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Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions



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21. Griesheim (Hessen, Germany), silver bow-fibula, one of a pair. In the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Darmstadt. Dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1975 in a woman's grave in a row-grave field.

The runes read: kolo:agilaprup

Y\$L\$:fXILfbRNb

kolo is a PN, nsm. n-stem, Kolo, perhaps connected with ON kollir 'helmet' (Gottschald 1982:297).

agilaþruþ is also a PN, n/asf. jō-stem Agilaþruþ. Agila- may be connected with Go. agis, OHG egī f. 'scare, fear' (Kaufmann 1965: 88, 89), or with Gmc *agjō- 'sword, edge', as in agilamudon on the Rosseland stone, Norway, and in the name of a Langobardic king Agilimund (cf. Antonsen 1975:51). A Bavarian family of dukes bore the name Agilolfing. About the second name-element -þruþ, cf. Friedberg.

The k rune of kolo has the form of the k from the younger

Danish fuþark. The runeform is also attested in Nordendorf II and in Hailfingen. I wonder whether this divergent rune might denote ch, product of the OHG soundshift of k. In that case we may read Cholo. The soundshift $k->k\chi-(ch-)$ occurred only in Alamanic and Bavarian. If this inscription should be labelled Frankish, we should stick to the reading **kolo**. See also Nordendorf II, nr. 31.

Another curiosity is the 1 rune in kolo: k, which has the form of the Anglo-Saxon cēn rune. This peculiar 1 rune is otherwise only attested in Charnay (once, in liano). In agilaþruþ, the sidetwig of the 1 is somewhat higher up the headstaff. Until the Griesheim inscription turned up, a reading liano or kiano in Charnay was arbitrary. Its occurrence in Agilaþruþ, where it can only denote 1 and certainly no k, was particularly decisive. The form of the rune might be influenced by the Roman 1. People who could write probably wrote both in Roman and runic lettering, so mutual influences were possible.

Kolo or Cholo is a Frankish or Alamannic man's name, because of the ending -o, cf. Boso, Freilaubersheim, and Bobo in Borgharen (Limburg, the Netherlands). The **r**-rune is similar to the **r** in Weingarten I; other parallels are: Nordendorf II, Wurmlingen, Niederstotzingen, Friedberg, Bülach and Soest. See p. 271.