Gnostic Runology – The Reemergence of Runic Studies

http://www.GnosticStudies.org/Runes

A European Esoteric Movement from the 17th Century

With the expansion of the Roman Catholic Religion during the Middle Ages (which lasted from about the 5th–15th century), the use of any non-Christian spiritual system was frowned upon. Depending on the country and the time period, one could easily be imprisoned or put to death for studying or practicing "Paganism" (other terms used for basically the same classification were 'hellene', 'gentile', and 'heathen'). Thus, even in Scandinavia, the study and use of the runes had declined, at least on a public level.

However, towards the end of the Protestant Reformation (approximately 1517–1648), there was a very interesting esoteric or occult current that began its movement through northern Europe: Rosicrucianism. Between 1614–1617, three anonymous manifestos were published in German, and later translated into other languages, spreading throughout Europe. These were:

- *Fama Fraternitatis RC* ["The Famous RC Brotherhood"] (1614),
- *Confessio Fraternitatis* ["The Confession of the Brotherhood"] (1615), and
- *Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosencreutz* ["Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosicross"] (1617).

In the early 17th century, these manifestos caused excitement throughout Europe by declaring the existence of a secret brotherhood of alchemists and sages who were preparing to transform the arts, sciences, religion, political and intellectual landscape of Europe. The books also called for others to come forward in support of the brotherhood and ignited a stream of publications sympathetic with the Rosicrucians between 1614 and 1620, amounting to more than 200 texts.

Johannes Bureus and the "Nordic Renaissance"



Right about this same time a book was published (although in Latin, not German), which is much less well known:

- *FaMa e sCanzla reDVX* ["The Famous Return of Scanzla"] (1616)

Its author was a Swede named Johan Bure (1568-1652), often Latinized as Johannes Bureus. In 1593, Bureus became a civil servant and was appointed as editor of religious texts in Stockholm. He lived in an area that had many runestones, but claims he never really noticed them until just before he moved to Stockholm, when one awakened his curiosity... He was captivated by the strange scripts and wanted to learn how to read them. Between 1599-1600 Bureus made an extensive trip throughout Sweden to find more runestones in an effort to document, translate and interpret them. The King even asked him to translate certain stones.

In 1604, Bureus was appointed tutor to the young Swedish Prince Gustavus Adolphus (who later became the King of Sweden in 1611). In the 1610s, Bureus was promoted to Royal Librarian. The following year, he wrote a runic 'ABC' booklet and wanted to allow other people to understand the language of the runes. Bureus seemed to have been influenced by other mystical currents of the time: Alchemy, Christian Kabbalah, Magic, etc. According to historians, he studied Paracelsus, Pico della Mirandola, Johann Reuchlin, Guillaume Postel, Heinrich Khunrath and others. Eventually, he became convinced that the runes had an occult side to them (similar to the letter-mysticism and numerology of the Kabbalah). He called his system of Runic Kabbalah *Cabala Upsalica* and its esoteric aspect *adulrunor*, the "Adul Runes" (or 'Noble Runes'). Thus, he is often called the first of the modern rune revivalists...

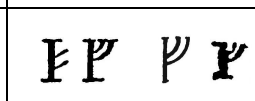
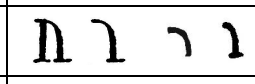
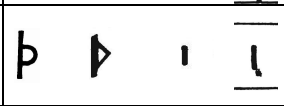
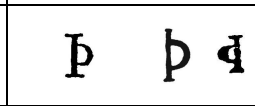
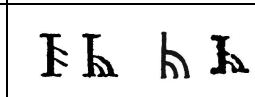
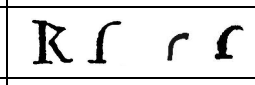
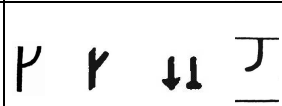
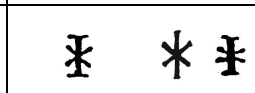
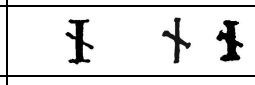
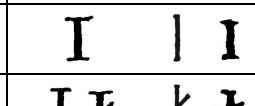
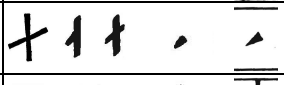
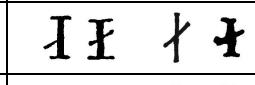
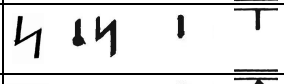
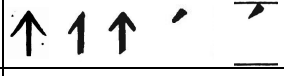
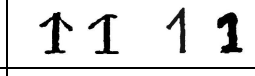
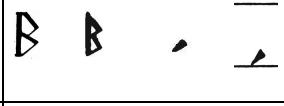
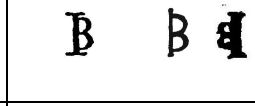
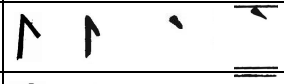
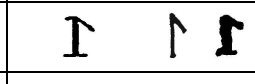
Different Historical Runic Alphabets or *Futhark*

Runic Alphabets have changed over the years and have their different letters or ways of writing the same letter varied by location, etc. The *Younger Futhark* (mainly used in Scandinavia) seems to have developed as a reduction of the *Elder* and the *Anglo-Saxon Futharks*:

Elder Futhark (150-700)			Anglo-Saxon Futhark (400-1000)			Younger Futhark (700-1150)		
1		F *fehu* (wealth)	1		F *feoh* (wealth)	1		F *fe* (wealth)
2		U *uruz* (cattle)	2		U *ur* (cattle)	2		U *ur* (iron/rain)
3		Th *thurisaz* (giant)	3		Th *thorn* (thorn)	3		Th *thurs* (giant)
4		A/O *ansuz* (a god)	4		O *os* (god or mouth)	4		A/O as/*oss* (a god)
5		R *raitho* (riding)	5		R *rad* (riding)	5		R *reio* (ride)
6		K *kaunaz* (ulcer)	6		K *cen* (torch)	6		K *kaun* (ulcer)
7		G *gebo* (gift)	7		G *gyfu* (gift)			
8		H *habalaz* (hail)	9		H *haegl* (hail)	7		H *hagall* (hail)
9		W *wunjo* (joy)	8		W *wen* (amusement)			
10		N *nathiz* (need/hardship)	10		N *nyd* (need/plight)	8		N *nauor* (need)
11		I *isa* (ice)	11		I *is* (ice)	9		I *isa/iss* (ice)
12		J *jera* (year/harvest)	12		J *ger* (year/harvest)			
						10		A *ar* (plenty)
13		E/I *eihwaz* (yew tree)	13		Ï *eoh* (yew tree)			
14		P *perth* (luck)	14		P *peoro* (pear tree)			
15		Z *algiz* (?)	15		X *eolh* (elk)	14		M *maor* (man)
16		S *sowulo* (sun)	16		S *sigel* (sun)	11		S *sol* (sun)
17		T *teiwaz* (the god Tyr)	17		T *tyr* (the god Tyr)	12		T *tyr* (the god Tyr)
18		B *berkana* (birch twig)	18		B *beorc* (birch tree)	13		B *bjork/bjarkan* (birch)
19		E *ehwaz* (horse)	19		E *eh* (horse)			
20		M *mannaz* (man)	20		M *mann* (man)			
21		L *laguz* (water)	21		L *lagu* (lake)	15		L *logr* (sea)
22		Ng *inguz* (the god Ing)	22		Ng *Ing* (the god Freyr)			
23		O *othila* (inherited land)	23		Œ *eoel* (estate/homeland)			
24		D *dagaz* (day)	24		D *daeg* (day)			
						16		Y *yr* (yew)

The *Younger Futhark* Variants and Bureus' *Adulruna* Alphabet

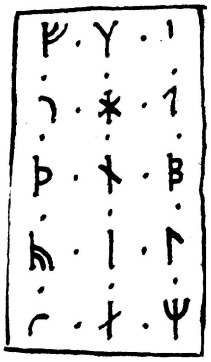
The basics of Johannes Bureus' "Adul Rune" system were to work with modified versions of the *Younger Futhark* runic alphabets (combining the "Long Branch", "Short-twig" and the *Hälsinge* or "Staveless" variants together):

	Younger Futhark Runes (700-1150)	Rune Sound, Name, and Scholarly Association		Bureus' *"Adul Runes"* (1600s)	Rune Sound, Name, Association and Numeric Value	
1		F *fe* (wealth, goods, cattle, sheep)	1		F, V *Frey* ("Freyr" – a phallic fertility god, as well as seeds, frogs and cow)	1
2		U *ur* (iron, rain, storm, spark)	2		U, V, Y *Ur* ("from", "out of", as well as clock or time)	3
3		Th *thurs* (giant, the god Thor)	3		T, Th *Tors/Thors* ("to dare", God United, as well as Thurs – the god Thor)	5
4		A/O as/*oss* (the god Odin, mouth of a river)	4		O, A *Odhes/Odhen* (Odin or Wodan, "oath", as well as Mercury)	7
5		R *reio* (ride, carriage, car, thunderbolt)	5		R *Rydhur* (advice, ride, as well as rudder)	9
6		K *kaun* (ulcer, boil, swelling)	6		C, G, Q *Kyn* (the reproductive power of nature, nature's generous or noble rod)	10
7		H *hagall* (hail)	7		H, Gh, Ch *Haghall* (skill, cunning, finesse, as well as art, "noble")	30
8		N *nauor* (need, fetters, want, necessity)	8		N *Nadh* (grace and distress)	50
9		I *isa/iss* (ice)	9		I, J *Idher* ("completely naked", remorse, repentance)	70
10		A *ar* (plenty/croh; year, harvest)	10		Æ, A *Æru* (honor and eagle)	90
11		S *sol* (sun)	11		S, Ss *Sun* (highest sun, hanging sun, son of light)	100
12		T *tyr* (the god Tyr, bull)	12		T, D *Tidhr* (tiger, priest)	300
13		B *bjork/bjarkan* (birch)	13		B, P *Byrghal* ("to start", "gate", the microcosm, the spirit immersed in matter, "son of war")	500
14		M *maor* (man)	15		M, Mm *Man* ("the one who closes the mouth" and "man as the measure of everything")	900
15		L *logr* (sea, liquid, moisture)	14		L, Ll *Lagher* (to drip, to pour, to bath, "arrange", law)	700
16		Y/R *yr* (yew, bow, money)				

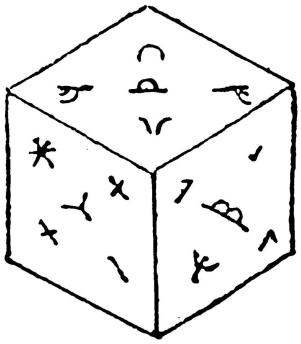
*Note that the 14th rune "Maor" of the *Younger Futhark* becomes Bureus' 15th "Man", and the 16th rune "Yr" of the *Younger Futhark* is combined with Bureus' 5th "Rydhur" to become a single rune.

The *AdulRuna* or Bureus' System of Occult Runology

Bureus' reduction (and slight reordering) of the different *Younger Futhark* variants into a single script appears to be the foundation or ground work for later Runologists such as Guido Von List.



Part of Bureus' system was *den Liggande Stenen* ["the Falling Stone"], a cube with three sides visible. On each of the visible sides, five runes are depicted (in a cross or X shape).

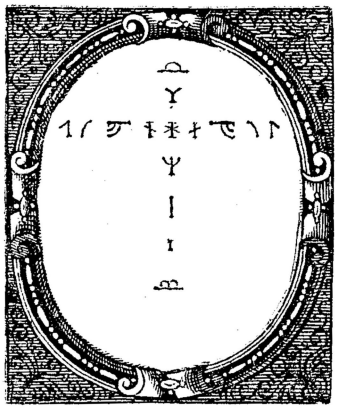


These 15 runes were divided into 3 groups of 5 runes each. In each group, at least 2 runes have been depicted as the mirror (or inverse) of one another.

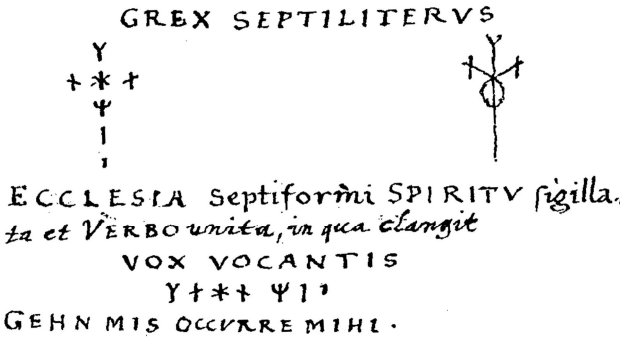
He arranged these same 15 runes into another cross-symbol (that he called *adulruna*) which seems to be related to the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, and the *Yggdrasil* World Tree (see the "Titulus III" image on the right below).

The *adulruna* is supposed to be a map of the universe and of the human being's progression through different levels of existence. It is both as a symbol of the human being and of the universe, the microcosm and macrocosm, with the ᚼ *Hagal* rune at its center. For Bureus, the initiate's progression was related to the vertical line of the cross.

ADVL-RVNÆ
TITVLVS III
De Pastoris Sacerdotio.



To help explain the larger rune-cross-symbol (with 15 runes), Bureus makes multiple other smaller rune-crosses (with between 4 – 7 runes) to highlight the significance of the runes and their interrelationship(s). An example of one of these smaller rune-crosses is below:



Here we have a translation of half a page from Bureus' *Adul-Runa* (1642) book:

GREX SEPTI LITERUS	GANG [OF] SEVEN LETTERS
	
ECCLESIA Septiformi SPIRITV sigilla-ta et VERBO unita, in qua clangit VOX VOCANTIS	Sevenfold SPIRIT [OF THE] CHURCH sealed and united [with the] VERB, in which [the] SOUND [of the] trumpet CALLS
	
GEHN MIS OCCURRE MIHI.	"GEHN MIS" OCCURS [TO] ME.

Bureus' Rune	ᛉ	ᚾ	ᚼ	ᚾ		ᛘ	ᛁ	ᛋ
Associated Sound	K/G	A/E	H	N		M	I	S/Z
Modern Rune	ᚴ	ᚨ	ᚼ	ᚾ		ᛘ	ᛁ	ᛋ