

Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions



Tineke Looijenga



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25. LIEBENAU (Niedersachsen, Germany). In the Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover. A silver disc, possibly part of a sword belt. Dated 4th c. Found in 1957 in a rich man's grave. The runes are on the front, and very difficult to identify. The surface has been damaged and the runes are of unequal size.

RFYI

Düwel (1972:134–141) read and interpreted *ra[u]zwi* < Gmc **rauzwīh* “der Rohr (= Speer)-Geweihthe”; cf. Gmc **rauza/rausa* ‘tube, hollow stem’.

rauz- may mean ‘spear’ or ‘sword’, cf. ON *reyr* ‘reed’, in metaphorical sense ‘spear, sword’. The second part *-wī* may either be connected with OHG *wīhen*, OS *wīhian* ‘to consecrate’ (cf. above, EICHSTETTEN, nr. 15), or *-wī* may be derived from **wīgan* ‘to fight’.

If it is a PN, it is perhaps short for *Rauzwī(gaz)*, nsm. *a*-stem, which may mean either ‘The one who is consecrated to the spear’ or ‘Spear- c.q. Swordfighter’. A name connected with some warriors’ cult? *Raus* is also known as the name of one of the Hasding brothers (see also NYDAM V, found in 1997, with the legend *rawsijo*, chapter five, nr. 27).