

On Öpir's pictures

LISE GJEDSSØ BERTELSEN

Introduction

The article presents some results of my research¹ on the pictorial programmes of picture-rune-stones signed by Öpir,² here referred to as Öpir's pictures. Picture-rune-stones form an integrated and important part of Late Viking-Age art, which must be remembered when investigating Öpir's pictures.

A message expressed as a picture has qualities distinct from a message expressed in writing. Pictures (perhaps coloured) are catchy, quickly communicating and easy to understand (if creator and spectator share the same frame of references) and do not require the skill of reading letters. Pictures arranged on a large scale (as for instance on picture-rune-stones) can deliver messages over a distance in the landscape. Pictures arranged on a small scale (as for instance on fibulas (Bertelsen 1992, 237; 1994a, 345; 1994b, 65)) can carry their messages far-off to different places. When picture and text unite – as on a picture-rune-stone – they form a coherent whole.

Late Viking-Age art's talented and sophisticated playing with lines can always be enjoyed. However its messages are concealed in an elegant symbolic language, which cannot be understood immediately except by contemporary spectators. That is why two things are indispensable for attaining an understand-

1 My thanks are due to Novo Nordisk Fonden, Humaniora Udvalget, for financial support and Aarhus Universitet, Department of Art History, for office space.

2 It is an issue of debate how many rune-carvers the name Öpir covers (Herschend 1998; Åhlén 1997). My article deals with the 46 stones signed by the rune-master Öpir according to Åhlén 1997, 213: Sö 308, U 23, U 36, U 104, U 118, lost U 122, U 142, lost U 168, U 179, U 181, U 210, U 229, lost U 262, U 279, U 287, U 288, U 307, lost U 315, U 462, U 485, U 489, U 541, U 544, lost U 565, U 566, U 687, U 880, U 893, U 898, U 922, lost U 926, U 961, U 970, U 973, lost U 984, U 993, U 1034, U 1063, U 1072, U 1100, U 1106, U 1159, U 1177, Unf 47, Unf 75 and lost Gs 4.

ding of the pictures: first that artefacts must be seen within the right chronological context, second that it is necessary to know the difference between the concepts: style, motif and pictorial structure.

Style

Style/design/form characterise the execution of the works of an artist and/or an art-era. The Mammen, Ringerike and Urnes styles³ constitute Late Viking-Age art, which was imaginative and self-conceited. Yet in spite of this it was subject to certain regulations, which makes it possible to divide the material into the three already mentioned stylistic groups. Late Viking-Age art dates from the middle of the 10th century into the second quarter of the 12th century in the Viking world. The Mammen, Ringerike and Urnes style were *Nordic designs*. However, foreign features were absorbed, not least from the Insular West, compare, for example, the below-mentioned late rune-serpent-heads of Irish origin or influence.

A relative chronology and approximate dating have been proposed by Gräslund for the zoomorphic rune-stones of Uppland with the runic animals' heads seen in profile. They are divided on stylistic grounds into five groups: Pr 1, Pr 2, Pr 3, Pr 4 and Pr 5 (Pr stands for seen in profile) (Gräslund 1992, 178–191). Early,

3 *The Mammen style* was the dominant style in the Viking world in the second half of the 10th century and its finest representative is DR 42 King Harald's picture-rune-stone in Jelling in Denmark. As to characteristics of the style see Wilson 1995, 121 with further references. *The Ringerike style* was the dominant style in the Viking world in the first half of the 11th century and a fine representative is, e.g., the picture-rune-stone N 84 Vang Church, Oppland in Norway. As to characteristics of the style see Wilson 1995, 152 with further references. *The Urnes style* was the dominant style in the Viking world in the second half of the 11th century and running into the second quarter of the 12th century and an illustrative representative is, e.g., the picture-rune-stone U 1134 Tierps Church, Uppland in Sweden. As to characteristics of the style see Wilson 1995, 184 with further references. However, it must be remembered that the transitions between the three styles were not clear cut and there was a great element of contemporaneity.

classic and late Urnes style match Gräslund's Pr 3, Pr 4 and Pr 5, approximately dated to 1050–1080, 1060/1070–1100 and 1100–1130.

As far as the design on Öpir's picture-rune-stones is concerned they are all executed in the Urnes style; some in the early, but most in the classic and late phases of the Urnes style until the termination of this last Nordic style, when it was replaced by the European Romanesque style. I see his examples of Pr 3 stones as rather late⁴, and most of his stones as fine examples of Pr 4 (figs 2–3) and Pr 5 (figs 4–7, 11). This is supported by the fact that none of the stones signed by Öpir are to be found in Gräslund's catalogue on excellent representatives of Pr 3 (Gräslund 1992, 184), whereas several are to be found in Gräslund's catalogues on excellent representatives of Pr 4 and 5 (Gräslund 1992, 185).⁵

The Urnes style favoured – in contradistinction to its two predecessors – slim and elastic forms, which give the spectator the impression of plasticity even down to the two-dimensional plan. Impressive interplays of gracefully curving lines of an organic nature with different widths – sometimes swelling, sometimes tapering – are typical. But an even width of f. inst. the serpents' bodies is also seen, and a much more formal, disciplined quality of the design with lines arranged in parallels, which intersect in right angles, is typical for Pr 5 (Gräslund 1991, 125 pp.) (figs 6, 7). Such stylistic features are in all probability Irish elements easily absorbed by the Urnes style (Farnes 1975, Vol. I, f. inst. 225).

Also both variants of the shape of the rune-serpent-heads of Pr 5 stones are well represented on Öpir's pictures (figs 4–7, 11). This is in agreement with the fact that several of the examples of both shapes of serpent-heads in Gräslund's

4 E.g., the lost Gs 4 Hedesunda Church is among the Öpir-signed stones classified to Pr 3 (Herschend 1998, 106, fig. 3). However, Gräslund's five stylistic groups are not to be understood as a strictly chronological sequence, in such a way that a group begins immediately after the previous one ends; on the contrary large overlaps must be expected (Gräslund 1992, 199). According to the preserved drawings of the lost Gs 4 Hedesunda Church, the rune-serpent's head belongs to Pr 3, but the head of the small serpent shows younger features.

5 Pr 4: U 36, U 210, U 566 and U 687. Pr 5: U 179, U 485 and U 541.

drawings are borrowed from Öpir's stones (Gräslund 1991, 127, fig. 9 a & 9 b).⁶ The Pr 5 triangular heads with or without marked eyes (figs 4, 6, 7) are a continuation of the earlier rune-animal-heads seen in profile, going back through Pr 4, Pr 3, Pr 2 to Pr 1, that is classic and early Urnes style, Ringerike style and Ringerike-Mammen style. On the other hand the Pr 5 rounded heads with heavily marked forehead and the round eye (figs 5, 11) or the eye turned with the point to the rear (fig. 5) are an inversion, which have their best equivalents in Irish metallic art on a whole series of well-dated objects from the first half of the 12th century (Gräslund 1991, 130, figs 11–12 & 131, figs 13–14).⁷ The Pr 5 triangular heads are of Nordic origin (figs 4, 6, 7), whereas the Pr 5 heads with heavily marked forehead are of Irish origin or show Irish influence (figs 5, 11).⁸

Motifs and motif-constellations

A motif is here a figure whose execution is defined by the style. The Mammen, Ringerike and Urnes styles share the same store of motifs and motif-constellations. This is a fact not widely known in research and with consequences for interpreting the material, see for instance concerning the mask-motif below. This store of motifs is repeated again and again throughout Late Viking-Age art executed in the dominant style of the day and on different materials, in different sizes and different dimensions and in some cases made extra attractive with colours.

6 Pr 5 triangular heads: U 104, U 179, U 544 and U 1034. Pr 5 rounded heads with heavily marked forehead: U 181.

7 The Irish metallic works of art referred to by Gräslund are: St. Manchan's Shrine, Boher Church, Co. Offaly (Farnes 1975, cat. no. 32); the mount from Holycross Abbey, Co. Tipperary (National Museum of Ireland NMI. P.1031) (Farnes 1975, cat. no. 27); the Processional cross of Cong (NMI, R. 2833) (Farnes 1975, cat. no. 31) and the Shrine of St. Lachtin's arm (NMI, 1884: 690) (Farnes 1975, cat. no. 29).

8 However, the fact must not be neglected that corresponding stylistic features are known from related, much older works of art such as, e.g., the Tassilo chalice (Wamers 1993, 37, fig.4.2), the Fejøl cup from Denmark (Wamers 1993, 40, fig. 4.8) and the book-cover from Lindau in Bavaria (now the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York) (Kolstrup 1995, 54, fig. 52).

Nine prevailing motifs throughout Late Viking-Age art are, as shown in my Ph.D.-thesis (Bertelsen forthcoming): 1) quadruped animals, now and then serpentlike 2) serpentlike animals with one or two forelegs visible and now and then wings, the tail sometimes terminates in a foot, 3) serpents without legs but now and then wings, the tail sometimes terminates in a foot, 4) birds, 5) masks, 6) Christian crosses and other holy signs, 7) ships, 8) Christ and humanlike beings and 9) vegetative elements such as trees (often as the crossing double scroll), acanthus-leaves and -palmettes. Late Viking-Age art was mainly Christian with respect to content.

It must be remembered that an inducement or prompting underlies every motif. Things look the way they do because of the message they were meant to convey. A motif can occur alone. Constellations of motifs are standard, and motifs which melt into each other are common. As far as motifs on the known stones signed by Öpir are concerned, we meet a selection of Late Viking-Age art's motifs and motif-constellations. These selected motifs are: 1) serpentlike quadrupeds (fig. 3), 2) serpentlike animals with one or two forelegs visible (figs 1–2, 4–6) and probably in one case equipped with wings (U 229 Gällsta), the tail now and then terminates in a foot, 3) serpents without legs (figs 1–7, 11), the tail often terminates in a foot, 5) one mask (fig. 4), 6) Christian crosses and holy signs (figs 1–7, 11), and 9) vegetative elements (figs 1, 4, 11).

Birds, ships, Christ and humanlike beings have hitherto not been observed on stones signed by Öpir. Below I shall devote special attention to the most prevailing motifs in Öpir's pictures: the serpents and the Christian cross, as well as the single mask. Understanding these motifs is central for understanding Öpir's pictures.

Serpents

Generally the serpent is one of the oldest and most frequently used motifs through time, also in Late Viking-Age art. This is because of the motif's predominant position among man's symbols and its association with eternal life through its capacity of renewing its life by sloughing its skin. The serpent belongs first of all to water and earth (a chthonic animal). Equipped with wings,

however, the serpent becomes associated with the sky (here U 229 Gällsta). The animal's swiftness, beauty and body-shape are also important. Its shape changes easily from a line to a loop or a circle.

Unlike the tree of life, which is always positive, the serpent is an ambivalent motif, also in Christianity. Sometimes the serpent is fraudulent and diabolical, representing Satan and the Fall, sometimes wise and health-bringing,⁹ representing wisdom, recovery, fertility and eternal life. Wisdom plays a prominent part among the serpent's symbol-values. In the New Testament (Matthew 10, 16) Christ commands the apostles to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

The intimate relationship between the tree and the serpent is demonstrated, for example, by the fact that wisdom is said to come from an apple of the tree of knowledge or from the blood from a dragon/serpent's heart. The wise serpent understands all mysteries, and the man who dares to eat its flesh or drink its blood gets a share of the wisdom. Many things are revealed to him, such as understanding the language of birds. People in the Viking Age/ Early Middle Ages were well aware of this, as shown by the numerous Sigurd-representations especially from the Isle of Man, Norway and Sweden. When the blood from Fafnir's heart touched Sigurd's tongue, he suddenly understood the birds so that they could warn him against Regin, his betrayer. Most famous among the pictures of Sigurd the Dragon-killer are the huge rock-carving Sö 101 Ramsundsberget, Södermanland in Sweden (Ringerike style),¹⁰ and the remains of the carved door-frames from the stave church in Hylestad, Setesdal in Norway (Romanesque art) (Gotfredsen & Frederiksen 1988, 222 & 224). Both illustrate exemplarily how the hero, who kills the dragon/serpent, could easily be transformed into the Christian world of pictures as a parallel to, for example, St. Michael.

The connection between the three motifs: the serpent, the tree of life and the Christian cross is specially challenging and interesting. This connection often appears on picture-rune-stones and is central to an understanding of their pic-

9 Cf. the Asclepius staff and today's symbol for pharmacy.

10 It must be noticed how the birds on Sö 101 Ramsundsberget, as well as one of the birds on Sö 327 Gök, are sitting in trees sprouting into a snake's head.

torial programmes. The intimate relationship between the snake and the plant of immortal life dates far back in the history of man. As far back as in the old Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh we hear how the serpent has possession of the plant of immortal life, proved to us by the animal's sloughing its skin.

The close connection between the serpent and the tree of life is also known in Christianity. In the Old Testament, Exodus 7, 8–13 (Aaron's rod) we read about Aaron and Moses working miracles before Pharaoh. When Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, the rod became a serpent. When Aaron gripped it by its tail, it turned back again into a rod, which later on flourished. This shows the double nature of Aaron's rod, which bursts into leaves or serpents at the right times.

This profound connection between the serpent and the tree of life is documented numerous times on picture-rune-stones as well as on crosiers. In the Welsh Book of St. Chad from about 800 AD St. Luke holds in his right hand a green staff branching into two spirals, each with seven shamrock leaves, representing the Miraculous Sprouting Staff (Frederiksen 2001, 247, fig. 8) (fig. 8 a). At the upper part of the east face of the famous Muiredach's cross in Monasterboice in Ireland from about 850 AD Christ himself – as on many high crosses – holds a tau-crosier branching into two spirals in his right hand on the Day of Judgement (Frederiksen 2001, 253, fig. 24). The T-shaped bronze crosier-head found at Pingvellir in Iceland from about 1060 AD branches into the same two spirals, but with a pair of Urnes-style serpents (Eldjárn 1971, 67, fig. 3 a–b) (fig. 8 b).

In Öpir's pictures serpents are the most frequently occurring motif (figs 1–7, 11). The rune-serpent plays an important role in the picture-field of every single Öpir-stone linking text and picture. This wise animal carries the text in its body and brings its message to generations to come. Öpir used mainly two basic rune loop patterns: one made up of large circles and one which follows the contour of the stone.

Concerning the loop-pattern of large circles the shape and numbers of the loops have significance and symbolic meaning owing to the predilection of Christianity for emphasis on numbers, geometrical symbols and expressive sign language (figs 1–2). This tendency is explicitly expressed on DR 42 King

Harald's picture-rune-stone in Jelling, throughout Late Viking-Age art and into the Romanesque period. DR 42 is a three-faced masterpiece and on faces B and C the double rope-frame makes up pretzel- and triquetra-forms in the most elegant way three times on each of the two faces (Bertelsen & Gotfredsen 1998, 9, figs 1b & c).

The number one indicates unity, God etc. and the geometrical symbol matching this number or rank is the circle, which expresses first of all eternity. In many cultures, including the Christian one, the circle symbolises the divine principle with no beginning and no end. On, for instance, U 179 Riala Church, U 544 Husby-Lyhundra Church (fig. 7) and U 970 Bolsta, the rune-serpent forms both the fence around as well as the loop – round as a circle – inside the picture-field.

A rune-serpent forming three conspicuous loops emphasises the number three.¹¹ The number three forms part of many structures of pictures and is sovereign when it reveals itself as a triquetra, trefoil, three loop pattern or snake's tail divided into three (e.g. U 229 Gällsta). The number three symbolises first of all the Trinity. The number is often used in the Bible and plays a predominant role in Christian art. DR 42 King Harald's picture-rune-stone in Jelling has the form of a three-faced pyramid, which immediately in the most elegantly way turns the spectator's thoughts to the Trinity. That the rune-serpent's tail on U 229 Gällsta branches into three spirals pointing at the Christian cross above is a brilliant way of making the number three visible.

The elegance of letting a serpent motif loop its way to make a symbol or symbolic number visible dates back to DR 42 face B. Here the serpent seen in a bird's eye view lifts its head towards Christ on face C. This serpent loops its way easily around the lion's neck, body and tail and forms a cross, which is situated in a sheltered hollow, well-defined by the lion's acanthus-tail, -back and -top of the head. This serpent-cross looks remarkably like the tetragram. In

11 E.g. U 142 Fällbro, U 210 Åsta, U 279 Skälby, U 287 Vik, U 566 Vällingsö, U 687 Sjusta, U 893 Högby, U 898 Nordby, U 961 Vaksala Church (fig. 1), U 1106 Äskelunda. On U 961 Vaksala (fig. 1) the loop pattern is seemingly made up of more circles, but a closer look reveals how only three of them are totally filled up by runes.

addition, a small acanthus leaf is growing out of the serpent's body. Such an animal must be seen as positive (Bertelsen & Gotfredsen 1998, 13).¹²

Öpir's predilection for loop patterns in large circles (two, often three of them) is not incidental. Fine examples of the loop pattern in two circles are, for example, U 489 Morby (fig. 2) and the lost Gs 4 Hedesunda Church. A rune-serpent winding as on U 489 Morby forms what is even today the sign for infinity in mathematics. The signification of this shape of the rune-serpent, respectively the cross staff (cf. on cross staff below), framed by the uppermost loop, matches perfectly with the written information in the inscription. The mother, who commissioned the execution of U 489 after her daughter, mentions that she also commissioned the building of a bridge. Constructing a road or bridge facilitated the way to the church for the living, which was highly valued by the Church, and therefore facilitated the way to salvation for the deceased. The idea of building a bridge for someone's soul became a part of the system of indulgence (Segelberg 1983, 53). On U 489 an explicit Christian message is conveyed in words as well as through the ornamentation.

The three-loop pattern can, for example, stand alone (e.g. U 566 Vällingsö, U 898 Norby), have a cross inside the uppermost loop (e.g. U 142 Fällbro, U 210 Åsta, U 287 Vik, U 687 Sjusta), have a bigger cross inside the topmost loop and a smaller cross further down the central axis (U 279 Skälby) or have a bigger cross inside the loop on top and smaller crosses in the lower part of the picture-field (U 893 Högby).

Concerning the loop-pattern following the contour of the stone, it forms an arcade or oval which fences in and protects what is inside it (figs 3–7, 11). Now and then the loop carries a motif on its top. In the case of U 1034 Tensta Church it is a man's mask (fig. 4). In the case of U 485 Marma, the stone is at the top too badly damaged for the motif to be interpreted (fig. 5).

With reference to the serpent-like quadrupeds (fig. 3) and serpents with two or no legs (figs 1–7, 11) on Öpir's stones, we can sum up that they were out-

12 See Klæsøe 1997, 78ff for the renaissance of the classical acanthus motif in Carolingian art, where it was especially connected with liturgical items. This connection continued throughout Christian art, including Late Viking-Age art, into Romanesque art. See Gotfredsen & Frederiksen 1988, 92 for the sacred character of this motif.

standing, beautiful and popular motifs. They were the wise rune-serpent linking text and picture¹³ and the protecting frame around certain motifs. They added smaller circles to the ground pattern and were now and then part of the high-status motif itself (e.g. U 544 Husby-Lyhundra Church (fig. 7)). The serpent on the ornamented border-side of U 1177 Hässelby is an exception, as it winds its way around the cross staff as the serpent does around the staff of Asclepius.

Judging from the known pictures, Öpir never depicted the serpent intimately melted together with the tree of life *and* the cross. Examples of such connections are e.g. the picture-rune-stones: Gs 11 Järvsta, Valbo Parish (Ringerike-Urnes style), U 208 Räcksta, Angarns Parish (Urnes style), U 236 Lindö, Gullbron, Vallentuna Parish (Urnes style) or U 337 Granby, Orkesta Parish (Urnes style).¹⁴

Interlaced pierced animals are a well known phenomenon in Öpir's pictures (figs 6, 7, 11) as well as in Late Viking-Age art generally. The phenomenon was known earlier, simultaneously and later on in the Romanesque period (Belling 1984, 155 pp.). However, the early presence on, for example, the book cover from Lindau in Bavaria (Belling 1984, 159, fig. 6) and on the crosses in the Insular West (Belling 1984, 157, fig. 4 & 158, fig. 5) are of distinct importance. To unveil the iconographic motif behind pierced animals will be a task for future research.

Christian cross

Generally the Christian cross placed on a memorial stone or gravestone is easy to understand. The Christian cross is the believing Christian's token of eternal life. The cross is the symbol of Christ and in time it became the most widespread symbol of Christianity. The motif is consequently Christianity's most revered sign. The Christian cross emphasises the Christian community. Several types

13 On DR 41 King Gorm's stone in Jelling, face B the double line of the text-band terminates in a serpent's head (Krogh 1983, 191, fig. 8 a-b).

14 On Gs 11 the tree of life cross rises directly from the rune-serpent's tail. On U 208 the tree of life cross so to speak falls out of the rune-serpent's body from the top of the picture-field. On U 236 the cross in the middle of the picture-field is formed by the rune-serpent's tail. On U 337 the tree of life cross is shown with palmettes, leaves and snakes bursting out from its arms.

exist: the Greek cross, the Roman cross, the tau cross etc. Different elaborations of the cross motif, however, disclose specialities and differences, emphasising various overtones, such as: the cross depicted only as a plain cross with plain extremities (figs 3, 6) or as a more sophisticated cross with other motifs added to amplify particular aspects of the Christian cross (figs 1, 2, 4, 5, 11).

In Öpir's pictures the cross is the second most frequently occurring motif after the serpents. The Greek cross dominates totally, while a single crutch-cross occurs on U 142 Fällbro. Among the different elaborations of the cross motif Öpir favoured first and foremost: the plain cross and the tree of life cross (figs 1, 4, 11). The cross staff (figs 2, 5) and crosses with a cross inside are seen as well as the above-mentioned crutch cross made up of 4 tau crosses. In the Insular West the Greek cross was widespread (sculptures and coins), yet another feature linking the works of Öpir with this area. Concerning the crutch cross on U 142 Fällbro, the tau cross also had strong links to the Insular West¹⁵ and reminds us of the bronze tau crosier from Þingvellir, Iceland, as already mentioned.

The tree of life cross

One of the most important points in Late Viking-Age art as well as in Romanesque art is the joint identity of the tree of life, *Arbor Vitae*, with the cross of Christ (Bauerreiss 1938). One of the versions of the old narrative about this connection was written down in the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine in the 13th century. The legend was then already very old and had for centuries made its mark on art. There are different versions of the legend, one of the most known tells that: when expecting death Adam sent his son Seth to the gate of Paradise to ask for a branch from the tree of life. His father had already died, however, when Seth returned with a small twig. It was planted on Adam's grave on Golgotha. Here it grew up into a big tree, which was cut down when Solo-

15 E.g. on the Irish Kilfenora stone cross (two persons, one with a crosier, the other with a tau cross (Eldjárn 1971, 73, fig.7)), on the Cross of the Scripture, Clonmacnoise, Ireland (the evangelist St. Matthew holding a tau staff (Eldjárn 1971, 74, fig. 8)), the tau staff from Kilkenny, Ireland (Eldjárn 1971, 75, fig. 9) and the Alcester Tau, carved from walrus ivory, an English work from the 11th century (Eldjárn 1971, 76, fig. 10).

mon's temple was built. But the trunk did not fit in and was rejected. Later on the queen of Sheba dreamt that this tree would cause great pain to our Saviour. So the tree was thrown into the brook of Cedron and carried by the current to the Pool of Bethesda. Here the carpenter found the tree on the day he was looking for wood for the cross of Christ. So the tree of life and the cross of Christ are one. Therefore the grave of Adam was at the foot of the cross of Christ, with the old Adam as a prediction of the new Adam/Christ crucified there on the tree of life.

The joint identity of the tree of life and the cross of Christ was common knowledge throughout Late Viking-Age art. This is documented by a countless number of pictures on pieces of jewellery, picture-rune-stones (figs 1, 4, 11), procession crosses etc.

As early as about 900 AD a person in Råbylille on the island of Møn in Denmark was wearing a beautiful arm-ring decorated with a picture programme unmistakably telling the story of the drama of Golgotha (Ramskou 1975, 157, fig. 6). The ring is made of gold. On each side of the expanded central zone a version of the Golgotha drama is repeated. Golgotha is shown framed by three bosses. On the slopes of Golgotha are the two crosses of the thieves and in the middle on top is the cross of Christ, in this case rendered as the tree of life.

It has already been mentioned that different elaborations of the cross motif disclose specialities and differences, emphasising various overtones. This is clearly illustrated by a comparison between the expression of the Golgotha drama on the arm-ring from Råbylille and a type of coins probably from the days of King Harald Bluetooth. On the coin the two crosses of the thieves are seen on the top of the slopes of Golgotha and in the middle on top is the cross of Christ, but in this case rendered as a cross. A mask shown upside down inside Golgotha occurs on some of the coins and reminds us of the old Adam as a prediction of the new Adam, i.e. Christ (Nancke-Krogh 1992, 119, fig. top right) (Bertelsen forthcoming).

Generally in Late Viking-Age art overtones of the tree of life are emphasised on picture-rune-stones in several ways. For example, the cross is built up of (fig. 9 a–b), or fixed together with (figs 1, 4, 10 a–b, 11 a–b) vegetative elements (leaves, palmettes etc.), the arms of the cross are rounded off and thereby given

the form of leaves (e.g. as a trefoil), leaves and/or palmettes grow out from the cross or root-suckers or root-spirals are to be seen at the foot of the cross (e.g. N 84 Vang Church). A spiral is a dynamic detail indicating movement, here the growth of the living tree.

Concerning the tree of life cross I shall present three illustrative examples to demonstrate the continuity of this motif-constellation through the Mammen style, the Ringerike style and the Urnes style (figs 9 a–b, 10 a–b, 11 a–b).

As an example of the Mammen style is chosen face C of DR 42 King Harald's picture-rune-stone in Jelling (fig. 9 a–b). DR 42 is the most distinguished representative of this style and as it seems to us today a striking source of inspiration for the picture-rune-stone era in Scandinavia which followed King Harald's stone – also concerning the tree of life cross. The high status motif of this stone is the victorious Christ in a sophisticated tree of life cross, which is not seen directly, but elegantly indicated by means of the serpentlike vegetative tracery, which ties Christ with its loops. The vegetative tracery ends as far as the topmost branch is concerned in a triquetra on each side of Christ's head. There is no doubt that this is the tree with roots in Paradise. The triquetra on the hierarchic left side has opened up and ends in a leaf (almost equal to a serpent's head seen in profile) pointing at Christ. The serpentlike vegetative tracery and Christ – shown in a cruciform position – are held together by a circle. DR 42 face C communicated in a picture what the famous Ruthwell Cross in Scotland, one of the finest manifestations of Anglo-Saxon art, had already communicated for a long time in words: that the tree of life and the cross of Christ are one.¹⁶

After having made its striking entry in the Mammen style on the Jelling-stone, the symbolism of the tree of life cross continued in the Ringerike and Urnes styles and the Romanesque style. The successors to the Jelling stone were of course more humble, but aesthetically beautiful standardised workmanship.

16 The cross of Christ = the tree is here personified and speaks out: "God Almighty stripped Himself. When He wished to ascend on to the gallows, brave before all men, I dared not bow down, but had to stand fast. I Raised up a powerful King. I dared not tilt the Lord of Heaven. Men mocked us both together. I was drenched with blood issued from the Man's side after He sent forth His spirit". Modern English translation from the Dream of the Rood, The Ruthwell Cross, Howlett 1992, 88.

As an example of a tree of life cross in Ringerike style may be taken Sö 167 Landshammar, Södermanland in Sweden (fig. 10 a–b). On the border-side is shown the tree of life cross composed of leaves and a Greek cross held together by a circle.

As an example of a tree of life cross in Urnes style may be taken one of Öpir's stones: U 288 Vik (fig. 11 a–b). The tree of life cross composed of leaves and a Greek cross are held together by a circle. Adding a circle to the Christian cross or to the tree of life cross emphasises the message of eternity (figs 4, 9 a–b, 10 a–b, 11 a–b).

DR 42 C's sophisticated tree of life cross (Mammen style) (fig. 9 a–b) and U 541 Husby-Lyhundra Church's plain and simple cross (late Urnes style) (fig. 6) show clearly, that the development of crosses on picture-rune-stones did not go from straight and stiff shapes to elaborated and complicated shapes as sometimes stated (Lietoff 1999, 13). In Öpir's pictures the tree of life cross (figs 1, 4, 11 a–b) is either composed by: leaves, the cross and the circle (figs 4, 11 a–b) or – more limited – by: leaves and the cross (fig. 1). They are all descendants of the tree of life cross on DR 42 face C (fig. 9 a–b).

The cross staff

Placed on top of a staff, the Christian cross turns into a processional cross or cross staff. The cross staff is closely connected with Agnus Dei/Christ. People in the Late Viking Age/ Early Middle Ages were well aware of this.

One of the examples of Agnus Dei with the cross staff depicted in Late Viking-Age art is seen on the bronze plaque from Tinggård, Northern Jutland, Denmark (Olsen 1996, 164, photo). It depicts the Agnus Dei in front of the cross staff, both surrounded by a twisted rope, from which two Ringerike acanthus-leaves break away into the centre of the decorated surface pointing at the Agnus Dei and the cross staff respectively.

One of the examples of Christ with the cross staff depicted in Romanesque art is seen on the golden altar from Ølst in Jutland, Denmark. Here the cross staff is carried by Christ during his descent into the Land of the Dead to redeem Mankind. In a most elegant way the illustration of the narrative is spread out

over 2 frames just under Christ sitting enthroned. First: Christ steps forward holding the cross staff in one hand and with a commanding gesture towards Satan who is chained to a column around which winds a serpent, which is grasped by another serpent. Between Christ and the column are the broken gateways of Hell. Second: Christ is pulling two naked persons, Adam and Eve, out of the Land of the Dead. A third person equipped with a nimbus is St. John the Baptist. In Byzantine as well as in Western European art the illustration of this narrative was popular (Gotfredsen & Frederiksen 1988, 190, fig. 83).

In Öpir's pictures the cross staff occurs. On the lost U 565 Ekeby skog, to judge from a preserved drawing the cross staff is lifted up or carried by a small serpent. On U 485 Marma the staff is executed as an elegant, almost flying ribbon, carried by a small serpent (fig. 5). On U 489 Morby the cross staff is like the one on the lost U 565, but carried by the rune-serpent (fig. 2). On U 1177 Hässelby the ornamented border-side shows a cross staff, around which a serpent winds. Above the serpent the staff carries the rune carver's signature.

In every case the cross is plain. The serpents are – as normal for picture-rune-stones – humble and on friendly terms with the cross. To my knowledge a cross staff transfixing a serpent or dragon never occurs on picture-rune-stones.

Mask

Generally the mask motif on picture-rune-stones in Scandinavia has been interpreted as pagan. Moltke, for example, understood it that way and compared it with the famous and feared Medusa-head of the Ancient World (Jacobsen & Moltke 1942, col. 850).

However, interpretations of these masks as representing Odin or Thor (e.g. Hultgård 1998, 735; Sawyer 2000, 129) have never been documented by either the presence of an unambiguous attribute or elements from an easily recognisable scene. Moreover, the statements about the picture-rune-stones' mask motif being pagan have always been based upon too few and early examples (e.g. Sawyer 2000, 129) overlooking the important number of later facial masks.

I have recorded 21 stones decorated with a total of 23 masks.¹⁷ These are thoroughly standardised and run all the way through the Mammen, Ringerike and Urnes styles and the motif continued into the Romanesque period. The masks recorded divide themselves into two groups: man's mask and lion's mask (Bertelsen 2003 & forthcoming).¹⁸ The masks always show males in a state of sublime peace, with strong features, but showing no sign of aggression (fig. 4 and see e.g. Sö 112 Kolunda and NÄ 34 Nasta). They do not, for instance, bare their teeth. This is of great importance, since the showing of teeth is a most aggressive feature of man's and lions' body-language (Bertelsen 2003 & forthcoming). Therefore a comparison to Medusa's head is less relevant since she is an awe-inspiring woman, in motion and indeed she shows teeth (e.g. Groenewegen-Frankfort & Ashmole 1972, 268, fig. 268).

Unlike the absence of a pagan attribute in connection with the mask, the co-existence of this motif and the Christian cross is seen several times (Bertelsen 2000, 514 p.). Stoklund has observed the harmonious relationship between the mask and the ideas of the new faith, and emphasised that the cross and the mask appear to be of equal value on Sö 112 Kolunda and Sö 167 Landshammar (Stoklund 1991, 288) (fig. 10 a–b). The latter has the mask placed on the front, the cross on one border-side, whereas Sö 112 Kolunda shows the motif-constellation: mask above Christian cross, also seen on Sö 86 N. Åby (T-cross),¹⁹ Sö 367 Släbro (space between), NÄ 34 Nasta, U 678 Skokloster Church and Öpir's U 1034 Tensta Church (fig. 4), all Sweden.

The motif-constellation: mask above a Christian cross runs through Christian art. An older expression of this motif-constellation is to be seen, for example, on the stone saltire cross from a churchyard in Moselkern, Kr. Cochem-Zell

17 DR 62; DR 66; DR 81; Sjellebro, Djursland, Denmark; Bjerring Church, Viborg County, Denmark; DR 258 a; DR 286–5; DR 314 (2 x mask); DR 335; Vg 106; Sö 86; Sö 112; Sö 167; Sö 367; NÄ 34; U 508; U 670; U 678 (2 x mask); U 824; U 1034 and U 1150.

18 Examples of lions masks at picture-rune-stones: DR 66 Århus 3 and DR 314 Lund 1, Skåne, face D. Compare with heads of lions on f. inst. the Bamberg casket (Ramskou 1975, 155, fig. 4).

19 Hultgård interprets Sö 86 N. Åby as Thor with hammer (1998, 735), whereas I interpret it as a man's mask above a T-cross. This I base on: the T-cross is well known in Late Viking-Age art; the close relations between serpent and cross; and the tradition of the motif-constellation of man's mask above the cross through Christian art, see below.

(now in Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Bonn) from about 700 AD.²⁰ Even older examples of this motif-constellation are e.g. on a large scale: the mosaic in the Stefano Rotondo Church in Rome and on a small scale: one of the oil-receptacles which Pope Gregory the Great gave to the Longobardic Queen Theodalinde around 600 AD to celebrate the newly built cathedral of Monza (Skovgaard-Petersen 1946, 74, fig.42). Here there is no doubt that the face above the cross does indeed show Christ. An early-Christian example of striking resemblance with Sö 86 N. Åby is a tombstone from Upper Egypt showing a face surrounded by a wreath right above the cross-beam of an ankh-symbol (see Frederiksen 2001, 251, fig. 20).

In Öpir's pictures the mask motif is seen only once: as a man's mask above a Christian cross on U 1034 Tensta Church, a Pr 5-stone with triangular snake heads (fig. 4).²¹ This is the last and youngest known example in the long row of masks on picture- and picture-rune-stones. Although the stone is damaged at the top, it is clear that U 1034 shows a man's mask.

The difference between the man's and the lion's mask is a task for future investigations. DR 314 Lund 1 has a lion's mask on face D as well as a man's mask between two quadrupeds on face C.

Pictorial structure

Generally the Christian pictorial structure elucidates the message of the artwork by the placing of the motifs in relation to each other and by employing deliberately different ways of rendering motifs in one or more picture-fields. It informs us of what to look at, so to speak. This pictorial structure is constructed on the principles of the hierarchic centre axis, which echoes the very structure of Christianity. Motifs placed on top, centrally, in the centre axis are of primary importance in the picture-field. Motifs placed at the bottom or peripherally are of secondary importance in the picture-field. Motifs rendered en face are of a

20 Spätantike und Frühes Mittelalter 1991, 53, fig. 27.

21 Older examples of the picture-rune-stones with the motif-constellation: man's mask above Christian cross are: Sö 86 (T-cross), Sö 112, Sö 367, Nä 34 and U 678.

higher status in the picture-field than motifs rendered in profile or seen in a bird's-eye-view.

Motifs rendered en face communicate with and address themselves very directly to the spectator. Motifs rendered in profile have had their significance halved so to speak and do not address themselves directly to the spectator. Motifs rendered in profile and in a bird's-eye-view are only being looked upon, they do not look back. But they often fulfil a purpose of pointing at, lifting up and referring to more important elements in the picture-field. Consequently a motif placed on top, centrally, in the centre axis and rendered en face occupies the highest position of all among the motifs of the picture-field and therefore is the high status motif, while a motif placed at the bottom and/or peripherally and rendered in profile or seen in a bird's-eye-view occupies a lower position among the motifs of the picture-field.

Already Wessén and Jansson applied the pictorial structure to the interpretation of U 508 Gillberga's mask. They observed that the motif occupied the same space in the picture-field as the Christian cross on other stones. Accordingly they interpreted this mask as a picture of Christ; but they did not understand the missing cross-glorification (Sveriges runinskrifter vol. 7, 361).

Correspondingly Hultgård explained the masks on Sö 112 Kolunda (mask directly above tree of life cross, Ringerike style), Sö 167 Landshammar (mask next to tree of life cross, Ringerike style) (fig. 10 a–b) and Sö 367 Släbro (mask above, but not directly connected with a crossed cross, Ringerike style) as representing Christ, based on the fact that these masks occupy the central part of the picture-field (Hultgård 1998, 732).

It is of central importance for understanding particularly the mask but also the triquetra to be aware that these two motifs appear in the high status place of the Christian cross in the picture-field. The three motifs replace one another according to which overtones of the Christian message the commissioner and the artist wanted to express in each case.²² And concerning the missing glory, it is also absent on, for example, Irish crucifixion-plates (Bourke 1993, 176, fig. 21.1), where no one can doubt that we are looking at Christ.

22 Examples of the high status motif just below the top of the rune-serpent arcade: U 1111 Eke: the cross; Sö 167 Landshammar: the man's mask; U 937 Uppsala: the triquetra.

Although the pictorial structure of Christian art has since the days of early Christianity been based on the principles of the hierarchic centre axis, one-sided hierarchic centre axes are also known. Here the motif of primary importance is seen placed on one side of the picture-field, while the motifs of secondary importance hurry towards or point at this high status motif. Typical examples of this one-sided hierarchic centre axis are to be found among pictures of the Adoration of the Magi through time, when the Child and Virgin are seen on one side of the picture-field and the Magi approach from the other.²³

In Öpir's pictures the pictorial structure is – not surprisingly and as common for Late Viking-Age art in general – in accordance with Christian pictorial structure.

The position as high status motif (i.e. placed on top, centrally, in the centre axis and rendered en face) on Öpir's stones is most frequently occupied by the Christian cross in different variations (plain cross (figs 3, 6), tree of life cross (figs 1, 4, 11 a–b), cross staff (figs 2, 5), crossed cross and a tau cross).

On U 1034 Tensta Church the man's mask above the Christian cross reveals itself as the high status motif of the stone (fig. 4). On U 544 Husby-Lyhundra Church the rune-serpent forms not only the protecting frame but also the dominant circle inside, which plays the main role in the picture-field (fig. 7). On U 279 Skälby the signification of respectively the figure of three formed by the rune-serpent loops, respectively the big crossed cross topmost in the central axis and framed by the uppermost loop and the small plain cross lower down in the same axis match perfectly with the written information about constructing the bridge. U 279 is truly an obvious example of how picture and text on picture-rune-stones create a whole radiating a Christian message.

The main motif the cross is often seen with space all the way around (U 142 Fällbro) or underneath (figs 1, 3), attached to the surrounding rune-serpent on top (figs 1, 2, 4, 5, 11 a–b) or peripherally (figs 3, 11 a–b) or supported by some part of the rune-serpent-head, -body or -tail or other serpents (figs. 2, 4, 5, 6, 11

23 For typical examples through times see e.g. Kehrer 1909: 16, fig. 12; 22, fig. 14; 28, fig. 16; 32, fig. 19–20; 37, fig. 28; 43, fig. 29; 44, fig. 30; 51, fig. 34–35; 101, fig. 99; 109; fig. 107; 111, Fig. 112; 112, fig. 113 etc. And the figure scenes of the picture-rune-stone N 68 Dynna, Oppland, Norway (Ringerike style) display the narrative about the Holy Magi (New Testament, Matthew 2, 1–12).

a–b). Tricks like space all the way around or underneath the cross give the spectator the impression that the cross has freed itself from the ground and is rising towards the sky (figs 1, 3, 5). This agrees with Late Viking-Age art's fundamental ways of radiating enthusiasm and strength, never sorrow and weakness. A fundamental attitude which dates as far back as to the time of the earliest Church.

An example of one-sided hierarchic centre axis among Öpir's works is U 1159 Skensta, which is as Christian as his other pictures. The high status motif of the stone is the Greek cross with the rune-serpent pointing towards the cross.

The pictorial structure shows us that although the serpents are the most frequently occurring motifs they do not hold the main roles, except when, for example, forming the circle in the middle of the picture-field symbolising eternity (fig. 7) or the dominant three loop pattern emphasising the number three (U 566 Vällingsö, U 898 Nordby). However, the serpents fence in, protect, support, worship, carry up, point at and lead us to the high-status-motif, first of all the Christian cross. Every depicted serpent contributes towards conveying the message of the picture.

Öpir's mask is the youngest in the row of high-status masks running all the way through Late Viking-Age art and into Romanesque art. It is also the youngest example in the row of occurrences of the motif-constellation: mask above Christian cross of Late Viking-Age art. This motif-constellation has deep roots in the soul of the Old Church and continued into Romanesque art. On the basis of the pictorial structure I am inclined to award the mask motif even higher value than the cross, when they occur together in the motif-constellation: mask above Christian cross as on U 1034 (fig. 4).

From this we learn that although investigations of crosses (e.g. Lager 2002) or serpents (e.g. Herschend 1998, 97pp.) are important, none of them must ever stand alone, the picture-field is always to be seen as a whole.

Conclusion

Picture-rune-stones form an important part of Late Viking-Age art in the Viking world. The Mammen, Ringerike and Urnes styles constitute Late Viking-Age art, dating from the 950s into the second quarter of the 12th century in the world of the Vikings. The three styles were Nordic designs in continuous development. They shared the same store of motifs and motif-constellations, whose content was mainly Christian. Their pictorial structure was in accordance with Christian pictorial structure. This is based on the principles of the hierarchic centre axis, which echoes the very structure of Christianity.

Therefore the transition from the Nordic Urnes style to the European Romanesque style presented a rupture with respect to design. Ideologically Late Viking-Age art and the Romanesque art were in accordance with one another. Picture-rune-stones are mainly a Christian phenomenon, most of them express explicit Christian messages in ornamentation and/or words.

The context of Öpir's pictures is Late Viking-Age art in general and the Urnes style in particular. Öpir was a very skilled rune-carver and artist, whose stones form part of the elegant finale of Late Viking-Age art. His pictures distribute themselves to Gräslund's Pr 3 (c. 1050–1080 AD),²⁴ and first and foremost to Pr 4 (c. 1060/1070–1100) and Pr 5 (c. 1100–1130 AD), that is early, classic and late Urnes style.

Öpir's store of motifs cover: serpentlike quadrupeds, serpents with foreleg/-s and probably in one case with wings, serpents without legs, one mask, Christian crosses and holy signs and vegetative elements. Late Viking-Age art's store of motifs also includes: birds, ships, Christ and humanlike beings. However, they have hitherto not been observed on stones signed by Öpir.

Öpir's motif-constellations are as common for Late Viking-Age art, his selection of motifs taken into consideration. One of the most elegant and frequent motif-constellations in Late Viking-Age art and in Öpir's pictures is the tree of life cross. This constellation, often leaves + cross + circle, was popular throughout Late Viking-Age art, from its striking entry in the Mammen style on DR 42 face C (fig. 9 a–b), through the more humble, but aesthetically beautiful

24 Öpir's oldest stones are not early Pr 3.

and standardised examples in Ringerike style, as e.g. on Sö 167 Landshammar's border-side (fig. 10 a–b), and in Urnes style, as e.g. on U 288 Vik (fig. 11 a–b), into Romanesque art.

Öpir's pictures are executed *according to the Christian pictorial structure* with the Christian cross as the predominant high-status motif. The pictorial structure is central for interpreting Öpir's single mask on U 1034.

Elegant Nordic designs in continuous development were combined with clear Christian symbols arranged according to Christian pictorial structure. These together were able to communicate highly abstract theological relations as between the tree of life and the cross of Christ. That this content was understood in the world of the Vikings is clear from the fact that this relationship was conveyed consistently throughout Late Viking-Age art and into Romanesque art.

Bibliography

- Bauerreiss, Romuald 1938: *Arbor Vitae. Der "Lebensbaum" und seine Verwendung in Liturgie, Kunst und Brauchtum des Abendlandes*. München.
- Belling, Dorte Lorentzen 1984: "Gennemstukne dyr". In: *Romanske stenarbejder 2*. Højbjerg, 155–176.
- Bertelsen, Lise Gjedssø 1992: "Præsentation af Ålborg-gruppen – en gruppe dyrefibler uden dyreslyng". In: *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1991. København, 237–264.
- 1994a: "Urnesfibler i Danmark". In: *Aarbøger for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 1992. København, 345–370.
- 1994b: "Yngri víkingaaldarstílar á Íslandi". In: *Árbók Hins íslenska fornleifafélags* 1993. Reykjavík, 51–73.
- 2000: "Some New Aspects of the Ringerike-Style Statuette from Eyrarland, Northern Iceland". In: *Aspects of Arctic and Sub-Arctic History*. Proceedings of the International Congress on the History of the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Region, Reykjavík, 18–21 June 1998. University of Iceland Press. Reykjavík, 507–516.
- 2003: "Maskesten i sen vikingetids kunst". In: *Romanske Stenarbejder 5*. Højbjerg, 17–38.
- forthcoming: *De sene vikingetidsstile i Skandinavien og Island. En kritisk analyse af stilenes motiver, stilistiske karakteristika og billedets formsprog*. Unpublished Ph.D.-thesis. University of Copenhagen.
- Bertelsen, Lise Gjedssø & Lise Gotfredsen 1998: "Fra kong Haralds billedrunesten i Jelling til Alnö-døbefonten i Medelpad". In: *Ting och tanke. Ikonografi på liturgiska föremål*. Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Handlingar. Antikvariska serien 42. Stockholm, 9–26.
- Bourke, Cormac 1993: The Chronology of Irish Crucifixion Plaques. In: *The Age of Migrating Ideas. Early Medieval Art in Northern Britain and Ireland*. Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Insular Art held in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, 3–6 January 1991. National Museum of Scotland, 175–181.
- DR + no. = Lis Jacobsen & Erik Moltke: *Danmarks Runeindskrifter 1–2*. København 1941–42.
- Eldjárn, Kristján 1971: "En tau-stav fra Island". In: *Kuml Árbog for Jysk Arkæologisk Selskab* 1970. Århus, 65–81.
- Farnes, Elisabeth 1975: *Some aspects of the relationship between late 11th and 12th century Irish art and the Scandinavian Urnes style*. Volumes 1–2. MA-thesis, University College, Dublin.
- Frederiksen, Hans Jørgen 2001: "Ægyptisk indflydelse på irsk og angelsaksisk kunst i 700- og 800-tallet". In: *Arven fra Ægypten I. Beundring og frygt. Kristendom og visdom*. Tidsskriftet Sfinx Århus, 243–257.
- Gotfredsen, Lise & Hans Jørgen Frederiksen 1988: *Troens billeder*. Herning.
- Groenewegen-Frankfort, H. A. & Bernhard Ashmole 1972: *Art of the Ancient World. Painting – Pottery – Sculpture – Architecture from Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete, Greece and Rome*. Japan.

- Gräslund, Anne-Sofie 1991: "Runstenar – om ornamentik och datering". In: *Tor. Tidskrift för arkeologi* 23. Uppsala, 113–140.
- 1992: "Runstenar – om ornamentik och datering 2". In: *Tor. Tidskrift för arkeologi* 24. Uppsala, 177–201.
- Gs + no. = *Gästriklands runinskrifter* granskade och tolkade av Sven B. F. Jansson. *Sveriges runinskrifter* 15:1. Stockholm 1981.
- Herschend, Frands 1998: "ubiR, ybiR, ybir – är det U 485 Ofeg Öpir?" In: *Fornvännen* 93. Stockholm, 97–111.
- Howlett, David 1992: "Inscriptions and Design of the Ruthwell Cross". In: *The Ruthwell Cross. Papers from the Colloquium sponsored by the Index of Christian Art. Princeton University 8 December 1989.* Index of Christian Art. Department of Art and Archaeology. Princeton University, New Jersey, 71–93.
- Hultgård, Anders 1998: "Runeninschriften und Runendenkmäler als Quellen der Religionsgeschichte". In: *Runeninschriften als Quellen interdisziplinärer Forschung. Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium on Runes and Runic Inscriptions in Göttingen, 4–9 August 1995, 715–737 & Tafel 27–35; Berlin-New York.*
- Jacobsen, Lis & Erik Moltke 1942: *Danmarks Runeindskrifter. Atlas 1941, Tekst 1942.* København.
- Kehrer, Hugo 1908 & 1909: *Die heiligen drei Könige in Literatur und Kunst.* 1–2. Leipzig.
- Klæsøe, Iben Skibsted 1997: "Plant Ornament. A Key to a New Chronology of the Viking Age". In: *Lund Archeological Review* 3 (1997) Lund, 73–87.
- Kolstrup, Inger-Lise 1995: *Magi og Kunst.* Skippershoved. Herning.
- Krogh, Knud J. 1983: "The Royal Viking-Age Monuments at Jelling in the Light of Recent Archaeological Excavations". In: *Acta Archaeologica* 53, 1982, 186–216.
- Lager, Linn 2002: *Den synliga tron. Runstenskors som en spegling av kristnandet i Sverige.* Occasional Papers in Archaeology 31. Uppsala.
- Lietoff, Eija (ed.) 1999: *Runestones – a colourful memory. The exhibition sketches.* Uppsala.
- Nancke-Krogh, Søren 1992: *Shamanens hest. Tro og magt hos vikingerne.* Tønder.
- N + no. = *Norges innskifter med de yngre runer.* Utgitt for Kjeldeskriftfondet. 1– (unfinished). Oslo 1941–.
- Nä + no. = *Närkes runinskrifter* granskade och tolkade av Sven B. F. Jansson. *Sveriges runinskrifter* 14:1. Stockholm 1975.
- Olsen, Anne-Louise Haack 1996: "Tinggård". In: *Arkæologiske udgravninger i Danmark 1995.* København.
- Ramskou, Thorkild 1975. "Om vikingetidens masker med mere". In: *Hikuin* 2. Højbjerg, 151–158.
- Sawyer, Birgit 2000: *The Viking-Age Rune-Stones. Custom and Commemoration in Early Medieval Scandinavia.* Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Segelberg, Eric 1983: "Missionshistoriska aspekter på runinskrifterna". In: *Kyrkohistorisk årskrift* 1983, Kyrkohistoriska föreningen, Uppsala, 45–57.

- Skovgaard-Petersen, C. 1946: *Korset i Kirken og Kunsten. Fra Oldkirken til Renaissance og Reformationen*. København.
- Spätantike und Frühes Mittelalter*. Ausgewählte Denkmäler im Rheinisches Landesmuseum Bonn. Band 134. Köln 1991, 52–57.
- Stoklund, Marie 1991: "Runesten, kronologi og samfundsrekonstruktion. Nogle kritiske overvejelser med udgangspunkt i runestenene i Mammenområdet". In: *Mammen. Grav, kunst og samfund i vikingetiden*. Jysk Arkæologisk Selskabs Skrifter 28. Aarhus Universitetsforlag. Århus, 285–297.
- Sveriges runinskrifter* utgivna av Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademien. Stockholm, vol. 1– (unfinished), Stockholm 1900–.
- Sö + no. = *Södermanlands runinskrifter* granskade och tolkade av Erik Brate och Elias Wessén. *Sveriges runinskrifter* 3. Stockholm 1924–36.
- U + no. = *Upplands runinskrifter* granskade och tolkade av Elias Weesén och Sven B. F. Jansson. 1–4. *Sveriges runinskrifter* 6–9. Stockholm 1940–58.
- Vg + no. = *Västergötlands runinskrifter* granskade och tolkade av Hugo Jungner och Elisabeth Svärdström. *Sveriges runinskrifter*. 5. Stockholm 1940–70.
- Voragine, Jacobus de: *The Golden Legend. Reading the Saints. Translated from Legenda Aurea by William Granger Ryan*. Volume 2. Princeton University Press 1993.
- Wamers, Egon 1993: "Insular Art in Carolingian Europe: the Reception of Old Ideas in a New Empire". In: *The Age of Migrating Ideas. Early Medieval Art in Northern Britain and Ireland*. Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Insular Art held in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, 3–6 January 1991. National Museum of Scotland, 35–44.
- Wilson, David M. 1995: *Vikingatidens konst*. Signums svenska konsthistoria 2. Lund.
- Åhlén, Marit 1997: *Runristaren Öpir*. En monografi. Runrön Runologiska bidrag utgivna av Institutionen för nordiska språk vid Uppsala universitet 12. Uppsala.

Å–pir. Quite the same Wikipedia. Just better. Å Å–pir was active. However, recent research presents him as a consistent and careful speller with very few language errors,[2] and based on this reinterpretation of his language skills, the different ways he spelled his own name have led to a hypothesis that there were two runemasters named Å–pir.[9]. Signed inscriptions. With the question regarding whether there was more than one runemaster named Å–pir, one scholar accepted the following 46 signed inscriptions as being made by Å–pir: SÅ¶ 308 in Vid JÅ¶rnnavÅ¶gen, U 23 in HilleshÅ¶gs, U 36 in SvartsjÅ¶ DjurgÅ¶rd, U 104 in Eds, U 118 in Å„lvsunda, the now-I People sometimes take pictures of ghosts with out meaning to. In the below photo a lady was taking a photo of her husband outside a museum in Amsterdam when she captured what appears to be the picture of a little girl ghost standing up there on the balcony. Yes people really do take photos of ghosts all the time with out meaning to. Little Girl Ghost Photo Taken In Amsterdam We circled the photo of the little girl ghost. If you drag your pictures into the collage area, a green or red smiley face will tell you if the photo fits. As with all collages, you can follow some basic rules with the letter collage. The most important thing is to create a consistent and coherent overall picture. This is best achieved when you put your photos together roughly by theme, quality, colour and frame size beforehand. You should be stricter with the colours of your letter collage: if the colours in the photos used are very mixed, you risk your collage looking too crowded and incohesive. We call them profile pictures, display pictures, online self-portraits, and avatars. While a picture may be worth a thousand words, many people usually add various captions on them to spice things up. Itâ€™s a good thing that thereâ€™s an abundant supply of ideas when it comes to short captions. The ideas listed here will help you spice up your social network profile. Captions for Your Facebook Display Picture. Spruce up your Facebook DP with these captions. When you look at me, what do you see? Lise GjedssÅ„ Bertelsen: On Å–pirâ€™s pictures. In: Marie Stoklund u. a. (Hrsg.): Runes and their Secrets. Studies in runology. Kopenhagen 2006, S. 31â€“64. François-Xavier Dillmann: Runenmeister. In: Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde (RGA). 2. Auflage. Band 25, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 2003, ISBN 3-11-017733-1 , S. 537â€“544. Signe Horn Fuglesang: Swedish Runestones of the Eleventh Century: Ornament and Dating. In: Klaus DÅ¼wel (Hrsg.): Runeninschriften als Quellen interdisziplinÅ¶rer Forschung. Å Laila Kitzler Å„hfeldt: Å–pir â€œ A Viking Age Workshop for Rune Stone Production in Central Sweden? A Study of Division of Labour by Surface Structure Analysis. In: Acta Archaeologica 72, 2 (2001), S. 129â€“155.