Some 20% of documented Scandinavian runestones are now considered to be lost. Several of these are known to have been reused as building material in bridges or churches, or simply as rubble. Others have been destroyed due to ignorance, negligence, misunderstanding and the like. Thus, many runic scholars have had to deal with information from lost inscriptions in their research. Some scholars, in fact, seem to find unverifiable inscriptions more suitable for elucidating their speculations than surviving runic texts, but that is another story.

In this paper I shall take a closer look at the unusually high number of lost runestones that were reported by antiquarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The list includes a variety of inscriptions ranging from stones that were reported only once before they disappeared to highly valued runic monuments which have vanished since they were investigated and debated by our predecessors 300–400 years ago. After working with several of these inscriptions, I have become convinced that quite a few of them represent interpretations of various kinds and have no real existence. In this paper I term such inscriptions “phantom”. It is my hope to persuade fellow scholars to look more closely into the find history of runic inscriptions in general. Although I shall be warning here against misleading information from phantom inscriptions which may accumulate in dictionaries and surveys of runic material, it must also be emphasised that several new discoveries await us in the archives. My aim though is principally to call for a more methodological, in essence text-philological, approach to lost inscriptions.
The island of the Goths, Ög 27–Ög 28†

In the runic corpus editions one now and again comes across very unusual lost inscriptions which were recorded in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. Several of these carry quite spectacular legends according to older interpretations. The quotation in the title of this paper comes from a remarkable pair from Öster Skam in Östergötland, Ög 27–Ög 28† (Fig. 1). According to Erik Brate (and Samnordisk runtextdatabas), these read:

Ög 27†
[þurir · sati · stain · at · þialfar · faþur · sin · iar · stranti · a · kautaun · ]
'Thorir placed the stone in memory of Þialfarr, his father, who landed in kautaun.'

Ög 28†
[… sun · iar buki · a · kautaun … truista · sina]
'… son, who lived in kautaun … his/her husbandman.'

Both inscriptions are recorded only once, namely in Johan Hadorph’s (1630–1693) edition of the Gotlandic provincial law, Gothlandz-laghen
Apart from interpreting *truista* as “trognasta” (‘most faithful’), Hadorph’s translation is very close to that of *Östergötlands runinskrifter*: “Ture satte Steen åt Tialfe Fader sin, som strandade eller Strandstegh på Götha Öö” (Ög 27), and “Han bode eller bygde på Gautau med trognaste Hustru och Barn sina” (Ög 28).

In his *Företaal* ‘preface’ (p. [3]), where the Öster Skam stones are mentioned, Hadorph devotes much energy to documenting the presence of the personal name Þialfarr in runic inscriptions on the Swedish mainland. The reason for this is to prove the ancient connection between Gotland, Götaland and Svealand, which had been questioned by the Danish historian Hans Nielsen Strelow in 1633 in his book *Chronica Guthilandorum: Den Guthilandske Chronica*. Þialfarr of course is critical here as the key person in the mythological story of Gotland with which the so-called *Guta saga* commences (Mitchell 1993, 253). I will touch upon this dispute briefly below.

A major proof of the connection Hadorph seeks to establish is of course the Öster Skam stones, which according to him were to be found in “Öster NyKyrkia Sochn och Öster Skams By” (now Skamby in Östra Ny socken). Unfortunately nobody has been able to find these two runestones since.

Hadorph states that his predecessor Johannes Bureus (1568–1652) possessed a drawing of the inscriptions. He furthermore claims that he inspected the pair of runestones on two occasions: “Deßa Stenars affskrift fins vthi Joh: Buræi Rune Rijtningar, för 60 Åhr sedan giorde, them iag sedan twenne Resor besicktigat och afrijta låtit”. Unfortunately no drawing of the inscriptions is preserved in Johannes Bureus’s runic manuscripts (*SRI*, 2: 25, note 1) although an extensive investigation of his drawings has been carried out by Elisabeth Svärdström (1936). In fact, as far as we are aware today, Bureus knew only eight out of several hundred runic inscriptions from Östergötland.

We know from Hadorph’s biography that he made several expeditions to Östergötland in search for antiquities between 1671 and 1676 (Schück 1933, 211). The runic monuments were drawn by his assistants and wood-blocks were later produced for the intended edition of Swedish runic inscriptions which was later published by Göransson in *Bautil* from 1750.

Apart from a depiction of Ög 215 (*Bautil*, no. 1043), all the wood-block illustrations of inscriptions from Östergötland in *Bautil* are signed by either “IL” Johan Leitz (employed 1671–83), jointly by “IL” and “HE” Petrus Helgonius (employed 1683–85) or by “PT” Petrus Törnewall (retired in 1687). The information on the artists given here has been taken from Venneberg 1917, 15–30. In addition, Hadorph’s approval is indicated by the signature “IH”, “JH” or the like on each wood-block.
The wood-block print of Ög 27–Ög 28†, Fig. 1, has been given a “seal of approval” by the appearance of the initials “IB” for Johannes Bureus and in the middle “J.H.” for Johan Hadorph. The signature to the right “VC” points to Ulf Christofferson, who was employed by the Antikvitetskollegium from 1687 until Hadorph died in 1693. The anachronistic juxtaposition of initials requires comment.

The surviving wood-block prints produced for Bureus are neither signed nor approved with a signature. Stylistically and artistically these wood-blocks are quite different from the depiction of Ög 27–Ög 28†, and it seems reasonable that the illustrations are in fact drawn by Ulf Christofferson.

On another occasion, in connection with the Vistena inscription, Ög 63, Hadorph points to Bureus (Rannsakningar, 2.1:296) but the wood-block print in Bautil (no. 876) is approved by “IH” and signed by “IL” (SRI, 2:62). No other illustration from Östergötland is ascribed to Bureus and his initials must have been added by Hadorph in order to assure the credibility of the Öster Skam stones.

Ulf Christoffersson travelled several times in search for antiquities in Småland and Öland “around 1690” (M. Nordström 2002, 231), and he has signed a lot of wood-block prints in Bautil from these provinces. Regarding Östergötland, Christoffersson’s drawing of Ög 11 could be compared with

Fig. 2. Wood-block print of Ög 60† from “Järnsta” published by Olof Verelius in 1672. The inscription commemorates Asgautr who fought a huge giant.
Petrus Törnewall’s printed vis-à-vis in *Bautil* as no. 832 “På Kyrkogården” and no. 833 “J Klåckstapelen” respectively. Apart from *Bautil* no. 832 Christoffersson has only signed the Öster Skam drawing and *Bautil* no. 922 = Ög 183 from this province.

Although Brate does not accept Þialfarr in Ög 27–28† as the saga figure, he takes the inscriptions to be genuine. He does not, however, consider the possibility of a conflation with other inscriptions in Östergötland or elsewhere. For instance there are close resemblances with Ög 94 Harstad, and Ög 28† in my opinion might well reflect the text on Ög 26. Thus I consider the Öster Skam inscriptions most likely to be mediocre copies of some kind, probably shined up for the political purpose in Hadorph’s *Företaal*.

A lot of work still needs to be done in order to establish the genuineness or otherwise of the Öster Skam inscriptions. One may safely conclude, however, that the utmost caution is required in using word forms or lemmata from these inscriptions in dictionaries and the like. Nevertheless they have been cited on various occasions.

The slayer of a huge giant, Ög 60†

Another spectacular inscription is the runestone Ög 60† (Fig. 2), reported from a place called “Järmsta”, which is said to be situated in Dal härad, Östergötland. The inscription reads:

\]
\[ \text{þikra : i : iatustun : auk : brunia : fik : harþa : kuþan ·] }\]

‘Dyri placed this stone in memory of Asgautr, his brother, who lived(?) in Jatunstaðir(?) and Bruni, a very good valiant man(?).’

The translation (quoted from *Samnordisk runtextdatabas*) follows Erik Brate’s interpretation in *Östergötlands runinskrifter*. Ög 60† was first published in 1672 by Olof Verelius (1618–1682) in his extensive commentary on *Hervarar saga*. Verelius, however, interprets the inscription in a much more direct and yet striking manner (p. 192): *Thuro lapidem posuit Asguto fratri suo, qui caecidit magnum gigantem in Iatunustaðir, dedicavitque loricam Odino Deo* ‘Þori placed this stone in memory of his brother Asgautr who killed a huge giant in Jatunstaðir and dedicated the giant’s armour to the god Óðinn.’ The statement in *Östergötlands runinskrifter* that Verelius’s wood-block print of Ög 60† comes from Bureus cannot be confirmed. When Verelius mentions the Järmsta inscription in his *Manuductio compendiosa ad runographiam Scandicam* (1675, 16) it is only to point to his edition of *Hervarar saga*.
The linguistic unsoundness of the Järmsta inscription speaks for itself; in particular the use of þ for /d/ in þíkra shows the typical fingerprint of the learned runologist. Again I think it is most probable that Järmsta results from a mix-up with other inscriptions, probably first and foremost Ög 132 Heda. The form barþi, then, is likely to be a misreading for buki, while Ög 132’s iatunstupum could have been read twice.

The son of Ingvarr víðförli, Sö 295†

Phantom inscriptions are not of course restricted to Östergötland. Take for instance Sö 295† Skälby (now Lövstalund), Grödinge parish, Södermanland, which seems to refer to the famous Viking Ingvarr víðförli:

[hán ua iguars] [sun]
‘He was the son of Ingvarr.’

According to Elias Wessén (in SRI, 3:268 f.) this inscription is mentioned by Johan Peringskiöld (1654–1720) in manuscript F h 31 in the Royal Library in Stockholm. The information comes from Richard Dybeck (1811–1877), but he only points to Peringskiöld’s unspecified ‘miscellanea manuscript’ (1876, 40). I have no good explanation as to how this discrepancy has arisen. Thorgunn Snædal and I both inspected F h 31 several times in 2003 and 2004, but we have been unable to find any mention of Sö 295†. Perhaps the choice of manuscript number was a mere guess on Brate’s part?

Probably Peringskiöld never inspected Sö 295†; nor did the inscription enter the Södermanland volume of his manuscript collection Monumenta Svea-Gothorum. It is therefore unwise to trust any historical or linguistic information which might be deduced from this inscription. I am also convinced that Sö 295† would have been omitted in any modern edition of runic inscriptions in Södermanland. Nevertheless all four lemmata from this inscription have entered dictionaries.

The island of the Æsir, U 649B†, and Atli from Atlantis, U 761†

We find the same type of material in Uppland. In Upplands runinskrifter (SRI, 8:104, see Fig. 3) Elias Wessén and Sven B. F. Jansson mention an inscription from Övergrans church which ends:

[...pr · buki · osaqiar · kup hulbi · ...]
‘they lived in Æsvøiar (‘the islands of the Æsir’). God help [their souls].’

Futhark 1 (2010)
Although this inscription has not been allocated its own number in the corpus edition, it has nonetheless entered *Samnordisk runtextdatabas* as U649B†.

U761†—this time with a proper inscription number—is recorded from the neighbourhood of Enköping in Uppland. According to SRI, 8:319 (see Fig. 4) it reads:

[... ... ir · atln · faþur · sin ...]

‘in memory of Atli(?), his father ...’

The only person to record U649B† and U761† is the famous Olof Rudbeck Sr. (1630–1702).

Rudbeck published the two finds in his renowned four-volume *Atlantica* ([1679]–1702), where he goes to considerable lengths in his attempts to prove that descendants of the Biblical Japhet and his son Magog settled Sweden and invented the runes long before the Greek and Latin scripts were developed. This reflects the scholarly discussion that followed the publication of the famous historical works of Johannes Magnus (1488–1544) and Olaus Magnus (1490–1557): *Historia ... de omnibus Gothorum Sveonumque regibus* (1554) and *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (1555). Rudbeck, however, goes a bit further by locating Atlantis in Sweden, and his ideas, often termed Rudbeckianism, attracted several enthusiastic followers, including Johan Göransson (1712–1769), who published *Bautil* in 1750.
Other contemporary scholars held different opinions (Agrell 1955, 57), but for many years Rudbeck’s excavations in Gamla Uppsala furnished the proof that an ancient temple devoted to Apollo = Baldr (Lindqvist 1930) was situated in the land of the Hyperboreans = Sweden (J. Nordström 1934).

The Atli stone serves a double purpose. Not only does it emphasise the Atlantis hypothesis, it is also used by Rudbeck in his dating of runestones to approximately 400 or 500 years after the Flood, based on observations of the geological layers in which the stone is said to be found. This in turn bolstered the long-standing belief that the sixteen-character fuþark was primary, descending directly from Hebrew, and that the runestones were pre-Christian. Subsequent scholars—indeed until as late as 1800—considered the twenty-four-character fuþark to be derived from the shorter sixteen-character version. It is troubling, though, that no other scholar has seen U649B† or U761†. We know that quite a number of antiquarians combed the neighbourhood of Enköping for runestones in the seventeenth century.

Again, although the publishers of Upplands runinskrifter are rather reluctant to accept these inscriptions, later scholars have tended to overlook their reservations.

Too good to be true, Sjörup 2

Sceptics will by now have noticed that all of the inscriptions dealt with so far have vanished over the course of time. Quite a few were reported only by a single scholar in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. The information regarding several of the find spots is inexact and it has proved impossible to locate them again in modern times.

In the light of this the corpus editions sometimes express doubt about the authenticity of the inscriptions, or at least the reliability of the readings that have come down to us. Unfortunately, however, not all readers of those editions seem to be aware of the problem. Non-runologists will often include not just uncertain but even dubious runic texts in their surveys. An example of this is the phantom Sjörup 2 inscription relegated to a footnote in Danmarks runeindskrifter and not given an independent inscription number (DR, Text, 334). The only mention of this inscription is in a manuscript written by Archbishop Jakob Benzelius (1683–1747) in the Engeström Collection in the Royal Library, Stockholm (MS Engströmska samlingen, B VIII 2,22—not B VIII 2,20 as stated in Danmarks runeindskrifter). Benzelius only quotes a translation of the inscription which he received from the antiquary Caspar Schönbeck (c. 1665–1731):

Futhark 1 (2010)
Thenna sten upreste jag för mina 2:ne Söner som blefvo slagne i Grickeland.
‘I erected this stone in memory of my two sons who were killed in Greece.’

The very dubious Sjörup 2 inscription has been included in a survey of the Viking Age and medieval Ystad Region of southern Sweden (Skansjö, Riddersporre, and Reisnert 1989, 82), and I am afraid it is likely to mislead others in the future.

Lost inscriptions now and then, Kälby

It is important to emphasise that there is a great difference between well-attested inscriptions which have been destroyed in recent times and inscriptions of which only 300–400-year-old transcripts survive. When dealing with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century recordings it is important to understand the working methods and working conditions of our predecessors. How did the surviving transcripts come about and what were the skills, and ambitions, of those making them?

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries runic inscriptions were harder to access than now and scholars often had to rely completely on the transcripts of fellow workers in the field. No Xerox machines existed, so everything had to be copied by hand. It is thus not surprising that errors occur both in the rendering of runic texts and the names of find spots. Upplands runinskrifter provides an example in the form of the Kälby inscription from Skånela, which owes its existence to a misunderstanding on the part of Bureus when he compiled a clean copy manuscript (MS F a 5 in the Royal Library, Stockholm) from his old notebooks (MS F a 6). By mistake, Bureus copied the parish name from the previous inscription, at the same time misreading Bälby as Kälby. Thus the “Kälby” inscription turns out to be identical with U 626 from Håbo-Tibble parish.

Even when it comes to well-attested runestones we have to consider the methods of the early runologists. With few exceptions seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars roamed far and wide in their attempts to decode runic texts. The ability to make a connection between runic legend and an event portrayed in saga literature or the like served to underline the learning of the scholar concerned. The result was a good number of fantastic interpretations which are now more or less forgotten thanks to subsequent investigations of the inscriptions. One of many examples that might be adduced is the extensive interpretation history of the Bällsta stones, U 225–U 226, recounted in SRI, vol. 6.
Forged runes

Yet another product of scholarly learning of those days is mostly forgotten by present-day runologists. There are several renowned cases of forged “historical” texts and charters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Johan Peringsköld, for instance, published *Hjálmars ok Hramers saga* in 1700–01 and included a facsimile of the alleged medieval runic vellum fragments upon which the edition was based. Most likely the “runic fragments” were produced by Lucas Halpap under the auspices of Peringsköld’s brother-in-law Carl Lundius (1638–1715). Halpap had defended his thesis on the subject some years earlier, but it took quite a while before he produced the fragments (Busch 2002, 213).

It is worth mentioning in connection with *Hjálmars ok Hramers saga* that the types of runes adopted in the forged vellum manuscript are very similar to those which can be found in a genuine fourteenth-century runic manuscript with an Old Scanian translation of the Lament of Mary (*Lamentatio virginis Mariae*). The lament had been discovered by Peringsköld in Vallentuna church north of Stockholm and it was later published as an Old Swedish text in 1721 by his son Johan Fredrik (1689–1725).

In the preface there is a direct reference to the fragment of *Hramers saga*. Since manuscripts with runes are very rare, I suspect there is a connection between the genuine and the forged text but more work needs to be done in order to demonstrate this. We also need to work out how the genuine runic manuscript came from Skåne to Uppland in the seventeenth century. War-booty is one possibility, but purchase from a book collection is another likely explanation.

The circumstances under which the discovery was made and later published no doubt reflect the scholarly rivalry between Sweden and Denmark. In 1638 the Danish scholar Ole Worm purchased the famous *Codex Runicus*, which is now kept in the Arnamagnæan Collection in Copenhagen (AM 28 8vo), and from his letters it is clear that runic manuscripts were well-known among scholars at the time.

There are other examples of runic forgeries such as the Gulland document, which was “discovered” by the Danish historian Niels Poulsen Pedersen (c. 1522–c. 1579) and proved the descent of the Danes (the Cimbrii and the Goths) from Noah. This hypothesis was published and much debated in the seventeenth century, but to my knowledge the matter has never been studied from a runological point of view.

Yet another interesting document, the partly runic Häggum charter from Västergötland, which among other things “confirms” the existence of the
renowned ætternisstapi (Swedish ättestupa), was discovered by the rector of the parish, Thure Ljunggren (1748–1825), in 1794. As demonstrated by Staffan Fridell in 1998, the fraud probably served to flatter the nobleman Pehr Tham (1737–1820), who claimed that the ancient town of Sigtuna was situated in Västergötland rather than Uppland. The most famous counterfeiter of the period—the Uppsala scholar Nils Rabenius (1648–1717)—was also associated with well-known contemporary runic scholars.

These forgeries in no way call into question the overall validity of the runology carried out in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but they show how closely genuine runic texts and the most celebrated runic scholars became associated with forgeries. Bearing this in mind, it is no surprise that early runologists were sometimes inclined to accept fragments of text of extremely doubtful provenance in what can hardly be other than an attempt to glorify themselves and emphasise the heroic past of their country or region. The work of these desk-runologists—to use a well-known term coined by Erik Moltke—had implications beyond the textual: when a drawing of an inscription was not available, the transliteration could be fitted into any shape suitable for a runestone. Probably this was often the result of a simple mistake, but it could also serve to make an inscription appear more trustworthy.

Types of misunderstanding: the case of Nä 12

As already mentioned, most of the curious misconceptions of the early runologists are now forgotten, having been superseded by the better-founded interpretations of later scholars. In some cases, however, old misconceptions survive as footnotes in the corpus editions. Let me illustrate this with a couple of examples:

The runestone from Stora Mellösa, Närke, was first recorded by Olof Celsius Sr. (1670–1756) in the eighteenth century. In Celsius’s transcript the inscription ends with the pious formulation guþ allin ‘God alone’, and his drawing which is signed by J. G. Hallmann (1701–1757, Fig. 5), shows complex ornamentation. No such runestone is known today, however, and it is now clear that what is depicted is the rather briefer and considerably plainer stone that still survives in Stora Mellösa, Nä 12 (Fig. 6). Except for the ‘God alone’ sequence there can be no doubt that the two texts are identical.

When we compare Hallmann’s drawing with other runestones known from Närke, it is easy to see what happened. For some unknown reason Hallmann fitted the text of the Stora Mellösa inscription into the text band of a runestone from Väsby, Nä 8 (Fig. 7). The mistake was recognised by
Sven B. F. Jansson in *Närkes runinskrifter*, but the Celsius inscription might easily have continued to feature as independent carving. It could theoretically have been a lost runestone with a text almost identical to that of Nä 12 but carved by the same rune-carver as Nä 8.

There are several other examples where text has been added for reasons that can hardly be anything other than wishful thinking. On the seventeenth-century woodcut of Sö 224 Grödby, Sorunda parish, Södermanland, one can clearly see the word *asfara* ‘Asia-traveller’. This has been added in the middle of the description, seemingly for no other reason than to try to make the text more spectacular. The well-known Forsheda inscription from Småland, Sm 52, which mentions Lifsteinn ‘who died in Gårdstånga in Skåne’, is recorded twice by Johannes Bureus in the first half of the seventeenth century. In the shorter version, which was long conceived to be a separate inscription, the place-name *karþ:stokum*, Gårdstånga, was misinterpreted as the statement *harþa + kuþ + oþin*, *O durum deum Othinum*. For this reason Forsheda attracted a lot of interest from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars. The shorter version is for instance discussed by Verelius in his comments on *Hervarar saga*, immediately following his presentation of the “Järmssta” inscription, Ög 60† (see above).
Hidden in the baking oven, U981†

So far I have tried to point out some characteristic features of the working methods and working traditions of the early runologists. In the light of these observations it should not surprise us when today erroneous transcripts of one and the same inscription are sometimes incorrectly classified as separate texts. This has happened a number of times in our present corpus editions and further examples are likely to come to light in the future.

Some years ago, I was asked to review a Festschrift for Lena Peterson, *Runor och namn* (Uppsala 1999). An article in it by Henrik Williams dealing with stone-raisers’ names in two inscriptions from Gamla Uppsala, U980 and U981†, kept puzzling me. In the seventeenth century both inscriptions were reported to be in the vicarage next to the famous church, but today only fragments and a drawing of U980 by Johan Peringsköld survive. Except for three accounts of U981† in Johannes Bureus’s manuscripts, the second inscription has vanished completely. The names of the stone-raisers appeared to be *ailifr* (U980) and *ailif* (U981†). In addition, the wording of the raiser formula on U981† is distinctly unusual. Furthermore, the idea of a brother and sister carrying a masculine and feminine variant of the same name seemed odd, indeed rather suspicious.

It was while observing the innocent word *aliter* in the illustration from Bureus’s manuscript F a 6 (Fig. 8) that I suddenly realised that U981† could be a conflation of U980 with another inscription. *Samnordisk runtextdatabas*
provided the answer immediately. The upper part of the transcription was probably an alternative reading of the last section of another inscription from Gamla Uppsala, U986† (Lerche Nielsen 2000).

Closer scrutiny revealed how this came about: at the beginning of the seventeenth century Johannes Bureus recorded a runestone that was built into the baking oven in the vicarage. The stone was subsequently broken into several pieces. In Bureus’s transcript of the inscription in his notebook F a 6, subsequently transferred to his clean copy F a 5, the incomplete transcription was for some reason mixed with U986†. When the stone was removed from the oven in the 1680s, the full text could finally be established (Fig. 9). Because of textual differences and the fact that Bureus did not give the exact find spot in his clean copy, the more complete reading was wrongly taken to be a completely new inscription. From this point on U981† took on an independent existence in the corpus editions.

I was puzzled by the fact that neither Elias Wessén nor Sven B. F. Jansson had investigated the similarity between the two inscriptions carefully when they published SRI, vol. 9. Instead, Wessén offers a learned digression on the family relationships and the apparent chronological gap between U980, which is attributed to the rune-carver Fotr, and U981† which is seemingly signed by Asmundr Karasunn, who also signed the neighbouring U986† (SRI, 9: 134). Thus U981† became accepted as a “lost inscription” and references to and phrases from it entered the works of later scholars—even
Claiborne Thompson’s monograph on Asmundr Karasunn from 1975. In the future we must hope that U 981† will be recognised as the first recording of U 980 (Lerche Nielsen 2000).

Never forget the neighbouring church, U 234†–U 235†

In 1978 Evert Salberger was heavily criticised for his haphazard evaluation of a lost runic sequence kuikun on the Kusta stone, U235† (Fig. 10). In his dissertation Runsvenska namnstudier Salberger interprets kuikun as Kvīg-Unnr ‘Bullock-Unnr’ (1978, 209), the sense of which could be explained as ‘Unnr, who owns/is fond of/is renowned for his cattle’. The author sees this as proof of bucolic naming practices among “stay-at-home” Vikings as opposed to those who went abroad pillaging.

Unfortunately, as Börje Westlund pointed out in his doctoral opposition, printed in Namn och bygd 1980, the editors of Upplands runinskrifter were not aware of the fact that U235† had been transported a few miles from Kusta to the neighbouring parish church of Vada, where it had been re-used as a gravestone in 1849 (Fig. 11). A few decades later, when Richard Dybeck
rediscovered the stone, he identified it as bearing a hitherto unknown inscription. Subsequently the inscription received the number U199 in Uppslands runinskrifter.

The preserved part of the runestone clearly reveals that the personal name was not kuikun but kuþmut, Guðmund (acc.). Dybeck’s, Wessén’s, Jansson’s and Salberger’s lack of thoroughness was later rectified when the Uppsala database was compiled. Discussions about bucolic naming practice among the skrytbönder ‘boasting farmers’ of the Mälar region also appear to have come to an abrupt end.

Westlund’s work of demolition did not stop there. He went on to suggest that yet another lost Kusta inscription, U234†, is probably nothing but a mediocre copy of U235†/U 199 (Fig. 12). Sadly this observation only entered the Uppsala database as a footnote and thus various odd spellings and forms of personal names in U234† have also entered dictionaries and hand-books.

In an article published in 2005 I have shown in greater detail than is possible here that it is much more likely U234† is a copy of U235†/U 199 than an independent inscription. The chief reasons for this conclusion are of course textual similarities but also the fact that Johan Axehielm (1608–1692) reported U235†/U 199 “widh Kustad i Walentuna sochn” to Bureus, whereas Johannes Hadorph one generation later recorded the very similar inscription U234† from exactly the same spot “Kusta Tompt” without noticing U235†/U 199. In my opinion a switch of runestones like this is highly improbable.

I am convinced that there are similar cases of runic doublets still to be found in Uppland. I am currently working on an article dealing with U816† and U817† and more are in prospect. The impressive number of Upplandic inscriptions facilitates such mistakes but the merging of inscriptions can of course happen anywhere.

Conflated inscriptions from Östergötland

Far fewer runic inscriptions were recorded from Östergötland in the seventeenth century than from Södermanland and Uppland to the north. As already mentioned, Johannes Bureus knew but eight inscriptions from this province: Ög 17, Ög 39, Ög 63, Ög 136, Ög 207, Ög 226, Ög 227 and Ög 229 (Svärdsström 1936, 58), whereas Östergötlands runinskrifter contains c. 250, not to mention more recent finds. The sparseness of early source material makes it much more difficult to demonstrate how mistakes came about. This is unfortunate, since a majority of the truly spectacular phantom inscriptions — some of which are cited at the beginning of this paper — come...
from Östergötland. I can offer an illustration of the problem, although I must emphasise that the specific example I give requires further field and archive research.

Ög 195† is known only from a seventeenth-century wood-block print published in Bautil (Fig. 13). Göransson gives the heading “Söderby Bro” to this inscription, which is highly unusual in containing only two words sunu sina ‘his sons’. The grounds on which the publisher of Östergötlands runinskrifter, Erik Brate, identifies the provenance of the inscription as Hadelö in Mjölby parish, Vifolka härad, are, it must be said, uncertain. In the light of all this, it is worth comparing Ög 195† with other inscriptions from Östergötland containing the not very common acc. pl. sunu sina. One such is found in Styrstad, east of Norrköping, Ög 153. This unusual and very beautiful runestone was well known to seventeenth-century scholars. Another runestone containing the sequence sunu sina is Ög 157 Tingstad, Lösing härad (Fig. 14). When first recorded in the mid-nineteenth century this runestone was located in the south-east churchyard gateway.

Its inscription reads:

--ti- + karþi × bru + þasi + a-tiR + hemkil + auk + siba sunu × sina

‘--ti- made this bridge in memory of Hæmkell and Sibbi, his/her sons.’

One may wonder why this stone was not recorded by the seventeenth-century scholars who visited the church in search of antiquities. This goes particularly for Johan Hadorph, who approved the wood-block prints of runestones in Östergötland, among which is Ög 195†. According to Hadorph’s unpublished notebook (Reseanteckningar, MS S 30 in Uppsala University Library) he personally investigated Tingstad church, but the only runestone he reports from there is Ög 156 (S 30, fol. 38), which at the time served as a threshold stone in the south doorway.

It seems unlikely to me that Hadorph could have missed a runestone lying in the churchyard. I therefore think it probable that Ög 157 was brought to Tingstad sometime in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, after Hadorph’s visit. Seventeenth-century investigators may well have inspected the runestone in its original setting, but that is a problem that still needs to be sorted out.

At any rate: because of the placement of sunu × sina in a separate text band in the middle of the Tingstad stone, I am inclined to think that Ög 195† may be an incomplete recording of the last part of this inscription. But if so, what happened to the rest of it? A database search for the diagnostic features of Tingstad shows similarities with another now-lost inscription recorded in Bautil, Ög 191†, from a place called “Nya Ree”. In Östergötlands
Erik Brate identifies this place-name as Nybble in Vikingstad parish, Valkebo härad, and reads the inscription as follows (Fig. 15):

\[
\ldots:hír : risbi : stán : þasi : uftir : krimu : faþur : si\ldots
\]

'...-geirr (?) raised this stone in memory of Grimi/Grimulfr, his father.'

As readily seen, the texts of Ög 157 and Ög 191† are not very similar. In my opinion the textual differences may well be attributed to attempts by seventeenth-century scholars to identify well-known elements in the raiser formula in the same way as I have sought to show earlier. Since I have still not been able to check the Tingstad inscription myself, however, this hypothesis remains no more than an educated guess.

I also find it rather suspicious that Östergötlands runinskrifter includes two lost runestones from Tingstad, Ög 158† and Ög 159†. The two are mentioned only in the work of one nineteenth-century scholar, P. A. Säve (1811–1887), who had not himself personally inspected them, nor does he render their texts. In my opinion Ög 158† is most probably the same inscription as Ög 156†, whereas Ög 159† has probably been confused with Ög 157. At least, I find it implausible that so many runestones were visible in Säve’s time, when Johan Hadorph only reported Ög 156 from his visit to Tingstad in the late seventeenth century.

*Futhark* 1 (2010)
I would thus suggest that the six inscriptions Ög 159†, Ög 191†, Ög 159† and Ög 157 plus Ög 158† and Ög 156 could probably be reduced to a mere two. Naturally this affects the distribution map for this particular area. It further affects the proportion of inscriptions considered to be lost. Such revaluation may be thought both useful and necessary.

**Sweden vs. Denmark**

In this survey I have shown that there are a number of potential phantom inscriptions from Sweden. There are several reasons for their occurrence. The impressive number of Swedish runestones is itself a probable cause; with so many to keep track of, mix-ups could easily occur. Another reason is the scholarly climate of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, characterised as it was by rivalry between Sweden and Denmark concerning the true homeland of the Goths, the age of the runes, etc. A third cause is the publication history. In Sweden the first printed collection of runestones from the whole country was Göransson’s *Bautil* published in 1750. Denmark (including Skåne, Halland and Blekinge) and Norway got their first runic
corpus edition in 1643 in Ole Worm’s (1588–1654) *Danicorum monumentum libri sex*. This work formed a solid foundation for several generations of runologists. Worm was assisted by only a few informants, and his artist Jon Skonvig (†1664) reproduced most of the inscriptions during field trips sponsored by Worm. The total number of inscriptions Worm was dealing with was much smaller than that in Sweden so it was easier to avoid mixing up new discoveries with reports of older finds.

With such a solid starting point only a few suspect inscriptions from older scholarship have entered *Danmarks runeindskrifter*. One of the inscriptions from Århus in Worm’s edition (DR 64†) was long regarded as independent until Moltke pointed out similarities between DR 64† and DR 63 in his dissertation (Moltke 1956–58, 2: 184 f.). When Worm reported DR 63 in his *Additamenta* from ca. 1651 he was not aware of the similarities with another Århus inscription published 1643 based on second-hand information in *chartis quibusdam*.

Furthermore I expect the apparently lost Tvorup (formerly spelled Torup) inscription, DR 154†, to be another Danish phantom. It is likely to be identical with the neighbouring Sjørring (formerly spelled Sjørind) inscription, DR 155. To be sure, Tvorup is much longer than Sjørring but there

*Futhark* 1 (2010)
are parallels to this, as shown above. In a series of articles from the first half of the twentieth century the philologist Frederik Orluf presented weighty arguments in favour of the two inscriptions being one and the same. These were rejected rather brusquely by Moltke in 1956–58, who however failed to take all of Orluf’s observations into account (Orluf 1911, 60; 1926; 1938). In my opinion we need to take a closer look at DR 154†.

A third rather dubious inscription in DR is the Skåne runestone (DR 351†; Fig. 16), which reads:

[kalia : risti : stin : þansi aftir : aisi : bruþur | sia]

‘Galinn raised this stone in memory of Æsir, his brother.’

This inscription has several features in common with DR 270 as pointed out by Jacobsen and Moltke in Danmarks runenindskripter, the form risti instead of the expected risþi could indicate a careless reading by a scholar familiar with inscriptions from central Sweden, and the personal names are a bit spurious too.

The Norwegian material I have yet to examine, but I have certainly noticed some suspicious lost inscriptions here and there.

Conclusion

The outcome of this survey is that we must be aware of possible double recordings in our corpus editions. We must also be very cautious when dealing with readings of lost inscriptions, even when we find items from them listed in dictionaries and handbooks.

Modern runologists have perhaps sometimes too willingly accepted that runestones recorded 300–400 years ago have vanished without trace. As a result, scholars have tended to adopt a rather naive attitude towards lost inscriptions from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the evaluation of specific readings from such inscriptions. Evert Salberger in particular has been criticised in this connection, but I am afraid that few of us can escape blame. As soon as an inscription has entered the corpus, we are inclined to accept it at face value.

More problematic, however, is the fact that lemmata from phantom inscriptions are included in databases and dictionaries, which take their information from corpus editions. Generally these entries are marked as lost, with brackets or the like, but nevertheless the reconstructed forms in for instance Lena Peterson’s Svenskt runordsregister (1989, 2nd ed. 1994) and Nordiskt runnamnslexikon (2007) occur side by side with verifiable forms from extant inscriptions. There is no attempt to grade the reliability of
individual lost inscriptions and consequently a number of unlikely-looking forms and a good few *hapax legomena* have entered the dictionaries.

Michael Barnes has on several occasions asked for more terminological exactitude in runology (e.g. Barnes 1994), and no doubt runologists have a lot to learn from the linguists in this respect. Runologists are stubborn creatures, however, which may explain why the spelling checker in my word-processing programme keeps suggesting the substitution of “rhinologists”. However this may be, I should like here to advocate greater strictness in dealing with “lost” inscriptions.

The method I have applied in this paper is not at all sophisticated. To me the acceptance of a lost inscription demands a thorough investigation of its history and circumstances. Here I deeply admire Ray Page, who combines text philology with runic studies. Naturally, comparing the surviving transcripts of an inscription and evaluating possible textual errors is the best way of establishing a reliable text.

In my view runology has to be more aware of the methodology of text philology, at least when scholars wish to draw on evidence from lost inscriptions. Above all, we must be aware that there is plenty yet to be found in archives: not only phantoms but also hitherto unrecorded inscriptions. One great step to facilitate such work would be internet access to the manuscript evidence.

**Bibliography**


DR + number = inscription published in *Danmarks runeindskrifter*, i.e. **DR**.

**DR** = *Danmarks runeindskrifter*. 3 vols.: Text; Atlas; Registre. By Lis Jacobsen and Erik Moltke. København 1941–42.


Göransson 1750 = *Bautil*.


Hadorph, Johan, ed. 1687. *Gothlandz-laghen på gammal göthiska, med en historisk berättelse wid ändan, huruledes Gothland först är vpfunnit och besatt, så och under Swea rijke ifrån hedna werld altijd lydt och sin skatt giordt …. Stockholm.*


Nä + number = inscription published in *Närkes runinskriften*, i.e. SRI, 14.1.


—. *Monumenta Svea-Gothorum*. Suite of folio manuscripts in the Royal Library Stockholm; manuscript signature: F h + number.

Peringskiöld, Johan Fredric, ed. 1721. *Fragmentum runico-papisticum …. Stockholm.*


Futhark 1 (2010)