gudbrandsdal. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) also mentioned Rinde and Søndre Gate in Trondheim, but stated that "the splendour of the carvings at Urnes is not found elsewhere in Norway" (p.148).



The rune-stone Ardre III, from the parish of this name in Gotland (fig. 89), was presented by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) as an example which depicts an early representation of the Urnes Style.



fig. 89

Some elements from the Ringerike Style can still be recognised, such as the “pear-shaped lobe, separating the two adorsed animals, the tendrils of the head lappet and the jaws” (p.150). The Urnes Style elements were defined by the authors as bands splitting from the bodies forming a loop, single-limbed animal bodies and a strong symmetry. This symmetry, however, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, is lacking in most of the Swedish artworks.

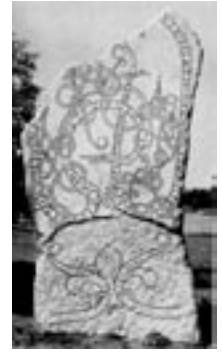


fig. 90

The stone from Stav, Roslagskulle, in Uppland, Sweden (fig. 90), was designed with a “Ringerike acanthus ornament and a soupçon of Ringerike taste in the placing of balanced spirals in the body of the animal at the bottom of the field” (Wilson and Klindt-Jensen, 1966, p.150). The animal depicted on this stone appears as a single-limbed serpent, entwined with many snake-like creatures which bite the main animal, themselves and the other animals.



fig. 91

The eyes of the creatures appear elongated and pointed, filling most of the head. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen emphasised particularly the absence of a regular pattern as observable at the Urnes Church decoration. The stone from Skråmsta, Haga, in Uppland (fig. 91), was described as an example of the classical phase (p.152).

The design of the stone from Nora, in Uppland, (fig. 92), was described as a late phase, representing the “classic Urnes combat motif together with features completely typical of the style: foot, eye, head, lappets, leg, etc.” (p.151).

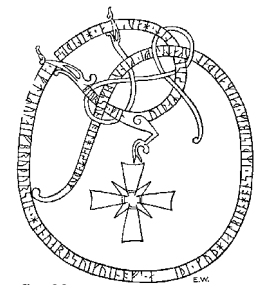


fig. 92



fig. 93

Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) presented a number of metal objects designed in the Urnes Style, such as the back of a drum-shaped brooch from Tändgarve, Sweden (fig. 93), a bronze animal head, defined by the authors as having probably originated in Gotland, Sweden (fig. 94), and a crucifix from Gåtebo, Öland (fig. 95). There was not much material found in southern Scandinavia designed in the Urnes Style; however, despite this, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), the Urnes Style should be regarded as a style which should be associated with Viking culture. Like the earlier Scandinavian styles, the Urnes Style



fig. 94



fig. 95

was also adopted in Britain. Wilson and Klindt-Jensen explained that this occurred because of the strong influence of earlier Scandinavian styles and also because of the now relatively large number of people of Scandinavian descent who had settled in England. An example of English artwork reflecting the Urnes Style, regarded by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen as being of outstanding quality, is the gilt-bronze brooch from Pitney, Somerset (fig. 96). The authors emphasised particularly the fact that this brooch is the only Urnes Style object which represents the combat motif well. The crozier of Bishop Flambard, who died in 1123 AD, was found in a tomb in the chapter-house of Durham. The crozier is made from iron and was covered with a sheet of silver. The animal ornamentation is clearly of



fig. 96

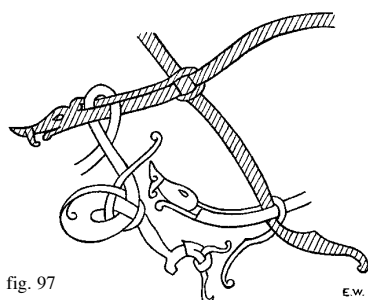


fig. 97

E.W.

Urnes Style (fig. 97); however, Wilson and Klindt-Jensen stated that it is recognisable that elements known from English book illumination have had an influence on this design. Flambard, according to the authors, may have been a Norman warrior-bishop and might have commissioned an “Anglo-Norman craftsman (possibly of Viking descent) within the Norman kingdom of England” (p.154) to create this crozier.

Irish artefacts appearing in an Urnes Style are, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), younger than the English examples, which may be due to the fact that they were influenced by work which had already been produced in England. The Shrine of the Bell of St Patrick’s Well (fig. 98) was designed between 1091 and 1105 AD (according to an inscription) by Cu Duilig O Inmainen and his sons. This object bears ornaments designed in the Urnes Style, which is



fig. 98



fig. 99

best recognisable on the crest of the bell (fig. 99). Animal heads

in cast silver were mounted on a sheet of bronze and the whole lot was gilded. The eyes are elongated and pear-shaped. Long tendrils merging with other interlacing were applied in a smooth typical Urnes Style design. The upper right-hand panel of the object depicts a combat motif. The

two birds depicted integrated in a vine-ornament were regarded by the authors as having a long history in Ireland, most likely originating in the Roman period.

The Cross of Cong was described by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966) as another outstanding example of Irish craftsmanship. The object is a “processional cross, which functioned as a reliquary for a fragment of the True Cross” (p.156) and was commissioned by Toirdelbach Ua Conchubhair, King of Connacht in 1123. The front of this cross (fig. 100) is decorated



fig. 100

with gilt bronze openwork panels separated by plain silvered borders. The ornamentation consists of animals, with hips depicted in spiral form, biting other animals. The animals are interlaced with ribbon-shapes with zoomorphic characteristics, and appear similar to the combat motif on the gable of the Urnes church. The animal shown in the detail photograph (fig. 101) is depicted with a pear-shaped eye, a single limb, a spiral hip and a filament-like body, comparable to its Urnes counterpart.



fig. 101

The Shrine of St Manchan (fig. 102), kept at Boher Co. Offaly, was, according to Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), probably created in the same workshop as the Cross of Cong. The detail photograph illustrates the “openwork animal ornament, complete with an interlaced snake, which might have been copied from the Cross of Cong” (p.157).



fig. 102



fig. 103

The reliquary of St Lachtan’s arm (fig. 103) was created, according an inscription mentioned by Wilson and Klindt-Jensen (1966), in the first quarter of the eleventh century. This naturalistic shrine is made of bronze inlaid with niello, gold and silver.

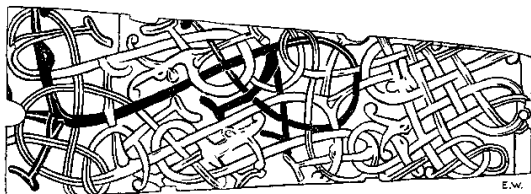


fig. 104

It is decorated with typical Urnes Style ornamentation (fig. 104). Some of the zoomorphic detail, according to the authors, “stems back to the single animals of ninth century AD Ireland” (p. 158).

Summary of Styles

Artistic creations which were produced during a particular period, according to Hofmann (1960), are analysed, defined and categorised by art historians. Objects of various kinds (architecture, painting, jewellery etc.), designed or decorated with similar ornamentation, appearing in great numbers are placed into the same category which can be regarded as a trend, fashion or style. If distinctive elements appear repeatedly on a great number of objects or items, it may be called a style. This can happen as a result of an outside event, such as for example a technological invention, a new material that became available or social circumstances which created a new taste. New social circumstances occurred when foreign cultures entered new territory resulting often in adoption of styles of the superior culture or a blend between the original and the newly introduced styles. Peoples from south-east Europe and Asia minor brought animal ornamentation to northern Europe during the migration period. Some early Scandinavian animal designs appeared like simplified naturalistic depictions. This is what Salin (1904) defined as Style I. The chip-carving technique, according to Hofmann (1960), emerged during the fourth and fifth century AD in Germanic cultures. This technique, as Hofmann mentioned, was particularly convenient for application to interlaced ornamentations, originally created in Irish Celtic cultures. It seems that the blend of Irish Celtic and Scandinavian cultures created the base for the development of the much appreciated Scandinavian designs.

Roth (1986) stated that Style II began in the last third of the sixth century AD and ceased during the “developed seventh century AD” (p.111). This time frame seems to contradict that which was set by Düwel (1997); however, Düwel supported the idea of three style phases, where Roth’s theory is based on only two. With the emergence of Style II, Roth (1986) observed a new technique of pictorial expression which is a combination of scenic depictions with ornamental depictions on one and the same object. Roth (1986) defined as scenic those illustrations which are instantly recognisable - simply a naturalistic representation of something. He described as ornamental “what must be read first” (p.111). It may be assumed that Roth tried to refer to symbolic images or abstract and semi-abstract images.



fig. 105
bracteate from Malle

Bracteates from the phases A, B and C (fig. 105), according to Roth (1986), were designed naturalistically. Abstract/ornamental images could only be found on fibulae created in the Nydam Style. This changed drastically. At the end of phase D, abstract/ornamental imagery on bracteates suddenly emerged, like the horse depiction that was probably



fig. 106

found near Hamburg, Germany (fig. 106), or the one found in Norway (unidentified precise location) (fig. 107). Figures of horses, for example,



fig. 107

were shown where head, legs and tail were separated from the body, and re-arranged rather dramatically. This abstraction could be interpreted as aiming to communicate directly on emotional rather than intellectual levels, however, it might be a reflection upon chaotic social circumstances which have been symbolised by disturbance. The picture of a horse however, continued to be used as depictions on many bracteates. Roth hypothesised that the cult which existed at the time must have, upon drastic changes in the second third of the sixth century AD, developed new forms of expression.

It appears that a disastrous event may have happened in the middle of the sixth century AD. Keys (2000) hypothesised that Krakatoa, a huge volcano in Indonesia, exploded in the year 535 AD. The author referred to tree-ring and ice-core dating as evidence for this theory. Baillie (2000) also, during an interview with the BBC, documented on the BBC website, stated that growth rings in bog oaks indicate that a catastrophic event must have taken place in the year 540 AD. According to Baillie, samples taken from Northern Ireland, Britain, northern Siberia and North and South America indicate a global event of the same kind. Baillie hypothesised that the cause for these difficult climatic circumstances may have been cometary influences. He assumed that clouds of ashes encircled the world's atmosphere which caused a drop in the global temperature.

Salin (1904, 359) stated that during the sixth century AD artistic styles from Northern Europe influenced artistic creations in Central Europe strongly, which was a trend opposite to previous times. One may speculate that Scandinavians had to leave their homeland in large numbers, went to Central Europe and influenced the stylistic developments there. One can imagine that catastrophic weather conditions, lasting several years, may have influenced cultural developments around the world. This could also have contributed to change in cultural expressions, as peoples' beliefs might be under stress or even change under devastating circumstances.

The large stone from Jellinge was analysed in detail by Horn Fuglesang (1986). The stone presents three sides which she refers to as A, B and C. Side A depicts predominantly runic text (*haraltr : kunukR : baþ : kaurua / kubl : þausi : aft : kurm faþur sin / auk aft : þaurui : muþur : sina : sa / haraltr [:] ias : saR · uan · tanmaurk*). An entwining ornament frames the text on the left, top-left and middle-right side. Side B presents a dominating depiction of an animal, identified by Horn Fuglesang as a lion, and around this lion one can observe a winding snake. A ribbon-ornament frames the illustration and a brief text continuation from side A appears (*ala o auk nuruiak*). Side C depicts a large image of Jesus Christ, who appears to be crucified and tied up by vines. A ribbon-ornament similar to that on the B-side frames this depiction and some more runic text is placed at the bottom of the stone (*auk t [a] ni [karþi] kristna*).

Horn Fuglesang (1986) assumed that the illustration of the lion and the snake represents more than just a decoration. In reference to the illustration of the crucifixion, she suggested considering the biblical text of Psalm 91,13: *Super aspidem et basilicum amulabis, conculcabis leonem et draconem*. You will walk over lions and otters and you will squash young lions and dragons. One interpretation, according to Horn Fuglesang (1986, 189), may be a symbol of “(die) von aussen gegen die Kirche wütenden Staates und der von innen drohenden Gefahren” (the state raging against the church from the outside and dangers threatening from inside). Alternatively the author suggested the image could be interpreted as the apocalyptic lion of Juda, who fights against a satanic dragon. Indeed, the author stated that there could be numerous theological interpretations. However, Horn Fuglesang also considered decoding the image by including the runic inscription. In this case, it would express the secular powers of King Harald next to the spiritual powers, which are depicted on side C the crucifixion.

The fact that animals have been used on banners and standards, and that the Romans adopted the sign of the dragon, most likely from the Dakers or Sarmants, expressed as a field-badge, and that a dragon is depicted to represent England on the tapestry of Bayeux, all encouraged Horn Fuglesang (1986) to assume that the lion and the snake were supposed to represent the powers of King Harald. At the time of Harald Gormson, other countries also had images signifying their rulers. The author mentioned the German eagle and the French lily (see fig. 84, bottom).

Particular attention was given by Horn Fuglesang (1986) to the story of the Saxons, written in 958 AD and finalised with its revision in 966 AD by Widukind. In the first book, according to the author, Widukind reported on the war between the Saxons and the Thuringians in 531AD, in which Hathagat kept the insignia of the Saxons. Horn Fuglesang mentioned that the insignia were admired by the Saxons, according to Widukind’s text, which she cited (p.190): “*leonis atque draconis et desuper aquilae volantis insignatum effigie ...*” which might be loosely translated as lions as well as dragons and the flying legion-eagle are depictions for an insignia...). Horn Fuglesang hypothesised that Widukind’s text may have inspired the design of the depiction of the lion and the snake on the large stone from Jelling, because Widukind and Harald Gormson were contemporaries. The historical position of Denmark and Saxony during the process of Christianisation was comparable, and the victory achieved by the Saxons under their banner, with lion, dragon and eagle,



fig. 109

may have made it attractive for Harald Gormson to use similar insignia. Metal weather-vanes, such as those from Källunge, Gotland, in Sweden, are proof for the author that the images from Jelling created an important influence on other insignia in Scandinavia.



fig. 108



fig. 110

Capelle (1986) considered that animals depicted singularly may often be regarded as symbols. The author referred to quite abstract designs, as depicted on the fibula from Bakkendrup, Denmark (fig. 108), the mount from Gedsted, Denmark (fig. 109), or the fire-steel grip from Öland in Sweden (fig. 110), and compared the abstraction of these designs with the *kenningar* of Old Norse poetry. The presented artefacts date, according to Capelle, from the ninth century AD. At the same time it was already fashionable to use *kenningar* in skaldic poetry. It appears as if the desire to encode messages in order to alter their meaning, to communicate about something otherwise undefinable, or to communicate to an initiated audience only, was expressed in pictorial format as well as in literature. It is known that contemporary abstract visual artists also prefer images, other than realistic ones, as a metaphor in order to express the inner qualities of something rather to depict simply the obvious. One could imagine that early medieval artists/craft people and writer had a similar desire. It seems that it was through contacts with Celtic craft that artists used variations of knot and/or entwining designs in Scandinavian artefacts. Scandinavian artefacts from the seventh century AD onwards show ornamental features such as these, which until then were produced only in Ireland. This may be because people who had migrated earlier to Britain maintained contact with Scandinavia, and some of them even moved back to the North, introducing a style there to which they had been exposed in Britain or Ireland. The knot design, according to Meehan (1992), was combined with the Germanic Animal Style.

A Scandinavian stylistic influence on Irish artefacts was observed by Michelli (1993, 183) who described bossed penannular brooches from the ninth and tenth centuries AD which were found in Ireland. These brooches were produced by applications of stamping and double shelling, which are, according to the author, techniques applied in Scandinavia during this time. The brooches, according to Michelli, are stylistically difficult to define. The brooch from Ballyspelan, Co. Kilkenny, in Ireland (fig. 111), which was



fig. 111



fig. 112

shown by Michelli as an example of other brooches of similar appearance, may not belong to any particular style. Another example, the brooch from Co. Roscommon, in Ireland (fig. 112), which was described by the author as of slightly later production, represents some “sharp angular outlines and foliate vocabulary of the Mamman Style” (p.183). Brooches which are similar to the one from Ballyspelan show panels filled with an image of a ribbon-bodied beast with three-fingered paws, either gripping its own body or embracing part of the panel frame. Such elements, Michelli suggested, remind one of images from the Borre Style and also from the Broa and the Jellinge Styles.

The entwining designs of Celtic and Old Scandinavian artefacts may not be seen only as evidence of stylistic adoption from another culture, even if they symbolise this as well. Entwining designs have an expression by enhancing aesthetic effects (beauty) of illustrations and they express a symbolic value where they obscure other depictions, juxtapose them or enhance their appearance. The designs are reminiscent to the modern viewer of a string that has accidentally uncoiled and become entangled. They have also something in common with the path which an insect has travelled on its search for food, crisscrossing a certain area. Similarly, they may suggest the path of a journey of discovery. In this way they show qualities that can also be recognised in mazes. Parallels to shapes in nature can be seen, where veins, for example, often grow in ways similar to these designs. In this comparison to natural plant-like shapes one can hardly deny a general association with organic, living material. Another element of these entwining designs seems to be, to a certain extent, a somewhat hypnotic quality.

Stylistic developments in early Scandinavia symbolise the various levels of cultural development and the differences of stylistic expression may be understood as symbols representing the peoples' experience at the time, their values and their fears.

Picture-credits for Animal Style

Fig. 1: Ashi and Sraosha: after Laszlo (1974),
no place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 2: Potnia Théron: after Laszlo (1974)
no place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 3: Germanic (Ukraine) and Slavic (Rumania) fibulae: after Laszlo (1974)
no place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 4: Bronze animal (elk) from Asiatic Russia after Pischel (1966),
British Museum, London.

Fig. 5: Bronze animal (horse) from Asiatic Russia after Pischel (1966),
British Museum, London.

Fig. 6: Decorations (Style II) from Valsgårde after Roth (1986), p.116, fig. 8.

Fig. 7: Fibula from Hol, North-Trøndelag, Norway: after Haseloff (1981, p.xxx).

Fig. 8: Sword-mount from Åmdal, Lista, Vest-Agder in Norway: after Haseloff (1981, p.xxx).

Fig. 9: Fibula from Vallstenarum: after Haseloff (1981, p.xxx).

Fig. 10: two fibulae from Grönby, Skåne, Sweden: after Haseloff (1981, p.xxx).

Fig. 11: Square-headed brooch from Gummersmark, Sjælland, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.
National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 12: Gold leaves from Brangstrup, Fyn, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.
National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 13: Fibula from Klepsau, area of Buchen in Germany: after Haseloff (1981, p.598).

Fig. 14: Eagle head of the Silver Gilt Buckle from Aker, Norway: after Meehan (1992). Illustrator Aidan Meehan,
no place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 15: Eagle head of the Great Gold Buckle from Sutton Hoo: after Meehan (1992). Illustration by Meehan, A.
British Museum, London.

Fig. 16: Bird heads, a. b. c. (detail): after Meehan (1992).Illustration by Meehan, A.
no place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 17: Gudme-D (455,2): after Hauck, 1992,
no illustrator and place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 18: Børringe-C,VF 7, 2) no.26: after Hauck, 1985,
no illustrator and place where the item is kept was mentioned.

Fig. 19: Initial letter 'd' from the manuscript Ff.1.23: photography Sir Thomas Kendrick, Poole, University Library, Cambridge.

Picture-credits for A - E Styles

Fig. 20: Gilt-bronz harness mount from Vallstenarum: photography A.T.A., Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 21: Detail of gilt-bronze mount of a scramasax from Valsgärde, Uppland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Universitets Museum för Nordiska Fornsaker, Uppsala.

Fig. 22: Bronze brooch from Kobbeå, Bornholm, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 23: Sword guard from Böda, Öland, Sweden: illustration Wilson, Eva, Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 24: Brooch from Othemars, Othem, Gotland: illustration Wilson, Eva, Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 25: Mask from a mount from Valsgärde: illustration Wilson, Eva, Gustavianum, Uppsala.

Fig. 26: Brooch from Gudhjem, Bornholm: illustration Wilson, Eva, National Museum, Copenhagen.

Picture-credits for the Oseberg find

Fig. 27: Prow of the ship, from Oseberg ship burial: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 28: Prow of Oseberg ship, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 29: Academician's head post, from Oseberg ship burial: photography after Sjøfold, T. (1985), Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 29a: Detail of Academician's animal-head post, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration after Müller-Wille, M. (2001).

Fig. 30: First Baroque animal head post, from Oseberg ship burial (detail of copy): photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 31: Tingle of the ship, from Oseberg ship burial: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 32: Tops of two bed-posts, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 33: Cart, from the Oseberg ship burial: photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 34: Cart, detail 1, from Oseberg ship burial: photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 35: Cart, detail 2, from Oseberg ship burial: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 36: Left side-panels of the cart from the Oseberg ship burial: illustration the late Dr. B. Salin. Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 37: Two animals from the fragmentary sledge pole, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government. Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 38: Ornament of the 'Baroque Master's sledge, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 39a: Shetelig's sledge, from Oseberg ship burial: photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Part of the runner of the sledge of the 'Careful Eclectic' (Shetelig's sledge) , from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 39b: Detail of the ornament of the Academician's sledge-pole, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Fig. 40: Ornament of the 'Baroque Impressionist's' sledge, from Oseberg ship burial: illustration the Norwegian Government, Viking Ship Hall, Bygdøy, Oslo.

Picture-credits for animal designs from Broa

Fig. 41: Group of gilt-bronze mounts from Broa, Halla, Sweden. Photography: joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.

Fig. 42: Gilt-bronze mounts from Broa, Halla, Sweden. Filled illustrations: Statens Historiska Museum Stockholm.

Fig. 43: Detail of gilt-bronze mounts from Broa, Halla, Sweden. Line-illustrations: Wilson, Eva.

Fig. 44, 44a and 44b: Gilt-bronze mounts from Broa, Halla, Sweden, Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Picture-credits for the 'gripping beast'

Fig. 47: Ornament from a strap-end and a brooch, found in Saelland, Denmark: by the late Dr. S. Müller, National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 48: The brooch from Lisbjerg, Jutland: joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 49a: Jet animal figure from Haugsten, Rade, Østfold, Norway: joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 49b: Jet animal from Inderøen, N. Trøndelag, Norway: joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 50: Disc-on-bow brooch from Gumbalde, Stånga: joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Picture-credits for Borre Style

Fig. 51-53: Silver-gilt and gold objects from Hon, Norway: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 54a: Horse-bridle: illustration by Brögger.

Fig. 54b: Gilt bronze mounts from Borre: Illustration by Brögger, Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 55: Clover-fibula (where found unknown, Norway): after Müller-Wille (1986, 162), plate 7, 2.

Picture credits for Jelling Style

Fig. 56: Cup from Jelling: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 57a: Jelling stone a: photography National Museum Copenhagen, Jelling, Denmark.

Fig. 57b: Jelling stone b: photography National Museum Copenhagen, Jelling, Denmark.

Fig. 58: Brooch from Morberg: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 59a: Bamberg casket (front): photography Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.

Fig. 59b: Bamberg casket (top): photography Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich.

Fig 60: Sword mount from Sigtuna: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 61: Horse collar from Mammen : photography National Museum Copenhagen, National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 61: Horse collar from Mammen, detail (a): photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 61: Horse collar from Mammen, detail (b): photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 61: Horse collar from Mammen, detail (c): photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 62: Horse collar from Søllested: photography National Museum Copenhagen, National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 63: Ornament from a cross-shaft in the parish church at Collingham, Yorkshire: illustration Eva Wilson. Church at Collingham, Yorkshire.

Fig. 64a and 64b: Inlaid iron axe from Mammen, Jutland, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum Copenhagen.

Fig. 65: Bone sleeve from Årnes, Nordmøre : illustration Eva Wilson. Videnskasselskapets Oldsaksamling, Trondheim.

Fig. 66a and 66b: Wind-vane from Källunge: illustration Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Gotlands Fornsal, Visby.

Picture Credits for Ringerike Style

Fig. 67: The stone from Väsby: photography Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum, Väsby, Skåne, Sweden.

Fig. 68: Stone from Sarcophagus. St. Pauls's churchyard, London: photography Guildhall Museum, London, Guildhall Museum, London.

Fig. 69a and 69b: Weather-vane from Källunge: illustration Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Gotlands Fornsal, Visby.

Fig. 70: Gilt-bronze weather-vane, Söderala, Hälsingland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O., Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 71: Stone from Vang: photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo, Vang, Valdres, Norway.

Fig. 72: Ornament from weather-vane from Heggen.: illustration Eva Wilson. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 73: Animals engraved on rune-stones/Stora Ek and Norra Åsarp: illustration Eva Wilson, Stora Ek and Norra Åsarp, Västergötland, Sweden.

Fig. 74a, b, c, d and e: Snake's heads from Swedish rune-stones: illustration Eva Wilson. a. Boge, Gotland, b. Ockelbo, Gästrikland, c. Strängnäs, Södermanland [Sö.279], d. Strängnäs, Södermanland [Sö.276], e. Vallentuna, Uppland [U.212]).

Fig. 75: Two wooden panels from Flatatunga, Iceland: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum, Reykjavik.

Fig. 76: Rock-engraving from Ramsund: photography A.T.A., Stockholm, Ramsund, Jäder, Södermanland, Sweden.

Fig. 77: The Gök-stone: photography A.T.A., Stockholm, Gök, Härad, Södermanland, Sweden.

Fig. 78: Silver brooch from Espinge, Hurva, Skåne, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 79: Silver-gilt figure of a bird from a hoard found at Græsli, Tydal, Selbu, Sør-Trøndelag, Norway: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Trondheim Museum.

Fig. 80: Gold-brooch from Hornelund, Home, Øster Home, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. National Museum, Copenhagen.

Fig. 81: Silver bowl from Lilla Valla, Rute, Gotland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 81a: Silver bowl (detail) from Lilla Valla, Rute, Gotland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.

Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 82: Gilt-bronze plate from Winchester: photography British Museum, Winchester Cathedral Library.

Fig. 83: Detail from Caedmon MS. Junius 11. photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Fig. 84: Initial letter 'd' from the manuscript Ff.1.23: photography Sir Thomas Kendrick, Poole, University Library, Cambridge.

Fig. 85: The Crozier of the Abbots of Clonmacnoise: photography National Museum Dublin. National Museum Dublin.

detail of the Crozier of the Abbots of Clonmacnoise: photography National Museum Dublin. (National Museum Dublin)

Fig. 86: Animal ornament from the crook of crozier of the Abbots of Clonmacnoise: illustration Eva Wilson. (National Museum, Dublin)

Picture credits for Urnes Style

Fig. 87: Ornament of the west gable of Urnes church: illustration Wilson, Eva, Urnes, Norway.

Fig. 88: The north portal of the Urnes stave church, Norway: photography Hupfauf, Peter.

Fig. 89: Rune-stone from Ardre III: photography Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm, Ardre, Gotland, Sweden.

Fig. 90: Rune-stone from Stav: photography Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm, Stav, Roslagskulle, Uppland, Sweden.

Fig. 91: Rune-stone from Skråmsta: photography Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm, Skråmsta, Haga, Uppland, Sweden.

Fig. 92: Runic inscription and ornament of a stone from Nora: illustration Wilson, Eva, Nora, Uppland, Sweden.

Fig. 93: Base-plate of drum brooch from Tåndgarve, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 94: Bronze animal-head from Gotland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 95: Silver and niello crucifix from a hoard from Gåtebo, Öland, Sweden: photography joint copyright of

Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.
Statens Historika Museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 96: Gilt-bronze brooch from Pitney, Somerset: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.
British Museum, London.

Fig. 97: Ornament from the socket of the crozier of Bishop Flambard of Durham: illustration Eva Wilson,
Durham Cathedral.

Fig. 98: The shrine of the Bell of St. Patrick's Will: photography National Museum Dublin.
National Museum Dublin.

Fig. 99: The shrine of the Bell of St. Patrick's Will (detail): photography National Museum Dublin,
National Museum Dublin.

Fig. 100: Details of the cross of Cong a: photography Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo,
National Museum Dublin.

Fig. 101: Details of the cross of Cong b: photography National Museum Dublin,
National Museum Dublin.

Fig. 102: Detail of the St. Manchan's shrine: photography National Museum Dublin,
Private Possession.

Fig. 103: Shrine of St. Lachtan's arm: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O.
National Museum Dublin.

Fig. 104: Ornament from the reliquary of St Lachtan's arm: illustration Wilson, Eva,
National Museum, Dublin.

Picture-credits for Summary of Styles

Fig. 105: Bracteate from Malle, Rogaland: after Roth (1986), who referred to M. Mackesprang, *De nordiske guldbrakeater. Jysk. Ark. Selskab Skr.* 2 (1958) No. 199.

Fig. 106: D-bracteate, probably from Hamburg area: after G. Haseloff, *Die germanische Tierornamentik der Völkerwanderungszeit. Vorgesch. Forschung* 17 (1981) 263, fig. 178c.

Fig. 107: D-bracteate from Norway: after G. Haseloff, *Die germanische Tierornamentik der Völkerwanderungszeit. Vorgeschichtliche Forschungen* 17 (1981) 222, fig. 129.

Fig. 108: Disc-fibula from Bakkendrup: after Capelle (1986).

Fig. 109: Mount from Gedsted: after Capelle (1986).

Fig. 110: Fire-steel grip: after Capelle (1986).

Fig. 111: Bossed penannular brooch from Ballyspellan, Co Kilkenny, Ireland: after Michelli, Perette (1991) in Spearman, M. R. and Higgitt, J., *The Age of Migrating Ideas*. p. 184, fig. 22.1.

Fig. 112: Bossed penannular brooch from Co Roscommon, Ireland: after Michelli, Perette (1991) in Spearman, M. R. and Higgitt, J., *The Age of Migrating Ideas*. p. 184, fig. 22.2.



fig. 1, Image source: http://www.historiska.se/collections/treasures/folkvandring/SHM_1464-e.html

5. Guldgubber

Guldgubber, which might be translated as ‘golden little chaps’, are small pieces of gold-foil, in most instances embossed, depicting figures. Most of these depictions are of male human figures, and the Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm (2001), described them as being of mythological nature. *Guldgubber* could hardly have been used as jewellery because the material of which they are made is too thin. However, some of them have been stuck on firmer bases and some have holes, probably to be sewn on to garments. Many of the *guldgubber* depict male and female figures (*double-gubber*) holding each other and are therefore called ‘loving couples’. Statens Historiska Museum, however, suggests that one should regard the figures as ‘dancing couples’, which could be either human or divine. Most of the *double-gubber* are depicted as standing still rather than moving, which contradicts the theory of ‘dancing couples’. A few pieces are cut from gold-foil and show simple engravings. Some of the cut-out figures have attachments such as rings or belts.

Guldgubber are a Scandinavian peculiarity. They have been found along the Scandinavian south-coast, middle-Sweden and in coastal areas of Norway. Watt (1992) assumed that the places where *guldgubber* were found might have had some particular geographic importance and/or a special function reflecting a concentration of wealth. This, the author assumed, may have been due to activities in metal-working and trade. According to Statens Historiska Museum (2001), *guldgubber* originated during the later Iron Age and have been found at places which are believed to have been religious centres.

Guldgubber have been dated over generations, according to Hauck (1992), within the Viking period. However, the finds at Sorte Muld, as well as at Lundeberg, were positioned among many items from the sixth and seventh centuries AD. According to Simek (2000a) *guldgubber* have been known of for at least two hundred years. They received only little attention and were located at the periphery of early Nordic iconography. That changed when larger hoards were found in 1899, in Jaeren (Western Norway), and also later in Lundeberg, near Gudme, on the island of Fyn, Slöinge (Halland, west Sweden), as well as in Toftegården, Eketorp, on the island of Öland and Neble on Zealand. The largest find was made in Sorte Muld (Black Earth), a settlement on the island of Bornholm where *guldgubber* were found

amongst many other objects dated to the Merovingian period, also called the Vendel period. Skåne, Småland, Bohuslän, Södermanland and Uppland were mentioned by tStatens Historiska Museum (2001) as other places where *guldgubber* have been found.



fig. 2

The location of the hoard of Mære, under the floor of a church, which is, according to Simek (2000a), believed to have been a heathen temple, as well as the find of Borg, on the Lofoten islands, which was buried in a post hole of a feasting hall, suggest that *guldgubber* may be of religious significance.

Because of the insignificant value of the small-sized and very thin *guldgubber* and the great care which nevertheless was taken to produce these items, Simek (2000a) assumed that the real value might lie in the symbolic quality of gold. Therefore he suggested that it could be

assumed that *guldgubber* may have served as “sacrificial money or token payment” (p.1).

According to Simek (2000a), all *guldgubber* found in Norway depict male and female figures together (double-*gubber*). The hoard of Sorte Muld depicts a majority of single male figures. The find of Lundeborg, as presented by Müller-Wille (1999), consists predominantly of double-*gubber*. Simek (2000b) stated that 600 different motifs are known, about 120 of which are double-*gubber*, 50-55 represent female figures and 215-220 are single male

figures. Thus male figures represent about 36% of all *gubber*, 20% of the *guldgubber* show male and female figures together (double-*gubber*) and approximately 8.5% show female figures only. Most *guldgubber* are rectangular and have a frame, which is, in most cases, made by a series of aligned dots. Some *guldgubber* are rounded at the top, which, according to Simek (2000a), gives them a more formal appearance. The author suggests that this feature is similar to the 'August Position', which is known from Christian iconography and meant to depict the status of a deity.

The hoard from Sorte Muld

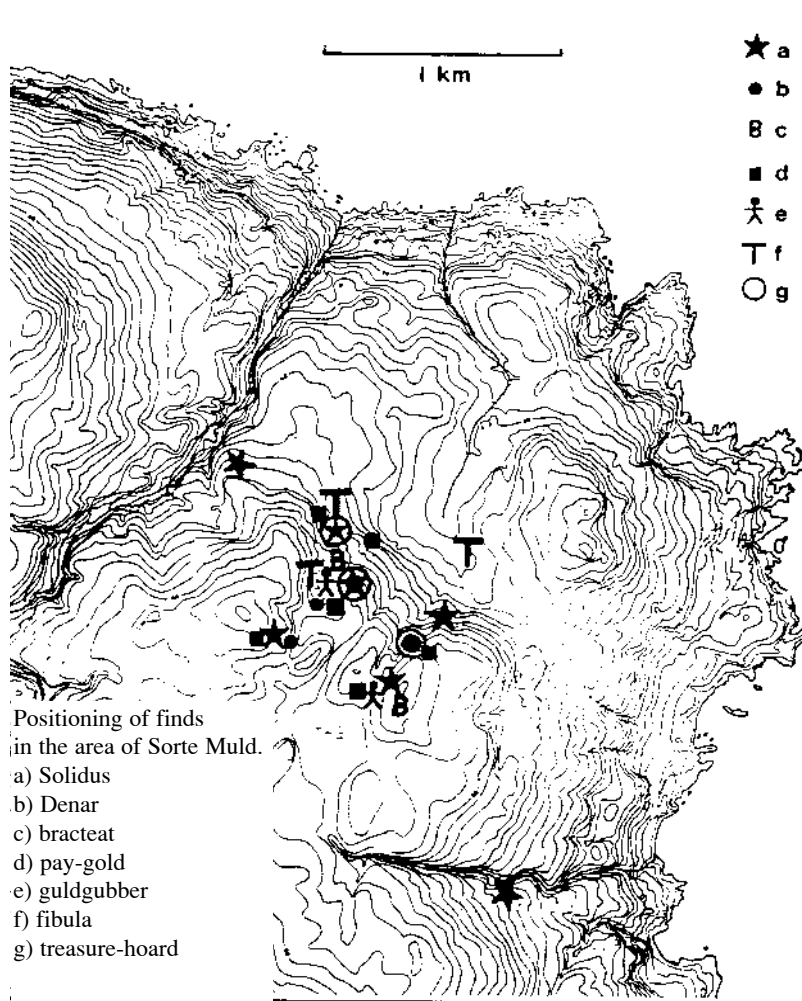


fig. 3

Between 1985 - 1987 AD, in Sorte Muld (Bornholm) (fig. 3), as stated by Watt (1992), 2300 *guldgubber* were unearthed, representing one of the most important discoveries of iconographic examples of the Merovingian period.

No patrices were found, which would indicate that the *guldgubber* were embossed in Sorte Muld; however, off-cuts of gold leaf were found which indicate that some of the cut golden figures were made there.

Some of the found items were folded and some were additionally hammered flat. Some, but not many, *gubber* were made from silver, which resulted in a less clear imprint.

Many of the embossings are identical. In all there are 370 different designs.

Watt (1992) observed that some design elements were repeated and could be arranged in groups. Most of the *gubber* depict only a single figure, which is in most cases a man. A smaller number of *gubber* shows two figures (male and female) and a few depict animals.

Watt classified the different kinds of *gubber*. She distinguished positions of the body, clothing, attributes and frames.

Positions include leg positions and arm and hand gestures.

Clothing includes male clothing such as trousers, tights, tunic and cloak, female clothing, such as petticoat, and a shawl which appears often similar to a cape-like gown. Some *guldgubber*, particularly single cut-out *guldgubber*, depict nude figures.

Attributes include jewellery, fibula, belt, staff (sceptre), sword, glass, horn and unidentifiable objects, which most likely represent symbolic signs.

Frames have several variations.

Watt (1992) sometimes identified more than just ornamental values, for example in the shape of the frame. A frame which is rounded on the top, creating the shape of an arch, might, according to the author, indicate a particular expression. She also underlined the importance of suggestive elements such as gestures of the hands and the positioning of the feet.

Standing male figures



fig. 4 a-j, standing male figures with a staff which might be a long-sceptre. (*the princely-group*).

Most of these figures are depicted as wearing a knee-or ankle-length coat. These coats show wide decorated borders along the front and bottom edge. The staff appears in many instances to be longer, coinciding with a more decorated figure. The patrice, used to emboss the figure 4a, was found at Møllegård, near Klemensker. Watt (1992) assumed that the *guldgubber* were produced at Sorte Muld and the patrice was together with other scrap-metal, disposed of at Møllegård.

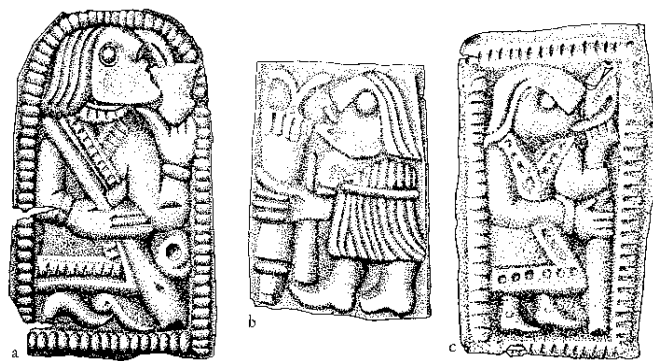


Figure 5a is holding a beaker (with spill [see p. 129]). This kind of vessel, according to Watt (1992), was relatively rare in Scandinavia and regarded as a highly valuable item. It is of Franconian origin and known as *Sturzbecher*. Another (large) object

fig. 5 a-c, standing male figures with other attributes.

shown in this figure was identified by Simek (2000a) as a wine-lifter, an instrument for getting wine out of a vat. Figure 5b is holding an undefinable object. The tongue seems to stick out of its mouth. Figure 5c is also holding an indefinable object or two objects.

Some of the figures show shapes at the wrist and the neck, which may be arm- and neck-rings; however, according to the author, they may also be part of the gown.

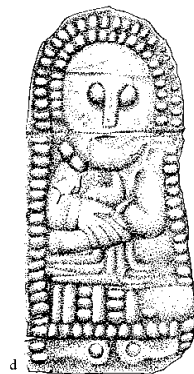
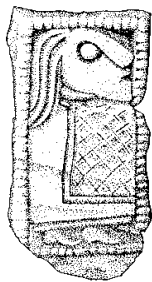
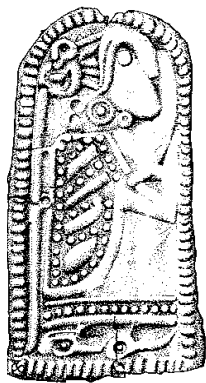


fig. 6a-d

Standing female figures

Approximately twenty embossings from Sorte Muld, according to Watt (1992), are single female figures. They are recognisable by their hairstyle, which often shows a bow or an Irish ribbon knot (Simek 2000a). The figures are quite often depicted with a dress which is ankle-length and is furnished with a decorated border at the edge. Some are shown with a decorated square front-part and some are shown wearing a cape or scarf. Watt suggested the possibility that it could also be a depiction of a feather-gown. Arms and hands are shown only when the figure actually holds a horn or a beaker. The hair is depicted as long and often tied and the ribbon knot appears close to the head.

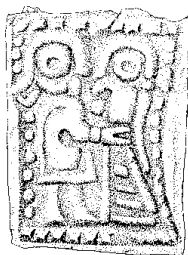


fig. 7



fig. 8

Double-gubber

According to Watt (1992), only eight to ten embossings from Sorte Muld are known to depict a male figure together with a female figure.

Figures in movement (*the dance-group*)

Most *gubber* of the *dance-group* depict male figures shown in profile or semi-profile. Many figures are depicted standing on the tips of their toes. The arms are usually hanging down and the hands, which are often proportionally too big, are turned palm towards

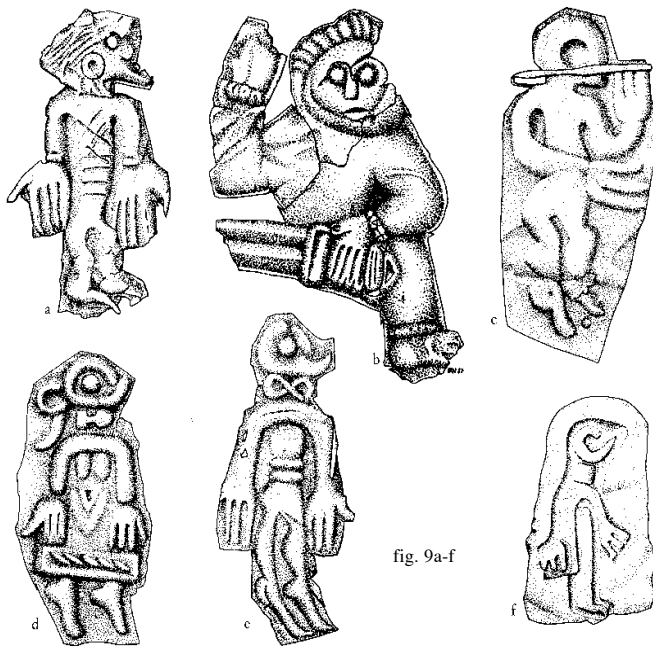


fig. 9a-f

the viewer (thumbs towards the outside). Sometimes one hand is shown raised, as if to greet or call. Because of missing indicators for clothing, Watt assumed that the figures were, apart from a belt, usually shown as being nude. The few known female dancing figures are, according to Watt, usually dressed; however, figure 9d depicts a figure which may show bare breasts and an undressed belly. Female figures are never shown with a greeting or calling gesture. Figure 9d wears a relief-fibula.

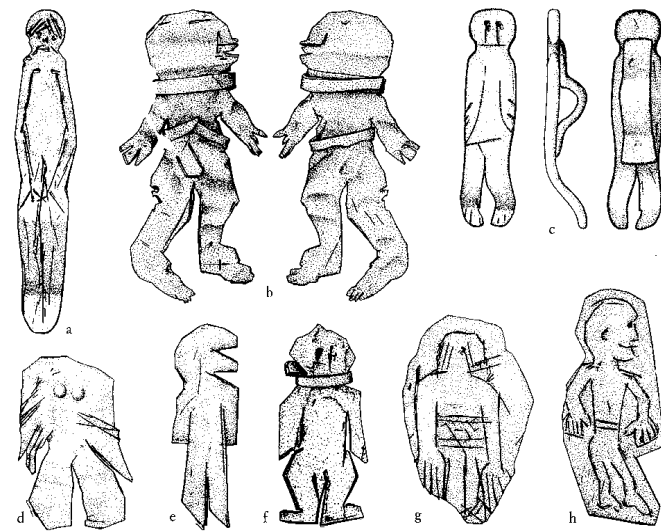


fig. 10a-h

Individually produced figures

Fifty-five figures of the Sorte Muld hoard were not embossed from a patrice. They were individually cut from gold foils. Figurative features and attributes were added by engraving.

Animal figures

About twenty animal figures, some cut individually and some embossed, were found in Sorte Muld. The individually cut figures include several pigs (it is not known if these are wild pigs or domesticated pigs) (fig. 11e) and an animal which may be a bear (fig. 11d). The embossed figures

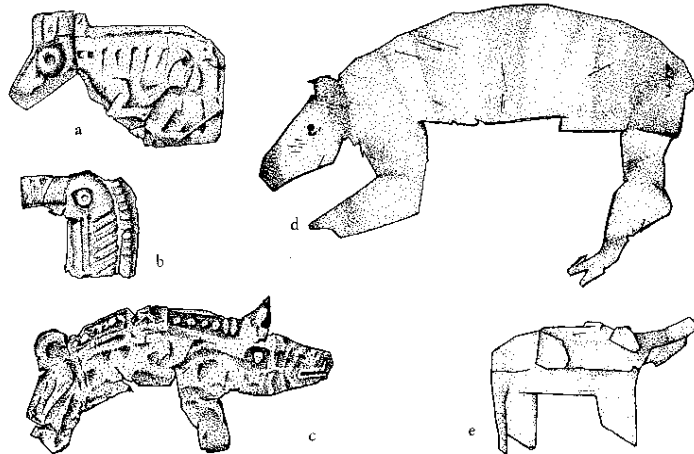


fig. 11a-e

include a wild pig (fig. 11c), possibly a part of a horse (fig. 11b), and a recumbent deer or horse (fig. 11a).

Watt (1992) stated that images of wild pigs and horses were common in connection with Upplandic burial places of chieftains, particularly Vendel, Valsgärde and Sutton Hoo, East Anglia. Bears are shown predominantly in combination with human figures. Deer and domesticated pigs appear rarely.

Müller-Wille (1999) briefly described *guldgubber*, summarised the situation of research and listed the places of their distribution. *Guldgubber* are found only in Scandinavia. The places where most of the *gubber* have been found are: Sorte Muld (Bornholm) a settlement where many other objects were also found which date between the late Roman period and the Viking age, Lundeberg (east of Gudme, Fyn), and Slöinge (Halland, west Sweden). Other places are Uppåkra near Lund (south Sweden), as well as Toftegården and Neble on Zealand.

Müller-Wille (1999) presented six illustrations of *guldgubber* (fig. 6) found in the settlement of Slöinge in Halland (West Sweden). There 48 *guldgubber* were placed in the filling of an inside-post of a longhouse, which was dated between 710 and 720. Two further finds were made in a post-hole of a neighbouring house. Müller-Wille (1999) described these *guldgubber* from this find as depicting, like the *guldgubber* from Lundeberg, a hugging couple. The size of the items was described as 10 x 10 millimetres.



fig. 12

The six *guldgubber* shown represent an identical style. They are simplified to a similar extent, their heads are in a similar position, they have eyes of similar size and they have huge noses. It is obvious that the figures show much closer body contact than, for example, the figures on the *guldgubber* found in Lundeberg.

The analysis of the *guldgubber* from Lundeberg, as presented in detail in the appendix (pp. 262-299) showed that most of them are double-*gubber*, depicting a male and a female figure together. The majority of these pairs hold each other on their arms or at the waist. This signifies a certain intimacy similar to the depictions on the *guldgubber* which were found in Slöinge, Sweden. A representation of similar intimacy is also shown in paintings from the Renaissance (see appendix pp. 300-301) and the paintings' known titles confirm the expression of love by such embracement. Some of the *guldgubber* from Lundeberg depict figures holding additional items. These items are difficult to identify because of their small scale and the fact that this analysis is based on a printed reproduction of the *guldgubber*. However, one shape appears as to be a stick-like object which may be a staff/sceptre or a plant, another one, a horn or beaker, probably spilling over which may signify generosity. One *guldgubbe* depicts a shape between two figures. This shape may be not more than an empty space, however, it could also be identified as an oar. One *guldgubbe* shows a ring, created from dots, placed between two figures. This could be a ring of oath, confirming the agreement of marriage.

The different styles in which the *guldgubber* appear suggest that they were created in several workshops. They all appear in stylisation of certain kinds which is understandable even by their extremely small size; however, it is recognisable that some of the *guldgubber* were given more stylistic sophistication than others. The depiction of large eyes on some *guldgubber* may have been important to some craftspeople.

Interpretation

The double-figures depicted on *guldgubber* have commonly been interpreted, according to Müller-Wille (1999), as the divine brother and sister Freyr and Freyja. The author suggested interpreting the male figures holding a long stick as Þórr. Þórr, representing an equivalent to the Roman Jupiter, would be commonly represented holding a long-sceptre. Müller-Wille suggested also several depictions of Óðinn, because Þórr, Freyr and Óðinn were worshipped as a trinity in the temple of Old Uppsala. Hauck (1992) suggested two theories. The first refers to Steinsland (1990), who proposed that the images depicted on *guldgubber* should be understood as scenes from the sacred marriage of Freyr and the giantess Gerðr as described in *Skírnismál*. The second variation is Axboe's (1986) suggestion, based on Arrhenius' (without detail) theory that the *guldgubber*'s depictions represent scenes from *Þrymskviða*, particularly the goddess Freyja. Hauck (1992) listed several aspects of the depiction of the female figure that would indicate that the woman depicted on the *guldgubber* may be Freyja. Most of the features mentioned represent jewellery which could be worn by a high-ranking woman or any woman on a special occasion. As evidence of great importance, the author refers to the depic-

tions of a female figure on two *guldgubber* from Bornholm (fig. 13). Hauck interpreted the gown, worn by these figures over a dress, as a feather gown, similar to the one described in *Þrymskviða*, in fact the feathergown owned by Freyja (see pp. 121, 127)



fig. 13

Hauck (1992) attempted to prove the existence of feather-gowns in Norse iconography through the introduction of another figure. This figure, a gold sculpture from Trønninge/Kundby (Sjælland) (fig. 14), represents an equivalent, according to Hauck (1992), to the figures depicted on the *guldgubber* from Bornholm.



fig. 14

The gold sculpture from Trønninge/Kundby was created in such a manner that it appears as if the figure is wearing a gown covered with a pattern in the form of scales. The scales are pointing upward. A real feather-cloth would also show scale-like shapes. However, the feathers on a bird point downwards, in order to repel rain, like roof-tiles. If a gown were made from feathers one would

expect to see this pattern occurring as well. It would be impractical to a high degree, if the feathers pointed upwards. An object where one can observe a pattern of scales in an upright position is a pine-cone. Therefore it may be suggested that the sculpture from Trønninge/Kundby be regarded as wearing a gown with a pattern of upright curves or, alternatively, as a golden version of a folkloristic pine-cone doll. The figure on the larger *guldgubbe* from Bornholm shows lines on its gown which may be interpreted as feathers; but it could be also fur or any pattern used for aesthetic reasons.



fig. 15

The gown depicted on the smaller of the two discussed *guldgubber* does not show any similarity to an image which could illustrate a feather gown. A *guldgubbe*, however, from Tørring (Jylland) (fig. 15), depicts a woman, wearing a gown, which looks very much like a feather gown. Even the pattern on the woman's upper front (chest area) is designed in feather-like shapes.

Hauck (1992) found similarities to bracteates in depictions of a male figure on *guldgubber* from Sorte Muld (figs. 18 and 19). The figure shown on the bracteate from Allesø (fig. 16) is suggested as representing Óðinn because of the symbolic depiction of the breath from the nose, an emperor's crown, and the hand which is positioned at the mouth, with the thumb under the chin. The figure on the *guldgubbe* (fig. 18) is simplified, according to Hauck (1992), but it still resembles some of the features on the bracteate which, according to Hauck, represent Óðinn.



fig. 16, bracteate from Allesø-B
(M 159, like 5,4, = 13,1)



fig. 17, bracteate from Norway
(?)-B
(M 5,7 = 131) 13,1)



fig. 18, *guldgubbe* from Sorte Muld
(no. 279)

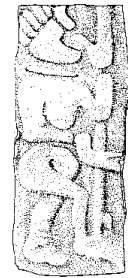


fig. 19, *guldgubbe* from Sorte Muld
(no. 281)

Regarding the depictions of male figures on *guldgubber*, Simek (2000a) suggested a further variation. The author argued that some settlements where *guldgubber* were found, like Lundeborg or Helgö, may have been very wealthy. Their chieftains may also have held positions as priests. The author considered the possibility that these chieftain-priests may have been “self-confident” (p. 11) enough to have arranged to be depicted on the *guldgubber*. The female figure, appearing on many *guldgubber*, was proposed to be seen in this context as part of a marriage scene or as a female ancestor who may be “recalled for protection” (p.11).

Following Simek’s suggestion that the figures depicted on the *guldgubber* would not necessarily have to be gods and goddesses, one may contemplate further and consider the idea of ordinary people being shown on these small gold leaves. This could be explained by the hypothesis that a person experiencing an important step in life, such as a marriage or an initiation, would have been depicted. Family or kin-group members could have obtained *guldgubber* to give to a celebrated person as some well-wishing kind of talisman. It would also be possible that *guldgubber* were purchased by guests at or participants in such an event in order to sacrifice them with the aim to enhance luck, wellbeing and prosperity. The deposition of the *guldgubber* in holes of the main pillars of the longhouses in Slöinge may be understood as confirmation of the theory that *guldgubber* were used in a ritual context, because the main pillars of houses were regarded in early Scandinavian society as sacred places.

Symbolic elements

Guldgubber, gold-foils in size varying from 5mm in side-length, up to a maximum of 20mm, depict, in their majority, impressed (embossed) figures, which are sometimes female, more often male and sometimes both male and female. A small number of *guldgubber* depicts animals. A few *guldgubber* are cut out individually and have no embossing.

Gold

Most *guldgubber*, as the name suggests, are made from gold. However, the thickness of the material is equivalent to the thickness of paper. For this reason, they are of very little value for their material. However, according to Simek (2000a), *guldgubber* may be considered as precious because of the symbolic value of gold. Bruce-Mitford (1996) stated that gold would be “regarded as the most precious of metals” (p.39). Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) referred to the ancient Greek belief that gold signifies the sun and associated qualities such as “fertility, wealth, dominion, a centre of warmth, love and generosity, the fire of light, knowledge and radiance” (p. 442). The Romans called gold ‘*rex metallorum*’ and, according to Hvass (1998), it was regarded to belong to the upper society only.

Goethe’s didactic part of his colour-theory from 1805, as presented in Matthaei (1971), stated that gold, if unblended, particularly with its shine in a new and high dimension of the colour yellow, as appearing on silk, creates a splendid and noble impression. Itten (1973) stated that gold “signifies luminous, light-emitting matter ... to ‘see the light’ means to be brought to a realisation of previously hidden truth. To say that someone is ‘bright’ is to credit him with intelligence. So yellow, the brightest and lightest colour, pertains symbolically to understanding, knowledge”. (p.132) In *Gylfaginning*, Snorri Sturluson (translated by Faulkes (1987) described the first temple in Ásgarðr, Gláðsheimr, built by the Æsir, as been built from nothing but gold, representing the best of the best. *Völuspá* stanzas 7 and 8 are described by Dronke (1997) as a description of ‘the golden age’ – a time which could not be better. *Völuspá* stanza 8 explains that the Æsir’s life became more difficult because giants appeared. Stanza 9 also mentions this struggle and the solution in that the Æsir created the dwarfs, who worked for them to gain metal (particularly gold) out of the “stony veins of the earth” (Dronke, 1997, 38). From that time, the dwarfs mined gold and produced golden items for the Æsir.

Considering the *guldgubber*’s small material value but high symbolic merit, one might be tempted to recognise them as items which were made to be purchased for a relatively small amount of money, given away, and appreciated by someone for their symbolic value.

Figures

The figures depicted on the *guldgubber*, identified as Þórr, Freyr, Freyja and Óðinn by several authors, were suggested by Simek (2000a) as being probably chieftains/priests, representing one or the other of the gods. Alternatively, these figures may show people in a ceremonial situation. This could be a wedding or an initiation ceremony. An animal depicted may represent one which was consecrated or sacrificed. The fact that *guldgubber* depict figures wearing noble clothes and rich jewellery (apart from the nude depictions) may be compared with contemporary weddings, where bride and groom also wear very special garments. A bride often wears a tiara, which does not necessarily elevate her legally to the position of a princess. The underlying idea, however, is to create a setting in which people who are dressed up prince/princess-like might be treated as such by others and feel as though they were in this position, at least for a limited time.

Gestures

Most of the double-*gubber* show a man and a woman in close embrace. Images on pieces of art from later periods show that artists emphasise hand and arm positions in expressing symbolically love and marriage. Three paintings from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries AD, which express this technique well, are shown in the appendix (C).

Eyes

It is noticeable that some *guldgubber* depict figures with eyes disproportionately large (e.g. Lund 13/14, 16, 22, 34 and 40 [see appendix C], and the 6 double-*gubber* from Slöinge [see p. 120]). In the case of the double-*gubber* from Slöinge and in the case of Lund 40, these large eyes might be explicable as stylistic features which appear quite integrated with other exaggerations. The eyes depicted on Lund 13/14, 16 and 22, however, do not quite correspond proportionally and stylistically with the rest of the depicted figures. It may be possible that these large eyes were chosen for the symbolic value of the eye itself. Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) stated that “a single, unlidded eye is in any case a symbol of Divine Essence and of Divine Knowledge” (p. 363). They mentioned the Inuit, who “call shamans and seers ‘the people with eyes’ ” (p. 363). Some Gaulish coins carry the inscription ‘Amarcolitanus’, a surname for Apollo. This translates, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant, as “Apollo of the long eye” (p. 366). A depiction on the coins shows a portrait featuring very large eyes. Shining eyes were discussed by Düwel (1995). In describing the bracteate from Nebenstadt, he suggested that large shining eyes were associated with hyper natural powers and magical abilities.

The inscription on the bracteate from Nebenstadt reads: *gljaugizujrnzl*, for which the original text interpretation is: *gljaugiz wiu r[u]n[o]z l [laukaz]* (Düwel, 1995, 29). A contemporary interpretation, according to Düwel, reads: ‘I, the one with the shining eye consecrate the runes. Leek [prosper]’.

Early Scandinavian literature placed some emphasis on eyes. Heimdallr was described by Snorri, in *Gylfaginning*, as the Áss with outstanding eyesight. He would be able to see over long distances, as well at night as day. Höðr’s blindness was used, in *Gylfaginning*, by Loki to kill Baldr. This blindness was considered by Lassen (2000) not necessarily a predominantly physical disability, but as a symbol for his “inner blindness” (p.223). Lassen also mentioned *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*, where the eye symbolically represents the value of manhood. When Egill and his men were invited to a great feast, they had to drink enormous amounts of alcohol in order to prove their masculinity. Egill was the only one who passed this test; he revenged himself by cutting off their host’s beard and poking out one of his eyes. The blindness (also the beardlessness) was regarded as a symbol of castration. By contrast, one may assume that eyes shown in an exaggerated size may represent masculine dominance.

Óðinn is described in *Völuspá* stanza 28 as pledging one of his eyes in order to gain access to Mímir’s wisdom. The act of sacrifice of an eye is explained by Lassen (2000) as a symbolic loss of masculinity in order to gain a “connection to the feminine realm” (p.225), with its connotation of “disorder, death and sexuality” (p.225). As a result, Óðinn appears as being in possession of sexual and intellectual ‘duality’. Óðinn’s remaining eye is regarded as holding extraordinary powers of a magical nature. If blindness represents missing manhood, then one may assume that, in contrast, large eyes may symbolise great fertility – and power.

Sticks

Some of the *guldgubber* featuring two figures depict one of them holding a stick-like object in the hand (fig. 20). This object has previously been identified as a staff and/or sceptre. In Greek and Roman antiquity, gods and people of high rank were depicted carrying a staff. The staff, originally a hybrid between a walking stick and a farmer’s/shepherd’s crook, is still in use in some Northern African areas, such as the Algerian and Tunisian Sahara. The best known staff is probably that of the Greek god Asklepius, also known as the Roman god Aesculapius, the god of medicine. The sceptre, according to Bruce-Mitford (1996), was regarded as having magical properties and represented the king’s responsibility for his people’s prosperity. Liungman (1991) associated a vertical line with authority, power and perfection. The sign also symbolises the contact between the lower and the higher. If the vertical, stick-like object were meant to depict a spear, then one may be tempted to consider whether this attribute were added to symbolise a particular being who was commonly asso-

ciated with a spear. This would in Scandinavia have been Óðinn.

According to the *Skáldskapamál* section of Snorri Sturluson's *Edda*, the dwarfs Brokkr and Eitri created several precious items for the Æsir. One was a golden boar for Freyr, another was Þórr's hammer, and Óðinn obtained two items, the golden ring Draupnir and Gungnir, a spear which "never stopped in its thrust" (translated by Faulkes 1987, 97). This spear was used by Óðinn in the war against the Vanir, as it was described in the eddic poem *Völuspá*, stanza 23:

Fleygði Óðinn	Óðinn flung
Ok í fólk um skaut;	And shot into the host-
þat var enn folkvíg	It was war still,
fyrst í heimi;	The first in the world.
brotinn var borðveggr	Torn was the timber wall
borgar ása;	Of the Æsir's stronghold.
knátto vanir vígspá	Vanir were - by a war-charm -
Völlo sporna.	Live and kicking on the plain.
(ed. Jónsson, 1926)	(Translated by Dronke, 1997)

Some of the stick-shaped objects show a plant-like top. It seems that this is actually the depiction of a plant (flower) to be handed over by one figure to the other. The shapes of some illustrations suggest that it may be the representation of a leek. *Lauka* (leek; well-being), as engraved in runic letters on a scrape-knife, found at Løksand, was defined by Bruder (1974) as belonging to the female sphere of activity. *Laukr* was given by Krause (1961) as an old Danish name for the runic letter representing 'L'. Cleasby (1957) translated the Icelandic word *laukr* as 'leek' and also as 'garlic'. Bruder (1974) referred to Krause (1961) who associated *lauka* (leek) with fertility, eroticism and protection against evil magic forces. *Laukar* was used according to Krause to express the letter 'L' in the oldest engravings. The Old English word *lagu* and the Old Norse word *logr* representing water were, according to Krause, never used in early runic engravings. He suggested that the leek, with its great preservative and healing attributes may have been regarded as an especially valuable plant, which would also be made into potions to keep people young. This would be well worth depicting on illustrations of special events or circumstances.

After Freyr fell in love with the giant's daughter Gerðr, according to *Skírnismál*, he sent Skírnir to Gerðr to propose a marriage with Freyr. When Gerðr was not willing to accept the proposal even if she were offered a golden ring (Óðinn's ring) and eleven golden apples, Skírnir threatened to harm her with his sword and also with a 'taming' wand and a terrible spell. The wand had three runes engraved: *ergi ok æði ok óþola* (ed. Jónsson, 1926, 111), which Larrington (1996) translated as "lewdness and frenzy and unbearable desire" (p.67).

Drinking vessels

Drinking vessels (fig. 20, below) such as horns or glass beakers are depicted on several *guldgubber* (for example, see standing male figure ‘a’ from Sorte Muld (p. 117) and the double-*gubber* from Lundeborg, Lund 4 and 13/14 (appendix B). One may assume that the addition of these items may have a symbolic relevance. The importance of alcoholic beverages can be seen in old Norse literature: *Grímnismál*, stanza 25 describes the goat Heidrun who filled a vat of shining mead... *Grímnismál* stanza 36 tells us that ale is served to the fallen

Hrist ok Mist,
vil ek, at mér horn beri,
Skeggjöld ok Skögul,
Hildr ok Þrúðr,
Hlökk ok Herfjörtur,
Göll ok Geirönul,
Randgríðr ok Ráðgríðr
ok Reginleif,
þær bera Einherjum öl.

(ed. Jónsson, 1926)

Hrist and Mist,
I wish, would bear a horn to me,
Skeggiold and Skogul,
Hild and Thrud,
Hlokk and Herfjotur,
Goll and Geirahod,
Randgrid and Reginleif;
they bear ale to the Einheriar.

(translation by Larrington, 1996)

warriors: Snorri’s *Gylfaginning* stanza 38 mentioned also Heiðrun the goat who fills the vats of mead served to the Einheriar. In *Skírnismál* stanza 37, Gerðr is mentioned offering mead to Skírnir. In Old Norse myth alcoholic drink (mead) was regarded as being an inspiration for poetry. Gerðr, offering a cup of mead to Skírnir, according to Simek (2000a), expresses a gesture of a peace agreement – an honourable act, but unlikely to be depicted on a *guldgubbe*. According to Simek, it also seems very unlikely and quite meaningless to produce a *guldgubbe* which depicts nothing but a valkyrie offering a drink to a warrior who was killed in battle. It appears much more that the depiction of a beaker symbolises a celebration.

Feather garment/drinking vessels

Hauck (1992) interpreted the female drink-offering figure shown particularly on the *guldgubber* of Lundeborg, as Freyja because he believed he had found figures on the *guldgubber* of Lundeborg depicted wearing a feather garment and a large necklace, attributes signifying Freyja. The goddess Freyja is described as being in possession of a feather cloak. In the eddic poem *Prymskviða*, 3, where Þórr loses his hammer, Loki, attempting to recover it, asks Freyja to lend him her feather cloak.

Gengu ðeir fagra Freyju túna,
ok hann ðat orða alls fyrst um kvað:
‘munt mér, Freyja, fjaðrhams léa,
ef ek minn hamar mættak hitta?’

(ed. Jónsson, 1926)

They went to the beautiful court of Freyja
and these were the first words that he spoke:
‘Will you lend me, Freyja, your feather cloak,
to see if I can find my hammer?’

(Translated by Larrington, 1996)

However, even with extremely careful observation one would not be able to discern these items among the 64 *guldgubber* of Lundeborg. Amongst many *guldgubber* illustrating a wide variety of figures, there is one that depicts a woman who may be wearing a feather gown. This may signify Freyja; however, it may also be that the depicted woman is human, dressed in the fashion of the goddess. The fact that male figures are also depicted holding drinking vessels suggests an illustration of a human figure holding a beaker or horn to celebrate, or acting in some ritual similar to the moment of offering/receiving wine at Holy Communion in the Christian religion.

The offer of a glass of an appreciated liquid symbolises willingness to share and to do things together.

Spills

Drinking vessels are sometimes shown with an additional shape at the top (fig. 20). This could be steam rising from a hot beverage or an object placed in the beaker. However, the interpretation of the shape as representing a spill is appealing. The container is depicted as being filled so generously that it overflows. Interpretations of this could be (a) that so much wealth exists that it does not matter if some of the precious liquid gets lost, or (b) that the person to whom the drink is offered is so highly regarded that as much as possible of the liquid is offered to him/her.

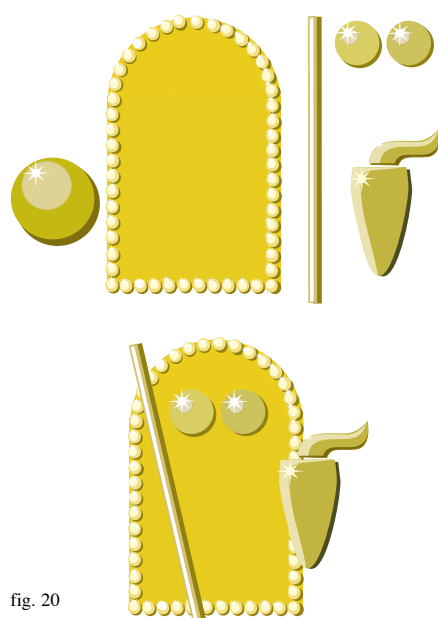


fig. 20

Outer shapes

The rectangular shape seems to be dominant among *guldgubber*, and a portrait format (upright) is common. In some instances *guldgubber* appear rounded at the top (fig. 20). Simek (2000a) suggested that this gives the *guldgubber* a more formal status. He suggested the appearance should be compared with the rounded arch which would signal the ‘August position’ (an elevated position), also known from Christian iconography.

Frames

At the edge, most *guldgubber* are produced with a frame. Some of these frames are straight lines, but in most cases they are formed by a series of aligned dots. A frame has two main functions. Firstly, it provides a neutralising border against the surrounding environment.

It ensures that the background on which an artwork is presented nor neighbouring images and objects interfere with the artwork's expression.

Secondly, a frame functions as a sign. It signifies a certain status of an artwork. Even if, since the Modernism of the 20th century AD, frames have been freed from their important role in contributing to the 'official' appearance of an artwork, frames traditionally held this position and are still generally accepted as such. In this regard one may suggest the *guldgubber*'s frames as a sign used to elevate the illustrated content to a status which is generally understood as 'official'.

Dots

As mentioned above, it is striking that most of the *guldgubber*'s frames are made from aligned dots. The fact, that some *guldgubber* are executed with a frame made from a straight line indicates that it has not been a technical decision to decide to create a frame in the one or the other way. Artistically, a dotted frame creates many more highlights than a single-lined frame. The brilliance of these highlights, illuminating the entire illustration, may have been sought when the decision for dots was made. According to Verstockt (1982), the dots symbolise fertility, seed and sperm, and the divine principle. Verstockt stated that according to Proclus (5th century A.D.) the point has a "cosmic power and rank first order among signs" (p.46).

In *Skírnismál* (19) (in the *Codex Regius* of the *Elder Edda*), golden apples are mentioned when Freyr was courting Gerðr. Freyr sent Skirnir, his servant, to the giantess Gerðr to offer her eleven golden apples as a bribe to make her agree to accept Freyr as her husband. Golden apples are also mentioned in Snorri Sturluson's *Gylfaginning*. Iðunn, an Ásynja, wife of the Áss Bragi, was the custodian of some golden apples; the Æsir regularly ate these apples in order to keep themselves permanently young. Steinsland (1991) in Clunies Ross (1994, 135) pointed out that a sphere presents one of the royal symbols (globe and sceptre).

Prominent features on *guldgubber* which do not relate stylistically to any particular period or predominantly to early Scandinavian mythology are:

- the colour gold
- a sphere
- a frame (dotted)
- big eyes
- a glass with a spill.

Application of perceptual principles in identifying symbolic values in *guldgubber*

Because of the small size of *guldgubber*, depictions on them are consequently also very small. This may be one reason why artists or craftspeople were forced to stylise the depictions, maybe simplifying them from larger versions. However, when they are viewed under a microscope it is evident that *guldgubber* were created in a very precise manner and any simplification was most likely intentional rather than accidental.

Stylisation is applied when elements of significance are intended to be highlighted (Hochberg, 1972, 74). Through the eradication of intrusive secondary elements, the remaining elements appear with considerably stronger expression. In the process of simplification, according to Marr and Nishihara (1978), an artist must take care that a basic internal structure is retained, in order to enable a viewer to recognise the image. Figures which appear on several *guldgubber*, such as those from Sorte Muld, with four and sometimes only three fingers on one hand (fig. 21), are not accidental; rather, this feature is used to give the fingers space for bolder expression (see p. 33, fig. 4) The figures on two *guldgubber*, which were defined by Watt (1992) as belonging to 'the dancing group' seem to have their hands held in a position to resemble the shape of a bird's wings (fig. 22). Following the suggestion of Marr and Nishihara (1978) to identify strong segmentation points and use the resulting structure as the set-up for a new shape (fig. 23), the result comes close to the depiction of a bird.

The patrice for a pendant F.34 from Haithabu (Schleswig Holstein, Germany) (fig. 24) has an inner structure similar of the figures shown on the *guldgubber* described (fig. 25). Of course, *guldgubber* were produced approximately three hundred years earlier than the bird-shaped patrice from Haithabu shown here. But this is not relevant. The important thing is to see the original shape's underlying structure, which has a great similarity in both cases.

From this interpretation one can hypothesise that the two figures depicted are performing a bird-dance. Their posture signifies that of birds with open wings, similar to a bird of prey positioning its wings in a rather fast flight. The shape in front of the face could be the dancer's tongue, imitating a bird's beak. Such a depiction of a tongue is also found in another *guldgubbe* from Sorte Muld (fig. 26). An interpretation as a breath-symbol, which is depicted in various manners on several bracteates, as shown in Hauck

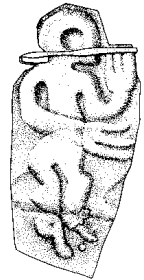


fig. 21

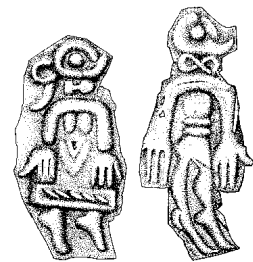


fig. 22

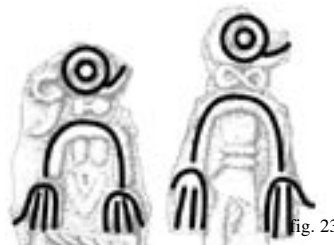


fig. 23



fig. 24



fig. 25



fig. 26

(1985, 76, fig. 13), does not fit into this context.

Another, less spectacular, interpretation could be that the artist who created the images of the two figures unconsciously gave them this particular shape because he or she may have been inspired by a bird, but had no intention of applying bird-like shapes for any other than aesthetic reasons.

Birds had great relevance in Old Norse mythology:

Ravens accompanied Óðinn

Óðinn transformed himself into an eagle

The giant Piazzi transformed himself into an eagle

The giant Hræsvelg appears as a huge eagle

An eagle sits in the branches of Yggdrasill and a hawk called Veðrfölnir sits between his eyes

Freyja owned a feather coat which, as written in the eddic poem *Þrymskiða*, was used by Loki to fly to 'jötna heima', to the land of the giants, in order to search for Þórr's hammer.

This range of mythological references to birds indicates their not unimportant position in early Scandinavian culture.

Six *guldgubber* from Slöinge (fig. 27), which have already been briefly mentioned, are skillfully created. However, the figures on them have strange-looking heads. From common assumption, one would identify the shapes on top of the bodies as heads. The big round dots, which could be interpreted as eyes, reinforce this assumption.



From general experience as well as from the view of the law of perception, a face, represented frontally, is recognised as such if the depiction shows at least two eyes and a mouth (fig. 28). These two points and one line have to be placed in a particu-



fig. 27

lar position, similar to the way in which humans are accustomed to perceive the faces of other humans. In profile also (fig. 29), a human face requires a particular arrangement of elements in order to be recognised as such. The heads on the *guldgubber* from Slöinge, however, to a great extent do not fit this schema.



fig. 28

The considerable detail in the depictions shows that the artist who produced them was able to control their appearance to a great extent. For this reason one must assume that the unusual shapes of the figures' heads are not the result of an accident but were created this way intentionally. The heads of the figures



fig. 29



fig. 30

appear to be covered with caps, which mask even the face (fig. 30). Such headwear is still common among indigenous people in the South-American Andes. Two lines which appear on top of the eyes resemble the shape of one side of a pair of spectacles. A part of the face, which could be interpreted as

the nose, appears on top of the head. It is possible that it was intended to portray the face looking upwards. Another explanation could be that this shape indicates not the position of a real nose but part of a mask, which carries a nose-like shape on top of the head. A third interpretation could be that this shape is not meant to represent a nose at all, but another kind of decoration such as can be seen on the depiction on a helmet-mount from Björnhovda, Öland, Sweden (fig. 31) and on the Sutton Hoo helmet from Essex, England (fig. 32).



fig. 31



fig. 32



fig. 33.
guldgubbe from Slöinge

Picture credits for Guldgubber

Post-stamp/*guldgubber*: http://www.historiska.se/collections/treasures/folkvandring/SHM_1464-e.html

Map of Scandinavia: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.

Map of area of Sorte Muld: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.

Standing male figures with a staff ('the princely-group'): after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Standing male figures with other attributes: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Standing female figures: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Double-*gubber*: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Figures in movement ('the dance-group'): after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Individually produced figures: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Animal figures: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.
Illustration Koch Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Guldgubber from Slöinge, Halland, Sweden: after Müller-Wille, Michael (1999).

Guldgubbe (woman with glass) from Bornholm: after Hauck, Karl.
Photography Nationalmuseum Copenhagen.

Guldgubbe (woman without glass) from Bornholm: after Hauck, Karl.
Photography Nationalmuseum Copenhagen.

Gold-sculpture of a woman (front and profile) from Trønninge/Kundby, Sealand: after Hauck, Karl.
Photography Nationalmuseum Copenhagen.

Guldgubbe from Törring, Jylland after Watt, Margrethe: *Guldgubber* og patricer til guldgubber fra Uppåkra.
In: *Fynden i centrum*. (= *Uppåkra-Studier 2*. Acta Archaeologica Lundensia Ser. In 8^o, No. 30, 1999), 177-190.

Bracteate, Allesø-B (M 159, like 5,4, = 13,1): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned)

Bracteate from Norway (?) - B (M 5,7 = 131): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned)

Guldgubbe from Sorte Muld (no. 279): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned)

Guldgubbe from Sorte Muld (no. 281): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned)

64 *guldgubber* from Lundeberg (Fyn): photography National Museum Copenhagen.

Guldgubbe from Sorte Muld (showing tongue): Photography Weiss, Kit, 1998, Nationalmuseet, Kopenhagen.

Shapes with symbolic values: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Patrice for a pendant (F.34), from Haithabu: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

(Schleswig Holsteinisches Landesmuseum, Germany)

Helmet-mount from Björnhovda, Öland, Sweden: after Jørgensen, L. and Petersen, V. 1998, p.221, fig. 165.

Picture-credits for application of perceptual principles in identifying symbolic values in *guldgubber*

One figure in movement (from 'the dance-group'): after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.

Illustration Koch, Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Two figures in movement ('the dance-group'): after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl.

Illustration Koch, Eva. (Place where items are kept, was not documented)

Patrice for a pendant, bird-shaped: photography Hupfauf, Peter (2002),

Archäologisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig.

Guldgubbe with incised male figure (detail), from Sorte Muld, Bornholm.

Photography Weiss, Kit, Nationalmuseet, Kopenhagen.

Guldgubber from Slöinge, Halland, Sweden: after Müller-Wille, Michael (1999).

Two faces: illustration Hupfauf, Peter (2002).

Guldgubbe (detail) from Slöinge, Halland, Sweden: after Müller-Wille, Michael (1999).

Bronze cast, depicting a Vendel warrior (detail): after Jørgensen, Lars and Vang Petersen, Peter (1998), p. 221, fig. 165.

Nationalmuseet, Kopenhagen.

Guldgubbe (detail) from Slöinge, Halland, Sweden: after Müller-Wille, Michael (1999).

6. Bracteates

The name bracteate derives from the Latin word *bractea*, which may be translated as ‘thin plate’.

Bracteates are disc-shaped golden pendants. They were produced and worn during the Migration Period and the earlier pieces, according to Axboe (1999b, 138) coincide with the Nydam Style (see p. 66). Axboe (1999a) mentioned bracteates which stylistically match well with fibulae, categorised as Style I, produced just after 450. This dating, according to Axboe, correlates with finds of dated coins also deposited together with bracteates at this time. Bracteates are made from thin sheets of gold pressed into a mould with a negative form of the image which was meant to be depicted. The result of this process presents an image, stamped from the visible (front) side, similar to coins, which in many instances also portray an important person. Bracteates were found attached to strings and leather straps which were used to wear these pendants on the chest or close to the neck, as talismans to enhance luck or gain protection.

The production of bracteates ceased, according to Axboe (1999b, 139) after approximately one hundred years (about 550), when the Vendel Period began. This coincides with the end of section A of the Gotland picture stones, a period in which the most impressive monuments were created, and the end of Style I, which was defined by Salin (1904) as an artistic style which included all artefacts produced in northern Europe up to the sixth century.

Even if bracteates appear very similar to coins, they differ in that they are not currency. However, Simek (1984) described their origin as “imitation of emperors medals from late Antiquity” (p.55). Medallions were worn, according to Hauck (1985), by the time of Constantine the Great. Gladigow (1992) described an amulet which depicted a deity as a miniature form of a temple or god-statue, which was tied on to a person’s body. Simek emphasised particularly the Hellenic practice of wearing a statuette representing one of the deities, which was an expression of “individual, personal spirituality” (p.18) that could be practised at any time, anywhere. Originally, medallions were currency. However, they gained the status of amulets and were worn as pendants. People from the North, as Bakka (1968) mentioned, who may have served as mercenaries in the Roman army, may have adopted the custom of wearing a medallion with the depiction of the emperor (who was regarded as sacred). This custom might have been brought to the North by these people, but the emperor’s portrait was soon replaced by a Nordic sacred image (in many cases an image of a figure most likely representing Óðinn).

It seems that in the area of today's southern Germany bracteates were replaced predominantly by embossed metal-sheet fibulae, which show a remarkable identity with bracteates. They appeared, according to Klein-Pfeuffer (1993), mainly in Frankish and Alamannic graves from the seventh and eighth centuries AD.

The depictions on metal-sheet fibulae are predominantly Christian. Because of the lack of local pictorial interpretations of Christian themes, the artists or craftspeople copied images from Roman and Byzantine coins. It appears, according to Klein-Pfeuffer (1993), that animals like the dove or the lamb, which have a symbolic interpretation in Christian context, are replacements of animals which had relevance in heathen Germanic society. One of these was the eagle. The eagle, according to Klein-Pfeuffer (1993), which was associated with Óðinn, represented Christ on the metal-sheet fibulae. The author further mentioned images of the tree of life, which replaced Yggdrasill. It seems that Klein-Pfeuffer assumed that the images of an eagle and a tree on the metal-sheet fibulae may be of Christian nature because Christianity was already established in the area and at the time when these fibulae were created. Because the images on these metal-sheet fibulae refer so strongly to Christian iconography, it was decided not elaborate further about these otherwise very interesting artefacts.

Simek (1984) stated that about one third of all bracteates show runic inscriptions. The custom of placing on a bracteate an image such as that of an emperor represents a copy of a medallion's appearance. The Mediterranean medallions had Latin (capitals) inscriptions and some of the bracteates, according to Hauck (1985), bear inscriptions in Roman Capitals. These inscriptions were of little relevance to the Nordic peoples. Therefore runes were used to replace them. Several of these inscriptions identify the maker of the bracteate, others carry the name of the owner, but most of the runic inscriptions are of magical character and are meant to enforce the magic powers of the bracteates themselves. Düwel (2001) stated that 216 known bracteates carry inscriptions of various kinds. Düwel (1992) mentioned that *al*, or *alu* (regarded by most scholars as representing good luck), which was found in many runic inscriptions, might stand for an object believed to keep evil away. This object might be a bracteate itself, which gained the status of an amulet. Other names mentioned by Düwel were *huilald*, *walhakurne* and *wiwald*. The author also referred to *Rígsþula* (stanza 28) *kinga var á bringo* which might be translated as a *kinga* was on the chest. *Kinga* was identified by Düwel as a coin with a little handle - a shank. He stated that this would be, most likely, a bracteate. It was, according to Düwel (1992, 79), also applied in *Laxdæla Saga*, chapter 76, where a grave of a female magician was described in which a *kinga* (bracteate) and a *seiðstafr* (magic wand) were found. *Kinga*, according to the author, was also used as a translation of the Greek word drachma, which denotes the Greek currency.

Simek listed the following places with approximate numbers of finds:

Denmark 300

Sweden 190

Norway 160

England 30

European continent, south of Scandinavia 20.

Simek (1987) and Hauck (1985) both detailed the division of styles in which bracteates appear. According to these authors, the categorisation was devised during the nineteenth century by Thomson (1855) and applied by Montelius (1869).

Hauck (1985) identified the bracteate types as follows:

M-bracteates (fig. 1) are Nordic copies of the imperial *multipla* which are commonly called medallions. M-bracteates represent the oldest kind of transition of traditional sacred amulets, made from gold, in the North. The depicted figure may represent Óðinn.



fig. 1.

Midtmjelde-M (M2, 3b = 126)

A-bracteates (fig. 2) depict a person (Óðinn), or a head in profile, similar to depictions on earlier Roman emperor-medals. Sometimes A-bracteates show also one or more animals together with the portrait.



fig. 2.

Revsgård-A (A 103 = 145)

B-bracteates depict one, two or three complete human figures, sometimes in conjunction with animals. Some of the B-bracteates are thought to depict the killing of Baldr.



fig. 3.

Beresina-area-B (M 6,16 = 20)

C-bracteates complement the emperor-like image (Óðinn as healer) with an animal with a tail, independently from other possible depictions. Most runic inscriptions on bracteates were found on C-bracteates.



fig. 4.

Gummersmark, Maglemose (III),
IK=300 (M 6 = 20)

D-bracteates (fig. 5) present a stylised animal/fantasy creature, sometimes entwined or in several parts, in the centre of the design. D-bracteates show no runic inscriptions.



fig. 5.
Monkton-D (467)

F-bracteates depict an animal as the central image, which is comparable to animals appearing on C-bracteates but without a portrait. Düwel (2001) argued that this animal usually represents Baldr's very vigorous foal, which is also mentioned on p. 147 in this document.

Like the Roman medallions, most of the bracteates show a person or the portrait of a person. On Roman medallions, the depicted person was usually the emperor. Simek (1984) suggested that the depicted male person on bracteates, in most instances, most likely represents Óðinn, the magician and highest of all Norse gods. According to the author, Óðinn is represented in most cases (C-bracteates) performing a healing procedure while riding on a horse.

Hauck (1992) presented some bracteates (fig. 6 - 9) which depict three male figures. These figures are identified by the author as Óðinn, Baldr and Loki. According to Hauck, the scene depicts the situation as described in Snorri Sturluson's *Gylfaginning* "... then it became an entertainment for Baldr and the Æsir that he should stand up at assemblies and all the others should either shoot at him or strike at him or throw stones at him" (translated by Faulkes 1987, 48). Hauck suggested that this performance represents a sacrificial offering, as known from archaic Mediterranean cultures where the throwing of stones was performed for this purpose. Hauck (1992, 498) also considered that Óðinn may be shown giving a coin to Baldr, as it was common, according to Hauck, to place a coin in a dead person's hand, mouth or on the eyes. Hauck recognised a figure carrying a sword as Loki, in the role of an offering-assistant. This role, as pointed out by Hauck, is similar to that played by Hermes. Because of this, Hauck stated, young ministrants in Lebadeia called themselves Hermai. It is known that Northern cultures adopted customs and fashions from Mediterranean cultures; however, Hauck's suggestions can be regarded as hypotheses only.



fig. 6.
Gummerup-B (A 52a = 66)



fig. 7.
Denmark-B (M 6,14 = 39)



fig. 8.
Denmark-B (M 6,15 = 40)



fig. 9.
Gudme-B (51,3)

The bracteate from Fakse (B) was used by Hauck (1994), to illustrate how figures depicted on bracteates may be identified by additional picture elements and attributes.



fig. 10,
Fakse (B) (M 6,11 = 51,1)

On the left one can observe a figure with a feather/wing-like element on the back. This figure was identified by the author as Loki, because Loki appeared in West-Norse skaldic, as well as in eddic, poetry as being able to fly. Baldr, positioned in the centre of the composition, can be recognised by the twig, or arrow, piercing his body. This arrow was made from a mistletoe twig and shot by Høðr, guided by Loki. On the right-hand side is a figure with a spear next to it (probably Gungnir, Óðinn's spear). On top, in front of the figure, one can recognise the belly and a claw of a bird (eagle), which is one of Óðinn's attributed animals. The bracteate from Kogsvad (A) represents a formal variation of Loki and Óðinn. Here, Loki is shown without wings but with a bird-like body. He is depicted carrying a mistletoe twig. Óðinn is signified by a head-dress/style, incorporating diadem-balls at the back of his head. Hauck emphasised that this certainly signifies Óðinn, even if similar head-dresses were also known in connection with other gods.

The rectangular shape with some round objects attached represents, according to Hauck (1985), a rail or a stick at a stage when Baldr presents himself a target for the Æsir. The little round objects were assumed by Hauck to be most likely objects like bells, to ring when the target was hit. Because such an instrument is not known from the literature, one must consider alternative explanations. Techniques known from the field of visual perception were applied (pp.148-149), in order to analyse this and other shapes shown on bracteates discussed here.

Bracteates quite often depict only the head of a figure. This, however, as Hauck (1985) suggested, is meant to represent the whole person. The very limited space on a bracteate would not have allowed the artist to show the full figure. This technique, according to Hauck, was already common in earlier Mediterranean coin designs.

The D-bracteate from Nebenstedt, Dannenberg, Niedersachsen, in Germany (fig. 11) was presented by Roth (1986), who used it as an example to demonstrate how human and animal parts were combined.



fig. 11

Roth (1986) defined a bird's head, a kidney-shaped ribbon-like body with two long twisted legs which depict a human foot at the end, in profile. Roth called it *Vogelmensch* (bird-

person) (p.21). The depiction on this bracteate would neatly fit into the range of human/animal designs presented by Roth; however, one may be puzzled as to why the bracteate depicts a third (short) leg in the centre of the composition. Roth unfortunately ignored its existence. It appears quite odd that, in many cases, the four-legged animal on which presumably Óðinn is shown riding has horns and a beard, while the hooves and the tail appear horse-like.

László (1974) presented illustrations of three bracteates. One bracteate was found in Vadstena, one in Asum and one in Hägeby (fig 12). The first two depict the image of a rider (head only) on a horse. In both cases the horses have horns. The horses on the bracteate from Hägeby also shows horses with horns, without riders. László speculated that this is meant to indicate that the horses do the fighting for their masters. The author explained that horses wearing masks with bull-horns already had a long history reaching back to the Late Palaeolithic Age. A rock-drawing from the Les Combarelles cave, as mentioned by the author, shows such bull-headed horses. The horse of Alexander the Great, according to László, “was called *Bucephalus*, meaning bull-headed” (p. 111).

László noted that the horse with a bull-head was found in Buddhist depictions as well as early Caucasian bronze casts.

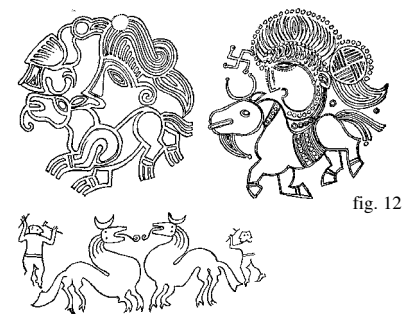


fig. 12

Associated signs

Behr (1992) investigated signs added to the main depictions on bracteates. The author called these signs *Beizeichen* (associated signs). They were, according to him, also called symbols, holy signs and ornaments.

The meaning of these associated signs is unknown, as is their origin. However, Behr speculated that variations in the positioning of signs on a bracteate may demonstrate a ranking of importance and may help to interpret the meaning of the various bracteates. Most of the associated signs also appear on items from several other cultures, which, according to Behr, makes it quite impossible to extract a particular significance. The Roman ‘multipla’, the prototypes for bracteates, however, do not show any such associated signs.

Unlike the main depictions on bracteates, which show concrete images such as persons, portraits, animals and fantasy-creatures, these associated signs depict abstract shapes. These shapes are dots, circles made from dots, sometimes solitary and sometimes arranged as groups; others are swastikas, crosses, triangles, triskeles, rosettes, circles, angles, spirals and curves. Most of the associated signs are single dots or groups of dots (triangles, squares and circles made from dots). The second most prevalent associated sign is the swastika. Most are oriented to the left, but some face right.

Behr (1992) reported that about 300 bracteates include associated signs and about 240 bracteates have none. The associated signs are distributed among all bracteate types, such as the A-, B-, C-, D- and F-bracteates. Half of all A-bracteates have associated signs, as do two thirds of the B-bracteates and one third of the D-bracteates. Behr also found that earlier bracteates (A-bracteates) showed fewer and more simplified associated signs than the later B- and C-bracteates. The D-bracteates also show fewer associated signs, and the author assumed that the reason for that could be that a different theme was depicted on the D-bracteates which made it unnecessary to use associated signs.

Dots and circles made from dots are shown predominantly on A- and D-bracteates, such as one from Gerete, Gotland (fig. 13). The more “differentiated associated signs” (Behr, p.116) can be found on the B- and C-bracteates.

Behr observed that the associated signs on the A-, B- and D-bracteates, like the one from Ven, Skåne, are relatively simple designs. The C-bracteates depict far more elaborate designs. The F-bracteates were not mentioned.



fig. 13, Gerete, Gotland.
M 211 Taf. 12,6 (=IK62,1).

One third of all A-bracteates show a swastika, half of all C-bracteates show a swastika and D-bracteates never show a swastika.



fig. 14, Ven, Schonen.
M 253, 377 Taf.9,7 (=IK 235)

Associated signs were positioned anywhere on bracteates; however, Behr mentioned that a placing of associated signs near the head of the depicted person seems to have been preferred on A-, B- and C-bracteates. More complex signs, such as the swastika or the rosette, appear more often in front of the faces and triskeles are found more often at the back of the heads. Behr considered the positioning, as on the bracteate from Darum, West-Jylland, as a possibly symbolic expression as well as a simple practical space-saving arrangement.



fig. 15, Allesø, Fyn,
M 53 Taf.5,4 (=IK 13,1)

C-bracteates depicting a bird in addition to the portrait of a person and a four-legged animal show associated signs in fewer cases than C-bracteates without a depicted bird.

Most of the bracteates with associated signs were found in Southern Scandinavia. Bracteates with triskeles were predominantly found in Sjælland, Fyn and North Jylland (Denmark). Several bracteates with a sign, based on the number three (three dots in a triangular constellation), were found in Sjælland, South-Sweden, the Swedish islands and Västergötland, West-Sweden.

Behr suggested considering the positioning of associated signs on bracteates, in relation to their main depictions, as an indicator of particular expressions or ranks.

Behr (1992) mentioned three C-bracteates belonging to the category called Åkarp. Two of these bracteates were found in Fjärestad/Gantofa, Skåne (picture 16/1), and one on the island of Ven (picture 16/2). These three bracteates depict a swastika, and the first of them is (and this is rare) made up from dots. The swastikas are, in all three cases, placed in front of a depicted face.



fig. 16,
1. Fjärestad/Gantofa, Skåne. M 244 Taf. 9,6 and 24,4 (IK 53)
2. Ven, Skåne. M 249, Taf. 9,8 (=IK 235)
3. Dybäck, Skåne. M 253, 377 Taf.9,7 (=IK 235)
4. Åkarp, Skåne. A 238 Taf. VII (=IK 4)
5. Hermanstorp, Skåne. M 241 Taf. 9,9 (=IK272)

Behr (1992) emphasised that a second and unusual associated sign is shown, a double-circle. Another Åkarp bracteate was found in Dybäck, Skåne (picture 16/3), depicting a double-circle. In this case, however, the associated sign is positioned differently from the one previously mentioned, under the front legs of the depicted animal. A further seven bracteates fit into the category of Åkarp. However, only one of them, the bracteate from Stenholts Vang on Sjælland, depicts also an associated sign – three dots in a triangular position, in front of the upper part of the face. Bracteate no. 16/4 was found in Åkarp, Skåne and no. 16/5 in Hermanstorp, Skåne.

Behr concluded that 10 different bracteate models were found which fit into the category of Åkarp. These bracteates were found in Skåne and neighbouring areas.

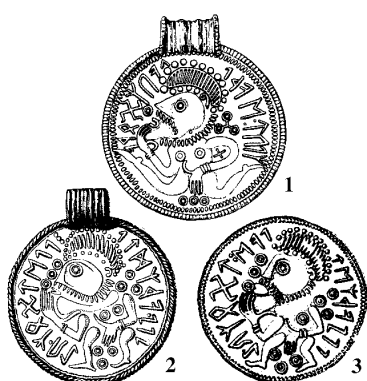


fig. 17,
 1. Allesø, Fyn.
 M 53 Taf. 5,4 (IK 13,1)
 2. Nebenstadt, Niedersachsen.
 M 323 Taf. 5,19 (=IK 129,1)
 3. Darum, Jylland.
 M 99 Taf. 5, 16 (=IK 129,2)

A second category of bracteates, was discussed by Behr, the Allesø. Three B-bracteates from this category were found on the island of Fyn (17/1), one in Nebenstadt, Niedersachsen (17/2) and one in Darum, Jylland (17/3). These Allesø bracteates depict a swastika placed in the inscription at the edge. The swastika is always placed level with the face. The other associated signs (dotted circles in triangular formation, dotted circles in line and dotted circles, varied to such an extent that they appear as triskele) are not identical. The main image on these bracteates is one single man, in identical positioning. Particularly striking are the identical hand gestures.

Dödevi is the name of the third category of bracteates mentioned by Behr. The author identified seven bracteates from Öland (Dödevi, Bostorb, Tjusby, Lundeby, Holmetorp and Lilla Istad) and one from Gerete (Götland), as well as one (two fragments) from Bornholm, two from Ravlunda and two from Vä (Skåne), and one from Wapno in Poland, as Dödevi-bracteates. The author



fig. 18,
 1. Dödevi, Öland. M 192 Taf. 11,12 (=IK 45)
 2. Bostorp, Öland A 189 a/3 Taf. V (=IK 223)
 3. Gerete, Gotland M 211 Taf. 12,6 (=IK 62,1)
 4. Lilla Istad, Öland M 191 Taf. 12 (=IK 106)

observed that the Dödevi-bracteates differ more from each other, than bracteates within the previous two categories. However, Behr stated that these bracteates would still fit into one category. A dotted circle (rosette) is shown on three of the bracteates. These rosettes are positioned in front of the depicted person's forehead. The author assumed that this represents a variation of the forehead-jewel, as known from the Roman Multipla. Four of the Dödevi C-bracteates depict additionally a swastika behind the depicted head. The arms of these swastikas end with a dot. Some of the bracteates mentioned show no associated signs, which indicates, according to the author, that associated signs were not simply filling material.



fig. 19,

1. Sjælland (I). M 20 Taf. 7,20 (= IK 330)
2. Maglemose, (II). Sjælland. M 33 Taf. 7,21 (= IK 301)
3. Lynge Gyde, Sjælland M 26 Taf. 7,27 (= IK 298)
4. Hammenhög, Skåne M 242 Taf. 7,29 (= IK 267)
5. Danmark (I) M 18 Taf. 8,8 (= IK 229)
6. Danmark(II) M 343 Taf. 7,26 (= IK 364)

The fourth category introduced by Behr is called Aversis.

The distribution of the Aversis bracteates was described by Behr, as follows:

One bracteate was simply described as found in Denmark. Two bracteates were described as found in Denmark, but the precise place is not known. One bracteate was simply described as found in Sjælland (fig. 19/1), one in Maglemose (fig. 19/2), one in Lynge Gyde (fig. 19/3), one in Aversis, one in Kitnæs, one in Lekkende Have, one in Ejby, all in Sjælland. One bracteate was found in Hammenhög,

Skåne (fig. 19/4). One bracteate was simply described as found on the island of Fyn, one was found in Killerup, Fyn, one in the area of Tved, East-Jylland, one in the area of Beresina, Russia, one in Kjøllegård, Bornholm, one in Bostorp, Öland, one in Fredrikstad, Østfold. One bracteate is simply described as found on Gotland, one in Gurfiles (not secured), Gotland, one in Visby Kungsladugården, Gotland, one in Djupbrunns, Gotland, one in Öster Ryftes, Gotland, one in Almungs, Gotland.

Fourteen of the Aversis bracteates show swastikas with arms which are twice angled. All these swastikas are in front of the depicted face, above the animal-head. Nine of these bracteates have runic inscriptions. Some of these inscriptions represent *laikar*-formulas. Others show the inscription *eelil*. A bracteate from Ejby depicts a small spiral which might represent a snake. A bracteate from Killerup depicts a cross. Behr emphasised that with one exception, a bracteate from an unknown find in Denmark (fig. 19/5), all depicted heads which on the main image are placed on an upper torso. All these torsos, with the exception of a bracteate from Bostorp, present decorations made up by dots. The animals' front legs are all depicted as spread far out, as if to represent a jumping position. Nearly all back legs are also spread out (with the exception of the bracteate from Bostorp, a bracteate from an unknown find site in Denmark (fig. 19/6), a bracteate from an area of Beresina and the bracteate from Killerup). Only four animals do not have horns and only one animal does not show a tongue hanging out of the mouth. The bracteates from Fredrikstad, Fride, Öster, Ryftes and Riksarve each depict a Greek cross in front of the face, while those from Fride, Öster, Ryftes and Riksarve also show it behind the head. The inscription of the bracteate from Gurfiles represents *laba*, which can be translated as invitation.

Symbolic elements in main depictions on bracteates

It was customary in Antiquity, according to Bakka (1968), to wear medallions on which Roman emperors were depicted. These depictions were regarded as sacred. People from the North adopted this fashion during the fourth century AD and placed comparable images from their own culture on coin-like tablets of gold.

In most cases, bracteates depict a whole person or a person's portrait. In cases where only a figure's head is shown, it still represents the whole person (Hauck, 1984). The depiction on most of the bracteates, according to Simek (1987), signifies in most cases a deity and, in the majority of instances, the god Óðinn.

Hauck (1992) proposed that the figure depicted on most of the bracteates may be Óðinn. He came to this conclusion because the headdress appears similar to the helmet commonly used to depict Mars, the Roman god of war. One or two lines, sometimes straight but often bent in wave-form, are often added to the portrait. These signs, according to the author, represent the figure's breath and are therefore called breath-signs. Hauck referred to the bracteate from Sievern (A) which shows a portrait with breath-sign and related it to one of Wodan/Óðinn's names *rasarr*¹. Old Icelandic *rás* was translated by Cleasby (1957) as well as Baetke (1993) as as rush, race, running, which could be interpreted as being furious. A further proof that the discussed figure is Óðinn was presented by Hauck, using the bracteate from Gudme (C) as an example. In this case, the headdress of the depicted figure merges at the end of the back into a snake head. Ófnir and Sváfnir are, according to Hauck, snake names, which were also used as appellations of Óðinn (*Grímnismál 54, Gylfaginning*).



Bracteates depicting a figure with a thumb in its mouth (fig. 20) represent, according to Hauck (1992) “an archaic ritual of gaining wisdom, by biting on one's thumb, which causes heavy pain and visions” (p.545).

fig. 20, Bracteate from Lellinge Kohave-B

The poem *Fáfnismál* in the *Poetic Edda* as well as a passage in *Skáldskaparmál* in Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda* describe the episode in which Sigurðr, a hero from the family of the Volsungs, killed the dragon Fáfnir. Sigurd then cut out Fáfnir's heart and roasted it on a spit. When Sigurðr tried the heart to see if he could eat it, he stuck his thumb into the meat and got burned. He then stuck the thumb in his mouth. When some of Fáfnir's heart blood came on his tongue, it made Sigurðr understand the language of the birds.

¹ Falk, Hjalmar, *Odinsheite* (Videnskapsselskapets Skrifter, II.Hist.-Filos. Klasse. 1924. No. 10).

Hauck assumed that the horses depicted on many bracteates represent Baldr's horse. The author referred to the second of the *Merseburg charms*, where Phol is mentioned. It tells how Phol and Wodan were riding into the wood, when Baldr's horse dislocated its foreleg. Sintgunt and Sunna sang over it, then Friia and Volla. Finally Wodan (Óðinn) sang over it. The songs represented a healing magic. The story says that Óðinn's magic healed the horse. Simek (1993, 278-9) stated that it is disputed whether Baldr refers to the son of Óðinn or whether it is meant to signify lord and refers to the god Wodan. The figure named Phol, according



fig. 21



fig. 22

to Simek, is also not clarified. He referred to Brate's (1919) hypothesis that Phol is Fol, the brother of Fulla (Volla), both of whom may be regarded as "corresponding to the Scandinavian gods Freyr and Freyja" (Simek, 1993, 278).



fig. 23

Bracteates from Gudme (fig. 21) and Obermöllern (fig. 22) depicted horses falling on their heads. Hauck (1992) explained this positioning as a symbolic representation of Baldr's dying horse. The author compared this kind of symbolic representation with an illustration depicting David and Goliath, from an Irish psalter (Cambridge, St. Johns College, MS C.9) (fig. 23). In this case, David, alive, is depicted standing upright on his feet. Goliath, however, being dead, is shown upside down. This too, according to Hauck, symbolises death. Through this comparison, it was suggested that the horses depicted on these bracteates are meant to be understood as dead.

The bracteate Denmark-B, M6,15 (fig. 24) depicts, according to Hauck (1992), Óðinn, Baldr and Loki. It seems that Baldr is holding an object in his left hand, which appears vaguely in the shape of an Arabic number nine. Denmark-B, M6,14 (fig. 25) depicts the same scene but the shape of a nine appears as mirror-image. The same occurs in Gudme-B,

51,3 (fig. 26) and Gummerup-B, A52a (fig. 27), where the mirror-image shape (of a nine) has a little serif attached at the bottom, similar to serifs on Roman letters. A similar scenery is shown on the bracteate Fakse-B, M6,11 (fig. 28). In this case, the object held by the figure which (most likely) represents Baldr shows a circle on the end of either side.

The shapes of interest on the bracteates Denmark-B, M6,15, Denmark-B, M6,14, Gudme-B, 51,3 and Gummerup-B, A52a look like an Arabic number nine. However, the Arabic numerical system is not known to have been introduced in Central and Northern Europe during the early Middle Ages, therefore one must consider alternative values for the nine-like shape.

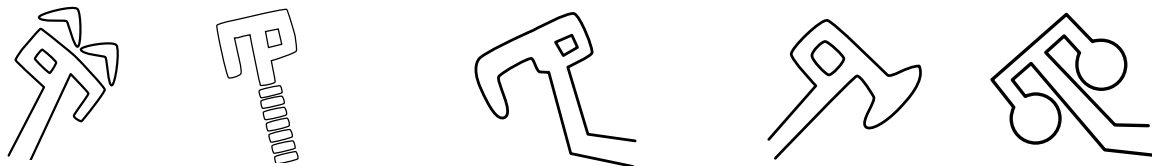


fig. 29

The expression of the number nine in Devanagari (fig. 29), however, may explain a numerical value of the sign in question. Devanagari is the name of the script used to write Sanskrit. Arabic numerals derived from this letter system. The letter nine in Devanagari has a shape closely related to the number nine used in Western society now.

Considering that the Devanagari-shaped numbers were adapted by the Arabs, it is possible that they were also known by people in northern Europe. A link between the northern European and Asian cultures may be seen in the signs that appeared on spear heads from Suszyczno (Kowel), Rozwadów, Mos and Stabu Øvre. These signs are identical with signs of ownership identified by Hachmann (1993) from Sarmatic tribes who lived in the northern part of the Black Sea area. The movements of peoples during the migration period could have brought this nine-like sign to the north.

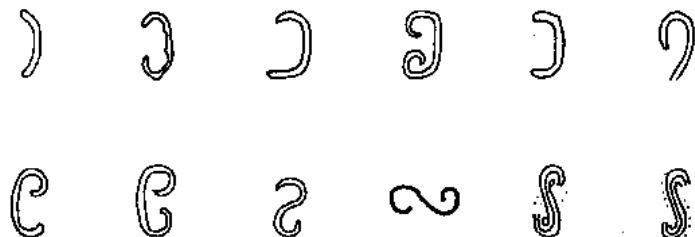


fig. 30

In support of the possibility of the depiction of a number nine, we know from Old Norse sources that this number was important in early Norse society but, for the argument to have weight, people would have to have recognised the symbol as meaning nine. The number nine, as stated by Polomé (1992), was of great importance in Germanic culture. In dividing the moon-year, a week had nine days. Óðinn was said in *Hávamál* to have spent nine days and nights hanging on a tree, where he gained the wisdom of the runes. This may be a reference to an initiation ritual. As the mathematical result of three times three, according to Polomé, the number nine refers also to the Norns. Heimdallr was said to have had nine mothers. The universe was believed to consist of nine worlds. Polomé (1992, 409) mentioned the “nine-yearly offering ceremonies” in Hleiðr (Denmark) and Uppsala, where every day for nine days, nine living beings (eight animals and one human being) were sacrificed. Gerðr promised Skírnir to meet Freyr in Barrey after nine nights. On every ninth night, it was believed, the ring Draupnir would create eight copies of itself (making nine). Skaði and Njörðr agreed to live for nine days in Prymheimr and then another nine days in Nóatún.

An enlargement of the shapes reveals further details. Through application of segmentation points (fig. 31) (see p. 33) it appears that the shape of the mirror-image nine-like object on the bracteate Denmark-B, M6,15 (fig. 34) may represent an abstracted image of the head of a bird of prey (fig. 31 and 32). Equally, the objects on Denmark-B, M6,14 (fig. 25) and Gudme-B, 51,3 (fig. 26) could be explained by the same assumption.

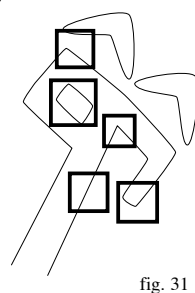


fig. 31

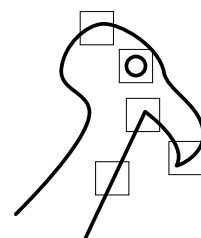


fig. 32





fig. 33



fig. 34

Two triangular shapes (fig. 44) are added to the nine-like form. An object with exactly this appearance seems not to have had any particular relevance in early northern Europe; however, the two triangle shapes are used to depict boomerangs, wings and eye-brows. Because boomerangs are not known to have been a weapon in Migration-Age Northern Europe, it may be that the triangles represent the shape of wings or eye-brows. Wings may have been added, similar to compositions known in abstract art, where elements are not necessarily positioned for their function but for their emotional expression. Exaggerated images of eyebrows were placed on helmets, such as that from a Vendel grave from approximately 600 AD. An depiction of eye brows on this bracteate, however, seems to be unlikely.

The enlargement of the object shown on Gummerup-B, A52a (fig. 27) appears, on the left hand side, similar to the object shown on Denmark-B, M6, 15 (fig. 24) () on the right hand side. However, the Gummerup's nine-like shape shows a little stroke (serif) () added to it, giving the whole object the appearance of a modern trumpet. Following the segmentation

points, as shown in figs. 35 and 36, it appears as if the right hand side of this object, on its own resembles vaguely the shape (gestalt) of a blade of an axe (fig. 37).

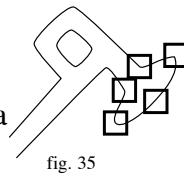


fig. 35

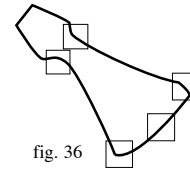


fig. 36



fig. 37

The object on Fakse-B, M6,11 (fig. 28 [copy]) shows certain similarities with the shape of a scale (fig. 38). The horizontal balance bar and the equally sized circles resemble the necessary elements to be recognised as a scale. The scale was a symbol for justice and balance in Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome.

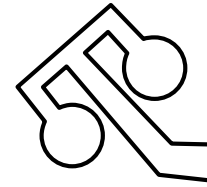


fig. 28 (copy)



fig. 38

Following the suggestions of Kasenova, Mistry and Kozareff (2002), one may categorise the nine-like shapes on Denmark-B, M6,14 (fig. 25), Gudme-B, 51,3 (fig. 26) and Gummerup-B, A52a (fig. 27) as squarish. These authors' interpretation of the square as representing honesty and straightforwardness appears suitable to be associated with the description of Baldr in *Gylfaginning* (Snorri Sturluson, trans. Faulkes, 1987, 23), as he "is so fair in appearance and so bright that light shines from him, and there is a plant so white that it is called after Baldr's eyelash. It is the whitest of all plants... . He is the wisest of the Æsir and most beautifully spoken... ."

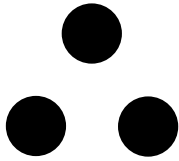
The two wing-like triangular shapes depicted together with the nine-like shape represent, according to Kasenova et al. (2002), action, agitation, conflict, tension and aspiration. These are terms which could be associated with the situation depicted on the bracteate.

The object depicted on Fakse-B, M6,11 (fig. 28), with its ball-like endings on either side, was interpreted by Kasenova et al. (2002) as sun-like, warm and protective.

It is possible that on the bracteates the figure which most likely represent Baldr is shown holding a toy or a musical instrument because the scene depicted is described in *Gylfaginning* as rather playful "it became an entertainment for Baldr and the Æsir that he should stand up at assemblies and all the others should either shoot him or strike at him or throw stones at him. But whatever they did he was unharmed and they all thought this a great glory" (Snorri Sturluson, trans. Faulkes, 1987, 48). However, it may also be possible that signs were placed at the end of Baldr's arm (in his hand) emphasising some of his attributes, like signs placed separately on some bracteates, identified by Behr (1992) as Beizeichen (associated signs).

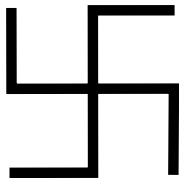
Symbolic expressions of associated signs on bracteates


Three dots



Liungman (1991) described the symbolic representations of three dots positioned in a triangular arrangement as hobo dots. Today, in Sweden, they are tattooed on the skin, between the forefinger and the thumb. This may be regarded as having protective properties. Of some significance for bracteates may be Liungman's interpretation of the sign as being "an old sign for pawnbrokers and money-lenders, still used today in the business world" (p.284). A money-lender is, compared to those who need the money, situated in a powerful, quite wealthy position.

Swastika



The swastika is described by Liungman as an ideogram which derived from the sun-god  sign established in the Euphrates-Tigris region. There it represented the highest god, power and life force. Liungman explained that the arms of the swastika represent the outspread wings of a four pointed star. The name swastika, according to Liungman, derived from Sanskrit, where *su* meant good and *asti* being, thus swasti might be translated as well-being, good fortune. Bruce-Mitford (1996) stated that the swastika predates Hinduism. In India, however, it "is associated with the sun and the wheel of birth and rebirth" (p.20). The arms are angled in a clockwise direction. In an anti-clockwise direction the sign is known as *sauvastika* and is associated with negative attitudes.

The Hittites and ancient Greeks used the sign for decorations on coins, ceramics and buildings. Liungman assumed that the Eastern Buddhist and Greek pagan associations of the swastika resulted in the discontinuation of its use in Christian Europe. In Scandinavian cultures, however, the swastika was continuously applied. A Swedish company producing electrical machinery (ABB) used the swastika as its logo and the Finnish Whites used the swastika as their sign, calling it the Cross of Freedom, in the civil war in 1918. The swastika, anti-clockwise, appeared in early 20th century Germany and Austria as an anti-Semitic symbol and Hitler and his fascist government used this sign to represent their perverted racial ideas and inhumane politics.

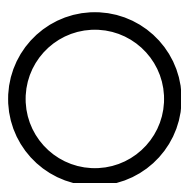
Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) stated that the swastika represents, due to the arms attached at the end of the crossbars, some kind of circular movement. They claimed that the extending arms would point towards the direction of movement. This seems unusual, because in human perception objects seem to carry a blurred shade behind them in fast movement, not in front. However, the authors regard the swastika as a representation of cyclical activities and perpetual regeneration.

Triskele



The triskele was described by Bruce-Mitford (1996) as a sign representing “good fortune” (p.105). According to Whittick (1960), the triskele symbolises the sun. The author regards the sign as similar to the swastika, symbolising revival. The triskele can be found, like the Ying and Yang sign, on many East Asian artefacts, representing, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996), heaven, mankind and earth. Liungman (1991), stated that the triskele was common in Greece after 400 AD. The fact that the three curved shapes of the triskele were quite often depicted as three legs was explained by Whittick by the fact that in ancient cultures the sun was believed to be dragged around by a hero. Whittick pointed to the Greek culture, where the sun was “anthropomorphised” (p.284) into Apollo, Hercules Orpheus and others. The legs of these figures might be understood in the legs of triskeles. The British Isle of Man uses a triskele with three legs and feet in its coat of arms.

Circle



The disc, often represented by a circle, is according to Whittick (1960) a widely distributed representation of the sun. It was “found in Egypt, Asia Minor, India, China, Greece and various parts of the Roman Empire” (p.170). The author mentioned that the disc was often used in conjunction with the swastika, triskele, trisula, crescent, thunderbolt and trident. In cases where several discs were depicted around one centre-disc, Whittick assumed that would represent the sun revolving around the earth.

The dwarfs Brokk and Eitri are described in *Skáldskaparmál* as having made the golden arm-ring Draupnir (dripper), which they gave to Óðinn. The ring creates eight further rings

every ninth night. Óðinn placed this ring on Baldr's funeral pyre. The ring was returned to Óðinn by Hermóðr. This return is regarded by Clunies Ross (1994) as "representing at least a partial recovery of the Æsir's generative powers" (p.77). Düwel (1997) referred to Hauck (1992) who stated that a ring shown on bracteates should be understood as a providential sign for transcendence into another world.

Application of perceptual principles for identification of symbolic elements on bracteates

It is noticeable that some C-bracteates were designed in such a manner that some of the negative space (background) appears to hold an image. This effect might occur accidentally. However, it is possible that it was created deliberately. Consistent with the rules of Gestalt theory, Bruce and Green (1985) referred to the positive/negative observation which takes place when images are viewed. The discrimination between a shape and a surrounding space assists in the process of recognising an image. Adding tonal variation enables an artist to position images against one another in primary or secondary position. When the tonal values are left the same, however, the observer must decide what is primary or secondary. If an observer decides to concentrate on an interlocked, most likely secondary image, as discussed in this case, a process takes place which was described by Marr and Nishihara (1978), in which the observer tries to detect segmentation points which are used to construct the internal skeleton of a meaningful object.

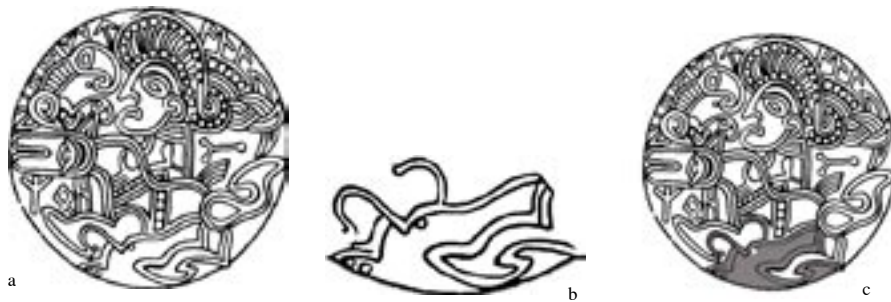


fig. 39, Bracteate from Gummersmark

A shape similar to a horned animal can be found on the bracteate from Gummersmark.

During the fifth and sixth centuries in northern Europe, artists and craftsmen developed the stylistic feature of interlacing ornaments. It is possible that the application of background/foreground imagery may have been an earlier attempt to achieve an effect equivalent to the interlacing ornamentation which appeared subsequently. The effect of such techniques may be to hide from the uninitiated certain information, and/or to add illustrative ornamentation instead of leaving the space empty.

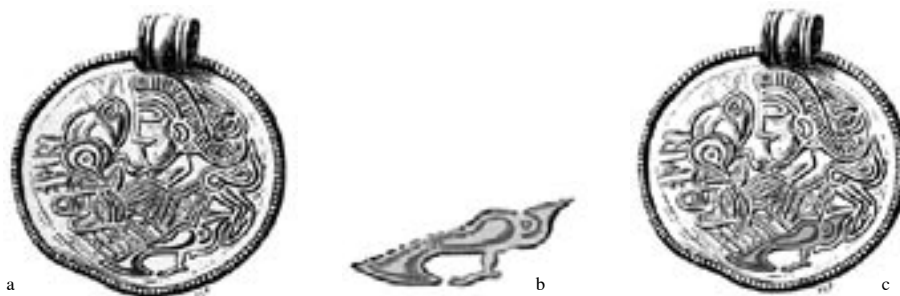


fig. 40, Bracteate from Randers

The shape of a second bird appears at the bottom of the bracteate from Randers.



fig. 41, Bracteate from Skonager

It seems as if a fish or whale with a spout is depicted on the bracteate from Sconager

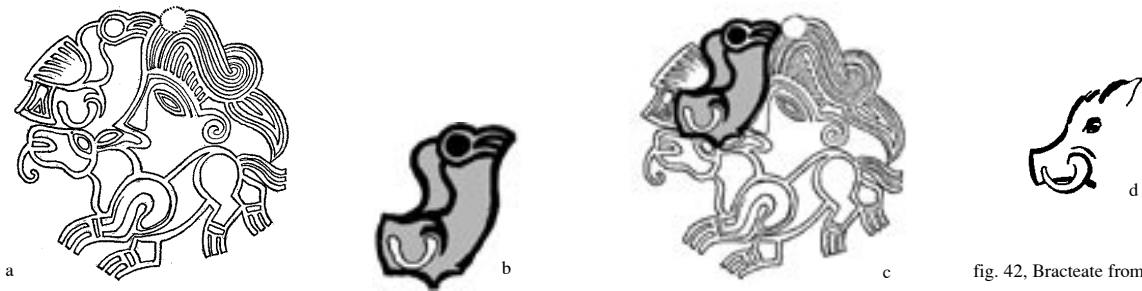


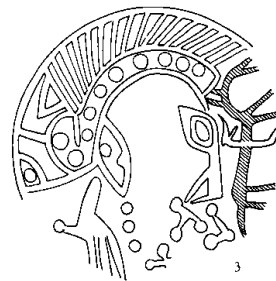
fig. 42, Bracteate from Vadstena

Using parts of the background, as well as some parts of the bird, in front of the face, creates the shape of the head of a boar (slightly compressed).

Two bracteates (Figs. 43 and 44) which were published by Hauck (1985) were used by him as examples of *Verknüpfungsformen*, which might be translated as combining shapes.



fig. 43,
left: Bracteate from Hjørring (detail)
without Hauck's shape-definition.



right: Bracteate from Hjørring (detail)
including Hauck's shape-definition.

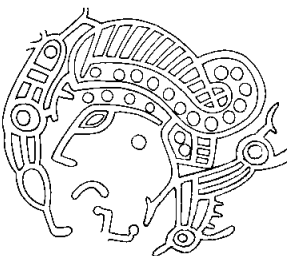
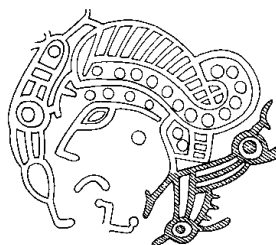


fig. 44,
left: Bracteate from Lille Kraghede
(detail) without Hauck's shape-defi-
nition.



right: Bracteate from Lille Kraghede
(detail) including Hauck's shape-defi-
nition.

Hauck did not explain how he became aware of the shapes which are attached to the primary images. However, even if he found the shapes without applying any specific method, the recognition of such elements would integrate within the concept of *Gestalt* theory.

Picture credits for bracteates

Fig. 1: Midtmjelde-M (M2, 3b = 126): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Universitetet i Bergen, Historik Museum, Norway.

Fig. 2: Revsgård-A (A 103 = 145): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

Fig. 3: Beresina-area-B (M 6,16 = 20): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Württembergisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart, Germany.

Fig. 4: Gummersmark, Maglemose (III), IK=300 (M 6 = 20): after Bakka, Egil, 1968, p. 11, fig. 4.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark

Fig. 5: Monkton-D (467): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator mentioned), private collection.

Fig. 6: Gummerup-B (A 52a = 66): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Fyns Stiftsmuseum, Odense, Denmark.

Fig. 7: Denmark (X)-B (M 6,14 = 39): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

Fig. 8: Denmark-B (M 6,15 = 40): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

Fig. 9: Gudme-B (51,3): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

Fig. 10: Fakse (B) (M 6,11 = 51,1): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

Fig. 11: Nebenstedt-D (468): after Haseloff, G. 1981, *Die germanische Tierornamentik der Völkerwanderungszeit*. Vorgesch. Forsch. 17, illustr. 123.

Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Urgeschichts-Abteilung, mit Beständen aus dem Welfenmuseum.

Fig. 12: Bullhead-masks: after Gyula László, 1974, p. 111.

Fig. 13: Gerete-C, Gotland. (62,1): M 211 Taf. 12,6 after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.

Fig. 14: Ven, Skåne. (=IK 235), M 253, 377 Taf.9,7: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992, (no illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned). The same number (IK 235) was listed in Axoboe, M., Düwel, K., Hauck, K., Padberg, von, L. and Rulffs, H. 1989, as Dybäck-C. (No illustrator was mentioned), Staatliche Münzsammlung, München, Germany.

Fig. 15: Allesø, Fyn, (=IK 13,1), M 53 Taf.5,4: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.

- Fig. 16/1: Fjärestad/Gantova. M 244 Taf. 9,6 and 24,4 (IK 53): Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 16/2: Ven. (=IK 235): M 249, Taf.. 9,8: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992,
This bracteate was listed in Axoboe, M., Düwel, K., Hauck, K., Padberg, von, L. and Rulffs, H. 1989, as =IK 379 b and =IK 377,1 b. (No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 16/3: Dybäck. (=IK 235): M 253, 377 Taf.9,7: after Behr, Charlotte, in Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Staatliche Münzsammlung, München, Germany.
- Fig. 16/4: Åkarp. A 238 Taf. VII (=IK 4): after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 16/5: Hermanstorp. (=IK272): M 241 Taf. 9,9: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 17/1: Allesø, Fyn. M 53 Taf. 5,4 (IK 13,1): after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned).
- Fig. 17/2: Nebenstadt, Niedersachsen. M 323 Taf. 5,19 (=IK 129,1): after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992. (No illustrator and place where the item is kept were mentioned).
- Fig. 17/3: Darum (IV), Jylland. (=IK 129,2): M 99 Taf. 5, 16: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.
- Fig. 18/1: Dödevi, Öland. (=IK 45): M 192 Taf. 11,12: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 18/2: Bostorp, Öland, (=IK 223): A 189 a/3 Taf. V: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Kalmar Läns Museum, Helsinki.
- Fig. 18/3: Gerete-C, Gotland. (=IK 62,1): M 211 Taf. 12,6 after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 18/4: Lilla Istad, Öland (=IK 106): M 191 Taf. 12: after Behr, Charlotte, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 19/1: Sjælland (I). (=IK 330): M 20 Taf. 7,20: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.
- Fig. 19/2: Maglemose, (II). (=IK 301): Sjælland. M 33 Taf. 7,21: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.
- Fig. 19/3: Lyngø Gyde, Sjælland (=IK 298): M 26 Taf. 7,27: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, København, Denmark.
- Fig. 19/4: Hammenhög, Skåne (=IK 267): M 242 Taf. 7,29: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Fig. 19/5: Danmark (I) (=IK 229): M 18 Taf. 8,8: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992.

(No illustrator was mentioned), Universitetet i Bergen, Historik Museum, Norway.

Fig. 19/6: Danmark(II) (=IK 364): M 343 Taf. 7,26: after Charlotte Behr, in Hauck, Karl, 1992,
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Picture credits for bracteates (symbolism)

Fig. 20: Lellinge Kohave-B (M 5.2 = 105) after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 21: Gudme-C (392): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 22: Obermöllern-B (M 9,1 = 132): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Landesmuseum für Frühgeschichte, Halle, Germany.

Fig. 23: The dying Goliath in the David-picture of the Irish psalter. after Hauck, 1992. (Cambridge, St. Johns College, C.9).

Fig. 24: Denmark-B (M 6,15 = 40): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 25: Denmark (X)-B (M 6,14 = 39): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 26: Gudme-B, 51,3: after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 27: Gummerup-B (A 52a = 66): after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Fyns Stiftsmuseum, Odense, Denmark.

Fig. 28: Fakse (B) (M 6,11 = 51,1): after Hauck, Karl, 1992,
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 29: Devanagari: after Bruce-Mitford, M. 1996, *Signs and Symbols*. DK Publishing, New York, p.102.

Fig. 30: Signs on spear and arrow heads: after Hachmann, Rolf, 1993, p. 416, fig. 9.

Credits for bracteates where perceptual principles for identification of symbolic elements were applied

Fig. 31: Segmentation points: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 32: Segmentation points: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 33: Eagle: after Stegemann, Walter, photography Prenzel, Fritz, 1978, *Geheimniss Tier*. Orbis Verlag, p.65.

Fig. 34: Triangular shapes: illustration Hupfauf, Peter, 2003

Fig. 35-6: nine and axe: illustration Hupfauf, Peter 2002.

Fig. 37: axe from Mammen, Jutland, Denmark: photography joint copyright of Wilson, D. and Klindt-Jensen, O. (National Museum Copenhagen)

Fig. 38: Gerechtigkeitsbrunnen, Frankfurt: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2003.

Fig. 39: Gummersmark, Maglemose (III), IK=300 (M 6 = 20)
after Bakka, Egil, 1968, p. 11, fig. 4. (No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 40: Randers, Jylland, IK=142 (M 6 = 22)
after Bakka, Egil, 1968, p. 12, fig. 5. (No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 41: Skonager, Ribe, Jylland, IK=163, (M 6 = 23):
after Bakka, Egil, 1968, p. 12, fig. 6. (No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Kopenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 42: Bracteate from Vatstena, IK=377.1 b. (M 179): after László, Gyula, 1974, p. 111.

Fig. 43: A-Bracteate from Hjørring (detail): after Hauck, Karl, 1985, p. 56, fig. 3.

Fig. 44: A-Bracteate from Lille Krahede (detail): after Hauck, Karl, 1985, p. 56, fig. 4.

7. Runes

Definition

Runes appear on many items created in Nordic cultures during the early Middle Ages. Runes are letters and fulfilled the same purpose as our commonly used alphabet, namely to write down words. They were used for various purposes, to indicate for example the ownership of objects such as jewellery, as engravings on memorial stones, or as carvings on sticks to list goods, such as many runic sticks from Bryggen in Bergen (Norway). Runes were associated with magic powers. Düwel (2001) stated that many runic inscriptions were created in order to gain protection against negative, or even evil, forces.

The Old Norse word *rún* was defined by De Vries (1961) as “*Geheimnis; Zauberzeichen; Rune*” (p.453), which translates as secret; magic sign; runic letter. De Vries referred to the Norwegian Sámi term *rudna*, which translates as mumbling and noise. The Gothic term *rúna*, according to the author, stands for secret. The Old English word *rún* was translated as secret; consulting; runic letter. De Vries further suggested that the Old High German word *rúna* could be translated as “*geheime Beratung*” (p.453), or secret counselling, and that the Old Irish word *rún* represents secret.

De Vries (1961) stated that the etymological origin of the word rune is unknown. However, he mentioned the possibility that it might be derived from the Greek word *ἔρευνάω*, meaning research. This interpretation, according to De Vries, would explain the custom of throwing sticks marked with signs on to the ground, in order to select a few and interpret these as an oracle, as mentioned by Tacitus (chapter 10). The assessment/interpretation of the selected sticks may have been interpreted as research. The Latin word *rumor* meaning rumour or gossip, may not be directly related but could be another possible link to the word's origin.

The word *run* according to Düwel (2001) occurs on Old Nordic inscriptions, in Old English literature, and on various objects such as bracteates, stones, spearheads and domestic items.

The word rune, according to Krause (1970), was popularised by the Danish researcher Ole Worm, in his publication *Runir* (1636). Krause, by using the word rune, probably meant the concept of runic writin'. Worm assumed wrongly that all Old Norse literature had been written in runes.

The origin of runes in mythological perspective

The origin of runes is described in *Hávamál*, stanzas 138 and 139. Here, Óðinn, the highest of the Æsir, executes a sacrificial ritual by hanging himself on a tree (most scholars agree that this tree is meant to be Yggdrasill), in order to alter his state of mind. Through this process Óðinn gained the wisdom of the runes. Lindow (2001) stated that the concept of the ‘world tree’ was common in Eurasia and shamanism was practised in Northern Europe and Asia.

Veitk, at ek hekk vindgameiði á nætr allar níu, geiri undaðr ok gefinn Óðni, sjalfr sjalfum mér, (á þeim meiði, es manngi veit, hvers af rótum rinnr).	I know that I hung on a windy tree nine long nights, wounded with a spear, [and] dedicated to Óðinn, myself to myself, on that tree of which no man knows from where its roots run.
--	---

Við hleifi mik sældu né við hornigi; Nýstak niðr, namk upp rúnar, œpandi nam, Fellk apr þaðan.	No bread did they give me nor a drink from a horn, downwards I peered; I took up the runes, screaming I took them, then I fell back from there.
---	--

(ed. Jónsson, 1926)

(translation by Larrington, 1996)

With this in mind, Óðinn’s hanging may be interpreted as a shamanistic technique to alter consciousness. Stanza 140 of *Hávamál* explains that Óðinn learned nine mighty spells from his mother Bestla’s father, Bolthorn, Óðinn’s grandfather, described in *Gylfaginning* as a giant. These spells gave Óðinn wisdom. Düwel (1992) cited *Rígsþula* (scholars’ views on the date of origin of this poem vary from 800 up to 1300 AD), to indicate that runes were believed to have derived from deities. He explained that, even if the work were composed rather late, the literary substance most likely stems from earlier mythology. In *Rígsþula* the god Rígr (later known as Heimdallr), who knew the art of carving runes, taught this skill to his son Jarl.

(*rúnar kendi*, stanza 36).

Kom þar ór runni Rígr gangandi, Rígr gangandi, rúnar kendi; sitt gaf heitti,	Then came Rig walking, walking out of the thicket, taught him runes; gave him a name, said he was his son;
--	--

son kveðz eiga;
þann bað hann eignaz
óðalvǫllo,
óðalvǫllo,aldnar byggðir.

(*rúnar kendi*, stanza 45).

Hann við Ríg iarl
rúnar deildi,
brögðom beitti
ok betr kunni;
þá oðlaðiz
ok þá eiga gat
Rígr at heita,
rúnar kunna.

(ed. Jónsson, 1926)

then he told him to get ancestral property,
to get ancestral property,
a long-established settlement.

He contended in rune-wisdom with Lord Rig,
He knew more tricks, he knew more;
Then he gained and got the right
To be called Rig and to know the runes.

(translation by Larrington (1996))

Jarl then was named Rig-Jarl and married Hersir's daughter. They had twelve sons of whom the youngest was called Konr. *Konr ungr*, an allusion to the title *konungr* (king), may relate to *kunni rúnar* (art of runes). The use of runes, as suggested by Düwel, was most likely retained by the upper social classes such as priests, magicians, shamans and aristocrats.

The belief that the runes had sacred origins probably placed them in a privileged position. The association with Óðinn, the highest of all deities, signifies the power which runes could have, for example in order to enhance luck or to create evil spells. Runes were and are still used by some obscure circles, in superstitious contexts.

Development of runic letters

It is still not known from which of the letter systems in use by the beginning of the first millennium runes developed.

Derolez (1954) supported the theory that runes evolved from Latin letters and postulated that they may have been influenced by Greek and northern Etruscan alphabets. Krause (1970) mentioned Wimmer (1887), who described the creation of all runes as a development from Roman Latin Capital Script, and Pedersen (1923), who considered the origin to be from Old-Irish Ogham. Krause stated that the Swedish scholar Askeberg attributed the creation of runes to the Visigoths, in the second century AD. Krause also mentioned Weinhold (1856), who, without any rationale, suggested the Etruscans as the originators of the runes. Marstrader (1928) favoured the theory that runes developed from the North-Etruscan alpha-

bet. The Etruscan alphabet itself emerged from the old Greek alphabet. Düwel (1983) preferred the theory that runes developed from several letter systems and were most influenced by Latin as well as Etruscan letters. Rix (1992) argued that runes relate more to the Etruscan alphabet than to the Latin. He explained that several letter systems based on the Etruscan and consequently originating from the Greek alphabet were used in Northern Italy between the sixth and the first century BC. These letter systems were Venetic, Magré-raetic, Bolzano-raetic, Sondrio-raetic (camunic) and Lepontic (Lugano). The Venetic alphabet was used until the first century BC, when it was converted into Latin script. Some of the Etruscan scripts were probably used even longer, which might be possible, taking into account that raeto Romanic, a language from that time, still survives up to the present in some small areas in Switzerland.

According to Rix, it is plausible that Germanic mercenaries were hired by Northern Italian states to fight for them. The helmet B from Negau may be seen as an epigraphic example of this. This helmet shows an engraving which reads as *harigasti teiva*. Rix recognised the representation of a Germanic name, which would be *hario-gasti*, and suggested that the second word, *teiva*, should be understood as "war-god" (p. 434).

Nedoma (1995) also discussed the inscription on the helmet from Negau. The helmet was found in 1811, in an area which now belonging to Slovenia, where 26 bronze-helmets were found together. Two of these helmets show text engravings in North-Italian script. These helmets may be called helmet A and helmet B. Because no similar finds were made in the area of Negau, Nedoma suggested that they were most likely brought in from somewhere else. A larger find of helmets similar to these from Negau was made in Vetulonia, in northern Etruria. Thirty-four of the more than one hundred helmets show text engravings in Etruscan letters. According to Nedoma, such helmets were in use between 500 and 400 BC. Nedoma mentioned that objects like such helmets were used over long periods, sometimes over hundreds of years, if they were in good order. The text on Helmet B from Negau, according to the author, may have been engraved between 450 and 100 BC. It reads *harigastiteiva*, further IIXIIX and XIIX. The additional signs (IIXIIX and XIIX) have not yet been explained. The script which was used represents a local Venetic alphabet from the Insonzo area. However, Nedoma

fig. 1, helmet B from Negau



fig. 2, helmet B from Negau, detail

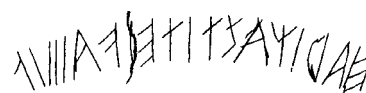


fig. 3, inscription on helmet B from Negau

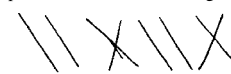


fig. 4, Inscription-group 1 on helmet B from Negau

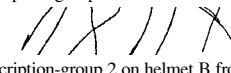


fig. 5, Inscription-group 2 on helmet B from Negau

(1995) cited Molinari (1974) who believed he could recognise a Raetic alphabet in this inscription. The inscription, according to Nedoma, is most likely the name of the helmet's owner. He suggested that the use of the letter h at the beginning of the text may indicate a Proto-Germanic origin, as in *haria-got. Harjis m* (p.44). The German word *Heer* translates as army. Nedoma argued that, although he had concerns about attributing the engraving on the helmet from Negau to a specific ethnic group, because of grammatical inconsistencies, he believed it very likely that the engraving was a name of Germanic origin. The author recognised the inscription as a double name which would be Haristi Teiva. However, Nedoma emphasised that this name could not easily be placed in any known grammatical scheme and further hypotheses were needed to clarify the situation.



































































According to Rix (1992) the helmet's deposition reaches back to a time between the end of the second century and the first half of the first century BC. Rix mentioned that it is known that, during this time, the upper Italian people fought with tribes which attacked from the northern and eastern mountains. It is not known on which side the Germanic mercenaries fought. However, Rix suggested that the helmet B from Negau represents an early example of an adoption of Etruscan writing on a Germanic item.

Moltke (1981) too speculated about the adoption of foreign alphabets. However, he stated that, if two languages differed greatly from each other, letters from one alphabet could not simply be used for expressions in the other language. Moltke stated also that runes needed to be shaped in such a fashion that they could be conveniently carved into wood. The use of existing letter systems could have resulted in difficulty in recognising horizontal lines because of visual interference with the wood grain.

The fact that the majority of surviving runic inscriptions was found in Scandinavia, far from the Etruscan area, suggests a need to investigate further possibilities of origin.





Runes compared with the Etruscan alphabet

The names for the runes were not identical over the whole period they were used, and differences appear between different geographical regions. The runic names are reconstructions developed by W. Krause, as shown in Düwel (1983, p.7).

runes	names		Etruscan		runes in Etruscan order
	fehu	f		a	
	uruz	u		b	
	þurisaz	th		c	
	ausuz	a		d	
	reidó	r		e	
	kaunan	c/k		v (f)	
	gebo	g		h	
	wunjó	w		th	
	haglaz	w		i	
	naudiz	h		k	
	isaz	i		l	
	jéran	j		m	
	perþo	p		n	
	iwaz	not known		p	
	algiz	R		s	
	soliwó	s		r	
	tiwaz	t		s	
	berkanan	b		t	
	ehwaz	e		u	
	mannaz	m		ph	
	laugaz	l		ch	
	ingwaz	ng			
	dagaz	d			
	opalan	o			

The shapes and expression of the Etruscan alphabet were constructed following the web page <http://www.geocities.com/athens/crete/4060/phonetic.html>

North Italian variations in script during Etruscan times:

Keponitic		A, M
Sondrio-raetic		R (z), N, P, P(alternative)
Magré-raetic		th, th (alternative)
Venetic		U, L, H, O, J, G, K, F, D, W

(often also in other locations)

History

Moltke (1981) identified three distinctive runic periods: The first dates from 0 to 600-700 AD (Migration Age), the second period 650-1025/50 AD (Viking Age), and the third period 1050-1400 AD (Middle Ages). After this time runes were not used commonly in a 'living' context. The first and oldest runic letter-system mentioned above is called the elder futhark. The name Futhark derives from the first six letters of the runic letter-system. Th is represented as one letter (thorn), still used in Icelandic writing. The elder futhark consists of 24 letters. Runic inscriptions in this system have been found in Scandinavia, England, Germany, France and the Balkans. According to its application (society and language group), the futhark was of varying length.

The English or Anglo-Saxon futhork (the a changed to o) most likely developed around 500 AD. The futhork includes seven new letters added to the end of the existing letter system. As mentioned, the a rune changed into o, in fourth position of the system, and the original a was placed in position 26 with a slightly changed appearance. The original 'a' shape was given to æ, which was placed in position 27.

During the Viking Age, from about 800 AD, the futhark was reduced to sixteen letters. The oldest example of this version was found in Gølev (Sælland) and is dated at 900 AD. From this find, as well as from other inscriptions from the Viking Age, Moltke (1981) defined the construction of the 'normalised' (Danish) futhark of Period 2. Because the letter-reduced futhark resulted in difficulties of exact expression, dots, already used in the Anglo-Saxon system, were added to differentiate between the same letters, expressing several meanings.

During the Middle Ages, from around 1050 AD, the runic letter system had changed so much that it could be called a runic alphabet instead of a futhark. Due to the influence of the Latin alphabet, the sequence of the letter system changed and instead of beginning with F, U, TH, A..., it now started with A, B, C. The mediæval runic alphabet, however, is called futhork – the same as the Anglo-Saxon version. Many of these runes were found in timber constructions of Romanesque churches because workmen preferred to mark the beams with runes rather than numbers. Inscriptions were also found on ecclesiastical objects, amulets and in manuscripts.

“Runes were designed to be carved in wood” (Moltke, p. 32), a practice which was applied until the years 1200 -1400 AD. About six hundred wooden sticks with rune-carvings were found at Bryggen in Bergen, Norway, which was once an important commercial centre. Düwel (1983) confirmed the obvious preference for vertical lines in the shapes of runes. An explanation may be that wood has a strong texture of parallel lines, making it difficult to incise any recognisable shapes other than those consisting of crossing the woodgrain lines. Engravings parallel to the woodgrain would vanish. Not many inscriptions on such organic material have been found. The oldest items, a comb and a planer, are dated to the third century AD. Items of perishable materials have been

found only when the embedding environment was of a preservative nature, such as bogs or particularly dry areas.

The oldest runic inscriptions show various directions in writing. Some text-rows start at the left and run to the right, others start at the right and run to the left. It was also quite common to carve a line from left to right and continue by starting the second row at the right end, and moving in reverse towards the left end (*bustrophedon*). Moltke (1981) noted even in the earliest engravings “ligatured runes or bind runes” (p.34). These are two or more runes combined along a vertical line. This technique, according to Moltke, saved effort in production but also was possibly meant to show competence in handling runic text. Ligaturing was also a common practice to encode secret text. Runes were not only used as letters within an alphabet-like structure. They were also used as ideographs. Moltke called them *Begriffsrunen* (p.34), and assumed that the runes needed names when they were created because they did not follow the alphabetical order developed by the “Phoenicians, and passed on to the Greek, Etruscan and Latin” (p.36). Thus creators gave them new names. Only the names of the first sixteen runes from the Viking-Age futhark are known first hand. The remaining eight names of the 24 characters of the elder futhark were determined by comparison of names in the Gothic and Anglo-Saxon systems.

Runic inscriptions

Runic inscriptions can be found on a great variety of objects of which the eldest were created



approximately at the beginning of the first millennium AD, as mentioned on page 166. Moltke (1981) dated the development of runes to the first century AD.

The oldest inscription in a runic system (futhark) was found at Kylver (fig. 6), on the Swedish island of Gotland. The engraving was executed about 400 AD.

fig. 6



Another find, a gold bracteate from Vadstena, Sweden (fig. 7), presents the complete futhark, which is recognised now as the elder futhark.

fig. 7

Inscriptions on fibulae

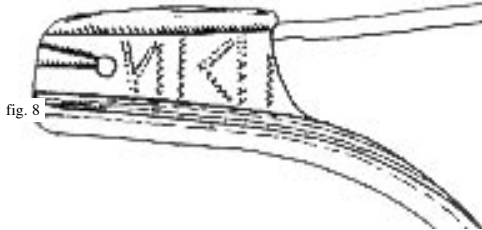


fig. 8

The earliest known example of rune use, according to Düwel (2001), originated in the first half of the first century AD. The fibula from Meldorf (fig. 8) emerged in 1979, in the archives of the archaeological museum of Schleswig (Germany) after a long time being forgotten..

The short inscription is difficult to identify. Düwel suggested the possibility that the engraved signs might not be 'proper' runes. He discussed whether these signs might be of pre-runic origin or an attempt to create Latin capital letters. Interpretations of the text were: *Iþih*, *iwih* or *hiþl*, *hiwi*. Düwel considered the possibility of *Hiwi* being a female name. A second item was mentioned by Düwel (2001), which was found in Vimose, Fyn, a comb with the inscription *harja*. The author related this to *Harjar*, a male name, which also relates to *Hari* (as well as to *hár* which translates as hair). The date when the comb was disposed of was identified as approximately 160 AD. Krause (1970) mentioned a find originating from the end of the second century (180 AD). A spear-blade was found in Ovre Stabu (Norway). The engraved text reads: *raunai-jaR* which relates, according to Krause, to the Icelandic *reynir* (the one who examines). Düwel (1983) suggested the interpretation of conqueror. Düwel (1992) also described a find from Himlingøje (Sjælland), where a fibula presented the inscription *Widuhu(n)daR* (woodhound = wolf), which was, probably, the name of the rune-master. Another fibula with a runic inscription was found in Værløse (Sjælland) and this find can also be dated to the third century AD. Düwel (2001) emphasised that the concentration of earliest runic inscriptions occurred in burials, designated for (most likely) high-ranking people in Sjælland. Krause believed that runes emerged

one to two hundred years earlier than the oldest known inscription. He compared the development of the runic system with the better known development of alphabets in other cultures such as the Greek, where it is known that alphabetic development started much earlier than the dates attributed to the oldest known inscriptions. Derolez (1954) mentioned other places where items with early runic inscriptions were found (Froiho, Kowel, Vi, Dahmsdorf, Mos and Torsbiaerg) and agreed with Krause in dating the found items.

As shown in some of the above examples, runic inscriptions in many cases consist of names. From reading the name one cannot usually deduce whether this was the person who engraved the inscription, the person who gave the object to someone else, or the owner of the object. Many of these name-inscriptions were found on fibulae, which were part of the female outfit. Because the engravings show female as well as male names, Düwel (1995) concluded that these inscriptions, to a certain extent, express the relationship between the sexes, particularly where the names of a female and a male appear on the same object. Düwel (2001, 54) mentioned a pair of fibulae from Weimar (fig. 9) which were produced in the first half of the sixth century AD and are engraved with the following text:

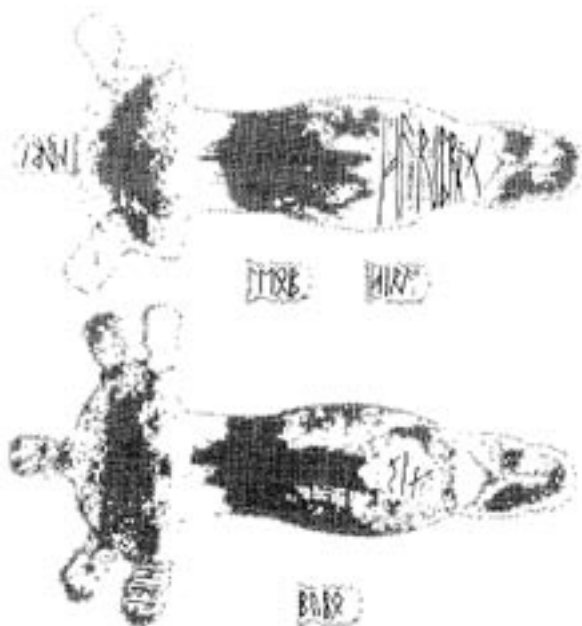


fig.9

fibula A: *haribrig : hiba : liubi : leob*
 fibula B: *sig – bubo – hiba*

Düwel (1995) identified Liubi and Bubo as male names and Hiba and Haribrig as female. The engraving sig is problematic, according to Düwel, because it is not known if represents a name or if this were just the attempt to engrave a longer word. The word 'Hiba' is assumed by the author to be a short version of *Haribrig*'. A similar situation, according to Düwel, might be also presented by the use of a male name. Düwel hypothesised that this combination of names, female and male, as well the full name and a more personal, short version, may represent a love relationship between the two.

Düwel (1995) compared the fibula from Freilaubersheim (fig. 10), which was dated between 520 and 560 AD, with the fibulae from Weimar. The fibula from Freilaubersheim presents the following engraving:



fig. 10

boso : wraetruna :
þk : daþynagolida :

This was meant to be read, according to Düwel (1995, 11), as:

“ *Boso wraet runa.*
þ(i)k Daþina: golida”

Düwel (1995, 11) translated this as “*Boso schrieb die Runen. Dich grüsste Daþina*” or “*Dich, Daþina, grüsste er (Boso)*”.

The translation in English would be:

Boso wrote the runes. (for) you Daþina, greetings or You, Daþina, he (Boso) greeted.

Inscriptions on bracteates

Many bracteates, considered in detail in Chapter six, were created with runic inscriptions. Bracteates of type C¹, with one hundred and five finds of seventy three different models, appear to have the greatest number of runic inscriptions.

Assuming that the figure, shown on many bracteates of type A – C may be Óðinn, Düwel (2001) suggested that the runic text on these bracteates may refer to Óðinn. In cases where this figure is shown, as on the bracteate from Trollhättan (A), together with the text *tawol aþodu*, which was identified by Düwel (2001, 47) as “*Ich nehme eine Einladung vor*”, that may be translated as: I conduct an invitation, the emphasis on the term I would refer to the depicted figure (Óðinn).

Two identical C bracteates were found in the area of Køge (Sjælland) (fig. 11). The runic inscription reads *hariuhahaitika farauisa gibuauja*. This was transcribed by Düwel (2001, 49) as: “*Hariuha haitika, Farawísa, gibu auja. H. heisse ich, der Gefährliche Wissende, [ich] gebe Glück [oder Schutz].*” This could be translated in English as: Hariuha is my name, the dangerous knowing one, [I] give luck [or protection].



fig. 11

The bracteate from Fyn (fig. 12) (c. 475 AD) was regarded by Düwel (2001, 54) as particularly interesting in regard to the use of words as formulae. Between the horse's head and foreleg the word *houar* (the high one) is inscribed, which according to Düwel referer to the depicted god. From the head of the horse to the line of pearls in the figure's hair appears first the



fig. 12

¹ Bracteates of type C are those which represent a male head shown in profile above a four-legged animal (most likely a horse), in many cases accompanied by a bird.

word *lapu*. Düwel believed that this word was considered to have magical qualities, and suggested regarding it as the bird's utterance and not seeking any further meaning in it. The inscription continues with a runic row, where some letters face right and some left. The letters are: aaeuaaauiuu. This, according to Düwel, probably represents something expressed in the language of the bird. The runes to the right of the head were explained by Düwel as representing the word *alu*, which is commonly known as protecting and luck-enhancing. However, I cannot recognise the third letter as u (𐌺) in *alu*, as it looks identical to the second letter, l (𐌻). Runic inscriptions sometimes include spelling mistakes and this could be such a case. The reason to include the inscription from this bracteate from Fyn in this document was the interesting aspect that the bird's sound was used to enhance the symbolic value of the bird's depiction.

Inscription on the Golden Horn from Gallehus

Klingenberg (1973) analysed the rune horn from Gallehus (Southern Jylland). Two large golden horns (approximately 3.2 kilogram each) were created circa 400 - 450 AD (fig. 13). The longer horn was found in 1639, the shorter in 1734. Both of the horns were stolen and melted down in 1802. Both horns depicted many images from northern mythology and the shorter horn carried a runic inscription (fig. 14). The inscription read:



fig. 13

ekhlewagastir holtijar horna tawido
MCHMPEXESTY HORTISFY HORTIS TEPIDQ
 which Klingenberg (1973, 44) translated as
 “*ich H.H. machte das Horn*”.

I, Hlewagastir Holtijar made this horn.

Klingenberg believed that the inscription also glorifies the number thirteen. He hypothesised that the numbers of the letters used in the runic inscription would apply the system of the Fibonacci row, which is regarded as a mathematical sequence reflecting the Golden Mean². Klingenberg (1973, 361-2) also

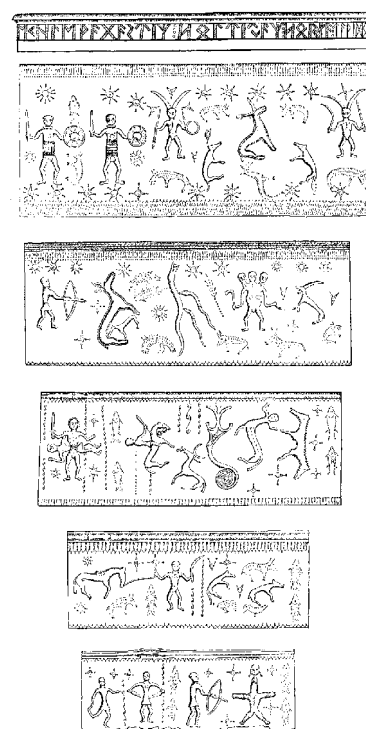


fig. 14

² The Golden Mean is a division of a line into two parts. This is done in such a manner that the smaller part relates to the longer part in the same ratio as the longer part to the whole distance.

explained that the division of the runic text by applying the Pentagram (one technique to define the ratio of the Golden Mean), would result in a perfectly constructed design, applying the golden mean. However, tests undertaken to reconstruct Klingenberg's theory showed slightly different results.

Inscriptions on the Franks Casket

In 1857, Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks purchased a small box (23 x 18.5 x 10.5 cm, the right side was missing) which was created around the year 700 AD in Northumbria and was made of whalebone. This box was given by Franks to the British Museum and is known as the Franks Casket. The right side was found later at Auzon, Haute-Loire, France and is now kept in the Bargello Museum in Florence.

The four sides of the casket present a runic inscription, running round the illustrations like an ornament.

The left front (fig. 15a) illustrates a scene regarded by Düwel (2001) as the legend of Weland the Smith and the right front depicts the Adoration of Christ.



fig.15a

The framing runic text, however, relates to the casket's material, which is whalebone. Left of the smith appears the word *hronæsban* (whalebone). The line on the top reads: *Fisc flodu ahof on fergenberig warþ gasrig grorn þær he on greut giswom*. Düwel (2001, 79) translated this as “*Den Fisch hob die Flut auf die Uferklippe, der Wal wurde betrübt als er auf den steinigen Strand schwamm*”; this reads in English as: The tide lifted the fish on to the cliff on shore, the whale became sad when he swam on to the stony beach.

The left side (fig. 15b) depicts Romulus and Remus, the mythological founders of Rome, with a female wolf. The runic text reads: *Romwalus and Reumwalus, twægen gibropær, afæddæ hiæ wylif in Romæcæstri, oplæ unneg*. This was translated by Düwel (2001, 79) as “*Romulus und Remus, zwei Brüder, eine Wölfin nährte sie in Rom, fern der Heimat*”; which may be translated as: Romulus und Remus, two brothers, a she-wolf fed them in Rome, far from home.



fig.15b

The panel on the back of the casket (fig. 15c) shows a scene in which Jerusalem is conquered by Titus.



The framing text reads: *her feġtaþ Titus end Giuþeausu*. This was translated by Düwel (2001, 79) as “*Hier kämpften Titus und ein Jude*” (Titus and a Jew fought here). The text reads further as *HIC FUGIANT (recte:-UNT) HIERUSALIM afitatores* which was translated as “*Hier fliehen die Einwohner von Jerusalem*” (here, the people from Jerusalem are fleeing) and further *dom* which Düwel (2001, 79) translated as “*Gericht*” (court) and *gisl*, which was translated as “*Geisel*” (hostage) or *Domgísel*, which according to Düwel could also be interpreted as a name.

The depiction, as well as the text, on the right side of the casket (fig. 15d) is, according to Düwel, difficult to interpret. The smaller inscriptions, within the illustration panel in the centre, read *asrisci* which Düwel (2001, 79) translated as “*Binse, Rohr*” (Engl. rush), *wudu* “*Wald*” (2001, 79) (Engl. woods) and *bita* “*Beisser*” (Engl. biter). The framing inscription according



to Düwel can be divided into single words which would read: *her hos sitþ on harmberga* which Düwel (2001, 79) translated as “*hier Hos sitzt auf dem Harmberge*” (Engl. here Hos is sitting on the hill of sorrow); *agl[ac] drigþ swa hiræ Ertae gisgraf* which was translated by Düwel (2001, 80) as “*Unheil erdulded sie, wie Erta es ihr auferlegte (oder: weil Erta ihr verordnete)*” (Engl. Misfortune she bares, as Ertra imposed on her) *sarden sorga* and *sefa torna* which Düwel (2001, 80) translated as “*eine erbärmliche Höhle von Sorgen und Herzenspein*” (Engl. a miserable cave of sorrows and heart-ache). Düwel stated that it is not known who were meant by the names *Hos and Erta*.

The lid of the casket (fig. 15e), also shows a short runic inscription. The letters *Agili* are presented which are attributed by Page (1989) to Ægili the archer, who is depicted defending his house.



The runic text on the Franks Casket appears to be an important element in the overall composition of the panels. Apart from the front-panel and the lids, the text, obviously, enhances

the dramatic situations depicted. It does this not only by describing the story behind the images, but also by its frame-like application. This creates an optical elevation to a higher status for the images, and the elongated runes appear in a hypnotically suggestive manner, as discussed in Chapter 3, pp. 53-9. The front panel, which Düwel stated depicts on the left side a scene from Weland the Smith, but has no connection with the runic inscription, may be interpreted differently. If one assumes that the runic text describes where the material for the casket originated - from a stranded whale, one wonders why a mythological element should be used to illustrate something completely different. Some smiths were very talented in handling material and were able to carve moulds in order to cast metal. The rather realistic descriptive text encourages the viewer of the panel to consider the depiction of the smith as representing the craftsperson who created the casket, a smith. The casket might then have been given to a church representative by the smith. The frontal position of this panel might have been chosen by the smith/craftsperson to display his role clearly.

Inscriptions on staves from Bryggen, Bergen

It is most likely that wooden sticks marked with different signs, as described by Tacitus in his *Germania* (chapter ten), were wooden staves with runes cut into them. Many wooden items with runic inscriptions have disappeared over the centuries because of decay. In some instances, however, objects with runic inscriptions have survived in favourable environments such as peat moors or in ashes, as in the case of the runic staves from Bryggen, Bergen, in Norway. Bryggen is the oldest part of Bergen and used to be a Hanseatic town, therefore quite important well beyond the Viking Age. It consisted entirely of wooden architecture (and, to a great extent, still does). Bryggen burned down several times and was always rebuilt. After the latest fire in 1955, which destroyed approximately half of this district, archaeological excavations were undertaken and amongst many items of great historical value, about five hundred and fifty runic inscriptions were unearthed. This is by far the largest number of runic inscriptions ever found at one place. The inscriptions were executed approximately between 1150 and 1350 AD, on a variety of objects, such as plates, bowls, buckets and even shoes. The greatest number of inscriptions, however, appears on wooden staves called *kefli* (fig. 16). These staves vary in length and shape. Some are relatively short and some are up to fifty centimetres



fig. 16

long. The diameter varies also between approximately eight and twenty millimetres, depending on the intended applications. The inscriptions usually appear as fine cuts executed by knives. Some inscriptions are executed more neatly, some less. The staves show inscriptions sometimes on one side only and sometimes on more than one side. The content of the inscription varies, as in writing today with contemporary letters. Elliott (1989) stated that some inscriptions are business related, others are private (some are even obscene) some can be defined as literature and some are talismans. A number of name engravings was executed on flat wooden objects (fig. 17) which were most likely stuck into a pile of goods or hung on to them by merchants.



fig. 17

Much as the runic staves (*rúnakefli*) from Bryggen are important historically, within script development and literature, from the view point of visual arts they appear of little importance. Stylistically and aesthetically they seem not to advance beyond the function of message carrier. The inscriptions are more or less neatly executed, but they lack attributes which some other runic inscriptions show, such as an ornamental flow or a ‘hypnotic’ quality due to extreme compression, or use as part of a larger composition. The German term *Buchstabe*, translated in English as letter, serves as a reminder of the rune-cut staves. The first part of the word stems from *Buche*, the German name for beech tree, and beech is very convenient for fine cutting and carving because it shows very little wood grain. The second part of the word (*stab[e]*) translates in English as stave, which is the object into which the runes are cut. The German word *Buch* (book) also derives from this.

Inscriptions on stones

Runic engravings in stones are the most monumental application of these letters. Many of these objects appear of great beauty even if nothing other than the runic text is shown. At least two circumstances appear important for this aesthetic phenomenon.

Firstly, the carved runes create a straight, constructive line pattern, which contrasts with the naturally-shaped surface of the stone on which the runic text is engraved. The surfaces of rune stones are usually not completely planned. They appear to be selected (for the purpose) for their relatively smooth surface, and may have been smoothed artificially although a slightly natural uneven surface seems a typical feature for most of the rune stones.

Secondly, the compositional distribution of engraved texts on rune stones appears in most instances very balanced. The rune masters had to consider how much text could be engraved on a stone's surface. For this the size of the letters was important, eg. the height, and also the width. A text's being too long to fit easily on the stone, would result in quite small letters. This would make engraving difficult and the text hard to read. If the letter size for the chosen text were too small an unbalanced appearance would result, because single letters should be in a certain proportion to the amount of text and this should be ideally in proportion to the stone as a whole.

It is known from the rules of composition that empty spaces are as powerful as filled ones. Leaving generous space around the text creates a harmonious free kind of composition. In particular instances, however, it is possible to break this general rule and create a composition that uses the elements of harmony and tension to the extreme. This is the case when shapes (and these can be blocks of text) interact with the edge of the object on which they are positioned. Leaving much space, as is usually done by artists, guarantees a problem-free positioning of elements within a space. Interaction with the edge, however, must be carefully considered and can produce a far more dramatic result than the first, more secure composition.

The most attractive example of the above discussed technique can be seen in the stone from Rök (fig. 18). In this case, the rune master has found the perfect letter size in proportion to the amount of text and the size of the stone. The tight interaction of the text with the stone's edge is successful possibly because of the quite open appearance of the engraved text. This is in contrast to bold black lettering on printed material or heavy dark spaces within a painting, which could easily result in optical 'overkill'.



fig. 18

Quite a different appearance characterises other stones, which apply runic inscriptions within the body of a ribbon-shaped animal (as illustrated). Sawyer (2000) undertook a comprehensive survey of rune stones in Sweden and described many of these, which were found particularly in the area of Uppland (Sweden). Sawyer identified designs comprising bands and serpents as typical of stones created in Uppland and Södermanland (fig. 19). The engraving on the rock from Ramsund (fig. 20) for example, illustrates, like many other stones, the slaying of Fáfnir by Sigurðr (fig. 20). Horn Fuglesang (2001), however, concluded that many animals that look like serpents are meant to represent predatory animals such as lions. The design on the stone from Sjusta (fig. 19), Skokloster, near Uppsala, shows the hindleg of such an animal quite well.

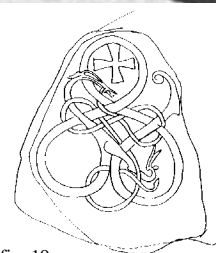


fig. 19



fig. 20

Inscriptions executed in band shapes, like the stone from Bjälbo (fig. 21), appear to invite use of the engraved runic text as a pattern for a depicted serpent or animal. The application of band-shaped script formed like a serpent can be seen clearly on a stone from Högby, Östergötland (fig. 22). The



fig. 21



fig. 22

stone from Högby appears to be created in the tradition of the runic band. However, the band has, in this case, had a head and a tail added, which allows the viewer to recognise a snake-like animal. The addition of a head and a tail makes the difference between an abstract shape in which text is placed and a serpent which has a skin with a pattern - the runic text. It is very likely that the symbolism of a serpent may have been taken into consideration when the design was created, Miðgarðsormr being a creature that held an important role in old Scandinavian mythology.

The stone from Snottsta, Uppland (fig. 23) shows a more illustrative application of the rune-inscribed image as it spreads openly to the edge of the stone. The inscription of the Snottsta stone was identified by Sawyer (2000, 30) as “Inga had these stones raised and this bridge built in memory of Ragnfast, her husband. Aussur was his housecarl.”



fig. 23

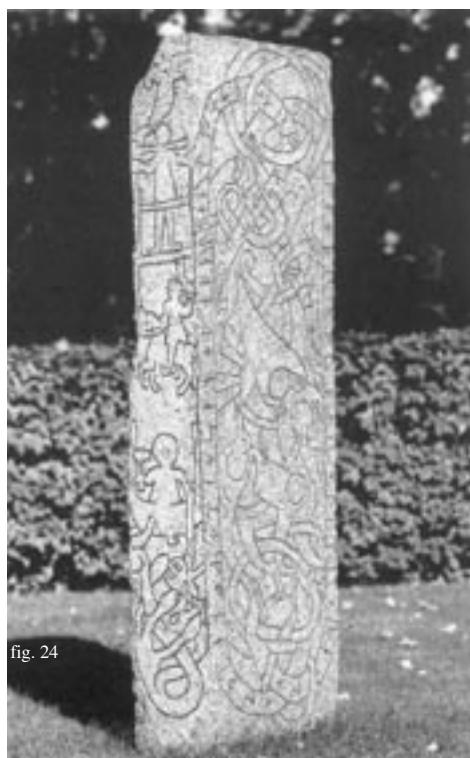


fig. 24

A stone which takes the feature of the serpent with the text-pattern much further than those previously described came from Altuna church, Uppland (fig. 24). This stone illustrates, according to Sawyer (2000, 127), Þórr using a head of an ox to catch Miðgarðsormr, also called Jormungandr. The text engraved on the serpent’s body, on the front of the stone, reads, according to Sawyer (2000, 127) “Vifast, Folkad, kuþar had this stone raised in memory of their father Holmfast (and their brother) Arnfast. Father and son were both burned in. Balle and Frösten, Livsten retainers (carved).” This particular stone is outstanding, not only because of its particular beauty but also because it clearly demonstrates the link between the snake-like shape and the



fig. 25

Miðgarðr serpent.

Stones like that from Altuna church, Uppland (fig. 24) or Hassmyra, Västmanland (fig. 25) were designed with great elaboration. The text on the stone from Hassmyra was identified by Sawyer (2000, 61) as “The good bonde (landowner) Holmgöt had (this stone) raised in memory of Odendis, his wife. To Hassmyra a better housewife, administering the farm, will never come. Rödballe cut these runes. Odendis was a good sister of Sigmund.” The runic text is placed on the body of a snake, which frames the imagery in the centre of the stone. The imagery consists of a serpent entangled with a four legged animal, which, according to Horn Fuglesang (2001), most likely represents a predatory animal.

Snakes which are composed along the edge of a stone, encircling a central image and probably representing Miðgarðsormr, can also be found on various stones from Gotland, and are discussed in the following chapter.

Symbolic significance of runes

An important symbolic aspect of script, as Düwel (1996, 540) explained, is that the spoken word, which disappears once it is said, is transformed in writing into a lasting image. The written word, in a sense, symbolises an object or event that happened. According to Düwel, runes, like other scripts, gained great significance because they were believed to have emerged in a sacred ritual. In the case of the runes this occurred when the god Óðinn hung on the world tree Yggdrasil for nine days (*Hávamál*, stanzas 138 and 139), where he gained the wisdom of the runes. By their use the special importance which runes acquired because of their sacred origin extended also to the person who created inscriptions. Someone who wrote, according to Düwel (1996, 540), would be regarded as a holy person, holding a distinguished position as a representative of the writing god. Even the materials used to create the inscriptions, such as red paint or ink (symbolising blood), gold, as in the case of bracteates, and lead, were increased in value by being applied to runes.

All runic letters had names, such as *fehu* (cattle), *úrúz* (aurochs), *þurisaz* (giant) etc. However, Düwel (1997) considered that the names given to the runes should be understood predominantly as an aid to memorising the runic row. Only occasionally do single runic letters symbolise objects represented by their names. This is known from L ᚠ (*laukr*), Old Norse for leek. The leek had a distinct importance in Germanic and early Scandinavian society because of its healing and preserving properties. Düwel (2001) mentioned that the leek is known to have been used particularly to cure injuries to horses' legs. This might explain why many of the *laukr* formulas appear on bracteates, where in many instances, as discussed on page 147 Baldr's horse may be the subject of the depiction, having injured its hindleg. Several objects are engraved with the owner's initials and some show the initials of the same person who engraved the runes.

Düwel (2001) and others have postulated that the complete runic row, the futhark, might have been regarded as magical because of the many things represented by the meaning of the runic names. Also the numerical constellation (F=1, U=2, Þ=3...) in which the futhark may be seen as being constructed was considered by several scholars to have magical properties. The sum of all numerical values of the twenty four runes of the elder Futhark results in 300. Klingenberg (1973) paid particular attention to the numerical aspect in his analysis of the Golden Horn from Gallehus. Krause (1970, 59) described the Futhark engraved on the stone sledge from Kylver (Gotland) as a trigger to mobilise all the magic forces contained in the runes. Düwel (1992) hypothesised that all the letters in the futhark could be arranged in any possible combination of messages by anyone who so wished, just as if someone spelt out a prayer by saying A, B, C... The alphabet can be used to make all prayers and God could choose the words.

It is, however, also apparent that meaningful text was created with runes and found appreciation. Düwel (1996) referred to inscriptions, which appear senseless or ridiculous, being used by magicians to communicate with deities and spirits. Düwel cited Güntert (1921) who stated that it was believed that anyone who knew the secret and true words and names of the gods and spirits would also have a certain power over them. The great importance which was attributed to written text can be imagined by the fact that some coins produced by Frankish mints show only apparently meaningless letter-like signs.

Runic inscriptions occurred on many items with sacred qualities. More than 150 bracteates are known with runic inscriptions. According to Sawyer (2000), more than 3,000 stones with runic inscriptions exist in Scandinavia. Most of the rune-stones, as mentioned by Düwel (2001), should be regarded as memorial stones for deceased family members. Sawyer (2000) has argued that the inscriptions on these stones were carefully arranged to express certain inheritance issues.

Some inscriptions are regarded as magic (such as *alu*) because they were used as formulas to influence someone's destiny by increasing luck, protecting them from evil forces or misfortune, curing sickness or laying sickness on someone. Runic inscriptions were also executed on graves in order to keep the spirits of dead people in their place. Düwel (2001) noted that earlier research had focused predominantly on the magic aspect of runes. He mentioned that Bæksted (1952) criticised this strongly and almost totally refused to regard any rune text as magic. When reading such firm opinions an open mind is helpful, to find valuable answers to questions which are still unresolved.

Sometimes, as Düwel (1997) stated, runes appear in combination with other signs. In such cases it is difficult to determine if a direct connection between the two exists. Often it seems impossible to interpret such additional signs/symbols. One example can be seen in spearheads from Suszyczno (Kowel), Rozwadów, Mos and Stabu Øvre which was earlier called Øvre Stabu (fig. 1a and 1b). These spearheads were discussed by Hachmann (1993). Some of the spearheads depict, in addition to runes, signs identified by Hachmann as being most likely Sarmatic Tamga signs. Sarmatic tribes lived to the north of the Black Sea; their Tamga signs were used for personal identification and as signs of the ownership of cattle, property and loose items. Hachmann also mentioned the possibility that these signs were meant to have certain protective qualities, referring to Bosporian Kings who used similar signs as expressions of power. One of the signs discussed by Düwel (1997), which is also recognisable on the spearhead, depicts a shape which looks like a figure 2 duplicated vertically, suspended upside down from the base of the upper figure 2 and forming



fig.
26a



fig.
26b

a mirror image of it. No remotely similar letter form is known from contemporary letter systems. Düwel assumed that the function of Tamga signs on spearheads was as a sign of ownership, but also as a power-sign connected with one person or with a particular group. In connection with runes, Hachmann assumed that the intention was to create a magic arrangement in order to succeed in fights. A Bronze-age rock-painting from Fränarp, parish of Gryt,

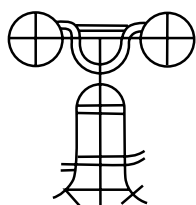


fig. 27

Skåne, Sweden, depicts, according to Stenberger (1977, 186), a cart with wheels, a pole and two horses (fig. 27). The sign for the horses and the cart without the wheels resembles a shape not very different from the protecting sign, no. 14 (fig. 28), presented by Hachmann (1993, 415).



fig. 28

Some signs, like three-whirls (triskeles) and four-whirls, half-moons, as well as S- and C hooks, belong, according to Hachmann (1993), to Germanic iconography. Hachmann (1993, 389) mentioned that protective signs from the Celtic La Tène culture were introduced as "*einheimische Heilszeichen*" (local protective signs) shortly before the birth of Christ (in locations in the area of what is today Germany) by the Goths, who most likely had contact with Sarmatian cultures at that time.

The predominantly vertical appearance of runes was not only an advantage when they were carved in wooden material, against the grain, but it also provided a characteristic which meant that they could be regarded as symbolically important. Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996, 1065) called the vertical axis "a powerful symbol of elevation and progress", stating that this symbolic representation was and is relevant in many cultures. It is still common to write items of importance in CAPITAL letters. Even if the creators of runes did not consciously aim to distinguish between the values of lower and upper case characters, they adopted features from other letter systems applying predominantly vertical lines.

Acknowledging the appearance of numerous items bearing runic inscriptions, one must assume that the vertical characteristic of runes discussed above was recognised by some artists or craftspeople and applied intentionally, creating ornament-like ribbons of text. This was achieved by slightly exaggerating the length of the runes and placing them slightly closer to each other than was commonly done on other items. An example representing this feature particularly well is the stone from Rök, in Sweden (fig. 29a, b and c).

This memorial stone bears the longest inscription known engraved on a runic stone. The inscription consists of approximately 750 characters, including some secret runes. It was summarised by Tonnelat (1959, 254) as "the merits of a young warrior who died prematurely in battle". Düwel (2001, 115) stated that the stone additionally featured the oldest poem from Sweden:



fig.29a



fig. 29b



fig. 29c

*Reð þioðikR
hinn þurmoði
stilliR flutna
strandu HraiðmaraR
SitiR nu garuR
guta sinum
skialdi um fataðaR
skati Mæringa.*

Düwel translated this as:

*Es herrschte (oder : ritt) Theoderich,
der kühngemute,
der Fürst der (See-) Krieger,
über den Strand des Hreidmeeres.
Jetzt sitzt er gerüstet,
auf seinem (got.) Ross,
den Schild auf der Schulter,
der Held der Märinge.*

This may be translated in English as:

There ruled (or: rode) Theodoric,
the brave,
the lord of (sea-) warriors,
over the shore of the Hreidsea.
Now he sits in armour,
on his horse,
the shield on his shoulder,
the hero of the Mæringar.

The great number of narrow, vertically oriented, runes creates lines which seem to achieve a result similar to that of rows of straight lines which, as previously discussed, with their effect on human perception create a hypnotic result. This might have enhanced, for those few who were literate, the effect of the heroic poem.

Sawyer (2000, 95) discussed the stone from Glavendrup on Fyn (fig. 30), which was placed next to a Bronze Age ship setting. The inscription on this stone has a similar appearance to that on the stone from Rök as it was erected in memory of Ragnhild's husband, whose name was not given by Sawyer. The inscription states that the deceased was a chieftain whose sons made the monument in memory of their father, and his wife in memory of her husband. Sawyer stated that it also reads: "Sote cut these runes in memory of his lord. May Þórr hallow these runes..." (p. 95). In this case, too, a compressed kind of runic script was created, which includes all the features mentioned in the description of the stone from Rök. As in the case of the



fig. 30

stone from Rök, a reference to something higher was also made, even if the figures to which the texts refers are rather different. While the stone from Rök depicts a poem referring to Theodoric, the stone from Glavendrup makes reference to Þórr. In both cases, the name of a hero or god was used to symbolise the importance of the deceased person.

It is not the compression and the ribbon-like arrangement of the runic text which transforms a runic text into a symbol, nor is it the reference to a hero or a deity. Considering the influence of perceptual effects discussed earlier, it seems that the letter style described and the reference to important figures enhance the likelihood that a particular image (in this case a runic text) will be memorised better than others. A stone such as the one from Glavendrup may have been recognised in its original culture as having symbolic status because of its particular text, which was engraved in the manner described above.

The stone from Jelling (fig. 31) presents an inscription of similar appearance to the two already mentioned. According to Düwel (2001, 105), the text engraved on one of its three sides reads:

*haraltr : kunukR : baþ : kaurua / kubl
: þausi : aft : kurm faþur sin / auk aft :
þaurui : muþur : sina : sa / haraltr [:] ias :
saR · uan · tanmaurk.* Sawyer (2000, 158)

translated this as: “King Harald commanded this monument to be made in memory of Gorm, his father, and in memory of Thorvi (Thyre), his mother – that Harald who won the whole of Denmark for himself, and Norway, and made the Danes Christian.”



fig. 31

The text on the Jelling stone makes no reference to any hero or deity. The artist who created the stone may not have seen any need for this because the depictions of Christ on one side and the picture of a four-legged animal together with a snake on another of the three sides fulfil the same requirements and are of the same importance as the text references on the stones mentioned previously.

Like the stones from Rök and Glavendrup, that from Jelling also appears with a distinctive ribbon-like and compressed arrangement of the runic text. This develops a recognisable identity in a viewer’s subconsciousness and creates a status of importance, due to the vertical direction of the letters.

Stones with runic inscriptions were described by Nylén and Lamm (1988, 78) as “the last high point in Nordic art”, which was otherwise “dominated by highly stylised animal ornaments of great complexity”. Pictures, engraved on stones before the fashion of runic engravings reached Gotland are also of great importance, in order to identify details and changes of early Scandinavian cultures. The next chapter investigates the development and range of imagery engraved on the Gotland picture-stones.

Picture credits for origin and development of runes

Fig. 1: Helmet from Negau: after Nedoma (1995).

Fig. 2: Helmet from Negau, detail of 'Harigast'- inscription: after Nedoma (1995).

Fig. 3-5: 'Harigast'- inscription on Helmet 'B' from Negau: after Nedoma (1995).

Picture credits for runic inscriptions

Fig. 6: Stone from Kylver, Gotland: photography Lundberg Bengt A. after Jansson, Sven B. F. (1987), Gidlunds, Sweden.

Fig. 7: Bracteates from Vadstena and Tjurkö: photography Lundberg Bengt A. after Jansson, Sven B. F. (1987), Gidlunds, Sweden.

Fig. 8: Fibula from Meldorf: after Düwel/Gebühr (1981), p.160. Archaeological Museum, Schleswig, Germany.

Fig. 9: Fibula from Weimar: after Düwel, Klaus, (1995), p.55. Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany.

Fig. 10: Fibula from Freilaubersheim: after Düwel, Klaus, (1995), p.11. Landesmuseum Mainz, Germany.

Fig. 11: Bracteate from Køge, after Düwel, Klaus (2001), p. 48. Nationalmuseet, København, Denmark.

Fig. 12: Bracteate from Fyn, after Düwel, Klaus (2001), p. 48. Nationalmuseet, København, Denmark.

Fig. 13: Golden horns from Gallehus: photography Larsen, Lennard. Nationalmuseet, København, Denmark.

Fig. 14: Rune horn from Gallehus: illustration Paulli, J. R., (1734). Nationalmuseet, København, Denmark.

Fig. 15a-15e: Franks Casket: after Düwel, Klaus (2001), pp. 75-8. Left side of casket is kept in Museum Bargello, Florence, rest is kept in the British Museum, London.

Fig. 16: Sticks with runic text: photography Liestøl, Aslak.

Universitets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 17: Sticks with runic text: after Page, R. I. (1987).

Universitets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.

Fig. 18: Stone from Rök: photography Hupfauf, Peter (2002).

Fig. 19: Stone from Sjusta, Skokloster, Sweden: after Horn Fuglesang, Signe (2001), p. 192.

Illustrator not mentioned.

Fig. 20: Rock from Ramsund, near Uppsala: after Düwel (2001), p. 141.

Fig. 21: Stone from Bjälbo, Östergötland, Sweden: after Sawyer, (2000), p. 104.

Photography Lundberg, Bengt, A.

Fig. 22: Stone from Högby, Östergötland, Sweden: after Sawyer (2000), p. 114.

Photography Lundberg, Bengt, A.

Fig. 23: Stone from Snottsta, Uppland, Sweden: after Sawyer (2000), p. 30.

Photography Antikvarisk-topografiska arkivet (ATA).

Fig. 24: Stone from Altuna church, Uppland, Sweden: after Sawyer (2000), p. 127.

Photography Lundberg, Bengt, A.

Fig. 25: Stone from Hassmyra, Västmanland, Sweden: after Sawyer (2000), p. 61.

Photography Lundberg, Bengt, A.

Picture credits for images in symbolic significance of runes

Fig. 26a: Spear blade from Kowel: after Düwel, Klaus (1997), p. 807, fig. 37.2.

Fig. 26b: Spear blade from Kowel (detail): after Düwel, Klaus (1997), p. 807, fig. 37.2.

Figs. 27/28: Drawings of signs: illustration Hupfauf, Peter (2002).

Fig. 29a/b/c: Stone from Rök: photography Hupfauf, Peter (2002).

Fig. 30: Stone from Glavendrup: after Sawyer, Birgit (2000), p. 95, fig. 18.

Fig. 30: Stone from Jelling: after Düwel, Klaus (2001), p. 106, fig. 15a.

8. Gotland picture-stones

Since prehistory mankind has left marks on rocky surfaces. Some of the rock-art is painted, such as the famous cave paintings from Lascaux, France (fig. 1) which were assumed by Powell (1973) to have been created in 13000 BC approximately.



fig. 1

Other pieces were carved, such as the kerbstone from New Grange, Ireland (fig. 2) which Powell (1973) believed to have been created in the third millennium BC.



fig. 2

Stonehenge, England (fig. 3), one of the best known European monuments from the Neolithic period, was built from approximately 1900 BC onwards.



fig. 3

The development of the megalithic culture was suggested by Powell to have been initiated by inspiration from Mediterranean cultures. Menhirs, huge freestanding undressed megaliths (fig. 4), were erected, according to Cunliffe (1994), between 4500 and 4000 BC in France as well as in Scandinavia.



fig. 4

The beautiful Bronze-Age rock carvings from Bohuslån (western Sweden) (fig. 5) were also painted with red pigment.



fig. 5

Greek, Etruscan (fig. 6) and Roman cultures used stone for sculpture and relief-work. Text was engraved into stone and carved stones were erected, for example as memorials.



fig. 6

With a long history of utilising stone as a material for artistic expression, it is not surprising that people in Old Nordic society similarly decided to use stone surfaces as ‘canvases’.

Düwel (2001) stated that the custom in Norway and Sweden of erecting memorial stones reached far back into prehistoric times. The author referred to the Eddic poem *Hávamál* (stanza 72), where it says:



Fig. 6a: scene on a stone from a cist burial at Bredarör, near Kirik, Skåne, Sweden, c.1300 BC.

*Sonr er betri,
þót sé síð of alinn
eftir genginn guma;
sjaldan bautarsteinar
standa brautu nær,
nema reisi niðr at nið.*

A son is better, even if he is born late,
when the father is dead;
seldom do memorial stones stand by the wayside,
unless one kinsman raises them for another.

(Translated 1996 by C. Larrington)

According to Düwel (2001), the first runic inscriptions on memorial stones appeared in the fourth century AD. He cited as one of the oldest inscriptions (on memorial stones) the stone from Einang (East Norway), which was set next to a grave: *[ek go] daga[s] tir runo* (p.35) which he translated as “*Ich Godegast malte eine Rune*” (p.35), in English: I Godegast painted a (maybe one) rune. Düwel speculated that the master who engraved the text wanted to demonstrate that he was rune-literate and therefore had the power to secure the peace of the grave where the stone was set.

Sawyer (2000), in her survey of rune-stones and their distribution, stated that more than three thousand rune-stones were erected in Scandinavia. She agreed with Düwel (2001) that the first rune-stones were created in the fourth century AD. Some of the stones appear vertical while other slabs covering graves (recumbent stones) were laid horizontally. Some runic inscriptions were engraved on natural rock faces. Rune-stones appear in different sizes and different designs; however, according to Sawyer (2000, 7), “the content of the inscription is very uniform and everywhere the language is Old Scandinavian”. Sawyer stated that the custom of erecting rune-stones seems to have begun in northern areas, spreading south to reach what is now southern Sweden by the seventh century AD. It was by then, particularly in Jutland, Denmark, that rune-stones found much appreciation among the higher classes. From there, according to Sawyer (2000, 10) the custom of erecting rune-stones spread quickly over southern and middle Sweden, parts of Norway and reached the British Isles. The time at which most of the rune-stones were erected was identified as from about 950 AD.

Fuglesang (1986) raised the question of why rune-stones were erected, finding that most of them were memorial stones for the deceased; the surviving dependents arranged for the erection of the stones. Some of the monuments, however, were raised by living persons for themselves, according to Fuglesang, for example the large stone from Jelling and the Jarlabanke-monument. Erection of the large stone from Jelling was commissioned between approximately 960 and 985 AD by King Harald Gormsson (Bluetooth). The runic inscription on this stone was discussed on page 181. More than one thousand decorated stones still exist undamaged in Uppland, Sweden. The oldest were erected just at the beginning of the first millennium AD.

On the island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea, the custom of creating picture-stones, according to Nylén (1988), began in the fifth century and lasted until the eleventh century AD, which constitutes the longest tradition in the creation of such monuments. The relatively early beginning of this tradition, and the length of the time span during which picture-stones were created, make it attractive to use them for investigation of the variety of pictorial expressions over a longer period. Some of the picture-stones carry runic inscriptions, some show only runic inscriptions without any pictorial image at all. However, according to Lindqvist (1941), they are all called picture-stones.

Gotland, with its 3,000 square kilometres, is the largest island in the Baltic Sea and is now part of Sweden. The island is relatively flat, reaching only 83 metres at its highest level. Gotland was described in *Guta Saga* (Peel, 1999) as rather mysterious. *Guta Saga*, probably written between 1220 and 1330 AD, tells the reader that Gotland was discovered by a man named Pieluar. The island, as the saga tells, was bewitched. It sank by day and rose up by night. Pieluar, however, brought fire to the island and after that it did not disappear any more. Peel (1999) referred to the fact that after the last Ice-Age the sea level was much higher than before and then gradually lowered. Dan Carlsson, archaeologist at the University of Gotland (2002), stated that the water level in Gotland fell drastically in the eleventh and twelfth century because the various parts of the Scandinavian landmasses changed their altitude after the loss of the weight from the glaciers of the Ice-Age period. This eleventh and twelfth century event may not account for the island's myth of origin, but it demonstrates that Gotland is not a static island and the water-level did indeed change for plausible reasons. Because of the relatively low altitude and the flat surface of Gotland, it may have been possible that the island seemed sometimes to have vanished and then reappeared. Peel stated that several legends existed in Scandinavia, Iceland, Ireland and England, which feature floating islands. She interpreted the myth of the fire that stopped the island submerging as a possible sign that the island was no longer flooded, so that fire could burn there from then on. Another explanation could probably be that the low-lying island of Gotland, without any marker, was difficult to recognise from a moving boat bobbing up and down in rough seas. After habitation, however, when fire was lit, the island was marked by it, just as a light-houses still mark cliffs and dangerous passages in the present day, and the island could be seen even under difficult circumstances.

As mentioned above, *Guta Saga* named Pieluar as the first settler. However, Pieluar was only briefly mentioned again in the story, as his son Hafþi married Huitastierna (white star). Hafþi and Huitastierna had three sons, Guta, Graipr and Gunfiaun. The island was divided into three parts (north, middle and south), which were given to the three sons. From these three men, the saga tells, the population of Gotland increased so much that the land could not support them all. Every third person was sent away and the story says that they moved as far as the Byzantine empire.

Peel (1999) related evidence that Gotland was already inhabited during the Stone Age. It is stated on the Gotland homepage 'History' (2002), that archaeological finds show that Gotland has been inhabited for over eight thousand years. The Gotland homepage 'Kalender' (2002) informs the reader that astronomic calendars were carved into rocks. These calendars are based on the moon cycles and depict an interval of nineteen years. Even the date of the calendars' creation, which was during the Stone Age between 3300 and 2000 BC, can be reconstructed by using them.

Sune Lindqvist undertook a survey of Gotland picture-stones which was published in two volumes in 1941. Lindqvist's survey is still regarded as the most comprehensive work on this topic, for which reason this study is conducted along the lines laid out by him. The material of the Gotland picture-stones, according to Lindqvist (1941), consists predominantly of limestone-sledge, which is a local material. Some of the stones, however, consist of sandstone. These materials were probably chosen for the picture-stones because of their relative ease of use. The images were created by chiselling away surface material that was not part of the picture or ornamentation. The background created in this manner was carved out to only one millimetre in depth. The surface of this background presents an appearance, rougher than that of the picture/ornament-area which was left untouched. Lindqvist (1941) assumed that the rough background was meant to be an appropriate texture on which to apply colour. He speculated that only the background was painted, filling up the carved-out background areas, in an approach similar to that used for niello and enamel, both goldsmithing techniques known at the time.

The custom of erecting picture-stones emerged, according to Lindqvist (1941, 20), from a late Roman iron-age tradition (200 – 400 AD) of placing rough, undressed stone sledges at graves – usually cremation burials. The stone sledges were set into the ground, exposing to the air only up to approximately 20 to 30 cm. Grave fields of this kind were found on Gotland.

A stone box grave, found in a grave field near Bjärs, Hejnum, on Gotland appeared to Lindqvist to represent a link between the Roman iron-age graves and the later picture-stone graves. The grave was a double-grave and showed two stones that were 68cm and 52cm higher than the other two, which were used to construct a box. The stones were decorated. One had only a few lines left, the other showed a meandering ornament which was also much deteriorated. The contents of the grave-box included an iron knife, parts of a ceramic bowl, ashes, coal and burned human bones. A fibula was also included, which allowed a date to be estimated because of its particular style. According to Lindqvist (1941), it indicated production within the fourth century AD.

Lindqvist (1941) assumed that the artists/crafts-people who created the picture-stones gained their skills on Roman building sites where they may have helped to make similar monuments or even created them themselves. He mentioned that stonemasons who were trained in foreign cultures (such as the Roman) quite often developed particularly impressive skills. However, the Roman Empire fell in 455 AD. Following Lindqvist's hypothesis that the custom of erecting picture stones emerged at this time and that they were executed by Scandinavian stonemasons, who had earlier worked on Roman monuments, one must assume that these stonemasons had returned to Gotland after the fall of Rome and applied

their skills there. Alternatively it may be assumed that merchants had seen Roman stone monuments and commissioned stonemasons to create similar designs in Gotland.

During the period between the fifth and the eleventh centuries AD animal styles emerged in Scandinavia. The Nydam–Style, Style I, Style II and Style III developed up to the ninth century AD. Style II included elements from Anglo-Saxon art. Style III appeared at the beginning of the Viking period. Subsequently the Borre Style, Jellinge Style, Ringerike Style and the Urnes Style followed each other. The Gotland picture-stones also changed their appearance. Influences from abroad left their mark on the approximately 600 year old tradition of carving and decorating stones on the island of Gotland. It seems that the stones did not undergo a qualitative development from simple to sophisticated. Lindqvist (1941) observed that stones produced early were already of very high quality. The reason for this may be that the stonemasons were trained and working in Roman workshops, as just mentioned.

A categorising system with groups A, B, C, D and E was used by Lindqvist (1941) to separate different stylistic developments. As mentioned before, the custom of erecting picture-stones began most likely at the beginning of the fifth century AD, with group A lasting the whole century. Some stylistic elements, such as swirls, on the stones can also be observed on other objects, as for example on the fibula from Eidsten in the parish of Brunlanes, Vestfold, in Norway. Ribbon-ornaments, which Lindqvist suggested reflect a Celtic influence, were applied on many stones, leading him to the conclusion that the designs of the stones of group A coincided with the designs of Style II, discussed on p. 67.

Group B covers most of the sixth and seventh centuries. Lindqvist (1941) described the ribbon-shaped ornaments from this period as more simplified and standardised in appearance. He mentioned the upper horizontal decoration of Vallstenarum (fig. 7) as a typical example.



fig. 7

Another, probably further development, seems to be the ornamentation on 'Fole K' (fig. 8).



fig. 9

Lindqvist also mentioned Endre skog, Lärbro Nordr-Ire I, Stenkyrka IX, and Hellvi Ire III and described the ornamental designs as similar to those which were created on fibulae of Style I and Style II. Lindqvist emphasized the snake design on Sada Sandegårda I (fig. 9), descri-

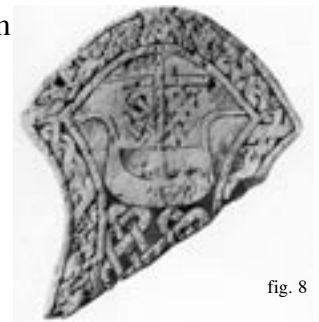


fig. 8

bing it as particularly close to the animal designs of Style II.

Group C started at the beginning and lasted until the middle of the eighth century AD. Lindqvist (1941) observed that the ornaments on the picture-stones became more complex. Instead of simple, single string or ribbon ornaments, ornaments now appear with multiple ribbons. This is, according to Lindqvist, particularly recognisable on the largest monuments, Stora Hammars and Tängelgårda (fig. 10).



fig. 10

A smaller number of stones was erected, according to Lindqvist (1941), during the time of group D which started approximately during the mid-or late eighth century AD. Lindqvist identified the stones of the group from Tjängvide (fig. 11) as belonging to this period. In his opinion all stones of this group from the southern part of Gotland seem to have been created by the same artist. He considered that they appeared to be artistically linked to the stones from the group from Lärbro. In the cases of Alskog Tjängvide and Ardre VIII (fig. 12), images and ornaments depicted there had already appeared on older monuments. Alskog Tjängvide shows at the lower right edge an ornament which Lindqvist suggested should be regarded as a ribbon-animal. He considered that the style in which this ornament was designed was a new development. According to Lindqvist, the style of group D does not differ widely from the style of group C, and he regarded it as practically a continuation of group C up to the ninth and tenth centuries AD.



fig. 11

Group E emerged during the eleventh century AD. Lindqvist (1941) observed that a two-ribbon ornament, which was common during the time of group B, re-emerged during this period. This element of style, according to Lindqvist, is consistent with finds of metalwork from the same period. He drew a comparison between the stone Ardre III (fig. 12) and a large ring fibula displayed in *Vitterhets*



fig. 12



fig. 13 *Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Månadsblad*, 1887 (p.114). The fibula described, which was unfortunately not depicted by Lindqvist, was made from silver and niello and is of the Jellinge-Style. The stone from Jelling (fig. 13) may help as an alternative for comparing the artwork of group E and the Jellinge Style and detecting some relationship. Ribbons on stones of group E were usually filled with runic descriptions. In cases where no text was written into the ribbon, the ribbon was very narrow, making further decoration unnecessary.

One notable detail in designs on Gotland picture-stones of the eleventh century AD was, according to Lindqvist (1941), a preference for the illustrative application of several curled leaves, as for example on the stone Hablingbo K (fig. 14).



fig. 14



fig. 15



fig. 16

The large monuments from Hogrän (fig. 15) and Sjonhem (fig. 16) were described by Lindqvist (1941) as being created in the mid-eleventh century and also belonging stylistically to group E.

Because of the complexity of the subject, I follow Lindqvist's model and explain the stones' particulars in separate groups. The categories are called Group A, B, C and so on. Firstly I will discuss the shapes in general. This will be followed by a general definition of the Groups, as Lindqvist called the different categories, before I focus on details of the depictions themselves, such as garments, ships, buildings etc.

1. Shapes

Lindqvist (1941) described the outer shapes of the stones, which are recognisably different from one period to another, and analysed the images depicted on the stones.

Three variations of picture-stones were introduced by Lindqvist (1941) and were discussed before the pictorial images were analysed in detail.

Large stones:

Bro-type, Martebot-type, Pavals-group, Vallstena-group, Havor-Austers-group, other, undecided, unclear

Dwarf-Stones:

Burs-type, rectangular

Curbstones:

Västind-type, with richly decorated borders, without ornaments on top, placed in circle, 20-30 stones, positioned in walls

Group A

The large stones were recognised by Lindqvist (1941) as having been created most skilfully. These stones were carefully selected to present a smooth front; sometimes they were slightly dressed in order to create a perfect surface. The back of the stones was usually left rough but the sides and top edge were carefully treated. The shape of the stones is nearly rectangular, but the top contour is usually convexly curved and the left and right vertical edges are bent slightly outwards towards the top, creating a gently concave shape. This treatment, according to Lindqvist, contributes to the stone's harmonious shape.

The curved vertical lines at the side, which make the shape of many Gotland picture-stones, are probably the result of considerations addressed in the twentieth century by Verstock and Kandinsky. A square or rectangular shape, according to Verstock (1982), creates a constructed and therefore restrained expression. Added to this Kandinsky described the qualities of left and right side vertical lines, as well as of top and bottom horizontal lines (see p 45). Curves, according to Kandinsky (1979, 85-90), create positive or negative pressure, depending on whether the curve appears convex or concave. Moreover, he defined curves generally as dynamic, resulting from curves in combination with straight lines, as in the shape of most Gotland picture-stones, creates a harmonious tension which is welcomed by most artists because it creates a temperamental and lively appearance.

Lindqvist (1941) described the pictorial arrangement on the front of the stones as skilfully composed. The spaces where images were supposed to appear were carved into the stone surface. The depth of the carving appears to be no more than one millimetre. He assumed that the images were coloured.

Type Bro is named after the stone Bro I from Bro (Gotland), because it best represents this type, according to Lindqvist (1941). The stone Bro I (fig. 17), which now measures 188 cm in height, must have been 250 cm before it broke. A fraction of the upper edge is missing, as well as a large part at the bottom. However, the main picture-field is undamaged and the artwork is easily recognisable. It features one large swirl with a diameter of 68 cm and two smaller circular designs, 34 cm and 35 cm in diameter, based on spiral shapes. The large roundel is accentuated by a ring of rays. A rowing boat with an



fig. 17

extremely high rising bow and stern-post, with eleven oars, a rudder and a box-shaped object in the centre, is shown at the bottom of the stone. Lindqvist (1941) mentioned that between the large swirl and each of the smaller spiral designs a spear and shield were vaguely recognisable, which belonged to two warriors whose bodies were carved into the stone but are no longer clearly recognisable. The photograph of Bro I unfortunately does not represent these elements.

The stones Hellvi Ire IV, Bro II and Halla K were mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as being of the same type.

Type Martebot (named after the stone Martebot K, because it best represents this type, according to Lindqvist [1941]) was described by him as similar to the Bro-type. However, he described this type as more noble. In comparison to the Bro-type, it appears to be executed with more detail. The stone presents a runic inscription (Lindqvist presented no translation), and on the left and right sides are geometric ornaments. The large swirl shows fewer segments than does the stone Bro I and therefore appears more open. The two smaller roundels are optically connected by the figure of a snake which encircles both roundels in a figure-eight form.

The stones Sanda IV and Västkinde Björkome I were mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as being of the same type.

The Pavals-group comprises a small number of stone-fragments, composed similarly to the types mentioned above. However, the vertical sides appear straighter. In several cases the stones depict dolphins as well as small swirls. Stone-fragments from the Pavals-group, group A, depict dolphins. Dolphins were mentioned by Andreae (1986) as signs of good luck on late-Roman belt-buckles. According to Andreae, dolphins symbolised a mythological maritime environment, namely *makaron nesoi*, the island of the blessed. Menelaos, in *Odyssey* 4, 560, was fighting at Troy and was promised that if he fought as a hero he would spend the afterlife on this island. Lindqvist (1941) listed Låbro Pavals, Tingstäde XVII and Hellvi Ire I as examples of this style.

The group of Vallstena, according to Lindqvist (1941), is represented by stones depicting only one swirl. These stones appear more simplified than those of the Bro- and Martebot-types. Examples mentioned are the stones from Vallstena Vallstenarum and Hablingbo Havor.

Stones which do not rise higher than one metre above the ground are called dwarf-stones by Lindqvist (1941). An exception are box-stones, categorised by Lindqvist as an indi-

vidual group.

Dwarf-stones are found not only on the island of Gotland but also on the Swedish mainland. Lindqvist (1941) observed that the smaller stones often appeared artistically less impressive than their larger counterparts, which is why he assumed that they may have been produced by less skilled tradespeople. However, he asserted that the importance of the dwarf-stones must be seen in the fact that they were produced at a time when, most likely, the urge or fashion to produce larger monuments was lacking. The dwarf-stones probably kept a tradition alive which might have otherwise languished.

Lindqvist (1941) divided the dwarf-stones into two types:

1. Burs-type, which appear to be a small copy of the large stones, e.g. Burs I and Halla Broa XIV.
2. Dwarf-stones of rectangular or nearly rectangular shape, e.g. Hejnum, Bjärs I and Stenkyrka Lillbjärs X, XI and XII.

Curb-stones have been found which are slightly curved in shape so that, if assembled with others, they form circles of between 3 and 10 metres in diameter. The left and right (shorter) sides of the stones are described by Lindqvist (1941) as being hewn in such a manner that their profile fitted well into that of the adjacent stone. He speculated that such circles may have been created to frame the foot of a hill, on top of which may have been erected a large stone, like one of the Bro-type.

Lindqvist (1941) mentioned engravings of wide grooves in often-changing directions on the long flat sides of the stones; however, he did not suggest any reason for these grooves.

Stones in the shape of spheres were also mentioned by Lindqvist (1941). He considered that they may have been part of an arrangement with the large stones. Many of the spheres were formed by nature; however, some of the spheres were hewn by craftspeople. These stones are not perfectly round. They usually represent a full circle when seen from above, but they are lower than they are wide, creating an oval when seen from side on. Stones in the shape of spheres are also known on the Swedish mainland. Lindqvist mentioned that some of these stones may have been placed on top of hills. The combination of sphere-shaped stones with large flat stones seems to be confirmed by the fact that some of the large stones were not decorated at the lower level, perhaps because a sphere-shaped stone covered this part of them.

Group B

Lindqvist (1941) described dwarf-stones which are small with horizontally oriented corners. They usually present extensions at the upper left and right corners. According to the author, the dwarf-stones were produced at a time after the creation of group A (c.400 – 500 AD). Lindqvist described these stones as being skilfully executed, but not to the same extent as the large stones of group A. Most of the dwarf-stones with horizontally oriented corners are decorated with a border which frames the two vertical edges and the top of the stone. One or two lines are usually drawn horizontally to define the lower end. These horizontal lines are in most instances designed differently from the framing border. The picture field usually presents a ship and one or two birds.

Dwarf-stones were produced over a long period and consequently show little overall uniformity. However, Lindqvist (1941) categorised them into four groups (Sojvide, Sandegårda, Ala and Stenstu). There are some dwarf-stones with a semi-circular top and corners pointing diagonally downward, from Stenstu. According to Lindqvist (1941), these appear more experimental. Stones in this category are often of the same width top and bottom; sometimes they are less wide at the bottom (Eskelhem Larsarve I and II).

Box-stones typically show a wave-shaped upper edge. Lindqvist (1941) described this shape: *“auf beiden Seiten der dominierenden Konvexität in der Mitte bemerkt man zwei kleinere Erhöhungen in den Ecken”* (on both sides of the dominant convexity in the centre two small elevations in the corners are recognisable) (p.40). This particular shape represents, according to Lindqvist, *“barbarisierte Reminiszenzen des wohlbekanntes antiken Giebels”* (barbarised reminiscences of the well-known gable from antiquity) (p.40). He mentioned that gravestones shaped in this fashion were also produced in provinces of Gaul (Trier) up to the Merovingian and Carolingian periods. Two such carved stones were erected at the shorter ends of a grave in Trier as well as on the island of Gotland. The lower parts of these box-stones were not decorated. The reason for this may be, according to Lindqvist, that the stones were placed deep in the ground in order to function as a box to contain ashes of a deceased and objects deposited with it.

Group C

This group was described by Lindqvist (1941) as the most interesting in the history of the picture-stones. He stated that the most impressive monuments were erected in this period and that the stone decorations became more elaborated and the main depictions more expressive. He assumed that artists with more highly developed skills were not satisfied with the small

scale of the dwarf-stones of group B and preferred to work in larger formats. This resulted in the development of a second group of large stones.

The shape of these new large stones echoes the shape of the dwarf-stones of group B. The upper parts of these new stones are far more convexly rounded and are wider than the main part of the stone. This created a kind of mushroom shape. The main part of these stones was slightly wider at the bottom, and narrower just where the upper part (the head) began. Lindqvist reported that the ratio between the upper (head) part and the main part of the stones was approximately 1:2. Sometimes, but rarely, the head appeared larger. As examples of such stones, Lindqvist referred to the stones Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 18) and Stenkyrka Smiss I.



fig. 18

The stones' surfaces were usually naturally smooth, and they were, according to Lindqvist (1941), not further improved. He assumed that the artists who created the stones of group C were better painters than stone masons. The engraved and painted borders appear elaborate and frame the whole stone. The main depictions consist of people, horses and riders, as well as ships. All illustrations were engraved and painted. The surrounding areas were also painted, presumably in several tones, resulting in an appearance which might be recognised as a painting on stone.

Some of the stones belonging to group C, according to Lindqvist (1941), were designed in the style of the stones in group B. A differentiation, however, is recognisable in the more elaborate decoration of the stones of group C.

As mentioned, the stones from the parish of Klinte were regarded by Lindqvist (1941) as outstanding. He recognised two main illustrations executed on the stones from Klinte, ship and rider, which were positioned on both sides of a horizontal dividing border-line at the lower end of the stones head.

The stones from Lärbro are also mentioned above. The stones Hammars I and Tängelgårda (fig. 19) were men-



fig. 19

tioned by Lindqvist (1941) as being the best representatives of this group. Further mentioned were the fragments from Lokrume and Hangvar, as well as the stone-slab Hejnum Riddare. The stone Buttle Änge was also recognised by Lindqvist as belonging to group C. Buttle Änge is the tallest of all the Gotland picture-stones, measuring 363 cm from the top to the lower end of its decorations. The monument Buttle Änge does not frame a grave. It was made up of two stones placed next to each other. This arrangement was also used with the stones from Bro Stenstu which are known as Bro Källingar (Bro-women), because from a distance they look like two women. Another pair of stones was erected near Eriks in Bro.

The huge space offered by the large stones invited the development of a rich illustrative art, as Lindqvist (1941) noted. However, he stated that the artists seemed to try to retain the monumental appeal of the stones. The illustrations executed on the stones were placed in panels which were individually framed; some of the stones include runic inscriptions. The stone slab Stenkyrka Smiss I appears similar to the stones from the group from Låbro; however, it seems that it was created by another master who created the illustrations less dramatically but nevertheless with much more “dramatic tension“ (Lindqvist, 1941, 47).

Lindqvist (1941) stated that in group C dwarf-stones were also produced, but they were the work of artists of lesser importance. However, some of the dwarf-stones (Stenkyrka Lillbjärs I and III, as well as Halla Broa IV) show artistic value and some of them are particularly interesting since they are less damaged than other stones.

The box-stones Buttle Änge III-VI belong to one arrangement. The unusual ornament, similar to that of the stone Sanda Sandegårda II, defines it as belonging to group C, according to Lindqvist (1941). A stone slab (Garda Smiss), with a decoration which is difficult to recognise because of its deterioration, belongs to the same category. Lindqvist claims that the stone-box slab Västkinde III seemed to be the only one decorated with the picture of a boat. Lokrume Tomase II- IV are four stones belonging together, which have lost their depictions. Lokrume Tomase I, found at the same place, belonged to another grave. Låbro Tängelgårda IV was of appearance similar to those mentioned before, according to Lindqvist.

The stone-fragments Visby St. Hans I are described by Lindqvist (1941) as large box-type monuments. He assumed that this arrangement was once richly decorated, but only a little remains of this. This assumption is based on a 20 cm wide ornament used as a border, where other stones present borders approximately 12 cm in width.

Group D

Not many stones make up the style of group D, according to Lindqvist (1941). He suggested a general loss of interest in picture-stones or, alternatively, that the designs of group C were structurally so well developed that craftspeople in the following period were satisfied to copy the earlier designs. Only in the south of Gotland did Lindqvist observe new developments, such as the group from Tjängvide. The stone-slab Ardre VIII (fig. 20) was mentioned as an example of this development, as well as Alskog Tjävvide I, the box-stone Alskog K and (probably [p.49]) the fragment of the mushroom-shaped stone Gothem III. These stones, according to Lindqvist, are distinctive because their illustrations present very precise contours and they show more detail than the stones produced earlier. However, he observed little artistic flair in illustrative skill or composition. He considered that the general appearance was copied from stones of group B.



fig. 20

Other monuments mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) were Klinte Hunnige III, with a border-ornament conforming with the style described earlier, as well as the stones from Gerda Bote, När Smiss, Gerda I and II and Gerda Smiss II, which, according to Lindqvist, were very simply executed. Lindqvist (1941) stated that the above-mentioned stones are small in number and represent a rather humble creation. However, he assumed that they were sufficiently important to be mentioned in order to understand the development of the subsequent group.

Group E

Lindqvist (1941, 122) placed group E in the eleventh century AD. He referred to the distinctive type of runes which were used by then, as well as style elements, which are a mixture of purposely applied old images, and some new elements from the Jellinge style. It is a period in which the erection of rune-stones, particularly in Sweden and Denmark, became a preferred custom. It was also the time when Christian missions were successful on the island of Gotland.

The general Scandinavian fashion of erecting stone monuments may have inspired the masters on the island of Gotland to create, now for the fourth time, a great number of large stones. Lindqvist (1941) stated that the artists of the time of group E learned from the well-executed stones from group C and based their designs on what they found from this period.

The shapes of group E were described by Lindqvist (1941) as having an elliptical line (curve) on top echoed in the lower parts (which are most likely the upper sides of the stone), straight narrow sides of the body, from which it is separated by only a small, unimportant step. The stone Hogrän K (fig. 21) was mentioned as a typical example.



fig. 21

The framing borders were also borrowed from earlier designs; however, the previous ribbon-knot designs were now replaced by snake-like animals which were called ormalur (lizards), according to Lindqvist (1941). These animals usually carried runic inscriptions. The lower parts of the stones commonly presented the inward-bent beginning and end (head and tail) of the snake-like animal. The upper part of the stones usually depicted a Christian cross. One monument was often assembled from several stones, such as Sjonhem I-III which consists of three stones, and was, according to the inscription, set by parents for their three sons who died.

The stone Hablingbo K (fig. 22a and b) was mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as an example of great artistic skill. This stone does not present a Christian cross. Instead it depicts on one side a rider and a valkyrie and on the other side a ship. Because of the lack of the cross, Lindqvist assumed that the person who ordered the stone may have been rather conservative or may have not been a strong believer in Christianity.



fig. 22a



fig. 22b

Stylistically, according to Lindqvist (1941), it is obvious that in this group lines replaced coloured fields. The lines were carved deeply and usually began and ended with a deep hole. Another new development is that the stones were now signed. The stone Hogrän K states that the animal was carved by kaiRuiðr, and the runes hewn by roðbiern and kaiRleifR.

Lindqvist (1941) considered that the stones were most likely regarded as public documents with legal value, for example in cases of heritage disputes. The name of the stone-carver (if well known and honourable) could have been important as proof of truth. Sawyer (2000, 47) too, concluded that rune-stones predominantly served as “declarations of inheritance”. Sawyer argued that the formulas and sequence of wording were carefully arranged, in that the sponsors of stones were named in order to display a rightful inheritance of property. Two examples which demonstrate this in practice were presented by Sawyer (2000, 51):

“Torbjörn and Frölög had the stone raised in memory of Önd, their son. (Sö 50, Jogersta)”.

The possessive [their], according to Sawyer (2000), conveys the information that Önd was the

son of both Torbjörn and Frölög and that after their death the families of both of them were entitled to inherit.

Holmsten and Vigunn, they had the stone raised in memory of her son, and Vihjälrm in memory of Ingefast. (Sö 37, Vappersta).

In this case, the possessive [her] indicates that Holmsten was not the father of Ingefast. It was not explained who Vihjälrm was; however, Sawyer (2000) assumed that he was Ingefast's brother. Holmsten, not being the father of Ingefast, according to Sawyer, would not be entitled to inherit from him. Vihjälrm, as brother, however, would have inheritance rights like their mother.

Dwarf-stones were also produced in group E. Their shape and decoration are similar to those of the large stones. However, the small format did not allow as much depiction as can be seen on the large stones of this period. The stones show new elements of decoration as well as selected old ones, in order to compliment the small scale.

Lindqvist (1941) described the stone Ardre III (fig. 23) as an excellent example of this type. The stone-carver in this case used spaces again. The image appears to be raised between three and four millimetres. Not all dwarf-stones were of such high quality as Ardre III. Ardre IV, according to Lindqvist, seems to be a copy of Ardre III, while 'Ardre VII' appears copied from stones of group 'B'. Worthy of mention are the stone-fragments Ekeby K and Stånga I, as well as Hemse annexhemman II and III. Levide K and När Bosareve are regarded, according to Lindqvist (1941, 58) as "naive replicas".



fig. 23



fig. 24



fig. 25a



fig. 25b

Box-stones were also part of the range of stones in group E. The shapes were, according to Lindqvist (1941), very traditional, and also the illustrations appear similar to these created much earlier. Lindqvist described the box-stones Ardre I, II, V and VI (fig. 24) as confusing because of their elaborate rune-pattern and the rather humble figurative depictions (fig. 25a and b). The order to create box-stones was placed by the sons of Liknats. Lindqvist assumed that these men gave also the order to erect the stone Ardre III for their father. He hypothesised that erected stones represented

a memorial for a man, where a stone-box may represent a grave for a woman, and he suggested investigating whether the decorations on other box-stones supported his theory. Other box-stones mentioned are Sanda I, Hemse I and the fragment of Halla Unsarve.

Interestingly, Lindqvist (1941) observed that, even though Gotland had such a long history of creating picture stones, it was only in the eleventh century AD that their style was copied elsewhere. A limestone-slab in the churchyard from Köping, Öland (fig. 26), has a mushroom shape and could be regarded as a consciously produced copy of a Gotland picture-stone.

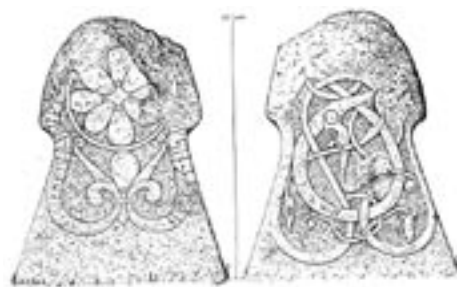


fig. 26

Lindqvist suggested that a Gotland artist may have created this stone. He mentioned another monument erected in the churchyard in Norrsunda in Uppland, which was engraved with text stating that it was brought from Gotland (*ðir furðu stin ðina af kutlanti*). The stone was hewn in the typical mushroom shape and had a framing border as well as a border across it, just below the upper part, like the designs from Gotland. This example is regarded as the first case of Gotland-stone export. Lindqvist also suggested that the custom in Uppland-stones of placing a line of script following the contour of the stone was most likely borrowed from Gotland. He mentioned the Tullstorp-stone from Skåne, which has a framing border merging at the bottom into a ship where mast and sail were replaced by a Christian cross.

2. Images

The depictions of riders on Gotland picture-stones, which according to Lindqvist (1941) became popular during the time of group C, are also observable elsewhere in Scandinavia. Lindqvist referred to the stone from Skokloster, in Uppland, Sweden, which depicts a rider. He reported that scholars believed that the stone was erected during the eleventh century AD. This assumption emerged because, after re-erection at an unknown time, the image of a cross, runic inscriptions, a script-ribbon and minor changes on the frame of the stone were executed. Lindqvist proposed that the image on the stone may be a copy of one of the images of the Gotland stones of group C. Similar designs with riders were also created, as mentioned by Lindqvist, as far south as Hornhausen, Thüringen, in Germany. The ribbon ornaments that accompany the rider depictions from group C are assumed by him to be inspired by designs from Anglo-Saxon culture. The same ribbon ornaments were also found on objects which were classified by Haseloff (1981) as style D (see p. 74).

Boats were depicted in all the periods during which picture-stones were created. However, according to Lindqvist (1941, 62), they seemed to be particularly important during the period of groups B, C and D. Even on the earliest known stone a boat is depicted. Therefore it seems necessary to give some attention to these illustrations.

Images on group A

Longboats of the Bro-type.

The stones Bro I and Västkinde Björkome I, as well as the fragments Hanvar Austers, show illustrations of boats of a type similar to the oak-boat from Nydam (fig. 27). The Nydam boat was found in 1864, near Schleswig, Germany. According to Bass (1972), it was built between 350 and 400 AD. Vessels used by the Anglo-Saxons to reach Britain, as mentioned by the author, must have been boats similar to the Nydam boat.



fig. 27

The stone Bro I depicts this kind of boat well. The hull

is drawn as being made from four planks and the bow and stern are curved upward. The boat is shown carrying a cabin or tent. A stick is appearing at the gable-end. Lindqvist suggested comparing this tent/cabin with finds from Oseberg and Gokstad. Some short lines recognisable on the stone Bro I (fig. 28) are explained by Lindqvist as the arms and maybe heads of the rowers. The boat is presented with ten normal oars, but is also equipped with a steering-oar and an additional oar at the bow. Tacitus, in *Germania*, chapter 44 described Swedish boats three hundred years older as different from normal ones because they had two prows, one at the front and one at the back and the oars could be taken out of their locks and placed in position to row in the opposite direction. This enabled the crew to reverse quickly.



fig. 28

A stone from Sanda kyrka (fig. 29) was presented by Ellmers (1986) and depicts a rowing boat similar to that of Bro I. It shows fewer rowers than Bro I but they are drawn in relatively greater detail. The tent-like construction appears to carry the shields of the rowing warriors.

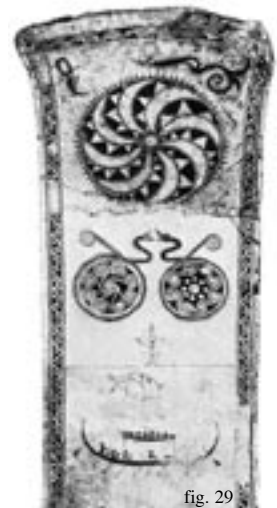
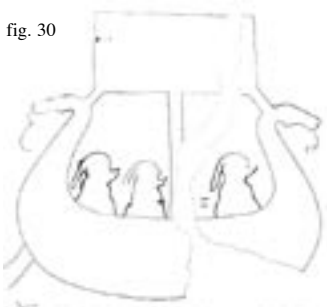


fig. 29

fig. 30



Images on group B

Sailing vessels of the type 'Larsave'

(fig. 30) were described by Lindqvist (1941, 64) as a new type. The ships, depicted on the stones Larsave I, Fole K, Bro, Endre skog and Halla Broa, appear short and the bow and stem are drawn as reaching far up.

At the end of the bow and stem were placed animal heads. The ship hulls were depicted with a curved line along the bottom. The relatively small sail was placed high up on the mast. The ship in Fole K is drawn with a bigger sail; however, care was taken not to hide the bow or the stem of the ship. Lindqvist assumed that this type of shape may have represented a cargo-ship. He suggested a copy of Roman designs.

Sailing vessels of the type Rikvide were described by Lindqvist (1941) as similar to the type Larsave. However, he noted minor differences, which is why these ships are placed in a different category. The depiction on the stone När Rikvide (fig. 31) consists of a ship representing a parallel line to the bottom of the ship and the gunwale. The stem of the ship reaches far up, as in the ship described earlier, but the mast is placed not in the middle but towards the end of the ship and carries a small square sail. The stone from Lärbro Källstäde presents a similar ship. The bow, according to Lindqvist, once displayed an animal head and the stem is designed as a spiral-shaped snail-tail.



fig. 31

The following stones are of similar design:

Sjonhem L, Sojvide, Hablingbo Stenstu, Stenkyrka IV, Norrlanda Bjärs, Halla Broa I, XII and X, Roma Kloster, Ardre Petsarve II, Norrlanda Bringes, Gothem Västerbjärs, Garda Smiss I, and Kräklingbo Smiss I.

Lindqvist (1941) assumed that the ships of the type Rikvide had a low hull. He believed that the relatively short depiction, in relation to the height of the mast, did not really represent the length of the ship but was probably the only known way to represent this particular feature.

Images on group C

Sailing-vessels of the type Lillbjärs.

The dwarf-stone Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III (fig. 32) was described by Lindqvist (1941) as being created in great detail. The ship type appears the same as that mentioned earlier; however, Lindqvist described a variety of naval details, like rope-work and battens, which may not have been recognisable on the previous ships. He considered that the ships depicted on the stones Halla Broa III and Lärbro St. Hammars IV appear to be of the same kind.



fig. 32

Sailing-vessels of the type Hunnige.

The ships depicted on Klinte Hunnige I (fig. 33) and III appear, according to Lindqvist (1941),

similar to the type Rikvide. However, the hull is much higher, suggesting a greater load capacity. The ships' bottom-line suddenly changes shape towards a vertical direction at both bow and stern. Additionally, this ship presents wing-like extensions on one end which may, according to Lindqvist, have been used to place the sail in more positions than would be possible without this extension. Lindqvist noted that similar extensions can be observed in the stone from Tullstorp in Skåne, one at the church of Holmby and one at Stratomtå in the parish of Törnevalla (Östergötland). He regarded the construction of this kind of ship as relating to far older designs, as for example that from Alsen, which belongs to the oldest known Iron Age, or even sledge-like ships, which are known from Bronze-Age rock engravings. The people depicted on the ship seem to carry their shields on their arms, not having them placed in specifically constructed rails at the ship's gunwale, was usual on Viking ships. The ship's sail appears to be made from diagonally overlapping sheets of fabric. Four ropes (sheets) are shown, fastened at the lower end, to manoeuvre the sail.



fig. 33

Longboats of the type Lärbro.

These ships, according to Lindqvist (1941), are of the same kind as the ships from Oseberg and Gokstad in Norway. Several depictions of them appear on stones in the parish of Lärbro, like that on Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 34). The ship's bow and stem are carved as an animal head and tail and a crew of ten warriors can be counted. The sail is wider than it is high and may have a boom. Several ropes (sheets) are depicted, woven into a net-shape, which was used to place the sail in a desired position. Because there is a bundle of spears at the ship's stem, it is likely that this represents a warship. Lindqvist mentioned that a ship similar to this is depicted on the stone Hejnum Riddare. He also classified in this type the ships shown on the stones Lärbro Tängelgårda I (fig. 37) and II. According to him the ship on the stone Stenkyrka Smiss I shows a sail whose lower width seems to be greatly exaggerated. The ship carries fifteen shields and a crew of eleven warriors.



fig. 34

Images on group D and E

The stones Alskog Tjängvide I (fig. 35) and Ardre VIII (fig. 36) depict ships which rise to the same height at both ends, with the ends curled in a snake-like fashion. The sails on both ships are cut off at their lower right and left corners. Lindqvist (1941) assumed that this might have been done in order to be able to see the



fig. 35



fig. 36

curled bows and stems of the ships. The sails' sheets are on the top, all divided into Y-shapes. The most outstanding feature of these illustrations, according to Lindqvist, is that the warriors can be seen from head to toe, as if the deck rose to the level of the gunwale. The stone När Smiss I depicts a similar design, but the warriors are covered by their shields and only the heads can be seen. Smaller boats are depicted on the stone Ardre VIII, Lindqvist (1941) concluded that these boats may represent a scene known as Þórr's fishing. He was probably referring to the situation described in Snorri's *Gylfaginning*, where Þórr went fishing together with the giant Hymir to catch Jörmungandr, the Midgard-serpent.

In describing details, Lindqvist (1941) observed that oars were only shown on long-ships from the type Bro and the boats from Ardre VIII. Sails depicted on older stones were small and placed high up on the mast. He considered the possibility that the sail-cloth was stretched within a frame. Tents or cargo-boxes are shown occasionally (group A), some depictions on later stones suggesting that the ships were constructed with decking (type Tjängvide). The ship depicted on Lärbro Hammars I was equipped with a walking-plank and the ship on Ardre VIII features a hook on the bow.

The most common weapon depicted carried by the boats' warriors is the sword. It seems, according to Lindqvist (1941), that swords were usually worn on the side of the lower body, held by a harness carried over the shoulder. Younger later depictions, however, suggest swords being carried on the belt, as was already common among the Franks.

The axe is a weapon repeatedly depicted. The blade appears smaller on older depictions (eg. Lärbro Tängelgårda I [fig. 37]) and is wide on illustrations on younger stones (e.g. Ardre II).

Spears are also commonly depicted weapons. It is interesting to see that a rider drawn on the stone Stenkyrka Lillbjärs I carries two spears. This indicates that at least one could be thrown at a target and the rider would still be in possession of another, probably to impale an enemy's body while holding the spear instead of throwing it. Bows and arrows were other weapons depicted on some Gotland stones (e.g. Klinte Hunninge I).

Shields are very common among depictions on Gotland stones. Shields are shown being carried by riders as well as by warriors on foot, and placed along the gunwale of ships. The shields are always round. The roundel, described by Lindqvist (1941) as a whorl-image, which was used as the main depiction on older stones, is also shown as decoration



fig. 37



fig. 38

on shields (e.g. Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III [fig. 38]). A central boss, according to Lindqvist, is not often shown.

The many depictions on stones suggest, according to Lindqvist (1941), that helmets were commonly worn by warriors. It is known from finds particularly from Uppland, that helmets were made from leather or metal and also from leather with metal in combination. Lindqvist stated that it would be impossible to recognise the particular material from the depictions on stones. Some of the illustrated helmets are round on top, others are pointed. This correlates with finds from the Vendel-period, and his suggestion is that the artist intended to show the variety of helmet styles.

Humans are found on picture-stones from all periods, according to Lindqvist (1941). However, stones from group C depict more humans than others. Lindqvist observed that figures from group A were usually drawn naturalistically, probably nude and in action (e.g. Martebo K, Vallstena Vallstenarum and Hangvar Austers). Later interpretations of humans appear more lifeless, even if they are dramatically arranged.

Men's garments

Garments are difficult to recognise on picture-stones because the depictions are not very detailed, probably because of the nature of the material on and from which they are created. The stones from group A, according to Lindqvist (1941), may depict men who are nude or wear extremely tight garments. Both would be possible. Depictions on other objects show men wearing tight garments, however Tacitus mentioned warriors fighting naked. Although not mentioned by Lindqvist, it might also be possible that the clothes were of little importance to the artists who carved and painted the stones. Some pictures present men wearing a tight shirt, pulled together at the waist by a belt and falling in creases down to the knees (e.g. Sanda I, and Ardre V, VI, I and II). Younger stones mentioned by the author are Garda Bote, Ardre VIII, Alskog Tjänvide I (fig. 39) and Alskog K. He mentioned that in cases where people are shown wearing shirts, it is quite often difficult to discern whether the shirt has sleeves or not. Depictions on other objects usually show shirts with sleeves. Two warriors, however, illustrated facing each other on När Smiss I, with shields carried on harnesses over their shoulders, seem to wear shirts with wide sleeves.



fig. 39

Pants, as observed by Lindqvist (1941), usually reached to the ankles, where they were commonly tied with ribbons, as is still common in the traditional dress of the Sami. Batey (1994) compared these pants with those worn in Asia Minor and considered that people from Norse

cultures may have adopted this particular style of garment. Short pants, which appear extremely loose, were also mentioned by Lindqvist (e.g. När Smiss I, Stenkyrka Smiss I, Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III).

Coats were garments which, according to Lindqvist (1941), were worn up to the Middle Ages. (One may assume that he meant one particular kind of coat, like a cloak, because coats as such are still worn worldwide in cold climates). However, he mentioned that coats were rarely depicted on picture-stones from group E. As an important representation of a coat, Lindqvist referred to Sanda I. On this stone, a standing man in profile wears a coat which has one end drawn to the front and the other to the back. Lindqvist referred to very similar depictions on *guldgubber*, which are also analysed in detail in chapter five and appendix B in this study. According to Lindqvist, such coats were placed over one shoulder and fastened on the other by a ring-fibula, and were also fastened at the waist by a belt. It appears that these coats had no sleeves; they may be regarded as blankets wrapped around the bodies of wearers.

Men's hair depicted on stones within group A appeared to be short and beards were rare, according to Lindqvist (1941). However, pictures created during the time of group B show men with long hair and pointed beards. Moustaches are difficult to discern because all men are depicted in profile. Lindqvist stated that men depicted on Lärbro I seem to have short hair while the men shown on Lärbro Tängelgårda appear to have long hair which is often plaited. He argued that long hair and a long (not pointed) beard may represent an old man.

Women's garments

Referring to women's garments represented on Gotland picture-stones, Lindqvist (1941) mentioned the great similarity to depictions on *guldgubber*, as described also within this study. The greatest similarity appears on depictions from the group of Tjängvide. Here, dresses are shown pleated and reaching the ankles. They seem longer at the back than at the front. Over this dress, according to Lindqvist, the figures are usually shown wearing a cloak. Lindqvist (1941, 81) mentioned that this cloak is no longer shown on illustrations from group C, which he dated at the year 700 AD. The hair appears to be tied together with a large knot at the neck, which was recognised by Simek (2000), in his description of depictions on *guldgubber*, as an Irish ribbon knot (see p. 118). The woman on the stone fragment Lärbro St. Hammars IV, according to Lindqvist, seems to wear a tunic over a pleated skirt. The tunic reaches to the knees and the length of the skirt appears ankle-length as mentioned before. Lindqvist believed that the garments most likely belong to mature women. However, he mentioned a small number of depictions where it was difficult to define whether the person is male or female. For example, a figure on Lärbro Tängelgårda IV may be a woman;

however, the figure wears a tunic with wide sleeves and a draped coat, which Lindqvist regarded as male attire. He considered that figures wearing short skirts, accompanying a spear-carrying hunchback man, were young girls (Sanda I).

Pictures of riders and horses

The stone Martebo K was mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as one of the older ones depicting two riders with shields and spears. The depictions on Stenkyrka Lillbjärs I (fig. 40) and III, from approximately 700 AD (group C), were regarded as appearing “quite noble” (p.82). The horses appear impressive, being in motion.



fig. 40

Saddles were already in use in the fifth century AD, as Lindqvist (1941, 83) stated. The stones Lärbro St. Hammars I and Lärbro Tängelgårda I depict a scene where one rider has fallen from the horse, allowing a view of the saddle. However, he noted that even the qualitatively better illustration of Lärbro Tängelgårda I does not show much detail.

Carts were mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as found on only three stones, Alskog K, Ekeby K and Levide K. Alskog K was regarded by Lindqvist as the stone with the qualitatively best illustration. This illustration of a cart is slightly damaged. According to Lindqvist’s description it may have had four wheels, of which only two are shown and, most likely, two horses which may have been placed in front of it (although only one is visible). The pole is bent like those of sledge-pullers from Oseberg. One pull-line depicted was described by Lindqvist as most likely representing all that was needed to pull the cart. It is not clear whether the upper part of the cart (the box) was meant to be rectangular or semi-cylindrical in shape (like Oseberg), because the illustration is in full profile. Two people are depicted as passengers in the cart.

Buildings

Lindqvist (1941) stated that only the stone Klinte Hunnige I (fig. 41 [detail]) clearly depicts buildings. Several buildings are represented there, surrounded by a rectangular enclosure with an opening, guarded by a person with bow and arrow. The houses are shown standing next to each other, the gables towards the outside, as was common in a village during the Middle Ages. However, Lindqvist (1941, 85) mentioned that, according to excavations of house-foundations from the Iron Age on Gotland, a close cluster of build-



fig. 41

ings was not common on the island. He considered the possibility that buildings from somewhere else were depicted on this stone. Ardre VIII depicts houses which are different from those on Klinte Hunnige



fig. 43

I. The roofs on the houses of Ardre VIII have semi-circular gables, and an entrance which is semi-circular on top, as well as small windows in the same shape.

Depictions such as that on Ardre VIII (fig. 42) allow the observer to see a story enacted inside a building. The small building below the end of the sailing ship with its hammers and pairs of pliers, represents the workshop of a blacksmith. Buttle Änge I (fig. 43), according to Lindqvist, represents a common house, with two people sitting on chairs and a dog in the hall.



fig. 42

Furniture and household items

Some of the above-mentioned ‘see-through’ houses are furnished with chairs (Buttle Änge I, Alskog K, Sanda I). När Hallute and probably also Ardre III depict a table.

Lindqvist (1941, 87) noted horns used as drinking vessels, which are depicted predominantly on stones from group C but also from groups D and E. Horns are usually shown carried by a woman standing in front of a rider. Lindqvist observed that the open part of the horn is usually directed towards the man. However, the woman standing in front of an eagle, on the stone Lärbro St. Hammars III, holds the horn opening towards herself. Lindqvist mentioned Lärbro Tängelgårda (fig. 37) as the only stone which depicts men holding horns. This stone depicts a shape which is difficult to define and which was regarded by Lindqvist as being probably a vessel containing mead.

Other items mentioned by Lindqvist (1941, 88) are a basket, hammers, pliers, fishing-fork, net, spade, sickle, a harp (*tallharpa*) and a bowl which he described as “a symbol of her housewifely pride”.

Snakes and fetters

Klinte Hunnige I (fig. 44 [detail]) depicts a man lying down defending himself with his hands against two attacking snakes, but being bitten by two other snakes. Stenkyrka Smiss I (fig.



fig. 44



fig. 46

45 [detail]) depicts a similar scene, in this case with the man upright. Roth (1986, 124) assumed that combinations of human figures and animals indicate the desire to incorporate animal attributes in the cultures of the Merovingian period. According to Lindqvist (1941) Ardre VIII (fig. 46) presents on the lower right end a man around whom snakes are coiling (difficult to recognise). Lindqvist suggested the possibility that this is a depiction of Loki being tied up after he was caught by the Æsir because he caused Baldr's death (*Gylfaginning*).



fig. 45

Alternatively, it could also represent the hero Gunnar in the serpent pit (*Atlakviða*). Further up on the same stone two more persons are shown, also tied up. Another depiction including snakes was mentioned by Lindqvist (1941). This is the scene from Ardre VI (fig. 47), dated by the author as created in the eleventh century AD. In this case a man, holding probably a child in his arms, tries to defeat several snakes. Snake-like serpents, according to Lindqvist, are also shown on several stones of the first large-monument group.



fig. 47

Animals

The animal represented more often than any other on the picture-stones from Gotland is, according to Lindqvist (1941, 89), the horse (Hablingbo Havor I, Alva Änges, Eskelhem Lasarve II and Ardre VI).



fig. 48

The stone from Vallstena (fig. 48) depicts two animals with horns. Holmqvist (1986) regarded these animals as horses, even though they have horns. He referred to similar depictions on the stone from Höggeby, Uppland, Sweden (fig. 49), where two horned horses are also shown, as well as on bracteates, e.g. that from Gerete, Gotland (fig. 50). Holmqvist (1986) believed that the depiction of horns reached back to Classical Antiquity, where horns, because of their formal similarity to the sickle shape of the half-moon, were used to pay homage to the sky-gods.



fig. 49



fig. 50

Dogs are shown, according to Lindqvist (1941), on Klinte Hunnige I, Klinte Ksp., Levide K, Alskog Tjängvide I, Ardre III (fig. 42), and probably also Visby St. Hans I.

Cattle can be discerned on Klinte Hunnige I (fi. 41) and Ardre VIII (fig. 42). Images on Buttle Änge III, V and VI, as well as on Halla Unsarve are, according to Lindqvist, not clearly defined.



fig. 51

An elk and/or a deer is depicted on Gerda II, Endre skog (fig. 51), Kräklingbo Smiss IV and Västkinde Butter (fig. 52).



fig. 52

Dolphins are shown on Hablingbo Havor I, Lärbro Pavals, Tingstäde XVII, and Hellvi Ire I.

A fish is depicted on Ardre VIII.

Birds

The stone Stenkyrka IX depicts an ornament in its central field, where a stylised picture of a bird was used to fill the space. Some other stones of the same group depict waterbirds positioned facing each other. Lindqvist (1941, 90) assumed that these depictions had symbolic purposes. Several Roman monuments in the area of Trier, in Germany, depict peacocks and doves. They are applied symbolically within the Christian context, where the peacock represents the solar wheel and immortality, and the dove purity, peace and harmony (Chevalier and Gheerbrant, 1996). The above-mentioned monuments from Trier are suggested by Lindqvist as being the prototypes for the Gotland box-stones. Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 34) depicts a scene of men stealing women. According to Lindqvist, a bird peacefully picking grain was placed in the composition to complement the dramatic situation. The illustration on Askog K was regarded by the author as a similar situation.

Several birds of prey are depicted on Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 34), which was already briefly discussed above. The illustration on Klinte Ksp. includes a bird of prey sitting on a rider's arm. Lindqvist (1941) suggested that the bird depicted on Sanda I be regarded as Óðinn's swallow, which means most likely one of the two ravens (Huginn and Muninn [thought and memory]) which, according to *Grímnismál*, 20, accompanied Óðinn. The illustration on Lärbro Tängelgårda I (fig. 37) includes a scene with three birds of prey, one of which attacks a fallen warrior. Another bird of prey is shown on Stånga II. A stone from Rikvide (fig. 53) depicts two birds with long necks. Lindqvist (1941) regarded these birds as some kind of duck; however, it seems more likely that they are geese, which were quite a common sight twice a year when they migrated to and from their winter and summer homes. Ellmers (1986) mentioned that geese were found in many Scandinavian ship-burials, as sacrificial offerings.



fig. 53

A human figure, which Lindqvist (1941) considered might be Óðinn, is depicted disguised as a bird on Lärbro St. Hammars III. He also suggested that a figure in the shape of a bird shown on Ardre VIII (fig. 42) was probably Völundr, the legendary smith.

Miscellaneous natural objects and elements

According to Lindqvist (1941, 90), depictions of objects found in nature other than animals and the elements are rare. An image depicted on Garda Bote may represent a star. Sanda I may be a sun. Sanda I definitely shows fire burning in/on a stove. Water is represented regularly, as waves flowing alongside depicted ships, a scene particularly well presented on the large stones of the group from Lärbro. Two trees tied together are depicted on Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 34) and a single tree may be recognised on Alskog K.

Abstract depictions

Abstract depictions were defined as symbols by Lindqvist (1941), particularly those shapes which he called roundels and spirals. Lindqvist (1941) referred to the scholars Gabriel Gustafson, born in 1853 in Visby (Gotland) and Frederik Nordin, born in 1852 in Västkinde (Gotland), who were convinced that the swirls drawn on the stones represent the sun, because of the importance of the sun in religious cults of earlier cultures. Kreutzner (1988) stated that without any doubt the designs of early Gotland stones were copies of late Roman,



fig. 54a



fig. 54b

Spanish and Frankish memorial stones, which explains the great similarity of the iconography. Lindqvist himself appeared sceptical; however, he investigated similar depictions on older monuments from other European areas. One of two stone sledges from León on the river Duero in Spain (fig. 54a and b) presents illustrations of one larger and two smaller swirls, in association with the sickle-shaped depiction of a half moon. The roundels in this case most likely represent the stars. Lindqvist hypothesised

that if images such as those from León had inspired the artists in Gotland, then there would be a possibility that the sickle-shaped moon was transformed into a ship. According to him, this proves that the Gotland artists, even if they had borrowed images from elsewhere, would not necessarily have preserved the original symbolic representation. For them, the sickle-shape may have been a stronger representation of a ship than of the moon. Therefore, the Gotland artists would not necessarily have interpreted the Spanish swirls as sun or stars; they could give them a different meaning relating to their own culture (fig. 55).



fig. 55

Ships depicted on the Gotland stones were, according to Lindqvist (1941, 94), regarded by Gabriel Gustafson and Frederik Nordin as vessels which deliver the dead to the 'other-world'. Lindqvist, however, argued against this theory, referring to the above-mentioned sun/star-symbol which, in his opinion, was not necessarily anything more than decorative. Similarly, he proposed that the ship images were probably used because of their decorative value. However, considering the importance of ships for an island population, and the importance of ships represented in Scandinavian ship burials, it seems very likely that the depictions of ships had much more value than being only decorative, and Gabriel Gustafson and Frederik Nordin may have been right in their assumption.



Three horns appear interlocked on the stone Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III (fig. 56). Three interlocked, triangular shapes are also mentioned by Lindqvist (1941) as appearing on the same stone behind the rider's head. This particular shape is difficult to define. A similar sign can be seen on Stenkyrka Lillbjärs I (fig. 57) between the horse's legs. Lindqvist suggested that these shapes may represent a ribbon-ornament in sharp angles, broken between straight lines, without beginning or end. Similar

shapes can be found on Buttle Ange V, Lärbro Hammars I (fig. 34), Lärbro Tängelgårda I, and Stenkyrka Smiss I (fig. 45). Under the body of the horse on Alskog Tjängvide I (fig. 39) appear several ribbon-ornaments, which Lindqvist suggested may be regarded as misunderstood copies of the above design.



fig. 57

Lärbro St. Hammers IV and Sanda Sandegårda II depict shapes which are, according to Lindqvist (1941), difficult to identify but may represent swastikas. He noted that the interlocked triangles described here, as well as the swastikas, belong stylistically to group C.

The abstract iconography of Group E, according to Lindqvist (1941), is dominated by the Christian cross. This reflects the developing Christianity in Scandinavia. Düwel (2001) presented an excellent example to demonstrate the transition between heathen and Christian

beliefs. A piece of copper, found in the parish of Boge, in Sweden, showed a runic inscription, which was presented by Düwel as:

Im Namen unseres Herren Jesu Christi, kuploh, des Herrn, des Vaters und des Sohnes, kuploh, [und] des Hl. Geistes, kuploh, Amen. Kreuz [Chris]ti: Vater, Kreuz [Chris]ti: Sohn, Kreuz [Chris]ti: Hl. Geist, kuploh, Amen. Christus regiert, Christus, kuploh, siegt, Christus herrscht, Amen.

This may be translated as:

In the name of our lord Jesus Christ, **kuploh**, of the Lord, of the Father and of the Son, **kuploh**, [and] the Holy Ghost, **kuploh**, Amen. Cross [Chris]t:Father, cross [Chris]t: Son, cross [Chris]t: Holy Ghost, **kuploh**, Amen. Christ governs, Christ **kuploh**, gains victory, Christ rules, Amen.

Düwel (2001) suggested that **kuploh** was the name of the woman who owned the copper piece. The text included a great number of sacred words, particularly the word Christ, which was meant to be a protection against demons. The copper piece functioned as an amulet, following heathen tradition, but used Christian vocabulary to function as a charm. Sawyer (2000, 128) referred to rune stone inscriptions from Virring, Randers, Skam, Odense, Sønder and S. Kirkeby in Denmark, Valenda in the parish of Väne-Åsaka, Västergötland, and possibly one from Jursta in the parish of Ludgo, Södermanland, Sweden. These stones express “invocations to Thor: May Thor hallow (these runes/this monument)!...” Sawyer stated that some scholars regard this text not as heathen but as an early adaptation of the Christian custom of blessing.

Hogrän (fig. 58) and Sjonhem (fig. 59) are examples of designs of this transition period. The imagery and the use of runes still present a link to a heathen tradition. The cross, however, is now shown with the same dominance as the serpent representing Jormungandr or Fáfnir.



Mythological pictures

Lindqvist (1941) mentioned that earlier scholars believed they recognised depictions of Óðinn on the stones Alskog Tjängvide I (fig. 60) and Ardre VIII (fig. 61) because the horses shown on these stones were identified as Óðinn’s horse Sleipnir. (Lindqvist did not mention



fig. 60



fig.61

that he and the other scholars cited by him, identified Sleipnir because the two horses were depicted with eight legs each.) Óðinn is shown in the shape of a bird (fig. 61), described as flying away from a woman who holds a horn, with a man behind her holding out his empty hand in supposed bewilderment. It



fig. 62

is incomprehensible how Lindqvist could describe the bird as “eagle-like, flying away from the woman” (p.95), when it is quite obvious that the bird’s head points towards the woman and the tail is in the opposite direction. The bird’s beak does not have the beak shape of a bird of prey; rather it resembles the impression of the beak of a dove. The bird holds an object in its beak which was not mentioned by Lindqvist. This object is difficult to identify. Possible interpretations may be (a) a scorpion (one claw can be seen in one of the dependent shapes; another shape could be the tail, with the sting), (b) a plant, (c) a serpent. It is also not clear which particular mood the depicted man expresses. The bewilderment of the man described by Lindqvist appears to be the author’s subjective interpretation. He suggested that the scene describes Óðinn together with Suttungr and his daughter Gunnlōð, in Norse mythology regarded as the keepers of the ‘mead of poetry’ as it says in the *Poetic Edda, Hávamál*, 104, 105:

<p><i>Hinn aldna jötun ek sóttak, nú em ek aftr of kominn; fátt gat þegjandi þar; mörgum orðum mæltak í minn frama í Suttungs sölum. Gunnlöð mér of gaf gullnum stóli á drykk ins dyra mjaðar; ill iðgjöld létk hana eptir hafa síns hins heila hugar, (síns hins svára sefa).</i></p>	<p>I visited the old giant, now I’ve come back, I didn’t get much there from being silent; With many words I spoke to my advantage In Suttung’s hall. Gunnlod gave me from her golden throne A drink of precious mead; A poor reward I let her have in return, For her open-heartedness, For her heavy spirit.</p>
--	--

(Jónsson, 1926)

(Translated by Carolyne Larrington, 1996)

Lindqvist (1941) regarded the scene on Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 63), as well as on Stenkyrka Smiss I, as pictorial interpretations of the story of Hildir. Hildir, a chieftain’s daughter, is depicted with a present in her hand, between her abductor Heðinn and her father Hogni. Hildir’s father, according to Ellmers (1986), is meant to be on the ship with his warriors.



An image depicted on Ardre VIII was described by Lindqvist (1941) as a reference to the myth of Þórr's fishing expedition with the giant Hymir. An object located on the left side of the rowing boat carrying two people may be the ox's head (fig. 64) which in Snorri's *Gylfaginning* (translated by Faulkes, 1987, 47) was described as being used as bait:



fig. 64

“And when Thor had shipped his oars, he got out a line that was pretty strong, and a hook that was no smaller or less mighty-looking. On to this hook Thor fastened the oxhead and threw it overboard, and the hook went to the bottom. And then it is true to say that Thor fooled the Midgard serpent no less than Utgarda-Loki had made a laughing stock of Thor when he was lifting the serpent up with his hand”.

Lindqvist believed he recognised Jormungandr, the Miðgarðr Serpent (see p. 223), at the bottom of the stone. He further identified Loki, caught amongst poison-spitting snakes, while Sigyn, his wife, holds a bowl to collect the snakes' poison in order to prevent it flowing on to Loki. As written in Snorri's *Gylfaginning* (translated by Faulkes, 1987, 47):

Then the Æsir took his guts and bound Loki with them across the stones – one under his shoulders, one under his loins, the third under the backs of his knees – and these bonds turned to iron. Then Skadi got a poisonous snake and fixed it up over him so that the poison would drip from the snake into his face. But his wife Sigyn stands next to him holding a basin under the drops of poison.



fig. 65

A person with five heads depicted on Ardre VIII (fig. 46) was suggested by Lindqvist as a mythical being, which may have associations with a three-headed figure depicted on the horn from Gallehus (fig. 65), which he regarded as being a depiction of Þórr.

A horn-carrying woman in front of a rider is shown on several stones. Lindqvist (1941) mentioned many depictions of this kind on stones from group C, on Alskog Tjängvide I from group D and on Hablingbo K from group E. This woman was regarded by Lindqvist (p.97) as one of the valkyries. The author suggested the valkyries could have been seen by the stone carvers as a Norse equivalent to the goddess Victory from Classical Antiquity. Lindqvist assumed that myths from Classical Antiquity were known in Old Nordic society. According to him, this can be seen from the bracteates from Skovsborg, Jutland, Denmark

(fig. 66); Aneby, Småland, Sweden (fig. 67); and Mauland, Rogaland, Norway (fig. 68), which represent copies of Roman medallions and were made at the same time as the stones discussed here.



fig. 66



fig. 67



fig. 68

The stone Lärbro Tängelgårda I (fig. 69) shows three horses. On the back of one of the horses the body of a person is depicted, horizon

tally positioned and wearing a long shirt. Lindqvist (1941, 100)

assumed that this person was meant to be dead. Between the horse's

legs appear additional crossed shapes, which he assumed to repre-

sent some kind of traditional fencing (Standtun) (fig. 70 and 71) that

divides the world of the living from the world of the dead. The eight-

legged horse depictions, as shown on Alskog Tjängvide (fig. 35) and

Ardre VIII (fig. 42), both designs from later group D, may, according to

Lindqvist, be misinterpretations of the 4-legged horse illustration from

Lärbro Tängelgårda I, which belongs to group C. He hypothesised

further that a dead body may have been carried not on the back of one

horse, but on a stretcher mounted on the backs of two horses walking

next to each other. An illustration of such an arrangement in profile

may result in the appearance of only one horse with eight legs. Such

a misunderstanding could have caused the invention of the legend of

how Óðinn's horse Sleipnir acquired eight legs.



fig. 69



fig. 70



fig. 71

The stone Klinte Hunnige I (fig. 72) presents several illustrations which seem to belong together: (a) A person is depicted lying in an enclosed space; it appears to be a dead body in a snake-pit. A woman is shown just about to reach into this enclosure. (b) A woman holds a snake. (c) A man holds a snake like a bow. Behind the man is a figure which is difficult to identify, but may be a person bowing down. Above this bowing person appears to be a bird flying off. (d) The next image looks like three figures in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige

in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige

in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige

in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige

in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige

in an upright position and one person apparently holding a stick or short sword, shown diagonally, nearly horizontally, which may indicate a struggle. Lindqvist (1941, 104) assumed that this illustration depicts a revenge-scene. The images were possibly drawn to represent a magical vendetta. This technique of illustrating a story over a series of pictures was, according to Lindqvist, already known from applications of this kind in Classical Antiquity. The tapestry from Bayeux, only a little later than Klinte Hunnige



fig. 72

I, used the same method to tell a story, as did the Anglo-Saxon Franks Casket. Lindqvist mentioned that other stones, for example LärbroTängelgårda I (fig. 37), Lärbro Tängelgårda II, LärbroTängelgårda IV, Ardre VIII (fig. 42), Lokrume K, and Stenkyrka Smiss I (fig. 45), may also have incorporated the same technique. This indicates the likelihood that the stone carvers from Gotland were aware of these other objects on which stories were depicted in such a manner, and followed the general fashion.

Sringley (1988-9) regarded the images on the picture-stones as illustrating the journey to Ásgarðr where a dead warrior would go because, the author assumed, Valhalla would be located within Ásgarðr. From the depictions, the author concluded that Ásgarðr was believed to be reached by ship and then by horse. Ásgarðr was, according to Sringley, guarded by a high wall and all this would resemble the journey to Byzantium. He cited the *Prologue* of Snorri Sturluson's *Edda*, where it says: "Near the centre of the world there was built the most splendid house and dwelling which has ever existed, and it was called Troy, in the land which we call Turkey".

Sringley (1988-9) went further and mentioned that Snorri described Ásgarðr-Troy as huge in size and containing the dwellings of twelve kings and one overlord. "A king called Munon or Mennon had a son by Priam's daughter, Troan. he was called Tror, whom we call Thor". Thor was brought up in Thrace (Þruðheim [Thrudheim]) which he later ruled over. He travelled all over the world, fought berserks, dragons and wild animals. In the northern parts of the world he met and married the prophetess Sybil, "whom we call Sif the golden-haired". From Tor and Sif were descended various kings of whom the twentieth in descent was Óðinn. It was Óðinn who led an expedition from Tyrkland (Turkey) to the North finally settling in Sweden where he made Sigtúnir his capital and ruled with twelve chieftains "just as it had been in Troy" (summarized from *Prologue* 0:3 – 5) (p. 164).

Ancient Troy (Ásgarðr), as hypothesised by Sringley (1988-9), was seen by the people of Gotland as their racial place of origin, their forefathers living there. Therefore, they believed that their spirits would go there after death. Sringley stated that not only did the Vikings believe in their ancestral origin was in Troy but also the Franks claimed to descend from a Trojan king named Francus, and Nennius, in *Historia Britonum* (1980), proclaimed that the Britains related to Brutus, also a Trojan.

From the sixth century AD onwards, as stated by Sringley (1988-9, 183) though without reasons, it was fashionable to refer to an ancestral origin in Troy. This may be an explanation for the related images on the Gotland picture stones, which suddenly appeared from the seventh century AD onwards. Even Ragnarøk was associated by Sringley with the fall of Troy. He explained, that mythologically, two sea snakes sent by Apollo, crossing a bay cau-

sing a tidal wave, came ashore to destroy Troy. Similarly the Miðgardr snake came from the ocean to attack Ásgarðr. Sringley noted that the fall of Troy is regarded by archaeologists as initiated by an earthquake, shortly before Agamemnon and the Greeks could finally sack it.

In 1993, Sringley published theories intended to prove the validity of his hypothesis that Troy is the place which is called Ásgarðr in Old Norse mythology. He described a number of images from the Gotland picture-stones and interpreted them with matching episodes from the Trojan War. However, it appears that the images could be interpreted as depicting any legend. Troy was located in Asia minor and not in Byzantium. Simek (2002) discussed this theme in an unpublished paper, emphasising the possibility of an identity between Ásgarðr and Troy. Simek, though, stated that no evidence existed for this assumption.

The sixth century historian Jordanes (according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica 2003) reported that the Goths originated in southern Scandinavia and during the second half of the second century under their king Bering, in three ships crossed the Baltic Sea. Wolfram (1995) mentioned that in 291 AD the Goths separated into two groups of peoples, the Ostrogoths, occupying the area of today's Russia/Ukraine and the Visigoths who settled in the area now called Romania.

Romania with its shores on the Black Sea shares a border with Turkey, where Troy once stood, at the southern entrance of the Dardanelles, the narrow strait linking the Black Sea with the Aegean.

People returning from the Black Sea area to Scandinavia could have brought the legends of Troy to the North, where they may have been integrated in the native Scandinavian mythology. It is also possible that Snorri Sturluson, when he referred to Troy in his *Prologue* to the *Edda*, followed simply a fashion of medieval European writers, who according to Encyclopaedia Britannica (2003), found the legend of the Trojan war inspiring for medieval courtly and chivalric poetry.

Summary

Lindqvist (1941) described the picture-stones from Gotland as having developed in several stages. He defined the first group as group A. Monuments within this category were created throughout the whole of the fifth century AD. Stones of group B were created during the sixth and most of the seventh centuries. Group C started at the beginning of the eighth century and lasted until the middle or the end of the same century. Group C was succeeded at the end of the eighth century by group D, which lasted until approximately the end of the tenth century. Group E started at the beginning of the eleventh century and ceased towards the end of that

century.

The most impressive monuments were erected, according to Lindqvist (1941, 127), during the times of group A, C and E. He hypothesised that this may have occurred because during these particular periods greater wealth existed on the island of Gotland than at other times. It is remarkable that the creators of the stone monuments obviously repeatedly looked back at designs from earlier periods for inspiration and to maintain a certain tradition.

Lindqvist (1941, 128) stated that the society of Gotland is assumed to have been wealthy until the middle of the first millennium. It is not known, according to the author, what caused the end of this period of wealth. Wealth was expressed through the impressively high artistic quality of the stonework executed in this culture. It was also claimed by Öhrman (http://www.gotmus.i.se/2_tyska/vorzeit.htm) that finds have shown that Gotland was very important as a trading place in the post-Roman era and large amounts of gold were used on the island to create jewellery, that was sold to other parts of Scandinavia and to Baltic areas. The date cannot be exactly defined when conditions on the island drastically changed.

Lindqvist (1941, 128) wrote that properties which had been in use for centuries, suddenly decayed, after approximately the middle of the first millennium. Houses were burned down and cultivated land deserted. He stated that it could only be imagined that a terrible war or another catastrophic event devastated the population on the island so badly that a state of desolation occurred. Peel (1999, xxvii) also mentioned that archaeological evidence suggests a sharp reduction of the population on Gotland between approximately 475 and 550 AD. This, the author stated, is indicated “by the paucity of grave finds and by the number of abandoned settlements”.

The neighbouring island of Öland, according to Lindqvist, experienced a similar form of decay several decades before the fifth century AD. The artistic continuity in style development experienced an obvious interruption. Weapons and jewellery changed; Lindqvist hypothesised that people from Svear-tribes may have begun to occupy Gotland. Objects and items appeared on the island which relate strongly to those in the Continental Germanic culture. Lindqvist described this as the beginning of the Vendel-culture, in which Salin's Style II developed. He emphasised the unexpectedly long period of little development until the next phase of creation of large stone monuments. There are almost no picture-stones on which Style II can be found.

As mentioned here in Chapter 4, Keys (2000) speculated that in 535 AD there was a volcanic eruption between the Indonesian islands of Sumatra and Java, which were not divided until then. The author stated that the explosion of the volcano Krakatoa was of such force that it caused a global climatic catastrophe, to the extent that it changed the course of human

history. Not just an eruption, but the explosion of a huge volcano, subsequently dividing a large island into two, must undoubtedly have created a cloud of smoke and ashes which darkened the sky dramatically and may have changed the world's climate drastically. Countries located under the path of the cloud, which may have been determined by winds, as well as countries with sensitive soil or weather conditions may have suffered extensively. Tree-ring investigations in Scandinavia and western Europe, according to Keys (2000), have revealed a great reduction in tree growth for about fifteen years.

Baillie (2000), in a BBC interview referred to growth rings in bog oaks, which indicate that a catastrophic event took place in the year 540 AD. He said, that studies of tree-rings from Northern Ireland, Britain, northern Siberia and North and South America indicate a global event of the same kind. Baillie assumed that a cometary bombardment may have taken place, which may have caused a cloud that encircled the world, bringing a dramatic drop in the global temperature.

Todd (1994) described an invasion that took place in about 550 AD from western Russia and the plains further east. The Avars from the Russian plains pushed into Slav territory. Some of the Slavs moved westward and southward, predominantly along the Danube. Some, however, moved in a northerly direction, along the Elbe valley, and according to Todd extended into Poland and Germany. These movements may have been initiated for the same reason that devastated the culture on Gotland. However, they might have contributed to the occupation of Gotland by people who were disturbed by the movement of the Slavs.

Nerman (1935) stated that from approximately 550 AD onwards, a large number of foreign shapes appear on Gotland. Several objects, such as coins, glass and bronze vessels, are most likely imported, predominantly from Frankish areas, particularly the area that is now Belgium, but also from East Prussia. However, Nerman observed that objects produced on the island of Gotland adopted style elements from these foreign countries. As, for example, Eagle heads which are a typical Frankish depiction. The East Prussian influence is most obvious on fibulae, particularly crossbow-fibulae. Influences from the Swedish mainland, according to Nerman, are also recognisable on later objects.

Symbolic elements in depictions on Gotland picture-stones

Because of their abstraction, whorl-like roundels depicted on the early picture-stones from Gotland invite speculation as to their meaning. Generally they are regarded in most texts as sun-signs (fig. 72). Lindqvist (1941) and Ellmers (1986) referred to provincial Roman originals in Spain which depict similar whorls. Roundels appear on picture stones singly, two together, or three together. In three-roundel compositions there are always two smaller ones positioned on the same level and one centred above, shaped as a whorl. The smaller roundels are of equal size, each represent-

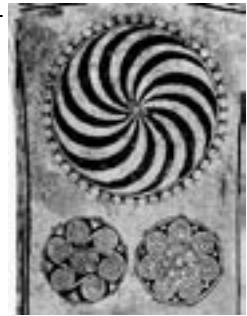


fig. 72, Bro I

ing variations of spirals. If the top (large whorl) roundel is not present, then the other two roundels appear just as if the top whorl were there. Therefore Ellmers suggested that the two smaller roundels may be regarded as more closely related to each other than to the larger whorl. He observed that in cases where only one roundel is present, it appears in most cases like the large whorl from the three-roundel constellation

(fig. 73); however, in some cases it appears in the typical shape of one of the small roundels (fig. 74). In this case, Ellmers suggested, it may be a simplified representation of the two small roundels. As mentioned above, Ellmers defined the large whorl as the sun. The two smaller roundels, depicting spirals, were regarded as the earth and the world of the dead. He presumed that a snake, depicted on the stone from Sanda kyrka would represent Jormungandr. Jormungandr, the Miðgarðr Serpent, was described in Eddic poetry as living in the oceans, encircling the earth. Hel, Loki's daughter and the female guardian of the world of the dead, could, according to Ellmers (1986, 345), also be depicted as a snake. Ellmers may have interpreted Hel subjectively as Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996, 845) did, citing Keyserling's (1932, 222) symbolic description of a serpent in terms similar to those used by Snorri Sturlusson to describe Hel "The she-serpent... dwells in the lower levels of consciousness and deeper strata of the Earth. Ever ambivalent... (it is) twins within the same body... linked to freezing, clammy subterranean darkness...".



fig. 73, Sanda IV



fig. 74, Vallstena, Vallstenarum

The shape of whorls like those depicted on Sanda IV (fig. 70), was defined by Liungman (1991) as "representing a rotation or an independent movement". Used in Aztec culture, the sign represented day. Every section of the whorl could also be counted, to make up several days. The spiral shape inherent in such whorls can also be recognised in many plants that grow in a spiral manner. Clouds can also be seen, particularly at sea or on an island, forming similar patterns. This may be the reason that the Bureau of Meteorology in Australia uses a logo,



fig. 75a



fig. 77

with a whorl-shape to identify itself (fig. 75a and b).

Considering that the whorl-shaped signs were applied

on stones on an island where weather-patterns can be

easily observed, it appears likely that they were associ-

ated with concepts of change relating to the sky or to heaven.

In view of the many spiral growth motions occurring in nature,

one must consider whether the whorl may have symbolised exist-

ence in its full complexity. Spirals, as in the case of 'Vallstena,

Vallstenarum' (fig. 76) or on Bro I (fig. 77), are

suggested by Liungman (1991) to be one of the

basic elements in Western ideography, elements

which also include the straight line, the circle seg-

ment, the dot or small filled circle. The spiral has existed for

a shorter time than the other shapes mentioned. The earliest finds,

according to Liungman, were *discos* from Crete (2000 BC). In

rock carvings and paintings found in Sweden, Liungman stated, they represented "potential

movement" (p.168). The Vikings used spirals to express "independent movement (against the

sun, waves and wind when necessary) and eventual return" (p.168).



fig. 75b



fig. 76

According to Liungman (1991), the mirror-image direction of the spiral appeared in approxi-

mately 2000 BC in the Euphrates cultures, and the anti-clockwise spiral was used as an

Egyptian hieroglyph, representing thread (probably on a spinning wheel) or measurement.

The sign was also used by the Phoenicians (its symbolic meaning was not explained by

Liungman), as well as on Bronze-Age jewellery found in Skåne in Sweden. Chevalier and

Gheerbrant (1996, 907) cited Champeaux (1966), stating "The spiral is and symbolises eman-

ation, extension, evolution, cyclical but progressive continuity and rotational creation".

Meehan (1993, 24) described the Megalithic period, the

time between 5000 BC and 3000 BC, as "the age of pot-

tery". Many ceramic vessels of this time were decorated

with spirals and S-scrolls. The tomb from New Grange,

Boyne Valley, in Ireland was built towards the end of the

Megalithic period. A kerbstone numbered A1 (fig. 78) at

the entrance of this monument is richly decorated with

carved spiral ornaments rotating clockwise as well as anti-clockwise. Meehan (1993, 26)

interpreted this as describing "in symbolic terms the division between two opposites...". Outside,

opposite the entrance a second stone was placed (K52) which was also decorated with spirals,

amongst other shapes. A third stone with spiral designs (C10) was placed inside, in the centre of



fig. 78

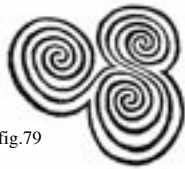


fig.79

the tomb. Opposite the designs on the outside stones, the stone C10 (fig.79) presented three spirals depicted as an infinite line, meandering from the inside out and from one spiral to the other.

Meehan (1993, 33) identified this combination of three lines forming three double spirals as a basic maze, with two S-scrolls, “each centre connected to the other by one path and exiting to the other side by the other. The S-scroll is enclosed by a line branching into a third spiral to the left, to exit”. This kind of maze, according to Meehan, is monocursal, because only one pathway runs throughout, with no dead ends. However, there are two forks in the path and two distinct circuits. The entrance is also the exit. A symbolic meaning of the two courses could be that if someone chooses the shortcut along the edges, he/she would miss the “core experiment” (p.34) which can only be experienced by following the path through the centres of the spirals.

The geometric plan of New Grange (fig. 80), according to the position of the mid-winter and mid-summer sun in relation to the points of the compass, creates a six-pointed star. The whole arrangement was laid out in a circle.

The entrance of the New Grange tomb was located towards the mid-winter and mid-summer sun. Opposite, the kerbstone K52 was positioned. The radius from the centre of the tomb to the outside wall was marked on kerbstone K67 with rich decoration.

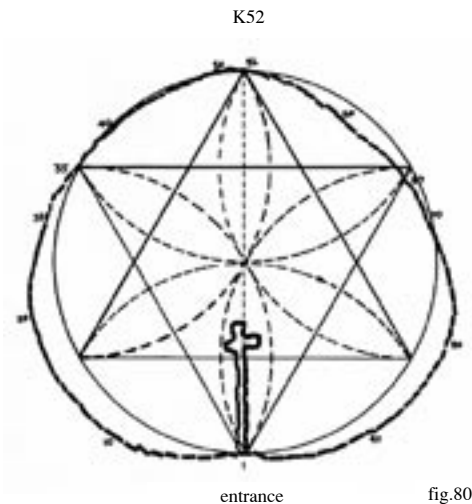


fig.80

From the fact that the radius of the tomb’s circle was marked on the tomb’s circumference in relation to the entrance-stone and the stone opposite the entrance, Meehan (1993) suggested that the creators of the mound used this construction element to create a six-pointed star. The construction method was outlined by Meehan (1993, 40) as follows:

- a. Take the diameter of the mound and half it to find the centre of the circle.
- b. Step the radius around the circle.
- c. Draw the star. The downward triangle touches kerbstones K1, K35, K67.
- d. Join the points of intersection of the triangles and project to fall between the stones K59 – K60. This line coincides with the North - South axis.
- e. Join opposite points of the triangles to make the horizontal arm of the cross, projected between K35 – 36 and K82 – 83. This line coincides with the East - West axis.



Not mentioned by Meehan and not obviously relevant in this context are the dotted construction lines he applied to determine the precise positioning of the star's points. By focusing on the shape of these dotted lines, one can recognise the same shapes depicted as symbols of secondary importance (relating one size to another) on the stone Vallstena, Vallstenarum (fig. 81).

To construct the four-armed star-like symbol at the centre of the Vallstena, Vallstenarum design (fig. 82), one must measure half the radius of the circle and divide the circle's perimeter into these lengths. The circle must then be divided into four (or eight) sections. From every point of the half-radius on the circuit one draws a curve the length of the circle's radius, between the centre and the circle's outer edge, along the four (fig. 83) or eight (fig. 84) dividing lines, as in the case of the outer right disc (fig. 85). The symbolic expression of such star-like symbols could be the range of cosmic objects in all directions of the sky, as indicated by the directions of the compass.



fig. 82



fig. 83



fig. 84



fig. 85

The smaller symbol, at the bottom of the Vallstena, Vallstenarum design is a disc that resembles the Yin-Yang sign. The Yin-Yang sign, according to Liungman (1991, 357), originated in ancient China and symbolises the universe. It “illustrates the two opposing dimensions that give the world its dynamics”. The horizontal line drawn through the S-shape may represent the division between the real world and the other world.

The small disk at the left of the same design divides a circle into four sections, with two crossed S-curves cut through them (fig. 86). The two crossed S-curves were described by Liungman (1991, 354) as “an ideogram from a caster found in Hissarlik, Turkey, considered the place where ancient Homeric Troy was situated”. Liungman considered the sign was most likely a sun symbol. He also referred to the sign of the swastika which was also associated with the sun, fertility and luck. Liungman (1991, 179) mentioned the two crossed S-shapes as being used “in the context of tribal migration”.



fig. 86

The small disc depicted at the top of the design shows a round space divided by a grid of straight lines at 90° and 45° angles to one another (fig. 87). It is difficult to interpret the meaning of this sign. Liungman (1991, 139) described an X-shaped sign, related to the depiction of two arrows pointing at each other. However, the depicted symbol includes also +-signs. “Semiotically the stem of the cross, the vertical line, stands for heavenly or spiritual, whereas the transverse beam represents the material plane of existence”. Liungman stated that in Sweden this sign is used by the military to indicate on maps that “blasting, or other types of destruction have been prepared” (p.140). One inter-



fig. 87

pretation of the constellation of lines could also be as a set of runes. Most of runic letters are drawn by applying straight lines vertically and diagonally. Horizontal lines have been applied to divide text lines. The runes which could be depicted are: F, T, A, R, K, G, W, H, N, I, J, P, Z, S, T, B, E, M, L, N, D, O. Runes with short, diagonal bars would be difficult to depict in this manner, being recognisable as such in combination with the remaining letters. Letters with longer bars are: C, G, N, I, Z, S, T, L, O. Düwel (2001) presented a runic script (fig. 88 [kefli B 583]) which he stated represents a luck-enhancing formula based on models from Classical Antiquity. It may be translated as "The sowing man Harpocrates



fig. 88

s	a	t	o	r	s o w e r (planter)
a	r	e	p	o	a r e p o (name)
t	e	n	e	t	h o l d s (protects)
o	p	e	r	a	w o r k s (farming)
r	o	t	a	s	w h e e l s (cart)

(Arepo) holds (protects) cart, farming and harvest" (Düwel 2001, p.169). The text is a palindrome, as it can be read from top left to bottom right or in reverse, as well as vertically from top left downwards or from

bottom right up to the top left, always presenting the same words. The shapes of the signs on the disc of interest on the stone 'Vallstena, Vallstenarum' appear to have a similar quality. However, hypothesising that these strokes represent runes placed on lines, it would not be possible to identify even one single letter on the top line. It could be the case that a horizontal line may occasionally be positioned as a line in the middle of a letter-row.



fig. 89

The stone Hablingbo Havor II (fig. 89), which was erected between 400 and 600 AD, depicts a quatrefoil loop, which is called "St. Hans' cross or the cross of St. John" (Liungman, 1991, 268). The website of the Historical Museum of Gotland (2002) stated that the quatrefoil loop was most likely regarded as a magic symbol,

the shape possibly representing infinity or eternity. A mosaic from a church at Shunat Nimrin in Jordan,



fig. 90

(fig. 90) which was attributed to the seventh or early eighth century AD, according to

Kitzinger (1991) shows a knot-design, similar to that of the stone Habingbo Havor II. The

text around the design was translated by Kitzinger as "God [be] with us"

(p.4). Ellmers (1986) regarded this sign as a formal variation of Jörmungandr, the Miðgadr-serpent. The golden medallion from Lyngby, Jutland, Denmark (fig. 91), depicts an equivalent to that sign, which Ellmers believed also to be Jörmungandr. The sign, which has no beginning and no ending, may portray a symbolic expression of eternity.



fig. 91

A depiction of a tree on the stone from Sanda Kyrka (fig. 92) was identified by Ellmers (1986) as Yggdrasil, the world-ash tree.



fig. 92



fig. 93

A sign of three interlocked triangles appears on several Gotland picture-stones (Stenkyrka Lillbjärs I [fig. 57], Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III [fig. 56], Buttle Ange V, Lärbro St. Hammars I [fig. 93], Lärbro Tängelgårda I, Alskog Tjängvide I [fig. 39]). According to Zuzana Polaskova, curator at Statens Historiska Museum in Stockholm, it also appears on a number of ceramic items, which were found in graves.

Kreutzner (1988) stated that the meaning of this symbol is not known. However, he mentioned the possibility of a representation of the heart of the giant Hrungrnir.

Snorri Sturluson, in his *Edda* (Faulkes, 1987, 20) mentioned a triangular sign symbolising the giant Hrungrnir:

Hrungrnir átti hjarta þat er frægt er, af hǫrðum steini ok tindótt með þrim hornum svá sem síðan er gert var ristubragð þat er Hrungrnis hjarta heitir.

This was translated by Faulkes (1987, 78) as:

Hrungrnir had a heart that is renowned, made of solid stone and spiky with three points just like the symbol for carving called Hrungrnir's heart has ever since been made.

The triangle was described in *Neues Grosses Volkslexikon* (1979, vol.2, p.469), as a symbol used by the Pythagoreans to represent the shape-creating principles of the universe.



fig. 94

The shape of three interlocking horns (fig. 94) appearing on various picture-stones may represent the great wisdom which Óðinn gained by drinking three draughts of the mead of poetry, which was, until then, in the possession of the giants.

It is described in *Hávamál* 104–10, as well as in Snorri's *Skáldskaparmál* 82-5, how Óðinn, disguised as Bǫlverk, used Baugi, the brother of the giant Suttungr, in order to meet Gunnlǫð, who cared for the sacred mead of which her father Suttungr was the guardian. Óðinn had intercourse with Gunnlǫð three times and this made her willing to give him three draughts of mead. Óðinn drank the mead out of Oðrerir, Boðn and Son, which are the names of the containers in which the mead was kept.

Ellmers (1986, 341) stated that ship-burials were undertaken and depictions of ships on memorial stones were created from the fifth century AD on and both were executed up to the end of the Viking period. The depictions on the picture-stones may have expressed the ship burials. The author cited Müller-Wille (1968/69) who stated that depictions of ships sailing to Valhǫll may have been replaced during the eighth century AD in many cases by horses.

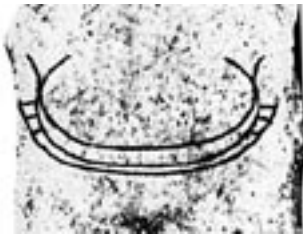


fig. 95¹

Müller-Wille, according to Ellmers, did not explain why horses and carts suddenly replaced the ships. Lindqvist (1941) explained that during the second half of the first millennium, the Vendel culture emerged on the island of Gotland. Not being insular people, Vendels perhaps appreciated horses at least as much as ships.

Considering the migration of the Avars from the Russian plains towards the west, one must also consider direct or indirect influences of this on the people in Scandinavia.

Ships depicted on Scandinavian picture-stones include large ships, small ships, sailing ships and rowing boats. Some of the ships have a great number of people as crew, some show only one or two people. The ships, according to Ellmers (1986), are depicted fishing and fighting. Most of the Gotland picture-stones depict the ships' crews as armed, which does not necessarily represent a battle. The author observed ships used as main motifs and as well as as secondary illustrations. Some stones depict several ships within one illustration.

According to Ellmers (1986), depictions of ships usually signify a funeral ceremony. He



fig. 96

came to this conclusion because of the depiction, e.g. on the stone 'Sanda Kyrka' (fig. 96), of two roundels which he argued represented earth and the world of the dead. The snakes encircling the roundels signify Jormungandr, the Midgard serpent and probably Hel, the female guardian of the world of the dead (Hel, according to Ellmers, could also be represented as a snake).

Ellmers (1986, 343) explained that the people from Gotland, and also from other parts of Scandinavia, most likely believed that the earth, the place of the living, was encircled by Jormungandr. Therefore, it would have made sense to regard the world of the dead as somewhere in the oceans. This perspective, according to Ellmers (1986, 349), was also adopted in Snorri Sturluson's *Gylfaginning* 53, where Hel's empire was called *Náströnd* (shore of the dead). For this reason, it was thought that one could only reach Hel's empire by ship.

The deceased was never depicted on Gotland picture-stones. Ellmers (1986) suggested that a drawing of a tent-like construction erected on the ships may have been of enough significance to express the presence of the dead person.

¹ A large stone (4.2 metre in high) erected in Austrheim, in Nordfjord, north of Bergen in Norway, depicts a ship which appears similar to Roman ships from the Iron age. In this Lindqvist (1941) observed stylistic parallels to the ships on the Gotland picture-stones in his group A.



fig. 97

Ellmers (1986) described the illustration of the stone Tjängvide I (fig. 97) as a classic example of how, between the eighth and eleventh centuries AD, ships were an integral part of the concept of death. The author mentioned earlier scholars' difficulty in identifying, additional to the ship, a second means of transport: the horse. Ellmers explained that there was general use of different vehicles in agricultural society. He also mentioned the possibility that all the pictures on the stone could be connected with each other, like a comic strip. In this case, he suggested that the dead person arrived by ship at Valhøll and was offered Sleipnir, Óðinn's horse, to ride to a building like those known as community-meeting halls, to be greeted by a woman who offers a horn, filled with a welcoming drink.

Application of perceptual principles in identifying of symbolic values in images of Gotland picture-stones

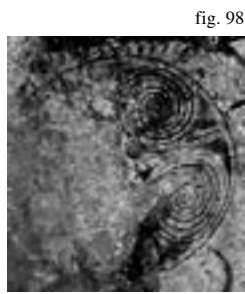


fig. 98



fig. 99



fig. 100

Spirals like those on the stone from Austers in Hangvar (fig. 98) or Vallstena (fig. 99) appear, with their even background/foreground space distribution,

like the spiral depicted on a hypnodisc (fig. 100). The spiral on a hypnodisc also is created by a black line rotating around a centre, leaving a white gap of the same or similar thickness as the black line itself. In the process of distinguishing the foreground and the background (Gestalt principle of figure/ground), the observer becomes absorbed to such an extent that other perceived information seems to become secondary. The lack of vertical and horizontal lines reinforces the effect even more.



fig. 101a



fig. 101b

Ardre III (fig. 101a and b), as well as the box-stones from Ardre (fig. 102a and b), are distinctive for their well-executed relief carving. Ardre III is displayed in the Historical Museum of Gotland, and the box-stones from Ardre in the Statens Historiska Museum in Stockholm. Both objects appear unpainted, although



fig. 102a



fig. 102b

Lindqvist (1941, vol. 2, 22) mentioned that the box-stones from Ardre show traces of red oxide. The unpainted condition of the stones allows the observer to concentrate, undistracted, on their

relief-work. Viewing the depictions, one can experience how the Gestalt principle of figure/ground appears as a dominant feature. Shading alone appears to form the shape of the picture, due to the fact that only two levels exist and no other levels of shading appear which could indicate different levels of depth. Foreground and background come into view, competing with each other to be perceived as the primary image.

The effect on observers, searching for the 'true' image, is to require a level of concentration which forces them to dissociate themselves partially from other possibly distracting images and/or events. The result may be that the image becomes memorised more clearly and in greater detail, developing into a key element with which other images viewed subsequently are compared.



fig. 103

The stone Ardre III (fig. 103) depicts a serpent which seems to hold an object in its mouth.

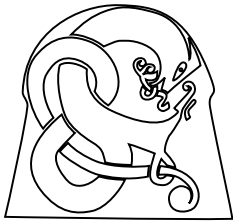


fig. 104

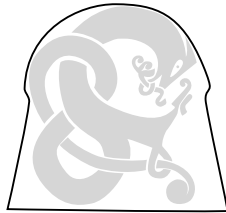


fig. 105

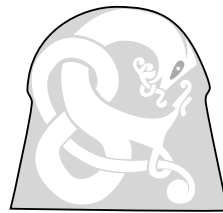


fig. 106

A line-drawing (fig. 104) makes the depiction clearer without giving greater attention to the foreground or the background, similar to the original carving. Filling one area with grey (fig. 105), however, allows one to distinguish shapes from each other which initially appeared similar. It seems useful to fill the background area with grey (fig. 106), to ascertain whether the altered weighting changes recognition of the image.

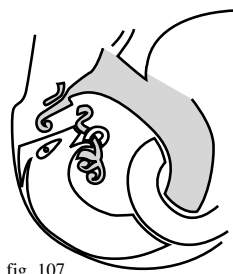


fig. 107

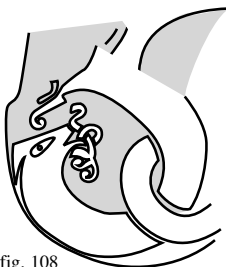


fig. 108

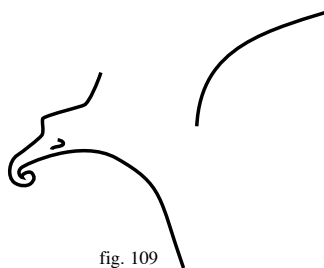


fig. 109



fig. 110

In both versions in which one area is filled in with grey (fig. 107 and 108), a shape appears from the background, resembling some features of a bird (fig. 109). A bird's head with a curled beak seems to oppose the serpent's head, if the image is turned upside down. This can be seen even more clearly if the background is filled in with grey. The shape of the object held in the serpent's mouth seems to resemble a bird's claw. An image of a bird (fig. 110), depicted by Slater (1974, 64) displays a similar shape of claws. The difference in shape may be explained by the fact that the claw in the serpent's mouth may be thought of as being torn off the bird, where Slater's illustration is meant to depict a living bird.

This image may not be perceived simply by concentrating on the foreground or the background. Most likely it is the case that the viewer creates a mental image as a result of taking features from both foreground as well as background, constructing a shape from the information of both.

Ardre VI (one side of the stone box from Ardre, fig. 102b and 111 a and b) is decorated with a picture in relief. The image represents two four-footed animals with elongated necks, a man lying at the lower edge of the picture and a man with a small figure (child) on his back. Snakes appear to attack the upright man as well as the four-footed animals. The man lying at the bottom appears not to be attacked by the snakes but holds a snake with his left hand. The imagery takes up more of the whole space than does the background. For this reason it appears to be the dominant feature. No shapes can be detected which would fit into the figure/ground schema, as such on Ardre III. The effect of the many parallel lines, regarded within the law of perception as good continuation, enables the



fig. 111a



fig. 111b

viewer to recognise a shape (in this case the snakes). This ensures that the background is not mistaken for foreground.

It is interesting, however, that the imagery discussed here consists predominantly of curved shapes. Hardly any line is vertical or horizontal. The principle of 'horizontal/vertical line preferences' in human perception, which was discovered by Mansfield (1974) and confirmed in more recent research by Furmanski and Engel (2000), seems to be mainly disregarded. The predominantly diagonal or curved lines produce an image which needs more effort to be recognised than an image with straight horizontal and vertical lines. Therefore, more concentration is necessary to recognise the picture, which results, as in the situation described previously, in a memory which is detailed and dominant and might become a schema with which similar images are compared in the future.

Credits for Gotland stones

Images, if not stated otherwise, Lindqvist, Sune (1941), all photographs were taken by Faith-Ell, Harald and all illustrations were produced by Olof Sörling.

Fig 1: Cave painting from Lascaux: after Cunliffe, B. (ed), 1994, front cover, CHMNS/SPADEM..

Fig 2: Carved kerbstone from New Grange, Ireland: after A. Powel, 1973, The Irish Tourist Board, p. 70, fig. 60.

Fig 3: Stonehenge: after Powel, A. 1973, Acrofilms , p. 71, fig. 62.

Fig 4: Menhir from Blieskastell, Saarland, Germany: photo W. Bauer 1988, *Stern* magazin, vol. 39, p.50.

Fig 5: Rock carving from Bohuslan, Sweden: after Adamson, S. (ed.), 1997, e. t. archive, p.64.

Fig 6: Etruscan funerary stele from Bologna, Italy: after Cunliffe, B. (ed), 1994, Museo Civico Archeologico, Bologna, Italy, p. 356.

Fig 6a: Scene on a stone from a cist burial at Bredarör, near Kirik, Skåne, Sweden: after Cunliffe, B. (ed), 1994, Antikvarisk-Topographiska Arkivet, Stockholm, Sweden, p. 248 (top).

Fig. 12: Ardre III b: photography Hupfauf Peter, 2002.

Fig 13: Jelling Stone: photography National Museum Copenhagen.
Jelling, Denmark.

Fig 27: Nydam boat: photography Hupfauf Peter, 2002.
Schleswig Holsteinisches Landesmuseum, Schloss-Gottorf.

Fig 29: Stone from Sanda Kyrka: after Nylén, E. in Ellmers, D. 1986

Fig 45: Stone from Stenkyrka Smiss I: after Helmut Roth, (author and editor),1986, p.127, fig. 32.

Fig 49: Stone from Häggeby, Uppland, Sweden: photography W. Holmqvist, Stockholm.

Fig 50: Bracteat 'Gerete-C', Gotland (detail) l. (62,1): M 211, photography W. Holmqvist, Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden.

Fig 54a and 54b: Headstones from León a., Duero valley, Spain: after Frankowski, E.

Fig 59: Stone from Sjonhem: photography B. A. Lundberg, Riksantikvarieämbetet, Sweden.

Fig 64: Rune horn from Gallehus: after K. Klingenberg, 1973, p.331.

Fig 66: Bracteat 'Aneby', Småland, Sweden: after Lindqvist,1941, p. 97.

- Fig 67: Bracteat 'Mauland', Rogaland, Norway: M 124, after K. Hauck, 1985, p.149, fig. 29,2.
- Fig 68: Bracteat 'Skovsborg', Jutland, Denmark: B 165, after K. Hauck, 1985, p.148, fig. 29,1.
- Fig 71: Horse in front of traditional Swedish fence: photography Hupfauf Peter, 2002.
- Fig 75a and 75b: Weather map and Logo of Bureau for Meteorology of Australia: from *Sydney Morning Herald* (17/12/2001).
- Fig 78: Carved kerbstone from New Grange, Ireland: after A. Powel, 1973, The Irish Tourist Board, p. 70, fig. 60.
- Fig 79: New Grange, C10, spirals: Illustration Meehan, A. 1993, p.33, fig. 15.
- Fig 80: New Grange, plan: Illustration Meehan, A. 1993, p.39, fig. 17.
- Fig 83: Four-folded flower/star: Illustration Hupfauf P.
- Fig 84: Eight-folded flower/star: Illustration Hupfauf P.
- Fig 88: Magic rune-square: after Düwel, K. 2001, p. 168
- Fig 89: Hablingbo Havor: Gotland home-page
available at: <http://gotland.luma.com/Kalender.html>, photography Hejdström, Raymund.
- Fig 90: Mosaic from ShunNimrin, Jordan: after M. Spearman and J. Higgitt, 1991, p. 5, fig. 1.2.
- Fig 91: Medalion from Lyngby: after Thomsen, C. J., in Ellmers, D. 1986, p.356, fig. 5.
- Fig 91: Yggdrasil on stone from Sanda Kyrka: after E. Nylén, in D. Ellmers (1986).
- Fig 93: Three interlocked triangles on the stone from St Hammers (detail): photograph by ATA, after catalogue from Statens historica museum, Stockholm.
- Fig 94: Three interlocked horns on the stone from Stenkyrka Lillbjärs III (detail).
- Fig 95: Austrheim (detail): after Ellmers, 1986.
- Fig 96: Stone from Sanda Kyrka: after Nylén, E. in Ellmers, D. 1986.
- Fig 104-9: Stone from Andre III b, three versions: illustrations by Hupfauf, Peter.
- Fig 110: Bird: after Slater (1974).
- Fig 111: Box- stone from Andre VIa and Andre VIb: illustrations by Hupfauf.

9. Conclusion

The purpose of this research has been to analyse objects from Germanic and in particular early Scandinavian cultures, in order to identify images that may be defined as signs or that include signs and images which are likely to be symbols or to carry symbolic values.

In order to understand the meaning of symbols from historical cultures or from a foreign background, scholars commonly consult relevant literature. In the case of existing cultures, field research is undertaken, people are interviewed, and symbols within a particular culture can usually be traced to their origin and their meanings discovered. In the case of early Scandinavian culture, however, it is impossible to study relevant symbols in a living context, because this culture has undergone major changes since the introduction of Christianity to Scandinavia.

Early Scandinavian literature of relevance to this study is not contemporaneous with the Migration Period, the Vendel and Merovingian Periods or the early Viking Age. In 98 AD Tacitus wrote *Agricola* and *Germania*, which refer to at least some aspects of cultural life in ancient northern Europe. Early Scandinavian mythology has an oral tradition. Quinn (2000, 31) has stated that skaldic poetry from Viking Age Scandinavia is an important source of information, as is also Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda*, which was dated about 1225 AD and the Codex Regius collection of eddic poems, thought to have been written c. 1270 AD. Early Scandinavian literature is much later than the objects discussed in this study. Authors such as Snorri Sturluson lived in a Christian society and wrote from the perspective of Christians who had an scholarly interest in preserving earlier traditions. However, Sturluson's work appears of great relevance, because it developed from and referred back to an older oral tradition which accommodated ancient Scandinavian mythology and settlement. Clunies Ross (1994) has suggested that myth should be regarded not simply as isolated religious fantasies but as an integral part of a culture, a culture which it reflects to a certain extent. Apart from objects such as *guldgubber*, bracteates, fibulae, weapons and decorated stones, it is indeed the early Scandinavian literature that creates a context in which the images applied on artefacts and common objects must be seen in order to comprehend their significance.

Secondary literature, such as descriptions of the development of styles and runic script, and analysis of objects from early Scandinavian cultures have all been utilised for this study; conclusions have been drawn from the combination of all relevant information. A major source of information has been Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* (as translated into English by Anthony Faulkes, 1987).

To establish common ground with the reader of this thesis, I have defined the terms sign

and symbol. The definitions are based predominantly on the writings of de Saussure (1922 [1964]), interpreted by more recent authors such as Barthes (1986), Melville and Readings (1995) and Paul (2000).

These studies clarify that a sign represents exactly what one perceives. In the case of visual signs, this means that further interpretations are not intended. Runes must be categorised, according to this position, very much as signs. Apart from some few exceptions, runes are signs in the category of script, called letters. These signs (runes) were usually (but not always) assembled in order to create words. A whole word, in most cases, should also be regarded as a single sign, as it is usually part of a sentence. However, some runes have been found engraved singly, such as the letter L (𐌆). The name of the letter L (𐌆) was stated by Krause (1970) as *laukaz* or *laguz* (Germanic), representing leek (or water). The leek was an important plant in early Scandinavian society, because of its preserving and healing qualities. It was because of the positive attributes of the leek, in all probability, that the letter L (𐌆) was engraved on several items. Thus in this case the rune L (𐌆) becomes a symbol. Similarly, words can represent more than what one reads. They can become symbols if they are used not only to determine a thing or an event but also to represent something much more complex (a situation or condition). Objects, their inscriptions and decorations or parts thereof, must be examined accordingly, before a decision can be made as to whether symbolic interpretations can be attributed to the signs upon them. Circles, for example, as they appear on bracteates, spear-blades (fig. 1), and other objects, must be appropriately defined. Such circles can be interpreted as representing the sun. Because, according to modern

research, circles are symbols for the sun in many cultures, we may assume with some plausibility that they may have possessed similar signifying power in early Scandinavia. However, Hauck (1992, 498-503) hypothesised that the shape of a circle, shown on several bracteates, should be understood to signify Draupnir. Düwel (1997) also mentioned this possibility. Draupnir, as described in *Gylfaginning*, was Óðinn's ring, which was laid on Óðinn's son Baldr's funeral pyre. Considering the ring's large size, as depicted on the bracteates, it appears that Draupnir may be the name for a bracelet, not a ring worn on a finger. The bracteate from Mauland (fig. 2) according to Hauck depicts Baldr arriving in the 'other world'.



fig. 1



fig. 2



fig. 3

It appears that key-elements from early Scandinavian mythology, like the image of Sigurd on the bracteate from Lellinge (fig. 3), sticking his finger in his mouth after it was burned when testing whether Fáfnir's heart was cooked, as well as objects which had considerable importance in early Scandinavian cultures, such as Þórr's hammer (fig. 4), have the



fig. 4

potential to be regarded as symbols. As such they represent customs, law and religious/mythological matter. The body-part and the tool are themselves of secondary importance. In some cases one can observe that such elements were presented in such a fashion as to be noticeable because of their prominent position and/or presentation.

The application of signs and symbols is as common among human beings as is using a language. Like languages, which vary from one culture to another and from one geographical area to another, symbols have developed individually. As demonstrated by Jung (1964) and Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989), symbols belonging to one culture, whose meanings are understood by any member of that society, may be absolutely alien in another culture or have an entirely different meaning there.

Scholars have traditionally analysed and identified objects from Germanic and early Scandinavian cultural backgrounds with reference to and in comparison with historical events, as well as by chronological and geographical identification.

The skilful execution of most early Scandinavian artefacts suggests that Germanic artists and craftspeople, like those from other cultures, applied effects in order to enhance the expression of the images on items which they created. Such effects are not necessarily always identified and interpreted correctly or to their full extent if only historical, geographical or socio-cultural stylistic aspects are taken into consideration.

Contemporary education in fine art includes the application of perceptual concepts. Students at art schools are taught to use a wide and sophisticated range of methods to express their message as effectively as possible. Even if one acknowledges that artefacts from the Migration Period may be not be as sophisticated as some more popular fine arts pieces, as for example from the Renaissance, it must be admitted that many of these items have a fascinating appearance. By analysing such objects, applying principles from visual perception, it becomes apparent that the ancient masters applied several of these principles. This study has not been able to reveal whether such methods were applied intentionally or by accident. It is possible that Germanic artists and craftspeople realised that certain designs were more successful than others and reacted accordingly, preferring such designs over others when they created their artefacts.

Formal preferences develop as symbols develop in a society. Such preferences include perceptual aspects and stylistic features. Humankind has developed skills that facilitate the conveyance of visual information, and stylistic features are part of this. Styles have particular expressions. Using the wrong style can easily result in misunderstanding. The wearing of

German *Lederhosen*, for example, may still in certain Bavarian districts indicate a trustworthy, straight and honest person. In Rio de Janeiro, however, wearing such clothes might simply indicate eccentricity. The use of particular materials can also be of importance. The selection of precious materials may indicate that a certain object is of particular relevance and therefore may possess or contain symbolic value. However, that does not mean that objects made from less valuable materials should be ignored. “Stereotypical images of tribal art have been known to embody an individual distinctive feature which would escape us since we know neither the person represented nor the stylistic conventions of the tribe.” (Gombrich, 1970, 16) This statement can apply also to artefacts from early Scandinavian cultures.

When principles from visual perception were applied to some of the objects analysed in this study, they revealed information which had appeared obscure and could not be identified by traditional analytical methods. It seems that the principles of visual perception, particularly of ‘gestalt’ theory, are a valuable method for the identification of symbolic matter in images where this cannot be found by the application of traditional methods such as the study of mythology, history and geography. Visual perception cannot replace traditional methods; however, in combination with them, shapes and images can be defined which would not otherwise be identified.



fig. 5

The principles that have been derived from visual perception were of great help in analysing *guldgubber* (fig. 5), tiny sheets of gold decorated with images of people and occasionally of animals. The figures depicted on the *guldgubber* have been regarded by several scholars, such as Hauck (1992) and Müller-Wille (1999), as deities. In agreement with Simek (2000a), however, I believe that these depicted persons are maybe meant to be humans. These figures probably represent people at a distinct stage of their lives, such as initiation or marriage, just as some wedding cakes made nowadays are decorated with little figures representing the bride and groom. Almost all of the *guldgubber* from Lundeborg, east of Gudme, Fyn, depict a male and a female person holding each other. Such a scenario is most plausibly explained as an expression of love, or a wedding.

Applying principles from visual perception, my analysis has shown that the Sorte Muld *guldgubber* figures (classified by Watt [1992] as a dancing group) were posed in the basic shapes of birds. This could then be the depiction of a ceremonial dance. Birds, as this study has shown, had significance in early Scandinavian culture and therefore are likely to have been important enough to be placed in such a central position.

Many of the depictions on the *guldgubber* have been enriched by the application of a frame.

This, together with the precious material from which they are made, the items which are depicted with the figures and the location where they were found, would indicate that the expression of a certain importance was intended. This is confirmed by the hoard from Slöinge, Halland, in Sweden, where *guldgubber* were placed in the hole of a central post of a long-house, which was regarded as a special position in an early Scandinavian building.

Like *guldgubber*, bracteates were predominantly made of gold. Bracteates are, according to Hauck (1985), imitations of Roman emperors' medals from late Antiquity. They are a rich source of imagery from the Migration Period in Northern Europe. Most of the depictions on the bracteates are symbolic. The people depicted on the objects are most likely to be the god Óðinn but also sometimes Baldr. On several bracteates a figure appears holding a thumb in its mouth, which seems to refer to the legendary slaying of the dragon Fáfnir, by Sigurðr, a hero from the family of the Volsungs. It appears to be unlikely that it is Sigurðr who is depicted on the bracteates, the thumb's position has been probably appropriated and attributed to another figure, such as Óðinn or Baldr. Some of the C-bracteates analysed reveal images of animals, or parts of animals, if the figure/ground rule from the principle of visual perception is applied.



fig. 6: bracteate from Gerete

A rich source of images from early Scandinavian culture is to be found in the well-documented picture-stones from Gotland. The relatively long period over which picture-stones were created on Gotland now allows us to observe the pictorial changes in a specific Nordic culture, including the subjects which were represented symbolically. The earliest stones, such as Bro I (fig. 7), Vallstena or Sanda Kyrka show whorls and spirals. They were regarded by Ellmers (1986) as representations of the cosmos (earth, moon and sun). Spirals have been symbols known since pre-history. Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996, 907) cited Champeaux (1966) who wrote “The spiral is and symbolises emanation, extension, evolution, cyclical but progressive continuity and rotational creation”.

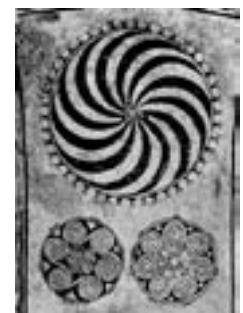


fig.7

Visual images such as the spiral or other shapes/ornaments, particularly those with repetitive features, appear comparable with audio-based standard induction methods used for hypnosis. Stark light/dark contrasts seem to focus the mental state. It is possible that with this focus the mind is less susceptible to distraction by the surrounding environment, and may therefore become more sensitive to other images present on the same object. Michael Yapko (2002, personal comment), asked for his opinion about this statement, said that my hypothesis is plausible. However, he warned that it could only be an assumption, because tests would be needed, “exposing people to the repetitious and shaded stimuli and measuring their subsequent reactions to suggested experiences” (correspondence from 04. October 2002).

As on Early Scandinavian jewellery and on weapons, interlacing and knot-designs, well known from Celtic cultures, emerged also on the Gotland picture-stones. The quatrefoil loop depicted on the stone Habingbo Havor II (fig. 8) dated 400 - 600 AD may symbolise infinity and/or eternity, according to the Historical Museum of Gotland (1997).



fig.8

Several Gotland picture stones, such as Lärbro St. Hammars I (fig. 9), depict a whole range of illustrations. These images are commonly regarded as interpretable in the context of Old Norse mythology. However, Sringley (1988-9) regarded the images on the picture-stones as illustrating the journey to Ásgarðr, Ásgarðr being identified by Sringley as Troy. Ancient Troy (Ásgarðr), according to Sringley (1988-9), was seen by the people of Gotland as their racial place of origin. This could explain why the Vikings had such a great urge to travel to Byzantium. It is not quite clear how Sringley explains the connection of these two different places, however, it is clear that the general direction from Scandinavia is the same and it is also possible that the myth from Troy may have lived strongly in Byzantium.



fig.9

Few Gotland picture-stones carry runic inscriptions. Stones from the mainland of Sweden, however, are rich in runic engravings. The oldest runic letters were found engraved on objects from the first century AD, and were used initially for short inscriptions only. The runic script was introduced to a culture which had not used writing at all. At that stage in early Nordic culture, it may have been difficult to express abstract concepts. Nevertheless this occurred, as evidenced by depictions of spirals, swastikas, triskeles, etc. from pre-runic periods. While the written word sometimes has a very precise definition, a picture allows various possibilities of interpretation. In this context it is understandable that to engrave a person's name, for instance, represented an enormous statement. This action, so to speak, transformed a person into a combination of abstract signs.



fig. 10: stone from Rök

In some cases, the name of a living person (e.g. the owner of a piece of jewellery) can be found engraved on objects depicting sacred images. A bracteate, for example, probably depicting Baldr and showing an engraving of a person's name on the back of the object, could have been understood as indicating that an engagement of some kind had taken place, because Baldr and the named person appeared together on the same object.

Hypnosis-inducing techniques were explained earlier. They may also have been used to influence readers of some runic texts psychologically. In cases where a viewer of such engravings could not read, one can imagine that at least the content of the inscription was

commonly known in the area where a rune stone was erected. A contemporary comparison may be made with text which is set in elongated, compressed styles. This, as we know, is a typographic technique used by designers to enhance the communication of text messages.

Most of the objects that have been analysed for this study were found depicted in literature. Many of the pictures presented here are photographs, others are drawings. In the case of the *guldgubber* find from Lundeberg, it has been difficult to depict them with satisfactory quality. The images of the *guldgubber* have been scanned from Müller-Wille's *Opferkulte der Germanen und Slawen* (1999). The pictures in Müller-Wille's publication are, like the original *gubber*, rather small. Repeated reproduction for this thesis, unfortunately, has resulted in further loss of visual quality. In cases where drawings were used for the analysis, as happened with many bracteates, we must take account of the subjectivity of the illustrator. As the study of perception has shown, a shape can look similar if it is turned inwards or outwards. The significance of one or the other can be quite different.

I visited Germany and Scandinavia in 2002, in order to study literature which is difficult to access in Australia and to take advantage of being able to browse in the specialised libraries of universities in Frankfurt, Göttingen, Kiel, Copenhagen and Oslo. I also had the opportunity to view a great number of the items discussed here in the Schleswigholsteinisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorf, in Schleswig, Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen, Statens Historiska Museum in Stockholm, Läns museet Gotlands Fornsal in Visby and Universitetets Oldsaksamling in Oslo.

In the Schleswigholsteinisches Landesmuseum in Schloss Gottorf, I was able to view forty-one patrices of brooches and pendants found together in a leather bag in Haithabu, near Schleswig. Because of the excellent opportunity to work with original objects, and not from photographs or drawings, I decided to include these objects in Chapter 5, even though they were not within the range of objects initially selected for this study, because they appeared most appropriate as examples demonstrating the application of the principles of visual perception for identification of shapes, within an unclear visual arrangement. In Oslo I found a brooch in Universitetets Oldsaksamling that showed shapes which did not fit into the scheme of the rest of its design. In this case too, I decided to undertake an analysis which is presented at the end of Chapter 3. In the case of both the patrices from Haithabu and the brooch from Lamøya, the principles of visual perception were of great assistance in analysing the objects and identifying shapes with symbolic values.

This study has focused on the identification and documentation of the most common symbols found in images of objects from early Nordic cultures. Contemporary methods from the fields of fine arts and psychology were adopted in order to reveal shapes which were oth-

erwise obscured. These methods allowed images' interpretation beyond the limits set in the past by traditional methods of analysis.

During this research, I found that, although several authors had discussed symbolic issues in Germanic/early Scandinavian cultures, symbols themselves had never been a primary interest. I had the advantage of using those authors' findings for this document. I am convinced that the application of modern perceptual theory to this topic is long overdue. This study should contribute towards a greater understanding not only of this culture but also of the use of symbolism in contemporary Western society, which is still, at least to a certain extent, influenced by early Scandinavian symbolism.



fig. 11



fig. 12



fig. 13



fig. 14



fig. 15



fig. 16



fig. 17

Current fashion shows that entwining ornaments are still regarded favourably in contemporary Western society. The three interlocked shapes of the letter 'W' (fig. 11) were part of the recent design by Clint Gorthy in Portland, Oregon, for the company W3 Productions and in the 1960s Francesco Saroglia designed the well known logo for the International Wool Secretariat (fig. 12). Animal images are still highly valued when a company chooses a logo as a commercial symbol meant to represent that company's qualities and attitudes. Toyota's stylised head of a bull (fig. 13), Jaguar's cat (fig. 14) and Qantas' Flying Kangaroo (fig. 15) are well-known images representing qualities and attitudes with which the companies wish to be identified. Similarly, animals which were applied on early Nordic artefacts were most likely chosen as images because of their association with powers beyond human capacities. With modern technical developments in human society, new representations such as signs from nuclear as well as computer technology (IT) and space programmes have become associated with the suggestion of power that was once represented by images of Þórr's hammer or wild boars. However, the effect on humans is the same now as it was fifteen hundred years ago.

The English car manufacturer Rover uses a Viking ship as a logo. The company was founded in 1861 and initially produced sewing machines. Rover built its first car in 1904. The term rover, according to Sinclair (1998), describes "a person who travels around, rather than staying in a fixed place" (p.1451). The image of a Viking ship may symbolise the long and adventurous journeys undertaken successfully by the Vikings, a rather desirable image for an automobile builder to identify with.

The petrol company Hydro in Sweden utilises the picture of a Viking ship to represent itself (fig. 17). I assume that the company does not intend to suggest that buyers of this petrol will drive to Valhøll, although that was most



fig. 18



fig. 19

likely the significance on the picture-stones from Gotland. In Copenhagen I found signage on a façade (Vest-Wood) in which a company applied three interlocking triangles (fig. 18). As this study found, this may have symbolised the giant Hrungrnir during the Viking period. However, the interpretation in contemporary society is certainly different. A beer brewery in Schleswig in Germany is called Asgard (fig. 19) and uses images of bracteates to represent the theme. This reference to the place where the gods lived may be seen as an indication of the beer's 'heavenly' quality.

Fine art and design still apply methods aimed at fascinating an audience – or create little visual confusions which allow messages to be conveyed subliminally. By analysing objects from Germanic/early Scandinavian cultures, it has become apparent that the ancient masters applied several principles of what is now defined as perception. It is possible that Germanic artists and craftspeople realised that certain designs were more successful than others and reacted accordingly, preferring such designs over others when they created artefacts.

This study has revealed that drastic changes in styles and production methods of artefacts in Northern Europe by coincidence took place at the same time, in the middle of the sixth century. Salin (1904) divided the northern European Animal Style into three categories, Styles I, II and III. According to Salin, Style I occurred during the sixth century and was then replaced by Style II. This time is regarded as the end of the Migration Period and the beginning of the Merovingian period and the Vendel period. The naturalistic design of bracteates ceased during the middle of the sixth century. Similarly Roth (1986) noted that at the end of phase 'D' of bracteate production, abstraction suddenly occurred. Roth assumed that religious reasons may have brought about this change. Also during the middle of the sixth century, according to Lindqvist (1945), on the island of Gotland, the creation of monumental, elaborately executed, picture-stones ceased suddenly. Newer stones appeared with less refined artistic quality, a smaller scale and slightly changed iconography. This could be interpreted as a replacement of Gotland's original population by people from somewhere else.

The explosion of the volcano Krakatau in Indonesia, in 535 AD, as hypothesised by David Keys (2000), or a possible dust cloud from a comet, as suggested by Mike Baillie (2000), may have caused extremely unfavourable weather conditions at the same time which could have caused failure of harvest, starvation and the spread of the plague. Disastrous weather conditions, such as mentioned by Baillie (2000) and Keys (2000), could have been a contributing factor for drastic changes in the development and stylistic changes of central European and Scandinavian artefacts, as became apparent in this study.

Picture credits for Conclusion

Fig. 1: Spear blade from Kowel: after Krause, Wolfgang, 1970, plate III.

Fig. 2: Bracteate from Mauland: after Hauck, Karl, 1985, vol. 1.1, p.145, fig. f.

Fig. 3: Bracteate from Lellinge Kohave-B, detail (M 5.2 = 105) after Hauck, Karl, 1992.
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks Oldtid, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Fig. 4: Thor's hammer: after Adamson, Stephen 1997, p.37, photograph Dixon, C. M.

Fig. 5: *Guldgubbe* from Helgö, Ekerö, Uppland, Sweden (SHM 25075): photography Statens historiska museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 6: Bracteate from Gerete, Fardhem sn, Gotland, Sweden (SHM 18375): photography Statens historiska museum, Stockholm.

Fig. 7: Stone from Bro (I): after Lindqvist, Sune (1941). photograph by Harald Faith-Ell.

Fig. 8: Stone from Hablingbo Havor II (detail): after Lindqvist, Sune (1941). photograph by Harald Faith-Ell.

Fig. 9: Stone from Lärbro St. Hammars I: after Lindqvist, Sune (1941). photograph by Harald Faith-Ell.

Fig. 10: Stone from Rök: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 11: W3 Productions (logo): designed by Clint Gorthy.

Fig. 12: International Wool Secretariat (logo): designed by Francesco Saroglia.

Figs. 13-16: Company logos for Toyota, Jaguar, Quantas and Rover: copies from the company's advertising materials.

Fig. 17: Hydro: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 18: Vestwood: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

Fig. 19: Asgard: photography Hupfauf, Peter, 2002.

10. Appendix

- A Objects and images on objects from early Scandinavian culture, discussed in this thesis, which have signifying qualities or are likely to carry symbolic qualities.
- B A detailed analysis of the *guldgubber* of the hoard from Lundeberg.
- C Paintings representing love or marriage by two people holding one another.

A. Objects and images on objects from early Scandinavian culture, discussed in this thesis, which have signifying qualities or are likely to carry symbolic qualities.

The following pages present images which have been identified in this thesis as signs or symbols, representing concepts from early Scandinavian cultures, in the sense outlined in Chapter 2, defining signs and symbols.

Birds

Birds were of great relevance in early Scandinavian mythology:

Ravens accompanied Óðinn.

Óðinn transformed himself into an eagle.

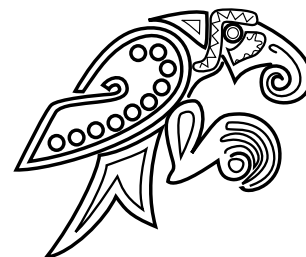
The giant Þjazi transformed himself into an eagle.

The giant Hræsvelg appears as a huge eagle.

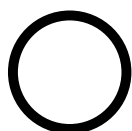
An eagle sits in the branches of Yggdrasill and a hawk called Veðrfölnir sits between his eyes.

Freyja owned a feather coat which, as written in the Eddic poem *Frymskviða*, was used by Loki to fly to 'jötna heima', the land of the giants, in order to search for Þórr's hammer.

Birds may have played a role in early Nordic culture as a medium in shamanism, similar to practices still performed by Siberian aboriginal people and in Sámi culture.



Circles



A simple circle, according to Whittick (1960), usually represents the sun. A ring, however, as depicted on the bracteate from Mauland, may depict Óðinn's ring Draupnir, in the hand of Baldr, arriving in the 'otherworld'. This ring was placed on Baldr's funeral pyre. A ring in early Scandinavian society had also great importance as an object upon which an oath was sworn.



Bracteate from Mauland

Dots

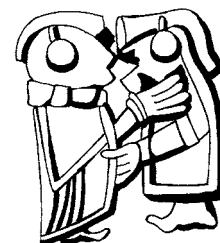
Dots are used on *guldgubber* to create frames, because dot-embossed metal appears to have a sparkling shine. Dots can be found as additional signs on bracteates. In this case, they may be interpreted as stars. In Snorri's



Skáldskaparmál it is mentioned that Óðinn placed the giant Þjazi's eyes in the sky where they shine as stars. According to Verstockt (1982, 46) the dot's symbolic interpretation often suggests fertility, seed and sperm, and the divine principle. The author stated that according to Proclus (5th century AD) the point has a "cosmic power and rank first order among signs".

Embracing

Forty-eight *guldgubber* were found in the settlement of Slöinge in Halland (West-Sweden). Two further finds were made in a post-hole of a neighbouring house. Jørgensen and Petersen (1998, 268) described the *guldgubber* "as depicting a man and a woman in an affectionate embrace". This signifies a certain intimacy. Similar depictions are shown on a large number of *guldgubber* which were found in Lundeberg.



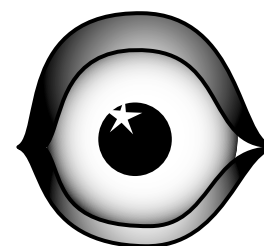
depiction of *guldgubbe* from Slöinge

Eyes

Shining eyes seem to have had a particular importance in early Scandinavian culture. Düwel (1995, 29) suggested that large shining eyes were associated with supernatural powers and magical abilities.

The inscription on the bracteate from Nebenstadt reads: 'gljaugizujrnzl' which can be expanded as: 'gljaugiz wiu r[u]n[o]z I [laukaz]'

Düwel interpreted this as: 'I, the one with the shining eye, consecrate the runes. Leek [prosper]'



Feather-gowns

A *guldgubbe* from Törring (Jutland) depicts a woman wearing a gown which looks very much like a feather gown. Even a pattern on the woman's upper front (chest area) is designed in feather-like shapes.

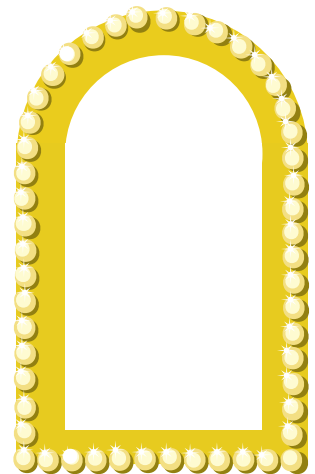
Hauck (1992) interpreted gowns worn over a dress as feather-gowns, like the one described in the eddic poem *Þrymskviða* as the feather-gown (or cloak) owned by Freyja.



Guldgubbe from Törring (Jutland)

Frames

Murals and mosaics from classical Antiquity appear in most cases surrounded by an ornamental framework. Following this fashion, framing ornaments can also be found in many cases on the edge of bracteates and *guldgubber*. A frame represents a border between an image (painting, photograph, calligraphy etc.) and a background. It acts as a neutralising area, to prevent a background from interfering with the presented artwork. An appropriate frame traditionally signifies the elevated status of an artwork and/or its subject. This may have been also the reason for the fashion of framing the images on objects from early Scandinavian cultures.



Headdresses

Hauck (1992) assumed that most of the figures depicted on bracteates would be representations of Óðinn. As a proof of his assumption, Hauck presented the bracteate from Gudme (C) as an example. He stated that, in this case, the headdress of the depicted figure merges at the end of the back into a snake head. Ófnir is the name of a snake according to *Gylfaginning* (trans. Faulkes, 1987,19) as well as Sváfnir (trans. Faulkes, 1987, 8), which was also used as an appellation for Óðinn in *Grímnismál* (54).

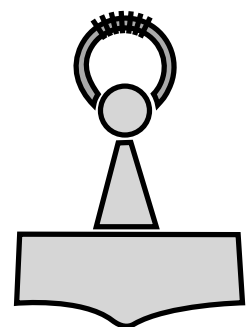


Bracteate from Gudme (C)

Hammers

Þórr is represented in *Gylfaginning* as being of great physical strength. He is described as being in possession of three special items: a hammer (Mjöllnir), a pair of iron gloves and the girdle of might. The hammer itself never failed to hit its target and, when it was thrown at someone or something, it would always come back. Mjöllnir could also shrink in size, if necessary, in order to be hidden conveniently.

Mjöllnir represents not only a devastating weapon. The hammer is also mentioned as a instrument for consecration, as in Baldr's funeral and *Prymskurða*. It may be regarded as a symbol of strength and protection.



Horns

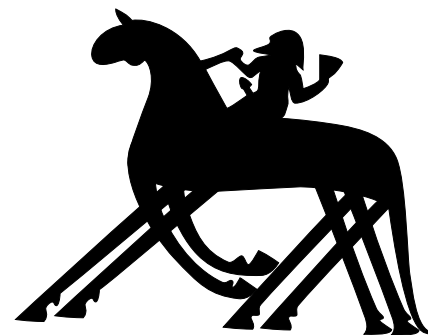
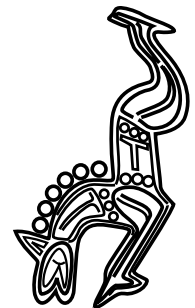
Three horn-like shapes, interlocked as they appear on various picture-stones, may represent the great wisdom which Óðinn gained by drinking three draughts of the mead of poetry, which was, until then, in the possession of the giants.



In *Skáldskaparmál* Óðinn is described, disguised as Bólverk, having intercourse with Gunnlóð, the daughter of the giant Suttungr, who was the guardian of the mead of poetry. This made Gunnlóð willing to give him three draughts of mead. After this, Óðinn changed his appearance into that of an eagle and flew off.

Horses

Baldr's horse is mentioned in the second *Merseburg Charm*. It tells how Phol and Wodan rode into the wood, when Baldr's horse dislocated its fore-leg. Sintgunt and Sunna sang over it, then Friia and Volla. Finally Wodan (Óðinn) sang over it. The songs represented a healing magic. The poem says that Óðinn's magic healed the horse. Simek (1993, 278-9) stated that it is disputed if Baldr refers to the son of Óðinn or if it is meant to signify 'lord' and refers to the god Wodan as Óðinn was called in today's Germany. The figure represented by the name Phol, according to Simek, is also not clarified. He referred to Brate's (1919) suggestion to regard Phol as Fol, the brother of Fulla (Volla), which may be regarded as "corresponding to the Scandinavian gods Freyr and Freyja" (Simek, 1993, 278). Horses are often depicted on bracteates of the 'C' group and Hauck (1992) suggested that several of these horses may be interpreted as the horse mentioned in the *Merseburg Charm*.



Óðinn's horse Sleipnir is described in *Gylfaginning* as having eight legs. Eight-legged horses are usually shown on the picture-stones from Gotland. The stone 'Alskog Tjängvide I' represents that well.

Loops

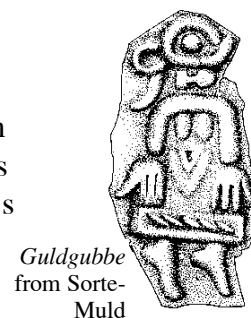
The quatrefoil loop depicted on the golden medallion from Lyngby, Jutland, Denmark, most likely represents a magic symbol (according to the Historical Museum of Gotland, 2002). The shape possibly represents infinity or eternity. Ellmers (1986) regarded this sign as a stylised representation of Jormungandr, the Miðgarðr-serpent.



medallion from Lyngby

Postures

The figures on the *guldgubber* from Sorte Muld, which were defined by Watt (1992) as belonging to a ‘dancing group’ resemble a posture which signifies a bird with open wings, like a bird of prey positioning its wings in a rather fast flight. The shape in front of the face could be the dancer’s tongue, imitating a bird’s beak. Such depiction of a tongue is also found in another *guldgubbe* from Sorte Muld.

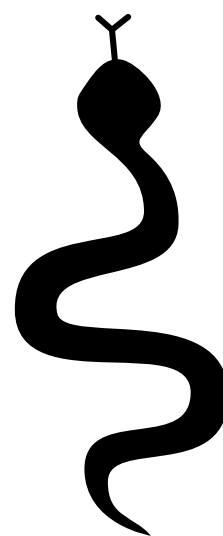


Runes

Single runic letters occasionally symbolise objects which are represented by the first letter of their names, such as \mathfrak{F} fehu (cattle), \mathfrak{U} úruz (aurochs), \mathfrak{P} þurisaz (Old Icelandic ‘Purs’ = giant). However, Düwel (1997) considered that the names given to the runes should be understood predominantly as an aid to memorising the runic row. The letter \mathfrak{L} (L) was found engraved as a single letter on some objects. It is understood that in such cases, \mathfrak{L} represents *laukaz*, an Old Germanic word for leek. The leek holds healing and preserving properties and had therefore most probably a distinctive position in Germanic and early Scandinavian society. Düwel also mentioned that single letters were occasionally engraved as initials of the name of an owner of an object, such as a bracteate or fibula. The word *alu* (‘good fortune’) was occasionally engraved on objects, because of its magical, luck-enhancing association.

Serpents/snakes

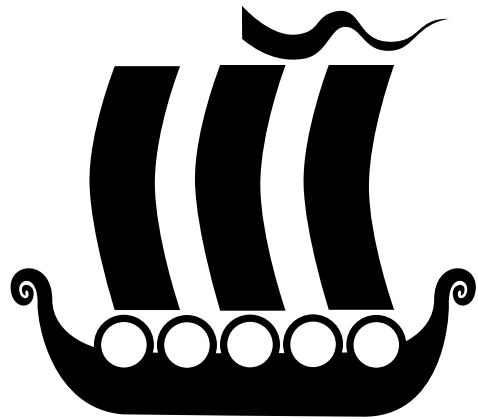
The fire-spitting winged dragons, known from modern children’s stories, do not exist in Old Norse literature. A well known reference is the legend of Sigurðr, who slew the dragon Fáfnir. Miðgarðr, the world of humans, was said in Snorri’s *Gylfaginning* to have been encircled by the Miðgarðr serpent (worm), Miðgarðsormr (also called Jormungandr), which symbolises ever-present danger and disorder. The well Hvergelmir, under the world-tree, the ash Yggdrasill, as described in *Gylfaginning*, is home to the serpent Níðhöggr (and many snakes) gnawing permanently on the roots of the world-tree Yggdrasill. Loki is said to have been tied to a rock while a snake dribbled its poison on to him, as punishment for his deception of Höðr which led to the death of Baldr. The giantess Hyrrokkin was called upon to push Baldr’s funeral-ship into the water. She came riding on a wolf, using vipers as reins. In *Atlamál* a prince, Gunnarr, was placed in a snake-pit.



Ships

Because the picture-stones from Gotland are, in most cases, memorial stones for deceased members of a family, depictions of ships on these stones are likely to represent the journey into ‘the world of death’.

Ships like that from Oseberg were used to bury the deceased in burial mounds together with food, jewelry, weapons and animals. Graves were set up in ship shapes, surrounded by rocks. Snorri Sturluson’s *Gylfaginning* mentions the use of a ship for the funeral of Baldr, Óðinn’s son.



Spills

Drinking vessels are sometimes depicted with an additional shape on top. This, most likely, represents a spill. The container is depicted as being filled so generously that it overflows. An interpretation of this could be (a) that so much wealth exists that it does not matter if some of the precious liquid gets lost; or (b) that the person to whom the drink is offered is so highly regarded that as much as possible of the liquid is offered to him or her.

Staves

Some of the *guldgubber* depict a figure holding a stick-like object in the hand. The object has previously been identified as a staff or sceptre. In Greek and Roman antiquity, gods and people of high rank were depicted carrying a staff. The staff, originally a hybrid between a walking stick and a farmer’s/shepherd’s crook, is still in use in some Northern African areas, such as the Algerian and Tunisian Sahara. The best known staff is probably that of the Greek god Asklepíus, who is also known as Aesculapius, the Roman god of medicine. In Anglo-Saxon England, according to Bruce-Mitford (1996), the sceptre was regarded as having magical properties and represented the king’s responsibility for his people’s prosperity. Liungman (1991) associated a vertical line with authority, power and perfectionism. The sign also symbolises the contact between the lower and the higher.



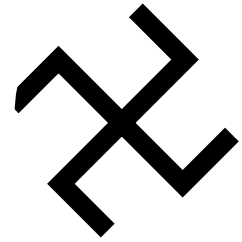
Swastika

The swastika is described by Liungman (1991) as an ideogram derived from the sun-god sign that was established in the Euphrates-Tigris region.

There it represented the highest god, power and life force. Liungman explained that the ‘arms’ of the swastika represent the ‘spread-out wings’ of a four pointed star. The name swastika, according to the *Oxford*

Dictionary of English Etymology (ed. C. T. Onions 1966, 892), derived from Sanskrit - *svastika* and *svasti*, which can be translated as well-being, fortune and luck. The word *sú* meant ‘good’ and *asti* ‘being’.

Bruce-Mitford (1996) mentioned that the swastika predates Hinduism. In India, however, it “is associated with the sun and the wheel of birth and rebirth” (p.20). The arms are angled in a clockwise direction. In an anticlockwise direction the sign is known as sauvastika and is associated with negative attitudes.



The Hittites and ancient Greeks used the sign for decorations on coins, ceramics and buildings. Liungman (1991) assumed that the Eastern, Buddhist and Greek pagan associations for the swastika resulted in discontinuation of use of the sign in Christian Europe. According to Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996), however, Charlemagne (742 – 814 AD) did use the swastika as an attribute. In Scandinavian cultures, however, the swastika was continuously applied. A Swedish company producing electrical machinery (ABB) used the swastika as its logo and the Finnish ‘Whites’ used the swastika as their sign and called it the ‘Cross of Freedom’ in the civil war in 1918. The swastika appeared in early twentieth century Germany and Austria as an anti-semitic symbol and Hitler and his fascist government used this sign to represent their perverted racial ideas and inhumane politics.

Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) stated that the arms of the swastika, attached at the end of the crossbars, represents some kind of circular motion. They claimed that the extending arms would point towards the direction of movement. This is very unusual, because in human perception objects seem to carry a blurred shade behind them in fast movement, not in front of them. However, these authors regarded the swastika as a representation of cyclical activities and perpetual regeneration.

Swirls and spirals

Swirls and spirals on Gotland picture-stones were regarded by Lindqvist (1941) and Ellmers (1986) as representing the sun, the earth and the moon. Variations of swirls, with a smaller number of arms, as depicted on the picture-stone from Vallstena, remind one strongly of the image of the swastika. This may indicate the inclusion of the Old Norse symbolic interpretation of the world through the supposed cyclical significance of the swastika.

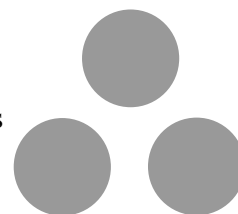


changing seasons in the Vallstena (detail) because of

Spiral shapes also appeared on objects from pre-history and Lindqvist (1941) as well as Ellmers (1986) suggested the origin of the symbols on the island of Gotland as being inspired by decorations from Roman culture, similar to the stone sledges from León on the river Duero in Spain.

Three dots

Three dots, tattooed on the skin between the forefinger and the thumb, according to Liungman (1991), are known as ‘hobo dots’ in Sweden. This configuration might be regarded as having protective attributes. Three circles in a triangular form were used in alchemy in the seventeenth century AD, as a sign for oil.



Of some significance for bracteates may be Liungman’s interpretation of the sign as being “an old sign for pawnbrokers and money-lenders, still used today in the business world” (p.284). A money-lender is, compared to those who need money, situated in a powerful, quite wealthy position.

Triangles

A sign comprising three interlocked triangles appears on several Gotland picture-stones and may be identified with the symbol ‘Hrungnir’s heart’.

Snorri Sturluson, in his *Edda* (Faulkes (1989, 20) mentioned a triangular sign symbolising the giant Hrungnir:

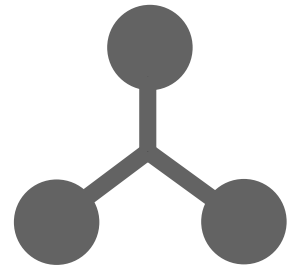
“Hrungnir átti hjarta þat er frægt er, af hørðum steini ok tindótt með þrim hornum svá sem síðan er gert var ristubragð þat er Hrungnis hjarta heitir”.

“Hrungnir had a heart that is renowned, made of solid stone and spiky with three points just like the symbol for carving called Hrungnir’s heart has ever since been made” (Faulkes 1987, 78).



Triskele

Triskeles appear on a number of bracteates as additional to the main image. The triskele was described by Bruce-Mitford (1996) as a sign representing “good fortune” (p.105). According to Whittick (1960), the triskele symbolises the sun. Whittick regarded this sign as similar to the swastika, symbolising ‘revival’. The triskele can be found, like the Ying and Yang sign, on many East Asian artefacts representing, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996), heaven, mankind and earth. Liungman (1991) stated that the triskele was common in Greece after 400 AD. The fact that the three curved shapes of the triskele were quite often depicted as three legs was explained by Whittick by the fact that in ancient cultures the sun was believed to be dragged around by a hero. Whittick pointed to Greek culture, where the sun was “anthropomorphised” (p.284) into Apollo, Hercules, Orpheus and others. The legs of these figures might be understood in the depicted legs of the triskeles.



Wine

The figure on this *guldgubbe* foil is holding a beaker (overflowing). This kind of vessel, according to Watt (1992), was relatively rare in Scandinavia and regarded as a highly valuable item. Another (large) object shown was identified by Simek (2000) as a wine-lifter, an instrument to get wine out of a vat. The beaker and the wine-lifter could signify someone who is a wine-maker or someone wealthy enough to be able to drink wine.



Guldgubbe
from Sorte-Muld

Picture credits for objects and images on objects from early Scandinavian culture, discussed in this thesis, which have signifying qualities or are likely to carry symbolic qualities.

Bird: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Bracteate from Mauland: after Hauck, Karl, 1985, vol. 1.1, p.145, fig. f.

Embracing couple (*guldgubbe* from Slöinge): illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Eye: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Frame: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Guldgubbe from Törring, Jylland: after Watt, Margarethe, 'Guldgubber og patricer til guldgubber fra Uppåkra'. In: *Fyndene i centrum*. (=Uppåkra-Studier 2. Acta Archaeologica Lundensia Ser. In 8e, No. 30, 1999), 177-190.

Gudme-C (392): after Hauck, Karl, 1992,
(No illustrator was mentioned), Nationalmuseet, Afdeling, Danmarks oldtid, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Mjøllnir: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Three interlocked horns: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Horse standing on its head: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Sleipnir: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Medallion from Lyngby: after C. J. Thomsen, in D. Ellmers, 1986, p.356, fig. 5.

Posture in bird-shape ('the dance-group'): after Watt, Margarethe, (1992), in Hauck, Karl, illustration Koch, Eva.

Runic font: design Hupfauf, Peter.

Snake: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Viking ship: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Wine glass with spill: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Staff: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Swastika: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Spirals: illustration by Hupfauf, Peter.

Three dots: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

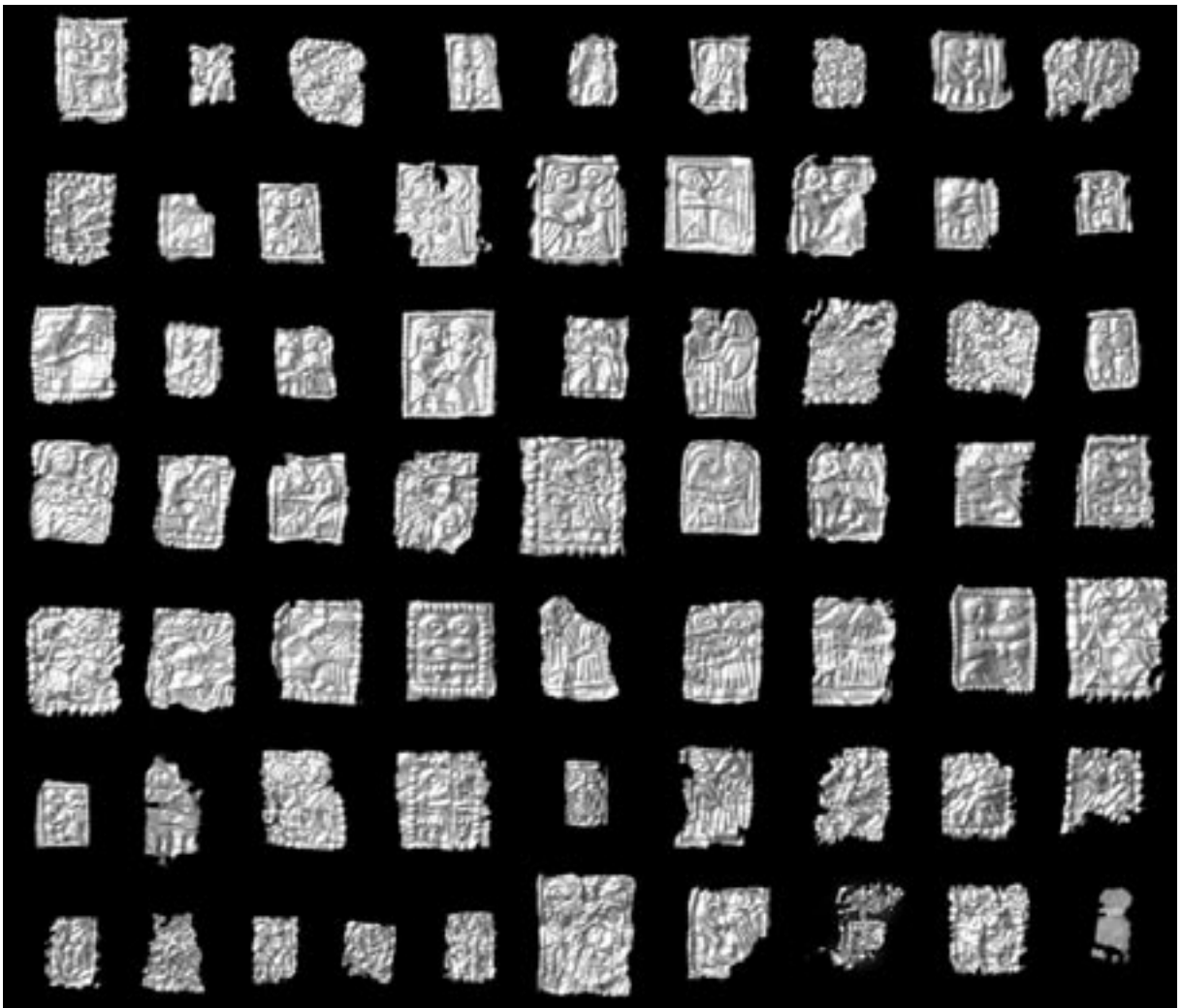
Three interlocked triangles: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Triskele: illustration Hupfauf, Peter.

Standing male figure with wine-lifter: after Watt, Margarethe (1992), in Hauck, Karl, illustration Koch, Eva.

B. A detailed analysis of the *guldgubber* of the hoard from Lundeberg

Because of the absence of information about the hoard from Lundeberg, east of Gudme (Fyn), as depicted in Müller-Wille (1999), it was appealing to undertake a detailed analysis of the find. The analysis was undertaken from a print only, which made it extremely difficult to recognise fine detail. However, the reproduction quality of the picture-source appeared satisfactory enough to gain information about symbolic elements represented in the Lundeberg find. Because of the detailed quality of this analysis, which could interrupt the flow of reading, I have placed this document here in the appendix.



Selection of *Guldgubber* from the shore of Lundeberg, east of Gudme (Fyn), as shown in Müller-Wille (1999).

Code: Lund 1.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68)

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: a pair, holding each other and facing each other, presented in profile. The left figure, most likely male, shows legs as if it wears either nothing, leggings or a pair of trousers. The right figure seems to be female. The figure's legs appear covered down to the ankles by a dress.

The left figure's head is pointed at the front (>) and shows a very big eye side on. The right figure shows a wedged profile (Σ), which may represent the nose on the upper part of the shape and the chin at the lower end. It will be noticed that the pointed shape of left figure's face fits into the the wedge-shaped face of the right figure (the figures are facing each other).

Frame: along the material's outer edge appears a frame made of a dotted line.

Other attributes: not recognisable - most likely none.

Code: Lund 2.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 6 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: not recognisable enough to be described. The item seems to be a fraction of a larger part and appears to be crumpled. However, due to a dividing, vertical gap in the middle of the *gubbe*, it can be assumed that the image depicted represents two figures.

Frame: the lower left corner shows a fraction of a frame-like line.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 3.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is nearly square, the upper corners and the right lower corner are slightly rounded, the left lower corner appears rounded as if representing a quarter circle.



Image: two faces are recognisable. The faces are presumably part of two figures which stand in profile, facing each other and holding each other. Further detail is not clearly recognisable because of the small size and possible damage caused by crumpling.

Frame: along the material's outer edge is a frame made by a dotted line.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 4.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures which appear to stand in profile, facing each other. The left figure shows legs as though it is wearing either nothing or leggings. The right figure's legs seems to be covered by a dress. The left figure holds a cone-shaped object vertically, with the point towards the ground. It is possible that this represents a drinking horn or a glass beaker. Something seems to be coming out of the top of this object. A little damage has had an impact on the depiction on the bottom of the object.

Frame: along the material's outer edge is a frame made by a dotted line (small dots).

Other attributes: none.

Code: Lund 5.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: a pair, most likely facing each other, presented in profile. The left figure cannot be identified. The right figure seems to be female, which seems to wear a dress covered by a rectangular cloth.

Frame: at the top edge: within a short undamaged section in the centre an unbroken line is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 6.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures depicted in profile, facing each other. The left figure seems to show legs as though it wears a pair of trousers but it could also be a cloak, with the cloth folded so that it appears like a pair of trousers. The right figure seems to be female, wearing a dress covered by a rectangular cloth.

The right figure's left hand is reaching towards the left figure's hip or, alternatively, the figure's lower belly.

Frame: along the material's outer edge is a frame made by a dotted line.

Other attributes: not recognisable (most likely none).

Code: Lund 7.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of a very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source. However due to a dividing, vertical gap in the middle of the *gubbe*, it can be assumed that this represents a double-*gubbe*.

Frame: fractions of an unbroken line-frame are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 8.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

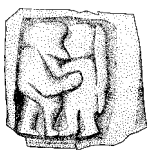
Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, nearly square.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure, probably representing a man, seems to show legs as if wearing a pair of trousers. It wears a waist-long shirt. The hair appears shoulder-long. The figure's right arm is shown reaching forward with an angle at the elbow. The hand seems to touch the right figure's chest from the side.



The right figure represents most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches just over the knee. The hairstyle appears like a straight cut in the front, over the eyebrows and tied together close to the head at the back (reaching down to the waist).

Both figures appear to be in movement (dancing) because of the positioning of the legs which are angled at the knees (particularly the presumed female figure).

Frame: a relatively bold line-frame, cut off at the bottom and partly cut off at the top.

Other attributes: not recognisable (most likely none).

Code: Lund 9.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, landscape.



Image: it may depict two figures. The item is too damaged to reveal any detail.

Frame: heavily damaged, most likely dotted.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 10.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.

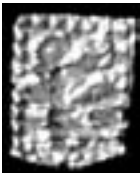


Image: most likely two figures. It seems as if heads are depicted there, where they would most likely appear if this piece depicted two figures. The item is too damaged to identify details.

Frame: partly damaged, dotted. The dots appear to be squarish and protrude in a pyramid shape. They are relatively big.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 11.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: may be two figures. The item is too damaged to identify any detail.

Frame: heavily damaged at the right top corner, dotted (small dots).

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 12.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure, probably representing a man, seems to show legs as if it wears a pair of trousers. It wears a tunic which is knee-long and tied at the waist by a belt. The hair is curled and relatively short. The figure's right arm is shown reaching forward, slightly downwards, with an angle at the elbow (as if touching the left figure's upper leg).

The right figure probably represents a woman, wearing a dress which appears to reach to the ground. It seems to wear a richly decorated (dots) shawl, which seems to fall over the shoulders and also reaches the ground. The hair seems to be long (reaching down to the waist). It may be tied together, probably by a knot, at the lower back of the head.

The figure's left arm reaches down and forward, as if it intends to hold the wrist of the other figure.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image (slightly damaged on top).

Other attributes: between the two figures appears a vertical shape, with its height reaching the middle of the figure's upper legs. On top of this wall-like shape is shown a sphere, about the size of an orange (compared to the figures).

Peculiarity: the right figure is depicted with an extremely large eye, corresponding with the image of Lund.21.

Code: Lund 13.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic held together at the upper front by a relatively large fibula. The rest of the clothing is not recognisable due to damage. The hair appears to be shoulder-long. It appears that the figure is holding the other's arm.

The right figure probably represents a woman. The figure wears a petticoat which appears to reach down to the ground and is pleated. It seems as if the figure also wears an over-skirt which is knee-length in the front and reaches the ground at the back. The hair seems to be long. It is tied together with a big knot (Irish ribbon knot) at shoulder-level and seems to be plaited at the lower end. The position of the figure's left arm can not be identified.

Additional feature: the figure on the left seems to hold a cone-like shape, which may be a horn or a beaker, in its right hand. Some undefined shape at the upper end could represent a spill.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image (heavily damaged at the lower left corner).

Other attributes: the *gubbe* appears similar to nos. 14 and 28. It is possible that nos. 13, 14 and 28 were made from the same die.

Code: Lund 14.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man wearing a long cloak. The legs appear uncovered. The hair appears to be shoulder-length.



It seems as this figure is touching the other one with its right hand at the arm, and may be touched itself by the right figure's right hand.

The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a petticoat which reaches down to the ground and is pleated. It seems as if it wears also an over-skirt, which is knee-length in the front and reaches the ground at the back. The hair is long and tied together with a big knot at shoulder-level.

The position of the figure's left arm can not be identified.

Additional feature: the figure on the left seems to hold a cone-like shape, which may be a horn or a beaker, in its right hand. Some undefined shape at the upper end could represent a spill.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image (slightly damaged at the upper right corner).

Other attributes: the *gubbe* appears similar to nos. 13 and 28. It is possible that nos. 13, 14 and 28 are made from the same die.

Peculiarity: the presented figures are depicted with extremely large eyes.

Code: Lund 15.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man wearing a long pleated cloak. The legs appear to be uncovered or wearing leggings. It seems as if the figure is wearing a cap. The figure is holding the other figure's hand. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches down to the ground and is pleated. The hair is long and reaches the ground.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the figure on the right (female) is depicted with a large eye.

Code: Lund 16.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a short tunic. The legs appear uncovered, wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may be shoulder-length. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's neck or shoulder. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress that reaches the ground and a shawl which appears to be pleated. The hairstyle cannot be identified because of damage.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a straight lined frame surrounds the image. The right side edge and the bottom right corner are heavily damaged.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the figures show large eyes, like the figures in Lund 14 and the heads look like diver-helmets.

Code: Lund 17.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a short tunic. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may be shoulder-length. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's neck or shoulder. The right figure is most likely a woman, reaching towards the left figure's hips. This figure wears a dress of unidentifiable length. The hairstyle cannot be identified.

Additional features: most likely none

Frame: a frame cannot be clearly identified. Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the shapes appear very undefined.

Code: Lund 18.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Place of origin: not known.

Size: approximately 5 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man. The clothing cannot be identified. The hairstyle cannot be identified. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's waist. The right figure may represent a woman wearing a dress which appears to reach the ground. A knee-length cloak may be depicted. The hairstyle cannot be identified.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. Both upper corners are rounded. The frame is slightly damaged at the upper left side.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the shapes appear very undefined which may result from the small scale of this particular object.

Code: Lund 19.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: a pair, holding each other and facing each other, presented in pro-

file. The left figure, most likely male, seems to wear a tunic tied at the waist by a belt, creating a draped kind of appearance to the lower part of the tunic. The right figure seems to be female. Its legs appear covered with cloth (maybe a dress).

The left figure's face is difficult to recognise. The right figure shows a pointed profile (<). The hairstyle is difficult to analyse because of the *gubbe*'s abstraction. However it seems that an Irish ribbon knot might be depicted in a very stylised manner.

Additional feature: it appears that the left figure intends to hand over a long stick-like object to the right figure. The object may be a plant because it appears to show (vaguely) some flower-like shapes at the tip of a stem.

Frame: along the material's outer edge is a frame made by a dotted line, damaged on the right side.

Other attributes: not recognisable - most likely none.

Code: Lund 20.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: most likely two figures. The item is much too damaged to identify any detail.

Frame: heavily crumpled, dotted (small dots).

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 21.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure, probably representing a man, seems to show legs wearing a pair of trousers or leggings. It is depicted as wearing a knee-length tunic tied up at the waist by a belt. It appears as if the figure wears a cap or helmet. It seems as if the figure is holding the right figure's hand.

The right figure represents most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches to the ground. It seems to show a richly decorated (dots) collar. The hair seems to be long (reaching to the waist). It is tied together, probably by an Irish ribbon knot close to the head. The figures seem to hold each other's hands.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image.

Other attributes: between the two figures appears a vertical shape, with its height reaching the middle of the figures' upper legs. On top of this wall-like shape is a sphere the size of an apple (relative to the figures).

Peculiarity: the right figure has a large eye, like the female figure of Lund. 12.

Code: Lund 22.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 11 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a cloak. The legs appear to be uncovered or wearing leggings. The hair is shoulder-long. It seems as the figure is touching the other one with its right hand and may be touched itself by the right figure's right hand at the wrist.

The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a pleated dress reaching to the ground. It seems to also wear a cloth or overskirt over the dress. The hair length cannot be recognised because of an object (maybe a sceptre or a leek) in front of the position where the hair would be if it were long. The position of the figure's left arm cannot be identified.



Additional feature: the figure on the right holds an object similar to a sceptre - however it could also be a plant (flower or leek). It is positioned with its lower end on the front of the presumed female figure's body, being held slightly diagonally towards the right shoulder.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the figures are depicted with large eyes.

Code: Lund 23.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: not recognisable enough to be described.

Frame: the left and upper side shows a fraction of a frame-like line.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 24.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a short tunic. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may reach to the ears only. The figure may be wearing a cap. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's upper arm. The right figure is most likely a woman wearing a dress, with a large collar, which appears to reach to the ground and



appears to be pleated. The hair appears to be shoulder-length only.
Additional feature: an object which is difficult to identify, perhaps an oar,
placed between the two figures.

Frame: the *gubbe* has no frame.

Other attributes: the outer shape of the *gubbe* follows basically the outer
shape of the embossing.

Code: Lund 25.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.

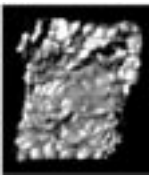


Image: presumably two figures. Because of the very crumpled surface the
image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: fractions of a frame with large dots are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 26.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is slightly landscape, nearly square.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface the image is too damaged to
be analysed from the existing picture source. However, it seems to depict
two figures, of which the left one appears to be female, wearing a long
pleated dress.

Frame: fractions of a frame with large dots are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 27.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 6 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man. Clothing is unidentifiable. The hairstyle cannot be identified. The figure seems to be holding the other figure by the waist. The right figure may be a woman, wearing a knee-length skirt. The hairstyle cannot be identified.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The frame is slightly damaged at the upper left side.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the shapes appear very clumsy compared to the above-mentioned illustrations. The figure on the right side seems to have an extremely large head.

Code: Lund 28.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a cloak. One identifiable leg appears uncovered. The hair appears shoulder-long. The (male) figure may be touching the (female) figure, which cannot be identified because it appears distorted by damage. The figure on the right hand side is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which appears to reach to the ground and is pleated. There seems to be a cloth over the dress which is knee-length at the front and reaches the ground at the back. The hair is long, and tied with a large knot at shoulder level.

The position of the figure's left arm cannot be identified.

Additional feature: a cone-like shape, as in Lund 13 and 14, cannot be identified because of the *gubbe*'s crumpled surface.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image (damaged).

Other attributes: The *gubber* appears very similar to nos. 13 and 14. It is possible that the no. 13 nos. 14 and 28 are made from the same die.

Peculiarity: the presented figures are depicted with extremely large eyes.

Code: Lund 29.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: most likely two figures. Two heads are clearly recognisable. It seems that the right figure (probably a woman) holds a beaker. The left figure seems to reach out its right arm for the beaker.

Frame: partly damaged, dotted. The dots appear to be squarish. They are relatively big compared to the other *gubber*.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Peculiarity: the left hand figure appears to be sitting but that might be an optical illusion from the poor picture source.

Code: Lund 30.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. It is not easy to identify which is male and which is female. But it appears that the left figure might be a man and the right one a woman. It is also difficult to identify the clothing clearly. The legs appear to be covered. The hairstyles are hard to identify because of their cropping by the *gubber's* edge. The left figure may be reaching towards the right figure's upper arm. The right figure's arm seems to point downwards.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The left top corner, as well as the left bottom side edge are damaged.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the figures show disproportionately large heads.

Code: Lund 31.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: fractions of a dotted frame are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 32.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 11 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic. The legs, from the knees down, appear to be uncovered or wearing leggings. The hair appears to be shoulder-length. It seems as if the figure is touching the other one with its right hand at the left upper chest.

The right figure is probably a woman, wearing a dress which reaches to the ankles and is pleated or draped, similar to the shawl she appears to be wearing. The hair is tied with a large knot at shoulder-level but it is not shown how far further it reaches.

The position of the figures' arms cannot be identified.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The dots are large and uneven.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the image is strongly stylised.

Code: Lund 33.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, top corners rounded, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. It is difficult to identify but it is possible that the left figure represents a man, wearing a tunic and a cloak. The lower legs appear partly uncovered. The hairstyle shows similarities with the native American Mohawk hairstyle. The figure seems to hold the other figure's upper arm. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches the ground and is pleated. The hair is long. It appears to be plaited and reaches to the ground.

Additional feature: the clothes are very similar to these on Lund 15.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image (small dots).

Other attributes: curved upper corners. The lines depicting the hair and the

folding of the gowns are created by using small dots.

Peculiarity: the figures are depicted with large eyes, the faces are very abstract (quite fish-head like).

Code: Lund 34.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may be shoulder-length. The arms and hands are difficult to identify, partly because of stylisation and partly because of some possible damage. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which appears to reach the ground and a shawl which appears to be pleated and also reaches the ground. The hairstyle cannot be identified partly because of stylisation and partly because of some possible damage.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a proper frame is not recognisable, however, a fraction of a straight line on the right edge of the *gubbe* and partly at the bottom indicate that a frame may have completed the work or was intended to complete it, but did not do so, because of production problems.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the gubber shows strong similarities with Lund 16. It is possible that they are made from the same mould and differ only because of minor damage to one or other *gubbe*.

Code: Lund 35.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic and probably a cloak. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify because of stylisation. The arms and hands are difficult to identify for the same reason. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a shawl which appears to be pleated, has a large collar and reaches to the ground. A dress is not recognisable. The hairstyle cannot be identified because of stylisation. It seems as if no particular hairstyle was meant to be shown.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The dots are, compared with the other *gubbers* from Lundeborg, relatively large.

Other attributes: none

Code: Lund 36.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile. The figures seems to hold each other by the arm.

Additional feature: none

Frame: partly damaged. It seems that the frame was once a straight, bold line.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Peculiarity: The *gubbe* appears to have been squashed flat which is a reason for the lack of detail.

Code: Lund 37.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man. Clothing is not identifiable. The hair appears to be shoulder-length. The figure may be touching the other one, which cannot be clearly identified.

The right figure is probably a woman. Clothing is not identifiable. The hair may be shoulder-length or longer.

The position of the figures' arms cannot be identified.

Additional feature: not recognisable.

Frame: a frame with relatively large dots surrounds the image (damaged, particularly on the right edge).

Other attributes: The *gubbe* appears to be created by the use of many thin lines. These lines, however, appear to be unrelated at times and give the image an abstract quality by confusing the shapes.

Peculiarity: none.

Code: Lund 38.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of its very crumpled surface the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: fractions of a frame with small dots are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 39.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic, which reaches to the middle of the lower legs. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may reach to the shoulders. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's lower arm. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches the ground and is pleated. The hair reaches the waist.

Additional feature: a ring with four dots, one each on the top, bottom, left and right, is placed between the two figures, in front of their chests.

Frame: large, but with various sized dots. The lower left corner is missing.

Other attributes: none.

Code: Lund 40.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The figures are both wearing the same kind of clothes, therefore it cannot be stated whether one would be male and one female. The figures wear a tunic and a skirt-like pleated lower garment reaching approximately to the knees. No hairstyle can be identified because both figures are depicted with diver-helmet-like heads, lacking any hair. Each figure reaches towards the other's arm.

Additional feature: none.

Frame: large dots.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the figures are strongly stylised. The eyes appear very large.

The reaching hands and arms are interestingly stylised by using positive/

negative embossing, resulting in the shape of a knot or interlacing design. The representation of both figures with the same style of dress/skirt may indicate the depiction of two female figures.

Code: Lund 41.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait, upper part missing.



Image: two figures most likely in profile, facing each other (difficult to assess because the upper right part of the *gubbe* is missing). The left figure may represent a man, wearing a cloak reaching to the knees. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The hairstyle is difficult to identify but it may reach to the shoulders. The figure may be reaching towards the other figure's waist. The right figure is most likely a woman (the head is missing), wearing a dress, which reaches to the ground and appears to be pleated. The hairstyle cannot be recognised because of the damage.

Frame: small dots.

Other attributes: none.

Code: Lund 42.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a tunic or cloak. The kind of clothing on the lower

part of the body is difficult to identify because of the strong stylisation. However, the legs seems to be uncovered, or wearing leggings or trousers. No hairstyle is identifiable because the figure is depicted with diver-helmet-like head, lacking any hair. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which reaches to the ground and appears to be pleated. This figure, like the one on the left, is shown with a strongly stylised head. However, the hair of the right figure seems to reach to the ankles and has an Irish ribbon-knot at the neck.

Additional feature: none

Frame: small sized dots, at the bottom missing.

Other attributes: large eyes.

Peculiarity: The shapes and proportions appear quite similar to the shape and the proportion of the image of Lund 43 and 51.

Code: Lund 43.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed in detail from the existing picture source. However, the shapes and proportions appear quite similar to those of the images of Lund 42 and 51.

Frame: fractions of a frame with small dots are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 44.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: The image is very simplified and the embossed edges are very rounded. This does not allow much detail to be recognised. However, two figures in profile, facing each other, are recognisable. It cannot be said which figure is male or female. The left figure seems to wear a tunic, reaching nearly to the knee. The right figure's lower body part is not recognisable because it is damaged. The right figure is depicted as reaching to the left figure's shoulders or neck.

Hairstyles: it seems that they were not meant to be represented (diver-helmet style).

Frame: a frame with small dots is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 45.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 11 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.

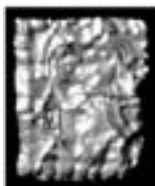


Image: two figures, depicted in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man. It seems as if this figure is wearing a tunic and a cloak. The legs, from the knees down, seem to be uncovered. It appears as if the figure wears a Roman-style helmet. It seems as if the figure is touching the other one, with its right hand, at the left upper chest.

The right figure represents probably a woman. The figure wears a long dress and also a shawl, which seems to reach the ground. The hair seems to flow loosely and appears to be shoulder-length. The image is slightly distorted because it is very crumpled.

The man appears to be reaching towards the woman's chest area. The woman's arms are not identifiable because of distortions.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image; the dots are big and uneven.

Other attributes: none

Code: Lund 46.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 6 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The figure on the left represents, most likely, a man. The clothes of this figure cannot be clearly recognised. Because both figures are depicted with diver-helmet-like heads, the left figure is lacking any hair at all. The right figure, which may depict a woman, seems to wear a ground-length dress and appears to have waist-long, plaited hair. The left figure is reaching towards the other figure's arm. The arm movement of the right figure is not identifiable.

Additional feature: none.

Frame: small dots.

Other attributes: none

Code: Lund 47.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 11 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface and missing parts at the top and bottom, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: not recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 48.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source (a head is definitely recognisable on the upper left side and probably another one on the upper right side).

Frame: fractions of a frame with large dots are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 49.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: one figure can be clearly identified on the left of the *gubbe*; another figure may be depicted on the right but it is too difficult to analyse because of possible damage or original production problems. The left figure may represent a man. The figure seems to wear a tunic, and possibly baggy Turkish-style trousers. The lower legs appear to be uncovered or wearing leggings. The hair appears to be shoulder-length. The arms and hands are difficult to identify, however it seems as if the right arm is angled at the hip, to reach forward from there.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a dot-frame is recognisable on the right and left side but the top is too crumpled to be defined and the frame is missing at the bottom.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: none.

Code: Lund 50.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. Because of strong stylisation, it cannot be identified which figure represents a woman or a man.

Clothing is not clearly identifiable. The position of the figures' arms cannot be identified.

Additional feature: not recognisable.

Frame: a frame with relatively tiny dots surrounds the image.

Other attributes: The *gubbe* appears to be created by the use of lines and is strongly stylised.

Peculiarity: the linework appears maze-like.

Code: Lund 51.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 10 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man, wearing a jacket. The kind of clothing on the lower part of the body is not identifiable. No hairstyle is identifiable because the figure is depicted with a diver-helmet-like head and a part is missing because of damage. The right figure is most likely a woman, wearing a dress which appears to reach to the floor and is pleated. The figure is also shown with a strongly stylised head. However it appears that plaited hair reaches the ankles and has an Irish ribbon-knot at the neck.

Additional feature: none

Frame: small sized dots, missing at the bottom.

Other attributes: large eyes.

Peculiarity: The shapes and proportions appear quite similar to the shapes and proportions of the image of Lund 42 and 43.

Code: Lund 52.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: fractions of a dotted-frame are recognisable on the upper right corner and on the right edge only.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 53.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The dots are large and uneven.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 54.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. No hairstyle can be identified because of heavy crumpling. The figure on the left is holding the figure on the right side on the shoulder. The lower, third part of the *gubbe* is missing, therefore clothing cannot be identified.

Frame: a dotted frame surrounds the image. The dots are partly small, partly big and uneven. The bottom part and the lower right hand side are missing.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 55.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source. However, from the general appearance it can be assumed that this is, like most of the others, a double *gubbe*.

Frame: a frame with relatively tiny dots surrounds the image. The top part is missing and the left and bottom side are damaged.

Other attributes: not recognisable

Code: Lund 56.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: no frame is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 57.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source; however the shapes of two figures are vaguely recognisable.

Frame: an uneven dotted frame can be vaguely recognised on the top and right side.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 58.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 7 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source. However the shapes of two figures are vaguely recognisable.

Frame: no frame is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 59.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Place of origin: not known.

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: no frame is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 60.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeborg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 11 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may represent a man. Clothing is not identifiable because the *guldgubbe* is too crumpled.

The right figure cannot be identified for the same reason.

Additional feature: not recognisable.

Frame: fractions of a frame with small dots can be recognised.

Peculiarity: none.

Code: Lund 61.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 9 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: two figures in profile, facing each other. The left figure may be a man, wearing a tunic. The right hand seems to touch the other figure's shoulder. The legs appear to be wearing leggings or trousers. The figure on the right is most likely a woman, wearing a dress and a shawl. The hair-styles are difficult to identify because of great abstraction. The hair of the left figure seems to be long (reaching to the waist). It may be tied, probably by a clasp.

Additional feature: none

Frame: a straight line-frame surrounds the image. The right lower corner is missing.

Other attributes: none

Peculiarity: the left figure's leg appears to be in motion due to the angled right leg at the knee.

Code: Lund 62.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is unregular (heavily damaged).



Image: because of the very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: no frame is recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 63.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 8 mm high.

Shape: outer shape is rectangular, portrait.



Image: because of a very crumpled surface, the image is too damaged to be analysed from the existing picture source.

Frame: fractions of a dotted frame are recognisable.

Other attributes: not recognisable.

Code: Lund 64.

Picture source: Müller-Wille, M. (1999, p.68).

Kind of depiction: print of photograph, computer manipulated (contrast).

Place where the item was found: Lundeberg east of Gudme (Fyn).

Size: approximately 6 mm high.

Shape: this *gubbe* is a cut-out figure (cut to shape).



Image: singular figure, most likely male (stylised beard). The item is not embossed and not engraved. Therefore no details such as clothing or hair-styles are depicted. The position of the feet may suggest the intention to represent movement.

Frame: no frame.

Other attributes: a little figure, without detail, very stylised.

Summary of description of *guldgubber* from the hoard of Lundeberg

1. Type

Lund 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 50, 51, 54, 60 and 61 (39 out of 64) are clearly recognisable as double-*gubber*, by a majority of nearly two thirds.

Lund 64 stands out because it is the only one in this group which is cut out.

2. Positioning of figures

The recognisable double-*gubber*, without exception, depict the male figure on the left and the female on the right.

3. Style

Lund 40 stands out from the other designs due to its greater abstraction and the interlacing of the arms.

Lund 34 and 44 show diver-helmet-like heads.

Lund 46 stands out due to the linear style of the work, which is maze-like but is also reminiscent, due to its simplification, of designs on shields of the later Middle Ages.

4. Clothes

A gown is depicted, worn like a coat, which is approximately knee-length but reaches the ground at the back, in Lund 13, 14, 16, 22, 32, 34, 35, 46 and 61. Lund 13 and 14 show underskirts and overskirts. Men are shown, wearing leggings or tight trousers and wide, oriental-style pants.

Lund 12 seems to be depicted as wearing a cape.

5. Hairstyle

On the *gubber*, the majority of the female figures depicted with hair (not

further stylised) are shown with long hair tied near the neck by an Irish ribbon knot. The lower end of the hair (below the knot) appears to be plaited. Lund 13 and 15 indicate such texture vaguely, while Lund 22 shows the style quite clearly. Men's hair, when shown at all, is in most cases depicted as shoulder-length.

6. Attributes

Nine of the sixty-four *guldgubber* (14%) show, apart from the figures, additional attributes of several kinds.

Lund 12 depicts a vertical shape between the two figures, extending to the height of the mid-upper legs of the figures. On top of this wall-like shape is a sphere the size of an orange (relative to the figures).

Lund 22, featuring two figures, shows one of them holding a stick-like object. The object has previously been identified as a staff or sceptre. It seems actually to depict a plant (flower) that is being handed over by one figure to the other. Its shape suggests that it might represent a leek. It is possible that the leek, with its great preservative attribute, may have been regarded as a special and valuable plant, well worth depicting on items made for special events or circumstances.

Lund 4 and 13/14 and probably Lund 29 depict one figure holding a cone-shaped object, probably a horn or a beaker. In Lund 4 and Lund 13/14, it seems as if the left figure (most likely the man) is holding the object. In Lund 29, it is possible that the woman is holding the object; however, the man might be reaching for it with his right hand. The object in all three depictions seems to indicate some kind of overflow. This may be a way of indicating wealth, which permits such generous waste or hospitality.

Lund 24 seems to show two figures holding an object placed vertically between them. If this shape is meant to be an item, and not simply empty space, then it might permit identification as an oar held vertically, with its blade up.

Lund 39 depicts a ring positioned between two figures. The ring is shown with four dots, one on top, one on the bottom and one each left and right. This ring might represent Draupnir, the ring which was owned by Óðinn. However, it may simply represent a gift which is given by one of the depicted figures to the other.

7. Presentation

Lund 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 20, 23, 25, 26, 31, 38, 43, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62 and 63 (24, slightly more than one third) are not recognisable because of damage and, in some cases, due to their extreme stylisation. However, because of the great percentage of double-*gubber* within this find, it could be assumed that the remaining *gubber* might also be double-*gubber*.

8. Coincidence

Some of the *gubber* seem to fit, stylistically, into the one category.

Lund 13 and 14 may be identical and stem from the same mould. Lund 16 shows similar large eyes and a similar diver-helmet-like head. These also appear in Lund 34, 44, 40, 42, 46 and 51.

C. Paintings representing love or marriage by two people holding one another.

Since *guldgubber* are not titled, it is left to the viewer to interpret what their depictions were meant to express. The following three images depict representations of love and/or marriage in paintings from the fifteenth and sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In these cases, the titles of the paintings are known and this allows an unmistakable interpretation of the images. The presented paintings demonstrate the importance given by artists upon the positioning of hands and arms of people holding each other, in order to express the themes of love and marriage.



Jan Van Eyck *The Arnolfini Marriage* (1434)
National Gallery, London

Lorenzo Lotto, *Messer Marsilio and his bride* (1523)



Rembrandt, *Bride and bride-groom* (1668)

Credits for images representing love and marriage.

The Arnolfini Marriage. Jan Van Eyck (1434): after *The Art Book*. (1994), (no author or editor mentioned); National Gallery, London.

Messer Marsilio and his bride. Lorenzo Lotto (1523): after *Die virtuelle Gemälde Galerie*. (no author or editor mentioned).

Bride and bride-groom. Rembrandt (1668): after *The Art Book*. (1994), (no author mentioned).

11. Bibliography

Adamson, Stephen (ed.), 1997, *Myth and Mankind; Sagas of the Norsemen: Viking and Germanic Myth*. Duncan Baird Publishers, London.

Andreae, Bernard, 1986, 'Delphine als Glücksbringer'; in: Roth, Helmut (ed.), *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 51-56.

Armbruster, Barbara, R., 2002, 'Goldschmiede in Haithabu - Ein Beitrag zum frühmittelalterlichen Metallhandwerk'; in: Schietzel, Kurt (ed.), *Ausgrabungen in Haithabu (Bericht 34)*. Wachholtz Verlag, Neumünster, pp. 85-198.

Axboe, Morten, 1986, 'Brisingamen – også et arkæologisk problem'; *Danske Studier*, 103, 116-121.

Axboe, Morten, 1999a, 'Die Chronologie der Goldbrakteaten - regional und überregional'; in: von Freeden, Uta, Koch, Ursula and Wiczorek, Alfred (eds.), *Völker an Nord- und Ostsee und die Franken*. Dr. Rudolf Habelt, Bonn, pp. 61-73.

Axboe, Morten, 1999b, 'The chronology of the Scandinavian gold bracteates'; in: Hines, J., Højlund Nielsen, K. and Siegmund, F. (eds.), *The Pace of Change*. Oxbow Books, London pp. 126-147.

Baetke, Walter, 1993, *Wörterbuch zur altnordischen Prosaliteratur*. Akademie Verlag, Berlin.

Baillie, M., 2000, 'Tree rings challenge history'; in *BBC news*. Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/in_depth/sci_tech/2000/festival_of_science/newsid_916000/916421.stm

Bakka, Egil, 1968, 'Methodological problems in the study of gold bracteates'; *Norwegian Archeological Review*. 1, 5-35.

Barthes, R., 1986, *Elements of Semiology*. Hill and Wang, New York.

Behr, Charlotte, 1992, 'Beizeichen auf formularverwandten Brakteaten, exemplarisch erörtert'; in: Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 111-142.

- Binder, Pearl, 1972, *Magic Symbols of the World*. The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd. London.
- Birren, F., 1950, *Colour Psychology and Therapy*. New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Bruce, Vicki and Green, Patrick, R., 1985, *Visual Perception Psychology, Physiology and Ecology*. Lawrence Erlbaum, London.
- Bruder, Reinhold, 1974, *Die Germanische Frau im Lichte der Runeninschriften*. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Bruce-Mitford, Miranda, 1996, *The Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols*. DK Publishing, New York.
- Bæksted, Anders, 1942, *Islands Runeindskrifter*. Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana 2, Copenhagen.
- Capelle, Torsten, 1986, 'Einzelbilder in der wikingschen Kleinkunst'; in: Roth, Helmut (ed.), *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 175-182.
- Carlsson, Dan, 2002, (archaeologist at the University of Gotland) personal interview.
- Champeaux, Gérard, de and Sterckx, Dom S. 1966, *Introduction au monde des symboles*. Zodiaque, Saint-Léger-Vauban, Yonne.
- Chevalier, Jean and Gheerbrant, Alain, translated by Buchanan-Brown, John, 1996, *A Dictionary of Symbols*. Second edition, Penguin Books, London.
- Cleasby, Richard, 1957, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Second edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Clunies Ross, Margaret, 1994, *Prolonged Echoes. Volume 1: The myths*. Odense University Press, Odense.
- Coon, Dennis, 1986, *Introduction to Psychology*. West Publishing Company, St. Paul.
- Day, R. H., 1969, *Human Perception*. John Wiley & Sons, Sydney.
- Derolez, R., 1954, *Runica Manuscripta*. De Tempel, Brugge.
- Die viertuelle Gemälde Galerie. (author/ed. not mentioned) www.tandem-verlag.de

Dreyfuss, Henry, 1972, *Symbol Sourcebook: An Authoritative Guide To International Graphic Symbols*. McGraw-Hill, New York.

Dronke, Ursula, 1997, *The Poetic Edda*. Vol. II, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Düwel, Klaus, 1983, *Runenkunde*. Second edition, Metzler, Stuttgart

Düwel, Klaus, 1992, 'Zur Auswertung der Brakteateninschriften'; in: Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 32-90.

Düwel, Klaus, 1995, 'Brakteat (Gold) von Nebenstadt I - B, Kreis Lüchow-Dannenberg'; in: Neumann, Hanne, Nowak, Jean and Düwel, Klaus (eds), *Katalog zur Ausstellung Schmuck und Waffen mit Inschriften aus dem ersten Jahrtausend*. Kunstsammlung der Universität Göttingen p. 29.

Düwel, Klaus, 1996, Katalog zur Ausstellung *Die Franken, Wegbereiter Europas vor 1500 Jahren: König Chlodewig und seine Erben*. Mannheim, Mainz.

Düwel, Klaus, 1997, 'Zeichenkonzeptionen im germanischen Altertum'; in: Posner, R., Robering, K., Sebeok, T. A. (eds) *Semiotik. Ein Handbuch zu den zeichentheoretischen Grundlagen von Natur und Kultur*. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, pp. 803-822.

Düwel, Klaus, 2001, *Runenkunde*. Third edition, Metzler, Stuttgart

Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Irenäus, 1989, *Human Ethology*. Aldine de Gruyter, New York.

Eliade, Mircea (editor and author), 1987, *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. (Vol. 13), Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, pp. 202-208.

Elliott, Ralph, W. V. 1989, *Runes, an Introduction*. second edn., Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Ellmers, Detlev, 1986, 'Schiffsdarstellungen auf skandinavischen Grabsteinen'; in: Roth, Helmut (ed.), *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 341-372.

Evers, Dietrich, 1985, 'Felsenbilder und Felsritzungen'; in: Schauer, Lucie (ed.), *Elementarzeichen*. Fröhlich und Kaufmann, Berlin, pp. 17-26.

Faulkes, Anthony, 1987, trans., *Snorri Sturluson, Edda*. David Campbell Publishers, London, pp. vii-xix.

Faulkes, Anthony, 1987, 'Introduction'; in: *Snorri Sturluson, Edda*. David Campbell Publishers, London, pp. vii-xix.

Ferguson, George, 1961, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*. Oxford University Press, London.

Foote, Peter, 1993, 'Conversion'; in: Pulsiano, Phillip (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Scandinavia*. Garland Publishing, New York, pp. 106-108.

Frank, Lawrence, K., 1966, 'The world as communication network'; in: Kepes, Gyorgy (ed.), *Sign Image and Symbol*. Studio Vista, London, pp. 1-14.

Frisby, J. P., 1980, *Seeing*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Fuglesang, Signe Horn, 1986, 'Ikonographie der Skandinavischen Runensteine der jüngeren Wikingerzeit'; in: Roth, Helmut (ed.), *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 183-210.

Fuglesang, Signe Horn, 2001, 'Animal ornament: the late Viking Period'; in: Müller-Wille, Michael and Larsson, Lars, Olof (eds.), *Tiere, Menschen, Götter*. Wikingerzeitliche Kunststile und ihre neuzeitliche Rezeption. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 157-194.

Furmanski, C. S. and Engel, S.A., 2000, 'An oblique effect in human primary visual cortex'. *Nature Neuroscience*, 3, 535-536.

Gibson, James, J., 1966, 'A theory of pictorial perception'; in: Kepes, Gyorgy (ed.), *Sign Image and Symbol*. Studio Vista, London, pp. 92-107.

Gladigow, Burkhard, 1992, 'Schutz durch Bilder. Bildmotive und Verwendungsweisen anti-ker Amulette'; in: Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 12-31.

[Goethe, Johann W. v.] 1971, in Rupprecht Matthaei (ed.), *Goethes Farbenlehre*. Otto Maier Verlag, Ravensburg.

Gombrich, E. H. 1972, 'The mask and the face: the perception of physiognomic likeness in life and in art'; in: Gombrich, E. H., Hochberg, Julian and Black, Max (eds), *Art, Perception and Reality*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, pp. 1-46.

Goodman, Frederik, 1989, *Magic Symbols*. Trodd Brian, London.

Gordon, Jesse, 1967, *Handbook of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*. Macmillan, New York.

Gotland homepage, 2002, *Astronomische Kalender*. Available at: <http://gotland.luma.com/Kalender.html>.

Gregory, Richard L., 1974, *Concepts and Mechanisms of Perception*. Duckworth & Co, London.

[Grimm, Jacob and Grimm, Wilhelm] 1956, in Heyne, M. Seedorf, H. and Teuchert, M. (eds) *Deutsches Wörterbuch*. Fifteenth edition, Leipzig.

Güntert, H., 1921, *Von der Sprache der Götter und Geister. Bedeutungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Homerischen und Eddischen Göttersprache*. Halle a. d. Saale.

Hachmann, Rolf, 1993, 'Verzierte Lanzenspitzen der Jüngerer Kaiserzeit'; in: Lang, Amai, Parzinger, Hermann and Küster, Hansjörg (eds), *Kulturen zwischen Ost und West*. Akademie Verlag, Berlin, pp. 327-423.

Haseloff, Günther, 1981, *Die germanische Tierornamentik der Völkerwanderungszeit. Studien zu Salin's Stil I-III, Vorgeschichtliche Forschungen* 17, I, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin.

Hauck, Karl, 1985, *Die Goldbrakteaten der Völkerwanderungszeit*. 1,1 Einleitung. Wilhelm Fink, München.

Hauck, Karl (author and editor), 1992, 'Frühmittelalterliche Bildüberlieferung und der organisierte Kult'; in: *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 433-574.

Hedeager, Lotte, 1992, *Iron-Age Societies*. Blackwell, Oxford.

Hedeager, Lotte, 2000, 'Scandinavian Animal Style - symbolic representation of a pre-Christian cosmology'. Paper presented at the 11th International Saga Conference. Sydney.

Hehlmann, Wilhelm, 1959, *Wörterbuch der Psychologie*. Alfred Kröner, Stuttgart.

Hochberg, Julian, 1972, 'The representation of things and people'; in: Gombrich, E. H., Hochberg, Julian and Black, Max (eds), *Art, Perception and Reality*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, pp. 47-94.

Hofmann, Werner, 1960, *Bildende Kunst*. Vol. II, Fischer, Frankfurt am Main.

Holmqvist, Wilhelm, 1986, 'Bilddenkmäler und Glaubensvorstellungen in der Eisenzeit Schwedens'; in: Roth, Helmut (ed.), *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 373-394.

Hull, Clark L., 1933, *Hypnosis and Suggestibility*. D. Appleton-Century, New York.

Huxley, Francis, 1979, *The Dragon*. Thames and Hudson, London.

Hvass, Steen, 1989, 'Foreword'; in Jørgensen, Lars and Petersen, Vang, 1998, *Guld, Magt og Tro*. Nationalmuseet, Thaning & Appel, Denmark.

Innis, Robert E., 1994, *Consciousness and the Play of Signs*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington.

Itten, Johannes, 1970, *The Elements of Colour*. Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York.

Itten, Johannes, 1973, *The Art of Color*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York. First published 1961 as *Kunst der Farbe*. Otto Maier Verlag, Ravensburg.

Jaffe, A., 1964, 'Symbolism in the visual arts'; in: Jung, C. (ed.), Freeman, John (co-ordinating editor), *Man and his Symbols*. Aldus Books, London.

Jennings, Bob and Colquhoun, Tim, 2003, 'We'll all be brutally ruined'; *Sydney Morning Herald (Drive)*. Fairfax, Sydney, 29/08/2003, vol. 51,782, p.5

Johnson-Laird, P. N., 1988, *The Computer and the Mind: An Introduction to Cognitive Science*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass.

Jung, Carl G., 1964, 'Approaching the unconscious'; in: Jung, Carl G. (author & editor), Freeman, John (co-ordinating editor), *Man and His Symbols*. Aldus Books, London.

Jónsdóttir, Selma, 1959, *An 11th Century Byzantine Last Judgement in Iceland*. Almenna Bókafélagið, Reykjavík.

Jónsson, Finnur, 1926, *Sæmundar Edda*. Kostnaðarmaður Sigurður Kristjánsson, Reykjavík.

Jørgensen, Lars and Petersen, Vang, 1998, *Guld, Magt og Tro*. Nationalmuseet, Thaning & Appel, Denmark.

Kaiser, Peter K., 1996, *The Joy of Visual Perception: A Web Book*. Available at: <http://www.yorku.ca/eye/>

Kalat, James, W. 1990, *Introduction to Psychology*. Second ed. Wadsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California.

Kandinsky, Wassily, 1979, *Point and Line to Plane*. Dover Publications, New York, first published 1926, edited by Walter Gropius and Moholy Nagy, *Punkt und Linie zu Fläche*. Bauhaus books.

Kant, Immanuel, 1978, *The Critique of Judgement*. Trans. James Meredith, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Karlsson, Lennart, 1983, *Nordisk Form. Om djurornamentik*. Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm.

Kasenova, Nargis, Mistry, Rukshan, Kozareff, Misha, 2002, *The Online Visual Literacy Project*. Pomona College, Claremont, California, available at <http://www.pomona.edu/Academics/courserelated/classprojects/Visual-lit/intro/.html>

Keys, David, 2000, *Catastrophe*. Arrow Books, London.

Keyserling, Count Hermann, 1932, translated by Duerr, Therese, *South American Meditations*. London.

Kitzinger, Ernst, 1991, 'Interlace and icons: Form and function in early insular art'; in: Spearman, Michael, R. and Higgitt, John (eds), *The Age of Migrating Ideas*. National Museum of Scotland and Alan Sutton Publishing, Edinburgh and Gloucestershire, pp. 3-15.

Klein-Pfeuffer, Margarete, 1993, *Merowingerzeitliche Fibeln und Anhänger aus Pressblech*. Hitzeroth, Marburg.

Klingenberg, Heinz, 1973, *Runenschrift - Schriftdenken Runeninschriften*. Carl Winter,

Universitätsverlag, Heidelberg.

Koch, Rudolf, 1984, *Das Zeichenbuch*. Insel-Verlag, Frankfurt.

Krause, Wolfgang, 1961, *Runica III*. Vandehoek & Ruprecht, Gottingen.

Krause, Wolfgang, 1970, *Runen*. Walter de Gruyter & Co, Berlin.

Kreutzner, Gert, 1988, 'Schiffe für Linkshänder und achtbeinige Pferde. Gotländische Bildsteine als kulturgeschichtliche Quelle'; in: Bohn, Robert (ed.), *Gotland Tausend Jahre Kultur- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte im Ostseeraum*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen.

Lassen, Annette, 2000, 'Hǫðr's blindness and the pledging of Óðinn's eye: a study of the symbolic value of the eyes of Hǫðr, Óðinn and Þórr'; in: Geraldine Barnes and Margaret Clunies Ross (eds), *Old Norse Myths, Literature and Society*. Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Sydney, Sydney, pp. 220-228.

Larrington, Carolyne, trans., 1996, *The Poetic Edda*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Latour, Bruno, 1993, trans. C. Porter, *We have Never been Modern*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

László, Gyula, 1974, *The Art of the Migration Period*. University of Miami Press, Coral Gables.

Lehmann, Winfred P. 1986, *A Gothic Etymological Dictionary*. Based on the third edition of *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Gotischen Sprache* by Sigmund Feist, Leiden.

Lennie, P., Krauskopf, J. and Sclar, G., 1990, 'Chronomatic mechanisms in striate cortex of macaque'; *Journal of Neuroscience* 10, 649-669.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 1969, in R. Needham (ed.), trans. J. H. Bell and J. R. von Sturmer, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Beacon Press, Boston.

Lexiconredaktion des Bibliographischen Instituts, 1973, *RoRoRo Lexicon, Dudenlexicon*. Rohwolt Taschenbuch Verlag, Reinbek, 6, p. 2193.

Lindow, John, 2001, *Handbook of Norse Mythology*. Santa Barbara, California

Lindqvist, Sune, 1945, *Gotlands Bildsteine*. i-ii, Wahlström & Widstrand, Uppsala.

- Lindqvist, Sune, 1968, Sagnet om Hild. *Skalk*. 68:3, 27.
- Liungman, Carl G., 1991, *Dictionary of Symbols*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York.
- Lorblanchet, M., 1977, 'From naturalism to abstraction'; in: Ucko, Peter (ed.), *Form in Indigenous Art*. Gerald Duckworth, London, pp. 44-56.
- Mansfield, R., 1974, 'Neural basis of orientation perception in primate vision'. *Science* 186, 1133-1135.
- Marold, Edith, 1989, 'Personenbeschreibung und Bedeutungsstruktur'; in: Werner, Ottmar (ed.), *Arbeiten zur Skandinavistik*. 8. Arbeitstagung der Skandinavisten des Deutschen Sprachgebiets 27.9. – 3.10.1987 in Freiburg i. Br., Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik 22, Frankfurt a. M., Bern, New York and Paris, pp. 399-425.
- Marstrader, Carl J. S., 1928, 'Om runene og runenavnenes oprindelse', *Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap*. 1, 5-179.
- Marr, D., 1982, *Vision*. Freeman, New York.
- Marr, D. and Nishihara, H.K., 1978, 'Representation and recognition of the spatial organization of three-dimensional shapes', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, Series B*, 200. 269-294.
- Matthaei, Rupprecht (ed.), 1971, *Goethes Farbenlehre*. Otto Maier, Ravensburg, pp. 5-8.
- Meehan, Aidan, 1992, *Animal Patterns*. Thames and Hudson, London.
- Meehan, Aidan, 1993, *Spiral Patterns*. Thames and Hudson, London.
- Meissner, Rudolf, 1921, *Die Kenningar der Skalden. Ein Beitrag zur skaldischen Poetik*. (Rheinische Beiträge und Hilfsbücher zur germanischen Philologie und Volkskunde). 1, Bonn and Leipzig.
- Melville, Stephen and Readings, Bill (authors & editors), 1995, *Vision and Textuality*. Macmillan Press, Houndmills.
- Michelli, Perette, 1993, 'Migrating ideas or migrating craftsmen? The case of the bossed penannular brooches'; in: Spearman, Michael, R. and Higgitt, John (eds.), *The Age of*

- Migrating Ideas*. National Museum of Scotland, Alan Sutton Publishing, Edinburgh, pp. 182-7.
- Milechnin, Anatol, 1967, *Hypnosis*. John Wright & Sons, Bristol.
- Molinari, Maria, V., 1974, 'Nota sull' iscrizione dell' elmo B di Negau', *Archivio Glottologico Italiano* 59. 44-55.
- Moltke, Erik, 1981, *Runes and their Origin, Denmark and Elsewhere*. Translated by Foote, Peter G., Department of Scandinavian Studies, University College, London.
- Montelius, Oscar, 1869, *Från Jernåldern*. Stockholm.
- Moss, Scott, 1970, *Dreams, Images, and Fantasy: A Semantic Differential Casebook*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana.
- Müller, Gunter, 1970, *Studien zu den theriophoren Personennamen der Germanen*. Niederdeutsche Studien, vol. 17, Köln, Wien.
- Müller-Wille, Michael, 1968-69, 'Bestattung im Boot', *Offa* 25/26, 120-125 and catalogue 193-194.
- Müller-Wille, Michael, 1999, *Opferkulte der Germanen und Slawen*. Theiss, Stuttgart.
- Müller-Wille, Michael, 2001, 'Tierstile des 8.-12. Jahrhunderts im Norden Europas. Dendrochronologie und kunsthistorische Einordnung'; in: Müller-Wille, Michael and Larsson, Lars Olaf (eds), *Tiere, Menschen, Götter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen pp. 215-250.
- National Museum in København, 2002, *Explanatory Chart*, presented together with displayed objects.
- Naveh, Joseph, 1982, *Early History of the Alphabet*. The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- Nedoma, Robert, 1995, *Die Inschrift auf dem Helm B von Negau*. Fassbaender, Wien.
- Nennius, ed. and transl. by Morris, John, 1980, *Historia Britonum*. Rowman and Littlefield, London.

Nerman, Birger, 1935, *Die Völkerwanderungszeit Gotlands*. Verlag der Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien.

Neues Grosses Volkslexikon, 1979, 2, Fackelverlag G. Bowitz, Stuttgart.

Nylén, Erik and Lamm, Jan, Peder, 1988, *Stones, Ships and Symbols*. fourth [English] edition, Gidlunds Bokförlag, Stockholm.

Orchard, Andy, 1997, *Dictionary of Norse Myth and Legend*. Cassell, London.

Öhrman, Roger, no date, (http://www.gotmus.i.se/2_tyska/vorzeit.htm) accessed: 02/09/ 2002.

Packard, Vance, 1981, *The Hidden Persuaders*. third edition. (first edition. 1957), Penguin Books, London.

Page, R. I., 1987, *Runes*. British Museum Publications, London.

Paul, Robert A., 2000, 'Sons or sonnets', *Current Anthropology*, vol. 41, 1. available at: //web4.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/824/318/63174487w3/5!mltview&amk_1_2_3

Peel, Christine (ed.), 1999, *Guta Saga. The History of the Gotlanders*. Viking Society for Northern Research, University College, London.

Pennick, Nigel, 1992, *Rune Magic*. Aquarian/Thorsons, London.

Pischel, Gina, 1966, *A World History of Art*. Phaidon, Oxford.

Polomé, Edgar, C. 1992, 'Schamanismus in der germanischen Region'; in: Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 404-420.

Powel, Ann, 1973, *The Origins of Western Art*. Thames and Hudson, London.

Quinn, Judith E, 2000, 'From orality to literacy in medieval Iceland'; in: Clunies Ross, Margaret (ed.), *Old Icelandic Literature and Society*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 30-60.

Rix, Helmut, 1992, 'Zum Ursprung der Runenschrift'; in: Aigner-Forsesti, Luciana, (ed.), *Etrusker Nördlich von Etrurien*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, pp. 411-441.

Rock, Irvin, 1973, *Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Dushkin Publishing Group, Guilford, Connecticut.

Rosenfeld, Andrée, 1977, 'Profile figures: schematisation of the human figure in the Magdalenian Culture of Europe'; in: Rosenfeld, Andrée and Ucko, Peter (eds.), *Form in Indigenous Art*. Gerald Duckworth, London, pp. 90-109.

Roth, Helmut (author and editor), 1986, 'Stil II – Deutungsprobleme' in: *Zum Problem der Deutung frühmittelalterlicher Bildinhalte*. Jan Thorbecke Verlag, Sigmaringen, pp. 111-128.

Salin, Bernhard, 1904, *Die Altgermanische Thierornamentik*. Typologische Studie über germanische Metallgegenstände aus dem IV. Bis IX. Jahrhundert, nebst einer Studie über irische Ornamentik. A. Asher & Co. Berlin.

Saussure, Ferdinand De, Bally, Charles and Sechehaye, Albert, in collaboration with Reidlinger, Albert (eds), 1964, trans. Baskin, W., *Course in General Linguistics*. First edition. 1922, Peter Owen Ltd, London.

Sawyer, Birgit, 2000, *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones: Custom and Commemoration in Early Medieval Scandinavia*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Scharfetter, Christian, 1992, 'Der Schamane – das Urbild des Heilenden'; in Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 422-432.

Schauer, Lucie (ed.), 1985, *Elementarzeichen*. Verlag Fröhlich und Kaufmann, Berlin.

Sekuler, Robert and Blake, Randolph, 1994, *Perception*. Third edition, McGraw-Hill, New York.

Sextus Empiricus, approximately 300 BC, trans. by Bury, R G., 1935, second edition. *Against the Logicians*, II, William Heinemann, London

Seymour-Smith, Charlotte (editor and author), 1986, *Dictionary of Anthropology*. The Macmillan Press, London.

Simek, Rudolf, 1984, *Lexicon der Germanischen Mythologie*. Alfred Kröner Verlag, Stuttgart.

Simek, Rudolf, 2000a, Summary of a letter by Margarethe Watt from 7th February. Unpublished manuscript.

- Simek, Rudolf, 2000b, 'Gods, Kings, Priests or Worshipers? The status of the figures on the Migration Age Scandinavian Guldgubber'. Unpublished article.
- Sinclair, John, 1998, *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary* (3rd ed.). Harper Collins, London.
- Sjøvold, Thorleif, 1985, *The Viking Ships in Oslo*. Universitetets Oldsaksamling, Oslo.
- Slater, Peter, 1974, *A Field Guide to Australian Birds*. Rigby, Adelaide.
- Sringley, Michael, 1988-9, 'The dream of Troy: an interpretation of the Gotland picture-stones of the Vendel and Viking periods', *Tor. Tidskrift för fornkunskap*. 22, 161-87.
- Sringley, Michael, 1993, 'The dream of Troy II', *Tor. Tidskrift för fornkunskap*. 26, 93-105.
- Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, 2001, *Era of the Great Migrations. 375 BC - 550 AD, Impressed Gold Foils*. Available at: <http://www.historiska.se/collections/treasures/folkvandring/guldgubbar-e.html>
- Steinsland, Gro, 1991, *Det hellige bryllup og norrøn kongeideologi. En analyse av hierogami-myten i Skirnismál, Ynglingatal, Háleygjatal og Hyndluljóð*. Oslo.
- Swann, Allen, 1991, *Graphic Design School*. New Burlington Books, London.
- Tacitus, 98 AD, *Agricola and Germany*. Trans. Birley, Anthony R., 1999, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- The Art Book*. 1994 (author not mentioned), Phaidon Press, London.
- Thomsen, Christian J., 1855, 'Om guldbracteaterne og bracteaterns tidligste brug som mynt', *Annaler for nordisk Oldkyndighed udgivne af Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab*. Copenhagen.
- Thorndike, Lynn, 1929, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*. 1., The Macmillan Company, New York.
- Todorov, Tzvetan, 1982, translated by Porter, C., *Theories of the Symbol*. Cornell University Press, New York.
- Ucko, Peter, 1977, 'Introduction'; in: Ucko, Peter, and Rosenberg, Andrée (eds.), *Form in*

Indigenous Art. Gerald Duckworth, London, pp. 11 – 18.

Van Pelt, S. J., 1950, *Hypnotism and the Power Within*. Skeffington and Son, New York.

Verstockt, Mark, 1982, *The Genesis of Form*. Muller, Blond & White Ltd., London

Vries, Jan de, 1961, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Brill, Leiden.

Watt, Margarethe, 1992, 'Die Goldblechfiguren ('guldgubber') aus Sorte Muld, Bornholm'; in: Hauck, Karl (ed.), *Der historische Horizont der Götterbild-Amulette aus der Übergangsepoche von der Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, pp. 195-227.

Wertheimer, M., 1923/1958, 'Principles of perceptual organization'; in: Beardslee, D. C. and Wertheimer, M. (eds.), *Reading in Perception*. Princeton, Van Nostrand, New York, pp. 115-135.

West, Andrew, 2001, 'Body language gives them all but Howard away'; *Sydney Morning Herald*. 21/7/2001, Fairfax, Sydney, p.4.

Whittick, Arnold, 1960, *Symbols, Signs and Their Meaning*. Leonard Hill Books, London.

Wilson, David M., and Klindt-Jensen, Ole, 1966, *Viking Art*. George Allen and Unwin, London.

Wilson, David M., 2001, 'The earliest animal styles of the Viking Age'; in: Müller-Wille, Michael and Larsson, Lars Olaf (eds), *Tiere, Menschen, Götter*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen.

Wimmer, Ludvig, 1887, *Die Runenschrift*. Weidmann, Berlin.

Wolfram, Herwig, 1995, *Die Germanen*. C. H. Beck, München.

Yapko, Michael, 1995, *Essentials of Hypnosis*. Brunner and Mazel, New York.

Yapko, Michael, 2002, correspondence from 04/10/2002

Yau, John, 1993, *A. R. Penck*. Harry N. Abrahams, New York.

Zangwill, O. L. 1987, 'Hypnosis, experimental'; in: Gregory, R. L., *The Oxford Companion to The Mind*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 328-330.

Zusne, Leonard, 1970, *Visual Perception of Form*. Academic Press, New York.