

Anna Katharina Heiniger / Rebecca Merkelbach /
Alexander Wilson (Hrsg.)

Þáttasýrpa – Studien zu Literatur, Kultur und Sprache in Nordeuropa

Festschrift für Stefanie Gropper



BEITRÄGE ZUR NORDISCHEN PHILOLOGIE

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Páttasyrpa – Studien zu Literatur, Kultur und Sprache in Nordeuropa
Festschrift für Stefanie Gropper

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unter Mitarbeit von
Yvonne Meixner, Andreas Schmidt und Kieran Tsitsiklis

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Vorwort

Anna Katharina Heiniger, Rebecca Merkelbach und Alexander Wilson

Stefanie Gropper kann auf eine sehr vielseitige akademische Karriere zurückblicken. Ihre Publikationen zeichnen sich durch die große Bandbreite ihrer Themen und Ansätze aus, die sich wie ein roter Faden durch das Schriftenverzeichnis ziehen: Sagas und *þættir*, Übersetzungsliteratur und Prosimetrum, Narratologie und Kulturwissenschaft haben ihre Faszination für die Jubilarin nie verloren. Dieser Enthusiasmus hat es ihr ermöglicht, die nationale und internationale Altnordistik über Jahrzehnte nachhaltig zu prägen, und kaum eine Literaturliste kommt ohne ihre Beiträge aus. Mit ihrer Dissertation zu den *þættir* der Flateyjarbók (1991) legte Stefanie Gropper einen Grundstein für die differenzierte narratologische Betrachtung dieser Texte, während ihre Habilitationsschrift zum altisländischen Antikenroman (1998) bis heute ein zentrales Werk für die Erforschung von Übersetzungsliteratur und Rezeption kontinentaleuropäischer Texte im mittelalterlichen Island darstellt. Seitdem publizierte Stefanie Gropper unzählige Aufsätze und edierte Sammelbände zu Erzählprozess und Autorschaft, Historizität und Dichtkunst, aber auch zu Themen wie Gender, Emotion und Heldentum.

Sowohl in der internationalen Skandinavistik als auch von interdisziplinären Kooperationspartnern wird Stefanie Groppers wissenschaftliche Tätigkeit außerordentlich wertgeschätzt. Diese weitreichende Anerkennung spiegelt unter anderem der ihr 2018 durch den isländischen Präsidenten Guðni Th. Jóhannesson verliehene Falkenorden wider. Und selbst im Ruhestand ist Stefanie Gropper eine beeindruckend aktive Wissenschaftlerin. Sie ist weiterhin in den Projekten ‚The *Íslendingasögur* as Prosimetrum‘, ‚Modes of Modification‘ und im SFB 1391 Andere Ästhetik involviert und prägt so nach wie vor die Forschungslandschaft und die Zusammenarbeit mit jüngeren Kolleg:innen. Viele der Beiträge, die in diesem Band zu finden sind, stammen aus der Feder ihrer aktuellen Forschungspartner:innen im In- und Ausland.

Nach einem Studium der Nordischen Philologie, Älteren und Neueren deutschen Literatur in München und Reykjavík und der Promotion, Habilitation und einer Professurvertretung ebenfalls in München, bekleidete Stefanie Gropper ab dem Wintersemester 1996 die Professur für Skandinavistik an der Universität Tübingen. Über die zweieinhalb Jahrzehnte ihrer Führung profitierten die Studierenden, Doktorand:innen und Mitarbeiter:innen des Lehrstuhls und der angebundenen Projekte nicht nur von ihrem enormen Fachwissen, sondern schätzen auch ihre klare Linie und Menschlichkeit in der Betreuung sowie in allen Formen der Zusammenarbeit. Steffi, wie sie von allen genannt wird, ist eine überragende Mentorin, die es versteht, fachlichen Input mit einer individuell zugeschnittenen Betreuung zu verknüpfen. Der wissenschaftliche ‚Nachwuchs‘ liegt ihr dabei immer besonders am Herzen. Die Herausgeber:innen des Bandes sind dankbar für ihr ständiges

Engagement, ihre unermüdliche Unterstützung und ihr offenes Ohr, durch die wir als Menschen und Wissenschaftler:innen wachsen können.

Auch innerhalb der Universität Tübingen hat sich Stefanie Gropper unermüdlich in verschiedensten Gremien engagiert und so einen unschätzbaren Beitrag zum komplexen Hochschulalltag geleistet. Viele Jahre war sie als Studiendekanin der Neuphilologischen Fakultät, Direktorin des Deutschen Seminars und vor allem als Prorektorin für Studium und Lehre tätig. Sie hat die Tübinger Abteilung für Skandinavistik umsichtig und klug durch schwierige Wasser sicher geleitet und stets die zentrale Bedeutung unseres Fachs für die Fakultät betont. Ihr ist es zu verdanken, dass wir uns eine Zukunft erarbeiten können.

Mit dieser Festschrift soll Stefanie Groppers herausragender Beitrag zur mediävistischen, skandinavistischen und literaturwissenschaftlichen Forschung aufgezeigt, reflektiert und gewürdigt werden. In dieser *þáttasyrpa*, „Geschichtensammlung, Serie“, sollen Beiträge renommierter Wissenschaftler:innen, die ihr oft auch freundschaftlich verbunden sind, zusammengestellt und damit Stefanie Groppers Bedeutung und Ansehen innerhalb der Skandinavistik sowie ihre internationale Vernetzung verdeutlicht und honoriert werden. Dabei reflektiert der Titel einerseits ein zentrales Forschungsgebiet der Jubilarin, nämlich die isländischen *þættir*, und steht andererseits für eine Serie von Beiträgen, die die große Breite ihrer fachlichen Interessen und weitreichenden Zusammenarbeit widerspiegeln.

Der Band zeichnet die Stationen, Kooperationen und Forschungsinteressen der Jubilarin auch in seiner Struktur nach. Dabei ergeben sich die drei Teile aus aktuellen und vergangenen Kollaborationen, die die Forschung zur isländischen und nordeuropäischen Literatur, Kultur und Sprache nachhaltig geprägt haben und noch prägen. Der erste Teil ist thematisch in Aufsätze jeweils zu Schrift (Blennow/Palumbo/Pettersson, Bampi/Johansson, Horn/Kleivane und Gerok-Reiter) und Autorschaft (A. Bauer, Rösli, Guðvarður Már Gunnlaugsson, Kramarz-Bein/Tellmann und Wolf/Bullitta) gegliedert. Der zweite Teil, zum Hauptbeschäftigungsgebiet der Jubilarin, ist ebenfalls in sich thematisch sortiert, angefangen mit einer Sektion zu Narratologie (Heiniger, Merkelbach und Schmidt). Hier knüpft Heinigers Beitrag mit dem Fokus auf kurze Erzählformen an die kurzen Exempla von Wolf/Bullitta am Ende der letzten Sektion an. Darauf folgen Aufsätze zu Skaldensagas und Prosimetrum (Tsitsiklis, Finlay, Quinn und Wilson). Beiträge zu *Þorsteins þátr stangarhöggs* (Schnall und Wehrle) sowie anderen Sagagattungen (Morcom, van Nahl und Heizmann) runden den zweiten Teil ab. Guðrún Nordal beschließt mit ihrem Aufsatz zum Ende von Sagaerzählungen diese Sektion. Der dritte Teil ist teilweise chronologisch gegliedert, teilweise thematisch, und reflektiert insgesamt die Forschungsgebiete der Jubilarin aus neuer Perspektive, indem er sich Fragen von Ästhetik, Textualität und kulturellen Kontaktzonen widmet. Rohrbach schließt mit ihrer Diskussion der Aktualität der Sagas in der Frühneuzeit direkt an den vorherigen Teil an. Bamberger und Kunz diskutieren beide die ästhetische Gestaltung von Texten über zwischenmenschliche Beziehungen. Darauf folgt je ein Block zu Natur (Inseln – Glauser, Fische – Egeler, Tiernamen – Lux) und zu Kulturkontakten und Übersetzung (M. Bauer/Zirker, Margrét Eggertsdóttir und Grage), bevor „Germanen“-Rezeption (Mohnike) und (post-)moderne Sagaproduktion (Lambertus) den Band abschließen.

Og hér byrjar nú þáttasyrpa.

Lebenslauf von Stefanie Gropper

- April 2021: Eintritt in den Ruhestand
- August 2018: Verleihung des isländischen Falkenordens
- Oktober 2013 – September 2019: Mitglied im Universitätsrat der Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg
- Oktober 2006 – September 2013: Prorektorin für Studierende, Studium und Lehre
- Oktober 1999 – März 2021: verschiedene Amtsperioden als gewähltes Mitglied im Fakultätsrat der Neuphilologischen, später Philosophischen Fakultät; im Senat und diversen Senatskommissionen; im Universitätsrat; und als Prodekanin für Studium und Lehre an der Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
- ab Wintersemester 1996/97: Professorin für Skandinavistik an der Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
- Wintersemester 1995/96 und Sommersemester 1996: Vertretung einer C4-Professur für Nordische Philologie und Germanische Altertumskunde an der Universität München
- Sommersemester 1995: Habilitation mit der *Venia legendi* für Nordische Philologie. Titel der Habilitationsschrift: *Der „Antikenroman“ in der isländischen Literatur des Mittelalters. Eine Untersuchung zur Übersetzung und Rezeption lateinischer Literatur im Norden*
- November 1992 – Oktober 1994: Habilitandenstipendium der DFG
- 1991 – 2000: Vertreterin der deutschen Skandinavistik im International Advisory Board of the International Saga Conference
- Sommersemester 1987: Promotion im Fach Nordische Philologie; Titel der Dissertation: *Elemente des Erzählens. Die þættir der Flateyjarbók*
- November 1983 – Juni 1984: Promotionsstipendium des DAAD
- Wintersemester 1976/77 – Sommersemester 1983: Magisterstudium der Nordischen Philologie, der Neueren deutschen Literatur und der Älteren deutschen Sprache und Literatur an der Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität München und der Háskóli Íslands
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Schriftenverzeichnis von Stefanie Gropper

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I Schrift und Autorschaft

Literate Mentality and Epigraphy

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It has been customary to link the development of literacy in medieval society to the emergence of a literate mentality at least since Michael Clanchy's (2013; first published 1979) seminal work on the history of memory, writing, and the making of records in England 1066–1306. The idea of a literate mentality could be expected to be relevant for the study of written culture at large, but it has hitherto mainly been addressed in studies on medieval administrative writing. Here, we intend to reflect on how epigraphic materials of different kinds connect to the concept of a literate mentality using a tripartite model of writing suggested by the slavist Simon Franklin (2002). The sources analysed stem from the medieval Swedish town of Lödöse, where a rich and varied epigraphic corpus has survived, comprising monumental and ephemeral inscriptions, in the vernacular and in Latin, in Scandinavian runes and in the Latin alphabet.

1. The literate mentality

The idea that the introduction of writing into a culture would change the ways of thinking among its population has been part of historical literacy studies from its beginning. It has even been argued that writing changed the minds of people in a neuro-psychological sense, though few maintain such radical hypotheses today.¹ Clanchy's concept of 'literate mentality' also points to a transformed way of thinking in a literate culture in comparison with a pre-literate one, but it does not frame writing in itself as restructuring our cognition; instead, the literate mentality refers to emerging habits and assumptions among social groups concerning the written word, "a cluster of attitudes which literates [...] shared" (Clanchy 2013: 188). The attitudes in question concern the written word in contrast to memory and oral practices, such as an increased trust in written documents over memory in legal procedures. Clanchy offers no list of criteria as to what constitutes a literate mentality,

1 For a recent historical overview and analysis of the different relevant research traditions, see Melve (2019).

but presents a range of historical examples in the second part of his study to describe the process through which writing became natural in various societies.

The term ‘literate mentality’ is often referred to in scholarship, in the titles of works or briefly in introductions and conclusions, but is rarely discussed thoroughly. Anna Adamska and Marco Mostert (2004: 3) describe literate mentalities (in the plural) as something qualified by attitudes within a social group, namely when a group “takes it for granted that juridical acts are written down, when it considers the keeping of records important, and when its members have recourse to the archives thus formed”. Adamska (2004: 37) offers a more expanded discussion, later summarised in the two-volume anthology *Medieval Urban Literacy* (see Mostert/Adamska 2014a and 2014b), where the editors enumerate some “factors contributing to the development of ‘literate mentalities’” (Mostert/Adamska 2014a: 1 n. 2):

- It is seen as a ‘natural’ thing to preserve human actions in writing;
- It is thought that written records can be used to reconstruct the past;
- Writing is trusted as an instrument for fixing and defining events.

These aspects of the use of writing in a society are complemented by two other factors concerning the spread of literacy and attitudes towards literates:

- There is an increase in alphabetisation, that is, the spread of the elementary skills of reading and writing among ever more social groups;
- There is an increase in the prestige of those individuals who can read and write.

The first three factors listed above are formulated from the perspective of administrative writing. In fact, the emergence of literate mentality in a society has been viewed more or less as a consequence of a certain stage of bureaucratisation. For instance, Clanchy (2013: 19) claims that “lay literacy grew out of bureaucracy, rather than from any abstract desire for education or literature”, though he also stresses the importance of religious lay reading. Our intention in this article is to discuss how another form of writing, namely epigraphy, might connect to the factors suggested by Mostert and Adamska, in order to explore what other perspectives on literate mentality the epigraphic material has to offer.²

2. The administrative literacy of Lödöse

Before examining the epigraphic material, we will give an overview of the medieval town Lödöse and the traces of literate mentality in parchment and paper sources preserved there. Lödöse is situated around 40 km upstream of the large Göta river, which runs through the western part of present-day Sweden and into the Kattegat, and was the only port in the west of Sweden during the Middle Ages. The area along the river was a frontier region for the three Scandinavian kingdoms, and Lödöse was a meeting place for representatives of the

2 There have been several studies into epigraphy and medieval literacy (see, for example, Garrison 1999; Larsson 2009 and 2014; Zilmer/Jesch 2012; Zilmer 2019 and 2020), but the question of how epigraphy relates to a literate mentality has not yet been addressed explicitly.

different realms (see Harlitz 2010). The town was also visited by pilgrims on their way either to the continental mainland or to Nidaros, today's Trondheim (see Ekre 2003).

Lödöse was a trading place from the middle of the eleventh century and its importance and population grew through the centuries.³ Minting took place in the town from before 1150, which makes it one of the earliest sites of minting in Sweden (see Harlitz 2010: 78). Three parish churches, St. Peder, St. Olof, and St. Mary, were built in the twelfth century, and some were probably preceded by wooden churches. A Dominican convent was established in 1243 and replaced the former church of St. Mary (see Ekre/Hylander/Sundberg 1994: 25). In the fourteenth century, the Lödöse region was an important nexus of the kingdoms of Norway and Sweden, united in a personal union under King Magnus Eriksson in 1319 (see Harlitz 2010: 117). In 1473, a 'New Lödöse' was founded nearer to the coast, and the burghers of 'Old Lödöse' were advised to move there; the old town continued to exist, but never regained its wealth and importance (see Harlitz 2010: 128–147).

Charters indicate that Lödöse was frequently visited by the king and the royal family, especially during the fourteenth century (see Harlitz 2010: 109–116). The oldest preserved charters from Lödöse were issued in the 1270s, but it is only in the middle of the fourteenth century that there is a marked increase in preserved letters (see Larsson 2009: 209–210). This increase was not due to an intensified literate activity among the general population, however, as the letters were mainly issued by King Magnus Eriksson and his sons. As to the local town administration, some letters are preserved from the second half of the fourteenth century, and all of them concern errands in other towns overseas, mostly Lübeck (see SDHK nos. 6178, 6268, 6569, 7754, 9914, 10508, and 40696). In the 1420s and 1430s, a few charters, mostly concerning the selling of property, were issued by burghers of Lödöse (see SDHK nos. 19835, 20358, 22110, 22896, and 22885), and several letters concerning local matters were issued by the town council (see SDHK nos. 17715, 20625, 21133, 21181, and 23160). A novelty in the fifteenth-century charters from Lödöse is the use of the vernacular instead of Latin.

Thus, even if the habit of issuing charters was present in Lödöse from the late thirteenth century, there are no signs of this practice having spread to the local population. The town council letters from the second half of the fourteenth century, conversely, bear witness to a culture based on memory and oral agreements rather than the written word.⁴ Furthermore, the town law of Lödöse, preserved in a manuscript from around 1345 (Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket B 58), shows very little of expected writing practices among the population; only wills are mentioned as being a required written document (see Larsson 2014: 22). The expectation seems instead to be that agreements would be memory-based and testified by witnesses. The medieval Swedish town law, probably introduced in the late 1350s, placed higher demands on the urban administration in that it required that judicial proceedings be recorded in the town book, but there are no traces of such a town book from Lödöse (see Larsson 2014: 23).

3 A recent investigation of the history of the town is found in Harlitz (2010).

4 This can be seen in that even though the letters mostly deal with inheritance matters, they rarely mention the existence of written wills or other written documents. In dealings with matters in other towns overseas, however, it is obvious that written statements from the town council and recommendation letters were a necessity.

Traces of a local administrative literacy at Lödöse thus mainly stem from the fifteenth century, but one must take into account that a very large proportion of the sources has been lost (see Larsson 2009: 210). Still, Lödöse shows a similar pattern to other Swedish towns, and the sources give us reason to believe that written documents were probably not necessary for many of the local juridical and economic practices in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the first half of the fifteenth century, however, there seems to be an increase in the number of agreements put into writing, which may indicate the emergence of a literate mentality.⁵

3. Epigraphic material and different kinds of writing

The basic definition of epigraphy is the study of inscriptions, that is, texts incised, stamped, scratched, or painted onto durable surfaces such as stone, metal, wood, plaster, and the like (see Beltrán Lloris 2014; Cooley 2012: 117–119, 124–127; Favreau 1997: 5). Inscriptions may be categorised in a multitude of ways: by function, material, type of monument or object, type of text, or expected audience (for example, public or private). It is our contention that the many forms and functions of epigraphic material suggest that such sources are particularly fruitful for discussing the history of literacy, since they relate to all levels in a society.

The corpus of inscriptions presented here is classified according to a model suggested by the slavist Simon Franklin (2002: 20), which has also been used in research into medieval Scandinavian and medieval Rus' epigraphic material (see Rozhdestvenskaja 2012; Zilmer 2018). Franklin distinguishes between three kinds of writing – primary, secondary, and tertiary – based on the relation between the text and the text-bearing object. An overview of the three categories with definitions and examples is presented below (see Table 1):

Category	Definition of categories	Examples
<i>Primary writing</i>	The principal purpose of the production of the object is to bear a written message	Manuscript codices; birch-bark letters; wooden wax tablets
<i>Secondary writing</i>	Writing is integral to, but not the main purpose of, the object's production	Coins; seals; pictures with labels and captions
<i>Tertiary writing</i>	Writing is produced on objects that already exist for other purposes	Graffiti (on walls, pots, or other portable objects)

Table 1: Three kinds of writing according to Franklin (2002: 20)

These three categories have the potential to capture interesting aspects of habits that involve writing, as they are defined through different discursive conditions that consider

5 Manuscripts were surely also present in the Dominican convent in Lödöse already in the thirteenth century, but none have been preserved. One manuscript from the last part of the period with a connection to Lödöse may be an indication of an appreciation of literate culture among the Lödöse inhabitants, namely Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket A 1, a voluminous parchment folio containing Old Swedish translations of various books of the Bible. The manuscript was produced at Vadstena Birgittine Abbey and donated to the monastery by a Lödöse widow and her daughter, who lived as a sister in the abbey.

the text and the object as a whole. It is not always simple, however, to classify specific inscriptions unambiguously into one of the three categories (see Franklin 2002: 20; Zilmer 2020: 74–77), and it is not possible here for us to discuss each object in our corpus singularly; the following analysis therefore relies in large part on conclusions about the artefacts' function drawn in the editions of the texts. In any case, the aim of Franklin's trichotomy is not a final, unequivocal classification of each object, but while this general division of a corpus into distinct categories may conceal some ambiguous cases, it can still help us to analyse the relation between object and writing.

4. Epigraphic writing in Lödöse

The epigraphic material of Lödöse consists of inscriptions on portable objects, funerary monuments, and one baptismal font. The inscriptions on portable objects are mainly written with runes, as is the baptismal font, mostly in the vernacular but sometimes also in Latin, whereas the funerary inscriptions are all in Latin and written in Latin script. Most of the inscriptions on portable objects are archeologically dated, with the oldest findings stemming from the middle of the eleventh century. The majority of these objects are dated to the early and middle parts of the thirteenth century, whereas there are relatively few inscriptions from the fourteenth century.⁶ The inscriptions on funerary monuments, by contrast, mostly date to the fourteenth century. Altogether, the epigraphic material in Lödöse evidences traces of writing long before it becomes visible in juridical and economic documents on parchment.

4.1 Primary writing

Primary writing concerns objects with no function other than to carry text, such as paper and manuscript sheets and wooden wax tablets. Pieces of wood, often in the form of a stick, or bones were used as material for carving messages with runes, and have mostly been found in urban areas like Bergen and Trondheim in Norway and Sigtuna and Lödöse in Sweden. Among the Lödöse inscriptions, wooden sticks dominate over bones, a pattern shared with the Norwegian towns, whereas almost exclusively bone inscriptions have been found in Sigtuna, near present-day Stockholm. In many aspects, runic writing in Lödöse shows close connections to Norwegian runic culture, which is natural in view of its proximity to Norway.

Twenty-five pieces of wood, bone, or metal found in Lödöse can be interpreted as examples of primary writing. Many of the texts believed to be written in the vernacular have not been interpreted; even when we can read the runes, the linguistic meaning is only understood in a minority of the texts. Some inscriptions may never have been texts with an intended meaning, but we have no reason to believe that all the undeciphered texts were meaningless to those who wrote them. Furthermore, medieval towns were often char-

6 The number and dating of the inscriptions preserved may depend on the locations excavated and the conditions of their preservation; however, excavations have been undertaken in a relatively large number of places in the old town of Lödöse, and the number of findings are likely to be fairly representative of the different periods discussed.

acterised by a rich linguistic variation, and our shortcomings in understanding some of the texts may derive from a lack of knowledge of their linguistic milieu.

Most of the Lödöse runic texts are in the vernacular, but some are in Latin. Some texts belong to a Latin learned culture, like the cross-formed lead amulet with a liturgic formula for the commendation of the soul (Vg 264, 13th c.), while other texts consist of formulas that could be used without proficiency in the language, such as a wooden amulet with the inscription **gortin : gortan / æþ gortan / ufau · ufai · ufao** (Vg VGD1987;122).⁷ The word **æþ** is likely to refer to the Latin conjunction “et” (“and”), but none of the other words are identifiable as Latin or vernacular words; the three words or names beginning with ‘gort-’, however – usually spelled ‘Gordan, Gordin, Ingordan’ – appear on lead amulets found mainly in Denmark but also in Norway, and seem to have been used in spells against elves (see Imer 2021: 25–27).

For around eleven of the twenty-five primary-writing inscriptions, there exists no clear interpretation of the text and the object reveals no specific function. In the remaining cases, we can point out some typical functions. Some inscriptions seem designed to communicate a message from one person to another. The clearest example is a wooden stick with a text that begins with **uær þu · uin min · arnfintir** (Vg 280, 12th c.; “Be my friend, Arnfinnr!”), and continues with what seems to be a request to this Arnfinnr (a male name). Two other candidates (Vg 265, c. 1200 and Vg 271, beginning of 13th c.) are not as clear, but still present the linguistic form of a message. Furthermore, an inscription belonging to the category of tertiary writing, namely an inscription made on a wooden weaving-knife (Vg 279, 12th c.), also takes the form of a personal message. On the upper side of its blade is written **mun : þu · mik : man : þik : un : þu : męr : an : þrr** (“Think of me, I think of you! Love me, I love you!”), but the text on the underside is not as clear. As a speech act, it may not be precisely the same kind of message as the other examples in this category, but its text nonetheless takes the form of a message.

Another group of inscriptions seem to be part of basic literacy and numeracy activities. Some rune sticks contain only the *futhark* (runic alphabet), and may be seen as the results of writing practice, a demonstration of the alphabet in a teaching activity, or a record of alphabetic knowledge. Two of the *futhark* inscriptions also display examples of the so-called *Sankt Peders lek* (“St. Peter’s Game”), a numeric riddle represented by the seemingly irregular patterning of two different runes in a line of, say, thirty runes. If one knows the correct number, however, all the runes of one kind may be sorted out by counting all the runes in intervals of this number, for example, by counting every ninth rune (see Svärdström 1984: 23–26). There are altogether three sticks from Lödöse with the *Sankt Peders lek* (Vg 270, Vg 274, Vg 276, all 13th c.), including the two also containing the *futhark*.

A handful of the Lödöse inscriptions can be connected to magic and religious practices. Two have already been mentioned, namely the cross-formed amulet with a formula for the commendation of the soul and the amulet with the ‘Gortin’ formula. Furthermore, there exists a lead amulet with what is believed to be a pseudo-Latin inscription (Vg Fv1982;237), and a runic stick with an inscription in the vernacular with what seems to be a formula for bloodletting (Vg Fv1983;236).

7 Runic inscriptions are referenced using their established signa to indicate where they have been published. As is customary, runic inscriptions are transliterated in boldface.

A group of inscriptions has been interpreted as representing owner's tags, labels, or tally-sticks. Such inscriptions are primary forms of writing in that the object bearing them has no specific purpose other than to carry writing, but these tags would usually have been attached to items with other functions. Two wooden sticks (Vg 242 and Vg 283, neither of them dated) bear just a name and may have been used to mark ownership. Several of the uninterpreted inscriptions have also been suggested to be tags containing a name or initials. These are closely related to a group of inscriptions in the tertiary writing category, where ownership is marked on objects.

Among the findings from Lödöse, there are also writing utensils like wooden wax tablets and styli. A pair of wooden tablets have been found within the town, while twenty-one objects have been interpreted as styli.⁸ Some of them stem from the Dominican convent area, but most were found within the town, several of them at central locations. This distribution recalls the findings of tablets and styli in the medieval town of Lund in present-day southern Sweden, where a concentration of styli was found near religious institutions and close to the central market square (see Carelli 2001: 350). This contributes to the impression of a milieu in which writing was an accepted everyday practice. Research on styli and tablets in European towns has typically concluded that these tools were in use in mercantile, administrative, and educational contexts (see Carelli 2001: 352–353).

How does the epigraphic primary writing material connect to the factors held to be important for the development of a literate mentality? The wooden tablets have been interpreted as having been in use in administration and everyday business activities, but what makes this material distinct from writing on parchment is its ephemeral character: it was not used to write archival texts, but for everyday notes and drafts. Yet the tablets and styli, together with the epigraphic primary writing material, indicate an ability to read and write that must have been relatively widespread among the town population; most of the vernacular runic inscriptions seem to be examples not of professional writing, but of everyday pragmatic literacy among the population of Lödöse. If the spread of literacy is a key part of the development of a literate mentality, the epigraphic material evidences a growing literacy in Lödöse already in the thirteenth century, long before it became visible in texts on parchment and paper.

Furthermore, the epigraphic primary writing provides examples of different kinds of communication, an aspect lacking in definitions of a literate mentality. The runic messages are very brief, but the fact that writing is taken into use for distance communication should be seen as one important step in the development of a so-called 'language of distance', which describes a situation in which language and text need to be planned in advance and there is a more pressing need to imagine an assumed reader and their potential reactions (see Koch/Oesterreicher 1985: 15–43). Finally, in the epigraphic writing it is also possible to discern certain attitudes regarding the medium of runes; it was clearly possible for runic writing to be used for Latin inscriptions, even for the liturgy and in the communication with God, as is shown by the cross-shaped amulet. Runic writing was therefore not necessarily

8 We are grateful to Ing-Marie Trägårdh, antiquarian at Lödöse Museum, for providing us with the information about the styli findings.

seen as a low-status script, which is corroborated by the rune-inscribed stylus discussed below (see 4.3).

4.2 Secondary writing

Secondary writing is classified by Franklin (2002: 20) as writing that is “integral to, but not the main purpose of, the object’s production”. In turning to secondary writing in the epigraphic material from Lödöse, we focus on the few preserved medieval Latin funerary inscriptions from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Texts of this kind are not included in Franklin’s material, as medieval Rus’ lacked a native tradition of public burial inscriptions, but his definition of secondary writing fits well onto such inscriptions: their text is integral to the interpretation of the monument as the tomb of a specific individual, but is not the main purpose in manufacturing the monument.

Five medieval funerary monuments with inscriptions in the Latin language and alphabet have been found in Lödöse,⁹ of which the oldest examples stem from the 1320s. This is surprisingly late compared with the rest of the Västergötland region, where funerary monuments with Latin inscriptions appear already in the twelfth century, although runic inscriptions in Old Swedish still were the most common choice in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (see Blennow/Palumbo 2021: 43). Two of the tombstones, excavated in the churchyard of the parish church of St. Peder (see af Ugglas 1931: 197), commemorate men identified as merchants: Rotgher of the family *de Colonia* – originally from Cologne, but later established in Lübeck, and owners of a trade house with a local branch in Lödöse – and John of Münster, originally from Westfalen (see Ekre/Hylander/Sundberg 1994: 56). Their inscriptions are as follows:

Anno D(omi)ni [M]CCC^o XV^o in dominica palmar[um obiit Io]h(ann)es de Monasterio. Orate p(ro) a(n)i(m)a eius (see af Ugglas 1931: 198–199, fig. 42; Gardell 1945–1946: I, 232, no. 142).¹⁰

In the year of the Lord 1325, on Palm Sunday, John of Münster died. Pray for his soul.¹¹

Anno D(omi)ni M^o CCC^o XVII d(o)m(ini)ca die an(te) letare o(biit) Rotgher de Colonia. O(ra)t(e) pro eo (see af Ugglas 1931: 204, fig. 44; Gardell 1945–1946: I, 233, no. 144).

In the year of the Lord 1327, on the third Sunday of Lent, Rotgher of Cologne died. Pray for him.

The other three inscriptions were found in excavations of the Dominican convent church.¹² On two of them, the name of the deceased is preserved: John Brandenborch and Alfhild, wife of Simon. The third is fragmentary, and displays neither a name nor a secure date:¹³

9 The inscriptions are today kept in the church porch of St. Peder, except for the tombstone of Alfhild and the fragmentary tombstone from the fifteenth century, which are both preserved in the Museum of Gothenburg.

10 Since no standard corpus edition of Latin inscriptions in Sweden from this period yet exist, the transcriptions of the inscription texts presented here have been produced by the present authors from the images of the slabs published in af Ugglas (1931: 198–199 and 204, figs. 42 and 44).

11 All translations of the funerary inscriptions of Lödöse are made by Anna Blennow.

12 In addition, four very small inscription fragments were found, albeit only with a few letters preserved on each fragment: [---] ATI [---]; [---] BUR +; [---] II [---]; [---] III IN [---] (Gardell 1945: I, 204, nos. 53–56). The fragments are dated by Gardell on palaeographical grounds to the fourteenth century.

13 As for the previous three inscriptions (see n. 10), the transcriptions presented here are produced from the images of the slabs published in af Ugglas (1931: 304 and 306–307, figs. 99–100), except for the

An(n)o D(o)m(ini) M° CCC° LIII in die pentecost(is) o(biit) Ioh(ann)es Brandenborch. O(rat)e p(ro) eo (see af Ugglas 1931: 307, fig. 100; Gardell 1945–1946: I, 268, no. 207).

In the year of the Lord 1353, on Whitsunday, John Brandenborch died. Pray for him.

Anno D(omi)ni M° CCC° XLIX f(er)ia V ant(e) die o(mn)i(u)m s(an)c(t)or(um) o(biit) [Alfhi]ld uxor Sym(o)nis ho(s)p(itala)n(i) (see af Ugglas 1931: 306, fig. 99; Widéen 1940: 83, fig. 13; Gardell 1945–1946: I, 263, no. 197).

In the year of the Lord 1349, on the fifth weekday [Thursday] before All Saints' Day, Alfhild died, the wife of Simon, head of the hospital.¹⁴

An(n)o Domini MCC[CC ... orate pro e]o (see af Ugglas 1931: 304; Gardell 1945–1946: I, 304, no. 278).

In the year of the Lord 14[...]. Pray for him.

The formulas in these inscriptions are very similar. Each starts with an indication of the year, given as *anno Domini*, and then the date, expressed as a liturgical dating; thereafter, a concluding prayer is added, either “orate pro anima eius” or “orate pro eo”. All these features are in fact innovations compared with the Latin epigraphic texts of the preceding two centuries in Sweden. The first time that the year is expressed in a Latin funerary inscription is in 1263 (see Gardell 1945: I, 185, no. 20); this seems to be an isolated early example, however, since we do not find the next occurrence until 1295 (see Gardell 1945: I, 190, no. 26). From the beginning of the fourteenth century, the year is almost always included in such inscriptions. The only instances where the day of death is mentioned in Swedish funerary inscriptions previous to the fourteenth century are in two cases from Visby on Gotland, where the Roman calendar is used (see Blennow 2016: 305). This type of dating is the expected form up to 1300, and liturgical dating – as in the Lödöse inscriptions – occurs only from the fourteenth century on (see Gardell 1945: I, 160–161).¹⁵ The verb “obiit” (“died”) is not found in the material from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Sweden, nor are the formulae “orate pro eo” or “orate pro anima eius”, but both formulae become very common from the fourteenth century on.

The palaeography and layout of the text on the Lödöse funerary monuments also indicate a new trend of standardisation, in line with the general development of funerary epigraphy in medieval Sweden from the fourteenth century. After an initial period of experimenting with various letter forms in Latin epigraphy during previous centuries, letters were now standardised into Gothic script, first into majuscules and soon also into minuscules; the first occurrences of Gothic minuscules in the Swedish epigraphic material in fact derive from Lödöse, in the funerary inscriptions of John Brandenborch and Alfhild. The layout of the

inscription relating to Alfhild. That inscription was first published by af Ugglas (1931: 306), who read it only partly as “Anno Domini MCCCXLIX in die [...] orate pro eo”, as did Gardell (1945–1946: I, 304, no. 278). The text was later deciphered in its entirety by Harald Widéen (1940: 83, fig. 13), who also published a clearer photograph of the slab, from which the transcription here is made.

14 The text refers to the leprosy hospital, established to the north of the town at around the same time as the Dominican convent was founded (see Widéen 1950; Ekre/Hylander/Sundberg 1994: 25).

15 It is worth noting, however, that liturgical dating is found in a funerary inscription dated to the twelfth century in runes and Old Swedish from Broddetorp, Västergötland, (Vg 81; see Blennow/Palumbo 2021: 51).