A new research project, “Runische Schriftlichkeit in den germanischen Sprachen—Runic writing in the Germanic languages (RuneS)”, has commenced. The undertaking is funded by the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and based at the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen. It will run from 2010 until 2025 and is conducted in three research centres:

- **Kiel:** Prof. Dr. Edith Marold (co-ordinator), Dr. Christiane Zimmermann, Ute Zimmermann, Dr. Jana Krüger; Areas of research: older fuþark, younger fuþark/fuþork.
- **Göttingen:** Prof. Dr. Klaus Düwel, Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Heizmann, Dr. Sigmund Oehrl, Dr. Alessia Bauer, doctoral candidate Andreas Fischnaller; Areas of research: older fuþark (South Germanic inscriptions) and runica manuscripta.
- **Eichstätt–München:** Prof. Dr. Alfred Bammesberger, Prof. Dr. Elke Ronneberger-Sibold, Prof. Dr. Ursula Lenker, Dr. Kerstin Kazzazi, PD Dr. Gaby Waxenberger; Area of research: Anglo-Frisian fuþorc.

There will be two principal domains of investigation. The first deals with the transfer of sounds into graphic characters. We will examine the system of sounds (phonematic system) in its relation to the system of graphic signs (graphematic system). Was the system of runic characters fitted “perfectly” to the sound systems of the Germanic languages? Did this apply in all cases and in all places? Were there any developments in the system of the graphic characters over the long period of its use, and if so, what were the causes? What were the effects of changes in the phonemic systems of the different languages? A point that is still controversial concerns the existence of...
of orthographic traditions and the influence from non-runic manuscript tradition. The second domain deals with the relation of oral speech to written utterances. What kinds of utterances were written down? Previous interpretations of individual texts, and likewise editions, have attempted to classify inscriptions according to content, without this always being done consistently. Attempts at determining the functions of the script itself have for a long time revolved mostly around the opposition of magic/ritual versus profane. Our aim is to develop a system that will allow for the description of the inscriptions as text types. This means that all elements of the complete runic monument—the inscription-bearing object itself, the text written on it, extra-runic accompanying characters, iconographic elements and ornaments, the order of the signs on the sign-bearing object as well as the context of the find—need to be regarded in conjunction with each other; through this, a basis can be created for determining the function of each individual written document in the society in which it was produced. In this way, a history of runic writing will emerge that presents a clear picture of the function of this script within the different cultures it was employed in. In both domains, the relationship between runic and Latin script will be of central importance. What were the effects of the long period of their co-existence? Were the two writing systems linked to specific cultural spheres or to different communicative domains? Was the nature of contact one of dialogue or of demarcation? Did the use of the two scripts have a social basis—e.g., with regard to the hypothesis of two cultures (native versus Latin)? Is it possible to trace any changes during their long co-existence? In accordance with this program, there will be two main modules, preceded by a preparatory module providing the necessary editorial platform.

Module I: Editorial basics (2010–13) forms the preparatory basis in that it is devoted to the creation of a corpus that is as uniform as possible (a) by complementing the existing editions and (b) by designing a database structure that is based on theoretical preliminary considerations with regard to modules II and III. To this end, it will be necessary to bring together runological data from different editorial projects, both completed ones and those in progress, and to edit certain runic monuments for the first time. In creating this corpus basis, a distinction will be made between epigraphic runic tradition (including inscriptions on bracteates) on the one hand, and non-epigraphic runic tradition (runica manuscripta) on the other, in order to account for the fundamentally different nature of these two main groups of runological tradition. The outcome of the editorial work will be the first comprehensive editions of the Old English epigraphic inscriptions and of the Scandinavian runica manuscripta. The new edition of the inscriptions in the
older_fuþark_will_be_published_in_two_separate_volumes_and_replace_the_older_edition_by_Krause_Ultimately_the_corpus_basis_for_the_main_investigation_in_modules_II_und_III_will_comprise_all_runic_texts_in_the_older_fuþark_the_Anglo-Frisian_inscriptions_and_the_non-epigraphic_runica_manuscripta_Due_to_the_large_number_of_inscriptions_in_the_younger_fuþark_fuþork_a_selection_will_be_made_based_on_the_focus_of_the_study_taking_into_account_i.a._chronological_areal_and_functional_criteria_Module_II:_Runic_graphematics_(2014–19)_concentrates_on_the_medial_aspect_focusing_on_the_relation_of_sound_and-written_representation_The_aim_of_this_module_is_to_document_describe_and_explain_the_process_of_runic_writing_and_the_development_of_the_runic_script_adapting_and_modifying_the_concept_of_German_Verschriftung_used_in_orality-literacy_research_This_implies_a_complete_systematic_and_functional_analysis_of_all_signs_recorded_on_the_monuments_of_the_different_sub-corpora_as_well_as_the_connections_between_the_runic_writing_systems_and_their_relationship_to_the_Latin_writing_system_For_each_sign_i.e._for_each_intentional_mark_on_a_runic_monument_we_will_attempt_to_identify_a_function_distinguishing_first_between_extra-runic_signs_and_runic_signs_proper_When_the_extra-runic_signs_have_thus_been_identified_the_runic_signs_proper_will_be_analysed_as_to_their_place_in_the_writing_system_In_a_second_step_the_development_of_the_writing_systems_as_well_as_the_system-internal_and_system-external_reasons_and_triggers_for_this_development_will_move_into_the_focus_of_our_research_For_these_steps_we_will_proceed_from_a_distinction_between_older_fuþark_younger_fuþork_fuþork_and_Anglo-Frisian_fuþorc_based_on_insights_from_earlier_research_regarding_the_fundamental_differences_between_these_systems_Steps_in_the_analysis_of_the_signs_include_the_distinction_between_different_groups_of_signs_a_compilation_of_a_list_of_allographs_and_allograph_types_a_structural_analysis_of_the_runic_sign_systems_the_analysis_of_non-phonic_functions_of_runic_signs_analysing_the_function_of_extra-runic_signs_and_interrelationships_between_the_Latin_and_the_runic_script_Module_III:_Runic_text_grammar_and_pragmatics_(2020–25)_is_devoted_to_the_text-pragmatic_and_functional_aspects_of_writing_It_is_the_aim_of_this_module_to_determine_the_conceptual_features_of_the_runic_texts_to_find_out_their_communicative_function_and_to_describe_the_changes_in_the_use_of_the_runic_script_from_the_perspective_of_social_and_cultural_history_Module_III_will_concentrate_on_the_aspect_of_what_we_have_called_Verschriftlichung_adapting_and_modifying_the_second_term_introduced_in_orality-literacy_research_The_following_features_and_characteristics_of_runic_writing_will_be_included_in_the_study_the_type_of_inscription-bearing_object_and_its_function_in_the_social_context_the_location_of_the_text_on_the_object_and_the_design
of the text space, structural, lexical and pragmatic utterance features and their possible contributions in determining the function of the inscription, the interconnection of the individual texts through the formulaic structure of the inscriptions, affinity with certain text types and communicative domains, intertextual relations and references to text traditions in the Latin script. What historico-cultural facts may be correlated with the choice of the means employed? The influence of the Latin writing tradition in the different phases of contact of the two scripts will form an important aspect of the study. The analysis comprises all intentional marks on runic monuments: Besides the runic and extra-runic signs differentiated in module II, these also include any accompanying Latin graphs. Both runic and Latin graphs are characterized by their linguistic function, commonly seen as forming the text of the runic monument. Extra-runic signs are used for the purpose of structuring or accompanying the text in different functions. In addition, the analysis will focus on the spatial distribution of these groups of signs on the monument, as well as on the special characteristics and functions of the monument itself. All these data and their interplay are here termed the communicatum, based on the German Kommunikat used in text linguistics. This seemingly broad approach of a “text” grammar/pragmatics follows from the realization that all the data mentioned are communicatively relevant since certain features of oral communication, e.g., paralinguistic and nonverbal signs, are lacking in written communication. This lack may be compensated for by the special conceptual design of the written utterance, the order of the signs and the choice of the sign-bearing object.

As the different phases of runic writing were linked in manifold ways, only a comprehensive research project will be able to provide deeper insights into fundamental questions regarding the earliest history and development of writing as a medium of communication.

A full description of the project is available on http://www.khm.uio.no/forskning/publikasjoner/runenews/7th-symp/preprint/runic-writing-scan.pdf. For further information cf. the project homepage: http://runes.adw-goe.de.