

Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions



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40. SOEST (Westfalen, Germany). In the Soester Burgmuseum. A gold disc-brooch with almandines, dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1930 in a rich woman's grave in a row-grave field. The runes read: **rada:dapa gatano**



R F M F : M F D F

gatano is written as a rune-cross. The rune **g** X occurs with four runes at its extremities: **a t a n** (cf. SCHRETZHEIM III, nr. 38 and KIRCHHEIM nr. 24). An **o** is written separately. The first inscription is separated by a division mark.

dapa is a PN, nsf. *ō*-stem *Datha*.

rada might be a PN as well, nsf. *ō*-stem *Rada*, but since the middle dental is written **d** and not **þ** as in *Dapa*, I suggest **rada** to be a verb form, actually *rādē(e)* (with ending *-ē < -ai*), cf. OHG *rātan*, OS *rādan* 'to guess, to read'. **rada** is then 3 sg. pres. opt. 'may Datha guess (read)'. The final **a** in **rada** may be intended as analogy to the first **a** (vowel harmony) or to rhyme with *Datha*.

gatano may be a PN, nsm. *n*-stem. Obviously, *Datha* should guess the name that was hidden in the rune-cross. A parallel case may be the Charnay-inscription, in which Liano had to find out (the name of) *Idda*.