

## Rune Yoga

Thomas Karlsson, *Uthark: Nightside of the Runes*



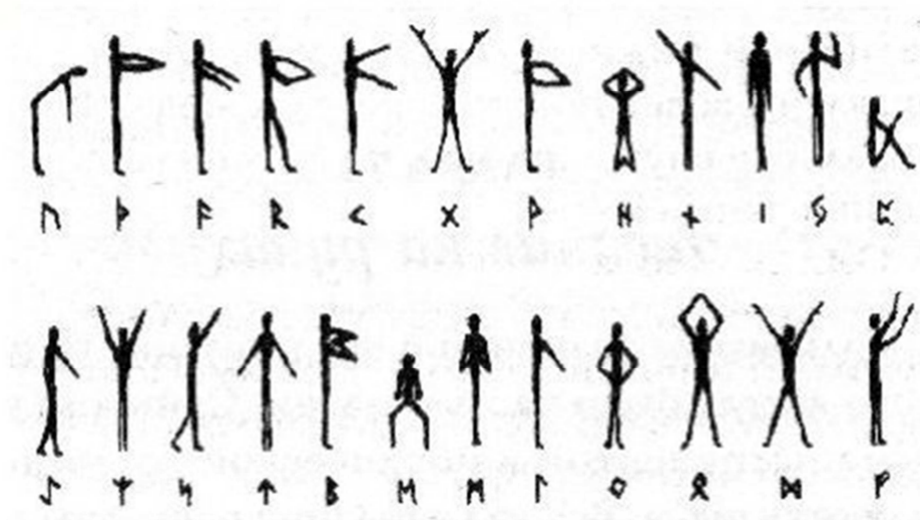
A recurrent thought in most esoteric traditions is that sounds, speech, numbers, letters, colors, gods, symbols etc, represent each other through occult correspondences. Thus the runes can be linked to galdors, gods, symbols and speech. If the runes are viewed as cosmic principles, it is important to expand their significance beyond their shape and function as writing letters. In German rune magic a system was developed where magicians contacted the powers of the runes through different body positions. These can also be used to direct and control the forces. In Friedrich Marby's version this was called "rune gymnastics". Siegfried Adolf Kummer called it "rune yoga". After them, many magicians have worked with runes and body positions. There is no evident support, however, for rune yoga as an old Norse phenomenon. The Gallehus Horn is often used to support these theories. This horn features pictures of people in various positions that are reminiscent of certain runes.

If one studies the existing systems of rune yoga, one will find that many positions are long-winded. Thus many rune magicians have dismissed rune yoga altogether. One could criticize the existing rune yoga for trying to imitate exactly the shapes of the runes with the body at any cost. It ends up reminding of charades and the positions often become uncomfortable. The imitation of the shape of the runes often feels far-fetched. If we assume that the runes represent cosmic principles it is not so important to solely

imitate their shape. We will here present a rune yoga that has been developed into a rune dance. This has been developed in Dragon Rouge, but can be varied to fit the personal experience of the runes. The twenty four positions, or “stodhur”, do to a certain extent rely on the shapes of the actual runes, but also express their function and character.

Several runes in the rune row are based on a stave which is shaped as a vertical line. Thus the Ice rune denotes a starting point in rune yoga where one stands upright in concentration. The stave represents the spine and the rune row is a description of different energy levels which emanates from the spine into the body-mind complex. This corresponds to Indian kundalini yoga. The Ur rune denotes the untamed primal serpent power which the magician learns to control through the rune row and the twenty four rune positions. At the Feh rune the magician’s will is able to control this force. The stave of the rune represents the world axis Irminsul. The word Irminsul denotes “the great stave”. The name Iormungandr, the great serpent which encircles the world, also denotes “the great stave”. The serpent and the stave are two expressions of the same principle, the force that rises up through the spine. In kundalini yoga Iormungandr represents the kundalini and Irminsul the spinal channel Sushumna through which the kundalini rises.

### The 24 Rune Positions



**Ur-(Uruz):** Lean forward and feel the primordial power of Ur and the volcanic force that boils in the center of the earth. Most positions can be varied, including this one. It can be conducted with straight legs and the body bent forward with arms hanging down and the palms against the ground. But it can also be conducted with bent legs, or without the hands touching the ground

**Thurs-(Thurisaz):** Stand straight with your arms stretched out and hands clasped. The arms represent the two thurs realms. Feel how the right arm is fire and the left ice (if you are right handed). The clasped hands represent the two extremes united and the arms create the spike that makes the Thurs rune complete.

**Ase-(Ansuz):** Stand straight with arms stretched out in front of you without bringing your hands together. Between the arms you can feel the power of the wind brought back and forth through your breaths.

**Reid-(Raidho):** Stand straight with one leg in front of the other in a firm position. Hold your arms in front of you, one hand above the other. You are standing as if you were driving a carriage and holding the reins, or standing with a sword in hand.

**Ken-(Kenaz):** Stand straight with open arms. Feel the force from fire, heat and expansion.

**Gifu-(Gebo):** Stand with legs wide apart and arms stretched above your head, thus standing in an X form. The hands should be stretched upward. Experience how power is flowing down from the heavens and up from the earth through your body. It flows through you in both directions.

**Wynja-(Wunjo):** Stand straight and hold your arms in a wide embrace.

**Hagal-(Hagalaz):** Sit down on your heels with the legs slightly apart. Rest the elbows on the knees and keep the upper arms directed upward, but the fingers inward to the head. Experience how you are focusing your power and keeping it inside in the same way that the Hagal crystal contains all the runes and their power inside.

**Naud-(Naudhiz):** Stand straight with arms on the sides of the body. One arm should point upward and the other downward. You can change the position of the arms in a wheel-like motion representing the wheel of destiny.

**Is-(Isa):** Stand straight with arms on the sides of the body. You are focusing yourself, your force, and you are present here and now, though passive.

**Jara-(Jera):** Stand straight with one arm in front of you, the forearm pointing straight upward. The other arm should be behind you, the forearm pointing downward. Let the arms rotate clockwise. You shall illustrate the wheel of the year and the work of the harvest.

**Pertra-(Perthro):** Sit on the heels with the feet apart. The arms should be pointing forward with upper arms pointing straight up. The fingers should point outward. This position reminds of the Hagal position but is striving outward and the elbows are not resting on the knees. You are the rock that gives birth.

**Eihwaz:** Stand straight with your left foot behind the right and your left arm pulled up at the side holding your hand at the waist level. The right arm should point forward, and slightly downward. You shall illustrate the Yew tree and an archer. *[This sounds like it was written for someone left-handed. I do it exactly the opposite way. Experiment and see which works best for you...as with all the rune stances, don't be afraid to experiment and innovate! – editor]*

**Algiz-(Elhaz):** Stand straight with arms raised above the head. Feel how you are standing like a tree, visualizing the trunk and the crown. Feel the force flowing through you and express reverence for the sacredness of your body.

**Sol-(Sowilo):** Stand straight with the left foot behind the right and the right arm stretched forward and upward. This is the salutation of the sun.

**Tyr-(Tiwaz):** Stand straight with the arms stretched outward from the body [*palms down*] pointing slightly downward. You are Irminsul, the sacred tree of Paganism. You are also illustrating the border between heaven and earth with your arms. You are experiencing the feeling of flying like the eagle.

**Bjarka-(Berkano):** Stand straight with fists clenched at the chest and the elbows straight forward. The position can illustrate two female breasts, or one holding a spear or a wand hard at the chest.

**Eh-(Ehwaz):** Stand with your legs spread wide and with knees bent. This position is called the “horse stance” and can be found in many martial arts.

**Mannaz:** Stand straight with arms crossed over your chest. You are the perfected man in balance with the planets, the stars, the Web of Wyrð (Urd) and the runes. These different cosmic forces are interacting inside you.

**Lagu-(Laguz):** Stand straight with one arm stretched forward with the palm turned downward to the earth. Feel moisture and water-veins with your body and your hand.

**Ing-(Inguz):** Stand straight holding your hands over the genitals or lower belly. The elbows are pointing outward horizontally from the body. You are channeling the inherent sexual force in the seed and the Ing rune.

**Odal-(Othala):** Stand with your legs spread wide, hands clenched slightly above the head. The elbows should point horizontally outward. This position gives power and protection. It centers and limits the mind.

**Dagaz:** Stand with legs wide apart and arms stretched above the head in the shape of an X. Unlike the Gifu rune, the palms are here turned outward. You are beaming like the sun and are feeling the force of the rune flowing through you. Stand with the left hand turned to the west and the right hand to the east. The hands represent the day between sunrise and sunset.

**Feh-(Fehu):** Stand straight with arms stretched outward. The forearms point upward, hands clenched. You are illustrating the horns of tame cattle and are holding riches and runes.

Try every rune position and feel the force and character of the rune. This is an effective way to reach knowledge about the runes and their functions. You will become one with the rune. Galdor the name of the rune while standing in the position. Make a series of “rune movements”. Begin to learn how to “dance the runes”. Make the whole rune row in a series of movements. When you have learned

this, proceed to include the galdors. A drum can indicate the rhythm of the dance. Try to dance your name.

Move in runic positions which formulate magical words and incantations like RUNA, ALU, LAUKAZ, or the names of gods. There are a number of rune movements which can express magical processes. Dance the sequence Is-Mannaz-Ken-Hagal-Ase-Gifu. This illustrates the process in which what is inherent in the ice is also inherent in man. Through the fire, parts of the ice are removed and fall down as hail. Through the breath of the gods man receives the soul-gifts. Create your own series describing magical processes.