

Anglo-Saxon Micro-Texts

University of Munich, 3 – 4 November 2017

*Venue: Internationales Begegnungszentrum der Wissenschaft e.V.
(Amalienstraße 38, 80799 München)*

Micro-texts, i.e. “texts” ranging from one word (often a name) to a few sentences have survived in large numbers from the Anglo-Saxon period. They are found on all kinds of materials (wood, stone, metal, garments, parchment, coins, etc.), in the form of epigraphic inscriptions in runes and/or the Latin alphabet, or – in manuscripts – as colophons, various kinds of marginal notes or parts of manuscript illustration.

Such short pieces of writing can be classified as “micro-texts” when constituting independent, self-contained texts: Despite their shortness, micro-texts thus generally perform a specific communicative function, similar to, e.g., today’s graffiti or tattoos.

Many Anglo-Saxon micro-texts have been subject to in-depth analyses of some of their details. This is particularly true for most of the runic inscriptions, as concerns the forms of their graphemes, their phonetic value and their – often much disputed – meanings. With colophons and marginal notes in manuscripts, the focus has predominantly not been on their form and language, but on their relevance for identifying the respective scribes or the origin or provenance of the manuscripts.

As yet, however, there has been little comparative investigation into the language and communicative functions of these micro-texts, their pragmatics and performativity. In this symposium, we would therefore like to bring together Anglo-Saxon scholars from different disciplines – Old English and Anglo-Latin literature and linguistics, palaeography, history, art history, runology, numismatics, archaeology, etc. – to present their ideas on the diverse functions of these micro-texts and on their relevance for a better and more comprehensive understanding of Anglo-Saxon literature and culture.

We hereby invite you to propose a paper and a provisional title for a 30-minute talk for this symposium by the end of March (we also plan a publication of the papers in a special issue of *Anglia*).

We are looking forward to welcoming you here in Munich.

With our best wishes,

Ursula Lenker, Birgit Ebersperger, Lucia Kornexl and teams

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