

# Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions



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32. OBERFLACHT (Baden-Württemberg, Germany). Found in the 19th century by Freiherr von Ow-Wachendorf on his property, and kept in the family's archaeological collection at Wachendorf (Black Forest). It is a silver *Sieblöffel*, dated 3rd th. 6th c. (Düwel 1994<sup>b</sup>:244). There is no find-report. A *Sieblöffel* is a Christian liturgical object. Runes on the back of the handle cover about the whole length, in unusual, relatively wide and large forms. The runeforms are unique, bearing no resemblance to other runic graphs. They read: **gba:dulþafd**

The **g** is a clear cross; the first **a** is reversed. The **b** rune is quite gross. The sidetwig of the **l** is almost lost in a crack. The sidetwigs of both **a** and **f** in **afd** are extremely long and set far apart.

**dulþ** is a well-known word, nsf. *i*-stem/rootnoun, ‘religious feast’, cf. OHG *tuld*, MHG *dult*, Go. *dulþs*.

The first part may be **g[e]ba** ‘gift’ nsf. *ō*-stem.

The sequence **afd** might be interpreted as *aft*, adv. ‘after, later’ (see BÜLACH, nr. 11), taken that the rune **d** is chosen because of the initial sound of its name, which had become *tag* (with OHG sound shift), instead of older *dag* < *\*dagaz*. Would the text mean as much as: ‘gift—feast—after’ indicating *this is a gift on the occasion of the feast?* (Other interpretations: Klingenberg 1974:81–94, and Opitz 1977:35).