Vine-workers of the Lord: a Reading of the Runic Sequence and Imagery of the Tollemache *Orosius* Flyleaf

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ABSTRACT

The flyleaf to the Tollemache *Orosius* (London, British Library, Add. MS 47967, 1r) which includes a vine-scroll panel, symbols of the four evangelists, and several smaller notes and sketches, constitutes one of the most extensive sequences of manuscript marginalia to survive from Early Medieval England. Its iconographical complexity is compounded by the inclusion of a sequence of sixteen runes that has long puzzled runologists. This article offers a contextual interpretation of the Tollemache *Orosius* runic sequence informed by the wider corpus of English *runica manuscripta* and the particular iconographical, literary and manuscript context in which the runic note appears. Elucidating the link between the runes and the surrounding imagery helps to unravel the iconographical scheme of the flyleaf, centred on the Vineyard of the Lord. It also provides an insight into the reception of the Old English *Orosius* in late-tenth-century Winchester and the importance of the layered meaning of the *vinea domini* motif for both monastic communities and the secular church.

London, British Library, Add. MS 47967 (Winchester, s. x[1]) commonly known as the Tollemache, Lauderdale, or Helmingham *Orosius*, is the earlier of the two extant manuscript copies of the Old English version of Orosius's *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII* ('Seven Books of History against the Pagans').[1] The Old English translation of Orosius' work, which Godden characterises as a lively adaptation of its fifth-century Latin source rather than a 'mere digest',[2] was probably made in the late ninth or early tenth century and has long been associated with the revival of learning and turn to the vernacular instigated during the reign of

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[1] The standard edition is *The Old English Orosius*, ed. J. M. Bately, EETS ss 6 (London, 1980), and it is referenced throughout this article. For a reliable translation see *The Old English History of the World: an Anglo-Saxon Rewriting of* Orosius, ed. and trans. M. R. Godden (Harvard, 2016), the alternative title reflecting Godden's view that the Old English work constitutes an adaptation rather than a straightforward translation of its Latin source.

[2] M. R. Godden, 'The Old English *Orosius* and its Sources,' *Anglia* 129 (2011), 297–320, at 319. Bately also notes that 'although it is normally thought of as a translation a more accurate description would be paraphrase […] by an author who […] had no hesitation in making radical but unacknowledged alterations to his primary source', *The Old English Orosius*, p. 93.

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King Alfred.[3] The Tollemache manuscript was copied in the early tenth century,[4] and as Bately assesses, 'all the indications are that the scriptorium responsible for script and illustrations was at Winchester.'[5]

The Tollemache manuscript is a plain working copy of the *Old English Orosius* (*OEO*), and its illustrations are limited to small zoomorphic initials opening the first five books and the occasional geometric design in the margins.[6] Far more impressive, and well known, is the informal sequence of drawings on fol. 1r, a flyleaf prior to the start of the main text (see Fig. 1). Along with several small scribbles and sketches, including a stylised face and one or two apparent pen-tests, this flyleaf includes more elaborate – and accomplished – drawings of the four evangelist symbols rendered in black ink with orange-red pigment used for detailing. The largest of these is a supplicant Matthew, labelled as *Maðieus*,[7] who proffers a cup towards what the British Library catalogue refers to as a 'leaf and scroll ornament', but which might be described more accurately as a large vine-scroll panel.[8] Ker suggests that these drawings, along with the musical notation on fol. 1v, were made in the late tenth or early eleventh century,[9] which means that we need to read this sequence of illustrations in a post-Benedictine reform context quite different to that which usually underpins discussion of the translation of the *OEO*: namely Alfred's educational reforms or the expansion of Wessex under his

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[3] Godden gives a date range for the translation between 870 and 930 and suggests that glosses to a Carolingian copy of Orosius' *Historiarum* may have inspired many of the adaptations made by the English translator, 'The Old English *Orosius* and its Sources,' pp. 316–7.

[4] N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), p. 164. Campbell also dates it to 'the quarter century immediately following upon the literary activity of King Alfred and his circle', *The Tollemache Orosius: British Add. MS. 47967*, ed. Alistair Campbell, EEMF 3 (Copenhagen, 1953), 18.

[5] *The Old English Orosius*, ed. Bately, p. xxiv. Bately here follows the assessment of M. Parkes, 'The Paleography of the Parker Manuscript of the Chronicle, Laws and Sedulius, and Historiography at Winchester in the Late Ninth and Tenth Centuries', in his *Scribes, Scripts and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation, and Dissemination of Mediaeval Texts* (London, 1976), pp. 143–69, at 159–60. The scribe is almost certainly the same as that of the Parker Chronicle entries for 925–55, using a script 'typical of Winchester in the middle of the tenth century', J. Roberts, *Guide to Scripts used in English Writings up to 1500* (London, 2005), p. 52.

[6] The most impressive of which is a small interlace design on the bottom of fol. 61v.

[7] The faint 'reversed' image of Matthew that can be seen to the right of the *vinea domini* panel is copied on the reverse of this folio (1v) and shows through the parchment. It lacks the definition of the Matthew symbol on fol. 1r and is almost certainly a test drawing for this more accomplished illustration.

[8] British Library, 'Detailed Record for Additional 47967', *Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts*, http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=8372

[9] Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 165. Page confirms that the runes were written in a late-tenth-century hand, R. I. Page, *An Introduction to English Runes*, 2nd ed. (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 198.

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Figure 1: London, British Library, Add. MS 47967, fol. 1r. Reproduced by permission of the British Library

immediate successors.[10] However, whilst the decoration of the flyleaf is at a historical remove from the copying of the *OEO*, Stokes argues that an eleventh-century

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[10] The traditional ascription of the translation of the *OEO* to the latter years of Alfred's reign (d. 899) maintained by Bately has been challenged in recent years, with Godden positing a *terminus*

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note made later in the manuscript again 'shows many of the features' of a Winchester hand, suggesting that the manuscript remained in the same location in which it was first copied.[11] The late-tenth-/early-eleventh-century illustrations on fol. 1r were almost certainly added in this same scriptorium, and may thus reflect the evolving meaning of the *OEO* for the community at Winchester.

The striking illustrations of the Tollemache *Orosius* flyleaf are accompanied by labels in a late-eleventh-century hand, which are important for identification of several of the images. In addition to bearing his name, the symbol of the evangelist Mark, for example, is clarified as a representation of the *agnus dei* rather than the usual winged lion with a short caption in Anglo-Saxon minuscules. By far the largest caption, however, accompanies the vine-scroll panel, which is labelled as VINEA DŃI (*vinea domini*, or 'Vineyard of the Lord') in Roman majuscules, the prominence of the label reinforcing the impression that it is the vine-scroll that is central to the iconographical programme of the flyleaf. Adding to this heady mix of iconography, text and informal decoration is a prominent sequence of sixteen large runes from the Old English *fuþorc*, placed above the vine-scroll and below the symbols of John and Mark. Despite the fact that the same runic letters are repeated in close proximity, this runic sequence was apparently misconstrued as an alphabet sequence by a later annotator, who provided an inaccurate alphabetic gloss of each runic character up to 's' and captioned it with the label 'abcde' (see Fig. 2 below).[12]

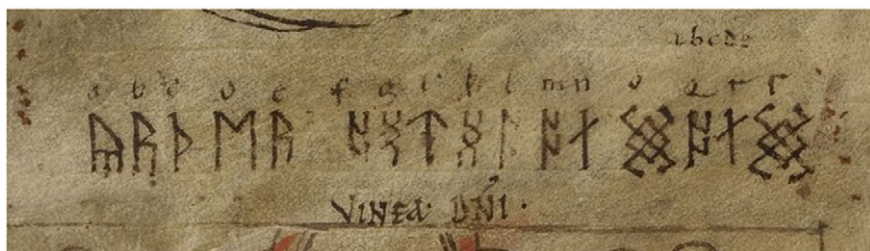

Figure 2: The Tollemache Orosius runic sequence, London, British Library, Add. MS 47967, fol. 1r. Reproduced by permission of the British Library

ad quem of 930 ('The Old English *Orosius* and its Sources', p. 297), and Francis Leneghan arguing that the translation is better placed in the context of the expansion of Wessex and imperial aspirations of Alfred's immediate successors, F. Leneghan, '*Translatio Imperii*: the Old English *Orosius* and the Rise of Wessex', *Anglia* 133.4 (2015), 656–705.

[11] P. A. Stokes, *English Vernacular Minuscule from Æthelred to Cnut c.990–c.1035* (Cambridge, 2014), p. 88.

[12] The twelfth rune, **n**, is the only one labelled correctly, and this is quite by chance: the fifteenth rune is also an **n**-rune and is labelled with an 'r' (see Fig. 2).

This prominent sequence of runes has for a long time puzzled runologists. R. I. Page offers a (faulty) transliteration of the runes but admits that he has 'no idea what their significance is', though he does, like Ker, ascribe them to a 'late tenth-century hand'.[13] Parsons, who points out that Derolez missed this particular runic note in his compendious study of the English *runica manuscripta*, refers to it as a 'perplexing runic sequence'.[14] In a recent article, I suggested that we should perhaps view the runes as decorative, their meaning derived through their visual and display qualities rather than any linguistic meaning.[15] The current article revises this opinion: the runes present a meaningful inscription that is not only fully in accordance with the images that it accompanies, but also helps to elucidate the overall scheme of this complex series of drawings and their relationship to the Old English *Orosius*. The following analysis of the runic sequence treats it as an inscription in the first instance, and follows runological conventions, including distinguishing wherever possible between the reading of the inscription – a process rooted in close observation informed by linguistic analysis – and the interpretation of the runic sequence which takes into account the wider context and draws on different areas of expertise.[16] It is, however, also important to recognise the unique context of manuscript runes and to acknowledge that the tradition was at least partly revived in the scriptorium,[17] leading to internal conventions quite distinct from those found in the epigraphical tradition, including scribal ciphers, the regular use of runes to stand in for their proper names, and playfully cryptic uses of runes represented most famously in the riddles of the Exeter Book.[18] These manuscript conventions, and the extent to which this sequence fits into the picture we have of runic usage in late Anglo-Saxon England, will be addressed in the discussion that follows.

THE RUNIC SEQUENCE

The runic sequence in the Tollemache *Orosius* is written neatly along one of the pre-ruled lines that suggest this flyleaf was originally intended as a writing page.

[13] Page, *An Introduction*, p. 198.

[14] D. Parsons, 'Anglo-Saxon Runes in Continental Manuscripts', *Runische Schriftkultur in kontinental-skandinavischer und -angelsächsischer Wechselbeziehung*, ed. K. Düwel (Berlin, 1994), pp. 195–220, at 216, n. 55, referencing R. Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta: the English Tradition* (Brugge, 1954).

[15] T. Birkett, 'The Page as Monument: Epigraphical Transposition in the *runica manuscripta* Tradition of Early Medieval England', *Manuscript and Text Cultures* 1 (2022), 205–231, at 219.

[16] See M. P. Barnes, 'What is Runology and Where Does it Stand Today', *Futhark: International Journal of Runic Studies* 4 (2013), 7–30, in which he argues that 'the reading of runic inscriptions is more central to runology than their interpretation', and that whilst adjacent disciplines as archaeology, art history and textual criticism may inform an interpretation, runology is primarily a linguistic discipline (at 10).

[17] M. P. Barnes, *Runes: a Handbook* (Woodbridge, 2012), p. 155.

[18] Exeter Cathedral Library MS 3501 (Exeter or Crediton, s. x ex).

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It is also carefully aligned with the surrounding iconography, starting on the same vertical line as the evangelist symbol of John above and ending precisely at the edge of the vine-scroll panel. The runes are for the most part clearly rendered, though there is at least one contentious rune-form which has led to several different readings. Page's transliteration, **yrþeroŋtnæonḡonḡ**, contains uncharacteristic errors. He reads the tenth rune as an **æ**-rune, though it has a clear uptick on the upper branch, meaning that it should probably be construed as an **a**-rune (see Fig. 2) and he also transliterates the identical rune-form ᚼ as **ŋ** ⟨ng⟩ in the first instance and **n** ⟨n⟩ in the second.[19] The transliteration on the *RuneS* database departs from that offered by Page, but introduces further errors. They have **yrþeroŋaoŋ(j/g)oŋ(j/g)**, rendering both the ᚼ rune and ᛏ rune as ⟨ŋ⟩, and missing two characters from the sequence.[20] The following transliteration corrects these errors and reflects the fact that there is a clear space between the fifth and sixth runes:

ᚱᚹᚦᛖᚱ ᚠᚷᛏᚷᚠᚠᛏᚷᚠᛏᚷ   yrþer oŋtŋ(a)onḡonḡ

<center>RUNE-FORMS</center>

There are several rune-forms in the sequence that merit further discussion. The **n**-rune (runes twelve and fifteen) is a reversed form of the standard Old English ᛏ, though this variant is found in circulating runic alphabets, including that of Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS. 9565-9566 (St Gallen, s. ix ex).[21] In the so-called alphabet of Nemnivus there is a reversed **n**-rune preserved as a variant in Oxford, St. John's College 17 (Thorney Abbey, s. x ix–xii in) and London, British Library, Cotton Galba A ii (Canterbury, s. xi/xii), where it is given the value /f/.[22] However, as there are no other forms that suggest the use of Nemnivus's alphabet rather than the Old English *fuþorc*, it is much more likely that this is a straightforward rendering of the **n**-rune: its reversed form might, however, suggest that either the rune writer was not confident in their command of the script, or was working from an exemplar with this variant form. The **r**-rune resembles a *wynn* (or **w**-rune) with a leg that protrudes at right angles beneath it, a more exaggerated variant of the **r**-rune found throughout the Exeter Book, though not one that creates any ambiguity about which rune-form is intended. The rune *gār* ᚷ is a

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[19] Page, *An Introduction*, p. 198. It should be noted that in 1999 when Page revised his *Introduction*, he may not have had access to the high-resolution images available today, but his lack of care with the transcription may also reflect his assessment of manuscript runes as 'a fairly trivial […] secondary development', *An Introduction*, p. 198.

[20] 'Fol. 1r, l. 2 of BL Add MS 97967, British Library', *RuneS* Database online.

[21] Derolez, *Runica manuscripta*, p. 120.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

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variant of the common Germanic **g**-rune (usually rendered as **ḡ** but transliterated in the *RuneS* database as **g/j** following their system of notation) that seems to have been developed in Northumbria to distinguish a velar from a palatal /g/ in this particular dialect of Old English.[23] It features in the Ruthwell Cross inscription, and is included in many circulating runic alphabets, but does not seem to have been used in epigraphy outside the northern reaches of Northumbria.[24] The form used here, with additional upticks on the legs, is typical of *fuþorc* circulating in English manuscripts, including that preserved in Cotton Domitian A. ix (South East England, s. ix ex, with alphabet added s. xi/xii, fol. 11v).[25] The use of this rune most likely does not reflect an attempt at phonological distinction between velar and palatal /g/, but simply the rune-writer's reliance on a manuscript *fuþorc* or runic alphabet in which both the usual **g**-rune and variant were glossed with ⟨g⟩: the variant may have been chosen for its more unusual shape, as I suggest below.

Three runes are affected by rubbing or scuffing of the manuscript page, which have obscured parts of the character. Runes six and seven are missing the lower parts of their staves (see Fig. 2), but the upper section is diagnostic of the rune-form, and there is no ambiguity that these are an **o**-rune and an **ŋ**-rune respectively, the latter rune only appearing twice in the epigraphical corpus.[26] The tenth rune is a more difficult case, as the rubbing has affected the branches rather than the stave of this rune, creating ambiguity as to which of the three Old English forms based on the common Germanic **a**-rune this character is supposed to represent. Page reads it as an **æ**-rune, with no uptick on either branch, but the high-resolution image makes it clear that there is definitely an uptick on the upper branch, rendering an **a**-rune, and it is possible that an uptick on the lower branch, rendering an **o**-rune, has been obscured by the rubbing. There are also two hairline pen marks to the left of the rune which could conceivably represent an attempt at a bind rune, or the use of a single stave as the basis for two or more rune-forms, though equally, these could simply be meaningless marks. The placement of this

[23] Barnes, *Runes: a Handbook*, p. 40.

[24] See G. Waxenberger, 'The Runes c *ċēn* ᚳ and g *ġ(i)efu* ᚷ and their Velar Counterparts in the OE *fuþorc* and Pre-*fuþorc*', *Wege zur Konfiguration der Zeichen-Phonem-Beziehung*, ed. A. Bauer and G. Waxenberger, LSS 3 (Wiesbaden, 2021), 185–204.

[25] According to H. Gneuss and M. Lapidge, *A Bibliographical Handlist of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Toronto, 2014), p. 254.

[26] The *Ing*-rune ᚸ is found in the Ruthwell Cross and Thames scramasax inscriptions: see G. Waxenberger, 'The Development of the Old English *fuþorc*', *Von den Hieroglyphen zur Internetsprache: Das Verhältnis von Laut, Schrift und Sprache / From Hieroglyphs to Internet Language: the Relation of Script, Sound and Language*, ed. G. Waxenberger, H. Sauer, and K. Kazzazi, with the assistance of K. Majewski, LSS 2 (Wiesbaden, 2017), 209–247, at 240. With thanks to the anonymous peer-reviewer for suggesting that its rarity in epigraphical contexts points to this rune having been inspired by a *fuþorc* circulating in a manuscript.

rune within round brackets in the above transliteration reflects the likelihood that this is an **a**-rune, but that the reading is not completely secure. All other rune-forms in the Tollemache *Orosius* note are clear and easy to read.

<div align="center">DIVISIONS / SPACING</div>

The sequence does not use a punctus as a divider between words, as is typical of some multi-word runic notes including that of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41 (Southern England, s. xi[1]).[27] Instead, word division may be indicated by spacing between runes. Whilst the division between the fifth and six runes is unambiguous, and is reflected in the transliteration above, there are other possible divisions discernible, such as between runes three and four, ten and eleven, and twelve and thirteen (see Fig. 2). Including these divisions would yield **yrþ er oŋtŋ(a) on ḡonḡ**, a sequence which already looks less like gibberish and more like an attempt at a meaningful Old English text. There are other features of the note which strongly suggest that this is not simply a random sequence of runes. Firstly, the runes are not copied following a *fuþorc* or abc order, as would be expected if the rune shapes alone were important. Secondly, several runes that appear in the initial sequence of both alphabet and *fuþorc* (such as the **b**, **c** and **d** of the alphabet, and the **f**, **u** and **c** of the *fuþorc*) are not used; and thirdly, several runes are repeated. If this is an inscription presented simply for its decorative features, then it is one that was set up to look much more like a 'real' (or linguistically oriented) written message than we might expect. One part of the runic note in particular does seem to be linguistically implausible, namely the sequence **oŋtŋ(a)**. However, it should be noted that if we are dealing with a damaged **o**-rune at the end of this sequence rather than an **a**-rune, then it would constitute a palindrome, a textual form unattested in the corpus of Old English runic inscriptions, but with some parallels in the runic tradition in Scandinavia.

<div align="center">RUNE VALUES</div>

It is possible that the Tollemache *Orosius* runes may not follow the traditional ascription of sound values to the runes, either due to the scribe having consulted a runic alphabet with non-standard transliterations, or through use of an obscure cipher in which the runes are deliberately encoded. Some *fuþorcs* circulated with individual runes given the wrong sound value: for example, Derolez highlights two Munich manuscripts in which the Northumbrian adaptation of the **g**-rune is

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[27] This note is found in the margins of p. 448. See T. Birkett, 'Correcting Bede's Corrector? A Runic Note in the Margins of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 41', *N&Q* 59.4 (2012), 465–70.

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given the value /a/. [28] However, these mistakes generally occur at the level of individual runes rather than representing a wholesale reassignment of values, and the use of one of the wildly inaccurate runic alphabets circulating on the Continent (sometimes labelled as Syriac or Arabic letters) as a model would be easy to spot because of their profusion of non-standard rune-forms. Whilst an elaborate cipher is possible, we can discount the most common cryptographic strategies. A vowel-substitution cipher, such as the strategy outlined in the Vitellius Psalter whereby vowels are replaced by the following consonant, is unlikely as the sequence does contain vowels, and in a reasonable proportion.[29] For the same reason, we are certainly not dealing with a vowel-less cipher such as that written in drypoint above *Riddle 64* in the Exeter Book, and neither are vowels replaced by invented characters, as on the right panel of the Franks Casket.[30] Because the Tollemache *Orosius* runic note uses standard rune-forms, it also clearly does not fall into the category of numerical cipher based on the division of the rune row and the indication of the position of the rune,[31] or any of the related runic cryptographic systems listed by Derolez.[32] An anagram is a possibility, and this cryptic strategy is well attested in the Exeter Book, in scribal signatures and in the aforementioned Vitellius Psalter, where it is combined with vowel substitution to render a complex 'read he whoso may' formula.[33] Whilst an anagram or another elaborate code cannot be discounted, the following reading proceeds on the basis that the most straightforward approach to the Tollemache *Orosius* runes is to look for meaningful sequences based on the conventional values of the letters. If any part of the sequence as it stands produces meaningful Old English, this must be considered the most likely reading.

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[28] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Lat. MS. 14436 (s. xi in) and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Lat. MS 19410 (s. ix). The scribe Ratgar also uses the $\bar{g}$-rune to render the second /a/ in his name, probably due to the influence of one of the Munich manuscripts. See Derolez, *Runica manuscripta*, pp. 411–12.

[29] For the discourse on 'secret writing' in the Vitellius Psalter, see Ciaran Arthur, *Charms, Liturgies and Secret Rites in Early Medieval England*, AS Stud. 32 (Woodbridge, 2018), 159–62.

[30] On the vowel-less runic cipher of the Exeter Book, see *The Old English Riddles of the Exeter Book*, ed. C. Williamson (Chapel Hill, NC., 1977). Williamson cites personal correspondence with Page as the source of the interpretation of the **bunrþ** inscription as a rendering of *beo unreþe!* ('be merciful!') with vowels added, p. 327.

[31] Attested in the so-called *isrunar* tract of a Continental provenance. These coded runes include the so-called *hahal*-runes which indicate the position of the rune numerically through branches emerging on both sides of a stave, a cipher which features, for example, on the eighth- or ninth-century Hackness Cross.

[32] See Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta*, pp. 137–70.

[33] Arthur, *Charms, Liturgies and Secret Rites*, p. 163.

READING

The first sequence of five runes, ᚣᚱᚦᛖᚱ, is clearly separated from the next sequence by a large gap and is unambiguous in terms of its individual rune-forms. The only question is whether we are dealing with a single sequence – **yrþer** – or with two individual words with a break after the first three runes, giving us **yrþ er**. In both cases, the first element appears to be a rendering of the well attested noun *yrþ*, meaning 'arable/cultivated land', as in the charter formula 'x æcera yrþ land' ('x acres of cultivated land') or 'the fruits of the land', as in the statement from the Old English *Bede* that the Roman legions 'ripe yrð fortreddon & fornamon' ('trampled and laid waste ripe crops') (Book 1, Ch. 9).[34] If we are dealing with a single word formed from this root, it could perhaps be a rendering of the unattested **yrþere*, a noun of profession formed using the common agent suffix *-ere*.[35] **Yrþer*, without the final /e/, is not a viable form at this date, but several other nouns formed in the same way are found with the final letter denoted by an abbreviation mark: for example both *godspeller(e)* ('evangelist') and *Caser(e)* ('emperor') in the OE gloss to the Durham Gospels[36] and *mynter(e)* in MS E of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.[37] Indeed, there is a trace of ink in the large space following the **yrþer** sequence, and it is at least conceivable that this gap may be accounted for by an abbreviation mark intended to designate the missing -e.[38] The first possibility, then, is that we are dealing with an abbreviated form of the profession **yrþere*, 'crop grower', or 'tiller of the earth', equivalent to the commonly attested *yrþling* ('tiller, husbandman') but formed in a similar way to other nouns denoting agricultural professions such as *sowere* ('sower'), *grindere* ('miller') or *feormere* ('food provider').

The second possibility is that we are dealing with two words, a reading perhaps supported by the larger space between the third and fourth runes than between the other runes in this first part of the sequence (see Fig. 2). In this case the **er** following the noun *yrþ* could be construed as the preposition *er*, a common variant

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[34] *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 4 vols., ed. T. Miller, EETS 95 (London, 1890) I, 44.

[35] The use of the agent suffix *-ere* to form professions 'seems to have increased in productivity even in the late Old English period', H. Sauer 'Old English Word Formation: Constant Features and Changes', in *Aspects of the History of English Language and Literature*, ed. O. Imahayashi, Y. Nakao and M. Ogura (Frankfurt am Main, 2010), pp. 19–38, at 35.

[36] *Rituale ecclesiae Dunelmensis*, ed. A. H. Thompson and U. Lindelöf (Durham, 1927), pp. 47 and 187.

[37] *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle MS. E*, ed. S. Irvine, AS Chronicle: a Collaborative Edition 7 (Cambridge, 2004), 57.

[38] It is worth noting that an unambiguous abbreviation marker is used to denote the missing letters of *domini* in the *vinea domini* title just below the runic sequence (see Fig. 2), though here it is clearly a superscript mark.

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of *ær* ('before')[39] appearing particularly – but not exclusively – in Kentish orthography of the tenth century onwards,[40] and in texts ranging from anonymous charters and homilies to the *Old English Version of St. Augustine's Soliloquies* attributed in an *explicit* to Alfred.[41] It also appears once as a variant spelling of *ær* in Ælfric's Lives of Saints, suggesting that it was a form common enough in Wessex even in a post-Reform context.[42] The rune writer may have chosen this variant spelling because the **æ**-rune, ᚫ, is very easily confused with the **a**-rune, ᚪ and **o**-rune, ᚩ, also used in the inscription, whereas the **e**-rune, ᛗ, has a more distinctive shape that would have appealed – like the exotic **ḡ**-rune – in the context of a display text. Both these readings – **yrþer(e)* and *yrþ er* – have something to recommend them. However, the reading *yrþ er* ('crops/tilled land before…') requires no amendment to the runes as they stand and takes account of the space between the third and fourth runes, and for these reasons should perhaps be considered preferable to the unattested noun **yrþer(e)* ('tiller of the earth'), even if *er* is a variant of the usual West Saxon *ær*. Both are of course viable openings to a statement that connects with the large 'Vineyard of the Lord' panel directly below the runic sequence.

The final six runes, ᚩᛝᚪᚾᚷ, **onḡonḡ**, are similarly unambiguous in their forms. The rune writer uses the *gār*-rune, ᚷ, unique to the expanded Old English *fuþorc* and probably developed in Northumbria to distinguish a velar from a palatal /g/,[43] but such nuance was almost certainly lost on the Tollemache notator whose reasons for choosing the **ḡ**-rune, ᚷ, over the common Germanic **g**-rune, ᚷ, are probably to do with the more elaborate form of the Northumbrian variant: the fact that it

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[39] For a full list of variants and uses of the word see *Dictionary of Old English: A to I* online, ed. A. Cameron, A. Crandell Amos, A. diPaolo Healey *et al.* (Toronto, 2018), *s.v. adv., prep. and conj. ǣr*

[40] A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 122–23. The second fronting found in the Mercian dialect of the Vespasian Psalter which raised /æ/ to /e/ should be 'sharply distinguished' from the later Kentish development of *ǣr* to *ēr*, as 'the latter occurred later than *i*-umlaut, and hence affected /ǣ/', whereas the earlier change did not affect the long vowel, p. 123 and 64. R. M. Hogg also concludes that this *æ*-raising 'is distinctively Kt and not, directly at least, connected with similar changes in Merc.', *A Grammar of Old English: Volume 1: Phonology* (Blackwell, 2011), 206; on the Kentish merging of vowels, see also D. Ringe and A. Taylor, *A Linguistic History of English Volume II: The Development of Old English* (Oxford, 2014), 336–37.

[41] Though see M. Godden, 'Did King Alfred Write Anything', *MÆ* 76.1 (2007), 1–23, in which he argues that with respect to the *Soliloquies* 'we have no need to confine a search for an author to Alfred's circle or his lifetime' (at 18).

[42] 'We cweðaþ on gerimcræfte *Cathedra Sancti Petri* seofon nihton **er** þam monðe þe we Martius hatað' (We name [that day] 'St Peter's Chair' according to the calculation of the calendar, seven nights **before** the month we call March), *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, ed. W. W. Skeat, EETS os 76 (London, 1881), i, 218–19.

[43] Barnes, *Runes: a Handbook*, p. 40.

would not be confused with Roman majuscule ⟨X⟩ may have added to its appeal.[44] Despite the slightly oversized space between the first two runes and the remainder of the sequence, we are unlikely to be dealing here with the preposition *on* followed by the OE masculine noun *gong*, meaning 'action of going / journey', because we would always expect a dative ending following this preposition, and neither are we likely to be dealing with the imperative singular form of the verb *gangan* (*gang/gong*) giving the instruction 'go' / 'proceed', well attested in the Old English charms,[45] as it would leave us unable to account for the preposition *on* that would precede it.[46] It is more likely that we are dealing with OE *ongong*, an attested strong masculine noun. OE *ongong* glosses Lat. *ingressus* ('entrance'), *irruptio* ('attack, irruption') and *impetus* ('violence / attack').[47] It is also used in the sense of 'violent compulsion', notably in the Rushworth Gospel rendering of Mark 5:13. Mark relates how 'unclean spirits' are exorcised from a madman by Christ and enter into a herd of wild pigs who rampage down the mountain and are driven into the sea with 'micle ræse & ongonge' ('great force and violent compulsion').[48] *Ongong* also appears to encompass the (negative) sense of worship in the quotation from the tomb of Saint Augustine provided in the Old English *Bede*, which relates how the first Archbishop of Canterbury led king Æthelberht and his people 'from deofulgilda ongonge to Cristes geleafan' ('from worship/irruption of idolatry to belief in Christ') (Book 2, Ch. 3).[49] The noun *ongong* is thus closely connected with a violent irruption of some kind, whether it be the violent compulsion of a herd of animals, the irruption of idol worship, or a more conventional *irruptio* ('attack'). The initial

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[44] See footnote 43 above. The **g**-rune is mistaken for a Roman majuscule X by the scribe of the Exeter Book, who copies the alphabet form when giving the solution to *Riddle 24*, *higoræ* ('jay'). See Page, *An Introduction*, p. 189, n. 4.

[45] Imperative *gong* is used six times in a single charm against elf sickness, G. Storms, *Anglo-Saxon Magic* (Nijmegen, 1948), pp. 223–28 and it also ends imperative statements, as in the Saviour's commands to the bedridden man related in Ælfric's homily for the second Sunday in Lent: 'aris, and ber þin legerbed, and gang' ('arise, and bear your sick-bed, and go'), *Homilies of Ælfric: a Supplementary Collection*, 2 vols, ed. J. C. Pope, EETS 259 (London, 1967), I, 184.

[46] The word *on* could also conceivably be a variant of the conjunction *ond*: this abbreviated form is found once in the text of the Old English *Orosius* as well as in several manuscripts produced in the tenth century as Bately points out, *The Old English* Orosius, ed. Bately, p. xlix.

[47] *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary based on the Manuscript Collections of the late Joseph Bosworth*, ed. T. N. Toller (Oxford, 1898), p. 751. The glossing of *ingressus* in the late-tenth-century Sailsbury Psalter is the only attested use of the late West Saxon form *ongang*: otherwise, it is the Anglian *ongong* that is preserved. See *The Sailsbury Psalter*, ed. C. Sisam and K. Sisam, EETS os 242 (Oxford, 1969), 243.

[48] *The Macregol Gospels or The Rushworth Gospels*, ed. K. Tamoto (Amsterdam, 2013), p. 118.

[49] *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Miller, p. 106. The use of *ongong* in the Early West Saxon of the OE *Bede* – and in such an important context as the quotation from St Augustine's tomb – would have exposed most ecclesiasts educated in those 'books most necessary to know' to this word in this particular form.
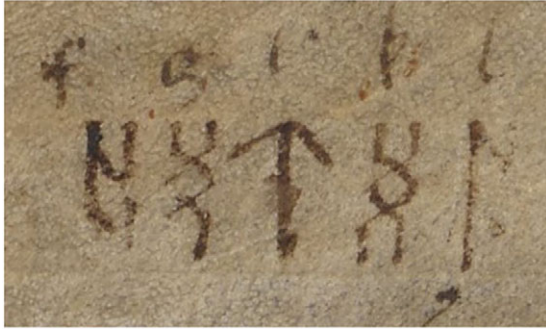
Figure 3: Detail from the Tollemache Orosius runic sequence, London, British Library, Add. MS 47967, fol. 1r. Reproduced by permission of the British Library

statement *yrþ er* ('cultivated land before…') is thus completed: it is cultivated before a violent irruption.[50]

The middle sequence of runes, ᚠᛟᛏᛜᚠ, presents the most serious challenge to linguistic interpretation, and contains at least one contentious form: the tenth rune in the sequence and the final rune in Fig. 3 above. As previously mentioned, Page reads this as an **æ**-rune, which lacks an uptick on either branch.[51] However, there is clearly an uptick on the upper branch, which would make it an **a**-rune, and the rubbing on this part of the sequence leaves open the possibility that there was also an uptick on the lower branch, which would make it an **o**-rune, and a repetition of the first rune in this five-rune sequence. This distinction between the **æ**, **a** and **o** runes (English variants all derived from a single rune in the common Germanic *fuþark*) is important. If we take the sequence to be **oŋtŋæ** as Page did, then we are almost certainly dealing with a nonsense word. If we take it to be **oŋtŋo**, then we are dealing with a palindrome,[52] and if we accept the reading **oŋtŋa** then there is more scope for reading this as a word which has a grammatically plausible ending. We can discount the first of these possibilities on the grounds that there is an unmistakable uptick on the upper branch of the rune. It is tempting to read this as a palindrome, as these miniature text-riddles have a long association with runic practice.[53] The Kylver

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[50] The preposition *ær* most often triggers the dative, but also regularly takes the accusative, as in the AS Chronicle entry 'Yware … ferde sona ær dæg to þone abbot Turolde', *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. Irvine, p. 88. Here, the strong masculine noun *ongong* takes the accusative.

[51] This rune can be compared with the small **æ**-rune that appears floating in an empty space at the top of the page near the inner margin (see Fig. 1).

[52] Page, *An Introduction*, p. 198.

[53] In addition to the Kylver stone, palindromes are found on the Kälder medallion (IK 286) and Flemløse runesone (DR 193), whilst the *sator arepo* formula is often set out as a palindrome. See B. Mees and M. MacLeod, *Runic Amulets and Magic Objects* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 150.

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stone from Gotland in Sweden, dating to *c.* 400, has the palindrome **sueus** inscribed above a complete *fuþark* and a symbol resembling a Christmas tree that probably represents a stacked **t**-rune, and perhaps a repeated invocation of the god Tyr. The meaning of the **sueus** palindrome is unclear, but a word that read the same both forwards and backwards was probably considered to be a particularly powerful form of writing, and 'may have had a magic function of some kind' as Spurkland acknowledges.[54] When it comes to the Tollemache *Orosius* runes, we are of course a long way from the carving of magic charms in late-Iron-Age Norway, but the palindrome seems to have had some longevity as an operative sign, continuing in use in medieval Scandinavia and also featuring in the English scriptorium in both Latin word-games and in charms.[55] It is conceivable that the palindrome may thus have retained an association with operative practice for a scribe attempting to represent older traditions.

Adding to the impression that the scribe may have intended this sequence in the Tollemache *Orosius* as a palindrome used to denote something pre-Christian and crudely operative is the choice of runes used to form this linguistically implausible word: *ōs, Tir* and *Ing*. The name of the **o**-rune that starts this sequence, *ōs*, means 'pagan god', whilst both the *Ing*-rune and the *Tir*-rune are named after individual pre-Christian deities, Ingvi and Týr in the Norse tradition.[56] The *Tir*-rune in particular is associated in Norse literary tradition with the invocation of victory, and is found carved on an early-seventh-century sword pommel from Faversham in Kent, probably for this same purpose.[57] Though in the Old English *Rune Poem* these runes 'are defined […] in such a way as to avoid the pagan connotations still visible to us in their names'[58] – including by associating Tir with the god Mars and describing it as a 'certain sign' that helps with navigation – the names themselves

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[54] T. Spurkland, *Norwegian Runes and Runic Inscriptions*, trans. B. van der Hoek (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 16.

[55] A palindrome within a cross design was a centrepiece of the popular work by Hrabanus Maurus *De laudibus sanctae crucis*: some eighty copies of this ninth-century work survive, including Trinity College, Cambridge MS B.16.3 (379) (South or West England, s. x med), where the palindrome features on fol. 30v above a miniature showing the author as supplicant to the cross. The *sator* formula found in a charm of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge MS 41, is also in origin a Latin palindrome 'sator arepo tenet opera rotas'. It was 'particularly popular in the Middle Ages as a general talisman' according to R. Grant, *Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 41: the Loricas and the Missal* (Amsterdam, 1979), pp. 18–21.

[56] Tir/Tiw is the English analogue to the Norse god Tyr, whilst Ing (or **Ingwaz* in its reconstructed proto-Germanic form) is probably another name for the god Freyr, as attested, for example, in the compound Ingvi-Freyr in the skaldic poem *Haustlǫng*, 'Þjóðólfr ór Hvini, *Haustlǫng* 10', ed. M. Clunies Ross, in *Poetry from Treatises on Poetics*, ed. K. E. Gade and E. Marold, Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages 3 (Turnhout, 2017), 446.

[57] On the use of this rune on early English weapons and funeral urns, see Page, *An Introduction*, pp. 92–3.

[58] M. Osborn, '*Tir* as Mars in the Old English *Rune Poem*', *ANQ* 16.1 (2003), 3–13, at 4.

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were unaltered and were likely still charged with pre-Christian associations. It is certainly notable that the only three runes from the *fuþorc* which retained an association with pagan deities through their conventional names are those used in the sequence.[59] It is of course extremely unlikely that at this late date we would be dealing with a genuine invocation of pre-Christian gods within the scriptorium at Winchester. Rather, if this is indeed a palindrome with pre-Christian associations, it probably represents a learned Christian 'best guess' at what a crudely operative inscription from the pagan past might look like. We should remember that even Ælfric, the most orthodox of late-tenth-century ecclesiasts to emerge from the reformed monastic school at Winchester, 'knew of rune magic': indeed, as Page points out, 'the casual way he referred to it [in a sermon on the efficacy of the mass] implies also that his audience could follow his meaning without explanation.'[60] It is thus not inconceivable that an **oŋtŋo** palindrome may be intended not only to represent an ostensibly powerful written sequence, but one that anyone with a knowledge of the rune names *ōs*, *Tir* and *Ing* would readily associate with the gods worshiped in pre-Christian England, and perhaps further associate with 'a Scandinavian belief in rune magic' amongst the Viking war-bands increasing their attacks on England in the late-tenth and early-eleventh centuries.[61] There is, of course, no exact equivalent of this use of runes surviving elsewhere in the (small) Old English *runica manuscripta* corpus.[62] However, uses of runes in the scriptorium are characterised above all else by their inventiveness, ranging from riddles and anagrams to the operative letters of the *Solomon and Saturn* Pater Noster and the use of a runic abbreviation as 'a sort of archaicism, an heirloom' in *Beowulf*.[63] As well as being fairly well attested in the Scandinavian runic tradition, a palindrome would be entirely in keeping both with the riddlic and highly symbolic uses of runes in Old English manuscripts, and with the attitude towards runes held by Ælfric in the late tenth century, associating the script with a credulous pagan past.[64]

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[59] Other runes such as *þorn* were updated from their common Germanic names (in this case *þurisaz, 'ogre') to defuse their pagan meanings. For a detailed discussion of these adaptations in the Old English Rune Poem, see M. Halsall, *The Old English* Rune Poem*: a Critical Edition* (Toronto, 1981).

[60] Page, *An Introduction*, p. 112.

[61] *Ibid.*

[62] For an overview of this corpus, see Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta*, and the summaries by Page, *An Introduction*, pp. 60–79 and 186–89, which include mention of some manuscript runes missed by Derolez.

[63] D. Fleming, 'Eþel-Weard: The First Scribe of the *Beowulf* -Manuscript', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 105 (2004), 177–86, at 181. See also T. Birkett, *Reading the Runes in Old English and Old Norse Poetry* (Abingdon, 2017), pp. 36–38.

[64] For further discussion of this sequence in relation to the wider context of English *runica manuscripta*, see the concluding section of this article.

Another possibility is that we are dealing with an ordinary word with the common noun ending, -*a*. A noun in the genitive plural would make sense in terms of the syntax of the runic sequence, giving us an irruption or attack 'of' something. However, what this word might be is entirely obscure, and it seems particularly strange to give a nonsense word an ending that integrates it with the sentence. What we might be seeing here is a Winchester scribe trying to have his cake and eat it: writing the palindrome **oŋtŋo** as a reference to pagan gods (or idolatry more generally), but subtly modifying the last letter from an ᚠ to an ᚨ in order to give this palindrome an ending that expressed its grammatical relationship to the rest of the sentence, whilst visually maintaining the illusion of a palindrome.[65] It is thus possible to construe the meaning of this riddlic sequence as 'of *os*, Ing, Tir' or more generally as 'of pagan gods'. We might recall that Bede refers to Augustine delivering the people from 'deofulgilda ongong' ('irruption of idol worship'), and this might be essentially what the **oŋtŋ(a) ongong** sequence means, the *deofulgilda* represented in a riddlic way by the use of a palindrome and reference to particular rune-names retaining an association with the pagan gods. Indeed, by using the term *ongong* in this context, the scribe might well be making a deliberate reference to the quotation on St Augustine's tomb, and to his purging of idolatry from England.

There is a further piece of runographic evidence that may support this interpretation. As pointed out in discussion of this rune-form, the final rune in the **oŋtŋ(a)** sequence seems to have been altered at some point, with the addition of two hairline pen marks to the left of the main stave (see Fig. 3). This may be a casual mark, but it may also be an attempt at a bind-rune – two or more runes using a single stave – incorporating the diagonal branch of the variant **n**-rune, ᚻ, used elsewhere in the sequence. If the final letter of a palindrome was indeed modified to an **a** to designate the genitive plural ending of strong nouns, perhaps the rune writer also thought to represent the genitive plural ending of weak nouns for good measure, by scratching an **n** onto the same stave.

In summary, I read this sequence of runes as opening with the phrase *yrþ er* ('crops/cultivated land before…'), followed by a runic sequence **oŋtŋ(a)** referencing pre-Christian deities or idols and possibly adapted to designate the genitive plural ending of both weak and strong nouns, and concluded by the noun *ongong* ('violent irruption'). The transcription *yrþ er *oŋ tŋ a* ongong* is acceptable in terms of its grammar, with *ongong* in the accusative and the nonsense word / pseudo-palindrome **oŋtŋ(a)** taking a genitive plural ending.[66] Putting together the whole,

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[65] The subtle difference between the true palindrome ᚠᚢᛏᚢᚠ and the modified form ᚠᚢᛏᚢᚠ is difficult to discern: the variant thus maintains the visual quality of a palindrome.

[66] Whilst the expected form of the noun *ongong* in late West Saxon would be *ongang*, this relatively obscure word would have been encountered most often in written form in the early West Saxon

we have the descriptive label 'cultivated land before violent irruption': a violent irruption either 'of pagan gods' or more abstractly connected to the return to idol worship signified by a crudely 'pagan' palindrome. Either way, this runic sequence should not be dismissed as a random sequence of letters: it serves to comment on the large *vinea domini* carpet panel that it accompanies.

DISCUSSION: THE ICONOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Whilst dismissing occasional uses of runes in manuscripts as being of low priority for the runologist, Derolez points out that that this category of *runica manuscripta* is 'as a rule more intimately connected with their environment' than that of runic alphabets or circulating rune lore.[67] Just as the archaeological context, the materiality and purpose of an object, and iconography or artwork must be taken into account when offering interpretations of epigraphical inscriptions such as those on the Northumbrian high crosses, the manuscript environment provides vital information for the interpretation of runic sequences that appear detached from any circulating alphabet. In the case of the Tollemache *Orosius* runes, the most obvious immediate context is the text and imagery surrounding the runes – used to date the runic sequence to the late tenth/early eleventh century – but we should also be aware of the positioning of the runes within the wider literary context of the *OEO* that the complex of imagery on folio 1r prefaces. Approached in this way, the runes can help to unlock a dense sequence of text and iconography and help us to understand the relationship of the flyleaf to the wider manuscript environment.

CULTIVATING THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD

As the central illustration on the flyleaf and the image headed by the runic sequence (see Fig. 1), the *vinea domini* panel is clearly key to the iconographic programme of the Tollemache *Orosius* flyleaf, and to interpreting the runic sequence in its immediate context. Vine-scroll ornamentation is a prominent feature of early English sculpture that serves to distinguish it from the closely related Irish tradition,[68] and prominent examples can be found in combination with runes on the Ruthwell, Bewcastle and Hackness Crosses. There may have been a particular affinity for the image of the vine in the Early English Church in part because of its role in mediating the transition between veneration of trees in

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dialect of the OE *Bede*, whose memorable quotation about the expelling of idol worship on Augustine's tomb it may well be referencing.
[67] Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta*, p. 423.
[68] See E. Kitzinger, 'Anglo-Saxon Vine-scroll Ornament', *Antiquity* 10.37 (1936), 61–71, at 62.

the pre-Christian tradition and veneration of the cross.[69] However, as Ó Carragáin points out, the vine-scrolls that feature on early Christian monuments were clearly influenced by Roman models, and the association of the vine with the Passion on the Ruthwell Cross has its basis in scripture.[70] The patriarch Jacob describes his son Joseph as a fruitful vine (Gen. XLIX.22), and in the New Testament John relates Christ's injunction to his disciples, telling them 'I am the vine; you are the branches' (John XV.5). This is an allusion that is of course bound up with the eucharistic association of the vine with the blood of Christ, with representations of the vine in Christian art always being open to possible 'Christocentric, Eucharistic, sacrificial and salvific connotations'.[71]

The vineyard – the particular manifestation of the vine imagery found in the Tollemache *Orosius* flyleaf – is itself a symbol with a layered significance. The 'Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard' (Mat. XX) is the primary point of reference in the New Testament, but this explanation of the working of God's grace through the parable of the vineyard builds on a connection between the vineyard and the Kingdom of God already well established in the Old Testament. After Noah and his sons are told to 'replenish the earth' (Gen. IX.1), the first thing the patriarch does is plant a vineyard, the Old English Heptateuch rendering this passage with the statement that 'Noe ða yrðlingc began to wyrcenne ðæt land & gesette him wingeard' ('Noah the earth-tiller began to work the land and established a vineyard for himself') (Gen. IX.20).[72] Here we might note the close connection between the descriptor *yrðlinc* and the action of planting a vineyard, suggesting that viticulture very much fell within the purview of the term *yrþ*. Noah's vineyard, whilst symbolic of the blessed plot granted to post-diluvian man – the second Eden – is also of course the source of Noah's drunkenness and Ham's violation of his father's modesty.[73] The biblical vineyard, then, from its

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[69] See M. D. J. Bintley, *Trees in the Religions of Early Medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2015), p. 27.

[70] For the most detailed examination of the 'classicizing style' of the vine scroll, and the potential of the vine-inscribed cross to act as 'an image of the integration of two cultures' see É. Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the* Dream of the Rood *Tradition* (Toronto, 2005), esp. pp. 47–8. Kitzinger further speculates on the particular routes through which this vine-scroll motif might have reached England, positing a Coptic or Eastern Mediter-ranean model, 'Anglo-Saxon Vine-scroll Ornament', pp. 67–8.

[71] M. S. Doquang, *The Lithic Garden: Nature and the Transformation of the Medieval Church* (Oxford, 2018), p. 115. Doquang, in this survey of foliate ornamentation in medieval churches, stresses the myriad ways the vine may have signified to a medieval audience, alluding amongst other things to paradise, the Eucharist, the golden vine of the temple of Solomon, whilst also expressing the centrality of nature to the lived experience of an agrarian society.

[72] *The Old English Version of the Heptateuch*, ed. S. J. Crawford, EETS 160 (London, 1922); repr. with additions by N. R. Ker (1969).

[73] On the parallels between Noah and Adam as 'men of the soil', see J. Blenkinsopp, *Creation, Un-Creation, Re-Creation: a Discursive Commentary on Genesis 1–11* (New York, 2011), p. 154.

introduction as a new Eden in Genesis IX, is both symbolic of God's blessing to his chosen people and a source of jeopardy should its proper tending be neglected and its fruits misused.

The link between the vineyard and the new Eden must be inferred in Genesis, but there is no such ambiguity in the song of Isaiah, which establishes the vineyard as a transparent symbol of the Kingdom of God on earth, and which is the primary antecedent to the 'Parable of the Vineyard' in Matthew XX. Isiah's song is essentially an admonition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and sons of Judah for neglecting God's work, using the vineyard as a symbol of God's chosen people and their privileged situation, and its tending as a representation of the work that must be undertaken to ensure that the Lord's Covenant is maintained. Isiah V opens with the statement that 'My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill' (Isa. V.1) and goes on to describe the establishment of the Lord's Vineyard in some detail. This includes the preparation and tilling of the earth, removing stones, fencing the land and planting the hill with the choicest vine (Isa. V.2). The term *yrþ* ('crops/cultivated land') is thus a very appropriate descriptor for both the vineyard in its state of grace and the lush *vinea domini* panel at the centre of the Tollemache *Orosius* flyleaf which illustrates this biblical trope in such clear detail, even down to the inclusion of a central structure which may be a representation of the watchtower or temple that Isiah tells us is built in the midst of the vineyard (Isa. V.2) (see Fig. 1).[74]

Isiah tells us in no uncertain terms that 'the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant' (Isa. V.7): the ruination of the carefully established vineyard prophesised in Isiah V thus serves as a straightforward allegory of the fall from grace of the men of Judah who have neglected to care for and cultivate God's Kingdom on earth, and whose existence is now threatened by enemies amassing outside their lands. Because the vineyard and the chosen people have brought forth only 'wild grapes', God threatens to ravage that same *yrþ* through the instrument of the Assyrian host: 'I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste…' (Isa. V.5–6). We might accurately describe this prophesied punishment as an *irruptio* ('irruption') or *impetus* ('attack or assault') on the vineyard, with the term *impetus* itself used in the vulgate to describe the *impetus tempestatis* ('rush of storms', or 'whirlwind') that will be visited in punishment on the men of Judah (Isa. V.28). The Old English term *ongong*, which as we have seen glosses both *impetus* and *irruptio*, is thus a particularly accurate description of what happens to the cultivated vineyard when faced with the Lord's displeasure at its failure to bear

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[74] Or alternatively, representing Christ as the root of the vine.

good fruit. The eaten hedge and trampled wall also conjure up the image of the ingression of animals, and links to the use of OE *ongong* to describe the herd of wild pigs that with 'micle ræse & ongonge' ('great force and violent compulsion') stampede down from the mountains. The violent and threatening connotations of the term *ongong* is thus fully in keeping with the Lord's laying waste of the *vinea domini* in response to the failure of the men of Judah to cultivate his works and has a clear message for the reader of the Tollemache *Orosius* flyleaf centred on the depiction of the Lord's Vineyard: this is what happened to the House of Israel, and this is what will also happen if the vineyard is not cultivated under the New Covenant. It serves as both a description of Isiah V and a warning to the Christian reader that the work of 'vine-dressing', or cultivation of God's works, does not cease.

The charges Isiah levels at the tenants of the vineyard – the leaders of the House of Israel – are manifold, and include drunkenness, iniquity, immoderation, wickedness and a lack of knowledge of the Lord (Isa. V.11–23), the sons of Judah memorably characterised as a people who 'draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope' (Isa. V.18). Their fall into sin and the ingression of poisonous 'wild grapes' into the vineyard is notably configured as a backsliding and a reversal: specifically, the destruction of the vineyard is caused by those 'that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter' (Isa. V.20). Such a reversal might well be interpreted in a late-tenth- or early-eleventh-century English context as the abandonment of God and adoption of what the Church regarded as contemptible heathen practices, and at the more extreme end, even a return to the worship of false gods. Ælfric certainly expresses a concern about the adoption of heathen practices, most famously in his 'Letter to Brother Edward' (*c.* 995) in which he admonishes English men for abandoning the ways of their fathers for the customs of the Danes, ending his diatribe against modish haircuts with the thundering pronouncement that 'se beo amansumod þe hæðenra manna þeawas hylt' ('he will be cursed who keeps the customs of heathen men').[75] Another late-tenth-/early-eleventh-century ecclesiast in the reformist tradition, Wulfstan of York, in addition to repeatedly referencing the adoption of 'hæþene unsida' ('heathen vices') by the English in his *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, also makes specific reference to apostasy, stating that 'her syn on earde apostates abroþene & cyrichatan hetole' ('here in the land are degenerate apostates and hostile church-haters').[76] It thus appears that regression to heathenism was perceived

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[75] M. Clayton, 'Letter to Brother Edward: A Student Edition', *OEN* 40.3 (2007), 31–43, at 42.

[76] *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, ed. D. Whitelock, 2nd ed. (London, 1952), p. 47. Additional reference to 'hlafordswican ond æbere apostatan' ('traitors and notorious apostates') is also made in one witness to *Sermo Lupi*, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 113 (Worcester, s. xi[2]), p. 50, n. 168.

as a very real and present danger in late-tenth-/early-eleventh-century England, a period 'marked by problems with the royal succession, renewed Viking attack, [and] the resulting vacillations of Æthelred's reign'.[77] Certainly, when contemplating those Sons of Judah who practiced wickedness and 'cast away the law of the Lord of hosts' in Isiah V, a late-tenth-/early-eleventh-century ecclesiast would be quick to make the connection with contemporary cultural backsliding, whether that be the adoption of heathen styles and Danish cultural practices, or more serious regressions amounting to apostasy and idol worship.

The instrument of God's punishment of the Sons of Judah takes the form of the Assyrian army who are poised to attack Jerusalem: God 'will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth' Isiah tells us (Isa. V.26) and this multitude 'shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea' (Isa. V.30). Reference to the laying waste of the Lord's Vineyard through the instrument of a pagan aggressor would again have resonated with an English readership at the turn of the eleventh century, with the country facing an increasing tempo and ferocity of Viking attacks. As Whitelock points out, 'sermons attributing present evils to the sins of the people are not uncommon',[78] but Wulfstan of York's strenuous depiction of the moral degeneration of the English in his *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* is remarkable for the frequency with which the successes of the pagan Vikings are referenced as a punishment. Just as Judah's 'vineyard in a very fruitful hill' was threatened by an external instrument but placed in existential danger due to internal neglect, so might the Lord's Vineyard be threatened by the external instrument of the Vikings in late-tenth- or early eleventh-century England, but become truly imperilled – in the thinking of Wulfstan and his contemporaries – by cultural backsliding, the adoption of heathen customs, and a failure to keep the faith. In the late tenth century the parallels with the threat of punishment by a pagan host in Isiah V, and the warning implicit in the *vinea domini* motif, could hardly be more apparent.

Against the backdrop of Viking raiding activity in England, and taking into account the evident fear of laypeople turning away from the church and towards heathen practices, the relevance of the operative word **oŋtŋ(a)** in the runic sequence becomes a little clearer. I earlier argued that this modified palindrome, which separates the references to *yrþ*, the cultivated vineyard, and to its destruction through violent attack, or *ongong*, is associated with the pre-Christian past or heathenism in the present in its use of three runes which reference the old gods through their conventional names. This reference to paganism works on two levels. It references what comes between the cultivated vineyard and the Lord's

[77] J. Hill, 'Ælfric: His Life and Works', *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. H. Magennis and M. Swan (Leiden, 2009), pp. 35–65, at 43.
[78] *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, ed. D. Whitelock, 2nd ed. (London, 1952), p. 17.

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laying waste of this blessed *yrþ* in Isiah V – namely, the backsliding into sin configured here as the worship of empty words and idols – and it also gestures towards the destruction that will be meted out using the instrument of a pagan host. Both of these ideas are conveyed by a palindrome made up of three runes whose names refer to pre-Christian deities that may in turn have been associated with Scandinavian beliefs in the present: Tir, Ing and the collective *ōs*, or (pagan) god.[79] Thus, in the runic sequence that captions the *vinea domini* panel we have three labels that correspond to the central elements of Isiah V: *yrþ*, referencing the vineyard or its cultivators which can stand for both the House of Israel, the Church, or an individual Christian community; a crude palindrome gesturing towards the cultural backsliding into pagan idolatry that also leads to God's punishment through a pagan instrument; and *ongong* referring to the violent laying waste of the vineyard that results.

The *vinea domini* panel, in combination with the runic sequence, relays an admonitory message that links the Old and New Testament images of the vineyard, and that is widely applicable to the Christian life. Indeed, as Kienzle points out, in medieval monastic literature, the motif of the vineyard can stand for 'the text; the individual soul; the community of a particular monastery; and also that of the realms beyond the monastery; the church and the world', and such oversignification makes it difficult to know the precise audience to which this particular motif of the vineyard might have been directed.[80] It is easy to see how the idea of quietly and diligently cultivating the Lord's vineyard as a means of countering the troubled social and political situation of the late tenth century would resonate particularly with monastic communities engaged in a life of both spiritual and physical labour, including in some cases the cultivation of vines for the Eucharist.[81] But the vineyard also represents the missionary Church and the Christian community at large. Ælfric, himself an alumnus of the Old Minster at Winchester, and a likely reader of the Tollemache *Orosius* manuscript held in the cathedral library, elucidates 'The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard' (Mat. XX.1–16) in a homily for Septuagesima Sunday, and hurtles through the various

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[79] The fact that the Danish royal house converted to Christianity in the year 975, and that a leader of one of the Viking warbands to harass England, Óláfr Tryggvason, was also baptised or confirmed at Andover does not seem to have altered the opinion of ecclesiasts such as Ælfric and Wulfstan that the Danes were collectively heathen. On the differing accounts of the conversion of Óláfr, and his involvement in raiding in England, see C. Ellis, 'Reassessing the Career of Óláfr Tryggvason in the Insular World', *Saga-Book* 43 (2019), 59–82.

[80] B. M. Kienzle, 'Defending The Lord's Vineyard: Hildegard of Bingen's Preaching Against the Cathars', *Medieval Monastic Preaching*, ed. C. A. Muessig (Leiden, 1998), pp. 161–181, at 163.

[81] For a summary of the evidence for viticulture in early medieval England, see D. Hooke, 'A Note on the Evidence for Vineyards and Orchards in Anglo-Saxon England', *Journal of Wine Research* 1.1 (1990), 77–80.

layers of the vineyard motif.[82] He begins with the statement in Isiah V that God's vineyard represents the House of Israel,[83] and then progresses to the image of the vineyard as a link between Old and New Testaments as the source of all God's chosen, 'fram þam rihtwisan abel oð ðam endenextan halgan ðe on ende þyssere worulde acenned bið' ('from the righteous Abel until the last saint born at the end of this world'), and to the transfer of God's mandate from the Israelites to the workmen of 'ða geleaffullan gelaðunge' ('the faithful church'), probably drawing on the 'Parable of the Evil Husbandmen' (Mat. XXI.33–41).[84] Ælfric explains that it is the mission of the secular church to 'screadian symle ða leahtras þurh heora lāre aweg' ('continually prune away sins by their teaching').[85] Finally, he addresses the lay individual, discussing how they may be called to the vineyard and the cultivation of good works 'on mislicum tidum' ('at various times') and that the good Christian should look to how they might evangelise and thus gain for God 'oðra manna sawla' ('other men's souls').[86]

As Joyce Hill points out, 'the extension of the [Benedictine] reform into the secular church … was a recurrent thread in Ælfric's work',[87] and the worldly, and indeed evangelical, dimension to the *vinea domini* motif that we see emphasised in his homily – the need not only for cultivation of the Lord's Vineyard amongst Christ's disciples and in monastic orders, but for the Church to cultivate the laity, and the laity to engage in their own 'pruning' of sins in the community – helps to make sense of the other illustrations that surround the vineyard image in the Tollemache *Orosius*. The *vinea domini* panel is centred in the page, and the extensive use of red pigment in this foliate image reinforces its prominence. It is the Vineyard that is surrounded by the evangelist symbols, rather than the other way round: John, Mark and Luke above, and a much larger Matthew below. The fact that it is Matthew who is singled out in the scene, and is the figure most clearly interacting with the vine panel (he both looks to its centre and appears to proffer a cup, further gesturing to the eucharistic use of the vine) is perhaps indicative of the importance of this particular evangelist in promulgating the 'Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard' and connecting the Old Testament motif of the *vinea domini* to the gospels: indeed, Matthew XX is the jumping off point for Ælfric's discourse on the vineyard's layered significance in the homily cited above. The presence of the evangelists as a collective, and of Matthew as

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[82] 'Homily V, Dominica in Septuagesima', in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series, Text*, ed. M. Godden, EETS ss 5 (London, 1979), 41–51.

[83] 'Homily V, Dominica in Septuagesima', p. 42.

[84] *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[87] J. Hill, 'The Benedictine Reform and Beyond', in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. P. Pulsiano and E. Treharne (Oxford, 2001), pp. 151–69, at 158.

the bearer of the eucharist, may also be drawing attention to the situating of this particular *vinea domini* as a symbol of the Church's ministry and role in the world, rather than as a symbol of the cultivation of the 'monastic garden', as it were. Such an outward looking conception of the *vinea domini* as representing both 'the church and the world'[88] is appropriate for the frontispiece to a translation into the vernacular of Orosius' *Historiarum*, which as well as following the original in representing 'a grand defence of the empire and its state religion, Christianity',[89] also represents the most important work of world history and geography circulating in the early medieval period: truly one of those books described as 'most needful for all men to know' in Alfred's preface to the OE translation of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care*.[90]

The runic inscription's framing of the vineyard panel by reference to Isiah and foregrounding of the admonitory aspect of the Vineyard of the Lord motif may thus tell us something about the context in which this copy of the Old English translation of the *Historiarum adversum Paganos* was used in the late tenth or early eleventh century: not simply for the education of a cloistered community, but for those – like Ælfric – in contact with the laity and perhaps drawing on Orosius' work of history and geography to cultivate the Lord's Vineyard outside their walls. The emphasis on the evangelists and role of the *vinea domini* in the world is particularly interesting in the context of post-Benedictine Reform Winchester, which saw secular clerics expelled by Æthelwold from the Old and New minsters in the 960s and replaced by reformist-minded monks.[91] Whilst we might therefore expect modifications to a text such as the *OEO* carried out at a scriptorium in Winchester in the late tenth or early eleventh century to primarily reflect the concerns of those in monastic orders, the wholesale replacement of secular clerics led to a situation in which 'the town cathedral and other significant churches were staffed entirely by monks after 964', with pastoral duties towards the laity in Winchester falling to these same monastic communities.[92] The Old Minster, holding the relics of St Swithun, was an important pilgrimage centre after 971, and the religious foundations were also 'cheek by jowl' with the royal palace

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[88] Kienzle, 'Defending The Lord's Vineyard', 163.

[89] S. J. Harris, 'The Alfredian "World History" and Anglo-Saxon Identity', *JEGP* 100.4 (2001), 482–510, at 496.

[90] *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. H. Sweet, EETS os 45, 50 (London, 1871, reprint 1958), 6.

[91] For a succinct account of Æthelwold's career and the impact of his school at Winchester, see M. Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 1–5 and 428–9.

[92] C. Riedel, 'Praising God Together: Monastic Reformers and Laypeople in Tenth-Century Winchester', *The Catholic Historical Review* 102.2 (2016), 284–317, at 286. Gretsch points out that a monastic cathedral was itself 'a rarity on the Continent but fervently advocated by Bishop Æthelwold', *Intellectual Foundations*, p. 427.

as Hill reminds us.[93] Winchester may have been a centre of reformed monasticism, but it was also a singularly difficult place to retreat from the world, and moreover, a place where reformist ideas could feed directly into the secular church. We can speculate that a work of world history in the vernacular held in the library of the Old Minster (Winchester's cathedral until 1093) might have found new meaning or utility for monks who may have been called on to leave the cloister and minister to the wider community.[94] Indeed, Ælfric, the most productive alumnus of Æthelwold's school, and both 'a teacher of those in religious life and of the laity',[95] is indicative of such outward looking monasticism and commitment to extending reform ideas from the cloister to the laity. The choice to use English runes and not Latin script to caption the *vinea domini* image opening the Tollemache *Orosius* and the use of the runic caption to draw attention to the admonitory aspects of the Lord's Vineyard in Isiah V may have been a further gesture towards the secular church and its important role in cultivating the laity, particularly at a time around the turn of the millennium when the irruption of imported beliefs would have been at the forefront of many a cleric's mind. In this respect, the runic sequence and imagery of the flyleaf adds to Orosius' message about the importance of defending the Christian life and convincing the population not to question their faith at a time of peril, and thus makes its own small contribution to the mission of his *History against the Pagans*.

PLACING THE TOLLEMACHE SEQUENCE WITHIN THE RUNIC TRADITION

The community at Winchester, or at least a particular group of scribes within one or more scriptoria in the Old or New Minsters, clearly maintained an academic interest in runes, and possibly a working knowledge of the script. Indeed, we must assume that the writer of the runic sequence would not have left this note, with its important message about the meaning of the vine-panel, if there was no one else who could interpret it, and at the very least the scribal community at Winchester must have had easy access to a *fuþorc* or runic alphabet in their manuscript collections. We can also surmise that this knowledge of runes in Winchester extended over a long period: from at least the early tenth century to the turn of the eleventh century. Evidence for knowledge of runes at the end of this period is attested by the prominent runic sequence discussed in this article, and by the use of a single æ-rune at the top of the same manuscript page, written either by the

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[93] Hill, 'Ælfric: his Life and Works', p. 49.

[94] See F. Tinti, 'Benedictine Reform and Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England', *EME* 23 (2015), 229–51.

[95] H. Magennis, 'Ælfric Scholarship', *A Companion to Ælfric*, ed. H. Magennis and M. Swan (Leiden, 2009), pp. 5–34, at 5.

same rune writer or by another contributor to the flyleaf (see Fig. 1). Evidence for earlier knowledge of runes comes in the form of a single *eðel* rune used as an abbreviation of its whole name by the main scribe of the manuscript.[96] This rune is used only once, but the fact it is an abbreviation standing for its common name nonetheless suggests the scribe expected that his readers in the community at Winchester in the early tenth century would be able to recognise runic characters and their names without issue, just as the later writer of the sequence on the flyleaf expected engagement with the runic sequence and an ability to link the runic message with the surrounding imagery. Taken together, these occasional runes constitute rare surviving evidence of a continuous knowledge of and use of runes in a particular scriptorium in a period extending from the Alfredian reforms to the eleventh century. The fact that a later annotator using Anglo-Saxon minuscule mislabelled the flyleaf runes as an alphabetic sequence might suggest that this 'window' of runic engagement was closed not long after the sequence was written, or that knowledge of runes, or access to this knowledge, was already limited at the time the runic sequence was written.

Though the use of a palindrome, and of select runes with pre-Christian connotations, is unprecedented within the Old English *runica manuscripta* tradition, other aspects of the runic sequence suggest a degree of continuity with the wider corpus of manuscript runes. Firstly, despite some unusual forms, including the reversed **n**-rune and a slightly oddly shaped **r**-rune (see Fig. 2) the runic letters are reasonably well formed and legible. Unlike the scribe of the Tollemache *Orosius*, who uses a particularly cursive form of the *eðel* rune for his abbreviation of this word, the rune-forms are all reasonably standard. In fact, even the few oddities – such as the reversed **n**-rune – are fairly in keeping with the small 'corpus' of occasional runes in manuscripts: several of the riddles and Cynewulf's signatures in the Exeter Book also feature small mistakes or scribal peculiarities, including an **l**-rune resembling a reversed Tironean nota, an **i**-rune resembling a Roman numeral, and a **g**-rune copied as a Roman letter ⟨x⟩,[97] whilst the scribe probably named Ratgar is at best only partially successful in rendering his name in runes, as Derolez makes clear.[98] In some cases unusual forms may be copied directly from whatever runic alphabet the scribe was using as a crib, and in other cases, including some of the Exeter Book forms, they probably result from a copyist 'normalising' unfamiliar forms to more familiar ones such as Roman numerals or Latin letters. One way in which the Tollemache *Orosius* sequence does depart from other *runica manuscripta* usage is in the lack of punctuation: a punctus marking word division is common in both epigraphical and manuscript practice, as in the **xii.7.xxx.swiþor**

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[96] This rune appears on fol. 53r, which corresponds to Book 4, chapter 5 of the *OEO*.
[97] In the poems *Christ II*, *Riddle 64* and *Riddle 24* respectively.
[98] See Derolez, *Runica manuscripta*, pp. 411–12.

(*xii ond xxx swiþor*) note of CCCC MS 41, p. 448;[99] dots are also used by the scribe of the Tollemache *Orosius* to indicate that the *eðel* rune is an abbreviation of its conventional name rather than a letter, a convention also followed in the Exeter and Vercelli Books, in Cotton MS Vitellius A ix (the *Beowulf* manuscript) and in the Junius psalter.[100] The fact that our rune writer relies on rather clumsy and uneven use of spacing rather than punctuation to indicate word division suggests that he is not aware of this common scribal convention for writing runes, which is what we might expect at the tail end of the tradition.

The inventive use of runes that I have suggested are on display in the rune sequence – namely, the incorporation of a non-linguistic palindrome – is not at all out of keeping with runic notes in manuscripts. In late manuscript contexts, runes are much more likely to be used in atypical ways, and as part of an intellectual game, than for the straightforward communication of information. In fact, inventive encrypting strategies and conceits requiring active participation from the reader amount to a distinguishing feature of those few scribal uses of runes surviving in the manuscript record. Virtually all occasional uses of runes in English manuscripts play with conventions, whether that be the use of runes to represent numerals in CCCC 41, the avoidance of vowels in the Exeter Book drypoint, the inventive use of ligatures to render names with the same first element in the St. Petersburg Gospels,[101] or the encoding of a solution as an anagram in a runic riddle.[102] Indeed, in the density of its references and inclusion of a runic puzzle at its heart, this sequence of runes in the Tollemache *Orosius* bears much in common with the runic riddles of the Exeter Book and Cynewulf's signatures in the Exeter and Vercelli Books.[103] It makes the reader actively engage in elucidating the significance of the runes in their iconographic, literary and theological context. In this respect, it is certainly the product of an intellectual milieu receptive to the unravelling of spiritual mysteries encoded in the written word and aware of the script's long association with invested forms of reading.

If there is one further defining feature of those few runic notes that survive in the manuscript record, it is that in addition to representing points of invested reading, they all have an intimate connection to the environment they are copied in, as Derolez first intimated in the 1950s.[104] That might mean that the runes are

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[99] Birkett, 'Correcting Bede's Corrector?', p. 466.

[100] For a full list of manuscripts featuring runic abbreviations, see Birkett, 'Unlocking Runes?', 94.

[101] Their names being Eþelstan and Eþeldryþ, Page, *An Introduction*, p. 198.

[102] Such as *Riddle 24*, with the solution *higoræ*, or 'Jay', named by a runic anagram embedded in the poem.

[103] Recent studies of the runic strategies in the Exeter Book include V. Symons, *Runes and Roman Letters in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (Berlin, 2016), esp. pp. 17–42 and Birkett, *Reading the Runes*, esp. pp. 49–81.

[104] Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta*, p. 423.

embedded in or comment on a riddle, that they serve as visual accompaniments to the Pater Noster prayer,[105] that they represent a note 'correcting Bede's corrector', or – in the case of the Tollemache *Orosius* runes – that they label and direct the interpretation of the *vinea domini* panel and accompanying imagery. In its close association between runes and the invested unravelling of Christian iconography, the Tollemache *Orosius* runes might even remind us of an earlier period of rune writing in England, and of objects such as the Franks Casket with its text–image riddles, and particularly the Northumbrian high crosses with their foliate panels, complex iconography, and runic inscriptions rendered difficult to read as part of their function to inspire reflection in the presence of the cross. Although there are intriguing parallels between the captioning of a vine-scroll panel in the Tollemache *Orosius* and the runic tituli of the Ruthwell Cross in particular, added 'to complement the vine-scrolls with a relevant narrative of the crucifixion',[106] it would be hard to draw any kind of direct link (or even through line) between the use of runes in this eighth-century context and the runes employed in a tenth-century manuscript written in the south of England. Yet in the intimate connection between text and image, the association of runes with a deep and invested reading, and in the continuing relevance of both the vine as a symbol and the runic script as a conduit of spiritual mysteries, these two instances of runic practice in the golden age of rune writing in England and its twilight years in the scriptorium at Winchester perhaps have more features in common than features that set them apart.[107]

[105] As they do in the Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 422 (s. x med) witness to *Solomon and Saturn I*. See Birkett, *Reading the Runes*, pp. 85–95.
[106] Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood*, p. 8.
[107] I would like to thank Éamonn Ó Carragáin for his careful reading of an early draft of this article, and the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful suggestions.