

## **Friends, Vassals or Foes.**

Relations and their representations between Frisians and Scandinavians in the Viking Age, late 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries.  
An analysis of textual and archaeological sources.

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## Preface

Scandinavia, the Viking Age and especially Viking activity in North-Western Europe have always fascinated me. In the course of my studies at Scandinavian Studies, Old Germanic, courses in Archaeology and finally Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, I have looked at this subject from different perspectives: literary, linguistic, historical and archaeological. Specific attention has always been paid to the contact between the Scandinavians and the Other and the consequences of these contacts in different ways.

During an internship at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, I was given the chance to do research (both of textual and material evidence) on the subject of the Vikings in the Netherlands, with a focus on the northern Netherlands, and the Early Medieval *emporium* of Dorestad. This shifted my focus from mainly the British Isles to the Dutch coastal region and its inhabitants, and it is this research that can be seen as the inspiration for this master thesis. Further inspiration was gained during a term at the University of York and a Summer School at the University of Århus.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Museum of Antiquities, especially dr. Annemarieke Willemsen who was my tutor during the internship and has provided me with assistance as the second reader of this thesis. Prof. dr. Dick de Boer has kindly and helpfully provided me with guidance and assistance during the writing of this thesis, for which I thank him. In addition, I would like to thank all my (former) tutors and teachers at the University of Groningen and in York for their inspiration and help throughout my studies and the writing of this work. During the writing, I have consulted a number of scholars who all kindly provided me with as much help as they could. I thank all of them, whose names can be found in the footnotes in the relevant sections. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my family and friends, especially Rik van der Pluym, the IJssennaggers, Christa Ackermann, Eline Baaten, Mark Schmidt, Floor Sieverink, Amarins Woltring and the people in the thesis-group for keeping me focussed and discussing my ideas and problems with me. Special thanks go to Heather Cunningham and Lindsey Smith for correcting my English and editing my manuscript. Despite the help of many people, all ideas, interpretations and mistakes remain my own, and only I can be held responsible for them.

Hengelo, August 2010

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## Introduction

*furu\* trikia frislats a uit auk uiks fotum uir skiftum.*

[We paid a visit to the lads of Frisia. And we it was who split the spoils of battle among us].<sup>1</sup>

So reads the runic inscription on a silver Viking Age neck-ring found in Senja, Troms County in northern Norway, which is dated to c. 1025.<sup>2</sup> Although the exact reading of the text is debated, the one thing that is certain is that it points to contact between Frisians and Scandinavians in the Viking Age (c. 793-1050). This ring is one of very few finds directly and unambiguously attesting to contact between these two peoples, and is therefore significant. Scholars like Judith Jesch and Kees Samplonius have examined the inscription and its context,<sup>3</sup> whilst others like James Graham-Campbell have focused on its material aspects.<sup>4</sup> In addition, attention has been paid to the meaning of this find in understanding the Viking Age.<sup>5</sup> Whilst the find has traditionally been interpreted as attesting to a Viking raid on Frisia, more recently both Jesch and Samplonius interpreted it as possibly attesting to more peaceful relations. I would like to argue that it is time to look at this ring and other evidence outside the context of Viking raids on the continent only, and place it in a broader perspective of Scandinavian-Frisian contacts in this period.

These contacts, already established before the Viking Age and continuing in its aftermath, changed over the course of time. Especially in the Viking Age, which came with raids and displays of political power, changes occurred. Whether or not these changes meant that the earlier (usually peaceful, trade) contacts disappeared, at least some other kinds of contact were established. In the Viking Age, a new chapter in the history of Scandinavian-Frisian contacts was written, that will be explored in this thesis. I will aim to present an overview of the ways of contact, the people involved and their reactions to these contacts and the consequences in both the short (i.e. transfer of single items, establishment of personal

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<sup>1</sup> K. Samplonius, "Friesland en de Vikingtijd: de ring van Senja en de Vierentwintig Landrechten," *It Beaken* 60:2 (1998): 89-101.

<sup>2</sup> J. Jesch, "The Senja Neck-ring and Viking Activity," in *Blandade Runstudier 2*. (Uppsala: Institutionen för nordiska språk Uppsala universitet, 1997), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Samplonius, 89-101. Jesch (1997), 7-12.

<sup>4</sup> J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Artefacts: A Select Catalogue* (London: British Museum Publications for Trustees of the British Museum, 1980), 87 (nr. 303).

<sup>5</sup> J. Jesch, "Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age," in *Scandinavia and Europe 800-1350. Contact, Conflict and Coexistence*, ed. J. Adams and K. Holman (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 255-268.

relationships,) and the long term (i.e. changes in attitudes and images, changes in relationships), by assembling textual and archaeological evidence. The subject can be divided into sub-issues, all part of contact and contact situations. These issues, are exchanged in material and immaterial respects (i.e. trade, gift-exchange, exchange of people and ideas), and the intrinsic aspect of images coming into being. A couple of main aspects are important here: the images of the Self and Other before, during and after contact. Looking at all these aspects can help one understand the processes of contact and its consequences. The main question with which I will approach these issues is to what extent and in which ways there was contact between the Frisians and the Scandinavians throughout the Viking Age, and what this led to.

Despite both scholarly and popular work on the Viking Age in the present-day Low Countries, including former *Frisia*<sup>6</sup> and Scandinavia, the story of contact has not yet been fully brought to light. More seems to lay hidden in history, waiting to be revealed, and this especially concerns contact within a broader geographical area (i.e. outside the Dutch part of Frisia). Although attention has been paid to the raids, political contacts and trade contacts individually, there is more to be discovered once all these are combined in one study that focuses primarily on the ways of contact between these peoples in the course of the Viking Age, and their consequences.

The contacts and their outcome are attested in different contemporaneous and later sources, such as texts, archaeological finds, iconographic and linguistic material. The written and material sources provide most of the information on the subject. Combining the two is a very promising approach, not only because it is a necessity if one wants to understand the processes and reactions in this period, but also because the combination of sources can overcome their individual limitations. In this thesis, I therefore combine both written and archaeological evidence, in order to create a more interdisciplinary understanding of the contacts in the past. When peaking of combining written and material sources, one can point to the Senja neck-ring again, which in itself is a combination of the two. It therefore is a fantastic example of how different aspects of sources can converge and illuminate Scandinavian-Frisian contacts in the Viking Age.

In this thesis, I will first discuss and establish some definitions, as well as explain my approach. In chapter one, the theoretical framework will be presented. In the second chapter, I will turn my attention to the present state of research on Scandinavian-Frisian contacts. An

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<sup>6</sup> The geographical range of this area that will be used in this thesis and the definitions of terms will be given in the following chapter.

historiographic overview of the research will be given, and the way in which this thesis can link up with them, but also provide new insights, will be discussed.

Chapters three to six comprise the results of the analysis of the different sources. In chapter three, the focus will be on what the written sources tell us about contacts between the inhabitants of *Frisia*<sup>7</sup> and Scandinavians. This will be done by a critical analysis, in which the questions when and where was there contact, who were involved, what was the nature of contact (e.g. trade, raid, gift-exchange) and how do the different sources represent this, are asked. The sources will also be analysed to establish how in the different cases of contact the different sources represent the involved peoples' attitudes and identities. The selected sources are from different spheres of influence and periods, as much as is possible. A lot of the sources containing information about Frisia in this period are from the Frankish atmosphere. Of these, several will be analysed. Firstly, the *Royal Frankish Annals*<sup>8</sup> (late eighth century, ca. 788 to 829 A.D.), which is merely a contemporary record of happenings in the Carolingian empire from the first Viking attacks.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, the *Annals of St. Bertin* (late eighth century, ca. 830 to 882 A.D.), also a contemporaneous account, the *Annals of Fulda* (ninth century, ca. 837 to 882 A.D.) which incorporates the years 714-837 as an adoption of earlier annals but is a contemporary account afterwards, and the *Annals of Xanten*.<sup>10</sup> These three can be seen as regional continuations of the *Royal Frankish Annals*.<sup>11</sup> In addition, some attention will be paid to the *Annals of St. Vaast* (second half of the ninth century), which contains a number of minor references to contact between Frisians and Vikings,<sup>12</sup> and to a reference in the *Life of Charlemagne*.<sup>13</sup> Whereas the Franks were active chroniclers, Frisians, unfortunately, did not leave us with much written material from that period. The texts from the Frisian perspective that we will look at are therefore mainly later in date. The first one is the *vita* of *St. Walfrid of Bedum*, who was said to have been killed in a Viking attack together with his son. The *vita* was probably composed in the eleventh or twelfth century, but is only recorded in fifteenth

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<sup>7</sup> As will be made more clear in Chapter 1, these concern the people that according to the medieval sources were identified as Frisians or coming from Frisia, and not necessarily 'ethnic Frisians'.

<sup>8</sup> All personal names, place-names – as well as source titles – will be given in standardised English forms.

<sup>9</sup> R. Rau, "Die Reichsannalen," in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* I (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977).

<sup>10</sup> R. Rau, "Jahrbücher von Xanten," in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* II (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972c).

<sup>11</sup> R. Rau, "Jahrbücher von St. Bertin" in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* II (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972a). R. Rau, "Jahrbücher von Fulda" in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* III (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960).

<sup>12</sup> R. Rau, "Jahrbücher von St. Vaas" in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* II (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972b).

<sup>13</sup> Einhard. "Vita Karoli," in *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* I, R. Rau (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977b).

century manuscripts.<sup>14</sup> Another type of text that we will look at are Frisian laws the *Seventeen Statutes* (c. 1200 A.D.) and the *Twenty-four Constitutions* (which came into existence before 1200 A.D., but extended from the eleventh to the fourteenth century), and the *Constitutes of Magnus*.<sup>15</sup> From the Scandinavian sphere of influence, most textual evidence is later than the Viking Age as well, apart from three runic inscriptions. The most appealing and intriguing one, on the Senja neck-ring, has already been referred to. The other two are found on runic stones in Sigtuna, Sweden.<sup>16</sup> The partly later sources that will be under examination are the famous *Egil's Saga* (written down first half of the thirteenth century), in which the protagonist travels to amongst others Frisia,<sup>17</sup> and the poem *Óláfsdrápá* which is transmitted in and contextualised by the Olaf Tryggvason's Saga (c. 1225 A.D.).<sup>18</sup> Another interesting source is Saxo Grammaticus' *History of the Danes* (second half twelfth century), which gives some insight in Danish-Frisian relations. Besides analysing these selected sources extensively, I will also use some references from other sources to provide a wider picture.

In the fourth chapter, I will move on to the material evidence, by examining archaeological finds from this period that can tell us something about contact, and what image they provide. The archaeological material will be selected on the criterion that it illuminates the Frisian-Scandinavian contacts in any way possible. As a point of departure, catalogues, articles and databases, both published and online, from The Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia and sometimes The British Isles were used. In addition, this builds upon an inventory drawn up by the author during an internship at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, the Netherlands, in 2009. A concise catalogue of the discussed artefacts will be presented as a supplement to the thesis. In chapter six, an analysis of the consequences of the contacts will be presented.

The titles of primary sources will be given in their standardized English forms, and will after their first discussion only be referred to in abbreviated form. A list of the abbreviations, the English titles and the original titles will be presented in the appendix. Editions used can be found in the first references to the sources as well as in the bibliography.

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<sup>14</sup> R. van Schaik, *Walfridus van Bedum. Een duizend jaar oude Groninger overlevering*. (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff/Bouma's Boekhuis, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> N.E. Algra, *Zeventien keuren en vierentwintig landrechten* (Doorn: Graal, 1992), 252, 370-371.

<sup>16</sup> Jesch 1997 and 2004.

<sup>17</sup> S. Nordal, ed., *Egils Saga Skalla-Grímssonar* (Reykjavik: Hið Íslenzka Fornritafélag, 1933).

<sup>18</sup> Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla*. II, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (Reykjavik: Hið Íslenzka Fornritafélag, 1945).



# Chapter 1

## Theoretical framework

*In an encounter through dialogue two cultures do not merge and blend; each keeps its uniqueness and open integrity, but both are enriched.*<sup>19</sup>

Michael Bakhtin

### 1.1 Contact and contact situations: methodology and approach

Contact is the meeting of one person or group with another person or group, and can be brought back to three main theoretical issues: viewpoint, identity and image. It can be looked at from different perspectives: the one (group of) participant(s), the other (group of) participant(s) or from outside. Each of these perspectives constitutes a different viewpoint, which is embedded in the cultural background of the individuals. These viewpoints that are formed within the frame of the cultural background, called *mentalités* by historians of mentality and historical anthropologists, are essential if one wants to understand social relationships.<sup>20</sup>

Images of the Self and the Other are linked with identity, an important theme within the historical-anthropological approach, as well as subject and object. Ideas about subject and object have long since been part of philosophy and it is argued that only in connection with each other that both the subject and the object have their specific characteristics and appearance. When looking at the representations of the Self and the Other, this is very important. As art-historian Paul Vandebroek stresses, the constant tension between the Self and the Other is essential for formation of the two.<sup>21</sup> In ‘Image of the Other, Exposé of the Self’ Vandebroek uses an anthropological approach to look at depictions of the Other. He investigates the marginal figures of savages, fools, farmers and beggars as playing a negative role in defining the Self or Self-image during the tenth to eighteenth centuries. Between the Self and the Other – in Vandebroek’s case subcultures but in this study two different cultures – a clear dichotomy can be discerned, signposted by the use of certain central pairs of concepts. These binary oppositions, as they are called in a structuralist approach, can be

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<sup>19</sup> A. Gurevich, “Historical Anthropology and Science of History,” in *Historical Anthropology of the Middle Ages*, A. Gurevich, ed. Jana Howlett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 6. Translation from M. Bakhtin, *Estetika slovesnogo tvorcestva* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1979), 334-335.

<sup>20</sup> Gurevich, 6.

<sup>21</sup> P. Vandebroek, *Over wilden en narren, boeren en bedelaars. Beeld van de Andere, vertoog over het Zelf* (Antwerpen: Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 1987), 5.

determined as the general underlying concept in all the sources, even though there are some variations and exceptions. Vandenbroeck has made clear that these are to a large extent universal principles for depicting the 'Other', which, as will become clear, are to a large extent applicable to the Scandinavian-Frisian contacts, although sometimes in an altered way. Although the Self-image is not always as clear for the people themselves, the way they portray the Other actually defines it. It is connected, to the patterns of values and norms,<sup>22</sup> to identity.

Identity can take shape on several levels, for instance the personal, the group, the cultural and the ethnic, which overlap.<sup>23</sup> In addition, an individual can view his own identity in a different way than others do. As a consequence, it is not an easy term to use or define. Yet it is an important one, as looking at identities gives insight into the process of contact. Identity is not always clearly expressed in the written and material evidence, but perceptions, representations and images might clarify it.<sup>24</sup> One aspect of identity that comes into the picture when talking about contact is ethnic identity.<sup>25</sup> It is difficult to speak of peoples and ethnicity in a retrospective way of the early medieval period. Ethnicity is interdependent with social, cultural and political environment.<sup>26</sup> Ethnic identities are not static, like other parts of identity they are fluctuous. They are, as Matthew Innes puts it, 'social constructions, transmitted and transmuted over time and space'.<sup>27</sup> In addition, we should not think of peoples in the Early Middle Ages as ethnic homogenous groups, as has sometimes been done in more recent times. This is especially true for times of migration. In Early Medieval societies like the Frankish and Frisian ones, ethnicity was often ambiguous, and people of what we would call different ethnic backgrounds could mix. Here, social identity was more important, and this was dependent upon the situation. For this reason, ethnic identity is sometimes called 'situational construct', which was coined by a process called *ethnogenesis*.<sup>28</sup> This, we will see, is very much the case with Scandinavians in Frisia and other parts of Francia. As much as this may be problematic for defining and establishing ethnic identity, it is interesting

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<sup>22</sup> Vandenbroeck, 6.

<sup>23</sup> M. Innes, "Danelaw Identities: Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Political Allegiance," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 67.

<sup>24</sup> D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards, "Introduction: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Scandinavian Settlement," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 6.

<sup>25</sup> Hadley and Richards, 6.

<sup>26</sup> W. Pohl, "Conceptions of Identity in Early Medieval Studies," in *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. L.K. Little and B.H. Rosenwein (Oxford:Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 15-16.

<sup>27</sup> Innes, 67.

<sup>28</sup> Pohl, 17.

especially for the diachronic processes of contact in which this will play a role. It provides a new dimension to changing contacts, because it not only involves changing identities, it can actually contribute to this change.

Just like ethnic identity, cultural identity is changeable and formable. Again it is a construct that can be created by the help of for instance language and material culture as active agents.<sup>29</sup> The latter is therefore important in establishing identities, and contact, and is manifested in exchange. One can discern different forms of material exchange: raid in which something is confiscated, trade in which products are exchanged for money or other goods, or gift-exchange by which social ties are sealed.<sup>30</sup> Gift-exchange was a common practice in Germanic and Early Medieval societies, and occurred between leaders of different groups and between the lord retainer and his followers.<sup>31</sup> It not only concerns an exchange of objects, but also attached significance such as social implications, as it was a way of establishing and confirming social and political ties.<sup>32</sup>

Exchange is, thus, not necessarily material. Exchange of people, ideas and oaths could be placed in the category of immaterial exchange. Although the exchange of ideas is not easy to track in written sources, some clues can be found in the contact situations and their outcome. In addition, interaction between people and the traditions and symbols people use can be visible in material culture.<sup>33</sup> Both material and immaterial exchange are important for the outcome of contact during the Viking Age: on small scale, as the outcome simply may be that one specific object was transferred from one culture to the other, but also in a larger sense because it can facilitate change in attitude and image.

From an anthropological point of view, these contacts in which exchange occurs would be defined as culture contact.<sup>34</sup> This presupposes two different cultures that are party to contact, so the question must be asked, to what extent the Frisian and Scandinavian cultures in the Viking Age were different and distinguishable. This particularly goes for the material culture, for can one speak of a discernible 'Frisian material culture' and a 'Scandinavian material

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<sup>29</sup> Hadley and Richards, 10.

<sup>30</sup> A. Gurevich, "Wealth and Gift-Bestowal among the Ancient Scandinavians," in *Historical Anthropology of the Middle Ages*, ed. Jana Howlett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 177-189. H.A. Heidinga, *Frisia in the First Millennium: An Outline*, ed. J. Bazelmans and D. Gerrets (Utrecht: Matrijs, 1997), 29.

<sup>31</sup> J. Bazelmans, *By Weapons Made Worthy. Lords, Retainers and Their Relationship in Beowulf*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 13-17.

<sup>32</sup> M. Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Routledge, 1990), 33. Bazelmans, 24.

<sup>33</sup> Heidinga, 45.

<sup>34</sup> "Culture Contact" in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Retrieved April 05, 2010, from *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1515732/culture-contact>. M. J. Herskovits, *Acculturation: The Study of Culture Contact* (New York: Augustin, 1938), 11.

culture' at this time? Close relationships between Dutch Frisia, northern Germany, Anglo-Saxon England and Scandinavia in the Migration Period (up to at latest the eighth century) have led to elite connections and cultural similarities, the latter which are described using the term 'North Sea Culture'.<sup>35</sup> This is especially evident in Anglo-Saxon and Frisian cultures at this time, which have similarities in the field of coins, language, the runic alphabet and material culture, but is not completely insignificant in Frisian-Scandinavian cultural relationships either.<sup>36</sup> For instance in the northern Netherlands, it is easier to discern an assimilated Frisian-Scandinavian material culture than to discern specific 'Viking finds' (which a lot of the scholars dealing with the Viking Age in the Netherlands nevertheless are keen on finding). However, in most cases the sphere of influence can be deduced from the physical and contextual features, as find studies have shown.<sup>37</sup> In addition, we must remember that even though we see great cultural similarities and sometimes find it hard to discern the different cultures, this does not necessarily mean that this was the case for the Viking Age people as well. On the contrary, they must have been aware of the differences, for instance by different use of language. As psychologist Stephen Bochner observes in his work on cross-cultural interaction, many studies have shown that even relatively small differences between groups are usually very noticeable to the members of the groups involved. These noticeable differences, then, often are exaggerated and distorted by both groups, to stigmatise and create a mutually negative stereotype. This is an interesting process that can hold true for the Viking Age as well, or perhaps, in particular.<sup>38</sup>

Changes in cultural identity mostly happen when contact occurs.<sup>39</sup> They are manifested in changing views and identities, but also in exchange. In the discourse on the Viking Age in England, one therefore speaks of new (cultural) identities that incorporate all sorts of different aspects, rather than of a Scandinavian-Anglo-Saxon dichotomy.<sup>40</sup> I suggest that we follow this example of a new definition to a certain extent, and view the Frisian-Scandinavian contacts

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<sup>35</sup> Heidinga, 18. See also: P. Pentz et al., *Kings of the North Sea, AD250-850*, ed. E. Kramer et al. (Leeuwarden etc.: Fries Museum etc., 2000).

<sup>36</sup> Heidinga, 18, 24.

<sup>37</sup> A. Willemsen, "Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands," in *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhineland and Scandinavia*, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 68. See for instance H.H. van Regteren Altena and J.C. Besteman, eds., *De Vikingen in de Lage Landen, getoetst aan de Danelaw* (Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1971).

<sup>38</sup> S. Bochner, "The Social Psychology of Cross-Cultural Relations," in *Cultures in Contact: Studies in Cross-Cultural Interaction*, ed. S. Bochner (Oxford etc.: Pergamon Press, 1983), 11.

<sup>39</sup> J.D. Richards, "Identifying Anglo-Scandinavian Settlements," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 303. Heidinga, 45.

<sup>40</sup> Richards, 303. R.A. Hall, "Anglo-Scandinavian Attitudes: Archaeological Ambiguities in Late Ninth- to Mid-Eleventh-Century York," in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. D. M. Hadley and J. D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 313.

not simply as contacts between two set separate groups, as has been the standard, but rather as a dynamic process of changing views, perspectives and cultural identities. Or, in ‘Gadameric’ terms, to look at the merging of old and the creation of new horizons. However, we must bear in mind that the Anglo-Saxon-Scandinavian contacts happened on a different scale and had a different outcome than the Frisian-Scandinavian contacts. For the latter, I use the definition by the Russian scholar Michael Bakhtin quoted at the beginning of this chapter: “In an encounter through dialogue two cultures do not merge and blend; each keeps its uniqueness and open integrity, but both are enriched.”<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, in this thesis, the aim is to create a fuller image and understanding of the different forms of contacts between the two peoples throughout the Viking Age. Whether or not someone was actually an ‘ethnic’ Frisian, or Scandinavian for that matter, or only happened to come from what, according to the historical sources, was a Frisian sphere of influence is therefore not as relevant as in other studies. More important is who were identified as Frisians and Scandinavians, and by whom. It is not about our modern definitions and perspectives of Frisian and Scandinavian, but about the Early Medieval ones. Each perspective will start with and result in a different image of the contact situation, its participants and its outcome.

Point of view and perspective not only concern the people that are involved in contact, it also concerns the writers of the sources that refer to it. As shall become apparent in the analysis, this often is an outsider’s perspective. In addition, the written sources that we have for the Viking Age all more or less have a distance to the events they describe, either in time, space or both. When looking at the written sources in order to shed light on the Frisian-Scandinavian relations, the perspective and agenda of the writer, as well as the distance from the events, must first be established. This is an essential part of critical analysis of the texts, as it influences the accuracy of the representations.<sup>42</sup>

When it comes to material evidence, one should look at contact in a reverse way, as the objects that tell something about contact usually are the end-stops of the process (i.e. the consequences of the contact). I will therefore examine what the object itself and where it is found can tell us about the process of contact and its outcome. Here, also, a historical-anthropological or perhaps contextual approach is used, as we look at the context of the

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<sup>41</sup> Gurevich, 6.

<sup>42</sup> M. Lezenberg and G. de Vries, *Wetenschapfilosofie voor de geesteswetenschappen* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007 (2001)), 134-136.

objects and the indications for social relationship.<sup>43</sup>

Since the focus of this thesis is on the changing, diachronic contacts between the Frisians and Scandinavians in a period of more and more varied sorts of contact than before, the whole period that is traditionally regarded as the Viking Age, namely late eighth to the eleventh century, will be taken into account.

## 1.2 Vikings and the Viking Age

[...] *classem ducentarum navium de Nordmannia Frisiam appulisse totasque Frisiaco litori adiacentes insulas esse vastatas iamque exercitum illum in continenti esse ternaque proelia cum Frisonibus [...].*<sup>44</sup>

*Annales Regni Francorum* 810

[[...] a fleet of two hundred ships from Denmark had landed in Frisia, [that] all the islands off the coast of Frisia had been ravaged, [that] an army had already landed and fought three battles against the Frisians [...]].<sup>45</sup>

*Royal Frankish Annals* 810

This image of a Viking raid can be seen as the classic image of the Viking Age, to which raids are intrinsic. But the period is more than that. The Viking Age (c. 793-1050 A.D.), which is defined from an Anglo-Saxon perspective and the start date of which was set by what is usually taken as the first recorded Viking raid on Western Europe at the monastery of Lindisfarne in 793 A.D., is an age of travel, trade, raid and, therefore, *contact*. Indeed, the age named after the Scandinavian pirates is defined not by a specific cultural or political event or development, but by the first recorded *contact(situation)* between the Vikings and others, in this case Anglo-Saxon monks. Nevertheless, some four years prior to the Lindisfarne raid, Scandinavian Vikings were already visiting the English coast. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, in 789 A.D. a number of Scandinavian ships were seen off the coast of England. As the English did not know who they were, the king's reeve rode to them. According to writer Æthelward, they were thought to be traders rather than enemies. But the Scandinavians were no merchants, they were Vikings and killed the reeve of the king.<sup>46</sup> This story echoes

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<sup>43</sup> Heidinga, 45-46. According to Heidinga the present archaeology of the Middle Ages has a clear historical-anthropological character.

<sup>44</sup> Rau (1977), 94.

<sup>45</sup> B.W. Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Histories* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1970), 91.

<sup>46</sup> ASC 789. D. Whitelock trans., "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," in *English Historical Documents c. 500-1042*, ed. D. Whitelock (London: Routledge, 1996), 180.

that (peaceful) trade contacts existed at that time, and that it was not always easy to distinguish between merchants and Vikings, especially not in the early days of the attacks.

Initially, the Viking attacks were surprise raids, where the Vikings disappeared as suddenly as they had arrived. But over the course of time, Viking activity and Viking presence changed. Three different phases, of which the initial raids constitute the first, are usually discerned. During what is seen as the second phase, which historian and numismatist Simon Coupland places between the years 841 and 875, the number and scale of the raids increased.<sup>47</sup> Not only did the Vikings attack more and in a wider area, their armies grew as well and their tactics changed. Instead of surprise raids, they now stayed on foreign soil for short periods of time: they stayed over winter.<sup>48</sup> The Vikings seem to have gotten the hang of this, because in the third phase, they started to spread over Europe and penetrate the hinterlands. They now settled for a number of years or, in some cases, permanently.<sup>49</sup> All these different phases mean different forms of contact and, different reactions and consequences. One deals differently with a foreign raider who sacks and leaves, than with an invader who becomes your neighbour. The first does not have to be accommodated at all, the last certainly has, and this requires different attitudes and measures. And, it brings changes to the indigenous people. Contact in the second phase can be seen as an intermediary between these two, a transition-period that is both important and interesting. A question that arises is whether or not all these people were Vikings, and if they still can be seen as Vikings when they settle and start to integrate.

The term Viking often is taken as a term for a Scandinavian people, but means in a narrow sense a sea-travelling pirate, raider and occasionally settler from either (what we now call) Danish, Norwegian or Swedish descent.<sup>50</sup> This is thought to be the original meaning of the West Norse word *vikingr*, denoting the person by his activities. Moreover, the activity of fighting or harrying at/over sea was also called *viking*.<sup>51</sup> In contemporary sources from outside Scandinavia, different terms were used for Vikings. Some of the most common ones are Anglo-Saxon *pirata* and *wicing*,<sup>52</sup> both used by amongst others the Anglo-Saxon scribe

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<sup>47</sup> S. Coupland, "The Vikings in Francia and Anglo-Saxon England to 911," in *Cambridge Histories Online* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 191-198.

<sup>48</sup> Coupland, 193-194.

<sup>49</sup> Coupland, 195-201.

<sup>50</sup> F. Hødnebo, "Viking," in *Kulturhistorisk Leksikon for Nordisk Middelalder. Bind XX* (København, Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1976), 20-25.

<sup>51</sup> Hødnebo, 20. E. Roesdahl, *The Vikings. Revised Edition* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 9.

<sup>52</sup> Hødnebo, 20-21.

Ælfric (c. 955-1010).<sup>53</sup> In Latin *nordmanni* or *northmanni*, *pagani* and *pyratae* are very frequent,<sup>54</sup> and in Old Frisian *nord mon*, *noerd manne* and *witsing*.<sup>55</sup> It is thought that this last word too meant ‘Viking’, or pirate in general perhaps, since the adjectives *nord-* or *northesk-* sometimes proceed it.<sup>56</sup> The medieval cleric and chronicler Adam of Bremen explains in his famous *History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* that what the Scandinavians call *wicingos*, they would call *Ascomanni*.<sup>57</sup>

Although it is now agreed that *viking* meant pirate, there have been different theories about the origin and meaning of the term. It is supposed that the term is a compound of the nominal or possibly verbal element *\*wik-* and the suffix *-ing*, which was a very common one indicating a person (or thing) who takes the characteristics of the first element.<sup>58</sup> Over time, *\*wik-* has been interpreted as coming from Old Norse *vík*, meaning ‘bay’ or ‘inlet’, or more specifically the *Vík* that is the Oslo fjord, as coming from *víka* meaning ‘seamile’, as coming from the verb *vík* meaning ‘to fight’, or from *wika* meaning ‘to give way’.<sup>59</sup> In addition, *\*wik-* has been interpreted as identical to Old English *wīc*, meaning ‘village, town, dwelling place, house, street’, also used as the name for early medieval trading centres, and Dutch *wijk* meaning ‘district in a town’. Here, *viking* is interpreted as inhabitant of a *wik* and therefore a merchant or merchant/sailor and might later have developed to pirate.<sup>60</sup> The primary activity of the Vikings then seems to have been trade, which sometimes changed into taking without payment. Although the above-mentioned etymologies are no longer accepted, they do show that the Vikings activities were not limited to piracy, but also included trade, and that on the basis of these activities Vikings could also be seen as merchants.

### 1.3 *Frisia* and Frisians

Whereas the start of the Viking Age in England is put at the Lindisfarne raid in 793, on the continent its start is really pinpointed by an attack on the northern coastland named *Frisia* in 810, as is read in the quotation from the *Royal Frankish Annals* in the beginning of this chapter. During this attack, the Vikings came into contact with the Frisians. The Early

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<sup>53</sup> J. Krüger, “*Wikinger*” in *Mittelalter: die Rezeption von víkingr m. und víkingf. in altnordische literatur* (Berlijn etc.: De Gruyter, 2008), 3.

<sup>54</sup> Y. Ustvedt, *Verre enn sitt rykte: vikingene slik ofrene så dem* (Oslo: Cappellen, 2004), 26. Krüger, 3.

<sup>55</sup> Hødnebo, 20-21.

<sup>56</sup> Krüger, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Krüger, 3. F. Meier, *Gefürchtet und Bestaunt: Vom Umgang mit dem Fremden im Mittelalter* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2007), 33.

<sup>58</sup> T. Hofstra, “Changing views on Vikings,” *Tijdschrift voor Scandinavistiek* 24:2 (2003):152.

<sup>59</sup> Hofstra, 153-155.

<sup>60</sup> Hofstra, 152.



Medieval homeland of the Frisians called *Frisia* or *Fresia* in contemporary sources, should not be confused with the present homeland of the Dutch Frisians, the province of Friesland in the Netherlands, which was only part of it. Frisia could be best defined, not as a region with set borders, but rather as a Frisian sphere of influence and power that both expanded and shrank throughout the Early Middle Ages.<sup>61</sup>

The original heartland of Frisia seems to have been the coastal zone between the waters Vlie and Lauwers.<sup>62</sup> The landscape in which the Frisians originally moved was thus a maritime cultural landscape, directed towards the sea and waterways.<sup>63</sup> The history and archaeology of *Frisia* and the Frisians from Roman to Early Medieval times is very complex. This, and the question of continuity, will not be addressed, since these are outside the scope of this thesis.<sup>64</sup> In the middle of the seventh century, the Frisian sphere of influence must have expanded southwards, incorporating the former Frankish Rhine, Scheldt and Meuse delta, in what is called *Frisia Citerior*.<sup>65</sup> The southward expansion meant that both the ecclesiastical centre of Utrecht and the rising trading centres of Dorestad and Walcheren were now situated in *Frisia*. These were very important, especially when considering contact. Dorestad, and probably Walcheren as well, were trading centres at the heart of an important network of trading places on the continent and in the north.<sup>66</sup> Both therefore are obvious places for different forms of contact to occur. During the seventh and eighth century, the Frisian sphere of influence not only expanded southwards, but also north-eastwards as far as to Jutland. It is to this expansion that Frisian language and material culture along the North Sea coast are attributed.<sup>67</sup>

Due to the Frankish offensives by Pippin II (c. 645-714 A.D.) and Charles Martel (688-741 A.D.), perhaps helped by the Anglo-Saxon missionaries who were eager to convert the heathen Frisians, the areas up to the Vlie (688-720 A.D.)<sup>68</sup> and later to the Lauwers (734

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<sup>61</sup> H.A., 8-12.

<sup>62</sup> E. Knol, "Frisia in Carolingian times," in *Viking Trade and Settlement in Continental Western Europe*, ed. I. Klæsøe Skibsted (Kopenhagen: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2010), 43-59.

<sup>63</sup> Heidinga, 13-14.

<sup>64</sup> For a good overviews over these issues, see H. Halbertsma, *Frieslands oudheid. Het rijk van de Friese koningen, opkomst en ondergang* (Utrecht: Matrijs, 2000), 14-44, Heidinga, 9-32, and S.H. Westra, "Frisians, Saxona and Franks," in *Insignis Sophiae Arcator. Medieval Latin Studies in Honour of Michael Herren on his 65th Birthday*, ed. G.R. Wieland, C. Ruff and R.G Arthur (Trunhout: Brepols, 2006), 28-44

<sup>65</sup> P.C.J.A. Boeles, *Friesland tot de elfde eeuw* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951), 269-276.

S. Lebecq, *Marchands et Navigateurs Frisons du Haut Moyen Âge. Vol. 1* (Lille: Presses Universitaire de Lille, 1983a), 101-105.

<sup>66</sup> A. Willemsen, *Dorestad: een Wereldstad in de Middeleeuwen* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2009), 154-157. S. Lebecq, "The Frisian trade in the Dark Ages; a Frisian or a Frankish/Frisian trade?," in *Rotterdam Papers VII*, ed. A. Carmiggelt, (Rotterdam: 1992), 10-14.

<sup>67</sup> Heidinga, 10.

<sup>68</sup> Boeles, 270-271.

A.D.) were subdued to Frankish rule.<sup>69</sup> The Frisians and Frisia did not disappear,<sup>70</sup> as is attested by the fact that the great Frankish ruler Charlemagne had the common laws of the Frisians as a group written down in the *Lex Frisionum* – the Law Code of the Frisians – around 800 A.D.<sup>71</sup> This text – preserved only in an edition by Joannis Basilius Herold from 1557 A.D.<sup>72</sup> – describes the area in which the law is valid as the area between *Sincfal* (generally agreed to be the Zwin where the Scheldt estuary is situated, and according to Lebecq just down to Zeelandic Flanders<sup>73</sup>) and *Wisara* (or *Uuisara*, identified as the Weser in modern north-west Germany).<sup>74</sup> It is not stated how far south the Frisian area under Frankish rule stretched apart from in the west, but as amongst others historian P.J.C. Boeles pointed out, other texts indicate that it was to the Rhine, which separated it from ‘Batua’, the Betuwe.<sup>75</sup> In the Frankish law text from c. 800 called *Ewa, quae se ad Amorem habet* the area of the “Amor”, which can be identified as the present Amer, is described as the border zone between the Franks, Frisians and Saxons. It concerns the area near Teisterbant including the



fig. 1 Frisia around 800 A.D. (Salomon, 2000, 6).

Betuwe and the area between the rivers Meuse and Waal just south of it.<sup>76</sup> According to J.F. Niermeyer, it was Frankish territory, but with a presence of groups of Frisian and Saxon merchants.<sup>77</sup>

The Frisian area seems to have been divided into three different regions, in which some variations of the law were current. These are the western region *inter Flehi et Sincfalam*<sup>78</sup> [between what is identified as the Vlie and the Zwin or the border of Zeelandic Flanders], the middle part *inter Laubachi et*

<sup>69</sup> Boeles, 382-383.

<sup>70</sup> Halbertsma, 48.

<sup>71</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 101-102.

<sup>72</sup> H. Siems, *Studien zur Lex Frisionum* (Ebelsbach: Verlag Rolf Gremer, 1980), 44. See for the edition the facsimile in Siems and Joannis Basilius Herold, *Originum ac Germanicarum antiquitatum libri* (Basel: Heinrich Peters, 1557).

<sup>73</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 102.

<sup>74</sup> *LF*, for example I:III-XIII:II.

<sup>75</sup> Boeles, 383. See for a discussion also A. Russchen, *New Light on Dark Age Frisia* (Drachten: Laverman, 1967), 9-12.

<sup>76</sup> Halbertsma., 210-211. The area might once have expanded further land inwards.

<sup>77</sup> Halbertsma, 211. J.F. Niermeyer, “Het Midden-Nederlandse rivierengebied in de Frankische tijd op grond van de *Ewa quae se ad amora habet*,” *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 66 (1953), 146-169.

<sup>78</sup> *LF* III:LXXIII.

*inter Flehi*<sup>79</sup> [between the water identified as Lauwers and the Vlie] and to the east the area *inter Laubachi et Wisaram*<sup>80</sup> [from the Lauwers to the Weser]. The Vlie and the Lauwers form natural borders (or ways of access, if one thinks in terms of a maritime culture), and presumably therefore coincide with the borders of the earlier Frankish conquests. A good part of the laws are nevertheless current *trans Laubachi*,<sup>81</sup> bearing witness to the broader entity of Frisia.

The Frankish conquest of 695 A.D. meant that Dorestad came into Frankish hands, but it is agreed that only after the death of the Frisian king Radboud in 719 A.D. it was no longer situated in the direct Frisian sphere of influence. This did not mean that Frisians stopped using Dorestad as their main trading centre and port to Scandinavia.<sup>82</sup> Because of the fact that the Frisian sphere of influence probably still stretched from Flanders up to Jutland, at least in certain areas, and people there presumably would have regarded themselves as Frisian,<sup>83</sup> this thesis will look at this entire coastal area in the Viking Age, including sites such as Dorestad and Walacria. But it will also look beyond it. Not only the Vikings were namely known for their overseas-travelling in the Early Medieval Period, the Frisians too were famous for their seafaring and their long-distance trade. Especially well known was their (trade in) textile, called *pallia fresonica* – cloth either made in Frisia or at least commercialised and traded by Frisian merchants.<sup>84</sup> It is not only in Frisia, then, that the Vikings, other Scandinavians and Frisians met, but also in other parts of Francia, Scandinavia, the Anglo-Saxon world and Italy.<sup>85</sup> They were in contact in the whole North Sea area, but because Frisia functioned as a buffer-zone between the North Sea and Scandinavia on one end and the heartland of the Frankish empire on the other, it is nevertheless the place where most of the contacts occurred.

A good example of Frisian-Scandinavian contact outside Frisia that is attested by both archaeology and textual references comes from the English city of York. According to the *Vita Liudgeri* by the Frisian Altfrid, a colony of Frisian merchants was based in the city and

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<sup>79</sup> *LF* Additio III:LXXVIII.

<sup>80</sup> *LF* I:III.

<sup>81</sup> *LF* III:VII for example.

<sup>82</sup> Lebecq (1992), 10-14.

S. Lebecq, "On the use of the word 'Frisian' in the 6th-10th centuries written sources: some interpretations," in *Maritime Celts, Frisians and Saxons*, S. McGrail (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1990), 87.

<sup>83</sup> Heidinga, 28.

<sup>84</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 15, 21, 97.

<sup>85</sup> Attested by both textual and material evidence, i.e. by references in *Beowulf*, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, the poems and letters of Alcuin, *Vita Liudgeri*, runic inscriptions and finds from trading centres such as York and Kaupang. See Lebecq (1983b) and N.L. IJssennagger, "Frisians in Early Medieval York: an Interdisciplinary Perspective", essay Medieval Studies University of York (York, 2010) unpublished. D. Skre "From Dorestad to Kaupang. Frankish Traders and Settlers in a 9<sup>th</sup> century Scandinavian Town," in *Dorestad in an International Framework*, ed. A. Willemsen and H. Kik (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010 [in print] ).

had to flee in the 770s.<sup>86</sup> This reference is often cited as the only evidence for Frisians in York in the Early Middle Ages, but my own research has shown that there is more evidence for a Frisian presence also after the 770s, together with Scandinavians. An analysis of references in prose and poetry indicates that Frisians were part of life in Anglo-Saxon trading centers,<sup>87</sup> and this is confirmed by archaeology.<sup>88</sup> Well into the ninth century, a third of the pottery at the Anglo-Saxon trading site Fishergate was imported from Frisia, and some quern stones may have been traded via Dorestad to York by Frisians.<sup>89</sup> Combs and textile finds point to more trading links between York and Frisia or the Frisians.<sup>90</sup> According to archaeologist R.A. Hall, the fact that there is trade between Scandinavian and York from the ninth to the eleventh century is indisputable. In this trade, Frisians could very well have functioned as middlemen, Hall suggests.<sup>91</sup> Frisians and/or Frisian trade were present in York, but also in Scandinavia, and had trade links with Scandinavians in other places. This shows that when thinking of Scandinavian-Frisian contact, one should also look outside Frisia and Scandinavia. Frisians not only traded with Scandinavians, but also with others.

The name 'Frisian' is not unproblematic either. The French historian Stéphane Lebecq has argued that "*Frisian* became synonymous with 'international trader' in the Early Medieval period",<sup>92</sup> but it might be more accurate to say that traders became labelled as Frisians and were consequently identified as such. It is true that in a lot of trade towns around the North Sea most traders were Frisian, as in York. It is also true that the name of one group of people could come to denote a larger group in the Early Middle Ages, as we saw with Danes or, later, Vikings. If the labelling of tradesmen as Frisians is true, then we see a reversed etymology as with Vikings. Whereas *Viking* originally referred to a certain activity (trade and piracy), and secondly to a people, *Frisian* originally denoted a certain people (ethnonym), and secondary people with a certain activity (international trade). When looking at the Frisians, one has to bear this in mind, as well as the fact that the Frisian sphere of influence also stretched over former parts of for instance Francia, meaning that inhabitants of Frisia could be Frankish-Frisian.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> W. Diekamp, *Die Vitae Sancti Liudgeri* (Münster: Theissingischen Buchhandlung, 1881), 17.

<sup>87</sup> IJssennagger, 2-4.

<sup>88</sup> IJssennagger, 6-10.

<sup>89</sup> R.L. Kemp, *Anglian Settlement at 46-54 Fishergate. The Archaeology of York Anglian York 7/1* (London: Council for British Archaeology, 1996), 73.

<sup>90</sup> IJssennagger, 9-15.

<sup>91</sup> Hall, 315.

<sup>92</sup> Lebecq (1990), 87.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

## Chapter 2

### Present state of research

Over the course of many centuries, books and articles have been written on the Viking Age in general and the Viking Age in the Netherlands, including, in particular, Frisia. A well-known and much-discussed example, particularly because of the author's later political sympathies,<sup>94</sup> is Jan de Vries' *Vikingen in de Lage Landen bij de Zee* (1923). It is one of the most complete and thorough overviews of the Viking Age in the Low Countries, and is therefore still used. However, De Vries's sympathies for the 'Vikings' become apparent already in the introduction, where he states that:

*Wie kennis genomen heeft van de uitermate rijke traditie, ons bewaard in gedichten en prozaverhalen, die hoopt, dat er ook voor onze geschiedenis winst uit te halen zal zijn.*<sup>95</sup>

[A person who has acquainted himself with the extremely rich tradition, preserved in poetry and prose, hopes that our history can gain from it too.]<sup>96</sup>

*Wanneer mij desniettemin de verleiding te machtig is geworden, om een min of meer samenhangend beeld te teekenen van den Noormannentijd, dan is dat grootendeels het gevolg van mijn bewondering en genegenheid voor het krachtige, schoone geestesleven, dat de oude Skandinaviërs in hun literatuur tot uiting hebben gebracht,[...]*<sup>97</sup>

[If, nevertheless, the temptation has become too strong to create a more or less coherent picture of the Viking Age, then it is for the most part the consequence of my admiration and affection for the strong and beautiful cultural life, that the ancient Scandinavians expressed in their literature [...]]

Not doubting his scholarly qualities or even his awareness of his own sympathies, his works should be read with these sympathies in mind. Whilst De Vries' work was merely a historical and literary study, Dirk P. Blok published a linguistic analysis in 1947, especially focusing on the province of Friesland, showing that there is little linguistic evidence pointing to

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<sup>94</sup> K. Logghe. *Dr. Jan de Vries. Nederlands bekendste germanist en volkskundige*. (Wijnegem, Monnickendam: Stichting Deltapers, 1996). M. Eickhoff, B. Henkes and F. van Vree, ed. *Volkseigen. Ras, cultuur en wetenschap in Nederland 1900-1950*. (Zutphen: Walburgers, 2000).

<sup>95</sup> J. De Vries, *De Vikingen in de Lage Landen bij de zee* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1923), 1.

<sup>96</sup> Unless stated otherwise, translations are by the author.

<sup>97</sup> De Vries, 2.

Scandinavian settlement in the Netherlands.<sup>98</sup> Archaeological studies have traditionally focused on certain aspects of the Viking Age in the Netherlands, such as individual finds or find categories.<sup>99</sup> Special attention has been paid to the trade centres of mainly Dorestad, Walacria, Deventer, Zutphen and Tiel in this context, and especially archaeological finds that might be called ‘Viking’ from these and other places have been published, and because Zutphen has provided the only clear evidence of Viking devastation in the form of charcoal layers and remains of slaughtered people. The best example, and still a useful overview, is the 1971 publication of the results of a research seminar called *De Vikingen in de Lage Landen, getoetst aan de Danelaw*. This overview comprises a critical discussion of finds that have been interpreted as ‘Viking’.<sup>100</sup> But, since this publication, new finds such as the famous Westerklijf hoards have been made, which have again been subject to study.<sup>101</sup>

More recently, some broader, more interdisciplinary studies have been published on the subject. The publication *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhineland and Scandinavia* (2004), which contains an overview and discussion of Viking finds from the river area by Annemarieke Willemsen, is a good example of this.<sup>102</sup> Another example, one of different approach, is *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland*. This 1995 study of the ring- fortresses in Zeeland is helpful because it shows that the fortresses are connected to the Viking activity in Zeeland, which was regarded as part of Frisia in the early medieval period. But, it also provides new insights for other ring-fortresses along the Dutch coast that might as well have been built against the Vikings.<sup>103</sup> This not only confirms the picture of Viking activity in Zeeland as we know it from the written sources, it also sheds light on how people reacted to it. Nonetheless, these studies all concentrate on the Viking presence and its material remains in the southern Low Countries, leaving a lacuna for the Viking Age history of (the rest of) former Frisia. Interestingly, it is this area that can be

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<sup>98</sup> D.P. Blok “De Vikingen in Friesland,” *Naamkunde* 10 (1978): 26-47.

<sup>99</sup> For example A. Roes, *Bone and Antler Objects from the Frisian Terp-Mounds* (Haarlem: Willink, 1963), and the titles in note 77, 78 and 79.

<sup>100</sup> H.H. van Regteren Altena and J.C. Besteman, ed., *Vikingen in de Lage Landen, getoetst aan de Danelaw* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, 1971).

<sup>101</sup> J.C. Besteman, “Nieuwe Vikingvondsten van Wieringen: de zilverschat Westerklijf II,” in *Middeleeuwse toestanden: Archeologie, geschiedenis en monumentenzorg, Aangeboden aan Herbert Rafatij bij zijn 65e verjaardag* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000). J.C. Besteman, *Vikingen in Noord-Holland? : de zilverschat van Wieringen in het licht van de Noormanneninvallen* (Provincie Noord-Holland, 1996). J.C. Besteman, “Viking Silver on Wieringen,” in *In Discussion with the Past: Archaeological Studies presented to W.A. van Es*. Sarfatij et al. ed. (Amersfoort: ROB, 1999), 253- 266.

<sup>102</sup> A. Willemsen, “Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands,” in *Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhineland and Scandinavia*, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 65-82.

<sup>103</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, P.A. Henderikx and A. Mars, ed., *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland* (Goes etc: De Koperen Tuin, 1995).

seen as an important link between Scandinavia, the homelands of the Vikings, and the rest of the continent. Studies that do focus on Frisia or the northern coastlands in general, especially considering the Early Middle Ages, usually only take into consideration Dutch Frisia. A good example of this was the Frisia-project (1997) of joint institutes which is outlined in H.A. Heidinga's *Frisia in the First Millennium*. An exception to this is the extensive and inspiring work of Stéphane Lebecq on the Frisians and their significance in Early Medieval Europe *Marchands et Navigateurs Frisons du Haut Moyen Âge* (1983). Lebecq looks at various aspects of the expansion of Frisian culture and collects references to them from both the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian world, which makes his work an important secondary source.

This thesis takes a new point of departure with which it hopes to contribute to the study of the Viking Age, and link up with the enlisted literature. The main novelty about this study is that it not only incorporates artefacts found in Dutch Frisia, but will look at artefacts from all around the North Sea that can tell us something about Frisian-Scandinavian relations. In addition, it will not only look at written material from the continent, but from the whole North Sea region. This will provide the best and most complete picture of the relations.

Developments in Viking Age and Early Medieval research have provided the possibility to ask new questions. The interdisciplinary approach has become more widely used. This can especially be seen in the discourse on the Viking Age in England, which seems to have always been an example for the study of the Viking Age in the Netherlands. The publication *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries* (2000) is significant in this development. Its quintessence is that new insights can be obtained by re-evaluating the available evidence, asking new questions and looking at it from new perspectives. According to the editors, archaeologists Dawn M. Hadley and Julian D. Richards, the historical framework used had been set for years, resulting in always asking the same questions, such as 'How big was the Scandinavian settlement and its influence?'.<sup>104</sup> Also in the Netherlands, the academic discourse seems have been dominated by the interlinked questions 'Was there a Scandinavian settlement in the Low Countries?', 'Is there a Scandinavian heritage from the Viking Age of some sort?', and 'What Viking finds are there in our regions?'. In their introduction, Hadley and Richards state that the evidence can bring to light more information about diversity, but also about identity and changes over time, themes that have become more important in Viking Studies in recent years. To study them, a more historical-anthropological approach is required.<sup>105</sup> This connects with the view of the

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<sup>104</sup> Hadley and Richards, 4-13.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* See also the individual articles in this publication.

historians of *mentalité*, as made clear above, and Russian historian Aaron Gurevich, who was an expert on Scandinavia, in particular. Their main view is that one cannot understand historical and especially social processes in history, if one does not take the participators' views into account.<sup>106</sup>

In the Dutch academic discourse these approaches and developments have been picked up to some extent, especially the historical-anthropological approach<sup>107</sup> and the question of identity.<sup>108</sup> Even in archaeology these changes seem to penetrate, as Heidinga for the Frisia-project stated that 'present archaeology of the Early Middle Ages has a clearly historical-anthropological character.'<sup>109</sup> It seems that the different disciplines are getting closer to each other, which is a fruitful development. The Frisia-project was designed to fill in some of the 'blind spots' on the map of Frisian history, and did so by focussing on main themes. The Frisian-North-West-European relationships are not one of them, yet according to the researchers this is an area that needs more work. As they themselves point out, these relationships, such as the Frisian-Scandinavian one, have been generally studied from an economic perspective.<sup>110</sup> The question of Scandinavian-Frisian contacts in a broader, cultural perspective still needs attention.

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<sup>106</sup> Gurevich, 3-49.

<sup>107</sup> For instance the work of J. Bazelmans and H. Nijdam.

<sup>108</sup> Heidinga, 45.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*



## Chapter 3

### Contact and context: Contact situations in textual sources

In this chapter, we will take a look at the representation of contact situations in the different written sources. Of importance for understanding a contact situation are the nature of contact, on whose territory it took place, what the time span or frequency was, what the number of people involved on both sides was and whether contact occurs between two groups from different societies or two different groups within a society and what their relative status was. All of these elements form some of the major variables of cross-cultural contact and are essential for the contacts' outcome.<sup>111</sup> Here, we will also look at the images of both groups in the different contact situations, according to the sources. We will pay attention to the purpose of the contact and the characteristics attributed to both groups, in order to establish the respective attitudes more precisely. To do this, we will first take a closer look at the sources.

#### 3.1 The textual sources: source criticism

As has been pointed out briefly in the introduction, we are dealing with several Early Medieval written sources that all come from a certain sphere of influence and are written from a certain point of view and scope. They can for instance be religious, poetic, heroic or political. Essentially, Early Medieval sources are often far in time or place from the what they describe, making it difficult to assess how accurate the information presented is. This is even more a problem because they often borrow material from each other. Moreover, original copies of the texts usually do not survive, so we are dealing with texts that were transmitted in different copies over a long period of time.<sup>112</sup> These sources can be fragmentary, but as we only have a limited amount of sources available for the period, they all have to be used.

##### 3.1.1 The Frankish Annals

The early medieval Frankish annals are a product of ninth-century religious- and court-culture. They were one of the main media for history-writing in the Frankish empire.<sup>113</sup> According to historians Rosamond McKitterick and Matthew Innes, the annals are the collective memories, written down in narrative form. Memory of the lords is recorded by their

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<sup>111</sup> Bochner, 8.

<sup>112</sup> T. Reuter trans., *The Annals of Fulda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), 1-5.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

followers, sometimes in exchange for patronage, linking the authors to the rulers.<sup>114</sup>

### 3.1.1.1 The *Royal Frankish Annals*

The Frankish Annals incorporating some of the earliest references to contact between Scandinavians and Frisian are the *Royal Frankish Annals* (subsequently *RFA*), the *Annales Regni Francorum*. Comprising the period from 741 A.D., the year of Charles Martel's death, to 829 A.D., *RFA* seem to have been written by several chroniclers in the Frankish empire. The first part, covering the years between 741 A.D. and 795 A.D., is generally agreed to have been written by one author, who started writing in about 787 A.D.<sup>115</sup> The second part, by a next author, would include the years 795 to 807 A.D., and the third part the period of 808-829 A.D.<sup>116</sup> According to some scholars, it is possible that the last part from 818 to 829 A.D. was written by abbot Hildvin of the monastery of St. Denis in modern day France.<sup>117</sup> In general, the authors remain unknown and the names that do get mentioned remain suggestions. It is clear though that they all are high clerics from the circle around the Royal Frankish court, and the oldest surviving manuscript of *RFA* seems to have been written there.<sup>118</sup> The author namely knows so much inside information that could not have been obtained whilst living in a monastery in the country. The writing of the *RFA* may even have been encouraged by Charlemagne himself, whom was interested in history-writing and keeping records.<sup>119</sup>

That the authors of the *RFA* must be sought in the circles around the Frankish court, gives the annals an official character, which has some implications. It implies that the annals were written by people who were close to the emperor, who would therefore write positively about the emperor, and not his opponents. Also, the writers might have chosen to leave out facts that were negative for the emperor and empire. As some historians have noted, the writer of the first part of the annals has the tendency to leave disasters and internal problems unmentioned. We must therefore remember that if something is not recorded in the annals, it does not mean it did not happen. Moreover, the purpose of the annals might even have been to actively influence public opinion, by adding, changing, or leaving out information, making it a text with a to a certain extent propagandic character. And this is exactly why we have to be careful with the sources and keep in mind that it is written from a Frankish perspective. As translator

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<sup>114</sup> M. Innes and R. McKitterick, "The Writing of History," in *Carolingian culture: emulation and innovation*, R. McKitterick ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2004), 201-202.

<sup>115</sup> Scholz, 4-6.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>117</sup> Rau (1977), 2-3.

<sup>118</sup> Scholz, 2, 6.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

and editor Bernhard Scholz expresses nicely, it is ‘the Carolingian version of Carolingian history’<sup>120</sup> and ‘a picture of the Carolingian world as viewed by a particular class of men’.<sup>121</sup> A later and revised version of the *RFA* does mention the disasters and fills in some information about the earlier period, which originally was left out. Yet, this version is farther removed from the events in time.<sup>122</sup> In the edition of the *RFA* by Reinhold Rau that will be used here, both are therefore mentioned and should be combined. At the same time, we must not forget that the writers were clerics, men of the church who gave the annals a clear Christian character.

Because the annals are written in the court-circle as official documents, they are restricted in scope and primarily focus on the political, diplomatic and military, sometimes combined with the religious. As they are written for a contemporary audience, many details that they would have been familiar with but we do not know, as well as motives or explanatory remarks are left out.<sup>123</sup> Therefore, the events described by the *ARF* are always being interpreted. Albeit the fact that the propagandistic and politically-focused character of the annals are somewhat of a hurdle if one is interested in establishing the historical reality (of which this reality is one version), they also provides a great insight in the way the Franks reacted to and used the Viking attacks on Frisia from the Frankish, propagandist point of view.

### 3.1.1.2 The *Annals of St. Bertin*

After 829 A.D., the history of the Frankish Empire is continued in both the *Annals of St. Bertin* (hereafter *AB*) the *Annals of Fulda* (henceforth *AF*) and the *Annals of Xanten* (henceforth *AX*), which should best be combined to get the best overview of events. All of these annals focus on a different part of the Frankish empire; the *AB* on the western empire, the *AF* on the eastern empire and the *AX* on the central part of the empire, reflecting the political situation. From 830 A.D., the power in the Frankish empire is namely undermined and eventually divided because of problems between Emperor Louis and his three sons.

The *AB*, transmitted in several manuscripts,<sup>124</sup> seem to have a broad political scope similar to the *RFA*, and are probably also written down by palace clergy.<sup>125</sup> They deal with the political events and the deeds of the Frankish rulers from a West-Frankish perspective, and

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<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

<sup>123</sup> M.L. W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe A.D. 500 to 900* (London: Methuen, 1957), 264.

<sup>124</sup> Rau (1972a), 4-5.

<sup>125</sup> J. Nelson, trans., *The Annals of St-Bertin. Ninth-Century Histories, Volume I* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 2.

are particularly well informed about the West-Frankish sphere of Charles the Bald. Yet the focus is more on public events and individual responses to them, and less on the ‘official history’ that the *RFA* focused on. They are not propagandistic like the *RFA* as they are not written at initiative of a ruler or as official history or annals, even though they can be positive about the king.<sup>126</sup> Again, subsequent writers are postulated for both annals. The first part comprising the period from 830 to 835 A.D. is from one unidentified author, who is sympathetic towards the Frankish ruler Louis the Pious. Partly therefore, it is suggested that this part of the annals was written by scribes in Louis’ court and palace. From 835 up to 859 A.D. the supposed writer is the Spanish Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861 A.D.). He seems to have been followed up by Hildvin’s student Hincmar of Rheims (806-882 A.D.), who was archbishop of Rheims and a close friend and advisor of Charles the Bald. Both authors wrote very personal accounts, which makes clear why the *AB* is so well informed and positive about Charles and, as in the *RFA*, sometimes leaves unpleasant things out.<sup>127</sup> It therefore provides some interesting Frankish key-hole views on the Frisian-Scandinavian relations. Because of the fact that the *AB* are more interested in public events and individual reactions, they are a useful source for finding the attitudes towards the contacts between the Frisians and the Scandinavians. And these, especially the Viking attacks, are often mentioned.

### 3.1.1.3 The *Annals of Fulda*

The *AF* are similar to the *AB* to a certain extent, but focus upon the East-Frankish realm. They are again transmitted in several compilations in different manuscripts, and several authors of the text can be discerned. The first part, up to 838 A.D. is by some scholars attributed to Einhard (c. 775-840 A.D.), who was a faithful courtier at the time of Charlemagne and his son Louis de Pious. The second part up to 863 A.D. is by some ascribed to the cleric Rudolf of Fulda (d. 865 A.D.), who was a friend of Louis, and the part after 863 A.D. to Rudolf’s pupil Meginhard (d. 888 A.D.), as their names are mentioned in the margins. But, they do not necessarily have to be the names of the authors, they can also be the names of the copyists in Fulda. The *AF*, a product of the East-Frankish royal chapel, is like the other annals very selective in the presentation of material. The focus is on political affairs, but also on natural disasters and on the miraculous, providing a different approach to the events than the *RFA* and *AB*.<sup>128</sup> The *AF* therefore seem to provide an interesting view on the Scandinavian-Frisian

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-12.

<sup>128</sup> Reuter, 1-6.

contact from an Eastern-Frankish viewpoint. But they also show the Viking attacks in a more miraculous or religious light, and are thus a good supplement to the other written sources.

#### 3.1.1.4 The *Annals of Xanten* and the *Annals of St. Vaast*

The *AX* are also contemporary accounts of Frankish history with focus on the central part of the Frankish empire, including *Frisia*. What is most interesting about this source is that it includes a description of the Viking attack on Xanten, of which the annals take their name, written by someone who actually witnessed the attack. It is generally accepted amongst scholars that the first part of the annals, from 790 to 860 A.D., is written by the cleric Gerward (of Gendt, first half of the ninth century), who was connected to the monastery of Lorsch. He was close to the emperor Lothar and had special attention for the faith of Frisia in the Viking Age. The continuer of the annals up to 873 A.D. is believed to be a cleric who commended himself to Louis the German.<sup>129</sup> It is interesting to note that Gerward moved in the same circles as Einhard, who had part in the writing of the *AF*. Not only did they become friends, Gerward also followed up Einhard as the royal Frankish librarian.<sup>130</sup> This indicates, as does the information above, that many of annalists moved in the same circles, which implies that the annals are closely related, that their writers could influence each other and that they come from the same, Christian, Frankish background.

The *AF* are continued by the *Annals of St. Vaast* (henceforth *AV*), named after the monastery of St. Vaast near Arras in modern Northern-France where the annals were written. They incorporate the period from 874 to 900 A.D.,<sup>131</sup> and are preserved in two manuscripts. The writer(s) of the annals remain anonymous.

### 3.1.2 The Frisian Sources

#### 3.1.2.1 *Walfrid of Bedum*

The *vita* of Saint Walfrid and his son Radfrid (subsequently *WB*), has been handed down in four separate fifteenth-century manuscripts. Unfortunately, no original manuscript of the text survives. Many copies must have existed between the original and the surviving manuscripts, all of which could have varied from the historical story and could have contained mistakes. Consequently, the questions of who wrote down the story, where, when

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<sup>129</sup> Rau (1972b), 8-9.

<sup>130</sup> [http://www.biografischwoordenboek gelderland.nl/bio/5\\_Gerward\\_van\\_Gendt](http://www.biografischwoordenboek gelderland.nl/bio/5_Gerward_van_Gendt).

<sup>131</sup> S. Walther, "The Vikings in the Rhineland according to Latin sources," in *Vikings on the Rhine. Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia*, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 165-166.

and for what reason remain an enigma.<sup>132</sup> It is generally accepted that the story was transmitted orally for some centuries, before finally being committed to parchment.<sup>133</sup> Because of the Viking attacks, the cultivation of land and the age of the churches that figure in this story, historian Remi van Schaik who studied the *vita* believes that it was written somewhere around 1100.<sup>134</sup> The four remaining editions can be divided into a ‘northern’ and a ‘southern’ group,<sup>135</sup> attesting that the story of Walfrid was also known outside the Bedum area, where the saint lived and died.

Because of the nature of the text, it is assumed that it stands halfway between history and a biography, in which the main aim is to stress the protagonists’ sanctity. A few aspects are required for this sort of text, such as the prophetic abilities of the saint and the performance of miracles before or after death.<sup>136</sup> It is thus a text with a very specific goal, which must be kept in mind when reading it. As van Schaik points out, it is also important to remember that the story was transmitted over a long period in an area that was largely protestant, which is uncommon.<sup>137</sup> The story must therefore have appealed to the people of Bedum in a way that preserved it, and we might wonder what caused this appeal. Was it the fact that Walfrid and Radfrid were locals, whereas most other saints usually are foreign or from farther away and therefore less easy to identify with? Was it the fact that Walfrid was an important man for the Bedum-area and initiated the reclaiming of land? Or was it the fearless, brutal deeds of the Vikings that appealed to them? We cannot be certain, but the story might give us some indications.

### 3.1.2.2 *Seventeen Statutes, Twenty-four Constitutions, Constitutions of Magnus.*

The range of codices preserving the Frisian law texts originated in different Frisian areas.<sup>138</sup> This not only reflects the widespread Frisian sphere of influence, it also shows some differentiation between the areas, since even the manuscripts containing the same laws all have variations. Although the laws together do represent the whole Frisian area, they do not necessarily represent all Frisians. In his very extensive and thorough study of the Vikings in the east, Omeljan Pritsak rightly stresses that the Frisian laws are clearly the laws of the pacified, Christian Frisians who were allied to Francia and Rome, which is reflected in

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<sup>132</sup> Van Schaik, 13, 19.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-27, 36.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-11.

<sup>138</sup> Algra, 25.

some of the law texts. And they should be distinguished from the independent Frisians who travelled north and east on their trading campaigns.<sup>139</sup> They therefore provide the view of the Christian Frisians on their contact with Scandinavians.

According to law historian N.E. Algra, the quintessence of the Frisian laws is the Frisian freedom. This is clearly expressed in the *Constitutes of Magnus*, which according to a professor in Old Frisian, Oebele Vries, actually is not as much a law text as a text of freedom.<sup>140</sup> The Frisian freedom was, according to a number of medieval texts, granted to the Frisians by Charlemagne, and the Frisians in all the Frisian lands have referred to it ever since. It meant that overlords could not mingle in Frisian politics and law,<sup>141</sup> which was a matter for free Frisian men. It is against this background these laws came into existence and were used.<sup>142</sup> The idea of Frisian freedom is thus connected with the ideology of the Frisians and signifies continuity from the early medieval period to now. However, it is likely that the Frisian freedom that is proclaimed in the texts actually dates back to the Later Middle Ages, when writers suddenly come up with the stories of the freedom granted by Charlemagne.

In the law texts the Old Frisian jurisprudence and morals are codified, and interestingly the Northmen are explicitly mentioned in it. This means that the laws must have originated in the period that Frisia was stricken by their northern neighbours, or the aftermath when the events were still fresh in mind. In addition, as Algra notes, the laws concern greater Frisia, so they must come from a time that the greater Frisian idea already existed.<sup>143</sup> All together, it points to the writing down of the laws in the eleventh to thirteenth century at the earliest, whilst the laws most probably already existed longer.<sup>144</sup> The general rule is that the texts themselves are older than the manuscripts.<sup>145</sup> Considering the fact that the Viking attacks are mentioned in them, I believe it is safe to say that at least some of the rules came into existence no later than the tenth or eleventh century. Having said that, it remains somewhat of an enigma why the laws concerning the Vikings were preserved to the fifteenth century when they were written down, as they were no longer needed after the twelfth century at all. Perhaps outdated laws were not discarded, which would make a great case for the authenticity of the preserved laws.

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<sup>139</sup> O. Pritsak, *The Origin of Rus'* (Cambridge/ Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981), 491-498.

<sup>140</sup> O. Vries, *Asega, is het dingtijd?* (Leeuwarden/Utrecht: Steven Sterk, 2007), 14. With thanks to Oebele Vries.

<sup>141</sup> Algra, 131.

<sup>142</sup> H. Nijdam, "Klinkende munten en botsplinters in de Oudfriese rechtsteksten. Continuïteit, discontinuïteit, intertekstualiteit," *De Vrije Fries* 89 (2009): 46-47. I would like to thank Han Nijdam for providing me with his article as well as other information, and for answering my questions.

<sup>143</sup> Algra, 195.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 202-203.

<sup>145</sup> Vries, 13.

The *Seventeen Statutes* are regarded as the oldest and most common of the named Old Frisian law texts (apart from the *Lex Frisonum*) and is probably dating back to a tenth-century version.<sup>146</sup> The laws were probably not all coined at once, however, but rather developed and collected over time, of which the end product is the *Seventeen Statutes*.<sup>147</sup> They were current from the Zuiderzee to the Weser. Together with the *Twenty-four Constitutions*, it forms the core of the Old Frisian law.<sup>148</sup> It is interesting to see that, as Algra puts it, they clearly contain the message that overlords should not think they can have power over the Frisians; the Frisians are free. Algra places this in the context of twelfth and thirteenth century developments within the law system.<sup>149</sup> This period is called ‘the period of the counts’ and later, when the first counts were put in place and the first benefice holders came on to the stage.<sup>150</sup> But, I think we also should consider the possibility that this is a message connected with the Danish overlords who got Frisian benefices, and the Frankish rulers who granted them.

*The Twenty-four Constitutions* comprise an eclectic collection of twenty-four laws about amongst other things land and landownership. They are regarded younger than the statutes, but some laws are very similar or in accordance with some of the statutes. This is the case when it concerns a reference to the Vikings, as we shall see below. Nevertheless, there are also some major differences. Again, this seems to be a collection of laws that has been accumulated over time.<sup>151</sup>

Another set of law texts that seems to be closely connected to the *Seventeen Statutes* are the *Statutes of Magnus*. These are of a different kind than the aforementioned law texts, for they tell the saga of Magnus; the story of Magnus who won freedom for the Frisians. This legendary story is also connected to the Northmen, under whose authority the Frisians are said to have been earlier.<sup>152</sup>

### 3.1.3 Scandinavian Sources

#### 3.1.3.1 *Egil's saga*

The saga of the Icelandic Viking and poet Egil Skallagrímsson was probably composed in the first half of the thirteenth century, and is written in the vernacular. It was thus written down

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<sup>146</sup> Pritsak, 492.

<sup>147</sup> Vries, 52.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>149</sup> Algra, 237-238.

<sup>150</sup> Vries, 14.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.



some three hundred years after the events it describes. But, the information that led to the composition of this saga must have come from earlier documents and, more importantly, oral tradition. The name of the composer of the saga did not survive, but some scholars have argued that it is very possible that Snorri Sturluson was the man who crafted the saga.<sup>153</sup> Snorri Sturluson (1179-1241) was an Icelandic aristocrat, who made career as writer, law speaker and historian. Although he was Christian, he was not a cleric. He lived at a time when the Vikings made way for a Christianised and more medieval society.<sup>154</sup> We cannot be sure that it was Snorri who composed the story, yet we do know that it must have been someone as skilled at history and narrative as he.<sup>155</sup> The saga can be classified as an Icelanders' saga, one of the types of sagas that deal with different Icelanders and Icelandic families. This type of saga is often seen as more historical sagas, whilst others are seen as more invented. Debates about the historicity of sagas has long characterised Old Icelandic Studies, and have traditionally been between two theories and their supporters. The so-called 'bookprose'-theory was based on the idea that sagas should be seen as stories composed, written like books, some time after the events they describe and therefore are of little historical value. The 'freeprose'-theory, on the other hand, expressed the idea that the sagas were composed in the Viking Age and been transmitted orally over time, until they were written down in a later period. Here, the sagas are ascribed a great historical value.<sup>156</sup> The truth may be somewhere in between. In the Egil's saga, poetry that is said to have been composed by the protagonist is recorded, and has proven to be one of the main arguments for scholars to attribute a certain amount of historical value to it. Yet, it is a product of the Christian, thirteenth century as well.

### 3.1.3.2 Saxo Grammaticus' *History of the Danes*

This Danish source was written by historian Saxo Grammaticus, probably in the period between 1208 and 1218 A.D.<sup>157</sup> He wrote it in Latin, which indicates that he was an educated man. In his preface, he stresses that the task of writing the *HD* was imposed on him by the Archbishop of Lund, his patron. The intentions of the book are also made clear, to 'glorify the fatherland'.<sup>158</sup> This, we might expect, usually seems the purpose of the national histories of

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<sup>153</sup> S. Óskarsdóttir, introduction to *Egil's saga* by trans. B. Scudder (London etc.: Penguin Books, 2004), xii-xiii.

<sup>154</sup> A. Faulkes, introduction to Snorri Sturluson. *Edda* by trans. and ed. A. Faulkes (London: Everyman, 1995), xi-xii.

<sup>155</sup> Óskarsdóttir, introduction, xiii.

<sup>156</sup> P. Meulengracht-Sørensen, "Historical reality and literary form," in *Viking Revaluations*, ed. A. Faulkes and R. Perkins. (London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 1993), 172-181.

<sup>157</sup> P. Fisher, trans. and H.E. Davidson, ed., *Saxo Grammaticus. The History of the Danes. Volume I* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1979), I.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

people drawn up in medieval times, but we do not always find that the writer is so clear about it. The *HD* comprises a total of sixteen books, starting with prehistory and ending in the late twelfth century.

It is clear that because of the intentions of the book, it has a very clear scope on the glorious events in Danish history and its protagonists. What is also clear, is that Saxo was a thirteenth-century Christian writer. He wrote the Viking Age history of his country from much later and Christian perspective, which again makes it difficult to assess how accurate his information is. Nevertheless, this view on the events provides an interesting perspective of the Scandinavian-Frisian contacts.

### 3.1.3.3 *Ólafsdrápa*

*Ólafsdápa* is a skaldic, panegyric poem composed for the Norwegian king Olaf Tryggvason. It probably dates back to the early eleventh century, and was composed by Sighvat the Skald. The poem is preserved in the Saga of Olaf Tryggvason in Snorri Sturluson's *History of the Kings of Norway* which was written around 1225 A.D. Again we are dealing with a source that has a distance from its subject in time and space, but as with the Egil's saga the poems here are also thought to be original and contemporaneous.

This skaldic poem tells of Viking raids on the continent; in Saxony, Frisia, including Walcheren, and Flanders. This stanza lists Olaf's many victories and victims there, but funny enough it also characterises him as a peace-maker. Apparently, those two activities were not mutually exclusive. This sounds very strange to us, but from a Viking Age or Medieval Scandinavian perspective it might not be so strange. In the Viking Age, going on 'Viking' was part of the job of being a Norwegian royal.<sup>159</sup> The *Olafsdrapa* is a panegyric poem, a poem in praise of the king. This was a very common form of poetry, which was composed by professional skalds, who in exchange for their works of praise were given patronage. Strict rules of form and style existed for the poetry, and specific style figures like *kennings* were used. Kennings are a form of circumlocution, by which a thing or person is described by two or more words or terms. The form of this poem is that of a battle list. This is a very common technique in panegyric poetry, as it lists the protagonist's successes in battle, by which he is honoured. It is presented as a sort of *curriculum vitae*, in which imposing battles cannot be missing. This is the context in which we find a reference to a raid on Frisia.

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<sup>159</sup> This becomes apparent, for instance, from the History of the Kings of Norway by Snorri.

#### 3.1.3.4 Runic inscriptions

Runic inscriptions provide important evidence for Viking Age Scandinavia and the actions and thoughts of Scandinavians, as they are the only type of textual evidence from this part of Europe that is contemporary. When it comes to references to Viking-Frisian contact, it can be established with certainty that it occurred and was recorded in that period, as with a number of the Frankish sources.

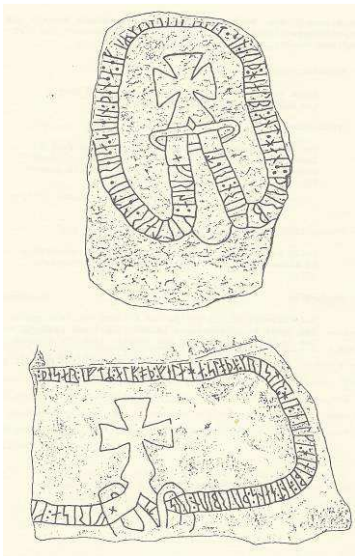


fig. 2 The Sigtuna rune-stones.  
(Lebecq 1983b, 452).

Three runic inscriptions are known to refer to Frisians in a Scandinavian context. These are the inscription on the Senja neck-ring (cat. nr. 24) referred to above, and two inscriptions from rune stones (U 379 and U 391, cat. nr.25) in Sigtuna, Sweden. The inscription of Senja can be read as half a poetic stanza written in the metre *fornyrðislag*. This metre with alliteration was one of the standard metres for skaldic poetry.<sup>160</sup> All three inscriptions are on the basis of their style and language, dated to the eleventh century and have been studied by different scholars, who have put forward different readings, that will be examined below.<sup>161</sup> Either they are interpreted as attesting to raids or as attesting to trade-relations or joint activities. In any case, they provide a Scandinavian representation of Frisian-Scandinavian contacts in text. The archaeological aspects of the necklace will be discussed in chapter 4.

### 3.2 The Contact Situations

#### 3.2.1 Frankish-Frisian-Scandinavian contacts before the Viking Age

With the first raid on Frisia a new phase of contacts began. But Viking Age contacts started some years earlier with contact situations other than raids, and the events of 810 A.D. and onwards cannot be understood outside the context of these preceding events. In the year 777 A.D. the Frankish king Charlemagne held an assembly at which the Franks and the Saxons, except for the Saxon Widukind and his men, gathered. Widukind had revolted against the Frankish ruler with some others, and together they had fled to the 'Nordmanniae', the Northmen in modern Denmark.<sup>162</sup> We can imagine this was not appreciated by the Franks, and the Danes must have figured this too, for the Danish King Sigfred sent his ambassador

<sup>160</sup> Jesch (1997), 7-12.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>162</sup> ARF 777.

Halfdan and his companions to Charlemagne's assembly.<sup>163</sup> It seems very plausible that this was done to show goodwill, perhaps out of fear, since Charlemagne managed to subdue the Saxons. Especially since this Halfdan is taken to be the same Halfdan, who according to the unknown Saxon writer *Poeta Saxo*, was taken into the Frankish kingdom by Charlemagne together with his retainers in 807 A.D.<sup>164</sup> The fact that later emissaries were sent between Charlemagne and Sigfred also supports the assumption that they were trying to keep good relations.<sup>165</sup>

The next Danish king Godfrid came into conflict with Charlemagne's son Pippin, since the latter feared he might want to attack Saxony. Godfrid left Saxony alone, but destroyed Slavic territory and the specifically mentioned trading site of Reric. He sent some of the traders he took captive from Reric to Pippin, telling him that he heard the king was angry about his actions and that he was willing to make peace. Despite efforts from both sides, no peace was established.<sup>166</sup> One of the reasons for the problems between the Danes and the Franks might actually have been the area of Frisia, which was at this time under Frankish rule but which Godfrid claimed belonged to him, together with Saxony.<sup>167</sup> The conflict might have become so bad, that it evoked the Viking raid of 810 A.D.

### **3.2.2 Hostile contacts: the Viking raids**

The period from 810 A.D. up to the end of the Viking Age is characterised by Viking raids and by Danish internal problems, as well as Danish royals getting involved in Frankish politics. In the written sources, hostile Viking raids are most frequently recorded as contact situations between Scandinavians and Frisians. They occur from the year 810 A.D.– the first Viking raid on the continent recorded in the *RFA* – to probably the eleventh century – attested by the runic inscriptions. Especially the Frankish annals record numerous Viking attacks on Frisia, which is not so strange if one thinks that the scope of the annals was mainly political and military, from a court point of view in which Vikings are the enemies. But the Frisian – as has been pointed out were mainly Christian – and Scandinavian sources also describe Viking activity. It is interesting to see that although each of these sources have their own agenda and a focus on particular aspects, the general picture of Viking raids that emerges from the sources is largely similar in all of them.

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<sup>163</sup> *ARF* 782.

<sup>164</sup> S. Coupland, "From Poachers to Gamekeepers. Scandinavian Warlords and Carolingian Kings," in *Early Medieval Europe* 7:1 (1998): 87.

<sup>165</sup> *ARF* 798.

<sup>166</sup> *ARF* 808 and 809.

<sup>167</sup> *LC. Rau* (1977b), 182.

### 3.2.1.1 Raids on Frisia in the Frankish annals

A range of Viking attacks on Frisia are recorded, which are presented as following:

**810** First Viking attack on the continent, instigated by Godfrid, who is said to have regarded Frisia as his province. 200 ships are said to have been involved. Vikings ravaged the islands of the coast of Frisia, landed and fought three battles with Frisians, which they won. A hundred pounds of silver was extracted from the surviving Frisians as tribute (*RFA* 810).

**834** Vikings sailed to Frisia, moored and travelled to Dorestad via Utrecht.<sup>168</sup> Vikings killed and took captive people, after which they burned everything (*AB* 834, *AX* 834).

**835** Dorestad and Frisia attacked again, this time looted savagely. As a reaction to this, the emperor instigated effective coastal defences in Frisia (*AB* 835, *AF* 835, *AX* 835).

**836** Dorestad and Frisia are attacked. The coastal defences were not yet in place (*AB* 836, *AF* 836, *AX* 836).

**837** The coastal defences were in place, and ships were built against the Northmen (*AF* 838). Frisia is attacked 'as usual', this time at Walcheren. Frisians refused to be part of the defence. The Christian, Danish *dux* Hemming died whilst defending Walcheren against the Vikings. The Vikings plundered, slaughtered and stayed to extract tributes for a while, before travelling on to Dorestad to plunder and extract tribute there. The Frankish emperor travelled to Nijmegen, which scared the Vikings away (*AB* 837, *AF* 837, *AX* 837).

**839** Frisia is attacked by the Vikings after it had suffered a flood that wiped away all houses, animals and people (*AB* 839).

**845** Vikings came to Frisia and fought three battles, the second and third of which they won, killing many Frisians. (*AF* 845, *AX* 845).

**846** Vikings fought and won another battle in Frisia and imposed tributes as large as they wanted. It resulted in the Danes taking control over the entire province. Frisia then had to cope with northern winds, wolves and other plagues that ravaged their country. According to the *AX*, the Vikings came upon Westergo, Oostergo and Dorestad (*AB* 846, *AX* 846).

**847** Dorestad was again laid to waste and occupied by Danes. Frisia was raided (*AB* 847, *AF* 847).

**850** Dorestad was plundered and/or occupied by Danes (*AB* 850, *AF* 850).

**851** Frisia was attacked (as well as Betuwe) (*AB* 851).

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<sup>168</sup> The route is identified as having been via the rivers Vecht and Kromme Rijn.

**852** Frisia was visited by Vikings, who are said to have come with 252 ships. After the payment of the amount they demanded, they left (*AB* 852).

**854** The part of Frisia bordering to Saxony, which therefore must be Rūstringen, was visited by Vikings.

**863** Dorestad was attacked by Vikings who were on their way to Cologne. The Vikings also attacked a *villa* where the Frisians had retreated. Many Frisian merchants were killed, others taken captive (*AB* 863).

**868** Vikings devastated Frisia (*AX* 868).

**873** The Danish Viking leader Rudolf took his force into ‘Aldbag’s country’, which is identified as the Oostergo region in Frisia, near the town of Dokkum.<sup>169</sup> He demanded tribute, which the Frisians refused to pay. Rudolf therefore started a war against them, in which he and a number of his men (*AB* speaks of 500, *AX* of 800) fell. ‘They left with shame and heavy losses, without their *dux*, back to their country’. The Frisian resistance is led by a converted Dane living amongst the Frisians (*AB* 873, *AF* 873, *AX* 873).

**876** Roric, who had held a benefice in Frisia was driven out by the locals, and returned with a force. The Frisians of Westergo fought the Vikings and were victorious.

**884** Frisia north of the Scheldt was plundered and devastated as usual by the Vikings. Norden in Ostfriesland was attacked by the Vikings. The Frisians here defeated the Vikings, many of which get killed. (*AF* 884, *AV* 884).

**885** Vikings – sent by Godfrid – were battling the Franks, when the Frisians called ‘Destaberzon’<sup>170</sup> suddenly appeared in their little ships, ‘as sent by God’, and defeated the Northmen. They attacked their ships and took and divided the booty (*AF* 885).

**887** Vikings under the command of Sigfrid came upon Frisia, Sigfrid was killed (*AV* 887).

Considering the intentions of the raids, two aspects stand out: the seizing of goods and people, and the establishment of power. This is connected to the question, why did the Vikings actually went on raids abroad. This question has long been debated, and is difficult if not impossible to answer. Theories that have been put forward vary from external forces, such as the Frankish expansion and the fear of Christianity, to internal forces such as scarcity of food in Scandinavia, overpopulation and the wish or need to gain wealth, power and status. Most

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<sup>169</sup> *AF* 837 (footnote 16).

<sup>170</sup> The exact meaning of this is debated. Some scholars suggest that this is Teisterbant. A possibility recently raised by Dick de Boer in connection with this thesis, is that it denotes people from Stavoren. Consultation of linguist Tette Hofstra and the sources he suggested shows that this is indeed an interesting possibility, which needs to be researched further.

recently, archaeologist James H. Barrett of Cambridge University has studied the different sources that can shed a light on this. Barrett chooses to focus not on one specific aspect, but on a combination of aspects.<sup>171</sup> Close reading of the selected sources reveals that there indeed might not be one single push or pull factor for all the raids, but that each raid to a large extent had its own reasons. We can distinguish between raids instigated by Danish kings for political reasons, raids by individual war bands looking for valuables, raids by members of the exiled royal Danish family in order to establish power in the Frankish empire and raids by ‘hired’ Vikings who worked by order of a Frankish royal. An example of the last is the case of Louis the Pious. According to the *AB* Lothar had acted against his father Louis by instigating Viking attacks on his kingdom. The Vikings, working in Lothars service, were a man named Harald and some other Danes, who over the course of years had imposed suffering on Frisia.<sup>172</sup>

Numbers of Vikings involved in raids according to the annalists can be extracted from the texts. In 810 A.D., 200 ships are said to have been involved. At this time, Scandinavian warships probably were of the type *tvítugsessa* or *þrítugsessa*, meaning a ‘twenty-seater’ or a ‘thirty-seater’.<sup>173</sup> The numbers refer to the pairs of oars, so the ships would have been able to carry a crew of between 40 and 60 rowers, plus the steersman.<sup>174</sup> This would mean that in the case of 200 ships, between 8000 and 12000 Vikings were involved in the raid on Frisia, which must have created an impressive sight. If the chronicler speaks the truth, that is, and this we can question. Numbers seem to have been exaggerated, to enforce the dramatic of the story,<sup>175</sup> and in many cases the different Frankish sources provide different numbers.

The Frisians increasingly seem to be able to repel the Vikings, something that is specifically the case according to the *AB* and *AF*. The general idea one gets is that Frisia happened to be in between Scandinavia and Francia and their political struggles, into which it became involved. This also becomes clear in the description of the 830s, when Horic was king of the Danes. He was eager to let the Franks know - or believe - that the Viking attacks were not supported by him in any way, and offered friendship and obedience. At the royal court, his envoys claimed that Horic had captured and killed the Vikings that recently attacked the coasts of the Frankish empire twice, in 834 and 838 A.D. On the first occasion, Horic wanted payment as reward. The sources are silent on whether or not payment was granted. The second time Horic asked the emperor to give the Frisians and the Obodrites to

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<sup>171</sup> J. Barrett, “What caused the Viking Age?,” *Antiquity* 82:317 (2008): 671-685.

<sup>172</sup> *AB* 841.

<sup>173</sup> O. Crumlin-Pedersen, “Skibstyper,” in *Kulturhistorisk leksikon for nordisk middelalder. Band XV* (København: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1970), 482.

<sup>174</sup> J. Graham-Campbell and D. Kidd, *The Vikings* (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1980), 27-29.

<sup>175</sup> Nelson, 61.

him. The emperor found this very inappropriate, and ignored it. In 839 A.D. Horic and the Frankish emperor consolidated peace and alliance, and Horic then makes an official complaint about the Frisians, the reason or nature of which is unknown.

The abovementioned raids all take place in Frisia, but Frisians were also victim of Viking raids in areas outside Frisia. Likely as early as 808 A.D., Frisians were victim of Godfrid's actions in Reric. According to the *RFA*, the Danish king – in war with the Franks and the Saxons – laid waste the trading centre of Reric in Germany, and had the tradesmen shipped off to Sliesthorp (Hedeby). A year later, in 809 A.D., some of the traders were sent to king Pippin with a message of peace.<sup>176</sup> As has been pointed out in the second chapter, the Frisians had made a name for themselves as tradesmen in the Early Middle Ages. Hence, they were found all over Europe during the Viking Age. Most notably, they formed Frisian quarters or colonies in trading centres. Archaeological evidence, which we will take a closer look at in the fifth chapter, has made a strong case for Frisian presence in Reric in the Viking Age. This means that they might have been located in Reric as a colony, been replaced to Hedeby and used as messengers between Pippin and Horic. Frisians were often used as messengers, and according to Lebecq it is likely this happened here as well.<sup>177</sup>

More certain are Viking attacks on Frisian colonies in Xanten and Birten.<sup>178</sup> Vikings travelled up the Rhine and plundered towns like Xanten, Duisburg, Cologne, Bonn and Koblenz.<sup>179</sup> According to eye-witness accounts, Xanten was attacked in 864 (or 863) A.D.<sup>180</sup> After having destroyed Dorestad, the Vikings sailed up the Rhine at high water levels in January, killed Frisians who had retreated in an unspecified villa nearby, and devastated Xanten and the churches on the way.<sup>181</sup> In 880 A.D., Birten, close to Xanten was plundered, and it is specifically mentioned that there was a great number of Frisian inhabitants here.<sup>182</sup>

The Frankish sources describe the Viking raids from the perspective of the victim, the Christian Frankish Self. Naturally, they place emphasis on the devastation and suffering imposed by the heathen intruders. According to Vandenbroeck, whose work was referred to in chapter 1, the universal oppositions between the Self and the Other can be brought back to:

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<sup>176</sup> *RFA* 809.

<sup>177</sup> Lebecq (1992), 13.

<sup>178</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 33, 40, 149.

<sup>179</sup> T. Himstedt, "How the Vikings got to the Rhine. A historical-geographical survey over the Rhineland in the Early Middle Ages," in *Vikings on the Rhine. Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhineland and Scandinavia*, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender 2004), 27.

<sup>180</sup> Walther, 172.

<sup>181</sup> *AX* 864.

<sup>182</sup> *AF* 880.



<i>Self</i>		<i>Other</i>
hierarchy		lacking hierarchy/ order
constructive		destructive
virtuous, decent		criminal
honouring women		raping women
self-control		expanding rapidly/uncontrolled
human		beast-like
civilised		wild
rational		mad
right order		reversed world

In the case of the Frankish sources describing Viking activity in Frisia, we can replace Self with Frankish and Other with Viking. The Frisians in this case are described as belonging to the Frankish side. This has to do with two characteristics that stand out as the most important ones for Self-Other distinction and that do not occur in Vandebroek's scheme: Christianity versus paganism and the active role of attacking or defending. The heathenness of the Vikings is stressed in the annals and is exemplified by the merciless activities of the Vikings as the annals portray them. Attacking, looting, imposing tribute on Christian people and capturing, raping and killing them makes them stand out as a true heathen enemy, the Other. The Frisians, on the other hand, are much closer to the Frankish Self, according to the depiction of the Frisians in the annals. They are Christians, defenders of the Frankish/Frisian area and are the victims of the heathen pirates.

An illustrative depiction of the Vikings can be found in the entry of the year 846. Here, the attack of the Vikings is placed in line with other misfortune that came upon the Frisians: northern winds, wolves and other plagues. Lining up all these negativities creates a very strong image. One can read it as if the Vikings are (like) the northern winds, (like) the wolves and (like) a plague. The imagery of Danes as wolves or other animals is not an unfamiliar one. It is found in the Anglo-Saxon sources about the Viking raids on England, in for instance the reaction of Symeon of Durham (around 1070-1129 A.D.) on the Viking attacks. In his text on the history of the church of Durham, Vikings are compared to wolves, attacking and killing not only animals, but even clerics.<sup>183</sup> The Northumbrian cleric Alcuin (c. 735-804 A.D), who spent most of his life in the Frankish court, also depicted the Vikings as animals,

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<sup>183</sup> P. Cavill, *Vikings. Fear and Faith in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2001), 249-250.

ravaging God's properties. In his reaction to the Lindisfarne raid in 793 A.D., he calls them foxes that plunder God's chosen vineyard.<sup>184</sup>

The opposition Frankish/Frisian Self – Viking Other, however, is not a static one even in the Frankish sources and can be due to changes. These changes show that the distinction is not based on an opposition of ethnicity Frankish/Frisian – Scandinavian, but on an opposition of religion and activity. A case in point is the description of the 837 A.D. raid on Walcheren, where a Dane is found amongst the defending Franks and the Frisians refuse to work in the defences against the Vikings.

In the *Vita Hludowici*, the life of Louis the Pious by an anonymous author, it is claimed that in the attack both the local count Eggihard and the Danish and Christian Hemming who fought at the Franks side. The latter is described as 'ex stripe Danorum, dux christianissimus' and is named as the son of Halfdan. The question arises, if this is the same Halfdan that commended to the Frankish emperor before. Coupland finds this very likely, and stresses the fact that Hemming could have joined his father to the Frankish court and could have returned to it in 813 A.D., after the sons of Godfrid had driven him and his brothers Harald and Reginfrid out and he disappeared from the sources.<sup>185</sup> Three hypotheses about how Hemming came to be on Walcheren are forwarded by Coupland; one is that Hemming had been given Walcheren as a benefice, supported by the fact that Walcheren was given to some other Danes in benefice later. If this is the case, one also has to consider the possibility that it was already granted to his father for his loyalty to the Franks. The second suggestion is that Hemming, as a *dux* held his sway over a neighbouring area and came to help the local count Eggihard when the Vikings arrived. The last possibility is that the Dane stayed in the circles around the emperor, until he was dispatched to Walcheren as part of the coastal defences,<sup>186</sup> the ones in which the Frisians refused to participate during the Viking raid. Here, the Danish Hemming is in the eyes of the Franks closer to the Self, whilst the Frisians no longer function as victims and defenders but as actively contributing to the failure of defence. Therefore, they are closer to the Other. We can question if this process of forming the Self and the Other may actually have been one of the reasons for the Frisians refusal. The Frisians, some of whom were not Christian, do not necessarily identify themselves with the Franks. As we shall see below, the Frisian sources point to some Frisians joining Viking raids. Thinking of the complaint that Horic – who likes to present himself as a Viking-fighter for the Frankish rulers – about the

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<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-5.

<sup>185</sup> Coupland (1998), 87-88.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

behaviour of the Frisians, the possibility that it is because some of them join the Vikings rather than fight against them seems attractive. Moreover, the Frisian laws stress that the Frisians do not have to fight for the Franks outside their own Frisian area. Hemming could be by the Frisians have been viewed as a Frankish count, and they might therefore have objected to fighting for him in this area.

Another case in point of an altered Self-Other division can be found in the raid of 873 A.D. by Rodulf and his men on Oostergo. After many of the Vikings died, the survivors seek shelter in a building which the Frisians laid siege. A Northman who had converted to Christianity, had lived amongst the Frisians for a number of years and functioned as their leader in this battle. He claimed that it was not their power, but the power of God that had brought them so many victories. The Northman proposed to take some hostages and let the other Vikings go to their ships to get the booty. After they had returned all treasure, and the Vikings had sworn not to attack Louis' realm again, they released the hostages.<sup>187</sup> The Northman – we cannot be sure if he was a Dane but this is likely – thus lived among the Frisians as a good Christian, which is emphasized by his dealing with the Viking enemies. The Frisians and their Scandinavian leader are very close to the Frankish Self in this case, whilst the Vikings are the Other, and the Christian Northman stands out as most positive. This is the first time that we really are dealing with a contact situation between two people living in the same society, and we can question if more Scandinavian chose to live a Christian or pagan life in Frisia. It is also striking that this event, according to the annals, marks the beginning of the period of Frisian success against the Vikings.

Considering this emphasis on Christianity, the annalists often mention the devastation of churches, which no doubt happened. By doing this, they show how significant this was for them as Christians, and again stress the negativity of the heathens. The Christian perspective of the annalists is also seen in the description of the relics of saints that were miraculously and with fear for their own lives saved by clerics under the protection of saints.<sup>188</sup>

### 3.1.1.2 Raids in the Frisian sources

A description of a Viking raid from a Frisian perspective is presented by the *WB*. Walfrid and his son Radfrid were religious men from the town of Bedum, in the peat land area in the vicinity of the town of Groningen. At one point the Vikings came upon Frisia and attacked the defenders of the area, who had not expected such a disaster although Walfrid had foreseen the

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<sup>187</sup> *AF* 873.

<sup>188</sup> This is for instance the case in Xanten, *AX* 864.

raid. The Frisians stood together and forced the enemies to back off, but since they were outnumbered by the Vikings they could not hold this defence. The attackers managed to defeat the Frisians, but, it is claimed, only with sincere trouble. Subsequently, the defeated fled and the Vikings broke through all the defences in the area, torturing and mutilating every person they met. After destroying this part of Frisia, they went to the town of Groningen, which was claimed to be a very rich and populous town. The Vikings are said to have created an ambush, surrounded the town and attacked it. Frisian men came to fight the Vikings, and 'boldly offered resistance.' Women and children fled, and the men were beaten by the Vikings. A lot of the Frisians were killed, the survivors fled. The Vikings, who had already destroyed most of the town, burned down the St. Maartenschurch.<sup>189</sup>

On their way back to their ships, they encountered Walfrid who was praying. According to the surviving text, the Vikings decided to take him back to their ships when they heard that he was a Christian. He was tortured and finally killed on December third.<sup>190</sup> His relatives, collected money and bought the 'most holy' corpse of Walfrid back from the Vikings, after which they bury him in his cell in his house.<sup>191</sup> Not much later, Radfrid is also found dead by his house, killed by the Northmen on the same day as his father.<sup>192</sup> The *vita* of the two holy men concludes by telling a number of the miracles they preformed.<sup>193</sup> A church was built on the spot of the grave of Walfridus.

According to this source the contact situation – whether or not it actually happened – took place on Frisian ground in the area of Bedum and Groningen. From the story, it becomes clear that the Vikings outnumbered the Frisians. What is interesting, in the light of the Frankish annals, is the fact that coastal defences figure in this story as well. Therefore, there seems to be a historical basis for the story. But, it has been given its own, very Christian twist. On the basis of the excavations of the church of St. Walfrid and historical evidence, Van Schaïk concludes that the story dates to the early eleventh century. The coastal defences that figure in the story also provide indications. From the Frankish annals we know that the earliest coastal defences were put in place in 800 A.D., so the attack cannot have happened before it. The time of the attack in the year, namely in December, is somewhat odd. Most Viking attacks occurred in spring or summer, although in later medieval times battles in winter are known to have taken place because land was easier accessible then. Later in the Viking Age, war bands

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<sup>189</sup> Van Schaïk, 145.

<sup>190</sup> According to the *vita*, he received 'death penalty' (capitale sentencian).

<sup>191</sup> Van Schaïk, 145.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>193</sup> The author or copyist of the *vita* claims that the author only recorded the most important of the miracles, as he did not wish to bore the readers with all the miracles that had occurred.

started to stay in Frisia over winter and it is possible that we have to see this attack in the light of these developments. Perhaps it was a Viking army situated in a different part of Frisia? We can only guess. Clearly, the Viking attack is used as a striking background for the deeds of a martyr and saint. In order to stress the holy men's virtues, 'good' (Christian) and 'bad' (heathen) are being juxtaposed. The saint naturally plays the part of the good, and the violent, heathen Vikings play the part of the bad.

The Frisian laws show that Viking raids indeed happened in Frisia, that it had its consequences and that the Christian Frisians viewed this Viking activity as very negative. According to the third and fourth of the *Seventeen Statutes* and *Statutes of Magnus*, confiscating someone's possessions (with violence and without trial), which was exactly what the Vikings did time after time to the Frisians, was forbidden. Even if one felt one was the rightful owner.<sup>194</sup> There was, however, an exception to this rule that is taken up in the fourteenth Statute and in the twentieth of the *Twenty-four Constitutions*. If a person had been captured and taken hostage by Northmen (or in some cases others), he would get his belongings back on his return. He could take back his land without any trial, here described in the fourteenth statute:<sup>195</sup>

*ief dae / noerdmannē enen man nymat / iefta wr sant werth. ende hy / vter need komme. iefta of hereferd komme In zyn ayn land binna tritiga ierum. en hi moege / bikanna zyn ayn eckeren. ende zyn eedele / ende zyn fadirs staten.*<sup>196</sup>

[If the Northmenn take a man / or was sent away and he / comes without violence or comes from expedition (or captivity) in his own land within thirty years he may / take back his own acre and his ancestors and his fathers lands.]

The twentieth constitution not only speaks of a Frisian returning from Viking captivity, but of a free Frisian that participates in their raids in Frisia, being forced to do so. If the Frisian is forced, then he will not be punished, not even if he burned down houses and churches, raped women and killed fellow Frisians to the point where he cannot pay the fine for it. If the man managed to escape or his freedom was bought, he could return home and declare what had happened, who his relatives were and what his possessions were, and could take them back without a trial.

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<sup>194</sup> Third and fourth Statutes. Algra, 293-300, J. Hoekstra, *Die Gemeinfriesischen siebzehn Kuren* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. N.V., 1940), 84-86.

<sup>195</sup> Fourteenth Statute, Algra, 297-298. Hoekstra, 111-113.

<sup>196</sup> Fourteenth Statute, manuscript W2, Hoekstra, 112. O.W. Robinson, *Old English and Its Closest Relatives. A Survey of the Earliest Germanic Languages* (London etc.: Routledge, 1992), 185-189.

Being taken hostage by Northmen was thus a serious threat in those days. Furthermore, returning home after capture was reality for the people as well, for the fact that this is specifically mentioned in the law, means that it happened and that the Frisians had to find a way to deal with it. According to the text, this only happened if the person escaped or was ransomed. As both Gosses and Samplonius have noted, the text not only is an indication that people were taken captive by the Northmen against their will, the statement also implies that some people joined them by choice.<sup>197</sup> Evidence for seafaring- and piracy-minded Frisians may also be found in other texts, such as the story of Frisians' travel to the far north where they confiscate goods from exotic creatures, which is recorded by Adam of Bremen.<sup>198</sup> Together, this provides an important clue about the Frisian-Scandinavian relationships, and could be one of the reasons for the Frisians refusal to defend Walcheren as seen above. Here, the Frisian Self defines the Viking Other by their activities of piracy and violence against the Self.

Statute number ten speaks of Viking activity in Frisia in connection to the Frisian freedom that is claimed to have been granted by Charlemagne. The statute claims that Frisians only had the duty to fight between the Vlie and the Wezer, i.e. Frisia, and not in other parts of Francia. According to some text editions, Frisians first were used by the emperor to defend the larger coastal region, but because of the danger of Viking attacks they were released from the task and only had the defences in their own area to put in order,<sup>199</sup> which might be connected to the Frisian refusal of defence in Walcheren. It is striking that both the Frisian freedom and the Frisian services to the Frankish empire are connected to the Viking attacks in this source. The threat of the Scandinavians apparently was enough to create military services and be released from it at the same time. However, according to Algra, this story is dismissed as unhistorical. All in all, it is generally agreed that the Viking attacks are not necessarily the reason for the fact that the Frisians only took on the defence of their own lands. Then, it is even more striking that the Viking attacks were used as an excuse or background for something that is so true to the Frisians as the Frisian freedom. This says something about the way they perceived the raids.

In the seventh statute it is stated that all free Frisians were entitled to a free chair (in lawspeaking), free speech and answers; a right given to them by Charlemagne according to the law. The Frisians had refused to any longer pay *clipselda* – a form of northern taxes – to

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<sup>197</sup> Samplonius, 98.

<sup>198</sup> C. Borchling, "Die Friesen und der Skandinavische Norden," in *De Iepening fen de Fryske Akademy* (Assen: Van Gorcum & comp., 1938), 56-57.

<sup>199</sup> Vries, 86-88.

the people across the sea to the north (i.e. the Scandinavians), where all were heathen. Instead, they turned to the Frankish rulers and had to pay them *huslotha* – taxes.<sup>200</sup> This way, they bought their freedom from the Franks. One of the manuscripts directly mentions that the freedom is granted to the Frisians ‘so that they would be inclined to the south, all Frisians belonged to the north, to the terrible corner’.<sup>201</sup> In the texts, this event is usually connected to the Frisian king Redbad, who figures as a Frisian ally of the Danes. According to Algra, this law could well date back to the time when Godfrid held his Frisian benefice (between 882 and 885) and imposed taxes on the Frisians, after which the Franks took over.<sup>202</sup> Here, there is also a clear reference to the north (Danish, bad) and to the south (Frankish, good). We must remember that this representation is from a Christian and pro-Frankish point of view, whereas some Frisians, especially earlier, must have been more positive about the Scandinavians. This is also shown by the ambiguous positions of some Frisians who refused to defend against the Vikings or who joined the Scandinavians.<sup>203</sup> Historian and expert of Old Frisian society Han Nijdam has noted in his article on the Frisian freedom, the transition from Scandinavian taxes to Frankish taxes expressed in some of the laws reveal important dichotomies between ‘before’ and ‘after’ and ‘negative’ and ‘positive’. These include the pairs of concepts slave/free, honourless/honour, north/south, heathen/Christian.<sup>204</sup> Nijdam has recently explained the *clipselda* or *klipskelda* in a very clear manner and pointed out that there are two traditions of this story. The younger tradition tells the story of Frisians conquering Rome in favour of Charlemagne, receiving their freedom as a reward. The older tradition is the one that is taken up in the seventh statute, where the Frisians buy their freedom from Charlemagne by abandoning the payment of *clipselda* to the Scandinavians, and paying the *huslotha* to the Franks instead.<sup>205</sup> *clipselda* literally means ‘sounding/ringing’ (Ofri. *klippa*) ‘debth/taxes’ (Ofri. *skelde*).<sup>206</sup> As both Nijdam and, before him historian Izaak Gosses, have pointed out and discussed, there is some evidence attesting the payment of this tax to the Danes in a Danish source.<sup>207</sup>

### 3.1.1.3 The Scandinavian Sources

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<sup>200</sup> Seventh Statute.

<sup>201</sup> Pritsak, 492.

<sup>202</sup> Algra, 311-313.

<sup>203</sup> Pritsak, 492-496.

<sup>204</sup> Nijdam, 62.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-56.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>207</sup> I.H. Gosses, “Deensche heerschappijen in Friesland gedurende den Noormannentijd,” in *Verspreide geschriften* (Groningen: Wolters, 1946), 147-148. Nijdam, 56-61.

The *HD* relates the story of the Danish king Godfrid, who was most powerful and generous, characterised by courage and by gentleness.<sup>208</sup> He extended his fame by extending his wars to outside the borders of his kingdom, according to Saxo. Saxony was subdued by the Frankish emperor Charlemagne who made it Christian, and according to Saxo the people were much happier under Frankish than Danish rule. But Godfrid took the area back and also subdued North-Frisia with his sea-force. Here, he installed a tax-system. He had a couple of buildings built of 240 feet in length, which were divided into twelve sections of twenty feet each. At one end of the building sat Godfrid's treasurer, at the other end lay a shield. In this shield, Frisians had to throw the coins that functioned as payment for the taxes. Only the coins that the treasurer could hear were counted, resulting in a lot of loss of coins for the Frisians.<sup>209</sup>

The tax system resembles the *clipselda* that was in existence in Westerlauwers Frisia as early as the beginning of the ninth century. The evidence might be too scarce to conclude that the Danish overlord imposed this form of tax payment throughout their Frisian benefices, but the possibility is there, if we bear in mind all the references to the extraction of payment that the Vikings and Scandinavian overlords executed in Frisia.

Even though this source is Scandinavian, it is a source with a very clear Christian agenda. Yet he shows some sympathy for the Frisians. According to Saxo, the taxes put upon the Frisians by the overambitious Godefrid is 'not so much harsh as it was strange', and many Frisians have lost useless money by it. Also, he claims that the Frisians were 'freed from this burden' by Charles.

Viking raids on are described by the Egil's saga, in which two episodes tell of Egil's journeys to Frisia. The first time with his friend Thorolf:

[...] þá fara þeir til Fríslands ok dveljask mjök lengi um sumarit, en þa halda þeir enn aptr til Danmerkr. [...] <sup>210</sup>

[Then they went to Frisia and dwelled there for a long time in the summer, and then they went to Denmark.]

It is impossible to mistake what the Icelanders came to do in Frisia, as the saga adds that they were going to '*fara í víking*'.<sup>211</sup> But nothing is said of what they exactly did the whole summer in Frisia. The saga is silent on where they stayed, how they were received by the Frisians, if they at all were received by Frisians, and on their business in the area. Yet it is

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<sup>208</sup> *HD* VIII, 247.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 248-249.

<sup>210</sup> *ES*, chap. 49, 126.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.



interesting that Egil's trip to Frisia is depicted as one of many of his travels, and is not marked as anything special. No explanation is given for 'Frísland' either, which indicates that people in thirteenth century Iceland were familiar with the area and its location in the Viking Age.

Fortunately for us, Egil went on yet another Viking expedition to Frisia.<sup>212</sup> This time, we get quite an elaborate, Scandinavian description of a Viking raid. Arinbjorn, a friend of Egil, felt the need to go on Viking one spring, so he and Egil prepared their ships and sailed off to Frisia. After having raided in Saxony in the summer, they finally went to raid further north and moored their ships off Frisia in autumn. Where they moored is described as a large estuary, since places to harbour were scarce in this area and the tide was out. They saw great, flat plains, wet by the rain, and a forest in the distance. This gives us a great impression of how the saga writer imagined, knew or had heard the Frisian coast looked like. Egil, Arinbjorn and part of the crew went to land, whilst the others took care of the ships. It is said that the Vikings followed a riverbank, until they came to a village where the fields were all separated by small ditches with water, some of which could be crossed by log bridges.<sup>213</sup> The farmers of the village fled, the Vikings pursued and found two more villages, of which all the farmers that could flee fled as well. They all went to the forest, and when they had gathered more than three hundred men, they attacked the Vikings who had come quite deep inland. But after the battle, the Frisians fled and were pursued by the Vikings once more.

So far, the story seems very realistic and is told in a very direct manner. In the next episode, the more fictional side of the saga seems to come to light, which stresses the protagonists' extraordinary abilities and the fear of the Frisians:

*Egill sótti þá hart eptir þeim ok fáir menn með honum, en mjök margir fóru undan; kómu Frísir þar at, er díki var fyrir þeim, ok fóru þar yfir; síðan tóku þeir af bryggjuna. Þá koma þeir Egill at ǫðrum megin; réð Egill þegar til ok hljóp yfir díkit, en þat var ekki annarra manna hlaup, enda réð ok engi til. Ok er Frísir sá þat, þá sækja þeir at honum, en hann varðisk; þá sóttu at honum ellifu menn, en svá lauk þeira viðskiptum, at han felldi þá alla.<sup>214</sup>*

[Egil then pursued them, a large group of men, fiercely, together with some of his men. The Frisians came to where a ditch was situated in front of them and crossed it, after which they removed the bridge. Then Egil arrived there at the other side, he took a run and jumped over the ditch, and no other man jumped because it was too far for them. When the Frisians saw this, they attacked him and he defended himself. Eleven men attacked him, but he killed them all eventually.]

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<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 216-219.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, 218.

Egil made his way back to the ships. The Vikings had taken a lot of booty, including cattle, which was slaughtered there whilst other Vikings formed a wall of shields and protected them from the Frisian crowd, which was shooting arrows at them. Egil, so the saga compiler wants us to believe, broke through the crowd of Frisians and arrived at the ship where all the men were surprised to see him, as they thought he was dead.<sup>215</sup>

It is not clear exactly where these events should have taken place, but the description of the area is a very accurate one for the Frisian lands. It is, however, clear that the raid is done from somewhere near the area, and not directly from Scandinavia. The saga does give numbers of the Vikings involved. Arinbjorn prepared three longships and had a crew of '*þrjú hundruð manna*': three hundred men. Apparently, each of their longships carried a crew of a hundred men. These were men from Arinbjorn's household, Egil's band of men and many local farmers' sons, both Icelanders and Norwegians, indicating that not only Danes ventured to Frisia as is often thought. All in all, over three hundred men were involved, but only two-third of them actually went to land in Frisia, the rest are said to have stayed on board.<sup>216</sup> The Vikings do not seem to outnumber the Frisians in this saga.

The story is somewhat reminiscent of the story of Walfrid. One point of agreement is the time when the attack happened: in winter. But in this story, the Frisians initially fled, later they kept attacking the Vikings until their ships set off. Egil's saga is mostly about portraying the brave deeds of the Viking, stressing the courage and strength of the typical anti-hero that Egil is and reflecting heroic society and ideals, which could explain the portrayal of the contact. The Viking Self is heroic and brave in pursuing, the Frisian Other cowardice in their fleeing. The agenda of the saga composer, as well as the historical background of the society should thus not be forgotten. Yet the differences are also clear and plentiful; the saga does not tell of women and children, nor of houses being burned or people being mutilated and slaughtered, neither of coastal defences.

The Frisians fled from the Vikings as soon as they saw them, which means that the Frisians were well aware of the threat these northern visitors imposed, and what they were after. Either they had seen Vikings before, or heard of attacks of these Scandinavians and did not doubt for a second when they saw them coming. It also suggests that Vikings could easily be recognized as Vikings by the Frisian farmers, something that also the story of Walfrid would make us believe.

#### 3.1.1.4 Exchange?

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

Considering the nature of the hostile contact, we cannot speak of ‘exchange’ other than the exchange of violence. It cannot be said that goods – or even less: ideas – are exchanged, as we see a one-way stream of confiscation. It mostly was the Vikings who managed to take the valuables from the Frisians, although the Frisians sometimes managed to take them back. What we do see, and what might or might not be considered exchange, is the taking of hostages. On one occasion, the Frisians take some Vikings captive, in order to force them to give back all the booty and promise not to return. The Vikings take people captive on more occasions and this seems to be an integral part of their raiding-tactics. Some of the captured probably were taken back to Scandinavia and kept or sold as slaves. Others seem to have been forced to join the attacks, and were able to return home afterwards.

### **3.2.2 Benefices: Frankish sources**

The practice of granting benefices in Frisia to Danish overlords was a specific one that led to another form of contact situations between Danes and Frisians. The purpose of the granting of benefice might be seen as two-fold: on the one hand it was a way to seal the ties between the Frankish rulers and this one particular Danish family, whose members were willing to convert to Christianity and be loyal vassals to the Franks. They stood out in a positive way. On the other, it was a measure against further Viking attacks, because the benefice-holders got the duty of defending the area against their fellow Scandinavians.

The first benefice was endowed to the Danish Harald Klakk in 826 A.D., after trouble with the sons of former king Godfrid, on his commendation to Emperor Charles. The area was Rüstingen in Ostfriesland. In Mainz – where there also was an attestable Frisian colony<sup>217</sup> – Harald, his family and 400 followers are said to have been baptized.<sup>218</sup> In 827 A.D. Harald is driven out of Denmark, and likely retreated in Rüstingen.<sup>219</sup> The conversion of the large group of Danes must have been very significant for the Christian Franks and Frisians in Mainz and Rüstingen. They now hold the same faith, making it easier to include the Danes in the Self. Moreover, it is a symbolic deed, showing that the Danes are willing to adapt to the Frankish lifestyle, and a sign that these Danes are loyal to the Frankish emperor. The importance can thus hardly be overestimated. The ties that were reinforced with the baptism

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<sup>217</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 33, 94-96. *AF* 886.

<sup>218</sup> *AX* 826.

<sup>219</sup> *RFA* 827. Some scholars have suggested that a rich boat burial from the first half of the ninth century in Hedeby might be the burial of Harald Klakk, since the grave goods that accompanied the buried were of high-status, Frankish origin, but this is debated.

were sealed by gift-exchange,<sup>220</sup> which according to Coupland clearly show the political significance of the event.<sup>221</sup> Nevertheless, a Dane, one of the same people that attacked their coast some sixteen years earlier, now was made lord over a part of the area of the Frisians. This must have had an impact, if not physical, then at least in the minds of people. It also provides a possible background for converted Northmen living amongst the Frisians, and we can question if the earlier mentioned Northman in Oostergo who functioned as the Frisians leader possibly can be viewed in the same way.

The later Harald who had preformed Viking services for Lothar was granted a benefice in 841 A.D. as payment for his services. This was the area of Walcheren, which may have been a benefice in hands of Hemming before, and neighbouring regions, according to the *AB*.<sup>222</sup> The *AF* mention the benefice of Harald as well, when it is stated that he earlier held a benefice around Dorestad with his brother Rorik.<sup>223</sup> According to the *AB*, Roric raided in Frisia and Lothar was unable to stop him, so he was forced to grant Roric with the benefice Dorestad.<sup>224</sup> Lothar once again decided to work with the Vikings rather than against them. The years 845 and 846 A.D. saw such devastating Viking activity in Frisia that the area had come into Danish hands. After Harald's death, Rorik fled to Denmark<sup>225</sup> somewhere in the 840s.<sup>226</sup> In contrast to the earlier Harald who appears to have been his uncle,<sup>227</sup> this Harald clearly was a Viking who got hold of the area he earlier raided.

The older Harald had a son called Godfrid, who was also baptized in Mainz in 826 A.D. and likely stayed in the Frankish empire until he returned to Denmark in the 840s. He joined forces with his cousin Roric in the late 840s when they raided Frisia and gained control over Dorestad. In 855 A.D., both left Frisia for Denmark, to return later and retake greater Frisia, including Dorestad.<sup>228</sup> In 857 A.D. Roric occupied the area between the 'sea and the Eider' with the Danish king's permission. This area is identified as 'North-Frisia' by Scholz.<sup>229</sup> Yet another Frisian area thus seems to be in the hands of a Dane from the Halfdan clan. At the time when the Vikings sailed up the Rhine and killed the Frisians that had retreated to the *villa*, Roric had to perform his role as benefice-holder. On his advice, the Vikings left.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> *RFA* 827.

<sup>221</sup> Coupland (1998), 90.

<sup>222</sup> *AB* 841.

<sup>223</sup> *AF* 850.

<sup>224</sup> *AB* 847.

<sup>225</sup> *AF* 850.

<sup>226</sup> Coupland (1998), 92.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>228</sup> *AB* 855.

<sup>229</sup> Scholz, 85 (footnote 3).

<sup>230</sup> *AB* 863.

In 864 A.D. we hear of a Danish Rodulf, who with his men is said to have performed services, for which Lothar was granting payment. Each *Manse*, the house of a Christian minister, in Lothar's realm was asked by to give four *denarii*. These, and a great amount of cattle, flour, wine and cider were given to Rodulf and his followers. We can only guess what the services were, possibly defensive services against the attacking Vikings or the holding of a benefice in Frisia. As Coupland has put forward, it is very possible that Rodulf took after his father Harald.<sup>231</sup> The idea of being granted payment in money, goods or benefice must have appealed to the pragmatic Vikings.

The granting of benefices to Danes must, in some cases, have been hard to cope with. Especially in the case of Harald and Rorik, whom were Vikings and heathens. The writer of the *AB*, a religious man suspicious of heathens, found it an utterly detestable crime, to put those who had put suffering on Christians in this manner in power over those same Christians, their lands and churches. According to his standards, it is completely wrong that Christians now had to serve a heathen lord.<sup>232</sup> Albeit the fact that we must read this statement with a pinch of salt, it being a propagandist statement against not only the Danes but also Lothar, what does become apparent in this statement, is that Harald and Rorik were not converted to Christianity. This is remarkable, since the other Danes that we have encountered at Frisian and Frankish side were explicitly mentioned as Christians. It makes us believe that Lothar was perhaps not so interested in having the Danes baptized, but more in gaining power and consolidating it. That Rorik was not too popular amongst the Frisian population is attested by the fact that he was driven out of his benefice by Frisians in 867 A.D.<sup>233</sup> Rorik, who stayed pagan and did not perform all his duties, was still seen as an outsider and as the Viking Other, and did not come close to the Christian Self as some other benefice-holders did.

The last of the benefice-holders is *dux* Godfrid, leader of the Great Heathen Army and most likely relative of all former benefice-holders. Charles the Fat made peace with Godfrid and his fellow leader Sigfrid, despite the fact that they had betrayed the Franks and killed some of them. Godfrid was baptized and given the former counties of Roric – which included Kennemerland, a strip of Dutch coastal land in the west of the Netherlands, and according to the editor, even more<sup>234</sup> – for him and his men to live in. Sigfrid was bought off with tribute.<sup>235</sup> Godfrid eventually is killed by Frankish rulers, an event in which two of Godfrid's

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<sup>231</sup> Coupland (1998), 102.

<sup>232</sup> *AB* 841.

<sup>233</sup> *AB* 867.

<sup>234</sup> *AF* 882 (footnote 11).

<sup>235</sup> Coupland (1998), 109.

Frisian counts – Gerulf and Gardulf also figure.

This information about the benefices all comes from Frankish sources, and it is uncertain how the practice of endowing fiefs in Frisia to Danes was received by the Frisians. But a number of reactions might be suspected on the basis of the sources. The Frisian laws make it very clear that Frisians are free men, not forced to be under the rule of any overlord, even though they are under Frankish rule. Therefore, they might have rejected the idea of Danish overlords, especially if they extracted tributes as some stories want us to believe. But not in all cases would Danish benefice-holders have been negative. The case of the later Godfrid makes clear that he worked together with Frisian counts. We can also imagine that where benefices were given in harmony, such as Rüstringen, and where the overlords kept their side of the bargain (i.e. becoming Christian, keeping away pirates) it was not at all a bad practice for the locals. Here, the benefice-holders are depicted as part of the Christian Self defending the Frankish realm against the heathen Viking Other.

#### 3.2.2.1 Exchange?

The granting of benefices in exchange for loyalty and anti-Viking services – or in the case of Lothar and Harald Viking services – can be seen as a very important form of exchange, with consequences for the Frisians. In a number of the cases, the exchange is done out of free will. Harald is given Rüstringen in exchange for his, and his followers, conversion and loyalty. In other cases the granting is a payment, as in the case of the younger Harald. But, some benefices are given as a result of pressure by the Danes, who promise to stop attacking the area if it is granted to them: a benefice in exchange for peace. The same can be said for the tribute-payments, where great amounts of money had to be paid by the Frisians, in order for the Vikings to leave the area and its inhabitants in peace. This is a negative form of exchange, where the involved parties are not on the same level, but where one party (Viking) is controlling the other (Frisians).

#### **3.2.3 Friendly contacts in Frankish and Scandinavian sources**

The contact between some benefice-holders and Franks and Frisians appears peaceful and friendly, and have already seen the case of the Scandinavian among the Frisians. But there also is a case of a Frisian among the Danes.

When covering the battle between Harald Wartooth, a legendary eighth-ninth century Scandinavian king, and his nephew Ring,<sup>236</sup> the *HD* speaks of the troops that Harald had gathered which include Scandinavians, an Englishman, a Slav and ‘*Ubbo Frescicus*’: Ubbi the Frisian.<sup>237</sup> It is said that he was the ablest of Harald’s soldiers, and also the physically most excellent. He was able to wound eleven men in battle and kill twenty-five Swedish champions. Ubbi also attacked the front-line of the enemy and, according to Saxo, drove them to every side, in fear of his spear and sword. But finally, Ubbi was defeated by the Swedes and the Danes had to cope with a great loss.<sup>238</sup> A Frisian playing such an important part on the Danish side in the war is an interesting counterpart to the Scandinavian on Frisian side. In this case, as in the other Scandinavian sources, we see again a tendency to stress the heroic ideal which Ubbi clearly lives up to. Ubbi can be seen as part of the heroic Self, fighting the Other. Nevertheless, the *HD* is not a contemporary source and is Christian, a reason to question the accuracy of the story. Nevertheless, the idea of a Frisian fighting on Danish side is very plausible. Possibly more Frisians fought on the Danish side, something that the Frisian laws and the runic texts might indicate, and more Danes on the Frisian side.

### 3.2.4 Raid or trade? The ambiguous runic inscriptions

The runic inscriptions provide evidence of Scandinavian-Frisian contacts, but whether they point to hostile or friendly contact is a question of interpretation.

The inscription on the silver neck ring that was part of a hoard found on the island of Senja in Northern Norway had already been mentioned in the introduction of this thesis. The original transcription of the text by the Danish Magnus Olsen is as follows:

*‘furu\* trikia frislats a uit auk uiks fotum uir skiftum.’*

which corresponds to Old Norse:

*Fórum drengja Fríslands á vit, ok vígs fötum vér skiptum*<sup>239</sup>

[We paid a visit to the lads of Frisia, and we it was who split the spoils of battle<sup>240</sup>]

As has been put forward, the text can be seen as half a poetic stanza written in the metre *fornyrðislag*. This metre was one of the standard, alliterative metres for skaldic poetry.<sup>241</sup> The

<sup>236</sup> Fisher and Davidson, 235.

<sup>237</sup> *HD* VIII, 214. (via <http://www2.kb.dk/elib/lit/dan/saxo/lat/or.dsr/8/2/index.htm>)

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>239</sup> Samplonius, 91.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

interpretation presented above was made in 1906. A new interpretation was made by Judith Jesch, based on the semantics of the text and some circumstantial evidence:

*‘We visited our trading-partners in Frisia and bought (sold or exchanged?) war-gear.’*

According to Jesch, the reading of the word *drengja* is namely suspicious, and might be changed. The word *drengja* was by Olsen taken to mean “quick, young man” or “young warrior”. But, Jesch argues, this is surprising when it is applied to the Frisian enemy. The word namely implies what she calls “the intimacy of an in-group”. It is a term appropriate for a group of warriors then, but usually the group oneself is a member of. Only on one occasion, Jesch found the group of warriors the term referred to, to be the enemy. Usually, it refers to the own war-band.<sup>242</sup> But if we follow the traditional reading of the text, this is not the case. So either it is a positive representation of the Frisian Other or of the Scandinavian Self. Moreover, Jesch found evidence on the rune stones of Sigtuna that the *drengir Frislands* actually could be merchants in the Frisian trade.<sup>243</sup> The U 379 and U391 hold the quite similar inscriptions:

*frisa kilter letu reisa stein þensa eftiR þur( )a sin kup hialbi ant hans þurbiurn risti<sup>244</sup>*

[The (members of the) guild of Frisians had this stone raised after (i.e. in memory of) Tor( ), their comrade. That the lord may help his spirit. Torbjorn carved]

*frisa kilter lety rista runar þesar eftiR alþoþ fela ka sloþa kristr hin helgi hialba ant hans þurbiurn risti<sup>245</sup>*

[The (members of the) guild of Frisians had these runes carved after (i.e. in memory of) Alþod, the associate of Slod. That Christ the holy one should help his spirit. Torbjorn carved]

Here, Frisian-Scandinavian guilds seem to be attested, and as these inscriptions are of the same date as the Senja one, Jesch sees a good case for a similar interpretation here.

As a reaction to this interpretation, Samplonius put forward yet another:

*Wij zochten de jongens/krijgers [= drengjar] van Friesland op en (tezamen) deelden wij krijgsbuit.<sup>246</sup>*

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<sup>241</sup> Jesch (1997), 7-12.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>244</sup> Lebecq (1983b), 451.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, 451.

<sup>246</sup> Samplonius, 98.



[We paid a visit to the guys/warriors of Frisia, and (together) we split the booty]

The translation of Samplonius does take into account the possibility of *drengjar* meaning men or warriors, and that it refers to a group that the rune carver himself is part of. But, he does not find it correct to interpret the text as referring to trading relations between the Scandinavians and Frisians. He rather sees it as attesting to Viking activities in which both Scandinavians and the lads from Frisia participated,<sup>247</sup> something that also the earlier discussed Frisian laws, the complaint by Horic and the episode of Frisians refusing to defend might point to.

On the basis of the Senja runic inscription itself, all interpretations remain possible.<sup>248</sup> The Sigtuna inscriptions, however, provide evidence for joint Frisian-Scandinavian trading activities. In any case, the inscriptions show that contact between Frisians and Scandinavians not only occurred in the first half of the Viking Age, but also in the late Viking Age, and that both joint trading and raiding very likely were current.

## Conclusion

From the written sources it is possible to abstract a lot of information about when, where and how often there was contact between Scandinavians and Frisians. It even gives clues about who actually were involved, especially on Danish side, what numbers we must think of, and how the groups are described by the different sources, all of which are important for understanding the contact, the perception of the contact and the participants, and the outcome.

What becomes apparent from the sources is that we mainly are dealing with contact situations throughout the whole Frisian area, but sometimes also in places outside this region where there are Frisian colonies. The bulk of the contact situations can be classified as short, surprise attacks, mainly raids, and short occupation of certain areas. Nevertheless, some contact situations go far beyond this time span and can be considered as longer contacts. This concerns the granting of Frisian benefices to Danish nobles, but also the accommodation of some Danes into the Frisian society, the nature of which we will look at in the next chapter.

As for the questions, how many people and who exactly were involved, we receive most information about the Scandinavians. It appears that the Viking war bands were considerably large, comprising of some hundreds or perhaps even thousands of Vikings. Here we must be

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<sup>247</sup> Samplonius, 89-101.

<sup>248</sup> I would like to thank Judith Jesch and James E. Knirk for the opportunity to consult them on the interpretation of the runic inscription.

careful, since numbers are generally an aspect that easily can be adapted and exaggerated for the purpose of the story. The numbers of Frisians involved remain more of an enigma, yet we can imagine that it considers mostly the inhabitants of Frisian towns that were under attack and sometimes Frisian 'counts' and soldiers that were put in charge of the coastal defences. Considering the successes of Vikings and the narrations of the impossibility of repel them, the possibility that the Frisians on several occasions were outnumbered by the Vikings seems a realistic one. But we must not forget that sometimes the Frisians actually resisted a Viking attack and were increasingly victorious in the course of the ninth and tenth century.

The Scandinavian sources give us some insight into the Norwegian-Frisian contacts in the Viking Age, which apparently did occur even though most scholars do not acknowledge this and only focus on the role of the Danes, who by far play the largest part in the sources. As has been stressed before, most Danes that we know by name and that were given some part to play in Frisia all appear to be members of one royal family. This family had been consolidating its ties with the Frankish rulers, ever since Halfdan first commended to Charlemagne in 807 A.D. Harald the older was given Rüstingen as a benefice in 826 A.D. and seems to have been staying there since 827 A.D., where after he disappears from the sources. Harald the younger was given charge of Walcheren and the areas around it by Lothar the German, as a reward for the Viking raids he imposed on his father's kingdom. In addition, Harald and his brother Roric seem to have been given Dorestad and neighbouring counties in benefice by Lothar. We hear of a Christian Dane living amongst the Frisians and leading them in their battle against the Vikings, when they are victorious. During the attack of 837 A.D. on Walcheren, the Christian, Danish *dux* Hemming fought on Frankish-Frisian side and died for their cause against the invading Vikings, in which the Frisians refused to do their work in the defences. And in 863 A.D. Roric played his part as benefice-holder of Dorestad, and prevented the Vikings from doing more damage than already done.

The different sources all have their own way of portraying the Self and the Other, which mutually define each other. In Frankish and some Frisian sources the Vikings provide a background to which the Frisians and Franks can see and present themselves as good, Christian people. For Walfridus, it provides the necessary background against which to be portrayed a saint. In the Scandinavian sources, the Scandinavian Self is described along the same lines as the Frankish and Frisian sources, but viewed in a positive light. The reason for this seems to be the heroic ideal that was current in Scandinavian society.

What becomes apparent from the analysis of the written sources, is that the moral distinction between the Self and the Other is the most stressed one. These mainly focus on

terms of religion and the perception of heroism and loyalty. In addition, this is connected to a geographical division between the north and the south, but only secondarily. Strikingly, no attention is paid to the physical appearances, the bodily, apart from the case of Ubbi the Frisian in the *HD*. The distinction is subject to changes, dependent on the moral, religion and actions of the individual, and especially on the perspective of the authors of the sources. These aspects seem to be more important than origin for defining the Self and the Other. The difference between the Self and the Other be stressed and diminished simultaneously, according to the circumstances and the scope and goal of the sources. Not one image predominates, multiple images existed side by side.

All in all, this provides us with a picture of Frisian-Scandinavian contacts, in which both Frisians and Scandinavians play a somewhat ambiguous part. Moreover, very different contact situations, hostile and friendly, existed simultaneously.

## Chapter 4

### Contact in the archaeological record

II  
These are trial pieces,  
the craft's mystery  
improvised on bone:  
foliage, bestiaries,  
  
interlacing elaborate  
as the netted routes  
of ancestry and trade.  
[...]

*Viking Dublin: Trial Pieces*, Seamus Heaney

This poetic interpretation of Viking archaeological artefacts by the Nobel-prize winning Irish poet Seamus Heaney connects interlacing patterns that are characteristic of Scandinavian Viking Age art with patterns of ancestry and trade, all important features of Viking Age archaeology. The textual sources have given us good insight into the Viking raids, the granting of Frisian benefices to Danish royals and commendation of Danes to Franks and Frisians. Only one type of source, namely the runic inscriptions, has given us a hint of another form of contact throughout the Viking Age: trade. Archaeological remains can provide us with more insight into this. It can help to further form the picture of the contact situations and the attitudes of the participants that was discussed in chapter 3, and can give important clues about identity and perception. Also, it offers a tool for assessing the measure of exchange in material and also immaterial sense that occurred.

We will take a look at archaeological remains from the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia. These will be examined in their economic, symbolic and cultural context. Most material comes from Dutch soil, only little material is known from Germany. During the research for this thesis, I have been in contact with a number of German scholars,<sup>249</sup> all of whom have given me their best effort, but could only provide me with little information. Discussed artefacts can be found in the concise catalogue in the appendix, where catalogue numbers are given in bold.

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<sup>249</sup> I would like to thank Jan Kegler, Hajo van Lengen, Gerd Kronsweide, Hauke Jöns and Florian Preiß for their assistance.

## 4.1 Hostile contacts: the Viking raids

The Viking raids on Frisia did not leave a large, archaeologically recognizable imprint on Frisia or the places outside Frisia where Frisians were attacked. Yet there are some archaeological finds that attest to the hostile contacts between Viking and Frisian.

### 4.1.1 Swords

A number of swords were found alongside the rivers or when dredging the rivers and in the Northern provinces, which are referred to as “Viking swords”. Even though it is uncertain that they were actually used by Vikings in the Netherlands, it is possible that this type of sword was brought from Scandinavia by Scandinavians, thus representing contact, either in a violent context, or by trade. But, the swords of the Scandinavians on the one hand and the Frisians and Franks on the other were very similar, and are almost impossible to distinguish.<sup>250</sup> Swords or part of swords were bought from one to the other, especially by Scandinavians who liked the good-quality Frankish blades, making it even harder to speak of ‘Viking’ and ‘Frankish’ swords.<sup>251</sup> Annemarieke Willemsen made an inventory of “Viking swords” found in the River delta of the Netherlands, and lists nine of them in total. Of these, four (1-4) are found in regions of interest for us in connection with the Frisians, near Dorestad and Utrecht.<sup>252</sup> Another one can be found in the collection of the Centraal Museum Utrecht (5) Northern counterparts are given from Saaxumhuizen, Maarhuizen, Wierhuizen, Antum (2x) in Groningen, and from Stiens in the province of Leeuwarden (6-11).<sup>253</sup> As Willemsen has noted, it is striking that of weapons only swords have been found, making it likely that they were deposited either by the Vikings or by their enemies.<sup>254</sup> This would indicate the swords’ symbolic as well as functional meaning. Unfortunately, a Scandinavian character of these swords cannot at all be established with certainty, yet the possibility remains.<sup>255</sup> Supporting this thesis is the distribution pattern of the swords, which largely coincides with the areas that saw Viking activity as it is known from the written sources.

### 4.1.2 Defence works

In the marshy, coastal area of former Frisia, which from time to time was flooded and that has

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<sup>250</sup> Willemsen (2004), 65.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 66-67.

<sup>253</sup> H.H. van Regteren Altena and J.C. Besteman, 9-12, 47-49.

<sup>254</sup> Willemsen (2004), 67.

<sup>255</sup> N.L. IJssennagger, *Vikingen in noordelijk Nederland: handel, hakzilver en handgemeen*. Inventory made during internship at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, 2009. Unpublished.

partly disappeared into the sea, not many traces of Viking attacks can be found. An exception, located in the Dutch part of Frisia, form the traces of defence against the Vikings, that can still be seen in the landscape. Along the coast of former Frisia, from Texel to Flanders, and along some of the rivers and estuaries, traces of circular fortresses or ring-fortresses can be found. These defence works were built up of clay sod, sand and wood. From south to north, ring-fortresses in former Frisia occur in Oostburg, Oost-Souburg, Middelburg, Domburg and Burgh in the province of Zeeland,<sup>256</sup> in Rijnsburg and in Den Burg on the island of Texel, both in North-Holland.<sup>257</sup> In a number of places ring-fortresses are expected or possible, but not yet proven, and these are from south to north, Naaldwijk and Maasland in South-Holland, and Velzerburg and Oudsborg in North-Holland.<sup>258</sup> Westwards as far as Zutphen and Deventer, towns that saw Viking activity in a later stage, ring-fortresses can be found.<sup>259</sup> Thanks to extensive archaeological research in the 1990s, much is known about the circular fortresses in Zeeland, with the exception of the possible fortress in Kloetinge that will not be discussed here. In Zeeland, the age of the fortresses is, according to Van Heeringen, still recognizable in the place-names, almost all of which incorporate the toponym 'burg', meaning 'burcht'; a fortress or stronghold in general sense, not only early-medieval ones.<sup>260</sup> But most of the five or six fortresses in this province are also still recognizable in the landscape, although mostly heavily restored, and two can even be visited. Most of them have approximately the same size (usually 220 m. but one 190 m. in diam. but the fortress of Domburg is bigger (265 m. in diam.)). They have all been partly excavated, and some finds (mainly organic material such as animal bones, but also construction wood) have been radiocarbon dated to the ninth or tenth century.<sup>261</sup> The construction of the defensive fortresses is dated to the last quarter of the ninth century, and they are therefore contemporary with the Viking activity in this area. On the basis of this evidence, it is agreed amongst scholars that

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<sup>256</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, "Voorwoord," in R.M. van Heeringen, P.A.Henderikx and A. Mars eds., *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland* (Goes/Amersfoort: De Koperen Tuin/Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek, 1995a), 9.

<sup>257</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, with contributions by Arent Pol and Janneke Buurman, "Kolonisatie en bewoning in het mondingsgebied van de Schelde in de vroege Middeleeuwen vanuit archeologisch perspectief," in R.M. van Heeringen, P.A.Henderikx and A. Mars eds., *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland* (Goes/Amersfoort: De Koperen Tuin/Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek, 1995d), 51.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>259</sup> M. Groothedde, "The Vikings in Zutphen (Netherlands)," in *Vikings on the Rhine. Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinelands and Scandinavia*, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 123-129.

<sup>260</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, "Inleiding. De burgerreinen in hun huidige gedaante," in R.M. van Heeringen, P.A.Henderikx and A. Mars eds., *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland* (Goes/Amersfoort: De Koperen Tuin/Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek, 1995b), 15.

<sup>261</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, "De resultaten van het archeologische onderzoek van de Zeeuwse ringwalburgen," in R.M. van Heeringen, P.A.Henderikx and A. Mars eds., *Vroeg-Middeleeuwse ringwalburgen in Zeeland* (Goes/Amersfoort: De Koperen Tuin/Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek, 1995c), 36-39.

the fortresses have been constructed as part of the coastal defences against the Vikings, where people and cattle could flee in times of danger. Most likely, they were predominantly used to store and protect mobile goods like sheep and food, especially since sheep remains were widely found within the fortresses.<sup>262</sup>

The fact that the Zealand fortresses are connected to the Viking raids as defence works, makes it very likely that the other ring-fortresses along the coast of former Frisia and along the rivers are connected to the attacks of the Northmen. As the fortresses are different in size and shape, this brings one to question if they were built by separate initiatives, with separate goals or for different amounts of animals (and perhaps people). More ‘burg’-place names can be found along the Dutch coast, raising the question if these too attest to former, circular fortresses. However, one must be careful with this identification, as burg-names might just as well indicate earlier (e.g. Roman) or later fortifications.

Although the German mainland coast has not yielded any fortresses as far as I am aware, they can be found on the Northern-Frisian Islands of Föhr and Sylt, where there was a Frisian and a Scandinavian population (see § 4.2.4). On Föhr, the ring-fortress Lembecksburg is still visible, just as the ring-fortress Tinnumburg on Sylt.<sup>263</sup> Here, the onomastics are again linked to the structures. At Archsum on Sylt there might have existed another one. As with the Dutch ‘burgen’, they seem to have been built to accommodate animals, goods and perhaps people in times of danger. All of these fortresses have been constructed in the first half or the middle of the ninth century,<sup>264</sup> so slightly before the Zealand fortresses. Despite this difference in age, they are, according to Herbert Jankuhn, also connected to Viking activity, and to the other defence works along the former Frisian coast.<sup>265</sup>

#### 4.1.3 Evidence from (t)ra(i)ding centres

As has been pointed out, the circular fortress at Domburg is bigger in diameter than the other fortresses,<sup>266</sup> which is probably due to the fact that a royal manor and a trading centre were present in this area in the Early Medieval period. The *villa Walachrium* – indicating a rural estate – was part of a royal estate that stretched out over the whole of Walcheren. Here, thousands of sheep are presumed to have been herded, perhaps as part of specialized production of wool and cloth – which happens to be the Frisians most famous trades ware.

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<sup>262</sup> Van Heeringen (1995d), 50.

<sup>263</sup> H. Jankuhn, *Die Frühgeschichte vom Ausgang der Völkerwanderung bis zum Ende der Wikingerzeit. Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins, dritter band*, V. Pauls. (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1957), 176.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, 177-178.

<sup>266</sup> Van Heeringen (1995d), 50.

Near the *villa* there was a trading centre, to which many coin finds from the sixth century onwards have been ascribed.<sup>267</sup> The trading centre was part of a network and hierarchy of coastal and riverine settlements that functioned as local or regional ‘central-market-places’, and can be classified as regional market with international links.<sup>268</sup>

Analysis of the numismatic evidence from Domburg has clearly shown a decline in the circulation of Carolingian coins after ca. 840 A.D. According to numismatist Arent Pol the difference between the amount of coins before 840 A.D. and after is not explicable on numismatic grounds, leaving the conclusion that the decline is the consequence of the Viking raid and devastation of 837 A.D.<sup>269</sup> There are two possible explanations for the decline. Either the trade was disturbed by the attack, causing less circulation of money, or part of the money was taken by the Vikings, or a combination of the two. In chapter three, we have seen that the Vikings took booty in Walcheren, and extracted tributes for as long as they wanted. This makes clear that the Viking attack on Walcheren causing destruction and disadvantage for the people present, the Franks and the Danish Hemming. This partly because the Frisians refused to do their work in the defences.

The famous brooch from Dorestad (12), an icon of Dutch archaeology, that was found in a well has on several occasions been connected to the Viking raids. The idea behind it is that the brooch is too precious an object to be lost or left in every day life, but that could be lost or buried in the heat of a Viking attack.<sup>270</sup> This raises the question if other valuables like brooches or other jewellery could also be seen as attesting to Viking raids, or that they may have ended up in the ground for different reasons. We can only speculate. But Frankish and Frisian (coin)-hoards of the ninth century from the Netherlands and Germany are, by some scholars, interpreted as having been buried out of fear for the Vikings.<sup>271</sup> It is unclear how many of these hoards actually have been found, but numbers vary between twelve according to



fig. 3 The Dorestad brooch. Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

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<sup>267</sup> D. Tys, “The Schelde estuary as a framework for Early Medieval settlement development,” in *Dorestad in an International Framework*, ed. A. Willemsen and H. Kik. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010 [in print], (164).

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>269</sup> Van Heeringen (1995d), 47-48.

<sup>270</sup> Willemsen (2004), 75-76.

<sup>271</sup> Knol (2010), 47-56. E. Knol, ‘Bedreigd door Noormannen? De schat van Marsum’ in *Stad en Lande* 15:1 (2006) 16-20. Amongst the hoards that Knol connects to Viking threats are the Tzummarum and the Marsum hoards.



archaeologists<sup>272</sup> and forty according to numismatists.<sup>273</sup> Some of the hoards contain Arabic coins or even Scandinavian silver,<sup>274</sup> but are not likely to be Scandinavian. More likely the hoards have been buried by Frisians, who had a pragmatic attitude towards money and silver in this period. Unlike the Franks, they were not so focussed on coins and accepted unminted silver more easily, like the Scandinavians.<sup>275</sup> Scandinavian silver could thus have ended up amongst the Frisians by means of trade or possibly gift-giving. The valuables of Frisians could consequently have been buried to keep them together and safe, possibly out of fear for Viking-attacks, but could also have ended up in the soil as offerings. These, again, could also be connected to Viking raids.<sup>276</sup> The fact that these specific Frankish and Frisian hoards almost only occur in the northern parts of the Netherlands, spread over this part of former Frisia, and the fact that they specifically occur in the ninth century at least make a strong case for a connection with the Viking attacks.<sup>277</sup> Especially Coupland has very convincingly shown that the hoards likely have been buried in years when we know Viking attacks occurred in Frisia and that the burying of hoards ceased in the period that the Frisians won more battles.<sup>278</sup>

Evidence of hostile contact from Germany can be found in Reric outside Frisia, of which I suggested earlier, on the basis of the written sources, that Frisians and Scandinavians met. Reric is a trading town that we know, from the written sources, to have been destroyed in 808 A.D. by Godfred, who relocated the tradesmen to Sliesthorp/Hedeby within the Danish kingdom. Since excavations in the 1990s by the University of Kiel, Reric is believed to be at the site of Groß Strömkendorf.<sup>279</sup> The excavations have proven that the trading centre was inhabited by Slavic people, Scandinavians and Frisians. These are identified mainly on the basis of the burials that have been excavated.<sup>280</sup> Many of the finds from the site – such as iron and bronze slag, fragments of casting moulds, pieces of melted glass and bone and antler debris – point to production, but equally many finds indicate importation. These are mostly Frankish-Carolingian, insular and Scandinavian.<sup>281</sup> Strikingly, Reric is the most eastern town where a pottery type called ‘Muschelgruskeramik’ has been found, and in considerable

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<sup>272</sup> IJssennagger (2010), 15.

<sup>273</sup> Coupland (2006), 246.

<sup>274</sup> Besteman (2004), 35-36.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>276</sup> Knol (2010), 47-56. Knol (2006), 16-20.

<sup>277</sup> Knol (2006), 19.

<sup>278</sup> Coupland (2006), 247-249.

<sup>279</sup> S. Brather, “Reric,” in *Reallexikon der Germanische Altertumskunde. Band 24* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 514-515.

<sup>280</sup> M.Müller-Wille, *Frühstädtische Zentren der Wikingerzeit und ihr Hinterland. Die Beispiele Ribe, Hedeby und Reric* (Mainz/Stuttgart: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur/Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), 31-33.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-32.

quantity. This type of pottery primarily occurs along the northwest-German and the Dutch coast,<sup>282</sup> i.e the coast of *Frisia*, and is regarded as a Frisian type, used by tradesmen.<sup>283</sup> It is very plausible that this pottery was brought to Reric by Frisian traders who had their business in the town. From the archaeology, it has become clear that Reric declined around 810.<sup>284</sup> Altogether, this allows us to suggest that Frisians indeed were victim of the violent actions of Godfred in 808 A.D., as suggested in chapter 3, and removed to Hedeby.

#### 4.1.4 Scandinavian evidence

From Scandinavian soil comes the very interesting Senja neck-ring (**13**) whose textual aspects have already been discussed in earlier chapters, but which can also be considered in an archaeological respect. Traditionally the find is interpreted as evidence of a Viking raid on Frisia, where the original reading of the runic inscription says they went and subsequently split the booty.<sup>285</sup> We know from textual sources that Viking raids on Frisia were frequent. Analysis of the necklace has shown that it most probably is manufactured in Scandinavia, but it might also have been made from Frisian silver. Yet some interpretations indicate that it is not necessarily an item from Frisia, as few parallels have been found here.<sup>286</sup>

The necklace with runic inscription is often assessed on its own, but was actually found in a hoard (**13**) that contained another twisted neck-ring and two chains with pendants, one a crucifix, the other hammer-shaped with small rings at the bottom.<sup>287</sup> The neck-rings are of a type dated to the ninth century, the rest of the objects are dated to the late tenth century, giving a date for the hoard in the tenth century.<sup>288</sup> Although the second neck-ring is classified as Scandinavian, the other items all have an eastern origin.<sup>289</sup> The objects might have been acquired in different places, possibly Frisia. Neck-rings like the ones in the hoard most likely were kept or exchanged as gifts by Scandinavians, possibly Scandinavian tradesmen or rulers in Frisia, or even by Frisian tradesmen who had obtained them here, in Scandinavia or even from the Baltic, where they encountered Scandinavians. The difference in the dating of the

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<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>283</sup> J. Hoops, "Slawische Keramik," in *Reallexikon der Germanische Altertumskunde. Band 29* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 80.

<sup>284</sup> Müller-Wille, 35-36.

<sup>285</sup> Samplonius, 89-101.

<sup>286</sup> Spangen, M. *Edelmetalldepotene i Nord-Norge. Komplekse identiteter i vikingtid og tidlig middelalder.*

(Tromsø: hovedfagsoppgave, institutt for arkeologi, universitet i Tromsø, 2005). Unpublished, 57-58. I would like to thank Marte Spangen and Jørn Erik Henriksen for providing the document and answering my questions.

<sup>287</sup> J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Artefacts. A Select Catalogue* (London: British Museum, 1980), 87.

<sup>288</sup> Spangen, 57-58.

<sup>289</sup> E. Roesdahl ed., *Wikingene, Varäger og Normannerne. Die Skandinavier und Europa 800-1200* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1992), 317.

objects suggest a hoard accumulated through time, the different origin of the objects an accumulation throughout a larger geographical area. All together, the image that the hoard provides us with is of a Scandinavian owner well travelled, with links to both the Baltic and Frisia, or of Scandinavian owners who all put some items into the hoard after a successful raid.<sup>290</sup> It therefore opens up the discussion for possibilities like trading contacts in the Baltic, which will be discussed below.

Most scholarly attention has been given to the runic inscription, which has been discussed in chapter three, but the ring holds another engraving that has been discovered by Spangen and that is not taken up in any other studies. It has been interpreted by Spangen as a ‘woman’s figure’; a carving of a dress-shaped (triangular) figure with arms in the side (round) and a neck, but no legs or head. She connects this figure to the symbolic identity of the neck-ring, i.e. a religious deposition in connection to a goddess.<sup>291</sup> She only sees parallels to this figure in southern Sweden and the Baltic. My search for parallels has only confirmed this image, but the parallels are male figures.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to study the object and its carvings in their original, only from pictures. Looking at the picture above, my interpretation of the figure would nevertheless be different than Spangen’s. I see a figure with two legs rather than a skirt, especially based on the darker line stretching from just above the ‘merkje’ down to the left, hands on the hips and something that might be a head.

Here we have a reference to the Frisians and a drawing of what appears to be a human figure on the same Scandinavian, Viking Age necklace. It leads to the question if they were carved at the same time, by the same person, and should be interpreted together. Very likely, this is not the case. But if it would turn out to be from the same date, then the question if they are connected should be considered. If so, could this figure then represent one of the “*drengir Fríslands*”, the lads of Frisia? Or could it be the depiction of one of the Scandinavians, who belonged to the ‘we’ who went to pay a visit to the Frisians? These are of course only speculations. According to

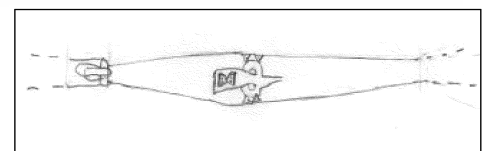
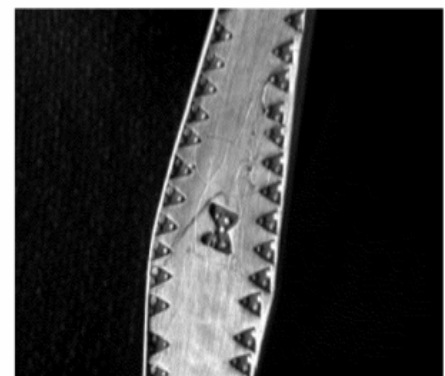


fig. 4 The ‘graffiti’ on the Senja neck-ring as interpreted by Spangen. Photo: Marte Spangen, Tromsø Museum.

<sup>290</sup> I would like to thank A. Willemsen for this useful comment.

<sup>291</sup> Spangen, 105-106.

runologists, the interpretation of the runic inscription would not change if it was connected to the human figure, if it is a human figure at all.<sup>292</sup>

## 4.2 Peaceful contact: Vassals and benefice holders

The scholarly discussion on the Viking Age in the Netherlands has long revolved around the question of whether there ever were any Danes that settled in this area. From the written sources, it became clear that at least benefice holders must have stayed in some parts of the Netherlands and other parts of former Frisia such as Rüstringen, and that they had winter camps on Dutch soil. But because of the lack of both archaeological and linguistic proof, the general agreement had long been that there was no Danish settlement.<sup>293</sup> The discovery of two Viking hoards have changed this image, and scholars now agree on a Danish presence.

### 4.2.1 The Westerklijf hoards

In 1996 a silver hoard was found at Westerklijf in the municipality of Wieringen, province of North-Holland (14). It consisted of one silver neck ring made of six braided silver threads, one twisted silver arm-ring, six flat stamped arm-rings, three coins made into jewellery, a strap end, sixteen silver ingots<sup>294</sup> and 78 Carolingian *denarii*, and had been found with sherds of Badorf pottery and some grass. It seemed to have been put in the Badorf container and covered with the grass when buried.<sup>295</sup> The youngest coins in the hoard are from around 850, providing a *terminus post quem* for the burying of the hoard, which is interpreted as once belonging to a Danish owner. The majority of the silver is from Scandinavia and we know the Danes were active in this area, but the coins are most likely to stem from the Frankish and Frisian area and may have been added to the silver collection last.<sup>296</sup> They could have been obtained either by raid or by trade, and the whole composition of the hoard points to it being the accumulated wealth of a Scandinavian merchant. In 1999 and in 2001 more silver was found close to the first hoard, and together these finds form a second silver hoard of

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<sup>292</sup> I would like to thank Judith Jesch and James E. Knirk for their remarks.

<sup>293</sup> J.P. Blok, "De Wikingen in Friesland," in *Naamkunde* 10 (1978): 26-47.

<sup>294</sup> In some publications, Besteman states that there are 17 ingots, but I have only counted 16, the number that is also mentioned on the website of the National Museum of Antiquities ([www.rmo.nl](http://www.rmo.nl)).

<sup>295</sup> Information from The Museum System, National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden.

J.C. Besteman, "De vondst van Westerklijf, Gemeente Wieringen. Een zilverschat uit de Vikingperiode," *Oudheidkundige mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden* 77 (1997): 199-226.

<sup>296</sup> S. Coupland, "Between the devil and the deep blue sea," in *Coinage and history in the North Sea world, c. AD 500-1250: essays in honour of Marion Archibald*, ed. B. Cook and G. Williams (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006), 242.

Scandinavian character: Westerkliof II (15).<sup>297</sup> This time the hoard consisted of one silver ingot, one coin ornament, 24 pieces of hack-silver, 95 Arabic coins and imitations (mostly fragmented) and 39 Carolingian coins. The find from 2001 also contained some sherds of Badorf pottery,<sup>298</sup> so presumably this hoard was buried in a vessel too. Again, the silver seems to have its origin in Denmark, apart from the coins. Both the youngest Arabic coins and the youngest Carolingian coins are from the late 870s, giving a date for the deposition of the hoard from around 880 A.D.<sup>299</sup>

In Scandinavia's early Viking Age, it was the silver itself that was important as currency, not coins. According to archaeologist James Graham-Campbell, there were three types of economies current, in subsequent order. Firstly, there was a display economy that is reflected in hoards by ornaments, jewellery and so on. Secondly, bullion economy consisted of the use of hack-silver, ingots and coins by their weight, because the weight and quality of silver is more important here. Therefore, silver is chopped up and tested for its quality. Lastly, a money economy in the way we know it became current, as in the rest of Europe. The types of economy can overlap, as is known from several hoards.<sup>300</sup> On the basis of Graham-Campbell's criteria, Westerkliof I is a point in case as it displays both display economy and the start of bullion economy. According to Besteman, during the ninth and tenth centuries the weight of silver was becoming increasingly important, signalling thus the transition to a bullion economy. Westerkliof II reflects this development, as it shows both fragmentation and traces of the testing of the silver quality.<sup>301</sup>

Strikingly, the period covered by the two hoards fits neatly within the period in which this part of Frisia was in hands of Danish overlords Roric and Godfrid as a benefice. The finds have therefore been interpreted as having been the possessions of two Danes who came to Frisia to settle for an undetermined period, taking part of their wealth with them from home and hiding their accumulated wealth from trading and raiding in the ground.<sup>302</sup> The reason for the burying and never retrieving of the treasure remains uncertain, but some suggestions have

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<sup>297</sup> J.C. Besteman, "Nieuwe Vikingvondsten van Wieringen: de zilverschat van Westerkliof II," in *Middeleeuwse Toestanden. Archeologie, geschiedenis en monumentenzorg*, ed. P.J. Woltering, W.J.H. Verwers and G.H. Scheepstra (Hilversum: Verloren, 2002), 65.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> Lecture by James Graham-Campbell, "Treasure," Monday 23.08.2010. Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus. See also B. Hårdh, *Silver in the Viking Age. A Regional-economic Survey* (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1996), 23.

<sup>301</sup> J.C. Besteman, "Scandinavisch gewichtsgeld in Nederland in de Vikingperiode," in E.H.P. Cordfunke and H. Sarfatij ed., *Van Solidus tot Euro. Geld in Nederland in economisch-historisch perspectief* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), 24-33.

<sup>302</sup> Besteman (2002), 72-73. Besteman (2004), 24.

been made and some more can be added. According to Graham-Campbell, there are three possible reasons for burying a hoard, namely the need to bury them in times of threat, the safekeeping of money you do not immediately need (also family treasure) and as offerings to the gods.<sup>303</sup> Analysis of the grass-sample has shown that the first hoard was buried in early spring. Viking raids usually were carried out in spring and summer, because of the weather conditions and because it was trading season. The sea and rivers were namely better sailable and because of that there were more goods in trading towns. It seems plausible that a Viking who had established himself in Frisia (presumably temporarily) and was going on a raid buried his silver to keep it safe. If this is the case, then the find not only attests to settlement, but also to raiding. But, there are more frameworks in which the hoard can be placed besides the economical framework Besteman uses, that also point to Danish settlement.

It was common practice in Viking Age Scandinavian to bury possessions. According to Snorri Sturluson, Odin made some laws for both the Old Norse gods and the humans. One of these laws was that the possessions that a deceased himself had buried in soil, would accompany him in the afterlife in Valhalla.<sup>304</sup> If this was common belief in Viking Age Scandinavia, then burying your treasures was a sensible thing to do, even if it was abroad. Burying silver to secure the afterlife could be an alternative explanation for the fact that we find Viking hoards such as in Wieringen. This explanation that is used in Scandinavian studies<sup>305</sup> has not been picked up in Dutch research until now. It could also well be seen in combination with the idea of going on a journey, securing your wealth for safe-keeping or for the afterlife. In any case, it indicates once more that the hoards were owned by Scandinavians.

Yet another argument, also overlooked in Dutch studies as far as I am aware, can be given for the hoards attesting to settlement. Archaeologist Torun Zachrisson has studied Scandinavian hoards in connection to landscape and properties. Her conclusions are that Viking Age silver hoards can be connected to property boundaries and even houses and graves within the property. They could have been used as markers of newly created properties. This argument is reinforced by a saga story, which tells of the taking of land in Iceland by the burying of silver.<sup>306</sup> Possibly, the hoards in former Frisia could also be seen in this context, and then they would definitely attest to settlement. If one accepts this explanation, they could be interpreted as markers of two boundaries of newly settled territory.

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<sup>303</sup> Graham-Campbell, "Treasure."

<sup>304</sup> Snorre, *De første kongene*, trans. A. Holtsmark and D. Arup Seip, ed. F. Hødnbø (Oslo: Jan Stenersens forlag, 2007). 12.

<sup>305</sup> See for example Spangen, 28 and Hårdh 26.

<sup>306</sup> Spangen, 31.

The settling of Danish immigrants in a benefice at least provides the right setting for this interpretation.

#### **4.2.2 More Wieringen silver**

The area of Wieringen has yielded even more Scandinavian silver that seems to have gone partly unnoticed in the discussion of “Viking finds”. The database of the Dutch money museum in Utrecht lists a round, silver ingot from Wieringen, dated to the ninth century (16). It most probably is of Scandinavian character, which has raised the question whether it belongs to one of the Westerklijf finds. Unfortunately, it is a single find that was made by a detectorist, and the exact location is unknown.<sup>307</sup> If the ingot did not belong to the Westerklijf finds, it would reinforce the image of a Scandinavian presence in this part of former Frisia. Also some coin finds that were made in the last decade seem to attest the presence of Scandinavians on Wieringen. In this municipality, a number of Arabic *dirhams* were namely recovered besides the hoards.<sup>308</sup>

Together, these finds represent the contact situations that occurred with the granting of benefices in Western-Frisia. It might also be worth pointing out that deposits like hoards do not necessarily have to consist of several items, even a single piece of jewelry can be deposited in the same way and with the same connotations as hoards.<sup>309</sup> So even single finds (discussed below) might point to the practice of burying possessions, and consequently to Scandinavian settlement, although it is hard to prove.

#### **4.2.3. Other ‘Scandinavian’ coin finds**

Also elsewhere in the Netherlands, Arabic coins are found. According to Besteman some were used as jewellery, others had traces of testing. Both of these are typical for a Viking character, considering their bullion economy. Because the Scandinavians cared more about the weight and quality of the silver than about the coins, old, outdated coins could easily be transferred to them.<sup>310</sup> At least 25% of the coins found in the Netherlands are fragmented (hack-silver), 25% have testing traces and 25% are made into jewelry. This all points to a Scandinavian origin. As Besteman has noted, it is remarkable that only two coins are found in the river area, and that most are found in the coastal areas and northern provinces (i.e. the Frisian and neighboring areas). Apparently, he claims, the distribution of the Arabic coins did

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<sup>307</sup> <http://www.geldmuseum.nl/museum/content/zoeken-numis>. Numinsnr. 1032997.

<sup>308</sup> Besteman 2004, 31.

<sup>309</sup> Spangen, 13.

<sup>310</sup> Besteman 2004, 31.



fig. 5 cut-up *dirham*. NUMISnr.  
1035493.  
<http://www.geldmuseum.nl/museum/content/zoekennumis>.

not occur at Dorestad or later trading towns in the area.<sup>311</sup> But one could also argue that they did occur at Dorestad, but did not remain there and were distributed to the Frisian parts of the country. The bulk occurs in areas that are known to have seen Scandinavian activity in this period in the form of benefice-holders and their followers, and could convincingly be connected to this Scandinavian-Frisian contact. Else Roesdahl confirmed that the Arabic coins on the European continent are few and

far in between, and that they only occur in Viking hoards as the Carolingians have their own mint and do not accept Arabic coins as currency.<sup>312</sup> According to Besteman, the coins are another form of evidence for ‘Scandinavian settlement’,<sup>313</sup> but more accurately it points to Scandinavian presence, which can be either in the very short or in the longer term.

#### 4.2.4 The German evidence

Thanks to the textual sources, we know that the granting of a benefice to a Dane also happened in Rüstringen. Unfortunately, no archaeological evidence attests to this. From other parts of Frisia there are some finds pointing to contact.

One of the obvious places to look for traces of more peaceful contact is Nordfriesland, the part of Frisia that bordered Denmark in the Viking Age. Here, there is an attestable Frisian population from the seventh or eighth century onwards. At the same time there is also a Scandinavian presence on the islands, and from c. 1000 A.D. also on the mainland. Just below the border of modern Denmark, a couple of Scandinavian finds have been made. They date from the year 1000 and shortly after, so well into the Viking Age. I have not been able to identify all the finds, but the most well-known ones are a pair of stirrups from Karlum with close parallels in Denmark, and part of a bronze bridle from Leck.<sup>314</sup> Herbert Jankuhn sees another piece of evidence in wooden beams from an eleventh-century church, that are decorated in a specific northern style.

In the study of history and archaeology of Schleswig-Holstein, Jankuhn argues that these

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<sup>311</sup> Besteman (2004), 33.

<sup>312</sup> Personal comment by Else Roesdahl during the Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

<sup>313</sup> Besteman (2004), 33.

<sup>314</sup> Jankuhn, 173-174.



single finds in combination with onomastic data are evidence of the presence of the Scandinavians as part of the Frisian people living there. This is perhaps not very surprising in a border region. The Frisian-Scandinavian cohabitation can predominantly be seen on the Frisian islands, to which Frisians first immigrated, and shortly after Danes from northern-Jutland. According to Jankuhn, dialect studies suggest that the Frisian dialect here is substantially different from that on the mainland. Most likely, the Danish and Frisian population lived together, mixing their dialects.<sup>315</sup> Unfortunately, Jankuhn does not list the finds and only presents one drawing, making it hard to critically consider his theory.

However, the evidence may be linked with evidence from the written sources. In the *AF*, we can read that in 857 A.D. the Danish king grants the land (indicating it was his property) between the Eider and the sea to a Scandinavian that came from Frisia, on behalf of Roric. Could this be another Scandinavian-Frisian benefice? We might then wonder if the mixing of people – either peaceful or not – that Jankuhn believes occurred, also happened in other Frisian benefices as well. The textual sources shed light on this, as they tell of the case of a Scandinavian living amongst Frisians and leading them in a battle against the Vikings and of Hemming on Walcheren.

Evidence from the earlier discussed site of Reric does not provide clues about benefices, but it does show that cohabitation of Scandinavians and Frisians was very well possible in trading towns. In Reric, both a Frisian and a Scandinavian population were present. This is not necessarily attested to by the tradeware or personal possessions, but mostly by grave finds. Burials identified as Frisian and burials identified as Scandinavian were both found at the site. The latter are very interesting, being boat-burials in Scandinavian style with Scandinavian, i.e. clinker built, boats.<sup>316</sup> The fact that the graves from these people are found side by side indicates that people from different backgrounds died and were buried in the same period at this site. There appears to have been contact in Reric, whether peaceful or not.

### **4.3 Peaceful contacts: Trade**

A considerable amount of the ‘Viking finds’ in the Netherlands can be linked to trade or related forms of peaceful contact (such as Scandinavian presence in trading towns), as Frisian/Frankish artefacts in Scandinavia can. The main sites for these finds are the site of the former trading centers such as Dorestad.

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<sup>315</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>316</sup> Müller-Wille, 34-35.

### 4.3.1 Dorestad

From the toll-inventories and other documents we know that there was a substantial trade between Scandinavian and Frisian and Frankish traders in Dorestad.<sup>317</sup> Most of the trades ware, like natural products, animals and slaves, cannot be found in the archaeological record. Finds are therefore of the more lasting kind, such as pottery, utensils, jewellery and perhaps (parts of) the swords. From Dorestad, the finds that can be identified as Scandinavian or influenced by Scandinavian style are a braided and twisted gold bracelet (**17**), two silver bracelets with geometrical patterns (**18,19**) and a golden fingering stamped with triangles all dated to ca. 800-850 (**20**). Dated to the ninth century in general are three (and a half) silver needles with spherical ends that are decorated with filigree (hair- or cloth pins, **21,22,23**<sup>318</sup>), a silver pennanular brooch with interwoven animal patterns (**24**), a silver buckle with animal patterns (**25**),<sup>319</sup> a silver strap-mount with interwoven animal patterns (**26**) a silver spiral-formed bracelet with abstract animal pattern (**27**) and a silver tortoise-brooch (**28**).<sup>320</sup> All of these could have ended up here as personal belongings of Scandinavian traders. They would then be indicative of the presence of Scandinavian males and females, as the tortoise brooch was an item for women. Another possibility is that they were brought by Scandinavian traders as trades ware and sold to local Franks and Frisians or tradesmen from other places, or that they had been bought in Scandinavia by Frisian traders. A third possible explanation of the presence of these objects is that they were given to people in Dorestad as gifts, indicating a practice of gift-exchange, which will be discussed below. The two latter possibilities mean that Frankish, and perhaps Frisian people, had Scandinavian artefacts in their possession and might even have worn them. This could say something about their attitudes towards the other and the self, about identity and about the contact situation.

If the objects were brought by the Scandinavians as personal possessions, they could have ended up in the soil as deposits in the same way as the Westerklijf hoards. However, most objects were found in layers of debris within the settlement, apart from the two bracelets with geometrical patterns (**18,19**) that come from grave contexts,<sup>321</sup> which according to Hårdh is somewhat uncommon.<sup>322</sup> Very few Scandinavian silver arm-rings like these have been found in graves in Scandinavia, but it was also uncommon in the Frankish world. Traditionally, all

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<sup>317</sup> Willemsen (2009), 127.

<sup>318</sup> I would like to thank Museum Dorestad for providing me with information and pictures of this pin.

<sup>319</sup> Willemsen (2004), 75.

<sup>320</sup> Information from The Museum System, the National Museum of Antiquities.

<sup>321</sup> Willemsen (2004), 75. L.J.F. Janssen, *Oudheidkundige Mededeelingen I* (Leyden: 1842), 39, 60. According to Janssen, the first arm-ring was found by a skeleton, and that a second, identical arm-ring was found near the same or a second skeleton, both of which got lost. Apparently the arm-ring was found back later.

<sup>322</sup> Hårdh, 26-40.

these “Viking finds” have been interpreted as evidence for trade contact, but, as made clear above, the possibility that they attest to Scandinavian presence in the context of Scandinavian benefices should not be omitted. After all, Dorestad was in the hands of Danish princes.

#### 4.3.2 Domburg/Walacrias

The second trading centre that has yielded archaeological proof of Scandinavian-Frisian contact in the form of raids and of trade is Walacria near present-day Domburg.<sup>323</sup> The range of finds is somewhat the same as in Dorestad, but on a much smaller scale.

Like in Dorestad, some silver needles with spherical ends that are decorated with filigree were found. One is part of a ‘toilet-set’ (29) that also includes an ear-spoon.<sup>324</sup> It usually is interpreted as Viking, or possibly a local copy of Viking toilet-sets.<sup>325</sup> It seems to point to trade with Scandinavia, but what makes this trade most visible is the presence of Arabic *dirhams* at the same site. As we have seen, Walcheren – like Dorestad – had been subject to several incursions and Domburg had a large circular fortress, indicating that there was something the Vikings were interested in, which had to be protected. Most likely, these were the sheep and their wool that were present at the ‘*villa Walichrum nomine*’ that is known from textual sources and discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>326</sup>

#### 4.3.3 Kaupang and Ribe

Scandinavian trading towns have also yielded evidence of contact. Archaeologist Dagfinn Skre has studied the trade relations between Kaupang and Dorestad. Kaupang was a Viking Age trading centre situated on the south-east coast of present-day Norway, which was in the same trading network as Dorestad, along with Ribe, Hedeby and Birka. On the basis of both the trades ware and what can be classified as personal possessions, Skre is able to show a clear link with Frisia and a Frisian presence in the first half of the ninth century. Although he considers the possibility of goods ending up in Kaupang as loot, he concludes that most of the items have come by two other means of exchange, namely trade or as personal belongings.<sup>327</sup> For some of the imports, Frisian traders are supposed as intermediaries. These are, for example, glass beads from the Caliphate,<sup>328</sup> amber and glass-vessels.<sup>329</sup> Moreover, Lebecq

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<sup>323</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 78.

<sup>324</sup> R.M. van Heeringen, “Een zilveren toiletgarnituurtje uit de Vikingtijd,” *Walacria, een kroniek van Walcheren* 3 (1990): 51-60.

<sup>325</sup> [http://www.zeeuwmuseum.nl/script/P\\_werken-in-depot\\_detail.asp?ID=178](http://www.zeeuwmuseum.nl/script/P_werken-in-depot_detail.asp?ID=178)

<sup>326</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 142-145.

<sup>327</sup> Skre, 2.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*

lists finds of Frankish coins and Frisian cloth from Kaupang, all likely to have been imported by Frisians.<sup>330</sup>

Almost one-third of the Kaupang pottery was of Frankish/Frisian origin, which is the same percentage as we have seen in York (§ 1.3), and was imported up to ca. 860 to 880 A.D., when import from our area suddenly stopped. The pottery mainly consists of cooking pots and some containers, which could have been taken to Kaupang as personal possessions or as containers for trade goods. Skre thinks it most likely that they were brought by Frisian/Frankish traders from their homelands, as there were almost no ceramic pots in Norway at that time. And they are domestic or personal items, indicating Frakish/Frisian people stayed in Kaupang for some time.<sup>331</sup> Other evidence pointing to the presence of Frisian traders are some pieces of not very high-status metalwork, part of which come from Frisia. They are all dress-accessories and fittings for weapon- or riding gear and have not been reworked, something that Scandinavian owners probably would do. Most likely they were worn by Frisian trades- or craftsmen during the first or second half of the ninth century.<sup>332</sup>

Skre is convinced he has found a Frisian traders' house. One building in Kaupang (building A301) that is dated to the second quarter of the ninth century – in the period that Frisians were probably present in Kaupang and Frisian imports came through – and was abandoned around 840/850, contained a concentration of Frankish metalwork. As three female dress accessories were found, it is concluded that at least one Frankish/Frisian woman lived there, possibly a whole household. But the bulk of the pottery in the building was Frisian, about twice as much as average in the rest of the settlement, and much more glass vessels had been found in this house than elsewhere. Besides, this house does not show any traces of a workshop, whilst all other buildings were combined residential houses and workshops. So according to Skre, the inhabitants of this house did not come to Kaupang for production, but more likely for trade. This is supported by the fact that more imports than in other houses were found, and by the fact that hack-silver and weights were found. Probably, these people were the first to use money-weight-silver in Kaupang.<sup>333</sup> The researcher concludes that it appears as if the inhabitants of this house were Frisian/Frankish. But the heading of one of the paragraphs of Skre's article in which this is discussed is called 'What

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<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>330</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 83.

<sup>331</sup> Skre, 3.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid.*

brought Frisians to Kaupang?', indicating that he assumes they were Frisian.<sup>334</sup> According to Skre, they came to exchange their wares for iron. Four times more iron was found in the 'Frisian house' than in others, and seem to have been stored on one side of the building.<sup>335</sup> This could have been the product that was shipped to Frisia and Francia in exchange for pottery and other products.

Skre does speak of the particular "Frisian" house as a possible storing place for people who had trading connections with the Frankish and Frisian lands.<sup>336</sup> This seems more attested by the archaeological evidence than a Frisian occupation. Only one-third of the pottery in Kaupang is actually Frankish/Frisian, which is not much if there was no pottery produced locally. Moreover, only three Frankish dress accessories were found. These might have been exchanged with Franks or Frisians in Kaupang or elsewhere, and do not necessarily point to a Frankish/Frisian household. What is most striking about the whole set of data, is that the imports and Frisian presence occurred in the first half of the ninth century to around 850-880 A.D. As Skre points out, this final date of the late 800s is exactly the period when Dorestad declined, a decline that traditionally is partly ascribed to the impact of the Viking attacks. It is assumed that because of the fact that products stopped coming to Scandinavia via Dorestad, Scandinavian trading centers also started to decline. This seems to be attested in the material from Ribe, Birka and Hedeby as well.<sup>337</sup> Most likely, we are thus seeing a trading link between Dorestad and Kaupang as well as other Scandinavian towns, where Frisian, Frankish and Scandinavian traders performed their trade.

According to archaeologist Søren Sindbæk, both Kaupang, Ribe, Birka and Hedeby are classified as nodal points in a broader trading network and are classified by their many imports and specialized production. These imports primarily consist of Frankish and Frisian goods, for which Dorestad was the main distribution centre. Especially Ribe shows a close connection to the Frisian-Frankish area on the basis of its imports.<sup>338</sup> Considering its close proximity to Frisia, this might not surprise us. If Frisian merchants or craftsmen are expected to have resided in Kaupang, than they most likely would have been present in Ribe too, especially since many of the imported vessels in Ribe are interpreted as personal containers for the merchant's provision.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>338</sup> S. M. Sindbæk, "Networks and nodal point. The emergence of towns in early Viking Age Scandinavia," *Antiquity* 81 (2007):119-124.

<sup>339</sup> S. Jensen, *The Vikings of Ribe* (Ribe: Den antikvariske Samling, 1991), 16-17.

#### 4.3.4 Sliesthorp/Hedeby

When discussing Reric, we have seen that according to the *AF* and the excavations of Jankuhn Sliesthorp/Hedeby (subsequently Hedeby) had a population of Frisian merchants after 808 A.D. But there is more evidence for Frisian presence in this Danish trading town.

The lay-out of Dorestad – the long road alongside the river at which the buildings and the trade were situated, is recognized as typically Frisian. Hedeby had a lay-out reminiscent of this, possibly showing the hand of the Frisians.<sup>340</sup> According to Lebecq, coins, ceramics, glass and Rhenish products point to trade with Frisians or by Frisians,<sup>341</sup> but according to Willemsen it points to direct links with Franks.<sup>342</sup> At least, there is a strong connection with Frisia, so claims Lebecq, and this is also evident in the selected historical sources. Lebecq argues that the evidence clearly shows that at the time of establishment in the eighth century, Frisians were already present with their personal belongings and goods. And in the ninth century, the Frisians again occupied the town with their trade.<sup>343</sup> This indicates that the story of Godfrid and his replacement of people from Reric is a very plausible one, and that the messengers between Dorestad and Hedeby could very well have been Frisian traders. This idea is also reinforced by the fact that Charlemagne himself used Frisian merchants as messengers whom he sent to Godfrid.<sup>344</sup>

#### 4.3.5 Single finds

In addition to finds from trading centers, some single finds can contribute to the image of Scandinavian-Frisian trade and contacts. More and ambiguous single finds will be discussed in paragraph 4.4.

The silver ingots from Wieringen point to economic activities. Ingots were used as a sort of Viking-Age wallet; they contained a concentration of silver for payment. Besides the ingots from Wieringen, another Scandinavian ingot was found on the mound Kloosterwierden in the vicinity of Warffum, province of Groningen (30).<sup>345</sup> According to Besteman, the ingot's weight of about 26 grams is approximately an *øre*, the standard quantity for the Scandinavian Viking Age economic system. Therefore, he concludes that it attests to a Scandinavian character. Also interpreted as attesting to this are the several testing traces.<sup>346</sup> In the same

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<sup>340</sup> Lebecq (1983a), 85.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, 85-87.

<sup>342</sup> Personal comment made by Annemarieke Willemsen.

<sup>343</sup> Lebecq (19883a), 85-88.

<sup>344</sup> Lebecq (1992), 13.

<sup>345</sup> E. Knol, "Zilverbaar uit de Vikingentijd," *Jaarverslag van het Groninger Museum 1998-1999*, 23.

<sup>346</sup> Besteman (2004), 28.

manner, the Carolingian and Arabic coins point to trade activities, but as Carolingian coins are common in Francia, only *dirhams* can be used to trace Scandinavian activity, so claims Besteman. We have seen that part of the second Viking hoard of Wieringen, and some single finds existed of Arabic *dirhams*. The spread of both Scandinavian ingots and Arabic *dirhams* is striking.<sup>347</sup> It is restricted to the coastal area and the area of Dorestad. Finds are centered on Walcheren, Wieringen and around Den Burg on the isle of Texel, the Westergo and Oostergo region and some spread finds in the provinces of Groningen and Drenthe. According to Besteman, they can be connected to the areas of Scandinavian activity.<sup>348</sup> They may have been used for trade in, for example, Dorestad or Walacria. There are several finds of coins throughout the northern Netherlands that are interpreted as Frisian but incorporate hack-silver, which also point to trading activities.

A Scandinavian silver arm-ring with five smaller rings attached to it (**31**) has been found near at the beach near Callantsoog, along the Dutch coast, in sand that had been taken from Schulpengat near the isle of Texel. The find is dated to c. 900/950 A.D.<sup>349</sup> and could have functioned as a form of currency, because the smaller rings could be taken off and used as payment. It is the only find of this type of ring outside Scandinavia, but similar ones are known from both Denmark (gold),<sup>350</sup> Norway<sup>351</sup> and Sweden.<sup>352</sup> Here, one arm-ring has five smaller rings as well, but other have only one or many. This is due to the fact that the arm-ring functioned like a wallet, and could have any amount of rings. We can question how the arm-ring came to the Dutch coast. Was the individual who owned it on the way to Dorestad or Walacria when he lost it? Or was it perhaps part of a hoard he buried in the coastal zone that has been flushed away?

#### 4.4 Exchange

There is a number of single finds from Frisia that seems to point to exchange, but it is not always clear to what kind of exchange exactly. We have already looked at finds connected to raid and trade, both means of exchange, but there are some other forms of exchange that should also be considered. Objects can have ended up in the Frisian soil by gift-exchange or as personal belongings of Scandinavians. This category can also include some of the objects

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<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>349</sup> Information from The Museum System, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.

<sup>350</sup> Roesdahl ed., 264 (catalogue nr. 144).

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*, 263 (catalogue nr. 141).

<sup>352</sup> Graham-Campbell, 87, 263 (catalogue nr. 302).

from Dorestad discussed above. Also, immaterial exchange, such as the exchange of ideas that is very common in contact situations, can sometimes be traced.

#### 4.4.1 Gift-exchange or personal possessions?

Gift-exchange, as has been pointed out in chapter 1, was a common practice in Scandinavian, Viking Age society. The written sources, give several descriptions of Franks and Scandinavians exchanging gifts, but in none of these were Frisians involved. Nevertheless, gift-exchange between Scandinavians and Frisians very likely happened as well, and may perhaps especially be expected where Scandinavian counts and Frisian counts were to cooperate. We will now take a look at the objects that would be suitable as gifts or personal possessions, and that might have been exchanged between Scandinavians and Franks or Frisians. Also some finds that are ambiguous will be mentioned.

As Egge Knol has pointed out, Scandinavian silver that was accepted by Frisians and ended up in the Frisian hoards could very well have come into the possessions of Frisians by means of gift-exchange.<sup>353</sup> It usually concerns silver or gold jewelry like arm-rings, neck-rings and finger-rings, but also swords.<sup>354</sup> Precious metals and other objects of prestige had an important social significance.<sup>355</sup> From Scandinavian prose and poetry, we know a lot about these practices. In poetry, it is often used in *kennings*, which was a style figure by which poets could describe a single noun by two or more compounded ones. A leader of a war-band or a royal person is for instance usually denoted as a ‘ring-giver’. In the Eddic poem Sayings of the High One (*Hávamál*), which presents rules of conduct for Old Norse society, it is stated that “With weapons and gifts friends should gladden one another”, and “mutual givers and receivers are friends longest.”<sup>356</sup> In her article on the Senja neck-ring, Jesch has already pointed out that the war-gear the runic text speaks of was not only important in trade, but also in gift-giving. This might be an explanation for the link between Frisia and Norway, and could also explain Jesch’s reading of the ‘lads’ as the own group.

In Ostfriesland, three gold Viking rings have been found, dating from the eighth to tenth century. One is a twisted ring of two gold threads found in Larrelt (32),<sup>357</sup> the second a

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<sup>353</sup> Knol, 47-56.

<sup>354</sup> Gurevich, 177-189.

<sup>355</sup> Besteman (2004), 24-25.

<sup>356</sup> “Hávamál,” in *Edda*, trans and ed C. Larrington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 20.

<sup>357</sup> H. Stierling, *Der Silberschmuck der Nordseeküste - hauptsächlich in Schleswig-Holstein. I. Band: Geschichtliche Entwicklung seit dem Mittelalter* (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz 1978), 25-26. I would like to thank Jan Keglner and Gerd Kronsweide for providing the information.



twisted ring of six gold threads from Aurich (**33**),<sup>358</sup> and the third a twisted ring with the depiction of a dog on it (**34**). Being gold, the objects are very valuable and definitely objects of prestige.<sup>359</sup> These are the kinds of objects that people would exchange as gifts or use as offerings, and not normally as currency. The area where they have been found is characterized by settlements from the ninth century onwards,<sup>360</sup> providing a possible background for the exchange and for Scandinavian presence.

Somewhat similar to the Larrelt ring is a gold ring from Gaasterland in Friesland (**35**). This ring, discovered in 2009, is made from four twisted gold threads. This too is a Viking ring, as it has numerous parallels in Scandinavia.<sup>361</sup> Unfortunately, research on this ring had not yet been published at time of writing. A gold ring from Den Burg, Texel (**36**) is unpublished as well, except for a reference by Willemsen.<sup>362</sup> This ring, which is in a private collection, consist of six gold threads that are placed on top of each other but twisted together in one end, under a single round piece of gold. Two of the six threads are ribbed. It is interesting that it is found at Den Burg, where we know there was a ring-fortress.

More stray finds are known from Frisia, but also from areas in the Netherlands outside Frisia. Most of these finds are jewellery like arm-rings and brooches. Like the Gaasterland ring above, a number of these finds are made by detectorist, and unfortunately this sometimes makes it hard to study the context. From the mound Kenwerd in the province of Groningen, an open-worked, circular Viking brooch is known. It is decorated with animals in Jellinge-style (**37**).<sup>363</sup> From north-east Groningen, another round Viking brooch (**38**) is published, this time in Borre-style according to the authors. Again, the decoration shows a pattern of interwoven animals, but this brooch is not open-worked.<sup>364</sup>

From Pingjum stems a silver, spiraled bracelet with two fragments (**39**). A similar one from Groningen is currently being studied. The Pingjum bracelet is a peculiar object that seems to have been reassembled, possibly the wrong way. Originally, what is now the Pingjum bracelet might actually have been two bracelets, especially because of the accompanying fragments that have not been reassembled. It is dated to c. 850/900 A.D. and shows stamped decorations of lines and dots.<sup>365</sup> The lines are placed horizontally and diagonally along the bracelet. They are very reminiscent of decorations on the respective

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<sup>358</sup> <http://www.ostfriesischelandschaft.de/af/>

<sup>359</sup> Stierling, 25-26.

<sup>360</sup> <http://www.ostfriesischelandschaft.de/af/>. See for instance 'fundberichte' 2004, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

<sup>361</sup> J. Besteman, "Een gouden Vikingring uit Gaasterland," *Detector Magazine* 107 (2009): 33-34.

<sup>362</sup> Willemsen, 70.

<sup>363</sup> J. Zijlstra, "Een bijzondere vondst uit Groningen," *Detector Magazine* 59 (2001): 10-11. Knol (2006), 16-20.

<sup>364</sup> R.A. Regtop, "Viking fibula," *Detector Magazine* 24 (1996): 8-9.

<sup>365</sup> Information from The Museum System, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden.

Westerklief bracelets and Scandinavian counterparts.<sup>366</sup> Also the form on the outside is very similar, where the middle is thicker or stands out more than the edges. The object thus seems to be Scandinavian or influenced by Scandinavian styles and possibly came to Frisia as a gift or a personal belonging, or even as currency as the bracelet was fragmented. But because the shape of the bracelet on the inside is slightly different – hollow whereas the other bracelets are flat inside – it might even be a local copy of a Scandinavian arm-ring.<sup>367</sup> A bracelet that is very similar to this one in form is a bracelet from Midlaren in Drenthe, which is currently being studied by Pieter den Hengst at the University of Groningen.<sup>368</sup> However, the decorations on this bracelet are completely different and do not resemble the Viking ones, which may reinforce the idea that the Pingjum find is a hybrid object, combining both local tradition and Scandinavian-style decoration.

#### 4.4.3 Exchange of ideas

People in international trade centres might have copied each others' fashion and exchanged ideas, as possibly is the case with the Pingjum bracelet.<sup>369</sup> This likely happened in Dorestad, where jewellery and other items of several styles have been found. One of the Dorestad finds has been interpreted as pointing to the practice of copying. The tortoise brooch (29) mentioned above is slightly different from Scandinavia ones, according to Willemsen. Here, these brooches usually are decorated in a relief, whereas the Dorestad one is much simpler with little relief and a more or less carved pattern. The pattern, however, does resemble Scandinavian ones. As Willemsen suggested, this brooch is a local interpretation or copy of a Scandinavian brooch.<sup>370</sup> Clearly, Frisians and Scandinavians came into contact, and so did their material culture. Although this is a very likely scenario, it must be stressed that on Scandinavian brooches patterns with little relief also are known. It may be style of decoration, but it can also be a matter of production. Tortoise brooches became mass-produced in the Viking Age by the use of moulds that were used over and over again. Over time, the relief of

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<sup>366</sup> See bracelets g1996/11.2a-f, 14.

<sup>367</sup> L. Amkreutz, and A. Willemsen, "Nieuwe voetsporen over oude. Naar een nieuwe opstelling 'Archeologie van Nederland' in het RMO," *Archeologie Magazine* 2 (2010): 56-59.

<sup>368</sup> I would like to thank Pieter den Hengst for providing me with information on the bracelet and for discussing this find and the Pingjum find with me.

<sup>369</sup> Willemsen (2009), 165-167.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 165. The other object – a silver ring-pin – that Willemsen suggest is a local copy, probably is not. An identical pin is found in the British museum. I have studied the ring-pin that is in the collection of the NMA, and do believe it could have functioned. On the backside of the pin, there is a silver piece sticking out, against which the pin could rest.

the mould and therefore the brooches could become worn and less pronounced.<sup>371</sup> It is striking that the brooch is found singly, as they usually are found in pairs (in grave contexts). If only one is found, this possibly points to reuse of the brooch, for instance as a single brooch used on the garment close to the neck.<sup>372</sup> The possibility that this was a Scandinavian brooch of lesser quality that was reused must thus not be omitted.

This process of copying styles can also be seen in the other direction. During the Viking Age, elements of Carolingian art were introduced and taken up into the indigenous art styles. Plant ornaments that were typical for the Carolingian art were introduced in the time of the Jellinge- and Mammen-styles (c. 880s-1030s), and were also used during the Ringerike-style up to the Urnes-style (c. 980s – 1150s).<sup>373</sup>

More mixing of style must have occurred, but it is not always traceable. In Nordfriesland we have already seen that people and dialects mixed, so why not other ideas? A very interesting and traceable exchange, or rather taking of ideas, can be seen in connection with the coastal defences. In Denmark, four circular fortresses are known, namely Aggersborg, Fyrkat, Nonnebakken and Trelleborg. What is interesting is that these were built some hundred years later than the Dutch fortresses, which without doubt had been encountered by the Danish Vikings. It is thought by a number of Dutch and Danish scholars, that the Viking Age Danes imported the idea from Frisia.<sup>374</sup> This would mean that the Danes came upon these fortresses, saw how well they worked, and tried the same at home. The Danes, however, did not apply the idea without adapting it to their own needs, which can be seen by the internal lay-out of the fortresses that is specific for Denmark.<sup>375</sup>

## Conclusion

It has long been said that it is striking that so little Viking archaeology is left in an area that has been so marked by Scandinavian activity as Frisia, and it is still said. But, this image is slowly changing, thanks primarily to the Westerkliof hoards. There is even more evidence to be considered from Frisia and beyond attesting to trade, raid, cohabitation, benefices and

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<sup>371</sup> D.M. Wilson, "The development of Viking Age art," in *The Viking World*, ed. S. Brink and N. Price (London: Routledge, 2008), 324.

<sup>372</sup> Personal comment by James Graham-Campbell during the Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

<sup>373</sup> Lecture by James Graham-Campbell, "Art and Ornament," Friday 20.08.2010. Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

<sup>374</sup> Van Heeringen (1995d), 54.

<sup>375</sup> Else Roesdahl, personal comment during the Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

exchange of ideas. Furthermore, more interpretations of the known finds are possible, that shed new light on the evidence. Good examples of this are in fact the Westerklijf hoards, but also the Senja neck-ring. Many of the finds, sites and data would probably reveal more of their secrets when subjected to closer scrutiny. We must also bear in mind that traces of contact and exchange seem to be mostly of the kind that is not always found in archaeology: the personal, immaterial and perishable.

It is striking that the image of the German Frisian area very much coincides with the image of the Dutch Frisian area, both when considering the archaeological material and the historical sources. What furthermore becomes apparent when combining the archaeological with the written sources is that on many occasions the peaceful contacts and the hostile contacts such as trade and raid occurred on the same place. Moreover, a lot of the details known from the textual evidence can be backed up by archaeology, and vice versa. It is clear that the different types of sources have different emphasis; the texts mainly speak of raids and benefices, whilst most of the archaeological material points to trade and gift-exchange. Clearly, all these different types of contacts existed side by side. This once again stresses that the textual sources have a very clear political scope, and shows that combining text and object is a valuable method by which the limitations of the individual sources can be diminished.

## Chapter 5

### Consequences of the contacts

The contacts between Frisians and Scandinavians naturally have had consequences, some of which we have already encountered, on the involved peoples and their homelands. A lot of these consequences will have been limited to the daily, personal life of people, which cannot be (easily) studied or reconstructed. Hence, not all consequences will be equally traceable. A number of the consequences of the different types of contact, both in the short and in the long term, ranging from the beginning of the Viking Age until now, will be set out in this chapter.

#### 5.2 The short term

##### 5.2.1 Economical consequences

In Domburg, the archaeological evidence clearly showed an economic decline at the time of the Viking Age, as a consequence of the Viking raids. Most of the short term consequences probably should be sought in this economic field. The taking of loot and tributes, must have meant a considerable economic loss for Frisians and Franks, even though they might have been able to hide some of their valuables or reclaimed them.

According to historian and numismatist Simon Coupland, Dorestad was most prosperous in the 820s and 830s, after which it declined rapidly in the 840s.<sup>376</sup> The decline of Dorestad was traditionally described to the Viking activity, but this image has somewhat altered and a combination of causes now is accepted.<sup>377</sup> One of the most important ones is the gradual silting of the Rhine.<sup>378</sup> But also political circumstances must have been of influence, for instance the fact that the Carolingian empire became splintered and Dorestad was given as a benefice to Danes when it already was on its way back.<sup>379</sup> The idea of Vikings destroying Dorestad, however, still is appealing to people.

The decline of Dorestad had its effect on Frisian-Scandinavian trade, as is attested by archaeological evidence from the Viking Age, Scandinavian trading centres. From around 850 A.D. a strong decline in import of Frisian and Frankish wares that usually are connected to Frisian trade can be seen, as was the case in Kaupang (§ 4.3.3) However, despite the Viking attacks and the devastation of a number of trading centres, Frisian-Scandinavian trade did

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<sup>376</sup> S. Coupland, "Dorestad in the Ninth Century: The Numismatic Evidence," *Jaarboek voor Munt- en Penningkunde* 75 (1988): 5–26.

<sup>377</sup> Willemsen (2009), 171.

<sup>378</sup> S. Coupland, "Trading places: Dorestad and Quentovic reassessed," *Early Medieval Europe* 2:3 (2002): 226.

<sup>379</sup> Coupland (2002), 226.

continue and seems to have found other channels, as is indicated by the case study of York (§ 1.3). A shift in blooming trading centres can be seen during and after the Viking Age, and although this cannot totally be ascribed to Viking raids, these must have contributed to the development. Frisia in particular was hit by Viking attacks and suffered from it. After 850 A.D. when Dorestad had declined, a shortage of silver is recognizable in the area. This must have meant poverty. Frisian merchants, who had no real trading centre in the vicinity at this point, most likely moved to new places,<sup>380</sup> such as Mainz of which it is said in 886 A.D. that it's best quarters were Frisian.<sup>381</sup> This, again, would have led to impoverishment of Frisia.<sup>382</sup>

### **5.2.2 Christianization and integration**

Viking activity gave a number of Danes a foothold in Frankish-Frisian politics in the form of fiefs. Although some were given when the Danes commended themselves to Frankish rulers, some also were given because the rulers saw no other option. They were forced to grant the Danes benefices, because they caused too much damage with their raids. As they could demand of the benefice-holders to keep out other Vikings, this sometimes led to a temporary decrease of Viking attacks on the area. In most cases, the Danes also had to convert to Christianity, be it sincerely or only symbolically, which led to a line of royal Danes from one family to become Christian. As we have seen in the case of Harald the older, his followers also converted. This was an important step for the Christianization of Denmark.<sup>383</sup> Harald is known to have accompanied the missionary Ansgar on his first attempt to Christianize the Danes. But also the sheer fact that Danes came into contact with Christianity and that some royals converted paved the way for conversion, which happened in 965 in Denmark and later in the other Scandinavian countries. With the conversion, also other aspects from continental Europe were introduced into Viking Age Scandinavia. These are a new language and crave for literacy, new art styles, centralization of power, but also different social attitudes and rules. Viking Age Scandinavia became closer to the continental, Christian society.<sup>384</sup>

The Danes who had converted to Christianity seem to have been able to integrate into Frankish-Frisian society. Examples are the Danish leader of the Frisians and the Danes who commended themselves to Frankish rulers. As has been pointed out, this particular concerned one family. The case of Godfrid is special in this context, as it is known that he married a

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<sup>380</sup> Coupland (2006), 262-263.

<sup>381</sup> *AF* 886.

<sup>382</sup> Coupland (2006), 263.

<sup>383</sup> Roesdahl, 158.

<sup>384</sup> Lecture by Else Roesdahl, "Christianization and Cultural Change," Friday 20.08.2010. Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

Frankish lady, the sister of count Hugh. This way he had strong ties to Frankish society and politics. According to some scholars, Godfrid and his wife had a daughter Reginhild, who was the mother of Queen Mathilda, the wife of King Henrik I. Mathilda is claimed to be partly Danish and partly Frisian.<sup>385</sup> If this is the case, then Danish and Frisian bloodlines were still involved in the rule of the Netherlands. Other Scandinavians could have ‘mixed’ with Frisians and Franks as well, leading to people of mixed descent in both the short and the long term.

## 5.3 The long term

### 5.2.1 The Captured

The Frankish annals tell us of Vikings taking people captive on their raids. This way, Franks and Frisians alike ended up in hands of Scandinavians during the Viking Age.<sup>386</sup> The captured were either put to slavery in Scandinavia or one of their settlements overseas, sold as slaves elsewhere, or they were released after payment of a ransom and thus converted into silver as well.<sup>387</sup> Slaves were one of the most important trading commodities of the Scandinavians, and the purpose of many Viking expeditions was no doubt to capture slaves. So what exactly happened to the Frankish and Frisian ones?

Very few traces of slaves remain, because of the fact that they were poor and did not have any influence in the political sense. Hence, they were usually not buried properly, but ended up in a pit in the ground. Written records tell of slaves and their duties, and sometimes they are found buried with their master. In Viking Age Scandinavia, slaves or *prælar* were subject to a master, but they could have some status and even retrieve their freedom, as is attested by for instance rune-stones. Both males and females were captured and used as slaves on the land and in houses. But they did not own any land, usually not even after obtaining freedom. Females were also used for sexual services, as is attested by the famous description of the Arabic Ibn Fadlan of the Vikings in Russia.<sup>388</sup>

Stefan Brink has argued that in Viking Age Scandinavian society, freedom was defined more by the identification of a person with a family, group and society and therefore the right to belong to a fellowship. This is cut off when people were taken captive and enslaved.

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<sup>385</sup> Halbertsma, 104.

<sup>386</sup> See chapter 3

<sup>387</sup> Graham-Campbell, J. and D. Kidd, 33.

<sup>388</sup> Roesdahl, 53-55.

Because of the fact strangers were usually seen as enemies, the enslavement of Frisians and Franks could be justified.<sup>389</sup>

The AX tells us of the 837 raid, when Walacria was under siege, that Vikings took captive many women, whose faith likely was the same:

[...] *et pagani vastaverunt Walicrum multasque feminas inde abduxerunt captivas cum infinita diversi generis pecunia.*<sup>390</sup>

[[...] and the heathens (i.e. Vikings) devastated Walcheren and abducted many women they captivated as well as an immense amount of various goods.]

If we believe the Frankish annals describing the different Viking raids, a considerable population of Frisian and Frankish slaves must have been forced into a new life in Scandinavia and the colonies. This would have provided a whole new contact situation or relation between the peoples, a relation of master and servant, of indigenous and immigrant and of Self and Other. Since female slaves could have sexual relationships with their male masters, it probably also would mean that a mixed population came into existence, with children of Scandinavian-Frisian/Frankish parents. This provides a shift in Self and Other again, when Frisian becomes part of the Scandinavian Self. Perhaps DNA-research, a method increasingly used in Viking studies, can provide more insight into this in the future, although it might prove hard to identify Frisians and Scandinavians because of their supposed earlier contacts, mixing and descent.

### 5.2.3 The counts of Holland

The Frisian benefices were very significant for the Frisian-Scandinavian contacts in the Viking Age, providing a base of power for Danish royals. The last benefice holder who is known from the written sources is Godfrid, presumably a member of the same royal Danish family as his predecessors.<sup>391</sup> Godfrid was leader of the Great Heathen Army that had come over from England. Emperor Charles came to terms with Godfrid and his fellow leader Sigfrid, by granting Godfrid Rorik's former benefice in Frisia and paying Sigfrid a tribute to leave. In return, Godfrid was baptized and took a Frankish wife,<sup>392</sup> by which he adapted to the local way of life. Besides, his wife was an illegitimate daughter of Lothar II, so Godfrid also

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<sup>389</sup> S. Brink, "Slavery in the Viking Age," in *The Viking World*, ed. S. Brink and N. Price (London: Routledge, 2008), 50.

<sup>390</sup> AX 837, ed. R. Rau, 342.

<sup>391</sup> Coupland (1998), 108.

<sup>392</sup> AB 882, AV 882, Coupland (1998), 109.



commended to the Frankish royal family.<sup>393</sup> This is not seen as a positive move by some of the chroniclers, since the Fulda annalist states that it was an insult that Charles made the former greatest enemy of the empire its fellow ruler.<sup>394</sup> What perhaps might have contributed to this negative attitude towards the commendation and conversion of Godfrid, is that this tactic earlier failed to stop Viking attacks. Although the Dane was converted, he was still not trusted by the locals.

The mistrusted Godfrid had, according to the annalists, entered into a conspiracy with count the Frankish count Hugh who was his brother in law. The latter wanted Godfrid to attack the empire of Charles in exchange for half the kingdom. Godfrid, however, sent his Frisian counts Gerulf and Gardulf to Charles, to let him know that if he wanted Godfrid to remain faithful to him, he would have to give him more land. He wanted areas in Germany that produced wine, since it was not available in his benefice. Subsequently, Godfrid and his wife were summoned by Duke Henry and the Bishop of Cologne in the Betuwe. Here, Gisela was lured off and Count Everhard, one of Henry's men, lured Godfrid into a quarrel. Godfrid and his men were killed by Henry's men, Hugh was blinded and banished.<sup>395</sup>

With the death of Godfrid, not only his benefice came to an end, but the line of Danish benefice-holders in Frisia in general. This freed the way for the counts of Holland that would play a significant role in Dutch history.

### **5.3.2 The image of the Scandinavians**

The image of Scandinavians, and Vikings in particular, has been formed in this period of Viking activity. The stories of their sea-voyages and their successful raiding and battling remained known. Even to this day the image of the Vikings is effectively used. In films, literature and in re-enactment, Vikings are very popular still. As in the Viking Age and the image of Vikings as brave, brutal, pragmatic and successful people prevails. There has been a certain fascination for these Scandinavian people that visited Frisia, even perhaps a longing to find traces of their presence and influence on Frisia, especially in the period of the National-Socialism. A good example showcasing this "longing" for the Viking past is the false Viking hoard of Winsum.

The Winsum hoard was bought by the Frisian Museum in Leeuwarden in the 1960s from shipper Romke de J. It was said to be found in the terp Bruggeburen, and consist of silver

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<sup>393</sup> Coupland (1998), 109.

<sup>394</sup> *AF* 882.

<sup>395</sup> Coupland (1998), 111.

Thor's hammers, rings, pendants, a warrior statue and a strip, 15 objects in total. In addition, Romke had sold numerous objects from other terps, including objects with runic inscriptions and even an Egyptian statuette. These proved to be false, which made museum staff suspect the same of the Viking hoard of Winsum, which happened to be one of the main attractions of the museum. As the hoard was 'found' shortly after the war by someone with connections to National-Socialists, a background in these circles, where there is a strong fascination for Germanic history, was suspected.<sup>396</sup>

The name Viking still bears certain associations, that can be traced back to the image of the Vikings in the Frankish, Frisian and Scandinavian source. Hence, we have Viking ice-skates, Viking lawnmowers, Viking pizza and, appropriately, a metal detector called 'Viking detector'. Let's hope the latter is as successful as the Vikings were at finding precious metals. Along the Dutch and German rivers, there is a collaborate program for water management called 'Viking X-Regio program'. It is aimed at collaboration in disaster control along the rivers, and funnily named after the people who ones caused problems along these waterways.

## Conclusion

All in all, the Vikings and other Scandinavians have made an impact by their way of acting for which they still are remembered. On the short term, economical and personal changes must have been amongst the most important consequences. Decline in trade and silver as well as loss of people and cattle were reality, as well as exchange of products and ideas. In the long term, Christianization of the Danes, integration of Frisian slaves in Scandinavia and transition from benefice-holders to counts of Holland all had important impact.

Albeit the fact that Vikings caused many problems in Frisia and Francia during the Viking Age, inhabitants of the former area today seem to have a more positive fascination for the Scandinavian visitors. This is an interesting development, in which the relation between the Self and Other changed in a positive sense. A change in the relationship between the Self and Other, in this case Frisian self and Scandinavian Other, can be seen in a direct consequence of the Viking activity. On their raids, the Vikings captured many Frisians and Franks – men and women alike – and took them back to Scandinavian and the colonies where they were sold or put to work as slaves. This way, a considerable amount of Frisians and Franks must have ended up in Scandinavian society, and mixed with the indigenous people. They became part of a Scandinavian Self, but at the same time were tied to a Scandinavian master, the Other.

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<sup>396</sup> L. Verhart, "De 'Vikingschat van Winsum'," in *List & Bedrog* (Matrijs:Utrecht, 1995), 54-58.

## Conclusion

Over the course of the Viking Age, Scandinavians and Frisian have faced each other in various contact situations, both hostile and friendly, across the Frisian, Frankish, Scandinavian and wider North Sea world. Most well known are the Viking raids that still fascinate people to this day. But, also other forms of contact existed, as is attested by both historical and archaeological sources, with different aims, participants and consequences.

The textual sources have mostly portrayed the raids and the benefices, which comprise both negative and more positive forms of contact and display of Scandinavian power in Frisia. Although the Viking raids were devastating and consequently the Scandinavian Vikings viewed as negative Others, foes or outsiders, it provided a background against which other people could stand out in a positive way at the same time. This not only is the case with the Christian Frisians and Franks who defended their country against the heathen Northmen, but also for some Scandinavians who chose to live amongst Frisians and Franks and help them in their battle against the Scandinavian pirates. Although these sources must be read carefully, they do provide us with valuable details about the contact situations that can help us understand them.

It has become clear that not all raids can be looked upon in the same way, as they may have been undertaken for different reasons. The first Viking raid was instigated by the Danish king, whilst later Viking raids were aimed at collecting silver and slaves or even at gaining control over a benefice, whilst some Viking raids were done at the instigation of Frankish rulers against other Frankish rulers. The Franks' and Frisians' reactions to the raids vary through time and place as well. Whereas the Frisians in the Frankish and Frisian sources usually are portrayed as the Christian defenders against the heathen Vikings, at one occasion they refuse to defend the coastal area for the Franks.

From both the Frisian, Frankish and Scandinavian sources, when piecing the information together, a very strong sense that Frisians sometimes decided to work with the Vikings rather than against them comes forward. Although the Christian Frisians presumably identified themselves more with the Franks, other, non-Christian Frisians might have identified themselves more with the Vikings or the Scandinavian merchants. As has been shown in this thesis, a good case for Scandinavian-Frisian collaboration (either in peaceful trade or in raid) can be made, something that is usually not recognized in the academic literature.

Benefices throughout Frisia were given to Danish royals from mostly one family. The benefice-holders stand somewhat in between with their role as protectors from the Viking

attacks, a role they gained because of the impact of the Viking attacks and the Frankish inability to deal with them, and a role which they did not always play according to agreement. Benefice-holders who converted and kept their part of the deal or were given the benefice because of their loyalty to the Frankish emperor were viewed in a positive way, whilst those who first raided the area and then were given control over it certainly were not. The breaking of oaths by some of the Scandinavians who were not as sincere in Christianity as the Franks had hoped, led to some form of mistrust against Danish benefice-holders. This is exemplified by and culminated in the rule of the later Godfrid, whom was thought to conspire against the emperor, and therefore killed. The event led to the end of Danish benefices in Frisia, which made way for the counts of Holland. It is clear that although the Frankish chroniclers were very negative about the Vikings, whom are also called heathens, Danes and northmen, it was not so much a division between an Frankish and Frisian Self and a Scandinavian Other, but more between a Christian, defending Self and a heathen, attacking Other. It appears as if Frisia stands between Scandinavia and Francia, both literally and figuratively speaking, and that the more the latter dealt with each other, the more the Frisians got involved in it.

The archaeological sources mainly attest to trade in the form of imports and exports to and from Scandinavia. Here, especially Kaupang, Ribe and Dorestad were important. But archaeology can also attest to settlement, as primarily the Westerkliof hoards and other silver has shown. This is agreed upon amongst scholars, on the basis of an economic framework that mainly is put forward by J.C. Besteman. As has been shown in this these, also a symbolic framework should not necessarily be omitted for interpreting these finds. Deposits in connection with Odin's law or in connection with marking the boundaries of one's property are possible explanations too, which provide a new look upon these finds. Gift-exchange between Frisians and Scandinavians likely took place, and a number of artefacts that can be classified as items that would be used in this practice are present in Frisia. Nevertheless, we cannot be sure whether these were used as gifts or came to Frisia as personal belongings, for instance. Although raid is hard to identify through archaeology, a number of perhaps less obvious finds might give clues about it. Buried jewellery and silver hoards across the Frisian areas that sometimes can be linked to the exact dates of Viking attacks, which are recorded in historical sources, may be a case in point.

These different kinds of contacts have generated very different reactions and attitudes held by the participants. From their religious background, Frankish annalists give accounts of how wrong the heathen attackers – the Other – were and how it was even worse that the same people were sometimes put in charge over the same Christian people they attacked. Not all the

Frankish rulers seem to have had problems with this, as they made the arrangements with the Scandinavians and sometimes even instigated their Viking raids. The Frisians – who mostly were identified with the Christian Self – were first and foremost victim of the Scandinavian activities, but at the same time some of them seem to prefer the Scandinavians over the Franks and happily traded and exchanged silver with them. From the analysis of the different attitudes, it has become apparent that not ethnicity but Christianity and the role of attacking or defending against the heathens were the most important features for defining the Self and the Other.

What we can conclude from all this is that a number of very different Frisian-Scandinavian contacts existed simultaneously and did not necessarily affect each other. Despite the Viking raids on Frisia, trade between this area and Scandinavia continued. A reason for this seems to be that the different contact situations and the attitudes they generate occur to some extent on different levels in society. The problems between the Franks and Scandinavians appear to be those of a clash of two different cultures and world views. Frisia clearly stands between Francia and Scandinavia, both literally and figuratively speaking, in this case.

We must conclude that the contact situations therefore were far more complex, varied and influential than usually is supposed in the academic literature. Scandinavians and Frisians were both friends, vassals and foes and could be all of these simultaneously. This thesis has shown that the Viking Age events in Frisia cannot be seen within only the Dutch area and the traditional period of 793 to 1050, but that it is important to study it in a much wider geographical and chronological perspective. As was pointed out in the introduction, a focus on attitudes, changes, identities and contact provides an interesting framework for the study of cross-cultural contact. As has been discussed, both peoples exchanged their ideas and styles, and both their societies were formed by the cross-cultural contact, making them more similar in a Christian, European context in the long run. To conclude, we can therefore return to the statement by Michael Bakhtin “In an encounter through dialogue two cultures do not merge and blend; each keeps its uniqueness and open integrity, but both are enriched.”

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Graham-Campbell, J. "Art and Ornament." Friday 20.08.2010. Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

Roesdahl, E. "Christianization and Cultural Change." Friday 20.08.2010. Summer School Viking Age Scandinavia – Transformation and Expansion, University of Århus.

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<http://www.ostfriesischelandschaft.de/af/> Accessed June 19 2010.

## Appendix 1      Glossary

### Sources

<i>RFA</i>	<i>Royal Frankish Annals</i>	<i>Annales Regni Francorum</i>
<i>AX</i>	<i>Annals of Xanten</i>	<i>Annales Xantensis</i>
<i>AB</i>	<i>Annals of St. Bertin</i>	<i>Annales Bertiniani</i>
<i>AF</i>	<i>Annals of Fulda</i>	<i>Annales Fuldenses</i>
<i>AV</i>	<i>Annals of St. Vaast</i>	<i>Annales Vedastini</i>
<i>WB</i>	<i>Walfrid of Bedum</i>	<i>Vita walfridi</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Seventeen Statutes</i>	<i>Zeventien Keuren</i>
<i>TC</i>	<i>Twenty-four Constitutions</i>	<i>Vierentwintig Landrechten</i>
<i>CM</i>	<i>Constitutes of Magnus</i>	<i>Magnuskeuren</i>
<i>LF</i>	<i>The law code of the Frisians</i>	<i>Lex Frisonum</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>Egil's saga</i>	<i>Egills saga Skalla-Grímssonar</i>
<i>OD</i>	<i>Olafsdrapa</i>	<i>Óláfsdrápá</i>
<i>HD</i>	<i>History of the Danes</i>	<i>Gesta Danorum</i>
<i>HK</i>	<i>History of the Kings of Norway</i>	<i>Heimskringla</i>
<i>ASC</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i>	
<i>LC</i>	<i>The Life of Charlemagne</i>	<i>Vita Karoli</i>
<i>LL</i>	<i>The Life of Saint Liudger</i>	<i>Die vitae Sancti Liudgeri</i>
<i>SH</i>	<i>The Sayings of the High One</i>	<i>Hávamál</i>

## **Appendix 2      Concise catalogue**

This concise catalogue comprises a number of single finds and hoards that are discussed in the text in order of appearance (for the discussion of sites, see chapter 4). It is aimed at providing additional information about the finds, that could not be taken up in the text. The finds in the catalogue were selected on the criteria of having been discussed more thoroughly in the text, as a result of their importance for the story of Scandinavian-Frisian contact. The information that was found available is presented here, but this catalogue has no pretence of completeness.

nr.	Inventory nr.	Picture (if possible)	Details	references
1	Centraal Museum Utrecht	Inv. nr. 8783	Iron sword, dated c. 950-1050 A.D. Found in 1941 in the river Vecht near/in Maarssen.  Length 90.5 cm. Width 12.1 cm. Height 0.4 cm.  The blade is marked on both sides.	Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands." In <i>Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinlands and Scandinavia</i> , ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 65-82.  <a href="http://mail.centraalmuseum.nl/Adlibext/detailPage.aspx#">http://mail.centraalmuseum.nl/Adlibext/detailPage.aspx#</a>  Ypey, J. 'Zwaarden' in <i>Spiegel Historiae</i> , April 1978 in <i>Westerheem Dorestad</i> 27, 254-259.  Ypey, J. 1960-61. 'Een aantal vroeg-middeleeuwse zwaarden uit Nederlandse musea' in <i>Berichten ROB</i> 10- 11, 368-394.
2	Archaeologisch Bouwhistorisch Centrum Gemeente Utrecht		Iron sword, dated c. 950-1050 A.D. Found in 1995 in the former riverbed in the city of Utrecht.	Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands." In <i>Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinlands and Scandinavia</i> , ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien:

3 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv. nr. f1940/8.1



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities

Iron sword, dated c. 1000-  
1040 A.D. Found in Wijk bij  
Duurstede, former Dorestad.

*Ibid.*

Inscription: 'ATALBALD'  
Length 96.8 cm  
Width 12.5 cm.

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4 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv. nr. f1952/2.1

Iron sword dated to the  
Viking Age. Found in Wijk  
bij Duurstede.

*Ibid.*

Length 93.4 cm.

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5

Centraal Museum  
Utrecht

Inv.nr. 12013

Iron sword, dated c. 800  
A.D. and classifies as  
'Viking Sword'.  
Found in 1958 in former  
riverbed in the city of  
Utrecht.

[http://mail.centraalmuseum.nl/adlib  
xt/detailPage.aspx?page=1&item=1#](http://mail.centraalmuseum.nl/adlibxt/detailPage.aspx?page=1&item=1#)

Length 98.5 cm  
Width 11 cm.

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6 Groninger  
museum


Inv.nr. 1884-1-3

Iron sword, dated to the  
Viking Age. Found in  
Saaxumhuizen, near human  
remains. Shows pattern-

Ypey, J. 1960-61. 'Een aantal vroeg-  
middeleeuwse zwaarden uit  
Nederlandse musea' in *Berichten  
ROB* 10- 11, 368-394.



		welding.	
		Length 97.1 cm.	Regteren Altena, H.H. van en J.C. Besteman. ed. <i>De Vikingen in de Lage Landen, getoetst aan de Danelaw</i> (Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1971).
7	Groninger Museum  Inv.nr. 1936-12-0001.	Iron word with short hilt and a pommel with three curves. Found in Maarhuizen.  Length 87.6 cm.	<i>Ibid.</i>
8	Groninger Museum  Inv.nr. 1911-06-1	Iron sword, dated c. 775-825 A.D. Short hilt and a pommel with three curves. Decorated with circles. Found in Wierhuizen.  Length 93.5 cm.	<i>Ibid.</i>
9	Groninger Museum  Inv.nr. 1906-1-2a	Found in Antum. The sword is pattern-welded. It was found in a grave-context with nr. <b>10</b> .  Length 97 cm.	<i>Ibid.</i>

<p><b>10</b> Groninger Museum Inv.nr. 1906-1-2b</p>	<p>Found in Antum. The sword is pattern-welded. It was found in a grave-context with nr. <b>9</b>.  Length 85.5 cm.</p>	<p><i>Ibid.</i></p>
<p><b>11</b> Fries Museum Inv. nr. 167.8</p>	<p>Iron sword, found in Stiens near the remains of two individuals.</p>	<p><i>Ibid.</i></p>
<p><b>12</b> National Museum of Antiquities f 1978/1.1</p>		<p>Brooch made of gold inlaid with glass, almandine, pearls and enamel.  Found in Wijk bij Duurstede, at De Heul in 1969.  Dated c. 775 – 800 A.D.  Diam. 8,5 cm.</p> <p>Es, W.A. van. ‘De grote gouden broche’ in <i>Westerheem Dorestad</i> 27 (1978), 247-250.  Es, W.A. van. ‘La grande fibule de Dorestad’ in <i>Festoen</i> (1976), 249-266.  Peddermors, A. ‘The Carolingian jewelled brooch from Dorestad’ in <i>Oudheidkundige mededelingen RMO</i> 62 (1981), 59-92.  <a href="http://www.rmo.nl/collectie/zoeken?object=f+1978%2f1.1">http://www.rmo.nl/collectie/zoeken?object=f+1978%2f1.1</a></p>
<p><b>13</b> Tromsø Museum Ts. 1649</p>	<p>Senja neck-ring. This ring (Ts. 1649) has a runic inscription on the end-</p>	<p>Roesdahl, E. ed., <i>Wikingen, Waräger, Normannen. Die Skandinavien und Europa 800-1200</i> (Mainz: Philip von</p>

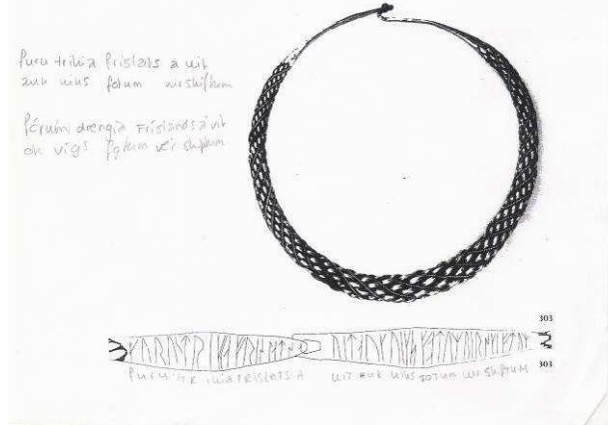


Image from J. Graham-Campbell (1980), 87.

Ts. 1650-1652



The pendants in the hoards. Photo: Marte Spangen, Tromsø Museum.

plates, as well as a carving of what is interpreted as a 'human figure'.

Like the other neck-ring in the hoard it is made of twisted silver threads.

Weight: 293.2 gr.

Diam: 18 cm.

The rest of the hoard consists of another neck-ring (Ts. 1650), necklace with crucifix (Ts. 1651) and pendants (axe-shaped (Ts. 1652).

Zabern), 317 (cat.nr. 348).

Graham-Campbell, J., *Viking Artefacts: a Select Catalogue* (London: British Museum, 1980), 87 (cat.nr. 303).

Spangen, M. *Edelmetalldepotene i Nord-Norge. Komplekse identiteter i vikingtid og tidlig middelalder.* (Tromsø: hovedfagsoppgave, institutt for arkeologi, universitet i Tromsø, 2005).

For discussion of the inscription:

Jesch, J., "The Senja Neck-Ring and Viking Activity," in *Blandade Runstudier 2* (Uppsala: Institutionen för nordiska språk Uppsala universitet, 1997), 7-12.

Samplonius, K. "Friesland en de Vikingtid: de ring van Senja en de Vierentwintig Landrechten," *It Beaken* 60:2 (1998), 89-101.

Jesch, J., "Vikings on the European Continent in the Late Viking Age," in *Scandinavia and Europe 800-1350. Contact, Conflict and Coexistence.* Adams, J. and K. Holman eds.

14 National Museum  
of Antiquities  
g 1996/11.1-79  
Westerklief I



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities



Found in 1996 at Wieringen  
as the first Viking hoard in  
the Netherlands.  
Dated. c. 850 A.D.

Consists of:

- A silver, twisted neck-ring
- A silver, twisted bracelet
- Six silver arm-rings with  
stamped decoration
- A strap end
- Three *dirham* brooches
- 16 silver ingots
- 78 *denarii*.
- Sherds of Badorf ware

Besteman, J.C., “De vondst van  
Westerklief, Gemeente Wieringen.  
Een zilverschat uit de Vikingperiode”  
in *Oudheidkundige mededelingen uit  
het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te  
Leiden* 77 (1997).

Besteman, J.C., “Viking Silver on  
Wieringen,” in *In Discussion with the  
Past. Archaeological Studies  
presented to W.A. van Es*. H. Sarfatij  
etc. eds. (Amersfoort: ROB, 1999),  
253- 266.

Besteman, J.C. *Vikingen in Noord-  
Holland?: de zilverschat van  
Wieringen in het licht van de  
Noormanneninvallen*. (Provincie  
Noord-Holland, 1996).

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Photo: Author, National Museum of Antiquities

g1996/11.4



Photo: Author, National Museum of Antiquities



g1996/11.2a

End of the necklace. Photo: Author, National Museum of Antiquities.

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g1996/11.3 (part  
6 of 6)



Photo: Author, National Museum of Antiquities

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**15** Municipality of Wieringen.

Westerklief II



Photo: Amsterdam Archaeological Centre, University of Amsterdam. In Willemsen (2004), fig. 10.

Found in 1999 and 2001.  
Dated c. 880 A.D.

Consists of:

- 24 pieces of hack silver
- Silver coin brooch
- 39 *denarii*
- 95 *dirhams* (48 cut to pieces)
- Sherds of Badorf ware

Besteman, J.C. “Scandinavisch gewichtsgeld in Nederland in de Vikingperiode.” In ed. E.H.P. Cordfunke and H. Sarfatij, *Van Solidus tot Euro. Geld in Nederland in economisch-historisch perspectief.* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2004), 21-42

Besteman, J.C. “Nieuwe Vikingvondsten van Wieringen: de zilverschat Westerklief II.” In *Middeleeuwse toestanden: Archeologie, geschiedenis en*

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monumentenzorg, Aangeboden aan Herbert Rafatij bij zijn 65e verjaardag. (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000, 65-75.

Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands." In Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinlands and Scandinavia, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien: Fassbaender, 2004), 65-82.

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**16** NUMISnr.  
1032997



Photo: NUMIS, <http://www.geldmuseum.nl/museum/content/zoeken-numis>.

Silver ingot found on Wieringen in 2000. Dated to c. 850 and possibly of Scandinavian origin.

<http://www.geldmuseum.nl/museum/content/zoeken-numis>. Search for '1032997' or 'single find', 'Wieringen'.

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**17** National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. f1928/12.1

Braided and twisted gold arm-ring, dated c. 800-850 A.D. Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.

Diam. 8.4 x 6.9 cm.

Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the Waterside: Viking Finds from the Netherlands." In Vikings on the Rhine: Recent Research on Early Medieval Relations between the Rhinlands and Scandinavia, ed. R. Simek and U. Engel (Wien:



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

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**18** National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. WD 680a



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver bracelet, decorated  
with geometrical patterns.  
Dated c. 800-850 A.D.  
Found in Wijk bij Duurstede,  
in a grave.

*Ibid.*

Diam. 8.3 cm.  
Heigh 1.2 cm.

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**19** National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. WD 680b



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver bracelet, decorated  
with geometrical patterns.  
Dated c. 800-850 A.D.  
Found in Wijk bij Duurstede,  
in a grave.

*Ibid.*

Diam. 7.8 cm.  
Height 1.2 cm.

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Photo: author, National Museum of Antiquities.

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20 National Museum of Antiquities

Inv. nr. WD 674



Photo: author, National Museum of Antiquities.

Gold finger ring, decorated with stamped triangles. Dated c. 800-850. Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.

*Ibid.*

Diam. 2 cm.  
Height 0.8 cm.

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21 National Museum of Antiquities

Inv.nr. WD 677  
(top one on photo)

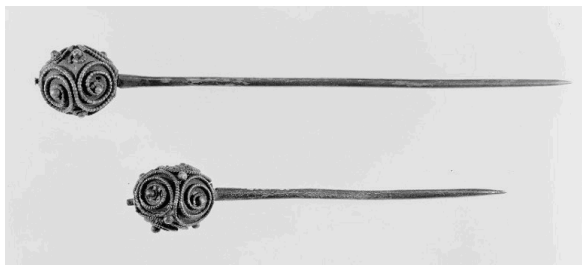


Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver needle with spherical end. Filigree-decoration. Dated to the 9th century. Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.

*Ibid.*

Length 11.9 cm.  
Width 1.6 cm.

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22 National Museum *Ibid.*

Silver needle with spherical

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of Antiquities

Inv.nr. WD 678  
(bottom one on  
photo)

end. Filigree-decoration.  
Dated to the 9th century.  
Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.

Length 8.3 cm.  
Width 1.6 cm.

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23 Museum  
Dorestad

Inv.nr. WD  
onbekend 60



Photo: Museum Dorestad.

Silver needle with spherical  
end. Filigree-decoration.  
Dated to the 9th century.  
Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.

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24 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. f1940/12.2



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver pennanular brooch  
decorated with interwoven  
animal patterns. Dated c. 9<sup>th</sup>  
century. Found in Wijk bij  
Duurstede.

Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the  
Waterside: Viking Finds from the  
Netherlands." In Vikings on the  
Rhine: Recent Research on Early  
Medieval Relations between the  
Rhinelands and Scandinavia, ed. R.  
Simek and U. Engel (Wien:  
Fassbaender, 2004), 65-82.



Photo: author, National Museum of  
Antiquities. Backside.

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25 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. 1940/12.1



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver buckle and buckle  
plate decorated with  
interwoven animal patterns.  
Dated 9th century. Found in  
Wijk bij Duurstede.

*Ibid.*

Length 9.5 cm.  
Width 6.3 cm.

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26 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. 1940/12.3



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver strap mound decorated  
with interwoven animal  
patterns.

Willemsen, A. Dorestad: een  
Wereldstad in de Middeleeuwen.  
(Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2009).

Length 8.5 cm.  
Width 2.6 cm.

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27 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. WD  
449.1.30



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Twisted, silver bracelet  
decorated with abstract  
animal heads. Found in Wijk  
bij Duurstede.

*Ibid.*

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28 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Bronze tortoise brooch.  
Found in Wijk bij Duurstede.  
Single find.

*Ibid.*

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Inv.nr. WD  
771.2.38



MEB-1002. Schildpadfibula  
Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

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29 Zeeuws Museum  
Inv.nr. M97-034



Photo: Zeeuws Museum.

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Toilet-set, dated to the 9th century. Found on the beach near Domburg.

Length 12.6 cm.  
Width 2.2 cm.

Heeringen, R.M. van "Een zilveren toiletgarnituurtje uit de Vikingtijd." *Walacria, een kroniek van Walcheren 3* (1990): 51-60.

30 Groninger Museum  
Inv. nr. 1999-111-5.



Photo: Groninger Museum.

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Complete silver ingot with traces of testing. Found in the terp Kloosterwierde.

Diam. 0.5-0.7 cm.  
Length 9.2 cm.

Weight 24 gr., approx. 1 *øre*

Knol, E. 'Zilverbaar uit de Vikingentijd' in *Jaarverslag van het Groninger Museum 1998-1999*, 23.

Besteman, J.C. "Scandinavisch gewichtsgeld in Nederland in de Vikingperiode," in *Van Solidus tot Euro*. Cordfunke, E.H.P. en H. Sarfatij red. (Hilversum: verloren, 2004), 21-42.

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31 National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv.nr. g1991/3.1



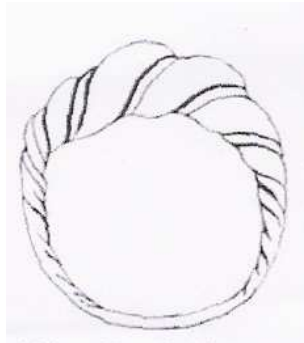
Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

Silver arm-ring with five  
smaller arm-rings. Dated  
c.900-950 A.D.

Diam. 7.1-8.1cm.

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32 Museum Emden



Picture: Stierling (1987), 25.

Gold ring from the 8th to  
10th century. Found in  
Larrelt, Ostfriesland.

Stierling, H. Der Silberschmuck der  
Nordseeküste - hauptsächlich in  
Schleswig-Holstein. I. Band:  
Geschichtliche Entwicklung seit dem  
Mittelalter. (Neumünster: Karl  
Wachholtz 1978).

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33

Badisches  
Landesmuseum,  
Karlsruhe.



Gold ring of six twisted  
threads, dated 8th to 10th  
century. Found in Aurich,  
Ostfriesland.

*Ibid.*

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Photo: Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe.

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34 Scloßmuseum,  
Berlin



Photo: Stierling (1987), 25.

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Gold, twisted ring with a dog  
on it. Dated 8th to 10th  
century. Found in  
Ostfriesland. *Ibid.*

35 Fries Museum

Gold ring from six gold  
threads. Found in  
Gaasterland. Dated to the 9th  
to 11th century.

Besteman, J.C. "Een gouden  
Vikingsring uit Gaasterland." *Detector  
Magazine* 107 (2009): 33-34.

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36 Private collection

Gold ring from Den Burg.  
Made of six gold threads,  
tied together at the front.

Willemsen, A. "Scattered across the  
Waterside: Viking Finds from the  
Netherlands." In *Vikings on the  
Rhine: Recent Research on Early  
Medieval Relations between the  
Rhinelands and Scandinavia*, ed. R.  
Simek and U. Engel (Wien:  
Fassbaender, 2004), 65-82.

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Photos: provided by A. Willemsen. Via F. Woltering. Owner of the ring: J.P.G. Schoorl.

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37 (Private collection)



Photo: J. Zijlstra

Open-worked fibula in Jellinge-style. Dated to the 10th century.

Zijlstra, J. "Een bijzondere vondst uit Groningen," *Detector Magazine* 59 (2001): 10-11.

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38 (private collection)

Bronze, circular fibula decorated with interlaced

Regtop, R.A. "Viking fibula." *Detector Magazine* 24 (1996): 8-9.

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animal patterns, identified as Borre-style.

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**39** National Museum  
of Antiquities

Inv. nr. a  
1913/11.16a



Photo: National Museum of Antiquities.

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Silver, spiral bracelet. Dated  
c. 850-900 A.D. Found in  
Pingjum.

Diam. 5.8 cm.

Amkreutz, L. and A. Willemsen,  
“Nieuwe voetsporen over oude. Naar  
een nieuwe opstelling ‘Archeologie  
van Nederland’ in het RMO.”  
Archeologie Magazine 2 (2010): 56-  
59.