

Malstastenens **nur i uika** återigen  
Summary  
The Malsta stone – **nur i uika** revisited  
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The Malsta stone is the name of a rune stone that once stood in the hamlet of Malsta in Rogsta parish, Hälsingland, but which since 1979 has been on display in the Hälsingland Museum in the town of Hudiksvall. The stone is dated to around the middle of the 11th century and is carved with staveless runes.

In the part of the inscription previously read as **kiulfir uarþ um lanti þisu in þa nur i uika i þrim bium in þa lanakr in þa fiþrasiu**, the interpretation of **uika** has caused problems, both semantically – is it a name or a common noun, and what particular name or word does it represent? – and morphologically, on account of the **-a** ending. In an essay published in 2005, the runologist Lena Peterson stated that the preposition **i** ‘in’ that had been read between **uika** and **þrim** was in fact a line forming part of the ornamentation of the stone. In a later work from 2012, she transliterated the passage as **kiulfir uarþ um lanti þisu in þa nur i uika þrim bium in þa lanakri| lin þa fiþrasiu**, with **il li** representing a double reading of **i**. The problem of **uika**, however, remained.

My suggestion is that **uika** represents Runic Swedish *\*Vika*, the genitive form of an unattested plural name for a settlement area, *\*VikaR*, in turn formed from a common noun, Runic Swedish *vīk* f., present-day Swedish *vik*, meaning ‘inlet’.

The name may have referred to settlements on the inner parts, or inlets, of two prehistoric arms of the sea, situated close together, which have since become dry land; at what would have been the head of one of them there is now a small relict lake, known simply as *Viken* ‘the inlet’.

Introducing the reading *Vika*, but in other respects building largely on previous proposals, I would normalise and translate the passage as follows, rendering the Runic Swedish *\*VikaR* ‘the farms by the (two) inlets’ with the modern Swedish

*\*Vikarna: GylfiR varð um landi þessu, en þā nor(ð)r ī Vīka þrīm byium, en þā Launangri /Lōnangri, en þā Feðrasiō* ‘Gylve [a male person] acquired this land, and then (land) to the north on the three farms of Vikarna, and then (land in) Lönnånger, and then (land in) Färdsjö’.

Lönnånger and Färdsjö still exist as hamlets in Rogsta parish, and the three farms mentioned may possibly have been a reference to what are now the hamlets of Sved, Byn and Bästdal, situated at the inner end of one or other of the arms of the sea, a few kilometres north-east of where the Malsta stone is first known to have been raised. There is much to suggest that all three of these hamlets could date from the Scandinavian Iron Age, which ended around AD 1050.