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Silver in Iceland: A History

From Settlement to the Early Medieval Period

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Abstract

When one thinks of the Viking Age various thoughts come to mind, from horned helmets (thanks to Hollywood), bearded burly men, long boats, and, most importantly, silver. Silver is undoubtedly a significant part of the Icelandic settlement from archaeological finds to the sagas. The aim of this thesis is to create a comprehensive history and timeline of silver in Iceland up until the decline of the Viking Voyages around the beginning of the twelfth century. While not an exhaustive catalog of all current silver finds, I hope to address key components to create a full image of silver history in Iceland. The silver itself reflects the Viking Age in the Nordic countries as expected, without any major outliers. The quantity however, is much less than in Iceland´s Norse counterparts.

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Introduction

Though the history of silver in Iceland is fragmented and scarce compared to fellow Scandinavian countries, it would be foolish to ignore its implications and wealth of potential information. Iceland has gone through various periods of currency from bartering, vaðmál[1], silver, and eventually minted currency. It would make sense for settlers to rely on silver as a main form of currency, as it would be what they were accustomed to in their homeland. Piecing together a timeline of silver in Iceland can create a clearer picture of silver use there along with trade reach, and aiding in future research about economic, religious, political, and social history during the settlement period and Viking Age of Iceland. By investigating finds within Iceland as a whole we can begin these conversations about the purpose of silver in Iceland, its uses and implications.

Background of Viking Silver

While the exact purpose of silver hoards throughout Scandinavia is unknown, there are a few theories as to why they were created. Hoarding was far from a new practice during the Viking Age, as hoards have been found from the Bronze Age through the early Middle Ages in Europe, even though there is still no definite answer about their purpose. It is impossible to reduce the purpose of silver hoards down to one singular model, one must take a mixed approach, the idea being that hoards were done for more than one significant reason over time. Some may have been made to hide valuables from potential thieves or even one's own family, as with Erik the Red[2], to ensure their protection, while others were deposited due to religious or ritual purposes. It is hard to imagine that the sheer amount of coins found in Gotland to simply be forgotten stashes, though some scenarios do come to mind on how a hoard could be lost, such as a deposit being established before heading inland, only for the traders to never be able to return for a myriad of reasons.

It is important to separate silver hoards/finds from grave goods, 'Archaeological evidence throughout the Viking world reflects the distinction made here between grave-goods and separately buried wealth… given that Viking Age grave-goods only rarely include silver or gold objects'[3]. If one was to bury the dead with silver or gold, it would enter a state of

[1] Váðmál is a thick wool cloth typically spun by women during the time and was used for bartering.
[2] James Graham-Campbell, "The Serpent's Bed," in *Viking Settlements & Society*, ed. Svavar Sigmundsson (Reykjavík: Hið íslenzka fornleifafélag and University of Iceland Press,2011), 106.
[3] Graham-Campbell, "The Serpent's Bed," 107.

permanent uselessness, as robbing one's relative graves is taboo even today, yet it was frequently done historically. The lack of silver and gold in graves could have been considered a logical defense against grave robbing as well, most likely, however, silver was simply too valuable for the dead.[4] Some believed they would have have access to the hoards they buried while living in the afterlife, Snorri Sturluson refers to this as Odin's Law 'He states that pre-Christian Scandinavians believed that they would have access to whatever they had buried in hoards in the afterlife, a principle sometimes referred to as 'Odin's Law''.[5]

Ritual offerings appear often more in the form of bog deposit or in other watery locations such as rivers instead of hoards. Often times objects are broken, and contain much more than silver, for example military fittings, animals, ornaments, and other objects. This tradition is old within geographic Scandinavia, with some prehistoric examples such as Skedemosse, Öland, where starting in 2000 BP there appears to be offerings from a horse based culture.[6] To Lake Tisso, Denmark, which contained weapons believed to have been sacrificed to Tyr[7].

he composition of these silver hoards could consist of anything from hack silver, to jewelry, and even kitchenware. Most silver is thought to have come from the Islamic world, however, the origin of the silver would have more to do with travel patterns 'The main flow of silver into Scandinavia between the late ninth and the late tenth century came not from the west, but from the east, in the form of Arabic coins'. [8] This would be due to the fact that there were no Silver mines functioning anywhere in Scandinavia during that time. 'Despite the enormous wealth of silver that can be seen to have passed through Viking hands into Scandinavian soil, it must be emphasized that there are *no* known native sources of silver that were being worked in Scandinavia during the Viking Age''.[9] Swedes would be more likely to travel and trade eastward, while Denmark and Norway were more likely to be traveling south west, therefore having French and English silver. Denmark borders Germany and the trading between the countries brought in a lot of German coins, as well as Roman due to the the extensive trading with the Roman empire along the limes line in southern Germany centuries earlier. 'Vikings obtained their silver and gold through raiding, trade and tribute, and they

[4]Graham-Campbell, "The Serpent's Bed," 111.
[5]Elizabeth Royles, *In Search of Vikings: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Scandinavian Heritage of North-West England* (CRC Press, 2014), 161.
[6]Kathryn Bernick, *Hidden Dimensions: the Cultural Significance of Wetland Archaeology* (UBC Press, 2011), 75.
[7] "Viking Archaeology," Viking Archaeology - Weapons from Lake Tissø, , accessed January 09, 2018, http://viking.archeurope.info/index.php?page=weapons-from-lake-tisso.
[8]James Graham-Campbell, *The Vikings* (London: British Museum Publications, 1982), 36.
[9]R. T. Farrell, *The Vikings* (London: Phillimore,1982), 34.

were especially interested in payment in silver coins that could be melted down to create objects in native form to trade in terms of weight or simply stockpile for later use'[10]. The idea was that the silver coins could have much more use than their sheer economic face value, they could be melted down to form a variety of objects both with utility and for decoration.

Stray finds come with different implications than hoards. Depending on their context they could be personal effects, as is more common with grave goods: a necklace, a brooch, a ring, etc. They could also be a lost coin or small object dropped by someone or forgotten. Due to the variety of context and causation of deposition it is difficult to group them together in the same cultural and religious meaning as we would intentional depositions such as hoards or water findings. However, much can still be learned from these finds about trade connections, economic markers of place and time, craftsmanship, travel patterns, wealth, and more.

Icelandic Viking Age Background

The Viking Age is often considered to have begun with the attack on Lindisfarne in 793, however, Iceland was not discovered until approximately 860 by Norse seafarers and some ten years later, about 870, the first settlers made their permanent homes here. The bulk immigrants, however, are thought to have come to Iceland in the years between 890 and 910'.[11] According to *Landnámabók* about 400 men, mostly Norwegian and some Gaelic, many with Gaelic wives or slaves consisted of the initial settlers. During the time of settlement 'The economy was essentially rural, with a mixture of livestock, fishing, hunting birds and animals of land and sea, and gathering berries… As in northern Norway and Scotland, no towns or international trading centres were established'.[12] However, as Norse men coming from Norse countries the importance of silver was brought with them, although silver hoards are few in Iceland when compared to places like Gotland, they are still very relevant. 'A considerable portion of these silver hoards reached Iceland both during the Age of Settlements and afterwards, right down to the 11th century. In this period silver was the Icelanders main currency and their principal unit for the measurement of value'.[13] However, due to Iceland's lack of natural sources of metals beyond bog iron the metal had to be

[10] Marijane Osborn, "The Ravens on the Lejre Throne," in *Representing Beasts in Early Medieval England and Scandinavia*, ed. Michael D.J. Bintley, Thomas J.T. Williams (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press,2015) 100.
[11]Kristján Eldjárn, "Viking Archaeology in Iceland," in ÞRIÐJI VÍKINGAFUNDUR, ed Kristján Eldjárn (Reykjavik: Ísafoldaprentsmiðja H.F., 1956), 25.
[12]Else Roesdahl, *The Vikings* (London: Allen Lane, 1991), 262.
[13]Jón Jóhannesson, *A history of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth*, (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1974), 329.

imported and recycled. This is seen in Iceland most likely through the much smaller amount of silver in both hoard numbers and the quantity of individual hoards compared to archaeological sites like Spillings. For example, the site of a farmhouse at Sandmúli in Bárðardalur that most likely dates to the 10th century, there were only 304 grams of silver found, mostly hack silver, but also some rings and other ornament fragments as well. While the small amount making up the hoards could signify many different things, it is important to remember that Iceland was only 'colonized' for the later part of the Viking age. During the age of settlement in Iceland (Viking Age) silver was considered the main currency along with their main way of measuring value, they would weigh the silver instead of counting it.[14] Nonetheless, eventually it does change into a cloth based currency called vaðmál[15]. There have never been any functional silver mines in Iceland so all silverware found in Iceland would have had to be imported, either as a raw material for working in Iceland, or as finished products manufactured elsewhere and then imported[16]. 'Vikings obtained their silver and gold through raiding, trade and tribute, and they were especially interested in payment in silver coins that could be melted down to create objects in native form, to trade in terms of weight, or simply stockpile for later use'[17]. The idea was that the silver coins could have much more use than their sheer economic face value. They could be melted down to form a variety of objects from ornamental jewelry to tools, and even household objects.

Silver was almost the only metal used for making fine decorative objects within Iceland's Viking age. This was true until the introduction of nickel silver, which was far more durable than pure silver[18]. The earliest silver objects that are thought to have been crafted in Iceland are estimated to be from around the early 1200's, this means that most likely, objects dating from before this time were imported. Until the 18th century, very few smiths received any formal education beyond spending a few months studying under another craftsman. Due to the lack of silver mines within Iceland, and the fact it was a considerable distance for trade, silver was in short supply. 'Silversmiths often had no option but to melt down existing silver objects to make new ones. Ornaments from women's costumes were thus

[14]Björn Olsen, "Um Silfurverð Og Vaðmálsverð, Sjerstaklega á Landnámsöld Íslands : Erindi Flutt í Mentamannafjelaginu." in *Skírnir* (1910). Web

[15] Michèle Hayeur Smith, "Thorir's Bargain: Gender, Vaðmál and the Law." *World Archaeology* 45, no. 5 (January 27, 2013). doi:10.1080/00438243.2013.860272.

[16] Jonas Ström, "Största Vikingatida Skatt," Största Vikingatida Skatt | Historiska Museet, June 2002, , accessed December 01, 2016, http://historiska.se/upptack-historien/artikel/storsta-vikingatida-skatt-2/.

[17] Marijane Osborn, "The Ravens on the Lejre Throne," 100.

[18] Þór Magnússon, Þór Magnússon, *Íslenzk silfursmið* (Reykjavík: Þjóðminjasafn Íslands, 2013), 387.

frequently melted down, as was cutlery, and old ecclesiastical objects'[19]. This means that the presence of silver decorative objects could very well signify wealth in a way unique to the Icelandic economy, compared to places such as Gotland and other parts of Scandinavia. 'The number of finds is in no way comparable with that of a medieval settlement in Continental Europe. Real assets were valuable, and especially metal was almost completely recycled.'[20]

Another clue leaning towards the lack of silver hoards found in Iceland is that many times silver would be worked at the marketplace location itself. Such was the case in Ribe, Denmark. 'The material found in the settlement clearly indicates a connection with the marketplace as to a certain degree traces of craft production and trade are also found in the majority of the excavations outside the area with the workshop places.'[21] Thus bringing up the thought that due to Iceland not having centralised markets there would be a lack of stereotypical places for such craft related finds. This however may be subject to change pending future excavations and further analysis being done in Miðbær (the central downtown area in Reykjavík) and possibly other areas though the markets would still be on a much smaller scale than in other Nordic countries. 'It is therefore hardly surprising that craftsmen's guilds in Iceland first appeared in the 19th century. Unlike other lands, there were no regularly held town markets in Iceland where the craftsmen could have offered their wares for sale.'[22] The use of decentralised markets could very well result in lower amounts of accumulated and centralised wealth and perhaps an even higher reliance on bargaining.

Another important aspect of Icelandic history relating to silver is that while there are no sources of silver within Iceland, nor for other metals beyond iron extracted from swamp lands. 'In the Viking Age and the medieval period, conditions for the production of iron were extremely favorable. The necessary raw materials were sufficiently available - bog ore of excellent quality is to be found in many parts of Iceland and during the first centuries of settlement, there was no scarcity of charcoal as fuel. It can be assumed that in the first centuries of the settlement the Icelanders were self sufficient in iron.'[23] What Icelanders

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[19] Magnússon, *Íslenzk silfursmið*, 388.

[20] Natascha Mehler, Viking age and medieval craft in Iceland: Adaptation to extraordinary living conditions on the edge of the Old World | Arts and Crafts in Medieval Rural Environment, , accessed January 10, 2018, http://www.brepolsonline.net/doi/pdf/10.1484/M.RURALIA-EB.3.1143.

[21] Volker Hilber, ''Hedeby'', in *The Viking World*, ed. Neil Price, Stefan Brink (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008),128.

[22] Mehler, Natascha, *Viking age and medieval craft in Iceland: Adaptation to extraordinary living conditions on the edge of the Old World* ,230.

[23] Mehler, Natascha, *Viking age and medieval craft in Iceland: Adaptation to extraordinary living conditions on the edge of the Old World* ,230

lacked in silver they could have made up for with access to quality bog iron. Iron smelting was popular from the settlement times up until the 15th century, when the fuel supply began declining. This timeline runs parallel with the height of the viking silver trade, Icelandic smiths were able to produce their own iron and craft with it, creating a high status for smiths.

Historical Sources

While sagas can often be dismissed as mere fairy tales, in the likes of Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, Peter Pan, and more but these fictional stories often contain bits of truth and we can get ideas of what things were considered normal from how they appear in the story. Snow White would, for example, not have eaten an apple if apples did not exist. Examining historical sources can help us form an idea of what normal life looked like during the time in question by deciphering what is normal and what is fantasy in the works. For example, in Egil's saga, he is presented with two chests of silver as a payment for his brother's death. 'Afterwards, the king had two chests brought in, carried by two men each. They were both full of silver. The king said, 'These cheats are yours Egill. And if you go to Iceland you will present this money to your father, which I am sending him as compensation for the death of his son.'[24] This reference to silver as payment is not alone in old texts and even though there are no records of trade figures available from this time they undoubtedly existed. 'The early Icelanders maintained a remarkably high degree of self-sufficiency, but foreign trade has nevertheless begun to play a part in the national economy even in the earliest period of their history.'[25] Meanwhile, Hauksbók, a redaction to Landnámabók mentions the wearing of an arm band to signify leadership, and to take oaths upon showing the presence of that tradition in Iceland as well as traditional Scandinavia.[26] 'A section in Grágás shows that grain, linen, lumber, wax, and tar were considered vital necessities for import'[27]. What is telling from this is not what was listed as an import, but what was not, namely silver. As discussed above, silver is not native to Iceland in any way, where perhaps one could farm bog iron from the soil, silver is non-existent as a natural resource. While silver was not considered an important import, making it not a priority, it had to be brought over in some way, meaning that it could have more likely been brought over by settlers, explorers, or as the personal money of travelers, and not the main currency behind trade.

[24]Örnólfur Thorsson ed. *The Sagas of the Icelanders,* Trans. Bernard Scudder (New York: Viking Penguin Press, 2000),91.
[25]Jóhannesson, *A history of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth,* 306.
[26]Jóhannesson, *A history of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth,* 56.
[27]Jóhannesson, *A history of the Old Icelandic Commonwealth,* 307

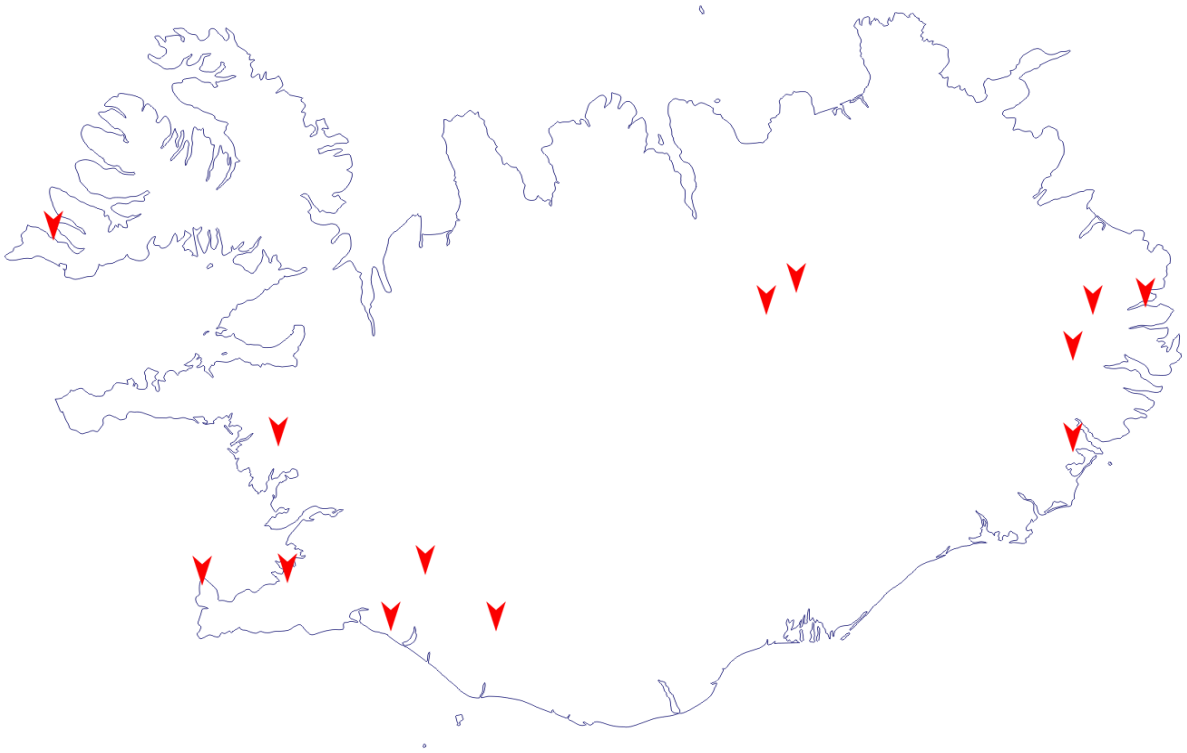
Roman Coins

The oldest finds in Iceland are considered to be three Roman coins that were found on a farm in Bragðavellir, however, they were found by a farmer, and it took many years for them to be brought to the National Museum. Since the original context is unknown it is hard to gauge the authenticity of the objects and how exactly they came to Iceland. They have been the topic of many theses, research articles, excavations, and a few conspiracy theories. They are not made from silver but bronze, thus not exactly fitting into the context of this synapsis of silver, but they do offer a possible suggestion of trade reach and early economies. Kristján Eldjárn claims that it would be highly unlikely that they were brought to Iceland during the 9th or 10th centuries due to the rarity of Roman coins in Scandinavian countries in general[28]. Contrarily, no pre-settlement artifacts or evidence of landfall have ever been found before, making it easy to dismiss Eldjárn's theory as mere speculation in an impossible puzzle. If these coins are indeed from the 9th or 10th century they do truly indicate how far coins can go, and for how many years, even a copper coin, may be in circulation and could be significant enough to be brought on one's travels.

[28] Eldjárn, Kristján. ÞRIÐJI VÍKINGAFUNDUR, 27.

Silver Finds and Analysis:

There are a number of excavations in Iceland that have yielded silver artifacts throughout the years. They artifact types vary from brooches, pendants, coins, to silver wire. The map below indicates the locations to be discussed further, note how they form what would be an expect pattern of location, following the outer rim of Iceland, only going inland for Lake Myvatn.



Tröllaskógur

The brooch found in Tröllaskógur in South Iceland is arguably one of the most beautiful finds in Icelandic archaeology. The piece is undoubtedly the work of a skilled craftsman, depicting a great beast entwined by two snakes, with dotwork on the body of the beast and significant figure eight imagery. The 'Great Beast', which is not itself a dragon, is attempting to bite the body of the snake that entwines its body, in a figure-of-eight loop, while a second snake fetters its front leg.'[29] This stray find is dated between 1050-1100 and made completely of silver. Forming a mostly square shape the brooch runs 4 x 3.6cm in size, and similar objects have been found in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

The style of the brooch, while appeasing, is not unique to Iceland in any way. It follows a typical design, the 'Great beast'. However, James Graham-Campbell does suggest

[29] Graham-Campbell, "The Serpent's Bed," 107.

that it could possibly be of Icelandic craftsmanship due to slight variations from some similar Danish brooches. Elegant Urnes-style brooches, depicting the so-called 'Great Beast' are common mostly in southern Scandinavia. The well known example from Iceland - a stray find from the deserted farm of Tröllaskógur - does, however, differ enough from the Danish brooches to suggest it might indeed be Icelandic workmanship.'[30] Graham-Campbell may be alone in that mind set due to simply the lack of evidence and the fact that skilled silversmiths were few and far between in Iceland, making it feel less possible. While it is also important to always be critical and question absolutes it is most likely of foreign origin. Similar brooches have been found all over Scandinavia, for example in Hedeby in Denmark multiple similar examples were both gilded silver and bronze. [31] Another artifact found of these Urnes style brooches was near the village of Kiaby, Skåne, Sweden[32] made of copper alloy from the 11th century. These finds demonstrate both the range of materials, geographical spread and the large possibility of import both considering how commonplace they were throughout Scandinavia and the lack of skilled Silversmiths in Iceland.

A similar brooch was found in the area of Skáney in Reykholtsdalur, also estimated to be from the period between 1050 - 1100. The brooch is approximately 4 cm wide, made of bronze, however, it appears to have been gilded. The gold is mostly worn off and the brooch is severely fragmented, missing chunks of body of the 'Great Beast' and snakes. The origin of this brooch is also undetermined. The 'Great Beast' appears to be of similar form as the Tröllaskógur brooch discussed above, however, it features only one snake, compared to the two seen in the first brooch[33].

Patreksfjördur

A magnificent boat grave was excavated in 1964 in Patreksfjörður, in the area called Vatnsdalur. The size of the ship was six meters long by one meter across containing the remains of a woman and her dog buried in the 10th century along with burial goods. While the wood used to construct the boat has degraded by the time of the excavation, the nails remained outlining the vessel. Two pieces of whalebone were attached to the gunwale to work as cleats. The grave goods would be considered wealthy, consisting of amber, a

[30]Graham-Campbell, "The Serpent's Bed," 127.
[31]Volker Hilber, ''Hedeby'', in *The Viking World,* ed. Neil Price, Stefan Brink (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 105.
[32]"Brooch in the Urnes style," The British Museum Images - Search, , accessed January 10, 2018, https://www.bmimages.com/results.asp?image=00034937001&imagex=2&searchnum=0001.
[33] "Brooch in the Urnes style," The British Museum Images - Search, , accessed January 10, 2018, https://www.bmimages.com/results.asp?image=00034937001&imagex=2&searchnum=0001.

necklace made of glass beads, two arm rings of bronze, a silver disk believed to have been made from an Arabic silver coin, and a silver Thors hammer amulet[34].

The silver disk is approximately 1.19-1.24 cm in diameter and 0.05-0.06 cm thick with a hole drilled through the outer edge. This coin is believed to be a Kuvian Dirhem estimated to have been minted for 850-950 AD, however it has been given a larger official age range of 870-1000[35]. This coin was most likely worn as jewelry due to the hole, and a similar find in Mjóadal in Mýrsýsla which contained two similar coins also believed to be worn as jewelry, which is not uncommon for the time period.

The Thor's hammer necklace found in the grave is simple, with no decoration, the artifact is 3.6cm long and the head of the hammer is 1.2cm in length. The thickness of the piece ranges from .2cm to .5cm at its greatest girth. The coloring of the silver varies slighting with some spots of black and brown. The hammer extends down from the head with a long shaft eventually turning up to loop on itself to form the hole for a string. 'Þessi Þórshamar er hinn fyrsti, sem fundizt hefur hérlendis, svo að öruggt sé.'[36] As of 2010 when the previous Icelandic quote was written, this hammer is believed to be the oldest found in Iceland, dating from 900-1000 AD. The Thor´s hammer is a common religious symbol for the time pendants would often be made often made of silver, copper, iron, and gold, suspected to commonly be included in grave goods throughout Scandinavia. The Thor´s hammer is also seen made of iron in the form of rings, similar in size and function as a bead attached to a large bracelet. These rings are often considered to be for ritual offerings or for other religious ceremonial purposes. They are often spun to make a twist in parts of it to make a screw like texture on the ring, most likely to serve as decoration. Thor´s hammers are mostly southern and middle Scandinavia along with Iceland. [37]

Iceland was officially Christianised in 1000 AD, so the pagan relics fit the time period for the burial suggested. However, even after 1000 AD it wasn't unheard of to have lingering pagan practices and beliefs, however, this could very well be one of the last examples of a Thor's hammer pendant in Iceland. Similar arabic coins have been found in famous hoards such as the Spillings hoard which was dated to the 9th century.

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[34] Anders Winroth, *The Age of the Vikings* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 92.
[35]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=313152.
[36]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=313164
[37] "Inget vanligt halsband," Inget vanligt halsband | Historiska Museet, , accessed January 10, 2018, http://historiska.se/upptack-historien/artikel/inget-vanligt-halsband/.

Hafurbjarnarstaðir

An Ulfberht sword with a hilt that was dipped in silver was found in Hafurbjarnarstaðir, a site located in the municipality of Sandgerðisbær, which is in south west Iceland, near the city of Keflavik. The sword was found in a series of cluster graves, believed to be from the 10th century. The sword eventually came to to Þjodminasafn in the 1800´s when it was donated. The sword was x-rayed in 1979 and revealed an inscription in the metal beginning 5.5cm below the helm. The word Ulfberht was identified through the x-ray placing this sword among the likes of other rare swords with the same inscription found in Norway, Finland, Russia, and other parts of Eastern Europe. This type of blade was believed to be from a transition period of smithing techniques, and the Ulfberht´s were the cutting edge technology 'Shortly before the tenth century, a new technique of blade forging was developed in the Rhineland. With this new innovation, Frankish smiths improved the strength of the blade while also enhancing its maneuverability. The new Frankish sword became highly sought after by the Northmen as well as by the Saracens to the south. This new technique created hard-elastic steel, which were entirely steel. Differing from the pattern-welded iron, mentioned above, they did not need to be hardened with iron and strengthened by woven steel into an iron base. This sword was the paramount Viking Age sword. The first swords of this model bear the inscription ULFBERHT inlaid into the steel with iron, with crosses etched before and after the name.'[38] These swords traveled remarkably far and wide, from finds in Ireland, England, to modern day Russia. A working theory is that the blade was made in the Frankish Kingdom, and then the hilts refitted in Scandinavia to the typical hilt and pommel style seen in Viking Age swords. The name Ulfberht is a mystery, however, due to the quantity of swords found, along with the wide distribution, it is thought that Ulfberht was the name of a family smithy that produced the swords.

This specific sword was still in its sheath when buried, the remaining bits of which are still on the tip of the sword. The sheath chape was made of bronze and gilded, there is a decoration of a worm or dragon, which winds in the form of two curves, the serpent has a claw and a spiral, and his tail is between his legs. Outside the dragon, two worms wrap decreasing in size as they go, the craftsmanship is very well done and elaborate. The hilt is 10.8 cm in length with a width of 2.5 cm at the ends, and the middle is 1.6 cm. The iron hilt is coated completely with silver, with a hammered pattern on both ends of the crossguard. Silver wire is wrapped around the grip which is approximately 3 inches in length. The

[38]Valerie Dawn Hampton, "Viking Age Arms and Armor Originating in the Frankish Kingdom, *The Hilltop Review*, Volume 4, no.2 (April 2011), 42.

pummel is divided into three parts, one large center hump with two mirroring smaller humps on the outer sides.There are silver braids on each side of the large hump where it meets the smaller ones, the silver braid is in very good condition. This sword is significant in both the wealth implications and it´s display of truly how far Ulfberht swords traveled.

An intricate silver ring was also found in the same area. The ring consists of a flat band that meets in the front, twisting both ends together to form a knot design. This ring was found in a woman's pagan grave and was estimated to be from 900-1000 AD.[39] The ring has a circumference of 2.2 cm and a width of 0.4 cm.

Seyðisfjörður

At the site of þórarinsstaðir in Seyðirfjöður 58 graves were excavated in 1998 and 1999, however two graves were excavated prior in 1938. During the 1998 and 1999 excavations 540 artefacts were uncovered. Two of those artifacts found were a silver ring and a coin. 'A finger ring made of silver was found in grave no. 22 inside the graveyard in front of the church at Þórarinsstaðir. According to its style of decoration, the ring dates to the 10th and 11th centuries, i.e. Lake Viking Age to Early Medieval times.'[40] Unfortunately the rest of the grave was gone, most likely due to deterioration, the grave was however marked in the ground so it was in fact a grave. The ring is made of a round silver thread that meets in the front to form a knot decoration, which both closes the ring and forms a design, very similar in technique to the Hafurbjarnstaðir ring.

As of 2004 this was only the third finger ring dated to the Viking Age and Early Medieval times found in Iceland, the two others, one is previously mentioned in this paper found in Hafurbjarnarstaðir. The second was found Vatnsdalur was made of bronze wire in a very simple fashion. Finger rings in general were very rare for the time period, even in hoards, while arm bands, bracelets, necklaces, etc are common in hoards. Most likely they were seldom made rather than being hard to find, due to conclusions that can be drawn from their rarity in hoards as well as graves.

A Danish coin was also found at the site of Þórainsstaðir from the middle 11th century. As of 2004 it was the only Danish coin found in Iceland, however, it is quite damaged and there is only a quarter of the coin in tact. Which may be a result of its use as hack silver rather than natural ware, due to the sharp edges seen on the coin. The coin itself if

[39] Kristján Eldjárn. *Kuml and haugfe*, (Reykjavík: 2000), 97.
[40] Steinunn Kristjánsdóttir, *The Awakening of Christianity in Iceland,* (PhD diss., University of Gothenburg, 2004), 68.

from the reign of Harthacnut dating it to be from 1035-1042 AD. The coin appears to imitate an Anglo-Saxon coin which was common for the time period. ‘ It is believed that Scandinavians began to imitate Anglo-Saxon coins in 1014. These Anglo-Saxon Viking mint coins usually bear the name of the king who had them made. The coin from Þórarinsstaðir belongs to this group of imitated coins and, for that reason, cannot have been from before that time.’[41]

Mjóidalur

Two coins were found in the stead of Mjóadal which is located in Mýrasýsla, in western Iceland. The coins were found in a pagan grave during an excavation in 1838. These two coins are dated from 900-1000 AD, ranging from 26 to 27mm[42] in circumference. One of the rings is more deteriorated than the other, with a chips on the outer ring. Both rings have a hole drilled into the outer ring, most likely for the purpose of attaching them to a stone necklace that was also found in the same location. Both coins were minted by Nasr Iban Ahmad of the Samanid Empire, which was located in the modern day Afghanistan. The first coin was minted in the area of Schach in 917 AD, the second was minted in 926 AD in the area of Nisabur. It is not uncommon to find Kufic coins in Iceland, as they would often make their way to the north as gangsilfur (otherwise known as hack silver). Other Kufic coins have been found in Iceland in the sites Vatnsdalur, Sílastöðum, Gaulverjabæ, and Keta. While the quantities are relatively low ranging from one to five, they are present in Iceland, more likely valued for their appearance than perhaps their weight. Often times they were incorporated into a necklace, such as the one found here.

The type of necklace found with the coins is constructed of glass beads with a mixture of blue and yellow color, sometimes they would contain beads made of amber or stone, however those would typically be large in size. Most often such necklaces were found in female graves, however sometimes they are found in a man's grace, but typically with larger beads, and fewer of them. The necklace found with the two coins in this case consisted of twenty five beads of a mixture of blue and yellow, along with three larger black beads. It is easy to understand why such coins were considered interesting and jewelry worthy, they were so admired that it was not unheard of for smiths to make fake replicas, ´Arabic dirhems

[41]Kristjánsdóttir, *The Awakening of Christianity in Iceland*, 71.
[42]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=317251

were especially popular in Finland, which is evident from the fact that 'counterfeit' dirhems were manufactured specifically for use as jewelry hangings.' [43]

Sandmúli

Coinless hoards offer a different perspective into the world of silver trade and use. While they can not offer information such as exact year and location of mint, they do indicated non-monetary uses, i.e. hacksilver. Sandmúli is one of two coinless hoards found in Iceland, the other being Miðhús. Sandmúli is a stead in the area of Bárðardalur, which is in Northern Iceland, near Lake Myvatn. The hoard was excavated in 1909 along with many other small objects from an unnamed house that previously stood in the location such as iron nails, a fish hook, and other iron scraps. The hoard itself contained 36 pieces of silver, not a single coin, weighing a total of 304 grams. These silver fragments vary in size and quality, the most remarkable being a section of an Irish brooch decorated in a Nordic style. Other silver fragments include four small rings that are considered poorly made, several pieces of arm rings, multiple fragments of twisted silver rods, and other various fragments of silver rods.

Miðhús

In East Iceland a hoard was found in 1980 in an area near Egilsstaðir, in South Múlasýslu. The excavation site, dubbed Miðhús, contained a hoard of silver fragments dated to the 10th century. Miðhús is the largest hoard in regards to weight found in Iceland as of date. Weighing a total of 653.5 grams, with 41 individual silver pieces. While this is a significant amount for Iceland in terms of hoards size, in other Scandinavian countries such as Sweden hoards have been found that dwarf Icelandic hoards by far. The world's largest Viking age treasure which was found in Gotland weighed 67 kilos, consisting of around 14,000 coins. However, Gotland did benefited greatly from its position in the middle of trade routes between Scandinavia and Russia, along with its age, as Iceland was still very young in the 10th century. Iceland had the problem of being remote from any of the trade routes, and lacking in desirable productions 'Iceland, by contrast was effectively empty when the Vikings began to arrive, and their settlement was purely agricultural.' 44 Regardless of its size in comparison to abroad, the hoard is significant in the world of archaeology, as it is one of two hoards found in Iceland.

[43] Torsten Edgren, "The Viking Age in Finland", in *The Viking World*, ed. Stefan Brink, Neil Price (Abingdon:Routledge, 2012), 476.
[44] James Graham-Campbell, *The Vikings*, 65.

In the 41 pieces of silver there are what appears to be armbands, necklaces, but mostly silver rods which would be used for hack silver. All the items, are cut down, bent, or broken in some way, which would be typical of hack silver, used for its weight. Along with the silver there was also reportedly wooden coals and lapilli, a volcanic stone, found with the silver.

Gaulverjabær

In the area of Flói, in south west Iceland a hoard was uncovered in 1930. The hoard contained approximately 300 coins of various origins. The coins came from all over including Germany, Sweden, the Arabic Empire, Denmark, Ireland, and England. Most of the coins came from England and are suspected to be from protection payments known as danegeld. The hoard totals at 495 grams and is believed to have been buried shortly after 1000 AD.

Danegeld is referred to in many ways, often times as 'Dane Tax', or 'Dane Tribute'. The concept was simple, pay the viking raiders to leave your land alone. 'To begin with, Viking involvement followed the same pattern as elsewhere: quick raids on islands and various coastal regions from bases on the Continent, from Ireland, or directly from the homeland. The first mention of them overwintering in England is 850-1, when they camped on the island of Thanet on the east coast of Kent. A few years later they made their first winter camp on Sheppy, at the mouth of the Thames. Reports of expeditions inland soon followed and in 865 an army encamped on Thanet and made peace with the people of Kent in return for money. This was the first English payment of Danegeld.'[45] It was much easier to pay off the would be raiders than to stand and fight, and take significant losses by doing so. The purchasing of peace lasted up until 1051 AD, millions of coins were paid out during the time of the danegeld, as of 1998 40,000 had been found in all of Scandinavia, and the number has been ever increasing since.[46] Not only did the English pay the price of peace but other countries did as well. ' In Ireland in the 9th century they imposed a tax and slit the noses of anyone unwilling or unable to pay, and that is the origin of the English phrase 'to pay through the nose' meaning to pay an excessive price.'[47]The flow of danegeld coins into Scandinavia matches the rate of single finds of coins from 10th to the 14th centuries. In the time dating before 1100 AD (10th and 11th century), 22 single coins have been found from that period,

[45]Roesdahl, *The Vikings, 2*34.
[46]Roesdahl, *The Vikings*,260.
[47]"Danegeld – The Vikings and money in England," Viking.no, , accessed January 10, 2018, http://www.viking.no/the-viking-world/the-vikings-and-the-law/danelaw/england-and-the-danelaw/danegeld-the-vikings-and-money/.

not to forget the two hoards also found dating to the same time period with a total of 356 coins. Meanwhile only 3 single coins have been found from the 12th and 13th century and no hoards have been found dating to that time period[48].

Urriðakot

A single silver find was found in 2010/1 at an excavation dubbed Urriðakot, located in Garðabær, which is near the capital Reykjavík. A small silver ring was found measuring 0.35cm x 0.1cm, weighing a total of 1.4 grams. The ring itself is very simple, consisting of a single thin silver rod twisted into a circle. Other finds in this area consist of a glass bead, appearing blue in color, believed to be from the time between 872 AD and 1226 AD. The bead is very typical for the time, weighing 0.4 grams, it is 0.5 cm thick, and has a diameter of 0.9 cm. Multiple iron objects were found as well consisting of nails, slag, and knives. Some bronze objects, ceramics, and glass were also found, however, they dated much more recently in time, typically 1226 AD to 1500.[49]

Skriðdalur

A pagan grave, dubbed Þórisárkumlið was excavated in 1995. The site is located in the east of Iceland in the area of Fljótsdalshérað.[50] The grave was a man's dating between 955 and 1015, and contained a large variety of grave goods. This grave offered up an array of interesting finds, such as textiles, bone, wood fragments, iron nails, and more. One find of interest in a simple tin ring found with a diameter of 1 cm, making it too small for finger use.[51] Another interesting artifact is a rather big sharpening stone made of gray stone. It appears that it used to be smooth in both sides but now one side is broken, dark in color and a bit uneven. A knitting needle made of copper was found with a decoration on the head of the needle depicting a cross inside a triangle. An iron sword is found in the grave in four parts, totaling 92 cm in length. The sword and its hilt were glued together in storage, and are now kept as a single unit.

Two fragments of silver coin were found in the grave, which is significant in a pagan grave due to the rarity of such an occurrence. One small fragments is believed to be from King Edmund Angels reign, dating between 939 and 946 AD. The fragment is very small, in

[48]Svein H. Gullbekk, 'Money and its Use in the Saga Society', in *Viking Settlements and Society,* ed. Svavar Sigmundsson (Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press,2011), 178.
[49]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=1522309
[50]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=1542708
[51]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=1549168

a triangular shape, approximately 0.8 cm by 0.8cm and 0.1cm in width. Only a small part of the decoration can be seen, consisting of what appears to be a singular dot and an I on what appears to be an outer ring of the coin. The second coin was broken into four parts and glued together in units of two, so the coin is now divided into two units. There is a clear design resembling a Maltese Cross, or a cross formed of four triangles pointing inwards. The outer ring has a row of crosses forming along it with a singular cross in the center. The coin is estimated to be from 955 to 959 AD.

Skálholt

Skálholt is one of the more historically notorious sites in Iceland in regards to history. As a result of such notoriety excavations are quite common at Skálholt, including introductory student excavations. The location has been a religious site since 1056, and up until 1756 it was one of the only two episcopal sites in Iceland. The area itself served as a township, with not only religious structures but a smithy, schools, multiple farmsteads, burial grounds, and even at one point a monastery. Such a large cultural area would undoubtable include much trade both within and from abroad. The location is inland however, restricting it from any port activities. Kristján Eldjárn lead an excavation from 1954 until 1958, yielding, among other things, four minted coins, three of which are made of silver and one is made of copper alloy. The two silver coins are of English origin, one of the silver coins is believed to be German, while the copper coin in of Danish origin.

Of the silver coins, two are in excellent condition. You can clearly see well defined markings, and they retain their circular shape, without missing and large fragments of the outer rims. The oldest coin of the three was minted under the rule of Henry the III , in London[52]. The coin is 1.8 cm in diameter, complete and undamaged. There is a large distinct long cross running from each edge of the coin, with three small circles near the meeting point on each corner of the crosses intersection. There is text running on the outer ring, this design was dubbed the long cross penny and was used in English mintage from 1247 AD up until 1485 AD. This coin is described as having a king's face on the opposing side of the long cross, and lacks a scepter accompanying the face, giving a clue towards minting location. This is believed to have been an adapted style due to coins having their outer edges clipped, causing them to be underweight. The long cross was designed to give one a proper idea of how large the coin was supposed to extend to. King Henry III´s reign lasted from 1216 until

[52]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=467343

1272, thus giving a relatively short possible date range for the coin, being between 1247 AD and 1272 AD.

The next coin is complete in form, however it was believed to have too much wear to be properly identified previously. It is 1.8 cm in diameter with an inner circle with a cross inside it, then a division line, and an outer ring with text. The reverse side has a design in the inner circle of three triangles elongated, the two outer triangles are are scalene with the largest angle pointing inwards, the middle triangle is isosceles and all three triangles appear to point down, angling inwards[53]. This triangle design is indicative of the german area of Stralsund, as the coins have beared such design as far back as 1265 on a seal from the sitting. The arrows appeared above a ship on the design and it has appeared on coins since[54]. Through my own personal analysis of the coin using computer imaging software, I was able to find that the side with the cross bears the text x DEUS x IN x NOMINE x TUO following a flower image, which translates from latin into 'in the name of god'. If the coin is compared to other better preserved coins available at auctions and antiquity sellers, that match the exact markings, it is dated before 1379[55]. The reverse side has the two words x MONETT x SUNDENSIS x , or what I believe to mean 'Money from Sundensis', Sundensis being a term previously used in regards for the region.

The third silver coin has been termed as being from Edward the VI´s reign which according to the first assessment found in Skálholt fornleifarannsóknir 1954-1958, lasted from 1461 until 1483. The coin is partially broken on one side and is heavily worn. There is a hole punched into the coin for threading, the coin has a diameter of approx 1.6 cm. It is clear that the dating given on this coin is incorrect, as the original estimate attached to Edward the VI´s reign places his reign at an incorrect place in time, as he himself ruled from 1547-1553. I believe this is simply a typo, as Edward the IV ruled from 1461 until 1483. I was unable to identify this coin any further, as it appears to be a repetitive style, however the style does appear during Edward the VI´s reign.

The last coin is made of copper and termed a 'copper sterling' believed to have been made in Denmark, northern Sjælland specifically. However, the town attributed to the coin, Næstved, is, contrarily to what is stated, in South West Sjælland, bringing the evaluation into question. The coin is dated to 1422, minted for King Eric of Pomerania, the first king of the

[53]"Peningur." Sarpur.is. Accessed January 10, 2018. http://www.sarpur.is/Adfang.aspx?AdfangID=467342
[54]Knorrepoes, "Stralsund," Wappen von Stralsund / Coat of arms (crest) of, January 06, 2018, , accessed January 10, 2018, http://www.ngw.nl/heraldrywiki/index.php?title=Stralsund.
[55] Ma-shops, "Witten o.J. (vor 1379), Stralsund, Stadt, ss-vz," MA-Shops, , accessed January 10, 2018, https://www.ma-shops.com/emporium/item.php5?id=8150&lang=en.

Nordic Kalmar Union, which consisted of Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden while also he himself originated from modern day Poland. The coin is heavily worn, but one can see a large E on the front along with a crown resting on top of the E. Along the rim the coin is believed to state 'MONETA x NÆST x WED'. From the current images available on Sarpur it is incredibly difficult to see these engravings, making it impossible to analyze further for accuracy.

Hofstaðir

From 1991 to 2002 Fornleifastofnun Íslands conducted a decade long excavation of a Viking Age feasting hall in the location Hofstaðir. Hofstaðir is located near Myvatn in North Iceland. The excavation yielded two silver finds, two pendants similar in stature, one made of silver one made of copper alloy and a silver wire. The first pendant is more elaborate, formed in a isosceles triangle shape, with the smallest side as the bottom. There is an incised decoration that was believed to depict a cross or a Thor's hammer by the original excavators. The second pendant found is similar however, more simplistic and made of copper alloy. It is a small sheet metal pendant formed in a similar shape to the silver one and perforated at one edge, however, it is not decorated like the first pendant. The shape resembles more a symmetrical concave hexagon than the firsts triangle, which could possibly be intended to mimic a hammer's head. 'The simplicity of form is hard to parallel at this stage, although there are a number of pendants of more elaborate nature which have been recorded in Iceland from the pagan grave. Thor´s hammer images are also not a common find in iceland, although examples of pendants in the form of a Thor's hammer in silver have been noted from the Vatnsdalur boat grave..'.[56] However, the Thor´s hammer found at Vatnsdalur (as discussed above) is much larger in size than the copper alloy pendant (approc 2.5cm) and similar in length to the more elaborate silver pendant. The pendant is also very different in shape, forming a clear hammer head on a shaft, where the pendants at Hofstaðir are in a triangle shape. The Vatnsdalur pendant also wraps back upon itself to form a hole for string, where the pendants found at Hofstaðir appear to have a hole drilled or poked through them.

Along with the first pendant a piece of silver wire was found. This silver wire is somewhat abnormal compared to previous finds in Iceland. 'Silver wire has been noted in a small number of Viking Age silver hoards in iceland, such as the hoard from Keta (Skefilsstaðahr.), Miðhús (Egilsstaðahr.) and in the large hoard from Sandmúli (Króksdalur).

[56] C.E. Batey, "The Artefactual Material", in *Hofstaðir,* ed. Gavin Lucas (Reykjavík: Fornleifastofnun Íslands, 2009), 254.

In each case the wire is broader than the example from Hofstaðir and comprises fragments (hack silver) of twisted objects, most commonly arm or neck rings'[57] The small width of the silver wire could simply be 'small change' in the world of hack silver, where it would just be a lesser amount of currency. The silver cord could also be related to the large amount of iron debris found at the site ' The detailed examination of the working debris of iron shows smithing and smelting activity taking place and this is a significant complement to other indications of self-sufficiency taking place in Iceland. There were significant finds of iron nails, totallying 163 units, and multitudes of hinges and brackets. One thin silver wire is however not enough to speculate further of silversmithing taking place.

Data

Of the sites accessed, very few had ideas of their artifact origin, and even worse, few had reliable assessments done of their features, age, size, etc. The data set below of all the sites in order in which they are discussed in this paper containing only the silver artifacts, none of the residual/ additional artifacts are included. The origin was very indecisive on everything that is not a minted coin, as it is nearly impossible to track down point of origin on silver fragments and hack silver. Artifacts marked Scandinavia have certain traits, such as the Urness art style found in the brooch excavated at Tröllaskógur, that indicated that it is of Scandinavian origin, however, lacks anything more specific. The quality of assessment data set has three levels of accuracy: Good, meaning that for the artifact type it is hard to imagine getting any more information from it. Confirmed, indicates that the analysis seems complete and accurate, as typically analysed in this paper. Review, indicates that the assessment seems flawed or needs additional information to confirm it.

As can be seen below of the 16 sets of artifacts discussed nine fall into 'Good' mostly due to their type of artifact, four I was able to confirm, and three need to be reviewed. This means that of the sample seen thirteen out of sixteen, or 81.25% of artifacts were assessed in a satisfactory manner, with less than 20% needing to be re evaluated. The largest area of error was in the information available, finding records of analysis that have been done is tedious, complex, and unsatisfying.

Meanwhile seven come from an unknown point of origin, three are from the generalised area of Scandinavia, and six have listed locations, the most common of which being England, where three are considered to be from. That means that we have a known

[57] C.E. Batey, "The Artefactual Material", in *Hofstaðir,* ed. Gavin Lucas (Reykjavík: Fornleifastofnun Íslands, 2009), 255.

geographical and cultural location of origin of less than half of the artifacts discussed, or 37.5%, there is an approximate location of origin known for slightly over half the artifacts, or 56.25%.

Location	Artifact	Origin	Quality of Assessment	Context
Tröllaskógur	1 Brooch	Scandinavia	Good	Stray Find
Patreksfjördur	1 Coin	Kufic	Confirmed	Pagan Grave
	1 Pendant	Scandinavia	Good	
Hafurbjarnarstaðir	1 Sword	Scandinavia	Confirmed	Pagan Grave
	1 Ring	Unknown	Good	
Seyðisfjörður	1 Ring	Unknown	Good	Christian Grave
	1 Coin	Danish	Confirmed	Church Site, Outside
Mjóadal	2 Coins	Samanis	Confirmed	Pagan Grave
Sandmúli	304 grams	Unknown	Good	Hoard
Miðhús	653.5 grams	Unknown	Good	Hoard
Gaulverjabær	300 Coins	Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Arabic, Ireland, England	Good	Hoard
Urriðakot	1 Ring	Unknown	Good	Farm Settlement
Skriðdalur	2 Coins	England	Review	Pagan Grave
Skálholt	3 Coins	England and Germany	Review	Christian Church Site
Hofstaðir	1 Pendant	Unknown	Review	Farm Settlement
	1 Wire	Unknown	Good	

Conclusions and Analysis

Looking at the collection of Silver found in Iceland from the period of Settlement, until the end of the Viking Age there are very few parallels or conclusions that can be drawn. The assemblage seen reflects what one would expect for the Viking Age in Nordic countries, simply to a lesser quantity. This could be due to many things, such as resource scarcity, trade distance, short chronological history, and varied trade values and systems. The typicality of the finds themselves does not offer much, beyond reflecting that the settlement period and beyond are understandably similar to their Nordic counterparts. The context of the artifacts also do not stray off an expected course for the time. Finding coins was common around churches, as they were often centers for wealth, hoards, graves, and farms, are also among typical places for both intentional and unintentional deposits, the most remarkable being the brooch found at Tröllaskógur, simply for its intricacy, preservation, and size as a stray find.

When looking for reasoning behind the low amount of silver found in Iceland, a limitless amount of factors come into play. It could simply be a reflection of the smaller population settling in Iceland, and the time in which it was settled. Another factor could be that Iceland was not considered a centralised point, or a waypoint for sea voyages. It would not serve as a reliable and accessible place to stash wealth for future retrieval. It would not be practical to store ones coin in Iceland unless they had sure plans of returning to habitating there.

During the 1500´s the Danish crown ordered churches within Iceland to send wealth over to Denmark, which could have included a large amount of viking age coins as well. One report from 1551 details a manifest of items being taken from three monasteries in Iceland (Muncketuraae, Nodreualdt, and Tingor). This receipt lists seven gilded coins, ninety three silver coins (including Dirhem), multiple silver and gold religious relics, and 3790 Lod (55kg)[58] of silver, along with various other objects of significant wealth, or approximately eighty five times the weight of the Miðhús hoard. This is just one snippet of items being removed from Iceland during this period.

Another possibility could be due to a lack of civilian discovery. While in other places of the world individuals use metal detectors for hobbies, it is increasingly difficult to receive permission in Iceland, along with a constant risk of underground wiring. Also, compared to

[58] C.F Bricka, *Kancelliets Brevbøger vedrørende Danmarks indre Forhold i Uddrag. 1551-1660* (København: Gad, 1885).

many places, such as Gotland[59],if you do find something historical there is little indication of any form or payment or otherwise compensation to the finder, giving little motivation beyond the excitement of discovery.

In general, not much research has been done into many of these finds, beyond simple identification and proving authenticity. Much more could be learned by further specific research into the objects themselves, including more written in English making in available to the outside world for comparison. For now, what can be gathered is that while significant, the silver found during this time period in Iceland is typical for the period, simply smaller in quantity.

[59] "Viking-era silver coins found in Sweden," NBCNews.com, November 02, 2006, , accessed January 18, 2018, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/15520771/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/viking-era-silver-coins-found-sweden/#.Wl_-Jd9l-Ul.

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