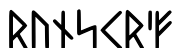_Roenskrif: Ou skrif vir die moederne mens._

Runic: Old writing for the modern person.

_Roenskrif_, written ᚱᛗᚾᛋᚲᚱᛁᚠ , is a runic alphabet for the West Germanic language Afrikaans devised by Luan Bierman. It was created for use in an alternate history world building project depicting South Africa in a world where the Latin alphabet is not widespread. Note that for the purpose of clarity real-world standard Afrikaans is written in _Italics_ and IPA is indicated with [square brackets].

In this world, the Dutch colonists at the Cape of Good hope brought along with them a highly traditional preservation of the Elder Futhark as used by their Frankish predecessors. This conservative writing system is what eventually develops into _Roenskrif._

## Early period: _Ouskrif_

For much of this alternate history of the Afrikaans language, an unchanged form of the Elder Futhark was used. This writing is now known as _Ouskrif,_ lit. "old writing". Within it are several quirks and complexities which developed for use with Early Modern Dutch, but are now plaguing modern Afrikaaners and their comparatively phonetically simplistic language. Most notable are non-phonetic digraphs such as ᛟᛗ for [u], co-opting ᚢ for [y] , and the use of runes and digraphs which have no phonetic distinction in Afrikaans, such as the retention of ᚦ , though [θ] and [ð] are not present in Afrikaans. Due to these issues, from approx. 1917, _Die Taalkommissie,_ lit. "The Language Commission", began to standardise and improve the Runic script, mirroring the same standardisation which occurred in actual history. Conversely to our world however, the _Taalkommissie_ allows both Standard spellings as well as spellings which indicate more dialectal writing for the purpose of cultural preservation.

## Current period: _Nuskrif_

_Nuskrif_, lit. "New Writing", is the subject of this page. In our alternate world's modern day, _Nuskrif_ is the defacto manner of writing Afrikaans. However, due to the runes' deeper cultural connection to the Germanic people, many conservative Afrikaaners maintain use of _Ouskrif_ as a competing standard. This has influenced certain standards even in _Nuskrif._

## Significant changes in _Nuskrif_

- Standard spellings are now often phonetic or near-phonetic (some dipthongs have centralised realisations which are written with their non-centralised counterparts.)
- Two runes, ᚦ and ᛋ, are no longer used in writing, but maintain ideographic use. ᚦ is often used as shorthand for _Donderdag_, "Thursday", and ᛋ is used as shorthand for _Jaar_, "year", such as in _Miljoene Jaar Terug_, "Million Years Ago", written ᛗᛋᛏ: .
- A great number of _Byroene,_ "By-runes" have been added. These include:

*Sakseskrif*, lit "Saxon Writing", which are runes borrowed from this world's English. These include:

ᚨ, called *Sakse ans* or, mockingly, *Rooinek ans* : Literally Saxon 'a' and Redneck (a common insult for Englishman) 'a'. This is used to represent [æ], written ᛗ in *Ouskrif*

ᚷ, called *Sakse j* or *Rooineck j,* once again "Saxon" and "Redneck" j respectively. This is used by the English to distinguish [g] from [j], a comparatively more uncommon problem in Afrikaans as [g] is an uncommon phoneme, but the rune is prescribed as optional by the *Taalkomissie* to distinguish standard writings from dialectal ones.

As a tidbit, ᚷ, now used for [j] by the Afrikaaners, is actually also a result of English influence. As [g] and [j] were allophones in Old English, the English used the Same rune for both, thus eliminating the difficult to write ᛃ . This extra use for ᚷ as [j] was adopted alongside use for [χ] in the *Ouskrif* period during the early days of English ownership of the Cape Colony. This still caused confusion however and thus in *Nuskrif* another rune was adopted to be used for [χ].

*Die Deensletter,* ᚱ *,* lit. "The Daneletter", also called *die Deense r,* "Danish r" is the rune adopted from the Danish writing system of this world in order to write [χ] without confusion for [j]. It was chosen by the *Taalkomissie* for its similar pronunciation: [ʁ], being distinguished from [χ] only by its voiced quality.

*Die Boereletters,* lit. "The farmer letters" are adaptations of Existing runes by the *Taalkommissie* to represent other phonemes. These include

ᛁ , a modification of ᛁ created to represent [ə]

The regular addition of one to two strokes to ᛁ , ᛁ and ᚠ in order to create the rounded varieties ᚱ , ᚦ and ᚠ respectively.

And finally *Invoegings,* "Insertions", created to replace *Ouskrif*'s confusing "long vowels" ᛉᛉ and ᛗᛗ *,* written to represent [ʊə] and [ɪə] respectively. An *Invoeging* is created by reducing and attaching the schwa rune to the preceeding vowel. It was originally the result of fast writing in the early days of *Nuskrif*'s adoption. It became so ubiquitous and expected, however, that is was soon codified by the *Taalkomissie*. There are three invoegings, ᚹ , ᚥ and ᚼ. ᚹ and ᚥ are used to represent the aforementioned [ɪə] and [ʊə] whilst ᚼ is used to write the indefinite article *'n* , pronounced as a partly nasalised schwa: [ə̃].

Thus we have the modern *Roenskrif.* For clarity, Ideographic runes are in green, the loan runes in red and blue, and runes created by the *Taalkommissie* are written in purple. Underneath each rune is its name in IPA, its equivalent in real-world standard Afrikaans and its IPA pronunciation.