The splendour of power

Early medieval kingship
and the use of gold and silver
in the southern North Sea area
(5th to 7th century AD)

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Early medieval kingship and the use of gold and silver in the southern North Sea area

(5th to 7th century AD)

J.A.W. Nicolay

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TO MY WONDERFUL SON

In memory of Dr Jurjen Bos

(1957-2012)

Initiator of the Wijnaldum
excavations and the first
to start a systematic inventory
of metal-detector finds (early medieval
brooches) in the Netherlands

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Front cover: gold and silver disc-on-bow brooch from Hogebeintum, early 7th century (Friesland, the Netherlands; coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photo M. Kooistra). Back cover: gold bracteate from Sievern, late 5th/first half of 6th century (Landkreis Cuxhaven, Germany; coll. Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhemshaven, photo R. Kiepe); gold, silver and bronze composite disc brooch from Milton North Field, mid 7th century (Kent, England, coll. and © Victoria and Albert Museum, London); and gold tremissis from Antum, 7th century (Groningen, the Netherlands; coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photo M. de Leeuw).

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Preface

This book about gold, silver and early medieval kingship is, in a sense, the dissertation that I hoped to write after graduating at the University of Groningen in 1998. My graduate thesis dealt with the exceptional collection of 6th- and 7th-century gold finds from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. Within the Dutch research tradition this area has been widely regarded as the original core region of a powerful Frisian kingdom that extended all along the Dutch and German North Sea coast (so-called '*Frisia Magna*') until it was largely conquered by the Franks after 719. On the basis of the distribution of gold objects and their 'social status', I proposed a triple division of the northern Netherlands into three socio-political zones: a central, 'royal' zone, a surrounding, 'aristocratic' zone and a peripheral zone where people of lower social status lived, all together forming the territory of a 'Frisian' kingdom in the late 6th and first half of the 7th century (fig. 2.2).[1] Three Dutch colleagues responded by questioning the conclusions of my thesis and especially the spatial division into socio-political zones; they argued that the concentration of finds in my 'royal' zone did not so much reflect a historical situation as the impact of so-called post-depositional factors on the distribution pattern.[2] Moreover, the clustering of valuables might be a characteristic not of stable power centres, but of socio-politically unstable and peripheral areas. Finally, the limited geographical scope of my research was criticized; to understand the 'Frisian' situation, the socio-political developments in the surrounding areas should be included in a comparative study.

The year after my graduation, I submitted a research proposal for a PhD thesis about kingship in the southern North Sea area, entitled: *Kings of the North Sea. The development of kingship in West-Germanic societies during the 'dark ages' (5th to 7th century AD)*.[3] Unfortunately, no funding was granted, which prevented me from offering a well-founded reply to the critics of my earlier research. One year later, the Free University of Amsterdam offered me an opportunity to write a dissertation after all, about the use of Roman weaponry and horse gear in the Batavian area. While this was a welcome chance to work on a find category and period that were unfamiliar to me and to enjoy the fresh air of a new academic environment, I still hoped one day to continue my research on early medieval kingship. My subsequent appointment at the University of Groningen, as the project leader of a large-scale excavation at Midlaren-'De Bloemert' (province of Drenthe), encouraged me to give it another shot – now as a post-doctoral researcher. The earlier research proposal was slightly adjusted and, under the same title, once more submitted to the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) in 2006.[4] This time I *was* granted the funding, almost a decade after completing my graduate thesis!

The importance of working on valuable items and kingship in the southern North Sea area is evident from the simple fact that large parts of this area are usually left aside in the discussion about power formation and the rise of early medieval kingdoms in northwestern Europe, which is traditionally focused on southern Scandinavia, the Frankish realm and Anglo-Saxon England.[5] Yet the coastal area of the Netherlands and northern Germany can be seen as a cultural and ideological bridge of crucial importance, linking the Scandinavian world to the Frankish and Anglo-Saxon worlds. Although most distribution maps of early medieval valuables show a dearth of finds in this 'peripheral' zone, this picture is in need of updating. Despite the fact that so far no 'royal' halls or burials have been found here, a rich collection of largely unpublished items of both gold and silver reflect the formation of kingdoms also in the Netherlands and northern Germany. The largest number of gold coins from northwestern Europe, for example, are found in the Dutch coastal area (and especially in the province of Friesland), as are some pieces of garnet-decorated jewellery that are paralleled in status only by the famous regalia from burial mound 1 at Sutton Hoo (Suffolk, England). Hopefully, this book will help to open up an until now penumbral world, offering colleagues at home and abroad an opportunity to include it in the fascinating exploration of early medieval kingship.

1 For a Dutch summary, see Nicolay 2006a; see also section 2.2.

2 Bazelmans et al. 2002.

3 This title is based on that of an international exhibition about early medieval kingship: 'Kings of the North Sea, AD 250-850' (Kramer et al. 2000).

4 The funding was part of the programme '*Vernieuwingsimpuls Veni*'.

5 See, for example, Carver 2005, 499-502

The post-doctoral research was conducted as a one-man project during the years 2007-2013. Tangentially, however, it is part of a broader and long-term research programme, which was sparked by the large-scale excavations at the famous settlement site of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland) between 1991 and 1993.[6] Wijnaldum is situated in northern Westergo, an area rich in gold finds, and is believed to be an elite residence, probably of royal status. To understand the cultural and socio-political position of this site in the wider context of *Frisia Magna*, a group of researchers from the universities of Groningen and Amsterdam in 1997 started working on the huge body of settlement, cemetery and other finds from the coastal area of the Netherlands, as part of the so-called 'Frisia project'.[7] Unfortunately, this ambitious and initially very successful project was terminated within three years, leaving this book as the only publication to fulfil its ultimate goal: interpreting Wijnaldum and other exceptional sites in the context of the 'North Sea world'.[8]

Writing a book about the rise of kingdoms in the extensive area that covers large parts of the Netherlands, northern Germany and southeast England would not have been possible without the help of many colleagues and friends, living all along the southern North Sea coast and in Scandinavia. First of all, I would like to thank Charlotte Behr (University of Roehampton, London), Roger Bland (British Museum, London), Menno Dijkstra (University of Amsterdam), Wim van Es (Opende), Charlotte Fabech (South Swedish Archaeology, Malmö), Stijn Heeren (Free University, Amsterdam), Anthonie Heidinga (Edam), Catherine Hills (University of Cambridge), Helle Horsnæs (Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen), Rasmus Iversen (Vejle Museerne, Vejle), Hauke Jöns and Annette Siegmüller (Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhemshaven), Gilles de Langen (Province of Friesland, Leeuwarden / University of Groningen), Karen Høilund Nielsen (Beder), Annet Nieuwhof (University of Groningen), Ulf Näsman (Linnaeus University, Kalmar), Paul Noomen (Fryske Akademy, Leeuwarden), Alexandra Pesch (Zentrum für Baltische und Skandinavische Archäologie, Schleswig), Arent Pol (Leiden University), Andrew Richardson (Canterbury Archaeological Trust), Jelmer Scheringa (University of Amsterdam), Martin Segschneider (Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Schleswig) and Barbara Yorke (University of Winchester). By reading drafts of one or more chapters and helping me with useful suggestions, references and information about unpublished finds, they kept me from making all manner of mistakes – although the text, of course, is fully my own responsibility.

Secondly, I am grateful to Iris Aufderhaar (Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhemshaven), Morten Axboe and Helga Schütze (Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen), Lyn Blackmore (Museum of London), Craig Bowen (Canterbury Heritage Museum), Jasper de Bruin (Leiden University), Maarten van Deventer (Municipality of Utrecht, Sectie Cultuurhistorie), Richard Edgcumbe (Victoria and Albert Museum, London), Giles Guthrie (Maidstone Museum & Bentlif Art Gallery, Maidstone), Michel Hendriksen, Nils Kerkhoven and Hans Lägers (Municipality of Utrecht, Archaeological Service), Klaas Henstra (Streekmuseum Volkssterrenwacht, Burgum), Volker Hilberg (Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesmuseum Schloss Gottorf, Schleswig), Juke Dijkstra, Henk van der Velde and Willem Jezeer (ADC ArcheoProjecten, Amersfoort), Egge Knol (Groninger Museum, Groningen), Evert Kramer and Nelleke IJssennagger (Fries Museum, Leeuwarden), Kevin Leahy and Chris Sutherns (British Museum, London), Babette Ludowici (Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover), Domniki Papadimitriou (Birmingham Museums Trust), Tim Pestell (Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Norwich), Matthias Schön (Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa), Martin Segschneider and Bente Majchczak (Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Schleswig), Ernst Taayke and Michiel Rooke (Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis), Pim Verwers (Hoevelaken) and Annemarieke Willemsen (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden). They allowed me to study the early medieval gold and silver items in their collections and/or helped me with all kinds of information and many, often newly made photos or other images.

Thirdly, several metal detectorists in the Netherlands kindly allowed me to study their collections, to share information about their

6 Besteman et al. 1999.

7 Heidinga 1997; 1999a. Project title: 'From Scheldt to Weser. Frisia in a Northwest-European perspective (3rd to 10th century).'

8 The dissertations by Gerrets (2010) and Dijkstra (2011), written as part of the Frisia project, only deal with parts of *Frisia Magna* (the provinces of Friesland and South Holland, respectively).

findspots and to take the relevant objects home for photography: Eelke Algra (Blauwhuis), Edwin van Alphen (Tzum), Robbert-Jan Boon (Den Haag), Ido Boonstra (Spannum), Gerke van Dijk (St. Annaparochie), Douwe Greydanus (Ternaard), August Niemarkt (Bolsward), Lourens Olivier (Holwerd), Freddy Onland (Hengelo), Nils Kerkhoven (Dreumel), Gerrit van Koningsveld (Wageningen), Henk Sloots (Ried), Gerrit Suierveld (Joure), Wytse Tjepkema (Blija), Tjamme Valk (Hallum), Akkie Visser (St. Annaparochie), Jelle de Vries (Hijum), Jan Jaap Waverijn (Den Burg) and Loet van Zoonen (Hippolytushoef). Jan Zijlstra (Leeuwarden) gave me permission to study some items he acquired from metal detectorists; Johan Koning (Leeuwarden), member of the detector society 'De Detector Amateur', provided valuable information about new finds. The coins presented in this study, the majority also found with a metal detector, are part of a large inventory that is still being carried out by Arent Pol (Leiden University, formerly working at the Koninlijk Penningkabinet). He generously shared not only his unpublished database but also his current ideas about the typology and dating of Merovingian-period coinage.

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Groningen/Heerenveen, September 2014
Johan Nicolay

1 Introduction: early medieval kingship & gift exchange

1.1 Introduction

Since the 19th century, historians have intensively studied the socio-political structure of societies belonging to the Germanic culture region in the late pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age and the medieval period. In most of these societies the topmost rank was held by kings (*reges*). The position of a king was determined on the one hand by his relations with other kings and with his closest (warrior) retainers, and on the other by his relations with the supernatural world. Both these interpersonal relations and those with the gods and ancestors might be defined as relations of mutuality, in which the exchange of valuable gifts played a crucial role.

While historical evidence from the 'Dark Ages', covering the 5th to 7th centuries AD, is in short supply, an archaeological analysis of such gifts provides an opportunity to grasp the earliest development of the socio-political configurations that in several cases rank as precursors of today's European peoples and nations (e.g. Frisians, Franks, Angles and Saxons). By examining valuable items or so-called 'prestige goods' of gold and silver in the archaeological record of various regions along the southern North Sea coast, this book aims to shed light on early medieval power formation and the rise of kingdoms in the periphery of the late-Roman Empire and its Frankish successor kingdom in the south and the Scandinavian kingdoms in the north.

In studies about early medieval kingship the terms 'king', 'chieftain', 'aristocrat', 'elite' and '*Gefolgschaft*' are commonly used. Here, with the term 'king' a supra-local leader is denoted, whereby a distinction is made between 'regional kings' (often called 'petty kings') and 'supra-regional kings' (including the *bretwaldas* or 'overlords', known from 7th- and 8th-century Anglo-Saxon England).[1] Such kings, however, are in no way comparable to contemporary Frankish kings, either in status or power range. By the term 'aristocrat' a member of the regional or higher elite is meant, while the label 'chieftain' (as a replacement for leader or king) is avoided. The term 'elite' refers to a small fraction within a society, which occupies a higher social position because of exceptional qualities or privileges – as a reflection of its members' personal relation to the king. Finally, the *Gefolgschaft* (or *Gefolge*/retinue) is seen as a group of warrior-followers who accompany their leader.[2]

This chapter first presents the traditional, *historical* view on the development of kingship in Germanic societies (section 1.2), followed by the introduction of a different, *anthropological* approach, which focuses on the exchange of valuable gifts, as described in *Beowulf* (sections 1.3-6). The final paragraphs deal with the role of valuable items in the *archaeological* analysis of power formation (section 1.7), as well as the complications of archaeological dating, the area and period of research, and the structure of this monograph (sections 1.8-10).

1.2 From tribe to state? The study of kingship in Germanic societies

Germani is a term introduced by Julius Caesar to distinguish a group of newly discovered north Gallic tribes, dwelling east of the Rhine, from the 'Celts' and the 'Gauls'. Although it is

1 For Anglo-Saxon overlordship, see Yorke 2005, 157-160.

2 See Roymans 1990, 40; Bazelmans 1991, 92.

1.1 | The socio-political development of Germanic societies, according to the so-called *Verfassungsgeschichte* ('history of constitution'). Following an evolutionary line towards early states, three stages are distinguished (drawing by the author).

generally believed that this ethnic term was created from a Gallic or Roman point of view, historical and archaeological research has on the whole followed the Roman habit of making no distinction among the Germanic peoples, including the Anglo-Saxon tribes. Today, we are much more aware of the great differences among the various Germanic societies, which had their own histories and cultural characteristics and bore their own (ethnic) names.[3]

Influenced by the assumed ethnic nature of the term *Germani*, research on the socio-political structure of Germanic tribes traditionally focused on the Germanic people as a uniform whole. Based on primary sources like Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, Tacitus' *Germania* and the Old English poem *Beowulf*, the history of political structures and institutions has been studied since the 19th century as part of the Germanic so-called *Verfassungsgeschichte* ('history of constitution'). According to the German historians Schlesinger and Wenskus, some of the most important scholars of this research tradition, three stages can be recognized in the socio-political development of Germanic societies (fig. 1.1).[4]

In the earliest form that could be reconstructed on historical grounds, the organization of small tribal groups or *Kleinstämme* was based on kinship, society being no political but first of all a cultic community (*das Sakralkönigtum*). Relations of descent gave each person a place within the tribal collective, although a certain order of rank, based on age, property and membership of prominent families, already existed. The elite was headed by one or more members of the *stirps regia*. Kingship, however, was no powerful institution. The political power of the king was limited; as the true or fictional descendant of the founding ancestors and one or more gods, a king first of all had a sacral and ritual function. A prominent place within society was also taken by the highest nobles or *principes*, who had the right to maintain a personal retinue of warriors, known as the *Gefolgschaft*, a modern equivalent for the Latin *comitatus*.[5]

During the early Roman period, this 'original', ancestral order began to falter because of the growing importance of the *Gefolgschaft*. These groups of warriors were formed by leading members of the elite in order to acquire wealth and land, and operated more or less independently of the king and tribe. Membership of a *Gefolgschaft* was no longer determined by birth; it was strictly on a voluntary basis and, more importantly, might cross existing networks of kinship and tribal relations. Consequently, the role and position of a Germanic king changed, and since the king was just one member of the leading elite who all had their own *Gefolgschaft*, kingship was no longer guaranteed by mere descent. As a new form of organization, this military kingship (*das Heerkönigtum*) is seen as a crucial step on the road to state formation.

The developments of the first centuries AD accelerated during the Migration period, when larger tribal confederations or *Großstämme*, like the *Frisii*, the *Saxones* and the *Franci* entered the stage. These confederations could take shape because a leader's *Gefolgschaft* was accessible not only to members of his own tribe; it could also include members of other *Kleinstämme*, which in the 4th and 5th centuries were often migrating. It is assumed that the *Gefolgschaft* functioned as a 'social glue', holding the socio-political confederations of those days together.

This evolutionary and unilinear model of power formation, often presented in both historical and archaeological studies, is criticised by the anthropologist Bazelmans and the archaeologist Hiddink, both participants in the research project 'Power and elite' (1989-1993, University of Amsterdam).[6] In an article about the concept of *Gefolgschaft*, Bazelmans compares the images of early Germanic people as presented by Tacitus in his *Germania*, with those presented by modern historians in their

3 E.g. Bazelmans 1999, 1-3.

4 Schlesinger 1953; Wenskus 1961; for a summary and more references, see Bazelmans 1991.

5 See also Roymans 1990, 40. For the history and use of the terms *comitatus* and *Gefolgschaft*, see Bazelmans 1991; Steuer 1998; 2009; Timpe 1998; 2009.

6 For the outcome of this project, see Roymans & Theuws 1991.

study of the Germanic *Verfassungsgeschichte*.[7] Not surprisingly, the two views show remarkable similarities. Tacitus' *Germania*, as a literary work, contrasts the barbaric Germanic societies against the (over-)civilized Roman world. Studying the organizational structure of Germanic peoples from their own, modern point of view, researchers like Schlesinger and Wenskus present a similar antithesis, that is a) between an original, natural order and a historical, cultural order; b) between passive members of the tribe (nature) and active individuals, operating independently of the kinship group (culture); and c) between primitive, archaic people and civilized, modern people.

Reviewing Hedeager's *Iron Age societies* (1992), an influential study of state formation in pre-Roman Iron Age to early medieval Denmark, Bazelmans detects a similar, evolutionary way of reasoning.[8] Although Hedeager is influenced by a different research tradition, she represents a point of view deeply rooted in the Germanic *Verfassungsgeschichte*. Like Schlesinger and Wenskus, she presents an evolutionary model based on an assumed distinction between a kinship-based, egalitarian tribal order (nature) and a retinue-based, stratified early state (culture). To avoid this stereotypical way of reasoning, Bazelmans argues, we should be aware that: 1. every social system is cultural, with a specific individuality which has developed historically, 2. the concepts used for describing socio-political organization are too general to do justice to the cultural complexity and multiformity of tribal societies, and 3. socio-political structures, including the *Gefolgschaft*, cannot be described without reference to kinship.[9]

In his unpublished dissertation, Hiddink also offers resistance to the stereotypical views of the character and organization of Germanic societies.[10] Critically evaluating the central concepts of the Germanic *Verfassungsgeschichte,* he draws the following conclusions: [11]

1. Traditional kingship did not disappear as a result of the growing importance of the *Gefolgschaft*. Both in the pre-Roman Iron Age and in later periods, Germanic tribes were headed by kings who had sacral-ritual as well as political-military power.
2. The *Gefolgschaft* system already existed during the pre-Roman Iron Age and its importance did not increase in the Roman Iron Age, in the sense that it displaced other organizing principles.
3. A large number of *Kleinstämme* known from the pre-Roman Iron Age were still around in the Roman Iron Age and early medieval period.[12] *Frisii*, *Franci* and other *Großstämme* did not replace the *Kleinstämme* as such, but should be seen as new, supra-tribal configurations that encompassed several smaller tribes.

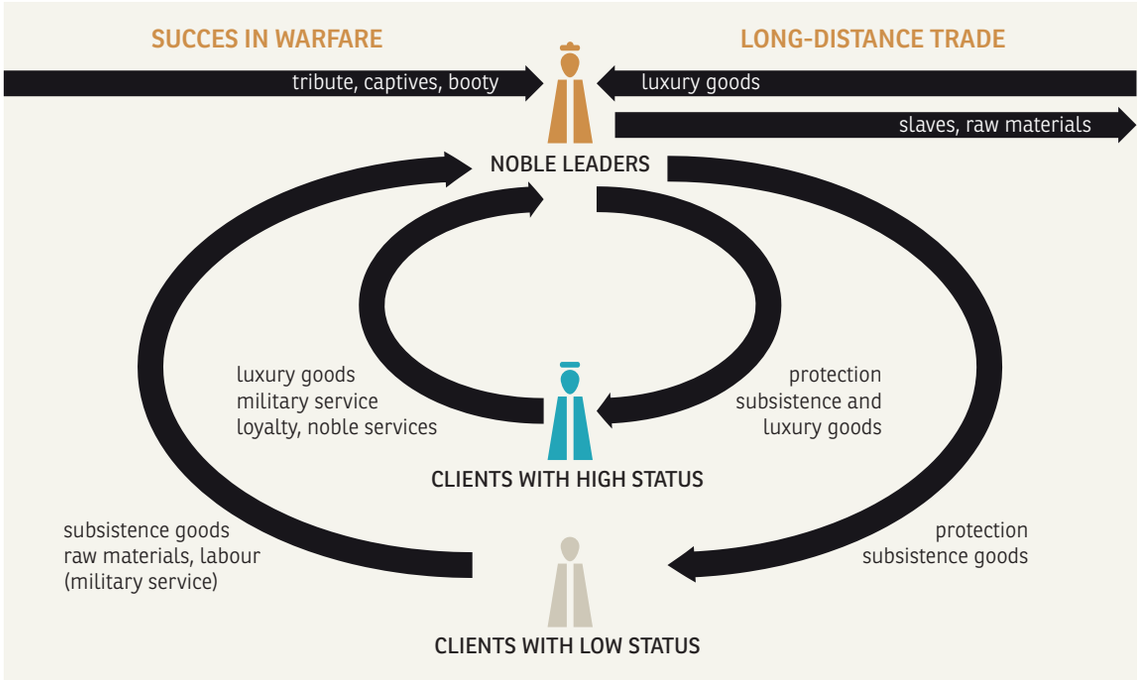
Bazelmans and Hiddink agree that, rather than in terms of an evolutionary model, it is more useful to describe the socio-political structure of Germanic tribes from the pre-Roman Iron Age into the early medieval period as "… modalities of *one* underlying structure in which the relation between a leader and/or king and his retinue or clientele is the most crucial part."[13] Depending on the historical developments in a specific region or larger area, this structure is more or less hierarchical, which renders unnecessary any assumed development from 'natural' *Kleinstämme* to 'cultural' *Großstämme*, or from tribe to early state.

1.3 Gift exchange and the *Gefolgschaft*

In present-day studies on valuable items or 'prestige goods', it is customary to interpret the exchange of gifts and the role of the *Gefolgschaft* in Germanic societies in 'political-economic' terms (fig. 1.2).[14] The political power of the royal and other leading families was founded on the establishment and consolidation of a *Gefolgschaft*, which required a large and continuous investment of wealth in the form of gift-giving. Under these conditions, the power of a leader and the size of his retinue were fully dependent on his material resources. At the same time, the size of the retinue determined the material resources a leader could acquire as gifts or payments of tribute and through success in raiding and warfare, showing the 'economic' relationship between the wealth of a leader on the one hand, and the ability to consolidate or indeed expand his power on the other.[15]

In his dissertation *By weapons made worthy*, Bazelmans offers a new, and in my opinion very useful perspective on the relations in the Germanic world between a leader on the one hand, and his close retinue of warrior-followers on

7 Bazelmans 1991.
8 Bazelmans 1994.
9 Bazelmans 1994, 171.
10 Hiddink 1999, chapters 4 and 9.
11 Hiddink 1999, 232-233.
12 See also Hiddink 1999, 219-222, compare figs. 8.2 and 8.3.
13 Bazelmans 1994, 173-174 (citation p. 174); Hiddink 1999, 233.
14 E.g. Hedeager 1992b, 280; 1993, 122; Steuer 1998, 547.
15 Roymans 1990, 41-43.



1.2 | The exchange of valuables, commodities and services in Germanic tribal societies, presented as a 'political-economic' model of the relationship between a lord and his clients of high and low social status (redrawn after Roymans 1990, fig. 3.4).

the other.[16] At the basis of his work is an analysis of relations and gift exchange in Old English *Beowulf*, an epic poem dealing with late 5th- or 6th-century Scandinavia and written down in an Anglo-Saxon context several centuries later – possibly in East Anglia during the 8th century.[17] Abandoning the dominant political-economic perspective on *Gefolgschaft*, Bazelmans chose a different approach that was based on modern anthropological theories regarding gift exchange. Further, he did not focus only on the immediately relevant passages on *Gefolgschaft* in various primary sources, as is usually the case, but analysed *Beowulf* – as 'one of the most important sources pertaining to this phenomenon' – in its entirety.[18]

Central to Bazelmans' analysis is the work of the French sociologist Dumont and his French-Dutch followers. Dumont can be regarded as a direct heir of the sociologist Mauss. In his *Essai sur le don*, first published in 1924, Mauss presents his pioneering research into the exchange of gifts in 'archaic' or pre-modern, tribal societies, like the New Zealand Maori.[19] He concludes that gifts were not exchanged voluntarily and spontaneously; the transactions are in fact obligatory and far from disinterested, giving the donor authority over the receiver. No less significant is his observation that in archaic forms of exchange the participants in exchange (the subjects) and the object of exchange (the object) are to a high degree interchangeable.[20] In the world of the Maori, gifts are 'alive' and often personified; they have a *hau*, a spiritual power. The bond created by the exchange is a very personal one, since the gift should be seen a part of the donor. This also explains why the *hau*, or some equivalent to take its place, always wants to return to its owner and obliges the receiver to repay the gift.

Dumont and his followers studied the significance of gift exchange not only for relations among individuals or social groups, but also for people's relations with gods and ancestors in the supernatural world.[21] They argued that individuals evolved in a complex field of relations within this 'broader' society. The transformation of individuals during their life cycle is not considered a natural process, however, but demanded the re-establishment of the whole network of relations through the ritual exchange of gifts (an 'active' role of rituals).[22] In other words, because of the changing position of individuals in the network of relations, society as a whole constantly needed to be 'formed' and renewed.

According to this Dumontian perspective, a study of gift exchange in pre-modern societies – like the society described in *Beowulf* – should be aimed at answering three closely related questions:[23]

16 Bazelmans 1999; see also Bazelmans 1998a; 1998b; 2000a; 2002.

17 Newton 1993. According to Newton (1993, 133), the poem might be seen as "...an explicit Wuffing claim to descent from the legendary Danish royal family." The unique manuscript of *Beowulf* is a copy not dating before the 11th century.

18 Bazelmans 1999, 5.

19 Mauss 1966 (English translation, originally published in 1923/1924).

20 Mauss 1966, 8-10.

21 Dumont 1966; 1980; Barraud et al. 1984; Barraud & Platenkamp 1990.

22 See also Theuws & Alkemade 2000.

23 Bazelmans 1999, 68; 2000a, 338.

1. What kinds of relationship inhered within the system of ideas and values, both between people (the society in a narrow sense) and between people and entities in the supernatural world (the society in a broad sense)?
2. How did a society view the constitution of a person; that is: which constituents played a role, what relationships were involved and how were these activated by the exchange of gifts?
3. How, in the totality of relations (the society as a whole), did a person come into being, develop and, after death, become an ancestor – successive transformations that are regarded as the bringing together, the development and the dissolution of a person's constituents?

1.4 Relations in *Beowulf*

In the chapter 'Mapping society in *Beowulf*', as a first step in his analysis, Bazelmans presents the most important relations within the system of ideas and values that is evident in *Beowulf*.[24] By using compound words, phrases or short descriptions, the poet introduces virtually every personage in *Beowulf* in relation to another person or social group – or, in the language of Dumont, as part of society as a whole. These relations were determined by kinship, friendship, or lordship: "In the world of *Beowulf*, one is the son or daughter of a father; one is the brother... or relative of a male kinsman; one is the wife or widow, follower, or friend of a lord or king; one is the son of a father who was already a retainer of one's king..., or one is the descendant of a male ancestor, a subordinate, or a retainer of a lord or king."[25]

At the centre of this network of relations stood the *royal family* and, within this family, the king. The king lived in a stronghold with a royal hall and is presented by the poet as a ruler, as a warrior king, as a protector of people, his warrior-followers and the land, and as a distributor of treasure from the royal *thesaurus*. Most attention in the poem is paid to the king's role as a protector of his land and its inhabitants against violence from the outside world. Moreover, he is often presented as a 'giver of rings' and 'breaker of treasure', being the distributor of gold, rings and treasure, often in the royal hall.

A central position in the network of relations was also taken by the *king's retinue* or *Gefolgschaft*. An important distinction to be made within the group of male followers is that of age. In *Beowulf* four age-determined groups may be discerned: 1. children, 2. youths and young warriors, 3. the adult, trained warriors, and 4. the old, wise men. At an unspecified age, the youths received weapons from their lord, from that moment on joining his personal retinue. The primary duty of 'warrior-followers' was to protect the lord's land and people and to take part in his military expeditions. As a reward for their services, the adult men or veteran warriors were given land by their lord and from various passages it is clear that they could have their own halls, armed retinues and lordship over people.

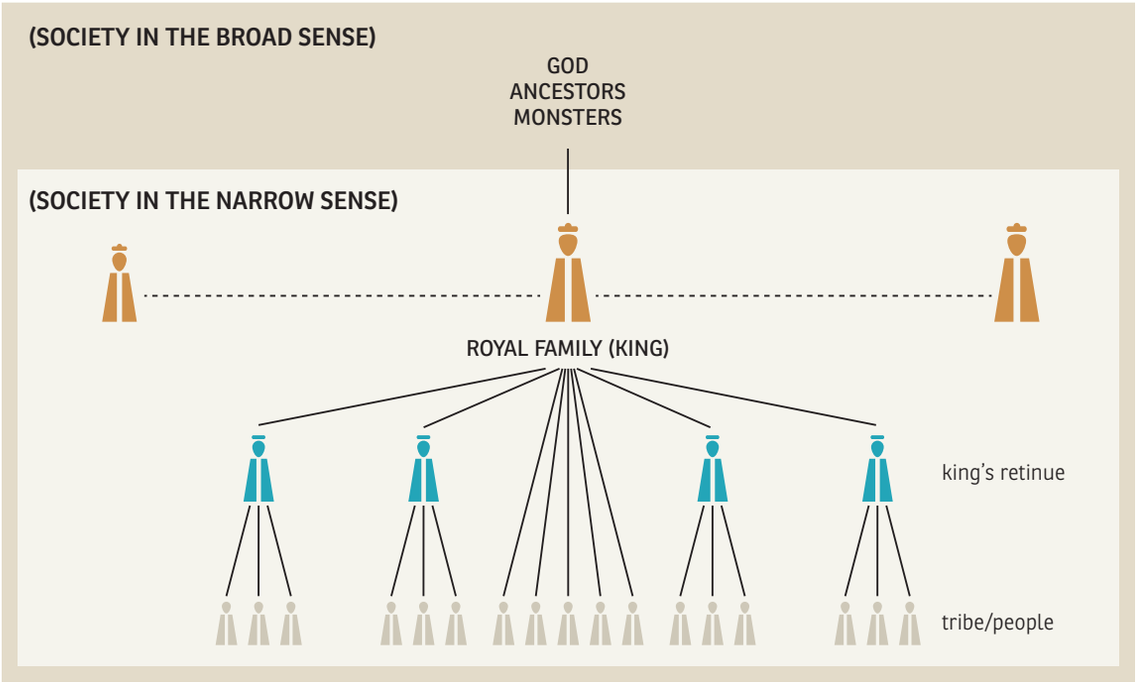
In the area surrounding the stronghold of the royal family lived the *tribe* or *people*, bearing a name of its own (in *Beowulf*: Danes, Geats and Swedes). The relation between a king or a lord and the people was mainly based on the provision of protection.

Besides these members of the society in a narrow sense (the usual subject when Germanic societies are studied), the network of relations also included entities in the *supernatural world*. These were ancestors, monsters inhabiting the sea and the centre of the universe, and, since *Beowulf* was written in a Christian context, God.

Among the relations that are specified in *Beowulf*, a clear hierarchy can be discerned (fig. 1.3).[26] Most important was the relation between God and the people, or actually between God and the royal family, who mediated between the supernatural world and the people. Within the society in a narrow sense, the relations between the king and his wife and their relatives on the one hand, and between the king and his retainers on the other were the most important. The hierarchy of relations between a king and his retainers is nicely illustrated by the drinking of beer or mead from a ceremonial drinking cup that is passed around in the royal hall: the drinking cup first goes to the king, then to the king's sons and tried warriors, seated near the king, and finally to the younger warriors, sitting at the end of the hall.[27] At a lower social level, the king and active or veteran warriors maintained a direct or indirect relation with their people – thus creating a pyramidical structure of patron-client relations.

Following Dumont, Bazelmans regards this *totality of relations* between kings, followers, people, ancestors, monsters and God as a

24 Bazelmans 1999, chapter 5.
25 Bazelmans 1999, 124.
26 Bazelmans 1999, 168-170; compare Roymans 1990, 29 ff.
27 Enright 1988, 179-180; see also Raw 1992, 168.



1.3 | The hierarchy of relations within the 'society as a whole', as it is described in *Beowulf*. These relations existed not only between people (society in the narrow sense), but also with entities in the supernatural world (society in the broad sense) (drawing by the author, partly after Roymans 1990, fig. 3.3).

starting point for understanding the circulation of valuable items in the society as a whole. A next step in the analysis of gift exchange in the world of *Beowulf* is to consider how a member of the elite, as a cultural and ritual project, came into being within this complex network of relations, which constituents were of importance in this trajectory, and how these were brought together, developed and eventually broken up again.

1.5 Gift exchange and the life cycle of warrior-followers in *Beowulf*

Although it is generally accepted nowadays that early medieval gifts have a highly symbolic value, the people participating in the exchange and the objects of exchange are mostly perceived as strictly separate categories. Mauss and others, however, have shown that in pre-modern societies object and subject were commensurable. According to Dumont and his followers, this meant that the 'living' objects of exchange represented, and were exchangeable with, specific constituents of a human individual.[28] These constituents could be drawn together in a series of rituals that were associated with the stages in the life cycle of the person involved.

The most important constituents in the early medieval Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian worlds, according to Bazelmans, were 'body' (*lic*), 'soul' (*sawol*), 'life' (*lif*) and 'worth' (*weorð*).[29] Whereas 'body', 'soul' and 'life' can be seen as intrinsic elements that were naturally present since birth, 'worth' is an extrinsic element, which a person had to develop in the course of his or her lifetime (fig. 1.4). *Beowulf* provides little information about 'body' and 'life' in relation to the ceremonial exchange of gifts. It is clear, however, that some of an individual's qualities, like strength and courage, were passed on in the line of male descendants (as part of 'life').

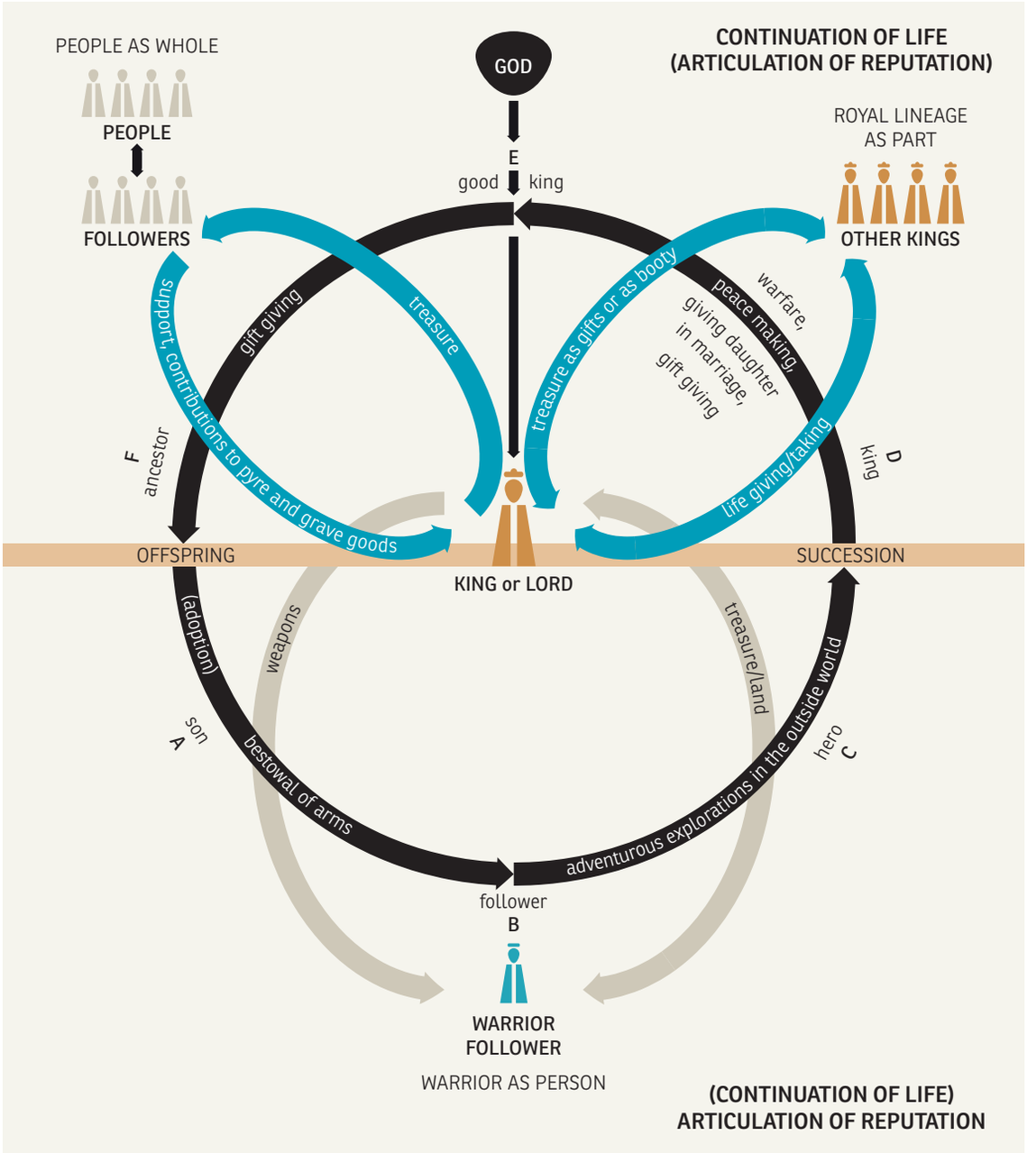
There is more to be said about 'worth'. As a person's image or reputation, which is synonymous with someone's appearance, fame and honour, worth was the most important constituent for a warrior-follower.[30] Worth could be articulated by passing several stages in the relation between a king or lord and his follower, which was visualized by the exchange of gifts. This worth was manifested by the receiving of weapons or other valuables and could be enhanced by achieving fame in wars or heroic enterprises. Leisi, in his article *Gold und Manneswert im Beowulf*, also relates the exchange of prestigious gifts (as *Ehrensold*) to image or reputation.[31] In Anglo-Saxon society, according to Leisi, 'rich' should be translated as 'gold-rich', as well as 'proud', 'glorious', 'honest' and 'honourable'. The rewarding of heroic acts with gifts not only made the receiver rich in material means, but – more importantly – added to his fame and prestige.

28 See also Bazelmans 1998a, 467-469; Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 415-417.

29 Bazelmans 1999, 156-160; for a first research on the subject, see Godden 1985.

30 Bazelmans 1998b; see also Hedeager 1992b, 280; 1993, 122.

31 Leisi 1953.



1.4 | The exchange of valuables, land and services in Germanic tribal societies, presented as a 'ritual-cosmological' model of the relationship between a lord and his closest warrior-followers. The circle shows the life-cycle of Beowulf and, especially in the lower half, the articulation of his reputation or 'worth' (redrawn after Bazelmans 1999, fig. 6.1).

Beowulf, which tells the life-story of the hero Beowulf, gives detailed information about the articulation of 'worth' during life (fig. 1.5). Although Beowulf's father was no member of a royal family, he was one of the warrior-followers of the Geatish king Hreðel and had married the king's daughter. The first visualization of Beowulf's 'worth' was his admission at the age of seven into the community of king Hreðel's royal hall. This transition from the group of children to the group of boys was visualized by an important rite of passage: the transfer of treasures from the king's *thesaurus* to the young Beowulf, for the first time showing the boy's potential aristocratic qualities.

A next step in the articulation of 'worth' is the bestowal of ancestral weaponry on the young Beowulf by his king and his father. From his king Beowulf received a very special coat of mail, which was taken from the ancestral treasury. This piece of mail is said to be the work of the smith Weland and therefore to be of exceptional, indeed supernatural quality. From his father Beowulf probably receives a sword, an ancient heirloom. With the granting of weapons, Beowulf was accepted as a member of the king's young warrior-followers, who lived at the royal hall. Now it was up to the young retainer himself to make a contribution to the articulation of his 'worth'. To show the strength and courage expected of a member of the royal retinue, he could either take part in the wars of his king, or undertake adventurous enterprises outside the kingdom.

During his period as a young warrior-follower – when king Hreðel died and within a short period was succeeded by his sons Hæðcyn and Hygelac – Beowulf proved himself im-

pressively, first by slaying many monsters in a swimming contest with king Breca and next by killing Grendel and his mother, two trolls that had harassed the Danes for years. After killing Grendel and freeing the Danes from this fearful monster, the Danish king Hroðgar rewarded Beowulf – whom he now regarded as his son – with numerous treasures, stating that his fame should always be remembered:

> "Beowulf, I now take you
> to my bosom as a son, O best of men,
> and cherish you in my heart. Hold yourself well
> in this new relation! You will lack for nothing
> that lies in my gift of the goods of this world:
> lesser offices have elicited reward,
> we have honoured from our hoard less heroic
> men, far weaker in war. But you have well ensured
> by the deeds of your hands an undying honour
> for your name for ever."
>
> (*Beowulf* 945-954)

Beowulf's strength and courage, as shown during his fight with Grendel, strongly contributed to his 'worth', which was visualized by all kinds of treasure that he received in reward for his deeds. First of all, the Danish king gave him some very special items: a famous sword, which belonged to Hroðgar's father, a golden standard, a helmet, a coat of mail and eight horses with golden bridles, one of the horses carrying the personal war saddle of king Hroðgar. Secondly, the queen presented Beowulf with other treasures from the royal treasury: a second coat of mail and various gold rings, including two bracelets and 'the largest and most beautiful among neck rings'. After Grendel's mother had taken revenge by killing one of the closest followers of the Danish king and Beowulf managed to slay this monster as well, he is richly rewarded again. This time Beowulf received twelve treasures, which are not described. Finally, one of the Danish king's warrior-followers rewarded Beowulf with a famous sword, named Hrunting, that Beowulf had received as a loan for fighting Grendel's mother.

After Beowulf returned to his homeland, he presented the many gifts he had received in the royal hall and offered these to his king Hygelac – the person who had given him, as his warrior-follower, the opportunity to prove his qualities and to articulate his 'worth'. At the end of the ceremony, Hygelac rewarded Beowulf for his successful enterprise by bestowing on him the famous, gold-decorated sword that Beowulf had received from king Hroðgar. Moreover, Beowulf was gifted with ancestral land, a hall and a throne. Beowulf now became an adult warrior-follower who not only had proven to have the quality of being a leader with a retinue of his own, but also to have the potential of becoming a future king.

LIFE-CYCLE	RECEIVING OF GIFTS	CONSTITUENTS
birth ↓ child		body soul life
↓ boy (in the hall)	king: treasure	
↓ warrior-follower (royal *Gefolgschaft*)	father: sword king: weaponry	visualization & articulation of worth
↓ active warrior-follower: war, raiding, adventures	(foreign) king: treasure	
↓ adult/veteran warrior-follower	king: land, hall	
↓ (king)		
↓ death/ancestor	family: treasure (grave) warrior-followers: wood (pyre)	separation body-soul; worth as enduring fame

1.5 | The exchange of gifts in relation to the bringing together and breaking up of a person's 'constituents', as it is described for a member of the royal *Gefolgschaft* in *Beowulf*.

Beowulf's years as an adult retainer were a period of war with the Frisians, the Franks and the Swedes. Hygelac and his son and successor Heardred were killed, and Beowulf refused to rule the Geats upon Hygelac's death, but he did accept the royal throne when Heardred also died. As a king, Beowulf now was the person responsible for providing young retainers with weapons and treasure, and, after they had proven to be mature warrior-followers, also with land, a hall and a throne. Although Beowulf ruled the Geatish kingdom for a long period of 50 years, no wars or other expeditions are mentioned, except for his struggle against a dragon that finally killed him.

After his death, king Beowulf is cremated and buried with an exclusive set of grave goods, including 'torques' and 'jewels' from the dragon's treasure. Moreover, 'shining mail-coats' and 'shields of war' had been hung upon the pyre. Similar gifts to the dead are mentioned in the description of two other funerals in *Beowulf*: one of king Scyld and the other of prince Hnæf, both being buried with weapons and treasures.[32] An important part

32 Härke 2000a, 386, table 3.

of Beowulf's final rite of passage is the gathering of the grave goods and the wood for the pyre by his relatives and warrior-followers. According to Bazelmans, the funeral rite was aimed at transforming Beowulf into an ancestor before his place could be taken by a new king. The ritual is also intended to separate the constituents 'body' and 'soul'. After death, the image and reputation of the deceased (his 'worth') lived on in the form of memories attached to the prestigious items that Beowulf had received as gifts and used during his lifetime. These now belonged to the royal *thesaurus*, in part to be redistributed among young warrior-followers again.

1.6 Gifts in *Beowulf*

From the above, it can be concluded that the exchange of gifts and the role of the *Gefolgschaft* in Germanic societies was meaningful not only in political-economic terms. Gift giving and membership of the retinue gave young males the opportunity to become men, to acquire honour and reputation ('worth'), and finally to become ancestors. The beginning of each new phase in their life cycle was visualized by the ceremonial exchange of gifts, giving the person a new place in the network of relations and, by doing so, in the society as a whole. An important question is to what extent the life cycle of warrior-followers, as described in *Beowulf*, can be traced archaeologically. As archaeological studies of the socio-political structure and life-cycle rituals are based on objects (artifacts), the gifts that were exchanged in *Beowulf* will be discussed in some more detail.

The gifts that Beowulf received during his lifetime are no simple commodities, but valuable items and prestigious objects, often originating from the royal *thesaurus* (fig. 1.5). Among the objects of exchange six important categories can be distinguished. Besides land, women and horses, these are: 1. weaponry and standards, 2. gold rings, jewels and gems and 3. silverware.[33] Normally, warrior-followers were armed with a helmet, a coat of mail and a sword, but also spears and bows are mentioned. Furthermore, every retinue possessed several standards or banners, which had an important symbolic value to the tribe as a whole and were carried during battle. The other valuables of exchange were made of gold or silver, and might be decorated with precious stones. The gold rings have a special significance because they are the only items that played a role in *all* relationships mentioned in *Beowulf*, that is between royal houses, between a king and his warrior-followers at several stages of their life, between bride givers and receivers, and between adult or veteran warriors and their retinues. Bazelmans is probably right in surmising that gifts of various categories were convertible to gold rings and that such rings allowed gold to be converted between different domains of exchange.[34]

Swords, often elaborately described, occupy a special place among the gifts in *Beowulf*.[35] First of all, these weapons are exceptional because of their decoration: the sword's blade is often ornamented with all kinds of damascened patterns or markings, and the hilt with gold. Secondly, most of the swords have a specific history or 'cultural biography', making them the 'living' objects known from anthropological research.[36] The swords are always ancient heirlooms, renowned for their origin and history of success in battle. Sometimes the swords have a mythical origin, like the exceptional sword that Beowulf used for slaying Grendel's mother and which, according to the poet, was the work of Giants. The history of this sword not only encompasses true or fictitious memories and stories, now including Beowulf's heroic deed, but also the fame of the sword's original owner, whose name in runes was engraved on the hilt. Finally, the sword, as a 'living' object, may bear a name, like the sword named Hrunting, which had never failed its owner in battle and was lent to Beowulf to fight Grendel's mother with.

From the poem it is clear that the bearing of such exceptional swords was reserved for the king and his close retinue. Like the other categories of gifts, these weapons often originated from the royal treasure and, as ancestral regalia, were in principle not to be given to outsiders.[37] Significant is Beowulf's request to the Danish king Hroðgar, before his fight with Grendel, to send his coat of mail home in the event of his death. Apparently it was important that this coat of mail, an ancient heirloom that Beowulf had received at his admittance into Hreðel's retinue, should return to its do-

33 Bazelmans 1999, 150; see also Raw 1992, 172-173. Similar treasures are known from other early medieval texts (Hardt 1998; 2004). For the role of *royal women* as treasure and gifts, see Stafford 2000.

34 Bazelmans 1999, 155; see also Bazelmans 1998b, 73.

35 Bazelmans 1999, 151-152.

36 See also Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 419-426; Härke 2000a, 393-395; for the 'cultural biography' of objects, see Kopytoff 1986; Gosden & Marshall 1999.

37 Bazelmans 1999, 181-182.

nor to remain part of the Geats' royal *thesaurus*.[38] The only way to acquire such regalia was to receive them as gifts that were passed on from a king to his sons and closest retainers, or to seize them as booty in warfare or raiding. Only in exceptional cases were regalia exchanged with royal or aristocratic denizens of other kingdoms, as does occur in *Beowulf*.

The items of gold and silver, including rings, jewels and silverware, occupy a different position in *Beowulf*. Although they too are described as old or ancient, no details about their origin or specific biography are given. Probably the value of gold and silver was closely linked to a more anonymous, ancestral origin of the precious metals, which explains why they were easily converted from coins into jewellery, or from one type of ornament into another.[39]

A certain hierarchy can be discerned not only among the relations between a king and his retinue and people, but also among the gifts that were exchanged in *Beowulf*.[40] Most important were the so-called 'inalienable possessions', as described by Weiner.[41] Such possessions represented the history and identity of the group to which the 'owner' belonged, and were only given out in very exceptional cases, either on loan, as copies, or in return for another object of the same kind (the so-called 'keeping-while-giving'). Within the group of inalienable possessions a division can be made between land, myths, genealogies and the group name on the one hand, and regalia, such as standards and 'glorious' swords, on the other. The first category of possessions was not exchangeable and represented the tribal group. Under normal circumstances the regalia, belonging to the royal *thesaurus*, circulated only within the royal family; as 'loans', however, they might also be given to members of the closest retinue, like Beowulf. A different category of valuables included items with a lower social status, such as weapons with a less impressive history if any at all, and gold rings. These are the items that usually circulated as personal gifts between kings or adult and veteran warriors and their retinues.

Since Beowulf is the main character of the poem, little attention is paid to the valuables worn by women and to their exchange and associated rituals. Except for the mourners at Beowulf's funeral pyre, all women mentioned in *Beowulf* are the wife or daughter of a king.[42] The only thing that is known about their appearance is that they were adorned with 'rings of gold'. Moreover, queen Wealhtheow, the wife of king Hroðgar, wore a golden crown. Although the poet does not elaborate on this, it can be assumed that the gold rings and crown, as ancient heirlooms, belonged to the royal treasury. The lack of detailed information about the image or 'worth' of royal women can be explained by their position within early medieval societies. As Sasse has shown for women at the Frankish court, this position was fully dependent on their relations with the king or male aristocrats – the women themselves not having any claim to the throne.[43]

An analysis of the gifts that are described in *Beowulf* makes clear that valuable items or prestige goods only circulated within limited social groups and that their value was first of all determined by their 'personal' history, referring to the 'worth' of the donor and previous owners. From an archaeological point of view there are two complicating factors when such early medieval valuables are studied.[44] First of all, every tribal society may have had its own classification of valuables, whose significance is further related to the history of the individual objects involved – a history that is difficult to reconstruct without specific historical information. Secondly, royal families will have been hesitant about burying valuables as grave goods or other ritual deposits and thus 'losing' part of their royal *thesaurus*. This explains why the most prestigious, truly royal insignia have rarely been found in graves or hoards.[45]

1.7 Valuable items and the study of kingship

Despite these complicating factors, the early medieval valuables that are known from burials, hoards and settlement sites represent an important archaeological tool for studying power formation, especially when they can be interpreted as gifts that were exchanged between royal families or other members of the elite, their retinues and supernatural entities. This study will focus on the structure, extent and evolution of the various socio-political

38 In a more formalized way, the return of weapons to the original donor – or his successor – is also known from 9th- to 11th-century Anglo-Saxon laws (Härke 2000a, 382-383).

39 Bazelmans 1998b, 72-73.

40 Hiddink 1999, 79-81; Härke 2000a, 380 (weapons).

41 Weiner 1985; 1992.

42 Bazelmans 1999, 119-120, 133-134.

43 Sasse 1997, 85-89.

44 Hiddink 1999, 231.

45 Compare the use of late-Roman and early medieval weapons in the burial ritual (Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 427, 462-464; Härke 2000a, 388, 394-395).

configurations in the coastal areas around the southern North Sea. Insight into these configurations will be sought through the stylistic analysis and geographical mapping of valuable items and by studying their origin, circulation and deposition.

Apart from presenting an inventory of published and recently discovered valuables of gold and silver, including gold- and silver-decorated weaponry, this study will focus on the following five aspects:

1. *Mapping the contacts among kings, the elite and their retinues.*

Valuables, as mentioned above, may be regarded as the material reflection of contacts among elite groups and their retainers (society in a narrow sense). By analyzing the origin, style and decoration of valuable items of gold and silver, the possibilities will be explored of determining the 'social status' of the various categories of valuables and of assigning these to members of specific social strata. An important question to be asked is whether these valuables indeed circulated as gifts only, or also in different, more commercial transactions, as in Roman and late medieval times. On the basis of the geographical distribution of the valuables concerned, an attempt will be made to sketch the *network of relations* between kings, other members of the elite and their retinues – and, in doing so, to reconstruct regional and supra-regional kingdoms.

2. *Mapping the contacts among the people or tribe and entities in the supernatural world.*

Valuable items were not only exchanged between kings or other leaders and their followers, but also between the people, probably represented by a member of the elite, and entities in the supernatural world (society in a broad sense). Ritual communications and their material reflection in the archaeological record will be reconstructed by analyzing the selection of valuables that were used in funerary rites and ritual deposition. It will be questioned *whether*, and if so, *how* these rituals are related to the assembling, development and breaking-up of the various constituents of royal and aristocratic personae during the life of both men and women.

3. *Determining how processes of power formation affected the (ethnic) self-definition of individuals or groups.*

A stylistic and geographical study of early medieval valuables presents an opportunity to trace the cultural focus and (ethnic) self-definition of individuals and groups. After all, these items were worn by people who performed a communicative role in inter-tribal relations. Both in historical and archaeological research, the study of (ethnic) identity in relation to styles in material culture and socio-political structures currently attracts much interest.[46] It has become clear, however, that the relation between ethnicity and material culture is not altogether straightforward; ethnicity is found to be a social construct, largely linked to the networks in which groups or individuals participate. On the basis of the shape and style of the valuables, it will be examined whether such items might have expressed individual or group identity, and, if so, at what social or socio-political level.

4. *Using the variation in depositional customs to determine whether significant socio-political processes are archaeologically visible.*

In recent years we have come to understand that the archaeological record does not always present unambiguous evidence of the socio-political structure and developments in a particular society. Generalising, it can be said that major transformational processes tend to be clearly visible archaeologically, for example in funerary customs or sacrificial practice, but that well-established structures are more difficult to detect. The question of how the deposition of valuables relates to social competition and processes of power formation is a central theme in this research.

5. *Testing the distorting effect of so-called post-depositional factors on the archaeological visibility of significant socio-political processes.*

The various study regions are quite different in terms of landscape and soils, modern agricultural practices and research coverage, both by professional and by amateur archaeologists – including metal detectorists. By examining such 'evidence-distorting' factors, known in archaeology as post-depositional processes, the representativity of distribution patterns will be assessed for each of the research regions.

1.8 The dating of valuables in the archaeological record: what is being dated?

The significance of valuable items for reconstructing the rise of kingdoms around the southern North Sea is largely dependent on the precision of their dating. In northwestern Europe, the dating of early medieval material culture – and especially metal items – is directly

46 Recently, for example, Derks & Roymans 2009.

or indirectly based on the chronology of Frankish and Alamannic row-cemeteries.[47] The most recent chronology of 5th- to 8th-century grave goods from the Lower Rhine area was published by Siegmund about a decade ago, and has been slightly adjusted in more recent publications.[48] Siegmund's relative chronology is based on the combination of finds in individual male and female graves (resulting in a '*Kontingenztafel*'), which is checked and extended by the occurrence of finds in single-phase, 'closed' segments of cemeteries ('*Chorologie*').[49] For the absolute dating of the sequence of find combinations, coin finds and some dendrochronological data were used, which resulted in a subdivision of the Lower Rhine chronology into twelve phases, each with a duration of ca 15 to 40 years.

An important question to be asked about such a chronology is *what* has actually been dated: the time when a specific combination of items was produced and used, or the time when these items were selected as grave goods and entered the archaeological record? According to Siegmund, grave goods should be analysed according to a so-called 'battleship model' ('*Schlachtschiff-Modell*'): new objects or types occurred randomly, then became fashionable and were more frequently selected, until they were superseded by new objects/types.[50] For the presentation of his typochronology, however, he opted for a traditional division into strict phases ('*Stufenmodell*') – especially because the succession of types often runs parallel to typological and/or functional changes in other find categories. The brief individual phases, especially during the 6th century (ca 15-25 years!), are thought to reflect the short periods in which specific objects or types were produced, used and deposited. Because 'old', outmoded items are said to be nearly absent in Frankish-Alamannic graves, Siegmund concludes that inheritance of dress accessories and weaponry was of little consequence in the Frankish and Alamannic societies.[51]

In a review of Siegmund's book, Theuws makes some highly relevant remarks about the validity of this way of reasoning.[52] First of all, it is stressed that many objects and types were used not during a single, but – according to the 'battleship model' – during two or more phases. Secondly, the chronological value of coin finds is questioned. Not only are pseudo-imperial and 'civic' coins difficult to date, they also have an important symbolic value; hence they probably do not represent the range of coins that circulated at a specific moment, but a specific selection of (older) coins. Thirdly and finally, the idea that jewellery and weapons were rarely inherited is questioned. According to Theuws, the deposition in a grave of a silver brooch or a sword was an exceptional occurrence, while many items were treasured as heirlooms, never ending up in a grave.[53]

As described above, the importance of inheritance is especially true for valuable items that circulated among royal families and their retinues. Siegmund's remark that few old pieces are found in Frankish and Alamannic cemeteries is difficult to understand when jewellery or other ornaments of precious metal are being studied. Silver brooches in particular are often well-worn and sometimes even repaired or worn in a fragmented state (fig. 10.9).[54] Moreover, old heirlooms are usually found in the richest, 'royal' or 'princely' graves, like the early Anglo-Saxon burials at Sutton Hoo and Taplow (England).[55] A good example from the Rhine area is the famous '*Fürstengrab*' of Wittislingen (Germany), which can be dated to around the middle of the 7th century.[56] Among the most exclusive items that were selected as grave goods are a garnet- and filigree-decorated bow brooch and disc brooch (fig. 1.6), jewels that were produced around 600 – roughly half a century before they were buried. The same phenomenon is exemplified by two late 7th-century high-status burials from Niedenstein and Frankfurt am Main (Germany). Both contained 'ancient' jewellery, produced in the second half of the 6th or the early 7th century.[57]

It can be concluded that Siegmund's chronology is not so much about the phases in which Frankish-Alamannic objects were produced and in circulation, but more about the phases when they were *most frequently selected*

47 For Anglo-Saxon England, for example, see Brugmann 1999.

48 Siegmund 1998; Nieveler & Siegmund 1999; Müssemeier et al. 2003.

49 Siegmund 1998, 176-209.

50 Siegmund 1998, 177-178. The term 'battleship' refers to the gradual appearance and disappearance of such a vessel when it passes at sea.

51 Siegmund 1998, 222-223 (for coins, see p. 200).

52 Theuws 2001. This is further elaborated by Kars (2011); see also Kars 2013.

53 Theuws 2001, 198.

54 See, for example, the silver brooches that are presented in the catalogue of *Die Franken* (1996, e.g. Kat. V.5.18a, VI5.4 and VIII.4.6c).

55 Taplow: Webster 2007, 70-71; 2011, note 9. For Sutton Hoo and the 'cultural biography' of such items, see section 10.3.1.

56 Werner 1950; Böhner 2000; *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. VI.2.11.

57 *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. V.5.24 and VI.2.12. Other examples are given by Kars (2011, 117-119).

1.6 | Two 'ancient' pieces of jewellery, belonging to the rich collection of valuable items selected as grave goods for the 'royal burial' of Wittislingen (Dillingen, Germany). The brooches were produced around 600 and buried half a century later. Scale 1:1 (coll. Archäologische Staatssamlung München, photos M. Eberlein).

as grave goods. Many items, including coins, may have been produced in previous phases and, as heirlooms, will often have been deposited in considerably later phases. As long as Siegmund's datings are not applied too strictly, however, his chronology still is very useful for the study of power formation – a study which, from an archaeological point of view, is based mainly on the *deposition* or 'investment' of valuables as grave goods and ritual deposits, as a reflection of competition for power positions.[58]

1.9 Definition of the research area and research period

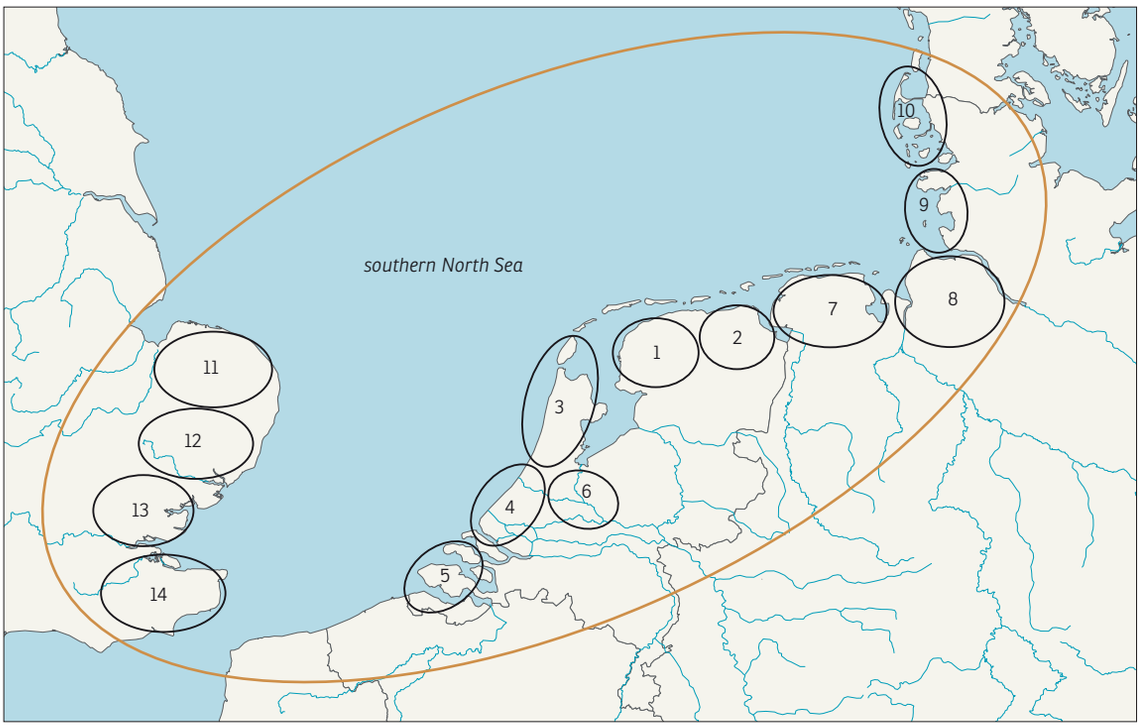
The *research area* comprises the southern North Sea world, that is the coastal regions of the Netherlands, northern Germany and southeast England, as well as the northwestern part of the Dutch central river area (fig. 1.7). A study of gift exchange and power formation in this assumed 'periphery' of the Frankish and Scandinavian kingdoms can only be successful when a supra-regional perspective and a long-term, comparative approach are taken. Within the southern North Sea area, different types of early medieval elites are visible only during *short periods* of time, in *varying contexts* and in *different parts* of the research area, which reflects the dynamics of social competition and complicates any attempt to study power formation in single regions.[59] The geographical research area can be compared to a draughts board, where power positions are observable on just one or perhaps two or three squares at any specific moment. When the evidence from longer periods is combined, however, it will cover a larger number of 'squares', and as a hypothesis it is assumed that in this way the archaeological data from one region can be used for reconstructing socio-political developments in neighbouring regions – as will be tested in the final chapter of this book.

The research area has traditionally been linked to the existence of a 'North Sea culture'. Although the validity of this term can be questioned, as it does not denote a single, uniform culture, it does refer to a close network of economic, socio-political, cultural and ideological relations across the southern North Sea.[60] These relations are anchored in the Migration period, when people from northern Germany and southern Scandinavia settled in the

58 See section 12.2.1.

59 See also Carver 1992, 178-179.

60 Van Regteren Altena & Heidinga 1977; see also Gerrets 2010, 47-48. For a cultural connection, especially between the Netherlands and southeast England, see Knol 1993, 196-205; Gerrets 1995a; Hills 1996; Dijkstra 2004, 399-401, 406.

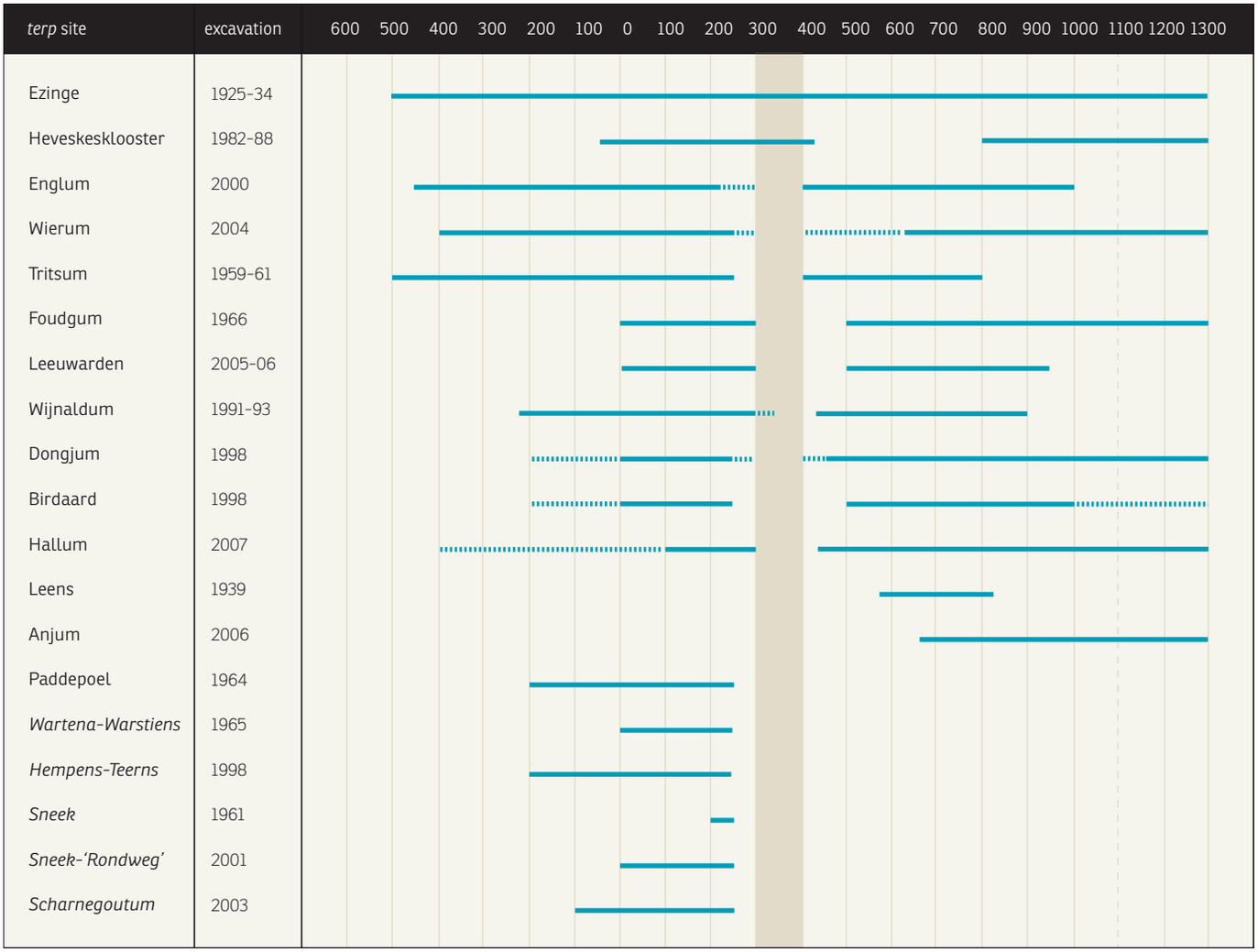


1.7 | Definition of the research area and of the various research regions (drawing by the author). *The Netherlands*: 1. Friesland, 2. Groningen, 3. North Holland, 4. South Holland, 5. Zeeland, 6. Utrecht; *Germany*: 7. Ostfriesland (including the districts Friesland and Wesermarsch), 8. northern Elbe-Weser region, 9. Dithmarschen and Eiderstedt, 10. Nordfriesland; *England*: 11. Norfolk, 12. Suffolk, 13. Essex, 14. Kent.

1.8 | A reconstruction of the late 4th- and 5th-century migration route along the southern North Sea coast, based both on historical and archaeological sources. The movement of people created a network of social and political relations between (royal) families living all along the southern North Sea coast (drawing by the author).

1.9 | Distribution of 5th- to 7th-century cemeteries with one or more graves containing a complete ship or boat, ship fragment(s) (two or more clench-nails) and single clench-nails, as a reflection of the cultural and ideological relations between societies belonging to the North Sea world (drawing by the author, based on Bruce-Mitford 1975; Filmer-Sankey 1990; Knol 1993, 189; Knol et al. 1995/1996, 332-333; Schön 2004c; Brookes 2007, fig. 3; Waasdorp & Eimermann 2008, 52-60).
1. Fallward, 2. Oosterbeintum, 3. Beetgum, 4. The Hague, 5. Sutton Hoo, 6. Snape, 7. Rochester, 8. Beakesbourne, 9. Breach Down, 10-11. Broadstairs, 12. Bifrons, 13-14. Dover, 15. Finglesham, 16. Margate, 17. Mill Hill, 18. Minster, 19. Ozengell, 20. Sarre, 21. Castledyke South.

1.10 | A 'boat grave', excavated in 2004 at the cemetery of The Hague-'Solleveld' (South Holland, the Netherlands). Along both sides of the boat-shaped grave, pieces of ship's timbers were placed, of which rows of iron clench-nails were preserved (photos Municipality of The Hague, Department of Archaeology).



1.11 | Habitation history of those *terp* sites in the salt-marsh and clay-on-peat areas of the northern Netherlands where excavations have taken place. The period when most dwellings mounds were deserted is highlighted. Sites in the clay-on-peat area are shown in italics; horizontal time line 600 BC-AD 1300 (after Nicolay 2011, fig. 13.9).

Netherlands and southeast England (fig. 1.8), linking the various tribal groups around the North Sea by ethnic and family relations.[61] Moreover, a 6th-century migration of 'New Frisians' from the densely populated Frisian *terp* region and the island of Texel to the western Netherlands can be assumed.[62] Despite the fact that the various parts of the research area were differently influenced by developments in the Late Roman/Frankish and Scandinavian worlds, their geographical position and common background probably explain the close cultural and ideological bonds between 'North Sea kings' – who used a closely related repertoire of valuable items to express their social status and position.[63] The importance of the North Sea, *connecting* regions rather than creating a barrier, is nicely illustrated by the tradition of burying the dead in a ship or boat (see figs. 7.4, 7.9), or placing ship fragments or single clinch-nails in the grave.[64] New discoveries and the re-interpretation of older finds have shown that this tradition is known not only from Scandinavia and East Anglia, but also from northern Germany, the Dutch coastal area and Kent (figs. 1.9-10).

The *research period* covers the 5th to 7th centuries, that is the Migration and Merovingian periods. As a starting date has been chosen the first arrival of immigrants in the Netherlands and southeast England, probably at the end of the 4th century. In large parts of the coastal zone of the northern Netherlands, this arrival is preceded by a depopulation phase lasting at least a century, which constituted a clear break with the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age (fig. 1.11).[65] Only in the province of Groningen and in the eastern part of Friesland can the presence of an indigenous remnant

61 Especially Hines 1984; 1992; Böhme 1986 (England); Bazelmans et al. 2004, 18 (western Netherlands); Nicolay 2005; Knol 2009 (northern Netherlands). Compare Soulat 2009 (northwest France).

62 Bazelmans et al. 2004, 18.

63 See chapter 9.

64 For the North Sea area as a well-accessible, 'maritime landscape', see Heidinga 1997, 50-53.

65 Most recently Gerrets 2010, 150-157; Nicolay 2011, 252-265; Nieuwhof 2011. See also section 3.2.

population be proven archaeologically.[66] The situation was probably similar in southeast England, the western Netherlands and large parts of the German North Sea coast, which also saw a substantial population decline in the 3rd and 4th centuries but no depopulation.[67] With the exception of a small number of settlement mounds in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, however, continuity at *site level* is rarely demonstrable; most settlements and cemeteries were newly founded during the late 4th and 5th centuries, and in the western Netherlands probably not before the late 5th or early 6th century.[68] Within the research area, the Elbe-Weser region occupies an exceptional position. Rather than seeing a drop in population numbers, the 3rd to 5th centuries in fact are a period of consolidation and prosperity, as reflected in the presence of local elite's residences (*Herrenhöfe*) and the richness of grave goods – followed by a period of population decline and subsequently in some regions probably even depopulation in the 6th and 7th centuries.[69] Despite these regional variations, ca AD 400 can be taken as a relevant starting point for studying the development of early medieval kingship in the research area as a whole.

The close of the period is linked to important changes in the economy of the southern North Sea world, marked by the emergence of specialised trading settlements (emporia), the introduction of a new, commercial currency (sceattas) and a new rural system, based on manorial estates, from the late 7th century onwards.[70] Moreover, southeast England gradually came under Mercian and Wessex rule from the middle of the 7th century, and the Netherlands and Northern Germany were progressively incorporated in the Frankish and Carolingian kingdoms from the early 8th century on.[71] This put an end to several centuries of autonomy of 'Saxon', 'Anglo-Saxon' and 'Frisian' kingdoms.

66 Taayke 1996, I, 191-193, III, 68-69, IV, 140-141; 2000 (pottery finds). See also Nieuwhof 2011; 2013.

67 Especially Gebühr 1998 (northern Germany); Hamerow 1994; 1998 (southeast England); Dijkstra 2011, 70-83; De Koning 2012 (western Netherlands). See also sections 3.3-3.5.

68 For the western Netherlands, see Dijkstra 2011, 84-86, 380.

69 Most recently Nösler & Wolters 2009. See also section 3.4.

70 Especially Hodges 1982. For manorial estates in the southern Netherlands, see Theuws 1999.

71 See Blok 1974, 41-59 (the Netherlands); Lampen 1999 (northern Germany); Yorke 2005, 29-32 (Kent), 62-64 (East Anglia). See also section 13.7.

1.10 Structure of the text

The structure of the text reflects a division of this book into four main parts. In the first, *introductory* part, the history of earlier research into kingship around the southern North Sea is discussed (chapter 2), followed by a description of the landscape, its division into so-called 'nuclear regions' and the different site types that can be recognized archaeologically (chapter 3).

The second, *catalogue* part describes the valuables of gold and silver from the various research regions, as well as their dating and context information (chapters 4-7). For each of the regions a distinction is made between grave goods, hoards of two or more items from wet and dry locations, and single finds, often from settlement sites. The dating of dress and weapon accessories is based on the one hand on analogies with late-Roman, Frankish and Scandinavian items, and on the other, on their association with coins in burials or hoards – or indeed on parts of the actual objects (e.g. coins on finger-rings). For both the minted and the unminted valuables, attempts have been made to establish their time of production as well as their date of deposition. The assumed dates of production, however, should be used with care; as mentioned above, these are closely linked to the times in which they were most frequently buried as grave goods and/or hoards.

The third, *discussion* part will focus on several aspects of the circulation of valuable items between and within early medieval societies in northwestern Europe. First, the origin of the imported gold and silver items and their routes of transport are determined, as well as the forms of interregional exchange in which they were used (chapter 8). Subsequently, chapter 9 discusses how precious metals were dealt with after they reached the research area: were they appreciated as foreign 'exotics' or merely seen as raw materials to be transformed into symbols expressing regional or supra-regional identity? Thirdly, the different forms in which gold and silver circulated within a society are discussed (chapter 10). The 'prestige value' of specific categories of valuables is introduced as a tool for identifying social strata, as presented in 'social pyramids'. Finally, the deposition of valuables – as grave goods, in hoards and as single items – is described, revealing a geographical division between a 'northern tradition' of gold hoarding and a 'southern tradition' of costly grave goods (chapter 11). The origin and chronological development of both traditions are dis-

cussed, as well as their association with specific life-cycle rituals.

The fourth and final part, that of *interpretation*, focuses on the archaeological reconstruction of elite networks around the southern North Sea. The impact of depositional and post-depositional factors on the distribution of valuable items in the various research regions is discussed, which results in a table of 'elite-visibility scores' (chapter 12). This is followed by an attempt to reconstruct the sociopolitical landscape of the 5th to 7th centuries (chapter 13). In doing so, the relation between specific elite networks and the expression of ethnic or other group identities at a regional or a supra-regional level is analysed.

As an epilogue, the results of this research will be confronted with the nature and composition of the marvellous, recently recovered Staffordshire hoard, which is interpreted as a collection of high-status weaponry and other war-related items that once belonged to an early Anglo-Saxon king and his *Gefolgschaft*.

2

History of research into early medieval kingship around the southern North Sea

2.1 Introduction

Earlier research into the formation, development, internal structure and extent of early medieval kingdoms around the southern North Sea has been dominated by traditional assumptions about the existence of a Frisian kingdom and several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms on the one hand, and a Saxon 'democracy' on the other. In this chapter both the traditional and present-day ideas about power formation are presented for each of the research regions, as well as the archaeological and especially the historical sources they are based on (sections 2.2-5). As will be shown below, an interesting transition can be seen from the traditional attempts to *reconstruct* the history of past kingdoms (or a past 'democracy') to the more recent attempts to *deconstruct* this history.

2.2 A Frisian kingdom in the northern Netherlands

The coastal area of the northern Netherlands is well-known for the richness of its early medieval finds. Especially the impressive collection of minted and unminted gold, with a total weight of ca 1.5 kg, has long intrigued researchers. In his 19th-century publication of a famous gold hoard from Wieuwerd (fig. 4.9), Janssen labelled the buried items as 'Frankish' and assumed their importation as booty.[1] In 1926, a selection of the Wieuwerd jewellery and several disc-on-bow brooches from the province of Friesland were described by Åberg, who compared these to the Anglo-Saxon corpus.[2] According to Åberg, the 'Frisian' objects form a separate style group, bridging the gap between the English and the Scandinavian finds. A year later, Boeles was the first to present the huge body of settlement and grave finds from Friesland in a magnificent study about the early history of this present-day province.[3] He not only agreed with Åberg that some of the gold ornaments were produced in local workshops, but also argued for the local minting of 6th- and 7th-century gold coins.[4]

Starting with Boeles, the interpretation of these gold finds has been dominated by the evidence from scanty and always younger historical sources, which in most cases do not even deal with the northern Netherlands. As a background for understanding the richness of finds from Friesland, Boeles described the political history of *Frisia Magna*, a late medieval term that refers to an early medieval region extending from the river Sincfal (probably the Zwin, debouching at the Dutch-Belgian border) up to the river Weser, as described in the *Lex Frisionum* (written down in 802/803, fig. 2.1).[5] This area is interpreted by Boeles as a single kingdom, which was headed by Frisian *reges*, of which Aldgisl and his probable successor Radbod († 719) are mentioned in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon texts. Although Utrecht is seen as the residence of both kings, their kingdom is thought to have originated in the province of Friesland – the area where

1 Janssen 1867.

2 Åberg 1926, 88.

3 Boeles 1927; 1951 (second, revised edition).

4 Boeles 1951, 266 ff.

5 Boeles 1951, 269-285 (for the borders of this '*Grootfriesland*', see pp. 270-271, 283-285); see also Halbertsma 2000, 220. The area up to the Danish border, including Nordfriesland, was thought not to belong to the 'Frisian sphere of influence' before AD 800 (Boeles 1951, 283).

2.1 | The 'Frisian area' between the river Scheldt and the Danish border in the 7th and 8th centuries, including the area of '*Frisia Magna*' (between Scheldt and Weser). The early medieval coastline is shown in black; north of the river Elbe no distinction between Pleistocene and Holocene soils is made. The habitation clusters or so-called 'nuclear regions' are described in chapter 3 (drawing J. de Koning, Amsterdam).

both 'Frisian-style' jewellery and locally minted coins have been found.[6] By linking the information from archaeological sources (6th-7th century) and historical sources (late 7th-8th century) in this way, a gradually expanding kingdom is reconstructed, having a substantial time-depth and an original power base in the province of Friesland, the assumed homeland of the ethnic Frisians.

In more recent studies, further surveys of early medieval valuables have been presented by Karras and Knol.[7] By comparing the Frisian finds with gold ornaments from Anglo-Saxon England, Karras came to a conclusion similar to that of Boeles 50 years earlier: they indicate the existence of a Frisian style of jewellery, made at local workshops on commission for a Frisian royal house. The distribution maps published by Knol show a significant clustering of gold and silver valuables from the Migration and Merovingian periods in the northwestern part of the province of Friesland

6 Boeles 1951, especially 272-273, 317, 328-332.

7 Karras 1985; Knol 1993.

(northern Westergo), especially at Wijnaldum, where the presence of a royal seat is assumed.[8] Although large-scale excavations at the site 'Tjitsma' (1991-1993) were aimed at finding this seat, no 'princely' burial or traces of a grand hall were discovered. Nonetheless, the exceptional find material supports the special status of Wijnaldum as a site where gold and silver ornaments, including garnet cloisonné jewellery, were not only worn but also produced.[9]

As a spin-off of the Wijnaldum excavations, the so-called 'Frisia Project' was initiated by the universities of Groningen and Amsterdam in 1997.[10] The main goal of this project, which, despite its early ending, still is very influential in Dutch archaeology, was to attain a better understanding of the habitation history and political structure of *Frisia Magna*. Shortly after the project had started, Heidinga summarized the then prevailing ideas about the formation and development of a Frisian kingdom.[11] During the Iron Age and the Roman period, the Dutch coastal area was believed to have been settled by egalitarian societies.[12] Large parts of this area became depopulated in the course of the 3rd century AD, which was followed by the arrival of new people from northern Germany (the 'Anglo-Saxons') and probably also southern Scandinavia in the late 4th to 6th centuries. Among the newcomers were strong military leaders, who had the capacity to establish a Frisian kingdom in the modern province of Friesland and during the 7th century went on to expand the Frisian territory in southern and eastern directions. This resulted in the influx of gold and other luxury goods, the development of Frisian-style jewellery and the minting of Frisian gold coinage. The question whether *Frisia Magna*, at the time of the Frankish conquest, should be seen as a single kingdom, headed by Aldgisl and Radbod, or as a loose confederation of smaller kingdoms is left unanswered, although Heidinga favours the first option.[13] The supraregional power of both kings "...may have been based on an elected supreme kingship, such as that of the Anglo-Saxon *bretwalda*, or an elected warlordship, as with the continental Saxons."[14]

Inspired by the assumed presence of a royal residence at Wijnaldum and, indirectly, as part of the Frisia Project, the author studied the distribution of gold finds from the northern Netherlands as part of his master's thesis.[15] Again, it is assumed that the arrival of immigrants played a key part in the formation of a Frisian kingdom. After an early, late 4th- and 5th-century phase of large-scale immigration from northern Germany, finds of gold bracteates are regarded as evidence of the arrival of a small group of aristocrats and their followers from Jutland in the late 5th, and first half of the 6th century. Being familiar with the process of power formation in their Scandinavian homeland, these Jutish newcomers were able to take over the leading positions in society, which resulted in the rise of a 'Frisian kingdom' in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands in the late 6th, and first half of the 7th century.[16] Based on the distribution of gold finds and the 'social status' of Frisian-style jewellery, a division of the kingdom's territory into three sociopolitical zones is postulated: a central, royal zone (northern Westergo), a surrounding, aristocratic zone (central Westergo and Oostergo) and a more peripheral zone (the province of Groningen) (fig. 2.2). At first, in the tradition of Boeles, this territory was regarded as the core region of an expanding kingdom, which in its heyday covered the area of *Frisia Magna*.[17] After including gold finds from the surrounding areas in the considerations, however, it was concluded that *Frisia Magna* probably was no more than a confederation of smaller kingdoms – not unlike early Anglo-Saxon England.[18]

In recent years, both the archaeological and historical evidence for the existence of a Frisian kingdom has been criticised. First of all, it is argued that the clustering of gold in northern Westergo is no sign of an early medieval power centre, but a modern artefact caused by post-depositional processes.[19] According to Bazelmans, Gerrets and Pol, there are significantly better opportunities for metal detection in northern Westergo than in the surrounding regions, mainly due to the

8 Knol 1993, figs. 73. For the significance of Wijnaldum, see Gerrets 1999a; 1999b.

9 Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999; Tulp & Meeks 2000; Bos 2001, 490-491; Tulp 2003; Nijboer 2004, 377-381; Nicolay 2008a. The variety of objects made of animal bones may also point to the special status of Wijnaldum (Prummel et al. 2011).

10 Heidinga 1997.

11 Heidinga 1999a; see also Heidinga 1997, 17-22; 1999b, 6-13.

12 The idea of an egalitarian society, based on the 'poor' character of the burials in the area between Rhine and Weser, has been countered by Hiddink (1999).

13 See also Heidinga 2002, 165.

14 Heidinga 1997, 22.

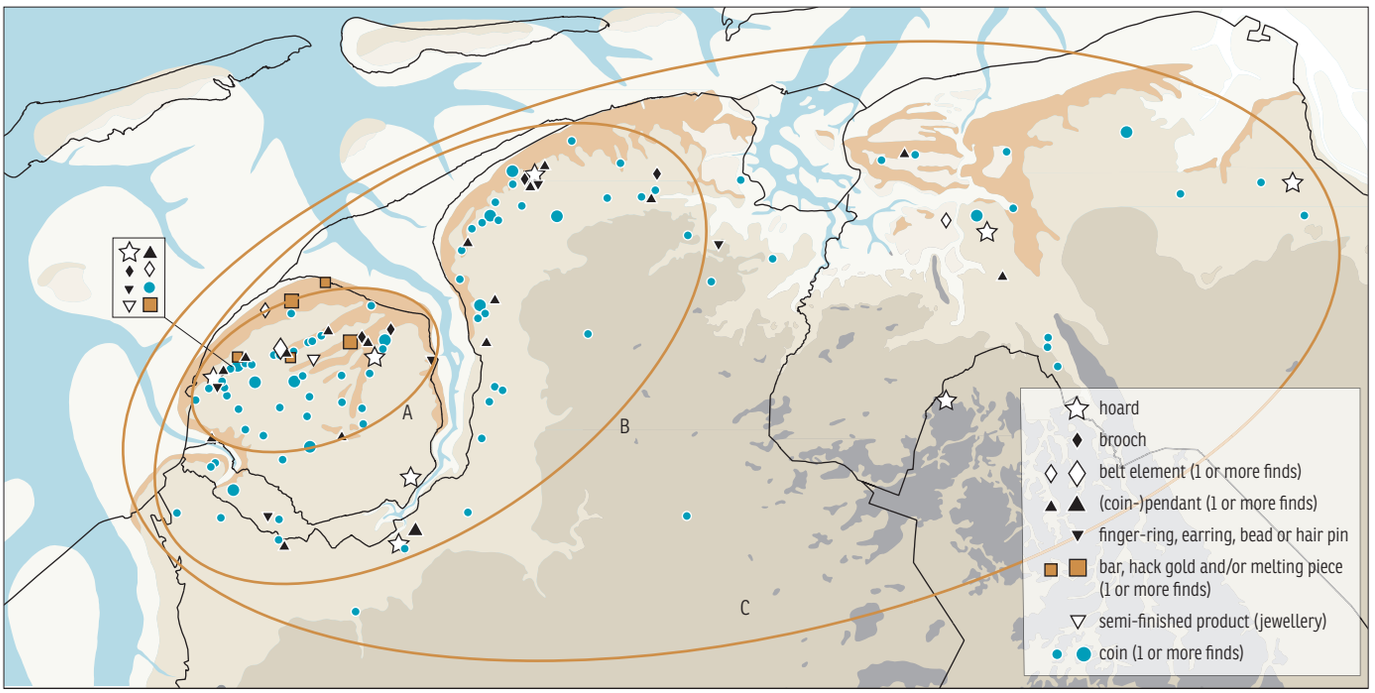
15 Finished in 1998 and, in a revised form, published in two parts: Nicolay 2005; 2006a.

16 Compare the English 'elite takeover model' (see below).

17 Nicolay 2005, 87-88.

18 Nicolay 2006a, 75-81; see also De Langen 1995, 182-183.

19 Bazelmans et al. 2002.



2.2 | The assumed division of the northern Netherlands into three socio-political zones, as reflected in the distribution of 6th- and 7th-century gold finds. The finds from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' are shown in a separate frame (after Nicolay 2010a, fig. 11; for the background, see fig. 3.1). A: core zone with unique, royal jewels decorated with garnet cloisonné (northern Westergo), B: intermediate zone with aristocratic jewels decorated with filigree (central Westergo and Oostergo), C: outer zone, dominated by simpler ornaments and gold coins (the province of Groningen).

presence of relatively intact dwelling mounds with early-medieval layers close to the surface, and the erosion of such layers as a result of agricultural activities.[20] Secondly, the arrival of Jutish immigrants is rejected by Taayke, who points to the near absence of pottery with a Jutish origin in the northern Netherlands.[21] Thirdly, Van Egmond has shown that the term 'Frisian' in early medieval times was probably no more than a geographical label, and was not used as an ethnic label for the inhabitants of *Frisia Magna* as a whole before the Frankish conquest – when this group of people became one of the '*gentes*' of the Frankish and Carolingian kingdom and their *Lex Frisionum* was codified.[22] In this view the term does not refer to a single ethnic group or kingdom, but to a coastal area that *outsiders* associated with 'Frisians'. Fourthly and finally, the status of the historically known Frisian 'kings' has been questioned, as well as the historical evidence for Frisian kingship in general, as will be discussed in the following paragraph.

2.3 Frisian kings in the western and central Netherlands: a *palatium* at Utrecht

The western coastal area of the Netherlands and the adjacent river region have played a crucial role in the discussion about the origin and expansion of Frisian kingship. Since the number of high-status valuables from the western and central Netherlands is limited compared to the richness of finds from the northern Netherlands, this discussion was largely based on the evidence from historical sources and, of course, on its interpretation.

In the article 'The Frisian kingdom' and later, in his PhD thesis, Halbertsma presents the historical evidence that is available about the assumed Frisian hegemony in the western and central Netherlands (table 2.1).[23] The early medieval history of Frisian kingship starts in the year 678, when king Aldgisl (*Aldgislo rege*) was visited by Wilfrid, bishop of York. According to his biographer, Wilfrid was Aldgisl's guest for the winter and stayed at his *palatium* in *Frisia*, which may have been situated in the former Roman *castellum* at Utrecht. A decade later, in the year 688, the Anglo-Saxon missionary Wigbert made a journey to the Frisian area, not meeting Aldgisl but his probable successor Radbod (*rex Rathbedus*). Unfortunately, we do not know how Aldgisl and Radbod are related (father and son?), nor which places Wigbert visited. Like Winifred (later named Boniface) in the year 716, Wigbert may have landed at Dorestad, meeting king Radbod at Utrecht. Two years after Wigbert's visit, according to his biographer, Willibrord too met Radbod, in his *palatium* at Utrecht. The third historically documented Frisian leader of aristocratic and possibly even royal status, was Bubo (or Poppo), who died in 734 fighting a Frankish army in the present-day

20 Bazelmans et al. 2002, 235. See the discussion in section 12.3.

21 Taayke 2008, 201-202.

22 Unpublished research by W.S. van Egmond (Utrecht). Compare the 7th-century re-introduction of the term *Frisii*, after a period of discontinuity in habitation, probably by the Franks (Bazelmans 2009).

23 Halbertsma 1965/1966; 2000 (revised edition dissertation, original publication 1982).

Table 2.1. | Historical or reconstructed events of the 7th and 8th centuries that relate to Frisian kingship and Frankish expansion in the western and central Netherlands (after Halbertsma 1965/1966; 2000).

YEAR	HISTORICAL EVENT
623-638	first church built within the walls of the Utrecht *castellum* by Dagobert I
ca 650	Frisian occupation of Utrecht and Dorestad
678	missionary Wilfrid visited king Aldgisl in his *palatium*, possibly at Utrecht
688	missionary Wigbert visited king Radbod
690	missionary Willibrord visited king Radbod in his *palatium* at Utrecht, shortly after Pippin II had reconquered *citerior Fresia*
695	Willibrord, archbishop of the Frisians, is granted the royal domain at Utrecht by Pippin II
ca 711	marriage of Grimoald (son of Pippin II) and Theudesinde (daughter of Radbod)
714	death of Pippin II and Grimoald; *citerior Fresia* reconquered by Radbod
716	Charles Martel defeated by Radbod; missionary Winifred (Boniface) landed at Dorestad and met Radbod at Utrecht
719	death of Radbod; Frisian territory, probably up to the river Vlie, conquered by Charles Martel
734	Frisian commander Bubo (or Poppo) defeated at the river Boorne by Charles Martel; Westergo and Oostergo (province of Friesland) became Frankish territory

province of Friesland. There is no record of the location of his residence, nor about any relationship to Aldgisl or Radbod.

The importance of Utrecht as a royal residence is thought to have its origin in the first half of the 7th century, when the central river area was Frankish territory.[24] The Merovingian king Dagobert I (629-639) is said to have founded a church, probably dedicated to St. Martin, within the walls of the Utrecht *castellum*. The church and *castellum*, as part of a royal domain consisting of reclaimed Roman state property, were presented by Dagobert to the bishop of Cologne. After the Frisian conquest, around 650, it is assumed that both Aldgisl and Radbod built their *palatium* within the *castellum*, perhaps using the church building as their residence. During a short period of Frankish control, the royal domain was granted to Willibrord by Pippin II († 714) in 695, upon which the church was restored or rebuilt. The death of Pippin, followed by a period of political unrest within the Frankish realm, gave Radbod the opportunity to reconquer Utrecht. Finally, after Radbod's death in 719, Utrecht lost its – assumed – significance as a residence of Frisian kings. Pippin's bastard son and successor Charles Martel (ca 688-741) not only conquered the area south of the Old Rhine (*citerior Fresia*), but also the coastal area of the western Netherlands (*ulterior Fresia*). By the time that the rebellious Bubo (or Poppo) was defeated, in 734, Frankish territory extended even further north.

In contrast to the 6th-century 'warlords', Halbertsma regards Aldgisl and Radbod as powerful kings.[25] The reason why these leaders are not called *reges* but *duces* in Frankish sources is explained by the fact that the Frankish kings – as successors to the Roman emperors – regarded the area south of the former Rhine *limes* as belonging to their territory. From a Frankish perspective, Aldgisl and Radbod had occupied Frankish territory and for that reason were dealt with as dependent vassals.[26] However, Halbertsma is of the opinion that only an acknowledgement of such leaders as true *reges* could explain the marriage between Pippin's son Grimoald and Radbod's daughter Theudesinde, the military successes of Aldgisl and Radbod and the Frankish fear of an attack by Radbod during his latter years.[27]

Unfortunately, it is not clear from Halbersma's publications which region Aldgisl and Radbod might have controlled. On the one hand, the whole area of the later *Frisia Magna* is considered Frisian territory.[28] The Frisian kingdom would have included the coastal areas from the river Sincfal to the river Weser, and for short periods also the central river area around Utrecht and Dorestad. Within this kingdom, a central function is assumed not only for the Utrecht region, but also for the area between the rivers Vlie and Lauwers, that is the modern province of Friesland. Although this is not specifically stated in Halbersma's work, his references to Boeles and pictures of Frisian-style jewellery again suggest a 6th- or 7th-century origin of the Frisian kingdom in this gold-rich area.[29]

24 For the history of Utrecht based on archaeological evidence, see recently Van Rooijen 2010.

25 Halbertsma 2000, 301-303.

26 Halbertsma 2000, 83; see also Wood 1992, 236. Compare the Frankish view on the Saxons (see below).

27 Halbertsma 2000, 85, 90.

28 Halbertsma 1965/1966, 73-74; 2000, 220-221, 228-229.

29 See Halbertsma 2000, 68.

2.3 | The gradual annexation of the western and northern parts of '*Frisia Magna*' by Pippin II and his successors since the late 7th century. The historically documented year of expansion (see table 2.1) and the assumed borders of the conquered areas (the Rhine, Vlie and Lauwers/Hunze) are shown in brown (redrawn after Noomen 2005, 63; drawing by the author).

On the other hand, Halbertsma is of the opinion that the coastal region between Sincfal and Weser, because of its length, could not have been controlled by a single authority.[30] In the days of Aldgisl and Radbod the Frisian kingdom would 'only' have comprised the still extensive areas between the Sincfal and the Old Rhine (*citerior Fresia*) and between the Old Rhine and the Vlie (*ulterior Fresia*), including the area around Utrecht and Dorestad. After Radbod lost the southern half of his kingdom shortly before 690, he is thought to have expanded his territory to the south and east once more in 714, then occupying the whole of the river area for some years. The slow and gradual annexation of 'Frisian' territory, started by Charles Martel in about 719 and completed by Charlemagne in the early 9th century (fig. 2.3), is seen as evidence of a divided *Frisia Magna* which comprised at least two kingdoms, one northeast and one southwest of the river Vlie.[31]

Discussing the socio-political organization of the western Netherlands in early medieval times, Besteman argues that the original power base of Aldgisl and Radbod was not situated in Friesland, but in the coastal area of North Holland. This is where 'important and strategically situated centres', later confiscated as Frankish royal property, are especially well-documented (e.g. in Texel, Wieringen and around Velsen) – and it was here that the Frisian expansion under Aldgisl and Radbod is thought to have started.[32] A similar view on the origin of Frisian kingship is given by Van Es, in a study of the Roman-period and early medieval history of the central river area.[33] Here it is argued that Aldgisl and Radbod, having their original power base in North Holland, controlled the coastal area of North and South Holland, as well as the western half of the central river area.[34]

A fascinating long-term perspective on the process of power formation in the central Netherlands, before Aldgisl and Radbod entered the scene, is presented by Heidinga.[35] The Betuwe and Veluwe regions, the home territory of the Chamavi, are seen as the political and economic heart of the Netherlands in the Migration period. Within this area a key position is assumed for Rhenen, which is situated directly north of the Rhine, on the eastern end of an impressive moraine range (fig. 2.4). This is where three gold torques were hoarded in the early 5th century (fig. 5.27), rich collections of grave goods were deposited in several 6th-

30 Halbertsma 2000, especially 301-304.

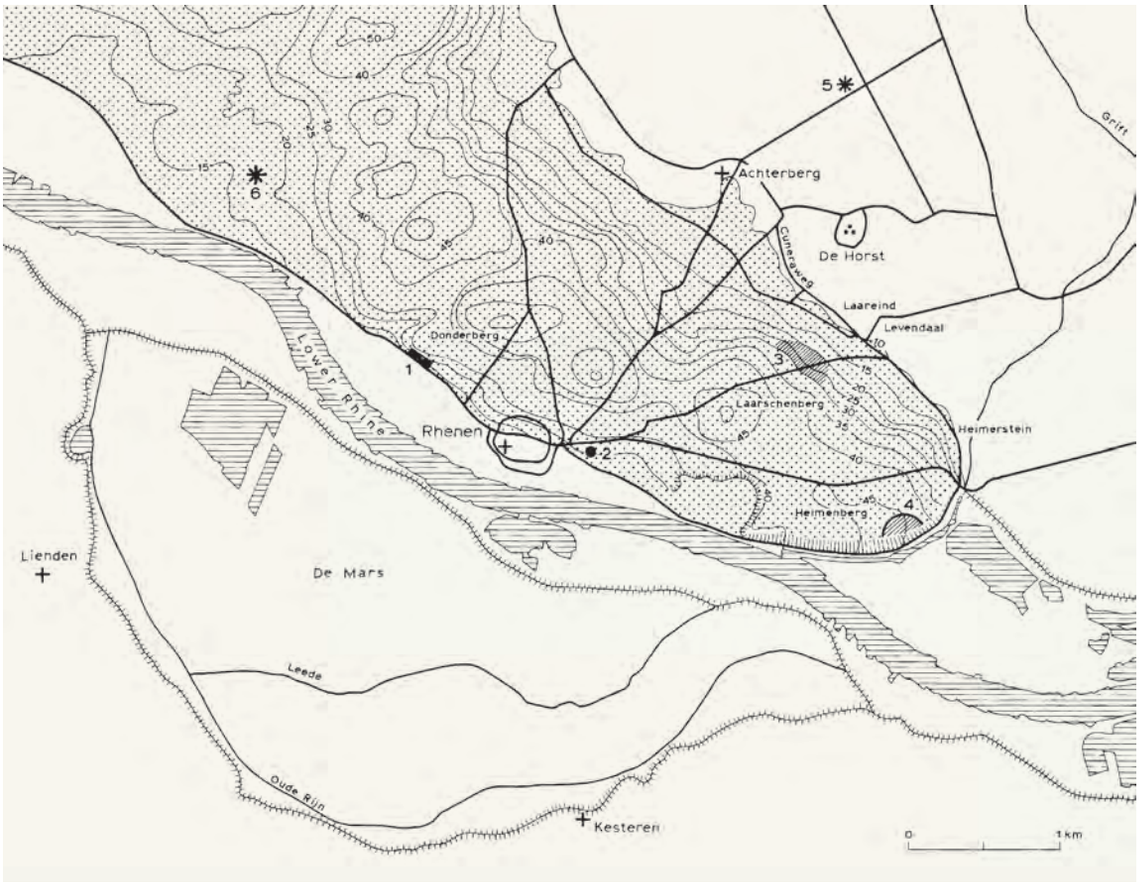
31 Compare Noomen 2005, 62. For the annexation of the German part of *Frisia Magna*, see Lampen 1999.

32 Besteman 1990, 104.

33 Van Es 1994, 82-93 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

34 See also Van Es 1990, 167.

35 Heidinga 1990; see also Heidinga 1987.



2.4 | The clustering of early medieval sites and a location referring to Cunera, a king's daughter known from a late-medieval legend, at a moraine range along the river Rhine, near Rhenen (after Heidinga 1990, fig. 4, slightly adjusted). 1. late-Roman and early medieval cemetery at the 'Donderberg', 2. so-called 'Cunerabergje', 3. supposed site of a second early medieval cemetery, at the 'Laarse Berg', 4. late-Merovingian-period earth-work at the 'Heimenberg', 5. early 5th-century gold hoard from the 'Achterberg', 6. late 7th- or early 8th-century coin hoard from Remmerden.

century cemeteries (see figs. 5.11-17) and a late 7th- or early 8th-century gold- and silver hoard was buried (fig. 5.25). Furthermore, a large, semicircular stronghold would have been constructed on the eastern end of this ridge in the Migration period (fig. 3.9).[36] Finally, historical sources speak of a royal estate and possibly even a royal palace at Rhenen.[37] According to Heidinga, Rhenen functioned as the seat of a regional king, who ruled the Betuwe and Veluwe districts as an early Anglo-Saxon-type 'petty kingdom' during the 5th and 6th centuries.[38] As one of many kingdoms, and probably forming part of loose confederations already, it became integrated into a larger, Frisian kingdom in the 7th century, in response to Frankish expansion. This would mean that *Frisia*, in its largest form, not only included the area between Sincfal and Weser and the adjacent river area, but also the Veluwe region in the central Netherlands.

The most recent views on the development of kingship in the western and central Netherlands are presented in three articles and a dissertation, dealing with the early history of the provinces of North and South Holland, the stature of Radbod, the reliability of historical sources about Frisian kingship, and the rise of 'central-place complexes' in the western Netherlands, respectively. In the first article, Bazelmans, Dijkstra and De Koning reject earlier ideas about the existence of an original core region of the Frisian kingdom in the northern or western Netherlands.[39] Given the central position of the province of Utrecht in the context of an international trading network and its proximity to the Frankish-Austrasian power centre, Radbod's kingdom is believed to have originated in the central Netherlands. On the basis of the territories mentioned in the *Lex Frisionum*, it is argued that *Frisia Magna* was subdivided into three judicial – and therefore political – regions, with the rivers Vlie and Lauwers functioning as natural borders. Although this is not specifically stated, this would mean that Aldgisl and Radbod controlled the extensive area south of the Vlie (western and central Netherlands).

In the second article, Van Egmond argues that Radbod, like Aldgisl, was not a true *rex*, as he is called in Anglo-Saxon sources.[40] Instead, he should be seen as a high aristocrat with a status comparable to a Frankish *majordomo*, like Pippin II and Charles Martel, which ex-

36 Heidinga 1990, 24-28; nowadays, the stronghold is dated to the late-Merovingian period (see section 3.3).

37 Heidinga 1990, 28-32.

38 Heidinga 1990, 35-36.

39 Bazelmans et al. 2004, 8-9, 19.

40 Van Egmond 2005.

plains why in Frankish sources he is called a *dux*. Furthermore, it is argued that Radbod did not represent an old Frisian tradition of royal authority, going back to the early 7th, and perhaps even 6th century. Instead, the expansion of his power is explained as a late 7th-century development, closely bound up with events within the Frankish empire at a time when control of the central river area was given lower priority by the Austrasian elite. According to Van Egmond, Radbod controlled just a small part of *Frisia Magna*, comprising the area around Utrecht and Dorestad and possibly also part of the western Netherlands.[41]

In the third article, Scheringa critically evaluates the historical evidence of Frisian kingship, as a modern 'historical construct'.[42] He argues that Frisian occupation of the central Netherlands around 650, its re-occupation by the Franks in ca 690, the presence of a Frisian *palatium* at Utrecht, and Frisian rule over the whole of *Frisia Magna* cannot be proved and is largely based on an over- or misinterpretation of historical sources.[43] Moreover, both the representativity of the cluster of gold finds in the province of Friesland and its suggested association with a Frisian royal power centre in the central Netherlands is questioned. Finally, Scheringa agrees with Van Egmond (see above) that the early medieval term 'Frisian' refers to a heterogeneous group of people, probably belonging to several kingdoms and not to a single Frisian realm. Scheringa concludes that the traditional image of Frisian kingship needs to be revised. In future, research should *separate* the evidence from historical and archaeological sources as being largely incommensurable.

Finally, Dijkstra in his dissertation presents both the archaeological and historical indications for power formation in the western Netherlands as part of two Scandinavian-type 'central-place complexes'.[44] By looking at the distribution of a) the oldest churches, b) manorial centres, c) assembly or so-called 'thing places', d) fortifications and e) trading sites, he reconstructs one of these complexes around the Rhine mouth, and a second in the Oer-IJ estuary. Although the idea is promising, most of the sites mentioned by Dijkstra are of a Carolingian or younger date, which makes it difficult to project this model back into the Merovingian period. The socio-political context of the central-place complexes is interpreted in a very traditional way: they are seen as the centres of regional kingdoms, which were headed by petty kings in the 6th and perhaps the 7th century, and by the time of Radbod had become part of an extensive Frisian kingdom.[45] Moreover, it is suggested that these regional kingdoms were tributary to the Franks before being incorporated by the 'Frisians'.

Studies of the socio-political organization of the western and central Netherlands have been focused on the origin and extent of a Frisian kingdom. Remarkably little attention has been paid to the internal structure of this *Frisia Magna*, or smaller, regional kingdoms, as reflected in the nature and distribution of high-status or prestige goods. For a few sites, like Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein' (fig. 3.7) and Uitgeest-'Dorregeest', a special status as a local or regional centre is assumed, but just how they functioned in early medieval elite networks has not been investigated.[46] Moreover, the presumed owners of prestige goods are only described in general terms, e.g. as 'nobles' or 'members of the social upper crust'– without offering any information about the position such persons occupied within the network of socio-political relations that must have existed in the western and central Netherlands.[47]

2.4 The Saxon 'democracy'

Traditionally, the early history of the 'Saxons' as a tribal group is based on two assumptions.[48] First, the original homeland of the Saxon people was located in Schleswig-Holstein, whence the Saxon tribe expanded to the south and part of this tribe migrated to England. Secondly, Saxon society was organized as a 'democratic' confederation; the Saxons had no central authority in the form of a king. Both assumptions are based on historical sources, the role of archaeology often being limited to presenting data that could support this modern origin myth.[49]

41 Van Egmond 2005, 35.

42 Scheringa, in prep. Compare Theuws 2003, note 50.

43 See also Van Egmond 2010 (specifically referring to the oldest church of Utrecht, which may be a donation not of Dagobert I, but of Dagobert II (676-679) – suggesting *uninterrupted* Frankish authority in the central river area during most of the 7th century).

44 Dijkstra 2011, 279-339, 383-384.

45 Dijkstra 2011, 337-338, 366-369, 385-386.

46 E.g. Dijkstra 2004, 402-404; Bazelmans et al. 2004, 22 (Rijnsburg: interpreted as a local elite residence with trading function); De Koning 2003, 73 (Uitgeest: interpreted as a regional centre with cultic function).

47 E.g. Bult & Hallewas 1990, 86; Van Es 1994, 84-86 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

48 Especially Genrich 1969; 1977; 1981, 80-84; more recently, see also Häßler 1996, 45-47; Capelle 2008.

49 For the medieval origin myth of the Saxons, see Last 1977.

In the work of the famous Greek geographer Ptolemy, working in Alexandria during the mid 2nd century AD, the name *Saxones* is first mentioned.[50] These Saxons, as neighbours of the *Chauki*, are said to have lived on the eastern side of the lower Elbe, in the present-day Dithmarschen area. Since no Saxon tribe is mentioned in Tacitus' *Germania*, Genrich is of the opinion that Ptolemy is dealing with a new tribe, bearing a new name.[51] He believes that this tribe originated from a confederation of smaller tribes in Schleswig-Holstein, who worshipped the same fertility goddess Nerthus. This peaceful coalition, sharing a common religious background, is thought to have been organized for centuries in a modern, democratic way – as the Venerable Bede describes in his 'Ecclesiastical history of the English people' (completed in 731):

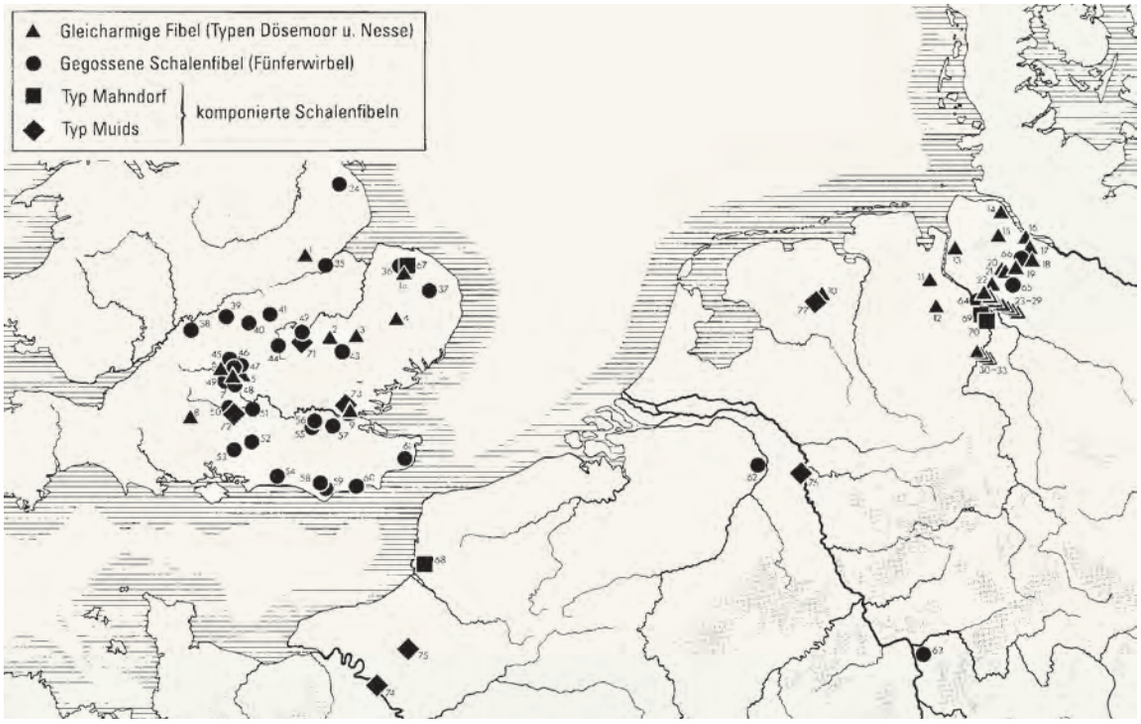
> "For these Old Saxons have no king, but several lords who are set over the nation. Whenever war is imminent, these cast lots impartially, and the one on whom the lot falls is followed and obeyed by all for the duration of the war; but as soon as the war ends, the lords revert to equality of status."
>
> (Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum* V.10)

According to Springer, however, the name *Saxones* in historical sources was used for different groups of people and not as a unique tribal name for 'the' Saxons, as Genrich uses it.[52] Moreover, the prevailing opinion that 'the' Saxons were first mentioned by Ptolemy as living to the northeast of the river Elbe is incorrect. Springer convincingly argues that during the Roman period the name *Saxones* – like the medieval term '*Vikings*' – was used as a collective noun for Germanic raiders who arrived by ship and harassed the coastal areas of the Roman Empire.[53] It is not before the mid 5th century that the *Saxones*, i.e. the Germanic inhabitants of southern England, were first mentioned as belonging to a tribal group. The earliest source speaking of *Saxones* in northern Germany is even younger, dating to the first half of the 6th century.[54] Interestingly, these people were called 'Old Saxons' ('*Antiqui Saxones*') in the above quotation of Bede, in opposition to the 'real' Saxons, who – in the eyes of Bede – inhabited England. It was only after the creation of a Saxon *gens* by Charlemagne and, related to this, the coining of the word '*Anglisaxones*', that the continental Saxons came to be known as *the* Saxons.[55] Springer's reinterpretation of the historical sources has important consequences for the earliest history of the *Saxones* as a tribal group: accepting Springer's argumentation, there is no ground for assuming (1) a Saxon homeland in the Dithmarschen area, (2) an origin from Schleswig-Holstein for the Saxon people living in southern England, or (3) a southward expansion of Saxon territory across the Elbe during subsequent centuries.[56]

On archaeological grounds, an origin of the *Saxones* more to the west, in the Elbe-Weser region, has been proposed by Böhme.[57] A specific burial tradition and the production of *Buckelurnen* and various brooch types are related to a 4th-century Saxon core region in the present-day Cuxhaven district.[58] A Saxon expansion to the south and the migration of Saxon people to England in the following century is thought to be reflected in the distribution of equal-armed brooches, especially of the types Dösemoor and Nesse, across the Elbe-Weser region and the occurrence of similar finds in southeast England (fig. 2.5). Over the Migration period, the still expanding territory of the *Saxones* would have come to include the Elbe-Weser region, the middle-Weser region and probably also the coastal area between Ems and Weser.[59]

The idea that the Saxon tribe was no kingdom with a central authority, but a collection of smaller tribes, only in a period of war forming a larger confederation with a military leader (a '*Heerführer*'), is based on three historical sources dating from the 8th to the 10th centuries.[60] Besides Bede's *Historia*, these are the *Vita Lebuini antiqua* (written ca 850 or later) and the *Res gestae Saxonicae* by Widukind (written ca 960).[61] In the first two sources, it is specifically stated that the Saxons had no king. Instead, the individual tribes were headed by *satrapae*. According to the second source, describing the work of the missionary Lebuin in the Saxon area around 770, there was a yearly tribal gathering at a location called Marklo,

50 Springer 2003a, 237-239.
51 Genrich 1977, 514.
52 Springer 2003a; 2003b.
53 Springer 2003a, 247-248; 2003b, 16; see also Wood 1990.
54 Springer 2003a, 248-249; see also Springer 2003b, 15-17.
55 Springer 2003b, 18; compare the creation of a 'Frisian' *gens* after the Frankish conquest (see above).
56 Springer 2003a, 237, 249.
57 Böhme 2003; see also Böhme 1999, 66-70.
58 For the burial tradition, see also Schön 2003.
59 Böhme 2003, 257 (see also fig. 2, regions 1-2 and 6-8).
60 Becher 1999; see also Last 1978.
61 Becher 1999, 149-153 (with translated text fragments).



2.5 | The geographical distribution of equal-armed brooches (*gleicharmige Fibeln*), cast saucer brooches (*gegossene Schalenfibeln*) and composite saucer brooches (*komponierte Schalenfibeln*), as a reflection of the 5th-century migration of 'Saxon' people to southeast England (after Böhme 1986, fig. 69).

where each of the *satrapae* was accompanied by twelve *nobiles* (nobles), *libri* (freemen) and *laeti* (serfs). During this gathering, matters of tribal importance were discussed and in times of war a military leader was probably elected. The third source speaks of a division of the Saxon tribe into three regional groups (Westfalen, Engern and Ostfalen), each having a military leader.[62] In periods of external threat, these are the leaders that were substituted by a central military authority.

Although it has often been assumed that the 'democratic' organization presented in these sources had its origin in the peaceful formation of a Saxon tribe in the Roman period, Becher is more critical. He argues that the formation of a Saxon tribal confederation with an elected military leader – like the formation of three regional groups – is no older than the third quarter of the 8th century, when the survival of the Saxon tribe was threatened by Carolingian expansion.[63] This is probably the time when smaller tribal groups joined forces, for the first time forming the larger tribal confederations that withstood the threat of Carolingian occupation for over 30 years (772-804).[64]

An interesting question is why Bede called the Saxon leaders *satrapae* rather than *reges*. Most information about 6th- to 8th-century *Saxones* was recorded from a Frankish perspective, focusing on military conflicts and presenting the Saxons as aggressive and rebellious ('*Saxones rebelles*').[65] Moreover, these were pagans, in no way comparable to the sophisticated and Christian leaders of the Frankish kingdom – which explains why Bertoaldus (ca 622-623), the earliest known Saxon leader, was called '*dux Saxanorum*' and not given the Frankish title for a king (*rex*).[66] The word *satrapa* will have been used in a similar, and even more negative way.[67] It is no coincidence that Bede chose the very same word when referring to the most important enemy of the people of Israel, the Philistines.[68] When the political and religious message as expressed in the Frankish and Anglo-Saxon sources is fully understood, there clearly is no reason to assume that the *Saxones* – unlike other Germanic tribes – were headed by leaders other than 'ordinary' kings or *reges*.

To support the historical evidence and, especially, to trace the leading elite mentioned by Bede, archaeological finds have only scantily figured in the debate. Genrich, for example, relates the richest 'Saxon' burials and hoards from the Roman and Merovingian periods to '*einer Oberschicht*' and persons with a '*fürstliche Position*' and a '*gehobene soziale Stellung*'; the absence of truly royal objects is explained by the lack of a central authority.[69] The existence of a 'democratic' structure without a single king is

62 For this triple division of the Saxon area, see also the 9th-century *Poeta Saxo* (Becher 1999, 152-153).

63 Becher 1999, 152, 154, 158.

64 For the history of the Frankish-Saxon wars, see Lampen 1999.

65 Zettel 1987.

66 Wood 1992, 236; compare the use of the title *dux* for 'Frisian' kings (see above).

67 Becher 1999, 149-150.

68 Becher 1999, 150.

69 Genrich 1981, 80-84; see also Genrich 1969.

also suggested by Häßler, who interprets the mid-Roman-period, so-called '*Fürstengräbern*' as belonging to aristocrats who had no more than regional power within the tribal coalition.[70] Moreover, he is of the opinion that the variation in richness of grave goods in the Migration and Merovingian periods directly reflects the historically known division of Saxon society into ranks – an association that was countered by Weber's analysis of the grave finds from Issendorf.[71]

For the first time presenting the *archaeological* evidence for the existence of a Saxon elite, Steuer concludes that royal burials are indeed lacking in northern Germany.[72] The absence of such high-status burials, however, is explained in a more satisfying way, by considering the impact of depositional factors on the archaeological visibility of elites. An important observation is that most of the currently known late-Roman and early medieval weapons and gold and silver ornaments were found in inhumation burials, while the excavated graves predating the 7th century are mainly cremation burials – in which the usually fragmented grave goods are harder to identify. Secondly, high-status burials are often characteristic of socio-political border or peripheral zones, which would explain why the richest graves are not found in the Saxon core region but more to the south, closer to the border with the Frankish kingdom (e.g. the '*Fürstengräbern*' of Beckum and Soest).[73]

Influenced by Scandinavian archaeology, research has headed in a different direction during recent years, now focusing on the formation of regional and supra-regional kingdoms and the appearance of 'central-place complexes'. On the basis of the clustering of gold bracteates in the environs of the 'Heidenschanze' and 'Heidenstadt' fortifications, the presence of a Scandinavian-type central place is assumed for the Sievern area, functioning as a socio-political, trading and religious centre in the northern Elbe-Weser region during the Migration period.[74] At a local level, social differentiation would be reflected in the variety of grave goods from sites like Fallward, Otterndorf, Flögeln and Sievern, the exceptional burials from Fallward (4th-6th century) probably representing an elite with a status similar to that of the leading family occupying the Roman-period *Herrenhof* of Feddersen Wierde.[75]

It can be concluded that, until recently, both historical and archaeological research into the early history of the Saxons as a tribal group was overshadowed by a modern origin myth about a 'democratic' kingdom, having its origin in Schleswig-Holstein. After the impact of depositional factors on the archaeological visibility of elites was recognized, and ideas about the formation of kingdoms in southern Scandinavia were integrated into the German research tradition, the focus has shifted towards archaeological research into power formation and the identification of 'central places'. Although attempts have been made to assign individual finds to members of a specific social stratum, the internal structure of socio-political configurations along the German North Sea coast and its relation to the distribution of valuable items has not as yet been the subject of research.

2.5 Germanic newcomers and the rise of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms

Every aspect of early Anglo-Saxon archaeology is dominated by the discussion about migration as an explanation for changes in settlement layout, material culture and identity, resulting in: "...two opposing paradigms, one which views 'Anglo-Saxon' material culture as intrusive and a symptom of migration, the other which views it as a misnomer applied to essentially indigenous developments in the fifth and sixth centuries, with a small nucleus of Germanic overlords acting as a catalyst."[76] Some six decades of debate show an interesting development of these paradigms, the early idea of massive migrations – as reported by Bede and others – (popular in the 1950s), being replaced by the model of elite takeover and dominance (1960s to present), after which the migration hypothesis has been reaffirmed by a group of prominent scholars such as Hines, Böhme and Härke (1980s to present).[77] According to Hamerow, it is the task of future research to develop more sophisticated models that are sensitive on the one hand to regional variability, and on the other to a more dual process of migration and overlordship with substantial indigenous continuity.[78]

70 Häßler 1996, 45-47; 2003, 133.
71 Weber 2000, 201.
72 Steuer 1978.
73 See also the discussion in section 12.2.
74 Zimmermann 2005; Aufderhaar et al. 2009; Jöns 2009a; Aufderhaar & Brandt 2011.
75 For the grave goods, see section 6.2. For Feddersen Wierde, see Schmid 2010, with references.
76 Hamerow 1994 (quotation p. 174); 1998.
77 For an overview, with references, see Hamerow 1994, 164-166; Scull 1998.
78 Hamerow 1994, 174-175; see also Yorke 2005, 5-6.

The influence of the different paradigms is clearly reflected in the models of power formation that have been suggested for the kingdoms of Kent, East Anglia and East Saxony. The year 428 is seen as an important starting point for the history of all early Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in southeast England.[79] Most of the Roman troops having left England two decades earlier, and the inhabitants of the Roman *civitates* being left to defend themselves, a Romano-British king named Vortigern is said to have invited Saxon mercenaries to defend the English coast against seafaring peoples and Picts. After small groups of Saxon *foederati* and their families had settled peacefully under British control, a Saxon revolt, possibly in the year 442, was allegedly followed by an uncontrolled and massive migration of different continental groups settling all along the coast (fig. 2.5).[80] According to a famous passage by Bede, in his 'Ecclesiastical history', "[t]hese newcomers were from the three most formidable races of Germany, the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent... From the Saxons ... came the East, South and West Saxons. And from the Angles ... are descended the East and Middle Angles..." (fig. 2.6).[81]

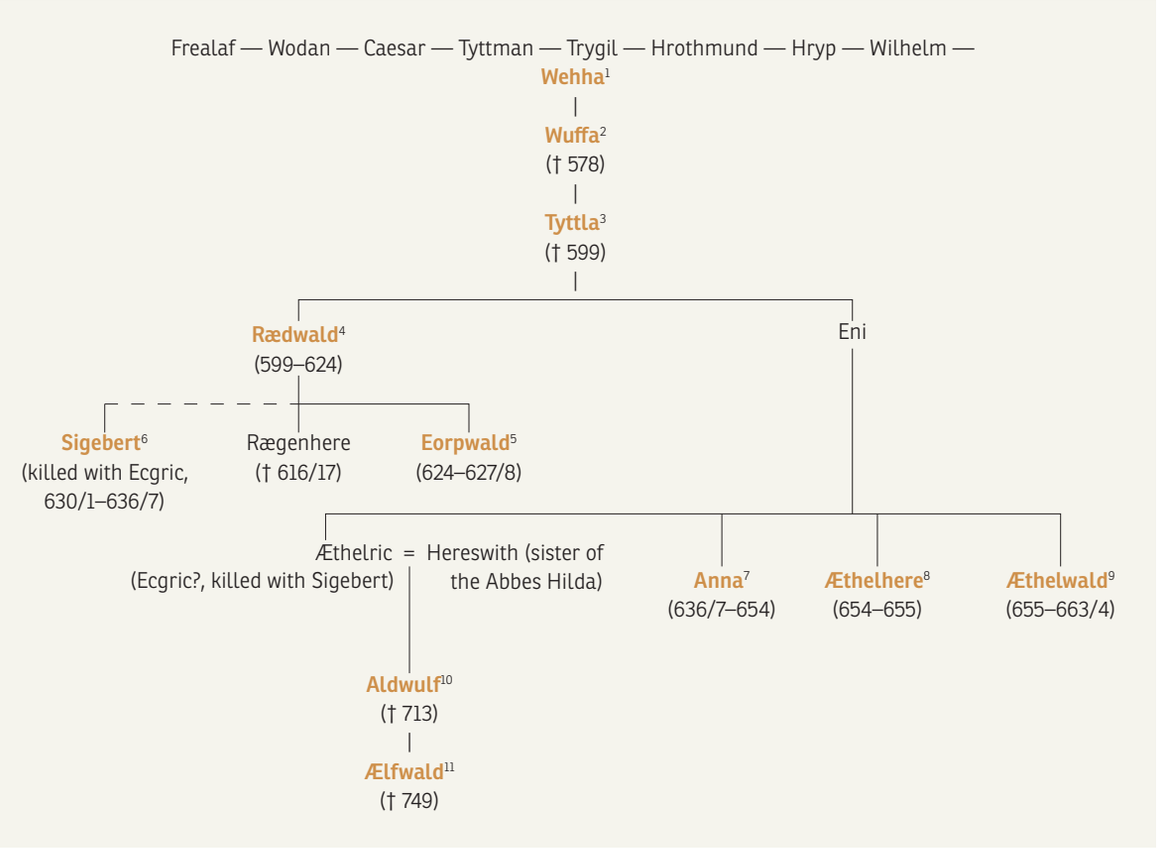
In Kentish archaeology, strongly influenced by the studies of Leeds, Myres and the Hawkeses, the arrival of south-Scandinavian and especially Jutish people is reflected in a 'Jutish Phase', which is followed by a 'Frankish Phase' and a 'Kentish Phase'.[82] The first phase, dated to ca AD 450-525, is characterized by 'Jutish' grave goods, including hand-made pottery, early cruciform brooches, silver-gilt square-headed brooches and gold bracteates.[83] These finds are attributed to an elite takeover by members of the Jutish aristocracy and to the formation of an independent kingdom in the eastern part of Kent before AD 500.[84] In the following phase (ca 525-560), the grave goods are dominated by Frankish imports. Although in early publications these finds were also attributed to immigrants, nowadays they are seen as the result of intensive cross-Channel trade and close political ties between the Frankish and Kentish royal houses.[85] For Kent, even

2.6 | The assumed division of England into early medieval kingdoms around 600, ruled by 'Anglo-Saxons' and 'Celts'. The Jutish (Kent), Saxon (Essex, Sussex and Wessex) and Anglian areas (East and Middle Anglia) are those occupied by the Germanic people mentioned by Bede in his *Historia ecclesiastica* (I.15) (after Campbell 1991, fig. 50).

Frankish overlordship has been proposed, which would explain the marriage of several Kentish kings to Frankish princesses.[86] The third, 'Kentish Phase' (after ca 560) saw the development of a Kentish art style, showing a mixture of Scandinavian and Frankish decorative elements. Especially 'Kentish Animal Style II' may have been used by the ruling elite to signal their status and power position.[87] Interestingly, recent metal-detector finds also point to the presence of 'Saxon' and 'Anglian' elements in the Kentish find material (e.g. supporting-arm and annular brooches), indicating not just a Scandinavian, but a mixed origin of the 5th-century immigrants.[88]

Besides archaeological data, written sources (especially Bede's work, law codes and charters of 7th-century Kentish rulers) are used for

79 Böhme 1986, 559-561;
80 Böhme 1986; see also Chadwick Hawkes 1982, 64-70.
81 Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum* I.15.
82 Especially Leeds 1936; Hawkes 1956; Myres 1969; Chadwick Hawkes 1982 and, more recently, Welch 2007, 211-227; Kruse 2007; Nielsen 2009.
83 Especially Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 321-325, 327.
84 Chadwick Hawkes 1982, 64.
85 Respectively Leeds 1936, 44-58 and Chadwick Hawkes 1982, 72.
86 Wood 1992; see also Yorke 2002, 125-129.
87 Nielsen 1999, 199-200.
88 See Richardson 2005, 29-30, 250-251, table 6; Welch 2007, 211-212.



2.7 | Royal genealogy of the East Anglian Wuffinga dynasty. The descent through Wodan and Caesar is shown horizontally. Members of the Wuffinga family that came to the throne are shown in gold, numbered in order of (putative) rule (redrawn after Bruce-Mitford 1975, table 38, slightly adjusted, with order of succession added).

reconstructing the history of Kentish kingship.[89] The Kentish origin myth is directly related to the arrival of the first immigrants in Kent, who were ruled by two brothers, Hengist and Horsa. In the royal genealogy Hengist is presented as a forefather of the Kentish royal house (the Oiscingas), which traces its ancestry to Wodan/Odin. Although it is generally agreed that both the origin story and genealogy are fictional and part of late 6th- and 7th-century court propaganda, two historical kings are mentioned: Irminric or Iurminric and his famous successor Æthelbert (ca 560-616).[90] The latter was married to a Frankish princess, became overlord or *bretwalda* over other kingdoms in eastern and southern England in ca 595, and was the first Anglo-Saxon king to be baptized and buried in a church (St Martin's Chapel, Canterbury).[91] In its early days, the kingdom of Kent only comprised what is today East Kent (east of the river Medway); it is probably not before the reign of Æthelbert that West Kent was also included.[92] During the 7th century, both regions were headed by a king, of which one was generally dominant.

The development of the East Anglian kingdom is discussed in several closely related articles by Carver and Scull, using historical and especially archaeological sources.[93] Both agree with Böhme and Hines that Germanic groups settled in large parts of East Anglia during the 5th and indeed 6th centuries, first originating from the Lower Elbe region (Saxons) and Schleswig-Holstein/southern Denmark (Angles), followed by people from southwestern Norway.[94] Although finds from cemeteries such as Spong Hill show that communities were internally ranked and expressed a regional, 'Anglian' identity even from the arrival of the first immigrants, the late 6th and early 7th centuries are seen as the period when small lordships were being replaced by larger kingdoms with more permanent, regional overlordship.[95] This development would explain the appearance of more structured settlements and specialized, controlled trading sites such as Ipswich, as well as the construction of 'princely graves' – in the case of Sutton Hoo in a separate, aristocratic burial ground. Moreover, this would be the time when 'East Anglian Animal Style II' was introduced by the new ruling family, signalling its (mythical) Scandinavian descent and, in doing so, legitimizing its power.[96]

89 Brooks 1989; Yorke 2002, 25-44; see also Welch 2007, 189-194.
90 Brooks 1989, 64-67; for Æthelbert, see also Yorke 2005, 113-117.
91 For Kentish control over Wessex, thought to be reflected in the grave goods of the famous 'royal' burial at Taplow, see Webster 2007, 70-71; 2011, 268-272 (especially note 9).
92 Brooks 1989, 68-69; Welch 2007, 189-190.
93 Carver 1989; 1992; 2005, 497-499; Scull 1992; 1995; 1999.
94 See Böhme 1986; Hines 1984; 1992.
95 See also Filmer-Sankey 2001, 264-266 (in: Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001); Penn & Brugmann 2007, 94-96. For the 'Anglian' identity of the people buried at Spong Hill, see Hills 1998.
96 Nielsen 1999, 198-200.

No origin myth is known for the East Angles.[97] According to the royal genealogy of the East Anglian Wuffinga dynasty, its earliest kings ruled during the second half of the 6th century and traced their origin back to Caesar and Wodan/Odin (fig. 2.7). King Rædwald († 624/5) was the first East Anglian king to become *bretwalda* of southern and eastern England, after Æthelbert's death. Although Rædwald's kingdom included at least two former kingdoms, represented by the North Folk and the South Folk, only single rulers are known. The original power base of the Wuffingas is assumed to have been located in southeastern Suffolk, where the ship burials of Sutton Hoo and Snape, the royal vill of Rendlesham and the trading centre of Ipswich are located.

Situated between Kent and East Anglia, the kingdom of the East Saxons accepted a variety of *bretwaldas* during the 7th century – with at most only short periods of freedom of action.[98] For the kingdoms of East Anglia and East Saxony a similar history has been assumed, characterized by the arrival of immigrants, the expression of a regional, 'Saxon' identity in the 5th and 6th centuries and the construction of 'princely graves', as known from Broomfield and Prittlewell, in the early 7th century. When the kingdom of the East Saxons first appears in the historical record, it is ruled by the Christian king Sabert († 616). His father Sledd, common ancestor of the East Saxon royal family (the Sleddingas), was married to a sister of Æthelbert. According to Yorke, the Sledd dynasty may have acquired its leading position in the late 6th century as a result of Kentish intervention.[99] In the following century, the East Saxon kingdom was ruled by a single ruler, joint rulers and once even triple rulers, all of them direct offspring or more distant relatives of Sledd.

During the past two decades, the traditional paradigms have been criticized and some new trends have emerged. First of all, it is now commonly accepted that most historical sources are no direct reflection of historical reality. The documentary sources about migration and early kingship were written in a Christian context, and at least partly present an idealized or falsified picture, mainly aimed at legitimizing power positions (e.g. the *construction* of royal genealogies).[100] Moreover, much of the 5th to 7th centuries can be considered 'Dark Ages', with most information about early Anglo-Saxon England originating from 8th-century and later sources.[101] To fill this gap, the accounts of 'foreign' writers, like Gregory of Tours († 594), have been included in the discussion, sparking new ideas about the arrival of the first immigrants.[102] Rather than mercenaries, it is thought that these might have been 'Saxon' raiders ('Saxon' referring to all non-Frankish groups from the North Sea area), establishing colonies and bases not only along the Frankish, but also along the English coast.

Secondly, the indigenous Romano-British population is given a more prominent position in the discussion about migration and cultural interaction. Comparing the Anglo-Saxon intrusion to the breakdown of the communist system and the rapid adoption of western cultural elements in Russia during the 1990s, Härke presents an interesting model of assimilation and acculturation.[103] After the Roman army left Britain around AD 410, several phases of 'Germanic' migration and coexistence of the newcomers with the Romano-British population are postulated. Throughout these phases, Romano-British groups were by far the largest part of the population; however, they quickly 'became Anglo-Saxons' by adopting the language and material culture of the incoming groups. In earlier articles, Bassett and Scull already questioned the dominant role often attributed to newcomers in the process of power formation.[104] It is stressed that the earliest Germanic settlement took place within a structured British society, indicating that developments in the late 6th and early 7th centuries cannot have been a simple, direct result of Anglo-Saxon settlement. Dark even argues for post-Roman British kingship in eastern England and the existence of a 5th- and 6th-century British kingdom between the 'Anglian' and 'Saxon' territories, with London as its capital.[105]

Thirdly and finally, genetic data are included in the discussion about the volume of migration. An important study of Y-chromosome DNA analysed samples of over 300 males from seven English towns (including Fakenham and North Walsham in Norfolk), the province of Friesland and Norway.[106] The results indicate a massive migration of Anglo-Saxon men into England, with striking similarities between the English and

97 For the available historical sources, see Yorke 2005, 58-71.

98 Dumville 1989; Yorke 2005, 45-57.

99 Yorke 2005, 46.

100 E.g. Bassett 1989, 4-5; Yorke 1999.

101 Dumville 1989, 123-128.

102 Yorke 1999, 26; 2002.

103 Härke 1999.

104 Bassett 1989, 23-25; Scull 1992, 10-14; 1995, 72-73.

105 Dark 1994, especially 86-89 and 248-251 for the assumed 'British kingdom' in eastern England.

106 Weale et al. 2002; compare Capelle et al. 2003 (suggesting a smaller, but still substantial Continental influx into England and especially into Norfolk).

Frisian samples which appear to link Britain to the Anglo-Saxon homelands. As an alternative to mass migration, a situation comparable to the apartheid system in South Africa has been suggested for Anglo-Saxon England.[107] Although the native population probably made up the majority, the genetic contribution of the immigrants would have been relatively high as a result of differential reproductive success and limited intermarriage between distinct ethnic groups.

The 'objectivity' of the genetic data, however, has been questioned by Oppenheimer.[108] Instead of a mass migration or an apartheid system, a more modest migration of 'Anglo-Saxons' is suggested – amounting to 5,5% of the ancestral stock of modern English people. Within the research area, a higher rate of intrusion is only seen in parts of Norfolk (a maximum of 9-15%). Oppenheimer believes the close affinities between England and the Continent, as shown by this and other research, to result not from mass migration in the early Anglo-Saxon period, but from much older migrations, probably dating back to the Mesolithic and earlier periods!

Because migration for a long time was, and still is, the dominant theme in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the actual formation of kingdoms – with Bassett's so-called 'knock-out model' still being the most popular in British archaeology.[109] This model is based on the idea that all kingdoms were subdivided into Kentish-type *lathes*, or small regional territories, ruled by *principes* or the earlier *reguli* or *subreguli*. According to Bassett, these *lathes* formerly were minor kingdoms, whose number as a result of knock-out competition steadily declined. In recent publications, the cemeteries of Snape and Sutton Hoo are interpreted as representing two stages of this model.[110] At the cemetery of Snape, leaders demonstrated their growing power *within* their local group, while at Sutton Hoo the creation of a *separate* 'princely' burial ground is thought to reflect the breaking free from local ties and the formation of a larger kingdom with regional or supra-regional power. Yorke, however, is more critical, warning that the rise of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms was not a matter of simple linear growth but a complex one, with rival claims to the throne not only between, but also within kingdoms.[111]

Although 'princely' or 'royal' burials are often related to a process of power formation and the rise of supra-regional kingdoms, Richardson is one of the few to make an attempt at analysing the grave goods from a larger data set in social terms – giving the Kentish grave constructions and sets of grave goods a specific 'wealth score'.[112] Moreover, the circulation of weapons, as personal gifts between a king and his followers, was studied by Härke.[113] Finally, the symbolic value of 'princely' grave assemblages has been a subject of research, leading to the conclusion that the elite burial ritual should be seen as the expression of a political message, with a specific goal and aimed at a specific audience.[114] The crucial question of how the distribution and selected types of grave goods during the 5th to 7th centuries reflect elite networks and the internal structure of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, however, has not yet been tackled.

2.6 Conclusion

Despite their close cultural, political and ideological ties, this overview might suggest that early medieval kingdoms with very different internal structures existed around the southern North Sea. Most differences, however, result from the divergent interpretations of the scarce and often much younger historical sources, the role of archaeology usually being limited to presenting evidence to support a specific 'historical construct', such as the Frisian kingdom and the Saxon origin myth. During recent decades, however, the traditional interpretation of many historical sources has been questioned, written as they are from an outsider's perspective (Frankish sources), often in a very specific context (military conflicts) and time frame (the incorporation of 'North Sea kingdoms' into the Frankish and Carolingian realms), or with the purpose of legitimising internal power positions (Anglo-Saxon sources). Moreover, archaeological evidence has taken a more prominent position in the debate about power formation, although its value for reconstructing elite networks has generally been neglected. In this book the traditional approach is turned around: the study of kingship in the southern North Sea area is primarily based on archaeological data, the often misleading historical sources being returned to only in the synthesis (chapter 13).

107 Thomas et al. 2006.

108 Oppenheimer 2006, 344-383.

109 Bassett 1989; see also Dumville 1989, 129-130; Yorke 2005, 157-162; Scull 1992, 19-22.

110 Filmer-Sankey 2001, 265-266 (in: Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001); Carver 2005, 497.

111 Yorke 1999, 27.

112 Richardson 2005, 239-248; compare Penn & Brugmann 2007, 88-97 (East Anglia). See also section 10.3.

113 Härke 2000a.

114 Carver 2000; see also Webster 1992; 2000.

3

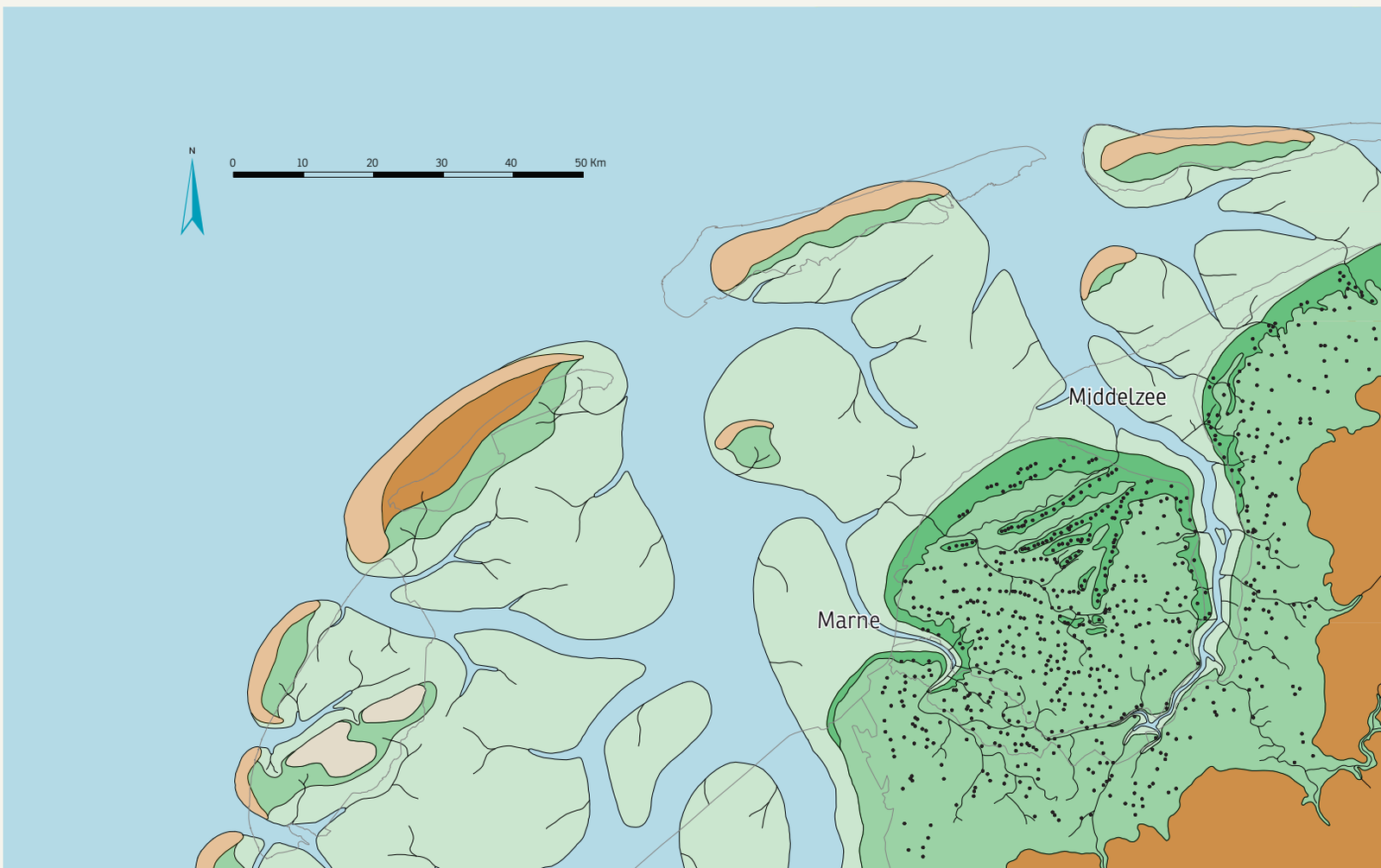
Research regions: landscape, nuclear regions and site types

3.1 Introduction

To place the valuable items that are presented in the following four chapters in a regional context, this chapter briefly discusses the main features of the landscape, the clustering of sites in so-called 'nuclear regions', and the different site types, varying from rural settlements to specialized trading sites, for each of the research regions (sections 3.2-5). Moreover, it presents the archaeological and other evidence for a functional and/or social differentiation between and within settlement sites, at this stage excluding any items of precious metal.

The term 'nuclear region' takes a central place in this chapter; it denotes the territory of at least a few hundred people, which is likely to have had 'a certain administrative status and cultural identity' (fig. 2.1).[1] The basic idea behind this term is that geographical distance is similar to social distance. Although the equation may work out differently for the Pleistocene sands from that in a more open, maritime landscape, where larger distances could easily

1 Heidinga 1987, 154.



be covered by boat or ship, regional habitation clusters probably were the 'basic units' of social and elite networks in both worlds.

3.2 The coastal area of the northern Netherlands

Most early medieval valuables from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands originate from man-made dwelling mounds (so-called *terpen* or *wierden*), situated in a salt-marsh area that extended across large parts of the present-day provinces of Friesland and Groningen.[2] In contrast to to the western Netherlands, this coastal area was not protected by rows of dunes.[3] The coast remained open during the Holocene period, with a broken line of islands bordering a zone of mudflats and salt marsh, and extensive peatbogs further south (fig. 3.1). On the salt marshes, intersected by the large tidal estuaries of the Marne, the Middelzee, the Lauwers, the Hunze and the Fivel, the availability of habitable land was closely related to the threat of storm floods. Until the first sea dikes were built in late medieval times, only the higher salt-marsh ridges were suitable for occupation – provided that the farmhouses stood on artificial dwelling mounds, built of sods, dung and domestic waste. An important advantage of living in this border zone between land and sea was the opportunity of using the extensive network of natural channels and gullies as waterways, which connected the settlements with each other and – via the North Sea – with the outside world.

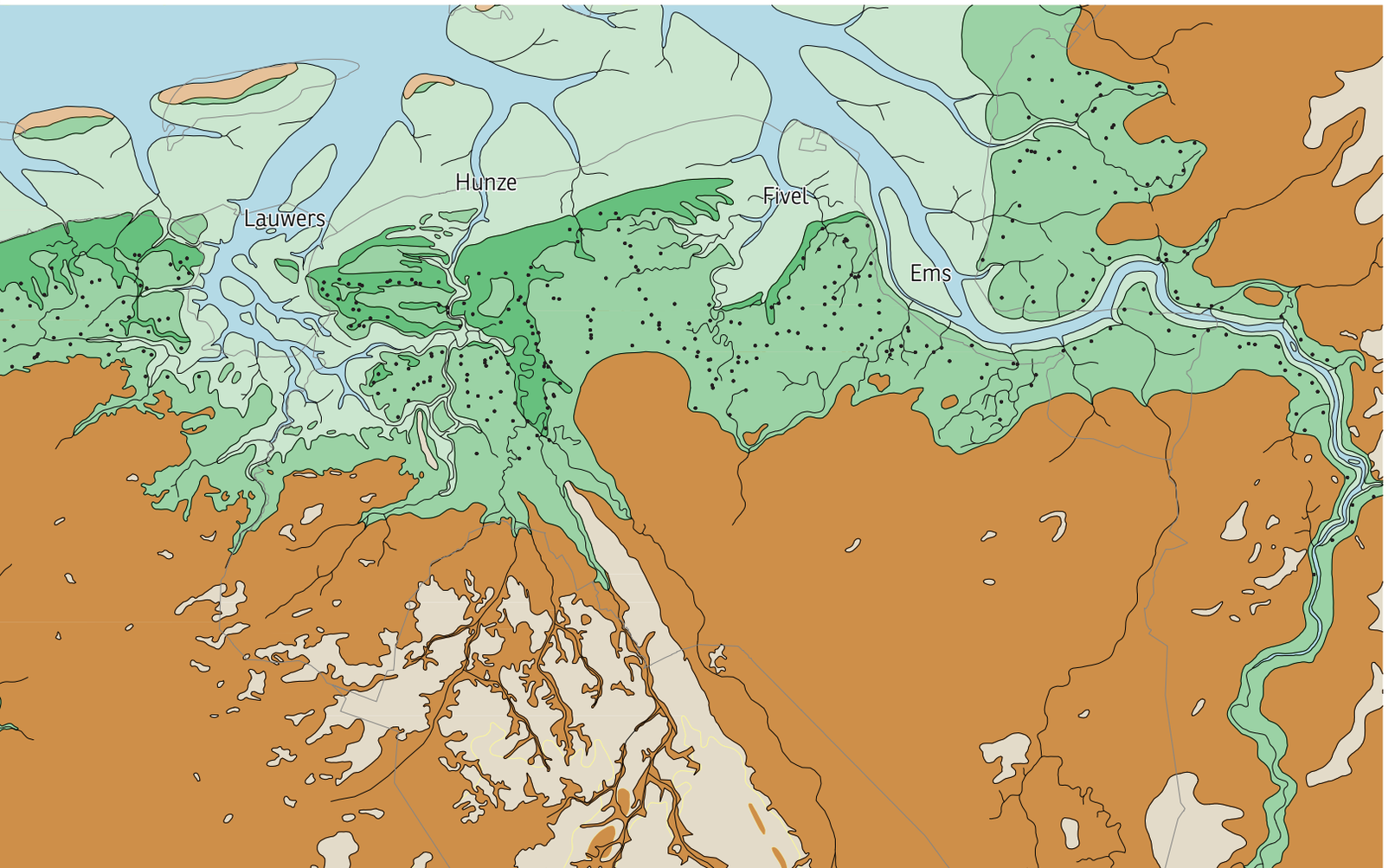
Since the late 3rd century the coastal area had been largely deserted for over a century, with only a small remnant population in the province of Groningen and the eastern part of Friesland (fig. 1.11).[4] The introduction of a new material culture, changes in the layout of reinhabited settlement mounds and the first appearance of cemeteries (which are unknown from the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age) are proof that new people arrived in the late 4th and 5th centuries, probably from northern Germany and perhaps also from southern Scandinavia (fig. 1.8).[5] During the following centuries, habitation was concentrated on up to 2000 dwelling mounds, of which ca 1500 in the province of Friesland and ca 500

2 For a general introduction, see Nieuwhof et al. 2013.

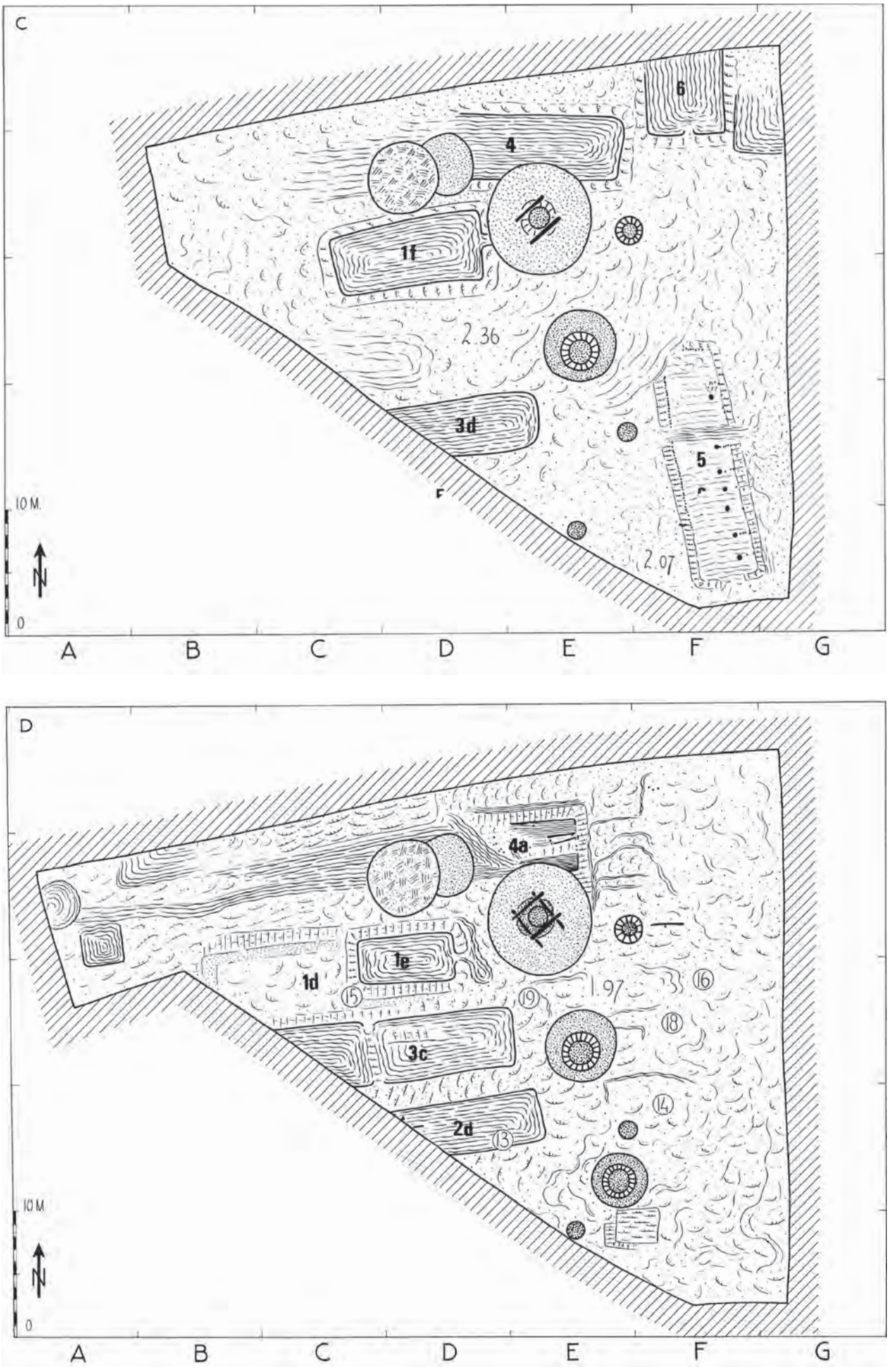
3 Especially Vos 1999; Vos & Knol 2005. For a recent series of palaeogeographic reconstructions, including one showing the situation around AD 800, see Vos et al. 2011.

4 See Bazelmans 2000b; Taayke 2000; Gerrets 2010, 150-164; Nicolay 2011, 252-257; Nieuwhof 2011; 2013.

5 Especially Gerrets 1999a, 121-123; 2010,170-190; Bos & Brouwer 2005; Nicolay 2005; 2011, 258-265; Knol 2009; Nieuwhof 2011; 2013. The idea of Anglo-Saxon immigrants was first put forward by Boeles (1927, 120 ff.; 1951, 207 ff.).



3.1 | Palaeogeographic reconstruction of the coastal area of the northern Netherlands and the adjacent area of Ostfriesland (Germany) around AD 800, and the distribution of contemporary dwelling mounds (black dots: *terpen* and *wierden*). Blue: North Sea and tidal gullies, light green: mudflats, green: salt marsh, dark green: salt-marsh ridges, brown: peat, buff: Pleistocene sand, and dark buff: coastal dunes. Dikes and provincial/national borders are shown as grey lines (after Vos & Knol 2005, 134-135).



3.2 | Merovingian- and early Carolingian-period sod-walled houses, sunken-featured huts and wells in the central part of a dwelling mound near Leens (Groningen, excavation levels C-D) (after Knol 1993, fig. 26).

3.3 | Three iron clench-nails from the Hallum village *terp*, found with a metal detector during large-scale excavations in 2007. The nails are stratigraphically dated to the 6th or 7th century. Length left nail 6.6 cm (photo L. de Jong, Groningen).

in the province of Groningen.[6] On the basis of the clustering of settlements and the natural geography, several early medieval districts or 'nuclear regions' can be identified, which probably coincide with the historically known *pagi*: Westergo and Oostergo in Friesland, and Hunzego, Humsterland and Fivelgo in Groningen (fig. 2.1).[7] During the early medieval period, these regions were part of a more extensive area, later to be called *Frisia Magna*, which also included the present-day region of 'West Friesland' in the western Netherlands (fig. 2.1).

Despite the long history of *terp* research in the northern Netherlands, starting with the collection of finds in the 19th century, no early medieval dwelling mound has so far been fully excavated. Excavations at Ezinge, Leens (fig. 3.2), Foudgum, Wijnaldum, Leeuwarden and Hallum present a picture of small hamlets of up to five contemporaneous farmsteads.[8] Most settlements were largely self-sufficient, combining mixed farming with small-scale craft activities, like spinning and weaving, bone- and antler-working and iron smithing. Moreover, at Wijnaldum waste from glass- and amber-bead production, as well as from gold and silver working was found.[9] The importance of Merovingian-period long-distance exchange, especially for the present-day province of Friesland, is reflected in the finds of wheel-thrown, imported pottery (up to 64% of the total amount of pottery) and, to a lesser extent, gold coins and glass vessels from the Frankish Rhineland.[10] Specialized waterside trading sites are unknown from the 5th to 7th centuries; most *terpen* were situated along tidal gullies and would have had their own mooring facilities – which is indirectly reflected in the finds of iron clench-nails at several *terp* sites (fig. 3.3).[11] As in Nordfriesland, any more specialized landing places or seasonal markets are likely to have been on the North Sea islands.[12]

There are no indications of social differentiation within the settlement structure, not even at the assumed 'royal' site of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'.[13] Although *Herrenhöfe* with a 'grand hall' are known from the neighbouring area of Drenthe, similar farmsteads from the Roman Iron Age or

6 Estimation of *terp* numbers by A. Nieuwhof (University of Groningen). It is assumed that most if not all known *terp* sites were inhabited during (part of) the research period. For the distribution of dated sites, see Knol 1993, figs. 18-19.

7 Heidinga 1987, figs. 75-76.

8 Van Giffen 1936; Waterbolk 1991 (Ezinge); Van Giffen 1940 (Leens); De Langen 1992, 173-186 (Foudgum); Gerrets & De Koning 1999 (Wijnaldum); Nicolay 2008b (Leeuwarden); Tuinstra & Veldhuis 2011 (Hallum). For early medieval habitation in the *terp* region, see Knol 1993; 1996; 2005; De Langen 1995.

9 Gerrets 1999b, 334-335; see also Sablerolles 1999b (glass and amber beads); Tulp 2003 (gold and silver).

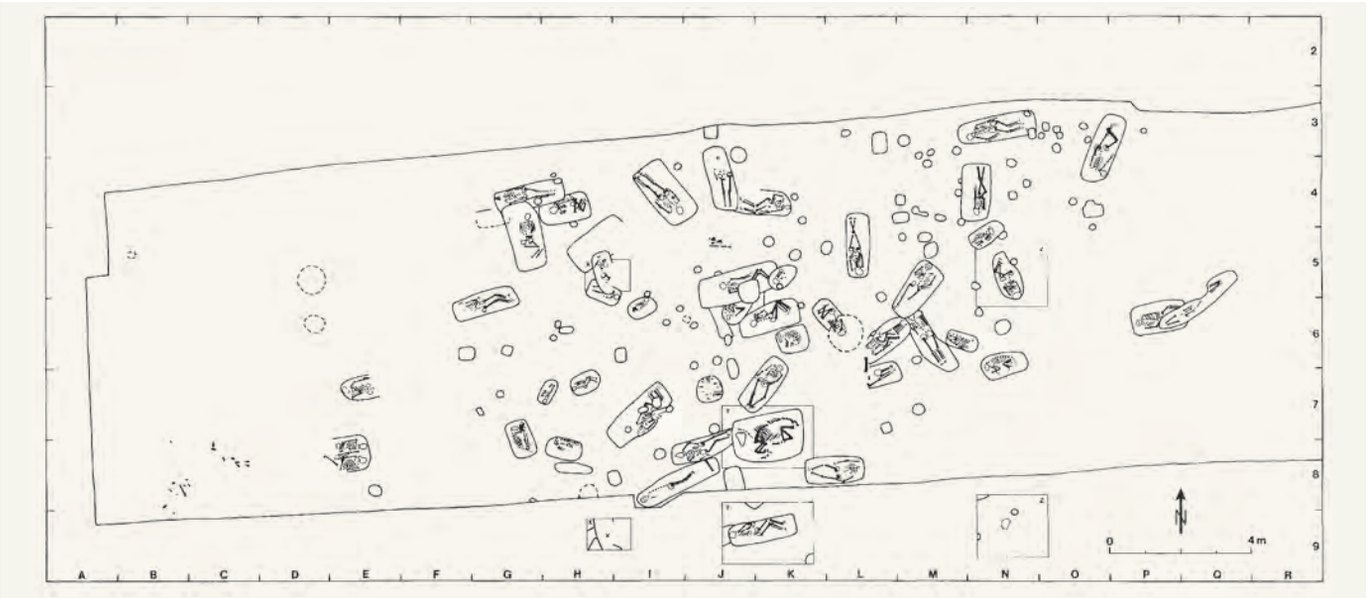
10 Knol 1993, 189-193; Gerrets 1999b, 336; see also Sablerolles 1999a (glass vessels from Wijnaldum); Pol 1999 (gold coins from Wijnaldum).

11 For clench-nails from the Netherlands, see Reinders & Aalders 2006.

12 See section 3.4 (a landing place on the island of Amrum).

13 See Besteman et al. 1999.

3.4 | Reconstruction of an early medieval sod-walled house from ca 700 at Firdgum (Friesland, length 17 m), completed in June 2013. The ca 95 cm thick walls, made of sods that were cut in the salt marsh outside the present-day sea-wall, fully support the roof, which is covered with sods. Unfortunately, half of the building collapsed after six months (reconstruction by D. Postma, University of Groningen; photo F. de Vries, ToonBeeld).



3.5 | Ground plan of the early medieval cemetery at Oosterbeintum (Friesland), used from the late 4th to the early 8th centuries. The smaller pits are cremation graves (after Knol et al. 1995/1996, fig. 7).

early medieval period have not yet been located along the coast.[14] The excavated ground plans there belong to farmhouses that were built in a regional style, different from the earlier, Roman-period tradition and characterized by an aisleless construction and solid walls built of marsh-sods rather than wattle-and-daub (houses of the Leens type, figs. 3.2, 3.4).[15] Historical sources provide little additional evidence; in contrast to the western and central Netherlands (see below), hardly any royal estates that may date back to the period of Frankish annexation are known from the provinces of Friesland and Groningen. Some exceptions are Franeker (*vroon* or *froon* referring to royal property), Dokkum and Groningen, which may have been regional elite centres in early medieval times.[16]

In addition to settlements, the newly established cemeteries were also located on dwelling mounds. During the early medieval period, both isolated inhumation or cremation burials and mixed cemeteries are found in the vicinity of contemporary farmsteads.[17] Furthermore, smaller mounds may have been used specifically as burial grounds, as they did in the Carolingian period. In modern times only one early medieval cemetery has been excavated, on the *terp* of Oosterbeintum (Friesland, fig. 3.5).[18]

Despite the mention of idols and altars in historical sources about *Frisia*, early medieval cult sites are unknown from the *terp* region or the adjacent peat zone.[19] As in Migration-period Scandinavia, ritual activities seem to have been focused on the settlement sites.[20] The earliest wooden churches, built in the town of Groningen and across the province of Drenthe, cannot be dated before the 9th or 10th century.[21]

3.3 The coastal area of the western Netherlands

In the early medieval period, the coastal area of the western Netherlands, between the rivers Vlie and Scheldt, was linked by a row of beach barriers and dunes, locked in between the North Sea to the west and extensive peat-bogs to the east (fig. 3.6).[22] The beach barriers and dunes were intersected by several rivers, which connected the coastal zone to the central river area and Belgian Flanders. These were the Scheldt in the province of Zeeland, and the *Helinium* (where the rivers Meuse, Waal and Lek joined) and the Old Rhine in the province of South Holland. The northernmost branch of the river Rhine, flowing via the Vecht into the Oer-IJ in the province of North Holland, had silted up since the 1st century AD, while an alternative route via the Vlie opened up roughly simultaneously (fig. 3.6). In the course of the early medieval period, the Meuse, Waal and Lek became the main transport routes in the western Netherlands, replacing the traditional Old Rhine route.

14 Nicolay 2010b.

15 Waterbolk 2009, 90, fig. 62. The postholes visible within the house plans in figure 3.2 contained posts that probably supported a loft; the *roof* construction was borne by the walls only (Postma 2011).

16 Blok 1974, 78 (Franeker); Noomen 1990 (Groningen); 2005, 67 (Dokkum); in prep. (these and other royal property in Friesland).

17 Knol 1993, 157 ff.; 2009.

18 Knol et al. 1995/1996.

19 For historical examples of cult places, see, for example, Halbertsma 2000, 228-229.

20 See the discussion in section 11.2.

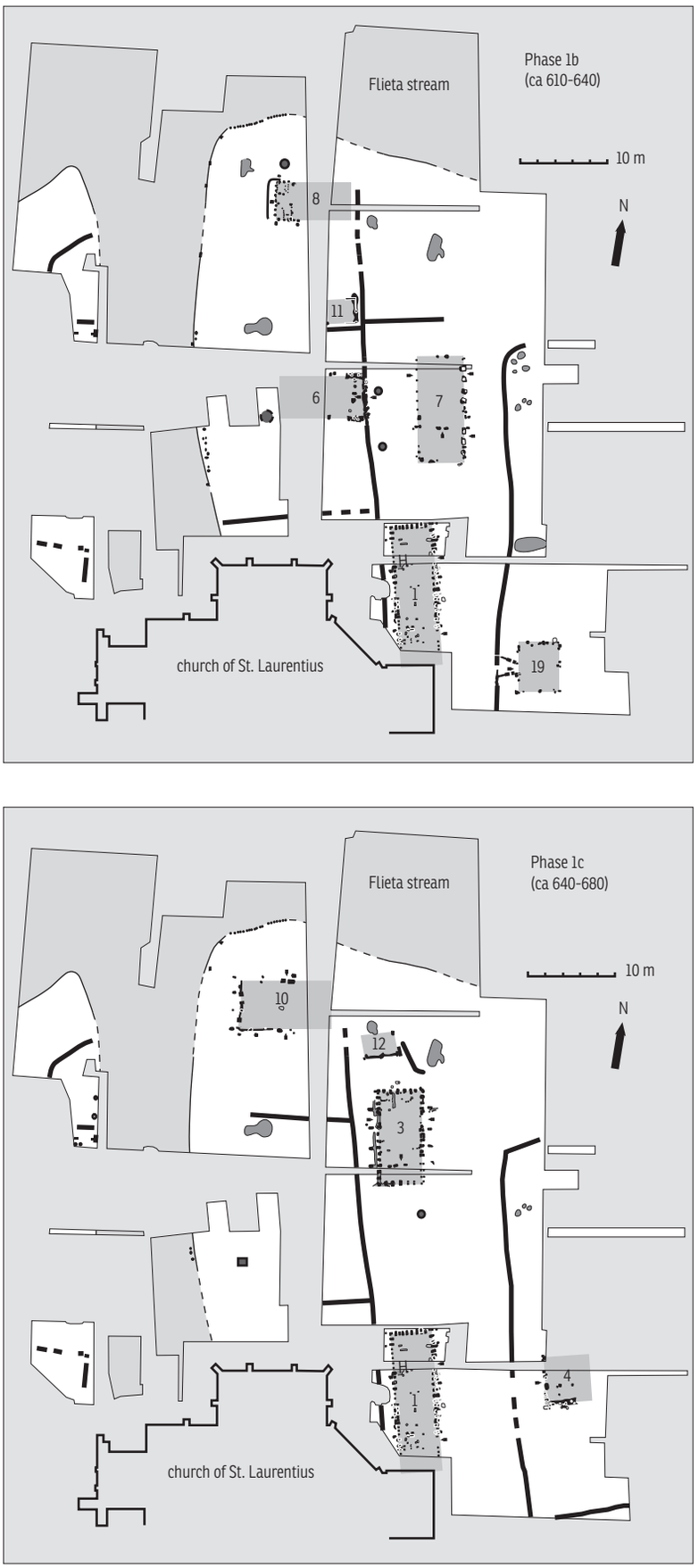
21 Waterbolk 2009, 159, figs. 122-123.

22 For the landscape of the western coastal area, see Bazelmans et al. 2004, 5-7, with further references. For South Holland, see also Dijkstra 2011, 23-59.

3.6 | Paleogeographic reconstruction of the coastal area of the western Netherlands and the adjacent river area around AD 750. Black dots: settlement sites dating to the 8th-9th centuries; single finds are shown as smaller dots (after Bazelmans et al. 2004, fig. 1, slightly adjusted).

As in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, the currently known settlement sites are clustered in a number of nuclear regions, e.g. *Texla* (the present-day island of Texel) and *Kinheim* (present-day Kennemerland) (fig. 2.1).[23] Within each of these regions, the location of sites is related to a specific type of landscape. In the northern part of North Holland, settlements are mainly known from the Pleistocene elevations of Texel and Wieringen. Along the North Sea coast, down to the *Helinium*, several habitation clusters along the (former) river mouths can be seen, especially on the sandy soils of beach barriers with dunes (the *geestgronden*) and on the higher marshland in the river estuaries. Further south, in Zeeland, only the beach barriers and dunes were available for habitation. Finally, the natural levees and stream ridges of active and fossil rivers in Utrecht and South Holland were relatively high and attractive locations. For a large part of the study area the archaeological visibility of settlement sites is limited, however, because of erosion, sedimentation and human factors such as the extraction of sand and clay.[24] Still, it appears that the western Netherlands were largely deserted during the 4th century and probably also during the 5th century, as archaeological and pollen data indicate.[25]

Within the diverse landscape of the western Netherlands a wide range of site types can be distinguished. Most sites are simple rural settlements of up to eight contemporary farmsteads, as excavations at Uitgeest, Rijnsburg (fig. 3.7), Katwijk, Valkenburg, Oegstgeest (fig. 5.38), Koudekerk and Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' have shown.[26] On Texel and in the river estuaries, houses may have been situated on dwelling mounds similar to those in the *terp*



3.7 | Excavation plan of a rural settlement at Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein' (South Holland), showing the 7th-century village layout (phases 1b-1c). The settlement was situated beside a tributary of the Old Rhine, probably the one known as 'Flieta'. Grey: houses and outbuildings, dark grey: pits, including an oven for the production of glass beads, directly north of building 12, dark grey and outlined: wells, black: postholes and ditches (after Dijkstra 2011, figs. 4.6-7).

23 See also Bazelmans et al. 2004, 3, 20-22. For regional overviews, see Besteman 1990 (North Holland), Henderikx 1986; Bult & Hallewas 1990; Dijkstra 2011 (South Holland), Van Heeringen 1995 (Zeeland) and several contributions in Van Es & Hessing 1994 (Utrecht).

24 Bult & Hallewas 1990, 73. See also the discussion in section 12.3.

25 Besteman 1990, 98; De Koning 2003; 2012 (North Holland); Bult & Hallewas 1990, 73-75; Dijkstra 2011, 70-86 (South Holland); Bazelmans et al. 2004, 16-18 (western Netherlands). For South Holland a population decline of at least 90% is suggested by Dijkstra (2011, 83).

26 De Koning 2003 (Uitgeest-'Dorregeest'); Van Es 1973; Dijkstra 2004, 402-404 (Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein'); Van der Velde 2008 (Katwijk-'Zanderij-Westerbaan'); Bult et al. 1990 (Valkenburg-'De Woerd'); Hemminga & Hamburg 2006 (Oegstgeest-'Nieuw Rhijngeest Zuid'); Van Grinsven & Dijkstra 2006 (Koudekerk aan den Rijn-'Lagewaard'); Nokkert et al. 2009 (Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn'). For a recent overview, see Van Es & Verwers 2010; Dijkstra 2011, 109-190; Dijkstra & Van der Velde 2011.

3.8 | Remains of the 7th-century revetment along an originally ca 10 m wide tributary of the Old Rhine, near the site of the rural settlement at Oegstgeest (see fig. 5.38). The mainly oak and ash posts were in the course of time pushed inwards as a result of soil pressure (photos University of Leiden).

region of the northern Netherlands.[27] The inhabitants were farmers combining agriculture and stock farming with small-scale artisanal activities such as spinning and weaving, the working of bone, smithing and, at several sites including Rijnsburg and Oegstgeest, the production of glass beads and the working of amber.[28] Moreover, Katwijk probably saw the local minting of gold tremisses.[29] The location of many sites along river tributaries offered the inhabitants the opportunity to participate in regional and inter-regional exchange networks – as is reflected in the amount of imported pottery at rural sites in the Rhine and Meuse estuaries (80-100% of the total amount of their Merovingian-period pottery).[30] This context of river transport and small-scale trade explains the mooring facilities at Valkenburg, Leiden-'Roomburg' and Oegstgeest (fig. 3.8).[31] The early medieval house-building tradition is dominated by aisled and, especially since the 6th century, aisleless buildings (the Rijnsburg and Katwijk types, comparable to the Odoorn type), as excavations at Rijnsburg (fig. 3.7) and, more recently, at Katwijk have shown.[32]

There is no convincing evidence for social differentiation within individual settlement sites, although some relatively large or exceptional buildings may reflect a higher social status of their inhabitants. The best example is farmhouse 1 at Rijnsburg (fig. 3.7), which has a remarkably long middle part that may have been used as a meeting hall.[33] Indirect evidence for an elevated social status of specific settlement sites or larger areas is their being mentioned as royal estates in later documentary sources, this status probably dating back to their confiscation by the Frankish (and 'Frisian'?) kings. Besides the former Roman military and civilian sites (see below) and the main trading centres such as Dorestad, such estates would comprise rural property of the regional elite, especially when it was strategically situated near the river mouths (e.g. Texel, Wieringen, Medemblik, Velsen, 'Maasland' and Schouwen).[34] Moreover, its assumed status as a local elite centre with a so-called '*Herrenhof*' (the farmstead of house 1, fig. 3.7) in Merovingian times and as a domanial centre in the Carolingian period might explain the bestowal of half of the rural settlement at Rijnsburg, called *Rodulfusheim*, to the church of Utrecht in the 8th or 9th century.

27 E.g. Woltering 1996/1997, 263-270 (Texel).

28 Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 442-443; Dijkstra et al. 2010; Dijkstra 2011, 162-167 (for craft activities, see table 4.1); Dijkstra & Van der Velde 2011, 20-21.

29 Pol & Van der Veen 2008, 318-319; Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 444; Pol 2011.

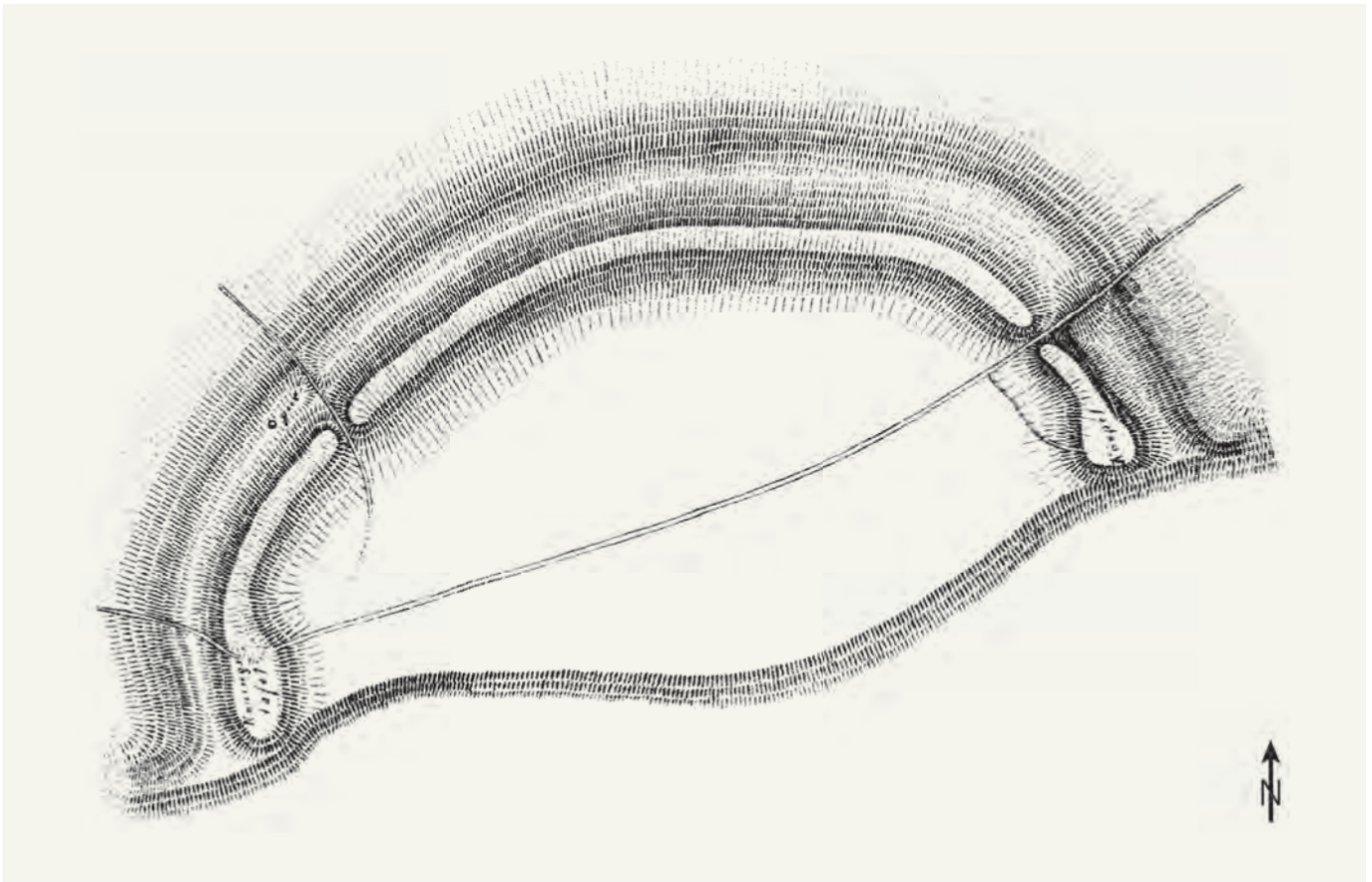
30 Dijkstra 2004, 404-405; 2011, 309-310, fig. 7.4.

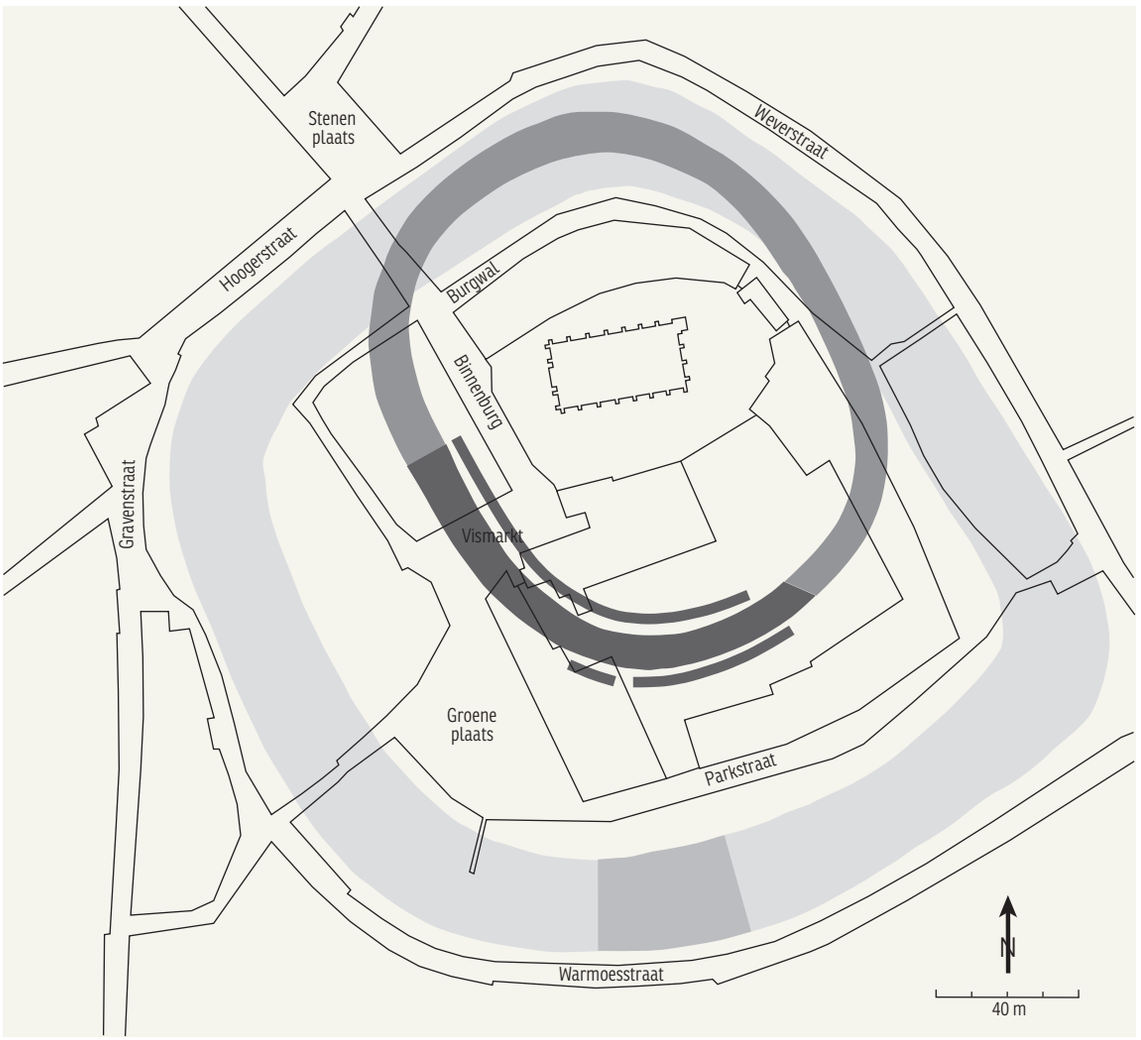
31 For the Old Rhine, see Bult et al. 1990, 149-151, figs. 84-85 (Valkenburg, 8th-9th century), Hazenberg 2000, 37; Brandenburgh & Hessing 2005, 62 (Leiden, 7th-early 8th century): pers. inf. J. de Bruin, University of Leiden (Oegstgeest, mid 6th-7th century).

32 See Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 435-440; Dijkstra 2011, 191-222.

33 Dijkstra 2011, 175-180, fig. 5.10 (Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein').

34 For a still accurate summary, see Blok 1974, 72-78 (including a map).





3.9 | The semicircular enclosure at the 'Heimenberg' near Rhenen (Utrecht), as it was mapped in 1834 (enclosed area ca 240 x 115 m), and two reconstructed phases of the circular enclosure in the town centre of present-day Den Burg, on the island of Texel (North Holland). Their oldest phases are dated to the late Merovingian and to the Carolingian period, respectively; the youngest phase at Den Burg (wide moat) is of late medieval date. Of the ditches at Den Burg only the parts shown in darker grey have actually been documented (after Heidinga 1990, fig. 9; Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, fig. 2, slightly adjusted).

Although the historical evidence is less convincing, Katwijk may be interpreted in a similar way.[35] Finally, the probable reuse of a Roman-period settlement site and later burial mound near Katwijk, as the place where Frankish and later counts were inaugurated and honoured, is circumstantial evidence pointing to the presence of an early medieval elite residence nearby.[36]

Some settlements of a more specialized character are the later emporium of Dorestad and smaller trading centres such as Domburg (then probably called *Walichrum*) on the isle of Walcheren (Zeeland).[37] Dorestad, situated at the junction of the rivers Rijn and Lek, developed from a riparian market and a minting place in the (late) 7th century into an international trading centre which flourished in the 8th and first half of the 9th centuries.[38] The settlement extended along an outer bend of the Kromme Rijn and may have consisted of three 'districts': a trading zone with the famous harbour in the north, an agricultural zone in the middle and a trading zone around the former *castellum* in the south.[39] As an alternative interpretation of the fragmentary archaeological data, a different triple division for these districts has been suggested, each district comprising a part of the harbour, a *vicus* and an agrarian zone.[40] Being strategically situated on the North Sea beach of Zeeland, Domburg probably also functioned as a market and trading site during the 7th to 9th centuries.[41] Several more of these smaller trading centres are to be expected in the western as well as in the central Netherlands, such as Medemblik and the historically recorded *Witla* (near present-day Rotterdam), both dating to the Carolingian period.[42]

Excavations at Valkenburg, Leiden-'Roomburg', Wijk bij Duurstede, Utrecht and Voorburg (the former *Forum Hadriani*) have shown that some of the rural settlements and trading sites were located at or near the site of abandoned Roman *castella* and urban centres along the former Rhine *limes*. Besides the *castella* of Dorestad and Utrecht, where 'Frisian kings' are assumed to have resided and the earliest churches were built, the other military and urban sites – as symbols of the Roman authority – probably also had a special significance as local or regional centres during the early medieval period.[43] After the Frankish occupation, these centres were claimed as royal property by the Frankish kings, who considered themselves the successors of the Roman emperors. The old names of some of the former *castella*, like Zwaden*burg* (Zwammerdam), 'Roden*burg*' (Leiden-'Roomburg'), Valken*burg* and Wilten*burg* (Vechten), indicate that their original function as fortresses (in Dutch: *burg* or *burcht*) was still known and probably visible in Merovingian times.[44] At Utrecht, there is evidence that the original *castellum* walls were indeed repaired during the early medieval period.[45]

Some exceptional sites within the research area are the enclosures of Rhenen (Utrecht), Den Burg (on the island of Texel) and Rijnsburg (South Holland). At the 'Heimenberg' near Rhenen, the enclosure is located on a morainic hill directly north of the river Rhine (fig. 2.4).[46] Its layout is shown in a 19th-century drawing (fig. 3.9). It was surrounded by a semicircular rampart, a dry ditch and a second, considerably lower rampart on the outside. The southern side of the fortification remained open but was protected by a steep slope. Although Heidinga dated the site to the Migration period and related it to the formation of a regional kingdom in the Central Netherlands, small-scale excavations point to a construction date of ca 650-710 for its earliest phase, comprising a ditch and a single rampart.[47] Interestingly, this is the period of the historically documented struggle for power in the Rhine area between the 'Frisian kings' Aldgisl and Radbod († 719) and the Frankish rulers (table 2.1) – of which the former may be responsible for the construction. The oval fortification at Den Burg consisted of a rampart, probably with a palisade, surrounded by a wide and a narrow ditch (fig. 3.9).[48] In a later phase a third ditch was dug on the inside of the first two, also with a rampart. Pottery finds date the two phases to the latter half of the 8th and the

35 Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 445. Dijkstra (2011, 154), however, is more critical about this interpretation.

36 Dijkstra & De Koning 2002.

37 For a hierarchy of trading settlements in the western Netherlands, see Van Es 1990, 171-172; 1994, 109-110 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

38 Van Es & Verwers 1980; 2009; Van Es 1990; 1994, 93 ff. (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); Verwers 1994; Heidinga 1997, 42-44; see also the contributions in Willemsen & Kik 2010. The generally assumed origin of Dorestad in the mid-7th century has been questioned by Theuws (2003, note 50); see also section 13.6.

39 Espescially Verwers 1994.

40 Van Es 1990, 154-162.

41 Capelle 1976; Van Heeringen 1995, 42-44.

42 Besteman 1990, 106-107; Van Es 1990, 171, fig. 8.

43 Van Es 1990, 163-166.

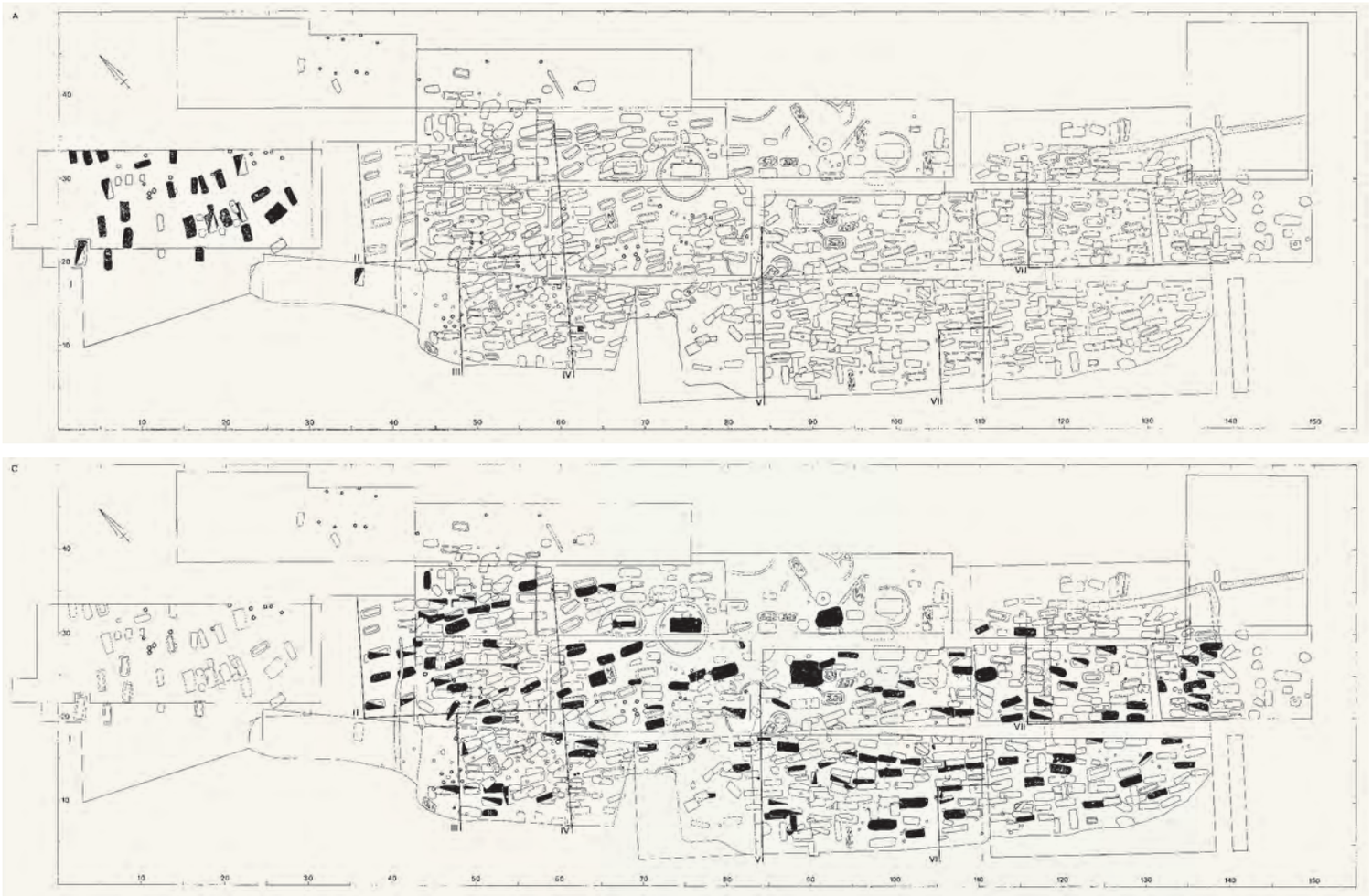
44 Blok 1974, 43.

45 Van Es 1994, 96, fig. 84 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); see also Van Rooijen 2010, 158.

46 Heidinga 1990, 24-28, fig. 9.

47 Heidinga 1990, 27-28; Van Doesburg, 2008.

48 Woltering 2002; Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, 203-204.



3.10 | Excavation plan of the cemetery at the 'Donderberg' near Rhenen (Utrecht), showing the spatial distribution of late-Roman and early Merovingian-period graves and their assumed assignment to 'family groups' (I-VII). The graves that belong to phase A (ca 375-450, top) and phase C (ca 525-600, bottom), respectively, are shown in black (after Ypey 1973, fig. 15).

9th centuries, the first phase possibly coinciding with the period of Frankish expansion – in which case it was built by either 'Frisians' or Franks.[49] In the third example, the circular enclosure is not dated before the late 9th century. Interestingly, however, it was constructed at the assumed site of a Merovingian-period '*Herrenhof*' and later dominial centre at Rijnsburg.[50] Several other enclosures, in Zeeland, were probably constructed in the late 9th or the following century – one of them situated near the former trading centre of Domburg.[51]

A different type of enclosure was fully excavated at Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', directly west of the later emporium of Dorestad (fig. 5.35). It comprises a ca 370 m long and up to 140 m wide, rectangular ditch system, which is traditionally dated to the 8th-9th centuries and interpreted as a refuge for the inhabitants of the northern part of Dorestad.[52] Recent analysis of the find material has shown that the enclosure in its largest form was already in use during the second half of the 7th century.[53] Its status and function are difficult to assess for this period: within the ditches only a few farmhouses and some pits and wells have been found. In the 8th century, only a smaller part of the enclosure remained in use (ca 370 x 80 m). The presence of some exceptional buildings, including a monumental hall, may point to a function of the site as an agrarian demesne or *curtis*, perhaps the '*villa non modica*' mentioned in a historical source.[54]

Merovingian-period cemeteries are known mainly from the provinces of South Holland and Utrecht. As in the northern Netherlands, most cemeteries show a mixture of inhumation and cremation burials.[55] Unfortunately, the two largest cemeteries along the coast, those at Rijnsburg (fig. 5.2) and Katwijk (fig. 5.5), were found during sand extraction at the beginning of the 20th century and were partly destroyed before they could be excavated.[56] Well-preserved and more recently investigated cemeteries can be found in the central river area, for example at Rhenen (ca 1100 graves, fig. 3.10) and Elst (ca 260 graves, fig. 5.18).[57]

Besides the possibly 7th-century churches that may have been founded under Frankish rule

49 Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, 215.
50 Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, 205-210; Dijkstra 2011, 126-129.
51 Van Dierendonck 2009. The earliest phase of the Domburg fortification has recently been dated to 835-838 (Ufkes 2011).
52 Especially Van Es 1994, 102-104, 231-233 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).
53 See the contribution in Heeren, in press.
54 Van Doesburg 2010; see also Van Es & Verwers 2010, 19.
55 For South Holland, see Dijkstra 2011, 223-277; Dijkstra & Van der Velde 2011, 21-24..
56 See section 5.2.
57 See section 5.2.

in the Roman *castella* at Utrecht and Dorestad, and some younger, 8th- and 9th-century churches, regional cult places with an early medieval date may be traceable through their place names.[58] Examples are Heiloo ('Holy forest', North Holland) and two '*harug*-sites' (*harug* = temple or sanctuary): Hargen in North Holland and Harg in South Holland.[59] Moreover, at a local level open-air sanctuaries were used, like the ritual site in the 'Broekpolder', near Beverwijk (North Holland).[60] The central element of this site was a pool, into which pottery, worked stones, bone artefacts and metal objects, probably including antique, Roman-period coins and brooches, were deposited by a local family group during the 6th and 7th centuries. At Uitgeest-'Dorregeest' (North Holland) some 5th- and 6th-century dress accessories were deposited in a former creek of the Oer-IJ system, at the site of a burial ground and probable cult place; in the 9th or 10th century this was succeeded by a small Christian cemetery, on which a tuff-stone chapel was built in the 12th century.[61]

3.4 The coastal area of northern Germany

The North Sea coast of northern Germany comprises the districts of Ostfriesland, (German) Friesland, Wesermarsch, Dithmarschen, Eiderstedt and Nordfriesland, as well as the northern Elbe-Weser region. The first four areas and the northern Elbe-Weser region have similar landscapes, dominated by extensive salt marshes, bordered by Pleistocene moraines and intersected by the estuaries of the rivers Ems, Weser, Elbe and Eider (fig. 3.11).[62] The coastal area of Eiderstedt and Nordfriesland is characterized by morainic elevations and sandy beach barriers bordering a mudflat zone where the present-day *Halligen* – as late medieval salt-marsh 'islands' with still functioning dwelling mounds – are located.[63] With the exception of some late medieval marine incursions (the Dollart and the Jadebusen), the coastline of Niedersachsen has seen only minor changes since the early medieval period (fig. 3.12). The situation is different in western Schleswig-Holstein. Outside the present-day coastline of Nordfriesland, large parts of the Roman-period and early medieval surface (salt marsh and largely peat) were destroyed or covered over by a thick layer of sediment during flooding in the 14th to 17th centuries.[64]

Like the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, the salt marshes of northern Germany are characterized by man-made dwelling mounds (*Wurten* or *Warften*), which here too show a clustering in regional groups (fig. 3.13).[65] In the Pleistocene interior (the *Geest*), on a smaller scale a similar clustering can be seen, reflecting the size of the inhabited sandy territories enclosed by streams and peat. Based on differences in burial rite and these natural borders, a subdivision of both the coastal area and the hinterland into 'nuclear regions' (*Kleinlandschaften* or *Kulturgruppen*) is presumed (fig. 3.14). These are interpreted as territories of cultural and possibly even ethnic communities.[66] Along the North Sea coast, these are the closely related '*Ostfriesisch-Ammerländische Gruppe*', '*Westerwannagruppe*' and '*Perlberggruppe*', which, according to Böhme, make up a common 'North Sea Group'.[67]

The *Wurten* or *Warften* are located on salt-marsh ridges, often along creeks or rivers. Excavations at Feddersen Wierde (1th-5th century), Hessens (7th-13th century, fig. 3.15) and Elisenhof (8th-11th century) have shown that here too, mixed farming was often combined with small-scale trading and craft activities.[68] Farmhouse construction shows an interesting difference from that in the northern Netherlands; the walls are not constructed of marsh-sods but still in the traditional wattle-and-daub manner. Feddersen Wierde is the only site where the presence of a '*Herrenhof*' with two collective halls, dating from the 2nd to the 4th centuries (settlement phases 4-6), is demonstrated archaeologically.[69] Moreover, a collection of 4th- or early 5th-century furniture, probably also originating from a hall building, was buried in a rich boat grave at Fallward (grave 265, ca 420,

58 For the 7th-century churches at Utrecht and Dorestad, see De Groot 1992, 14-20; Halbertsma 2000, 66-67, 120-122, 233-236. Such an early date of the church at Utrecht, however, has recently been questioned by Van Egmond (2010) and Scheringa (in prep.).

59 Blok 1974, 63.

60 Therkorn et al. 2009, 84-123; see also Kok 2008, 150-153, fig. 4.35 (chronology).

61 De Koning 2003, 64-66, 73, fig. 7; Bazelmans et al. 2004, 27.

62 Behre 1999; 2008, 19-37.

63 Hoffmann 1981; Meijer 1997; 2011, 18-25; Segschneider 2004; Kühn 2007.

64 For a reconstruction of the coastal area of Nordfriesland in early medieval times differing from that shown in figure 3.12, see Meier 2011, 18. See also chapter 12, note 25.

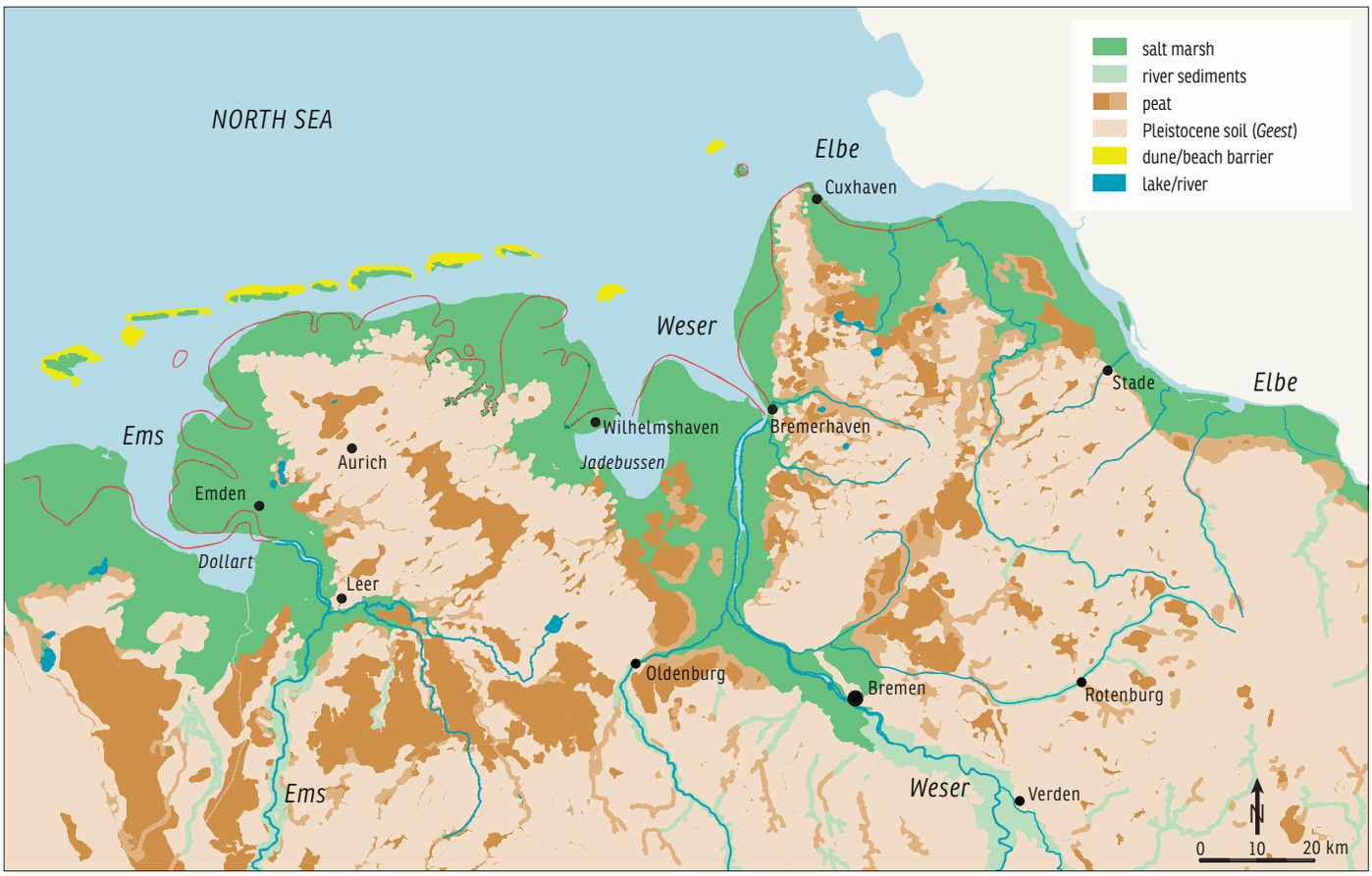
65 For the habitation history of the coastal area, see Schmid 1982; Kühn & Müller-Wille 1988; Behre 2008; Nieuwhof et al. 2013 and the contributions in Kossack et al. 1984.

66 Böhme 2003, especially figs. 1-2.

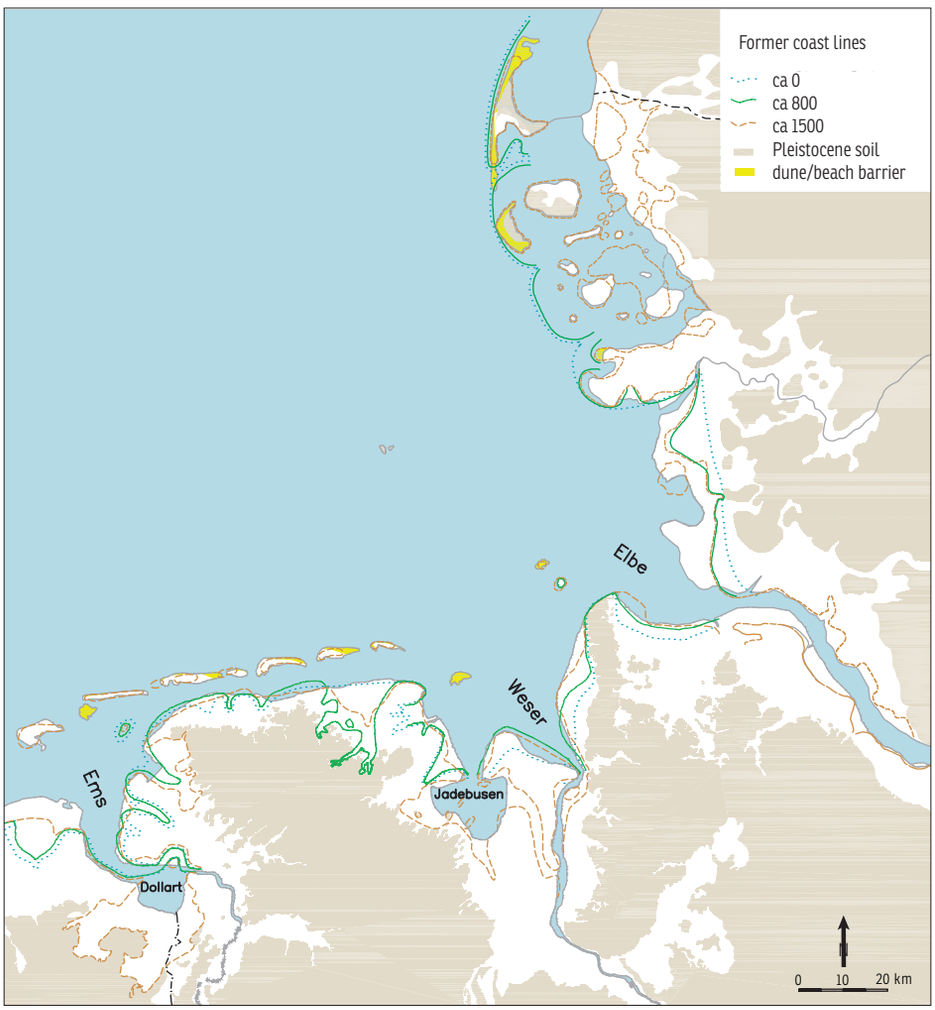
67 Böhme 2003, 254.

68 Haarnagel 1979; Schuster 2006 (Feddersen Wierde); Siegmüller 2010 (Hessens); Bantelmann 1975 (Elisenhof).

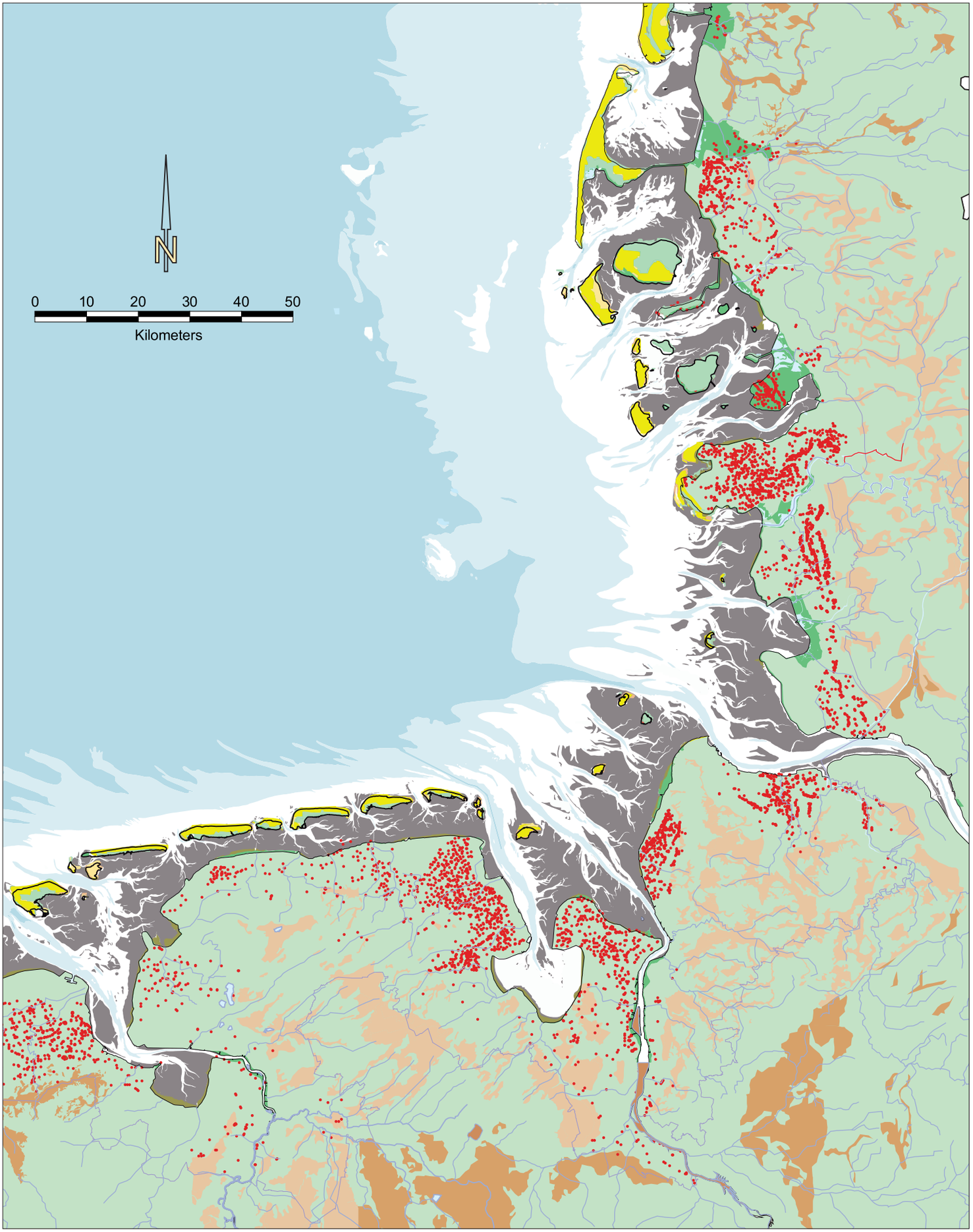
69 Recently Schmid 2010.



3.11 | Geological map of northern Niedersachsen, showing the reconstructed coastline of around AD 800 in red (drawing by M. Spohr, Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).



3.12 | Simplified geological map of northern Niedersachsen and western Schleswig-Holstein, showing the reconstructed coastline of ca AD 0, 800 and 1500. Holocene soils are shown in white (drawing by M. Spohr, Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).



3.13 | The distribution of all known settlement sites on man-made dwelling mounds (red dots: *Wurten* or *Warften*) along the present-day German North Sea coast, showing a clustering in several nuclear regions. Especially in the area north of the river Elbe, the dating of many sites is unknown (© Common Wadden Sea Secretariat).

3.14 | The geographical distribution of cemeteries with cremation and inhumation burials dating from the late 3rd to the first half of the 5th century in the Elbe-Weser region, assigned to six 'nuclear regions' (*Kleinlandschaften* or *Kulturgruppen*). The larger cemeteries in regions 2 and 6 are marked with a circular or a square frame (after Böhme 2003, fig. 1, slightly adjusted).

figs. 6.5-6).[70] Feddersen Wierde and Fallward are neighbouring dwelling mounds, which suggests that such halls fulfilled a *local* function in the Roman and early Migration periods.

A function as seasonal markets is assumed for several 'landing places', recently located along the German North Sea coast. A landing place that has been partly excavated is situated on the island of Amrum (Nordfriesland).[71] At this 5th-century beach market, divided into plots by ditches and clay banks, Anglo-Saxon pottery, fragments of Frankish glass vessels, some brooches and debris from bronze- and iron-working, as well as amber processing were found. The Elbe-Weser region is thought to have seen at least three more of such landing places: near Elsfleth ('Hogenkamp') and Sievern ('Tajenfeld' and 'Langenacker', fig. 3.16).[72] The finds from Elsfleth and Sievern include wheel-thrown pottery, coins, brooches and waste from metal working, covering the Roman and early medieval periods.

A special type of settlement mound is the so-called *Langwurt*, first appearing in the late 7th century.[73] This type of settlement has an elongated shape, with the houses situated along a central road. Most houses are small and lack a byre, which supports the idea that *Langwurten* were specialized trading settlements – probably functioning at a regional level mainly serving the surrounding marshland and sandy hinterland. Larger trading centres, like Emden (originally a *Langwurt*), Jever and Stade, are unknown in pre-Carolingian northern Germany.

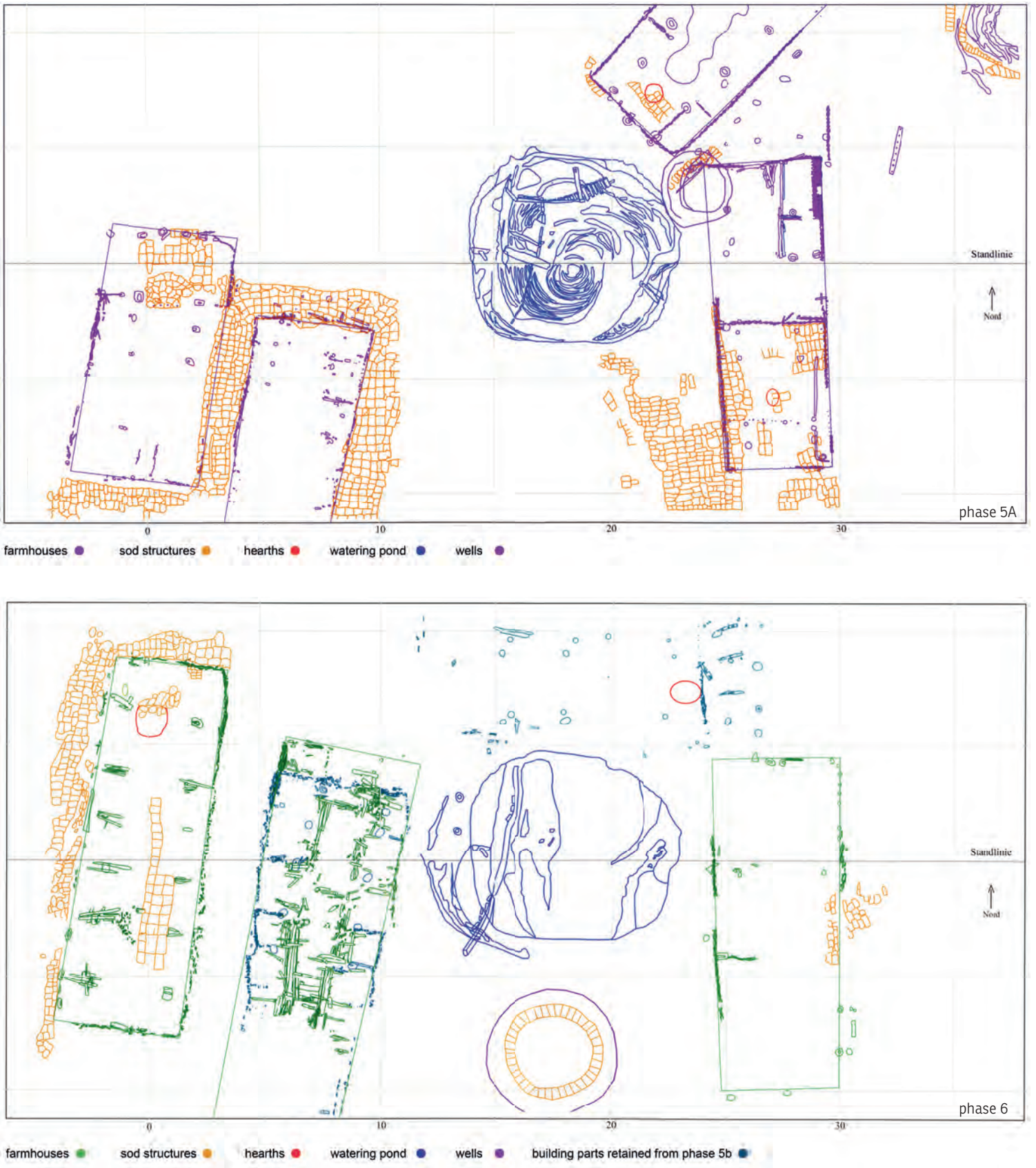
Along the German North Sea coast several fortifications are known in the northern Elbe-Weser region, in Dithmarschen and on the islands of Sylt and Föhr. Near Sievern, two impressive enclosures are situated close to-

70 Recently Schön 2010; see also section 6.2.

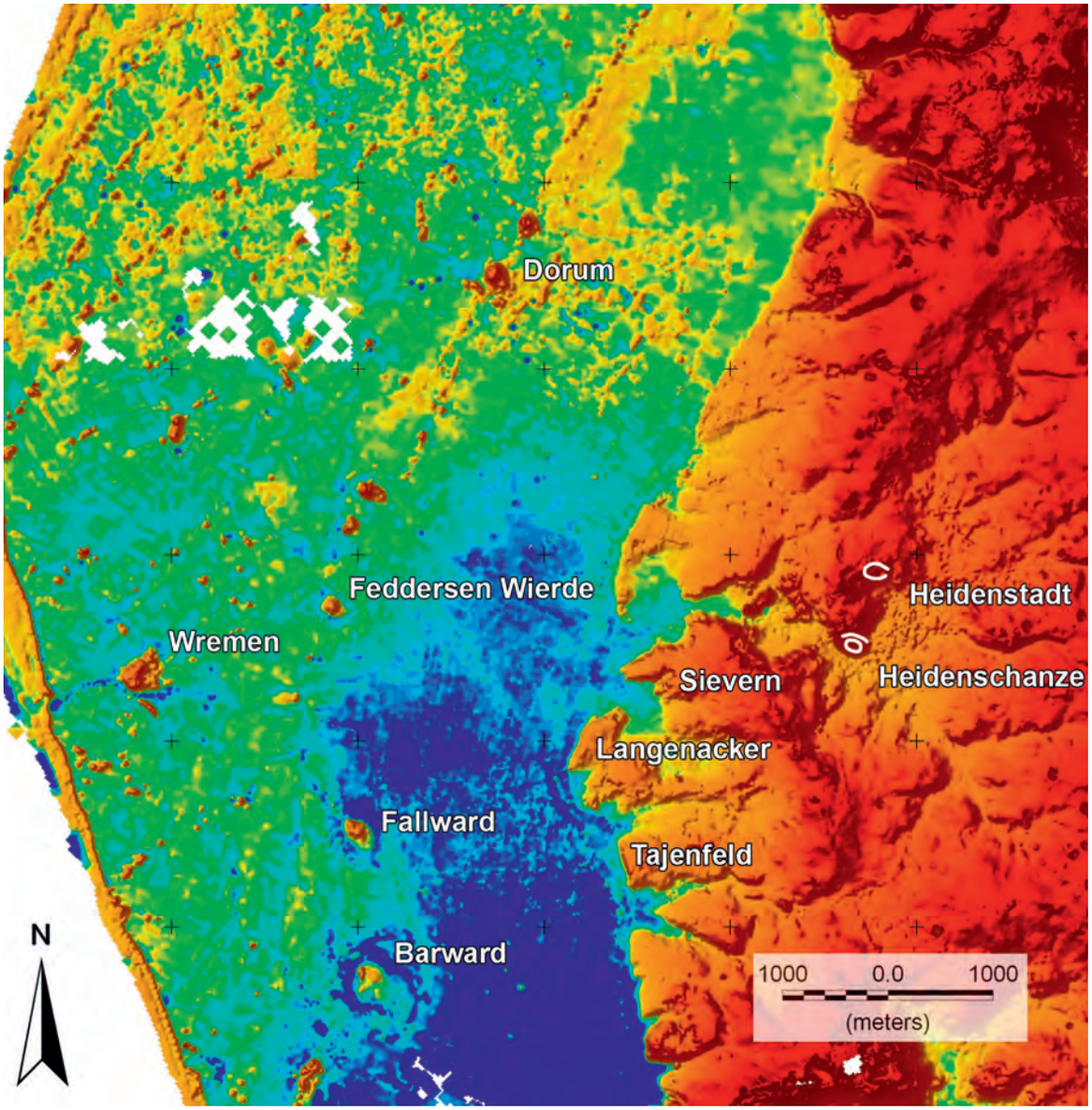
71 Segschneider 2002a; 2002b.

72 Jöns 2009b, 394-402 (Elsfleth and Sievern); Aufderhaar et al. 2009 (Sievern); Mückenberger 2013 (Elsfleth).

73 Brandt 1984; more recently, see Behre 2008, 83-85; Nieuwhof et al. 2013, 154-155.



3.15 | Farmhouses, a watering pond, wells and a sod platform in the central part of the settlement mound at Hessens (*Landkreis* Wilhelmshaven), dating to the 7th and early 8th centuries (phases 5a and 6, after Siegmüller 2010, *Beilagen* 2 and 4, slightly adjusted).



3.16 | Detailed elevation map of the area around Sievern (*Landkreis* Cuxhaven) in the 1960s, showing a Pleistocene height (red) with the location of two fortifications ('Heidenschanze' and 'Heidenstadt') and two probable landing places ('Tajenfeld' and 'Langenacker'). West of this height, parallel rows of dwelling mounds (red, e.g. Feddersen Wierde and Fallward) are clearly visible in the low-lying salt-marsh area (blue, green and yellow) (drawing by M. Spohr, Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).

gether, on a strategic location with direct access to the Weser estuary and the marshlands of Land Wursten (figs. 3.16-17). The largest enclosure ('Heidenschanze'), featuring an inner and an outer rampart with palisades, was constructed in the late Iron Age and repaired in the early Roman period, followed by its abandonment in the 3rd century.[74] The smaller enclosure ('Heidenstadt') was surrounded by a single rampart only; it probably had a symbolic rather than a defensive function. Although a construction date similar to that of the larger enclosure and re-use in the Migration period have been assumed for a long time, recent excavations put its earliest construction date in the 4th or 5th century.[75] Recent excavations at 'Gross Thun', along the river Swinge, near Stade, have shown that this oval enclosure is a little younger and has a Merovingian-period origin: its first construction phase can be dated to ca 675.[76] The 'Archsumburg' on Sylt is contemporary with the second construction phase of the 'Heidenschanze' (1st century AD); there is no evidence, however, of its reuse in the early medieval period.[77] A fifth enclosure near Sievern ('Pipinsburg', fig. 3.17), two more in the northern Elbe-Weser region, three or four in the Dithmarschen area, one more on Sylt and one on Föhr are much younger, not dating before the 8th or 9th century.[78]

Cemeteries from the Roman and early medieval periods are especially well-known from the Pleistocene uplands, where thousands of burials have been documented.[79] In the salt-marsh area, on the other hand, graves

74 Recently Scheschkewitz 2009, 188-189; Aufderhaar et al. 2009, 175, 203-205.

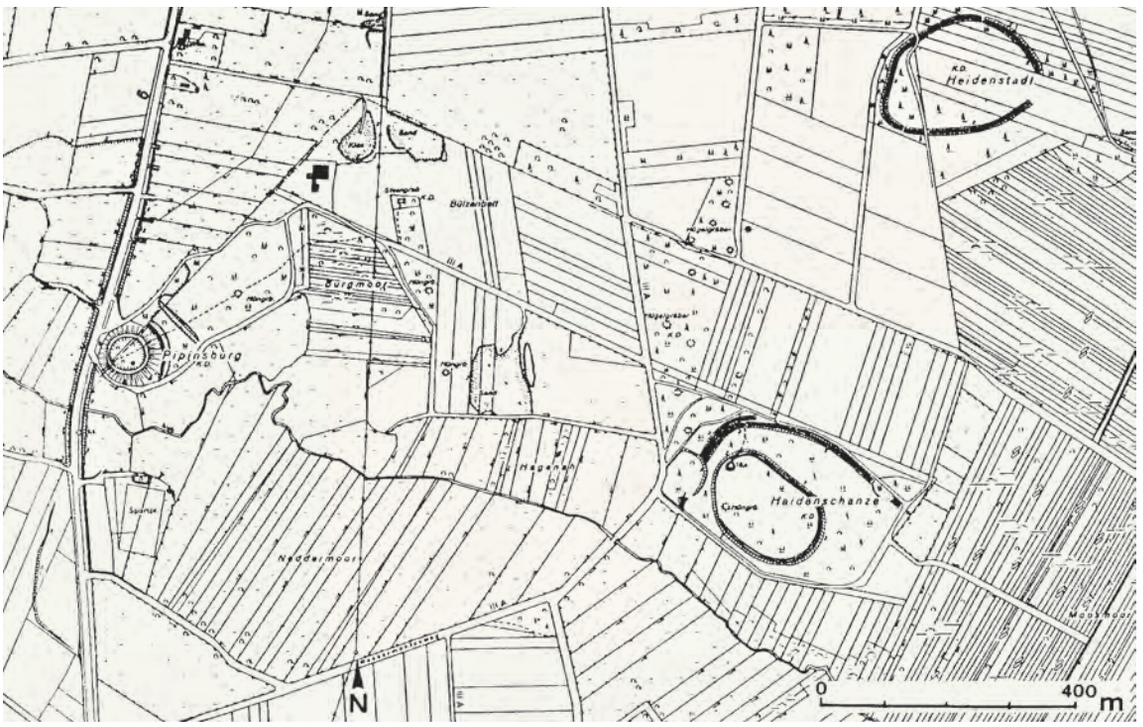
75 Compare Zimmermann 2005, 369; Jöns 2010, 73 and Schön 2009, 194-201 (in: Aufderhaar et al. 2009).

76 Nösler 2011; Schäfer 2011.

77 Segschneider 2009, 99-105, with references.

78 See Scheschkewitz 2009; Lemm & Wilschewski 2009; Segschneider 2009.

79 For an overview, see Schön & Tempel 1995.



3.17 | Three enclosures northeast of Sievern (*Landkreis* Cuxhaven): 'Pipinsburg', 'Heidenschanze' and 'Heidenstadt' – the last-named probably constructed in the 4th or 5th century (after Jöns 2009a, fig. 2).

are rare finds. Only a few cemetery sites have been excavated, for example at Dingen, Fallward and Otterndorf (Elbe-Weser region) and at a present-day mudflat site near Ostbense (Ostfriesland).[80] Although inhumations were probably not recognized during early research at sites like Altenwalde and Westerwanna, more recent excavations, for example at Issendorf (fig. 3.18), have shown the mixed character of the late-Roman and Migration-period burial rite. The rarity of burials in the salt-marsh area is no proof that the coastal people too buried their dead in the extensive cemeteries on the *Geest*. The currently known cemeteries suggest that every *Wurt* or *Warft* probably had its own cemetery or cemeteries, located on a salt-marsh or stream ridge close to the settlement.[81] In an area where sedimentation often continued during and after the period of habitation, however, such cemeteries are very difficult to detect archaeologically.

Although it has recently been suggested that the enclosure of 'Heidenstadt' may have had a religious function, cult places with temples or other structures – like the *fana* and holy spring that Willibrord saw on Helgoland (the name meaning 'holy land') – are unknown from the coastal area of northern Germany.[82] Ritual activities seem to have been focused on wet places such as bogs on the one hand, and settlement sites on the other.[83] The very earliest churches date from the 8th or 9th century.

In studying early medieval valuables from the coastal area of northern Germany, it is important to realize that the number and distribution of finds may be biased because of discontinuity in habitation. It is assumed that during the period when most gold and silver was deposited in the Netherlands and Anglo-Saxon England, northern Germany was largely deserted. Most if not all settlements and related cemeteries along the coast – including those on the adjacent *Geest* – are believed to have been abandoned in the course of the 5th century, and it is not before the late 7th century that the North Sea coast was to be reinhabited.[84] Recently, however, it has been questioned whether this area was completely deserted; indeed the number of inhabitants may just have dropped, leaving a remnant population (as local '*Siedlungsinseln*'), which is reflected, for example, in the continuous occupation of the rural settlement at Loxstedt (Cuxhaven) from the 1st century AD into the 9th.[85] Moreover, regional variations in settlement continuity should be considered, with probable depopulation in parts of the Elbe-Weser region and possibly uninterrupted habitation in Ostfriesland, where settlements may have 'moved around' rather than being abandoned.[86]

80 Plettke 1940 (Dingen); Schön 1999b, 40 ff.; 2002; 2004c; 2010 (Fallward); 1999a; 2004b (Otterndorf); Bärefänger et al. 1997; Bärefänger 2004 (Ostbense).

81 Schön & Tempel 1995, 164.

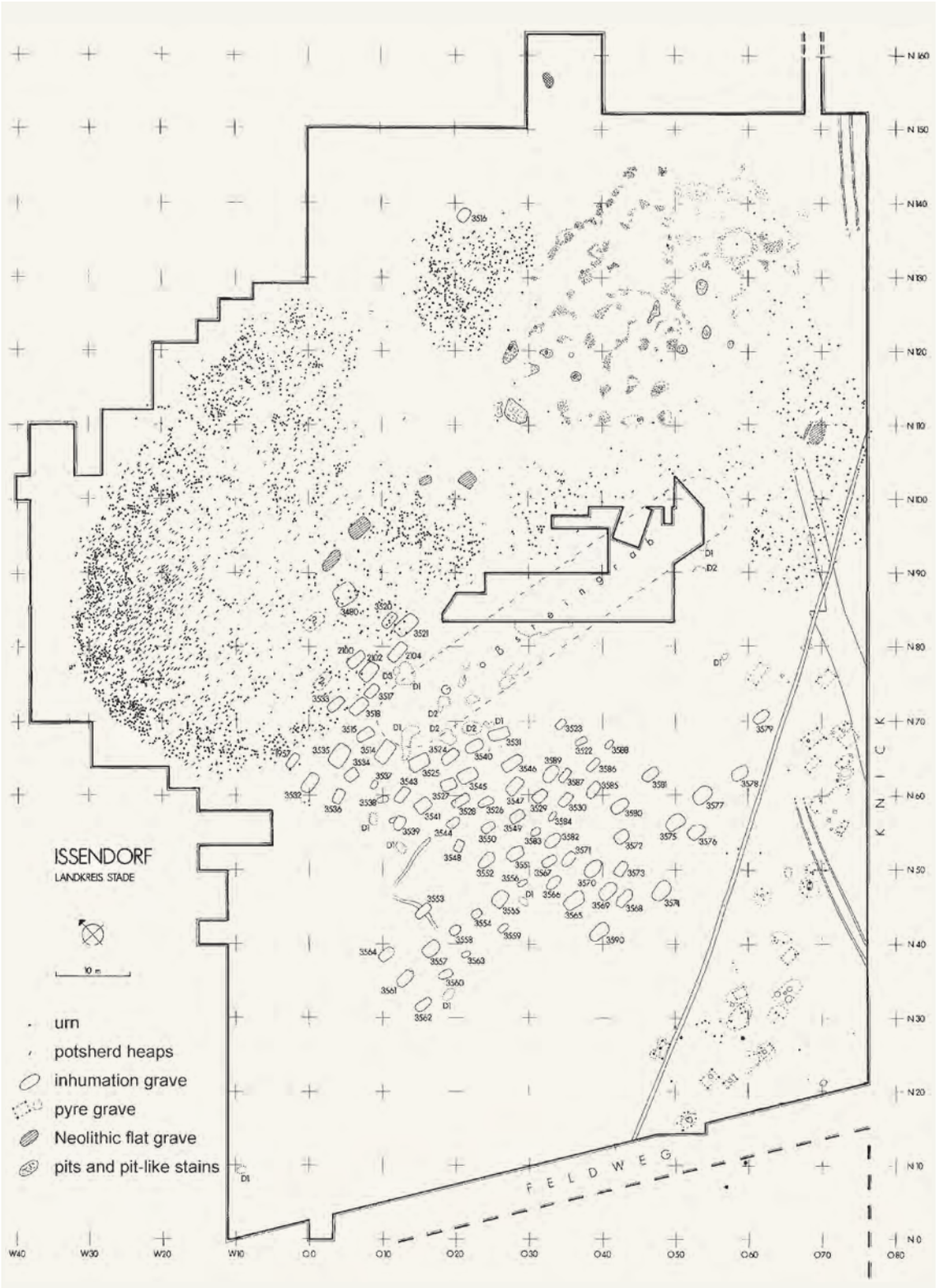
82 For Heidenstadt, see Jöns 2009a, 308-309, 314; Aufderhaar et al. 2009, 213; for Helgoland, see Halbertsma 2000, 228-229.

83 See section 11.2.

84 E.g. Schmid 1977; Gebühr 1998; Jöns 2010, 71-72.

85 Nösler & Wolters 2009; see also Schön & Tempel 1995, 185; Böhme 2003, 265; Häßler 2003, 105; Majchczack 2013, 106-107.

86 For Ostfriesland, see Bärefänger 2001.

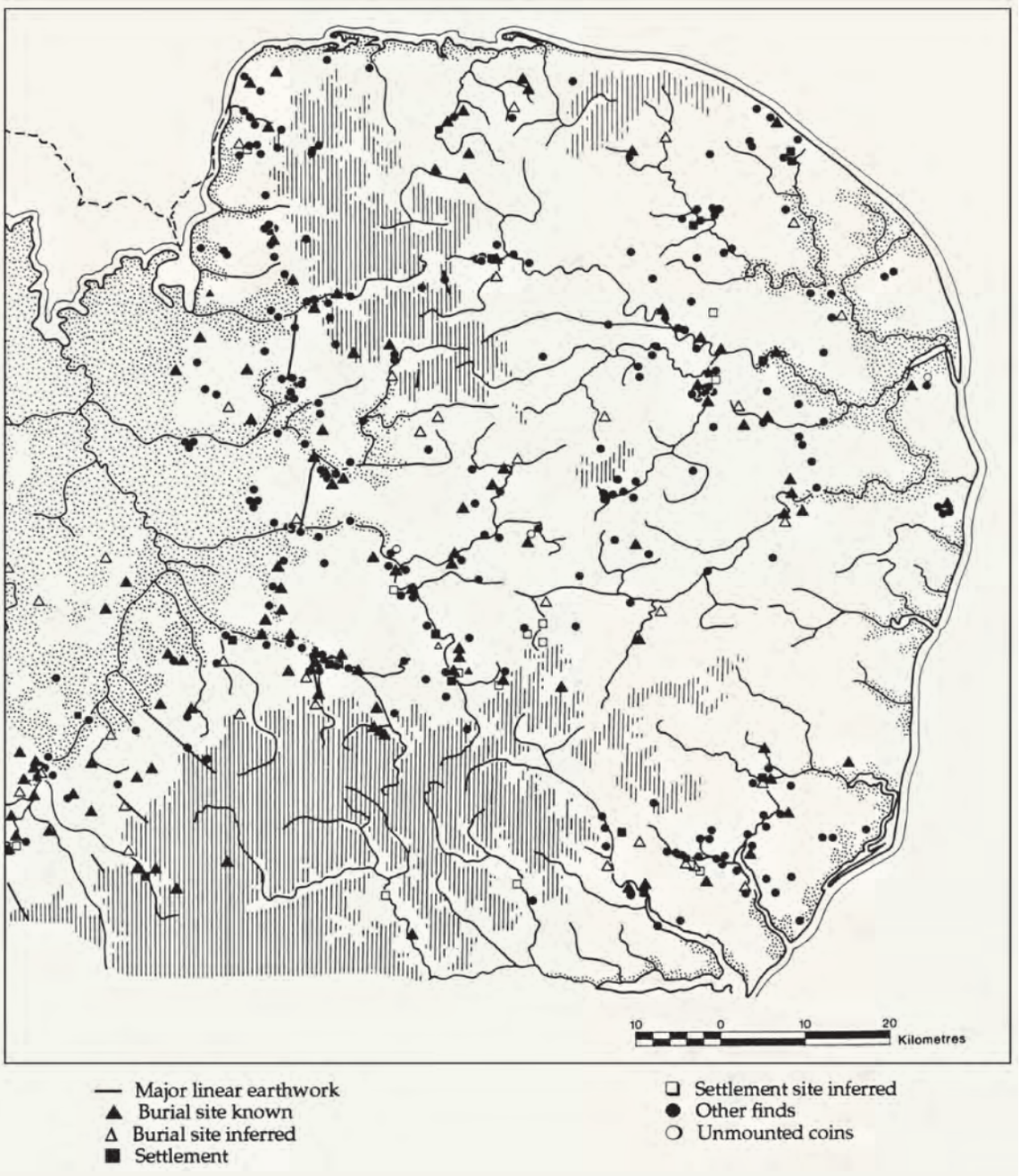


3.18 | Layout of the cemetery at Issendorf (*Landkreis* Stade), which was in use from the 4th to the first half of the 6th century. In total, ca 6600 cremation burials and ca 80 inhumation burials were documented at this site, around an older megalithic tomb (*Großsteingrab*) (after Häßler 2001, fig. 3, slightly adjusted).

3.5 The coastal area of southeast England

The southeast coast of England nowadays belongs to the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent, their territories roughly covering the historically known, 7th-century kingdoms of East Anglia (Norfolk and Suffolk), Essex and Kent (fig. 2.6). The soils along the North Sea coast are dominated by boulder clay moraine and in Kent also chalk, and are intersected by rivers like the Stour and Thames. With the exception of the silted-up estuary of the former Wantsum Channel in eastern Kent, which once divided Thanet from the mainland of Kent, and some erosion along the Thames estuary, the present-day coastline is more or less the same as it was in the early Anglo-Saxon period (mid-5th to 7th century).[87]

87 For Kent, see Brookes 2003, 86, fig. 8.1.



3.19 | Geographical distribution of early Anglo-Saxon burial and settlement sites in East Anglia. The boulder-clay moraine is shown in white (higher areas: shaded), the river valleys and estuaries are stippled (after Scull 1992, fig. 3).

With only a handful of settlement sites excavated on a large scale, archaeology in southeast England has traditionally been dominated by cemetery research. The large number of cemetery sites cluster in areas that are probably comparable to the 'nuclear regions' along the North Sea coast of the Netherlands and northern Germany. Five clusters are most prominent: one in east Kent, a second around and especially south of the Thames (Kent/Essex), a third in the 'Sandlings area' (Suffolk), a fourth in eastern Norfolk and a fifth in western Norfolk/Suffolk (for East Anglia, see fig. 3.19).[88] Besides, some dispersed cemeteries in eastern Essex may have been part of a sixth cluster. For East Anglia, Scull has suggested that such concentrations of population may have coincided with 'independent political groupings at some time during the fifth and sixth centuries.'[89]

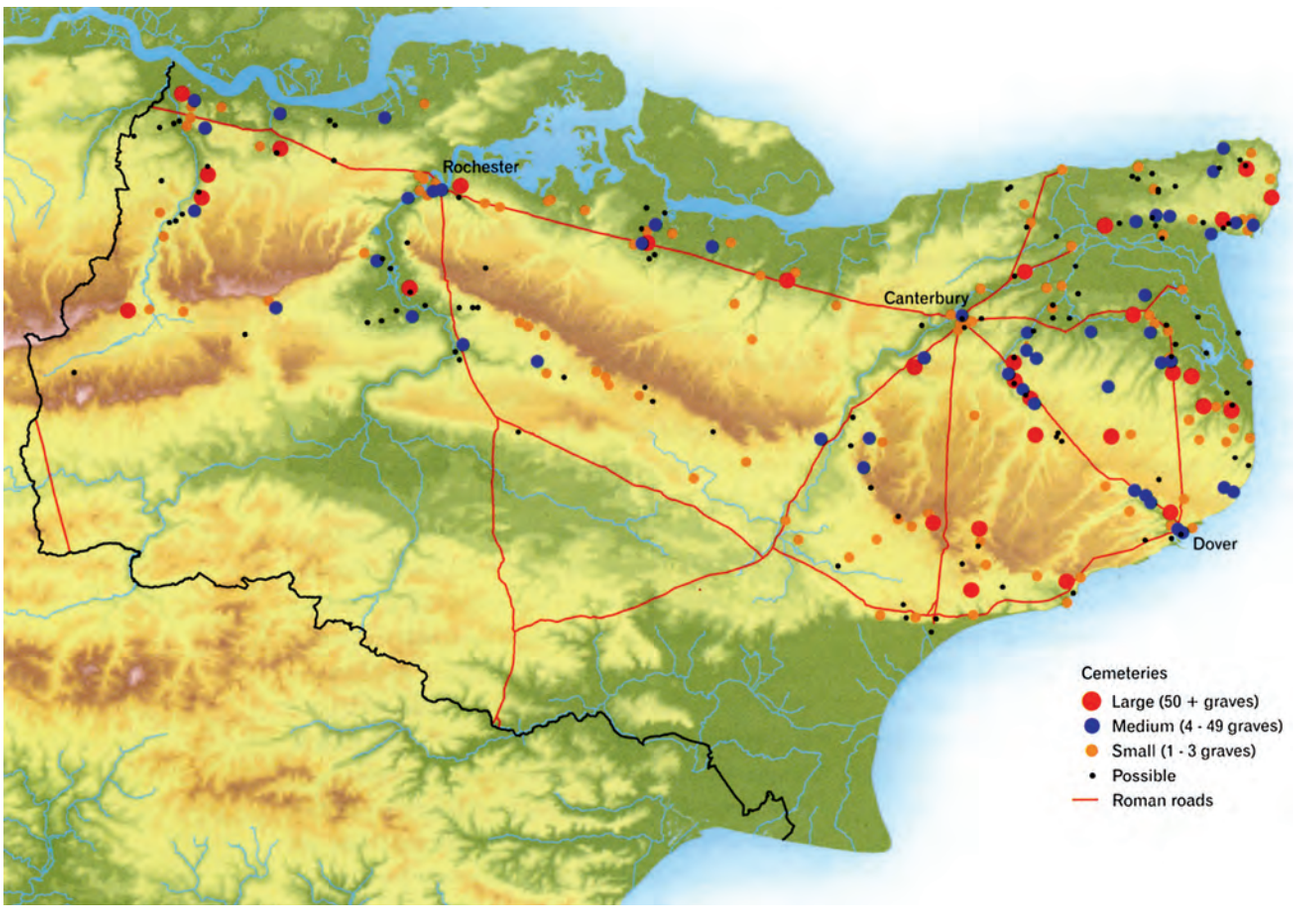
Within the cemetery clusters north of the Thames, most early Anglo-Saxon sites show a preference for light soils and gravels, particularly in the valleys of the main rivers and their tributaries.[90] In Kent, most sites concentrate on the fertile soils of the 'Foothills', north of a limestone ridge (the 'North Downs'), and 'Holmesdale', south of it.[91] Site location is further determined by the vicinity of Roman roads connecting Kent to Essex and East Anglia, and

88 See Campbell 1991, fig. 34. For East Anglia, compare West 1998, fig. 143a.

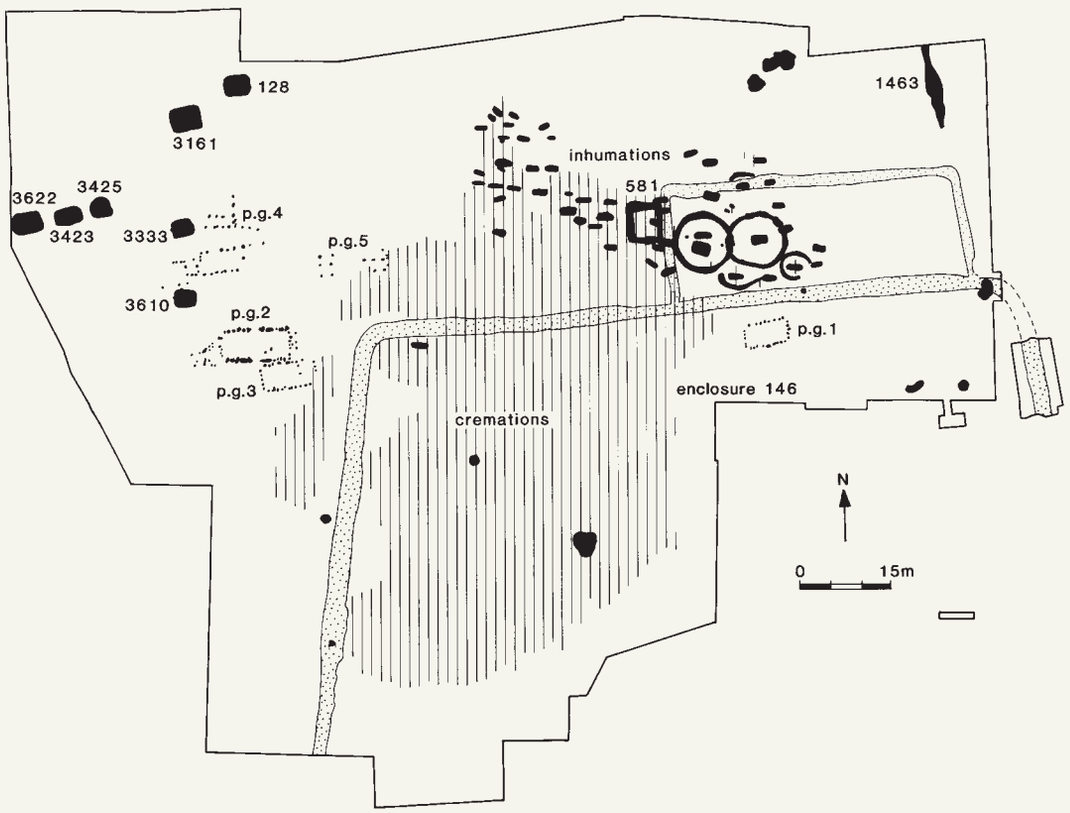
89 Scull 1992, 15.

90 Newman 1992; Penn & Brugmann 2007, 5-6 (East Anglia).

91 See Welch 2007, figs. 6.6-7.



3.20 | Geographical distribution of early Anglo-Saxon burial sites in Kent, showing a spatial relation to the Roman-period road system on the one hand, and waterways on the other. Background: elevation map (after Welch 2007, fig. 6.5).



3.21 | The early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and adjacent settlement site at Spong Hill (Norfolk). Besides the area with cremation graves (shaded), the inhumation graves (top right), the timber-built houses (left and right) and the sunken-featured huts (top left) are shown. The enclosures (stippled) are older, dating to the Roman period (after Rickett 1995, fig. 60).

3.22 | Aerial views of the 2013 excavation area at Lyminge in Kent (top), showing three superimposed halls of the Merovingian period (bottom). The phasing of the halls progresses from the top to the bottom of the picture; the youngest, southernmost hall measures ca 15 x 7.5 m (photos Hawkeye Elevated Photography, © University of Reading).

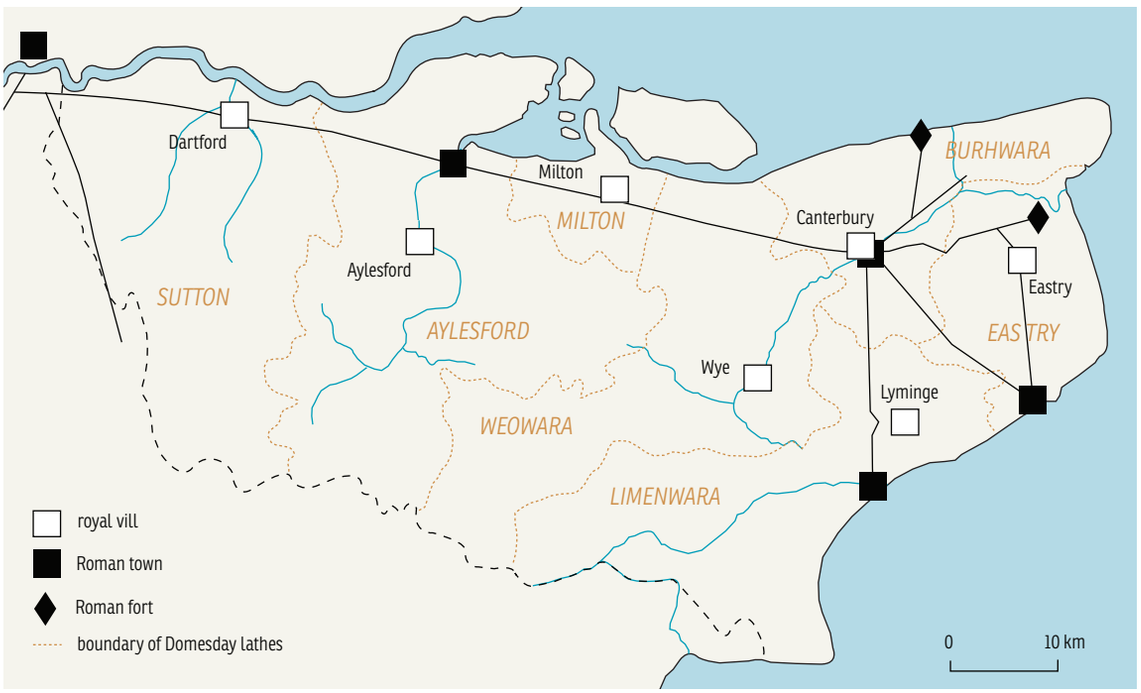
especially of waterways that link southeast England to the Frankish Empire and the North Sea world (for Kent, see fig. 3.20).[92] Despite the broad similarities in regional distribution of Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon sites in East Anglia and Essex, there is little evidence of continuity in the use of Roman-period settlements, most of which were abandoned in the course of the 4th century.[93] For Kent, on the other hand, continuity is found in the use of its Roman name (*Cantium*) and in the regional metalwork production (the so-called 'Quoit Brooch Style'), which suggests the same for the use of settlement areas and sites.[94] Indisputable evidence of continuity at site level, however, is hardly available.[95]

92 Palmer 2003, 51, figs. 5.1-2; Brookes 2003, 86-87, fig. 8.1 (Kent). For a reconstruction of the 'maritime world' of southeast Suffolk in the early Anglo-Saxon period, see Carver 1990, 118-122, fig. 15.3.

93 For East Anglia, see Scull 1992, 10-14 (compare figs. 2 and 3); Newman 1992, 31-32.

94 E.g. Bassett 1989, 57; Yorke 2005, 6-8; for the 'Quoit Brooch Style', see Böhme 1986, 523-525; Richardson 2005, 22-23.

95 Richardson 2005, 53-54; Welch 2007, 194-201.



3.23 | The administrative division of early Anglo-Saxon Kent into historically known 'lathes' and the probable location of 'royal vills'. The Roman roads are shown as black lines (drawing by the author; based on Brooks 1989, fig. 4.2).

Most of the early Anglo-Saxon rural settlements were small, dispersed hamlets, that were relocated around the landscape after one or more generations. The few settlements that have been excavated, such as Spong Hill (5th-6th century, Norfolk, fig 3.21), Kilverstone (6th-7th century, Norfolk), West Stow (5th-7th century, Suffolk), Bloodmoor Hill (6th-7th century, Suffolk) and Mucking (5th-early 8th century, Essex), show a loose spatial organization without substantial enclosures or large farmhouses.[96] The main buildings are small houses of 'Chalton type', surrounded by sunken-floored huts. The houses were aisleless and had no byre; in the late 6th century foundation trenches were introduced, as were small annexes.[97] Despite the apparent differences between 'Anglo-Saxon' and continental houses, the ground plan of English houses closely resembles that of the so-called 'short houses' found alongside the usual longhouses on the Continent.[98]

In the early 7th century, a new type of rural settlement with more imposing farmhouses and a clearly planned layout appeared among the still prevailing hamlets, as excavations at a few English sites outside East Anglia, Essex and Kent have shown.[99] Only recently, some impressive hall buildings have been excavated also in Kent, at Lyminge: a single-phase building (ca 21 x 8.5 m) and three successive phases of a second hall building (last phase measuring ca 15 x 7.5 m, fig. 3.22), both dating to the late 6th and 7th centuries.[100] Some of these elite residences will have functioned as a 'royal vill' (*villae* or *vici regales*), that is the administrative and judicial centre of a district (*regione*), or Kentish-type 'lathe' (fig. 3.23) – which was usually smaller than a nuclear region.[101] Moreover, this is the site where a king had his (temporary) residence and rents in kind were collected by a royal agent. Several royal vills are known from historical sources and have been identified by their place-names, like Lyminge, Sturry, Canterbury, Eastry and Wye in Kent, as well as Rendlesham in Suffolk and Writtle and North Benfleet in Essex.[102] Interestingly, the last three settlements are located near sites of one or more 'princely' burials (Sutton Hoo, Broomfield and Prittlewell, respectively).[103] A different category of elite centres is related to the presence of royal or other estates, such as Finglesham (Kent), its name in the Old English form *Pengels-hām* meaning 'prince's manor'.[104]

96 West 1985 (West Stow); Hamerow 1993 (Mucking); Rickett 1995 (Spong Hill); Garrow et al. 2006 (Kilverstone); Lucy et al. 2009 (Bloodmoor Hill). An overview of excavated settlement sites in Kent is given by Welch (2007, 201-209).

97 Hamerow 1994, 169-173; 1999; 2002, 46-51.

98 Hamerow 1999; see also Dijkstra 2004, 399-401, fig. 2; 2011, 215-217.

99 Hamerow 2010. The best example is Yeavering, in Northumbria (Hope-Taylor 1977).

100 Thomas 2013, 126-128, fig. 6 (single-phase building); pers. comm. G. Thomas (University of Reading). The buildings were part of a larger complex, probably in a courtyard arrangement.

101 Brooks 1989, 69-71.

102 Brooks 1989, 69-73, table 4.1; Welch 2007, 244-245 (Kent); Bruce-Mitford 1975, 30-32; Newman 1992, 36-38 (Suffolk); Blackmore 2008, 338 (Essex).

103 See sections 7.2-3.

104 Chadwick Hawkes 1991; Behr 1994, 160.

The economy of rural settlements was based on mixed arable and livestock farming. Crafts were practised for local self-sufficiency; these included potting, spinning and weaving, small-scale metalworking, and the working of leather and bone. More specialized sites first appear in the course of the 7th century, with the rise of emporia or *wics* along the coast of southern England. Besides the well-known emporia at Ipswich (Suffolk) and London (*Lundenwic*), some exceptional sites have been located in their direct hinterland, such as Barham and Coddenham, north of Ipswich.[105] Both rural sites have yielded gold coins and luxury goods of Frankish and 'Celtic' origin, pointing to the presence of 7th-century elite residences, which may have controlled the import and distribution of 'foreign' goods that entered East Anglia through Ipswich.[106]

Hillforts or other enclosures are unknown in the Kentish 'Downs' and the natural ridges in East Anglia and Essex. The only fortified settlements are the old Roman towns that survived into the early Anglo-Saxon period. Although it is hard to demonstrate continuity in the use of these former urban centres and fortifications during the 4th and 5th centuries, the Roman towns of Ipswich, London and Canterbury became the capitals of medieval East Anglia, Essex and Kent. Most other Roman centres too will have been reoccupied in early medieval times, like the former military camps at Rochester (Kent) and Great Chesterford (Essex).[107]

Although the number of finds from settlement sites has strongly increased during the past decades thanks to metal detecting, cemeteries continue to be the most important source for studying the early Anglo-Saxon period. Many cemeteries have a mixed character, with a combination of cremation and inhumation burials; in Kent, however, 'pure' inhumation cemeteries seem to predominate (table 7.1). The excavations at Spong Hill (fig. 3.21), West Stow and Mucking have shown that cemeteries were usually situated close to the settlements, the larger burial grounds probably being used by several communities. There is little proof of continuous use of Roman-period cemeteries into the early Anglo-Saxon period. The overwhelming majority of burial grounds are new establishments, even where they are adjacent to Romano-British sites.[108]

Place-names with a religious significance point to the sites of several, probably early Anglo-Saxon sanctuaries in Kent. The best examples are *Thunoreshlæw* ('Thors hill'), Woodnesborough ('Wodan's hill') and Wye ('Altar'), the last two situated close to the royal vills of Eastry and Wye.[109] The building of the earliest churches at Canterbury (Kent) and London (Essex) is related to the relatively early conversion of the royal family in Kent, around 600.[110]

3.6 Conclusion

Despite their different landscapes, all research regions are characterized by clusters of rural settlements and their cemeteries, which probably represent social or even political units. Within these nuclear regions, the settlements were probably self-sufficient, combining arable and stock farming with small-scale craft and trading activities. There is little evidence of functional and social differentiation among or within settlement sites, especially when valuables of gold and silver are disregarded. Since 'grand halls' have rarely been found, specialized crafts, such as bead making or the working of precious metals, often are the only indications of an elevated social position of the local inhabitants. In the Dutch part of the research area, later historical sources about royal estates can be used for tracing sites or areas where members of the regional elite may have resided during the time of Frankish occupation. In Anglo-Saxon England, royal vills with a clearly defined status are historically documented and can be traced through their place names. Circumstantial evidence of social differentiation is provided by some other site types, which are likely to have been located at or near elite residences, such as specialized trading sites, cult centres and fortifications. In the following chapters, such elements of the 'socio-political landscape' will be furnished with chronological, stylistic and geographical evidence derived from an important category of early medieval status symbols: valuable items of gold and silver.

105 See Palmer 2003.

106 Newman 2003; Scull & Newman 2009, 307-313 (in: Scull 2009)

107 Chadwick Hawkes 1982, 74 (Rochester); Evison 1994, 49-50 (Great Chesterford).

108 See chapter 7.

109 Behr 1994, 163-164.

110 Welch 2007, 235-239.

4

Valuable items from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands

4.1 Introduction

The historical quarrying of ancient settlement sites for their fertile soil and the introduction of the metal detector have led to an impressive collection of gold and silver valuables from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. The majority of these items are single finds from probable settlement contexts (section 4.4). Moreover, a fair number of gold hoards have appeared (section 4.3). Grave goods of precious metal, however, though well-known from the surrounding regions, have rarely been found (section 4.2). Most of the gold and silver objects that are presented below, including their context information and dating, have been previously published by the author, in various Dutch articles.[1] For coin finds, the largely unpublished data set from an inventory by Pol is used, as well as his typology.[2] The dating of most of the jewellery and other ornaments is based on the chronology of Kentish grave goods (especially disc brooches), and on their occurrence in coin-dated hoards from the area.[3]

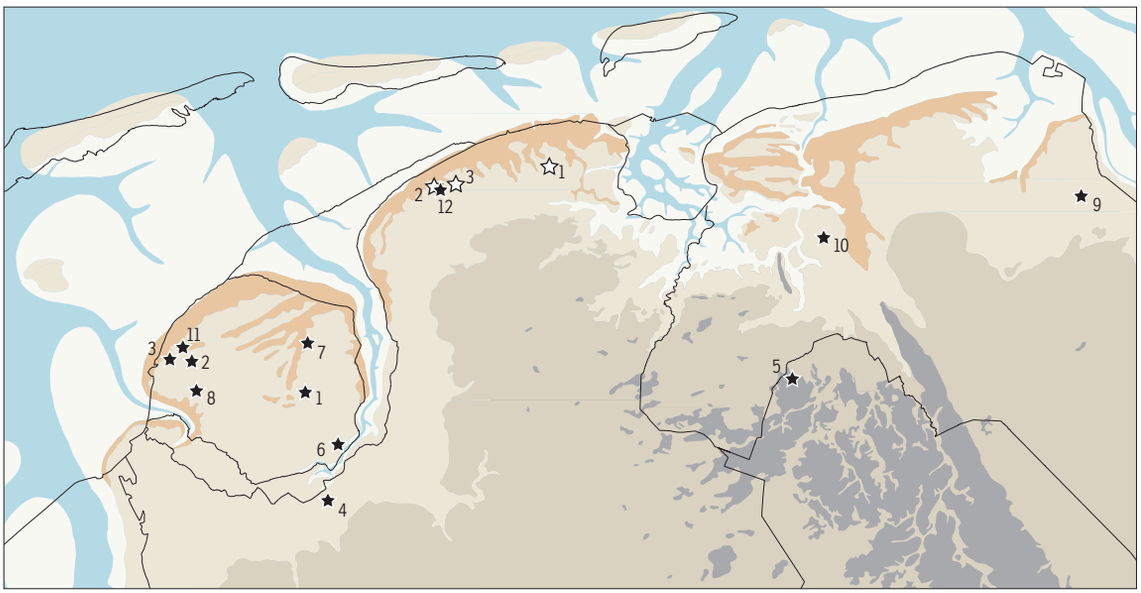
4.2 Grave goods

In the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, grave goods from 5th- to 7th-century inhumation and cremation burials are often limited to one or more brooches, some glass beads, a knife and/or a belt-buckle. Ornaments of gold and silver, as well as weapons, have rarely been found (fig. 4.1).[4] Because of its exclusive character, the sole garnet-decorated ornament from a funerary context, made of bronze, is also included in this overview.

The cemetery of Aalzum (Friesland)

In the late 19th century, the quarrying of *terp* soil at the village of Aalzum brought to light a rich inhumation burial with remains of a wooden coffin. The grave goods include a string of 11 glass and shell beads, a fragment of a bronze annular brooch, a bronze 'relic box' and a bronze disc-on-bow brooch (fig. 4.2).[5] The 'relic box', first interpreted as a bracelet, is made of bronze sheet and decorated with repoussé dots, forming two rows of crosses. Similar boxes, made of bronze and sometimes of silver or gold, also appear as grave goods in southern Germany and Anglo-Saxon England.[6] The most exclusive object is the disc-on-bow brooch. The head- and foot-plate of this slightly worn piece are decorated with garnet cloisonné and five white studs, probably made of some form of silica.[7] Unfortunately, the central disc is lost. The shape and decoration of the brooch date the inhumation burial to the first half of the 7th century.[8] Closely related brooches, executed in gold and silver, are known from Wieuwerd (fig. 4.10, no. 1), Hogebeintum (fig. 4.20) and Wijnaldum (fig. 4.32). Moreover, the headplate of a brooch that might be similar in type to the Aalzum piece was found at Menaldum (fig. 4.28, no. 4).

1 Nicolay 2005; 2006a; 2008a.
2 Coin data: situation in February 2014; Pol, in prep. (the typology is briefly presented in section 8.2.2).
3 For the Kentish chronology, see Richardson 2005, 36-40, fig. 12 (overview); Avent 1975, 62-63 (disc brooches).
4 For an overview of early medieval weapons from (probable) graves, see Knol 1993, table 16.
5 Boeles 1951, 327-328, pl. XLIII (no. 3); Knol 1988, 126; 1993, 213, fig. 71.
6 Werner 1950, 38-52, *Taf.* 11; Meaney 1981, 181-189; Vida 2009. Compare the bronze 'relic box' from Harford Farm, grave 18 (Norfolk, see section 7.4).
7 Ypey 1961, 573-575; Karras 1985, 170-171; for the composition of the white studs, compare Evison 1951 (Kentish disc brooches).
8 See below (section 4.4: 'gold and silver brooches').



4.1 | Geographical distribution of graves (white symbols) and hoards (black symbols) with valuable items of gold and/or silver across the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. For the background, see figure 3.1 (drawing by the author).
Grave: 1. Aalzum (bronze), 2. Hogebeintum, 3. Oosterbeintum.
Hoard find: 1. Lions, 2. Herbaijum, 3. Midlum, 4. Scharnegoutum, 5. Nietap, 6. Wieuwerd, 7. Dronrijp, 8. Achlum, 9. Marsum, 10. Krassum, 11. Wijnaldum, 12. Hogebeintum.

4.2 | Grave goods from an inhumation grave at the cemetery of Aalzum: a bronze, garnet-decorated disc-on-bow brooch, a bronze 'relic box' and a string of glass and shell beads. Length of disc-on-bow brooch (disc lost) 8.7 cm (coll. and photo Fries Museum, Leeuwarden).

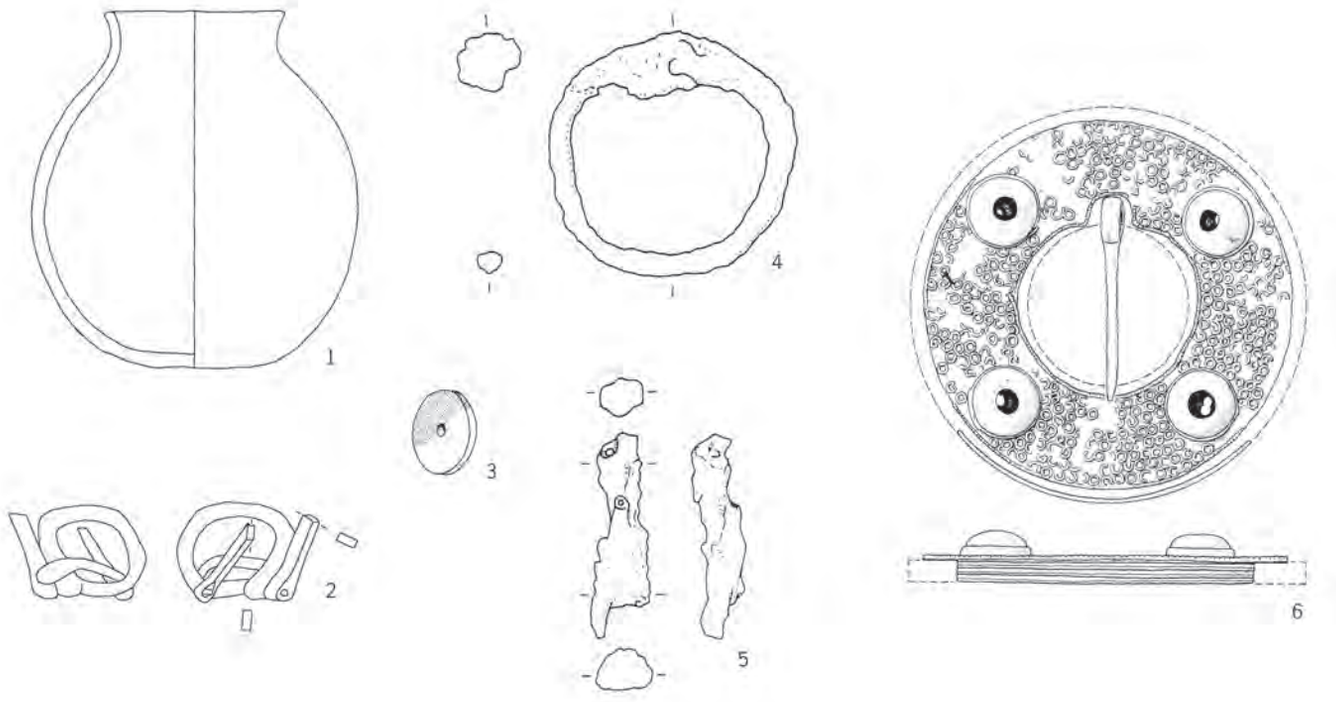
The cemetery of Hogebeintum (Friesland)

An exclusive piece of jewellery was found at the cemetery of Hogebeintum in 1905, when the quarrying of *terp* soil was supervised by an employee of the Fries Museum. The cemetery showed a combination of inhumation and cremation burials. One of the cremations was buried in an undecorated urn which also contained a bead of shell, several iron objects, including a buckle and ring, and the remains of an annular brooch (grave 112, fig. 4.3).[9] The remaining elements of the brooch are a sheet-gold front-plate, a fragment of its silver, ribbed edge and its silver pin. The original back-plate, probably made of silver, is missing. The front-plate is decorated with slipshod and heavily worn ring filigree and four bosses of horn, with cavities that probably held garnets (fig. 4.4). The shape and decoration of the Hogebeintum find is very similar to that of the so-called 'plated disc brooches' from Kent (see fig. 9.24, no. 2), dating to the late 6th and early decades of the 7th century.[10] Given the radiocarbon analyses of charcoal remains from the urn (ca 425-600 cal. AD, 2 sigma), a late 6th-century date is most probable for the Hogebeintum find.[11]

9 Boeles 1951, 330, pl. XXXV (no. 10); Ypey 1961, 572-573, fig. 28 (no. 1), 30 (no. 2); Knol 1993, 213, fig. 70; Karras 1985, 167-168.

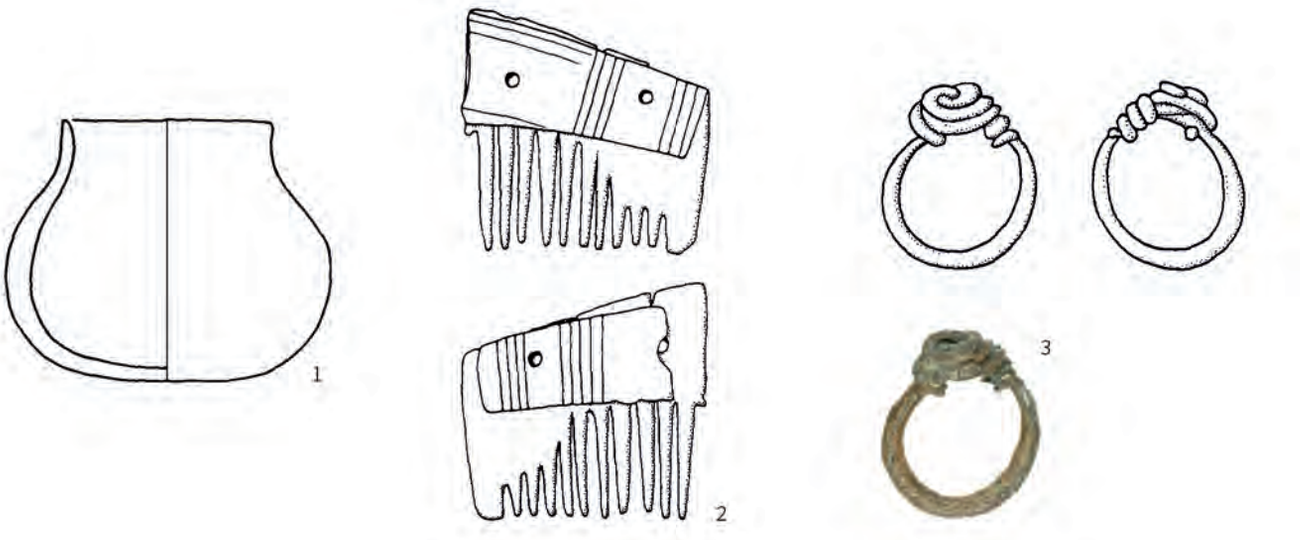
10 Avent 1975, 62 (compare cat. nos. 146, 165, 167-168, and for the bosses nos. 183, 186); see also Brown & Schweizer 1973, 180, table 1 (AM 26 = Avent no. 167); Richardson 2005, 38 (Phase V).

11 Knol 1993, 59, fig. 13.



4.3 | Grave goods from cremation grave 112 at the cemetery of Hogebeintum: 1. hand-made urn, 2. iron buckle, 3. chalk bead, 4-5. iron ring and rod with unknown function, 6. gold and silver remains of a plated disc brooch. Scale of urn 4:1, other items 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden; after Knol 1993, fig. 70).

4.4 | The gold-sheet, filigree-decorated front plate of a plated disc brooch with four bosses of horn from grave 112 at the cemetery of Hogebeintum. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra & J. van der Veer).



4.5 | Grave goods from cremation grave 438 at the cemetery of Oosterbeintum: 1. hand-made urn, 2. part of a bone comb, 3. silver-wire finger ring. Scale of urn 2:1, other items 1:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photo by the author; redrawings after Knol et al. 1995/1996, 400).

The cemetery of Oosterbeintum (Friesland)

The cemetery of Oosterbeintum is the only burial ground in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands to have been excavated according to modern standards.[12] Between 1988 and 1989, 65 cremation and 47 inhumation burials were documented at the centre of a largely destroyed *terp* (fig. 3.5). Among the grave goods are weapons (a *Schmalsax* and a lance head), knives, belt fittings, brooches and bone combs, dating from the late 4th to the early 8th century. Finds of iron clench-nails suggest that at least three coffins were made of re-used ship's timbers (graves 335, 393 and 433).[13]

The only burial find made of silver is a finger ring from an undecorated urn, which also contained half a bone comb and the cremated remains of a child (grave 438, fig. 4.5).[14] The poorly preserved ring was made of a plain wire, terminating in a spiral knot. Similar rings from graves in Anglo-Saxon England and in a hoard from Hogebeintum (fig. 4.19) date this burial to the 7th century.[15] This date falls within the date range of the radiocarbon-dated charcoal from the urn (ca 600-760 cal. AD, 2 sigma).[16]

4.3 Hoard finds

A total of twelve (probable) gold hoards from the 5th to 7th centuries have turned up in the northern Netherlands and the direct hinterland (fig. 4.1, table 4.1). These collections of two or more items comprise coins, jewellery and the ornament of a sword grip, including hacked pieces that were meant to be re-used by a goldsmith. First the 'pure' coin hoards are described, followed by the 'mixed' hoards (coins and jewellery) and the hoards containing only jewellery or other ornaments.

Table 4.1 | List of gold hoards from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands and their probable time of burial (F: Friesland, G: Groningen, D: Drenthe, *: *terp*-quarrying find, **: excavation find, mat: material, g: gold, s: silver, b: brooch).

FIND SITE	COIN	JEWELLERY	OTHER ORNAMENT	HACK GOLD/ BAR	MAT	WEIGHT (GR)	DEPOSITION DATE
Lions-village (F)*	2				g	6	440-475
Herbaijum-village (F)*	2				g	6	525-575
Midlum-'Middelstein' (F)	15				g	ca 65	540-600
Scharnegoutum-village (F)*	3				g	13	590-650
Nietap-surroundings (D)	89				g	ca 110	630-635
Wieuwerd-'Bessens' (F)*		39			g	220	625-650
Dronrijp-'Dotingastate'(F)*		1	1	5	g	260	640-650
Achlum (F)*		7			g	16	525-560
Marsum-village (G)*		2			g	6	600-650
Krassum-village (G)*			6(?)		g	-	600-650
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)**			1		g	2	600-650
Hogebeintum-village (F)*		1 (g/s)	9 (s)		g/s	194 (b)	640-675

12 Knol et al. 1995/1996.

13 Knol et al. 1995/1996, 332-333.

14 Knol et al. 1995/1996, 331, 330 (ring), 402.

15 For the date of the English finds, see Geake 1997, 48-49.

16 Knol et al. 1995/1996, 402, fig. 25.

4.6 | Solidus hoard from Midlum, spread out in front of a small, handmade pot, which may have been the original container. Maximum diameter pot 6.5 cm (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photo M. Kooistra).

4.7 | Two solidi of Valens (left) and of pseudo-imperial type (right) from a probable coin hoard that was found at Scharnegoutum, both with a ribbed suspension loop. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; coll. and photos Fries Scheepvaart Museum, Sneek).

The probable coin hoard from Lions (Friesland)

In 1903, the quarrying of *terp* soil at Lions turned up a solidus and a tremissis of Valentinian III (425-455).[17] The solidus, now lost, was minted at Ravenna. Because the tremissis is slightly worn, this presumable coin set was probably buried around the middle or in the third quarter of the 5th century.

The probable coin hoard from Herbaijum (Friesland)

During the quarrying of *terp* soil at Herbaijum, a pseudo-imperial tremissis and solidus in the name of Justinian I (527-565) were successively uncovered at the same location in 1845 and 1846.[18] The solidus was probably minted in the Ostrogothic kingdom. The coins show no traces of wear and, when part of a hoard, are likely to have been buried in the second or third quarter of the 6th century.

The coin hoard from Midlum (Friesland)

In 1925, during water-mains construction, at least 15 solidi were found in the *terp* 'Middelstein', near Midlum (fig. 4.6).[19] The coins, of which several were lost, include imperial solidi of Marcian (450-457, 3x), Leo I (457-474, 9x), Anastasius I (491-518, 2x) and Justinian I (527-565, 1x). All coins were minted at Constantinople. The original loop of the Justinian coin had been carefully removed. There is a remarkably wide time span between the old-

17 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (no. 11); Van der Vin 1992, 101 (no. 151).

18 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (nos. 46, 63); Van der Vin 1992, 84-85 (no. 104); Pol, in prep.

19 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (nos. 13-22, 29-30, 43); Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1960, 94-96; Van der Vin 1992, 104-105 (no. 160); Ufkes 1991/1992; Pol, in prep.

4.8 | A light-weight solidus of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine, nine Frankish and 'Frisian' tremisses and three smaller, so-called 'Frisian grains' belonging to a disturbed coin hoard that was found near Nietap, in the direct hinterland of the coastal zone. Scale 2:1 (coll. Drents Museum, Assen, photo T. Veenstra).

est coin and the youngest, which was minted before 538. Most coins, including the youngest piece, are fairly worn, which suggests a time of deposition around the middle or in the second half of the 6th century. The hoard may have been buried in a small hand-made pot that was found at the same location.[20]

The probable coin hoard from Scharnegoutum (Friesland)

In 1942, a gold solidus with a simple ribbed loop was found at the *terp* village of Scharnegoutum.[21] The coin is probably part of a larger hoard that also contained another coin-pendant and a coin with a removed loop, previously uncovered in 1863 and 1922. The coins are two imperial solidi, of Valens (364-378) and Maurice Tiberius (582-602), minted at Arles and Constantinople, respectively, and a Frankish pseudo-imperial solidus, showing the bust of Anastasius I (491-518) (fig. 4.7)[22]. Again, there is a large time span between the oldest and the youngest coin. Assuming that all three coins – of which the light-weight solidus of Maurice Tiberius is very worn – were buried as part of the same hoard, its time of deposition can be dated to the late 6th or the first half of the 7th century.

There are two interesting triangular punch-marks on the reverse of the solidus of Maurice Tiberius. According to Van Schie-Herweijer, the wafered marks may have had a 'magical significance', since they are placed on either side of the head of Victoria.[23] Similar, but not identical marks are present on one of the two biconical rings from the Wieuwerd gold hoard (fig. 4.10, no. 2) and on some finger rings, stray finds from the northern Netherlands (fig. 4.34).

The coin hoard from Nietap (Drenthe)

Over a period of over 100 years, since 1866, one gold solidus and 88 tremisses were found in the surroundings of Nietap (fig. 4.8, no. 2).[24] The finds belong to a coin hoard which was disturbed as a result of clay quarrying. Because Nietap is situated in the immediate hinterland of the coastal area, at the southern border of an extensive peat zone, the hoard will be discussed as part of the coastal finds.

A light-weight solidus of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641), struck at

20 Ufkes 1991/1992, 304, fig. 5.

21 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (no. 2); Halbertsma 1966; Van Schie-Herweijer 1969; Van der Vin 1992, 117-118 (no. 192); Pol, in prep.

22 The current whereabouts of the second coin is unknown.

23 Van Schie-Herweijer 1969, 84 (for a drawing of one of the stamps, see fig. 3).

24 Boeles 1947; 1951, 311-312; Pol 1977; in prep.; Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 125.

4.9 | Gold hoard from Wieuwerd. Length of the foot of a disc-on-bow brooch 8.2 cm (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp).

Constantinople, is the only Byzantine coin in the hoard. The Frankish tremisses are represented by two quasi-imperial coins, showing the bust of Maurice Tiberius (582-602) and minted in the Provence, a royal coin of Dagobert I (629-639), minted at Viviers, and 20 'civic' coins, minted at Maastricht (11x, including four imitations), Mainz (2x), Metz (1x) and several places in Frankish Gaul (fig. 8.8C). The majority of the coins were probably minted in the province of Friesland, including 35 tremisses of the Dronrijp A-D types and seven tremisses or 'Frisian grains' (in Dutch: *Friese korrels*) of the Zweins type. A third group of tremisses, belonging to the types Nietap (12x) and Posterholt (3x), may have been minted in the Frankish or 'Frisian' area. Finally, the provenance of eight coins is unclear.

By comparing the composition of the Nietap hoard with coin finds from Dronrijp (see below), Wieuwerd (see below) and Escharen (province of Noord-Brabant), Lafaurie was able to establish their chronological order and time of deposition: Escharen ca 600, Wieuwerd ca 625, Nietap ca 630/635 and Dronrijp ca 640/645.[25]

The mixed hoard from Wieuwerd (Friesland)

The largest and most spectacular gold hoard from the northern Netherlands came to light in 1866, during the quarrying of *terp* soil at the site 'Bessens' near Wieuwerd.[26] The hoard find comprises a total of 39 gold objects, weighting 220 g: the foot of a disc-on-bow brooch, two rings, seven pendants and 29 coins, all mounted as jewellery (fig. 4.9). Possibly, a white clay bead also belonged to the hoard.[27] The hoard was buried in a probably hand-made pot, which is now lost.

Of the disc-on-bow brooch only the hollow front-plate of the triangular foot was found (fig. 4.10, no. 1). The brooch was probably broken deliberately before burial, with the original back-plate, made of silver, being removed. The foot-plate has five hemispherical bosses and is richly decorated with filigree bands of twisted and beaded gold wire. The central zone is divided into two panels, showing an interlace cross and a stylized interlace animal in triple filigree – made of a thick central, beaded wire with a thin, plain wire on either side. The Wieuwerd brooch is part of a larger group of 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches, which is discussed below.

Two biconical rings were probably worn as finger rings or as hair ornaments (fig. 4.10, nos. 2-3).[28] One ring has a smooth surface, the

25 Lafaurie 1959/1960, 172-176. These datings are still generally accepted today (pers. inf. A. Pol, Leiden University).

26 Janssen 1867; Halbertsma 1957; Boeles 1951, 312-313, appendix VIII; Lafaurie et al. 1961; Karras 1985, 159-166; Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 124; Van der Vin 1992, 130-132 (no. 226); Alkemade 1997, 188 (no. 21); Pol, in prep.

27 See Jansen 1867, 84 (speaking of 'a small round disk of white, slightly burned clay,' which was 'perforated at the centre').

28 According to Karras (1985, 161), the rings might have been sword-pommel decorations. The presence of sword elements in a 'female' jewellery hoard, however, is improbable.

4.10 | The foot-plate of a large disc-on-bow brooch (no. 1), two biconical rings (nos. 2-3), two annular pendants (nos. 4-5), two kidney-shaped pendants (nos. 6-7) and three bracteates (nos. 8-10) from the Wieuwerd hoard. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

4.11 | A selection of coin-pendants from the Wieuwerd hoard, partly decorated with elaborate borders. The solidi and tremisses are of pseudo-imperial and quasi-imperial types (nos. 1-2, 12 and 11, respectively), and minted by Justinian I (nos. 3-4), Justin II (no. 10), Maurice Tiberius (no. 13), Phocas (no. 14), Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (no. 6), king Chlothar II (nos. 4-5), king Sisebut (no. 7) and moneyer Ansoaldus (no. 8). Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

4.12 | A coin-pendant and a coin finger ring from the Wieuwerd hoard. The coins are of pseudo-imperial type (finger ring), and minted by Chlothar II (pendant). Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra).

other is decorated with rows of stamped circles and wafered triangles. Both rings are best Parallelled by narrower, partly also biconical finger rings from the northern Netherlands – of which some are also decorated with wafered triangles (see below).

Two round pendants have a biconical loop, decorated with ring and spiral filigree (fig. 4.10, nos. 4-5). The front of the pendants is adorned with different patterns in filigree and garnet cloisonné, one in the shape of four stylized birds' heads and one showing a cross. Most garnets had been removed, probably before burial. Two near-identical kidney-shaped pendants bear stylized, opposing birds' heads (fig. 4.10, nos. 6-7). These pendants have ribbed loops and are fully decorated with ring filigree. Three pendants with a stamped decoration can be labelled as bracteates (fig. 4.10, nos. 8-10). Two of these depict identical, stylized human faces in frontal view, surrounded by two rows of repoussé dots. The border is decorated with twisted and beaded wire; above the central motif a ribbed loop is attached. The third bracteate shows interlaced animals in ribbon ornament, surrounded by a single row of repoussé dots. The loop is missing. All three pendant types show interesting links with early Anglo-Saxon Kent, in both shape and decoration.[29]

The Wieuwerd hoard is famous for its 29 coins, mounted as pendants (figs. 4.11-12) and as a finger ring (fig. 4.12). On the basis of the areas where the solidi and tremisses were minted, a subdivision into four groups can be made. The first group comprises seven imperial solidi, minted at Constantinople: a coin of Justin I (518-527), two of Justinian I (527-565), one of Maurice Tiberius (582-602), one of Phocas (602-610) and two of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641, both light-weight). Most of these coins were transformed into pendants by the addition of a simple ribbed loop. The solidi of Maurice Tiberius and Phocas have biconical loops with ring filigree and elaborate mountings, decorated with a band of twisted and beaded gold wire. A strip of gold sheet had been soldered to the back of one of the loops as a repair (fig. 4.11, no. 14).

29 See the discussion in section 9.5.

The second group of coins was minted in Italy; it comprises a solidus of Justinian I (527-565, Ravenna), a tremissis of Justin II (565-578, Ravenna) and an Ostrogothic, pseudo-imperial solidus showing the bust of Anastasius I (491-518). The coin of Justinian I is mounted in a narrow filigree border; the biconical loop is decorated with ring filigree. The tremissis of Justin II has a wider border, decorated with twisted and beaded wire; traces of repair show that the original, probably biconical loop was replaced by a ribbed loop (fig. 4.11, no. 10). Finally, the Anastasius coin has a simple, originally ribbed loop.

The third 'group' is formed by a single tremissis, minted at Seville (southern Spain), which shows the bust of the Visigothic king Sisebut (612-621). The coin has a ribbed loop.

The fourth and final group comprises 18 late 6th- and 7th-century imitations of imperial solidi and tremisses, minted at various locations in the Frankish and other Germanic areas (fig. 8.8B). Most coins are royal emissions, minted by Chlothar II (613-629) at Marseilles (11x). Two quasi- and three pseudo-imperial coins show the busts of Justinian I (527-565, 2x), Justin II (565-578), Justinian I or Justin II, and Tiberius II Constantine (578-582). Both quasi-imperial coins were minted in the Provence; the origin of the pseudo-imperial coins is uncertain. Finally, two Frankish tremisses were struck at Maastricht. Three coins from this group are mounted in an elaborate filigree border, one very similar to that of the pendants with solidi of Maurice Tiberius and Phocas (first group). The two others have different borders, one decorated with S-spirals of single filigree and the other with twisted loops of double filigree. Two of these pendants have biconical loops with filigree decoration, the third a ribbed loop – a repair, as can be seen on the reverse (fig. 4.11, no. 11). The remaining coins lack decorative borders and were suspended by simple ribbed loops.

One of the pseudo-imperial solidi, belonging to the fourth group and showing the bust of Justinian I or Justin II, is surrounded by a narrow border decorated with twisted wire, and mounted on a finger ring (fig. 4.12). The ring is made of a thick gold wire, which terminates in four flat spirals that are attached to the reverse of the coin and its border. By way of decoration two sets of three small beads were soldered to the transition from the ring to the mounting.

Coin pendants with simple, ribbed loops have been found all over Europe. The pieces with decorated borders and biconical loops are more unusual. In a less exuberant form they are sometimes represented in the Frankish area, Anglo-Saxon England and Scandinavia.[30] The finger ring is a direct copy of southern examples as known from Frankish and Alamannic graves, like the 'royal' burial of Wittislingen (Germany).[31]

Although the similar style of mounting and decoration may seem to indicate that the Wieuwerd jewellery was made at the same time, the differing degrees of wear on the loops suggest different moments of production, possibly over a period of some decades. The youngest coins, two solidi of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641) and eight royal coins of Chlothar II (613-629), all showing traces of wear, establish a *final* date of production some time after 613. The decoration of the disc-on-bow brooch with triple filigree is closely Parallelled by a gold, garnet-decorated disc-brooch from Rosmeer (Belgium, fig. 11.17), which was buried with an early-7th-century tremissis (ca 610-620).[32] Kentish 'composite brooches' with a similar decoration are found in graves dating to ca 620/630-640 (see fig. 9.24, no. 1), which points to a production date of the Wieuwerd brooch in the early decades of the 7th century.[33] Deposition around 625, as suggested by Lafaurie (see above), must be one or two decades too early, especially since some of the jewellery is heavily worn and repaired.[34] More probably, this is the moment when the coin assemblage was closed and no further coins were mounted as jewellery.

The mixed hoard from Dronrijp (Friesland)

In 1876, a large gold hoard was found during the quarrying of *terp* soil; it was sold in two parts (Dronrijp I and II). The complete hoard, which was buried in a small hand-made pot, comprised four cut-off fragments of a large buckle, a pendant, a bar, a triangular object of uncertain function and 44 coins (total weight 260 gr, fig. 4.13).[35]

The gold buckle had an original length of ca 18 cm and was of the early Anglo-Saxon, Kentish triangular type with three hemispherical bosses and a characteristic shield-tongue.[36] The front would have been fully dec-

30 E.g. Werner 1935, *Taf.* I, V (photos); Fagerlie 1967, *Taf.* XXI; Kent 1975, fig. 429.

31 Werner 1950, 36-37, *Taf.* 10 (no. 4), with other parallels.

32 Roosens 1970.

33 Avent 1975, 63 (class 4.2, compare cat. nos. 182-183); see also Brown & Schweizer 1973, 180, table 1 (AM 28 = Avent no. 182).

34 See also Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 124.

35 Dirks 1890; Boeles 1951, 309-310, appendix VIII; Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 125; Alkemade 1997, 193 (no. 43); IJssennagger 2013a. For a hypothetical reconstruction, see Zijlstra 1992, pl. I-II.

36 Compare Åberg 1926, figs. 214-222.

4.13 | Gold hoard from Dronrijp. Length of reconstructed buckle 18.5 cm (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photo M. Kooistra).

orated with gold filigree and garnet cloisonné, of which only one row of honeycomb-shaped cloisons along part of the outer rim remains (fig. 4.14). A large part of the buckle, including the three bosses, was destroyed and probably melted down before the hoard was buried.

The gold pendant has a simple ribbed loop and was decorated with a large oval gem that was later removed. This stone was surrounded by a narrow band of two twisted gold wires. Similar so-called 'cabochon pendants' are regularly found in 7th-century English burials, especially in Kent.[37]

The function of a third gold object, now lost, is uncertain. A letter in the archive of the Fries Museum, which gives a short description and a sketch of the object, indicates that it was triangular and had been decorated with three small garnets, one of which was missing. This may have been a decorative fitting belonging to the same hip-belt as the large buckle.

The gold bar was clearly cut off at one end, probably for the production of gold coins or ornaments. The surviving end of the bar is heavily worn, pointing to frequent testing of its quality on a touchstone. It has been assumed that the bar was made from a part of the destroyed buckle, and that two of the coins (the so-called 'Frisian grains' of the Zweins type) were also made from cut-off pieces of this bar.[38] However, the difference in gold carat between the bar and coins confutes this hypothesis.[39]

Most of the 44 'civic' tremisses from the hoard were struck at Frankish mints, in the Middle-Rhine area (at Mainz, Cologne and Zülpich, 20x, including nine coins of the Mainz type), in the Meuse valley (at Maastricht and Huy, 2x), or further south, at various places in Frankish Gaul (7x) (fig. 8.8D). Seven tremisses of the types Dronrijp B-C, as well as both tremisses of the Zweins type, are usually regarded as 'Frisian' products. Finally, three tremisses of the Remmerden type, one of the Posterholt type and two of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type may have been minted either in the Frankish or the 'Frisian' area.

Gold or gold-decorated triangular buckles and gold cabochon pendants are typical of late 6th- and 7th-century burials, especially in Kent (see figs. 9.22, 9.31).[40] The shape of the remaining cloisons on the Dronrijp buckle is reminiscent of the outer rim of the so-called 'Trier plaque' (garnet cloisonné: late 6th century) and some Kentish composite brooches (ca 620/630-640, see fig. 9.24).[41] A production date of the buckle and pendant in the late 6th, or early decades of the 7th century is confirmed by the dating of the coins. Pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus

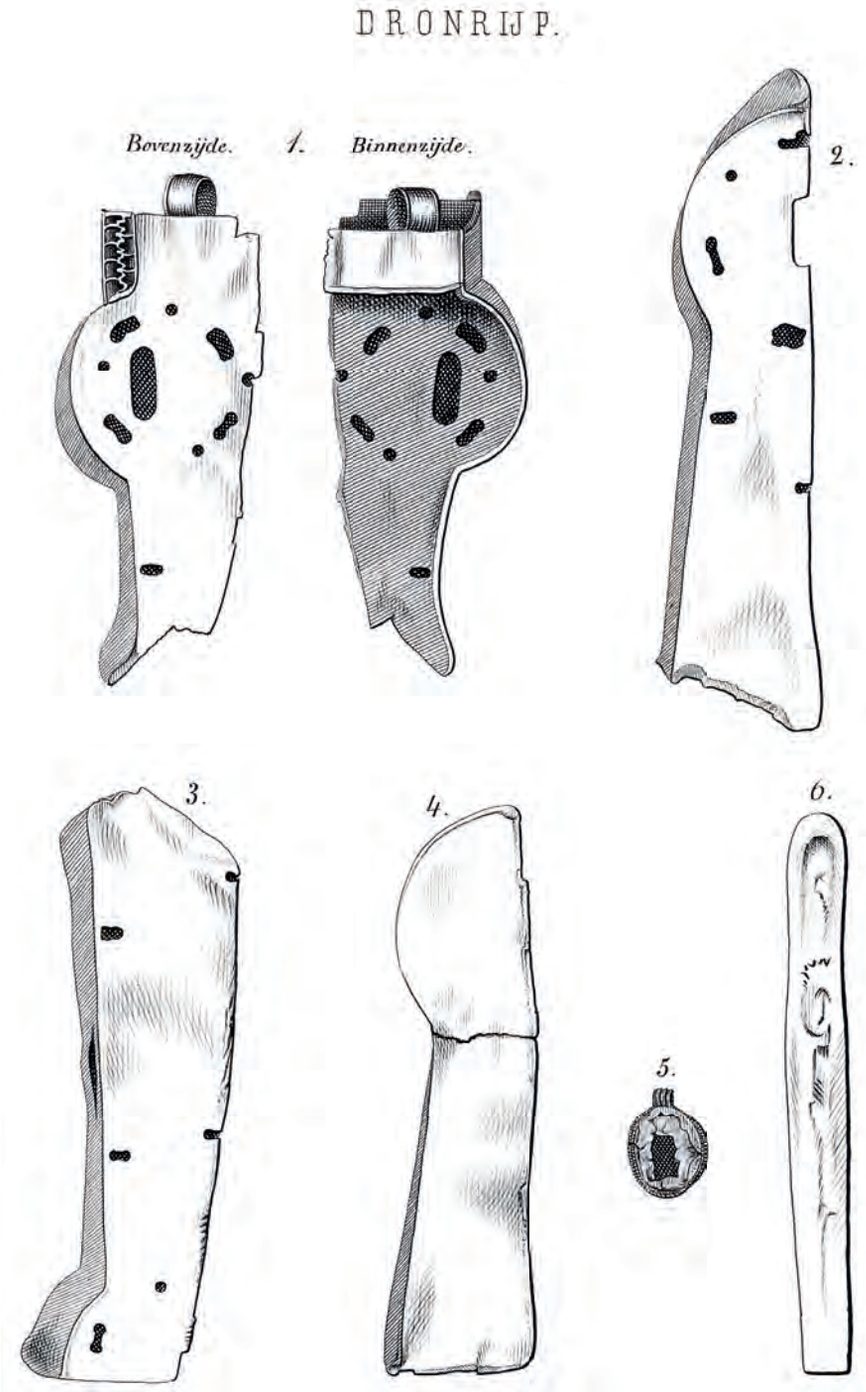
37 Geake 1997, 39-40, fig. 4.5.

38 Boeles 1951, 310.

39 Pers. comm.. A. Pol (Leiden University).

40 Åberg 1926, 121-126, 135-137, figs. 217-221, 256-257; Geake 1997.

41 Trier plaque: Arrhenius 1985, 169-171, fig. 204; composite brooches: Avent 1975, 63 (compare cat. nos. 181-183); see also Brown & Schweizer 1973, 180, table 1 (AM 28 = Avent no. 182).



4.14 | Drawing of gold buckle fragments (nos. 1-4), a gold pendant (no. 5) and a gold bar (no. 6) from the Dronrijp hoard. Scale 1:1 (after Dirks 1890, pl. C).

type coins were probably not minted before ca 640/650, some decades after the coins of Dronrijp type were first minted (after ca 620).[42] Given the proportions of the two coin types in the Dronrijp hoard, the time of its deposition can be dated to around the mid 7th century.

The bracteate hoard from Achlum (Friesland)

The digging for fertile soil at a *terp* site south of Franeker resulted in the recovery of four Scandinavian type-D bracteates, which were first sold to a goldsmith and in 1885 bought by the Fries Museum. According to Knol, these pendants were part of a small gold hoard, as were the stray finds of a fifth type-D bracteate (found in 1878), a stamped coin-bracteate, a type-A bracteate and a solidus with its loop

42 See Pol 1990 (pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type, dating ca 640/650-675); 2008 (Dronrijp type, dating ca 620-675).

4.15 | Five type-D bracteates and a coin-bracteate, found near Achlum and probably belonging to a single gold hoard. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra).

removed, all probably found around Achlum.[43] Because of their similar decoration, there is little doubt that the five type-D bracteates belonged to the same hoard (fig. 4.15). The findspot of the two other bracteates cannot be proven, but is very probably the same. Although the 'type-A bracteate' is now lost, its description as a pendant with ca 18 runic marks that is similar to a runic bracteate from the vicinity of Vadstena (Sweden) indicates that it must have been a bracteate of type C.[44] The coin-bracteate is a unique piece. It bears the impression of a pseudo-imperial solidus showing the bust of Anastasius I (491-518, fig. 4.15).[45] The only find that was certainly not part of the Achlum hoard is the Byzantine solidus of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641), which is a century younger than the gold bracteates.[46]

The type-D bracteates are made of gold sheet and decorated with a stamped, griffin-like animal motif. Stylistically, these pendants can be assigned to two groups: a first group of three large bracteates with the head, body and feet of the animal interconnected, including two die-identical pieces, and a second group of two smaller, die-identical pendants showing the animal cut into separate elements.[47] Other differences between the two groups are 1) the shape of the head, 2) the presence of human hands and feet on bracteates of the first, and a human ear on bracteates of the second group, and 3) the presence of a central 'eye' on bracteates of the first group. All bracteates have ribbed loops that are heavily worn, as are the beaded wires along the outer rims. The coin-bracteate, also with a ribbed loop, is hardly worn and may be a later addition to the set of type-D bracteates.

Boeles was the first to notice the human hands and feet on the bracteates of the first group, and interpreted these as a 'Frisian' element that probably pointed to local production.[48] Although over the past decades many new bracteates have been uncovered in northwestern Europe, these features still are unique to the Achlum bracteates – which further supports the idea of production in Friesland. For

43 Knol 1993, 224, footnote 1272; see also Boeles 1951, 326; Mackeprang 1952, cat. no. 319, pl. 16 (nos. 14, 30); IK 404 (2 bracteates), IK 405,1 (2 bracteates) and IK 405,2. The hoard was probably found at the *terp* site 'IJslumburen' or 'Groot Deersum'.

44 Boeles 1951, 325; Nicolay 2005, 46. For the type C-bracteate from Vadstena, see Mackeprang 1952, cat. no. 179, pl. 14 (no. 11 = IK 377,1).

45 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (no. 36); Van der Vin 1992, 143 (no. 44).

46 Boeles 1951, appendix VIII (no. 79).

47 Pesch 2007, *Formularfamilien* D9 (IK 404) and D10 (IK 405,1 and 405,2).

48 Boeles 1951, 326.

4.16 | Two round, filigree-decorated pendants from Marsum. Scale 2:1 (coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photos J. Stoel).

the coin-bracteate no parallels are known; this piece may have been produced in the same workshop as the type-D bracteates.

Gold bracteates executed in a Scandinavian style are currently dated between ca 440 and 520/530, type-D bracteates probably not being produced before ca 475.[49] Grave goods accompanying type-D bracteates from England and the Continent show that they were deposited during the first three quarters of the 6th century, especially between ca 520 and 560.[50] The solidus that was used as a stamp for the coin-bracteate puts the production date of the Achlum bracteates in the late 5th or early decades of the 6th century. Like most bracteates from graves, the heavily worn pendants will have been buried in the second quarter of the 6th century or shortly after.

4.17 | Two of originally at least six gold mounts from Krassum. The mounts show recent cutmarks and may have decorated a hip-belt or drinking horn. Scale 2:1 (coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photo M. de Leeuw).

The gold pendants from Marsum (Groningen)

Around 1910, two gold pendants were found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Marsum.[51] These round pendants differ in size and are filigree-decorated. The decoration consists of S-shaped beaded wire along the outer rim, the small pendant with ring filigree and the larger with a 'cross' of U-shaped wires in the centre (fig. 4.16). Moreover, the outer zone of the larger pendant is divided into six sectors by beaded wires, the sector directly below the ribbed loop being decorated with parallel and crossing wires. The loop of the other pendant has broken off. The quality of neither is very good: the small pendant is more or less oval, the spirals on neither were applied with much care and the ring filigree of the large pendant is loose and uneven. The differences in wear and colour indicate that the pendants were made on different occasions and only later put together as a set. They show similarities to Frankish and Alamannic pieces that mainly date to the second half of the 6th century.[52] Although the smaller pendant may have a southern origin, the other, less worn piece most probably

49 See section 9.3.

50 Axboe 2007, fig. 59.

51 Karras 1985, 171, fig. 10 (nos. 4-5); Knol 1993, table 21.

52 Trier 2002, 58-59, *Taf.* 228 (nos. 32-33); see also Koch 2001, fig. 16 (phases 6-7).

is a local imitation and may even date from the early 7th century. For this set of pendants burial in the first half of the 7th century is most likely.

The gold mounts from Krassum (Groningen)
In 1890, the quarrying of *terp* soil uncovered a gold hoard at Krassum. It wasn't recognized as an important archaeological find until fifteen years later, when two of the originally six or more gold mounts were bought by the Groninger Museum.[53] The other mounts had been made into a bracelet for the finder's daughter. Both surviving pieces are rectangular in shape and are decorated with interlaced motifs in triple filigree (fig. 4.17). Three empty, rectangular cloisons remain at the end of one of the Krassum mounts, and both mounts show traces of recent cutting. Originally they probably adorned a belt or a drinking horn.[54] The decoration closely resembles the filigree ornamentation on the footplate of the Wieuwerd brooch (fig. 4.10, no. 1), which dates the Krassum finds to the late 6th or the early decades of the 7th century. The filigree is clearly worn, which suggests a deposition date in the first half of the 7th century.

The sword mount from Wijnaldum (Friesland)
During large-scale excavations at the site 'Tjitsma', near Wijnaldum (1991-1993), a saddle-shaped gold mount was found. The two halves of this mount were folded around eight gold rivets and a small piece of silver, which makes the assemblage a hoard find (fig. 4.18).[55] The edges of the mount are set off with a thick beaded wire. The outer face is divided into seven areas by plain wires, each area decorated with a row of sloppily-made ring filigree of beaded wire. In all four corners is a small drilled hole for one of the rivets.

Related mounts from the cemetery of Sutton Hoo (Suffolk, burial mound 1), from an unknown site in Cumbria (England) and from the cemetery of Nocera Umbra (Italy) indicate that the Wijnaldum find was part of an exclusive sword grip.[56] In the case of Sutton Hoo, a gold mount was attached to the upper and lower part of one side of the grip (fig. 7.5, no. 2). The other swords show that a set of mounts might also be attached to the lower part only (Cumbria), or to both the upper and lower part of the grip (Nocera Umbra). Assuming that no more than eight rivets were used at Wijnaldum and that a second mount is missing, the hoarded mount is most likely to have been attached in a similar way to that found in Sutton Hoo, or perhaps Cumbria. The burial in mound 1 at Sutton Hoo is dated to ca 615-635 and the sword from Nocera Umbra was buried in a grave dating to ca 600.[57] Merovingian pottery from the same context as the Wijnaldum mount points to deposition after 600, probably in the first half of the 7th century.[58]

4.18 | Filigree-decorated sword-grip mount from Wijnaldum, folded around eight gold rivets and a small piece of silver when it was found during excavations. Scale 3:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author).

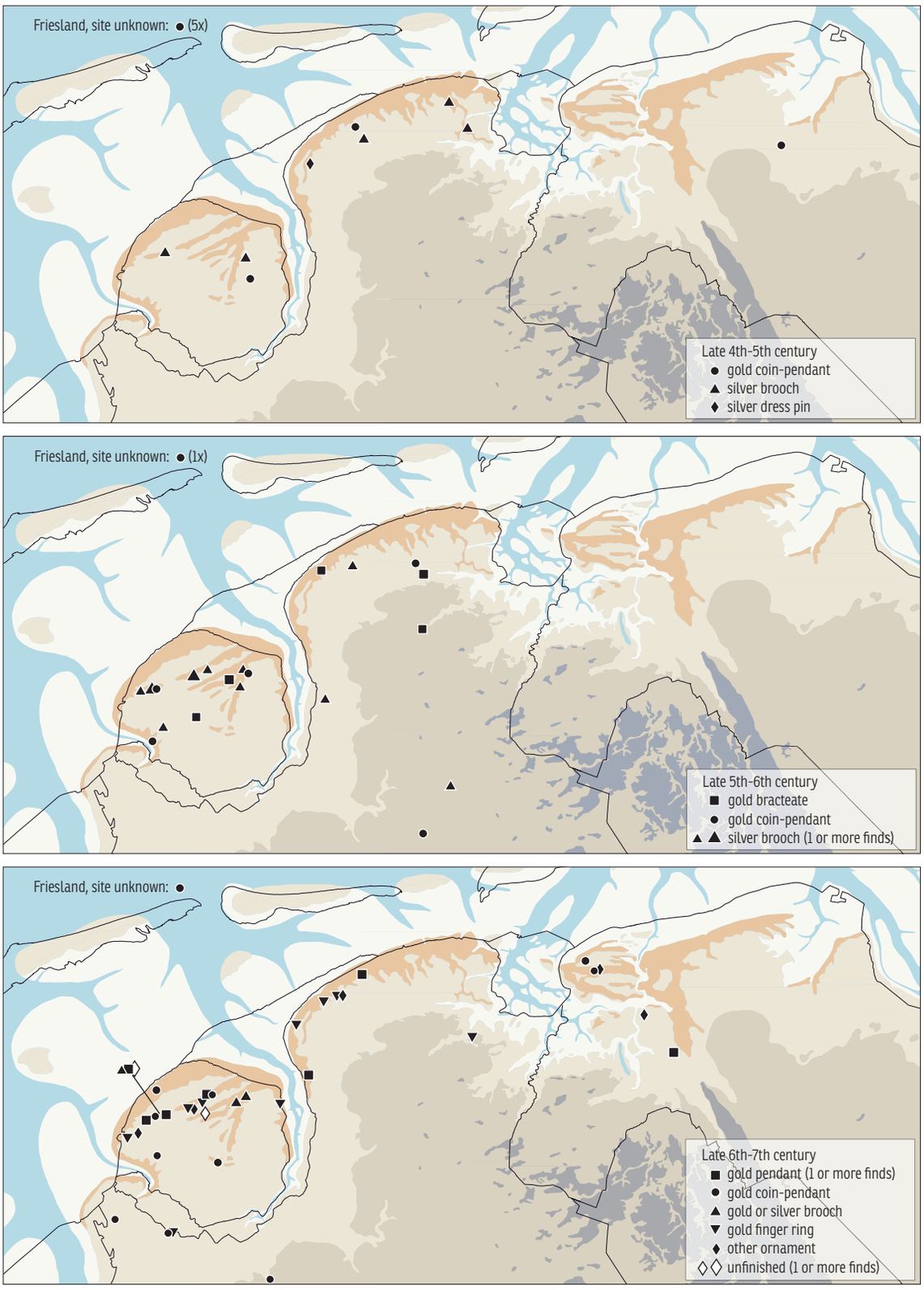
The brooch hoard from Hogebeintum (Friesland)
The final hoard is not a purely gold hoard. It contained a disc-on-bow brooch, as well as nine or more silver rings and 102 glass beads that belonged to one or more necklaces (fig. 4.19).[59] This hoard was found during one of the earliest archaeological investigations in the coastal area, carried out by the Frisian Historical Association ('Fries Genootschap') when large parts of the *terp* of Hogebeintum were dug away in 1907. According to the information on the 'excavation plan', the hoard was uncovered at a depth of 1.7 m below the surface of the settlement mound, at a location separate from the above-mentioned cemetery.[60]

The most impressive piece from the Hogebeintum hoard is the disc-on-bow brooch, weighing 194 gr (fig. 4.20). It is made of sheet gold over a heavy silver back-plate. The front of the head- and footplates is divided into panels and decorated with eight hemispherical bosses and simple loops of triple filigree. The disc has a central boss and is divided into four panels, each filled with bands of filigree. In

53 Feith 1910; Boeles 1951, 329, pl. 41 (no. 13); Miedema 1983, 171, fig. 120; Karras 1985, 171-172, fig. 10 (nos. 6-7).
54 Karras 1985, 171.
55 Nicolay 2008a; see also Tulp 2003, 223, fig. 17.2B.
56 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 298-299, figs. 210, 225 (Sutton Hoo); Behmer 1939, 30-31, 36, *Taf.* II (no. 3: Cumbria/Cumberland); 166, *Taf.* XLI (no. 6: Nocera Umbra).
57 Bruce-Mitford 1975, 578 ff.; Behmer 1939, 166.
58 Pers. comm. D.A. Gerrets (Archeologisch Diensten Centrum, Amersfoort).
59 Boeles 1951, 328-332, pl. 43 (no. 2); Ypey 1961, 569-572, figs. 27, 30; Karras 1985, 166-168, fig. 7; Knol 1993, 218, footnote 1254, fig. 77; IJssennagger 2013b (erroneously presenting the find context as a well).
60 Excavation plan 'Hogebeintum 1905-'6, GA 12, no. 13', archive of Groningen Institute of Archaeology (University of Groningen).

4.19 | Mixed hoard from Hogebeintum, containing a gold and silver disc-on-bow brooch, silver rings and a string of 102 glass beads. Length of brooch 13.5 cm (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photo M. Kooistra).

4.20 | The gold disc-on-bow brooch with a silver back-plate from the Hogebeintum hoard. Scale 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra & J. van der Veer).



4.21 | Geographical distribution of single finds of gold and silver jewellery or other ornaments, including unfinished pieces, from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. Former coin-pendants with the loop removed are excluded. The coins found outside the salt-marsh area originate from secondary contexts: they were transported here as part of dug-away terp soil, which was used to enrich the less fertile peatland, heath and sandy soils. For the background, see figure 3.1 (drawing by the author).

comparison to the footplate of a similar brooch from the Wieuwerd hoard, the decoration is of poorer quality and shows no recognizable animal motif. The only, strongly stylised animal heads are found on the back, alongside and at the end of the silver catchplate. The Hogebeintum brooch was probably produced a little later than the Wieuwerd brooch, between ca 620 and 640. Especially the wire rim of the disc is heavily worn, which points to a time of deposition around the middle or in the third quarter of the 7th century.

The rings, less well preserved, are made of silver wire, terminating in a spiral or a more elaborate knob. A ring with a spiral knob, interpreted as a finger ring, is also known from burial 438 at the cemetery of Oosterbeintum (fig. 4.5). From 7th-century English grave goods it is clear that such rings were worn not only as finger rings, but also among the beads of a necklace (see fig. 7.25) – as was probably the case at Hogebeintum.[61]

61 See Geake 1997, 48-49, figs. 4.10-11. For examples, see also section 7.4.

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4.4 Single finds from a probable settlement context

Most gold and silver ornaments from the *terp* region are single finds, uncovered during the quarrying of *terp* soil (ca 1840-1945) or, more recently (after ca 1980), spotted with a metal detector (fig. 4.21). Although the context of most objects is unknown, it is certain that all finds originate from *terp* sites. The near-absence of grave goods of precious metal in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands strongly suggests that at least the majority of stray finds originate from settlement contexts.[62] This hypothesis is supported by the excavations at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', where – besides the sword mount described above (fig. 4.18) – gold jewellery, gold coins, gold and silver bars, hack gold and a possible touch needle from the 5th to 7th centuries have been found as single finds spread across the settlement area (see below).[63] Moreover, the finding of a gold pendant during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Cornjum (fig. 4.23, no. 1) was recorded in detail; since *no* burial or further small finds are mentioned, it can be excluded that this object was deposited as a funerary gift.[64]

62 Knol 1993, 218-236; Nicolay 2006a, 63-64.

63 See Pol 1999; Tulp 2003; Nicolay 2006a; 2008a.

64 Knol 1993, footnote 1255.

Gold bracteates

Besides the pendants with a stamped decoration from the Achlum and Wieuwerd hoards, six further gold bracteates are known from the province of Friesland (table 4.2).[65] The quarrying of *terp* soil at the village of Hitzum (1907) brought to light a type-A bracteate (fig. 4.22, no. 1).[66] The bracteate shows a stylized human head, surrounded by four engraved lines and a border decorated with a complex pattern of circular and rectangular punch marks. The head is that of a bearded man, wearing a diadem with an originally V-shaped decoration of twisted gold wires. On both sides of the head a runic inscription can be seen, reading *fozo* (a personal name) and *groba* (possibly 'groove, furrow' or 'belonging to a grave').[67] The middle part of the ribbed loop is decorated with irregular, horizontal grooves. The beaded wire surrounding the pendant is quite heavily worn.

The second and third bracteates are of type C (fig. 4.22, nos. 2-3). The first is currently in the collection of the Danish National Museum and was probably found during quarrying activities at Dokkum (before 1890).[68] The second,

65 Boeles 1951, 324-326; Nicolay 2005; 2006a, 81-83.

66 Seebold 1996, with further references; Pesch 2007, 93-95 (*Formularfamilie* A7); IK 76.

67 Looijenga 2003, 208 (no. 19); see also Seebold 1996, 195-196.

68 IK 46.

4.22 | Scandinavian-type gold bracteates from Hitzum (no. 1, type A), Dokkum (no. 2, type C), De Valom (no. 3, secondary context, type C), Ferwerd (no. 4, type D) and Peins (no. 5, type D), and a deviating gold bracteate from Wijnaldum (no. 6). Scale 2:1 (Hitzum/Ferwerd: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; Dokkum: coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo J. Lee; De Valom: private coll. (now in Streekmuseum Volkssterrenwacht, Burgum), photo M. Eversen; Peins/Wijnaldum: private collections, photos J. Zijlstra and by the author).

Table 4.2. | Stray finds of gold bracteates in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands and their probable dates of production (F: Friesland, *: quarrying find, f: filigree).

FIND SITE	TYPE	F	WEIGHT (GR)	PRODUCTION DATE
Hitzum-village (F)*	A	+	4.6	490-530
Dokkum (F)*	C	-	3.1	490-530
De Valom (F)	C	-	2.9	490-530
Ferwerd-'Burmania I' (F)*	D	-	2.0	490-530
Peins (F)	D	-	2.1	490-530
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	varia	-	-	600-650

bent piece is a recent metal-detector find from redeposited *terp* soil that was used as fertilizer in the vicinity of De Valom.[69] Unfortunately, the exact origin of the soil is unknown. Most probably, it originates from a *terp* in the region of Oostergo, where Dokkum is also located. The two bracteates show a very similar motif in chip-carving: a bearded man with long hair riding a galloping horse.[70] On the forehead of both men a triangular jewel can be seen, the jewel terminating in a bird's head. Like the tie ends behind the head, this jewel is part of a diadem.[71] Both bracteates are surrounded by a beaded wire. The hardly worn bracteate from Dokkum has a ribbed loop, which is missing from the other, more intensively used piece.

Two bracteates of type D were found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Ferwerd (1913) and, recently, with a metal detector at Peins (fig. 4.22, nos. 4-5).[72] Both bracteates are decorated with griffin-like motifs, which are very similar to the decoration on the small bracteate (cf Ferwerd) and the larger one (cf Peins) from the Achlum hoard.[73] The Ferwerd bracteate, however, is more slipshod in execution: the different body parts do not properly align. An interesting parallel between this piece and the small Achlum bracteates is the depiction of a human ear to the left of the animal. The significance of the rectangular motif of 'bars', below the animal, is unknown. Around the animal a row of dots is stamped. The beaded rim wire is heavily worn, the ribbed loop is broken and was drilled through for re-use. Although the Peins and the larger Achlum bracteate bear similar motifs, the Peins bracteate shows no human hands and feet; instead, the trumpet-shaped motif behind the head is added as a new element. This bracteate has a ribbed loop and is surrounded by a twisted, heavily worn gold wire.

The bracteates of types A, C and D are executed in a Scandinavian style and were probably produced between 440 and 520/530 (see the Achlum hoard). The male head on the Hitzum bracteate can be assigned to Axboe's 'head group' H3.[74] Both type-C bracteates are executed in high relief, with male heads characteristic of group H4. Like the type-D bracteates, the pieces belonging to groups H3 and H4 can all be dated to the late 5th, or the early decades of the 6th century.[75]

A deviating bracteate, found in 1995 by a metal detectorist at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', is not of a Scandinavian type and probably of a younger date (fig. 4.22, no. 6).[76] After this badly bent pendant was unfolded, it showed a standing man in frontal view, holding elongated objects in either hand, perhaps a spear and a shield. The male individual appears to stand on a triangular platform, which is shown between his legs. Along the outer rim, an illegible imitation of a Latin(?) inscription can be seen. The pendant has a simple ribbed loop and is surrounded by a heavy, twisted wire. Both the loop and the wire are slightly worn. Interestingly, the bracteate was not stamped with a matrix – as is usually the case – but with a patrix. A production date similar to that of the bracteates from the Wieuwerd hoard may be assumed, in the first half of the 7th century.

Other gold pendants, including coin-pendants

Gold pendants are well-represented in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands (table 4.3). The most exclusive piece is a round pendant, found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Cornjum (fig. 4.23, no. 1).[77] Its front is decorated with a cross of four rectangular garnets, connecting five garnet studs, placed on calcite- or shell-filled roun-

69 Henstra 2003; Zijlstra 2003a; IK 598.

70 Pesch 2007, 230-239 (*Formularfamilie* C16).

71 For the bird's head and tie ends, compare Axboe 2007, figs. 208-210, 213-214.

72 IK 415 (Ferwerd) and IK 623 (Peins).

73 Pesch 2007, 276-292 (*Formularfamilien* D9 (Ferwerd) and D10 (Peins, not included in Pesch 2007)).

74 Axboe 1998; 1999; 2007, 144-148.

75 See the discussion in section 9.3.

76 Zijlstra 2003b; pers. comm. M. Axboe (National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen); A. Pesch (Zentrum für Baltische und Skandinavische Archäologie, Schleswig). For the use of gold bracteates into the late Merovingian period, see Dannheimer 1967.

77 Boeles 1951, 330, pl. XLI (no. 5); Karras 1985, 171, fig. 10 (nos. 1-2).

4.23 | Gold pendant from Cornjum (no. 1, loop broken) and two elements of a similar pendant from Wijnaldum: a garnet stud (no. 2) and an unfinished, drop-shaped panel of four empty cloisons (no. 3). Scale 2:1 (pendant/stud: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; panel: private coll, photos by the author).

dels. The four quadrants are filled with interlace of triple filigree, depicting the stylized bodies of snake-like animals. The large, originally biconical loop is missing. On the reverse, remains of the loop terminate in a triangle of beaded wire, filled in with slipshod ring filigree. The shape of the cross is well-known from Kentish pendants and disc brooches of the late 6th or the early decades of the 7th century.[78] A similar date for the Cornjum pendant is supported by the closely related pendant in the Wieuwerd hoard (fig. 4.10). The triangular decoration on the back of the pendant is of Scandinavian style and well-known from older gold bracteates.[79] Two small metal-detector finds from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' were probably part of a similar type of pendant: an unused garnet stud, surrounded by a single beaded wire and a pair of beaded wires twisted together (fig. 4.23, no. 2), and an unfinished, drop-shaped panel of four empty cloisons (fig. 4.23, no. 3).[80]

Less exclusive are five pendants that were decorated only with filigree. The first, omega-shaped pendant was found in the village of Wijnaldum (fig. 4.24, no. 1). It is decorated with a border and a central loop of beaded wire.[81] On the reverse the runic inscription *hiwi* can be read, probably meaning 'to the *mater familias*'.[82] Similar pendants are known from Frankish and Alamannic burials, dating to the second half of the 6th century.[83] In the northern periphery of the Frankish kingdom, however, the production of filigree-decorated jewellery continued into the first half of the 7th century – as the ornaments in the Wieuwerd hoard clearly indicate.

The second pendant, found during the excavations at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', was made of a crescent-shaped piece of gold sheet, terminating in arms of beaded wire that spiral inwards. The pendant has a simple ribbed loop (fig. 4.24, no. 2). Three more pendants, a *terp*-quarrying find from Wierum and metal-detection finds from Holwerd and Ried, share their oval basic shape (fig. 4.24, nos. 3-5).[84] The crescent-shaped body and the spiralling arms of the Wierum pendant are outlined in a double line of twisted filigree on a background of gold sheet. The upper part of the pendant is filled with slipshod ring filigree and the loop is missing. The Holwerd and Ried pendants, of which only one half survives, are also made of gold sheet. The fronts are decorated with an outline of beaded wire and a fill of slipshod ring filigree around a bean-shaped hole. The bottommost ring is filled with a small gold ball (Holwerd) or made of thinner gold wire (Ried), thus forming the eye of one of the opposing bird's heads. The kidney-shaped pendants

78 Åberg 1926, 132, figs. 241, 244; Avent 1975, 41-55, pl. 49 ff.
79 Compare Mackeprang 1952, pl. 3 ff.
80 Nicolay 2006a, 45, fig. 12.
81 Zijlstra 1991, cat. no. 79, pl. VII; Zijlstra & Looijenga 1992.
82 Looijenga 2003, 323-324 (no. 19).
83 Trier 2002, 58-58 (dating filigree-decorated pendants). For parallels, see Dannheimer 1962, *Taf*. 13 (nos. 8-11, especially no. 10); Christlein 1978, *Taf*. 91.
84 Wierum: Miedema 1983, 170, fig. 121.4.

4.24 | Gold pendants: omega-shaped pendant with runic inscription from Wijnaldum (no. 1), four crescent- or kidney-shaped pendants from Wijnaldum (no. 2), Wierum (no. 3), Holwerd (no. 4) and Ried (no. 5), round pendant from Boer (no. 6), and dome-headed pendant from Wijnaldum (no. 7). Scale 2:1 (Wijnaldum, with runic inscription: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; Wijnaldum: coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author; Wierum: coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photos J. Stoel and M. de Leeuw; others: private collections, photos L. Olivier, J. Schokker and by the author).

from Wijnaldum, Wierum, Holwerd, Ried and the Wieuwerd hoard (fig. 4.10, nos. 6-7) form a closely related set that can be dated to the late 6th, or the first half of the 7th century. Their basic shape is nicely paralleled by the terminals of Achlum-type brooches (see below) – which also show two opposing bird's heads (figs. 4.30-31).

A deviating pendant is reminiscent of the hemispherical bosses on the disc-on-bow brooches from Wieuwerd (fig. 4.10, no. 1) and Hogebeintum (fig. 4.20). This metal-detector find from Wijnaldum-'Okkinga' is made out of a flat and a domed piece of thin gold sheet, surrounded by a beaded wire that is heavily worn (fig. 4.24, no. 7). The pendant has a ribbed loop, which is a later replacement. The original loop was not completely removed; remains can be seen on the reverse. Domed pendants are well-known from Frankish and Alamannic burials, dating mainly to the final quarter of the 6th century.[85] In Anglo-Saxon England, similar, so-called 'bulla pendants' were also used throughout the 7th century (see figs. 7.25, 9.31), again pointing to a longer period of use in the periphery of the Frankish kingdom.[86] The Wijnaldum pendant shows closest similarities to the English pieces and can be only roughly dated to the 7th century. A relatively late date, probably to around the middle or in the second half of this century, appears from the pale colour of the gold.

A unique pendant, recently found with a metal detector at Boer, does not show the usual decoration of filigree on a background of gold sheet; instead, the outer rim is formed by a low circle of upright gold sheet, and the central decoration by similar strips of gold sheet

85 Trier 2002, 59, *Taf*. 228 (nos. 3-6, 22). For parallels, see also Koch 1977, 73-74, *Taf*. 195 (nos. 1-7); Christlein 1978, *Taf*. 91.

86 Geake 1997, 36-37, fig. 4.4.

4.25 | Five coin-pendants with simple ribbed loops or a suspension hole, found at Stedum (solidus, no. 1), Hatsum (solidus, no. 2), Uitwellingerga (solidus, no. 3), Bolsward (tremissis, no. 4) and Ried (tremissis, no. 5), and an unfinished ribbed loop for a gold pendant or coin-pendant from Schalsum (no. 6). The coins were minted between the late 4th and the 7th century. Scale 2:1 (Stedum: coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photos M. de Leeuw; Hatsum/Bolsward/Uitwellingerga: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer; Ried/unfinished loop: private coll., photos by the author).

forming three cracknel-shaped motifs (fig. 4.24, no. 6). The pendant has a slightly worn, ribbed loop and can be dated to the same period as most of the filigree-decorated pieces (late 6th-first half 7th century).

A large and uniform group of jewellery is formed by (former) coin-pendants, made out of solidi (16x) and tremisses (14x), including an imitation solidus and three false tremisses (*subaerati*, with a copper core).[87] The majority of the pendants were found during the quarrying of *terp* soil; only six pieces are recent metal-detector finds and one is an excavation find from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'. In most cases, a simple ribbed loop had been attached to the rim of the coin; only five coins were pierced for suspension (fig. 4.25). Coin-pendants with elaborate borders or filigree-decorated loops are not represented among these stray finds, which underlines the exclusive character of the Wieuwerd pieces. The custom of transforming coins into pendants and pendants into coins again is nicely revealed in the often careful removal of the loop from no fewer than 13 of the pendants. The coins that were selected to be worn as jewellery can be dated from the late 4th to the 7th centuries, reflecting a long-lasting tradition that started in the late Roman period (table 4.3). They include imperial (14x), pseudo-imperial (7x), quasi-imperial (3x) and 'civic' coins (8x), of which one is of the 'Frisian' Dronrijp type (from Spannum). An exceptional 'coin' is an imitation solidus from the vicinity of Harlingen, whose loop had been removed (fig. 9.11). This so-called 'Hada-solidus' is one of three known runic coins from the North Sea area, the inscription

87 Some of the pendants are illustrated by Boeles (1951, pl. XXXVIII-XXXIX).

Table 4.3. | Stray finds of gold pendants and (former) coin-pendants from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands and their probable production dates. Coin dates are in italics (F: Friesland, G: Groningen, *: quarrying find, **: excavation find, mat: material, g: gold, ga: garnet inlay, f: filigree, c: copper core) (coin data after Boeles 1951, appendix VIII; Pol, in prep.).

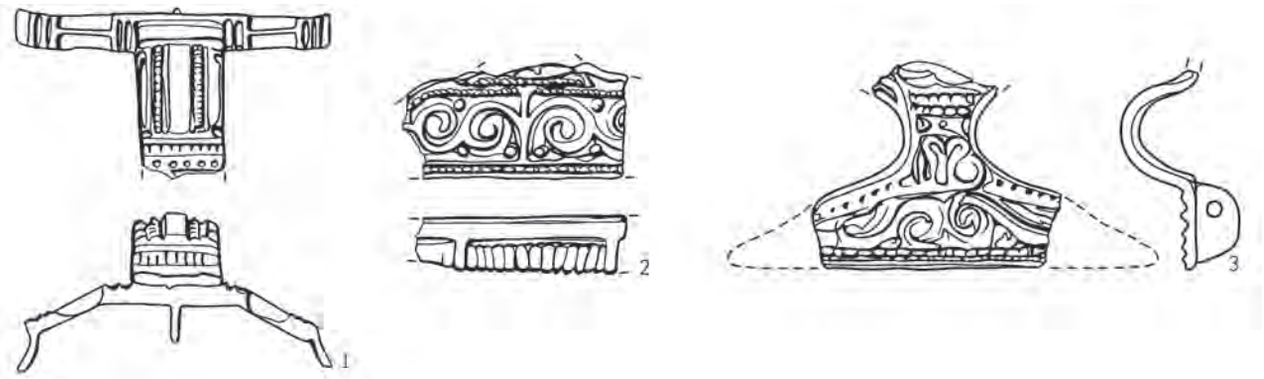
FIND SITE	OBJECT	MAT	GA	F	WEIGHT (GR)	PRODUCTION DATE
Cornjum-'Dekema/Stoomterp' (F)*	round pendant	g	+	+	8.5	590-630
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	garnet stud, unused	g	+	+	0.5	590-630
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	drop-shaped cloison, unfinished	g	+	-	0.4	590-630
Wijnaldum-village (F)	omega-shaped pendant	g	-	+	0.9	550-650
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)**	kidney-shaped pendant	g	-	+	1.1	590-650
Wierum-village (G)*	kidney-shaped pendant	g	-	+	2.2	590-650
Holwerd (F)	kidney-shaped pendant	g	-	+	0.7	590-650
Ried (F)	kidney-shaped pendant	g	-	+	0.6	590-650
Wijnaldum-'Okkinga' (F)	domed pendant	g	-	+	0.8	640-700
Boer-village (F)	round pendant	g	-	-	0,6	590-650
Hatsum-'Osingastate' (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.4	*375/9-395*
Stedum-'Lutjewijtwerd' (G)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.3	*383-408*
unknown site (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.7	*395-408*
Hatsum-'Osingastate' (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.2	*411-413*
unknown site (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.8	*425-455*
Blija environs (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.3	*457-474*
unknown site (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.5	*476-477*
Slappeterp (F)	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.5	*527-565*
unknown site (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.8	*565-578*
Achlum? (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.3	*613-641*
Cornwerd-village (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.6	*613-641*
Leens (G)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.7	*613-641*
Aalzum-village (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.6	500-585
Arum/Kimswerd (F)*	coin-pendant, pierced (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.4	500-585
Ferwerd (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.3	500-585
Gersloot (F)	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.3	500-585
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)**	coin-pendant, pierced (tremissis)	g(c)	-	-	1.1	500-585
Witmarsum (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.3	500-585
Harlingen (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop, runic inscription (imitation solidus)	g	-	-	3.6	500-585
Bilgaard-village (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	3.0	585-600
Uitwellingerga (sec. context, F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (solidus)	g	-	-	4.1	585-600
unknown site (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.3	585-600
Bolsward-'Groot Eekwerd' (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.4	585-675
Britsum-village (F)*	coin-pendant, removed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.3	585-675
Tibma (F)	coin-pendant, removed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.2	585-675
Elens (G)	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.4	585-675
Oosterbierum (F)	coin-pendant, pierced (tremissis)	g(c)	-	-	0.7	585-675
Spannum (F)*	coin-pendant, ribbed loop (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.3	585-675
Ried (F)	coin-pendant, pierced (tremissis)	g	-	-	1.2	585-675
Wijnaldum (F)	coin-pendant, pierced (tremissis)	g(c)	-	-	0.5	585-675
Schalsum (F)	ribbed loop, unused	g	-	-	0.9	600-700

hada possibly being a personal name.[88] The looping and piercing of gold coins is well-documented from the surrounding areas, including Scandinavia, the Frankish-Alamannic world and Anglo-Saxon England.[89]

Finally, a flat strip of gold sheet found with a metal detector at Schalsum was ready to be made into the ribbed loop of a (coin-)pendant, which points to the local manufacture of gold jewellery (fig. 4.25, no. 6). Its pale gold colour suggests a relatively late date, in the (second half of the) 7th century.

88 Van der Vin 1992, 82 (no. 101.14); Looijenga 2003, 306-307; 2013; see also the discussion in section 9.3.

89 See, for example, Werner 1935, *Taf*. 1; Fagerlie 1967, pl. XXI-XXII; Kent 1975, fig. 429.



4.26 | Large part of a silver-gilt supporting-arm brooch from Bollingawier, and fragments of two silver-gilt equal-armed brooches from Wijnaldum and Dronrijp. Scale of supporting-arm brooch unknown, scale of other brooches 1:1 (private collections, drawings by S. Boersma, University of Groningen, Groningen Institute of Archaeology).

Gold and silver brooches

The brooches made of gold or silver (table 4.4) can be subdivided into three regional groups: a group of Saxon-style brooches, a group of Frankish/Alamannic-style brooches and a group of regional, Frisian-style brooches. The 'Saxon' brooches, imported from the German Elbe-Weser region or imitated locally, include a supporting-arm brooch and several equal-armed relief brooches and saucer brooches.[90] The only silver supporting-arm brooch, found with a metal detector at Bollingawier, is of Lower-Saxon type A (fig. 4.26, no. 1).[91] The gilded brooch, which lacks its trapezoid foot, can be dated to the second half of the 4th century. Silver equal-armed brooches of the Wehden type (late 4th and 5th centuries) are represented by two metal-detector finds from Dronrijp and Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (fig. 4.26, nos. 2-3).[92] The gilded brooches are decorated with spiral motifs in chip carving. Two contemporaneous saucer brooches were found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Jouswier (Jouswier type) and Oosterbeintum (Lippspringe type) (fig. 4.27).[93] Both composite brooches have a bronze base and a silver front-plate with spiral decoration.

A total of seven brooches are of Frankish-Alamannic design. Again, these brooches may have been imported or imitated locally. The fragment of a semicircular headplate, found by metal detecting at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', was part of a silver-gilt radiate-headed brooch dating to the late 5th or the first half of the 6th century (fig. 4.28, no. 1).[94] The silver-gilt and niello-decorated fragment of a similar brooch is a metal-detector find from Dronrijp (fig. 4.28, no. 2). Two S-shaped brooches, also found with a metal detector, are a little younger, dating to the second half of the 6th century: a silver-gilt brooch terminating in two animal heads and decorated with garnets (Slappeterp, fig. 4.28, no. 3), and a silver brooch without any decoration (Goutum).[95] A large square-headed relief brooch from Wijnaldum-village was made of gilded silver and decorated with niello (fig. 4.29).[96] This *terp*-digging find can be assigned to the Langweid type and roughly dated to the 6th century.[97] The lobed headplate of a second silver-gilt piece, found with a metal detector at Dongjum, is characteristic of several brooch types dating from ca 525 to 625.[98] The final, disc-shaped brooch, found with a metal detector at Slappeterp, was made of bronze covered in sheet silver and decorated with silver-wire filigree, small silver studs and triangular inlays (garnets or glass); it can be only roughly dated to the late 6th or 7th century.[99]

The 'Frisian' brooches, which show a regional development during the 6th and first half of the 7th century, can be assigned to three types. The oldest type is made up of a uniform set of silver-gilt disc-on-bow brooches from the province of Friesland (Achlum type). The only intact specimen was found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Achlum (fig. 4.30).[100] Its rectangular headplate is decorated with nielloed zig-zags and two stylized animals in ribbon relief with a human face in the centre, its bow with rows of punchmarks (dots, crosses and wafered triangles) and its drop-shaped footplate with strips of nielloed zig-zag, two hanging animal heads, and two opposing bird's heads

90 For the dating and geographical distribution of these brooches, see section 9.2.

91 Unpublished inventory by the late J.M. Bos (formerly University of Groningen).

92 Zijlstra 1990, cat. no. 2 (Wijnaldum); 1993, cat. no. 20 (Dronrijp).

93 Boeles 1951, 224, pl. XXXV (nos. 9, 11); Böhme 1974, 24-28, cat. nos. 60, 62, *Taf*. 58 (nos. 14-15).

94 Unpublished inventory by the late J.M. Bos (formerly University of Groningen). Dating: Koch 1998, *Typentafel* 1.

95 Bos 1996, 135; Zijlstra 2005 (Slappeterp); unpublished inventory by the late J.M. Bos (formerly University of Groningen: Goutum). Dating: Koch 2001, 75-78, figs 15-16 (phases 5-6 and 6).

96 Ypey 1961, 575, fig. 28 (no. 4); Kühn 1974, 1179-1186 (no. 20); Karras 1985, 170, fig. 9 (no. 3).

97 Koch 1998, *Fundliste* 22 (Wijnaldum: no. 17), *Typentafel* 3.

98 Zijlstra 1991, cat. no. A8. Dating: compare Koch 1998, *Taf*. 40-42, *Typentafel* 3.

99 Zijlstra 1993, cat. no. 22. Dating: Müssemeier et al. 2003, figs 8-9 (phases 6 and 7-8).

100 Boeles 1951, 326-327, pl. XLIII (no. 1); Ypey 1961, 575, fig. 28, 30 (no. 3); Karras 1985, 170, fig. 9 (no. 2).

4.27 | Two bronze saucer brooches with a silver front-plate, found at Jouswier (Jouswier type, top) and Oosterbeintum (Lippspringe type, bottom). Scale 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer).

that form a kidney-shaped terminal. The small central disc is filled with white paste, in which is set a flower with silver and bronze petals. In the hollow heart of the flower, the presence of wafered gold foil points to a missing garnet. Fragments of five further brooches of the Achlum type are recent metal-detector finds (figs. 4.28, no. 5, 4.31).[101] The most complete is the brooch from Dronrijp. Its headplate shows an S-shaped motif in relief, and both the headplate and the disc are decorated with strips of nielloed zig-zags. The central disc on the bow fragment from Boornbergum (secondary context) has a line of niello along the edge and a central cross of two S-shaped motifs in relief. Finally, fragments of footplates from Boer, Oosterbierum and Wijnaldum, also decorated in relief, terminate in opposing birds' heads. The Achlum-type brooches were clearly inspired by the originally Scandinavian square-headed brooches of Jutlandic type, dating to ca 480-530/540.[102] As a transitional type between the younger 'Jutlandic brooches' and the disc-on-bow brooches of the Hogebeintum type (see below), they can probably be dated to the decades around the mid 6th century.

A unique, silver-gilt terminal knob, shaped like a stylized animal head with a pronounced nose in relief, may also have been a 'Frisian' product (fig. 4.28, no. 6).[103] This metal-detector find from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' shows similarities to the terminal knobs on several brooch types from the Frankish-Alamannic area and can probably be dated to the 6th century.[104] Of similar date are two bow fragments of a silver-gilt and a silver brooch, possibly of the Achlum type. The fragment from Wijnaldum is decorated in relief (fig. 4.28, no. 7); the other, from Dongjum, with rows of triangular cavities, still partly filled with niello.[105]

A second 'Frisian' brooch type (Hogebeintum type) is formed by the filigree-decorated disc-on-bow brooches from the Wieuwerd and Hogebeintum hoards and a magnificent find from Wijnaldum. The last-named is a 17-cm-long brooch, made of sheet gold over a heavy silver backing (fig. 4.32).[106] Both the foot- and the headplate are fully decorated with garnet cloisonné in geometric and Style II animal motifs. The footplate, showing two reptilian creatures that look back over their shoulders and are intertwined by their legs, has five bosses: three large bosses with a cloisonné stud and two smaller bosses with round garnets placed in a border of white paste. The legs seem to form the stylized face of a bearded man, flanked by both animals. The headplate, which was badly damaged as a result of ploughing, shows a similar motif of a human face between two stylized animals, the two cloisonné studs forming the figure's eyes. The face first became apparent after the central part of the headplate was found with a metal detector in 2009.[107] The bow, which lacks its central disc, is covered with spiral filigree. Finally, a small gold animal head with ring filigree and a garnet eye may have been attached to one side of the missing catch at the back. Since signs of cutting indicate that the brooch was buried to be later repaired or dismantled, the missing disc was presumably re-used on another brooch.[108]

Bruce-Mitford dates the Wijnaldum brooch to the first half of the 7th century, like the jewellery from Sutton Hoo mound 1 (ca 615-635). Garnet-cloisonné characterized by very similar, step-pattern, simple zigzag and mushroom cells occurs both at Sutton Hoo and Wijnaldum. Because no blocking out of garnet decoration with plain gold lids was applied and there is no millefiori design like that on the Sutton Hoo purse (fig. 7.5, no. 8) and shoulder clasps (fig. 7.5, no. 4), a production date of the Wijnaldum brooch early in the 7th century – shortly *before* the

101 Zijlstra 1991, cat. no. 70, pl. VI (Wijnaldum), cat. no. A5, pl. XI (Boer); 1993, cat. no. 24, pl. III (Boornbergum); unpublished inventory by the late J.M. Bos (formerly University of Groningen: Dronrijp and Oosterbierum).

102 See section 9.4.

103 Zijlstra 1991, cat. no. 71, pl. VI.

104 Compare Koch 1998, *Taf.* 28 ff.

105 Unpublished inventory by the late J.M. Bos (formerly University of Groningen).

106 Bruce-Mitford 1974, 270-273, pl. 88a-b (interpreting the footplate as a buckle); Gerrets 1997; Schoneveld & Zijlstra 1999; Olsen 2001; 2005/2006, 488-490, 497-500.

107 See Stoter 2010.

108 Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999, 214.

4.28 | Brooches of Frankish and 'Frisian' types: fragment of the headplate of a silver-gilt radiate-headed brooch from Wijnaldum (no. 1), fragment of a similar brooch from Dronrijp (no. 2), silver-gilt, S-shaped brooch with garnet inlay from Slappeterp (no. 3), silver-gilt head-plate of a small disc-on-bow brooch from Menaldum (no. 4) and three fragments of silver-gilt bow brooches from Wijnaldum (nos. 5-7). Scale 2:1 (Wijnaldum: coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author; Slappeterp: after Zijlstra 2005; Menaldum: after Zijlstra 2003c; Dronrijp: private coll., photos by the author).

Sutton Hoo jewellery was produced – is most probable. On stylistic grounds, Olsen has recently suggested a date around 600, which is in agreement with the high gold content of the different elements of the brooch (ca 95%).[109] The brooches of Hogebeintum type probably have the following chronological order, nicely illustrating a gradual degeneration of animal-style motifs: Wijnaldum (ca 600), Wieuwerd (ca 610-630, fig. 4.10, no. 1) and Hogebeintum (ca 620-640, fig. 4.20).[110] Outside the northern Netherlands, the Wijnaldum brooch is best paralleled in size and use of garnet decoration by the 'royal' bow brooch from the Alamannic cemetery at Wittislingen (fig. 1.6), which too is dated to around 600.[111]

A small headplate of gilded silver, found by a metal detectorist at Menaldum, represents the third type of 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches (Menaldum type, fig. 4.28, no. 4).[112] Instead of the usual set of bosses, the head-

4.29 | Square-headed brooch from Wijnaldum (Langweid type), executed in gilded silver and decorated with niello. Scale 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra).

109 Olsen 2005/2006, 500 (late 6th century); compare Nicolay 2006a, 43 (ca 600). For gold content and related dating, see Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999, 207, 213, table 2 (late 6th-early 7th century).

110 See also section 9.5.

111 Werner 1950, 15-23; Böhner 2000, 186; *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. VI.2.11.

112 Zijlstra 2003c.

4.30 | Disc-on-bow brooch from Achlum (Achlum type), executed in gilded silver and decorated with niello. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer).

4.31 | Fragments of silver-gilt disc-on-bow brooches of 'Achlum type', found at Dronrijp (no. 1), Boer (no. 2) and Oosterbierum (no. 3). Scale 1:1 (private collections, drawings by S. Boersma, University of Groningen, Groningen Institute of Archaeology).

plate is decorated with three round garnets. The greater part of the brooch is missing; it may have been similar in shape to the Aalzum brooch (fig. 4.2). The date of the Menaldum find is probably similar to that of the Hogebeintum-type brooches (ca 600-640).

Gold and silver finger rings

Nine gold finger rings from the northern Netherlands are stray finds (table 4.5). Two of the rings are adorned with a mounted coin (fig. 4.33). The first ring was found with a metal detector near Parrega in redeposited *terp* soil, which originally came from Bolsward.[113] For this ring a solidus of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641) was used, bordered by thick, beaded gold wire.[114] The second ring, a *terp*-quarrying find from Westergeest, has a wider border of gold sheet, decorated with twisted, beaded, and fine, plain wires. These worn rings are very similar to the coin finger ring from the Wieuwerd hoard (fig. 4.12): on the back of the coin or on the gold-sheet border, respectively, these also have thick gold wire that terminates in four flat spirals. Moreover, in a similar way two sets of three small beads were soldered to the transition from the ring to the border. This type of construction and

113 Kramer 2001.

114 Boeles 1951, 324, appendix VIII (no. 205), pl. XLI (no. 11).

4.32 | Gold and silver disc-on-bow brooch from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', with the newly found central part of the head-plate added, as well as a close-up of the head plate. Scale 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra).

Table 4.4. | Gold and silver brooches from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, ranged by type and probable production date (F: Friesland, *: quarrying find, mat: material, g: gold, sg: silver-gilt, s: silver, b: bronze, ga: garnet inlay, f: filigree, n: niello inlay).

FIND SITE	OBJECT	MAT	GA	F	N	WEIGHT (GR)	PRODUCTION DATE
Bollingawier (F)	supporting-arm brooch	sg	-	-	-	-	350-400
Dronrijp (F)	equal-armed relief brooch	sg	-	-	-	-	370-500
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	equal-armed relief brooch	sg	-	-	-	-	370-500
Jouswier-village (F)	composite saucer brooch	b/s	-	-	-	4.6	370-500
Oosterbeintum-village (F)	composite saucer brooch	b/s	-	-	-	6.8	370-500
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	radiate-headed brooch, head	sg	-	-	-	1.0	480-550
Dronrijp-'Longbuorren' (F)	radiate-headed brooch, bow	sg	-	-	+	1.5	480-550
Slappeterp (F)	S-shaped brooch	sg	+	-	-	-	550-600
Goutum (F)	S-shaped brooch	s	-	-	-	-	550-600
Wijnaldum-village (F)*	square-headed brooch	sg	-	-	+	ca 25	520-580
Dongjum (F)	square-headed brooch, head	sg	-	-	-	-	525-625
Slappeterp (F)	disc brooch	b/s	+	+	-	-	580-680
Achlum-'Groot Ludum' (F)	disc-on-bow brooch	sg	+	-	+	18.8	530-580
Dronrijp (F)	disc-on-bow brooch	sg	-	-	+	-	530-580
Boornbergum (sec. context, F)	disc-on-bow brooch, bow	sg	-	-	+	-	530-580
Boer (F)	disc-on-bow brooch, foot	sg	-	-	-	-	530-580
Oosterbierum (F)	disc-on-bow brooch, foot	sg	-	-	-	-	530-580
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	disc-on-bow brooch, foot	sg	-	-	-	0.9	530-580
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	bow brooch, terminal knob	sg	-	-	-	1.2	500-600
Wijnaldum (F)	bow brooch, fragment bow	sg	-	-	-	1.0	500-600
Dongjum (F)	bow brooch, fragment bow	s	-	-	+	-	500-600
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	disc-on-bow brooch	g/s	+	+	-	ca 200	590-610
Menaldum (F)	disc-on-bow brooch, head	sg	+	-	-	-	600-640

decoration was directly copied from Frankish and Alamannic finger rings of the second half of the 6th and early 7th centuries.[115] A relatively late date for the Dutch finds, in the first half of the 7th century, is supported by the minting date of the solidus used for the Bolsward ring, and by the dating of the Wieuwerd hoard.

For the manufacture of a second group of finger rings, narrow strips of gold sheet were used. The finds include two biconical rings from Marssum and Boer, a slightly conical ring from Hallum and two rings with straight sides from Ferwerd and Midlum (fig. 4.34, nos. 1-4).[116] Finally, a slightly biconical ring from Dongjum was cut open and hammered flat for re-use (fig. 4.34, no. 7).[117] With the exception of the Ferwerd ring, which is a *terp*-quarrying find, all rings were metal-detector finds. Four rings are decorated with punch marks: rows of circles and wafered triangles on the Marssum, Ferwerd and Midlum rings, and two opposing rows of double chevrons on the Hallum ring. Two broader but closely related rings, one decorated with wafered triangles, are represented in the Wieuwerd hoard (fig. 4.10, nos. 2-3). These gold-sheet rings, all showing traces of wear, have no direct parallels in the Frankish-Alamannic realm or Anglo-Saxon England. They probably are similar in date to the coin finger rings (ca 590-650). More difficult to date is a ring made out of a flat, undecorated strip of gold sheet, found east of Wijnaldum (fig. 4.34, no. 5). A similar ring is known from Hippolytushoef (North Holland, fig. 5.33); both of these metal-detector finds can probably be dated to the 7th century.

A finger ring from Hogebeintum (a *terp*-quarrying find) displays a different construction. It is made out of two plain and two beaded, partly braided gold wires (fig. 4.34, no. 6). Although no parallels are known, this ring too can be dated to the late 6th, or the first half of the 7th century.

Gold and silver earring, beads and dress pins

Gold and silver earrings, beads and dress pins are represented by just one or two finds in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands (table 4.5). At Hogebeintum a unique, annular earring was found with a metal detector (fig. 4.35, no. 1). One third of the ring has a circular section and the remainder was beaten flat into a crescent. The crescent-shaped part

115 For parallels, see Werner 1935, *Taf*. II-III (nos. 60, 72-73, 76-77, 79); 1950, *Taf*. 10 (no. 4); Christlein 1978, *Taf*. 84; *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. VI.2.10.e.

116 Boer: Zijlstra 1992, cat. no. 49; Ferwerd: Boeles 1936, 41, pl. II (no. 3).

117 De Langen & Hommes 1998, 93 (no. 21).

4.33 | Gold coin finger rings from Westergeest (top) and Bolsward (bottom, found in redeposited *terp* soil at Parrega). Scale 2:1 (Westergeest: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer, Bolsward: private coll., photos E. Kramer).

is bordered by a double beaded wire and filled in with slipshod ring and loop filigree. Like the other ornaments with ring filigree, the earring can be dated to the late 6th, or the first half of the 7th century.

A biconical bead, found with a metal detector at Midlum, is decorated with a strip of ribbed gold sheet and filigree ornamentation of beaded wire (fig. 4.35, no. 2). The bead's shape is similar to that of the loops of some bracteates and the exclusive coin-pendants from the Wieuwerd hoard. The filigree decoration dates this find to the same period as the earring.

A second bead, from Leens, and also found with a metal detector, has a conical shape and is made out of spirally wound gold wire.[118] Similar but more symmetrical beads of gold and silver wire are well known from Anglo-Saxon England, where they are dated to the 7th century (see fig. 9.31).[119]

Two pins that were worn on clothing were made of silver and gold, respectively. A silver, so-called 'hand pin' turned up as a by-product of quarrying *terp* soil at Hallum (fig. 4.36).[120] Its hand-shaped head is decorated with a cross, squares and triangles of small dots. This very worn and exotic piece, imported from Ireland, Scotland or, most probably, central or southern England, can be dated from the mid-4th to the 5th centuries.[121] The Hallum pin is the only piece of this type that has turned up on the Continent. It is very likely that its head was originally decorated with enamel, like most of the silver hand pins (including the contemporary 'proto-handpins') that are currently known. At Wijnaldum a metal-detectorist recovered the gold head of a probably silver dress pin (fig. 4.35, no. 3). Its globular head is decorated with four small balls, each surrounded by heavily worn, beaded wire. A similar piece was used as an antique funerary gift in a Frankish burial around ca 700.[122] The specimen from Wijnaldum was probably manufactured in the same period as the filigree-decorated earring and bead.

Gold and silver sword-scabbard ornaments

With the exception of the sword-hilt mount from Wijnaldum (fig. 4.18), gold-decorated weaponry is unknown from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. A group of objects that were attached to the sword scabbard by leather straps are pyramidal mounts, of which two garnet-inlaid examples were found alongside a gold-decorated spatha in Sutton Hoo mound 1 (fig. 7.5, no. 5).[123] From the provinces of Friesland (7x) and Groningen (1x) there are a relatively large number of such pyramids – especially when compared to the number of

118 Zijlstra 2002.

119 Geake 1997, 42-43, figs. 4.6, 4.11 (silver).

120 Boeles 1951, 444 (suggesting a Carolingian date), pl. LI (no. 3); Fowler 1963, 126-129, fig. 7.7; Knol 1993, 72, 201, fig. 62.

121 Youngs 2005; Gavin 2013; pers. inf. A. Blackwell (National Museums Schotland, Edinburgh).

122 *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. V.5.24.a.

123 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 300-303, fig. 423 (reconstruction).

4.34 | Gold finger rings made out of strips of gold sheet and gold wire, found at Marssum (no. 1), Ferwerd (no. 2), Hallum (no. 3), Midlum (no. 4), Wijnaldum (no. 5), Hogebeintum (no. 6) and Dongjum (no. 7, beaten flat). Scale 2:1 (Marssum/Ferwerd: Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, Dongjum: coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis; others: private collections, photos J. Schokker and by the author).

4.35 | Gold, filigree-decorated ornaments: annular earring from Hogebeintum (no. 1), biconical bead from Midlum (no. 2) and the head of a probably silver dress pin from Wijnaldum (no. 3). Scale 2:1 (Hogebeintum: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; Midlum/Wijnaldum: private coll., photos E. Kramer and by the author).

contemporary sword or other weapon finds.[124] The most exclusive piece was found during the quarrying of *terp* soil at Ezinge (weight 14.2 gr, fig. 4.37).[125] The hollow pyramid is of silver, plated with gold sheet and decorated with garnet cloisonné and heavily worn filigree of beaded and twisted gold wire. On all four sides of the pyramid a stylised bull's head can be seen, made of garnet cloisonné and a central gem (none of the gems has survived). Two silver pyramids, found with a metal detector at Dongjum, are similar in shape. They are decorated with garnets and niello, and with gilded, triangular recesses, respectively.[126] Bronze examples are more common in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, with metal-detector finds from Dongjum (2x), Wijnaldum, Waaxens and Oosterbierum.[127] Pyramidal sword ornaments are known especially from the Frankish-Alamannic area and from Anglo-Saxon England, where they are dated to the first half of the 7th century – the gold and garnet-decorated pieces being relatively early.[128]

Gold and silver hip-belt ornament

Besides the buckle from the Dronrijp hoard (fig. 4.13), a second high-status belt-buckle is represented by a recent metal-detector find from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'. What remains of this buckle is the mushroom-shaped tongue plate, whose actual tongue is broken off – as can

124 For an overview of early medieval weapons, see Knol 1993, table 16. Some bronze sword pommels from amateur collections can be added now (unpublished inventory by the author).

125 Mensonides 1958; Karras 1985, 172, fig. 10 (no. 8).

126 Bos 1996, 132. No pictures available.

127 Bos 1996, 132, with new finds from Dongjum and Waaxens added.

128 Menghin 1983, 150-151, *Karte* 22.

Table 4.5. | Stray finds of gold finger rings, an earring, beads and dress pins from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. The sole coin date is in italics (F: Friesland, G: Groningen, *: quarrying find, mat: material, g: gold, s: silver, f: filigree).

FIND SITE	TYPE	MAT	F	WEIGHT (GR)	PRODUCTION DATE
Westergeest-'Weerdeburen' (F)*	coin finger ring (tremissis)	g	+	7.5	600-650
Bolsward (F)	coin finger ring (solidus)	g	+	10.2	*613-641*
Marssum-'Hoge Dijk' (F)	finger ring, biconical	g	-	1.1	590-650
Boer (F)	finger ring, biconical	g	-	-	590-650
Hallum-'Jousmaburen' (F)	finger ring, conical	g	-	3.0	590-650
Midlum-'Ungebuurt' (F)	finger ring	g	-	1.8	590-650
Ferwerd-'Burmania II' (F)*	finger ring	g	-	2.5	590-650
Dongjum-'Hovensreed' (F)	finger ring, beaten flat	g	-	0.5	590-650
Hogebeintum-village (F)*	finger ring, gold wires	g	-	4.4	590-650
Wijnaldum (F)	finger ring	g	-	2,3	600-700
Hogebeintum (F)	earring	g	+	1.3	590-650
Midlum (F)	bead, biconical	g	+	1.7	590-650
Leens (G)	bead, biconical (wire)	g	-	-	600-700
Hallum-'Jousmaburen'(F)*	dress pin	s	-	10.7	350-500
Wijnaldum (F)	dress pin, head	g/s	+	1.6	590-650

4.36 | A silver 'hand pin' from Jousmaburen, and close-up of the head. Scale 1:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer; drawings after Knol 1993, fig. 62).

4.37 | Garnet- and filigree-decorated, gold and silver sword pyramid from Ezinge. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra).

be seen on the back (2.4 gr, fig. 4.38). The plate is made of silver, covered on the front with garnet cloisonné within an outer rim of beaded gold wire. The wire is heavily worn; some of the garnets are damaged or missing because the tongue plate was hit by a modern plough.

The construction (garnet decoration on a silver back-plate) and the shape of the garnets (mushroom-shaped and with simple step-pattern outlines) are also typical of the Wijnaldum brooch, which makes it probable that both were manufactured in the same workshop. In contrast to the Wijnaldum brooch, however, no wafered gold foil was placed behind the individual garnets to enhance the effect of reflected sunlight. Kentish triangular (fig. 9.22) and rectangular buckles with similar, gold-decorated tongue plates date this piece to the late 6th or early decades of the 7th century.

Although fairly common in Anglo-Saxon England and especially in Kent, hardly any silver hip- or sword-belt ornaments, including buckles and strap mounts, have been reported for the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. The few known finds include an oval buckle from an unknown site in Friesland and part of a buckle-tongue from Wijnaldum (2.1 and 1.7 gr, fig. 4.39). Similar belt-elements are well-known from Frankish and Alamannic graves and can be roughly dated to the late 5th and 6th centuries.[129]

Gold-decorated clothing

During the excavations at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' the sifting of *terp* soil yielded two thin pieces of wire (diameter 0.4 mm), made of twisted strips of gold sheet (width 0.7 mm; total weight ca 0.1 gr, fig. 4.40).[130] They originate from two different contexts, where they ended up between ca 640 and 750. Frankish, Alamannic and early Anglo-Saxon grave finds (see fig. 10.15) indicate that such wires, woven into fabric or wound around a core of silk or linen for embroidery, decorated exclusive garments.[131] In a Frankish female grave at Wesel-Bislich (Germany), for example, about 70 fragments of similar gold wire were found, also made out of twisted strips of gold sheet (width ca 1 mm).[132] Moreover, in some 6th- and 7th-century 'royal' Frankish graves, including the burial believed to be that of queen Aregund at St. Denis (Paris, France), such filaments were found as part of richly decorated clothing.[133]

Coins, bars, hack gold and a probable touch needle

With a total number of 27 solidi and 187 tremisses, not including coins that at any time were incorporated into jewellery, gold coins form the largest group of valuable stray finds in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. These coins have turned up all along the North Sea coast, with a clustering of finds

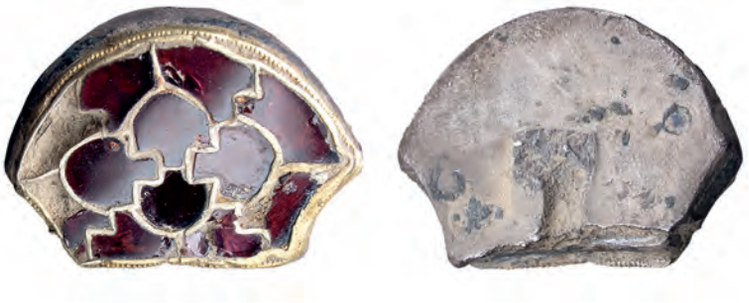
129 Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 3-6 (ca 480/490-580/590); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phases 3-5 (ca 460/480-580/590).

130 Tulp 1996, 44-45, cat. nos. 1621-1622.

131 See Crowfoot & Chadwick Hawkes 1967; Crowfoot 1969; pers. inf. S. Comis (Voorschoten).

132 Janssen 1991, 78, *Taf*. 4 (nr. 30).

133 See Wamers & Périn 2012, figs. 49, 81, 89-91 (imitated gold-wire decoration) and especially 134-136.



4.38 | Garnet-decorated, gold and silver tongue plate from Wijnaldum. Scale 3:1 (private coll., photos J. Van der Veer).

4.39 | Silver buckle from an unknown site in Friesland (left) and broken buckle tongue from Wijnaldum (right). Scale 2:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author).

in the province of Friesland – and especially in its northwestern part (fig. 4.41, now including former pendants). The density of finds in northern Westergo is nicely reflected in the coin distribution at and around Ried: within an area of 1 sq km, a metal detectorist found seven tremisses, all at *different* locations.[134]

The only imperial solidi that had not been transformed into pendants are coins of Arcadius (395-408), Honorius (395-423, 2x), Theodosius II (408-450) and Leo I (457-474), and two imitation solidi of Theodosius II and Severus III (461-465). The 6th-century coins can be subdivided into imperial, pseudo-imperial and quasi-imperial pieces. The imperial solidi (10x) and tremisses (3x) are of Justin I (518-527, 1x), Justinian I (527-565, 8x, Anastasius I (491-518, 2x) and Maurice Tiberius (582-602, 2x). The pseudo-imperial pieces are represented by eight solidi and 67 tremisses (ca 500-585), which were minted all over northwestern Europe (table 8.2). One solidus and one tremissis of quasi-imperial type were minted in southern Gaul (present-day Provence, ca 585-600). Moreover, a substantial number of 'civic' tremisses are both of Frankish and 'Frisian' origin (table 8.2: 115x, ca 585-675).[135] Finally, one 'royal' solidus, minted by Dagobert I (629-639) at Marseille, and an Anglo-Saxon thrymsa, minted in present-day Britain, are represented among the single finds. The majority of these coins show little wear. By a rough estimate, just 5% of all coins show traces of lengthy or intensive use.[136]

Gold bars and hacked pieces of gold (table 4.6) probably served the same function as gold coins in early medieval Frisia: they were used as currency with their value based on their carat and weight, or as a raw material for the production of jewellery.[137] The gold bars, all metal-detector finds, vary in shape and weight (fig. 4.42, nos. 1-4). The rounded ends of a rectangular bar from Wijnaldum show signs of particularly intensive wear, indicating that it was frequently assayed on a touchstone. The pieces of hack gold, also found with a metal detector, had been cut from rods of different shapes and diameters (fig. 4.42, nos. 5-10). Traces of melting at one end of the rod from Tzummarum reflect the use of such gold as raw material for the local production of coins or jewellery (fig. 4.42, no. 10). Although stray finds of gold bars and hack gold cannot be dated on typological grounds, the chronology of gold ornaments and coins from the coastal area suggests a most likely date in the 6th and (first half of the) 7th century.

An interesting object found during the excavations at Wijnaldum is a thin gold rod, probably used as a touch needle (fig. 4.42, no. 11).[138] The slightly tapered rod has a

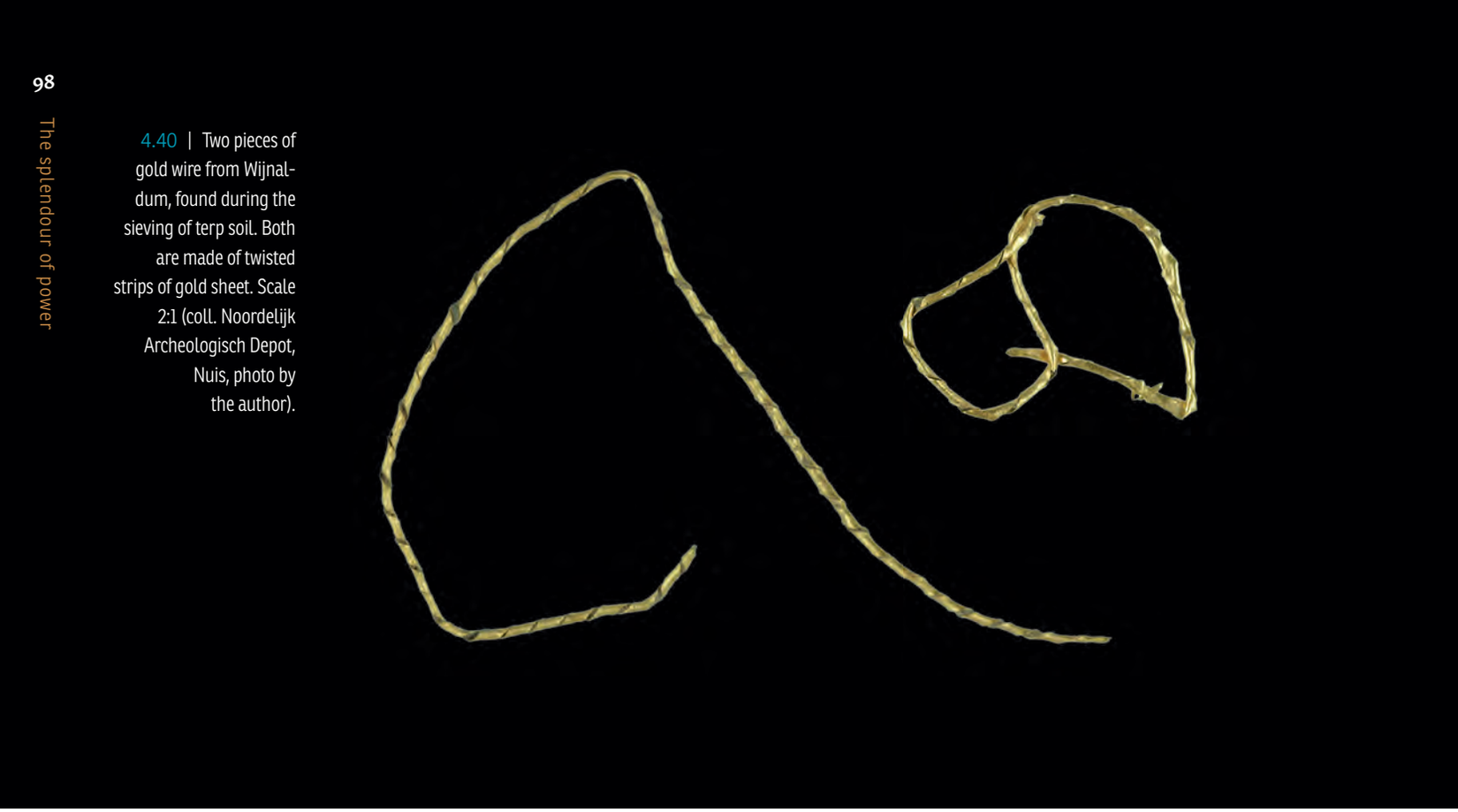
134 The finds include tremisses of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type (5x, one with a copper core) and two Frankish tremisses, minted at Maastricht and in the vicinity of Cologne (determinations by A. Pol, Leiden University).

135 Pol, in prep.

136 Of the ca. 300 6th- and 7th-century solidi and tremissis found in Friesland only 16 pieces are 'very to extremely worn'. Pers. comm. A. Pol (Leiden University).

137 See the discussion in chapter 8.

138 Tulp 1996, 42, cat. no. 1626, fig. 17G; 2003, 225.



4.40 | Two pieces of gold wire from Wijnaldum, found during the sieving of terp soil. Both are made of twisted strips of gold sheet. Scale 2:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photo by the author).

Table 4.6. | Gold and silver bars, hacked pieces of gold and a probable touch needle from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, probably dating to the 5th-7th centuries (F: Friesland, *: excavation find, mat: material, g: gold, s: silver)

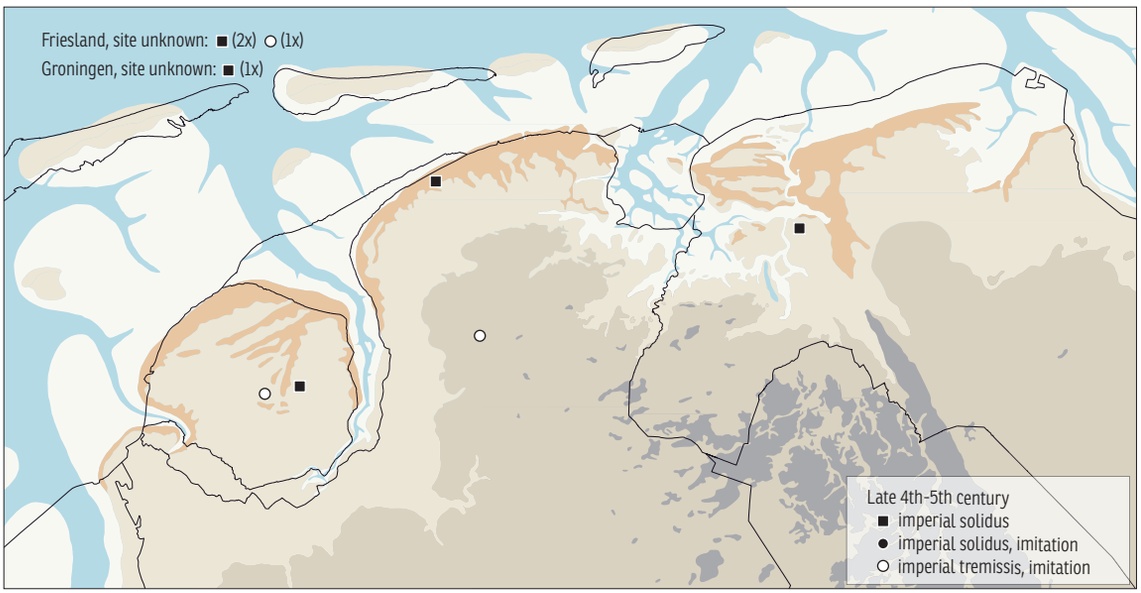
FIND SITE	OBJECT, SHAPE/SECTION	MAT	WEIGHT (GR)
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	bar, rectangular section	g	3.0
Slappeterp (F)	bar, rectangular section	g	1.3
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	unworked disc, round	g	0.6
Wijnaldum-'Okkinga' (F)	unworked disc, round	g	0.3
Tzummarum-'Zwaardeburen' (F)	hacked part of a hollow rod, melting traces, tubular	g	3.3
Tzummarum-'Zwaardeburen' (F)	hacked part of a rod, rectangular section	g	0.5
Ried-village (F)	semicircle of ring gold, circular section	g	4.8
Slappeterp (F)	hacked part of a rod, circular section	g	2.9
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	hacked part of a rod, circular section	g	3.4
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	hacked part of a rod, semicircular section	g	0.7
Hallum-'Jousmaburen' (F)	hacked part of a rod, triangular section	g	0.6
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)	touch needle?, circular section	g	0.8
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)*	bar, oval section	s	6.9
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)*	bar, oval section	s	6.1
Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (F)*	bar, halved, oval section	s	2.9

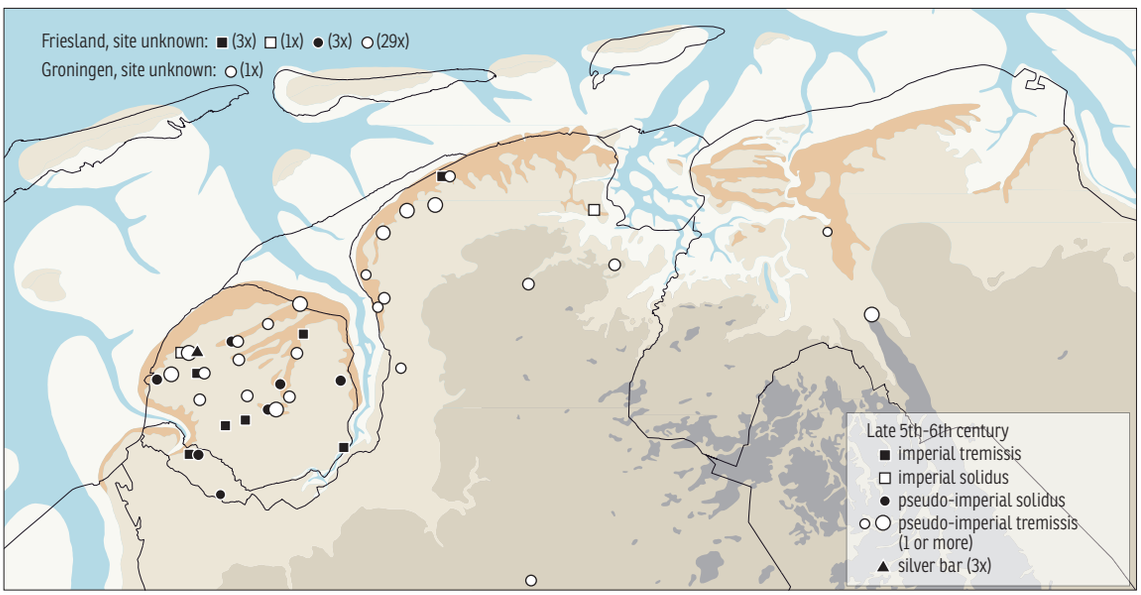
circular section and is cut at one end. The other end is beaten to a point and slightly worn. This end might have been used to make a mark on a touchstone. Several touchstones, in two cases bearing traces of gold, were also excavated at Wijnaldum (fig. 10.5).[139] The thin rod was found in a 9th-century context, but may well originate from an older, disturbed layer.

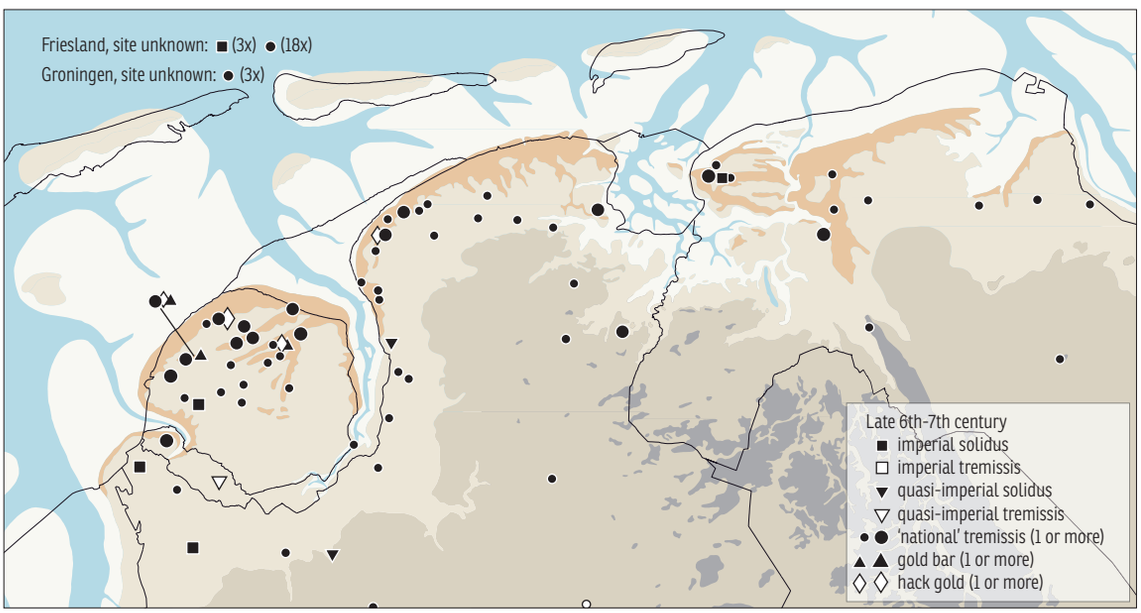
Because silver bars and hack silver are common also in the Carolingian period, these are not included in this inventory. The only exception is made for three small bars from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', two of which were found in contexts dating to the 5th or 6th century (6.9, 6.1 and 3.0 gr, fig. 4.43) – the very period when silver brooches dominated the small finds.[140] All three bars have a similar, oval shape and section and one of them was cut in two.

139 Touch stones with traces of gold: Tulp 1996, 41-42, cat. nos. 1624-1625, fig. 17E-F; 2003, 224-225, fig. 17.2C-D. Context datings: ca 550-650 (cat. no. 1624) and 800-850 (cat. no. 1625).

140 Tulp 1996, 47, cat. nos. 1611, 1613-1614, fig. 17A.







4.41 | Geographical distribution of late 4th- to 7th-century gold coins, including former coin-pendants, as well as gold or silver bars and pieces of hack gold, found as single pieces in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. The coins found outside the salt-marsh area originate from secondary contexts: they were transported here as part of dug-away terp soil, which was used to enrich the less fertile peatland, heath and sandy soils. For the background, see figure 3.1 (data after Boeles 1951, appendix VIII; *NUMIS*; PoL, in prep., drawing by the author).

4.42 | Oblong gold bars from Wijnaldum and Slappeterp (nos. 1-2), two round gold bars from Wijnaldum (no. 3-4), pieces of hack gold from Ried (no. 5), Slappeterp (no. 6), Wijnaldum (no. 7), Hallum (no. 8) and Tzummarum (nos. 9-10) and a probable touch needle from Wijnaldum (no. 11). Scale 2:1 (Wijnaldum, oblong bar/Slappeterp & Tzummarum, hack gold: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra; Wijnaldum, left round bar/Slappeterp, oblong bar: Geldmuseum Utrecht, photos A. Pol; Wijnaldum, touch needle: Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author; others: private collections, photos by the author).

4.43 | Three bars of unworked silver, one halved, found during excavations at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photo by the author).

Table 4.7. | Chronological overview of numbers of graves and hoards with gold and silver objects, as well as single finds from (probable) settlement contexts in the northern Netherlands. The coin numbers also include former coin-pendants (loop removed) (settmt: (probable) settlement site; *: including relatively late tremisses with a high silver content).

	LATE 4TH-5TH CENTURY			LATE 5TH-6TH CENTURY			LATE 6TH-7TH CENTURY		
	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.
gold ornament	-	-	9	-	1	12	1	6	42
silver ornament	-	-	6	-	-	16	1	-	4
gold coin*	-	1	9	-	2	90	-	2	128
total:	-	1	24	-	3	118	2	8	173

4.5 Conclusion

Valuables of gold, and to a lesser extent of silver, have been found in the provinces of both Friesland and Groningen, mainly as hoards and as single items from settlement sites (table 4.7). During the late 4th and the 5th century, the find material is dominated by gold coins and coin-pendants, as well as silver 'Saxon' brooches, that were buried at settlement sites. The late 5th and the first half of the 6th century are characterized by Scandinavian-type gold bracteates, and most of the 6th century by silver, Frankish- and Frisian-style brooches – again with substantial numbers of gold coins and coin-pendants, mainly from settlement contexts. The late 6th and first half of the 7th century can be seen as the heyday of precious-metal deposition in the northern Netherlands, with large numbers of gold ornaments and especially coins now being buried as hoards and as single items at settlement sites. Moreover, the richest graves (Aalzum and Hogebeintum) can also be dated to this particular period. Finally, the second half of the 7th century saw a gradual drop in the number of valuable items from archaeological contexts – the Hogebeintum hoard representing the youngest hoard find (buried ca 640-675).

5

Valuable items from the coastal area of the western Netherlands and the central river area around Utrecht and Dorestad

5.1 Introduction

As a result of recent excavations and metal detecting, the number of early medieval valuables from the coastal area of the western Netherlands and the adjacent river area around Utrecht and Dorestad has increased considerably during the past decades. The items of gold and silver comprise grave goods (section 5.2), hoards (section 5.3) and single objects from (probable) settlement sites, ranging from rural settlements to specialized trading centres (section 5.4). Besides a description of the individual finds and their dating, this chapter presents the available context information and current ideas about the status of specific sites. A substantial part of the archaeological finds described below are also included in Dijkstra's recently published PhD thesis.[1] The data concerning coin finds and their typology are based on the largely unpublished inventory by Pol.[2] For the dating of most jewellery and other ornaments, the Lower Rhine chronology is used.[3]

5.2 Grave goods

High-status burials have been documented in the provinces of South Holland, Utrecht and, recently, also North Holland (fig. 5.1). Most of these are female; the richest male graves usually lack any ornaments of gold or silver, but are characterized by the presence of one or more weapons, and sometimes bronze and/or glass vessels. The metal objects from the beach at Domburg (Walcheren, Zeeland) are stray finds from several cemeteries and an adjacent trading site. Although some of the Domburg jewellery probably came from graves, the following section will treat all these finds as part of the trading complex. Not included in this overview is the early medieval cemetery of Oud-Leusden (Utrecht), which so far has been published only as a preliminary report.[4]

The cemetery of Rijnsburg-'De Horn' (South Holland)

Soil improvement of a field near Rijnsburg resulted in the discovery of a Merovingian-period cemetery, which was partly excavated in 1913 and 1924 (fig. 5.2).[5] Additional research in 1998, 2002 and 2005-2006 was aimed at establishing the size of the cemetery and the quality of its remaining features.[6] Of this mixed cemetery at least 140 graves were uncovered, including 13 inhumations and a horse grave. Within the cemetery three clusters of graves were present, which seem to be contemporaneous and may relate to three family groups. Unfortunately, a substantial part of the grave goods, including the most exclusive objects, were not found during the archaeological excavations and cannot be linked to specific graves; they were collected by labourers and sold to the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden. The wheel-thrown pottery and other items from the cemetery dated its use from the middle of the 6th to the late 7th century. The presence of some exceptional grave goods is related to the status of the nearby

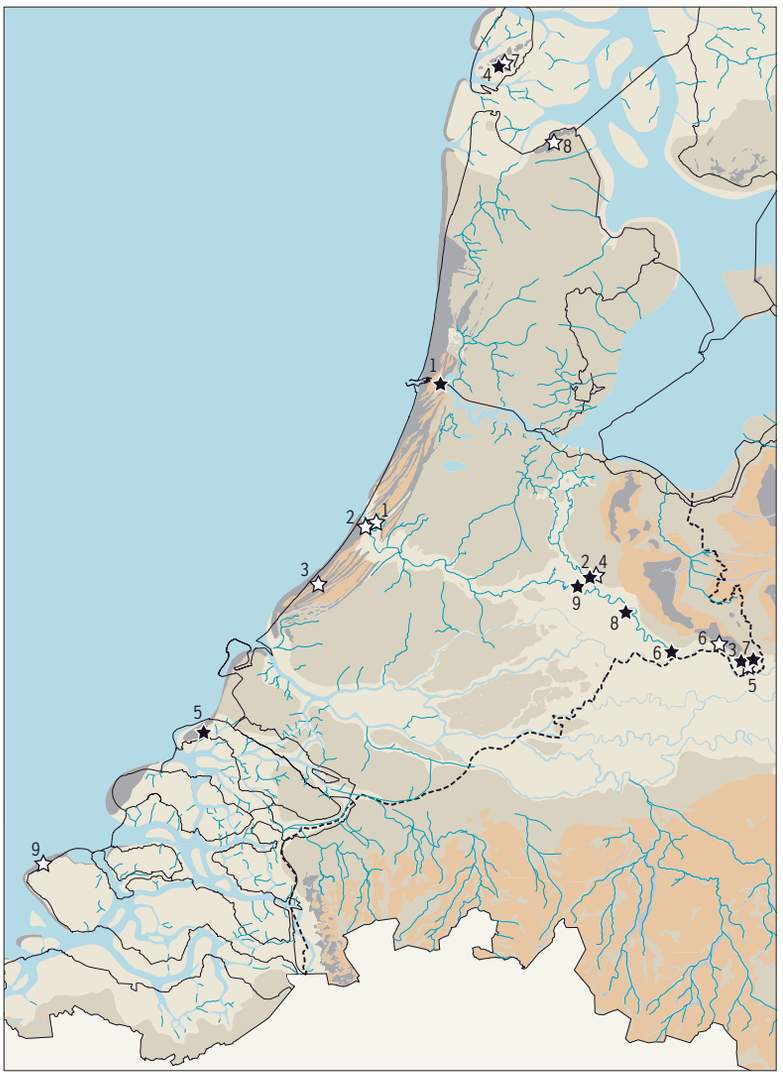
1 Dijkstra 2011.
2 Coin data: situation in February 2014; Pol, in prep.
3 Siegmund 1998; Nieveler & Siegmund 1999; Müssemeier et al. 2003. For some critical remarks about the use of this chronology, see section 1.8.
4 Van Tent 1985.
5 Holwerda 1914; Peddemors & Carmiggelt 1993, 28-30; Dijkstra 2004, 401-402; 2011, 226-235 (site no. 49).
6 Dijkstra & Flamman 2002; Tol 2006.

settlement of *Rodulfusheim* (fig. 3.7), later known as Rijnsburg.[7] This settlement may have included a '*Herrenhof*' in the Merovingian period (with the central part of farmhouse 1 functioning as a meeting hall), later to become the centre of an agrarian demesne or *curtis*.

The cemetery of Rijnsburg is especially renowned for one find, probably originating from a male inhumation grave: a 10.5 cm long, gilded bronze belt-buckle with a shield-tongue and a rectangular mount (fig. 5.3, no. 1). The central part of the mount is decorated with a piece of gold sheet, showing interlaced animal motifs in repoussé and overlaid filigree work (Style II). The individual animals are executed in triple filigree, comprising a central beaded wire or row of small rings, and a thin beaded wire on either side. The gold-sheet panel is surrounded by a raised border topped with a band of five twisted gold wires. The mount has six dome-headed rivets at one end and two pegs at the back of the other. The trapezoid shield also has a central panel of gold sheet within a raised border. The panel is decorated with interlaced animal motifs in triple-filigree, and the border with garnet cloisonné and blue enamel. The shield is surrounded by a thick, twisted gold wire that is heavily worn.

The buckle is said to have been found together with a rectangular strap-mount and a Byzantine coin-weight (22.8 gr) (fig. 5.3, nos. 2-3). The flat, square bronze weight is engraved with a Latin cross and the weight indications *gamma* and *alpha*. The belt-mount (length 5.4 cm), which is much smaller than the buckle-plate, is also executed in gilded bronze. Its elevated central panel is decorated with cloisons filled with blue and white enamel as well as garnets. Both ends of the mount were fastened with four dome-headed rivets.

The shape and decoration of the belt-buckle and strap-mount are paralleled by finds from English graves, especially from Kent, dating to the late 6th, and first half of the 7th century (see fig. 9.22).[8] Unfortunately, it is uncertain whether the buckle, the smaller mount and the weight are a genuine assemblage, or a later composition by the labourers who collected these items.

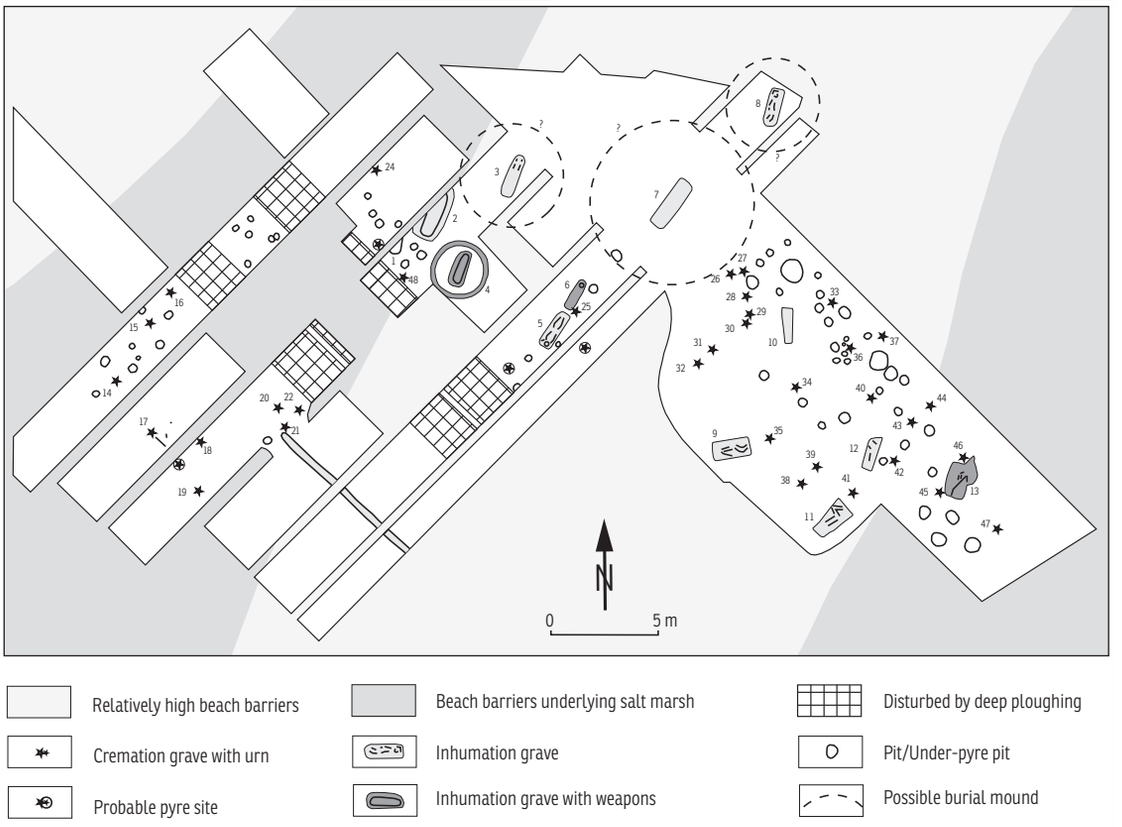


5.1 | Geographical distribution of cemeteries or single graves (white symbols) and hoards (black symbols) with 5th- to 7th-century valuable items of gold and silver across the western and central Netherlands. The eastern border of the research area is shown as a broken line. For the background, see figure 12.4 (drawing by the author).
Cemetery/Single grave: 1. Rijnsburg-'De Horn', 2. Katwijk-'Klein Duin', 3. Wassenaar, 4. Utrecht-'Domplein', 5. Rhenen-'Donderberg', 6. Elst-'Het Woud', 7. De Waal-'Polderweg', 8. Hippolytushoef, 9. Domburg-beach.
Hoard find: 1. Velsen, 2. Utrecht-'Domplein', 3. Remmerden, 4. De Waal, 5. Ouddorp, 6. Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', 7. Rhenen-'Achterberg', 8. Odijk, 9. Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn'.

Some other male inhumation graves are characterized by Frankish-type weapons. The richest, late 6th- or early 7th-century burial contained a *Schmalsax*, a lancehead, a tinned-bronze belt-buckle, two decorative bronze mounts, of which one is shaped like a stylised bird, two flint fire-makers, a fragment of amber, and one or maybe two wheel-thrown pots (grave 4, a child aged 7-9). The grave was surrounded by a ring ditch with remains of a wooden structure, probably a fence. Other weaponry finds are a probable *umbo*, represented by an iron domed button, from grave 3, a fragment of a double-edged sword from

7 Sarfatij 1977; Halbertsma 2000, 179-182; Dijkstra 2004, 402-404; 2011, 132-133, 288.

8 Åberg 1926, 120 ff. (Rijnsburg: p. 127, figs. 223, 228). For the dating, see section 9.5. Peddemors & Carmiggelt (1993, 28) suggest a date between AD 630 and 640; Dijkstra (2004, fig. 5) dates the buckle to around 600.



5.2 | Excavation plan of the southern, most extensively excavated part of the cemetery at Rijnsburg-'De Horn'. A western and an eastern cluster of graves can be seen, possibly reflecting its use by two family groups (after Dijkstra 2011, fig. 6.3, slightly adjusted).

5.3 | Gold-decorated belt-buckle (no. 1), ornamental belt-mount (no. 2) and bronze weight (no. 3), said to have been found together in an inhumation grave at the cemetery of Rijnsburg-'De Horn'. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

grave 6, and a *Breitsax* from grave 13. Moreover, an amber sword bead and two further iron domed buttons, covered with bronze sheet, are single finds from a disturbed male grave. None of the graves contained any item of gold or silver.

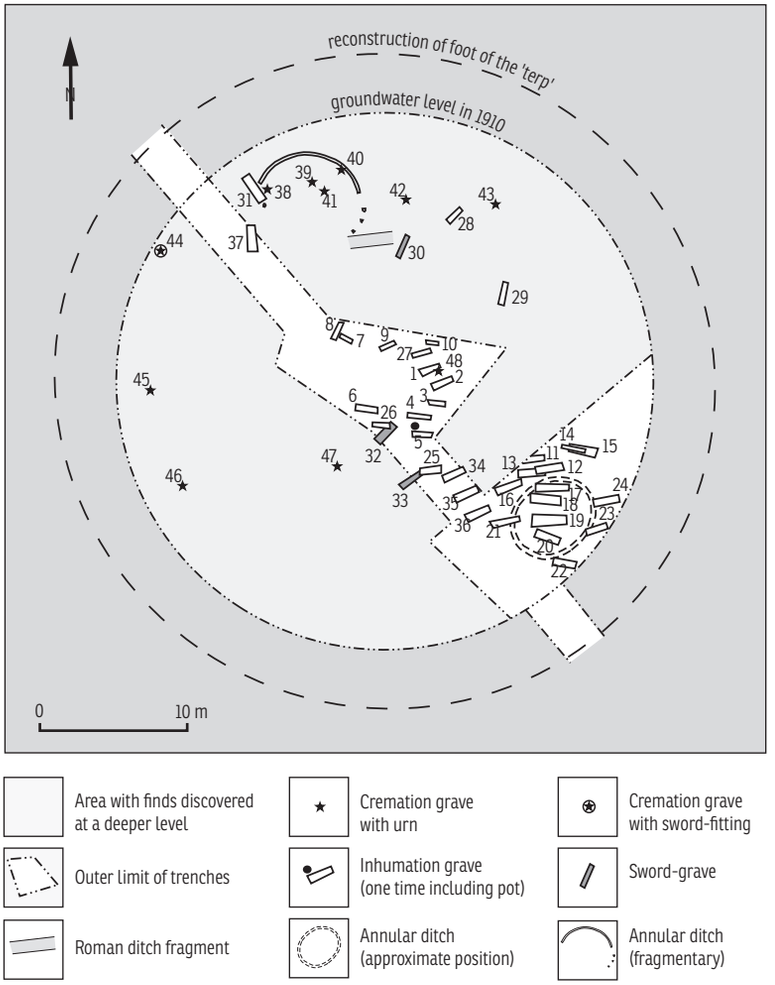
The only piece of high-status female jewellery from the Rijnsburg cemetery is a typically Frankish disc brooch, executed in silver, and dating from the second half of the 6th century (fig. 5.4).[9] The front of this single find is decorated with a central cross and two rings of garnet cloisonné and blue enamel.

5.4 | Silver, garnet- and enamel-decorated disc brooch from the cemetery of Rijnsburg-'De Horn'. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

The cemetery of Katwijk-'Klein Duin' (South Holland)

After their discovery in the course of sand extraction, ca 70 burials of a mixed cemetery near Katwijk were documented during the years 1906, 1910 and 1911 (fig. 5.5).[10] These mid 6th- to 8th-century burials were dug into a man-made dwelling mound of the Roman period, which functioned as a highly symbolic landmark where it is thought that Frankish and later counts were inaugurated and paid homage to since the 8th century.[11] The richest graves, containing a sword, a lance, a glass cup and in one case also a shield, date to the Carolingian period and were published by Stein among her '*Adelsgräber*'.[12]

The richness of the previous, Merovingian-period cemetery phase is reflected in just a single cremation grave (no. 47), which contains a hand-made urn and two metal objects: a fragment of an annular decorative mount, executed in tinned bronze, and a bird's-head terminal of gilded bronze (fig. 5.6). The decorative mount was probably part of a belt or horsegear. The worn terminal, for a long time misinterpreted as a knife-handle, is of greater significance: it originally belonged to an exclusive drinking horn of early Anglo-Saxon type. Besides a pair of silver-decorated horns from the 'royal' or 'princely' male graves at Sutton Hoo (Suffolk, mound 1) and Taplow (Buckinghamshire, fig. 10.17, no. 6), there are two bronze terminals that closely parallel the Katwijk find from Taplow and a third from a cist cremation



5.5 | Excavation plan of the cemetery at Katwijk-'Klein Duin'. The burials were dug into an older, Roman-period settlement mound or *terp*. The graves with a sword or sword-fitting date to the Carolingian period (after Bazelmans et al. 2004, fig. 6).

at Loveden Hill (Lincolnshire).[13] The English parallels and the execution of the bird head in Style II date grave 47 to the late 6th, or first half of the 7th century. Although Dijkstra assigned this grave to a female, in Anglo-Saxon England such exclusive drinking horns are only known from male graves – which also suggests burial with a male at Katwijk.[14]

The few weapon finds from the Merovingian period are an iron lancehead (grave 39) and the fragmented shaft of a second

9 Dating: Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 5-6 (ca 550/560-580/590); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phase 5 (ca 565-580/590).

10 Holwerda & Krom 1907; Evelein 1911; Holwerda 1912; Dijkstra & De Koning 2002, 140-147; Dijkstra 2004, 401-402; 2011, 235-245 (site no. 61).

11 Dijkstra & De Koning 2002.

12 Stein 1967, site nr. 343, *Taf.* 67-68; Dijkstra & De Koning 2002, table 1; Dijkstra 2011, 238-243 (graves 30 and 32-33).

13 Bruce-Mitford 1983, 324-347; for Loveden Hill, see also Fennell 1969, 215, fig. 2.

14 Dijkstra 2011, 243-245.

5.6 | Gilded bronze terminal of a drinking horn and tinned bronze ornamental mount of a hip-belt or horse gear from a cremation grave (no. 47) at the cemetery of Katwijk-'Klein Duin'. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

5.7 | Silver arm ring, probably originating from a disturbed grave in the vicinity of Wassenaar. Scale 1:1 (private coll., photos J. van der Helm).

lance- or spearhead (grave 43), which were buried in association with a Frankish wheel-thrown urn. The pottery dates these graves to (the second half of) the 7th century.

A disturbed cemetery (?), probably near Wassenaar (South Holland)

In 2009, a silver arm ring was found by a metal detectorist at the future site of the American embassy at Wassenaar, near The Hague (weight 25.1 gr, fig. 5.7). This *Kolbenarmring* has square ends, which are decorated with rows of punched 'scales'. Silver arm rings are well-known from Frankish and Alamannic female graves, dated roughly to the late 5th and first half of the 6th century.[15] The decoration of the Wassenaar find is unusual, however, although similar scales are found on an atypical arm ring from a female burial at Kircheim am Neckar (late 5th/early 6th century).[16] Like this German find, the arm ring from the western Netherlands clearly is a local imitation of a Frankish-type status symbol.

Earlier corings and the digging of test trenches adjacent to the find location showed that the site was situated in a former wetland, close to a beach barrier, and that in recent times the area had been raised with soil from an unknown source. Since the arm ring is a typical grave find, this soil may have contained debris from a disturbed early medieval cemetery somewhere in the vicinity of Wassenaar, like Katwijk-'Klein Duin' (in the 19th century this site was owned by Baron van Wassenaer van Catwijck) or The Hague-'Solleveld'.[17]

15 Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 3-4 (ca 480/490-550/560); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phases 3-4 (ca 460/480-565).

16 Koch 1967, 239 (no. 4), fig. 1.3, *Taf*. 47.4.

17 Katwijk: see above and pers. comm. M. Dijkstra (University of Amsterdam); The Hague: Waasdorp & Eimermann 2008; Dijkstra 2011, 245-252 (site no. 94).

5.8 | Silver, partly gilded strap end, decorated with animal and floral motifs in relief, and a gold, acorn-shaped pendant from the 'Domplein' site at Utrecht. Scale 2:1 (PUG collection, Municipality of Utrecht, photos H. Lägers).

The cemetery of Utrecht-'Domplein' (Utrecht)

In 1929 and 1933 the eastern and the western parts of the Chapel of the Holy Cross were excavated beneath the 'Domplein', in the centre of Utrecht.[18] This chapel was situated in the central part of the Roman-period *castellum* (*Traiectum*), on the site of the former *principia*.[19] Directly east of the chapel several graves of an early medieval cemetery were found, partly in Carolingian-period or younger vaults built of tuff blocks. Stray finds of gold and silver jewellery appear to date the earliest phase of this cemetery to the Merovingian period. Further excavations of the *principia* in 1935 and subsequent years resulted in the discovery of more burials, some again within stone vaults, and in stray finds of a gold pendant and several gold coins.[20] The early medieval valuables include some probable grave goods (gold and silver jewellery) and objects that may belong to a hoard (the coins, see below).

A gold brooch, a silver strap-end and two silver arm rings were found during the excavations of 1933. The disc brooch, the present whereabouts of which is unknown, is decorated with four double circles of ribbed gold wire and five stone settings: a central, round setting and 'cross arms' of four triangular settings.[21] Of the original stones only one piece of garnet is still present. The outer rim is made of a thick, ribbed gold wire. This ornament is similar in shape and decoration to the often larger disc brooches from Frankish and Alamannic female graves, which are dated to the late 6th and first half of the 7th century.[22]

The heavily worn strap-end is executed in silver, which is partly gilded and decorated in relief (weight 33,2 gr, fig. 5.8).[23] The front shows interlaced animal motifs in Style II and a cross filled with irregularly shaped garnets, within a border of beaded wire. The reverse is decorated with floral motifs. Both the animal and floral motifs are asymmetrical and not very neatly executed. The strap-end is attached to a thin silver backplate by four rivets. Strap-ends of gold, silver and bronze decorated in animal style are well-known from Frankish and Alamannic female burials of the 7th century.[24] The animal-style decoration is closely related to that on a reliquary box from Beromünster (Switzerland), which dates the Utrecht strap-end to the second half of the 7th century.[25]

18 Van Giffen, Vollgraff & Van Hoorn 1934; see also Halbertsma 2000, 233-236.

19 De Groot 1992, 15-20; Van Es 1994, 96, fig. 83 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994). For Utrecht in the Merovingian period, see Van Rooijen 2010, 158.

20 Vollgraff & Van Hoorn 1938; Ozinga & De Weerd 1989.

21 Van Giffen, Vollgraff & Van Hoorn 1934, 61, fig. 33.

22 See Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 7-9 (ca 580/590-670); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phases 6-7 (ca 580/590-640/650). For Alamannic parallels, see Christlein 1978, *Taf.* 92-93.

23 Van Giffen, Volgraff & Van Hoorn 1934, 61-62, 64-67, fig. 38; Roth 1986, 279, *Taf.* 62b-c.

24 E.g. Christlein 1966, *Taf.* 66-69; 1978, *Taf.* 81, 98, 104.

25 See Roth 1986, 261, *Taf.* 2a.

5.9 | Two silver arm rings from the 'Domplein' site at Utrecht. Scale 1:1 (PUG-collection, Municipality of Utrecht, photos H. Lägers).

Both of the solid silver arm rings terminate in animal heads (fig. 5.9).[26] The heads on the larger one (weight 34 gr) are best paralleled by the terminal knobs of 5th-century cruciform brooches – the bangle itself being a unique find.[27] The animal heads on the second, smaller and gilded bangle (weight 28 gr) have an oval shape, and eyes decorated with small garnets, of which only one survives. Snake-like creatures with similar heads can be seen on the cover of the famous *Lindau Gospels*, which suggests an 8th-century date for the second Utrecht arm ring.[28]

The gold pendant from the 1935 excavation, found in a layer covering one of the walls of the *principia*, is acorn-shaped (weight 0.7 gr, fig. 5.8).[29] The damaged pendant is made out of two pieces of gold sheet. Its upper part is decorated with small, punched circles. The simple, semicircular loop is broken. Although close parallels are unknown, this find can be dated to the second half of the 6th, or early decades of the 7th century.[30]

The cemetery of Rhenen-'Donderberg' (Utrecht)

The largest and richest early medieval cemetery of the Netherlands is situated on the 'Donderberg', which is part of an ice-pushed ridge along the river Rhine, near Rhenen. The site was discovered during sand extraction and largely excavated in 1951.[31] Of the mixed cemetery ca 800 inhumation and 300 cremation graves were documented, as well as 14 horse burials (figs. 3.10, 5.10) – dating from the late 4th into the first half of the 8th century. In 1995 a small part of the cemetery was re-excavated, resulting in the uncovering of further cremation graves below the previously excavated inhumation graves.[32] About 75% of the graves contained one or more gifts, mainly weaponry, belt fittings, brooches and glass beads – including some of the most exclusive objects from the research area. For a long time only a small number of graves were properly published, but now a detailed catalogue of all grave goods is available.

The earliest inhumations, dating to ca 375-450, form a separate cluster that may be grouped around an early 'founder's grave' (grave 818).[33] On the eastern side of this cluster a more extensive cemetery with inhumation

26 Van Giffen, Vollgraff & Van Hoorn 1934, 62, figs. 34-35.

27 Pers. comm. A. Pesch (Zentrum für Baltische und Skandinavische Archäologie, Schleswig). Compare Reichstein 1975, *Tafeln*.

28 Haseloff 1990, 89-90, fig. 66c. Another silver arm ring with such heads is a single find from Domburg (Capelle 1976, cat. no. 440).

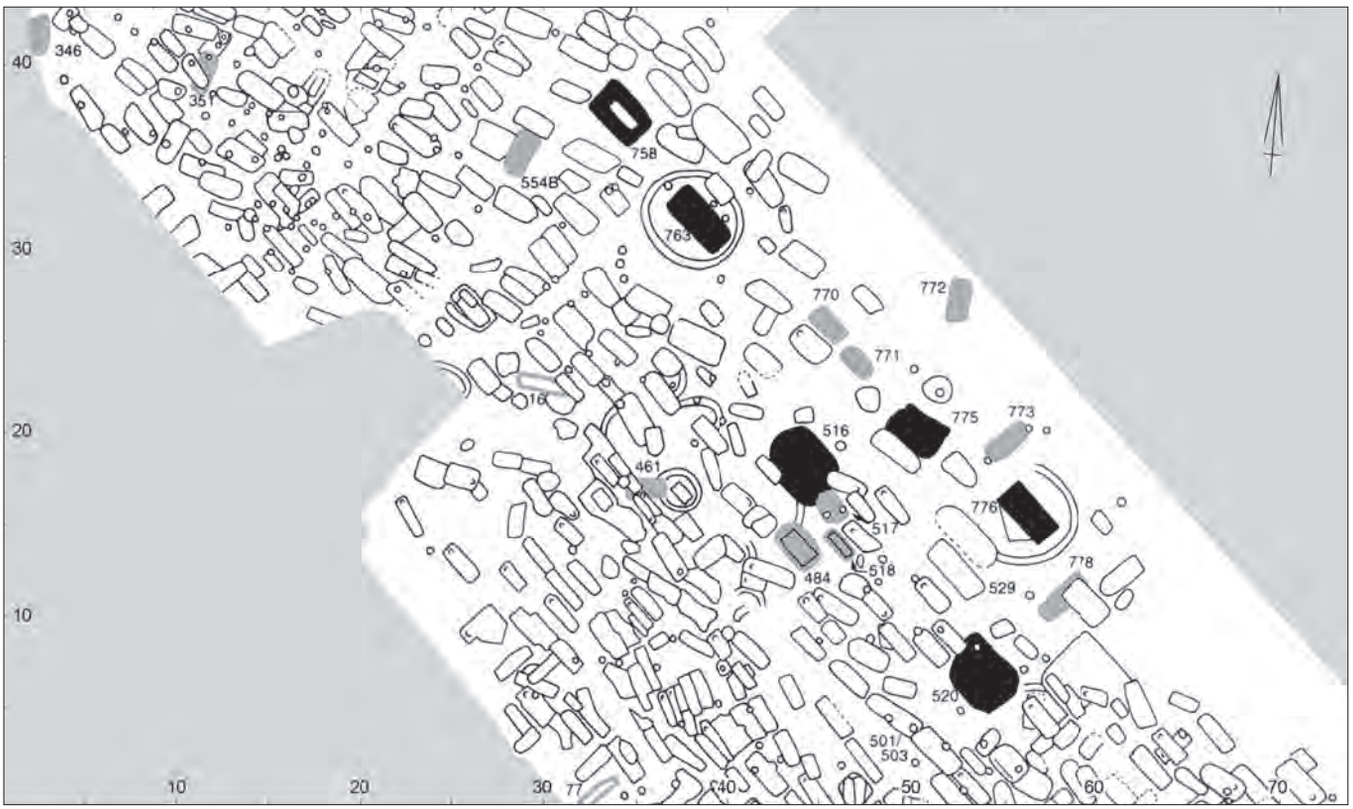
29 Volgraff & Van Hoorn 1938, 139, fig. 76.

30 Compare the decoration and dating of Frankish gold pendants (Trier 2002, 58-61).

31 Ypey 1955, pl. 3-43; 1973; 1978; 1983; Böhme 1974, site nr. 64, Taf. 59-69; Heidinga 1990, 20; Wagner 1994; Van Es & Wagner 2000; Wagner & Ypey 2011 (catalogue of all grave goods).

32 Pers. comm. A. Wagner (Westkapelle, the Netherlands).

33 Ypey 1973, fig. 15A; Heidinga 1990, 20; Van Es & Wagner 2000, 119-121.



5.10 | Central part of the cemetery at the 'Donderberg' site near Rhenen, showing the spatial distribution of rich male graves (black) and horse burials (grey), dating to the 6th and early 7th centuries (after Wagner 1994, fig. 146).

and cremation graves developed from the 5th to the first half of the 8th century. Within this mixed part of the cemetery, six contemporary groups are discernable, presumably linked to individual families or other social groups.[34] During the 1995 excavations, some of the earliest cremation graves were found in this mixed area, which suggests that the cemetery started at multiple locations – with inhumation graves to the west and contemporary cremation graves east of them.[35]

In the late 4th and the 5th century, the richest burials were the inhumation graves in the western, separate part of the cemetery (fig. 3.10). According to Van Es and Wagner, these represent members of a local elite.[36] The male burials, including the assumed founder's grave, are characterized by weapons and late-Roman hip-belts, richly decorated with bronze mounts. With the exception of a sword from grave 821 and a shield from grave 833, the weapons are limited to one or more spears or lances, in many cases accompanied by an axe. The only gold and silver objects from these male burials are two coins: a denarius of Commodus (180-192) from grave 818, left in the mouth of the deceased, and a solidus of Gratian (375-383) from grave 842, found near the skull. In most of the contemporary female burials the metal finds are limited to a brooch or hairpin executed in bronze. The only silver object is a hairpin with a highly ornamented, gilded head from grave 356 (fig. 5.17). Besides, at least one of the 5th-century cremation burials contained drops of silver, indicating the presence of one or more molten silver ornaments.[37]

The most exclusive grave goods from the Rhenen cemetery are of Frankish design and can be dated to the 6th and early 7th centuries, when the separate, western part of the cemetery was no longer used (fig. 3.10). Weapon graves containing a sword, a shield, and one or more spear- and/or arrowheads are now distributed all over the cemetery. Some exceptional graves cluster in the centre-northern part of the cemetery, where most of the horse burials were also found (fig. 5.10). These graves have relatively large pits, of which at least one, and probably even four, contained a wooden chamber, and rich sets of grave goods, comprising weaponry (including an *ango*), horsegear, bronze-bound buckets, bronze bowls and a glass beaker (table 5.1, fig 5.11).[38] One of the graves (no. 775) also contained two wooden discs of unknown function, each with a silver-gilt type-D

34 Ypey 1973, 297, fig. 15 (groups II-VII); 1978, 54, fig. 3 (with phasing of the burials). For the assignment of the 5th-century burials to 'family groups', see Van Es & Wagner 2000, fig. 4.

35 Pers. comm. A. Wagner (Westkapelle, the Netherlands); see also Van Es & Wagner 2000, 121-124.

36 Van Es & Wagner 2000, 125-126; see also Van Es 1994, 81 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

37 Pers. comm. A. Wagner (Westkapelle, the Netherlands).

38 Wagner 1994; see also Ypey 1973, 297.

5.11 | The inventory of a relatively rich male grave at the Rhenen cemetery (grave 763). Length of angon ca 89 cm (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos P. Bomhof).

5.12 | Two silver-gilt type-D bracteates from grave 775 at the Rhenen cemetery, at the time of burial attached with silver-gilt, ribbed bands to wooden discs with an unknown function. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos P. Bomhof).

5.13 | Sets of silver-gilt bow and bird brooches from grave 131 at the Rhenen cemetery. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

5.14 | A selection of garnet-decorated disc brooches from the Rhenen cemetery (from top left to bottom right graves 400, 169, 166, 380, 332, 530 and 423). Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp).

bracteate attached to the centre (fig. 5.12).[39] The special status of the centre-northern part of the cemetery is underlined by the presence of two 'ordinary' grave pits, containing the only other *angones* and yet another bronze bowl (graves 501 and 503, table 5.1).

The distribution of rich female burials, mainly dating to the 6th century, shows no specific clustering, although the richest graves belong to burial groups II and V.[40] Gold or silver ornaments are known from a total of 41 female burials. Most objects are silver-gilt brooches of various types, including bow brooches, garnet-inlaid disc or rosette-shaped brooches, bird brooches and so-called horseman brooches (figs. 5.13-14).[41] These brooches, which often are heavily worn and in some cases have been repaired (fig. 10.9), were found in association with silver ear and finger rings, silver hair or dress pins, a silver bracelet, and looped or pierced Roman-period denarii (fig. 10.7). Moreover, one of the graves also contained a crystal ball with silver suspension, which probably served an amuletic function and might be used for cooling the hands or wine (grave 79, fig. 5.15).[42] Gold ornaments are less common. They are limited to a pair of small, filigree-decorated pendants with ribbed loops (grave 86, fig. 5.16), a small decora-

5.15 | Crystal ball with silver suspension from grave 79 at the Rhenen cemetery. Scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo P. Bomhof).

39 For a detailed description of the finds from grave 775, see Ypey 1983.

40 Ypey 1973, 297-300.

41 Belonging to Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 3-7 (ca 480/490-610); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phases 3-5 (ca 460/480-580/590).

42 On the (uncertain) function of crystal balls, see Martin 1984, 115-116; Owen-Crocker 2004, 94-95.

Table 5.1. | List of rich male burials in the centre-northern part of the cemetery at Rhenen-'Donderberg'. Graves 758 and 776 were probably re-opened in early medieval times (**: chamber burial, *: probable chamber burial) (after Wagner & Ypey 2011; the dates are based on Wagner 1994).

GRAVE	DATE	WEAPONS	HORSE GEAR	WOODEN BUCKET	BRONZE BOWL	GLASS BEAKER	OTHER
501	530-570	angon, lance	-	-	-	-	-
503	550-600	spatha, angon, lance	-	-	+	-	knife, 2 buckles, firesteel/purse mount
516**	580-620	lance	+	-	-	-	buckle
520*	600-650	shield	+	-	-	-	iron belt-mounts, inlaid with silver
758*	530-570	lance, shield	-	+	-	+	knife
763	530-570	angon, lance, shield	-	+	+	-	buckle
775*	580-620	seax or knife, shield	+	+	+(?)	-	knife, buckle, wooden discs with bracteates
776	6th century	arrow	-	+	+(?)	-	knife, buckle

5.16 | Gold ornaments from the Rhenen cemetery: a set of filigree-decorated pendants from grave 86 (nos. 1-2) and a finger ring from grave 669 (no. 3). Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

tive ring of twisted wire (diam. 0.4 cm, grave 95), the fragmented gold sheet of a gold-plated coin (diameter at least 1.7 cm, grave 433), and a plain finger ring with a D-shaped section (grave 669, fig. 5.16). One of the richest graves is relatively late, dating to around 600 (grave 413); it contained, amongst other things, four silver-gilt bow brooches, a silver *Kolbenarmring*, a pair of silver earrings, a silver finger ring, four silver coin-pendants (denarii) and an Anglo-Saxon-type glass claw beaker (fig. 5.17).[43]

Finally, a 6th-century, pseudo-imperial solidus, showing the bust of Anastasius (491-528) and probably minted in the Burgundian kingdom, is the only surviving item from an inhumation grave (no. 315). Neither the sex of the deceased nor the exact findspot in the grave are known.

In the 7th, and first half of the 8th centuries, jewellery of gold and silver no longer played a role in the funerary ritual. The use of precious metal is now limited to the silver inlay of 7th-century iron belt-fittings (e.g. graves 738 and 814).[44] Weapons, on the other hand, occurred as grave goods in similar proportions to the preceding period.

The cemetery of Elst-'Het Woud' (Utrecht)

Prior to the construction of new housing at the village of Elst, most of a mixed cemetery of ca 260 burials was excavated in 1981. The cemetery contained 165 (probable) cremation graves, 90 inhumation graves, four horse burials and one dog burial, dating from the early 5th to the mid 8th century (fig. 5.18). Although publication has been limited to a preliminary report, a detailed description of the burials and finds is currently in preparation.[45]

Like the Rhenen cemetery, the burial ground at Elst is situated on the western flank of an ice-pushed ridge, directly north of the Rhine. The shape of the cemetery is more or less semicircular, with the richest graves – and the horse burials – concentrating in the central, and above all, the western part. All burials containing gold and silver ornaments are female inhumation graves, roughly dated to the 6th century.[46] Most weapon graves are of similar date, with the exception of two late-7th- or 8th-century inhumation graves in the centre

43 Ypey 1955, pl. 4-5; 1973, 297.

44 E.g. Ypey 1955, figs. 18-19; 1973, fig. 13.

45 Van Tent 1988; Verwers & Van Tent, in prep.

46 Belonging to Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 4-6 (ca 520/530-580/590); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phases 4-5 (ca 510/525-580/590).

5.17 | A selection of grave goods from one of the richest female burials at the Rhenen cemetery (grave 413). The hair pin was found in a different grave (no. 356). Length of brooches 9.0 cm (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo P. Bomhof).

5.18 | Excavation plan of the cemetery Elst-'Het Woud'. The rectangular features are inhumation graves; the circular features, cremation graves (after Van Tent 1988, fig. 2).

5.19 | A selection of silver brooches from the Elst cemetery: a horse brooch (grave 175) and some garnet-decorated disc brooches (graves 88, 118, 127, 135 and 238). Scale 1:1 (coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot, Utrecht, photos J. Schokker).

5.20 | One of the two gold, filigree-decorated pendants from grave 127 at the Elst cemetery. Scale 2:1 (coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot, Utrecht, photos J. Schokker).

5.21 | Bronze-bound bucket from weapon grave 178 at the Elst cemetery. Scale 1:2 (coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot, Utrecht, photos J. Schokker).

and south of the cemetery (graves 248 and 250). Of the female burials, eight contained one or more silver brooches, all of Frankish design (fig. 5.19). Most brooches are of the disc-shaped type, decorated with garnet cloisonné (7 graves). One of these brooches was buried together with a pair of gold pendants (grave 127, fig. 5.20). These round pendants have a ribbed loop and are decorated with a band of filigree in figure-of-eight motifs around a central dome. Moreover, a pair of disc brooches were buried with two radiate-headed brooches, one of the latter executed in gilded silver and decorated with niello (grave 239). This brooch is heavily worn and was broken and repaired before it was buried in a fragmented state (fig. 10.9). One of the richest female burials contained no disc brooch, but a small, silver-gilt horse-shaped brooch (grave 175, fig. 5.19), as well as a crystal ball with a silver mounting and a glass bowl. Interestingly, this burial formed a short alignment with two of the horse burials (nos. 176 and 206). The only indication that cremated women too wore silver ornaments is a piece of molten silver from grave 90.

Weapon graves, containing swords, shields, axes and especially spear- and arrowheads, are well-represented at Elst (22 graves). The only *ango* was placed with the richest male burial, which also contained a spatha, a lance, a shield, a francisca, an iron buckle, several elements of iron and gilded-bronze horsegear, a glass bowl and a bronze-bound bucket (burial 178, fig. 5.21). This typically Frankish burial is part of a row of six weapon graves, closed by a horse burial at the eastern end (no. 134). No gold ornaments were found in any of the male burials; three silver buckles are the only items of precious metal (graves 85, 131 and 240). However, one bronze buckle (grave 146), like the iron buckle and horsegear from burial 178, is inlaid with silver.

5.22 | Gold, filigree-decorated pendant, partly melted (no. 1), part of a silver-gilt belt mount with gold filigree decoration (no. 2), and a Frankish tremissis, minted at Maastricht (no. 3), found near De Waal, on the island of Texel. The first item probably originates from a disturbed cremation grave. Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos by the author).

5.23 | Gold filigree-decorated pendant, found near Hippolytushoef. This partly melted ornament probably originates from a disturbed cremation grave. Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos by the author).

Finally, one of the graves (no. 91, probably female) contained a false tremissis of gold-plated copper. The pierced coin probably is an imitation of a 7th-century Frankish tremissis.

The probable cremation burial of De Waal-'Polderweg' (Texel, North Holland)

In 2006, 2008 and 2013, a metal detectorist found two ornaments and a coin of precious metal close together on a prominent ridge in the Pleistocene landscape of southern Texel, at the probable site of a disturbed burial or cemetery (fig. 5.22). The first ornament is a largely molten round pendant of gold, decorated with two circles of S-filigree in beaded wire (weight 1.7 gr). On the 'inside' of the deformed pendant, part of the originally ribbed loop is still present. The second ornament is a fragment of a silver-gilt belt-mount whose concave, T-shaped centre is filled with gold filigree (weight 4.9 gr). The filigree decoration on both ornaments is best Parallelled by that of gold jewellery from the nearby *terp* region of the northern Netherlands, which has been dated to the late 6th and the first half of the 7th century (e.g. fig. 4.12). Finally, the coin is a 7th-century tremissis, minted by Magano at Maastricht.

The deformation of the pendant appears to be the result of intense heat, probably in a pyre. The other ornament does not show any traces of heating. Although this object may originate from the same or from a different (inhumation) burial, its fragmented state is typical of settlement 'waste'. The coin probably also is a settlement find. The combination of finds suggests the presence of at least one cremation burial within or near a settlement site at De Waal. This site also yielded two 7th-century tremisses of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type, ca 350 m south of the findspot of both ornaments and the other gold coin.

The probable cremation burial of Hippolytushoef (Wieringen, North Holland)

Around 1994, a gold pendant was found by metal detector near Hippolytushoef, on the former island of Wieringen.[47] The pendant has a ribbed loop and is made out of a round piece of gold sheet, stamped with a motif of which only some curved lines can still be seen on the reverse (weight 2.8 gr, fig. 5.23). What the central image originally represented is difficult to say; perhaps the curved lines should be seen as the hairs of a stylized human head in profile.

47 Koning 2008.

Table 5.2 | List of (probable) gold hoards from the western Netherlands and the adjacent river area, and their probable time of burial (N: North Holland, S: South Holland, U: Utrecht, *: excavation find, mat: material, g: gold, s: silver).

FIND SITE	COIN	JEWELLERY	HACKED/ BAR	MAT	WEIGHT (GR)	DEPOSITION DATE
Velsen (N)	17			g	40	540-575
Utrecht-'Domplein' (U)	48? (g)/20? (s)			g(/s)	62? (g)/24? (s)	650-700/720
Remmerden (U)	287		2 (s)	g/s	ca 370	690-720
De Waal (N)	2			g	9	540-575
Ouddorp (S)	3/4			g	4/5	625-675
Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (U)*	3		2	g	13	540-600
Rhenen-'Achterberg' (U)		3		g	212	400-430
Odijk (U)			1	g	21	400-520
Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' (U)		2		g	6	700-800

The stamped motif is surrounded by a border of gold sheet decorated with five twisted wires, which are hardly worn. The deformation of this pendant clearly is the result of intense heating, probably in a cremation fire. Unfortunately, further searching at the findspot failed to produce any further finds to suggest the presence of a cemetery or settlement. The best parallels for the pendant are known from the *terp* region, especially from the Wieuwerd hoard (figs. 4.10-12), which date this find to the late 6th, or first half of the 7th century.[48]

5.3 Hoard finds

Compared to the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, and especially the province of Friesland, the extensive area of the western Netherlands and the province of Utrecht has yielded a relatively small number of hoards (table 5.2). Besides a large gold and silver hoard from Remmerden and the famous gold hoard from Rhenen, only six smaller gold hoards or probable gold hoards are known. Moreover, one single item is also interpreted as a hoard, because of its deposition outside a settlement context. With the exception of a probable coin hoard from De Waal, said to have been found in association with a piece of leather, no remains of a container were recorded for any of these hoards.[49]

The coin hoard from Velsen (North-Holland)

The construction of the North Sea Canal in 1866 uncovered a small coin hoard, comprising six solidi and eleven tremisses (fig. 5.24).[50] One Byzantine solidus of Justinian I (527-565) was minted at Constantinople. The remaining coins are of 'Germanic', pseudo-imperial type, including nine tremisses that were minted in the Frankish realm and two tremisses and one solidus probably minted in the Visigothic and Ostrogothic kingdoms. Most of these coins show the bust of Justin I (518-527) or Justinian I; the loop of a solidus with the bust of Justinian I had been removed. According to Lafaurie, the Velsen hoard was buried around 570-575.[51] Since the coins are hardly worn, a time of deposition several decades earlier is also possible.

The probable coin hoard from Utrecht-'Domplein' (Utrecht)

In preparation of the building of a new, underground visitor centre about the Roman-period and medieval history of the Domplein, the soil from earlier excavations, carried out in 1949, was systematically searched with a metal detector in 2011 and 2013. This resulted in the recovery of 32 tremisses of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type and one imitation of an Adelbertus-tremissis as mentioned below, as well as 11 sceattas.[52] Interestingly, one of the coins was discovered *in situ*, in a pit or ditch that was still a visible feature in one of the undisturbed sections of the 1949 site. To these coins can be added the four pieces recovered during the original excavations. Two pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus tremisses, found within the former *principia* (1936), originate from a Merovingian-period layer.[53] Two more tremisses came from the excavation spoil: another pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coin and a Frankish coin minted by Adelbertus at Maastricht. Because recent excavations, carried

48 For Merovingian-period bracteates, see also Dannheimer 1967.

49 De Waal: pers. comm. J.J. Waverijn (Den Burg, Texel).

50 Van der Chijs 1866, 353-360, pl. 22-23; Byvanck 1947, 171-172; Lafaurie 1958, 26; Alkemade 1997, 191 (no. 40); Pol, in prep.

51 Lafaurie 1958, 26.

52 Pers. comm. N.D. Kerkhoven (Municipality of Utrecht, Archaeological Service). Coin data, recent and older finds: pers. inf. A. Pol (Leiden University).

53 For the find context, see De Boone 1973, 43; Ozinga & De Weerd 1989, 83, fig. 38 (find nos. 171 and 178). Dating find layer: pers. comm. N.D. Kerkhoven (Municipality of Utrecht, Archaeological Service).

5.24 | Three solidi and ten tremisses belonging to a coin hoard from Velsen. Scale 2:1 (coll. Geldmuseum, Utrecht, photo A. Pol).

out in 2014, yielded new coin finds (another 11 tremisses and 7 sceattas), up to now a total number of 48 tremisses and 20 sceattas have been reported from this site of the re-used Roman *castellum*.

Although the coins were collected over a long period, their (probable) origin from the same location and especially the dominance of one coin type – including several pieces that were struck with the same die (die-linked) or set of dies (die-identical) – are good evidence that the overall assemblage may include a hoard. The presence of a *single* coin in the archaeological feature mentioned above, as well as the relatively large area over which the other coins were found, indicate that such a hoard was already disturbed in medieval times. Within the extensive group of civic tremisses, produced between ca 585-675, those of Adelbertus and the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type are relatively late; these were not minted before ca 630-640. If only the gold tremisses belonged to the hoard, a time of burial in the second half of the 7th century is most probable; if they were buried together with the sceattas, however, burial in the early 8th century cannot be ruled out (compare the Remmerden hoard below).

The coin hoard from Remmerden (Utrecht)

During the preparation of a building site in 1988, several gold and silver coins dating to the 7th and early 8th centuries were found at an industrial estate northeast of Remmerden (fig. 5.25). Excavation of the findspot with the systematic use of a metal detector resulted in the discovery of ca 100 tremisses, two denarii, ca 140 sceattas, two pieces of hack silver (weights 3.7 and 2,9 gr).[54] Unfortunately, no remains of a container or archaeological features from the Merovingian period were found. An important observation, however, is that the gold and silver coins were found close together and thoroughly mixed, which indicates that they were probably buried as part of the same hoard.[55] Since the first discovery, several more coins have been found during further excavations and by metal detectorists, raising the total number to 114 tremisses, two denarii and 165 sceattas. The hoard is unique,

54 Pol 1989; Van Tent 1996; Alkemade 1997, 193 (nr. 44).

55 Both horizontally and vertically the tremisses and sceattas had a similar distribution, as was documented during the excavation of the site in units of 1 sq m (pers. comm. A. Pol, Leiden University).

5.25 | Coin hoard from Remmerden, also containing two pieces of hack silver. Length of the broad piece of hack silver 1.2 cm (coll. Geldmuseum, Utrecht, photo Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed).

5.26 | Mixed gold hoard from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp).

because it is not only the largest 7th-century coin hoard from the Netherlands, but also the first to contain a mix of gold and silver coins in early medieval Europe.

Although a final publication is still in preparation, some remarks about the composition and date of the coin hoard can be made. The tremisses are of the 7th-century, so-called 'civic' type and were minted at a large number of locations across the Frankish realm and also in 'Frisian' territories. The Frankish coins originate from present-day France (3x), the Rhine ports of Mainz and Cologne (14x, including 8x of the Mainz type), the Meuse ports of Huy and Maastricht (17x), and the trading centre of Dorestad (15x) where the moneyer Madelinus was active. Among the 'Frisian' emissions are three coins of the Dronrijp type. The remaining tremisses, of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type (54x), Nietap type (3x) and Remmerden type (5x), may have been minted either in the Frankish or the 'Frisian' area.

Of the Frankish denarii, one was minted at Metz. The remaining coins are sceattas of the 'continental runic' type (159x) and the 'porcupine' type (6x). The coins of the first type may have been minted in the 'Frisian' or Frankish area; for most varieties of the 'porcupine' type a 'Frisian' origin is assumed.

The hoard find is difficult to date, because the youngest gold coins were minted before ca 675 and the silver coins were probably struck after ca 690-695. Interestingly, the majority of the tremisses are 'fresh' or hardly worn, indicating that they were not intensively used or had circulated for a short period only. If we assume that the numismatic datings are correct, it seems that an older collection of gold coins was supplemented with a batch of silver coins shortly before being buried – probably in the late 7th or early 8th century.

5.27 | Two gold neck rings of Velp type and the lower part of a late-Roman gold necklace with stone settings from Rhenen-'Achterberg'. Scale 1:1 (coll. Museum Het Rondeel, Rhenen, photo O. Odé).

The probable coin hoard from De Waal (Texel, North Holland)

Two almost identical solidi of Justinian I (527-565), found in the churchyard of De Waal on the island of Texel, were probably deposited as (part of) a hoard.[56] The imperial coins, both minted at Constantinople, were found prior to 1894. Since the coins are hardly worn, we may assume a time of deposition around the middle or in the third quarter of the 6th century.

The probable coin hoard from Ouddorp (South Holland)

After a single tremissis was found at Ouddorp in 1971, three more tremisses were uncovered at this village in 1977.[57] The last three coins are 'Frisian' tremisses of the Dronrijp type (ca 620-675); the first is a 7th-century Frankish coin minted by Gaucemarus, possibly at Bonn. Coins of the Dronrijp type have rarely been found outside the northern Netherlands, which suggests that the specimens from Ouddorp, possibly together with the contemporary coin of Gaucemarus, were buried as (part of) a hoard. The coins are hardly worn and were probably buried in the second or third quarter of the 7th century.

The mixed hoard from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht)

In the northeastern periphery of the rural settlement at 'De Geer' (see below, fig. 5.35), a small gold hoard was discovered during the excavations in 1991 (fig. 5.26).[58] This hoard, which was buried in the posthole of an unknown structure, consists of a solidus, two tremisses, a hollow rod and a piece of hack gold.[59] The last two objects have a weight of 5.0 and 1.3 gr, respectively, each showing traces of cutting at both ends. Although the smaller piece was clearly cut from the larger, they do not fit together – indicating that an intermediate part is missing. The Byzantine solidus is of Justinian I (527-565) and was minted at Constantinople. Both 'Germanic' tremisses are Ostrogothic imitations of coins showing the bust of Justinian I, probably minted by king Athalaric (526-534) at Ravenna. Based on the dating of these barely worn coins, a time of burial around the middle or in the second half of the 6th century can be assumed. At the time of burial, the 7th-century and later, rectangular enclosure were not yet constructed. Because the size and layout of the 6th-century settlement are unknown, the original position of the hoard within the settlement and its relation to specific structures could not be established.

5.28 | Gold ring bar from Odijk. Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp).

The jewellery hoard from Rhenen-'Achterberg' (Utrecht)

In 1938, two gold neck rings and the central part of a gold necklace were found at Achterberg, a hamlet near Rhenen. They were said to be hidden at a depth of about 30 cm (fig. 5.27).[60] The complete torques, weighing 85 and 55 gr respectively, are decorated with lines of small dots and a variety of punch marks. Arm and neck rings with a similar shape and decoration, belonging to the Velp type, are known from five further sites in the eastern Netherlands and adjoining Germany.[61] Of the necklace only the central part, with a hinge at both ends, was found (weight 72 gr). This 'exotic' piece in late-Roman style is decorated with classical palmette motifs in relief, glass imitation gems (of which three are missing) and heavy, beaded gold wire. On the back, among a stamped palmette pattern, the following inscription can be read: *'Ere (?) made this, at a weight of 5 unciae [136,44 g] and a value of 22.000 denarii, by order of Proclus'*.[62] Both hardly worn rings were produced in the late 4th or early 5th century, possibly in the Lower Rhine region.[63] The imported, late-Roman necklace is more heavily worn and was probably produced in the (second half of the) 4th century. For the set of jewellery a deposition date in the first half of the 5th century is most likely.

The ring hoard from Odijk (Utrecht)

In 2008, a metal detectorist found a coiled gold bar in redeposited soil, originating from an adjacent levelled field, directly northeast of Odijk (fig. 5.28).[64] At this site no other objects were found, which suggests intentional concealment outside a settlement. The heavy ring was made out of a thin, oblong bar, rectangular in section (20.6 gr). All four sides of this bar show traces of beating and one of its ends is damaged as a result of cutting. Finds of ring gold are mainly known from southern Scandi-

56 Byvanck 1947, 174; Gerrits 1973, 158-158, fig. 8; Woltering 1996/1997, 285.

57 Pol, in prep.

58 Van Es 1994, 87, fig. 76 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); Botman & Heeren, in press (in: Heeren, in press, chapter 9); Pol, in prep.

59 Context: pers. comm. S. Heeren (Free University, Amsterdam).

60 Roes 1947; Waterbolk & Glasbergen 1955, 96, tables 1-2; Heidinga 1990, 14-19, fig. 5; Alkemade 1997, 185 (no. 6).

61 Heidinga 1990, fig. 6 (distribution map); Quast 2009, fig. 10 (find list).

62 Roes 1947, 186; Alkemade 1997, 185.

63 Heidinga 1990, 16; Quast 2009, 218-220.

64 Willemsen et al. 2010.

5.29 | Set of gold pendants with stone settings from site 'LR 51/54' at Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Gemeentelijk Archeologisch en Bouwhistorisch Depot, Utrecht, photos H. Lägers).

navia (e.g. figs. 11.4, 11.11) and can be only roughly dated to the 5th or early decades of the 6th century.[65] The hardly worn specimen from Odijk was probably hoarded in the same period.

The pendant hoard from Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' (Utrecht)

During the excavation of a rural settlement at 'Leidsche Rijn' (site 'LR 51/54', see below), a set of two gold pendants was found (weights 2.9 and 2.6 gr, fig. 5.29).[66] The drop-shaped pendants are decorated with a large garnet and a smaller stone of green glass – of which one is missing. The stone settings are surrounded by a ribbed and a twisted gold wire. Both these wires and the ribbed loops are heavily worn. On the irregular reverse of the pendant lacking its green stone, traces of a repair can be seen. During this repair the gold sheet at the back was replaced and the lower part of the original loop removed. Although direct parallels for these pendants are unknown, their shape is reminiscent of Anglo-Saxon 'cabochon pendants' of the 7th century.[67] The two pendants were found close together in a ditch, south of a storage building (building 'B38') in the central part of the excavated settlement (fig. 5.39). The ditch, which also contained 8th- and 9th-century pottery, is assigned to settlement phase 8 (ca 750-775), which suggests that the gold jewellery had been worn for at least 50 years before being buried as a small hoard.

5.30 | Geographical distribution of rural settlements (circles), trading sites (squares) and former Roman military camps or Roman towns (triangles) where 5th- to 7th-century valuables of gold and/or silver have been found. The eastern border of the research area is shown as a broken line. For background, see figure 3.6 (drawing by the author).
1. Den Burg-'Westerweg', 2. Oosterend-'Koningsweg', 3. Hippolytushoef, 4. Katwijk-'Zanderij-Westerbaan', 5. Valkenburg-'De Woerd', 6. Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', 7. Oegstgeest-'Nieuw Rhijngeest Zuid', 8. Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn', 9. Houten, 10. Leiden-'Roomburg', 11. Alphen aan de Rijn, 12. Katwijk-'Brittenburg', 13. Vechten, 14. Voorburg-'Arentsburg', 15. Wijk bij Duurstede/Dorestad, 16. Domburg, 17. Aardenburg.

5.4 Settlement finds

For a long time, valuables of gold and silver were rare finds from settlement sites in the western Netherlands. At sites such as Uitgeest-'Dorregeest', Koudekerk aan den Rijn-'Lagewaard'

65 For the find distribution, see Geisslinger 1967, map 10; Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991, fig. 11. For the dating of Scandinavian (ring) gold, see section 8.2.1.

66 Kerkhoven 2009, 218-219, fig. 10.3a-b.

67 Geake 1997, 39-40, compare fig. 4.5.

5.31 | Two tremisses and a drop of melted gold from Den Burg-'Westerweg', on the island of Texel. Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos by A. Pol and the author).

5.32 | A looped solidus and a biconical finger ring from Oosterend-'Koningsweg', on the island of Texel. Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos by the author).

5.33 | A gold finger ring and a gold bar, found at two sites near Hippolytushoef, on the former island of Wieringen. Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos by the author).

5.34 | A silver and garnet disc brooch from Katwijk-'Zanderij-Westerbaan'. Scale 1:1 (private coll., photo ADC ArcheoProjecten).

and The Hague-'Frankenslag' only some bow brooches, belt fittings and dress pins of bronze had been found.[68] The use of a metal detector at more recent excavations, however, has dramatically changed this picture. Gold coins especially are now found at all types of settlement sites (fig. 5.30). Below, first the finds from rural settlements are presented, followed by those from former Roman sites and trading sites.

Den Burg-'Westerweg' (Texel, North Holland)

In 1996 and 2008, a metal detectorist found three gold objects at the site of an early medieval settlement west of Den Burg: two tremisses of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type and a molten piece of gold (weight 2.1 gr) (fig. 5.31). The molten piece has a convex upper surface, and a flat, irregular base, showing an imprint of the surface onto which this 'droplet' had fallen. The molten piece is an important indication for local goldsmithing, probably during the 7th century.

68 De Koning 2003, fig. 7 (Uitgeest); Van Grinsven & Dijkstra 2006, fig. 26 (Koudekerk); Magendans & Waasdorp 1989, figs. 53-54 (The Hague).

Oosterend-'Koningsweg' (Texel, North Holland)
In 2012, two gold items were found with a metal detector at the site of an early medieval settlement northeast of Oosterend. The finds include a heavily worn, looped solidus (weight 4.2 gr) and a simple, biconical finger ring (weight 1.4 gr) (fig. 5.32). The pseudo-imperial solidus, showing the bust of Anastasius I (491-518), was probably minted by the Ostrogothic king Theoderic (475-526) at Rome. Rings of this type are well-known from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, as part of the Wieuwerd hoard (fig. 4.10, nos. 2-3) and as single finds (fig. 4.34, nos. 1, 7), and can be dated to the late 6th, or first half of the 7th century.

Hippolytushoef (Wieringen, North Holland)
In 2005 and 2010, a metal detectorist recovered two gold items at different sites northwest of Hippolytushoef, on the former island of Wieringen: a gold finger ring and a small gold bar (fig. 5.33). The ring (weight 1.8 gr) is made out of an undecorated strip of gold sheet; it is closely paralleled by a ring from Wijnaldum (Friesland, fig. 4.34, no. 5) and can probably be dated to the 7th century. The bar (weight 3.2 gr) actually is a gold drop with a convex upper and an irregular lower side, which was shaped into a bar by hammering on both long sides. It matches a larger group of oblong and round bars (figs. 4.42, 5.45). On the assumption that this find is contemporary to most gold ornaments from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, it can be dated to the late 6th, or (first half of the) 7th century.

Katwijk-'Zanderij-Westerbaan' (South Holland)
The sand extraction area of 'Zanderij-Westerbaan' was the site of an extensive rural settlement complex dating to the Roman and early medieval periods. A small part of this complex, still covering an area of 1.6 ha, was excavated in 1996-1997 and 2005.[69] The Merovingian-period features (settlement phases 9-13, ca 475-700) are attributed to a maximum of eight to eleven contemporary farmsteads, all situated on driftsand dunes.[70] With the possible exception of a farmhouse with a small annexe to its living area (no. 15), there are no indications of social differentiation in the settlement layout.[71] Artisanal activities were limited to small-scale iron working and comb making. More exceptional, however, is the probable presence of a local mint producing imitations of Dorestad/Madelinus coins (see below). Van der Velde and Dijkstra believe that in the Merovingian period the settlement complex was a local, or perhaps even a regional centre – in the 8th or 9th century possibly identical with *Hovarathorp* ('village of the manor's occupants'), half of which had been granted to the bishopric of Utrecht.[72]

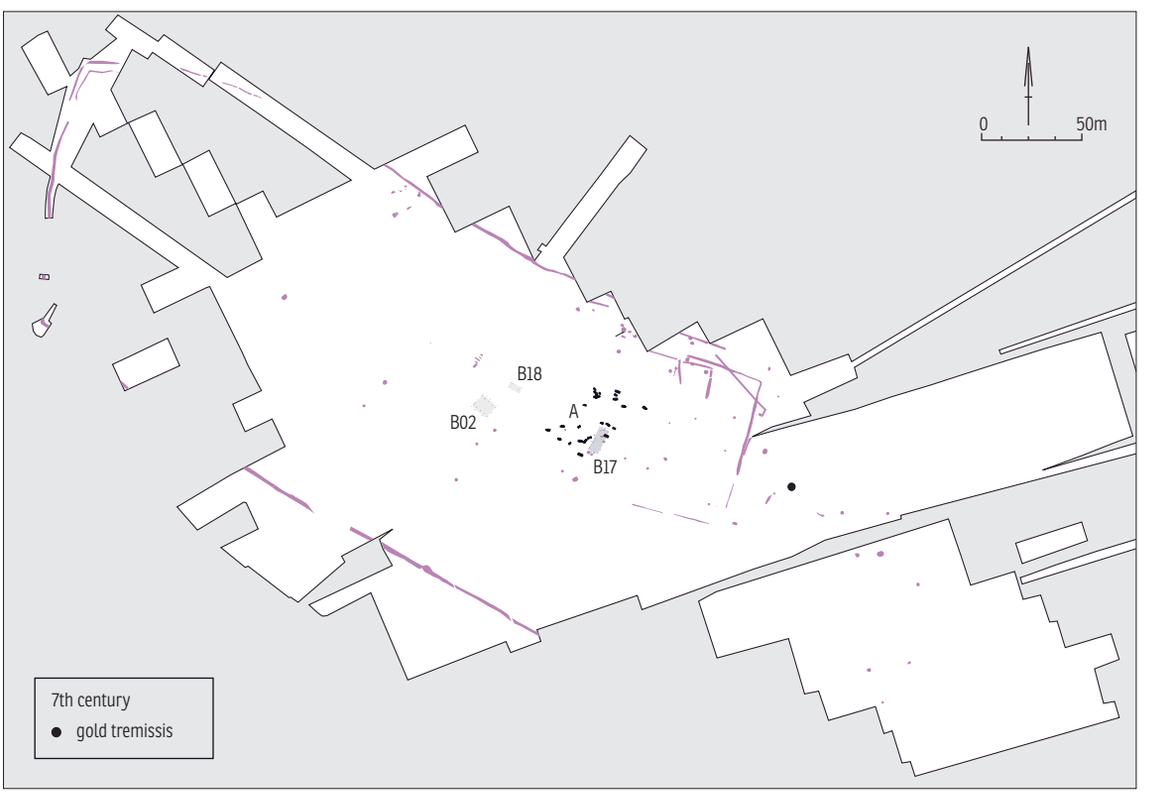
Since the 19th century, large numbers of metal objects have been found at 'Zanderij-Westerbaan', especially by metal detectorists. The early medieval finds include 42 brooches, 58 coins, several belt fittings, two bronze sword pyramids and a 7th-century coin proof or die cleaner (fig. 8.5).[73] Unfortunately, all items of gold and silver are stray finds; their spatial relationship to specific farmsteads is unknown.

Of the early medieval coins, nine can be dated to the 6th and 7th centuries: a bronze nummus of the Vandal king Gelimer (530-534) and nine tremisses. One tremissis is of pseudo-imperial type and was probably minted in the 'Frisian' area. The other tremisses are of the Frankish 'civic' type (1x, now lost), Frankish or 'Frisian' imitations of Dorestad/Madelinus coins (6x) and a probably Frankish imitation of a coin minted by Geroald at Mainz (1x, copper core). Silver coins dating to the late 7th and 8th centuries are represented by five Frankish denarii and 43 sceattas.

Important to understanding the organization of Merovingian-period coin minting in the northern periphery of the Frankish kingdom is the coin proof or die cleaner, showing the imprint of a pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus tremissis on one side of a lead plate.[74] Although none of the ca 530 currently known tremisses of this type were struck with the Katwijk die, this unique find does seem to indicate that gold coins were minted not only at central places like Dorestad, but also at settlements of a rural character. According to Pol, this find fits in very well with the probably huge number of local mints where Frankish-type coins were imitated.[75]

Among the other metal finds, there is only one made of precious metal: a silver disc brooch, decorated with garnet cloisonné surrounded by a beaded wire (fig. 5.34).[76] This Frankish-type brooch can be dated to the second or third quarter of the 6th century.[77]

69 Van der Velde 2008.
70 Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 431-434, figs. 20.8-9; see also Dijkstra 2011, 144-155 (site no. 58).
71 Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 441, fig. 7.1.
72 Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 445; compare Dijkstra 2011, 154.
73 Knol 2008; Pol & Van der Veen 2008.
74 Pol & Van der Veen 2008, 318-319; Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 444; Pol 2010, 93; 2011.
75 Pol 2011, 187.
76 Knol 2008, 297.
77 Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 4-5 (ca 520/530-570); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phase 4 (ca 510/525-565).



5.35 | Simplified excavation plan of the rural settlement at Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht), showing features and the find locations of the items of precious metal (the find locations of the 6th-century rectangular pendant and bead, and the 7th-century garnet mount are unknown). The wells and pits are securely dated. Some of the buildings dated to the 6th century and some of the buildings, ditches and graves dated to the 7th century may belong to an earlier or later period; some of the building and graves dated to the 8th-9th centuries may belong to an earlier period. A: cluster of inhumation graves (black), B: farmhouse or outbuilding, numbered (after Heeren, in press).

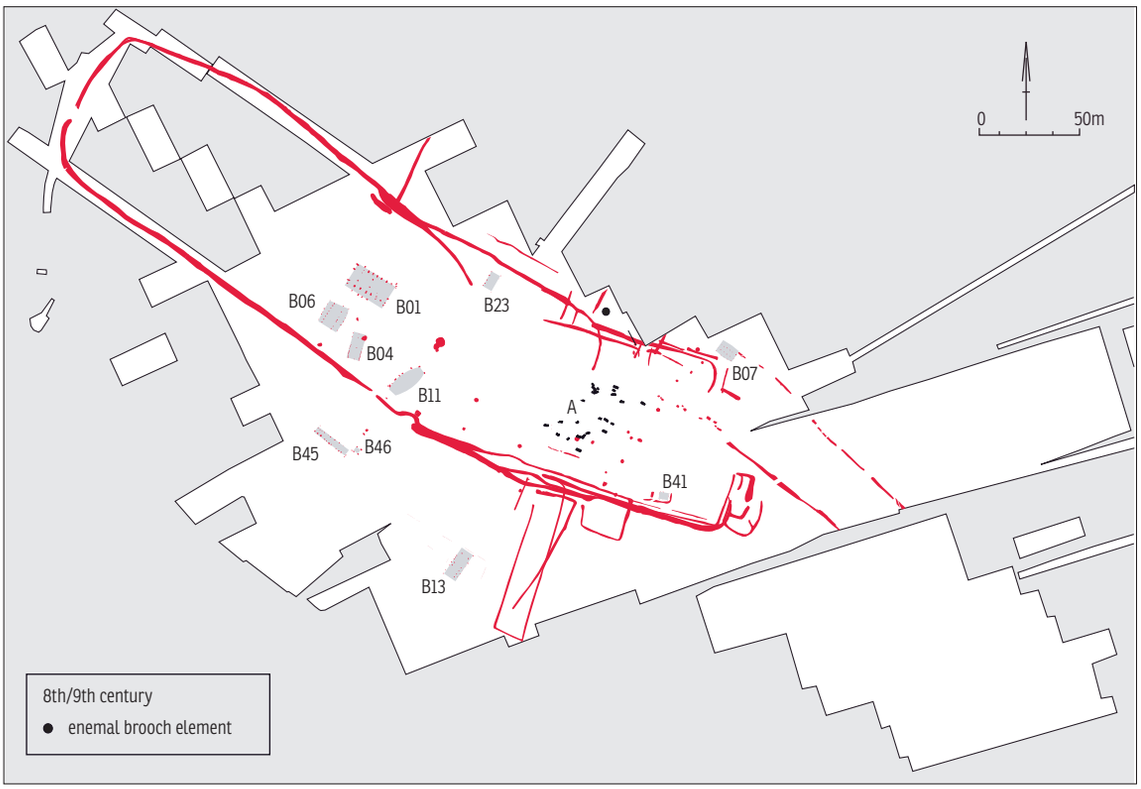
Valkenburg-'De Woerd' (South Holland)

The rural settlement of Valkenburg-'De Woerd' is situated on the western levee of the Old Rhine, on both sides of a small tributary.[78] Between 1986 and 1988 six to eight contemporary farmsteads were excavated here, dating from the Merovingian and Carolingian periods. Some early medieval mooring facilities at 'De Woerd' are probably no older than the 8th or 9th century.[79] During the excavations a Frankish or 'Frisian' tremissis of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type and five sceattas were found, the tremissis having been deposited or lost in the gully that bisected the settlement.[80] A stray find (ca 1975) of a pseudo-imperial tremissis in the name of Justin I (518-527) may originate from this site as well.

78 Bult & Hallewas 1987; 1990; Dijkstra 2011, 140-143 (site no. 56).

79 Bult et al. 1990, 149-151, fig. 84-85.

80 Bult & Hallewas 1987, 103, fig. 58 (tremissis).



Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht)

Between 1989 and 1994, a rural settlement from the Roman and early medieval periods was excavated at the site 'De Geer', ca 750 m west of the northern harbour area of Dorestad.[81] The post-Roman features and finds have over the past years been analysed as part of the Dutch Odyssey project 'Dorestad-*Vicus Famosus*', and a site publication is in preparation (fig. 5.35).[82] Although the Merovingian-period features were largely destroyed by modern ploughing, at least one surviving house plan and the remains of a cemetery have generally been assigned to the 6th and 7th centuries. The excavated burials are inhumation graves with different orientations, none containing any grave goods. Bronze belt fittings and dress pins, bronze and silver brooches and several gold ornaments that were found in the topsoil, especially north and northwest of the burials, have long been interpreted as originating from disturbed graves, dating this cemetery to the Merovingian and Carolingian periods.[83] A recent analysis of the find distribution, however, indicates that no direct association between the assumed grave goods and the actual graves can be proven – only one of the gold pendants having been found at the actual cemetery site. Moreover, human bone from one of the graves was radiocarbon-dated to the late 7th or 8th century, which might indicate that the cemetery was only used during the Carolingian period. For this reason the gold and silver items from 'De Geer' are not presented here as grave goods, but as settlement finds.[84]

According to Van Es and Van Doesburg, 'De Geer' probably functioned as a local elite residence from the late-Roman period into Carolingian times; during the 8th and 9th centuries an impressive rectangular enclosure was constructed, which is interpreted as a the centre of an agrarian demesne (a *curtis*) and a probable refuge for the inhabitants of the northern section of Dorestad.[85] At present, the first phase of the enclosure, measuring ca 370 x 140 m, is dated to the second half of the 7th century (fig. 5.35). There are no other features that suggest a special status of the site in Merovingian times. This changes in the Carolingian period. Although the size of the enclosure was reduced to ca 370 x 80 m, some impressive buildings (including a probable meeting hall, building B01) point to a function as a local elite centre – perhaps to be identified with the historically known '*villa non modica*' ('a not unimportant agrarian domain') to which the 'Frisian traders' of Dorestad fled during a Viking attack in 863.[86]

81 Van Es 1994, 71, 87, 102-103 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); Van Es 1994; Van Dockum 1997; Nicolay 2007, 95-97; Van Doesburg 2010; Van Es & Verwers 2010, 7-19.

82 Heeren, in press.

83 Van Es & Van Dockum 1991, 46; Van Dockum 1997, 105; Willemsen 2009, fig. 8; pers. comm. J. van Doesburg (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort).

84 For a reinterpretation of the site and its finds, see the contributions in Heeren, in press.

85 Van Es 1994, 71, 87, 102-104 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); Van Es 1994; Van Doesburg 2010; see also Van Es & Verwers 2010, 7-19.

86 Van der Velde & Van Doesburg, in press (in: Heeren, in press, chapter 17); for the identification as '*villa non modica*', see Van Doesburg 2010.

5.36 | Gold ornaments from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer': four pendants (nos. 1-4), a bead (no. 5), a garnet-decorated mount (no. 6) and a decorative element filled with enamel (no. 7). Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp).

5.37 | Two silver-gilt brooches from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos L. van der Tuuk).

The gold items comprise four pendants, a bead, a garnet-decorated mount and a decorative element filled with coloured enamel (fig. 5.36). Two of the pendants, made out of ribbed and plain gold wires, are almost identical. Because they are found over 100 m apart, deposition as a small hoard must be excluded. The different loops indicate that one of the pendants had been repaired. A third, round pendant is decorated with irregular, S-shaped filigree of plain wire and a border of two double, twisted wires. The fourth pendant has a rectangular shape. The front and back are punched with double semicircles and all four edges are ribbed. The fragmented, biconical bead is decorated with crossing strips of ribbed gold sheet, and ring filigree in between. Along the lower rim of the gold mount, which contains an oval, dark red garnet, small holes indicate that it was probably attached to a leather strap or clothing. Finally, a gold ornament with green, blue, red and white enamel had been part of an exclusive disc brooch.

The pendants and bead are of Frankish types and can be dated to the second half of the 6th or the early 7th century – *before* the construction of the first enclosure.[87] The garnet mount is paralleled by Anglo-Saxon 'cabochon pendants' and can be roughly dated to the 7th century.[88] The enamel brooch element is much younger. Like the famous disc brooch from Dorestad, which is decorated with similar elements, it is typical of the late 8th or early 9th century and contemporary with the Carolingian-period enclosure.[89]

87 Trier 2002, 58-60, *Taf*. 228; see also Koch 2001, fig. 16 (phases 6-7: ca 555-600).

88 Geake 1997, 39-40, fig. 4.5.

89 For the dating of the Dorestad brooch, see Van Es 1976; Willemsen 2009, 81-90 (ca 800).

Of the brooches found at 'De Geer', two are executed in gilded silver: a large bird brooch, shaped like a sitting bird, and an S-shaped brooch, terminating in two stylised bird's heads (fig. 5.37). The bird brooch is decorated with nielloed zig-zags, and the body of the S-shaped brooch with ribbed, rectangular recesses. Both Frankish-type brooches can be dated to the second or third quarter of the 6th century.[90]

A metal detectorist found a third, silver and niello-decorated brooch at 'De Geer'.[91] Unfortunately, its exact findspot is unknown. This supporting-arm brooch is of Gallic type A and can be dated to the late 4th, or early decades of the 5th century.[92]

The recent analysis of the find material from 'De Geer' resulted in the reassignment of a tremissis, long thought to originate from Dorestad, to this site.[93] The pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coin was found east of the contemporary enclosure (fig. 5.35), according to the find documentation in a layer of clay that also contained a lot of indigenous pottery. Unfortunately, this feature could not be identified in the excavation drawings, so the pottery cannot be used to date the coin's deposition.

Oegstgeest-'Nieuw Rhijngeest Zuid' (South Holland)

In 2004, 2005 and since 2009 during annual campaigns, large parts of a rural settlement have been excavated near Oegstgeest, directly east of a former tributary of the Old Rhine.[94] Besides the remains of probably up to six contemporaneous farmsteads situated along this tributary, contemporary revetments and mooring facilities were found (fig. 3.8) – including three small slipways. Artisanal activities on the site include the working of iron and bronze, the production of glass and amber beads and the making of shoes. On the basis of pottery finds and the dendrochronological dates of the revetments, the settlement can be dated from the mid 6th to the late 7th century.

Among the many metal finds are six tremisses, including a probably 'Frisian' pseudo-imperial coin, a tremissis of Frankish 'civic' type three of Frankish or 'Frisian' pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type and one of Frankish or 'Frisian' Nietap type. Most coins were found in a low-lying area close to the gully; two more coins came from the gully fill, close to the central slipway (fig. 5.38), and from the relatively high, sandy levee on which the farmsteads are situated, respectively.[95] Before the excavation started, a seventh tremissis was already known from this site; this pale coin is of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type. Other coin finds from the excavated area are two Frankish denarii and at least eight sceattas.

Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' (Utrecht)

In 2005 and 2007, road construction necessitated the excavation of two rural settlements at 'Leidsche Rijn', a modern development near the city of Utrecht.

The first site, called 'LR 51/54', is located on the northern levee of the medieval riverbed of the Old Rhine[96] The settlement layout is characterised by a row of three to five contemporaneous farmsteads, dating from the late 6th to the 9th century. In the excavated part of the settlement a functional division was observed between a trading/storage part on the western side, where most coins have been found (fig. 5.39), and an artisanal part to the east, with iron and bronze working and manufacture of bone combs and probably also glass beads.

The second site, called 'LR 55' or 'Appellaantje', was less well preserved.[97] Along the medieval riverbed only fragmented traces of a rural settlement were found, dating from the final quarter of the 5th up to the 8th century. A small molten drop is evidence of silver working at this site; it was found together with a drop of lead in an undatable pit.[98]

Gold and silver coins were found at both sites.[99] The coins from LR 51/54 are a Frankish tremissis, minted at Clucy (fig. 12.7, no. 1), two or three fragments of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus tremisses with copper cores, and 27 sceattas. At LR 55 five tremisses and five sceattas were found: an original and a pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus tremissis and three Frankish tremisses minted at unknown locations (fig. 12.7, nos. 2-5). Of these three coins one is pierced, and two are

90 U. Koch 2001, fig. 15-16 (phases 5-6: ca 530-580).

91 Van Es 1994, 70, fig. 58 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

92 Böhme 1974, 12-13, fig. 2; 1989, 770 (revised dating of the Gallic '*Fundgruppe* A': ca 390-430).

93 Find no. 7546; Willemsen 2009, fig. 137 (published as coming from Dorestad); pers. comm. S. Heeren (Free University, Amsterdam).

94 Hemminga & Hamburg 2006; Jezeer 2011; Dijkstra 2011, 134-139 (site no. 21); pers. comm. J. de Bruin (University of Leiden) and W. Jezeer (Archeologisch Diensten Centrum, Amersfoort).

95 Nooijen 2011, 75 (in: Jezeer 2011).

96 Nokkert et al. 2009.

97 Den Hartog 2010.

98 Hendriksen 2010, 111; pers. comm. M. Hendriksen (Municipality of Utrecht, Department of Archaeology).

99 Kerkhoven 2009, 230-233, table 10.1; Hendriksen 2010, 105-107; pers. comm. A. Pol (Leiden University) and N. Kerkhoven (Municipality of Utrecht, Department of Archaeology).

5.38 | Excavation plan of the rural settlement at Oegstgeest-'Nieuw Rhijngeest Zuid' (South Holland). The mid 6th- to late 7th-century settlement was situated beside a tributary of the Old Rhine. The findspot of one of the tremisses found at this site is marked with an asterisk. Red: farmhouses, orange: outbuildings, green: granaries, dark blue: wells, blue: Rhine tributary with revetment (black) and three slipways ('docks') (after Dijkstra & Van der Velde 2011, fig. 4).

false, having a copper core. Unfortunately, most tremisses originate from the topsoil and have no context dating; two of the copper-cored tremisses at LR 51/54 were found in a habitation layer probably dating to the 8th century. Like most of the sceattas, all tremisses from LR 51/54 were found in the western part of the settlement (fig. 5.39).

Besides coins and a small hoard of two gold pendants (see above), an interesting piece of silver-gilt jewellery was found at site LR 51/54.[100] Although only a small fragment of 1.3 x 1.1 cm remains, its decoration is typical of Kentish 'keystone garnet disc brooches' (fig. 5.40, compare fig. 9.20). Besides a Style II animal in relief, three cloisons can be recognized, one of which contains a small, triangular piece of wafered gold foil that would have underlain a garnet. The brooch fragment has

100 Kerkhoven 2009, 223.

5.39 | Spatial distribution within the rural settlement at Leidsche Rijn-site 'LR 51/54' of tremisses and sceattas, a set of gold pendants and a fragment of a silver-gilt disc brooch. Houses 1-5 and 13-14 can be dated to ca AD 575-700, the other houses to ca 700-775. The assumed boundaries between farmsteads are shown as broken lines (after Nokkert et al. 2009, figs. 5.6, 10.22, with additions).

traces of cutting on all sides. It was buried as 'scrap' in what probably was a pit or ditch, directly south of farmhouse 3, which is dated to the mid 7th century (settlement phases 3-4, ca 625-675, fig. 5.39). Keystone garnet disc brooches were produced in the latter half of the 6th and the early decades of the 7th century. On the basis of the animal decoration and the shape of the cloisons, the Dutch piece can be attributed to a Class-4 brooch – although an unusual, extra set of (semi)circular garnets seems to have been present along the outer rim.[101] Avent dates Class-4 brooches to ca 575-620.[102]

At some distance from the settlement site, a silver bead was found in the topsoil (fig. 5.40). The hollow bead, made out of two bell-shaped halves, is Parallelled by Anglo-Saxon finds roughly dated to the 7th century.[103] The original context of this find is unknown; no further contemporary objects were found at the same location.

The only silver ornament from site LR 55 is a rectangular belt-buckle with bevelled sides.[104] It was found in the upper fill of a residual gully that had already become silted up in pre-Roman times. This Frankish-type buckle can be dated to the second half of the 6th century.[105] The large fragment of a silver, square-sectioned ingot from the same site probably has a younger, 8th-century date.

Over the past decades, metal detectorists have picked up six more tremisses in the vicinity of Leidsche Rijn, in the suburbs Vleuten and De Meern. The oldest specimen is a 6th-century pseudo-imperial tremissis, probably minted in the 'Frisian' area. The other coins are of the Frankish 'civic' type (2x, both copper core and pierced) and of the Frankish or 'Frisian' pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type (3x).

The Houten area (Utrecht)

On the levee of a defunct riverbed, southeast of Houten, several settlement sites were excavated in the course of house building between 1998 and 2003. Two rural settlements, named 'Site 9' and 'Site 21' are of early medieval date.[106] Merovingian-period items of gold and silver were found only at the first site, which was the location of two farmsteads dating to ca 500 and to the second half of the 7th or the early 8th century, respectively. The finds comprise a Frankish tremissis minted by Ansoald at Maastricht, a Frankish denarius and nine sceattas.[107]

5.40 | Small fragment of a silver-gilt disc brooch, which contained the piece of wafered gold foil, and a hollow silver bead from Leidsche Rijn-site 'LR 51/54'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Gemeentelijk Archeologisch en Bouwhistorisch Depot, Utrecht, photos H. Lägers).

101 Compare Avent 1975, pl. 30-31 (especially cat. no. 108).
102 Avent 1975, 62; see also Richardson 2005, 34 (ca 580/590-early 7th century).
103 Geake 1997, 42-43, fig. 4.6.
104 Hendriksen 2010, 99.
105 Nieveler & Siegmund 1999, phases 5-6 (ca 550/560-580/590); Müssemeier et al. 2003, phase 5 (ca 565-580/590).
106 Vos & Lanzing 2001 (site 21); Dijkstra & Van Benthem 2004 (site 9).
107 Van der Veen 2004 (in: Dijkstra & Van Benthem 2004).

5.41 | Gold bracteate with a stylised coin motif from Leiden-'Roomburg'. Scale 2:1 (coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot Zuid-Holland, Alphen aan den Rijn, photos by the author).

Other 7th-century gold coins that were metal-detector finds in the Houten area are six more tremisses, one of which was found during an unpublished excavation at a site known as 'Dina's Hoeve' (2001).[108] This coin came from the fill of a tributary of the Old Rhine, which also contained Roman-period and late medieval finds.[109] The tremisses are a probably 'Frisian' pseudo-imperial coin, two civic coins from Frankish mints at Andernach and Banassac, a false imitation of a Madelinus coin (copper core) struck at Maastricht, and two coins of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type (one halved).

Leiden-'Roomburg' (South Holland)

Between 1995 and 1997, the Roman-period 'Corbulo Canal' near the *castellum* of 'Roomburg' (*Matilo*) was partly excavated. Dendrochronological analyses of the revetments of this canal provide evidence of repair works in ca 620-625, 680-690 and 714-716.[110] One of the objects that were found in the early medieval canal fill, between the wooden posts, is a gold 'bracteate', stamped with a stylised coin motif and provided with a simple ribbed loop (weight 1.5 gr, fig. 5.41).[111] Remarkably, not the front of the bracteate (the 'positive' side), but the reverse is decorated with a border of two twisted wires and a plain wire in between. An interesting parallel for the Leiden pendant is a gold bracteate from the Merovingian-period cemetery at Loenen (province of Utrecht), which also has a filigree border and shows an even more stylised human face.[112] The filigree decoration dates both pendants to the second half of the 6th, or early decades of the 7th century.[113] A second gold item from Leiden-'Roomburg' is a tremissis that was recently recovered with a metal detector. This pseudo-imperial coin was probably minted in the Ostrogothic kingdom, in the name of Justinian I (527-565).

5.42 | Kidney-shaped pendant from the 'Brittenburg' site near Katwijk. The present location of this 18th-century find is unknown. Scale 2:1 (after Dijkstra & Ketelaar 1965, fig. 53; redrawn by S.E. Boersma, University of Groningen, Groningen Institute of Archaeology).

Alphen aan de Rijn (South Holland)

Prior to house building, a section of the former riverbed of the Old Rhine, close to the Roman-period *castellum Albaniana*, was dug away in 2002, and the spoil has since been scrutinised by metal detectorists. Besides a large number of Roman-period objects, some early medieval finds were recovered, including an original tremissis of Dorestad/Madelinus type.

Katwijk-'Brittenburg' (South Holland)

Sometime before 1694, when the water level of the North Sea was extremely low, a gold pendant was found near the drowned ruins of a late-Roman fortification known as 'Brittenburg' (*Lugdunum*), at the mouth of the Old Rhine near Katwijk.[114] The pendant, whose present location is unknown, was kidney-shaped and had a simple ribbed loop (fig. 5.42). The front was decorated with beaded gold wires and two small gold balls. The Katwijk pendant is different from the kidney-shaped pendants that have turned up in the northern Netherlands and is more closely related to Frankish-style jewellery.[115] It can probably be dated to the second half of the 6th, or the early 7th century.

108 The excavation was carried out by the Dutch Society of Amateur Archaeologists (Archeologische Werkgemeenschap Nederland, AWN).

109 Pers. comm. H. van Herwijnen (De Bilt).

110 Hazenberg 2000, 37; Brandenburgh & Hessing 2005, 62; see also Van Es & Verwers 2010, 21-23.

111 Hazenberg 2000, 37, fig. 20, pl. 2b; Brandenburgh & Hessing 2005, 60, fig. 55. Find context: pers. comm. T. Hazenberg (Hazenberg Archeologie, Leiden).

112 Heidinga 1990, fig. 2 (no. 7).

113 See Trier 2002, 58-61; compare the (coin-)pendants from the Wieuwerd hoard (Friesland, figs. 4.10-12).

114 Dijkstra & Ketelaar 1965, 103 (no. 1059); Dijkstra 2011, 440 (site no. 65). For the date and function of the 'Brittenburg', see Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 420-421, figs. 20.2, 20.4, with references.

115 Compare the kidney-shaped pendants from Niedenstein (G) (*Die Franken* 1996, Kat. V.5.24f-g).

5.43 | Early medieval gold finger ring with a Roman-period intaglio from 'Hoogstraat I' and a gold, filigree-decorated pendant from the 'Hoogstraat III' site at Wijk bij Duurstede. Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos P. Bomhof & A. de Kemp).

Vechten (Utrecht)

Evidence of early medieval habitation at the site of the Roman-period *castellum* at Vechten (*Fectio*) are a 19th-century find and several more recent metal-detector finds of 7th-century gold coins. They comprise three Frankish tremisses, of which two were minted at Namur and Mainz, a probably 'Frisian' tremissis of the Dronrijp type and a Frankish or 'Frisian' tremissis of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type. Furthermore, two 7th-century Frankish tremisses were recovered near Vechten as early as the 18th century. These had been minted by Gandolinus at Huy and by Madelinus at Maastricht.

Voorburg-'Arentsburg' (South Holland)

In about 1570, an original or a pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus tremissis was found at the site of the former Roman town of Voorburg (*Forum Hadriani*).[116] Early medieval pottery finds, including a 4th- or 5th-century 'Anglo-Saxon' vessel, indicate that the abandoned town was partly reoccupied in the Migration and Merovingian periods.[117]

Wijk bij Duurstede/Dorestad (Utrecht)

In spite of the large scale of the excavations at Dorestad, mainly between 1967 and 1976, only few metal items from the Merovingian period were found.[118] First of all, this is due to the chronology of Dorestad as a settlement and trading site. Most metal and other finds are post-7th-century and can be dated to the heyday of Dorestad (8th and 9th centuries), like the famous gold brooch, some swords and most of the coins.[119] A second explanation is the early date of the excavations, when no metal detectors were available and all metal objects were 'visual finds'. Significant in this respect is the large number of metal objects found during more recent excavations at Dorestad – including two Merovingian-period gold items.[120]

5.44 | Gold bracteate and pierced tremissis from Wijk bij Duurstede-'Veilingterrein'. The loop of the bracteate is missing. Scale 2:1 (coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot, Utrecht, photos M. Hoppel).

116 Dijkstra 2011, 446-447 (site no. 97). For the history of Voorburg, see De Jonge et al. 2006.

117 De Jonge 2006a; 2006b.

118 For the excavations at Dorestad, see Van Es & Verwers 1980; 1986; 2009; Van Es 1990; see also Willemsen 2009.

119 E.g. Van Es 1976 (brooch); Ypey 1980; Van Es 2006 (swords); Van Gelder 1980 (coins).

120 Dijkstra & Van Renswoude 2005; Dijkstra & Williams 2010; Dijkstra 2012.

5.45 | Part of an oblong gold bar from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Heul' (no. 1) and two round gold bars, probably from Wijk bij Duurstede (no. 2) and Domburg (no. 3). Scale 2:1 (oblong bar: coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp; round bar, probably Domburg: coll. Geldmuseum, Utrecht, photos A. Pol; round bar, probably Wijk bij Duurstede: private coll., photos G. Cornelissens).

5.46 | Restored sword with a silver-gilt pommel, and upper and lower guards from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Heul'. The pommel is a 7th-century piece that was put on an 8th- or early 9th-century sword. Sword scale 1:4, silver elements of grip scale 1:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos P.J. Bomhof & Restaura, Haelen).

5.47 | Gold, filigree-decorated pendant and two silver-wire finger rings, found on the North Sea beach near Domburg. Scale 2:1 (coll. Zeeuws Museum/ Zeeuws Genootschap, Middelburg, photos I. Wennekes).

The valuable pieces from the Merovingian period, all from the northern part of Dorestad, are limited to a re-used sword pommel of gilded silver and six gold objects: a finger ring, two pendants, two tremisses and a small bar. The gold finger ring was found in the harbour area ('Hoogstraat I', 1972).[121] It consists of a solid gold band and an oval setting holding a Roman-period intaglio that shows a stag attacked by a dog (weight 8.5 gr, fig. 5.43). The ring itself is not of Roman date, however; it was probably manufactured in the 6th or 7th century. As a result of long use, the beaded wire on each side of the stone setting has almost worn away.

The first pendant, also originating from the harbour area ('Hoogstraat III', 1973), was made out of a round piece of gold sheet, with a concentric rib around the centre (weight 3.2 gr, fig. 5.43).[122] The front is decorated with sloppy S-filigree of beaded wire and a double twisted gold wire along the rim. The pendant has a simple ribbed loop, which at the back terminates in two irregularly cut, leaf-shaped pieces of gold sheet. There are hardly any traces of wear on the loop and filigree decoration. The shape and decoration date this Frankish-style pendant to the second half of the 6th, or the early 7th century.[123] Another excavation find from 'Hoogstraat III' is a tremissis of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type.[124]

The second pendant was found with a metal detector during recent excavations at the 'trading zone' behind the harbour area ('Veilingterrein' site, 2007).[125] This light-weight pendant is a bracteate showing the stamped motif of a cross with looped arms and four stamped dots (weight 1.1 gr, fig. 5.44). On the front, a twisted, now worn-down gold wire was soldered along the rim. The upper part of the pendant, including the loop, is missing, and at the back two small pieces of gold sheet are soldered on as a repair. Although exact analogues are unknown, the Dorestad pendant can probably be dated to the 7th century.[126] The bracteate was found in the fill of a pit that also contained 8th-century and younger pottery – indicating that this pendant probably derived from an older layer or dug-in feature.[127] In 2004, a Frankish tremissis had previously been found in the topsoil of the 'Veilingterrein' site (fig. 5.44).[128] This pierced coin was minted by Anglo at the trading centre of Quentowic (northern France).

A gold bar of 16.2 gr was found during the excavation of several 8th- to 9th-century farmhouses at 'De Heul' (1969, fig. 5.45, no. 1), situated in the 'agricultural zone' of Dorestad.[129] The oblong bar is clearly cut and partly broken at one end. The other end is very abraded, as a result of frequent assaying of its gold content with a touchstone. All four sides of the bar, which originally had an oval section, show traces of beating. Like most of the gold coins from Wijk bij Duurstede (see below), this stray find can probably be dated to the 6th or 7th century.

121 Maaskant-Kleibrink 1980.

122 Van Es & Verwers 2009, 213, fig. 166.

123 Trier 2002, 58-59, compare *Taf*. 228-229; see also Roth 1986, *Taf*. 33c (disc brooches, ca 600).

124 Van Es & Verwers 1978, 225, fig. 2.

125 Nooijen 2012, 534, fig. 5.61 (in: Dijkstra 2012).

126 Two lead pendants from Domburg, dating to the late-Merovingian or Carolingian period, are decorated with a similar cross motif in relief (Capelle 1976, cat.no. 275-276).

127 At the 'Veilingterrein' site many features with a Carolingian date also contained Merovingian pottery, originating from older, disturbed features (pers. comm. J. Dijkstra, Archeologisch Diensten Centrum, Amersfoort).

128 Dijkstra & Van Renswoude 2005, 22, fig. 9.

129 Pers. comm. W.J.H. Verwers (Hoevelaken, the Netherlands); for the house plans and their dating, see Van Es & Verwers 1995.

5.48 | Geographical distribution of late-4th- to 7th-century gold coins, including (former) coin-pendants, found as single pieces in the coastal area of the western Netherlands and the adjacent river area (including excavation finds from cemetery and settlement sites). The eastern border of the research area is shown as a broken line. For the background, see figure 12.4 (coin data after NUMIS; Pol, in prep., drawings by the author).

The presence of a Merovingian-period item at 'De Heul' is in agreement with a more recent metal-detector find from this site: an undecorated sword pyramid, executed in silver and dating to the first half of the 7th century.[130]

The most exceptional find is a solid sword pommel of gilded silver (57 gr), which is part of a recently restored spatha (fig. 5.46).[131] This heavily worn trilobate pommel is richly decorated with interlaced floral motifs in relief. It is similar to a group of sword pommels that Menghin assigns to his 7th-century phase F (ca 650-680/700).[132] Interestingly, the pommel was re-used as part of a younger, 8th- or early-9th-century prestige sword, which was buried with a large iron

130 Pers. comm. J. van Doesburg (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort). For the dating and parallels, see Menghin 1983, 150, 363-364 (type 1a).

131 Van Es 2006; see also Willemsen 2009, 70, figs. 80-82.

132 Menghin 1983, 321-328 (types 4-7), fig. 77.

spearhead in a partly disturbed ditch or pit. The findspot is also situated in the 'agricultural zone' at 'De Heul', near a contemporaneous farmstead with an exceptionally large house and the well that contained the famous gold brooch.[133] According to the finders, the sword and spear were buried alongside each other, possibly in a (partly disturbed) grave.[134]

To these excavation finds a substantial number of stray coins (15x) and a second gold bar can be added, found at or nearby Wijk bij Duurstede since the middle of the 19th century. All coins are tremisses. The oldest, 5th-century piece is a Germanic imitation showing the bust of Valentinian (III?). Two younger pieces are 6th-century, pseudo-imperial coins, in the name of Justinian I (527-565). One of these coins was probably minted by the Ostrogothic king Athalaric (526-534). The 7th-century coins are five Frankish tremisses, minted in

133 Van Es 2006, 97-98. For the brooch, see Van Es 1976.

134 Van Es 2006, 98; Willemsen 2009, 70.

5.49 | Two looped tremisses, of pseudo-imperial type from Westergeest, on the island of Texel (lef), and of Dronrijp type from Sassenheim (right). Scale 2:1 (private coll., photos A. Pol & H. de Geus).

France (Banassac, Foix and Metz), Germany (near Mainz) and the southern Netherlands (Maastricht). Finally, eight contemporary coins of the types Dronrijp B (1x), Nietap (1x) and pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus (6x, including a false tremissis) are of Frankish and/or 'Frisian' origin. The tremissis from Foix is the only coin that was worn as a pendant, since it was pierced. The probably 6th- or 7th-century unworked piece has an irregular round shape and is made out of a heavy gold drop that was beaten flat (weight 1.1 gr, fig. 5.45, no. 2). The rounded rim is abraded, probably as a result of its gold content being assayed.

Domburg (Zeeland)

A large number of stray finds from the North Sea beach near Domburg point to the presence of an early medieval trading centre, possibly called Walcheren (*Walichrum*).[135] The finds include ca 1200 coins and almost 500 other metal finds, dating from the 6th to the 11th century. All objects are single finds; all we know is that they originate from three cemeteries and a part of the trading site that were revealed by marine erosion during storms in the 17th and 19th centuries. Although most finds are said to have been recovered at one of the burial grounds, the grave goods from Rhenen and Elst (see above) show that coins – with the exception of Roman-period denarii – were rarely used in the early medieval burial rite. More probably, these coins, as well as a small gold bar, were related to the function of the beach near Domburg as a landing place and trading site. The remaining objects, including gold and silver ornaments, are more difficult to interpret. They may originate either from the landing and trading site or the cemeteries.

A solidus, 100 tremisses and one Anglo-Saxon thrymsa from the Domburg beach have a Merovingian date.[136] The earliest, 6th-century coins are a Byzantine solidus and a tremissis of Justin I (518-527) or Justinian I (527-565), or imitations of these coins. Among the pseudo-imperial tremisses, Frankish (8x, including 1x Justinian I), Ostrogothic (1x Justinian I), Visigothic (4x), Langobardic (1x Maurice Tiberius) and 'Germanic' coins are probably represented. A younger group of 7th-century coins comprises Frankish, 'Frisian' and Anglo-Saxon pieces of the 'civic' type. The Frankish coins originate from at least twelve locations in present-day France (21x), from the Rhine ports of Mainz and Cologne (3x), from the Moselle ports of Vic-sur-Seille, Dieuze, Metz and Trier (9x), from the Meuse ports of Resson, Namur, Huy and Maastricht (4x), and from the trading centres of Quentowic (3x) and Dorestad (1x). The only 'Frisian' coin is a tremissis of the Dronrijp type. Moreover, 43 coins of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus and one of Remmerden type are of Frankish or 'Frisian' origin. The final coin is an Anglo-Saxon thrymsa, showing two unidentified kings. Some of the coins were made into pendants by the addition of a loop or a drilled hole (12x); in two cases, the loop was later removed.

Besides a substantial number of coins, a small disc of unworked gold probably originates from Domburg (weight 0.3 gr, fig. 5.45, no. 3). Like the piece from Wijk bij Duurstede (fig. 5.45, no. 2), this disc has an abraded outer edge and can probably be dated to the 6th or 7th century.

Only a few of the other metal finds from the Domburg beach have a Merovingian date, including some bronze bow brooches and belt fittings and a gold pendant.[137] The round pen-

135 Capelle 1976 (with earlier references); Van Heeringen 1995, 42-44; Pol 1995; Halbertsma 2000, 214-219. Walcheren is also the modern name of the island on which Domburg is situated.

136 Pol 1995, table 2; in prep. The finds with a probable origin from Domburg are also included.

137 For the pendant, see Capelle 1976, cat. nr. 265, *Taf*. 15.

Table 5.3. | Chronological overview of the numbers of (probably) graves and hoards with gold and silver objects, as well as single finds from (probable) settlement contexts in the western Netherlands. The numbers of graves with gold and silver ornaments and gold coins at the Rhenen and Elst cemeteries, and the numbers of gold coins from the trading site at Domburg are shown in brackets (settmt.: (probable) settlement site; *: including relatively late tremisses with a high silver content).

	LATE 4TH-5TH CENTURY			LATE 5TH-6TH CENTURY			LATE 6TH-7TH CENTURY		
	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.
gold ornament	-	1	-	1 (5)	-	9	4	1	11
silver ornament	1 (1)	-	1	2 (51)	-	4	1 (2)	-	2
gold coin*	1	-	5	(1)	3	19 (15)	-	3	118 (86)
total:	3	1	6	60	3	47	7	4	217

dant is decorated with a filigree cross, made of heavy, beaded wires flanking a central band of slipshod S-shaped filigree (fig. 5.47). In the angles of the cross are soldered four small gold balls, each surrounded by a twisted wire. The outer rim is decorated with a band of ring filigree, two twisted wires and a ribbed wire. At the back of the pendant a part of the broken ribbed loop can be seen. The cross motif is well-known from disc brooches and filigree-decorated pendants found in Anglo-Saxon England (see fig. 9.24), and dates this piece to the late 6th or 7th century.[138]

The date of two finger rings of silver wire, terminating in a spiral knot (fig. 5.47), is uncertain.[139] Although a silver ring with a similar decorative knot was buried in a 7th-century cremation grave at Oosterbeintum (Friesland, fig. 4.5), such rings were also worn during the 8th and 9th centuries – when Domburg flourished as a trading site.

Aardenburg (Zeeland)

As an urban settlement or fortification of the late 2nd and 3rd centuries, Aardenburg is the southernmost Roman site in the coastal zone of the western Netherlands.[140] During excavations in 1962, a 7th-century Frankish tremissis, minted by Baudolefius at St. Yrieix (southern France), was found in an early medieval habitation layer at this site.[141]

Single coins from (probable) settlement sites

Besides the coins presented above, a substantial number of gold coins have been discovered as accidental finds during the 19th and early 20th century, and more recently through the use of a metal detector. Most of these coins probably originate from settlement contexts and are proof of the 'circulation' of gold in rural settlements or small trading sites. The coins, both solidi (7x) and tremisses (73x), can be dated to the 5th, 6th and especially to the 7th century. Although the coins have been found spread along the North Sea coast and in the central river area, a clustering of 7th-century finds along the Old Rhine and to a lesser extent in North Holland and Zeeland can be observed (fig. 5.48).

The coin finds comprise four imperial solidi of Honorius (393-423, 2x), Tiberius II Constantine (574-582) and an unknown emperor, two imitation solidi of Valentinian III (425-455) and Leo I (457-474), two solidi and ten tremisses of pseudo-imperial type (ca 500-585), one quasi-imperial tremisses (ca 585-600), as well as 'civic' coins from various mints in the Frankish, 'Frisian' and Anglo-Saxon realms (table 8.2: 49 x, ca 585-675). A pseudo-imperial tremissis of Ostrogothic origin (Westergeest, North Holland, fig. 5.49), a tremissis of the 'Frisian' Dronrijp type (Sassenheim, South Holland, fig. 5.49) and a Frankish 'civic' tremissis have a ribbed loop (province of Utrecht, find site unknown), and one of the pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type tremissis is pierced (Westerschouwen, Zeeland). The loops of three further coins (another Dronrijp-type coin and two Frankish tremisses) had been removed. Most of the stray coins, like the coins discussed above, show hardly any traces of wear.[142]

5.5 Conclusion

The early medieval valuables of gold and silver have turned up mainly along the former Rhine *limes*, in cemeteries, in hoards and at settlement sites (table 5.3). The late-4th- and 5th-century items are limited to a single gold hoard (Rhenen-'Achterberg') and a small number of silver ornaments and imperial solidi (or imitations) from graves and settlement sites. In the late 5th and 6th cen-

138 See Avent 1975, 62-63 (plated disc and composite brooches, compare cat. nos. 158, 167, 174 and 179-183); Geake 1997, 32-33, 37-38, fig. 4.4.

139 Capelle 1976, cat. nos. 438-439, *Taf.* 27.

140 Trimpe Burger 1973, 141-144; Van Es 1981, 112-114.

141 Trimpe Burger 1962/1963, 550; Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1962/1963.

142 Pers. comm. A. Pol (Leiden University).

turies we see a peak in the use of gold and especially silver jewellery in the burial rite, as excavations at Rhenen-'Donderberg' and Elst-'Het Woud' have shown. Moreover, several hoards can be dated to this period, as well as some silver and, notably, gold ornaments and a substantial number of pseudo-imperial solidi and tremisses from (probable) settlement contexts. In the late 6th and 7th centuries, with the exception of rich inhumation burials at Rhenen and Rijnsburg and two probable cremation burials on Texel and Wieringen, less gold and silver is 'invested' in funerals. Instead, ornaments of precious metal were now buried relatively frequently at settlement sites. Moreover, an unprecedented number of gold coins (the 'civic' tremisses) are encountered in hoards and especially at settlements of various types, ranging from rural settlements and reinhabited *castella* to specialised trading centres such as Dorestad and Domburg.

6

Valuable items from the coastal areas of Niedersachsen and western Schleswig-Holstein

6.1 Introduction

Along the North Sea coast of northern Germany, 5th- to 7th-century valuables of silver and gold were mostly buried as grave goods (section 6.2) and as hoards (section 6.3), respectively. Moreover, a small number of gold items are single finds from probable settlement contexts (section 6.4). This chapter presents the individual finds and their context information, as well as some current ideas about the social status of specific grave goods. The dating of most items is based on the revised chronology by Böhme and the recent chronology by Rau (late 4th-5th century), and on the chronologies of metal finds from the cemetery at Liebenau (late 4th-7th century) and of 'Saxon' equal-armed brooches in general.[1]

6.2 Grave goods

Because only few cemeteries have been excavated in the salt-marsh area along the North Sea coast, late Roman and early medieval graves with items of gold and silver have rarely been found here (fig. 6.1, cemetery nos. 1-3). To search for any patterning in the valuable items that had been selected as grave goods, the few objects from the salt-marsh area are presented as part of the larger collection of finds from the adjacent *Geest* uplands – the cemeteries of Helle and Issendorf being the southernmost sites (fig. 6.1, cemetery nos. 4-13). In contrast to the relatively large number of cemeteries yielding 'isolated' items of gold or silver, mostly dating to the 4th or 5th century, the large cemetery of Issendorf is of special significance, showing the changing use of prestigious items in the burial rite throughout the Migration *and* early Merovingian periods. Besides items of gold and silver, the contemporary weapon finds, which often mark the richest male burials, are also described for the cemeteries below.

The cemetery of Ostbense (Landkreis Wittmund)

In 1993 and 1994, the remains of a largely disturbed cemetery from the Migration period were excavated on what now are coastal mudflats, north of Ostbense in Ostfriesland.[2] Two inhumation burials were still intact: the burial of a woman, 40-50 years old, interred with a silver composite saucer brooch (fig. 6.2) and a bronze supporting-arm brooch, and the burial of an infant, only three months old and placed in a small wooden trough. The silver brooch is of the Rhenen type and can be dated to the late 4th, or the first half of the 5th century.

The cemetery of Otterndorf-Westerwörden (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1979, a mixed cemetery dating to the late 4th and the first half of the 5th century was excavated on a salt-marsh ridge in the Weser estuary, ca 50 m northeast of the large village *Wurt* (dwelling mound) of Westerwörden.[3] Besides 20 inhumation burials, all without a coffin, the remains of mainly disturbed cremation burials were documented. Only one of the inhumations (grave 29) is a weapon grave, containing an iron axe.

1 Böhme 1974; 1986; 1989 (revision of his 1974-chronology); 1999; 2003; Rau 2010, 79-109, especially figs. 35, 38,1; Brieske & Schlicksbier 2005 (Liebenau); Bruns 2003, 28-32 (equal-armed brooches).

2 Bärefänger et al. 1997; Bärefänger 2004; 2013.

3 Schön 1999a; 2004b.

Silver brooches were found in two inhumation burials: a pair of composite saucer brooches in grave 19, and an equal-armed brooch in grave 10 (fig. 6.3). The saucer brooches are decorated with spiral motifs and can be dated to the late 4th, or the first half of the 5th century (type Lippspringe or Krefeld-Gellep). The equal-armed brooch is an exceptional piece: the silver is not gilded but covered with gold foil, richly decorated with small dots. This brooch is of a relatively early form, dating to around AD 400 (*Formengruppe* Issendorf). The deceased were a child (grave 19) and an adult (grave 10), both of the female sex.[4]

According to Schön, the graves containing the axe and the silver objects can be attributed to members of a 'class of landed gentry' (*großbäuerlichen Schicht*): the quality of their grave goods positions them midway between the 'poor' inhumation graves of Sievern and Flögeln and some 'rich' inhumation graves at Fallward (see below).[5]

The cemeteries of Fallward (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

Between 1993 and 1998, two small cemeteries, lying close together, were fully excavated on a stream ridge of the Lower Weser, ca 250 m north of the village *Wurt* of Fallward.[6] The mixed cemeteries, dating to ca AD 300-450, comprised a total of ca 200 cremation and ca 60 inhumation graves. Hardly any grave goods were found in the urns or simple pits with cremated remains. Exceptions are some beads and fragments of brooches or bone combs, as well as the molten remains of silver objects, probably brooches.[7] The inhumation graves, on the other hand, show a remarkable variation in shape and grave goods, which according to Schön represent three 'quality groups'.[8] The richest graves are thought to represent members of a 4th- and 5th-century 'upper class' (*Oberschicht*), probably similar in status to the local elite living at the Roman-period '*Herrenhof*' of Feddersen Wierde (just 2 km north of Fallward).[9]

The inhumation burials of the first quality group were found close together on the seaward side of the cemetery, and possibly belonged to members of the same family. The

6.1 | Geographical distribution of cemeteries (top) and hoards (bottom) with late 4th- to 7th-century valuable items of gold and silver along the North Sea coast of northern Germany and on the adjacent Pleistocene sands (*Geest*). The border between salt marsh and sandy upland is shown as a dotted line (drawing by the author).
Cemeteries: 1. Ostbense, 2. Otterndorf, 3. Fallward, 4. Flögeln, 5. Sievern, 6. Helle, 7. Altenwalde, 8. Westerwanna, 9. Wehden, 10. Ritsch, 11. Issendorf, 12. Riensförde, 13. Daudieck.
Hoards: 1. Altenwalde, 2. Larrelt, 3-5. Sievern, 6. Katharinenheerd, 7. Hamburg, 8. Helgoland, 9. Gallehus, 10. Heide, 11. Dösemoor.

4 Herrmann & Großkopf 1999, 201-203.
5 Schön 1999a, 149; 2004b, 525.
6 Schön 1999b, 40 ff.; 2002; 2003, 44-45; 2004c; 2010; pers. comm. M. Schön (Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa). A final publication is in preparation.
7 Schön 2004c, 529.
8 Schön 2004c, 528-530; 2010.
9 For Feddersen Wierde, see Schmid 2010, with further references.

6.2 | Photo and reconstruction drawing of a silver, composite saucer brooch, found in one of the inhumation burials of a drowned cemetery in the present-day mudflats north of Ostbense. Scale 1:1 (coll. Ostfriesische Landschaft, photo by G. Kronsweide; drawing after Bärefänger et al. 1997, fig. 1a).

dead were carefully buried in a coffin or on a bier, accompanied by a rich collection of wooden and other grave goods. The oldest of these '*Prunkgräber*' is of a woman, interred on an oak plank with a dendrochronological date of around 300 (grave 284). The grave goods comprise a hand-made ceramic *situla*, two wooden dishes, a Roman-type, wooden box or *pyxis*, a string of glass and amber beads, two bronze tutulus brooches (Ortbrook type), a bronze *Armbrustfibel* (type Almgren VII,3), a bronze hairpin and two finger rings, one made of bronze and the other of silver.

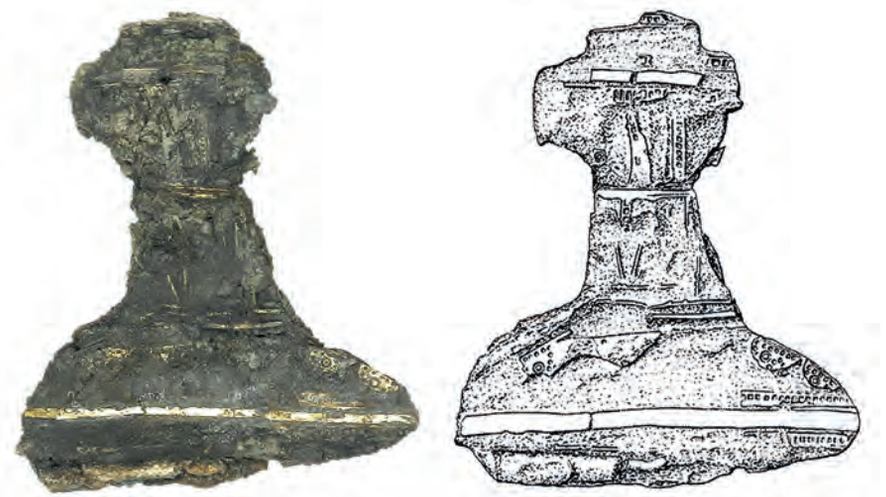
A little younger is the burial of a girl, interred in a large wooden trough, which is dated dendrochronologically to shortly after 327 (grave 250). The trough was placed in a large burial pit, which was surrounded by a circular ditch, and covered with a layer of brushwood and two heavy, crossed beams. The grave goods comprise a wooden table and a round stool with lathe-turned feet, a simple footstool, a small wooden box, three wooden dishes, a small wooden trough, two wooden objects of unknown function (toys?), two hand-made pots, a string of glass and a string of amber beads, a shard of green glass, two silver tutulus brooches of developed type and two silver *Armbrustfibeln* (of type Almgren VII,3). The tutulus brooches are gilded and each decorated with an amber bead (fig. 6.4).

The burial of a second girl, also interred in a wooden trough, can be dated to around 400 (grave 282). Besides a round stool that was placed outside the coffin, the burial contained a hand-made pot, a string of glass, amber, bronze and silver-wire beads, a heavy bronze ring, possibly of a belt, and three silver brooches, covered with gold foil: an equal-armed brooch, decorated in chip-carving (type Wehden, fig. 6.8), and two supporting-arm brooches (probably Lower Saxon type A). The two silver-wire beads too are decorated with gold foil.

Two boat burials are dated to shortly after 420. One of the boats, made out of an oak tree, held a woman interred with a simple round stool and two wooden dishes (grave 142).

The second boat was transformed into a mortuary house by the addition of a planked roof (grave 265, fig. 6.5). The deceased male was interred with an exceptional collection of gifts: a small wooden table with lathe-turned legs and tabletop rim (fig. 6.6, no. 3), a large 'throne' with a footstool (fig. 6.6, nos. 1-2), a wooden vessel in the shape of a bird, a large wooden dish (fig. 6.6, no. 4), a bronze cauldron (fig. 6.6, no. 5), a hand-made pot of '*Buckelkeramik*' and a late-Roman belt (Vieuxville type, fig. 6.6, no. 6), decorated with bronze fittings and a large number of small, silver-plated studs. The 'throne', which was buried outside the boat, is richly decorated in chip-carving and black paint. The upper surface of the footstool, the bird-shaped vessel and the flat rim of the large wooden dish show a similar decoration. Moreover, the underside of the footstool is carved with a Roman-type hunting scene of a dog attacking a deer (fig. 11.20), and on the front is a runic inscription reading '*scamella algu skapi*': '(foot)stool with deer-harming'.

The second group of graves, belonging to a lower quality group, is also characterized by the regular occurrence of wooden coffins, but lacks the rich collection of (wooden) grave



6.3 | Photo and drawing of a silver equal-armed brooch from grave 10 in the cemetery of Otterndorf-Westerwörden. The brooch was covered with decorated gold foil, which is only partly preserved. Scale 1:1 (coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photo by M. Schön; drawing after Schön 1999a, fig. 29b).

goods. Among these are two weapon graves, the first containing a spatha (grave 178) and the second a large, wooden bow and a set of arrows (grave 407). In the first burial also a hand-made pot and a bronze pair of tweezers were found. Neither of these male burials can be dated more closely than to the 4th or 5th century.

Finally, the largest group of male and female inhumation graves can be assigned to the third, lowest quality group, of bodies without a coffin. If any grave goods are present, these are limited to a hand-made pot, a belt with a bronze or iron buckle, a simple brooch and/or a string of beads.

The cemetery of Flögeln-'Voßbarg' (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

Between 1972 and 1980, the mixed cemetery of 'Voßbarg' was fully excavated near Flögeln, on the *Geest*.[10] A total of ca 100 cremation and 10 inhumation graves could be dated from the mid 4th to the mid 5th century. Besides molten fragments and drops of silver from fourteen cremation graves, four more, probably female cremation graves contained silver objects: a disc brooch from grave 53 (4th century), a fragment of a finger ring from grave 60 (4th/5th century), three spiral-wire beads from grave 79 (5th century) and small fragments of an equal-armed brooch with chip-carved decoration from grave 130 (5th century). Moreover, two silver biconical beads were buried in inhumation grave 119 (5th century). Cremation grave 79 also contained the iron bindings of a wooden bucket and two bronze rings probably belonging to horsegear. The ages of the deceased range from 'child or young adult' (grave 79) to 'adult or early elderly' (graves 53 and 130).[11] According to Schön, no elite status is reflected in the grave goods; the silver objects belonged to people 'of a certain prosperity'.[12]

The cemetery of Sievern (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

Between 1988 and 1991, a mixed cemetery from the 4th and 5th centuries was partly excavated on the *Geest* east of Sievern (site 58B).[13] During the excavations, ca 50 cremation graves, ca 50 inhumation graves and one horse burial were documented. One of the inhumations is a weapon grave, containing a spatha with scabbard, a probable sword bead of bone, an iron knife and a bronze buckle (burial 142, second half of 5th/early 6th century).

10 Schön 1988.
11 Herrmann & Dobner 1988.
12 Schön 1988, 224, 233.
13 Schön 1990; 2001; 2004a.

6.4 | Pair of silver-gilt tutulus brooches from grave 250 in the cemetery of Fallward. The brooches each incorporate an amber bead. Scale 1:1 (coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photo by H. Lang).

The only object partly made of silver is a composite saucer brooch from inhumation grave 68. The brooch (type unknown) was found on the left shoulder of an adult person and can be dated to the late 4th or 5th century.

Apart from some burials belonging to an 'agrarian middle class' (*bäuerlichen Mittelschicht*), including the weapon grave and those with bronze fittings of a late-Roman belt, most

6.5 | One of the two boat burials (grave 265) in the cemetery of Fallward during its excavation in 1994. The boat was covered with a planked roof. At one end was placed the wooden 'throne' shown in figure 6.6 (after Schön 1999b, 77).

6.6 | Wooden 'throne' with a footstool (nos. 1-2), a wooden table with lathe-turned legs (no. 3), a wooden dish (no. 4), a bronze cauldron (no. 5) and bronze belt-fittings (no. 6) from grave 265 in the cemetery of Fallward. The throne, footstool and dish are decorated in chip-carving, the belt-fittings with similar motifs, and the chair also with black paint. The front of the footstool bears a carved runic inscription. Wooden items and cauldron scale 1:4, belt-fittings scale 1:2 (coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photos by H. Lang).

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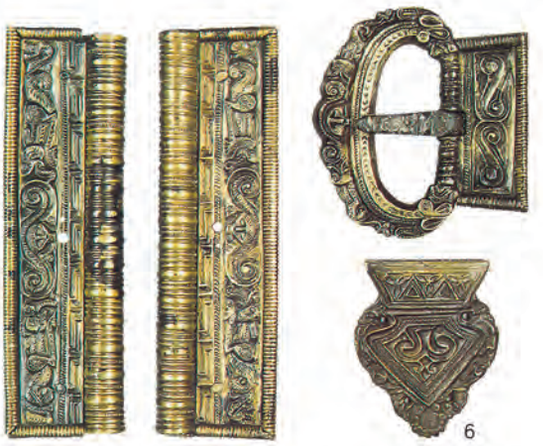


6

6.7 | A largely molten solidus pendant from grave 2 in the cemetery of Helle. Scale 2:1 (coll. Landesmuseum für Natur und Mensch, Oldenburg, photos by W. Kehmeier).

burials contained just one or more 'simple' grave goods (iron knife, iron buckle, etc.) or none at all, reflecting the presence of a 'class of simple folk' (*einfachen Bevölkerungsschicht*).[14]

The cemetery of Helle (Landkreis Ammerland)

During excavations in 1925-1926, three inhumation and 15 cremation graves were excavated on a natural hill called 'Kummerkamp', near Helle.[15] In 1965 and 1969, one more inhumation and several cremation graves were documented.[16] The cemetery can be dated from the late 3rd to the mid 5th century.

One of the inhumations was a weapon grave; it contained a spatha with scabbard, an iron shield boss, two ango-like lances, bronze fittings of a late-Roman belt, a knife with a leather sheath, a glass bowl and a hand-made pot (grave 1, mid 5th century).[17] The teardrop-shaped terminal of the belt is decorated with a strip of silver.

Close to this weapon grave, two more inhumation graves with exceptional grave goods were found, dating to the 4th or 5th century. One of these male burials contained a hand-made pot and a Roman bronze dish and bucket (grave 6), and the other a hand-made pot, a similar bronze bucket, remains of a leather belt and an axe (grave 7).

Finally, ca 20 m west of these inhumation graves, a cluster of cremation graves were found, one containing the molten remains of glass beads and a partly molten gold pendant (female, grave 2, fig. 6.7).[18] The pendant was made out of a solidus and has a simple ribbed loop. Unfortunately, no relief is visible any longer on either side of the coin.

The cemetery of Altenwalde (Landkreis Land Hadeln)

Between 1884 and 1887, on the *Geest* ridge of 'Hohe Lith', over 150 cremation graves and a possible inhumation grave were found, dating to the Roman and early Migration periods.[19] One of the cremation urns contained the molten remains of glass beads, fragments of a bronze buckle and a small part of an equal-armed brooch (female grave, without serial number).[20] The 5th-century brooch, probably of the Wehden type, is made of silver and decorated with chip-carving.

The cemetery of Westerwanna (Landkreis Land Hadeln)

From the 18th to the beginning of the 20th century, a total number of ca 3000 cremation graves from the 1st to the 6th centuries were unearthed north of Westerwanna.[21] The find material includes a large number of weapons (a shield boss, fragments of chain mail, sword elements, spear- and arrowheads and axes) and silver brooches, mainly dating to the 3rd and 4th centuries. The only piece with a secure 5th-century date is a stray find of a silver equal-armed brooch, decorated in chip-carving (type Sahlenburg, fig. 6.8).[22]

The cemetery of Wehden (Landkreis Wesermünde)

In the late 19th century, ca 600 cremation graves from the 4th and 5th centuries were unearthed on a *Geest* ridge near Wehden, and the grave goods were largely collected as stray finds.[23] These include a silver *Armbrustfibel* with a trapezoid foot (no. 323, variant C) and fragments of three silver equal-armed brooches, decorated in chip-carving (nos. 345, 793-794, Wehden type, fig. 6.9).[24] The first brooch can be dated to the late 4th or the early decades of the 5th century, the three others to the 5th century.

14 Schön 2001, 133-134; 2004a, 441.

15 Von Buttel-Reepen 1926; Werner 1958, 385-389, figs. 10-12; Böhme 1974, 234 (cat. no. 22), *Taf.* 21.4-14; 1999, 60, fig. 7. The burial numbers mentioned in the text refer to the 1925 excavation.

16 Zoller 1972, 202-203.

17 For the sword, see Westphal 2002, 52-54, fig. 1.2.1, table 1.2; Aouni & Westphal 1999.

18 Von Buttel-Reepen 1926, 177-178, fig. 2; Werner 1958, 388.

19 Waller 1957; Böhme 1974, cat. no. 2.

20 Böhme 1974, 219 (cat. no. 2), *Taf.* 2.13.

21 Zimmer-Linnfeld 1960; Röhrer-Ertl 1971; Von Quillfeldt & Roggenbuck 1985.

22 Böhme 1986, 527, fig. 50.1 (erroneous caption).

23 Waller 1961; Böhme 1974, cat. no. 48.

24 Waller 1961, *Taf.* 44; Böhme 1974, 252-253 (cat. no. 48), *Taf.* 42.7, 11-13.

6.8 | Two silver equal-armed brooches from the cemeteries of Fallward (left, grave 282) and Westerwanna (right, stray find). The Fallward brooch was decorated with gold foil. Scale 2:1 (coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photos by H. Lang).

The cemetery of Ritsch (Landkreis Stade)

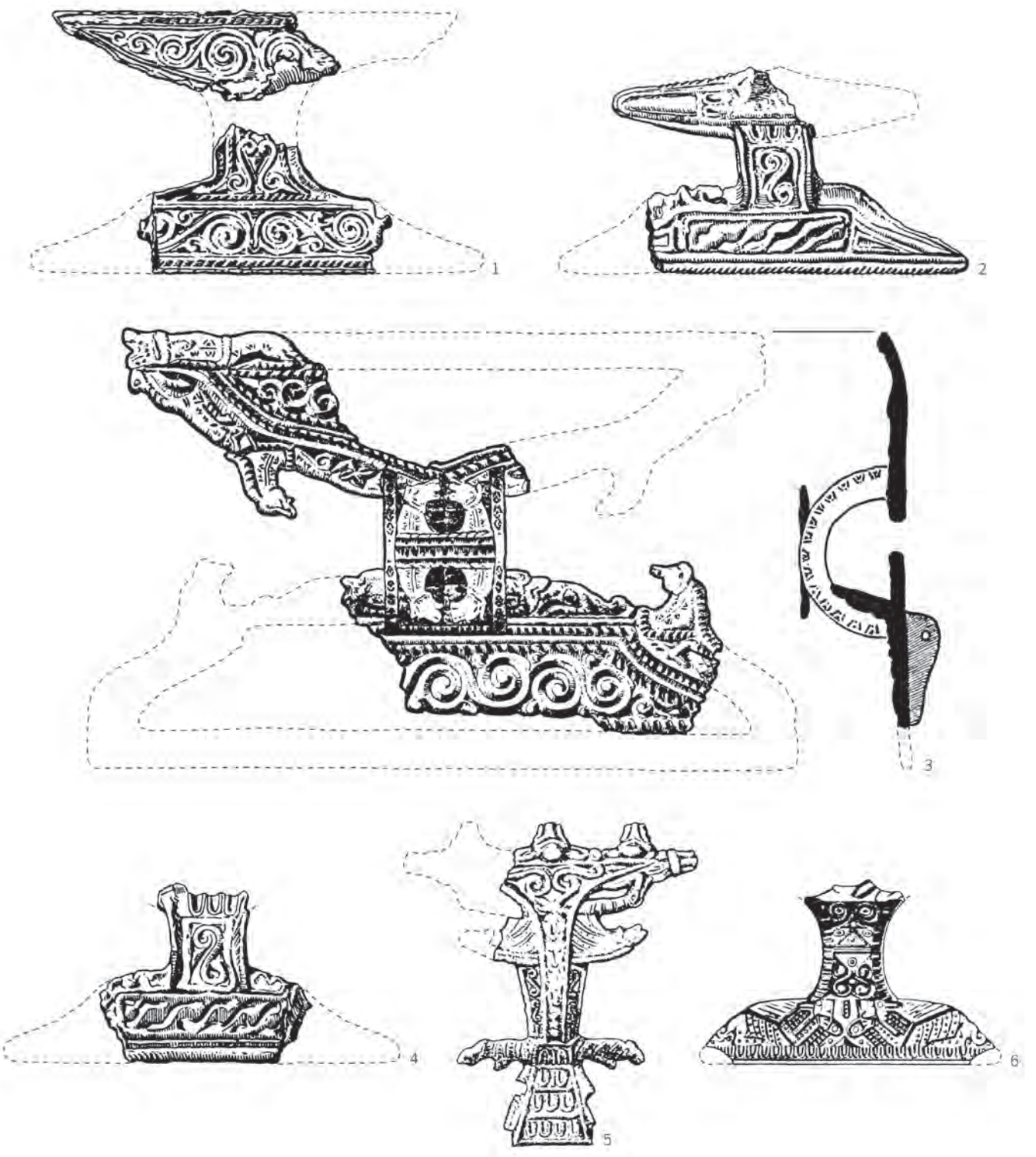
In 1988, a small cemetery of five inhumation and two cremation graves was excavated near Ritsch. One of the cremation graves contained a rich collection of goods, including a hand-made pot, a glass cup, a string of glass and amber beads, remains of a bronze brooch, a piece of silver sheet and the remains of a wooden plate, decorated with gold sheet (grave 1, sex unknown).[25] Although the original shape and function of the wooden plate is unclear, the decoration of the gold sheet in chip-carving – with a pattern similar to that on the silver equal-armed brooches – dates the burial to the 5th century.[26]

The cemetery of Issendorf (Landkreis Stade)

Between 1967 and 1997 this extensive cemetery of ca 6600 cremation and ca 80 inhumation graves on the *Geest* near Issendorf was fully excavated.[27] The graves were laid out to the west of a large megalithic tomb (fig. 3.18) and can be dated from ca AD 370/380 to 550/560.[28] The inhumation graves cluster near the western end of the tomb (fig. 6.10). They are executed as wooden chambers or covered over with planks or beams. After the middle of the 5th century chamber graves gradually became obsolete. Only one of the younger burials is a chamber grave, constructed in the shape of a small house (no. 3575).[29] Most of the bodies were interred in wooden coffins made of planks or hollowed-out trunks – some shaped like a trough. Interestingly, large numbers of wooden grave goods could be documented as round or rectangular silhouettes in the soil. These are the remains of wooden tableware and all manner of furniture, such as nine round seats that may have been similar in shape to the 'throne' from Fallward.[30]

With one exception, the chamber graves and probable chamber graves can be dated from the final quarter of the 4th to the second half of the 5th century. One of the earliest burials contained bronze fittings of a late-Roman belt, a set of bronze spurs and a probable arrowhead (grave 3480, adult male). Two younger, 5th-century weapon graves contained one and three arrowheads, respectively (grave 3539, age 1-2, and grave 3545, age 20-29). Silver objects were found with six female burials. The richest grave is of an adult person, famously dubbed 'the Princess of Issendorf' (grave 3532, fig. 6.11).[31] She was interred with an equal-armed brooch (Dösemoor type), two composite saucer brooches (Lippspringe type), a silver neck ring, a set of bronze and iron belt accessories, and strings of glass, amber and silver spiral beads with silver slip-knot rings in between. All three brooches are decorated in chip-carving and executed in gilded silver, the saucer brooches having a bronze base. An exceptional burial is that of an adult female, probably originating from Thuringia (grave 3575).[32] She was buried in a house-like chamber, wearing a pair of silver-gilt bow brooches (Rositz type) and two rectangular, silver-gilt pendants decorated with chip-carving (fig. 6.12). Other finds of silver are a spiral bead (grave 3517, age 3) and eight slip-knot rings belonging to a string of glass and amber beads (grave 3541, age 5-6), as well as a ring-shaped pendant (grave 3546, adult), an ear-scoop and needle (grave 3527, age 30-49), and two composite saucer brooches with a bronze

25 Ziegert 1992, 139-143, fig. 143.
26 See Schön 1999a, 143.
27 Especially Häßler 2002; 2004b; Weber 2000; 2004.
28 Rau 2010, 88-92 (revised chronology).
29 Schmidt 1997.
30 Häßler 2002, 27-29.
31 Häßler 2004a, 24.
32 Schmidt 1997; Häßler 2004a, 25-27.

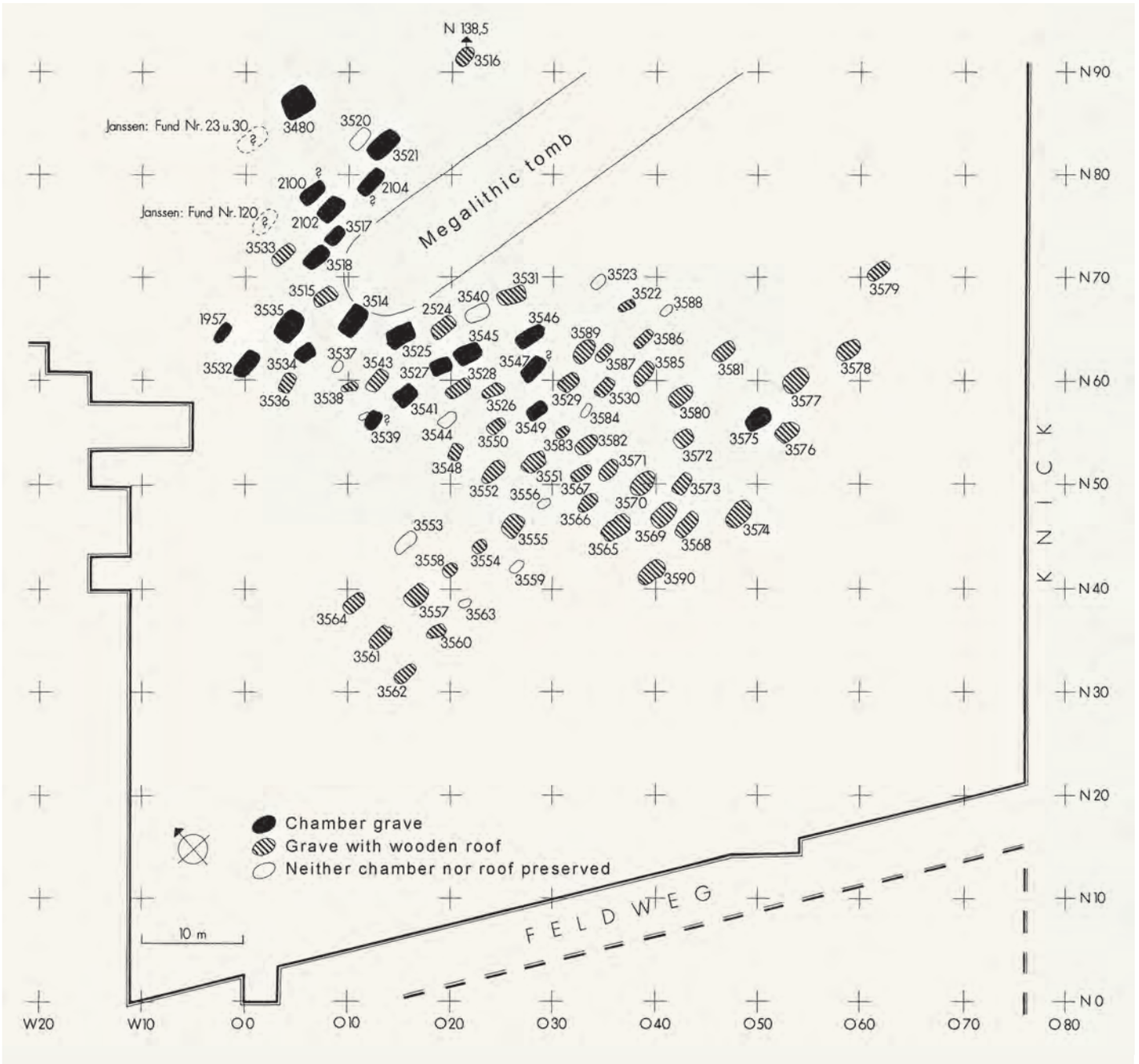


6.9 | A selection of 5th-century silver brooches found at three cemeteries in the northern Elbe-Weser region. Scale 1:1 (after Böhme 1974, *Taf*. 17.6, 34.9-10, 42.11-13).

1-2, 4. Three fragmented equal-armed brooches from Wehden, stray finds.

3, 5. An equal-armed and a supporting-arm brooch from Riensförde, stray finds.

6. An equal-armed brooch from a cemetery near Daudieck (or perhaps Perlberg), stray find.



6.10 | Excavation plan of a cluster of inhumation burials near the western end of a megalithic tomb in the cemetery of Issendorf, showing the types of grave construction. Compare figure 3.18 (after Häßler 2002, text fig. 7, slightly adjusted).

base (Rhenen type, grave 3534, age 20-39). With the exception of graves 3541 (ca 460-500) and 3575 (ca 530-560), the other female grave with silver ornaments can be dated to ca 400-460.

The 'plank/beam graves', dating from the final quarter of the 4th to the first half of the 6th century, were found among and especially south of the chamber graves. Weapons documented for eight of these graves include a lance, axes (2x) and one or more arrowheads (6x). These accompanied young children as well as adult men. Besides two bronze bow brooches, one of the female burials contained a silver equal-armed brooch (Dösemoor type) and eleven silver spiral beads (grave 3536, adult). Other ornaments that were (partly) made of silver comprise a gilded finger ring (grave 3590, age 20-39), a ring-shaped pendant (grave 3549, adult), some spiral beads (grave 3540, age 12-16), two developed tutulus brooches (grave 3533, age 50-80) and two composite saucer brooches, found with a bag or purse that was decorated with eight silver mounts (grave 3573, age 12-18). Finally, a probable female aged 20-29 was interred with a fragment of a silver siliqua of Gratian (367-383, grave 3515). The coin has a central perforation and was probably worn as a pendant. The graves with silver items can be dated to ca 370/380-400 (grave 3533), ca 400-460 (graves 3540 and 3573) and ca 460-500 (graves 3549 and 3590).

A third and final group of eleven graves also covered with planks or beams, and roughly dated to the first half of the 6th century,

6.11 | Funerary assemblage of the 'Princess of Issendorf' (grave 3532), comprising a silver-gilt equal-armed brooch, two silver-gilt composite saucer brooches, a silver neck ring, an iron knife, a set of bronze and silver belt accessories, strings of glass and amber beads that were worn with silver slip-knot rings, and four hand-made pots. Length of the equal-armed brooch 8.2 cm (coll. Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo by U. Bohnhorst).

6.12 | Funerary assemblage of an adult female from the cemetery of Issendorf (grave 3575), comprising a pair of silver-gilt bow brooches, two silver-gilt pendants, some glass and amber beads, an iron weaving batten, latchlifter and knife, and two hand-made pots. Length of brooches 7.3 cm (coll. Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo by U. Bohnhorst).

6.13 | Funerary assemblage of a probably adult male from the cemetery of Issendorf (grave 3555), comprising a spatha, an axe, a bronze-and-iron belt set and a hand-made pot. Length of sword 90 cm (coll. Niedersächsiches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo by U. Bohnhorst).

forms a more-or-less separate cluster west of the previous group. Three of these graves contained weapons: a spatha, axe and belt-set (grave 3555, adult, fig. 6.13), a seax (grave 3558, age 5-6) and an axe and two arrowheads (grave 3562, adult).[33] A set of ca 10 small silver studs from grave 3555 probably decorated a leather bag. Of the female burials, four contained silver objects: a highly stylized bird brooch and

33 Westphal 2002, cat. no. 1.2.6, table 1.2 (spatha); cat. no. 2.2.1, table 2.2 (sax).

6.14 | Funerary assemblage of an adult female from the cemetery of Issendorf (grave 3557), comprising a gold bracteate, a pair of silver-gilt radiate-headed brooches, an iron knife and buckle, amber beads, a fossil sea urchin and a hand-made pot. Length of brooches 6.6 and 6.7 cm (coll. Niedersächsiches Landesuseum Hannover, photo by U. Bohnhorst).

a small silver ring, probably from a necklace (grave 3553, adult), a pair of silver-gilt radiate-headed brooches accompanied by a gold bracteate (grave 3557, adult, fig. 6.14), another pair of silver-gilt bow brooches (grave 3561, age 40-80), and a pair of iron brooches, both wound in a strip of silver sheet (grave 3564, age 11-12). The bow brooches may have been imported from the Frankish-Alamannic area, or were imitated locally.[34] The bracteate is of type B, showing a highly stylized figure in frontal view above a snake-like creature.[35]

The cremation graves are characterized by a substantial number of weapon elements (32x) and silver brooches (9x) or other silver ornaments (6x). The weapon graves contained at least two fragments of chain mail (4th-early 5th century), a sword scabbard (late 5th-early 6th century), a shield (late 5th-first half of 6th century), and in 23 cases one or more arrowheads (especially in the 5th century). The silver brooches comprise one brooch of type Almgren VI or VII (grave 3448) and four tutulus brooches (3x Oudenburg type, graves 130, 1297, 3475 and 3493) from the 4th century. One *Armbrustfibel* with trapezoid foot (variant C, grave 3475) and three composite saucer brooches (graves 131, 2600 and 2652, one of them of Krefeld-Gellep type) are a little younger, dating to the late 4th and first half of the 5th century. One of the tutulus brooches (grave 130) is the only object showing traces of gilding. Other silver ornaments are a simple neck ring (grave 3211), a shield-shaped pendant or decorative mount (grave 1062) and five spiral beads (graves 3211 and 3474), dating to the 5th century. The silver ornaments were probably all worn by women, including a girl aged 9-10 (grave 3211).

According to Häßler, the people interred at Issendorf were members of a local elite, employing not only luxury goods but also a different burial rite to express their special status.[36] Other members of the community would have been cremated and, in most cases, buried with a less exclusive set of grave goods or with none

34 Compare A. Koch 1998, *Taf.* 28, 44 (groups III.3.1 and V.2.2.6).

35 Axboe 1997 (in: Häßler et al. 1997, 123 ff.); IK 574.

36 Häßler 1994, 66-67; 2004b, 444.

at all. Weber's analysis of the 'social structure' of the cemetery, however, has shown that such a distinction cannot be observed during the 4th and early 5th centuries; in this period, the finds appear to represent 'a broad class of prosperous people' (*eine breite Schicht Wohlhabender*).[37] In the course of the 5th century, the picture changes: while the number of 'rich' cremation graves decreases, an increased investment of weapons and items of precious metals in the inhumation rite can be seen – now, according to Weber, definitely reflecting a process of socio-political differentiation and the rise of a local elite.[38]

The probable cemetery of Riensförde (Landkreis Stade)

In 1881, several probable grave goods were collected during the quarrying of sand at Riensförde, including an undated spatha and lance-head, and two silver brooches that may have belonged to the same inhumation: an equal-armed brooch (Nesse type) and a unique supporting-arm brooch, both richly decorated in chip-carving (fig. 6.9).[39] The brooches can be dated to the 5th century.

The probable cemetery of Daudieck (Landkreis Stade)

The large fragment of an equal-armed brooch of Wehden type is a stray find from a probable cemetery near Daudieck – or perhaps Perlberg (fig. 6.9).[40] The 5th-century brooch is executed in silver and decorated in chip-carving, showing an unusual animal scene of four standing cows or horses.

6.3 Hoard finds

From the coastal area of northern Germany eight gold and silver hoards are known, dating from the 5th to the 7th century. They comprise 'true hoards' (collections of several objects), as well as single items deposited in a bog or an older burial mound (table 6.1, fig. 6.1). Two hoards found not far beyond the boundary of the research area, from Hamburg and Gallehus (Denmark), are also included in this overview.

The coin hoard from Altenwalde (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

At Altenwalde three and five tremisses were found in 1905 and 1915 respectively, the latter within the 'Burg von Altenwalde'.[41] One more tremissis from Altenwalde, of which the find date is unknown, was identified in a private collection some decades later. The first three tremisses are a Frankish 'civic' coin, minted by Theudemaro at Mouzon, a 'Frisian' coin of Dronrijp type (unknown variant) and a halved, Frankish or 'Frisian' coin of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type. The next five tremisses, lost during World War II, comprised four Dorestad/Madelinus coins, or, more probably, imitations of such coins, and another Frankish coin, minted by Adelbertus at Maastricht. The final tremissis is of Dronrijp type C.

Because of the rarity of Merovingian-period gold finds in northern Germany and the presence of (pseudo-)Dorestad/Madelinus coins in the first two finds and Dronrijp-type coins in the second find and the private collection, the coins from Altenwalde should probably be interpreted as the remains of a single, disturbed hoard.[42] The pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coin

Table 6.1. | List of gold hoards found along the German North Sea coast and their probable time of burial, including two finds from adjacent areas (N: Niedersachsen, NF: Nordfriesland, S: Schleswig-Holstein, H: Hamburg, J: Jutland (Denmark), mat: material, g: gold, s: silver, e: electrum).

FIND SITE (DISTRICT)	COIN	NECK/ARM RING	OTHER ORNAMENT	HACK/RING GOLD	MAT	WEIGHT (G)	DEPOSITION DATE
Altenwalde (N)	9				g	11	640-700
Larrelt (N)	?				g	-	600-700
Sievern-'Mulsumer Moor' (N)		1	5		g	120	500-550
Sievern I (N)			11		g	59	500-560
Sievern III (N)			2		g	10	500-560
Katharinenheerd (S)			1	46	s/e	169	400-520
Hamburg-Schnelsen (H)		1			g	281	400-520
Helgoland (NF)		1			g	49	450-550
Gallehus (J)			2 (or 3)		g	ca 7000	400-450/500
Heide (S)			1		g	-	450-550
Dösemoor (N)			1		s	42	400-500

37 Weber 2000, 190-201.
38 Weber 2000, 200-201.
39 Böhme 1974, 247-248 (cat. no. 43), *Taf*. 34.9-10.
40 Böhme 1974, 229 (cat. no. 13), *Taf*. 17.6.
41 Berghaus 1961; Berger 1988, 179-180 (cat. no. 8008); Häßler 2003, 146-147; Pol, in prep.
42 Compare the composition of the gold hoard from Dronrijp (Friesland, see section 4.3).

6.15 | Gold hoard from the 'Mulsumer Moor', near Sievern, containing a neck ring and five coin-pendants. Scale 1:1 (neck ring: coll. Niedersächsiches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo by U. Bohnhorst; coin-pendants: coll. Archäologisches Institut der Universität Göttingen, photos by S. Eckardt).

(ca 640/650-675) dates its time of deposition to the middle or the second half of the 7th century.

The possible coin hoard from Larrelt (Landkreis Emden)

In the vicinity of Larrelt, according to an 18th-century publication, some 'nuggets' of gold were found where today the river Ems flows.[43] These 'nuggets' may have been tremisses of the Zweins type ('Frisian grains'), dating to the 7th century.[44]

The mixed gold hoard from the Mulsumer Moor, Sievern (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1823, peat-cutters uncovered a gold hoard comprising a neck ring and five coin-pendants in the Mulsumer Moor, near Sievern (fig. 6.15).[45] The findspot is located ca 700 m east of a Migration-period fortification, called 'Heidenstadt'. On June the 9th 1923, the royal administration diligently recorded the following about the original find context:

43 Berghaus 1961, 50 (no. 16); Berger & Stroess 1988, 120 (cat. no. 2005).

44 Similar tremisses are represented in the Dronrijp hoard (Friesland, fig. 4.13).

45 Hauck 1970, 34, 272-275, with references (see note 8); Berger 1988, 225-226 (cat. no. 8070); Häßler 2003, 106-114; PoL, in prep.

46 Hauck 1970, 274 (translation by the author).

> "The site ... where the ... metalwork and the gold coins were found, is located on the top of a small hill in the Mulsumer Moor and is surrounded by shallow peatbog, at a distance of about 45 minutes from the nearest village, which is Sievern in the municipality of Bederkesa. This hillock rises about 7 or 8 feet from the surrounding peat, and its top has a near-circular flat surface almost 30 strides across"[46]

In the subsequent part of the record, it is stated that several burial mounds – containing urns with cremation remains – were found in the peatbog surrounding the findspot. On the basis of this description and the recovery of two small fragments of a similar gold neck ring in a cremation burial at Liebenau, Häßler interpreted the elevation as a Migration-period burial mound – belonging to a member of the Saxon elite.[47] In northern Germany and southern Scandinavia, however, gold neck and arm rings are only known as hoard finds. Liebenau, on the other hand, is situated in a more southerly area, where gold coins, bracteates and indeed a neck ring are known to have been deposited as grave goods.[48] The find of the gold ring and solidi in a large mound (height ca 2-2,5 m, diameter ca 15-20 m) might indicate that an old funerary monument was still visible in the Migration period and, being a striking landmark in the peatbog landscape, was considered a suitable location to bury a hoard. The discovery of the valuables in the *top* of the mound is a further indication that these are no grave goods, but a secondary deposition.

The slightly worn neck ring, weighing 98 gr, consists of two semicircular elements. The lower half of each element is decorated with crescent-shaped punch-marks. The two parts were joined by two ribbed gold strips, of which one is missing; the other ends terminate in a hook and loop. Although the shape of the neck ring is typically Scandinavian, the ring from Sievern and the find from Liebenau were hollow and not made of solid gold – as the Scandinavian rings are.[49] The similar manufacturing technique and decoration of both 'Saxon' neck rings point to local production in a 5th- and 6th-century Scandinavian style.[50]

All five coins are solidi, transformed into pendants by the addition of simple ribbed loops. Three late-Roman and Byzantine solidi were minted at the time of Valentinian I (364-375, Antioch), Valentinian III (425-455, Ravenna) and Leo I (457-474, Constantinople).[51] Both remaining coins are pseudo-imperial solidi, showing the bust of Anastasius I (491-518). One of these coins was probably minted in the Ostrogothic kingdom. Interestingly, the relative antiquity of the coins is reflected in the wear of both the coins and the loops (the coin and loop of the solidus of Valentinian I being the most worn), an indication that the coins were not looped at the same time but over a longer period. Given the differential wear of the coins and the neck ring, a relatively late date may be assumed for the ring (late 5th-early 6th century). The pseudo-imperial solidi date the time of deposition to the first half of the 6th century.

The bracteate hoard from Sievern I (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1942, peat-cutting in the very bog where the previous hoard had been found resulted in a second spectacular find: a hoard of eleven Scandinavian-type gold bracteates (fig. 6.16).[52] The findspot is situated ca 250 m southeast of the 'Heidenschanze', at a distance of ca 1 km from the earlier find. A detailed description of the find circumstances is given by Schröter:

> "In May of the wartime year 1942, farmer Johan August Hoffmann of Sievern (house no. 90) and his 15-year-old son Walter were cutting peat here [in the peatbog], when the son threw up a sod from a depth of 1.35 m. As he did so, both of them spotted something glinting in the sun: a gold coin! They continued searching and recovered a total of 11 gold discs, neatly sitting close together, upright in the peat. Apart from a piece of braided thong preserved in the loop of one of the pieces, they found nothing, neither a body nor a pouch or any such container."[53]

The hoard comprises one bracteate of type A, two of type C and eight of type D, all with a ribbed loop and a twisted or beaded wire rim. The first pendant is very similar to the type-A bracteate from Hitzum (Friesland, fig. 4.22, no. 1).[54]

47 Häßler 2003, 109-114.

48 See the discussion in section 11.2.5.

49 Brieske 2001, 149-150; see also Häßler 2003, 114-115.

50 See also section 9.3.

51 Berghaus 1961, 45 (no. 1); Pol, in prep. (interpreting the coins showing Anastasius as pseudo-imperial).

52 Schröter 1957; Hauck 1970, 120-121, 133 ff., figs. 2-4, 6; Berger 1988, 226-227 (cat. no. 8071); Häßler 2003, 124-127; IK 156-157 and 505-507.

53 Schröter 1957, 113 (translation by the author).

54 Hauck 1970, 118-120, 135-136; Pesch 2007, 93-95 (*Formularfamilie* A7).

6.16 | Bracteate hoard from the 'Mulsumer Moor', near Sievern (I). Bracteates of types A, C and D are represented. Scale 1:1 (coll. and photo Historisches Museum Bremerhaven).

Both bracteates show a stylised male face with a beard and a V-shaped decoration of beaded gold wire as part of a diadem. Moreover, they have similar loops, decorated with horizontal grooves, and a runic inscription. The inscription on the Sievern bracteate can probably be read as *r writu* ('r[unes] I write', referring to the person or deity shown on the bracteate). In contrast to the Hitzum bracteate, it has no second inscription to the left of the face, but a snake-like animal. Another difference from the Hitzum find is the presence of two small, worm- or snake-like creatures in front of the nose and chin.

Both type-C bracteates were produced with the same die. The size of the bracteates, the stamped decoration along the outer rims and the shape of the loops, however, are different. The smaller bracteate, found with the remains of a plaited leather cord, has a narrow border, punched with a row of dots. The larger bracteate, showing the central horse rider upside-down, has a broader border, decorated with punched groove lines, 'leaves' and dots. A triangular decoration below the loop is made of beaded gold wire; it has a filigree pretzel in the centre. Both pendants are part of a uniform group of type-C bracteates, showing a bearded man wearing a bird's-head diadem and riding a galloping horse.[55]

The type-D bracteates, all stamped with a single or double griffin-like animal, constitute a group of six die-linked bracteates, one bracteate showing a slightly different central motif, now in mirror image, and a bracteate with

55 Hauck 1970, 137-141 ('*westskandinavischen Gruppe*', nach Mackeprang 1952); Pesch 2007, 230-239 (*Formularfamilie* C16).

6.17 | Two gold bracteates (types C and D), probably belonging to a small hoard. The bracteates were found in a field directly northwest of the Heidenschanze, near Sievern (III). Scale 2:1 (coll. Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven, photos R. Kiepe).

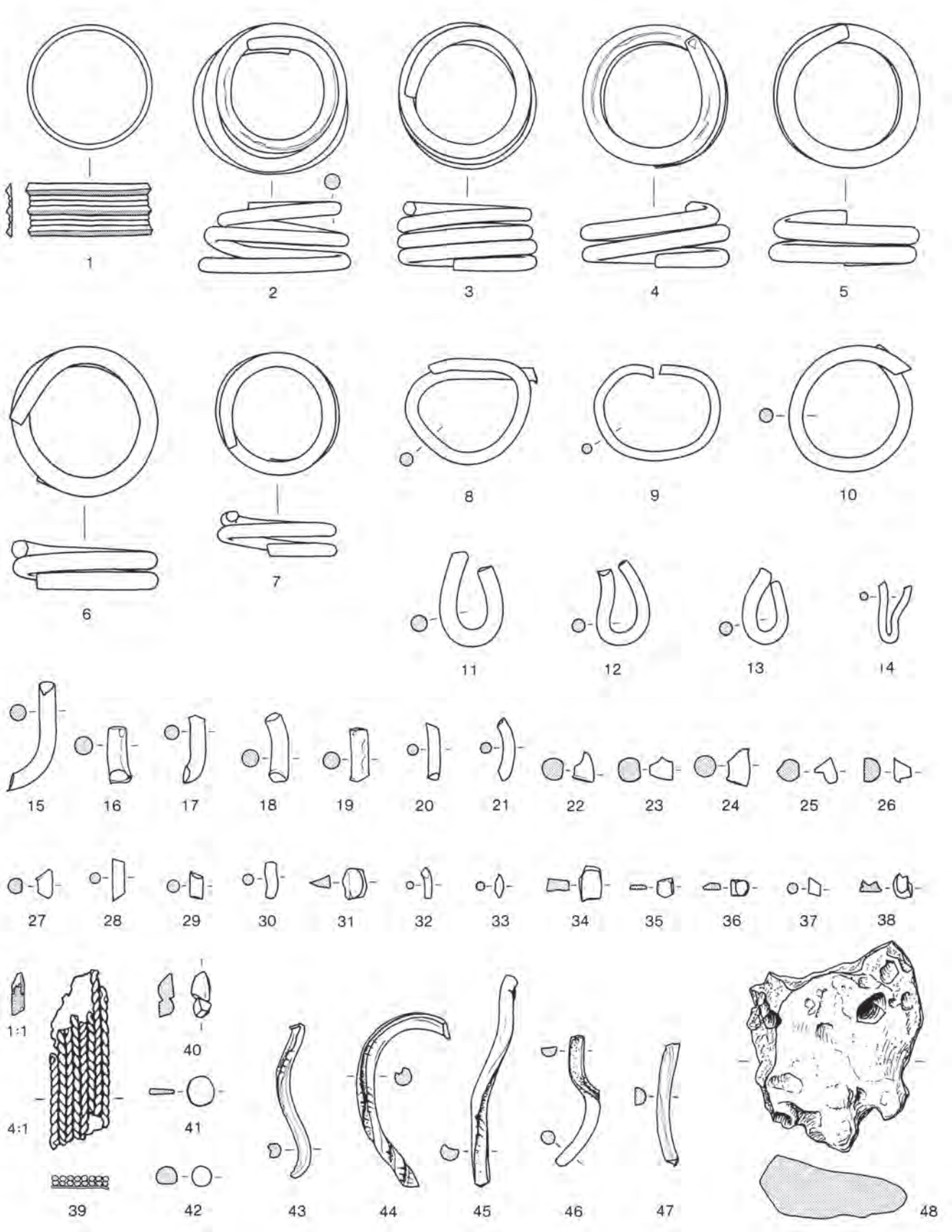
an altogether different central motif.[56] Two of the die-linked bracteates have a broad rim and four a narrower one, all punched with dots and double-crescent motifs in different patterns. Interesting details are a human lower leg with a foot in the centre, as well as a small circle above the head of the animal, a human ear and a spear or arrow to the right, and a crescent-shaped motif to the left of its body. The seventh bracteate has a narrow border punched with a row of dots. Again a human lower leg with a foot is visible in the centre of the stamped motif, and perhaps a second foot in front of the griffin's beak. The eighth and final bracteate shows two opposing, more slender animals with intertwined legs and seven dots around their bodies. The central motif is surrounded by a line of punched dots between two concentric ribs. All type-D bracteates have a different kind of ribbed loop.

The presence of type-D bracteates and the execution of the type-C bracteates in chip-carved relief (Axboe's 'head group' H4) point to a production date of these pendants between ca 475 and 520/530.[57] The type-A bracteate, belonging to group H2, probably is an older, 5th-century product. Like the bracteates from datable English and Continental graves, they were probably hoarded during the first half of the 6th century, or perhaps a little later.[58] All bracteates, and especially the type-A bracteate, show traces of wear.

56 Pesch 2007, 268-285 (*Formularfamilien* D8-9).

57 See the discussion in section 9.3.

58 See Axboe 2007, fig. 59.



6.18 | Intact and hacked items belonging to an electrum and silver hoard that was found near Katharinenheerd (nos. 1-47). It is uncertain whether the glass slag also belonged to this hoard (no. 48). Scale 1:1 (after Müller-Wille 1986, fig. 2).

6.19 | The electrum and silver items from the Katharinenheerd hoard, comprising a finger ring, spiral rings, hacked items and gold drops, of which one was beaten flat. Diameter of spiral rings 2.5-2.8 cm (coll. Archäologisches Landesmuseum Schloß Gottorf, Schleswig, photo by C. Janke).

The bracteate hoard from Sievern III (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1999, a metal-detectorist found two gold bracteates directly north-west of the 'Heidenschanze', just outside the entrance to this fortification (fig. 6.17).[59] Since both bracteates were found within a short distance of each other (ca 14 m), they were probably buried as a hoard. The findspot is part of an extensive area with high phosphate values, which indicate the presence of one or more settlement sites. To understand the archaeological context of the bracteates and to check whether any part of the hoard was still *in situ*, several test trenches were dug in the spring of 2009. Unfortunately, no further bracteates were found. Moreover, only scattered (oven) pits were uncovered, which failed to support the presence of a densely populated settlement site as was expected.[60]

One of the two bracteates is of type C, showing a horseman in high relief, surrounded by a circle of punched dots. The bracteate has a simple ribbed loop and a beaded gold wire was soldered along the outer rim, both heavily worn. Interestingly, a closely related die was used for this bracteate and for the type-C bracteates from the Sievern-I hoard, which suggests production in the same workshop.

The second bracteate, of type D, was slightly bent and damaged in recent times. The outer rim is decorated with a double circle of punched dots and, once again, bordered by a beaded gold wire. Traces of soldering on the back indicate that the broad, ribbed loop was added during a repair. Probably at the same time a decorative gold wire was soldered on below the loop, on top of the head of the griffin-like animal. Again, both the outer rim and the loop are heavily worn. Like the first bracteate, this pendant can be linked to the Sievern-I hoard; it was probably manufactured with the same die as the set of six type-D bracteates.

The bracteates from the closely related Sievern hoards I and III were probably produced, and indeed deposited, around the same time.

The ring hoard from Katharinenheerd (Landkreis Eiderstedt)

In 1872, during the quarrying of sand on a beach barrier near Katharinenheerd, a hoard containing ca 50 gold and silver objects with a total weight of 169 gr was found (figs. 6.18-19).[61] In the close vicinity, several urned cremations of unknown date had also been unearthed. The hoard was buried at a depth of ca 1 m, in a small, hand-made pot, maybe placed within a larger pot with an iron lid. In the original find report, the lid was interpreted as a possible shield boss. Most of the objects found within the pot(s) are made of gold mixed with silver (electrum), in-

59 Aufderhaar et al. 2009, 187; Jöns 2010, 77-79; Aufderhaar & Brandt 2011, 51; IK 157,2 and 507,2.

60 Pers. comm. I. Aufderhaar (Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).

61 Müller-Wille 1986, 296-301; Berg 2006.

6.20 | A gold neck ring from a marshy field near Schnelsen. Scale 1:1 (coll. Archäologisches Landesmuseum Schloß Gottorf, Schleswig, photo by C. Janke).

cluding a finger ring with decorative ribs, six spiral rings, 13 fragments of such rings and 19 pieces of hack gold (one piece decorated with thin, twisted wires). Two electrum droplets are also present, one beaten flat in a similar way to several pieces from the Netherlands (figs. 4.42, nos. 3-4, 5.45, nos. 2-3). Other items from the hoard are a fragment of a silver spiral ring, five fragments of heavy, irregularly twisted silver wire, and possibly also fourteen glass and amber beads and a glass slag.

Similar hoards with so-called 'ring money' are well-known from southern Scandinavia.[62] These hoards often also contain late-Roman and Byzantine solidi and/or gold bracteates, and can be roughly dated to the 5th, and the early decades of the 6th century.[63] This is in agreement with the decoration of the small pot from Katharinenheerd, which shows typically 5th-century bosses (*Buckeln*).

62 See Geisslinger 1967, map 10.

63 For the dating of Scandinavian gold coin finds, see section 8.2.1.

6.21 | A gold arm ring with punched decoration, found on or near Helgoland. Scale 2:1 (coll. Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Staatliche Museen Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, photo by C. Plamp).

The gold neck ring from Hamburg-Schnelsen (Landkreis Hamburg)

In 1856, a gold neck ring, weighing 281 gr, was found in a boggy field near Schnelsen, close to Hamburg (fig. 6.20).[64] Both arms of this massive ring are decorated with wavy grooves and, at the squared ends, with parallel grooves. The ring is hardly worn and was probably deposited in a peat bog. The currently known finds of gold neck rings of the same type that is found near Hamburg and Sievern (fig. 6.15) show a clustering in the southern part of Scandinavia, and are similar in date to the 'ring money' mentioned above.[65]

The gold arm ring from Helgoland (Landkreis Nordfriesland)

In 1862, an arm ring of solid gold was found on Helgoland (fig. 6.21, weight 48.8 gr).[66] Unfortunately, the find circumstances are uncertain; the ring is said to have been found either on the beach, on the southern shore of the main island, or in the bottom of a stranded ship, east of the main island. The outer side of this heavily worn slip-knot ring is stamped with a row of roughly hour-glass-shaped motifs.

Although direct analogies for the Helgoland ring and its decoration are lacking, this pieces is probably contemporary with the Scandinavian-type arm rings that are similar in shape to the neck rings mentioned above – which suggests a date in the 5th or early 6th century.[67] In view of its wear, the Helgoland ring may have been deposited in the second half of the 5th, or first half of the 6th century.

The gold horns from Gallehus (Denmark, southern Jutland)

In 1639 and 1734, two large gold horns were found close together in a field at Gallehus, near Møgeltønder, 7.5 km north of the German-Danish border.[68] With the exception of a possible third horn that may have been found in the early 19th century, no other finds are known from this field. The first two horns, weighing ca 7 kg, were stolen and melted down in 1802, after which only a drawing of these richly ornamented objects remained (fig. 6.22). From this drawing it is clear that both horns were decorated with stylized human and animal motifs, which probably relate to the same mythical narratives as the Scandinavian-type gold bracteates do.[69] Moreover, a runic inscription was carved below the upper rim of the shorter horn, reading *'ek hlewagastiz holtijaz horna tawido'* ('I, Hlewagastiz ['famous or protected guest'], son of Holt, made the horn').[70] The function of the horns is uncertain; they may have been wind instruments, or, more probably, drinking horns. On the basis of their decoration, the production of these horns is dated to around 400.[71] Although the degree of wear on both horns is unknown, a time of burial in (the first half of) the 5th century is considered most probable.

The bracteate from Heide (Landkreis Dithmarschen)

In 1851, a (now lost) type-B bracteate was found during ploughing in the vicinity of Heide – according to the find documentation, in a burial mound (fig. 6.23).[72] Since no other objects

64 Geisslinger 1967, 149 (cat. no. 98); Articus 2006.
65 For the geographical distribution, see Geisslinger 1967, map 2 (Hamburg: no. 98).
66 Ahrens 1966, 247, note 790, *Taf*. 112.1; 1980, 40; Neumayer 2010.
67 Neumayer (2010), however, suggests an earlier, Roman-period date.
68 Jankuhn 1964, 319-320, figs. 25-26; Axboe 1996, with further references.
69 Heizmann 1996.
70 Nielsen 1996.
71 Axboe 1996, 334.
72 Mackeprang 1952 (cat. no. 320); IK 74.

6.22 | Replicas of two gold horns, found in a field at Gallehus, close to the German-Danish border. The original pieces are lost. Scale 1:2 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo K. Weiss).

6.23 | Copy of a gold bracteate from the vicinity of Heide (type B), the original now lost. Scale 2:1 (coll. Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo U. Bohnhorst).

were collected, the gold pendant – like the hoard from the Mulsumer Moor (see above) – may be interpreted as a secondary deposition in the top of an older burial mound. The bracteate shows a dancing figure with animal-like figures along his arms. In front of the face of the central figure, the short runic inscription reads '*alu*' (probably referring to 'ale' and ritual drinking).[73] Below the ribbed loop a triangular motif of small gold granules and a spiral of plain gold wire were soldered on. The outer rim is decorated with concentric grooves, a row of double-crescent motifs and a beaded wire rim.

Bracteates with a related design are known from Denmark and Germany, including two finds from Nebenstedt (Niedersachsen).[74] The execution of the male head in low relief is typical of Axboe's group H2, which can be roughly dated to the 5th century.[75] The heavily worn piece from Heide will have been buried during the second half of the 5th, or first half of the 6th century.

The silver brooch from Dösemoor (Landkreis Stade)

In the late 19th century, the extraction of bog peat resulted in the discovery of an equal-armed brooch of the Dösemoor type (fig. 6.24), wrapped in a piece of textile.[76] The brooch is incomplete and must have been buried in a damaged state. Like the equal-armed brooches from grave contexts in northern Germany, this silver-gilt ornament was probably buried sometime in the 5th century.

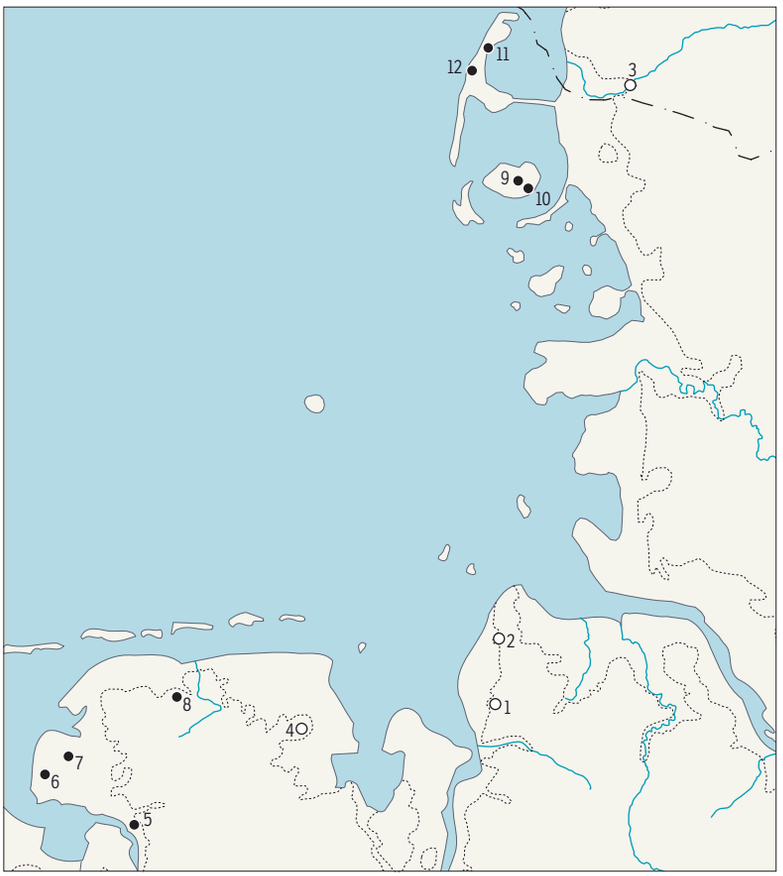
6.24 | A silver-gilt equal-armed brooch from Dösemoor. The brooch was damaged before burial. Scale 1:1 (coll. and photos Schwedenspeicher-Museum, Stade).

73 Looijenga 1997, 111-112 (Heide: p. 119).

74 Pesch 2007, 112-116 (*Formularfamilie* B4).

75 See the discussion in section 9.3.

76 Böhme 1974, cat. no. 16, *Taf.* 17.12.



6.25 | Geographical distribution of single finds of gold jewellery (white symbols) and gold coins or hack gold (black symbols) from probable settlement sites along the German North Sea coast. The border between salt marsh and sandy upland is shown as a dotted line (drawing by the author). 1. Sievern, 2. Nordholz, 3. Tønder, 4. Jever, 5. Hamswehrum, 6. Jennelt, 7. Schweindorf, 8. Alkersum, 9. Wrixum, 10. Klappholttal, 11. Wenningstedt.

6.4 Single finds from a probable settlement context

Compared to the coastal areas of the northern, western and central Netherlands, the number of gold and silver objects from settlement contexts is remarkably small (fig. 6.25). The attribution of single finds to a probable settlement context is based on their find location (at settlement mounds or on the *Geest*) on the one hand, and on the absence of further finds indicative of a cemetery on the other. One bracteate found just north of the German-Danish border is also included here.

The bracteate from Sievern II (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1950, a farmer found a type-B bracteate (weight 10.3 gr, fig. 6.26, no. 1) in a load of sand from the *Geest* ca 750 m west of the 'Galgenberg', near Sievern.[77] No associated finds were reported. The worn bracteate, which was probably damaged by the finder, shows a kneeling figure with a raised head and two griffin-like animals with bird's heads around his arms. The outer rim is divided into four zones by concentric groove lines, each zone being decorated with rows of semicircular and/or crescent-shaped punch-marks. On the obverse, the broad, ribbed loop terminates in a triangular piece of gold sheet, which is decorated with a beaded-wire rim, three sets of granules and two pretzel-shaped motifs in filigree.

The shape of the central motif is very similar to that of type-B bracteates from Sjöhagen (Sweden, Västergötland) and Nebenstedt (Germany, Niedersachsen) – showing two and three griffin-like animals, respectively.[78] Stylistically, the Sievern find is also related to the bracteate from Heide (fig. 6.23); the execution of the head on both bracteates is characteristic of group H2 (5th century).

The bracteate from Nordholz (Landkreis Cuxhaven)

In 1977, a type-D bracteate (weight 2.5 gr, fig. 6.26, no. 2) was found on a freshly ploughed field on the *Geest* near Nordholz, at Spieka-Knill.[79] Important for the interpretation of this find was the discovery of a 4th-century well, no more than ca 100 m from the findspot of the bracteate. Moreover, stray finds of pottery from the 1st to 5th centuries indicate the presence of a settlement site. The small, slightly worn bracteate shows a griffin-like animal. For the rim a twisted gold wire was used. The loop is missing; maybe it broke off when the bracteate was bent several times by the finder who at first believed it to be a piece of modern tinplate. Type-D bracteates, also represented in the bracteate hoard from Sievern I (fig. 6.16), were probably produced between ca 475 and 520/530.

The bracteate from Tønder (Denmark, southern Jutland).

Near the findspot of the Gallehus horns, in the vicinity of Tønder, a type-B bracteate was found during ploughing in 1908 (weight 2.3 gr, fig. 6.26, no. 3).[80] There is no information about any associated finds. The bracteate is intact and has a simple ribbed loop and a beaded-wire rim, which are heavily worn. The central motif shows a standing person holding an arrow, surrounded by a small human or divine '*Begleitfigur*' and three animal-like figures. Below and left of the person, two runic

77 Gummel 1957; Hauck 1970, 123-133, fig. 10; Berger 1988, 225 (no. 8068); Häßler 2003, 127-128; IK 333. For the find location, see Schön 1990, 199.

78 Hauck 1970, 128-130, fig. 10 (nos. 11, 13); Pesch 2007, 108-111 (*Formularfamilie* B3); IK 337 and 308.

79 Aust 1980; Berger 1988, 224 (no. 8066); IK 472.

80 Mackeprang 1952 (cat. no. 110); IK 353.

6.26 | Stray finds of gold bracteates from Sievern (site II; no. 1, type B), Nordholz (no. 2, type D) and Tønder (no. 3, type B). Scale 2:1 (Sievern: coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photo H. Lang; Nordholz: coll. Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum Hannover, photo U. Bohnhorst; Tønder: coll. Archäologisches Landesmuseum Schloß Gottorf, Schleswig, photos C. Janke).

inscriptions read *ladalu* and *uld aul*, the first inscription possibly referring to a trial and the second to fame, distinction or splendour.[81]

This bracteate is another representative of the 5th-century 'head group' H2. The composition of its central motif is most closely related to that of so-called '*Drei-Götter-Brakteaten*', which are found mainly in Denmark.[82]

The finger ring from Jever (Landkreis Jever)

In 1873, a gold finger ring turned up in a mole-hill, near Jever (weight 27.6 gr, fig. 6.27).[83] The findspot is on the 'Südergast', a Pleistocene spur extending deep into the marshes of the Weser estuary. The later discovery of three cremation urns (4th-5th century) and a shield boss and sword (8th century) on the same height points to the presence of a cemetery. Although the exact findspot of the finger ring is unknown, Häßler suggests that it originated from a disturbed inhumation burial belonging to the same cemetery as the urns and weapon finds.[84] Intentional hoarding of this valuable item at a nearby settlement site seems more probable, however; especially when we consider the context of contemporary jewellery in the adjacent salt-marsh area of the northern Netherlands.[85]

The finger ring is made out of a heavy gold strip with a clear midrib, on the front terminating in a flat roundel. This roundel was decorated with a central stone (now lost), surrounded by an inner circle of 12 rectangular cloisons, and an outer zone forming a cross of four single cloisons. In most cloisons garnets are still present; they are irregularly cut and poorly fitted. In the spaces between the four outer cloisons a gold wire can be seen, which was probably threaded with small beads of an organic material (shell?). The worn outer rim is made up of three beaded gold wires twisted into a heavy wire and placed between two thin, plain gold wires.

The garnet decoration of the Jever ring is Parallelled by that on Frankish gold disc-brooches with a central coin or pseudo-coin, dating to the late 6th, and early decades of the 7th century.[86] A heavy rim wire made out of several beaded wires twisted together is also known from the head- and foot-plates of several disc-on-bow brooches (e.g. fig. 4.32) and the lower rim of a sword pyramid (fig. 4.37) from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, all similar in date to the disc brooches.

81 Pers. comm. H. Nijdam (Fryske Akademy, Leeuwarden).

82 Pesch 2007, 99-103 (*Formularfamilie* B1).

83 Heinemeyer 1995; Häßler 2003, 140-141.

84 Häßler 2003, 140.

85 See section 4.4.

86 Roth 1986, *Taf.* 4 (with a solidus of Justinian I, 527-565); Heinemeyer 1995, 83, fig. 2.

6.27 | Gold, garnet-inlaid finger ring from a probable settlement site near Jever. Scale 2:1 (coll. Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Oldenburg, photos by S. Adelaide).

A piece of hack gold from Wrixum (Föhr, Landkreis Nordfriesland)

In 2011, a piece of hack gold was found by a metal detectorist on a field near Wrixum, on the island of Föhr.[87] At this site traces of a rural settlement were already located with aerial photography and geomagnetics before. The settlement comprises several farmsteads, each surrounded by a rectangular curved ditch (fig. 6.28). Because of its exceptional size (80-120 x 60 m) and the presence of the largest farmhouse (length c. 60 m), one of the farmyards can be interpreted as a local elite residence or '*Herrenhof*' (fig. 6.28). This farmstead is separated from the main settlement area by a northwest-southeast oriented bank that shows an entrance directly north of it. A ditch, belonging to the larger settlement complex, is leading from the northwest towards this entrance. The gold item was found at the site of this ditch, ca 100 m north-east of the assumed '*Herrenhof*'.

The curved piece of hack gold, having a weight of 7.5 g, was clearly cut from a piece of ring gold (fig. 6.29).[88] It has a square section; there are traces of hammering on all sides. Pieces of ring gold have mainly been found in southern Scandinavian and can only roughly be dated to the 5th or early decades of the 6th century. This dating is supported by the size and construction of the longhouses that could be identified, which are best paralleled by 4th- and 5th-century longhouses at Flögeln (Cuxhaven).[89] A good parallel for the Wrixum find is the more intact piece of ring gold from Odijk, in the central Netherlands (fig. 5.28).

Gold coins from various sites

Along the North Sea coast of northern Germany only eight gold coins from the 5th to 7th centuries have been recovered as single finds (table 6.2). With the exception of one dredge find and a find with an unknown provenance, they were found on dwelling mounds (*Wurten/Warften*) in the salt-marsh area and at probable settlement sites on the North-Frisian islands of Föhr and Sylt (fig. 6.25).

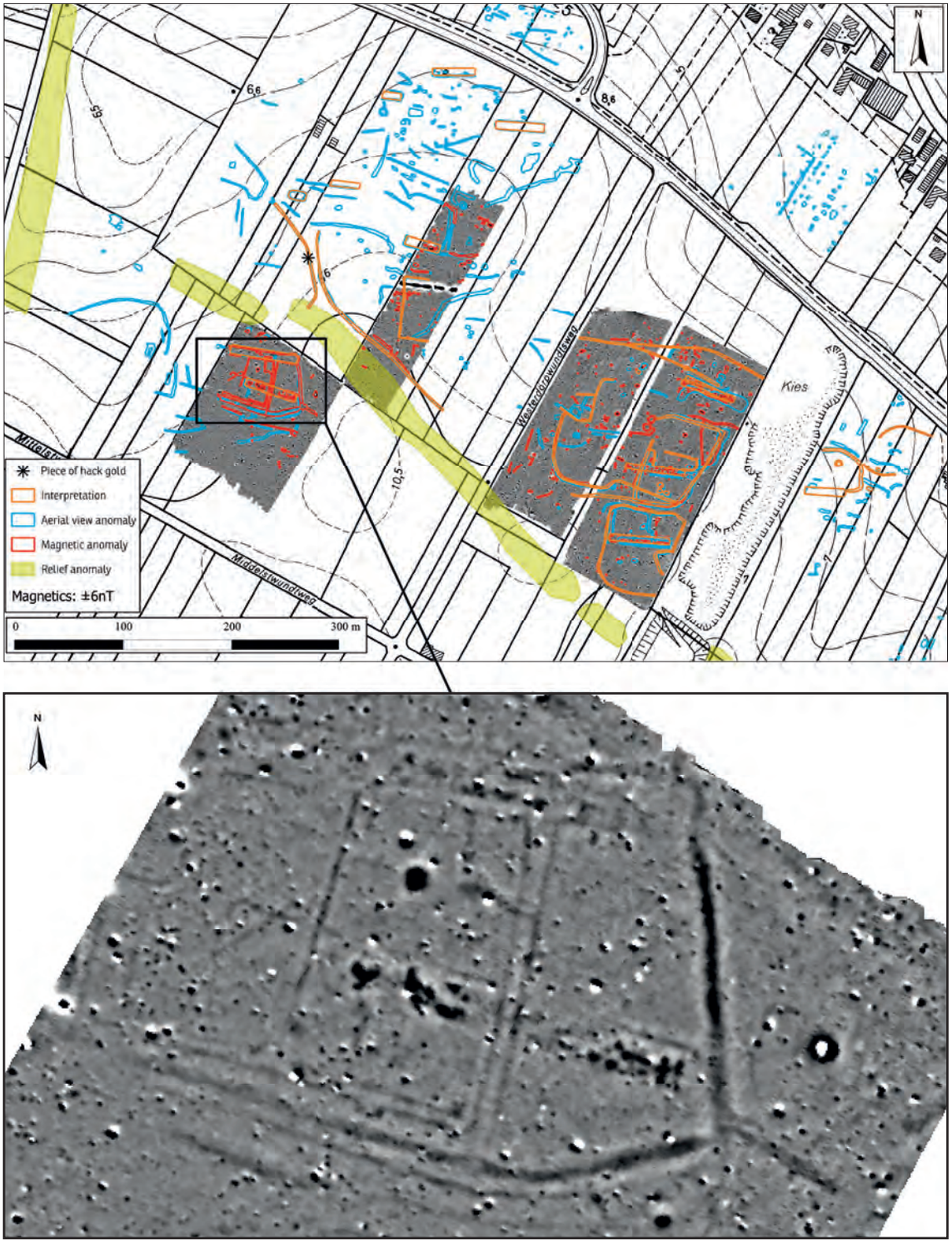
The oldest coin is the so-called 'Anglo-Frisian runic solidus' from Schweindorf. This cast and mounted 'coin' of pseudo-imperial type shows a stylized human head on the obverse, and a runic inscription below a standing male figure on the reverse (fig. 9.11).[90] Unfortunately, the original loop was removed shortly after the coin was found in 1948. The runic inscription can be read as *þe luda* or *we ladu*, possibly meaning 'For you (is this) help',

87 The find and its context have recently been studied as part of a Master thesis (Majchczack 2013).

88 Majchczack 2013, 45.

89 Majchczack 2013, 29-31; for Flögeln, see recently Dübner 2013.

90 Berghaus & Schneider 1967; Page 1968; Häßler 2003, 145, fig. 56; Looijenga 2013.



6.28 | The results of aerial photography and geomagnetics southwest of Wrixum, on the island of Föhr: traces of a rural settlement complex (top) with a probable '*Herrenhof*' (bottom, geomagnetics only), divided by a low bank with a passage. The findspot of a piece of hack gold is shown with an asterisk (after Majchczack 2013, figs. 8 and 14, slightly adjusted).

6.29 | Piece of hack gold, originally cut from a piece of ring gold, found north of the assumed '*Herrenhof*' at Wrixum, on the island of Föhr. Scale 2:1 (coll. Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Schleswig, photos L. Hermannsen).

Table 6.2 | List of single gold-coin finds from the Merovingian period. The present whereabouts of the coins from Hamswehrum, Jennelt and the German Bight is unknown (VII: Berger 1988; Berger & Stroess 1988; VIII: Komnick 1994).

SITE (LANDKREIS)	COIN TYPE AND PROBABLE ORIGIN	CATALOGUE
Hamswehrum (Krummhörn)	tremissis, Frankish/'Frisian', (pseudo-)Dorestad/Madelinus	VII-2021
Jennelt (Krummhörn)	tremissis, Frankish/'Frisian'?, civic	VII-2023
Emsland or Ost-Friesland	tremissis, Frankish, civic (Maastricht)	VII-1073
Schweindorf (Wittmund)	solidus (pseudo-coin), 'Frisian'?, pseudo-imperial	VII-2029
Alkersum, Föhr (Nordfriesland)	tremissis, Frankish, civic (Maastricht)	VIII-1108
Klappholttal, Sylt (Nordfriesland)	tremissis, 'Frisian', type Dronrijp C	VIII-1112
Wenningstedt, Sylt (Nordfriesland)	tremissis, Frankish, civic (Périgueux)	VIII-1115
German Bight, dredge find	solidus, imperial (Maurice Tiberius, Constantinople)	Pol in prep.

Table 6.3 | Chronological overview of the numbers of graves and hoards with gold and silver objects, as well as single finds from probable settlement contexts along the German North Sea coast. The finds from the cemetery of Issendorf are in brackets (settmt.: probable settlement context; *: including electrum objects; **: dating is uncertain).

	LATE 4TH-5TH CENTURY			LATE 5TH-6TH CENTURY			LATE 6TH-7TH CENTURY		
	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.
gold ornament	1**	3	-	(1)	4	3	-	-	1
silver ornament*	17 (17)	2	-	(5)		-	-	-	-
gold coin	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	7
total:	18 (17)	5	-	(6)	4	4	-	2	8

or referring to the artisan (perhaps the legendary smith Weland) or runemaster.[91] This find can probably be dated to the late 5th or early decades of the 6th century, which is when most gold bracteates from the research area were produced.[92]

The remaining coins are an imperial solidus of Maurice Tiberius (582-602), minted at Constantinople, and 7th-century Frankish or 'Frisian' 'civic' imitations of Byzantine coins (6x). Earlier gold coins, dating to the late 4th and the 5th century, are unknown from the coastal area. With the exception of a 'fresh' tremissis from Alkersum, the coins that could be studied are slightly worn.[93]

6.5 Conclusion

Gold and silver ornaments have been found all along the North Sea coast of Niedersachsen and Schleswig-Holstein, with a concentration of finds in the northern part of the Elbe-Weser region. Most finds are silver brooches or other silver ornaments, mainly deposited as grave goods during the late 4th and 5th century (table 6.3). During the 5th century and the first half of the 6th, a relatively large number of Scandinavian-type gold ornaments (neck ring and bracteates) were buried both as hoards and as single items outside funerary contexts. Only at the cemetery of Issendorf, situated near the southern border of the research area, is there any evidence of continued use of valuable items as grave goods into the first half of the 6th century. By the middle of the 6th century, this tradition had come to an end at Issendorf as well; henceforth gold coins and gold jewellery were only buried as part of hoards, or buried or lost as single items at probable settlement sites along the German North Sea coast.

91 Berghaus & Schneider 1967, 41-46; Page 1968, 21-22; Looijenga 1997, 180; 2013.

92 See the discussion in section 9.3.

93 Pers. comm. A. Pol (Leiden University).

7

Valuable items from southeast England: East Anglia, Essex and Kent

7.1 Introduction

In 5th- to 7th-century southeast England, items of gold and silver were buried as grave goods, as hoards and as single items at what presumably were settlement sites. Because the volume of early Anglo-Saxon grave goods is too large to allow the inclusion of all finds, this chapter will present the still impressive body of material from a representative selection of cemeteries in East Anglia, Essex and Kent (table 7.1, fig. 7.1). The use in the burial ritual of gold and silver items, which offer information about the sex, age and presumable social status of the deceased, is described for the 'princely' burial ground of Sutton Hoo (Suffolk, section 7.2), three cemeteries containing a 'princely' grave (in Suffolk and Essex, section 7.3) and some so-called 'folk cemeteries' (in Norfolk and Kent, section 7.4). Finally, there is a brief description of the weapon graves in these cemeteries, which often represent the richest male burials. Where possible, the dating of grave goods is based on recent East Anglian and Kentish chronologies.[1]

In contrast to cemetery finds, hardly any hoards (section 7.5) or single items of gold or silver from a secure settlement context (section 7.6) are known. For most stray finds of valuables, often discovered with a metal detector, it is uncertain whether they originate from a grave or a settlement site. Although this is also true of gold coins, especially of those transformed into jewellery, this category of valuables does seem to include a substantial number of settlement finds. The coin data for hoards and single finds were taken from several inventories, which also include finds from the on-line database of the *Portable Antiquities Scheme*.[2]

7.1 | Geographical distribution of the selected cemetery sites discussed in chapter 7. The western boundary of the research area is shown as a broken line (drawing by the author). 1. Spong Hill, 2. Harford Farm, 3. Morning Thorpe, 4. Snape, 5. Sutton Hoo & Tranmer House, 6. Broomfield, 7. Prittlewell, 8. Sarre, 9. Gilton, 10. Kingston Down, 11. Finglesham.

7.2 A 'princely' burial ground: Sutton Hoo

The richest and most famous of early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries is Sutton Hoo, which is situated on the eastern edge of a plateau overlooking the estuary of the river Deben. Both inhumation graves and cremation graves

1 East Anglian chronology: Penn & Brugmann 2007 (late 5th-6th century); Kentish chronology: Brugmann 1997; 1999 (6th century); Richardson 2005, 36-40, fig. 12 (5th-7th century). The most recent chronology of 6th- and 7th-century Anglo-Saxon grave goods, by Hines & Bayliss (2013), was not yet available during the writing of this chapter.

2 Abdy & Williams 2006 (5th-7th centuries); Bland & Loriot 2010 (5th-6th centuries); Pol, in prep. (late 6th-7th centuries).

Table 7.1 | Representative selection of cemetery sites in southeast England, with their period of use, numbers of inhumation (inhum) and cremation (crem) burials, and the presence of any 'princely' graves. The sites are arranged per county and in chronological order.

CEMETERY SITE (COUNTY)	PERIOD OF USE	INHUM (N)	CREM (N)	'PRINCELY' GRAVE
Spong Hill (Norfolk)	ca 425-550	57	ca 2500	-
Morning Thorpe (Norfolk)	ca 450-650/700	365	7	-
Harford Farm (Norfolk)	ca 675-700	46	-	-
Snape (Suffolk)	ca 475-625/700	47	52	+
Tranmer House (Suffolk)	ca 500-625	19	17	-
Sutton Hoo (Suffolk)	ca 600-700	8	8	+
Prittlewell (Essex)	ca 500-700	ca 40	-	+
Broomfield (Essex)	ca 590-630	(>)1	-	+
Sarre (Kent)	ca 480-700	294	-	-
Gilton (Kent)	ca 480-700	127	-	-
Finglesham (Kent)	ca 525-750	>250	-	-
Kingston Down (Kent)	ca 575-725	319	-	-

have been found here, part of them covered with monumental barrows (fig. 7.2). After a period of grave robbing, research started with the excavation of grave mounds 1 to 4 (1938-1939 and 1965-1971).[3] All four barrows had been disturbed by subsequent pits, mound 1 being the only one with a still intact burial chamber.[4] Between 1986 and 1992, most of the northern part of the cemetery was excavated, including a (re-)excavation of eight mounds.[5] During this campaign, several new graves were discovered, including contemporary flat graves and two clusters of unfurnished graves, belonging to a younger 'execution cemetery' (fig. 7.2, around a gallows). Finally, the building of a visitor centre in 2000, ca 400 m north of the burial mounds, resulted in the discovery of a second early Anglo-Saxon burial ground (the so-called 'Tranmer House cemetery').[6] Although the accuracy of the dating of most Sutton Hoo graves is difficult to prove, Carver's recent chronology will be used here.[7]

At Sutton Hoo, the earliest burial mounds were constructed around AD 600 (mounds 5 to 7).[8] All three mounds, forming a row, are characterized by a central cremation, placed in a bronze bowl. A cloth was used to wrap the cremated remains, or as a cover for the bowl. The deceased are a young adult (mound 5) and two adults, probably males – the first with head wounds from a blade. The grave goods from these at some point re-opened burials seem to represent a more-or-less uniform set of objects, comprising one or more boxes or caskets, silver-mounted drinking vessels, bone gaming-pieces and personal items such as a bone comb and a knife. Other finds are a ribbed silver collar and fused glass from mound 5, a pyramidal sword mount inlaid with garnets and glass, which possibly originates from mound 6, and the probable remains of an iron-bound bucket and a bronze cauldron, together with some molten gold and silver, from mound 7.

In a second stage, three more mounds were erected west and south of this 'founder group' (mounds 3, 4 and 18, ca 600-610/620). Two of the burials show a burial rite like that of the preceding stage: the cremation remains of a young individual (mound 18) and an adult man, a woman and a horse (mound 4) were placed in a bronze bowl, wrapped in or covered with a cloth. Again, both burials had been robbed, the first grave now only containing a bone comb, the second a fragment of a gaming-piece. Mound 3 shows the remains of a different ritual: two concentrations of cremation, including the remains of an adult man and a horse, were placed on a wooden 'tray' (perhaps a trough or part of a dugout boat). The finds from this re-opened grave include a unique limestone plaque engraved with a winged figure, and the lid of a bronze ewer, both imported from the Eastern Mediterranean, a Frankish-type throwing-axe, a casket faced with bone and probably displaying a chi-rho monogram, and a bone comb.[9] At about the same time as the construction of mounds 3, 4 and 18, west of mound

3 Bruce-Mitford 1975; 1978; 1983; see also Evans 1986.

4 For the re-opening of graves in early medieval times, see Van Haperen 2010 (arguing for the collection of heirlooms or 'relics', rather than grave looting).

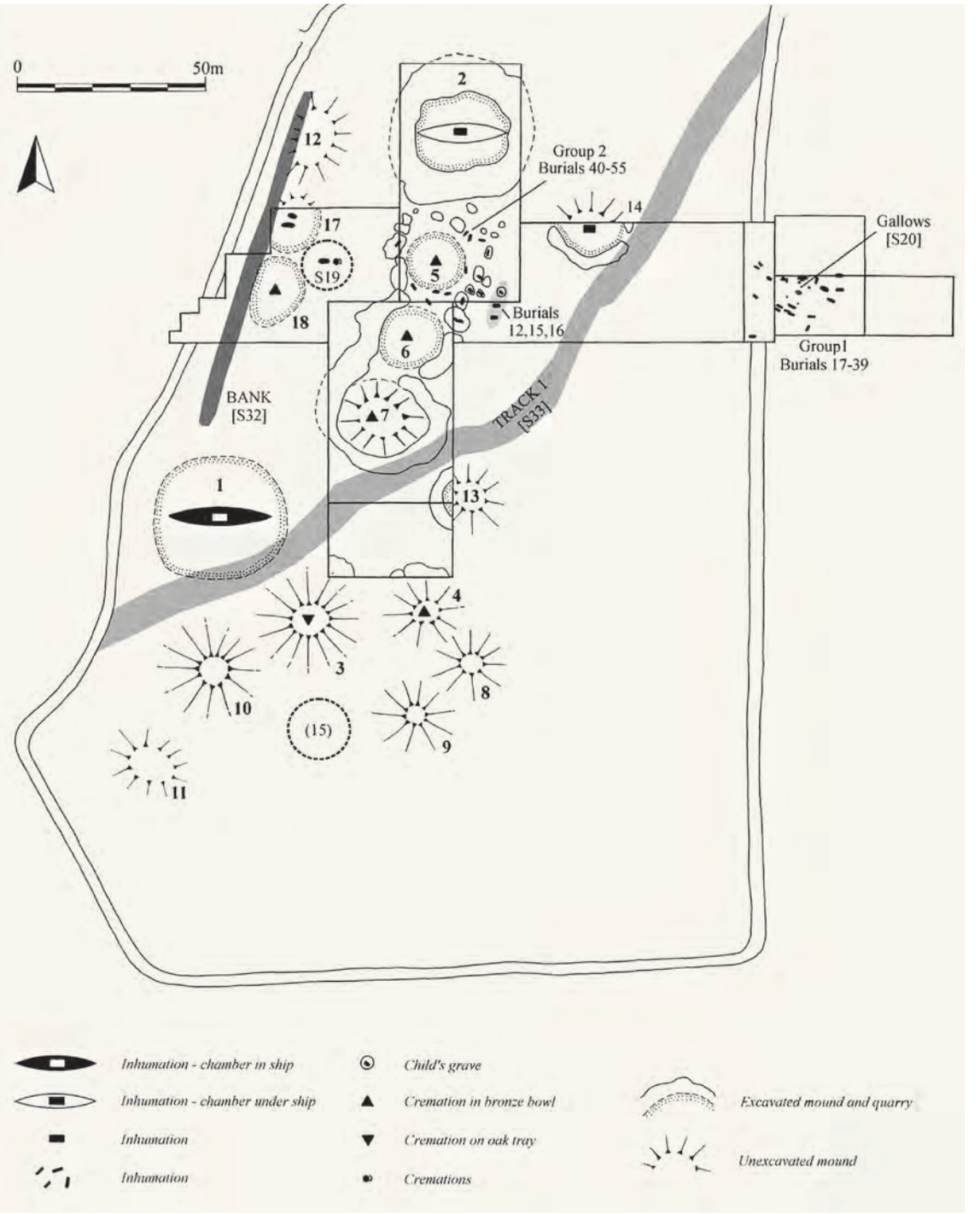
5 Carver 2005.

6 Newman 2005, 283, 483-486 (in: Carver 2005); Fern 2008.

7 Carver 2005, 307-310; for critical remarks about the dating method, see Hines 2005.

8 For the relation between grave and mound nos., see Carver 2005, table 3.

9 For the chi-rho monogram, see Grainger & Henig 1983.

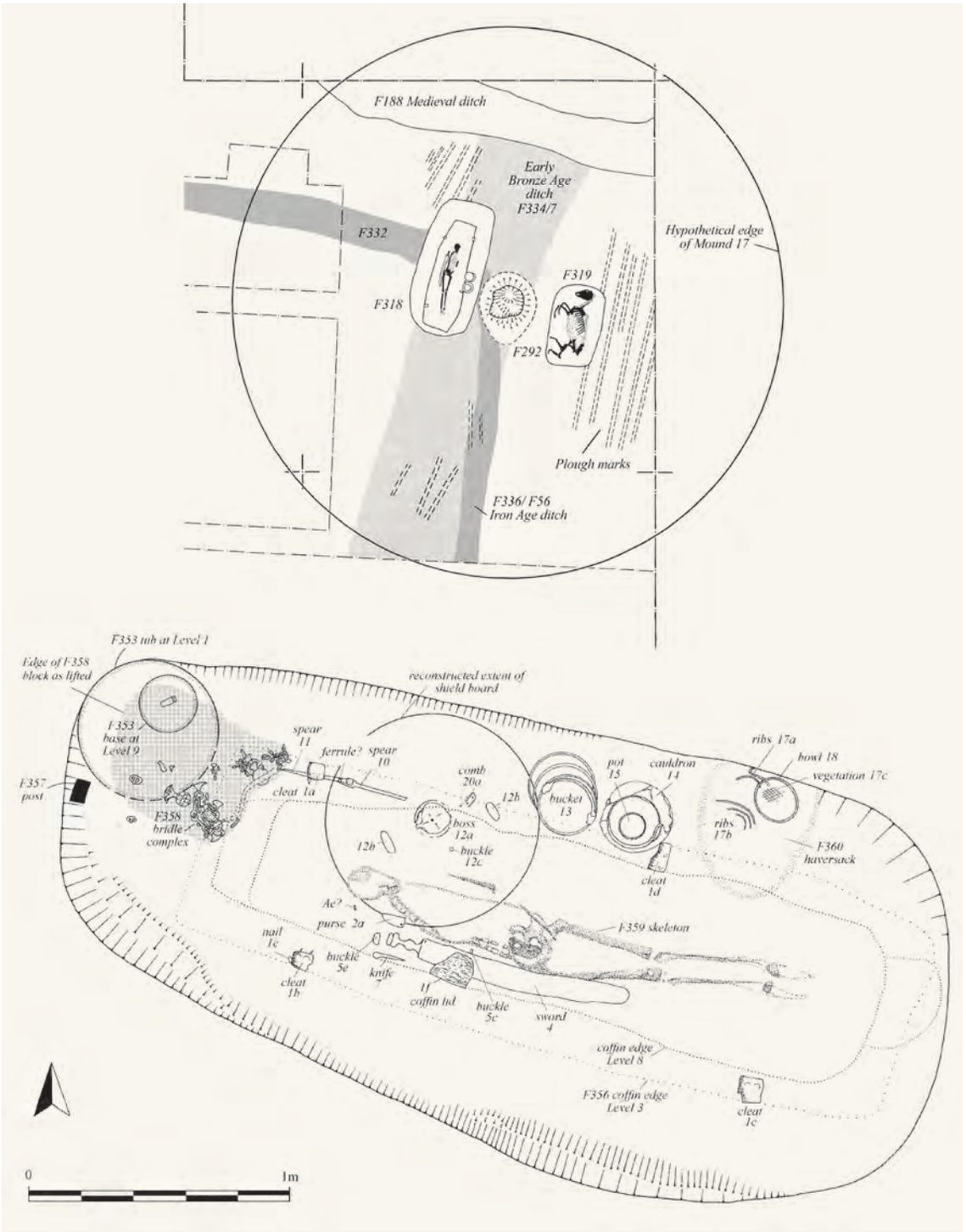


7.2 | Plan of the principal early-medieval features at the 'princely' burial ground of Sutton Hoo. Feature 32 is a 19th-century bank, feature 33 a trackway of the medieval and later periods (after Carver 2005, fig. 19).

5 two unfurnished cremation graves were dug (nos. 13 and 14, the latter being of a young male).

In a third stage, a small burial mound was constructed west of the earliest graves, covering a 'horse and warrior burial' (mound 17, ca 600-620, fig. 7.3). Because this grave was undisturbed, the interment could be reconstructed in detail.[10] After the grave pit for the warrior had been dug, two spears and a shield were placed on the grave floor. Then an iron-bound bucket, a bronze cauldron and bowl, a hand-made pot and a leather or textile bag probably containing foodstuffs were placed along the northern side of the pit, and a harness with silver-gilt and gilded bronze fittings, a saddle and a large wooden tub at the western end. A young man (aged ca 25-35) was placed in an oak coffin, accompanied by a sword, a sword-belt with bronze buckles and pyramidal mounts (inlaid with garnets, blue glass and ivory), a knife and a strike-a-light-mounted purse, containing eight unattached garnets and a piece of millefiore glass. After the coffin was lowered into the grave, a bone comb was thrown onto the coffin and finally the pit was back-filled. As part of the rite, a five-year-old

10 Carver 2000, 40-42; 2005, 127-137.



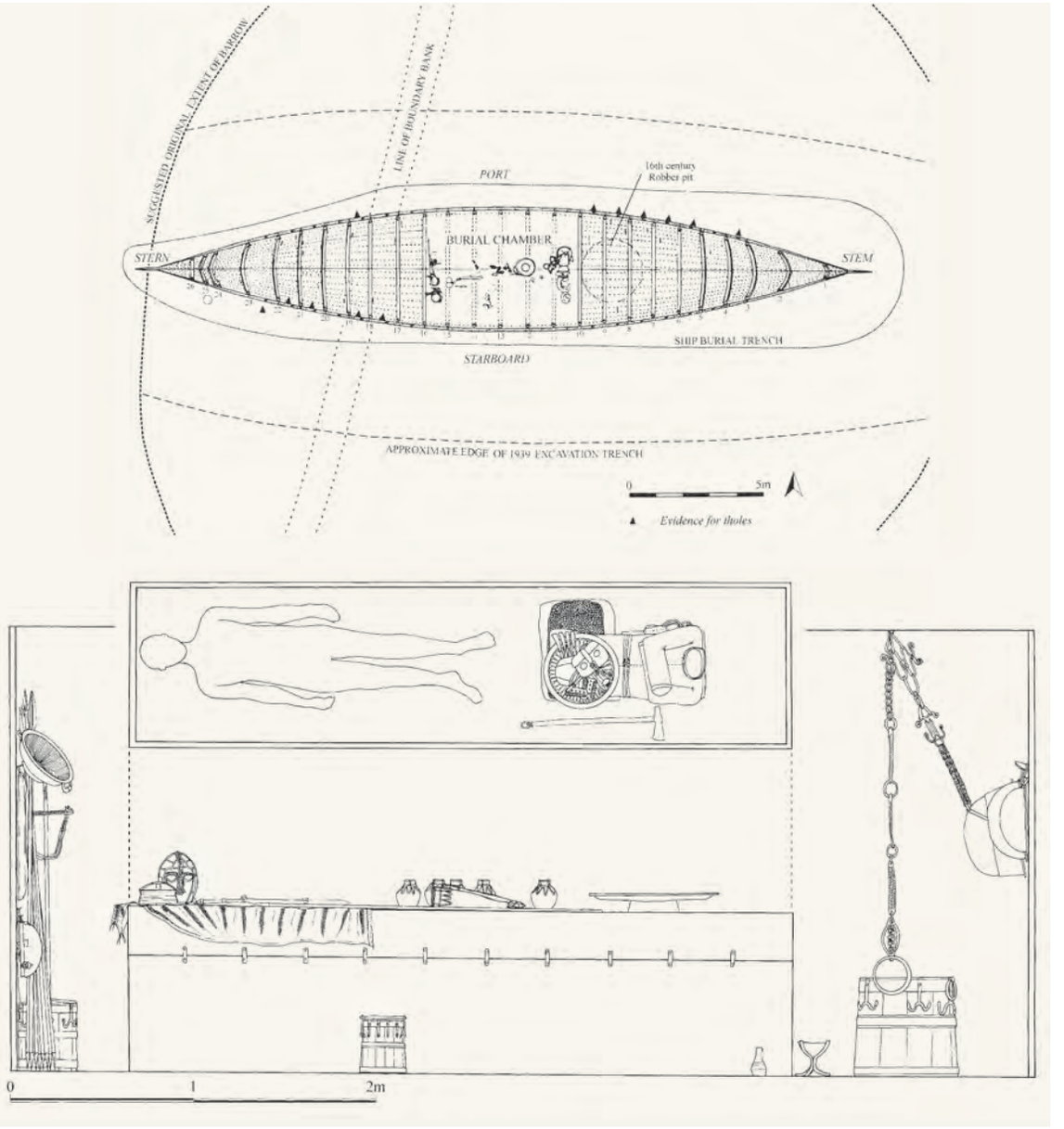
7.3 | Layout of the 'horse and warrior burial' at Sutton Hoo (mound 17, top), as well as a composite plan of the warrior's burial chamber (bottom) (after Carver 2005, figs. 50, 57).

horse was killed and interred in the second grave pit, next to its presumed rider.

In a fourth stage, the two largest mounds were constructed north and south of the 'founder group', both containing a clinker-built ship and an extremely rich collection of male grave goods (mounds 2 and 1, ca 610-630 and 615-635). Because the older mound (no. 2) was re-opened, the finds from mound 1 will be described first.[11] Within this mound, the deceased was placed in a large chamber with a gabled roof, constructed amidships of a 27-m-long, clinker-built vessel, and on the inside probably lined with textiles (fig. 7.4). The body had been laid out in the west central area, on a platform or in a coffin. On the basis of their function and position in the burial chamber, the grave goods can be assigned to three groups: a) weapons and regalia at the west end, b) feasting paraphernalia at the east end and c) mainly 'personal' possessions and equipment in the centre – the various items belonging to the public (a, b) and the private zones (c).[12]

11 For more detailed find descriptions, see Bruce-Mitford 1975; 1978; 1983; Carver 2005, 177-199.

12 Carver 2005, 187, table 21; see also Carver 2000, 43.



7.4 | Simplified excavation plan of the famous ship burial at Sutton Hoo (mound 1, top) and a reconstruction of the richly furnished burial chamber (bottom) (after Carver 2005, figs. 87, 91-92).

The first group of objects, placed against or hanging on the chamber wall, comprises a richly decorated shield (fig. 7.5, no. 3), five spears, three angos, an iron standard and a whetstone sceptre (fig. 11.22), as well as a bronze 'Coptic' bowl and a 'Celtic' hanging-bowl (fig. 8.12), a lyre (in a beaverskin bag) and an iron-bound bucket.

The second group, again partly hanging on the chamber wall, comprises three bronze cauldrons, one with an iron chain, and an iron-bound tub and bucket.

The 'personal' items, belonging to the third and most complex group, were placed over or beside the body – or, if there was a coffin, within it and on its lid (see fig. 7.4). First, a heap of textile and leather clothing, a mail coat, a pillow and several vessels (a horn cup, two 'Celtic' hanging-bowls and a wooden bowl) was placed near the feet. This heap was topped with a silver fluted bowl, containing three combs, four knives, seven walnut burr-wood cups, a silver ladle and cup, and a number of garments, including a cap lined with otter fur. An axe-hammer was lying beside the heap. Secondly, ten silver bowls, upside-down with two spoons beneath them (all Byzantine, fig. 7.6), gaming pieces, a richly decorated helmet (fig. 7.5, no. 1), two pairs of gold shoulder-clasps (fig. 7.5, no. 4), a heavy gold belt-buckle (fig. 7.5, no. 6), gold buckles and mounts from the baldric (fig. 7.5, no. 7, 9.25), a gold-decorated sword with scabbard (fig. 7.5, no. 2), a spear, and a gold-lidded purse (fig. 7.5, no. 8) with gold coins and ingots were placed above the upper part of the body. Thirdly, two drinking horns, six maplewood bottles and a large silver dish (Byzantine, fig. 8.12), which probably held burnt animal bones wrapped in a cloth, were placed above the feet and the 'clothes heap'. Finally, an iron lamp, a ceramic bottle and a third bucket were set on the surrounding floor, in the central part of the burial chamber.

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7.5 | This and next page: a selection of high-status grave goods from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. Scales 1:10 (shield), 1:4 (sword), 1:2 (helmet), 3:4 (shoulder clasps and purse-lid), 1:1 (buckles) and 2:1 (sword pyramids) (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum). 1. reconstructed helmet with tinned- and gilt-bronze decorative elements, 2. gold- and garnet-decorated sword, 3. reconstructed shield with gilt-bronze, nielloed and garnet-inlaid decorative elements, 4. gold, garnet- and millefiori-decorated shoulder-clasps, 5. set of gold, garnet-and millefiori-decorated sword pyramids, 6 gold buckle of the hip-belt, decorated in relief, 7. gold, garnet-decorated buckle of the sword belt, 8. gold, garnet- and millefiori-decorated purse-lid.

4

5

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7.6 | Three of ten silver bowls and two silver spoons, all Byzantine, from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. Scale 1:4 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Although burial mound 2 – covering a burial chamber, topped by a clinker-built ship – had been re-opened and most of the remaining grave goods were found fragmented and no longer in their original position, a set of objects broadly comparable to that from mound 1 can be reconstructed.[13] It is assumed that the body was laid at the western end of the burial chamber, with a concentration of iron and bronze objects at the eastern end, which probably included an iron-bound tub and bucket, a bronze bowl and two bronze cauldrons, one with an iron chain. The deceased was interred with his belt, sword and shield. Moreover, several knives, a silver-mounted casket, a silver bowl, a blue glass jar, as well as drinking horns and other vessels with silver-gilt mounts were placed around or above the body. Although those who re-opened the grave left behind no gold objects, we may presume that the personal equipment was similar to that in mound 1. Interestingly, the swords and drinking horns from mounds 1 and 2 were produced in the same workshops – which supports the idea that the men interred in these ship burials were close associates, probably members of the same family.[14]

In a fifth phase (ca 620-700), three flat graves were dug east of mound 5 (graves 12, 15 and 16) and two mounds were erected east and west of this 'founder grave' (mound 14 and grave 56, fig. 7.2). The richest, re-opened burial is of a woman, placed in a coffin or on a box-bed, in a timber-lined chamber (mound 14). Besides clothing of embroidered textiles, the grave goods included a silver bowl, a silver-mounted wooden drinking cup, a box with silver fittings, a knife, a quartz fragment, a purse and a bronze-and-iron chatelaine. In grave 56, originally covered with a burial mound and later re-opened, only some bronze and iron objects, a glass bead and a leather fragment were found. The flat graves, placed close together, comprise the burials of a child in a coffin (no. 12), of a young male, placed on a wooden bier that may have been part of a dugout boat (no. 15), and of a female in a coffin or on a box-bed (no. 16). Among the grave goods are a miniature spear from grave 12, and a bronze buckle decorated with gold-sheet and a small garnet from grave 15.

In a sixth and final phase, two clusters of graves were dug, one around mound 5 and one on the eastern edge of the cemetery, probably at the site of a gallows (fig. 7.2). The deceased are interpreted as victims of hanging or beheading, who were interred, without any grave goods, during the 8th to 11th centuries.[15]

An important reference site for Sutton Hoo is the Tranmer House cemetery, claimed to represent the society from which the high-ranking individuals buried at Sutton Hoo emerged.[16] This mixed cemetery can be dated from the 6th to the early 7th century and was probably focused on a Bronze Age barrow. In total, 19 inhumation and 17 cremation burials were excavated, five of the latter surrounded by ring-ditches.[17] The cremations were buried in organic containers, hand-made urns and, in one case, a bronze hanging-bowl. Interestingly, the grave with the hanging-bowl was surrounded by four other cremation graves, each containing a fragment of a bronze vessel – which suggests a direct link with the central cremation. Of the inhumation graves, two contained a sword, shield and spear, nine a shield and spear, and two a spear only. One of the shields was decorated with an-

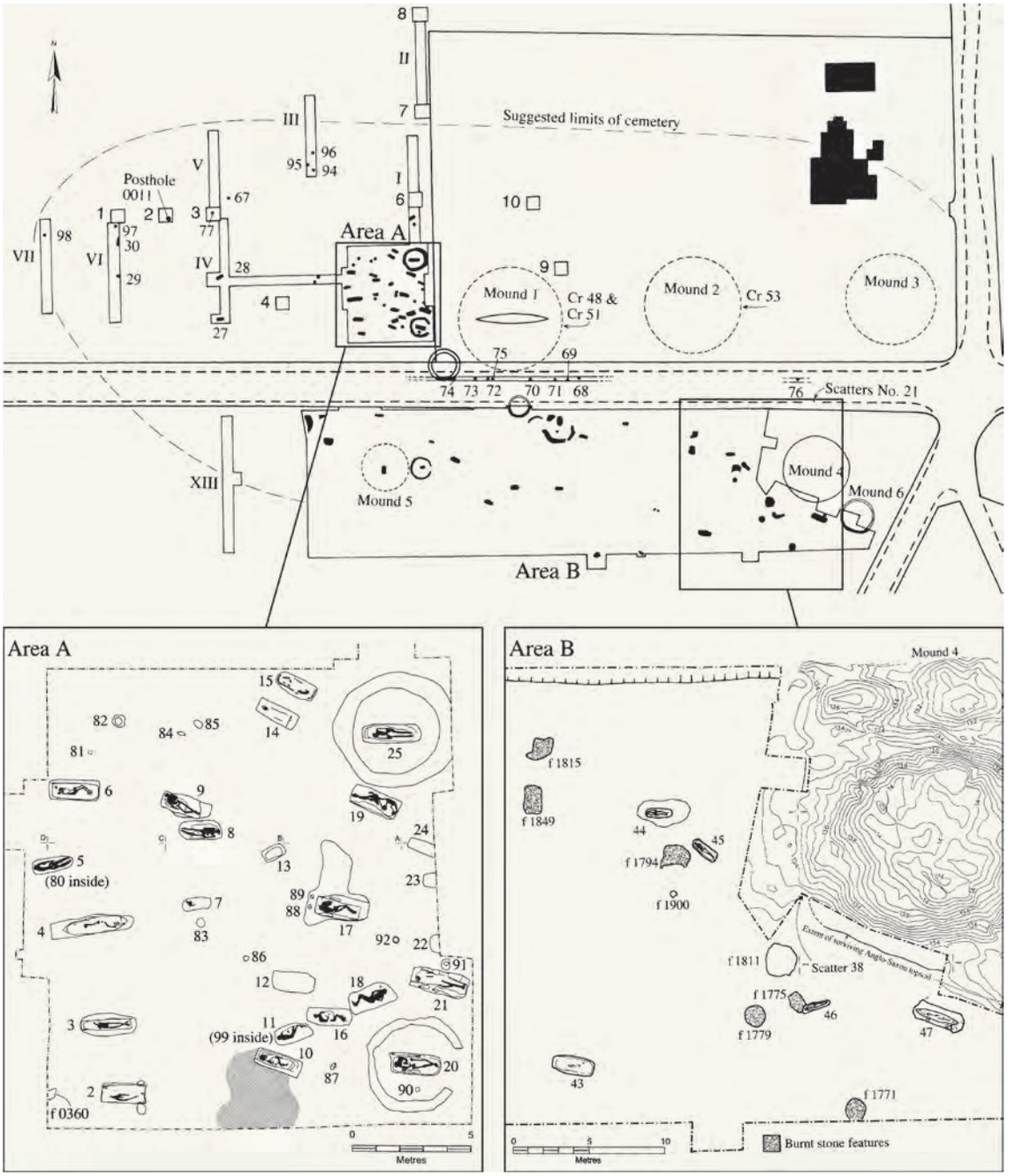
13 Bruce-Mitford 1975, 100-133; Carver 2005, 153-177.

14 Evans 2005, 256-258 (in: Carver 2005; swords: identical blade-pattern, drinking horns: same die used for silver-gilt foil).

15 Carver 2005, 347-349.

16 Newman 2005, 483-486 (in: Carver 2005).

17 Fern 2011; in press.



7.7 | Map of burial mounds and the other inhumation and cremation graves and related ring-ditches (black) at the partly excavated Snape cemetery, with more detailed maps of areas A and B (after Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001, figs. 5-7).

imal-shaped mounts of gilded bronze (grave 868). The only item of precious metal from a female burial is a silver brooch fragment (grave 960). Two stray finds, also related to the Tranmer House cemetery, are a bronze bucket and a gold coin-pendant, made from a solidus of Honorius (395-423).

A fact significant for the interpretation of Sutton Hoo is that the 'princely burial ground' was used for a short period only, mainly by aristocratic males. According to Carver, the separation of this cemetery from the usual 'folk cemeteries' like the one at Tranmer House, is linked to the creation of the early Anglo-Saxon kingdom of East Anglia.[18] In this perspective, certain of the burials might be those of historically known members of the East Anglian royal family (the Wuffingas), the bronze bowl burials belonging to the time of Wehda, Wuffa († 578) and Tyttla († 599), the ship burials to the time of Rædwald († 624/625), Eorpwald († 627/628) and Sigebert († 636), and the execution burials to the days of their Christian successors (for the Wuffinga genealogy, see fig. 2.7).[19]

18 Carver 2005, 499.

19 Carver 2005, 503.

7.8 | Gold, filigree-decorated finger ring with a Roman-period intaglio from Snape mound 1. Scale 2:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

7.3 Cemeteries with 'princely' graves: Snape, Prittlewell and Broomfield

In contrast to Sutton Hoo, two other 'princely' burials in southeast England were part of larger 'folk cemeteries' (Snape and Prittlewell). This most probably also goes for a third 'princely' burial (Broomfield).

The cemetery of Snape (Suffolk)

Between 1986 and 1992, a mixed cemetery was partly excavated north of Snape (fig. 7.7). In the 19th century, a group of nine or ten barrows belonging to this cemetery were robbed, but one of the barrows, containing a 'princely' ship burial, was more properly investigated.[20] The cemetery is situated in the Sandlings area, north of the river Alde, at the site of an older cemetery, of which a Bronze Age and a 4th-/5th-century urn were recovered. The burial ground was visible both from the river and from the sea, possibly serving a navigational purpose in marking the mouth of the Alde.

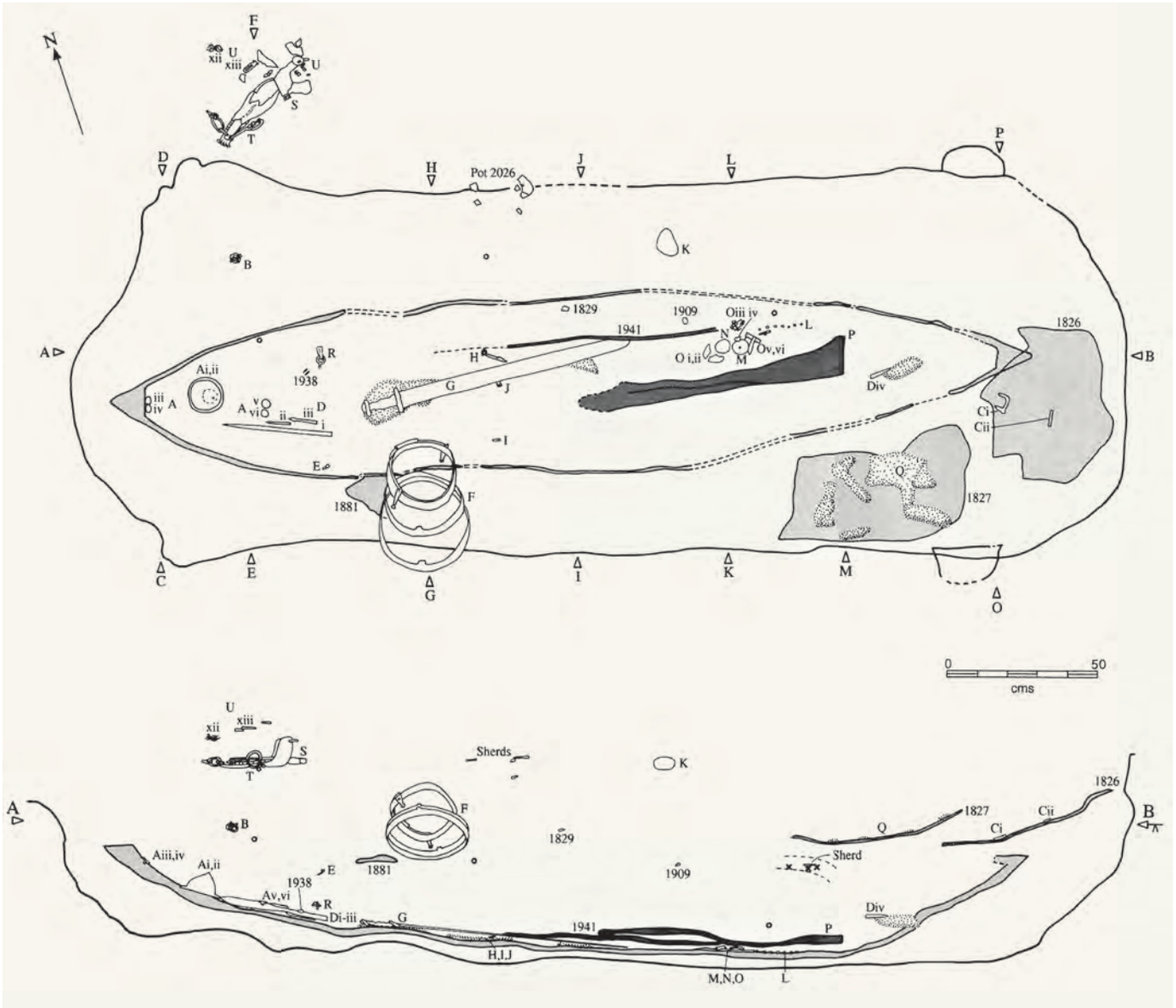
During the 1986-1992 excavations, ca 20% of the burial ground was investigated, with barrows clustering in the eastern and southern part of the cemetery, while inhumation and cremation graves were found in between and more to the north and west. When the finds from earlier research are included, 52 cremation and 47 inhumation burials were documented at the site. Although the grave goods are generally not of types that allow a precise dating of the individual graves, a chronological division between cremation and inhumation graves can be made. Cremation graves can be dated from the late 5th or early 6th to the (early) 7th century, and the inhumation graves probably to the second half of the 6th and the early 7th century. All weapons and most other high-status grave goods originate from male inhumation graves. Because the skeletons only survived as silhouettes in the sand, there is little information about the age of the deceased.

The weapon graves show a remarkable variation in execution, ranging from a clinker-built ship, some log boats and coffins or biers, to linings in textile or leather. The 'princely' ship burial (mound 1) occupied a central position within the cemetery. It was the westernmost of three large barrows (mounds 1 to 3), that like mounds 5 to 7 at Sutton Hoo form a row. An 'excavation' in 1862 showed that all three mounds had been robbed, mound 1 still containing the remains of a 16.5-m ship and a rich collection of grave goods. Most items were found at the very base of the ship, probably amidships. They date the burial to the second half of the 6th century and probably to around 600, one to three generations before Sutton Hoo's mounds 1 and 2.[21] The finds comprise a Continental gold finger ring with a Roman-period intaglio (fig. 7.8), fragments of a glass claw beaker, a fragment of a glass jar, two spears, the probable remains of a woollen cloak, and a few pieces of jasper (a type of quartz) that belonged to an unknown object. The finger ring and glass beaker were buried as 'old' pieces, produced in the early and mid 6th century, respectively. Unfortunately, no ship or chamber survived, nor have any early Anglo-Saxon metal finds been reported from mounds 2 and 3.

In the southeastern part of the cemetery, close to mounds 4 and 6, the best-preserved log boat was found in grave 47 (adult?, fig. 7.7: area B). This 3.1-m boat was covered or lined with fabric, a collection of grave goods being buried within and upon it (fig. 7.9). A shield and a bundle of three spears were placed near the head of the deceased, and a sword with scabbard lay on his body. Other personal items include a pillow, a bronze buckle, a knife, a comb, a ceramic spindle-whorl and probably

20 Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001. For the ship burial, see also Bruce-Mitford 1974, 118-131.

21 Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001, 196 (second half of the 6th century); Carver 2005, 304 (ca 600).



7.9 | Excavation plan and long section of the boat grave 47 at Snape (after Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001, fig. 75).

a wooden box. Finally, three deposits were found higher up in the back-fill, placed well outside the log boat: an iron-bound bucket, a probable animal offering and a horse's head complete with iron bit.

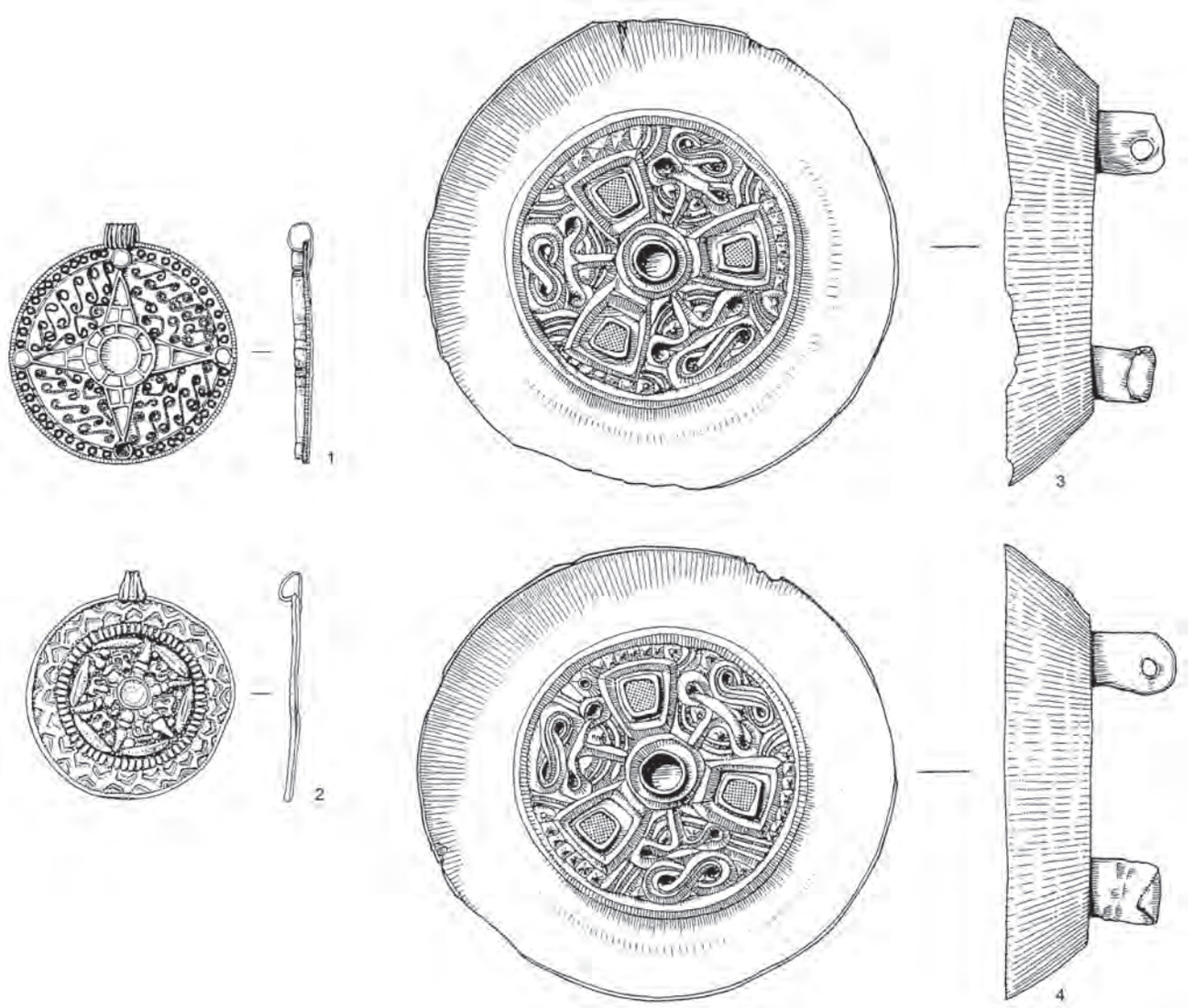
West of mound 1, a second, and half of a probable third log boat were used as burial containers in two adjacent graves (fig. 7.7: area A). The boat grave contained a knife, an iron buckle and two drinking horns without metal fittings (grave 4, juvenile?), the other grave held a shield, a spear, a knife and a bronze and iron buckle (grave 3).

Nine burials with other types of container also yielded one or more weapons. In three burials a spear and shield were found, in one case together with a lyre (grave 32). Single spears were buried in six graves, one accompanied by a buckle with a silver loop and tongue (grave 36).

The only high-status object from a probably female inhumation burial was a horn cup or drinking horn with a bronze rim mount (grave 18). Moreover, the cremated remains of a probable female were buried in a bronze bowl (grave 68). No female jewellery of gold or silver was found at the Snape cemetery.

When we compare the cemeteries of Sutton Hoo and Snape, some interesting similarities and differences can be observed.[22] On the one hand, both cemeteries have a location overlooking a major river estuary, and show a similar range in burial ritual, with ship burials representing the highest social status. On the other hand, there is a difference in status of the burials (elite burials versus elite *and* 'common' burials), their date (Sutton Hoo starts when Snape probably comes to an end) and the length of time that the cemeteries were in use (late 6th-7th century versus late 5th/early 6th-early 7th century). According to

22 Filmer-Sankey 2001, 264-265 (in: Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001).



7.10 | Stray finds from the Prittlewell cemetery site: a gold, filigree- and garnet-decorated pendant (no. 1), a gold pendant with stamped and punched decorations (no. 2), and a set of gilded-bronze cast saucer brooches decorated with garnets (nos. 3-4). Scale 1:1 (after Tyler 1988, fig. 14).

Filmer-Sankey, the similarities in burial rite prove that the people buried at Sutton Hoo and Snape both had their origins in the Sandlings area. At Snape a local elite is thought to have developed, not yet able to disengage from its local ties, while the aristocratic burials at Sutton Hoo mark the emergence of a royal dynasty wielding well-established, regional power.[23]

The cemetery of Prittlewell (Essex)

Preceding road construction at the site of a known, Roman-period and early Anglo-Saxon cemetery, the exceptionally rich burial of the so-called 'Prittlewell prince' was uncovered in 2003.[24] The Prittlewell cemetery is situated on the southeastern side of a shallow valley, where a small river (the Prittle Brook) bends to join the river Roach. Unlike Sutton Hoo and Snape, the site does not overlook a large river estuary; it only provides a view north along the Prittle valley, towards the river Roach.

The first grave goods from the Prittlewell cemetery were collected in 1887, and included an early Anglo-Saxon spearhead.[25] In 1923, 16 certain and 11 possible inhumation graves from the early Anglo-Saxon period were found, together with some Roman-period graves. The early Anglo-Saxon graves included at least 18 weapon burials. Besides the usual spear, they contained a sword (6x) and/or a shield (6x) – in one case together with an iron, silver-decorated buckle. South of these, a male burial with a complete weapon set (spatha, shield boss and spear) and the only female burials with high-status ornaments were found some years later (1930). The female grave goods, which may have belonged to the same grave

23 Filmer-Sankey 2001, 266 (in: Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001); see also Carver 2005, 497.

24 Hirst et al. 2004; Blackmore 2008; 2013 (see also cat. nos. 153-160); Pollington 2008, 126-128; Webster 2011; Higham 2013.

25 For the finds predating the 2003 excavations, see Tyler 1988.

7.11 | A reconstruction of the burial chamber in which the 'Prittlewell prince' was interred (after Blackmore 2008, fig. 5).

or to different graves, were buried with a gold, filigree- and garnet-decorated pendant, a gold pendant with a stamped decoration, and a pair of gilded-bronze, cast saucer brooches with keystone garnets – all showing Kentish influences and probably dating to the second half of the 6th or the early 7th century (fig. 7.10).[26]

The recent excavations uncovered three more early Anglo-Saxon graves. Two of these are flat graves, one without finds and one with a complete weapon set (sword, shield and spear). The third and most exceptional grave had been covered with a monumental mound and contained an intact burial chamber with a coffin (or box-bed) placed at its north end (fig. 7.11). Within the coffin some 'personal' belongings were placed: a gold belt-buckle (fig. 7.12, no. 1), two bronze shoe-buckles and gold braid of clothing were found, as well as two small gold-foil Latin crosses – which had probably been placed on the eyes (fig. 7.12, no. 2). Moreover, two Frankish tremisses were found near the waist, on the left side of the deceased (perhaps put in the left hand) and below the buckle (held in the right hand or in a purse suspended from the hip-belt). The Frankish tremisses, one of which was minted in Paris, can be dated after ca 585. Unfortunately, no skeletal remains were preserved.

Most of the other grave goods were placed along the wooden walls of the rectangular chamber, partly hanging on iron hooks. As in mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, a spatial division can be made within the burial chamber between a zone with 'public' items (north and east side of the central grave, mainly feasting equipment) and a zone with 'private' items (south and west of it, weaponry and other 'personal' belongings). The objects found in the northern part of the burial chamber, closest to the coffin, comprise an iron standard or candelabrum, a bag with 57 bone gaming-pieces and two large dice of antler, two wooden cups with gold rim mounts, an iron-bound wooden tub and, hanging on the wall, a Byzantine flagon (fig. 7.12, no. 4) and a 'Celtic' hanging-bowl, both made of bronze. The tub contained a small bronze bowl and an iron scythe blade. Along

26 Tyler 1988, 113.

7.12 | A selection of high-status grave goods from the burial chamber at Prittlewell. Scales 1:1 (gold items), 3:4 (spoon and flagon) (coll. Museum of London Archaeology Service, photos A. Chapping). 1. gold buckle of the hip-belt, 2. gold-foil crosses, probably placed on the eyes of the deceased, 3. silver spoon, 4. bronze Byzantine flagon.

7.13 | Glass vessels, wooden vessels and drinking horns along the eastern wall of the burial chamber at Prittlewell, during excavation (photo Museum of London Archaeology Service).

7.14 | Three gold ornaments from a chamber burial near Broomfield. Scale 3:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum). 1. gold, garnet-decorated sword-pyramid, 2. gold, garnet- and enamel-decorated buckle-tongue mount, 3. gold, filigree-decorated strip, probably belonging to the same buckle.

the eastern wall were placed a good number of vessels (fig. 7.13): a large bronze cauldron with an iron lamp inside it, four glass squat jars, two drinking horns and five wooden drinking cups with gold and bronze rim mounts, and two iron-bound buckets. Besides, a bronze bowl and cauldron of Eastern Mediterranean origin were hanging from this wall. The finds from the southern and western end comprise an iron folding stool of Roman type, weaponry (a gold-decorated sword, a shield and two spears), a lyre and a small wooden box containing a Byzantine silver spoon (fig. 7.12, no. 3). The spoon bears a largely illegible, two-line inscription below a cross.

In preliminary publications about the 'Prittlewell prince', it is suggested that the deceased might be identified as Sabert, nephew of the Kentish king Æthelbert and ruler of the kingdom of Essex.[27] Both leaders were converted to Christianity about a decade before they died in the year 616, after which Sabert's sons reverted to paganism. While Æthelbert was buried in a modest grave near the church he had founded in London, the splendour of the Prittlewell finds is assumed to reflect the family's return to pagan traditions, while still respecting Christian symbols.[28] According to Webster, however, the burial represents a 'first generation Christian', who was buried with clearly Christian symbols (e.g. the gold crosses and silver spoon) but without the lavishly decorated metalwork that is known from Sutton Hoo mound 1 (compare the gold buckles from both graves).[29] This, together with the execution of the grave goods, would date the burial to the early decades of the 7th century (ca 600-620).[30]

The cemetery of Broomfield (Essex)

In 1888, the remains of a sword, spear and knife, as well as three gold items were found in the gravel pit 'Clobb's Row' at Broomfield, near Chelmsford.[31] The gold items are a sword pyramid and a buckle-shield, as well as a filigree-decorated strip that probably belonged to the same buckle (fig. 7.14). The pyramid is inlaid with garnets, and the buckle-shield with garnets and blue glass paste; both can be dated to the late 6th or the early decades of the 7th century.[32] Six years after the first discovery, excavations revealed a partially destroyed burial chamber and a rich collection of high-status objects, to which the previously recovered gold items can probably be added: a complete weapon set (sword, spear and shield), a bronze bowl, one and possibly two drinking horns, two squat jars of blue glass (fig. 7.15), two turned beechwood cups with gilded bronze rims, an iron tub, two iron-bound buckets (fig. 7.15), an iron lamp (fig. 7.15), a ceramic pot and textile remnants. No skeletal remains were found. According to the excavator, the body may have been cremated within the burial chamber, as the presence of charcoal might indicate. Given the parallels at Sutton Hoo and Prittlewell, however, interment seems more likely for the Broomfield burial too. Documented remains of wood and iron may have belonged to the largely decayed coffin. There is no information about any monumen-

27 Hirst et al. 2004, 39-42; Blackmore 2008, 339-340.

28 Blackmore 2008, 339.

29 Webster 2011, 271.

30 Webster 2011, 267, 272. Blackmore (2008, 339) dates the burial to ca 600-650.

31 Pollington 2008, 125-126, with references; pers. inf. L. Webster (London).

32 For the sword pyramid, see Menghin 1983, 365 (cat. no. 87).

7.15 | Selected grave goods from Broomfield, probably originating from the same chamber burial as the gold ornaments in figure 7.14. Top: iron-bound bucket and iron lamp, bottom: blue glass jars. Scales 1:4 (bucket and lamp), 3:4 (jars) (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

tal barrow or surrounding burials, although this burial – like that of the 'Prittlewell prince' – most probably was part of a larger 'folk cemetery'. The person buried in the chamber grave at Broomfield clearly belonged to the same status level as the individuals in the 'princely' or 'royal' graves at Snape, Prittlewell and perhaps even those at Sutton Hoo.

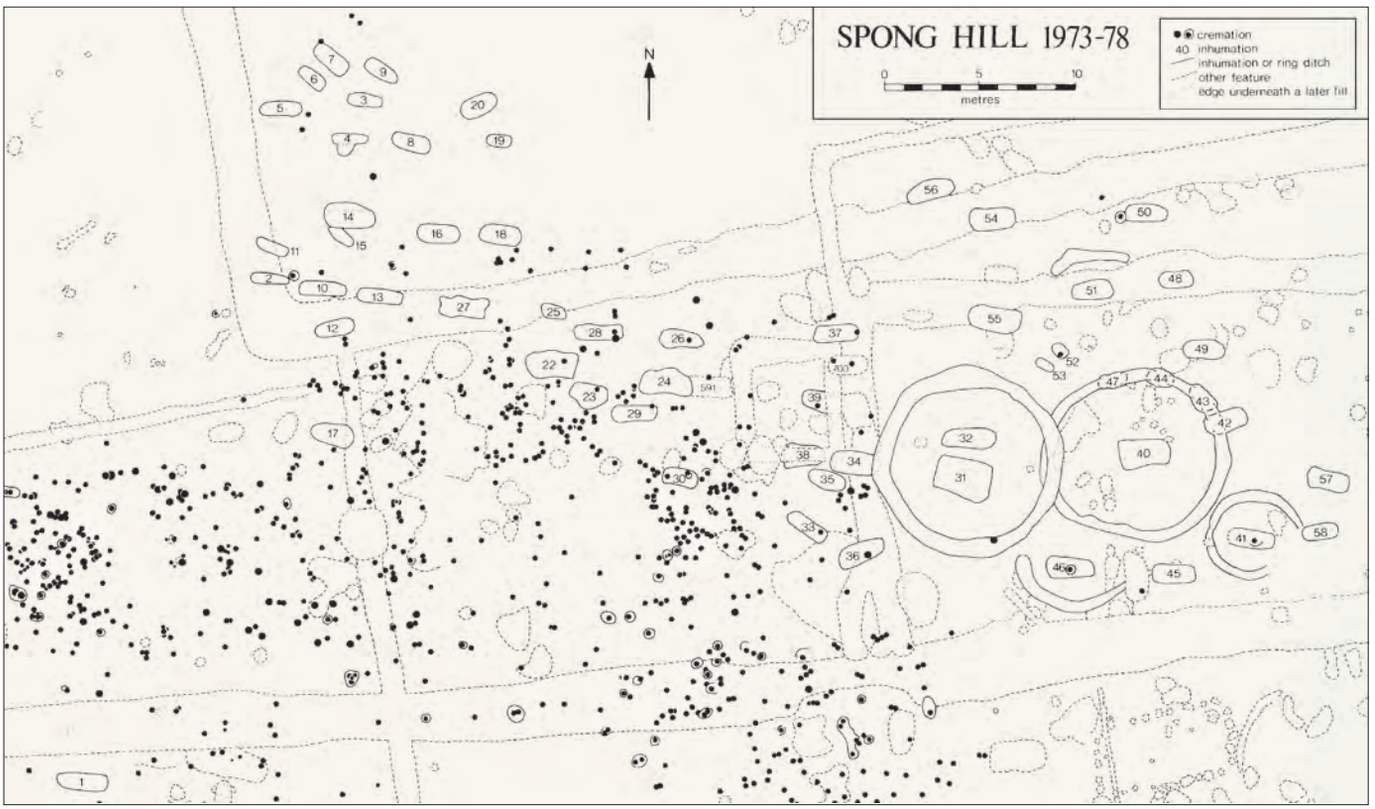
7.4 A selection of 'folk cemeteries' in Norfolk and Kent

The bulk of cemeteries in southeast England can be labelled as 'folk cemeteries', lacking graves of a similarly high status to those at Sutton Hoo, Snape, Broomfield and Prittlewell. Although hundreds of such cemeteries are known from the research area, an impression of the chronological and regional variation in the use of gold and silver in the burial rite will be given by briefly presenting seven cemeteries, three in Norfolk (Spong Hill, Morning Thorpe and Harford Farm) and four in Kent (Finglesham, Sarre, Gilton and Kingston Down, the last three to be treated together). The grave goods show culturally very different developments in the areas north and south of the Thames, with Essex taking an intermediary position by virtue of adopting a mixture of East Anglian and Kentish customs.[33] The selected cemeteries from Norfolk and Kent are presented in chronological order.

The cemetery of Spong Hill (Norfolk)

Between 1968 and 1981, a mixed cemetery dating from the second quarter of the 5th to the

33 See the discussion in chapter 9.



7.16 | Map of the northeastern part of the cemetery at Spong Hill. The inhumation graves are numbered (after Hills et al. 1984, fig. 1).

mid 6th century was fully excavated at Spong Hill, west of Billingford.[34] The cemetery lies on the southern flank of a low ridge, overlooking the Black Water river. In total, ca 2500 cremation and 57 inhumation burials were documented, dating from the first quarter of the 5th to the mid 6th century (figs. 3.21, 7.16). The layout of the cemetery is closely bound up with two rectangular, Roman-period enclosures. The cremation graves were dug in the northwestern corner and to the north and west of the larger enclosure, and the inhumation graves lay within and west of the smaller one. After two early, 5th-century phases with cremation graves only (phases A-B, ca 400/420-470/490), both cremation and inhumation were practised probably from the last third of the 5th century (phase C, ca 470/490-530/550).[35] Directly west and east of the burial ground the remains of a contemporary settlement were found, including postholes of short houses and sunken huts (fig. 3.21).[36]

Two presumed 'founder graves' of the inhumation cemetery are the richest male inhumations at Spong Hill (graves 31 and 40, ca 500).[37] They both are chamber burials, which had each been covered with a large barrow. Grave 31 contained a spear and shield, a silver-plated bronze strip of unknown function and several iron objects, including a knife and two buckles.[38] The shield board was decorated with two gilded bronze appliques in the shape of a fish. Some poorly preserved bones from the burial are of an adult male (ca 40 years old), a child (ca 12 years old) and a red deer. If indeed there were two individuals, the child may have been interred soon after the adult, disturbing the original burial.[39] Grave 40 produced a complete weapon set (spear, shield and spatha with scabbard), as well as an amber sword bead, a bronze-bound bucket and a wooden bowl. The mouth of the sword scabbard has a strip of gilded bronze, showing chip-carved decoration in 'Quoit Brooch style'.[40] The sword was probably an heirloom dating from the mid-5th century.[41] No bones were preserved. Most of the other weapon graves cluster around these chamber burials and can be dated to the late 5th and the first half of the 6th century: four

34 Hills 1977a; 1977b; Hills & Penn 1981; Hills et al. 1984; 1987; 1994; McKinley 1994. For a recently published chronology and synthesis, see Hills & Lucy 2013.

35 The third phase equates with the earliest phase of the chronology set out by Penn & Brugmann (2007, 59, 70-71, figs. 5.14-15: phases FA1-2/MA1-2); see Hills & Lucy 2013, fig. 3.30.

36 Rickett 1995, 41-58, 154-156; Hills & Lucy 2013, 24-26, 267.

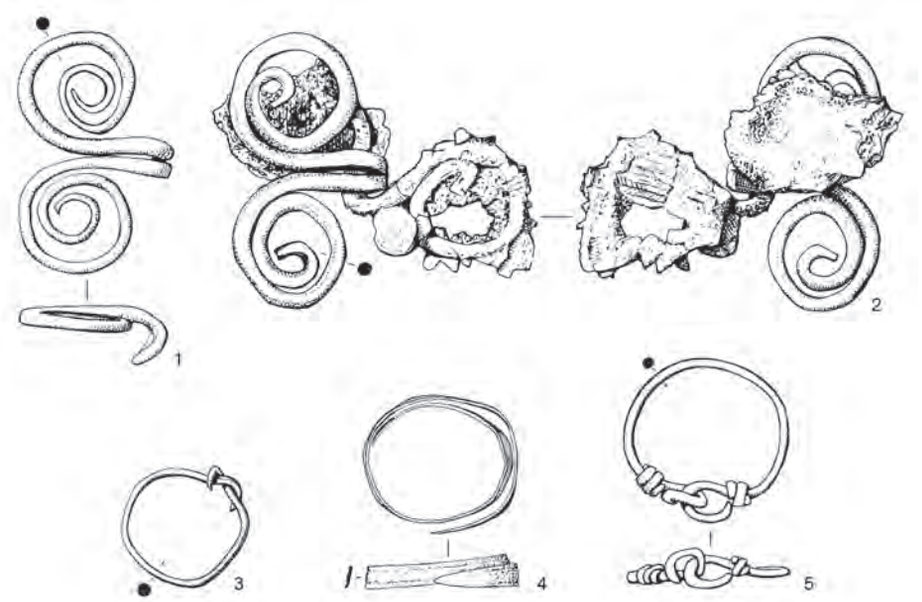
37 Dating: Penn & Brugmann 2007, 59 (transition from phase MA1 to MA2).

38 Hills 1977b.

39 Penn & Brugmann 2007, 77; Hills (1977b, 171) assumes that grave 31 was robbed.

40 Menghin 1983, 333-334 (type Altenerding-Brighthampton); see also Böhme 1986, 512, 542.

41 Scull 1992, 18-19.



7.17 | A selection of silver jewellery buried in inhumation graves at Spong Hill. Scale 1:1 (after Hills et al. 1984, figs. 72-73, 92, 101). 1-3. silver-wire wrist-clasps, partly with remains of fabric, and finger ring from grave 5, 4. silver finger ring from grave 38, 5. silver-wire finger ring from grave 46.

burials with a spear and shield (nos. 36, 41, 49 and 51) and three with a spear only (nos. 32, 50 and 54). The two burials with preserved skeletal remains are of adult males.

The female burials with objects of precious metal were found more widely spread across the area with inhumation graves. Gold objects are lacking at Spong Hill, and silver ornaments were found in just three graves: a set of silver-wire wrist-clasps and a silver-wire finger ring in grave 5 (ca 450-480), a silver finger ring in association with a silvered square-headed brooch and a string of crystal, jet, amber and glass beads in grave 38 (ca 480-510), and a silver-wire ring, found with some brooches and crystal, amber and glass beads in the chest area of grave 46 (ca 450-480) (fig. 7.17). The finds from grave 24 (ca 510-550) include no silver objects, but some other exceptional items: a bronze bowl, a gilded and silvered great square-headed brooch decorated with pieces of red glass (fig. 7.18) and an iron weaving batten. The deceased from the first two graves were adult females; the age of the latter two females is unknown.

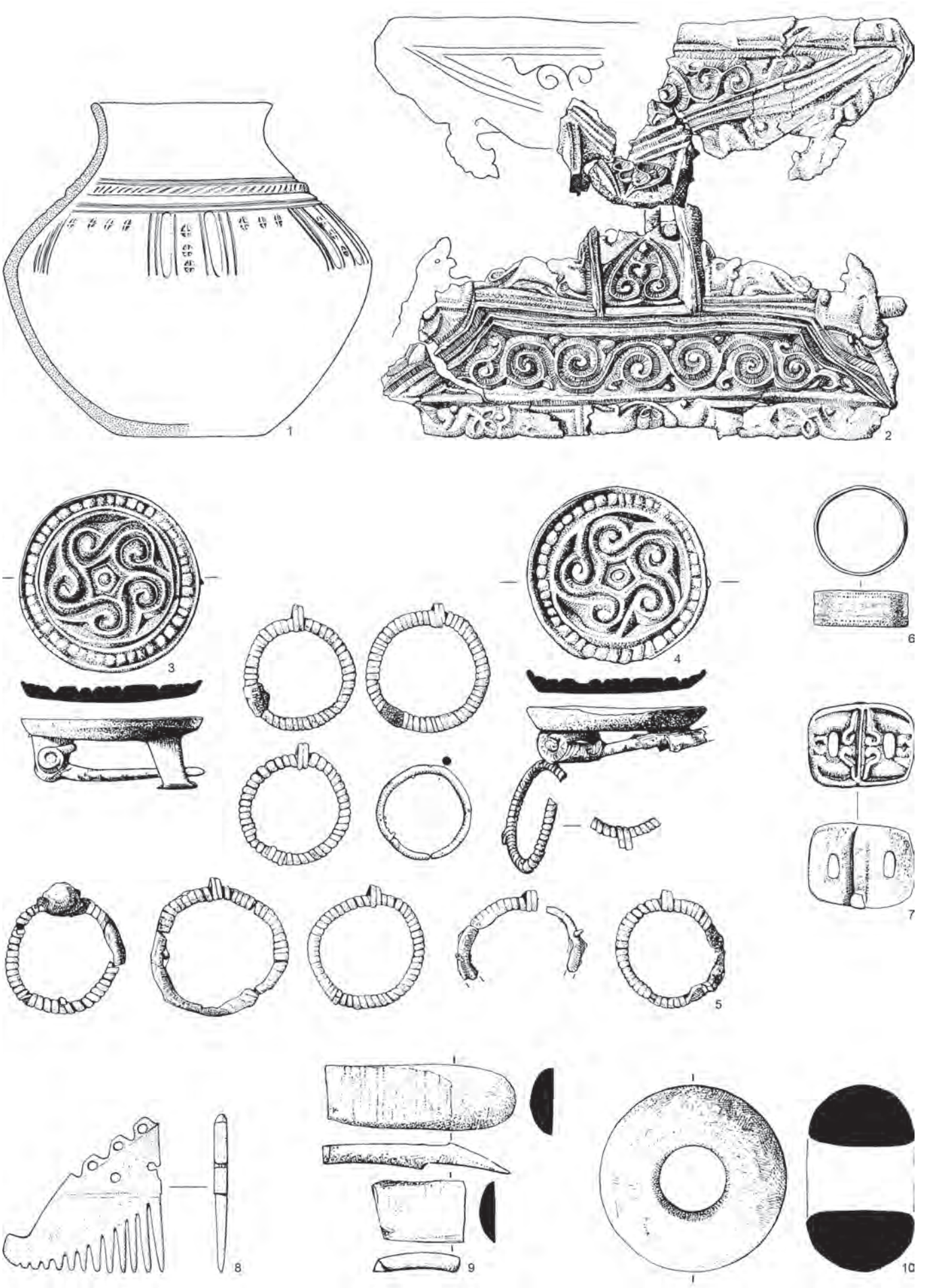
Most of the cremation graves at Spong Hill are characterized by a less exclusive set of grave goods. Interestingly, however, some find categories are represented that are unknown from the inhumation graves, such as arrowheads, bone gaming pieces, fragments of decorated bone strips that belonged to small rectangular boxes, pieces of horse harness, fragments of ivory rings that were used as purse frames, and the fused remains of glass vessels. Other find categories, also known from the inhumation graves, are sword fittings, spearheads, fragments of bronze-bound buckets and bronze bowls, and some silver ornaments. The richest cremation grave contained a silver finger ring, a set of ten iron rings bound with strips of silver and belonging to a necklace, a bronze equal-armed brooch (of the Nesse type), two bronze composite saucer brooches (Lippspringe type), a silvered bronze mount with animal decoration, a bone spindle-whorl and comb, and ivory fragments, perhaps of a bracelet or a purse-frame (grave 2376, 5th century, adult female, fig. 7.19). Moreover, a silver pendant and two or three silver rings were found in grave 1743, a small piece of silver wire in grave 1692, and three unidentifiable silver fragments (one gilded) in graves 1211, 2146 and 2655 (all subadults or adults, sex unclear). None of these items can be dated closely.

The people who were interred at Spong Hill are usually regarded as a small group of newcomers, or as local people who adopted the idea of inhumation. They may have been members of the leading family among an immigrant group, burying their dead around and west of two chamber burials (nos. 31 and 40) that have been interpreted as the 'founder graves' of a small, separate burial ground.[42] Yet these graves may also reflect the emergence of a prominent lineage from within the community that already used the cemetery.[43] The social status of the individuals buried with silver or other prestigious items at Spong Hill has not yet been investigated.

42 Hills et al. 1984, 10, 41; see also Böhme 1986, 542.

43 Scull 1992, 19.

7.18 | Selected grave goods from inhumation grave 24 at Spong Hill, as they were probably worn on the body of the deceased: a square-headed brooch of gilded and silvered bronze, a pair of bronze annular brooches, strings of glass and amber beads, two bronze girdle-hangers and an iron knife and ring, the last perhaps used as a purse-frame. Scale 1:2 (coll. and © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery).



7.19 | The partly melted grave goods from cremation grave 2376 at Spong Hill. Scale of urn 1:3, other items 1:1 (after Hills et al. 1987, plate VI).
1. urn, 2. bronze equal-armed brooch, 3-4. pair of bronze composite saucer brooches, 5. set of ten iron rings, bound with strips of silver and belonging to a necklace, 6. silver finger ring, 7. silvered bronze fitting with animal decoration, 8. bone comb fragment, 9. ivory fragments, perhaps of a bracelet or a purse-frame, 10. bone spindle-whorl.

7.20 | Excavation plan of the early Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Morning Thorpe (after Green et al. 1987, fig. 5).

The cemetery of Morning Thorpe (Norfolk)

Threatened by gravel extraction, ca 365 inhumation and at least seven cremation graves of an originally larger cemetery could be documented at Morning Thorpe, in 1974 and 1975 (fig. 7.20).[44] The cemetery is located on the south slope of a valley drained by a stream that joins the river Tas. A probable Bronze Age barrow, just to the north of the excavated area, may have been the focus for the burial ground. The earliest graves are widely scattered across the site, the intervening spaces gradually being filled with younger graves – some within ring-ditches.[45] Unfortunately, bone preservation was very poor and coffins were only visible in exceptional cases, as dark stains. The cemetery was used from the middle of the 5th, into the second half of the 7th century, with most graves dating to the 6th century. All finds described below originate from the inhumation graves.

Weapon graves both of young men and of adults are well represented at Morning Thorpe, including one with a complete weapon set (sword, shield, spear, grave 218), 26 graves with a shield and spear, and one grave with an axe and spear. Single weapons were found in 42 burials (three shields, 38 spears and one arrow). The only sword has a bronze pommel (grave 218) and the central knobs of three shield-bosses are covered with sheet silver (graves 1, 61 and 389). The datable burials can be assigned to ca 450-510 (15x), to ca 510-560/570 (32x) and to the last decades of the 6th, and the 7th century (12x), with a single spear or the combination of a shield and spear dominating in all three periods.

Besides the usual buckle and knife, more exclusive items were rarely buried in combination with weapons. Exceptions are a glass cone-beaker (grave 148, 5th-6th century), a large wooden vessel and possibly a lyre (grave 97, ca 450-510), a wooden tub (grave 35, ca 510-560) and a hip-belt with a set of gilded bronze mounts decorated in Animal Style I (grave 157, ca 510-560?).[46] Moreover, two of the weapon graves contained an iron-bound bucket, fragments of gold leaf, probably from clothing, and in one case also a wooden tub (grave 218, ca 560-650, and grave 238, ca 510-560).[47] Of high status is also a 6th-century male burial without any weapons: it contained a bronze cauldron, a bronze bowl, a bronze-bound bucket, a wooden bowl and a knife (grave 200).

Characteristic of the female burials are bronze bow-brooches and wrist-clasps of various types. The most exclusive are some 6th-century great square-headed brooches, decorated with sheet silver and/or gilding (fig. 7.21). Gold ornaments are lacking, the finds of precious metal being limited to silver scutiform pendants (6x, including a stray find, ca 550-650), silver-wire rings belonging to a necklace (3x, 6th-7th century), a bead of sheet silver (ca 500-550) and a set of silver double-bell-shaped beads (ca 550-650). In several cases a combination of two or three silver items was found: a set of silver-wire wrist-clasps and a silver finger ring in grave 396 (ca 480-510), a scutiform pendant and one and two

44 Green et al. 1987; Penn & Brugmann 2007 (chronology).

45 Penn & Brugmann 2007, 68-70, figs. 5.10-12.

46 For the lyre, see Lawson 1987, 166-171 (in: Green et al. 1987).

47 The gold leaf was recovered from organic material, probably textile (Green et al. 1987, 94, 100). For the use of gold in clothing, compare Crowfoot & Hawkes 1967.

7.21 | Two great square-headed brooches from Morning Thorpe graves 288 (left) and 371 (right). The bronze brooches are decorated with sheet silver and gilding. Scale 1:1 (coll. and © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery).

silver wire-rings in graves 375 (ca 550-650) and 378 (ca 480-550) respectively, and a silver finger ring of late-Roman type, four silver double-bell-shaped beads and a zoomorphic, silver-gilt mount with niello inlay in grave 384 (ca 550-650). The deceased were of different ages, ranging from subadult to elderly.

According to Penn and Brugmann, the richest graves at Morning Thorpe are characterized by great square-headed brooches, of which four have been found. Because three of these graves (nos. 214, 359 and 371) were found close together in the central-southern part of the cemetery, they are regarded as "... an early indication of an accumulation of wealth as a result of peer competition that led to the development of a 7th-century elite".[48] The social status of the wearers of these brooches or the silver ornaments that were buried at Morning Thorpe, is not discussed.

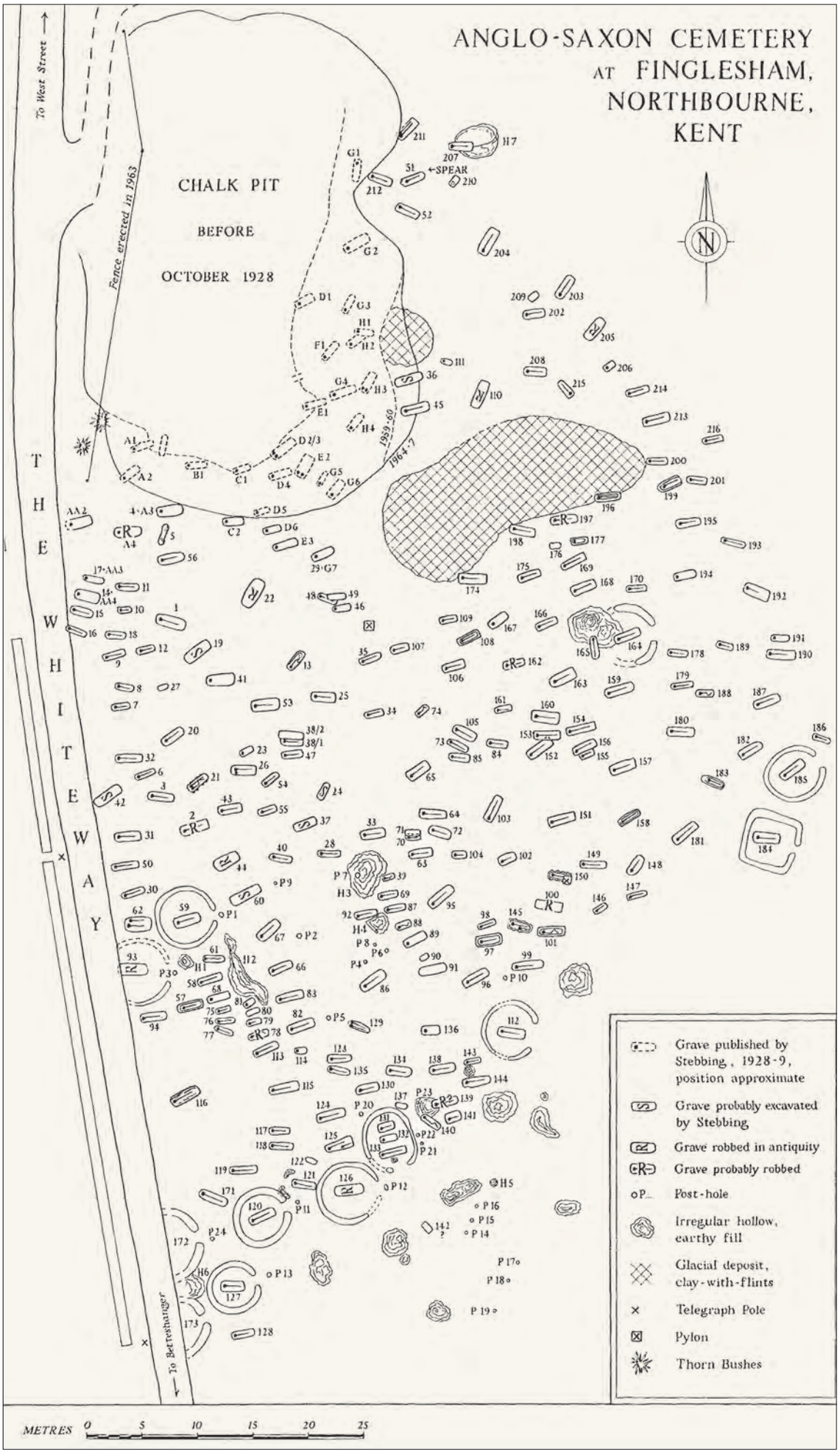
The cemetery of Finglesham (Kent)

Southwest of Finglesham, an extensive cemetery with over 250 inhumation graves was almost fully excavated in 1928-1929 and 1959-1967 (fig. 7.22).[49] The cemetery, with its more or less rectangular shape, is located on a natural ridge belonging to the North Downs. East of the cemetery, the land slopes down to the former estuary of the southern branch of a creek that in early Anglo-Saxon times led into the North Sea.[50] All graves were dug into chalk subsoil, with little evidence of wooden structures.

48 Penn & Brugmann 2007, 96.

49 Chadwick 1958; Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981; Chadwick Hawkes 1991; Richardson 2005, 58-59; Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006.

50 Chadwick 1958, 3-7, figs. 2-3.



7.22 | Excavation plan of the early Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Finglesham. The graves and postholes are numbered (after Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006, fig. 1.3).

7.23 | A selection of grave goods from grave 204 at Finglesham. The deceased is thought to have been the burial group's 'founding male'. Scale of buckle 1:1, other items 1:2 (after Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006, figs. 2.146-148).
1. iron spear head and ferrule, 2. iron sword with silver-gilt and nielloed ring-pommel and gilt-bronze scabbard mouthpiece (upper part shown), 3. iron shield-boss, 4. iron knife, 5. iron and silver, garnet-, glass- and bone-decorated buckle with gilded bronze tongue, 6. green glass claw beaker, 7. bronze bowl.

Finds of angle-irons indicate that only some of the larger burial pits contained a coffin. In the southern part of the cemetery, circular ditches and one square ditch are the remains of barrows that probably covered many further burials. No prehistoric monument is known from the site, but the burials may have been focused on a large Anglo-Saxon barrow on the highest, northern part of the cemetery, which, according to Chadwick Hawkes, marked the grave of Finglesham's 'founding male' (grave 204).[51] The cemetery was in use from the early 6th to the mid 8th century.

The oldest graves seem to cluster around and west of the assumed 'founding grave', which is dated to ca 525/530. This grave belonged to an adult male, who died at the age of about 25. He was interred in an iron-bound coffin, accompanied by a complete weapon set (ring-sword, shield and spear), a Frankish-type belt-buckle, inlaid with garnets, green glass and bone, a bronze bowl, a glass claw beaker, a large wooden vessel(?) and a knife (fig. 7.23). The sword has a silver-gilt and nielloed ring-pommel of the Bifrons-Gilton type.[52] Five other weapon graves, dating to the 6th century and belonging to adult or older men, were found spread across the cemetery. They contained a probable spatha and a shield (no. 22, robbed), a seax and spear (no. H3), a shield and spear (no. 211), and two single spears (nos. 13 and 103). The space around four of these graves indicates that they had been covered with relatively large mounds (nos. 13, 22, 103 and 211).

Only four female burials with gold or silver ornaments can be dated to the 6th century. Burial D3 was similar in date to burial 204. It contained a rich collection of grave goods, including a glass claw beaker, an iron weaving batten, a necklace with 52 beads and three gold bracteates, and five silver-gilt brooches (two pairs of bird and radiate-headed brooches and a great square-headed brooch). The bracteates are of Scandinavian type D, two of them stamped with the same die.[53] The other female burials are a little younger, dating to around the middle or second half of the 6th century. The richest grave contained a glass claw beaker, an iron weaving batten, a bronze bowl, a bead necklace and festoon, four silver brooches (two small and one great square-headed brooch and a garnet rosette brooch), gilt-bronze belt-fittings set with garnets, a comb and a knife (grave 203, age 25-35, fig. 7.24). The festoon, attached with two silver pins, was made of glass and silver-gilt beads, a large gold bead, two die-identical type-D bracteates and two gold pendants.[54] A third burial contained four silver-gilt brooches: a large and two smaller square-headed brooches, all decorated with garnets, and a keystone-garnet disc brooch (grave E2). Finally, a silver radiate-headed brooch was the only high-status object still present in the re-opened grave 205C.

During the late 6th, the 7th and the first half of the 8th century, over 200 graves were dug in a large, rectangular area south and west of the assumed founder grave. Weapons were found in 21 graves, having a date range from the early to the late 7th century. Besides a spatha, shield and spear (burial G2), a shield and spear (nos. G6 and 110) and four seaxes (nos. 33, 159, 165 and 198, 2x with spear), it most often was a single spear (15x) that accompanied children, adults or older men. One of the 'spear-burials', dating to ca 625-650, contained two exceptional items: a bronze-bound bucket and a gilded bronze buckle showing a standing warrior in relief (grave 95, age ca 18). Also a glass bag beaker (grave 86) and a silver buckle (grave 181) were found in two 'spear-burials' with a less precise dating. Two male burials without any weapons contained the bronze rims of two drinking vessels and a Frankish-type iron belt-set inlaid with silver (grave 25, adult), and a purse with 8 sceattas (grave 145A, age ca 21). The former dates to the early, the latter to the late 7th century.

Compared to the previous period, the female grave goods show a more uniform composition during the late 6th to early 8th century. The largest group of 'rich' burials is characterized by one specific element: a necklace of glass and often also amethyst beads with silver rings and/or pendants of various types (21x, see fig. 7.25). One of the silver rings was found together with a gilded bronze finger ring and a conical bronze 'pyramid' (originally a sword accoutrement), the first decorated with a single garnet and the second inlaid with garnets (grave 58, ca 675-700). Except for a child aged 6, all of the individuals buried with such jewellery were adult and older females. Gold ornaments were found in only two graves: two gold coin-pendants and four gold-wire beads belonging to a necklace with glass beads, silver rings and two silver bulla pendants (grave 7, age 2-5, ca 670-680), and a gold ring belong-

51 Chadwick Hawkes 1991, 25.

52 Menghin 1983, 313 (cat. no. 53).

53 IK 425 and 426,1, all three belonging to *Formularfamilie* D9 (Pesch 2007).

54 Bracteates: IK 426,2, both belonging to *Formularfamilie* D9 (Pesch 2007).

7.24 | A selection of grave goods from grave 203 at Finglesham. Scales 1:1 (brooches and belt-fittings) and 1:2 (necklace, festoon and bowl) (after Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006, figs. 2.141-144). 1. silver great square-headed brooch, 2-3. pair of small square-headed brooches, 4. silver-gilt and garnet-decorated rosette brooch, 5. gilt-bronze and garnet-decorated belt-fittings, 6. necklace of glass and amber beads, the central, silver bead inlaid with garnets, 7. festoon of glass, shell and silver-gilt beads with gold pendants, including two D-bracteates, and a central gold bead inlaid with blue glass and garnets, at both ends attached to silver pins, 8. bronze bowl.

7.25 | A necklace from grave 7 at Finglesham, made of glass beads in part suspended on silver-wire rings, gold coin-pendants (Frankish royal solidus and Kentish thrymsa), gold-wire beads, silver-wire rings and silver bulla pendants. Scale 1:1 (after Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006, fig. 2.73).

ing to a bead necklace (grave 61, age ca 20, 7th century). The coin-pendants were made of a Frankish solidus of king Sigebert III (634-656) and a 7th-century Anglo-Saxon thrymsa, both suspended by a simple ribbed loop.

According to Chadwick Hawkes, the richest, 6th-century graves at Finglesham (meaning 'prince's manor'), may have belonged to members of the royal elite, who also had a so-called royal vill at nearby Eastry.[55] The assemblages from the richest male and female burials at Finglesham are given a 'status score' of 10 (grave 203, female), 11 (grave D3, female) and 13 (grave 204, male) by Richardson.[56] They are assumed to represent the social upper class of 6th-century Kent, scores of 10 or higher referring to people with a 'very high status'. In the 7th century, this elite was no longer visible in the grave goods, and the cemetery is believed to have been used henceforth by 'a community of modest rank and prosperity'.[57]

The cemeteries of Sarre, Gilton and Kingston Down (Kent)

In the second half of the 18th, and the 19th century, several hundred inhumation graves from the early Anglo-Saxon period were uncovered and the grave goods collected at Sarre (272 graves recorded, ca 480-700), Gilton (127 graves recorded, ca 480-650) and Kingston Down (319 graves recorded, ca 575-725).[58] In 1982 and 1990, several more graves were excavated at Sarre (graves 273-291).[59] All three cemeteries are situated on gentle slopes with chalk as the

55 Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 330; Chadwick Hawkes 1991, 24.

56 Richardson 2005, 244-245, table 141.

57 Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 330.

58 Richardson 2005, 2-3, 45, 70-71. All individual graves are described in the '*Novum Inventorium Sepulchrale: Kentish Anglo-Saxon graves and grave goods in the Sonia Hawkes Archive*', 1st edition (www.web.arch.ox.ac.uk/archives/inventorium).

59 See Perkins 1991; 1992.

7.26 | A selection of grave goods from grave 4 at Sarre. Scale 1:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/Maidstone Museum, photo Archival Images Limited). 1-2. silver-gilt and nielloed square-headed brooches, one decorated with garnets, 3-4. silver-gilt garnet-disc brooches, 5-10. gold D-bracteates, 11. silver-wire finger ring, 12-13. set of silver, garnet-decorated strainer and crystal ball in silver-gilt fitting, 14. bronze belt-buckle, 15. Roman-period bronze coin, 16. glass bell beaker.

underlying geology. Barrows were recorded at Gilton and Kingston Down. Although most graves were not documented to modern standards, they nicely demonstrate the changing use of precious metal in the Kentish burial ritual throughout the early Anglo-Saxon period – linking the pattern that can be seen in Finglesham to that in Harford Farm (see below).

Weapon graves were documented at all three sites (Sarre 69x, Gilton 58x, Kingston Down 46x). Most of these graves contained a shield and/or a spear, swords too being well-represented (Sarre 32x, Gilton 7x, Kingston Down 2x). Two of the swords have a silver-gilt ring-pommel of the Bifrons-Gilton type (Sarre gr. 88, Gilton gr. 56).[60] Moreover, three similar pommels are stray finds from Gilton.[61] Less common are axes (Sarre grave 39A, Gilton grave XV) and angos (Sarre graves 89 and 211). Valuable items from the 6th-century weapon graves are silver or silver-plated buckles (Sarre graves 26 and 87, Gilton graves 10 and 39), a bronze bowl (Gilton grave XV), bronze-bound buckets (Sarre graves 39A and 264, Gilton graves 28 and XV), claw beakers (Sarre grave 60, Gilton grave 83) and sets of scales and weights (Sarre grave 26, Gilton graves 66 and XV, fig. 10.4). Moreover, the younger, late 6th- and (early) 7th-century weapon graves contained a gold-decorated buckle (fig. 9.22) and a bronze-bound bucket (Sarre, grave 68), a silver-gilt and gold filigree-decorated belt-set (Gilton grave 23), a 'Celtic' hanging bowl (Kingston Down grave 76), a bronze bowl (Sarre grave 88), a set of glass palm cups (Kingston Down grave 146), a set of globular beakers (Gilton grave 107) and an inlaid pyramidal stud (Sarre grave 211).

All three cemeteries are renowned for their rich female burials, which yielded a variety of gold and silver ornaments. The earliest finds, dating to the first half of the 6th century, are a silver 'Jutlandic' great square-headed brooch (Gilton grave 48), one or more gold bracteates of Scandinavian type D, buried with gold braid (Sarre graves 4 and 90), or a Frankish-type garnet disc brooch (Sarre no. 148). The richest of these graves contained not only six bracteates and gold braid, but also a silver strainer and a rock-crystal ball, a pair of silver-gilt keystone-garnet disc brooches, a silver finger ring, a weaving batten, a glass bell beaker and a belt with a chatelaine (Sarre grave 4, fig. 7.26). Younger finds of silver, dating to the middle or second half of the 6th century, are keystone-garnet disc brooches (Sarre grave 158, Gilton graves 19 and 62) and a Frankish-type quatrefoil-garnet brooch (Sarre grave 158).

In the decades around 600, the richest female burials were characterized by silver-gilt keystone-garnet disc brooches and silver slip-knot rings and/or pendants belonging to a necklace (Sarre graves 115, 162 and 210, Gilton, graves 27, 41, 76 and 81, Kingston Down graves 15A and 161). Moreover, a gold pendant (Gilton, grave 27) and two gold coin-pendants were part of such necklaces (Sarre, grave 286: a Frankish tremissis in the name of Justinian I (527-565); Gilton, grave 41: a similar coin).

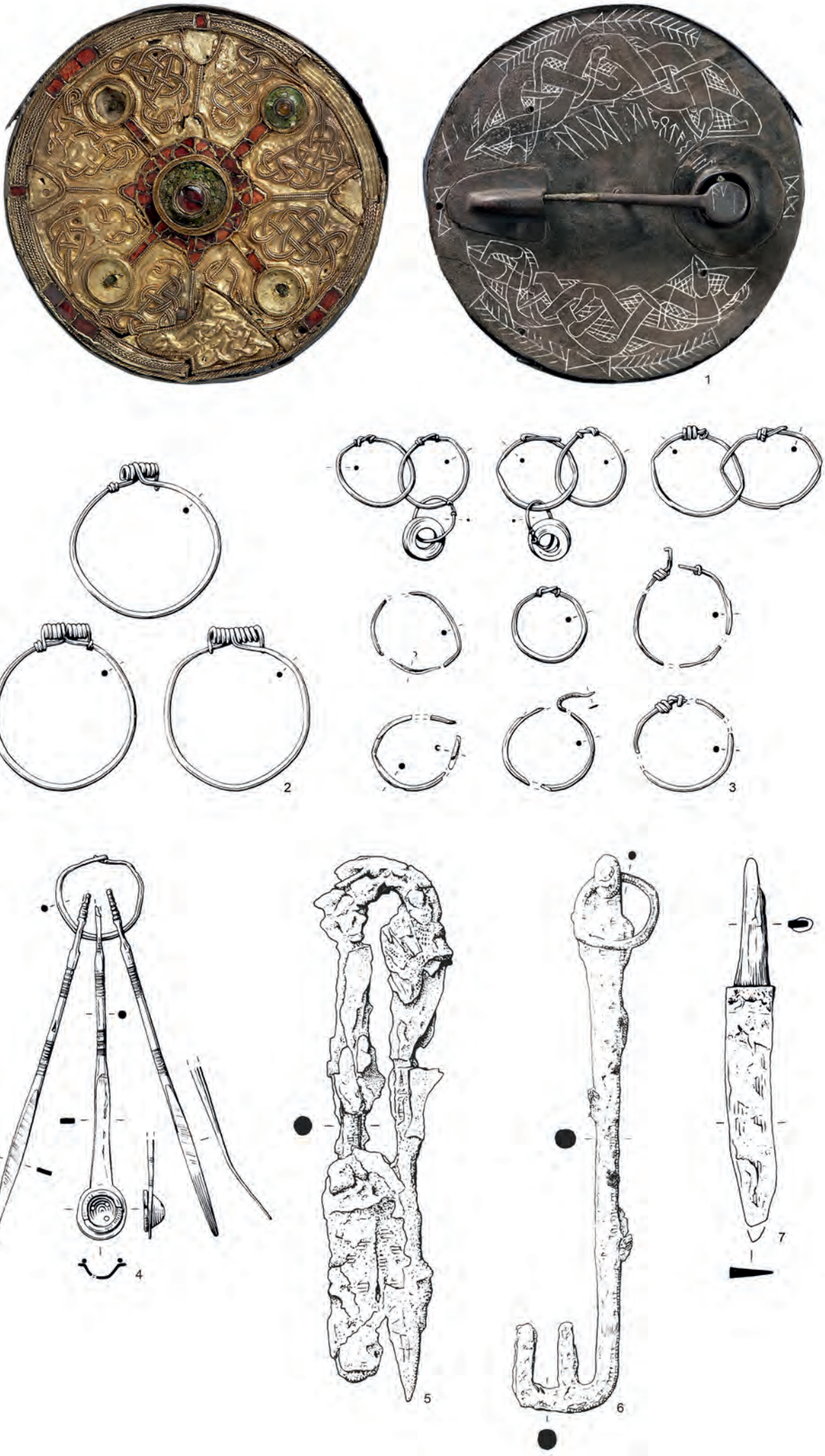
During the first three or four decades of the 7th century, gold and silver composite disc brooches were buried alongside keystone-garnet disc brooches (Gilton graves 42, 108, XV and XIII, Sarre grave A, Kingston Down graves 205 and 299. The composite disc brooches often were buried with other prestigious items, including a gold pendant (Gilton grave 108), a necklace of four gold coin-pendants (three quasi-imperial solidi and a royal Frankish solidus of Chlotar II (613-629), fig. 8.9), a 'Coptic' bronze bowl, a large purse and an iron weaving batten (Sarre grave A), a gold scutiform pendant, a pair of silver brooches, a 'Celtic' hanging bowl, a bronze bowl with a trivet, a glass palm cup and a wooden casket (Kingston Down grave 205), and a 'Kentish' keystone-garnet disc brooch, an inlaid silver pendant, a bronze arm ring, a wooden casket, several other vessels of organic material, weaving equipment and exotic shells (Kingston Down grave 299). A second composite disc brooch from Sarre, recovered from an unknown grave, was probably found with a 'hanging bowl of Coptic form'.[62]

More common female grave goods, buried from the late 6th to the early 8th century, are various types of silver rings, pendants and beads, often worn as part of glass and amethyst bead necklaces (Sarre grave 220, Gilton grave 32, Kingston Down graves 7, 8, 46, 53, 59, 72, 92, 110, 156, 211, 223, 241, 250, 260, 297, 298 and 305). Two burials from Kingston Down are more exceptional, both containing silver slip-knot rings and a silver dress pin, combined with two glass beakers and a rock-crystal ball (grave 6), and, amongst other things, a pair of gold, garnet-decorated pendants, a pair of silver-gilt cruciform pendants, a silver toilet set, a wooden casket, an ivory purse ring and a cowrie shell (grave 142). Other valuables, buried with or without silver slip-knot rings,

60 Menghin 1983, 313 (Gilton: cat. no. 54), 315 (Sarre: cat. no. 62).

61 Menghin 1983, 313-314 (cat. nos. 55-57).

62 Avent 1975 (part II), 47 (no. 178).



7.27 | A selection of grave goods from grave 11 at Harford Farm. The engraved interlaced animals and runic inscription on the back of the brooch are shown in white. Scale 1:1 (after Penn 2000, figs. 84-85; coll. and © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery). 1. gold and silver, garnet- and filigree-decorated composite disc brooch, 2-3. set of large and smaller silver-wire rings, 4. silver toilet set, 5. iron shears, 6. iron key, 7. iron knife.

are gold pendants (Sarre grave 123, Kingston Down graves 96, 235 and 253), a silver finger ring (Kingston Down grave 171), two 'Pada thrymsas' (Sarre grave 226), a bronze bowl with trivet (Gilton grave 8) and a glass pouch bottle (Kingston Down grave 46).

Most of the funerary assemblages from these Kentish cemeteries to which Richardson assigned a 'status score' of 10 or higher can be dated to the first half of the 6th century and to the late 6th and early decades of the 7th century. They include graves 4, 39A and 88 at Sarre and grave 56 at Gilton (ca 500-550), and graves A and 68 at Sarre, grave 23 at Gilton and graves 205 and 299 at Kingston Down (ca 580-625/650). The only younger assemblage to receive a similar score was that from grave 142 at Kingston Down (ca 625-675).

The cemetery of Harford Farm (Norfolk)

In 1990, preceding road construction, 46 inhumation graves were excavated within a prehistoric barrow cemetery at Harford Farm.[63] The cemetery is situated on a ridge south of Norwich, overlooking the river Yale. The inhumation graves form two separate groups, each associated with a large barrow. The graves of the northern group are more-or-less arranged in rows (31 graves, Area A); the southern graves were found more spread out, dug around and partly into a prehistoric barrow (15 graves, Area C/D). Although both groups were laid out in the late 7th century, a difference in burial rite can be seen – with most of the northern graves being coffined, whilst the southern graves were nearly all uncoffined. Given its date, the cemetery is interpreted as belonging to a group of 'Final-Phase cemeteries'. These are characterized by a high proportion of unfurnished graves, which is thought to reflect the transition to Christian burial customs.[64] The bodies of the deceased only survived as stains; their dimensions suggest adults.

Weapons were encountered in two instances only: a seax in grave 25 (Area A), and a spearhead from a younger ditch cutting graves 43 and 44 (Area C/D). The other male burials contained a knife and buckle, or no grave goods at all.

Silver dress accessories, in four cases accompanied by gold ornaments, were found in eight female burials: graves 1, 11, 18, 20, 22 and 28 in Area A, and graves 33 and 41 in Area C/D. Grave 11 contained a gold and silver composite disc brooch, a silver toilet set, silver slip-knot rings of a necklace, and a knife, shears and keys (fig. 7.27). The back-plate of the brooch, an old and repaired piece, is engraved with interlaced animals and a runic inscription, reading 'Luda repaired the brooch'.[65] A gold and garnet pendant, decorated with filigree, was found in grave 18, which also contained two silver sceattas (ca 690-710), silver pins belonging to a silver-wire chain with zoomorphic terminals, a bronze bracelet and a wooden box; a bronze 'relic box', a firesteel/purse-mount and some other objects were suspended from a belt. In grave 33 the remains of a leather or textile bag were found next to the body, containing a necklace of silver slip-knot rings and glass and amethyst beads, a silver toilet set, an iron chatelaine and two small gold, as well as two small garnet discs (diameter 2 mm); other items are a gold pendant with a Roman-period intaglio and iron shears. Silver-wire rings were found in five graves, three also containing a pendant, a silver 'bucket pendant', at least 11 silver bulla pendants and two silver discs with interlace animals in relief (grave 28), a set of at least 20 silver bulla pendants (grave 22) and a silver chain and pin (grave 1). Finally, a possibly female burial contained a knife and an iron buckle, the buckle-plate decorated with garnet settings of gold (grave 12, Area A). The majority of female burials, however, are characterized by an absence or paucity of grave goods, which often comprised little more than a knife.

The social status of the deceased was not discussed in detail in the excavation report. It is only stated that the women in graves with gold and silver dress accessories were 'wealthy', some of the buried items probably showing their Christian belief (the 'relic box' in grave 18, and the cruciform motifs on the gold and silver jewellery in graves 11, 18 and 28).[66] With the possible exception of the seax in grave 25, there is no 'mark of high male status'.[67]

7.5 Hoard finds

No fewer than nineteen hoards or probable hoards have been found in the counties of southeast England, as accidental finds and by metal detecting (table 7.2, fig. 7.28). With the exception of three (probable) hoards, they can all be dated to the late 4th, and early decades of the 5th century (ca 390-420/430) – the final phase of Roman occupation in Britain.[68]

63 Penn 2000.

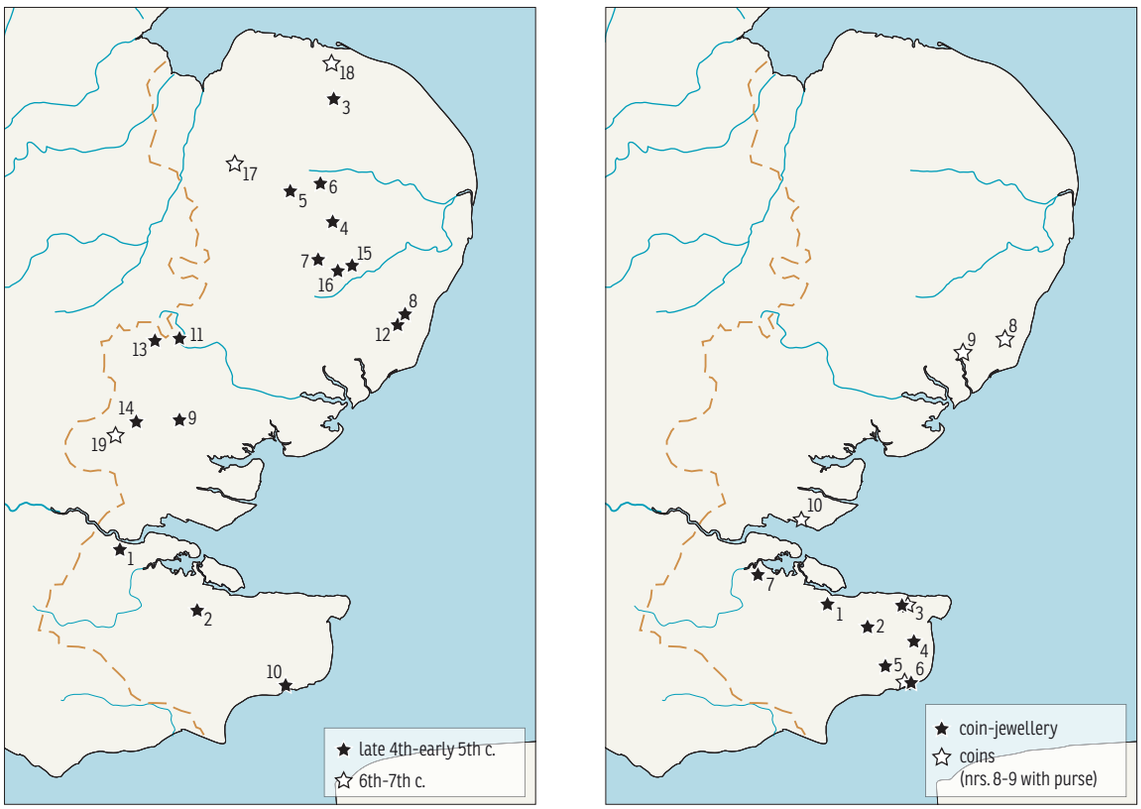
64 Penn 2000, 96-98; see also Geake 1997.

65 Hines 2000, 81-82 (in: Penn 2000).

66 Penn 2000, 98.

67 Penn 2000, 98.

68 See Bland 1997, 39, tables 4-5; Bland & Loriot 2010, 80, table 31.



7.28 | The geographical distribution of (probable) gold and silver hoards, dating to the late 4th-early 5th and 6th-7th centuries (left), and collections of two or more coins from 6th- and 7th-century graves (right) across southeast England. The western boundary of the research area is shown as a broken line (data after Adby & Williams 2006; Bland & Loriot 2010; Pol, in prep.; drawing by the author). *(Probable) hoards*: 1. Springhead, 2. Doddington, 3. Wood Norton, 4. Carleton Rode, 5. Caston, 6. Deopham, 7. Burgate, 8. Sweffling, 9. Terling, 10. Hougham Without, 11. Sturmer, 12. Great Glemham, 13. Ashdon, 14. Good Easter, 15. Hoxne, 16. Eye, 17. Oxborough, 18. Bingham, 19. Chipping Ongar. *Graves*: 1. Faversham, 2. Canterbury, 3. Sarre grave unknown and grave 226, 4. Finglesham grave 7, 5. Silbertswold Down grave 172, 6. Dover-Buckland graves 110 and 232 (one coin looped, other unworked), 7. Chatham Lines (3 siliquae and Roman bronze coin), 8. Sutton Hoo mound 1, 9. Ipswich grave 4, 10. Prittlewell.

The late-Roman hoards contained one or more imperial solidi, in combination with contemporary silver siliquae (10x), silver miliarenses (2x) and gold aurei (1x). Moreover, late-Roman jewellery and other items of gold and silver are represented in these hoards, partly in a fragmented state. The famous Hoxne hoard (Suffolk), for example, comprises 580 solidi, 60 miliarenses, over 14,500 siliquae and five half-siliquae, as well as gold jewellery (a chain worn around the upper body, six chain necklaces, three finger rings and 19 bracelets, fig. 7.29) and many items of small silver tableware.[69] These valuables had been packed into a wooden box that also contained some smaller caskets. Containers were also documented with some of the other hoards, including hand-made or wheel-thrown pots (Sturmer, Terling, Carleton Rode and Caston) and a wooden case covered with lead (Eye). Like most other late-Roman gold and silver hoards, the Hoxne treasure was probably buried at some point in the first half of the 5th century.[70]

In contrast to the more easterly parts of the North Sea area, southeast England has produced hardly any post-Roman gold or silver hoards. Most coin collections dating to the 6th and 7th centuries are grave goods (fig. 7.28), whereby a distinction can be made between coins that were buried as 'currency' (e.g. Sutton Hoo and Prittlewell, see above), and coins that were looped or pierced and buried as jewellery (e.g. Finglesham and Sarre, fig. 8.9).[71] The *non*-funerary hoards dating to the early Anglo-Saxon period are only represented by three (probable) coin and jewellery hoards.

The mixed gold and silver hoard from Oxborough (Norfolk)

The only hoard dating to the late 5th or early 6th century is a metal-detector find from Oxborough (fig. 7.31).[72] It contained a pseudo-imperial solidus and a tremissis showing Libius Severus (461-465) and Julius Nepos (474-475) respectively, an antique denarius of Severus Alexander (222-235) and a fragment of a silver finger ring. Both gold coins were probably minted in the Visigothic area, one having a simple suspension loop (the solidus), which had been removed from the other (the tremissis, part of the rim missing). The denarius was pierced for suspension, but the rim above the suspension hole had broken off. Although the origin of the coins and finger ring from a funerary context cannot be excluded, the fragmented state of the ring and the removal of one of the suspension loops support the assemblage's interpretation as a hoard. There is no record of any container.

69 Johns & Bland 1994; Guest 2005 (coins); Johns 2010 (jewellery and tableware).

70 Johns & Bland 1994, 168.

71 See Abdy & Williams 2006, catalogue ('hoards').

72 Abdy & Williams 2006, cat. no. 2.

7.29 | Late-Roman gold jewellery from the Hoxne hoard: a chain that was worn around the upper body, six chain necklaces and three finger rings. Length of body-chain ca 38 cm (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

7.30 | Two of the gold bracteates from what probably was a buried hoard near Binham. The larger bracteates is the heaviest yet found in Great Britain (27.4gr). Scale 2:1 (coll. and © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery).

7.31 | A probable gold hoard from Oxborough, comprising a solidus-pendant (no. 1), a damaged tremissis (no. 2, original loop ripped off), an antique, looped denarius (no. 3) and a fragment of a silver finger ring (no. 4). Scale 2:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

The bracteate and jewellery hoard from Binham (Norfolk)

Between 2004 and 2013, five gold bracteates, three fragments of a heavily gilded, bronze bracelet, and a gold arm ring were found by means of a metal detector in a field near Binham (fig. 7.30).[73] Most of these items came from an area of ca 5 sq m, indicating that they were part of a single deposit. Other early Anglo-Saxon items have not been found at this site, while no archaeological features could be traced during a limited geophysical survey. Two die-identical bracteates are of type B, and three, most probably, die-identical ones are of type A. The heaviest among them is a type-A bracteate (27,4 g). Only one of the A- and one of the B-bracteates still has a loop; those of the others seem to have been ripped or cut off. Moreover, one of the A-breacteates was cut in half and buried after being folded; a second A-bracteate is heavily folded and a kink suggests that the third had also been folded, but bent open again before burial. The bracelet and arm ring, of which the first was intentionally cut into pieces and the second was bent before burial, are decorated with various punch-stamp designs. The bracteates were probably produced between 475 and 540, and buried in the 6th century – when bracteates mostly ended up in early Anglo-Saxon graves (ca 500-570).[74] No remains of a container were found.

The probable coin hoard from Chipping Ongar (Essex)

Also with a metal detector, two coins were found at Chipping Ongar: a 'national' tremissis of Merovingian origin and a lightweight imitation of such a coin, brought up to the standard weight by having an additional 'plug' of gold attached to one side.[75] No contemporary jewellery that may relate to a grave has been found at this site, nor any trace of a container. If both coins indeed belonged to a hoard, this was buried at some time in the 7th century.

7.6 Single gold coins from cemetery and settlement sites

Although excavation finds demonstrate that gold and silver ornaments were not only buried as grave goods but also deposited or lost at settlement sites, most single finds of jewellery probably originate from disturbed graves.[76] At the largely excavated rural settlement of Bloodmoor Hill (Suffolk, 6th-7th century), for example, systematic use of a metal detector resulted in the recovery of almost 2900 metal artifacts and scrap pieces, including only one item of precious metal: a silver pin head, shaped like a bird and probably an antique,

73 Pestell 2013a; Behr & Pestell, in prep.; bracteates: IK 630,1-3 (type A), 604,1-2 (type B). Total weight of gold bracteates: ca 64 gr; weight of bracelet and arm ring at present unknown.

74 See section 9.3.

75 Abdy & Williams 2006, cat. no. 8.

76 A probable exception are gold bracteates, found north of the river Thames (Behr 2010, 77-80; see the discussion in section 11.2).

Table 7.2 | List of late 4th- to 7th-century gold and silver hoards from Norfolk (N), Suffolk (S), Essex (E) and Kent (K), in order of deposition date. The siliqua numbers also include half-siliquae and clipped and irregular pieces (*: metal-detector find, **: of pseudo-imperial type, ***: 1x plated copy) (cat. nos. after Abdy & Williams (AW) 2006; Bland & Loriot (BL) 2010).

FIND SITE (COUNTY)	LATEST EMPEROR, TERMINUS POST QUEM	SOLIDI	SILIQUAE	OTHER ITEMS	CAT. NO.
Springhead (K)	Magnus Maximus, AD 388	3	432	12 miliarenses	BL 337
Doddington (K)	Valentinian II, AD 392	2	-	-	BL 334
Wood Norton (N)*	Theodosius I/ Valentinian II, AD 392	2	-	-	BL 446
Carleton Rode (N)	Honorius, AD 402	3 or 4	11	-	BL 440
Caston (N)	Honorius, AD 402	1(?)	>1	-	BL 441
Deopham (N)*	Honorius, AD 402	26	4	-	BL 442
Burgate (S)*	Honorius, AD 402	1	175	3 silver finger-rings, 7 fragments of silver spoons	BL 549
Sweffling (S)*	Honorius, AD 402	3	59	-	BL 555
Terling (E)	Honorius, AD 402	26	304	2 unidentified bronze coins, 2 gold finger rings	BL 185
Hougham Without (K)*	Honorius, AD 402	2	-	-	BL 335
Sturmer (E)	Honorius, AD 402(?)	1	29	-	BL 184
Great Glemham (S)*	Honorius, AD 406	8	-	-	BL 551A
Ashdon (E)*	Honorius, AD 406	1	1	-	BL 181
Good Easter (E)*	Constantine III, AD 408	16***	-	-	BL 183
Hoxne (S)*	Constantine III, AD 408	580	14,570	60 miliarenses, gold jewellery and small silver tableware	BL 554
Eye (S)	Constantine III, AD 411	-	-	>600 aurei	BL 550
Oxborough (N)*	imitation Julius Nepos, AD 475	1**	-	1 tremissis**, 1 denarius, fragment of a silver finger ring	AW 2, BL 445
Binham (N)	-	-	-	5 gold bracteates (1 half), fragments of a gilt bronze bracelet, gold arm ring	-
Chipping Ongar (E)*	'national' coins, AD 585	-	-	2 Merovingian tremisses	AW 8

Roman piece.[77] Moreover, a silver anthropomorphic pendant was found at this site after the excavation had finished.[78]

The situation is different when it comes to single coins, especially those not transformed into jewellery. The spatial distribution and composition of metal-detector finds from Barham and Coddenham (Suffolk) indicate that gold coins were buried or lost at these probable manufacturing and trading sites, as may be the case also at many other, less specialized rural settlements.[79] Early Anglo-Saxon gold coins have also been found at former Roman sites, such as the military camps of Richborough, Reculver and Lympne (Kent), the *colonia* of Colchester (Essex) and the *civitas* capitals of Canterbury (Kent) and Caistor St Edmund (Norfolk).[80] At religious sites within the research area, on the other hand, no such finds have been recorded as yet.

During the late 4th and the 5th century, single gold coins show a regular distribution along the North Sea coast (fig. 7.32). Most coins are imperial solidi of Honorius (395-423, 19x, including two plated copies) and Arcadius (395-408, 12x), dating to the same period as the majority of gold and silver hoards (table 7.2). The remaining imperial solidi and tremisses (2x) were minted by other late 4th- and 5th-century emperors, starting with Magnus Maximus (383-388) and ending with Julius Nepos (474-475) (17x in total, including a plated copy).[81] Seven solidi and two tremisses are contemporary imitations, in most cases probably originating from Visigothic Gaul.[82] Only a small number of coins had been transformed into jewellery by the addition of a loop or by piercing: four imperial solidi, a pseudo-imperial solidus and a pseudo-imperial tremissis.[83] For three of the coin-pendants, from Tranmer House (Suffolk) and Ash (Kent, two pendants), their origin from a cemetery site is supported by excavations.[84] There is no evidence that the other, non-jewellery coins also originate from funerary contexts. An argument in favour of their interpretation as settle-

77 Lucy et al. 2009, 171 ff. (head pin: no. 44). Some of the few other secure settlement finds are a gold finger ring from Dover (Philp 2003, 111), a silver-gilt relief brooch from Gillingham (*TAR* 2005/2006, no. 197), and two fragments of silver slip-knot rings from West Stow (West 1985, 123) – all situated in Kent.

78 *TAR* 2000, no. 62.

79 For Barham and Coddenham, see Newman 2003. Compare the situation in the northern and western Netherlands (sections 4.4 and 5.4).

80 Bland & Loriot 2010, table 13.

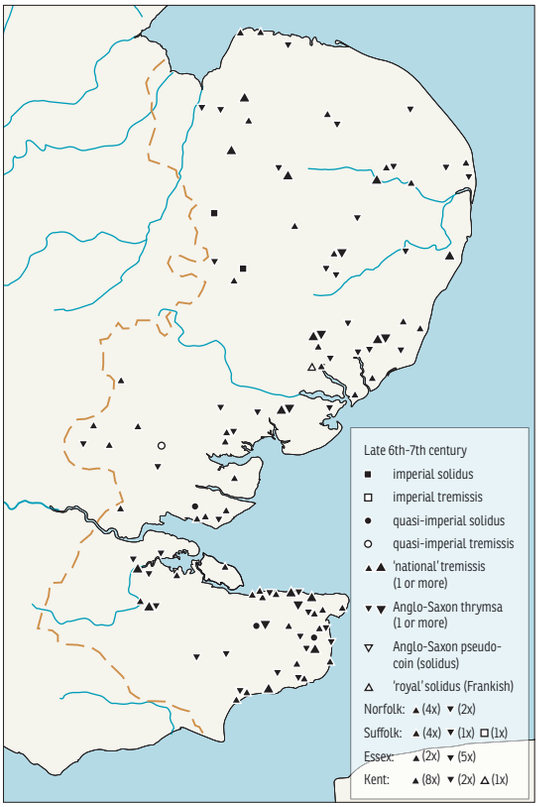
81 The coins issued by Valentinian II (375-392) are not included.

82 Bland & Loriot 2010, table 33 (with cat. no. 884 added).

83 Bland & Loriot 2010, tables 36, 38.

84 Bland & Loriot 2010, cat. nos. 257-258, 532.

7.32 | The geographical distribution of single gold coins, including (former) coin-pendants, from southeast England, dating to the late 4th-5th century (left) and to the late 5th-6th century (right), respectively. The western boundary of the research area is shown as a broken line (data after Bland & Loriot 2010; drawing by the author).



7.33 | The geographical distribution of single, late 6th- and 7th-century gold coins from southeast England, buried or lost as 'currency' (left, including former coin-jewellery) and as coin-jewellery (right), respectively. The western boundary of the research area is shown as a broken line (data after Pol, in prep.; drawing by the author).

ment finds is the appearance of a cut tremissis at Canterbury (Kent) and a folded solidus at Higham (Kent); such a treatment has not been documented for any of the coins known from Anglo-Saxon graves.[85]

The late 5th- and 6th-century coins show a clustering of finds in eastern Kent and a more widespread distribution along the North Sea coast of Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk (fig. 7.32). The finds comprise Byzantine solidi and tremisses (16x, including a plated copy), an Ostrogothic solidus of Theoderic (493-526), and, especially, pseudo-imperial pieces from vari-

85 Bland & Loriot 2010, table 48. See the discussion in section 10.2.2.

ous parts of Gaul and the 'Frisian' realm (28x, ca 500-585) – the majority being tremisses. The imperial coins were minted under Anastasius I (491-518, 5x), Justin I (518-527, 5x), Justinian I (527-565, 3x, including the plated copy), Justin II (565-578, 2x) and Tiberius II (578-582, 1x). A small portion of both the imperial and the pseudo-imperial coins were transformed into jewellery, again by the addition of a loop or by piercing (7x, including 3 solidi).[86] Three more coins were framed in a filigree border, though one of the borders had been removed. For the coin-pendants from Sarre (Kent, grave 286), Gilton (Kent, grave 41), Dover-Buckland (Kent, grave 29), Ash (Kent) and Bloodmoor Hill (Suffolk), their origin from a grave or a visible barrow has been documented.[87] A coin-pendant from Reepham (Norfolk) was found together with a gold bead, which also points to the presence of a disturbed grave.[88] Again, there is no evidence that the non-jewellery coins had been buried as grave goods.

The majority of single gold coins from southeast England can be dated to the late 6th and the 7th century. They have been found mainly along the North Sea coast, with finds clustering in southeast Suffolk and especially in eastern Kent (fig. 7.33). Besides some Byzantine solidi (4x) and quasi-imperial solidi and tremisses minted in the Provence (10x, including 7 solidi, ca 585-600), there are substantial numbers of 'national', Frankish or 'Frisian' (137x, including 15 plated copies) and Anglo-Saxon coins (90x, including 2 plated copies) (ca 585-675).[89] The imperial coins were minted under Maurice Tiberius (582-602, 1x) and Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (613-641, 3x). The 'national' coins are tremisses from many different locations in Frankish Gaul, as well as six Frankish or 'Frisian' tremisses (pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type) and five (probably) 'Frisian' tremisses (4x Dronrijp type). Most Anglo-Saxon coins are so-called thrymsas, although two Anglo-Saxon pseudo-coins (solidi) are also present.

No fewer than 37 of these late 6th- and 7th-century coins were at any time looped, mounted in a pendant or finger-ring, or pierced. Three of the loops and two of the mounts had been removed and one of the pierced holes had been plugged, which points to the practice of re-using coin-pendants as coins. For the coin-jewellery, relatively often solidi – including the two Anglo-Saxon imitation solidi – were selected (16x), besides substantial numbers of quasi-imperial (1x) and 'national' tremisses (13x, including a plated copy) and Anglo-Saxon thrymsas (7x). For about one third of the coin-ornaments an origin from a specific grave or cemetery site has been documented or assumed (13x). Single coins *not* worn as jewellery, like the royal solidus of Sigebert (639-656, loop removed) from Ipswich grave 93, are highly exceptional in funerary contexts; the majority were probably buried or lost at settlement sites, as is illustrated by the finds from Barham (3 Frankish tremisses), Coddenham (3 Frankish tremisses and 11 thrymsas) and recently Rendlesham (1 quasi-imperial solidus and tremissis, 16 Frankish or 'Frisian' tremisses and 4 thrymsas, including one pierced and one formerly looped tremissis).[90] Nine of these 'non-funerary' coins, including one each from Barham, Coddenham and Rendlesham, had been cut or halved.

This short overview makes clear that single coins are a complicated category to work with, as they include both cemetery and settlement finds. When the coin use (coins versus coin-jewellery) and the available evidence about find context are analyzed, however, some patterning can be seen:

- Intact coins, and especially solidi, were selected for jewellery.
- Coin-jewellery has mainly been found in graves.
- Single gold coins, including former pendants, have rarely been found in graves.
- Fragmented gold coins have not been found in graves.

Based on these observations, a rough division can be made between predominantly cemetery finds on the one hand (jewellery coins), and predominantly settlement finds on the other (other coins, including fragmented ones and former pendants).[91] Naturally, the latter category represents a more random and hence a more representative sample of the gold coins that circulated at a specific time than do the items that were carefully selected for a burial.

86 Bland & Loriot 2010, tables 36-38.

87 Bland & Loriot 2010, cat. nos. 786, 795, 811, 837.

88 Bland & Loriot 2010, cat. no. 831.

89 Coin data after Pol, in prep.

90 Ipswich: Archibald 2009, 101 (in: Scull 2009). For Barham and Coddenham, see also Newman 2003, 101-102, 104. At Coddenham and Rendlesham also 6th-century coins were found (an imperial and two pseudo-imperial tremisses, and two pseudo-imperial tremisses, respectively; Pol, in prep.).

91 See also Williams 2006, 163-164.

Table 7.3 | Chronological overview of the numbers of graves and hoards with gold and silver objects, as well as single finds from probable settlement contexts in southeast England. The gold coins from graves comprise both single coins and coin collections, which are counted as 1 (all without a loop, piercing or mounting). The number of ornaments is presented in three grades: no (-), a relatively small (+), or a relatively large number of items (++) (settmt.: probable settlement site; *: including relatively late tremisses with a high silver content).

	LATE 4TH-5TH CENTURY			LATE 5TH-6TH CENTURY			LATE 6TH-7TH CENTURY		
	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.	grave	hoard	settmt.
gold ornament	-	-	-	+	-	-	++	-	+
silver ornament	+	-	(+)	++	-	+	++	-	+
gold coin*	-	16	51	-	2	35	6(+5?)	1	234
total:	+	16	>51	+/++	2	>35	++	1	>234

7.7 Conclusion

Although only a selection of gold and silver valuables from the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent is presented in this chapter, some relevant patterning in their funerary and non-funerary use can be observed (table 7.3). The late 4th and early 5th century produced a brief horizon of late-Roman gold and silver coins, deposited as hoards and buried or lost as single items at settlement sites. Throughout the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries, gold and silver ornaments were mainly buried as grave goods, the richest graves dating to the first half of the 6th century (male and especially female burials in Kent), and to the late 6th, and early decades of the 7th century ('royal' or 'princely' male burials in Suffolk and Essex, and both male and female burials in Kent). Non-funerary hoards are rare finds by this time; most single finds of gold coins probably originate from settlement sites, including former Roman military and urban sites and many rural settlements along the North Sea coast of southeast England.

8

Origin and interregional exchange of early medieval gold and silver

8.1 Introduction

No precious-metal ores were available in the coastal areas along the southern North Sea. The gold and silver ornaments from sites like Sievern (Elbe-Weser region), Wijnaldum (Friesland) and Sutton Hoo (East Anglia), or the material for their production, had to be imported from southern or eastern Europe, i.e. the Roman Empire and its successor kingdoms. This chapter will focus on the *interregional exchange* of early medieval precious metals, first of all by analyzing the origin of the imported gold and silver objects, and reconstructing the transport routes that connected the North Sea world to areas as far as the Eastern Mediterranean (section 8.2), and, secondly, by discussing the interregional exchange mechanisms that were in operation before the rise of emporia and the introduction of an early form of currency (silver pennies or sceattas) in the late 7th and the 8th century (section 8.3).

8.2 The origin of precious metals: a reconstruction of exchange routes

During the 5th to 7th centuries, gold and silver may have reached the North Sea world as coins, ingots and various forms of jewellery or other ornaments. Because the origin of ingots is hard to establish, and most imported ornaments were melted down and transformed into symbols expressing regional and supra-regional identities (as will be discussed in the following chapter), coins especially are a useful tool for reconstructing interregional exchange routes. Moreover, the composition of the currently known coin collection is less affected by depositional factors than that of contemporary jewellery, most of which was deposited during relatively short phases.[1]

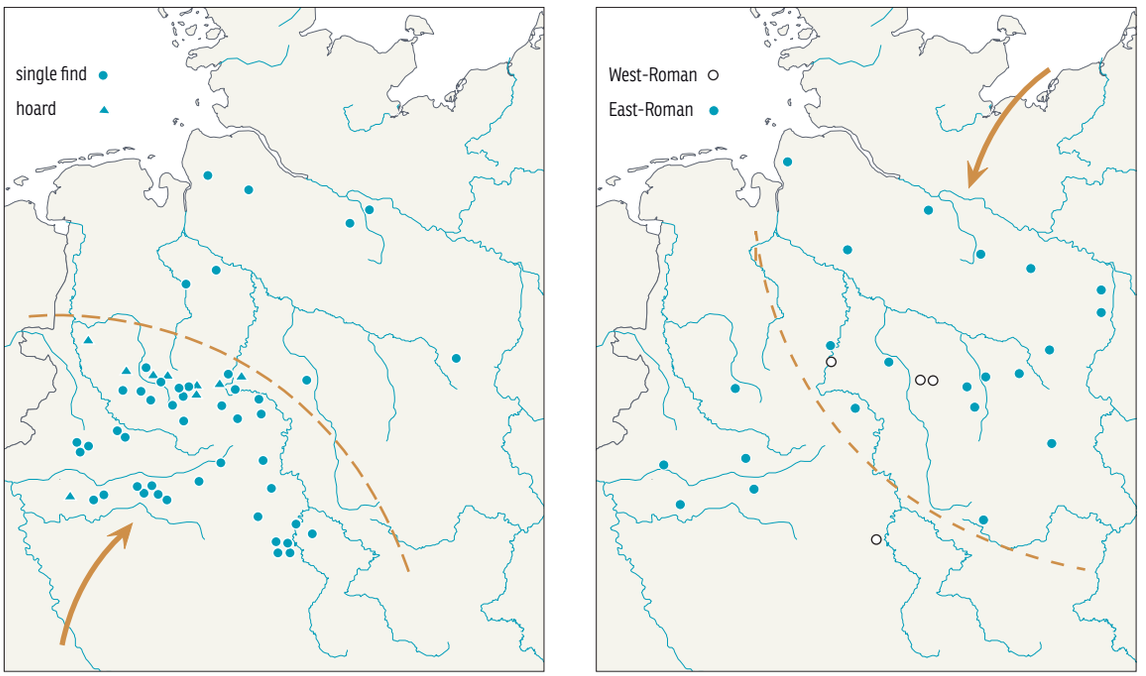
Until the first silver pennies or sceattas were minted, medieval coinage was dominated by gold solidi and tremisses. The origin and dating of these coins reflect the existence of two important exchange routes: an early, East-European route running from the East-Roman Empire and via southern Scandinavia to the west, and a later, West-European route running northward from the West-Roman Empire and its Frankish successor kingdom. After the numismatic evidence for both routes is presented, a comparison with the importation of minted and unminted silver and other 'exotic' items is made.

Unfortunately, there is no record of chronological and geographical fluctuations in the production of Roman and Germanic coins, which makes it impossible to assess their impact on the patterns described below. Moreover, it is unknown to what extent 5th- to 7th-century coins were imported as 'old' pieces, after circulating in their area of origin or an interjacent area for some time. In spite of these potentially distorting factors it is assumed that the coin finds from the research area, because of their relatively large number, offer a more-or-less representative picture of contemporary exchange relations.

8.2.1 *The East-European route*

The 5th- and early 6th-century imperial gold coins that have been found along the southern North Sea coast originate both from West-Roman and East-Roman mints. With the exception of the solidi of Honorius (395-423) from southeast England, which date to the final period of Roman occupation, the solidi from the West-Roman Empire are surprisingly few, compared to the relatively large number of East-Roman coins (table 8.1). Although we have no information about the difference in

1 See the discussion in chapter 11 and section 12.2.



8.1 | Geographical distribution of solidi from northern Germany, minted in the 4th century (left, hoards shown separately) and after ca AD 425 (right). The coins were probably imported from the West-Roman Empire and, via southern Scandinavia, from the East-Roman Empire, respectively. The area with the largest number of coins is outlined in a broken line (redrawn after Berger 1992, figs. 59, 65).

output of mints in the West- or the East-Roman Empire, the numbers of finds clearly reflect the importance of the eastern exchange route. A significant find for tracing the origin of the East-Roman pieces is the solidus hoard from Midlum (Friesland), which was probably buried around the middle or in the second half of the 6th century (fig. 4.6). The hoard contained solidi of the East-Roman emperors Marcian (450-457, 3x), Leo I (457-474, 9x), Anastasius I (491-518, 2x) and Justinian I (527-565, 1x), coins that are especially familiar from southern Scandinavia (table 8.1). Moreover, a 6th-century hoard from the 'Mulsumer Moor', near Sievern (Elbe-Weser region, fig. 6.15), contained five coin-pendants, two made from East-Roman solidi of Valentinian III (425-455) and Leo I. It is not without significance that these pendants were buried with a Scandinavian-type neck ring, in a period when Scandinavian-type gold bracteates were produced at different locations in northern Germany, the Netherlands and southeast England.[2]

The late-Roman and Migration-period solidi from the German North Sea coast and its wider hinterland neatly reflect a shift in cultural focus from the Roman Empire in the south to the Scandinavian world in the east (fig. 8.1).[3] During the 4th and early 5th centuries, the coins reflect several phases of gold importation from the West-Roman Empire, with a concentration of finds in German Nordrhein-Westfalen. The youngest phase is represented by the gold and silver hoards from Dortmund (444 solidi and 16 silver coins) and Großbodungen (21 solidi and 809 gr of silver vessel fragments, fig. 8.10), which were probably buried shortly after these coin collections were closed around 410.[4] The younger, 5th- and early 6th-century solidi are different in origin, the majority of them now being minted in the East-Roman Empire. Moreover, the coin finds show a more easterly distribution, between the rivers Weser and Elbe, which suggests importation via southern Scandinavia.[5]

The wealth of late-Roman and Byzantine coins in southern Scandinavia and, on a smaller scale, all along the North Sea coast is a direct result of the growing pressure of Germanic groups on the northern borders of the Roman Empire.[6] While the Western Empire collapsed in the course of the 5th century, the Eastern Empire could be safeguarded by the tactic of tribute payment. This started in AD 424, when Theodosius II (408-450) began paying 350 pounds of gold (ca 25,200 solidi) annually to Rugila, king of the Huns. A decade later, the payment was doubled to 700 pounds of gold, after which Atilla, in 443, received an immediate payment of 6,000 pounds plus an annual tribute of 2,100 pounds. After the Huns were defeated in 451, the Ostrogoths, who had been subjected by the Huns some decades earlier, regained their independence and were settled

2 See section 9.3.

3 Berger 1992, 171-205. Only the finds from the coastal area are included in table 8.1.

4 Grünhagen 1954; Berghaus 1999 (Großbodungen); Berghaus 1986, with references (Dortmund).

5 Berger 1992, 203: "*...sie mögen somit ein ferner Niederschlag des vielen Ostseegoldes sein*."

6 Fagerlie 1967, xxii-xxiii, 163-165; see also Malmer 1977; Godlowski 1980, 76-77; Kyhlberg 1986, 64; Rausing 2001, 53-54; Ciolek 2005, 1102-1103; 2009, 224-226.

Table 8.1 | Imperial solidi and some tremisses minted in the West- and East-Roman Empires (5th to early 7th century), found as hoards, grave goods and single pieces in the coastal areas along the southern North Sea, in southern Scandinavia (Denmark and Sweden, including the islands of Bornholm, Öland and Gotland) and in northern Poland (Pommern). The coin finds that, because of their exceptional numbers, can be related to late-Roman tribute payments by specific emperors are highlighted (*: including the province of Utrecht; coin data after Berger 1988 (northern Germany); Boeles 1951, appendix VIII; *NUMIS*; Pol, in prep. (the Netherlands); Bland & Loriot 2010 (southeast England); Fagerlie 1967, table C (Sweden); Horsnæs 2009 (western Denmark and Bornholm); Ciolek 2009, tables 2-3 (northern Poland)).

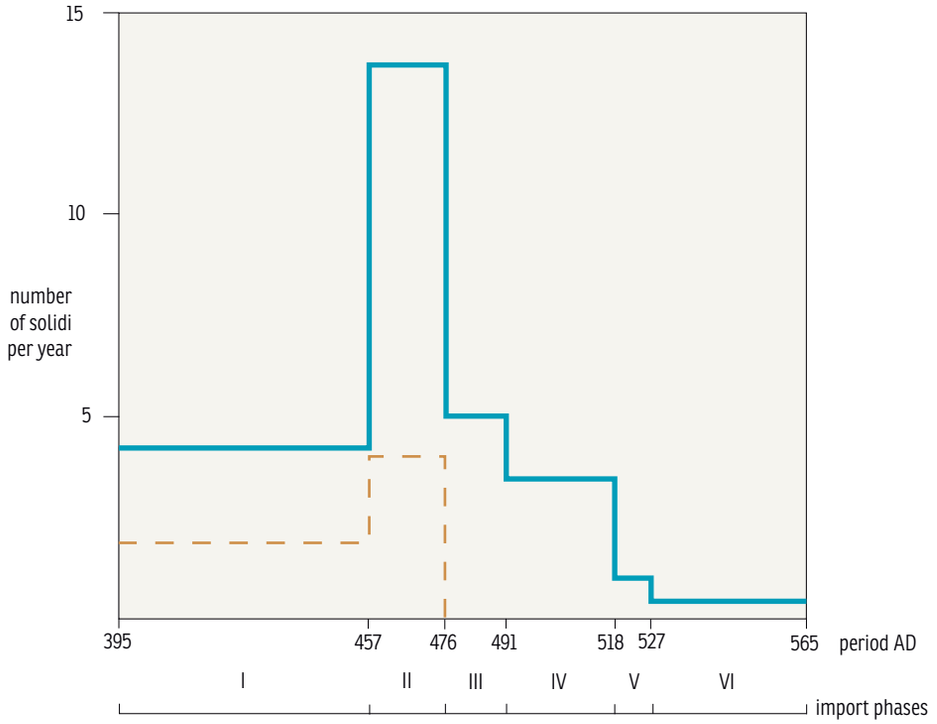
ROMAN EMPIRE	EMPEROR	REIGN	NORTHERN POLAND	SWEDEN & BORNHOLM	WESTERN DENMARK	NORTHERN GERMANY	NORTHERN NETHERL.	WESTERN NETHERL.*	SOUTHEAST ENGLAND
Western	Honorius	395-423	44	35	1		2	2	61
	Constantine III	407-411	1						2
	Jovinus	411-413					1		1
	Johannes	423-425	2						
	Valentinian III	**425-455**	**19**	**81**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**2**
	Avitus	455-456							1
	Majorian	457-461		20	1				1
	Libius Severus	461-465	3	38	1				
	Anthemius	467-472	6	31					
	Glycerius	473-474	1	3					
	Julius Nepos	474-475	1	10					3
	Romulus Augustus	475-476		4					
Eastern	Arcadius	395-408	9	5			3		35
	Theodosius II	**408-450**	**110**	**176**	**3**		**1**		**2**
	Marcian	450-457	7	34			3		
	Leo I	**457-474**	**25**	**178**	**6**	**1**	**11**	**1**	**2**
	Leo II/ Zeno	474	1	5	2				
	Zeno	**474-491**	**10**	**105**	**1**				
	Basiliscus/Marcus	475-476	5	10			1		
	Leontius	484-488		1					
	Anastasius I	**491-518**	**150**	**102**	**3**		**5**		**4**
	Justin I	518-527		9			2	1	4
	Justinian I	527-565		16			13	5	2
	Justin II	565-578					2		1
	Tiberius II Constantine	578-582						1	
	Maurice Tiberius	582-602				1	4		4
	Phocas	602-610					1		1
	Heraclius/Heracl. Constantine	613-641					7		3
		total:	394	863	19	3	59	12	129

as *foederati* within the Empire, receiving an annual payment of 100 pounds of gold. In the year 461, the Ostrogoths revolted and secured an even larger tribute in gold from Leo I (457-474). Eventually, after the Ostrogoths in 488 migrated south to conquer Italy, the payments ceased.

Several phases of tribute payment to the Huns and Ostrogoths can be recognized in the composition of 5th- and 6th-century solidi from southern Scandinavia and the adjacent area of northern Poland; these are characterized by the products of West- and especially East-Roman mints (table 8.1, fig. 8.2).[7] The first phase reflects the payments by Theodosius II (408-450), Valentinian III (425-455) and Marcian (450-457), the second, those by Leo I (457-474), and the third, those by Zeno (474-491). After the Ostrogoths had left the Empire and these tribute payments ceased, there was a steep decline in the number of solidi that reached southern Scandinavia (phases V-VI). The relatively numerous finds of coins minted during the reign of Anastasius I (491-518, phase IV) are more difficult to explain. Possibly, they represent a new phase of tribute payments to one or more unknown tribal groups that may have replaced the Ostrogoths as *foederati*.

Although East-Roman gold coins probably circulated in southern Scandinavia as early as the first half of the 5th century, the frequency of die-identical coin finds in Scandinavia indicates that their main influx did not begin before ca

7 Malmer 1977, 107.



8.2 | Schematic presentation of the numbers of solidi from Denmark and Sweden in relation to their minting period, showing a division into six phases (I-VI). The coins from bracteate hoards are represented by a broken line (redrawn after Malmer 1977, fig. 2).

AD 450.[8] This is supported by the relatively late date of the many coin hoards found in southern Scandinavia, of which only one, newly reconstructed find from Öland (Sweden) probably dates to the first half of the 5th century.[9] According to Fagerlie, the Ostrogoths should be seen as key players in the distribution of East-Roman gold to the north, functioning as intermediaries between the East-Roman emperors and Germanic groups living in the Baltic area.[10] Although the context of these transactions is unknown, Ciolek argues for exchange in the political sphere – aimed at creating or maintaining tribal bonds between the Ostrogoths and more northerly groups.[11] Moreover, the 'Baltic' gold may have changed hands as payment for mercenary services and for Scandinavian wool or furs, until the import of solidi ceased in the early 6th century.[12] In northern Poland and Denmark the youngest solidi are of Anastasius I (491-518); in southern Sweden, including the islands of Öland and Gotland, the import ends a little later, with coins of Justin I (491-527) and Justinian I (527-565) (table 8.1). However, most of the younger coins were probably *not* imported via the eastern, but via the later, western route (see below).

Within southern Scandinavia a geographical distinction can be made between Denmark on the one hand, and southern Sweden, including the Danish island of Bornholm, on the other.[13] While Denmark, like northern Germany, has a history of steady import of modest numbers of gold coins throughout the 3rd to 6th centuries, especially the Baltic islands and northern Poland are characterized by a short and more intensive influx of gold during the second half of the 5th and the early 6th century. This supports the idea that the Baltic gold originates from tribute payments made in the east – with Denmark being situated on an intersection of transport routes, receiving part of the Baltic coins from the east, and imperial solidi as well as a substantial number of Germanic imitations (the so-called 'pseudo-imperial coins') from the west.

An intriguing question is why the gold flow to Scandinavia did not begin before the Huns were defeated, which is almost 30 years after the payment of tribute by the East-Roman Empire had started. Although Hedeager has recently suggested a strong Hunnic impact on the cultural, socio-political and ideological development of southern Scandinavia in the Migration period, which also resulted in a northward flow of Hunnic gold, her arguments have been rejected by Näsman – especially because Hunnic finds are very rare in Denmark

8 Fagerlie 1967, 113, 163; Malmer 1977, 108-109, table 2; Metcalf 1995, 440. Compare Ciolek 2005, 1100; 2009, 223-224 (northern Poland).

9 Fischer et al. 2011.

10 Fagerlie 1967, 164-165.

11 Ciolek 2005, 1103; 2009, 225-226.

12 Grierson 1959, 135; Näsman 1984a, 148 (mercenary service); Herschend 1980, 253-254 (wool); Fagerlie 1967, 171; Metcalf 1995, 419-423 (furs).

13 Horsnæs 2009.

8.3 | Geographical distribution and numbers of 5th- and early 6th-century gold solidi from the West-Roman Empire (left number) and the East-Roman Empire (right number), minted during the reigns of Honorius/Arcadius to Anastasius I. The diameter of the circles is proportional to the total number of finds. The river Vistula (Weichsel) is highlighted, connecting the Baltic area to Eastern Europe (data after table 8.1).

and Sweden.[14] This is in agreement with an apparent Hunnic 'blockage' of the gold flow to the north, the reason for which is unknown.[15] When the Ostrogoths entered the stage as *foederati*, however, the situation suddenly changed: the political and/or trading contacts with southern Scandinavia were intensified and gold flowed north as never before, especially during the reign of Leo I (table 8.1).

For the transport of 'tribute gold' to southern Scandinavia the river Vistula (Weichsel) was most important (fig. 8.3), as the distribution of Polish solidus finds indicates.[16] After passing this river connection between the East-European continent and the Baltic world, large amounts of gold were transported to the islands of Öland and Gotland, and, either from there or directly, to the island of Bornholm, the Swedish mainland and Denmark.[17] The North Sea world lay at the periphery of this gold flow and only a small proportion of the gold that circulated within Scandinavia reached more southerly shores all the way to East-Anglia, Essex and Kent (fig. 8.3). The small number of East-Roman coins from the coastal area of northern Germany is remarkable and probably not representative of the 5th- and early 6th-century situation, as the more numerous coin finds from its hinterland suggest (fig. 8.1).[18]

Within the southern North Sea region an exceptional position is occupied by southeast England. Most late-Roman gold was imported during the late 4th and the early 5th centuries, when *Britannia* still was Roman territory (table 8.1). This is also the period when an unprecedented number of Roman-period coin hoards were buried in southeast England, the youngest coin(s) in such hoards often having been minted by the West-Roman emperor Honorius (395-423) in AD 402 or 406 (table 7.2).[19] These solidi may have circulated for some decades, supplemented during the early Migration period by small numbers of West-Roman and early pseudo-imperial Visigothic coins on the one hand, and just a few East-Roman coins, probably imported via the eastern, Scandinavian route, on the other.[20]

Besides the solidi and some tremisses, an unknown proportion of East-Roman

14 Hedeager 2007; Näsman 2008.

15 Pers. comm. R.B. Iversen (University of Århus). Näsman (1984a, 147), however, has argued against the traditional idea of such a blockage.

16 See Ciolek 2009, fig. 1.

17 Fagerlie 1967, 117-122; Metcalf 1995, 427-440.

18 See also the discussion in section 12.3.

19 Bland 1997, 37-39, table 4; Bland & Loriot 2010, 75-89, table 30; see also Webster 2001, 254-256.

20 For the circulation of late-Roman coins in 5th-century England, see Johns & Bland 1994, 168; Bland & Loriot 2010, cat. no. 554 (Hoxne hoard, Suffolk, deposited in the first half of the 5th century); White et al. 1999, 307-310; Bland & Loriot 2010, cat. no. 569 (Patching hoard, Sussex, deposited ca 465, also including ten mid-5th-century Visigothic solidi).

Tabel 8.2. | The (probable) origin and number of 'Germanic' imitations of imperial solidi and tremisses, found as hoards, grave goods and single pieces in different parts of the research area and dating to the 6th and 7th centuries (*: including the province of Utrecht; **: including the Nietap hoard (province of Drenthe); coin data after Bland & Loriot 2010 (pseudo-imperial coins found in England); Pol, in prep.).

COIN TYPE/ ORIGIN	PROBABLE DATING	KENT	EAST ANGLIA/ ESSEX	WESTERN NETHERLANDS*	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS**	NORTHERN GERMANY
pseudo-imperial coins	500-585					
Visigothic		7	3	5	5	
Ostrogothic		1		9	16	1
Frankish		6	4	27	29	
Alamannic		3			-	
Burgundian		2	1	2	2	
Lombardic				1		
'Frisian'		1		5	21	1
Germanic				1	2	
unknown		7	1	5	11	1
quasi-imperial coins	585-600					
Frankish		9	15	1	9	
royal coins	585-675					
Visigothic					1	
Frankish		8	5		13	
'civic' coins	585-675					
Frankish		60	102	170	128	10
'Frisian'		1	3	14	63	3
Frankish/'Frisian'			6	160	48	1
Anglo-Saxon		37	62	2	1	
	total:	142	202	402	349	17

coinage will have reached these parts after being transformed into Scandinavian-style objects. Besides some of the gold bracteates, possible examples of Scandinavian jewellery from the research area are a solid neck ring and arm ring, found near Schnelsen (Hamburg, fig. 6.20) and on the island of Helgoland (fig. 6.21), respectively. Moreover, a single piece of ring gold from Odijk (Utrecht, fig. 5.28) and a second piece from Velp (Gelderland, outside the research area), buried with several gold finger rings and regional-type neck rings, are typically Scandinavian in execution.[21] The neck ring and arm ring from northern Germany are found close to the central distribution area of such rings, making it hard to establish whether they were imported or imitated locally – like the *hollow* neck ring from Sievern.[22] The 'exotic' pieces from Odijk and Velp are a stronger indication that East-Roman gold partly ended up in the research area after intervention of a Scandinavian goldsmith. There is no evidence that any Byzantine gold ornaments reached the research area in their original form.

21 For the Velp ring, see Quast 2009, 212 (no. 8), fig. 5.

22 For the distribution area, see Geisslinger 1967, maps 2-4, 10; Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991, figs. 2, 4, 11. The local production of Scandinavian-type jewellery is discussed in section 9.3.

8.2.2 ***The West-European route***

Shortly after the tribute payments to the Ostrogoths ceased and gold coins no longer reached the Baltic area in large quantities, the growing importance of a westerly route is reflected in the coin finds from the North Sea world. Instead of southern Scandinavia, the Frankish kingdom, as a successor of the West-Roman Empire, now emerged as the main distributor of gold in northwestern Europe.

Imperial coins minted after the reign of the East-Roman emperor Justinian I (527-565) are unknown from southern Scandinavia, so these must have been imported to the North Sea region via a different, more westerly route. This change of route is directly related to the 6th-century expansion of the Frankish kingdom, resulting in a flow of gold from the East-Roman or Byzantine Empire and surrounding tribes into Frankish Gaul, again mainly as tribute and other payments. The East-Roman emperor Maurice Tiberius (582-602), for example, paid 50,000 solidi to Childebert II (575-596), for securing Frankish intervention against the Lombards, who had conquered large parts of Italy, while Dagobert I (629-639) received a payment of 200,000 solidi for helping the Visigothic king Sisenand (631-635/636) to gain the throne.[23]

23 Grierson 1959, 132-133, with references.

8.4 | Three 7th-century gold coins from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands: a Frankish tremissis minted by Madelinus at Dorestad, excavated at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (no. 1, Friesland), a Frankish or 'Frisian' tremissis of pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type from Antum (no. 2, Groningen), and a probably 'Frisian' tremissis of Dronrijp type D, found at Augustinusga (no. 3, Friesland). Scale 3:1 (Wijnaldum: coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author; Antum: coll. Groninger Museum, Groningen, photos M. de Leeuw; Augustinusga: private coll., photos A. Pol).

Besides imperial solidi and tremisses, a growing proportion of Germanic imitations circulated in 6th-century Europe – the late-Roman and contemporary Byzantine coins being their main source of raw material. The Germanic coins were minted by Visigothic, Frankish, Alemannic and other kingdoms that succeeded the West-Roman Empire. The earliest Germanic pieces are 'pseudo-imperial' coins of the traditional Victory type, for the largest part more or less degenerate copies of Byzantine examples.[24] Because such copies bear no name of a king or mint, they can be only roughly assigned to specific Germanic groups, on stylistic grounds. Indeed, the presence of one or more monograms next to the Victoria figure may help to assign such coins to the Burgundians or Ostrogoths.[25] The coin finds from the research area – and further north, from Denmark – are quite diverse in origin and are evidence of participation in a strongly 'international' exchange network (table 8.2). Besides locally minted 'Frisian' pieces, the gold coins originate from the Frankish, Alamannic, Burgundian, Lombardic, Visigothic and Ostrogothic kingdoms in central and western Europe.

A special group of late 6th-century Frankish imitations from the research area were produced at a small number of mints in southern Gaul (the Provence), including those at Marseilles, Arles, Viviers and Uzès. These 'quasi-imperial' coins (table 8.2) are entirely imperial in execution, bearing the bust and readable name of the ruling emperor. As a new element, however, the name of the mint is added – for the first time making it possible to trace the exact origin of west-Germanic coinage.

For a reconstruction of exchange routes connecting the North Sea world to more southerly regions, the so-called 'royal' and 'civic' coins are the most useful. After the minting of solidi and a growing number of tremisses of the pseudo-imperial type by most of the west-Germanic kingdoms between ca 500 and 585, the late 6th century saw the introduction by the Franks of a new type of tremissis with a cross or monogram and, more importantly, the mentioning of the mint (ca 585-675, fig. 8.4, no. 1).[26] In contrast to the Visigothic coinage, which was under tight royal control, Frankish coinage is characterized by an uncontrolled and decentralized system. Although 'royal' coins were issued by members of the ruling elite, most coins are 'civic' in character, which means that the name of the king and his title were replaced by those of the moneyer (*monetarius*) and his mint. The name of the mint also appears on some of the Anglo-Saxon tremisses known as 'thrymsas', allowing part of the Anglo-Saxon coins to be assigned to regional mints in Kent or Essex.[27] The probably 'Frisian' coins form a more complex group in this respect.[28] There are no such coins with the name of a mint, and distinctions between the well-known 'Frisian' pieces of Dronrijp types A-D (fig. 8.4, no. 3) can only be made on stylistic grounds – without any specific evidence of their provenance.[29]

24 Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 111-115; Grierson 1991, 9-18.

25 Any assignment to individual kings, such as the Ostrogothic king Athalaric (526-534), is based on the contemporaneity of their reign with that of the emperor shown.

26 Grierson & Blackburn 1986 (for the Frankish coins, see pp. 117 ff.).

27 Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 161-164.

28 Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 135-138. For the development and chronology of 'Frisian' coinage, see Boeles 1947; Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1961, 9-10; Pol 1977, 45; 1990; 2008.

29 Boeles 1947; 1951, 313-317; Pol 2008 (suggesting a new division, into 'series I-VI'). The name 'Audulfus' on some of the late 6th-century, 'Frisian' tremisses probably does not refer to a king, as suggested by Grierson & Blackburn (1986, 137), but to a (Frankish?) moneyer (Pol 2010, 91; pers. comm. A. Pol, Leiden University; see also Dijkstra 2011, 367).

8.5 | Front and back of a lead trial piece or die cleaner, showing the imprint of a pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coin. It was found at the site of a rural settlement near Katwijk (South Holland). Scale 3:1 (coll. Money Museum, Utrecht, photos A. Pol).

The 'royal' coins from the research area are represented by a relatively small number of solidi (22x) and tremisses (5x) (table 8.2). These comprise 22 Frankish coins of Chlothar II (613-629), Dagobert I (629-639) and Sigebert III (634-656), minted in southern Gaul, three Frankish coins of Theudebert II (595-612) and Clovis II (639-657), minted in central Gaul, one Frankish coin that could not be identified and a Visigothic coin of Sisebut (612-621), minted at Seville.[30]

The majority of late 6th- and 7th-century coin finds belong to the more extensive and varied group of 'civic' tremisses, which were minted at a wide range of locations in the Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and 'Frisian' realms (table 8.2). Several groups of imitations that fail to name the actual moneyer or mint but only show the (corrupted) names that were copied from the original are harder to interpret; they may have been produced in the Frankish as well as in the 'Frisian' area (types known as pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus (fig. 8.4, no. 2), Nietap, Remmerden, Posterholt and Zweins – of which the last is nowadays interpreted as a 'Frisian' type).[31] At least some of these coins were struck in the research area itself, as is indicated by the recent discovery of a lead trial piece or die cleaner: it shows the imprint of a pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coin and was found at a rural settlement near Katwijk (South Holland, fig. 8.5).[32]

Historical as well as archaeological sources document two major early-medieval transport routes leading from the Mediterranean to the North Sea world: a 'northern' route via northern Italy, the Alps and the river Rhine, and a 'western' route along the river Rhône and beyond along rivers further north and west (fig. 8.6).[33] By comparing the origin of late 6th- and 7th-century coins, as represented in four gold hoards (Escharen, Wieuwerd, Dronrijp and Nietap) and one gold and silver hoard (Remmerden) from the Netherlands, fluctuations in the share of 'northern' and 'western' coins can be seen – probably reflecting the changing relative importance of the two routes (fig. 8.7).[34] It cannot be fully excluded, however, that changes in the composition of coin assemblages were affected by selective hoarding or by fluctuations in the importance of specific mints.

The majority of coins in the Escharen hoard (Northern Brabant, closed ca 600, fig. 8.8A) were minted in the Middle Rhine valley and imported via the Lower Rhine. Some coins from mints at Nijmegen and Tiel indicate that in the late 6th century the river Waal was also part of this northern route. Although of less importance, the use of the western rivers (Rhône-Saône-Meuse, Allier-Loire and Somme) is reflected in the Escharen hoard as well. In the Wieuwerd hoard (Friesland, ca 625, fig. 8.8B) the coins from the Rhine valley are fully replaced by those minted along

30 Pol, in prep. One of the coins of Sigebert III may have been minted by Sigebert II.

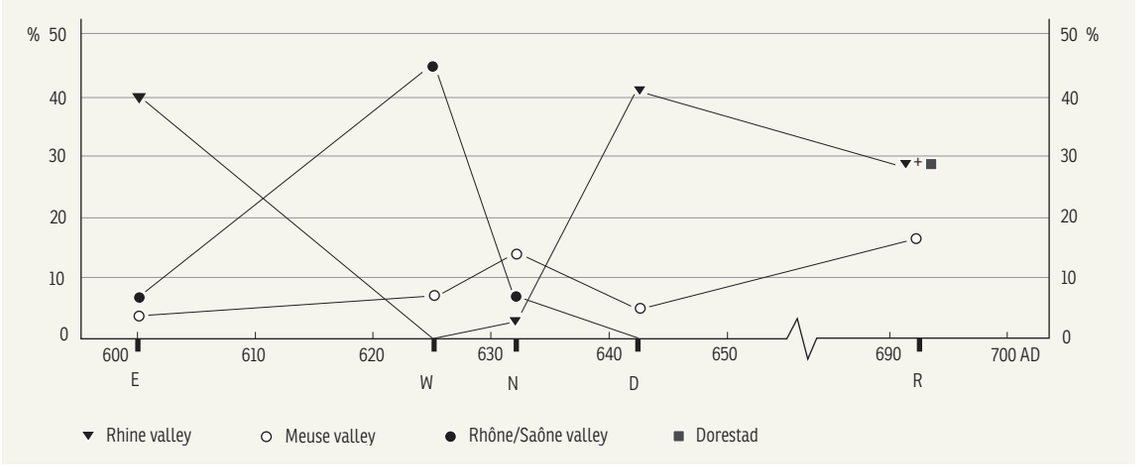
31 Grierson & Blackburn 1986, 137-138; Pol 1990; 2010 (pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus type); Pol, in prep. (other types).

32 Pol 2011; see also section 5.4 ('Katwijk-'Zanderij-Westerbaan").

33 Hodges 1982, 31 ff., fig. 5; Schwärzel 1983; Berghaus 1985, 205-209, figs. 2-7.

34 Lafaurie 1961; Zadoks-Josephus Jitta 1961, 6-8; Pol 1977, 43-45.

8.6 | A reconstruction of riverine and sea transport routes connecting northwestern Europe to the Mediterranean world, and the location of trading sites in Merovingian-period Gaul and the adjacent areas, based on historical sources (redrawn after Schwärzel 1983, maps 7, 9).

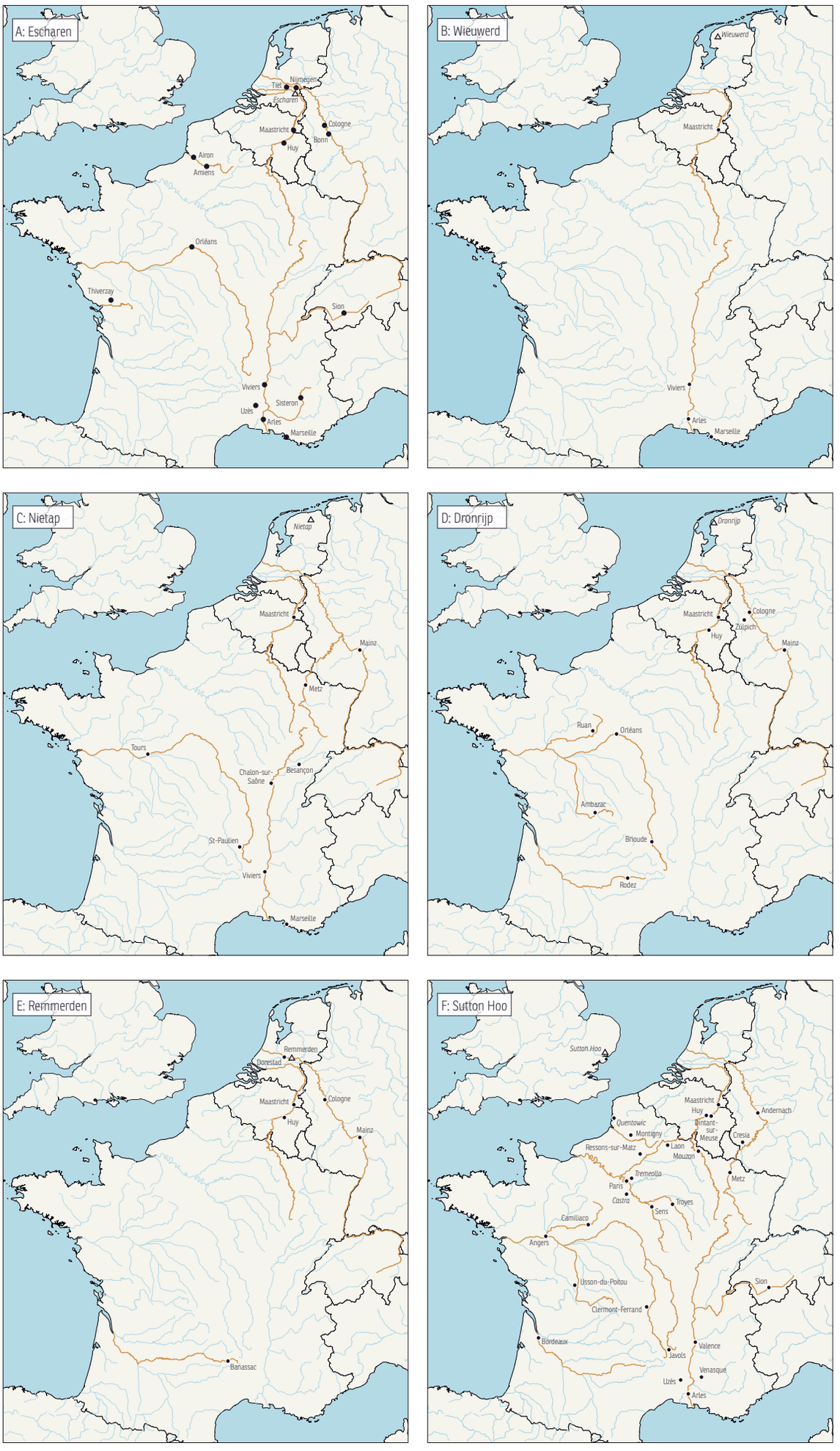


8.7 | Schematic presentation of the proportion of gold coins from mints along the Rhine and more southerly rivers, as represented in the hoard finds from Escharen (E, n = 66), Wieuwerd (W, n = 29), Nietap (N, n = 89), Dronrijp (D, n = 44) and Remmerden (R, n = 114) (redrawn after Pol 1977, 44, with the Remmerden hoard added).

the rivers Rhône-Saône-Meuse. Some 'exotic' coins from the Byzantine Empire and both the Ostrogothic and Visigothic kingdoms were probably also imported via this Gallic route. In the Nietap hoard (Drenthe, ca 630/635, fig. 8.8C) the importance of both the traditional Rhine route and more westerly routes is reflected in the coin composition. Finally, the hoards from Dronrijp (Friesland, ca 640/645, fig. 8.8D) and Remmerden (Utrecht, ca 690/695, fig. 8.8E) show a gradually changing picture, with a growing importance of the rivers Rhine and Meuse in the course of the 7th century.

According to Lafaurie, the decreasing importance of the Rhine as a transport route in the late 6th and the early decades of the 7th century is related to the Lombardic conquest of Italy in 568.[35] As a consequence, the Alpine connection to Italy was cut off for several decades, until in 606 the Lombards reached an agreement with the Byzantine emperor Phocas (602-610). In the meanwhile, the Provence had stepped in as the intermediary between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Frankish transport

35 Lafaurie 1961, 248; Lafaurie et al. 1961, 86; see also Pol 1977, 45.



8.8 | A reconstruction of Merovingian-period transport routes, based on mint location of the solidi and tremisses occurring in the gold or gold and silver hoards from Escharen (ca 600: A, n = 66), Wieuwerd (ca 625: B, n = 29), Nietap (ca 630/635: C, n = 89), Dronrijp (ca 640/645: D, n = 44), Remmerden (ca 690/695: E, n = 114) and Sutton Hoo mound 1 (ca 625/630: F, n = 37) (drawings by the author; data after Lafaurie 1959/1960, 198; Bruce-Mitford 1975, fig. 413; Pol, in prep.).

8.9 | A bead necklace with four coin-pendants, found together with a composite disc brooch in inhumation grave A at the cemetery of Sarre (Kent). The Frankish coins are three quasi-imperial solidi (ca 585-600) and a royal solidus of Chlothar II (613-629), all minted in the Provence. Scale 1:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

routes to the North Sea world.[36] The growing importance of both the Rhine and the Meuse in the course of the 7th century reflects a different development: the rise of trading sites at places of Roman origin, including Huy, Namur, Dinant and in the late 7th century also Dorestad, which in the following century became the foremost trading centre of northwestern Europe.[37]

The evolution of English finds again slightly differs.[38] Solidi and tremisses that were imported before ca 625 originated from mints along the rivers Rhône, Seine, Loire and Garonne, in southern and western Gaul. Some of these quasi-imperial, royal and civic coins were buried as part of necklaces in the Kentish cemeteries of Canterbury, Faversham and Sarre (fig. 8.9) during the late 6th and early decades of the 7th century.[39] In the second and third quarter of the 7th century, the growing importance of the more northerly route can be seen. Although solidi and especially tremisses from southern and western Gaul are still represented, the majority of these coins now were minted along the rivers Meuse and Rhine. The coins from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo (Suffolk) represent a transitional phase (ca 620/625, fig. 8.8F): tremisses from the Rhine valley are already there, but the assemblage is still dominated by coins of a more southerly origin.[40]

The minting places of the 'civic' gold coins that have turned up in the research area reveal the existence of several Merovingian-period transport routes. The Rhine was a major route to the Netherlands and northern Germany during the 6th and 7th centuries. Only when the transalpine route was cut off for some decades did a growing importance of more southerly rivers become manifest, the Rhône now being the main access to the Mediterranean for northwestern Europe. Because of its geographical position, southeast England was focused especially on transport via various rivers in western Gaul, including the Seine and Loire. With the re-opening of the route across the Alps and the rise of trading sites like Dorestad as

36 Hodges 1982, 34-35.

37 Hodges 1982, 39-46; Verhulst 2000. For a discussion about the early development of Dorestad, see sections 5.4 and 13.6.

38 Rigold 1975, especially fig. 423 (compare phases I/II: up to ca 625, and phases III/IV: after ca 625); see also Williams 2006, 171-172.

39 Abdy & Williams 2006, cat. nos. 5-6, 9; Pol, in prep.

40 Rigold 1975.

8.10 | The mixed gold and silver hoard from Großbodungen (Thüringen), consisting of 21 solidi and 809 g of silver vessel fragments. The youngest coins in the hoard are five solidi of Constantine III (407-411). Not to scale (coll. Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt, Halle, photo J. Lipták).

major emporia, the Rhine – now together with the Meuse – regained its importance, not only for the Netherlands and northern Germany but now also for southeast England.

8.2.3 *By way of comparison: the origin of silver and other 'exotics'*

During the 5th to 7th centuries, jewellery and other ornaments were not only made of gold. Locally produced brooches and other ornaments from the coastal areas of northern Germany (5th century), the Netherlands (6th-7th century) and southeast England (5th-7th century) show that silver must have been available as well. This precious metal reached the North Sea world in the form of coins from the late-Roman period on, when silver siliquae and to a lesser extent also silver miliarenses – replacing the earlier denarii after ca AD 325 – found their way to southeast England (see table 7.2) and, to a lesser extent, to the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia.[41] Moreover, unminted silver circulated as political gifts, military pay and 'bullion currency' in the northern Roman provinces and their periphery, especially during the 4th and 5th centuries.[42] In the following centuries, this late-Roman silver was replaced by silver ornaments that were imported from, or via, the Frankish kingdom. With the exception of late-Roman silver coins, the archaeological record of the North Sea world has unfortunately preserved little silver in its original shape; like the gold, most of this precious metal was transformed into symbols of regional or supra-regional significance.[43]

The late-Roman payments of tribute, *donativa* and the regular pay to Germanic soldiers were not only made in gold solidi, but also in minted and unminted silver. Two silver ingots from the Waal near Nijmegen, for example, are military *donativa* of a pound each (300 and 306 gr), dating to the early 4th century.[44] Silver plates, like the 4th- and 5th-century '*Largitionsschalen*' (see fig. 8.10), had a similar function, although these were only given to officers or high-ranking officials.[45] Finally, silver 'pound-ingots', shaped like a double axe, and silver vessels of various forms were used as gifts or pay to soldiers, and as political gifts or tribute payments to Germanic leaders.[46] Some German and especially Danish 'scrap metal' hoards with fragments of silver vessels, and in some cases also silver siliquae, are proof that late-Roman silver, in minted and especially in unminted form, must have been available in relatively large quantities for re-use during the late 4th and 5th centuries.[47] For example, one of the German hoards, buried at Großbodungen, probably in the first half of the 5th century, contained over 800 gr of silver vessel fragments (fig. 8.10).[48] A contemporary 'horizon' of silver hoards is known from southeast England as well. Most of the English unminted silver, however, has a different character (small items of tableware and jewellery) and was not buried as scrap.[49] The only silver hoard from the Netherlands that might be of a late-Roman date was found at Winsum (Friesland) in 1861 and melted down soon after; all that remains of the ca 3 kg of silver, originally including fragmented, partly gilt beakers and trays, some round and hexagonal rings and at least one spoon, are four fragments of silver plate (fig. 8.11).[50]

In the 6th century, the role of the West-Roman Empire as distributor of gold and also silver was taken over by the Frankish kingdom, the silver from now on mainly circulating in the form of brooches and belt-fittings. Like the 'civic' tremisses, these ornaments were not produced in central workshops, but at a wide range of locations.[51] Because most imported silver will have been melted down for reuse, the number of Frankish (or Alamannic) silver objects in the northern and western Netherlands, northern Germany and East Anglia/Essex is particularly small. An exceptional position is taken by the central river area of the Netherlands and Kent, both belonging to the Frankish sphere of

41 See Bland 1997; Guest 2005; Bland et al. 2013 (England); Horsnæs 2010, 138-141 (Denmark), 142-143 (the Netherlands and Germany). The *clipped* coins from the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia may have been in Britain before being transported to these areas (Horsnæs 2010, 143-144; for the English practice of clipping siliquae, see Guest 2005, 110-115; 2013, 96-100; Abdy 2006, 84-86).

42 Recently, Guggisberg 2013; Rau 2013a; 2013b; see also Williams 2013.

43 See chapter 9.

44 Salomonson 1961.

45 See Grünhagen 1954, 15-38; Salomonson 1961, 73-74; Guggisberg 2013, 198-199.

46 Guggisberg 2013, 198-200; for the ingots, see also Salomonson (1961, 64-67), describing finds from Dierstorf (northern Germany), London (Essex) and Richborough (Kent).

47 For Denmark, see Olfert 1954; Munksgaard 1955; Horsnæs 2010, 86-87; Dyhrfjeld-Johnsen 2013; compare Rau 2013a; 2013b.

48 Grünhagen 1954; Berghaus 1999.

49 Bland 1997, 39, table 5; compare Johns & Bland 1994 (the Hoxne hoard, Suffolk).

50 Eekhoff 1861; Boeles 1951, 142; Galestin 1993.

51 For bow brooches, see Werner 1962, 314-316; Koch 1998, 481-499.

8.11 | Hacked and partly melted fragments of silver vessels, which are the remains of a probably late-Roman silver hoard found at Winsum (Friesland, original weight ca 3 kg) that was largely melted down shortly after its discovery. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photo J. van der Veer).

influence during most of the 6th century. Here brooches, buckles and decorative belt-mounts of Frankish design were appreciated as prestigious symbols and even imitated locally.[52]

Besides brooches and belt-fittings, silver also reached the North Sea world in the form of more exclusive luxuries. The best examples are the silver vessels and tableware from Sutton Hoo mound 1, which include a large dish (fig. 8.12), a fluted bowl, a partly gilded ladle, a small bowl with a foot-ring, ten bowls with cruciform designs and a pair of spoons. Hallmarks of the East-Roman emperor Anastasius I (491-518) are proof that the dish was made in the Eastern Mediterranean.[53] The other pieces either have a similar origin, or were produced in Frankish Gaul.[54]

In the late 6th century, the influx of silver to the North Sea world suddenly decreased, probably as a result of the growing scarcity of silver in the Frankish kingdom. In Frankish workshops most types of silver bow brooches were no longer produced after the third quarter of the 6th century and silver belt fittings were gradually replaced by bronze and later also iron specimens.[55] In the research area, this development is clearly reflected in the changing production of silver ornaments, which after ca 600 became limited to smaller and simpler ornaments such as finger rings, various types of pendant and slip-knot rings.[56]

While gold coins reached the North Sea world from various directions, most silver had a southern origin and from the late-Roman period on was imported via western Europe, the Rhine probably being the dominant transport route. The late-Roman 'pound-ingots' from Dierstorf (northern Germany), for example, were produced at Trier, while most of the imported silver brooches probably originated from the Middle- and Lower-Rhine valley.[57] Moreover, most siliquae from the research area were minted in the West-Roman Empire, notably at Trier.[58]

The more 'exotic' objects, like 'Coptic' vessels and glass beads from Egypt, amethyst beads and cowrie shells from the Eastern Mediterranean or Near East, ivory from Africa, and garnets from India, reached the North Sea world by the same routes as the late-Roman and Frankish gold.[59] Although finds of 'Coptic' vessels show a concentration along the northern Rhine route, historical sources also point to Marseilles as an important entry point for exotic luxuries from the Mediterranean and regions further east that reached the research area via the western route.[60]

52 E.g. Ypey 1973; 1978 (Rhenen, central river area); Parfitt & Brugmann 1997 (Mill Hill, Kent). See also section 9.4.

53 Bruce-Mitford 1983, 28-45.

54 Bruce-Mitford 1983, 162-163; Werner 1986, 467-478.

55 See Koch 1998; Siegmund 1998.

56 For England, see Geake 1997.

57 Salomonson 1961, 5 (no. 4: ingot, Dierstorf); Koch 1998 (bow brooches).

58 See Guest 2005, 93-100.

59 See Werner 1962; Huggett 1988; Whitehouse 1992; Knol 1993, 205-207. The origin of the garnets in Merovingian-period jewellery from the Netherlands has recently been analysed under supervision by A. Willemsen (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden). For some preliminary results, see Willemsen 2011 (in: Wagner & Ypey 2011); IJssennagger et al. 2013.

60 Compare Werner 1962, 310-312, fig. 2 and Schwärzel 1983, 19, maps 7, 9.

8.12 | Two 'exotics' from burial mound 1 at Sutton Hoo (Norfolk): a Byzantine silver dish with hallmarks of Anastasius I (491-518, top) and a 'Celtic' hanging-bowl (bottom). Scale of dish 1:4, scale of bowl 1:2 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

Yet a different route, archaeologically reflected in some of the richest funerary assemblages from southeast England, was not directed towards the south or east, but to the 'Celtic' north. Besides the whetstone that was used for the Sutton Hoo sceptre (fig. 11.22), the bronze hanging bowls from Sutton Hoo (fig. 8.12), Prittlewell and other 'royal' or 'princely' graves were probably produced in Ireland or northern England.[61] A silver hand pin from Hallum (Friesland, fig. 4.36) originates from either of these areas or a more southern part of Britain and will have reached the northern Netherlands also via this 'Celtic route' and southeast England.[62]

8.3 The interregional exchange of gold and silver: gifts or merchandise?

The late-Roman and Byzantine Empires, and the southern Scandinavian and Frankish kingdoms, played a crucial role in the flow of precious metals to the North Sea world. But how were objects of gold and silver exchanged, and by whom? Traditionally, the 'import' of gold and silver, as currency or merchandise, has been explained as *trade* according to Roman-period and modern market principles. Inspired by the anthropological work of Mauss, Grierson was the first to emphasize the *social* importance of exchange during the early medieval period. In reaction to the traditional, economic interpretation, he states that "[i]t involves the error of reading history backwards – or in this case also forwards: of assuming that because material goods were later, as they had been in Roman times, distributed largely by the agency of trade, the same was necessarily the case in the Dark Ages. Even the briefest reflection must show that this is scarcely likely to have been the case."[63]

Instead of commercial exchange, aimed at making a profit, Grierson prefers to explain 'trade' of high-status or luxury goods as a form of *gift-exchange*, amply known from non-western societies and described for the Germanic world both by Tacitus and in *Beowulf*.[64] In contrast to the commercial exchange of goods, the giving and receiving of gifts was not a goal in itself, but primarily aimed at creating a personal bond between both parties that participated in the exchange – thus structuring the network of social relations not only within, but also between Germanic groups.[65] Although Näsman too rejects the traditional ideas about early medieval trade, he is of the opinion that the large number of imported luxuries from Scandinavia cannot be explained by gift-exchange alone.[66] Näsman argues for a more regular exchange of, for example, bronze or glass vessels as a kind of commodity in a social network of long-distance exchange. Furthermore, there are both historical and archaeological indications that high-status objects changed hands as tribute, war booty, ransom, compensation and dowries – besides items that were transported as the belongings of migrating people.[67]

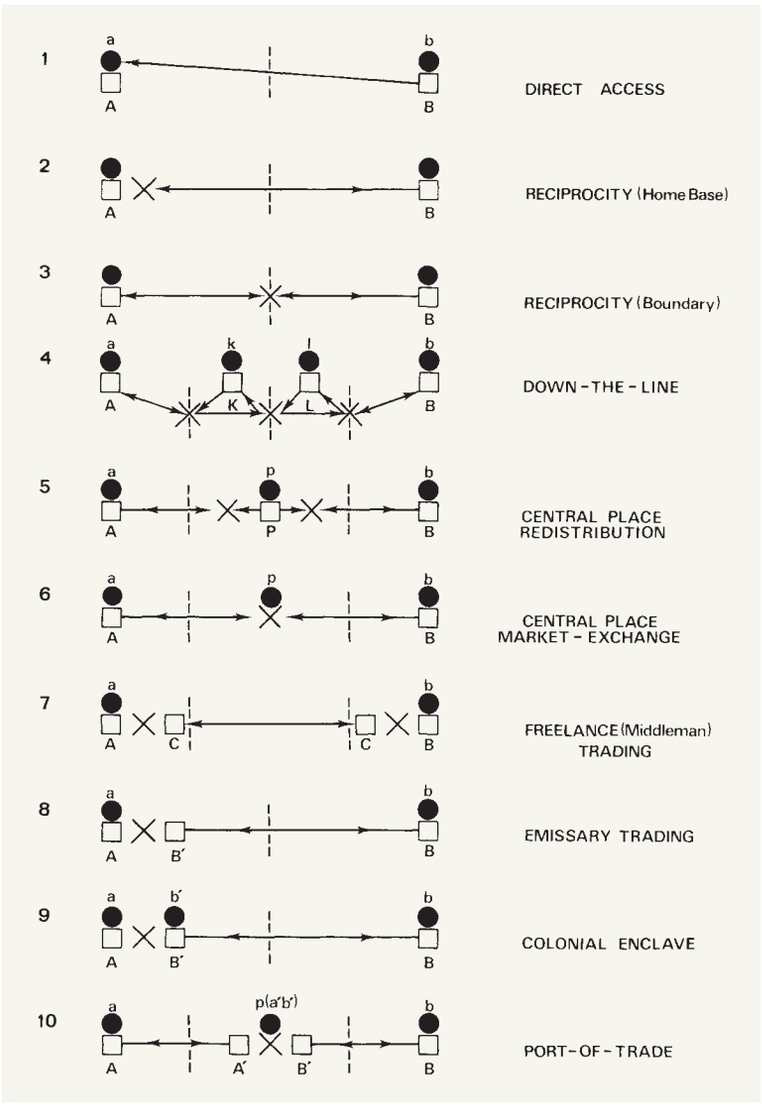
Although terms like 'gifts', 'merchandise' and 'commodities' are useful in working with archaeological data, there is a risk of misinterpretation because of their association with modern concepts. Moreover, both anthropologists and archaeologists tend to create an opposition between the 'romantic' gift = traditional society, and the 'capitalist' commodity = modern society.[68] Especially Bloch and Perry have shown that the role of an individual object always depends on the *specific context of exchange*, which was associated with a particular set of standards and principles.[69] These authors draw a distinction between a cycle of long-term exchange, which played a role in the reproduction of the social and cosmic order, and a cycle of short-term exchange, which is the arena of individual transactions and competition. The first, however, could not exist without the second, which provided much of the goods that were necessary for the reproduction of society. Within this 'total sphere of exchange', individual, impersonal exchange items could become collective property and morally positive after being (ritually) converted from one exchange sphere to the other. Especially items of gold and silver seem to have been used in *both* spheres of exchange; in contrast to other categories of prestige goods, gold rings, for example, played a role in *all* relations that are described in *Beowulf*.[70]

61 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 357-377 (sceptre); 1983, 263-295 (hanging bowls); Ryan 1992.
62 For the origin of (proto-)hand pins, see recently Gavin 2013, 432-434, fig. 27.4.
63 Grierson 1959, 125.
64 Grierson 1959, 129 ff.
65 See also section 1.3.
66 Näsman 1986, 96 ff.; 1991.
67 Grierson 1959, 131 ff.; Hardt 1998, 272-273; 2004, 157-199, 249-264.
68 Moreland 2000, 22-24.
69 Bloch & Parry 1989; see also Theuws 2004.
70 Bazelmans 1998b, 72-73; 1999, 155.

8.3.1 *Renfrew's 'modes of trade'*

Present-day ideas about early medieval trade and exchange mechanisms have been strongly influenced by anthropological research.[71] The concepts and models presented by 'economic anthropology' enable the archaeologist not only to make a distinction between different forms of exchange, but, perhaps even more importantly, also to link (archaeological) distribution patterns to specific exchange mechanisms.

In an influential article about the relationships between different forms of exchange and the spatial distribution of imported goods, Renfrew presented a series of 'modes of trade' and distance-decay models.[72] The modes of trade represent various exchange mechanisms that may, but do not have to, reflect an evolutionary development (fig. 8.13). Moreover, different modes may have operated alongside each other. The first mode represents a simple transaction (mode 1: 'direct access'), the next two modes are forms of reciprocity, at someone's home and at an intermediate place, respectively (modes 2 and 3). When the imported goods are further exchanged with neighbours, Renfrew speaks of 'down-the-line exchange' (mode 4). The existence of 'central places', in the next mode, will have favoured the development of a redistributive system (mode 5: 'central place redistribution'). When exchange becomes 'less embedded, less integrally related to the social organization', a market system with currency will develop (mode 6), the role of 'middlemen' will replace 'many changes of hands' (mode 7), and trading activities will eventually become state-organized (mode 8). Finally, with a growing power of the state, remote trading stations or colonial enclaves may be set up (mode 9), giving rise to 'ports of trade' or emporia (mode 10).



8.13 | 'Modes of trade' and their spatial implications. Territorial boundaries are indicated by broken lines. Circles a/b: point of origin and place of receipt of the exchange goods, squares A/B: person at the source and recipient, circle p: central place, square P: central person, X: exchange transactions (after Renfrew 1975, fig. 10).

Early-medieval exchange, before and after the emergence of emporia, was dominated by a large variety of luxury goods, including precious metals, bronze and glass vessels, weaponry and also spices and wine, on the one hand, and by 'utilitarian goods' or 'commodities', such as wheel-thrown pottery, lava quernstones and salt, on the other.[73] When these goods were exchanged as political gifts ('prestige-chain trade'), a very specific distribution pattern is to be expected: luxury goods are found in substantial numbers not only near the original source, but also at large distances from it (fig. 8.14, no. 1). This is different from the usual 'down-the line trade' according to the principle of reciprocity (modes 2 to 4), which is characterized by a rapid fall-off in the occurrence of exported items beyond the primary supply zone (fig. 8.14, no. 2). The transportation of commodities may point to the development of a more commercial type of exchange and a role for middlemen, or 'freelance traders' as Renfrew calls them, each with a specific area of operation – which will result in a less rapid fall-off curve within that trader's marketing area. Because transport was much easier, and hence cheaper, by water than by road, the fall-off curve will be markedly stretched by the presence of rivers and coasts.[74]

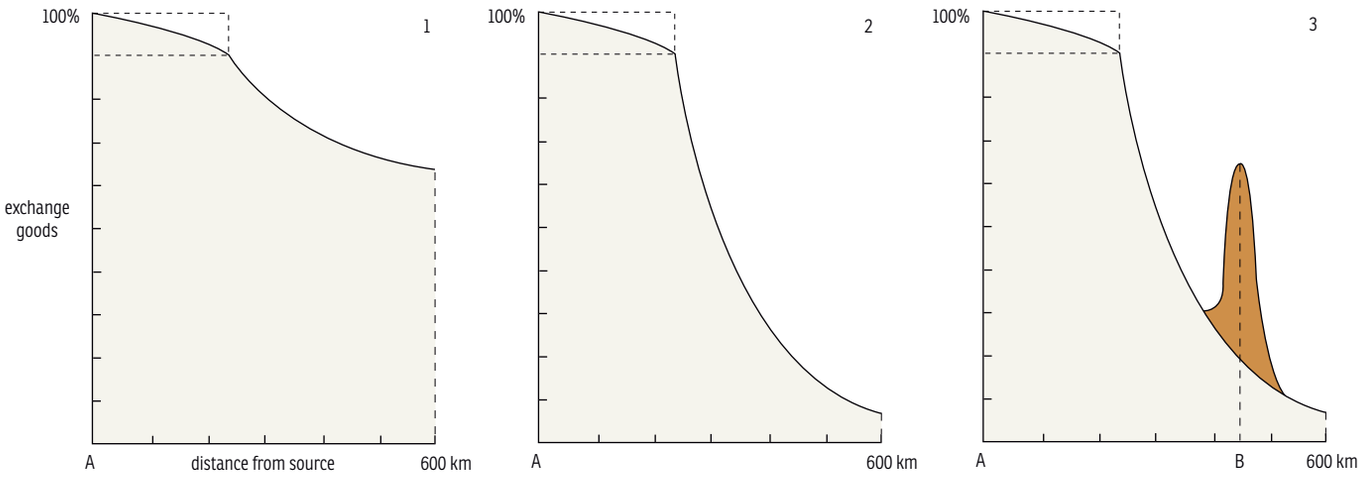
The distribution of most categories of early-medieval prestige goods, however, shows a less regular fall-off curve. Objects of gold and silver and various other types of 'exotics' are found at large distances from their original source, while at the same time clustering in small areas. According to Renfrew, this pat-

71 E.g. Kilger 2007, 256-263; Skre 2007, 329-335. See also section 1.5.

72 Renfrew 1975.

73 See Hodges 1982, 117-129, table 3; Schwärzel 1983, 1-6.

74 See, for example, Loveluck & Tys 2006.



8.14 | Fall-off curves of exchange goods in relation to distance from the source: 'prestige-chain trade' (1), 'down-the-line trade' (2) and 'central-place redistribution' (3). A: primary source, B: central place/ secondary source (redrawn after Renfrew 1975, figs. 11-12, 14).

tern is typical of 'central-place redistribution': via a network of central places, the imported goods were redistributed in their secondary supply zones (mode 5, fig. 8.14, no. 3).[75]

The clustering of prestige goods in small areas around central places is an important indication that direct access to gold and silver was limited to a small number of 'central persons'. This is in agreement with Mauss's observation that, in non-western societies, prestigious items were often exchanged between chieftains or other leaders in their capacity as intermediaries representing a specific part of society or the society as a whole.[76] This exchange at least partly had a collective goal, and is reminiscent of Smelser's 'mobilizative type of exchange', which was aimed at collecting "... goods and services into the hands of those responsible for pursuing the broad political aims of the society."[77]

8.3.2 *Archaeological indications for long-distance exchange*

The large amount of gold coins and the high proportion of Frankish wheel-thrown wares among the pottery in the northern Netherlands led Heidinga to the conclusion that "[t]his influx of gold and goods cannot only be explained as the result of alliances and gift-exchange, but must be attributed to a form of regular trade."[78] Although post-Roman trade according to modern market principles was probably nonexistent before the late 7th or the 8th century, in the Migration and Merovingian periods it may well be a different exchange mechanism that explains the import of most gold and silver as the 'raw materials' that were needed for the production of regional- or supraregional-style status objects.

This *long-distance exchange* is defined by Näsman as "...an exchange of luxuries that were distributed across the Germanic regions via a developed network of social-political relations."[79] The main differences from commercialised trade are that a) no basic commodities, but only high-status objects were exchanged, b) these luxuries – including minted and unminted gold or silver – were exchanged as *goods*, without the use of currency, and c) the exchange was based on an extensive network of social relations, connecting northwestern Europe with areas as far as the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. In this way, long-distance exchange can be seen as an important stage in the development from down-the line reciprocity (mode 4) to a 'modern' market economy (modes 6 and higher), the latter being characterised by the transport of bulk cargo, the use of currency, and a prominent role of specialized merchants making a profit as middlemen.

A significant aspect of long-distance exchange is that it enabled the participating elite to obtain 'foreign' objects that were desired or needed, without being dependent on another's gift. Glass vessels are particularly relevant in this respect; these were produced in the German Rhineland and distributed as a kind of commodity across large parts of northwestern Europe.[80] A substantial part of the numerous gold coins, bronze vessels and weapons probably circulated in long-distance exchange networks as well, alongside their more incidental exchange as gifts. Unfortunately, it is rarely if ever possible for the archaeologist to make a clear distinction between the overlapping categories of exchange goods on the one hand, and personal gifts on the other.

75 Renfrew 1975, 48; see also Hodges 1982, 31-32.

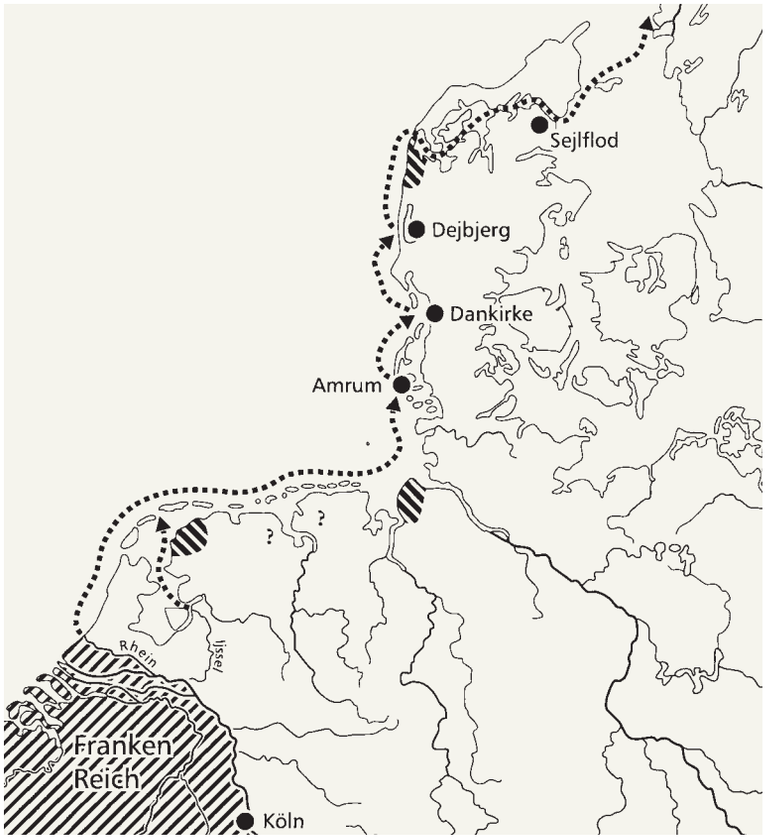
76 Mauss 1966, 3.

77 Smelser 1959, 179-181 (quotation p. 179).

78 Heidinga 1997, 32.

79 Näsman 1986, 100-105; 1991 (quotation p. 33).

80 See Näsman 1984a; 1986; 1998, 263-268.



8.15 | Reconstruction of the exchange network connecting the Frankish kingdom to a series of landing places along the southern North Sea coast around AD 500. Hatched: areas with a 'high potential of centrality', question marks: possible areas with such a centrality potential (after Segschneider 2002b, fig. 7).

The development of long-distance exchange in Migration-period Europe seems to have triggered the rise of 'central places', as defined by Renfrew. In southern Scandinavia several redistribution centres, also called central places (or central-place complexes), have been traced archaeologically over the past decades.[81] Unlike normal rural settlements, these extensive sites or, actually, site clusters covering an area of up to 10 and sometimes even 20 km² had a *multiple function*, being characterized by a) landing facilities for ships, b) evidence of artisanal manufacture, including the working of gold and silver, and c) the presence of ritual and ceremonial buildings, including the 'grand hall' of the leading elite, who probably controlled most activities at these sites. The earliest convincing central places functioning in a supra-regional context can be roughly dated to the 3rd or 4th century, and include the famous sites of Gudme-Lundeborg (Funen), Sorte Muld (Bornholm) and Uppåkra (southern Sweden).[82] At least one century later, the first central places – or 'central regions' – are traceable also along the southern North Sea coast, in the Sievern area (Germany), northern Westergo (northern Netherlands) and eastern Kent (late 5th-6th centuries).[83] Before the appearance of emporia in the late 7th or early 8th century, a direct relationship can be observed between the location of central places and small, regional clusters of gold, silver or other high-status goods, which reflect their function as both elite and redistribution centres.

Instead of transportation directly from production sites to distribution or redistribution centres, the exchange of 'foreign' luxuries probably occurred in a series of shorter steps (fig. 8.18, no. 1).[84] Central places are essential within this system, functioning as 'contact points' in an extensive, interregional network of social relations. In his reconstruction of a trading route from the Frankish Rhineland to southern Scandinavia, Segschneider located a series of landing places and seasonal markets along the North Sea coast, at Amrum, Dankirke and Dejbjerg (fig. 8.15).[85] At least two more landing places probably existed in 'areas with a high potential of centrality': northern Westergo and the Sievern area. Although the situation along most of the Dutch coast is less clear, a line of landing places, at largely regular intervals, can be assumed here as well. As at Gudme-Lundeborg, where Lundeborg functioned as the landing place of the actual settlement of Gudme, such sites should be seen as an integral part of central places, offering facilities for interregional exchange via the North Sea.

As redistribution points, central places will have acted as 'filters' on any exchange with sites in their hinterland and with other central places, with fewer objects being found outside their supply zones (fig. 8.18, no. 1; compare Renfrew's 'down-the-line exchange').[86] This can be illustrated by Huggett's analysis of imported grave goods in early Anglo-Saxon England, which were mainly produced in, or imported via the Frankish kingdom.[87] The find distribution and fall-off curves of, for example, amethyst beads, crystal balls and glass vessels indicate that eastern Kent was a key player in the 6th- and 7th-century importation of specific luxury goods (fig. 8.16); the same holds for

81 Especially Jensen & Watt 1993; Fabech 1999b; Jørgensen 2009; Pesch 2011a; Näsman 2011.

82 Nielsen et al. 1994; Sørensen 2010 (Gudme-Lundeborg); Adamsen et al. 2008 (Sorte Muld); Larsson 2004 (Uppåkra). The existence of an earlier, 3rd-century central place on eastern Zealand, as suggested by Hansen (1988; 1995), is not generally accepted (see Randsborg 1987; Näsman 2006).

83 See chapter 13.

84 Näsman 1986, 101; 1991, 26.

85 Segschneider 2002a, 129-131; 2002b. Compare the situation along the coast of southern Norway (Myhre 1987).

86 Näsman 1986, 101.

87 Huggett 1988; see also Hodges 1982, 36. For western England, compare Campbell 2007.

8.16 | The geographical distribution of imported glass vessels, amethyst beads and crystal balls in early Anglo-Saxon England (6th-7th centuries), showing a clustering of finds in eastern Kent (redrawn after Huggett 1988, figs. 2, 5, 7).

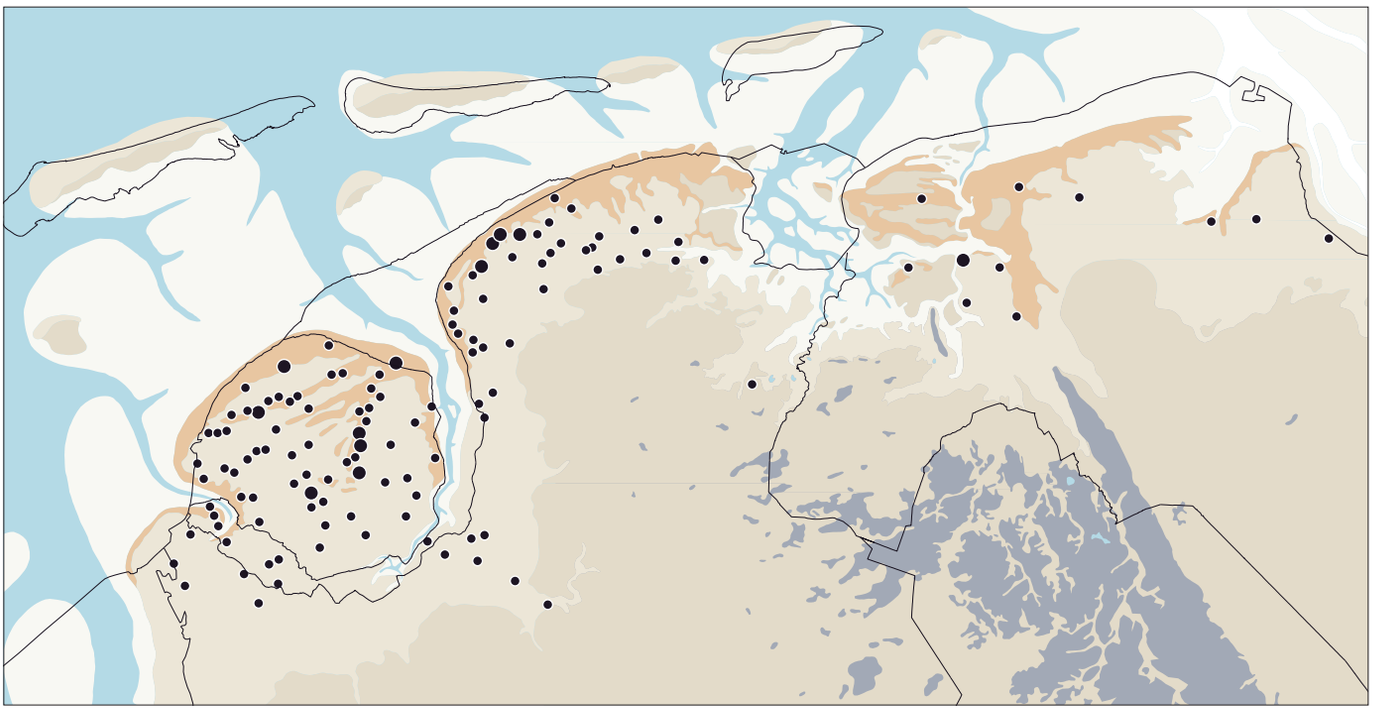
gold coins (fig. 7.33). The absence or small number of such finds from the areas north and west of Kent suggests a deliberate selection of exotic goods that, once they reached Kent, were used for further distribution. Although regional differences may have been strengthened by differing preferences for grave goods, and one or more entry points were certainly active also in East Anglia and Essex especially during the late 6th and 7th centuries, the dominant position of eastern Kent is supported by historical evidence of close contacts between the Frankish and Kentish royal families.[88] A redistribution pattern is also reflected in the collection of high-status items from rural settlement sites in the coastal zone of the northern Netherlands. Amongst other imports, 6th- and 7th-century gold coins show a clustering in the province of Friesland, especially in the district of Westergo, while relatively few of these are found outside Friesland (fig. 4.41).

Long-distance exchange, as defined by Näsman, is different from the probably co-existing and more regionally oriented exchange of commodities mentioned above. Especially within areas rich in high-status imports, such goods are found at most, if not all, rural settlements (fig. 8.17) – wheel-thrown pottery in the Rhine and Meuse estuaries, for example, representing 80 to 100% of all pottery at rural sites.[89] In his overview of 6th-century exchange in the northern Frankish world and its periphery, Wickham makes a relevant distinction between local and regional commercial exchange by independent merchants on the one hand, and non-commercial prestige-goods exchange by the elite or dependent merchants on the other.[90] In a more recent article about early medieval exchange along the Channel and southern North Sea shores, Love-

88 See Wood 1990; 199; Yorke 2002, 125-129.

89 For the Rhine and Meuse deltas, see Dijkstra 2004, 404; 2011, 309-311, fig. 7.4.

90 Wickham 1998, 283-284.



8.17 | The geographical distribution of Frankish, 6th- and 7th-century wheel-thrown pottery from dwelling mounds in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. The finds show a wide distribution in the province of Friesland, especially in the gold-rich district of Westergo. Small dots: 1-9 shards; large dots 10 or more shards (redrawn after Knol 1993, fig. 55).

luck and Tys also argue for the existence of a form of 'free trade', mainly consisting in the exchange of wheel-thrown pottery between independent merchants and people living in rural settlements along the coast, which at least partly functioned as landing places and 'exchange sites' (fig. 8.18, no. 2; matching Renfrew's 'market exchange' and 'freelance or middleman trading', modes 6-7).[91] Interestingly, this commercial exchange mechanism seems to have operated only in the former Roman provinces and their close periphery, including the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. In Scandinavia, by contrast, imported pottery and lava quernstones are rare finds until the appearance of emporia, like Hedeby and Ribe, in the 8th century – which supports the idea that early commodity exchange had a more regional character than prestige-goods exchange.[92] Whether gold or silver were used as 'money' in such early commodity exchange will be discussed in section 10.2.

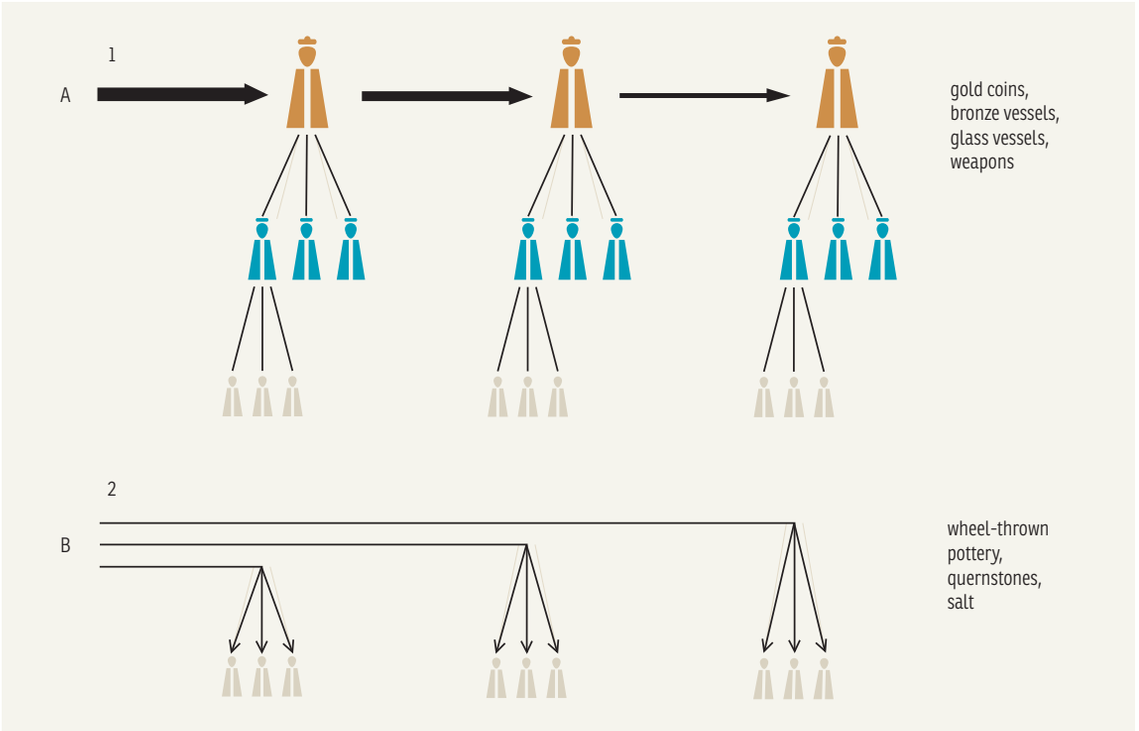
Because of the prominent role of 'Frisians' in the historical sources about early medieval trade, Ellmers suggested a 'Frisian monopoly' of long-distance exchange in northwestern Europe during the Migration and Merovingian periods.[93] Lebecq, however, has rightly shown that the term 'Frisian' was used as a synonym for 'international trader' and will have referred to Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian traders as well as people from the northern Netherlands.[94] That 'Frisians' became the eponym of a markedly international category of traders can be explained by the importance of Dorestad in early-medieval North Sea trade, a major node in the stepwise exchange of luxuries between the Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian worlds.

8.3.3 *Political payments, war booty, ransom, compensation, dowries and bridewealth*

Gold and silver will have reached the North Sea world not only as political gifts and exchange goods, but, more incidentally, also as different forms of payment or war booty.[95] These exchange mechanisms are difficult to study archaeologically, because it is hardly possible to assign individual hoards or singe finds to specific events. Moreover, the most exceptional gifts or pieces of war booty became part of the royal *thesaurus* and would usually not be buried as grave goods or hoards, which renders them invisible to the archaeologist.[96] Consequently, this section can be no more than a short review of mechanisms that will have contributed to the flow of gold and silver from surrounding areas to the southern North Sea world – or the other way around.

War and pillaging were no exception in Migration- and Merovingian-period Europe, but a crucial part of the aristocratic lifestyle – as described in section 1.5. The vast weapon

91 Loveluck & Tys 2006.
92 For Scandinavia, see Näsman 1991, 36-38; 2000.
93 Ellmers 1990.
94 Lebecq 1990.
95 For an overview, see Hardt 2004, 157-199, 249-264.
96 See the discussion in sections 1.8 and 11.3.2.



8.18 | Interregional exchange during the 5th to 7th centuries: 1. long-distance exchange of luxury goods, by stages, from the source (A) to central persons/central places, followed by redistribution within society in the form of personal gifts, 2. 'free trade' of commodities, directly from the source (B) to customers – each merchant covering a specific marketing area (drawing by the author).

deposits in southern Scandinavia, dating from the 3rd to the 5th centuries, comprise thousands of weapons that were offered to the gods after victory in war.[97] Inter-tribal conflicts are also mentioned in historical sources, such as the 7th- and early 8th-century battles that were fought between 'Frisian' kings and their Frankish opponents.[98] These battles were not only aimed at subjecting neighbouring kingdoms and territorial expansion; probably even more important was the capture of booty, including gold, silver and other treasures from the enemy's *thesaurus* – likely to be accompanied by the 'smashing of a hall' as documented at Uppåkra (southern Sweden).[99] The only archaeological find from Merovingian-period Europe that may represent such a collection of war booty is the recently discovered Staffordshire hoard, discussed in the epilogue of this book.

Directly related to war and pillage are *political payments*, often aimed at creating a bond of friendship with an aggressive neighbouring tribe on the one hand (tribute), or gaining political influence in a specific area on the other (diplomatic gift). Both types of exchange, which are nicely exemplified in the late-Roman and Byzantine solidus payments described in section 8.2.1, are actually gifts that were meant to create or to maintain a personal relationship between the giver and the receiver.

Finally, gold or silver will have crossed socio-political borders as *ransom*, *compensation* and *dowries* or *bridewealth*. Again, these payments should be explained in the light of gift-exchange, with a prisoner, a reconciliation or an alliance being 'exchanged' for gold, silver or other luxuries.

8.4 Conclusion

Gold coins are particularly useful for reconstructing the early medieval transport routes that connected the North Sea world to surrounding areas. During the 5th and early 6th centuries, most gold was imported via an east-European route running from the East-Roman Empire, via the Baltic area and southern Scandinavia to the coastal areas of northern Germany and the northern Netherlands. A smaller number of West-Roman gold coins, as well as minted or unminted silver, had reached this part of the research area as early as the late 4th and the 5th century via western Europe, but the 6th-century expansion of the Frankish kingdom meant a revival of the traditional Rhine route – connecting northwestern Europe across the Alps with the eastern Mediterranean. In the early 7th century, the growing importance of some more westerly routes can be seen, especially those via the rivers Rhône-Saône, Seine and Loire, while after the mid 7th century the rivers Rhine and Meuse became the dominant transport routes. The situation was different in the western Netherlands and especially southeast

97 See, for example, Jørgensen et al. 2003; Blankenfeldt & Rau 2009.

98 See section 2.3, table 2.1.

99 For Uppåkra, see Herschend 2009, 369-376; Larsson 2011.

England, which into the early decades of the 7th century received most of their gold and silver via western Europe; after ca 625, however, their precious metals were also mainly imported via the rivers Rhine and Meuse.

During the 5th to 7th centuries, inter-regional exchange was not trade according to modern (or Roman) market principles. Besides incidental gifts or 'payments', most gold and silver was probably exchanged as luxury or prestige goods in a social network of long-distance exchange. Central places should be seen as key elements in the stepwise exchange of valuables, forming the 'contact points' between kingdoms or regions all over Europe. The clustering of high-status goods in the areas surrounding these points indicates that these were not only distribution or redistribution centres, but also the residences of the leading elite who controlled both the interregional and regional exchange of luxuries – alongside the probably 'free' and more commercial exchange of specific commodities, like wheel-thrown pottery, in the former Roman provinces and their close periphery.

A relevant question to be dealt with in the next chapter is how foreign coins, jewellery and other ornaments were used after reaching the North Sea world. Were they treasured as foreign exotics, or regarded as no more than raw materials for items expressing prestige in a regional or supra-regional style?

9

Reshaping imported precious metals: the creation of regional and supra-regional style groups

9.1 Introduction

After late-Roman and Byzantine gold and silver reached the North Sea world via various East- and West-European routes, most of the precious metals were melted down to be reshaped into brooches, pendants, buckles and other ornaments in a regional or supra-regional style. This process of *reshaping and transformation* neatly reflects the cultural focus of the leading elite living at 'central places' and probably controlling the interregional exchange of valuable items as gifts and exchange goods.[1] A fascinating question is what foreign or local cultural traditions governed the royal and aristocratic families' preferences as to the design of the high-status items that they distributed as gifts among their retinues. In this chapter, the gold and silver ornaments from the research area are assigned to five culturally distinct and chronologically partly overlapping 'style groups', each giving expression to a different cultural identity among the North Sea elites.[2] These style groups, presented in chronological order below, reflect a cultural focus dominated by 'Saxon' (section 9.2), Scandinavian (section 9.3), Frankish (sections 9.4-5) and Byzantine influences (section 9.6), respectively.

9.2 Late-Roman silver transformed into 'Saxon' brooches (ca 390-475)

During the final decades of the 4th and the 5th century, northern Germany saw the emergence of regional brooch types, inspired by late-Roman brooch forms and the decoration of late-Roman belt-plates with geometrical patterns and animal motifs in a style suggestive of chip-carving. In southern Scandinavia and southeast England the imitation of late-Roman decorative motifs is Parallelled by the production of brooches in 'Nydam Style' and 'Sösdala Style', and brooches and belt and sword fittings in 'Quoit Brooch Style', respectively.[3] Because of their find concentration in the northern part of the Elbe-Weser region, the presumed homeland of the early Saxons, the German brooch types are interpreted as ethnic markers and related to the ethnogenesis of the *Saxones* as a tribal group.[4]

The earliest brooches with regional, 'Saxon' characteristics were produced from the middle or late 4th century on.[5] They comprise late tutulus brooches of the Issendorf type, early saucer brooches (*Schalenfibeln*) of differing types, crossbow brooches (*Armbrustfibeln*) with a trapezoid foot (variants A and B), as well as supporting-arm brooches (*Stützarmfibeln*) with a trapezoid foot (Lower-Saxon types A and B; all show a clustering of finds in the Elbe-Weser region (see fig. 9.1).[6] Most brooches are made of bronze, with the

1 See section 8.3.

2 The datings presented below are supported by the recent chronology of Anglo-Saxon grave goods by Hines & Bayliss (2013, fig. 8.16), which was not yet available when this chapter was written.

3 Haseloff 1981, 8 ff.; Kristoffersen & Magnus 2010, 75-77, 93-94 (Nydam Style); Näsman 1984b (Sösdala Style); Richardson 2005, 21-23; Webster 2012, 52-55 (Quoit Brooch Style).

4 Especially Böhme 1999, 66-72; 2003; see also Nielsen 2003, 194-206 and section 2.4.

5 Böhme 1989, 770 (revised dating of the Gallic *Fundgruppe* A: ca 390-430); Brieske & Schlicksbier 2005 (phase 1a: late 4th century); Rau 2010, 92-96, fig. 38 (group 1: ca 350/370-400/420).

6 Böhme 1974, maps 2-4, 6-7.

9.1 | Geographical distribution of silver and bronze supporting-arm brooches with a trapezoid foot, of Lower-Saxon types A and B. Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site; black symbol: bronze; white symbol: silver (data after Böhme 1974, *Fundliste* 3, with additions: Bollingawier (Friesland, type A, 1x silver), Fallward, grave 282 (Cuxhaven, probably type A: 1x silver, with gold foil)).

exception of a silver supporting-arm brooch of Lower-Saxon type A from Bollingawier (Friesland, fig. 4.26, no. 1) and some tutulus brooches with a silver or silver-gilt upper part (e.g. fig. 6.4). The few dispersed finds from northern Gaul are traditionally related to Saxon *foederati* serving in the late-Roman army.[7] The supporting-arm and composite saucer brooches found in the northern Netherlands and southeast England, mainly north of the river Thames, were probably taken overseas when these coastal areas were settled by 'Anglo-Saxon' immigrants from the late 4th century onwards (fig. 1.8).[8] A gold bell-shaped pendant from Hijum (Friesland, fig. 9.2) can be explained in the same way: four identical pendants are known from a 4th-century gold hoard that was buried near Lengerich in northern Germany.[9]

In the first half of the 5th century, new types of saucer and bow brooches (e.g. supporting-arm brooches with a rectangular foot, of Mandorf and Perlberg types) were introduced alongside the equal-armed brooches (*gleicharmige Fibeln*) – especially the last showing the characteristic 'chip-carved' decoration.[10] As a new element, a substantial number of the equal-armed brooches were executed in silver, the largest and most exclusive pieces being decorated with gilding (especially the Dösemoor type, see fig. 6.24). Transitional

9.2 | Gold bell-shaped pendant from Hijum (Friesland), probably imported from northern Germany. Scale 3:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer).

forms, showing a regional development from supporting-arm to equal-armed brooch, are the so-called '*Formengruppe* Issendorf' and 'pre-form Seraing', which can be dated to around 400 (fig. 9.3).[11] Whereas Böhme suggested a single line of development for the 5th-century equal-armed brooches, Genrich and more recently Bruns have shown that most types are contemporaneous and probably represent micro-regional variants.[12] The currently known saucer and equal-armed brooches show a clustering of finds in the Elbe-Weser region (fig. 9.4).[13] Less pronounced find clusters, which again can be related to migrating 'Anglo-Saxons', are visible in the northern Netherlands and southeast England; the English equal-armed brooches, with one exception, are found only in the area north

7 E.g. Böhme 1999, 64-66.

8 Böhme 1986, 527-532, fig. 54; see also sections 2.2 and 2.5.

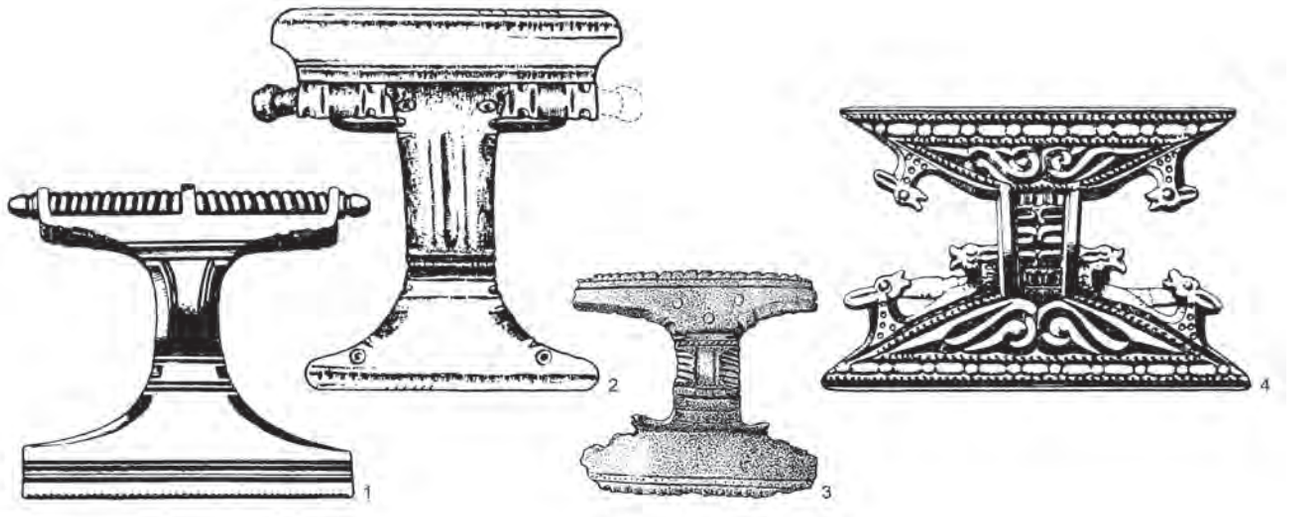
9 Boeles 1951, 324, pl. 39.2 (Hijum); Häßler 2003, 78-83, fig. 45 (Lengerich).

10 Brieske & Schlicksbier 2005, 100 (phase 1b: first half of the 5th century); Rau 2010, 92-96, fig. 38 (group 2: ca 400/420-450/460).

11 Böhme 1999, 66-67, fig. 15; 2003, 256-257, fig. 9; see also Genrich 1951, 13-27; 1952; Bruns 2003, 13 ff.

12 Böhme 1974, 18-19; 2003, 256-257 and Genrich 1951, 24-29, fig. 30; 1952, 188, fig. 5; Bruns 2003, 30-32, map 5 (including the newly distinguished types Hannover, Daudieck and Nesse 2). Compare the cast saucer brooches, only found in a small part of the Elbe-Weser region (Böhme 1974, map 8; Hines 1999, 227, fig. 1).

13 For saucer brooches, see Böhme 1974, maps 7-8.



9.3 | The development of 'Saxon' supporting-arm into equal-armed brooches, illustrated by finds from the German Elbe-Weser region. Scale 1:1 (after Böhme 1974, Taf. 22.12, 36.2, 36.16; 1986, fig. 50). 1. supporting-arm brooch with a trapezoidal foot from Sahlenburg (Lower-Saxon type B), 2. 'transitional' brooch from Hemmoor-Warstade ('*Formengruppe* Issendorf'), 3. equal-armed brooch of 'pre-form Seraing' from Westerwanna, 4. equal-armed brooch of type Sahlenburg from Sahlenburg.

of the Thames.[14] One more find, from the area south of this river, is a silver, atypical supporting-arm brooch from Eastry (Kent), which is closely paralleled by a find from Riensförde (Stade, fig. 6.9, no. 5).[15]

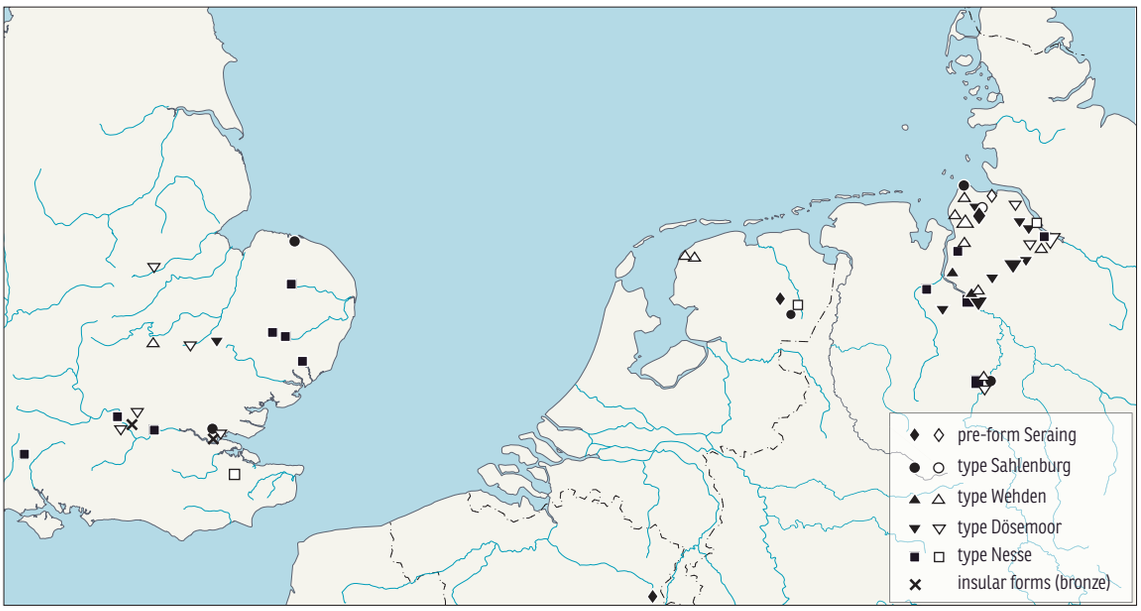
An interesting feature of a small group of 'Saxon' brooches in Germany, dating to around 400, is the use of gold foil.[16] The brooches are of different types, including a supporting-arm brooch, probably of Lower Saxon type A (Fallward, grave 282), an early equal-armed brooch of '*Formengruppe* Issendorf' (Otterndorf, grave 10, fig. 6.3) and an equal-armed brooch of the Wehden type (Fallward, grave 282, fig. 6.8).[17] Rather than being gilded, these silver brooches are overlaid with gold leaf – probably representing an experimental phase before the earliest silver-*gilt* brooches of the types Dösemoor and Nesse were manufactured.

Probably soon after their introduction, Saxon-type brooches were also produced locally in southeast England. The initial imitations of equal-armed and both composite and cast saucer brooches evolved into several insular forms.[18] The insular-style equal-armed brooches were no longer executed in silver, however, but in (gilded) bronze (Mucking and Berinsfield types). Like most of the imported and locally imitated pieces, they are found only in the area north of the river Thames – which functioned as a cultural border between East Anglia/Essex and Kent. In Kent, the 'Saxon' influence on 5th-century female dress was limited to the use of saucer brooches, mainly in western Kent.[19]

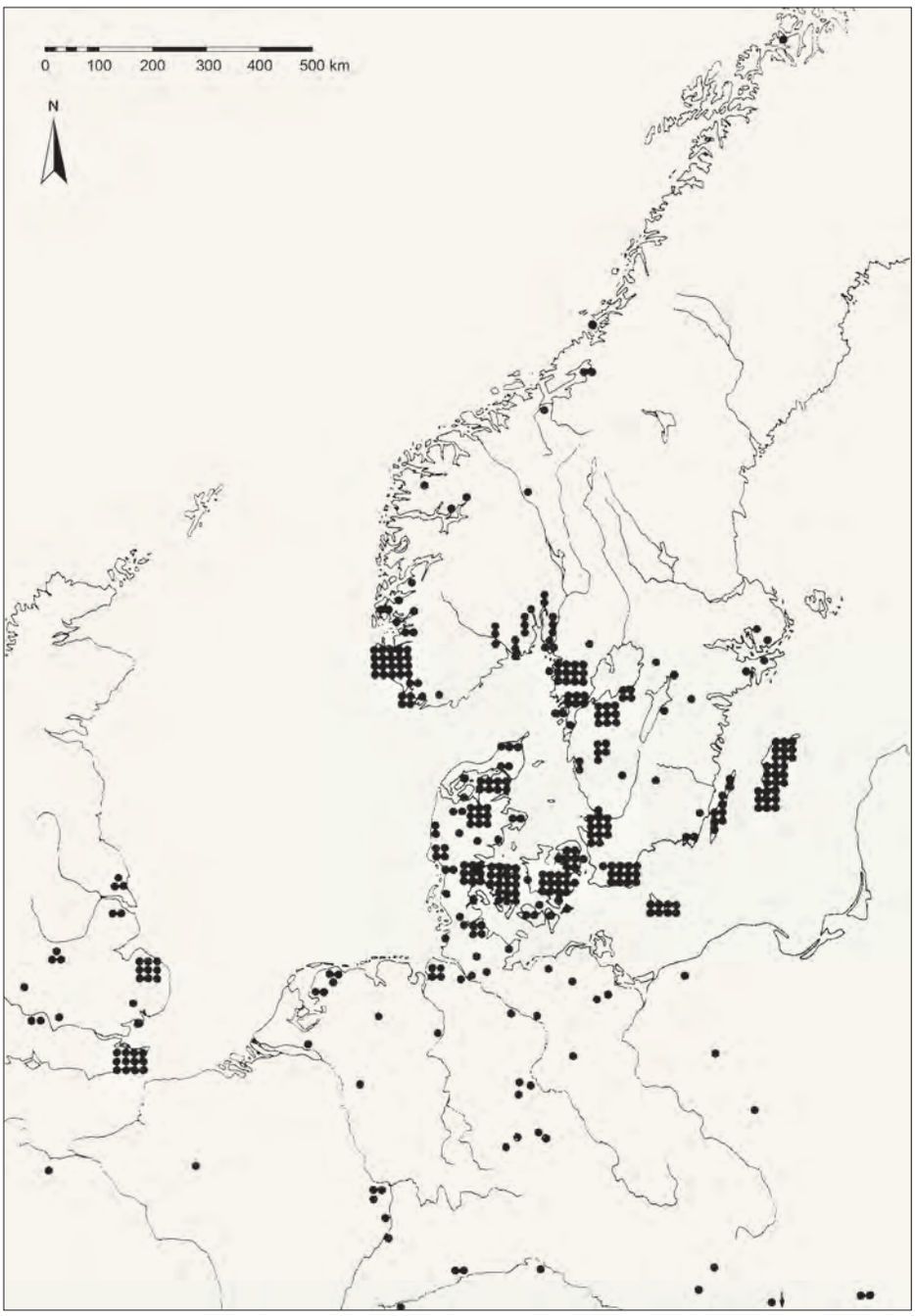
In the southern North Sea area 'Saxon' or 'Saxon-style' brooches were worn throughout most of the 5th century. Although some of the equal-armed brooches were buried in graves dating to the late 5th or early 6th century, their production probably ended several decades earlier, in the third quarter of the 5th century.[20] In southern Scandinavia, this is Parallelled by the replacement of the closely related Nydam-Style brooches by jewellery with a decoration in Animal Style I – a development that has recently been dated to ca 450-465.[21]

Interestingly, two Kentish finds of very similar, silver-gilt Nydam-Style brooches, decorated with geometric, animal and human motifs in relief (fig. 9.13, no. 1), show an early cultural link with Scandinavia.[22] Since some decorative elements, like the rosette on the footplate, are unknown from Scandinavian brooches, they were probably not imported, but produced in a Kentish workshop.[23] The brooches can be dated to around the middle or the third quarter of the 5th century, predating a typically 'Scandinavian phase' in the production of North Sea jewellery.

14 For southeast England, see Böhme 1986, 527 ff., figs. 54, 69. Two fragments of the only equal-armed brooch from Kent were found at Hollingbourne (*TAR* 2003, no. 71; 2005/2006, no. 198: late Nesse type, silver-gilt).
15 For the brooch from Eastry, see Ager 1989.
16 Schön 1999a, 142-143.
17 For the find context and references, see section 6.2.
18 Böhme 1986, 542 ff.; Bruns 2003, 22-23, 32.
19 Richardson 2005, 29-30, table 6.
20 For datable graves with equal-armed brooches, see Bruns 2003, 31.
21 Kristoffersen & Magnus 2010, 75-77, 93-94, fig. 20; Rau 2010, 297-301.
22 Richardson 2005, 23, fig. 4a (Canterbury); *TAR* 2005/2006, no. 197 (Gillingham); see also Welch 2007, 216, fig. 6.20.
23 Richardson 2005/2006, 72 (in: *TAR* 2005/2006, no. 197).



9.4 | Geographical distribution of silver and bronze equal-armed brooches, belonging to different types. The Wehden type also includes the newly distinguished Hannover and Daudieck types; the insular forms comprise the types Mucking and Berinsfield. Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site; white symbol: silver; black symbol: bronze (data after Böhme 1974, *Fundliste* 5; Bruns 2003, table 3, with additions: Dronrijp (Friesland, Wehden type, 1x silver), Wijnaldum (Friesland, Wehden type, 1x silver), Fallward, grave 282 (Cuxhaven, Wehden type, 1x silver with gold foil) and five English finds (*TAR* 2003, no. 71; *PAS* NMS-647B60, SF-770321, BH-F115D1, FASW-948D00).



9.5 | Simplified geographical distribution of Scandinavian-type bracteates. The majority of bracteates, including the oldest pieces, have been found in southern Scandinavia (after Axboe 2007, fig. 1).

9.3 Late-Roman and Byzantine gold transformed into Scandinavian-type jewellery (ca 475-550)

After the fall of the West-Roman empire, late-Roman silver was no longer available as a raw material for the manufacture of high-status jewellery, and was replaced by late-Roman and Byzantine gold, imported mainly via the East-European, Scandinavian route. A substantial part of the imported solidi were transformed into jewellery either by piercing or by the addition of a loop. In southern Scandinavia, for example, over 20% of the 5th- and 6th-century gold coins were worn as coin-pendants, some of the coins being set in beaded or more elaborate borders.[24] Northern Germany, the northern Netherlands and southeast England saw a similar tradition of transforming solidi into jewellery (e.g. fig. 4.25).[25] The remaining coins could be kept as savings, or were melted down for the manufacture of Scandinavian-type bracteates, neck rings or other gold ornaments.

Gold bracteates are among the typical artifacts of Migration-period Scandinavia.[26] The oldest pieces, belonging to type A, are imitations of late-Roman coins or medallions in low relief, showing the bust of an emperor and a Latin inscription. Shortly after, new motifs and runic inscriptions were introduced, while the bracteates were also executed in higher relief (types A to C). Finally, two new types of bracteates with a griffin- and a horse-like motif (types D and F, respectively) were introduced alongside the existing ones. The oldest Scandinavian-type bracteates have been dated to ca 440/450, the youngest to ca 530/540.[27] The type-D and -F bracteates, as well as the type A-C bracteates with a male head in 'chip-carved' relief (Axboe's 'head group' H4), are relatively late, probably not being produced until ca 475.[28] Burial finds from southeast England, the Continent and Norway indicate that bracteates were still worn, and possibly also produced outside southern Scandinavia for some time after ca 530/540, before finally being buried as 'old' pieces during the second and early third quarters of the 6th century (until ca 560/570).[29] The oldest bracteates show a clustering in southern Scandinavia, with Funen as the probable place of origin, while the youngest pieces are found mainly in the border zones of the bracteate distribution area – including the North Sea world (fig. 9.5).[30]

The use of metals other than gold and variations in the execution of the central motif and the decoration of the rim zone are strong indications that bracteates were not only produced within Scandinavia. Most bracteates from the research area show regional characteristics and were probably manufactured in regional workshops.[31] On the basis of similarities in the style and execution of the central motif, the majority of finds can be assigned to specific subtypes or *Formularfamilien*, as were recently defined by Pesch (table 9.1, fig. 9.6).[32] The absence of the earliest bracteate forms and the high proportion of finds executed in chip-carved relief suggest a relatively late start of production along the southern North Sea coast, probably not before the last quarter of the 5th century.[33] Significant is also the complete absence of bracteates in English graves predating ca 500.[34]

In the research area, bracteates of type A are represented by a small number of finds in the northern Netherlands, northern Germany and southeast England (fig. 9.7). Two closely related pieces are known from Hitzum (Friesland, fig. 4.22, no. 1) and Sievern (Cuxhaven, fig. 6.16), both showing a male, bearded head in profile and a runic inscription along the border.[35] Below the loops a V-shaped volute of twisted or beaded gold wire is soldered, forming part of the head's diadem. Production by the same craftsman or in closely related workshops is further supported by the similar, unusual decoration of the loops with horizontal grooves. An English find, from St. Giles' Field (Oxford), is clearly influenced by

24 Fagerlie 1967, 137-144 (22%); see also Hornæs 2009, 237 (Denmark, without Bornholm: 53%).

25 Berger 1992, 203-204 (Germany); Pol, in prep. (the Netherlands); Williams 2006, 161-163; Bland & Loriot 2010, 96-106 (England).

26 For a recent overview of bracteate finds, see Axboe 2007; Pesch 2007.

27 Axboe 1999; 2007, 146-148; see also Iversen, in prep. (Norwegian chronology, phases 10-12).

28 For the division into 'head groups' and their chronology, see Axboe 1998; 1999; 2007, 142-148. In Norway, type D-bracteates have only been found in graves dating to ca 530/540-570 (phase 12), probably having been produced after ca 470/480 (phase 11) (Iversen, in prep.); compare Kristoffersen & Magnus 2010, 71, 93, fig. 19.

29 Axboe 2007, 148, fig. 59.

30 Pesch 2007, 353.

31 See Hines 1984, 199-220; Seebold 1996; Axboe 2007, 148-150; Pesch 2007, 348-353; Welch 2007, 218; Behr 2010, 65-71.

32 Pesch 2004; 2007. Each *Formularfamilie* represents a closely related set of bracteates within the larger group belonging to a specific type (e.g. *Formularfamilie* D7, being a subgroup of type D).

33 Compare Nicolay 2005, 55-57, fig. 15 (Friesland).

34 Axboe 2007, fig. 59; Nielsen 2009, table 8.

35 See also Hauck 1970, 133-136; Seebold 1996.

9.6 | Type-C bracteates from the coastal areas of the northern Netherlands (Dokkum, left: IK 46) and northern Germany (Sievern, right: IK 157,2), showing close affinities in motifs and execution. Both bracteates belong to *Formularfamilie* C16. Scale 3:1 (Dokkum: coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo J. Lee; Sievern: coll. Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven, photo R. Kiepe).

9.7 | Geographical distribution of gold bracteates belonging to *Formularfamilien* A7 and B3-4, 6-7, and of those that cannot be assigned to any specific *Formularfamilie* (A-). Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site (data after Pesch 2007, with additions: see table 9.1).

9.8 | Geographical distribution of gold, silver and bronze bracteates belonging to *Formularfamilie* C16. The find location of a bronze die for the manufacture of type-C bracteates is marked with a cross (IK 637). Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site; white symbol: bronze or silver (data after Pesch 2007; Behr 2010, with additions: see table 9.1).

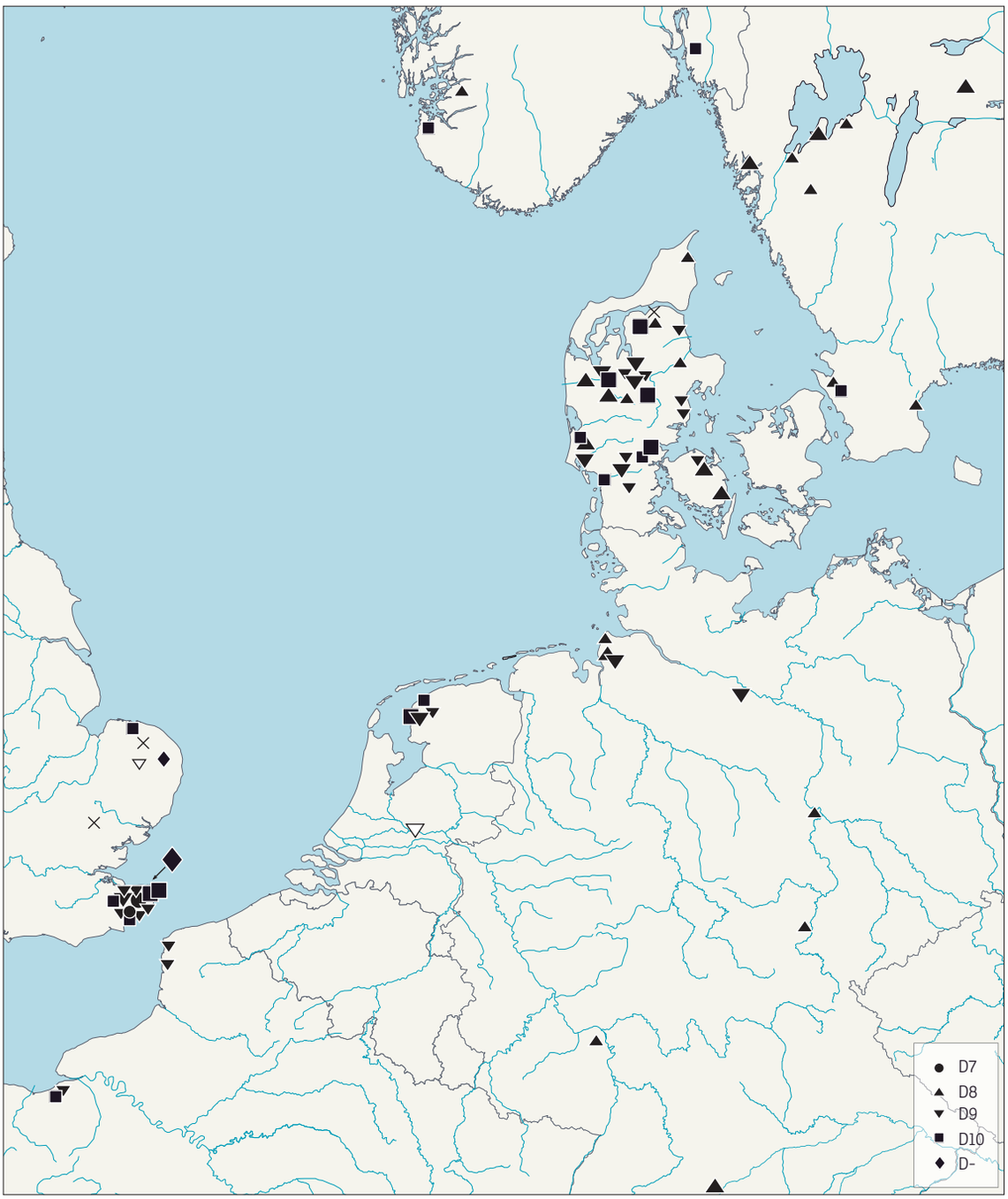
the style and decoration of the Hitzum bracteate and also decorated with an applied volute below the – now missing – loop.[36] Although Hines has suggested a source in southern Scandinavia or Schleswig-Holstein for the English piece, it is more likely that all three bracteates were produced in the southern North Sea area.[37] According to Pesch, *Formularfamilie* A7, which includes the Hitzum and Sievern finds, may have had its origin in the Sievern area.[38] Four type-A bracteates that fall outside Pesch's *Formularfamilien* are found at Undley (Suffolk), at Brinton (Norfolk) and at Binham (Norfolk, 2x).[39] The central motif on the unique Undley bracteate shows a helmeted bust with a wolf-and-twins and a runic inscription. Below the loop an S-shaped piece of plain gold wire is soldered on. The Brinton find too is unique, showing a small anthromorphic figure below a large head. Behr is probably right in arguing for an Anglo-Saxon origin of these unParallelled pieces, which were clearly inspired by contem-

36 Hines 1984, 209-210 (IK 323).

37 Hines 1984, 210; Hines & Odenstedt 1987, 79.

38 Pesch 2007, 94, 358; 2011a, 258. For the role of Sievern in connecting bracteate production in southern Scandinavia to that in southeast England, see Behr 2010, 74-76; Pesch 2011a, 258-260.

39 Undley (IK 374): Hines 1984, 204-209; Hines & Odenstedt 1987; Hills 1991; Brinton (IK 584): Behr 2010, 53-56 (no. 11); Binham (IK 630): Behr & Pestell, in prep.



9.9 | Geographical distribution of gold and silver bracteates belonging to *Formularfamilien* D7-10, and of those that cannot be assigned to any specific *Formularfamilie* (D-). The find locations of three bronze dies for the manufacture of type-D bracteates are marked with a cross (IK 572, 589, 609). Large symbols: two or more finds from the same site; open symbols: silver or silver-gilt (data after Pesch 2007; Behr 2010, with additions: see table 9.1).

porary Scandinavian examples.[40] The stamped imitation of the framing wire on the probably die-linked Binham pieces, which show a male head surrounded by letters imitating a Latin inscription, is unknown from Scandinavia or the Continent – which again points to production within Anglo-Saxon England.

With one exception, the bracteates of type B can be assigned to four *Formularfamilien* (B3, 4, 6 and 7). The finds from northern Germany and southeast England are part of a larger, Scandinavian group of type-B bracteates (fig. 9.7). They show a standing or dancing figure, with snakes around both arms (B3), a runic inscription and 'eyes' surrounding the body (B4), a sword in one hand and animals at the figure's feet (B6), and a staff or cross in one or both hands (B7). With the exception of a unique, probably locally produced piece from Issendorf (B7, fig. 6.14), it is hard to establish the origin of the other bracteates. The concentration of finds in northern Germany suggests the presence of a workshop in the Elbe-Weser region, possibly at Sievern. A type-B bracteate from southern Jutland, found in the vicinity of Tønder near the German border (fig. 6.26, no. 3), is related to *Formularfamilie* B1 (the so-called '*Drei-Götter-Brakteaten*') and will have been produced in Jutland or on Funen.[41]

40 Behr 2010, 69-70 (Undley and Brinton). Hines (1984, 204-209; Hines & Odenstedt 1987) considers the Undley bracteate a Scandinavian import, while Hills (1991) argues for local production.

41 Pesch 2007, 99-103 (IK 353).

9.10 | Bronze die used for the local manufacture of type-D bracteates in southern England, found in the Uttlesford district in northwestern Essex (IK 609). Scale 3:1 (coll. Saffron Walden Museum, photos Portable Antiquity Scheme).

Most bracteates of type C belong to the same *Formularfamilie* (C16), which is represented all along the southern North Sea coast (fig. 9.8). The finds from Dokkum (Friesland, fig. 4.22, no. 2) and Sievern (figs. 6.16-17), and the less elegant pieces from Landegge (Emsland, Germany) and De Valom (Friesland, fig. 4.22, no. 3), form a closely related set that will have been produced in the coastal areas of northern Germany and the northern Netherlands (see also fig. 9.6). An important characteristic of this group is the comparatively large ear of the horse, instead of the 'horns' that can be seen on most of the Scandinavian finds belonging to the same *Formularfamilie*. The English pieces, including two bronze bracteates from Morning Thorpe (Norfolk, *Formularfamilie* C16), two silver pieces from Eriswell (Suffolk, *Formularfamilie* C16) and a gold one from Jaywick Sands (Essex, *Formularfamilie* unknown), are corrupted imitations from insular workshops.[42] The recent discovery of a type-C bracteate die near Morley (Norfolk), not far from Morning Thorpe, is important proof that such bracteates were indeed produced in England.[43]

The greatest number of bracteates from the research area are of type D, belonging to four *Formularfamilien* (D7 to D10). Three bracteates of variant D7 are known only from Kent, indicating local production (fig. 9.9).[44] The other variants are found in a larger area, extending from southeast England to Scandinavia, with a striking concentration of such finds in Jutland (fig. 9.9).[45] Bracteates belonging to several 'bastard groups' (*Bastardgruppen*) are well-represented among these finds, and include pieces from Sievern (2x D8, fig. 6.16), Nordholz (Cuxhaven, D8, fig. 6.26, no. 2), Ferwerd (Friesland, D9, fig. 4.22, no. 4), Rhenen (Utrecht, 2x D9, fig. 5.12), Achlum (Friesland, 3x D10, fig. 4.15) and several sites in Kent (3x D9) and Norfolk (D10). The wide variation in execution of the 'regular' type-D bracteates and their clustering in the very areas where the corrupted pieces have been found, indicate local production in several workshops along the North Sea coast. Important corroborative finds are bronze dies from the northwestern part of Essex and from Billingford (Norfolk), used for the local manufacturing of bracteates that are stylistically related to *Formularfamilien* D9 and D10 (fig. 9.10).[46] Significant also is the relatively large number of die-linked groups or pairs, often found in the same region as other, closely related bracteates.[47] The die-linked type-C and -D bracteates from the Sievern I hoard (fig. 6.16), for example, are almost identical to pieces from the Sievern III hoard (fig. 6.17). Moreover, the human hands depicted on three bracteates from the Achlum hoard (fig. 4.15), two of which form a die-linked pair, are a unique feature of the finds from Friesland, unknown from southern Scandinavia.

A group of seven type-D bracteates from Kent and one from Norfolk cannot be assigned to any specific *Formularfamilie*.[48] These gold bracteates have a much degraded central image, which points to local production. The

42 IK 285, 306, 634. For Morning Thorpe and Jaywick Sands, see also Hines 1984, 211-213; Hines & Odenstedt 1987, 79-80.

43 IK 637 (*Formularfamilie* C16). Pers. inf. C. Behr (Roehampton University, London).

44 Pesch 2007, 266, 357-358.

45 Mackeprang 1952, 217 ('Jutland Group 1'); Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 327-328, fig. 1.

46 Behr 2010, cat. nos. 8 (IK 609, related to D9) and 10 (IK 589, related to D10).

47 For die-linked bracteates from Kent, see Kruse 2007, 281; Behr 2010, cat. nos. 2 and 4. For the geographical distribution of such bracteates within southern Scandinavia, compare Axboe 1991, figs. 17-18.

48 IK 483 (Ozengell), 493 (Sarre, 3x), 496 (Sarre), 581 (Dover-'Buckland'), 581,2 (Denton), 603 (St. Nicolas at Wade).

9.11 | Obverse and reverse of two gold 'runic coins', found at Harlingen (Friesland, left) and Schweindorf (Wittmund, right). Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra & Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum, Emden, photos C. Kohnen, © Ostfriesische Landschaft).

Table 9.1 | The numbers of 5th- and 6th-century gold, silver and bronze bracteates from different parts of the research area, arranged by type and subtype and compared with the numbers of finds from Scandinavia. The finds from northern Germany include the bracteates from Landegge, Nebenstedt and the surroundings of Hamburg, all found in the direct hinterland of the coastal area. The Scandinavian bracteates belonging to unknown *Formularfamilien* are excluded from this table (after Pesch 2007; Behr 2010, with additions for the research area: IK 157,2, 507,2, 582,2, 604 (2x), 623, 630 (2x) and 634 (2x)).

TYPE AND *FORMULARFAMILIE*	SOUTHEAST ENGLAND	CENTRAL NETHERLANDS	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS	NORTHERN GERMANY	SCANDINAVIA
type A					
Formularfamilie A7			1	1	
unknown	4				
type B					
Formularfamilie B3	1			4	1
Formularfamilie B4				4	4
Formularfamilie B6	2			2	1
Formularfamilie B7				1	1
type C					
Formularfamilie C16	4 (2x silver, 2x bronze)		2	7	19
unknown	1				
type D					
Formularfamilie D7	3				
Formularfamilie D8				3	40
Formularfamilie D9	16 (1x silver)	2 (silver-gilt)	3	13	32
Formularfamilie D10	5		4		21
unknown	8				
total	44	2	10	35	119

stamped central motif of one 'bracteate' was even replaced by a gold-wire application in triple filigree (St. Nicolas at Wade, Kent).[49]

A small group of finds with close affinities to the Scandinavian-type gold bracteates is formed by the so-called 'runic solidi' from Harlingen (Friesland, fig. 9.11), Schweindorf (Wittmund, Germany, fig. 9.11) and an unknown site, probably in southeast England (now in the British Museum, London).[50] The first two 'coins' were cast instead of minted, and the (former) presence of loops indicates that they had been worn as pendants. They are imitations of imperial solidi from the first half of the 5th century, showing a bust and a Latin inscription on one side, and a standing figure with a staff and an 'Anglo-Frisian' runic inscription on the other. The runic coin from London has been dated to ca 500-525, and the finds from Harlingen and Schweindorf to the second half of the 6th century.[51] An early date for all three ornaments, during the period of bracteate production (late 5th-first half of the 6th century), is more likely, however.[52] In the second half of the 6th century, the casting of similar coins – without a runic inscription – was continued only in exceptional cases. A specimen from the research area, an imitation of a solidus of Justinian I (527-565), was buried as a pendant in the early-7th-century Wieuwerd hoard (Friesland, fig. 4.11, no. 2).[53]

49 Behr 2010, cat. no. 6 (IK 603).

50 Berghaus & Schneider 1967; Page 1968; Hines 1996, 47-51; Looijenga 2003, 306-307; 2013. Compare the gold bracteates belonging to *Formularfamilien* B1 and C6 (Pesch 2007).

51 Berghaus 1967, 20-22 (in: Berghaus & Schneider 1967).

52 See also Page 1968, 23-24.

53 Berghaus 1967, 25 (cat. no. 5), *Taf*. III.5 (in: Berghaus & Schneider 1967).

9.12 | Two fragments of a hollow gold neck ring with crescent-shaped punch-marks from cremation grave H12/B2 at Liebenau (Nienburg/Weser), beside the terminals of a similar ring from Sievern (Cuxhaven, see also fig. 6.15). Scale fragments 3:1 (coll. Niedersächsiches Landesmuseum Hannover, photos U. Bohnhorst).

Finally, the cultural relationship of the North Sea world with southern Scandinavia is expressed in the local production of gold neck rings of the Mulsum type.[54] Although only one neck ring of this type has been found near the coast, at Sievern (fig. 6.15), fragments of a second piece are known from a cremation burial at Liebenau (Nienburg an der Weser, fig. 9.12), in the hinterland of the Sievern area. The neck rings are imitations of Scandinavian examples, though not executed as solid but as *hollow* pieces.[55] The decoration with crescent-shaped punch-marks is similar to that on Scandinavian arm and neck rings (fig. 11.9), which dates the Mulsum type to the 5th or 6th century. When the wear on the Sievern ring is compared with that of the coin pendants in the same hoard, the ring can be dated more precisely, probably to the late 5th or early 6th century.[56] The only solid arm and neck ring from the research area were also found in northern Germany: near Schnelsen (Hamburg, fig. 6.20) and on the island of Helgoland (Nordfriesland, fig. 6.21). These rings will have been imports from Scandinavia or local imitations.

It can be concluded that typically Scandinavian ornaments were imitated all along the southern North Sea coast during the final quarter of the 5th, and first half of the 6th century. Production sites for different types of bracteate were probably located in the Elbe-Weser region, Friesland, Kent, Norfolk, Essex and the central river area of the Netherlands. Runic coins were manufactured in similar parts of the North Sea world, possibly in the same workshops as the gold bracteates. The hollow gold neck rings are only known from northern Germany, with Sievern as the most probable production site. Both the clustering of bracteate finds around settlements with a central function in southern Scandinavia (the so-called 'central places') and the high level of standardization of the bracteate iconography indicate that the manufacture of 5th- and 6th-century gold ornaments within each of the assumed 'production regions' must have been limited to a single workshop or a few workshops at most.[57]

9.4 Frankish silver transformed into 'Kentish', 'East-English' and 'Frisian' ornaments (ca 500-600)

The 5th century saw a growing importance of the cultural affinities of the North Sea area with the Frankish world. In northern Germany, the regional-style brooches were gradually replaced by imported and locally imitated Frankish-Alamannic brooches.[58] This development is nicely illustrated by grave goods from Issendorf (Stade), in the direct hinterland of the coastal area. After a century of rich female burials with typically 'Saxon' brooches, the late 5th and the first half of the 6th century saw the appearance of silver jewellery executed in a more southerly style, e.g. the pair of silver-gilt radiate-headed brooches from grave 3557 (fig. 6.14), the pair of silver-gilt square-headed brooches from grave 3561, and the silver bird brooch from grave 3553.[59] At the cemetery of Liebenau (Nienburg an der Weser, Germany) a similar development is reflected in the selection of grave goods, which points to a changing cultural focus among the leading families, who after ca 500 preferred Frankish- and Alamannic-style ornaments to the traditional 'Saxon' high-status goods to express their social rank in the burial ritual.[60]

Starting in the late 5th or early 6th century, silver ornaments from southeast England show a striking concentration in the eastern part of Kent. The Kentish finds have traditionally been assigned to a 'Jutish phase' (ca 450-525), a 'Frankish phase' (ca 525-560) and a 'Kentish phase' (after ca 560).[61] The first phase was thought to be marked by objects re-

54 Brieske 2001, 149-151; see also Häßler 2003, 113, 115.

55 The only hollow neck rings from southern Scandinavia are the so-called '*Goldhalskragen*' found in Sweden (see Pesch 2011b, with references).

56 See section 6.3 (Sievern-'Mulsumer Moor').

57 Behr 2007; Pesch 2007, 353-359; on 'central places', see section 8.3.2.

58 Böhme 2003, 259-260.

59 Häßler 2002; see also section 6.2.

60 Brieske & Schlicksbier 2005 (compare phase 1 and phases 2-3).

61 Kruse 2007, 253-259, with references; compare Richardson 2005, 24-26, 30-34; Welch 2007, 212-225.

9.13 | Four silver-gilt brooches from Kent: a Nydam-Style brooch from Canterbury (no. 1), a 'Jutlandic' brooch from Bifrons, grave 41 (no. 2) and two 'Kentish-type' square-headed brooches with garnet settings from Howletts (no. 3) and Bifrons, grave 42 (no. 4). Scale 1:1 (Canterbury: Canterbury Museums Collections, © Canterbury Museums and Galleries; Howletts: coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum; others: coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photos Archival Images Limited).

flecting the arrival of Jutish immigrants, the second by Frankish imports, and the third by Kentish products showing a mixture of south-Scandinavian and Continental, especially Frankish style elements. More recent research has shown that the situation is more complex, with 'Jutish' and 'Kentish' jewellery being found in combination with Frankish brooches and belt fittings throughout the 6th century.[62]

The assumed existence of a 'Jutish phase' is related to the production date of two categories of high-status objects: silver-gilt square-headed brooches of Haseloff's '*Jütländische Fibelgruppe*' (groups B to D, produced ca 480-530/540, fig. 9.13, no. 2), and gold type-D bracteates of Mackeprang's 'Jutland Group 1', comprising *Formularfamilien* D7-10.[63] The earliest of these ornaments are of south-Scandinavian origin and/or were made by Scandinavian artisans who migrated to Kent in the late 5th or early 6th century. Soon after, these were complemented with a larger number of local imitations and more derivative copies, including the Kentish-style brooches of group D (fig. 9.13, nos. 3-4).[64] Interestingly, most Scandinavian or Scandinavian-type objects that are known from Kent were buried as heirlooms during the 'Frankish' phase, one or two generations after they were produced.[65]

From the beginning of the 6th century, Frankish ornaments were imported in large numbers. The silver ornaments comprise bow brooches of different types (e.g. fig. 9.14), garnet disc and rosette brooches, animal brooches and belt elements. The close relationship between eastern Kent and the Continent is also reflected in finds of imported glassware, wheel-thrown pottery, bronze bowls, and garments with woven-gold trimmings (fig. 10.15), originating from the Frankish area and, in the case of gold-decorated clothing, probably also imitated locally.[66]

62 Brugmann 1997, 94 ff. (in: Parfitt & Brugmann 1997); 1999, especially tables 3.1-2 (phases II-IV).

63 Haseloff 1981, 21 ff., 170-173; Mackeprang 1952, 217; Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 324-325, 327-328, fig. 1; Nielsen 2009 (introducing group D).

64 Most recently, see Kruse 2007, 270-287; Nielsen 2009, 105-107 (for group D, see p. 62).

65 For the brooches, see Haseloff 1981, 170-173; Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 324-326; Nielsen 2009, 83, table 7 (compare table 8: bracteates).

66 Crowfoot & Chadwick Hawkes 1967; Huggett 1988.

9.14 | Pair of silver-gilt, Frankish-type radiate-headed brooches from Bifrons (Kent), grave 29. Scale 1:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photos Archival Images Limited).

9.15 | A sword hilt with silver-gilt fittings, including a ring-pommel of Bifrons-Gilton type, from Bifrons (Kent), grave 39. Scale 1:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photos Archival Images Limited).

Finally, the grave goods include a substantial number of silver and silver-gilt ornaments that were executed in a typically insular, 'Kentish' style. The finds comprise large and small square-headed brooches, often decorated with garnets (ca 500-560, fig. 9.13, nos. 3-4), keystone-garnet disc brooches of classes 1 and 2 (ca 530-590, fig. 9.20), as well as 6th-century sword pommels of the Frankish-Kentish Bifrons-Gilton type (figs. 9.15) – which all show a clustering in eastern Kent (figs. 9.16-17).[67] Silver or silver-gilt skimmers, often found in combination with a ball of rock crystal (ca 500-560, fig. 9.18), show a similar distribution (fig. 9.19) and were probably also produced in eastern Kent.[68] The square-headed brooches represent a further development of the 'Jutlandic' brooches, with the addition of a Frankish element (garnet settings); the keystone-garnet disc brooches were inspired by Scandinavian square-headed brooches on the one hand (medallion on the bow, nielloed borders and animal design in Style I), and Frankish disc brooches on the other (shape, garnet settings).[69] First used as a decorative element on Kentish square-headed brooches (fig. 9.13, no. 3), the keystone-garnet disc on its own was probably soon adopted as a new, Kentish-type brooch, inspired by Frankish fashion.[70] The sword pommels and skimmers clearly imitate Frankish examples, executed in a Kentish style.

The 'Jutish', 'Kentish' and 'Frankish' high-status objects that were buried as grave goods throughout the 6th century offer an interesting glimpse of the use and re-use of precious metals in a Kentish context.[71] Only a small proportion of the silver ornaments that reached eastern Kent were worn as 'exotic pieces', expressing a cultural relationship with southern Scandinavia or the Frankish kingdom. Most silver, however, was melted down and transformed into Kentish-style ornaments, expressing a regional identity. Because of the special significance of the 'Jutlandic brooches' as heirlooms, Frankish brooches and belt fittings will have provided most of the raw material for the production of Kentish-style ornaments. Moreover, the garnets from Frankish disc and rosette brooches could be reused for decorating Kentish square-headed and disc brooches.

The situation in Kent is different from that north of the Thames (East Anglia and Essex), where the use of silver for female ornaments during the late 5th and 6th centuries was limited to the surface decoration of brooches and to simple finger or other rings, wrist-clasps of class A and early scutiform pendants (fig. 9.21) – the last two categories expressing cultural relationships with western Norway and Denmark, respectively.[72] Although some of these ornaments may have been imported, insular characteristics, such as the size of the wrist-clasps, indicate that most pieces were of local manufacture. The few silver brooches are of a Frankish type and may have been imported via Kent.[73] The relationship with Kent is more clearly reflected in two silver-gilt sword pommels of the Bifrons-Gilton type, found at Congham (Norfolk) and Woodbridge (Suffolk).[74] A remarkable difference between East Anglia/Essex and the area south of the Thames, however, is that the impressive 'great square-headed brooches' (ca 500-570) of the former area are not executed in silver but in bronze, often with a decoration in gilding, tinning and/or sheet silver.[75] Like the 'Kentish' square-headed brooches, they probably also have their origin in Scandinavia.[76] The few brooch types that seem to cluster in East Anglia are relatively late, dating to around the middle of the 6th century (especially group XVI, ca 530-570). Compared to the valuable items from Kent, the silver or silver-decorated jewellery from East Anglia and Essex is insufficiently distinctive to constitute one or more regional style groups as early as the 6th century. Rather, it belongs to a broader 'East-English' group.

67 Brugmann 1997, 35-40 (in: Parfitt & Brugmann 1997: square-headed and disc brooches); Avent 1975; Leigh 1984 (disc brooches); Chadwick Hawkes et al. 1967; Menghin 1983, 67, 312-315; Fischer 2008 (sword pommels). For the brooch datings, see Richardson 2005, 33-34, fig. 11.

68 Martin 1984, 105 (type B1), fig. 57.

69 Compare Richardson 2005, fig. 11.

70 Leigh 1984, 74; see also Richardson 2005, 33-34.

71 See also Brugmann 1997, 110-118 (in: Parfitt & Brugmann 1997).

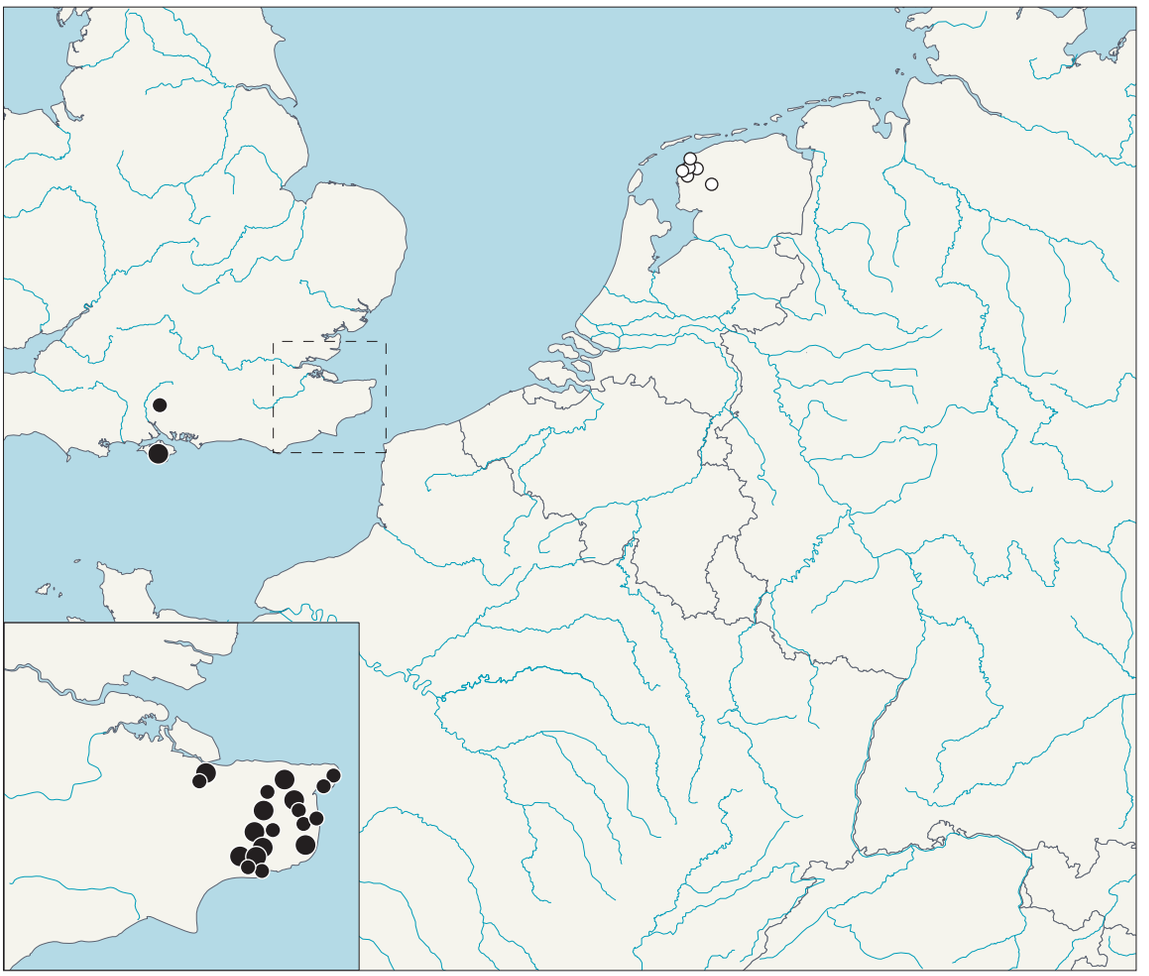
72 Hines 1984, 68-70, 225-233, 272-277, map 6.1; Hines 1992, 316. Scutiform pendants were also used as grave goods in Kent, but not before the mid or late 6th century (Hines 1984, 234-235).

73 E.g. West 1998, 47 (no. 51.8), fig. 51.8 (Icklingham, Suffolk); *TAR* 2001, no. 36 (Kilverstone, Norfolk).

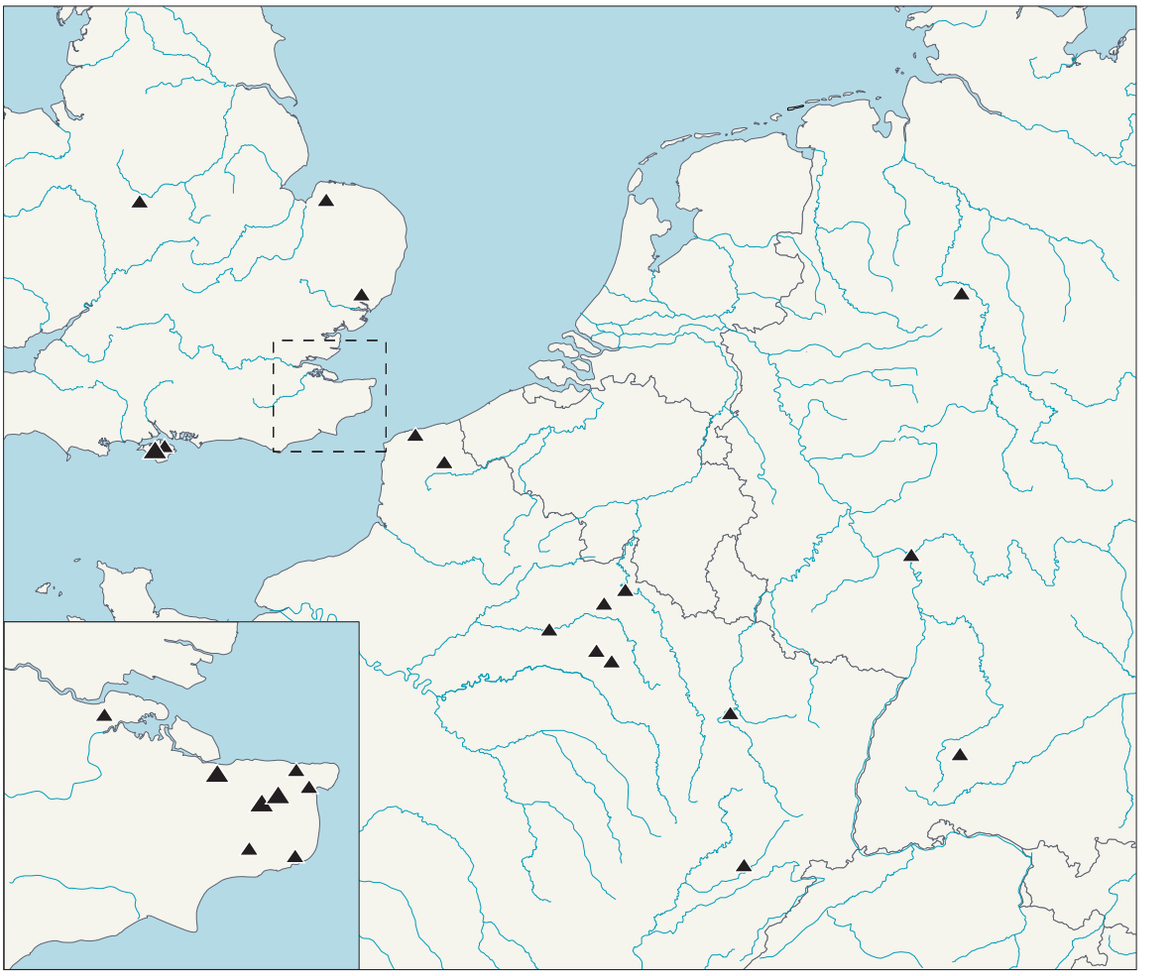
74 *TAR* 1998/1999, no. 59; 2007, no. 174.

75 For the dating and distribution of 'great square-headed brooches', see Hines 1997.

76 Hines 1997, 27-32.



9.16 | Geographical distribution of silver-gilt keystone-garnet disc brooches of Avent's classes 1 and 2 (black symbols, not including bronze imitations), and silver-gilt disc-on-bow brooches of Achlum type (white symbols). Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site (data disc brooches after Avent 1975, maps 1-2, with additions: *TAR* 2001, no. 34; 2005/2006, no. 201; *PAS* KENT-044642; KENT-9BD357; IOW-C938C0; HAMP-9B6151; data disc-on-bow brooches after chapter 4).



9.17 | Geographical distribution of silver or silver-gilt sword pommels of Bifrons-Gilton type. Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site (data after Fischer 2008, maps 1, 3, with additions: *TAR* 1998/1999, no. 59; 2004, no. 88C; 2005/2006, no. 283; 2007, no. 174; *PAS* IOW-481C94 (2x); STAFFS-6DB776).

In the coastal area of the northern Netherlands a continuing Scandinavian influence resulted in the production of 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches of the Achlum type (fig. 9.27, no. 1).[77] The finds show a concentration in the north-western part of Friesland (northern Westergo, fig. 9.16), the same area where several gold bracteates turned up. The overall shape of the silver-gilt brooches, the decoration of the headplate with a 'man between beasts', the small disc on the bow, the hanging bird-heads on the footplate, and the decorative bands of zig-zag niello are modelled on the 'Jutlandic' square-headed brooches. A regional, 'Frisian' element is the kidney-shaped knob of the foot plate, also known from so-called small-long brooches of the 'Frisian' Domburg type.[78] In contrast to the Kentish finds, no cultural relation with the Frankish area seems to be reflected in the brooch shape or its decoration. The Achlum-type brooches can be dated roughly to the second and third quarters of the 6th century, occupying a transitional position between the older, 'Jutlandic' square-headed brooches and the younger, 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches of Hogebeintum type (see below, fig. 9.27, nos. 2-4). Although so far no Scandinavian prototypes have turned up in Friesland, finds of Scandinavian-type gold bracteates suggest that they very well may have been present in the late 5th or early 6th century. Unlike Kent, the northern Netherlands have yielded hardly any imported silver Frankish brooches, which suggests that most of the imported silver was melted down and transformed into 'Frisian' brooches. The discovery of a silver drop at Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma', in a feature dating to ca. 500-550, may relate to the production of this specific brooch type (fig. 9.31).[79]

In the central river area of the Netherlands, the situation was a completely different one. For most of the 6th century, the area south of the Rhine belonged to the Frankish cultural world and may even have been part of the Frankish kingdom. The cemeteries of Rhenen-'Donderberg' and Elst-'Het Woud' (both Utrecht) show the full range of male and female grave goods that are typical of Frankish row-grave cemeteries (figs. 5.11-21).[80] One of the females at Rhenen, for example, was buried with an exclusive set of Frankish-style ornaments, including four silver-gilt bow brooches, a silver *Kolbenarmring*, a pair of silver earrings and a silver finger ring (grave 413, fig. 5.17). Although towards the west coast the number of currently known silver ornaments is very small, a similar picture can be seen here. Besides wheel-thrown pottery and glass vessels, the Frankish-type items include some silver garnet disc brooches (figs. 5.4, 5.34).

After a phase with minor regional differences in the execution of Scandinavian-type bracteates, the late 5th century saw the first development of regional-style ornaments in Kent, East Anglia and Friesland – inspired by Scandinavian prototypes. At the same time

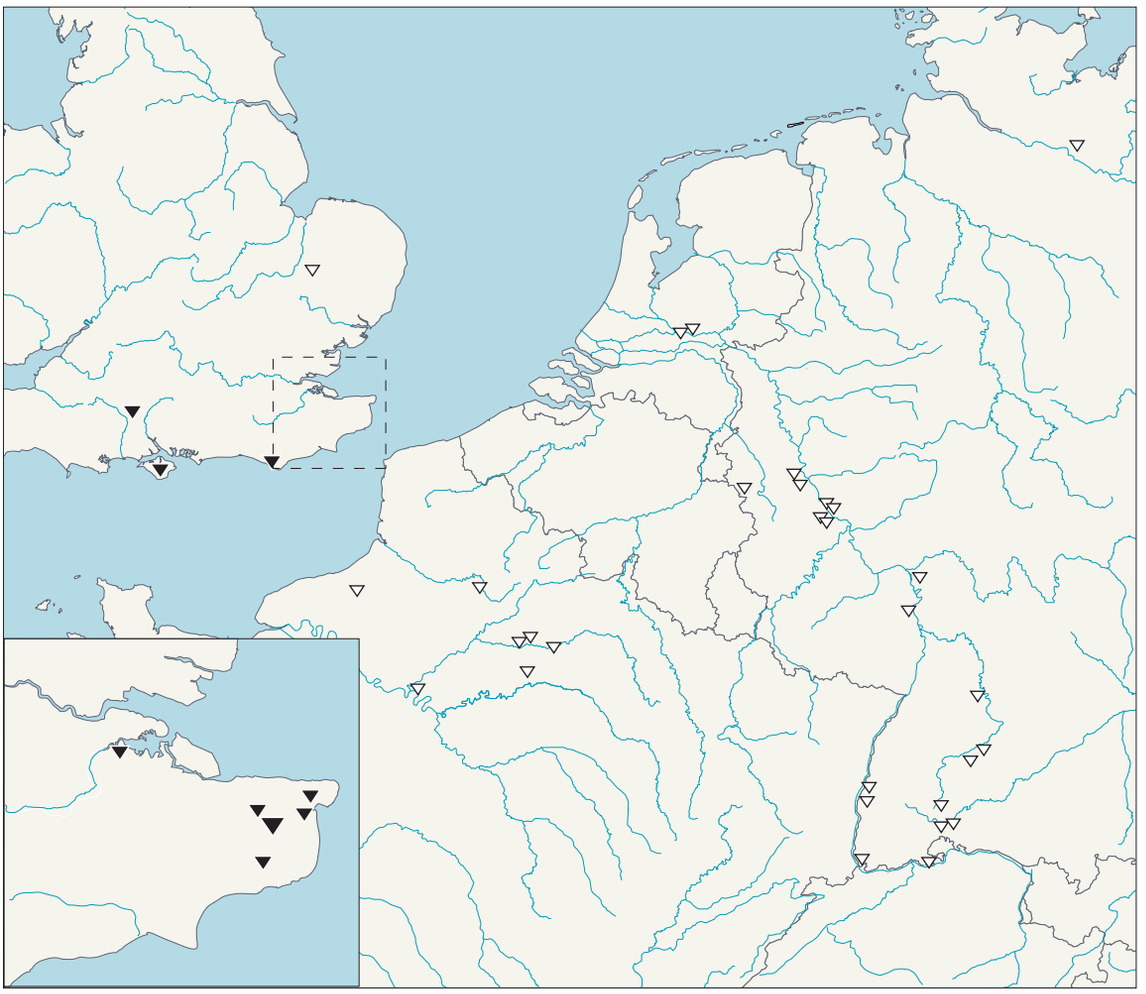
9.18 | Set of skimmer and crystal ball from Bifrons (Kent), grave 42. Scale 1:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photos Archival Images Limited).

77 See also section 4.4 ('gold and silver brooches').

78 For Domburg-type brooches and their distribution area, see Werner 1955; Botman 1994; Koch 1998, 450-454, map 29; Knol 2008, 299-300; Dijkstra 2011, 354-357.

79 Tulp 1996, 37, cat. no. 1616.

80 See section 5.2.



9.19 | Geographical distribution of silver or silver-gilt skimmers, executed in a continental (white symbols) and an insular style (black symbols). Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site (data after Martin 1984, fig. 57).

a growing Frankish influence is reflected in the importation of Frankish items, especially brooches, which have been found all along the North Sea coast. The manner in which imported Frankish ornaments were used in different parts of the research area, however, shows interesting variations: in the central and western Netherlands, Frankish items were adopted as part of the native material culture, while in southeast England a combination of adoption (especially in Kent) and transformation of melted-down objects into insular, partly regional-style ornaments can be seen. Such transformation seems to be dominant in the northern Netherlands too, resulting in 'Frisian' brooches. The uniformity of regional-style brooches and other ornaments points to production in small numbers of workshops that were closely linked within a specific region.

9.5 Frankish gold transformed into 'Kentish', 'East Anglian' and 'Frisian' ornaments (ca 590-630/640)

In the late 6th century, several decades without any evidence of local goldsmithing are followed by a short peak in the production of gold status symbols in southeast England and the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. Despite the wide variety of ornament types, this 'North Sea jewellery' is characterized by a very similar garnet-and-filigree decoration. The finds from the research area belong to a final phase of Continental cloisonné art, which is characteristic for the northern periphery of the Frankish cultural world and can be dated to the late 6th, and the early decades of the 7th century.[81] To what extent cultural relations can be traced between items from the southern North Sea area and the recently discovered Staffordshire hoard will be discussed in the epilogue of this book.

In Kent the gold ornaments comprise shield-on-tongue buckles, composite disc brooches, plated disc brooches, pendants and beads. The buckles, made of gold-decorated silver or bronze, are of two types, the first with a triangular plate and three large, convex rivet caps (fig. 9.22), and the second with a rectangular plate and a row of smaller rivet caps at the plate terminal.[82] The rectangular plates could also be worn separately, as decorative mounts. These belt fittings are decorated with garnet

81 See Arrhenius 1985, 156, 194.

82 Åberg 1926, 120-131, figs. 214-224, 230-231.

9.20 | Two silver-gilt, 'Kentish' keystone-garnet disc brooches from 'King's Field' at Faversham (Kent, single finds), belonging to Avent's classes 2.4 (left) and 3.1 (right). Scale 2:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

and filigree work, including 'Kentish Style II' animal designs in triple filigree or in repoussé overlaid with triple filigree.[83] The shape of the buckles with a triangular plate and the use of garnet cloisonné were copied from Frankish ornaments. Buckles with a rectangular plate and rectangular belt-plates are less common on the Continent, however, and can be regarded as Kentish elements. The Animal Style II design and its execution in triple filigree have a Scandinavian origin, the use of repoussé for creating extra relief being copied from 6th-century Scandinavian sword-scabbard mounts (fig. 11.10). Although Nielsen has suggested an indirect introduction of Style II via the Continent, a continuation of earlier relations with southern Scandinavia cannot be excluded – given the recovery of a typically Scandinavian disc-on-bow brooch, lacking its original disc, at Eastry (Kent, late 6th/early 7th century).[84]

The gold-decorated buckles and belt-plates can be dated to the late 6th and early 7th centuries, and show a concentration in the eastern part of Kent (fig. 9.23). This is the very area where a metal-detectorist found a small buckle-shield of a highly excusive gold buckle, probably of the rectangular type (Thurnham, fig. 10.19).[85] The shield is decorated with animal interlace in garnet cloisonné, showing a degree of craftsmanship comparable to some of the Sutton Hoo jewellery (compare fig. 7.5, nos. 4, 8). Kentish-type buckles have also been found in other parts of the research area, at Taplow (Buckinghamshire, gold, triangular type, fig. 10.17, no. 1), Prittlewell (Essex, gold, triangular type, fig. 7.12, no. 1), Broomfield (Essex, gold tongue-shield of a triangular buckle, fig. 7.14), Rijnsburg (South Holland, gilded bronze, rectangular type, found with a rectangular belt-plate, fig. 5.3) and Dronrijp (Friesland, gold, triangular type, fig. 4.13). These buckles will have been produced in Kent, or imitated locally.

The composite and plated disc brooches were manufactured alongside the smaller keystone-garnet disc brooches of classes 3 to 7 (fig. 9.20).[86] They represent an insular equivalent of contemporary, Frankish and Alamannic garnet- and filigree-decorated disc brooches, found mainly in the Rhenish area.[87] The Kentish brooches consist of a gold front- and a silver back-plate. The front-plate is decorated with a 'cross' of circular garnet settings (composite disc brooches) or a 'star' of circular and often triangular garnet settings (plated disc brooches) – the studs in the centre of the circular settings being placed on white roundels (fig. 9.24, nos. 1-2). The space between and around these settings is filled with bands of circular, spiral or pretzel-shaped filigree and cloisonné work. Both the composite and the plated disc brooches are dated to the late 6th, and the first three or four decades of the 7th century; they are known only from south-east England, with a concentration in eastern

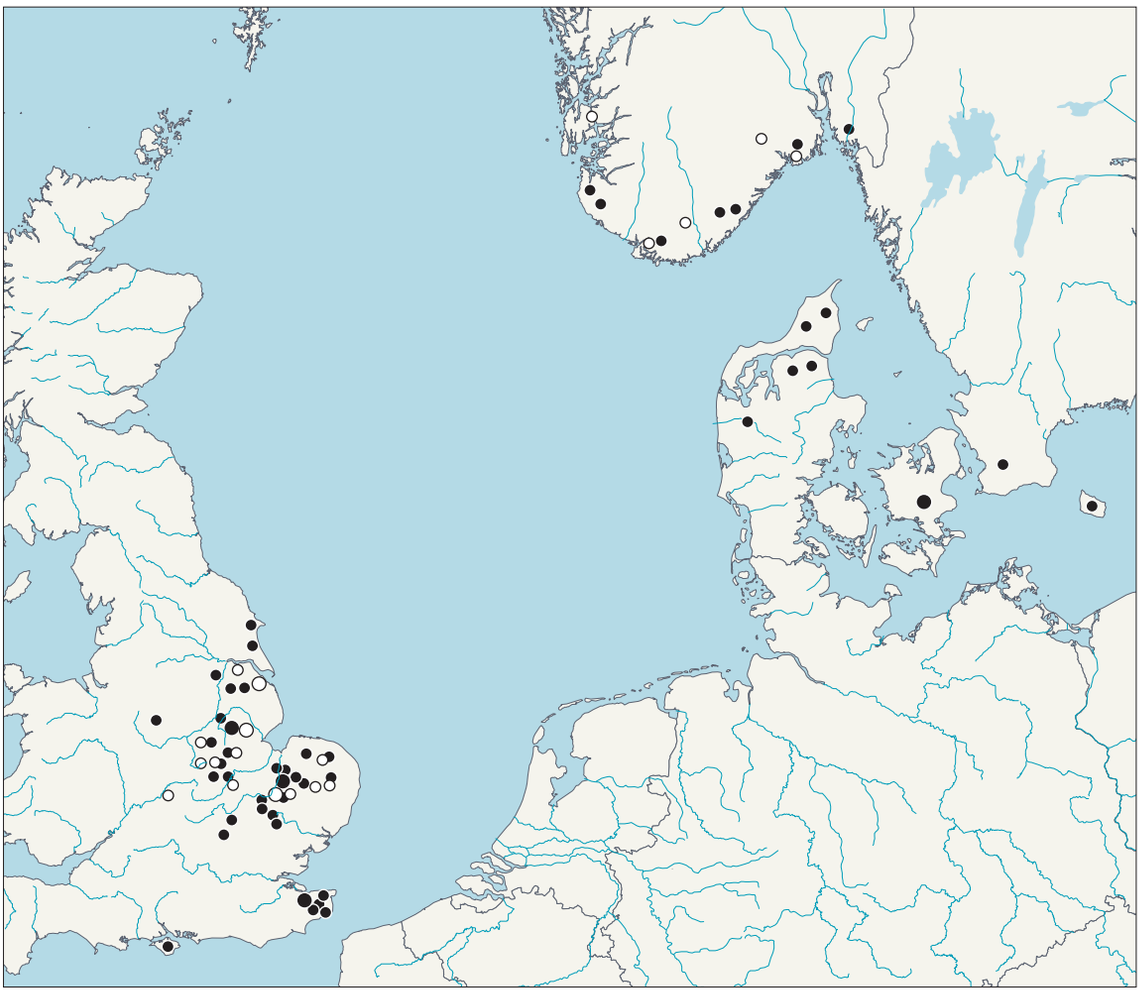
83 For the development of 'Kentish Style II', see Nielsen 1999.

84 Compare Nielsen 1999, 194 and Welch 2007, 220. For the brooch, see Chadwick Hawkes 1979, 86-88, figs. 4.4-5.

85 *TAR* 2005/2006, no. 285.

86 Avent 1975, 7-11.

87 Nieveler & Siegmund 1999 (phase 7, Fib-2.3 and 4.3a: ca 580/590-610).



9.21 | Geographical distribution of bronze and silver wrist-clasps of class A (white symbols) and early scutiform pendants (black symbols). Large symbol: two or more finds from the same site (data after Hines 1984, maps 2.2, 2.8, 4.3-4).

Kent (fig. 9.23).[88] The smaller and less exclusive keystone-garnet disc brooches of classes 3 to 7 have a similar date and distribution.[89] Some of these smaller brooches have also been found across the Channel, in western France and the central Netherlands (e.g. fig. 5.40).[90]

Other types of Kentish gold ornaments that can be dated to the late 6th and early 7th centuries were part of necklaces or adorned a sword scabbard. The largest group is formed by round, kidney-shaped and drop-shaped pendants, decorated either with garnet and filigree work, or with repoussé 'Kentish Style II' or interlace ornamentation (fig. 9.24, nos. 3-6).[91] The cloisonné and filigree work is closely related to the decoration of Kentish plated and composite disc brooches, indicating production in the same workshops. A bronze die for manufacturing round pendants with an animal design in repoussé, which must originate from one of these workshops, was found at Lullingstone (northern Kent).[92] The only gold sword ornament is a probable scabbard boss from Wickham, showing a cross-shaped decoration in garnet cloisonné that is well-known from plated disc brooches.[93]

In East Anglia, the Sutton Hoo jewellery is the most compelling evidence for the presence of at least one late 6th- and early 7th-century workshop producing high-quality gold cloisonné and filigree ornaments. Among the 'personal' objects from mound 1 (ca 625/630) are a richly decorated helmet, a shield and a sword, two pairs of gold shoulder-clasps, a heavy gold belt-buckle, gold buckles and mounts from the baldric, a purse with a gold lid, gold fittings from a probable rod, as well as two drinking horns and six maplewood bottles with silver and silver-gilt mounts (figs. 7.5, 9.25). Most of these objects are decorated with garnet cloisonné, garnet settings and/or filigree. The shoulder-clasps and purse-lid show a combination of garnet cloisonné with so-called lidded-cell and millefiori work, which seems to be unique to items produced in the Sutton Hoo workshop. Moreover, the large buckle, clasps, helmet, shield mounts and drinking-vessel fittings are decorated with animal motifs in a

88 For the dating, see Avent 1975, 62-63.
89 Avent 1975, 62, maps 3-5.
90 For the French finds, see Soulat 2009, figs. 110-111.
91 Åberg 1926, 132-135, figs. 240-254.
92 Capelle & Vierck 1975, 123-124 (no. 22).
93 Åberg 1926, 140, fig. 470.

9.22 | Gilded-bronze, garnet- and filigree-decorated triangular buckle from Sarre (Kent, grave 68, top) and silver-gilt, garnet-, glass-, niello- and filigree-decorated buckle from Ash (Kent, single find, bottom). Scale 2:1 (Sarre: coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photo Archival Images Limited; Ash: coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

regional, 'East Anglian Style II', cast in relief or executed in repoussé.[94]

The Sutton Hoo finds show a fascinating mixture of 'foreign' influences. First of all, the use of garnet cloisonné, the shape of the large buckle and the purse, and the probable use of the buckle as a relic holder are related to the Frankish area – where the coins from the purse were also minted (fig. 8.8F) and the 'old', 6th-century sword pommel (fig. 7.5, no. 2) was produced.[95] Secondly, the execution of the shield and the decorative motifs on the helmet ('dancing warrior' and 'rider and fallen warrior'), purse ('man between beasts') and vessel-fittings ('Scandinavian Style II') are closely related to Swedish finds, as are the animal designs on some of the other regalia, executed in 'East Anglian Style II'.[96] Thirdly, the shape of the buckle and the ornamental mounts of the baldric, like the filigree decoration of the sword and the fastening pins of the shoulder-clasps, were probably inspired by the Kentish-type belt fittings and disc brooches described above.[97] Finally, the shape of the helmet and the use of shoulder-clasps show an attempt to imitate late-Roman imperial dress, while the use of millefiori is related to the 'Celtic' world in the north.[98] With the exception of the imported Frankish sword pommel and the

94 For the development of 'East Anglian Style II', see Nielsen 1999.

95 Werner 1982, 201-204; for the sword pommel, see also Arrhenius 1985, 141-146.

96 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 91-99, 132-137, 205-220, 521-522; 1983, 374-380.

97 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 603-611, compare figs. 432-433 and 438. For the Kentish connection, see also Webster 2011, 270-272.

98 Bruce-Mitford 1978, 220-225 (helmet), 532-534 (shoulder-clasps), 582-584 (millefiori). On the imitation of late-Roman dress, see also Filmer-Sankey 1996.

9.23 | Geographical distribution of gold or gold-decorated ornaments from southeast England, the Netherlands and northern Germany with regional characteristics. *Above*: large 'Kentish' buckles of triangular and rectangular types with filigree and/or garnet decoration (black symbols), 'East Anglian' ornaments with garnet decoration (white symbols) and 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches of Hogebeintum type and related jewellery: the sword-pyramid from Ezinge and the finger ring from Jever (grey symbols) (the 'East-Anglian' and 'Frisian' pieces are mentioned in the text; data relating to Kentish-type buckles after Åberg 1926, figs. 214-224, with the Thurnham, Littlebourne (*TAR* 1998/1999, no. 61), Taplow, Broomfield and Dronrijp buckles added).
Below: 'Kentish' composite disc brooches (black symbols, not including 'late' pieces with bronze cloisons) and plated disc brooches (white symbols), as well as 'Frisian' filigree-decorated ornaments, including coin-jewellery with a filigree-decorated border (grey symbols) (the 'Frisian' pieces are mentioned in the text; data relating to English finds after Avent 1975, map 6, with additions: West 1988, no. 47.1; *TAR* 2002, no. 29; *PAS* KENT2669; KENT-048BC7).

9.24 | Early Anglo-Saxon jewellery, found in eastern Kent. Scale 3:2 (no. 1), 2:1 (nos. 2-6) (Milton: coll. and © Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Canterbury: coll. Canterbury Museums Collections, © Canterbury Museums and Galleries; others: coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).
1. gold, silver and bronze, garnet- and filigree-decorated composite disc brooch from Milton North Field, 2. gold and silver, garnet-, filigree- and niello-decorated plated disc brooch from Wingham, grave 8, 3. gold, garnet- and filigree-decorated pendant from Canterbury, 4-5. gold, garnet- and filigree-decorated pendants from 'King's Field' at Faversham, 6. gold pendant with repoussé ornamentation from Wingham, grave 8.

9.25 | Curved, garnet-decorated buckle from Sutton Hoo, mound 1 (Suffolk, top) and cruciform pendant from Wilton (Suffolk, with a Byzantine solidus, bottom). Scale 2:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

'Swedish' shield, it is this mixture of influences that gives the Sutton Hoo ornaments their own, 'East Anglian' character.

Although the number of finds is too small to allow a clear definition of an 'East Anglian' style group, some finds of early 7th-century cloisonné jewellery that may have been part of such a group are the cruciform pendants from Wilton (Norfolk, fig. 9.25), Ixworth (Suffolk) and Coddenham (Suffolk), a round pendant from Bacton (Norfolk) and a round setting or mount from the Mildenhall area (Suffolk).[99] The gold coins that were mounted in the pendants from Bacton (quasi-imperial solidus, late 6th century) and Wilton (Byzantine solidus of Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine, 613-632) indicate that such ornaments were made in the same period as the Sutton Hoo jewellery. Moreover, the shape of the Wilton and Ixworth crosses closely resembles the cross motif on the set of sword-scabbard bosses from Sutton Hoo.[100] Production in the 'Sutton Hoo workshop' or in closely related workshops can also be assumed for two garnet-cloisonné pieces from Essex: the head of a gold pin from Forest Gate (Essex) and a fragment of an oval mount with unknown function from the Chelmsford area (Essex).[101] Finally, two rectangular bronze dies for the production of decorative mounts in 'East Anglian style II' for Sutton Hoo-type drinking vessels and weaponry were found at Icklingham (northern Suffolk).[102]

A closer relationship between East Anglia and the Frankish kingdom, compared to the previous period, is manifested not only in the

99 Pendants: Jessup 1974, 52-54 (nos. 2.1, 2.3, 3.1); West 1998, no. 19.10; mount: *TAR* 2005/2006, no. 300.

100 Bruce-Mitford 1975, 709, fig. 439.

101 Åberg 1926, 140, fig. 268 (Forest Gate); *TAR* 2007, no. 179 (Chelmsford).

102 Capelle & Vierck 1971, nos. 17, 19; West 1998, nos. 56.1-2; pers. comm. K.H. Nielsen (Beder).

Sutton Hoo assemblage but also in a spectacular metal-detector find: a double-sided seal matrix of a Frankish gold signet ring from the Norwich area (Norfolk), on the front showing a long-haired frontal bust and the inscription of a female name, which can be read as *Baldehildis* (fig. 9.26).[103] At the same time a cultural relationship with Kent is reflected in several imported or locally imitated pieces, including three plated disc brooches from Suffolk and a gold buckle with a rectangular, garnet-set plate from Tostock (Suffolk).[104] Unfortunately, the origin of a gold, filigree-decorated sword-pommel cap from Hacheston (Suffolk) remains unclear.[105]

In contrast to Kent and East Anglia, no gold jewellery or other ornaments point to the development of a regional style in Essex. Besides the probably East Anglian pieces mentioned above, the find material is dominated by Kentish-style ornaments, including the gold buckles from Prittlewell (fig. 7.12, no. 1) and Broomfield (fig. 7.14), the fragmented footplate of a triangular buckle from Kelvedon and a gold sword-pommel cap from Ardleigh.[106] Although no identical pieces have been found in Kent, their shape and decoration were clearly inspired by Kentish jewellery – which points to importation or local imitation. Interestingly, such a Kentish connection is also reflected in the grave goods from the 'royal' burial at Taplow (Buckinghamshire, fig. 10.17), which is located west of London, in the kingdom of Wessex.[107]

A variety of gold ornaments from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands can be dated to the late 6th and the early decades of the 7th century. Most impressive are three disc-on-bow brooches of the 'Frisian' Hogebeintum type, found in the province of Friesland (fig. 9.27, nos. 2-4). These brooches have a composite construction, with a gold front- and a silver back-plate. The front-plate is decorated with garnet cloisonné in animal and geometric styles (Wijnaldum, ca 600), filigree interlace and a stylised animal in triple filigree (Wieuwerd, ca 600-620), and simple loops and interlace patterns, also in triple filigree (Hogebeintum, ca 610-630). A small, silver-gilt

9.26 | A Frankish signet ring from the Norwich area (Norfolk). The front shows a frontal bust and the inscription of a female name, which can be read as *Baldehildis*. Scale 3:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

headplate from Menaldum was part of a closely related, also regional-type disc-on-bow brooch (Menaldum type, fig. 4.28, no. 4). A different brooch type is represented by an annular front-plate from Hogebeintum, decorated with ring filigree and four bosses of horn, originally set with garnets (fig. 4.4).

The disc-on-bow brooch from Wieuwerd, of which only the footplate was found, is part of the largest gold hoard from the northern Netherlands (buried ca 625-650, fig. 4.9), which also contains various other categories of jewellery: coins mounted as pendants and on a finger ring, circular pendants decorated with garnet and filigree work, kidney-shaped pendants decorated with ring filigree, round pendants showing a human face and interlace animals in repoussé, and biconical finger rings, in one case decorated with bands of circular and triangular punch-marks (figs. 4.10-12). Closely related is a varied group of single finds from the provinces of Friesland, Groningen and North Holland, which includes pendants (round, kidney-shaped and omega-shaped), finger rings, hair pins, an earring and a gold bead, many of them decorated with garnets, filigree and/or punch-marks (e.g. figs. 4.23-24, 4.34-35, 5.22-23).

Finally, there are some gold mounts of hip-belts and swords. A large buckle with a triangular plate, cut into pieces and buried in the Dronrijp hoard (Friesland, buried ca 640-650, figs. 4.13-14), is of the Kentish triangular type. Of its original garnet-cloisonné and filigree decoration only some empty cloisons remain. The gold, garnet-decorated tongue plate of a similar Kentish-type buckle was recently found at Wijnaldum (fig. 4.38). Interestingly, both the construction (garnet-cloisonné on silver plating) and the shape of the garnets (mushroom-shaped and with simple step-pattern outlines) relate this piece to the Wijnaldum brooch mentioned above – both probably having been produced in the same workshop. Two (of the originally at least six) decorative mounts from Krassum (Groningen), once belonging to a belt or a drinking horn, are decorated with

103 *TAR* 1998/1999, no. 57; Pestell 2013b.

104 Brooches: Avent 1975, nos. 167-168; West 1998, no. 47.1; buckle: West 1998, no. 128.10.

105 *TAR* 2003, no. 115. Swords with such pommels have been found on the Continent and in Scandinavia (Menghin 1983, 311-312, map 2: type Krefeld Gellep-Stora Sandviken).

106 *TAR* 2001, no. 72 (Kelvedon); 2004, no. 105 (Ardleigh).

107 Webster 2007, 70-71; 2011, 269-272.

9.27 | Four disc-on-bow brooches from the province of Friesland, belonging to the 'Frisian' types Achlum (no. 1: Achlum) and Hogebeintum (nos. 2 to 4: Wijnaldum, Wieuwerd and Hogebeintum). Scale 1:1 (Wieuwerd: coll. National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp; others: coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos M. Kooistra & J. van der Veer).

triple filigree, closely resembling the decoration on the Wieuwerd brooch. Gold weapon elements are limited to the filigree-decorated hilt-mount of a sword from Wijnaldum (Friesland, fig. 4.18), and a sword pyramid with four stylised bull's heads in garnet cloisonné from Ezinge (Groningen, fig. 4.37). The Ezinge find is part of a group of sword pyramids from the northern Netherlands, which includes both silver and bronze pieces.

The gold finds from the northern Netherlands reflect cultural affinities with surrounding areas, including southern Scandinavia, the Frankish kingdom and the Anglo-Saxon world. The relationship with Scandinavia is evident from the shape of the disc-on-bow brooches, the elaborate borders of the exclusive coin-pendants, and the small triangle of filigree on the back of a garnet- and filigree-decorated pendant from Cornjum (Friesland, fig. 4.23, no. 1).[108] The disc-on-bow brooches with their hanging animal heads, which are clearly visible on the Wijnaldum brooch and only remain as 'eyes' (the upper bosses of the footplate) on the later brooches, show a further development of the brooches of the Achlum type. Moreover, the borders and filigree triangle on the pendants recall Scandinavian-type gold bracteates, while the Animal Style II designs on the Wijnaldum brooch and other jewellery also have their origin in southern Scandinavia.

108 Karras 1985, 161, 166, 170; for the brooches, see also Olsen 2005/2006.

The coin finger rings and some of the pendants show a Frankish influence. The shape of the rings and the triangular arrangement of small beads at the transition from the coin's setting to the actual ring is directly copied from Frankish examples.[109] Two round pendants from Marsum (Groningen, fig. 4.16) and an omega-shaped pendant from Wijnaldum (fig. 4.24, no. 1) are imitations of Frankish jewellery, the larger pendant from Marsum possibly having been imported.[110] Finally, the heavy, filigree-decorated loops of the elaborate coin-pendants from the Wieuwerd hoard are best Parallelled by those of Frankish coin-pendants.[111]

Although an originally Frankish element, the cloisonné decoration links the northern Netherlands to the Anglo-Saxon world. Going by the composition of the paste underneath the gold foil (sand putty and fused paste), Arrhenius suggested the existence of a 'central workshop' in the North Sea area, producing the jewellery found at several locations in northern Gaul (6th century), as well as Kent, Sutton Hoo and Wijnaldum (late 6th/early 7th century).[112] Although differences in shape and decoration, and variations in the paste-binder prove the existence of at least one workshop in *each* of the regions where this jewellery occurs, the cloisonné work is indeed characterized by very similar step-pattern, zigzag- and mushroom-shaped cells.[113]

Only one of the regional workshops for cloisonné jewellery can be located with certainty: at Wijnaldum (Friesland). Excavation and metal-detector finds from the settlement site 'Tjitsma' include a bronze die for producing 'special boxed' gold foils (figs. 9.28-29), an unfinished cloisonné panel (fig. 4.23, no. 3), a crucible fragment with tiny gold droplets (fig. 9.30), as well as some larger gold droplets (fig. 9.30) and several lumps of partially molten gold.[114] A piece of raw garnet too is said to have been found at Wijnaldum.[115] Moreover, a detailed analysis of the large disc-on-bow brooch from this site has shown that it was buried for later reuse or repair, probably by a local goldsmith.[116] Finally, the decorative hilt-mount of a Sutton Hoo-like sword was hidden at the same site as a small hoard (fig. 4.18), clearly meant to be melted down at a later time.[117] An English candidate for such a regional workshop is a rural site near Coddenham (Suffolk). This probable 'magnate residence' yielded not only many imported luxuries, but also a fragment of a gold, originally garnet-decorated cross pendant. The garnets had been deliberately prised from their cells, which suggests the presence of a goldsmith who may have produced 'East Anglian' cloisonné jewellery at this site.[118]

Within the area belonging to Arrhenius' 'North Sea group' the closest resemblance can be seen between 'Kentish' and 'Frisian' ornaments, belonging to a 'Kentish-Frisian group' – which also includes the filigree-decorated items from Essex. Besides the Kentish-type buckle from Dronrijp, the Kentish-Frisian link is reflected in the decoration of the Wieuwerd brooch and Krassum mounts with interlace animals in triple filigree, one of the Wieuwerd pendants with animal design in repoussé, the pendants from Wieuwerd and Cornjum with a garnet-cross of roundels and birds' heads, and various ornaments with ring and/or spiral filigree.[119] Moreover, the composite construction of the 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches and the convex cloisonné studs in the centre of white roundels seem to have been copied from Kentish disc brooches, while the shape of the annular brooch from Hogebeintum (fig. 4.4) is closely Parallelled by Kentish finds. At the same time, an important difference from East Anglia can be seen. Compared to the Sutton Hoo jewellery, the animal designs on most Kentish and Frisian finds have a much more stylized character, with hardly any zoological features appearing in the interlace patterns.[120]

Within the 'Kentish-Frisian group', the shape and size of the disc-on-bow brooches of the Hogebeintum type are unique to the

109 For Frankish parallels, see Werner 1950, *Taf.* 10 (no. 4); Böhner 1958, *Taf.* 22.; *Die Franken* 1996, *Kat.* VI.2.10.e. Compare Christlein 1978, *Taf.* 84 (Alamannic area).

110 Compare Veeck 1931, *Taf.* 29; Franken 1944, *Taf.* 7; Trier 2002, *Taf.* 228-229.

111 E.g. Werner 1935, photo *Taf.* I (no. 27), V (no. 176).

112 Arrhenius 1985, 127 ff., distribution map II.

113 For regional differences, see Bruce-Mitford 1974, 270-273 (differences between Sutton Hoo and Wijnaldum); Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999, 206 (differences in paste-binder).

114 Bos & Nijboer 1997; Tulp & Meeks 2000; Tulp 2003; Nijboer 2004, 377-381. Unfortunately, no match was discovered between the Wijnaldum die and any jewellery with 'special boxed' foils – like the Sutton Hoo sword pommel and some Kentish brooches (Tulp & Meeks 2000, 19).

115 See Tulp 2003, 224; pers. comm. D. Gerrets (ADC ArcheoProjecten, Amersfoort). Unfortunately, its current whereabouts is unknown.

116 Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999, 214.

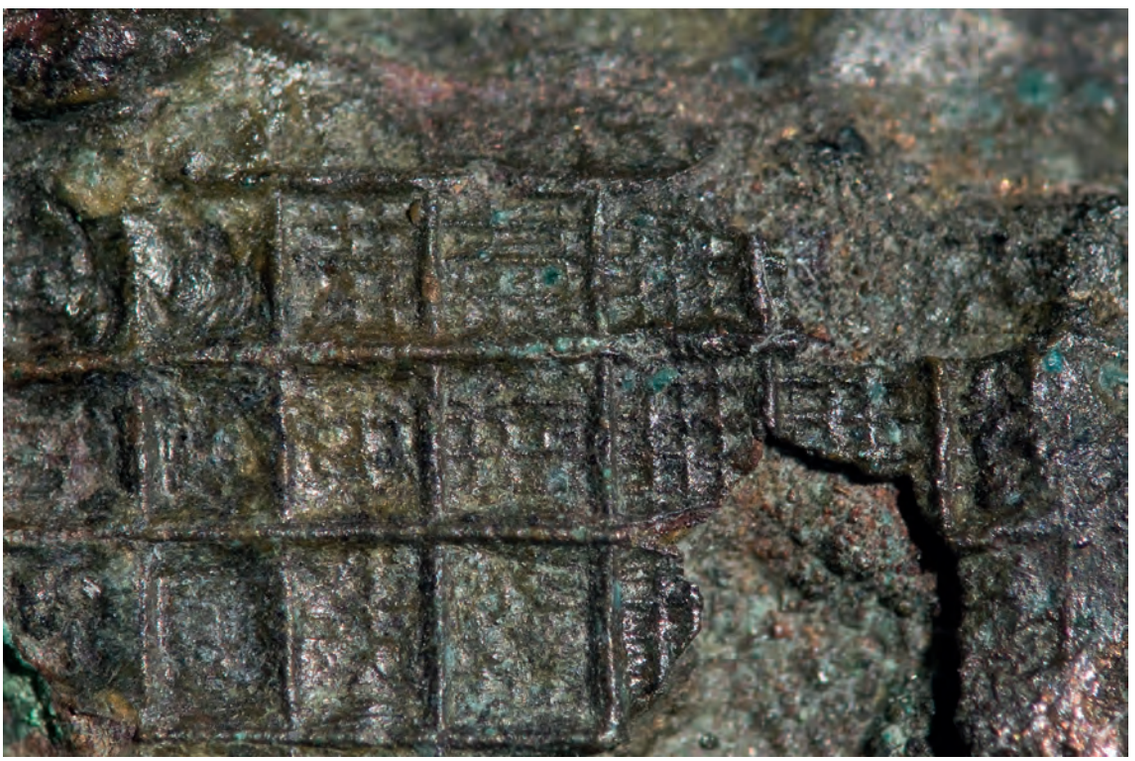
117 Nicolay 2008a.

118 West 1998, 20 (no. 19.10), fig. 19.10; Newman 2003, 104, fig. 9.3c.

119 See Karras 1985 and the description of individual objects in chapter 4.

120 For the Kentish finds, see Nielsen 1999, 188-192, fig. 6.

9.28 | Front and back of a bronze die for producing wafered gold foils from the settlement site of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland). Scale 4:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos G. van Oortmerssen).



9.29 | Detail of the Wijnaldum die (see fig. 9.29), clearly showing the pattern that was stamped into gold foil. This foil was to be placed behind the individual stones in garnet-cloisonné to enhance the effect of reflected sunlight (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photo G. van Oortmerssen).

northern Netherlands.[121] Other 'Frisian' traits are the richly decorated borders and heavy, filigree-decorated loops of the more exclusive coin-pendants, the rounded body of the kidney-shaped pendants, and the biconical shape of a uniform group of gold finger rings. Moreover, the ring- and spiral-filigree decoration of 'Frisian' jewellery is generally rather slipshod, compared to the often more precise Kentish work.

The 'Frisian' ornaments show a striking concentration of finds in Friesland (fig. 9.23), where Karras on stylistic grounds had already suggested the existence of one or more workshops producing garnet and filigree jewellery.[122] Within Friesland the finds cluster in the northern part of Westergo, especially in the area around the Wijnaldum workshop. It is quite likely that the small number of Frisian-style ornaments from surrounding areas, including the provinces of Groningen and North Holland, were also produced at Wijnaldum, or in related workshops elsewhere in northern Friesland.

The origin of a gold, garnet-decorated finger ring from Jever (Ostfriesland, northern Germany) (fig. 6.27), found east of the distribution area of 'Frisian' finds, is more difficult to establish. The heavy rim wire surrounding the garnet decoration may indicate production in Friesland. Similar rims of multiple beaded wires twisted together adorn the brooches of Hogebeintum type and the Ezinge sword pyramid. The garnet decoration of the Jever ring, however, is best Parallelled by Frankish disc brooch-

121 See also Bruce-Mitford 1974, 270-273; Karras 1985; Nicolay 2006a, 55-57.

122 Karras 1985, 172-173.

9.30 | Evidence of early medieval gold and silver smithing at the settlement site of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland): a silver droplet (no. 1), a crucible fragment with minute gold droplets (no. 2) and two larger gold droplets (nos. 3-4). Context datings: ca 500-550 (no. 1), ca 650-750 (no. 2), ca 850-900 (no. 3) and unknown (no. 4). Scale 3:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author).

es with a central coin or pseudo-coin.[123] Because so far no other late 6th- or early 7th-century gold jewellery has been found in the coastal area of northern Germany, importation from the northern Netherlands or the Frankish realm seems most probable at the moment.

The few late-6th- and early-7th-century gold ornaments from the coastal area of the western Netherlands show a cultural relationship with the northern Netherlands on the one hand (in the northern part), and with southeast England on the other (in the southern part). The only gold pendants from the province of North Holland, found near De Waal (fig. 5.22) and Hippolytushoef (fig. 5.23), are similar in shape and decoration to some of the pendants from the Wieuwerd hoard and were probably produced in Friesland. Importation or local imitation can be assumed for two typically Anglo-Saxon items from the province of South Holland. Besides the Kentish-type buckle and belt-mount from Rijnsburg (fig. 5.3), the terminal mount of an East Anglian-type drinking horn was found at Katwijk (fig. 5.6).[124] As in Essex, there are no indications for the production of regional-style high-status ornaments in either province.

During the first half of the 7th century, the river area of the central Netherlands probably was part of the Frankish kingdom, followed by one or more phases of 'Frisian' occupation.[125] During the second half of the 6th, and the early 7th century, some gold jewellery in this area was imported from the south, or inspired by Frankish examples. The finds comprise a round pendant from Dorestad (Utrecht, fig. 5.43) and some round pendants, a rectangular pendant and a gold, biconical bead from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht, fig. 5.36); all, with one exception, decorated with filigree.[126] The fragment of a Kentish keystone-garnet disc brooch (class 4) from Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' (Utrecht, fig. 5.40) is the only evidence for a cultural relationship with southeast England too. Again, there is no evidence that high-status ornaments served to express a regional identity.

The 6th-century development of regional-style ornaments extended into the early 7th century, resulting in a variety of 'Kentish', 'East Anglian' and 'Frisian' jewellery and decorative fittings for the belt and sword. It is remarkable that Essex and the western and central Netherlands lack such a development; instead, 'foreign' ornaments were imported or locally imitated, and adopted into the native material culture. Despite the wide variety in ornament types, the similarities in garnet, filigree and repoussé decoration again indicate production in small numbers of workshops, which were now situated in eastern Kent, (southeast) Suffolk and northern Friesland. Not only within but also across regions these workshops must have been closely related.

9.6 Frankish gold and silver transformed into 'North Sea ornaments' (ca 600-700)

With the exception of the garnet- and filigree-decorated ornaments dating to its early decades, the 7th century is characterized by a range of less exclusive jewellery that no longer reflects regional identities. Within Kent these 'Conversion-period assemblages' are dated

123 Compare Roth 1986, *Taf.* 4; Heinemeyer 1995, 83, fig. 4.

124 See also Dijkstra 2004, 401; 2011, 232-233, 243-244.

125 For the political history of the central Netherlands, see section 3.3.

126 Compare Veeck 1931, *Taf.* 29; Trier 2002, *Taf.* 228-229.

9.31 | Typical 'Final Phase' jewellery from Desborough (Northamptonshire). The necklace comprises gold-wire beads, gold bulla and cabochon pendants and a central gold cross. Scale 1:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

9.32 | Gold cabochon pendant with a black stone, probably made of glass, from Eelde (Drenthe) and a biconical bead, made of twisted gold wire, from Dreumel (Gelderland), both situated in the hinterland of the research area. Scale 2:1 (Eelde: coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp; Dreumel: private coll., photos by the author).

after ca 580; outside Kent, after ca 600.[127] The finds include finger rings (silver), linked pins (gold/silver), and most notably necklaces with biconical, double-bell and almond-shaped beads (gold/silver), scutiform, bulla, cabochon, bucket, filigree-decorated disc- and coin-pendants (gold/silver), as well as slip-knot rings (silver), often combined with amethyst beads (fig. 7.25). Moreover, glass or amber beads were transformed into pendants by the addition of elaborate suspension loops made of twisted silver wire. Some of this jewellery is characteristic of so-called 'Final Phase cemeteries', dating from the mid 7th to the late 7th or early 8th century.[128] It comprises the bulla and filigree-decorated disc pendants and the biconical beads (fig. 9.31), as well as the youngest category of composite disc brooches, usually with bronze rather than gold cloisons.[129] Examples of such brooches are the mid-7th-

127 Geake 1997, 35-57; 1999.

128 Geake 1997, 123-125, table 6.1 (group D); see also Scull 2009, 99-100. For typical 'Final Phase jewellery', see section 7.4 (Harford Farm cemetery).

129 Composite disc brooches: Pinder 1995 (construction and catalogue).

century pieces from Harford Farm (Norfolk, grave 11, fig. 7.27, no. 1) and Ipswich-'Boss Hall' (Suffolk, grave 93) – both buried in the late 7th century.[130] Given their gold-sheet panels decorated with fine, 'Kentish Style II' animal ornaments in triple filigree, the Milton North Field brooches (fig. 9.24, no. 1) represent the transition from 'early' to 'late' composite disc brooches, which can be dated to ca 630-640.[131]

Most of the 7th-century gold and silver ornaments are known from southeast England.[132] Although once more a clustering in eastern Kent can be seen, the gold and silver ornaments show a wider distribution, also encompassing Essex and East Anglia.[133] Moreover, Continental finds show that elements of this Anglo-Saxon fashion occurred in a wider 'North Sea group'. The gold and silver jewellery found all along the Dutch coast and in the adjacent river area comprises gold coin-pendants, a gold bulla pendant from Wijnaldum (Friesland, fig. 4.24, no. 7), a set of gold pendants with garnet and stone settings from Leidsche Rijn (Utrecht, fig. 5.29), a gold cabochon mount from Wijk bij Duurstede (Utrecht, fig. 5.36, no. 6), a gold-wire bead from Leens (Groningen), a silver double-bell bead from Leidsche Rijn (fig. 5.40) and at least one silver-wire finger ring with a spirally wound bezel, from Oosterbeintum (Friesland, fig. 4.5).[134] Without any doubt a gold cabochon pendant from Eelde (Drenthe, fig. 9.32) and a gold-wire bead from Dreumel (Gelderland, fig. 9.32) also have their origin in the North Sea area.

According to Geake, the 7th-century jewellery reflects an early-medieval renaissance of the Roman and Byzantine fashion, already visible in the inventory of Sutton Hoo mound 1 (e.g. shoulder-clasps and helmet).[135] The short necklaces with beads, rings and pendants, the cabochon and bulla pendants, the metal beads and the linked pins are inspired by, or directly copied from Classical jewellery, while the 'Classical' amethyst beads have an Eastern Mediterranean provenance. Because of its more-or-less uniform character, it is impossible to associate this 'antique' jewellery with any regional workshops.

9.7 Conclusion

After 5th- to 7th-century gold and silver reached the southern North Sea area in minted and unminted form, most of these precious metals were melted down and transformed into jewellery expressing a regional or supra-regional identity. In the collection of finds from the research area, five – partly overlapping – phases of reshaping and transformation have been identified:

Phase 1 (ca 390-500): regional, 'Saxon' brooches made out of late-Roman silver. The brooches were produced in the northern part of the Elbe-Weser region, transported to the northern Netherlands and southeast England by migrating 'Anglo-Saxons', and imitated locally in the English coastal area north of the Thames.

Phase 2 (ca 475-550): supra-regional, Scandinavian-type bracteates, runic coins and neck rings made out of late-Roman and Byzantine gold. Along the southern North Sea coast several concentrations of finds and bracteates dies are indicative of the presence of workshops in Kent, Norfolk, Essex, Friesland and the Sievern area.

Phase 3 (ca 500-600): regional-style 'Kentish' and 'Frisian' jewellery, as well as supra-regional, 'East-English' ornaments, made out of, or decorated with Frankish silver. The regional-style ornaments appear to have been produced in small numbers of workshops, situated in eastern Kent and northern Friesland.

Phase 4 (ca 590-630/640): regional-style 'Kentish', 'East Anglian' and 'Frisian' jewellery and decorative elements of belts and swords made out of Frankish gold. Again, production in a small number of workshops is likely, situated in eastern Kent, Suffolk (Coddenham?) and northern Friesland (Wijnaldum).

Phase 5 (ca 600-700): supra-regional 'North Sea ornaments' made out of Frankish gold and silver. Any regional workshops are no longer traceable.

The next chapter will focus on analysing by what mechanisms the regional- or supra-regional-style ornaments, as well as coins and hacked items, circulated *within* societies along the southern North Sea coast.

130 Harford Farm: Penn 2000, 45-49; Ipswich: Scull 2009, 88-91.

131 See also Avent 1975, 63; Scull 2009, 89-90. Milton: Avent 1975, 63, cat. nos. 182-183; Pinder 1995, cat. nos. 11, 15.

132 Geake 1997, maps 6-9, 13, 18, 23.

133 See, for example, *TAR* 2000, nos. 64-65 (unfinished 'North Sea ornaments' from Beachamwell, Norfolk and Bromeswell, Suffolk).

134 Other silver-wire finger rings, for example those found at Domburg (Zeeland, fig. 5.47), may date both to the 7th and to the 8th-9th centuries.

135 Geake 1997, 107 ff.; 1999, 205-209; for Sutton Hoo, see Filmer-Sankey 1996.

10

The circulation of gold and silver within early medieval societies

10.1 Introduction

After gold and silver had reached the North Sea world in various forms and by various routes (chapter 8), and had in part been transformed by the ruling elite into jewellery and other ornaments expressing a regional or supra-regional identity (chapter 9), most of this minted and unminted precious metal was distributed within the early medieval societies living along the southern North Sea coast. This chapter will focus both on the *intraregional exchange* of gold and silver, and on the *social status of prestigious items* in relation to ownership by specific members of society. First to be considered is the distribution of such items within societies, observing the distinction between gift-giving on the one hand, and a more commercial form of exchange on the other (section 10.2). Secondly, the hierarchical ranking of gold and silver ornaments is examined and presented in a series of 'social pyramids', showing their distribution among groups of differing social status (section 10.3).

10.2 The distribution of gold and silver

The circulation of gold and silver was bound up with the exchange of goods and/or services: you give something and you get something else in return. Traditionally, following the division made by Polanyi, three means of exchange are distinguished: reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange.[1] *Reciprocity* is based on the symmetrical movement of goods and services between individuals or groups. *Redistribution* is characterized by the movement of goods towards a centre, and out of it, back into society. Both reciprocity and redistribution share characteristics with *gift-exchange*, a centralized form of reciprocity that is strongly embedded in a system of social and ritual relations.[2] Finally, *market exchange* is what we know as the modern economic system of buying and selling in a free market; with the aid of a price mechanism (money) and the aim of making a profit, mainly basic commodities are exchanged. In fact, market exchange can be seen as a commercialized form of reciprocity. Goods (or services) are still exchanged between two parties, whereby 'money', as a *commodity* with a standardized value, has replaced one of the reciprocally exchanged goods.[3]

This section will focus on the question in which of these systems, or in what combination of systems, early medieval gold and silver circulated in the northwest-European context: were objects of precious metal exchanged according to the principles of reciprocity or in a market system, so that potentially any member of society had access to them, or was their movement governed by the rules of gift-exchange, in a system that allowed a small group of aristocrats to control not only the importation, but also the circulation of gold and silver?

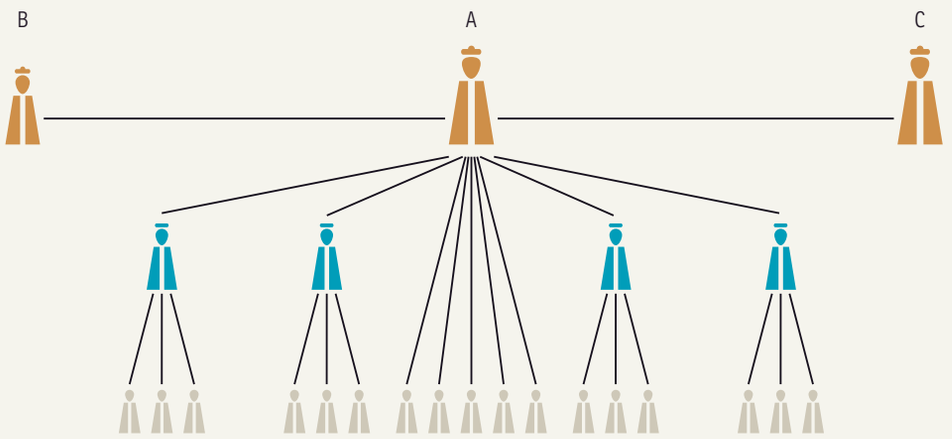
10.2.1 *Gift-exchange: the clientship system*

The restricted number of people that were able to control the importation of gold and silver can be taken as the starting point for studying the circulation of high-status objects within early medieval societies. The top-down distribution of precious metals can most satisfyingly be explained by the principle of gift-exchange, especially after their transformation into

1 Polanyi 1957, 250.

2 Bazelmans 1998a; 1999; see also section 1.3-6.

3 See also Kilger 2007, especially 324-325; Skre 2007, 332.



10.1 | The pyramidal structure of societies marked by a clientship structure. Besides 'horizontal' relationships between kings or other leaders (A-C), 'vertical' relationships between a patron and his clients were important (redrawn after Roymans 1990, fig. 3.3).

jewellery or other ornaments. The exchange of gifts is very similar to the sharing-out part of the redistribution system (fig. 8.13, mode 5: 'central-place redistribution'), in which basic goods and services move from society towards central places, while prestigious gifts, among other things, move from central places back into society. The exchange itself was actually based on the principle of reciprocity, while showing one essential difference from the regular exchange of goods and services: "... although the prestations and counter-prestations take place under a voluntary guise they are in essence strictly obligatory..."[4] Gift-exchange, for this reason, is not only a reciprocal exchange mechanism, but, even more importantly, also the creative force behind a network of *personal bonds* between individuals, groups and their ancestors or gods (fig. 1.3: 'society in the broad sense').[5]

According to the anthropologist Mauss, gift-exchange played a crucial role in the establishment and reproduction of power positions and authority in pre-modern societies. By means of gift-giving, social differences could be created between the giver or patron and the receiver or client: "To give is to show one's superiority, to show that one is something more and higher, that one is *magister*. To accept without returning or repaying more is to face subordination, to become a client and subservient, to become *minister*."[6] This definition of 'magisters' and 'ministers' refers to an asymmetrical and hierarchical relationship between a patron and his clients, based on the principle of patronage or clientship.

The organization of 'clientship societies', as reconstructed by historians like Wenskus, and a concept successfully applied by archaeologists like Steuer and Roymans, is characterized by a hierarchy of patron-client relations.[7] Each patron headed a group of clients, who in their turn could function as patrons of a clientele of yet lower social status (fig. 10.1). Roymans draws a distinction between two types of patron-client relations within tribal societies.[8] First, there were *vertical* relations between a king or other leader and people of lower social status. The patron, for example, would offer his clients protection and favours in the material sphere, while the client, in turn, performed a range of services, such as participation in the patron's warrior band. Secondly, there were *horizontal* relations among persons of high social status, belonging to the same tribe or to other tribal groups. In reality, however, these relations were also vertical, creating asymmetrical relations within the group of aristocrats, and hence a social hierarchy amongst the elite.[9]

In societies where a clientship system was in operation, the political power of an elite was based on the extent of its network of alliances. To establish, to enlarge and, no less importantly, to consolidate such a network, members of the elite were forced to invest a large and continuous flow of wealth in personal gifts. These gifts were not basic commodities, but prestigious and often 'exotic' goods, that is "... rare, portable items that represent a certain value in society and are not directly related to subsistence."[10]

4 Mauss 1966, 3.
5 See section 1.4.
6 Mauss 1966, 72.
7 Wenskus 1961; Steuer 1982; 1989 (speaking of '*Personenverbandstaaten*'); Roymans 1990. For its value in the context of the Frankish kingdom, see also Theuws 2009, 43-45, fig. 2.
8 Roymans 1990, 39.
9 Wes (1992, 252-253) speaks of '*primus inter pares* relations'. See also Fabech 1999b, 457-458.
10 Roymans 1990, 41.

10.2 | Two gold coins with their suspension loop removed, from Blija (Friesland, left: imperial solidus of Leo I, 457-474) and an unknown site in Friesland (right: imperial solidus of Justin II, 565-578), indicating their transformation into jewellery and back into payment gold. Scale 2:1 (coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, photos J. van der Veer).

The top-down distribution of these so-called 'prestige goods' did not reach all members of society. According to Roymans, two categories of prestigious gifts can be distinguished, each related to a group of clients of a particular social status (fig. 1.2).[11] The first category includes high-status objects that circulated almost exclusively among the elite ('clients with high status'), mainly in exchange for loyalty and military service. As discussed in section 1.5, gift-giving at this social level was closely related to the life cycle of aristocratic males, who used weapons and other valuable items to express and to increase their prestige and reputation, thus showing off their potential as future leaders. Objects belonging to the second category could also be passed on to members of more lowly social groups ('clients with low status'). They include less exclusive items that would be distributed among various levels of lower patrons and their clients, in exchange for subsistence goods, raw materials and, indirectly, labour. Despite the fact that most kinds of prestige goods were available only to members of the elite, it will be argued below that precious metals, in the form of lower-status objects, circulated within a larger part of society.

Within this system of gift exchange an exceptional position was occupied by royal regalia, as 'inalienable possessions' representing the history and identity of a particular society.[12] These highly symbolic items belonged to the royal *thesaurus* and, under normal circumstances, circulated only within the leading family and were never distributed to lower social groups.

Whether valuable items were treasured as regalia or distributed as gifts, in either case the power of a king or other member of the elite was directly related to the size of his material resources. As discussed in the previous chapter, the importation of prestige goods, including items of gold and silver, was probably controlled by the elite, residing at 'central places' along the southern North Sea coast. They acquired these luxuries a) by participating in long-distance exchange and inter-regional gift-exchange networks, b) by raiding and warfare, and c) by receiving tribute and other political payments, not only from the late-Roman and Byzantine Empire, but also from other Germanic groups.[13]

10.2.2 *A form of commercial exchange?*

Although gift-exchange probably was the most important mechanism behind the top-down distribution of the highly symbolic gold and silver ornaments in early medieval societies, a 'horizontal', more commercial type of exchange can also be assumed for coins, ingots and so-called ring and hack gold or silver. Significantly, hundreds of the especially Byzantine and Frankish gold coins that reached the North Sea area were *not* transformed into jewellery, probably because they were valued as items of a standardized weight and value. During the 6th and 7th centuries, these 'foreign' coins were imitated on a large scale by Germanic leaders living along the southern North Sea coast (e.g. the 'Frisian' pseudo-imperial and pseudo-Frankish coins, table 8.2), which reflects a shortage of items with a generally accepted value. This contrasts strongly with the idea that gold coins only had a symbolic function and were specifically imported to be worn as jewellery or to be melted down.[14] More probably, minted gold had a *double function*: as ornamental pieces and as raw material or currency.[15] This is nicely illustrated by the frequent removal of coin-loops and the plugging of pierced coins – a way of restoring to gold coins their original function as money (fig. 10.2). A similar use can be assumed for ring gold: small rings of different types that could be worn as jewellery or alternatively melted down or used as currency. When not bent into rings, ingots and hack gold had a more limited function, as raw material or currency.

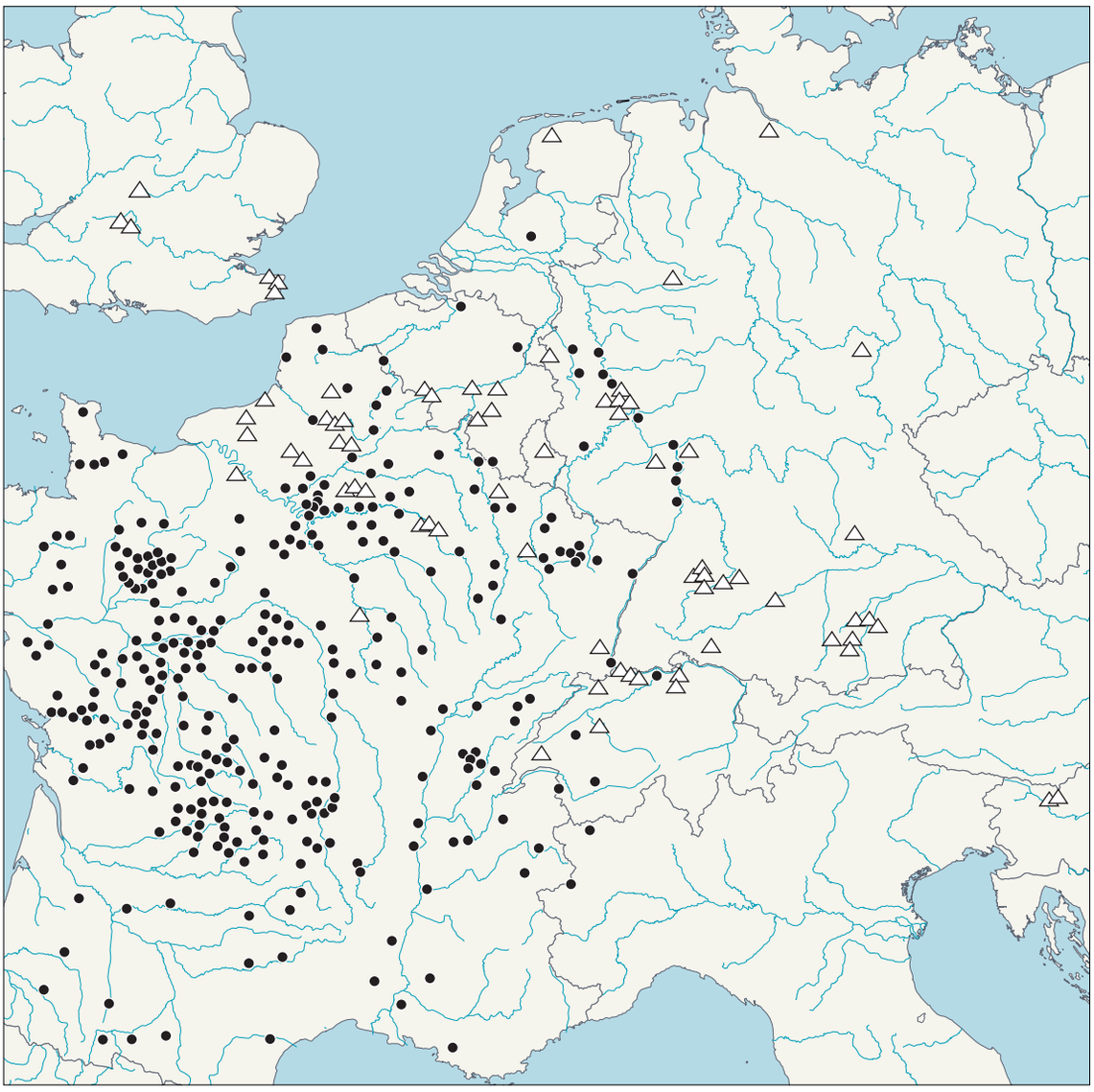
11 Roymans 1990, 41-42.

12 Weiner 1985; 1992; see also section 1.6.

13 See section 8.3.

14 E.g. Rigold 1975, 661; Berger 1992, 203-204.

15 See also Williams 2006, 189-190. Compare Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991 (Scandinavia).



10.3 | The distribution of balances and Frankish 'civic' coins, showing the supposed geographical division of the Frankish realm and its northern periphery into a 'gold-scales landscape' (*Feinwagenlandschaft*) and a 'monetary landscape' (*Monetarlandschaft*) (redrawn after Werner 1954, map 1).

There can be no doubt that Migration- and Merovingian-period Europe, including the North Sea world, was familiar with the Roman payment and weight system. Not only had the Frankish area and southern England been occupied by the Romans for several centuries, there also was a long tradition of close political and trading contacts between the Roman authorities and Germanic tribes living outside the Empire's borders. An intriguing and often debated question, however, is whether Germanic societies – both during and after the Roman period – also copied the Roman payment system, or used Roman and later coinage merely as a 'commodity' with a specific metal value in their traditional exchange system.[16]

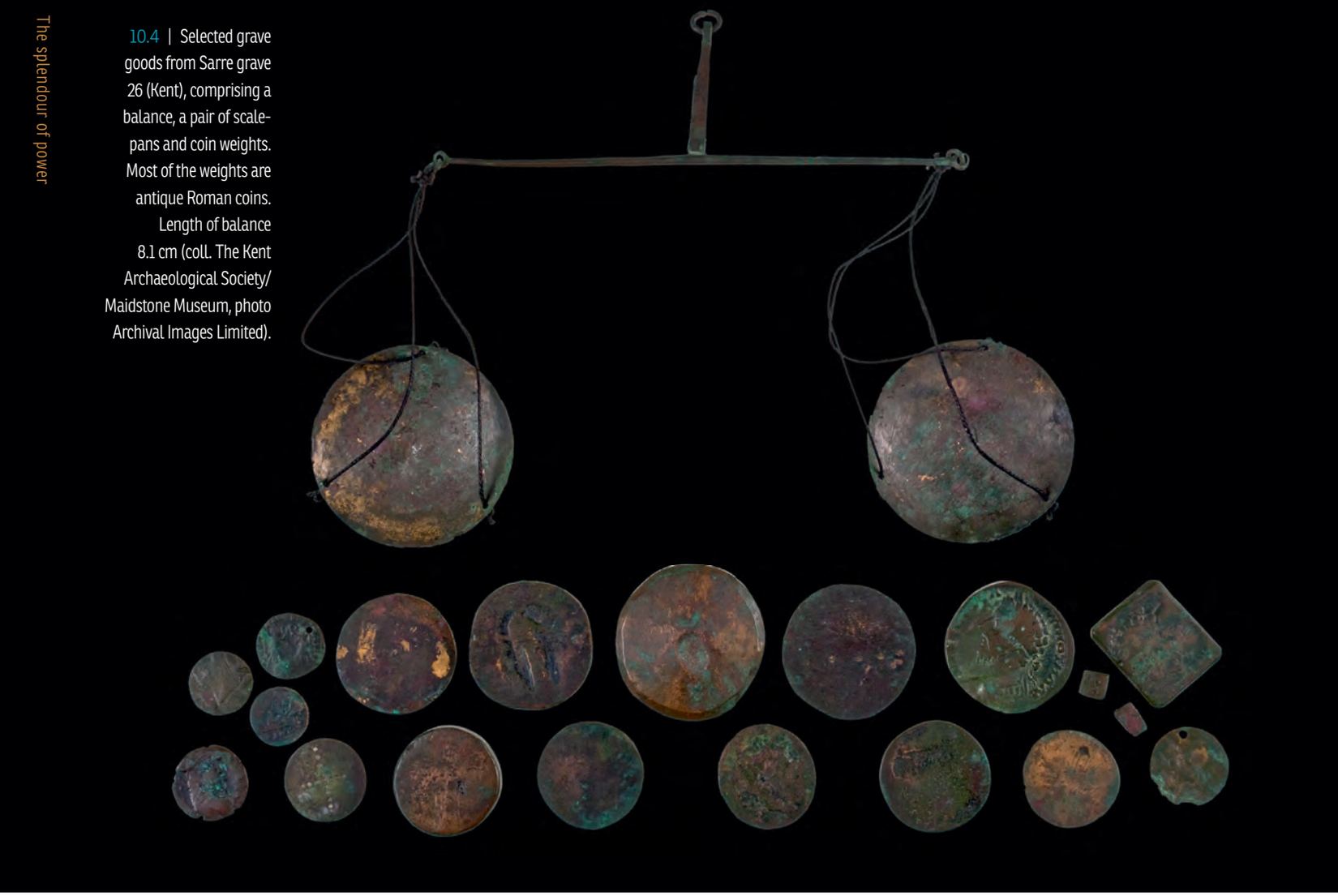
An important study of the commercial use of gold coins in the early-medieval period is Werner's analysis of 5th- to 7th-century balances, weights and touchstones, which are especially well-known from Frankish-Alamannic and, to a lesser extent, Anglo-Saxon graves.[17] The balances were used for the weighing of precious metals, including minted and unminted gold and silver, and probably also other luxuries, such as amber or spices.[18] According to Werner, the distribution of balances in western Europe reflects the existence of two different 'economic landscapes': on the one hand, a 'monetary landscape' (*Monetarlandschaft*), where no balances have been found and tremisses with a guaranteed weight and value circulated as proper money, and, on the other, a 'gold-scales landscape' (*Feinwagenlandschaft*), where balances are found and the value of coins and gold in other forms depended on their quality and weight (fig. 10.3).[19] While within the Frankish kingdom Frankish tremisses with their 'standard' value could be used as currency according to the Roman 'quantity principle', its border zone and the surrounding regions would be using a more heterogeneous

16 E.g. Williams 2006.

17 Werner 1954; for additional finds, see Scull 1990; Knaut 2001.

18 Martin 1987, 228.

19 Werner 1954, 7-8; 1962, 327-329.



10.4 | Selected grave goods from Sarre grave 26 (Kent), comprising a balance, a pair of scale-pans and coin weights. Most of the weights are antique Roman coins. Length of balance 8.1 cm (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photo Archival Images Limited).

mixture of imported and locally produced gold coins, ingots and hack or ring gold and silver. In these regions, including the southern North Sea area, the value of an amount of gold or silver would have been based on the 'quality principle'. Balances and weights have indeed been found in the research area, as grave goods in eastern Kent (sets of scales and weights, fig. 10.4) and the central Netherlands (single scales and Byzantine weights, fig. 5.3, no. 3), and as probable settlement finds in the northern Netherlands (single scales).[20]

Although Werner's model has been influential and widely used, his geographical division can be criticized on several points. First of all, most balances originate from so-called row-grave cemeteries, their distribution not so much demonstrating the existence of two essentially different economic systems as reflecting the differential prevalence of this type of cemetery.[21] Secondly, there is no reason to assume that the precise weight and gold content of coins were insignificant within the assumed 'monetary landscape', where several hundred individual *monetarii* were active rather than a single, royal mint.[22] Thirdly and finally, the numerous solidi and tremisses from Werner's 'gold-scales landscape' rarely show any signs of assaying, which indicates that a mixed set of local and foreign coinage was not tested more frequently than a 'uniform' one.[23]

Both within and outside the Frankish kingdom, gold coins will have been exchanged according to a *combined* quantity and quality system: most contemporary coins were accepted as currency with a fixed unit of value, which was tested only when the weight

20 Scull 1990 (England); Veenstra 2009 (northern Netherlands). In the central Netherlands the scale-pan of a balance was found in grave 546 at Rhenen (Wagner & Ypey 2011, 394, object K) and the probable arm of a second in grave 81 at Elst-'Het Woud' (Verwers & Van Tent, in prep.). For some Byzantine weights from the central Netherlands, see Van Es & Hessing 1994, fig. 57.

21 Steuer 1984, 274; 1987b, 450-454; 2007, 561.

22 Steuer 1984, 274; Kyhlberg 1986, 16-17; Martin 1987, 226-228. For *monetarii*, see Pol 2002.

23 Pers. comm. A. Pol (Leiden University).

10.5 | Touchstone from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland), found during the excavations at this site. Both flat sides bear traces of gold on the intentionally roughened parts of this heavily worn stone. Context dating ca 550-650. Scale 2:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author).

or gold content was questioned.[24] For other, less standardized forms of precious metal, like ingots and pieces of hack or ring gold and silver, the situation was different. They had no standard value and would have been tested more frequently when used as a form of 'bullion currency' alongside gold coins. This can be illustrated by finds of small gold ingots from Friesland (fig. 4.42, nos. 1-4) and bigger pieces from Dronrijp (Friesland, fig. 4.13) and Dorestad (Utrecht, fig. 5.45, no. 1), most of them showing traces of assaying with a touchstone. At Wijnaldum, such a touchstone from a 6th- or 7th-century context was recovered, still showing actual traces of gold (fig. 10.5).[25]

Besides different minted or unminted forms of gold and silver, 'antique' silver and copper coinage was probably also used as a form of currency during the early-medieval period. The rich find material from southern Scandinavia is of special interest in this respect. The famous central-place complex of Gudme-Lundeborg, on the Danish island of Funen, was in operation from the second half of the 3rd to the 6th centuries.[26] At this site, over 800 silver denarii (1st to early 3rd century), over 350 silver siliquae (mainly 4th century) and just 23 gold solidi (4th to 6th century) had been found by 2010, indicating that not gold coins but contemporary or older silver coins probably were the most frequently used in 'commercial' transactions.[27] All 1st- and 2nd-century denarii from archaeologically dated contexts in the 'Great Halls area' at Gudme were buried or lost between the late 3rd and the early 6th centuries, while a 4th-century siliqua hoard from the settlement site of Gudme III was probably buried in the second half of the 5th or the 6th century.[28] In addition, context datings indicate that denarii from the landing site at Lundeborg had been used up to the 6th century.[29] Significant is also a coin hoard from Smørenge, on the Danish island of Bornholm, which contains both a 5th-century solidus of Anthemius (467-472) and almost 500 denarii minted between the 1st and early 3rd centuries.[30] A second hoard from Bornholm, found at Sorte Muld, contained at least one solidus of Theodosius II (408-450) and four 'antique' denarii.[31] Such finds support Hedeager's suggestion that Roman-period denarii – like the contemporary siliquae – remained in circulation for centuries and should be seen as *the* standard currency of Migration-period Scandinavia.[32]

The tomb of Childeric at Tournai (Belgium, † 482) is proof of a similar tradition of coin usage on the Continent. Besides a total of at least 100 solidi dating to the 5th century, the grave goods include a collection of at least 200 denarii minted in the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries.[33] Moreover, Roman denarii and copper coins are frequently found in Frankish-Alamannic row-grave cemeteries, be it as Christian *oboli*, as small coin collections, often in a purse, or as jewellery (notably coin-pendants).[34] In the German Lower Rhine

24 For the existence of standardized weight systems both within and outside the Frankish realm, see, for example, Herschend 1980; Martin 1987; Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1988; Scull 1990; Steuer 2007, 565-566.

25 Tulp 1996, 41 (cat. no. 1624); 2003, 224.

26 Recently, Sørensen 2010. For the function of Lundeborg, see Thomsen 1994.

27 Horsnæs 2010, 94-105.

28 Horsnæs 2010, 97-98, fig. 49.

29 Horsnæs 2010, 103.

30 Kromann & Watt 1984; Horsnæs 2009, 233 (solidus: cat. no. 17a).

31 Horsnæs 2009, 233 (solidus: cat. no. 23a).

32 Hedeager 1988, 150-152.

33 Böhner 1981, 453-454.

34 See Siegmund 1998, 243-245.

10.6 | A selection of silver and copper-alloy Roman coins, found in early medieval contexts during excavations at the settlement site Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland). The numbers refer to table 10.1 (no. 7 not shown). Scale 2:1 (coll. Noordelijk Archeologisch Depot, Nuis, photos by the author).

Table 10.1 | Numismatic information, context dates and wear of the Roman-period coins found in early medieval contexts at the settlement site Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'. Wear: not worn (a), slightly worn (b), heavily worn (c) or totally worn (d) (largely after Van der Vin 1999, catalogue).

NO.	COIN TYPE	MINT	EMPEROR	COIN DATE	CONTEXT DATE	WEIGHT (GR)	WEAR	FIND. NO.
1	denarius	Rome	Domitian	81	425-550	2.1	b	141
2	as? (cut)	Rome?	-	1-192	550-650	2.9	c	4604
3	as	Rome	-	98-250	775-850	7.9	d	9226
4	antoninian	barbarian	Postumus	259-268	450-525	2.6	c	9156
5	antoninian	Gaul	Tetricus I	270-273	575-625	1.3	a	1080
6	antoninian	Gaul	Tetricus II Caesar	270-273	425-550	2.5	c	140
7	antoninian	Gaul	Tetricus II Caesar	270-273	770-900	2.3	b	5979
8	aes (cut)	-	-	260-295	500-550	0.9	c/d	9084
9	follis	Trier	Constantine II Caesar	330-335	>450	1.7	a/b	4394
10	follis	barbarian	(sons of) Constantine I	335-350	650-750	1.0	a/b	4389
11	aes-III	-	Valentinian I/Valens	364-378	550-650	1.4	c	6117

area only a quarter of the 108 coins from 5th- to 7th-century graves are contemporary gold (18%) and silver pieces (8%).[35] Apart from two sceattas, the other coins, including silver (15%) and especially copper-alloy coins (57%), have a Roman date. Exactly half of the 'antique' coins had probably served as *oboli* (19%) or as jewellery (31%). According to Siegmund, the remainder should be interpreted as currency, used in the local exchange of low-value goods – in contrast to the smaller number of Merovingian gold coins, which circulated exclusively among members of the elite.[36]

The use of old, Roman-period coins in early-medieval exchange can also be assumed for the southern North Sea area. A single denarius turned up in the late-5th- or early-6th-century gold and silver hoard from Oxborough (Norfolk, fig. 7.31), while a 1st-century denarius was found in a feature dating to ca 425-550 at the settlement site of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland, fig. 10.6, table 10.1).[37] Moreover, at Wijnaldum some Roman copper-alloy coins were found in younger, Merovingian-period (8x) and even Carolingian-period contexts (2x) (fig. 10.6 table 10.1). Interestingly, two of these coins, which show different degrees of wear, are cut; like the late-Roman hack silver, they had been transformed into mere metal whose intrinsic value was needed for specific transaction.[38] Although the bulk of Roman-period silver and copper-alloy coins from Anglo-Saxon England have no archaeological context, many of these coins are heavily worn and, at least partly, seem to have circulated into early medieval times.[39] In the light of Scandinavian and Frankish finds, it can be argued that antique silver and copper-alloy coins – as 'stamped small bullion' – were used as a form of small currency alongside the tremisses that were also found at a site like Wijnaldum.[40] This is supported by the discovery of early-Byzantine copper-alloy coins in southeast England (Kent and East Anglia), which were minted in the late 5th to 7th centuries and probably used alongside the older pieces.[41] The use of antique coins in the early medieval North Sea world was not limited to commercial transactions, however; many coins were pierced to be worn as pendants (fig. 10.7) or selected as weights for balances (fig. 10.4), as is indicated by funerary finds from Anglo-Saxon England and the central Netherlands.[42]

10.2.3 *A combined exchange system*

Early medieval gold and silver were probably exchanged both as gifts and as currency in 'commercial' transactions, representing different elements of the 'total sphere of ex-

35 Siegmund 1998, table 32.

36 Siegmund 1998, 245.

37 Roman-period coins from Wijnaldum: Van der Vin 1999 (catalogue with context datings). At a *terp* site, however, it is often difficult to establish to what extent 'old' coins or other items had been dug up from deeper, older deposits.

38 See Williams 2013. The small collection of hack silver from the Nydam bog (site IV, buried ca. 470-480), probably buried in a purse, is of special significance in this respect (Rau 2010, 454-456, *Taf*. 52.4-26; 2013b, 339-341).

39 Williams 2006, 159-160, note 31.

40 Compare Rau 2013b, 353. The tremisses from Wijnaldum (15x) were published by Pol (1999).

41 Moorhead 2009.

42 For Anglo-Saxon England, see White 1988, 62-101; Scull 1990.

10.7 | Antique, Roman-period coins and an early Merovingian-period coin from the cemetery of Rhenen-'Donderberg' (Utrecht), all pierced to be worn as pendants. The coins originate from graves 169 (no. 1: denarius, 3rd c.), 188 (no. 2: as, 1st c.), 195 (no. 3: antoninianus, 3rd c.), 341 (no. 4: half-siliqua, 6th c.) and 563 (no. 5: denarius, 2nd-1st c. BC). Scale 2:1 (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo A. de Kemp).

change' (fig. 10.8).[43] The lavishness of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon high-status burials (see table 10.2) supports the idea that most of the imported precious metals were distributed as gifts among members of the leading families. These gifts will have included payment gold and silver, and notably jewellery and other ornaments, the latter giving expression to the personal relations between a king or other leader and his retinue.

A substantial part of the gold and silver also reached lower groups of followers. Indirectly, this is reflected in the relatively large number of balances from graves in the northern periphery of the Frankish kingdom (fig. 10.3). Although such tools may relate to officials participating in inter-regional exchange on behalf of the elite, as was suggested by Scull, it is more likely that they belonged to an extensive group of clients who were gifted with gold and silver by their patrons and would use these precious metals as coins, ingots and ring or hack gold/silver in 'commercial' transactions.[44] During the 5th to 7th centuries, however, there are no indications that payment gold and silver was already used in forms of profit-led market exchange; their use was part of the reciprocal exchange of bronze bowls, glass vessels and other prestigious items, especially between members of regional and local elites.[45]

Antique, Roman-period silver and copper-alloy coins, and at least during the 5th century also late-Roman miliarenses, siliquae and small pieces of hack silver, will have circulated among members of the same elite, who would use these as a form of smaller currency alongside minted or unminted gold. It is very likely that silver and copper-alloy coins were also used for payments at local 'exchange sites' in the 5th to 7th centuries. A low-value 'bulk commodity' that was probably imported without interference of the regional or supra-regional elite and may have been distributed through such sites, is Frankish wheel-thrown pottery, which is found at large numbers of rural settlements all along the southern North Sea coast (e.g. fig. 8.17).[46]

10.3 The hierarchical ranking of prestige goods

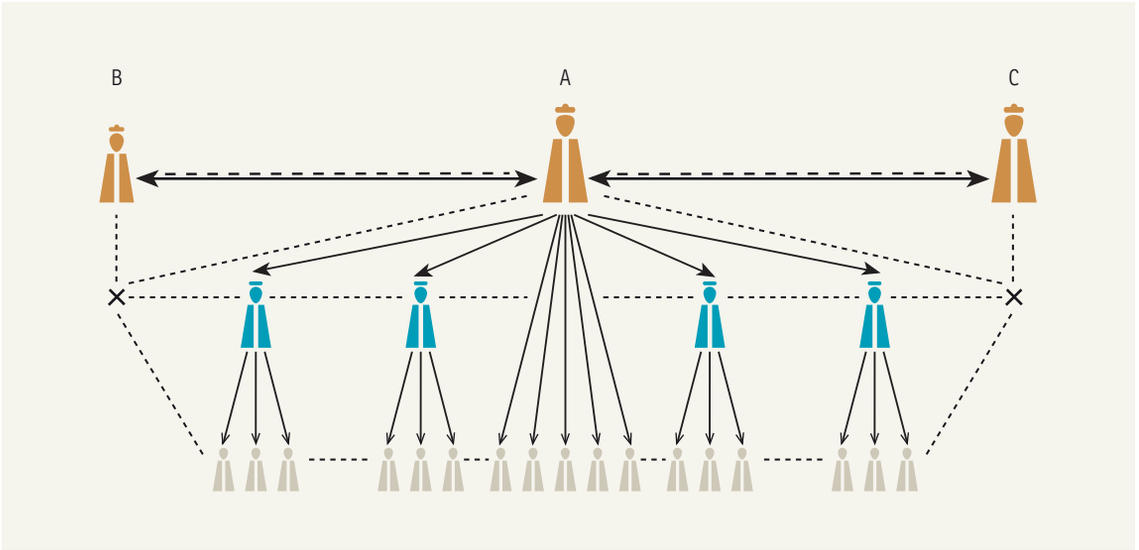
After gold and silver reached the North Sea area in the form of 'foreign' ornaments or coins, most ornaments and an unknown amount of coinage were melted down and transformed into high-status symbols for the leading elite – to be worn, to be stored or to be distributed as gifts among their clientele. For reconstructing the top-down distribution of such prestige goods in the research area, it is necessary to analyse the archaeologically traceable asso-

43 See the discussion in section 8.3.

44 See Scull 1990, 199-208; 1993 and Steuer 1987b, 454-458; 2007, 565, respectively.

45 Compare the use of payment gold and silver in long-distance exchange (section 8.3.2).

46 See section 8.3.2. Along the Rhine and Meuse estuaries, for example, 80-100% of the total amount of pottery from rural settlements had been imported (Dijkstra 2004, 404; 2011, 309-310, fig. 7.4).



10.8 | A schematic reconstruction of the movement of valuables within early medieval societies, comprising: a) the exchange of gold and silver jewellery or other ornaments as gifts, between kings or other leaders (A-C) and different levels of patrons and their clients (arrows); b) the exchange of minted and unminted gold and silver, including antique coins, as a form of currency between members of the (supra-)regional and local elites (broken lines). X: independent or 'freelance' trader (drawing by the author).

ciation between specific categories of prestige goods and the social status of their owners. After a discussion of the main criteria for assessing the prestige value of 5th- to 7th-century gold and silver ornaments, an attempt is made to determine the 'social status' of the various categories of valuables presented in chapter 9.

10.3.1 ***The prestige value of gold and silver ornaments***

Gold and silver had an important symbolic value as precious metals, because of their restricted availability in early medieval Europe. Access to these metals was limited to the tribal leaders who participated in the interregional networks of gift- and long-distance exchange, and – indirectly – to their clientele. Within the patronage system, described above, the ownership of precious metals was closely related to a person's network of socio-political relations, and hence reflected that person's status and prestige. Status and prestige, however, were not only related to the amount of gold or silver one possessed. The *prestige value* of an object, as a 'cultural construct', could be increased by four elements, each giving jewellery or other items of precious metal an extra symbolic dimension:[47]

1. The type of object and quality of ornamentation

A substantial part of the imported gold and silver was transformed into jewellery and decorative mounts for belts, weapons and vessels of various types, at first sight showing a wide variety in forms and decoration. At a closer look, however, a more or less standardized relationship between the types of ornaments and the quality and splendour of their decoration can be observed, probably reflecting the social status of their owner. The personal relationship between the tribal leader or other member of the elite (patron) and the receiver of the object (client) is essential in this respect, because it was the patrons who decided what types of ornaments should be manufactured, how much gold or silver was to be used, what decorative or symbolic elements would be incorporated, and, finally, to whom the ornaments were given. The often uniform execution of particular categories of high-status items seems to imply a 'code of conduct' concerning the ownership and use of status symbols, each type of object and decoration being related to a specific, generally recognised status level.

2. An 'exotic' or mythical origin

Although the imported precious metal was for a large part molten down and transformed into highly symbolic prestige goods, the 'exotic' or mythical origin of a finished product or its raw material certainly contributed to an object's prestige value. According to Näsman, the value of imported luxuries was much enhanced by their production outside the user's political or ethnic homeland; it was crucial that 'culture barriers' had been passed.[48] Helms also points out the importance of items not only coming from afar, but indeed having a mythical origin.[49] Interestingly, the mythical origin of some weapons that are described in *Beowulf* is specifically mentioned. Beowulf's chain mail, for example, is said to have been made by Weland, the famous blacksmith of Germanic legend.[50] Moreover, the sword that Beowulf found in Grendel's lair was the work of Giants.[51] In a

47 For prestige items as 'cultural constructs', see also Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 422-423.

48 Näsman 1991, 25.

49 Helms 1993.

50 *Beowulf*, lines 454-455.

51 *Beowulf*, lines 1557-1561.

Christian context, the role of such artisans and other mythical beings living outside the human community, was directly or indirectly replaced by that of bishops, saints and God.[52]

3. Religious and mythical symbols

The prestige value of gold and silver ornaments was also related to a complex system of religious and mythical symbols, reflecting the personal relation between the owner and – directly or via a patron – the ancestors or gods. In early medieval Scandinavia an important role is assumed for the old Norse Odin cult and related (origin) myths, in which animals take a central place, linking the living to the supernatural world (Animal Styles I and II).[53] In the southern North Sea area the import and, more importantly, the local imitation of Scandinavian-type bracteates and square-headed brooches has been related to the introduction of a similar cult in the late 5th, and first half of the 6th century.[54] The gold bracteates show Odin and his guardian spirits (types A and C) and his transformation into a griffin-like animal (type D); the brooches show the same deity between two of his helping spirits – a symbolism that can also be seen on 6th-century 'Kentish' square-headed brooches (fig. 9.13, no. 3) and 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches of the Achlum type (fig. 4.30).[55] During the late 6th and the early decades of the 7th century, a similar religious belief is expressed in Animal Style II. The head- and footplate of the 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooch from Wijnaldum (Friesland, fig. 4.32), for example, probably show Odin and his helping spirits.[56]

According to Hedeager, the Odin cult was introduced or revived by the leading elite in the Migration period to legitimize its own growing political authority; this was not based on political alliances and generosity alone, but also on the existence of sacred narratives and origin myths (*cosmology*) and access to the supernatural world (*wisdom*).[57] The introduction of Animal Styles I and II in the research area can be seen as a similar attempt by the Migration- and Merovingian-period elite to legitimize their power by showing their ability to communicate with the supernatural world. Part of this strategy was the creation of a line of descent with mythical ancestors in the Scandinavian 'homeland', by incorporating Wodan/Odin in the genealogy of the East Anglian Wuffingas (fig. 2.7) and other royal houses.[58] From the early 7th century on, symbols of the Odin cult were gradually replaced by Christian motifs, such as the cruciform pendants from Ixworth and Wilton (Suffolk, fig. 9.25) and the fish on the Crundale Down buckle (Kent, fig. 10.18) – without changing their purpose, however.

4. An object's cultural biography

Besides the high value of gold or silver as precious metals and as prestigious, often richly decorated and highly symbolic ornaments, an object's prestige value was determined by its history or so-called 'cultural biography'.[59] Ancestral ownership, success in war and also the bestowal itself contributed to the historical background or biography of an object. The importance of this biography is explained by Mauss, describing the 'spirit of things'.[60] In non-western societies the subject and object of personal gifts are commensurable; every object is 'animate' and has a spiritual power derived from its original owner(s). Gift-giving means giving part of oneself and one's personal history. For this reason, every period of use and every change of owner enhances the cultural biography of an object and, consequently, its related status – a process that continues until the object is deposited in a burial or a ritual hoard and enters the world of ancestors and gods.

The importance of their cultural biography explains why so many prestige goods in *Beowulf* are described as 'ancient', sometimes with a 'personal' history.[61] The ancient sword used by Beowulf to fight Grendel's mother, for example, is named Hrunting and is said never to have failed its owner in battle.[62] The history of Wiglaf's sword is described in more detail.[63] During a Geatish-Swedish conflict, this weapon was taken as booty by Weohstan, Wiglaf's father, and given to his lord, the Swedish king Onela, who returned it to Weohstan. At his death, Weohstan left the sword to his son Wiglaf, after which the history of this famous object will have accumulated further until the weapon was finally taken out of circulation. In most

52 Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 422; compare the assumed religious context of coin minting in the Frankish kingdom (Theuws 2004, 127-129).
53 See Hedeager 1999; 2005; Nielsen 1999; 2007.
54 Behr 1994, 161-165; compare Olsen 2005/2006.
55 For bracteates, see Hedeager 1999, 153; 2005, 236-238; Olsen 2005/2006, 493-494; Pesch 2007, 39-43.
56 Olsen 2001; 2005/2006, 488-489, 503.
57 Hedeager 1999, 154-155, fig. 6.
58 See Nielsen 1999, 199-200.
59 Especially Kopytoff 1986; Gosden & Marshall 1999.
60 Mauss 1966, 8-10.
61 Bazelmans 1999, 150-156; see also Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 419-420.
62 *Beowulf*, lines 1454-1463.
63 *Beowulf*, lines 2599-2622.

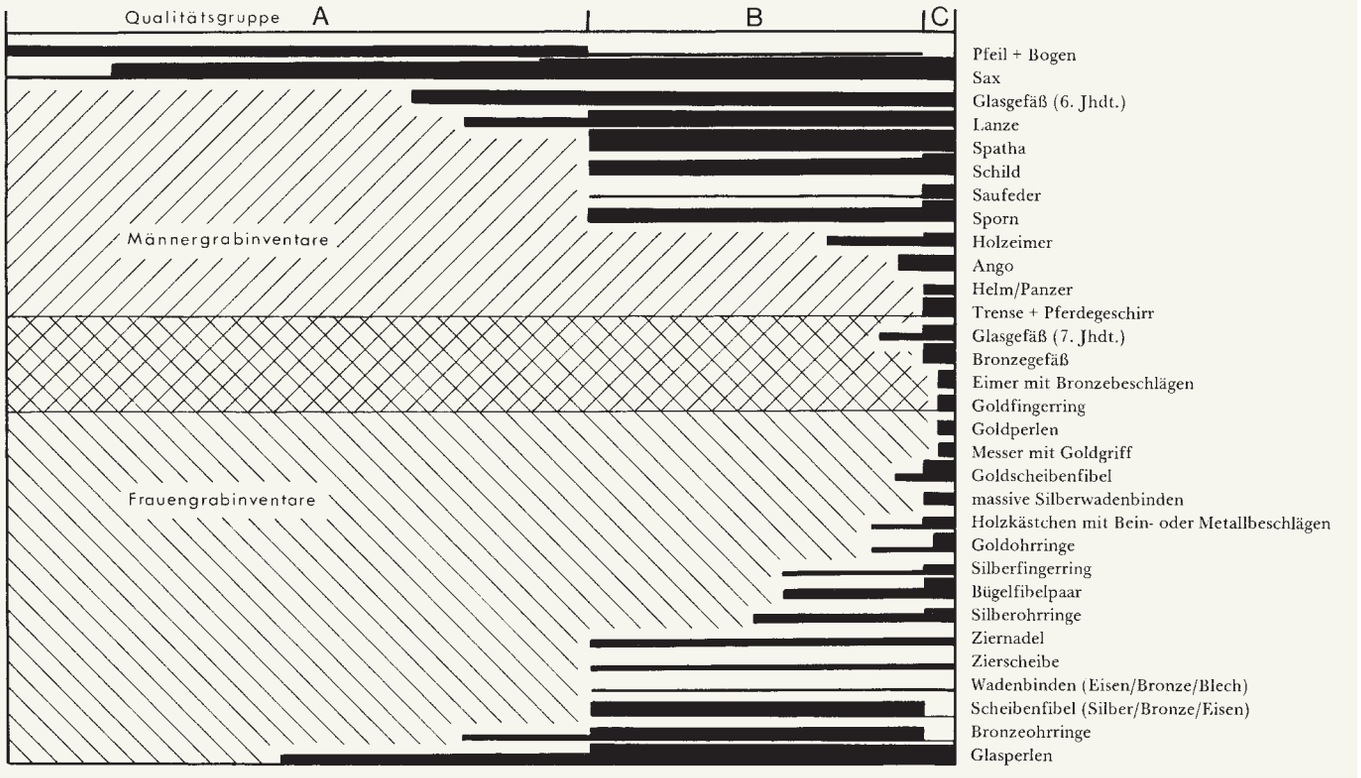
10.9 | Two sets of heavily worn radiate-headed brooches from Rhenen-'Donderberg' grave 182 (Utrecht, nos. 1-2) and Elst-'Het Woud' grave 239 (Utrecht, nos. 3-4), showing that repaired and even incomplete items of jewellery were selected as grave goods. Both knobs that are lost from one of the Rhenen brooches were still present at the time of discovery. Scale 1:1 (Rhenen: coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photos A. de Kemp; Elst: coll. Provinciaal Archeologisch Depot, Utrecht, photos J. Schokker).

cases, however, the history of prestige goods in *Beowulf* is not traced back for more than two generations. This might indicate that not the individual history of an object was the most relevant, but the more anonymous, *ancestral origin* of the precious metal (see above) – an aspect that did not lose its significance when an object was melted down, not even after a (temporary) transformation into payment gold.[64]

Archaeological examples of ancient prestige goods, including jewellery and exclusive weaponry, are well-known – especially from high-status burials.[65] Gold and silver ornaments from the research area are often heavily worn down and sometimes repaired or had even been worn in a fragmented state (fig. 10.9), which suggests that they were buried as ancient heirlooms with a specific cultural

64 Bazelmans 1998b, 72-73.

65 Nielsen 1999, 195: "It is typical of princely burials…in containing grave goods from a broad span of time…" See also section 1.8, with several examples.



10.10 | The frequency in which the grave goods shown on the right occur in male and female Alamannic graves, and their relation to 'quality groups' (*Qualitätsgruppen*) A-C (after Christlein 1975, fig. 11).

biography.[66] Weapon finds show a similar picture. The Sutton Hoo helmet, for example, was over a century old at its time of deposition, while many other early medieval helmets apparently were constructed from re-used parts of older helmets.[67] The gold-decorated ring-swords are also interesting in this respect. At least some of these swords were composed from parts of different dates and origins, like the Sutton Hoo sword with its old, Frankish pommel (fig. 7.5, no. 2).[68] Indeed, a gold or silver ring might be added during the sword's lifetime – and, at a later time, removed again.[69]

10.3.2 *Prestige value and socio-political hierarchy*

On the basis of written sources and archaeological finds, several attempts have been made to reconstruct the socio-political hierarchy of early-medieval societies.[70] The most important studies are by Christlein and Steuer, who both relate particular find assemblages, as represented in Alamannic and Frankish row-grave cemeteries, to specific status levels.[71] Yet the value of such studies has been questioned, with the arguments that chronological and regional variation are insufficiently taken into account, and that grave goods reflect not only the function and status of the deceased, but also the motives of the group that arranged the funeral.[72] Despite these general problems regarding the interpretation of cemetery finds, which will be discussed in greater detail in section 11.3, prestige value can still be considered one of the most important dimensions of grave goods, reflecting a hierarchy of social relations.[73]

According to Christlein, 6th- and 7th-century Alamannic society was divided into four levels of free and unfree people, as described in the 7th-century *Lex* and *Pactus Alamannorum*.[74] Displaying the wealth and lifestyle (*habitus*) of the deceased and his or her family, the funerary assemblages – as 'quality groups' (*Qualitätsgruppen*, fig. 10.10) – are associated with these historically known social strata. The *reguli* or *duces* were buried with exceptional or unique objects, often made of gold and decorated with garnet cloisonné (quality group D). The more numerous burials belonging to other members of the elite contained helmets, gold-decorated knives, gold finger rings, earrings, pendants,

66 E.g. Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981 (gold bracteates and silver square-headed brooches).

67 Steuer 1987a, 200; Alkemade 1991, 290-292; see also Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 423-425 (describing weapons as 'composite artefacts').

68 For the Sutton Hoo pommel, see Bruce-Mitford 1978, 303-304; Arrhenius 1985, 141-146. Compare the 8th- or early 9th-century spatha from Dorestad (Utrecht) with an old, 7th-century pommel (fig. 5.46; Van Es 2006, which includes a description of its cultural biography).

69 Steuer 1987a, 211, 216-217, 220.

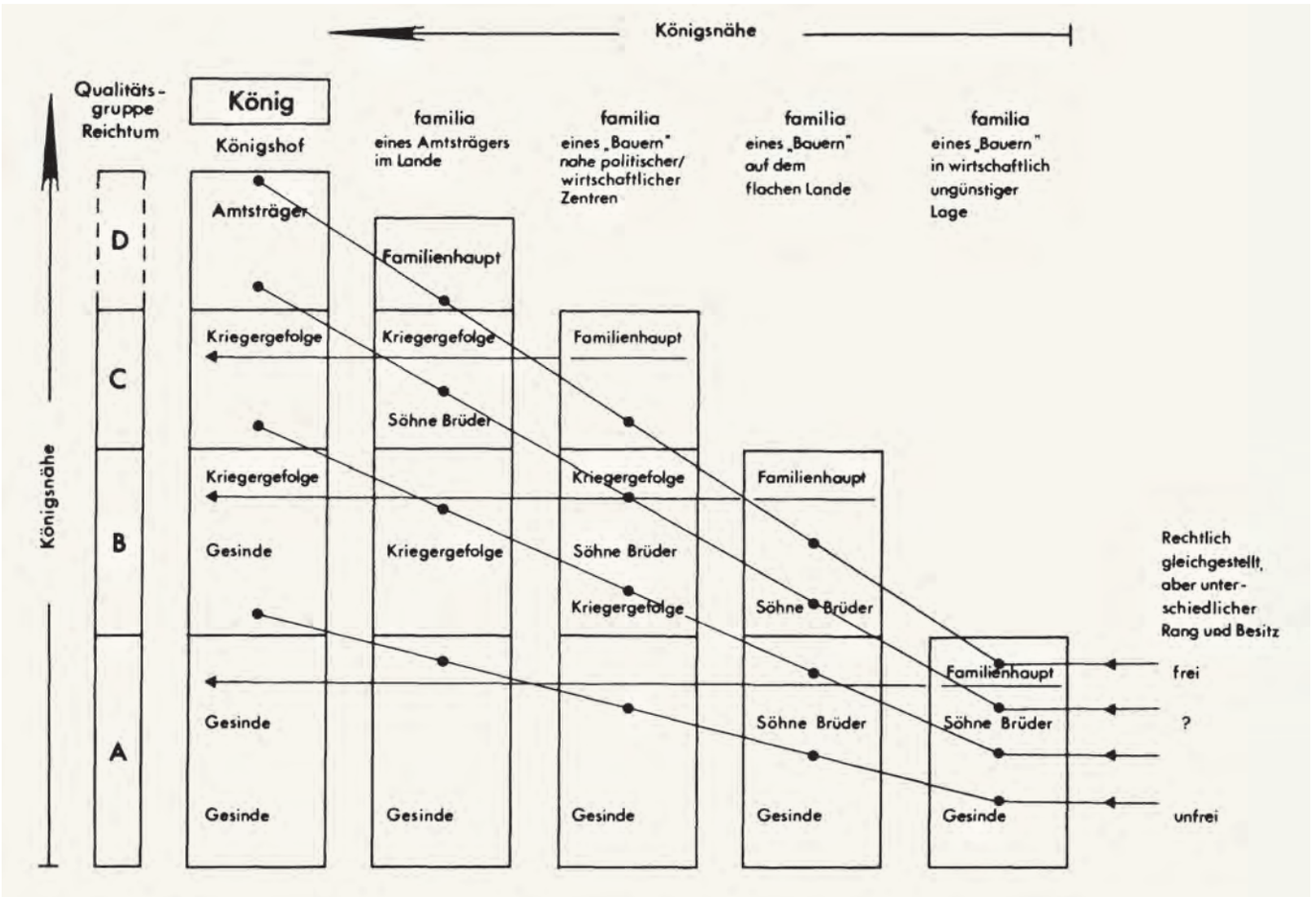
70 See Härke 2000b.

71 Christlein 1975; 1978; Steuer 1982.

72 E.g. Steuer 1989, 103-107.

73 Christlein 1975, 173; see also Steuer 1989, 107.

74 Christlein 1975; 1978, 19-20, 83-94.



10.11 | The social organization of Merovingian-period Germanic societies, showing a differentiation between and within individual household groups (*familia*) in relation to Christlein's quality groups A-C (see fig. 10.10) and their 'distance to the king' (*Königsnähe*) (after Steuer 1982, fig. 114).

beads and brooches, silver arm rings and spoons, bronze or specific types of glass vessels, and bronze-bound buckets – including 'exotic' pieces, like 'Coptic' bronze vessels (group C). Horsegear is an important feature of both social strata (groups C and D).[75] Finally, free and unfree people of lower social status were buried with less prestigious objects, such as silver or bronze finger rings, brooches and belt fittings (group B), and simple knives, glass beads or no grave goods at all (group A). Burials containing prestige goods of quality group D are usually not represented in the Alamannic cemeteries; among the few examples given by Christlein are the 'royal' or 'princely' burials of Cologne (2x, table 10.2, fig. 10.16), Krefeld-Gellep (table 10.2) and Wittislingen (fig. 1.6).[76]

According to Steuer, the fixed ranks of nobles, freeborn and unfree people only originated in the 8th century; the organization of Merovingian-period societies had been 'open' and, as discussed above, was based on clientship – with the *familia* or household ('*Hausgemeinschaft*') as the basic element of the socio-political structure. Within societies, Steuer distinguishes a hierarchy of five household classes, each with a different internal social structure (fig. 10.11).[77] The status level of a person's family, as well as the status of that person within this family, is determined by the 'distance to the king' (*Königsnähe*). Although Steuer is wary of drawing strict distinctions between status levels, he does relate this social distance to Christlein's 'quality groups', with these groups not representing rank, but their members' ability to distribute valuables among their followers.[78] Steuer relates objects of the top quality level to the group of '*Amtsträger*', i.e. members of the royal family and their highest officials (group D), which at a lower social level are followed by insignia of the royal retinue (group C).[79] The remaining prestige goods are related to regional or local leaders and members of their families (groups C and B).

In Christlein's studies only a few graves qualify for his quality group D, marked by often unique, garnet-decorated items. By analyzing the grave goods belonging to the assemblages of groups C and D in close detail, Donat was able to assign a substantially larger number of Alamannic *and* Frankish graves (36x: 19.5% of the total number of C and D graves) to group D.[80] Despite

75 Christlein 1975, 148-156.

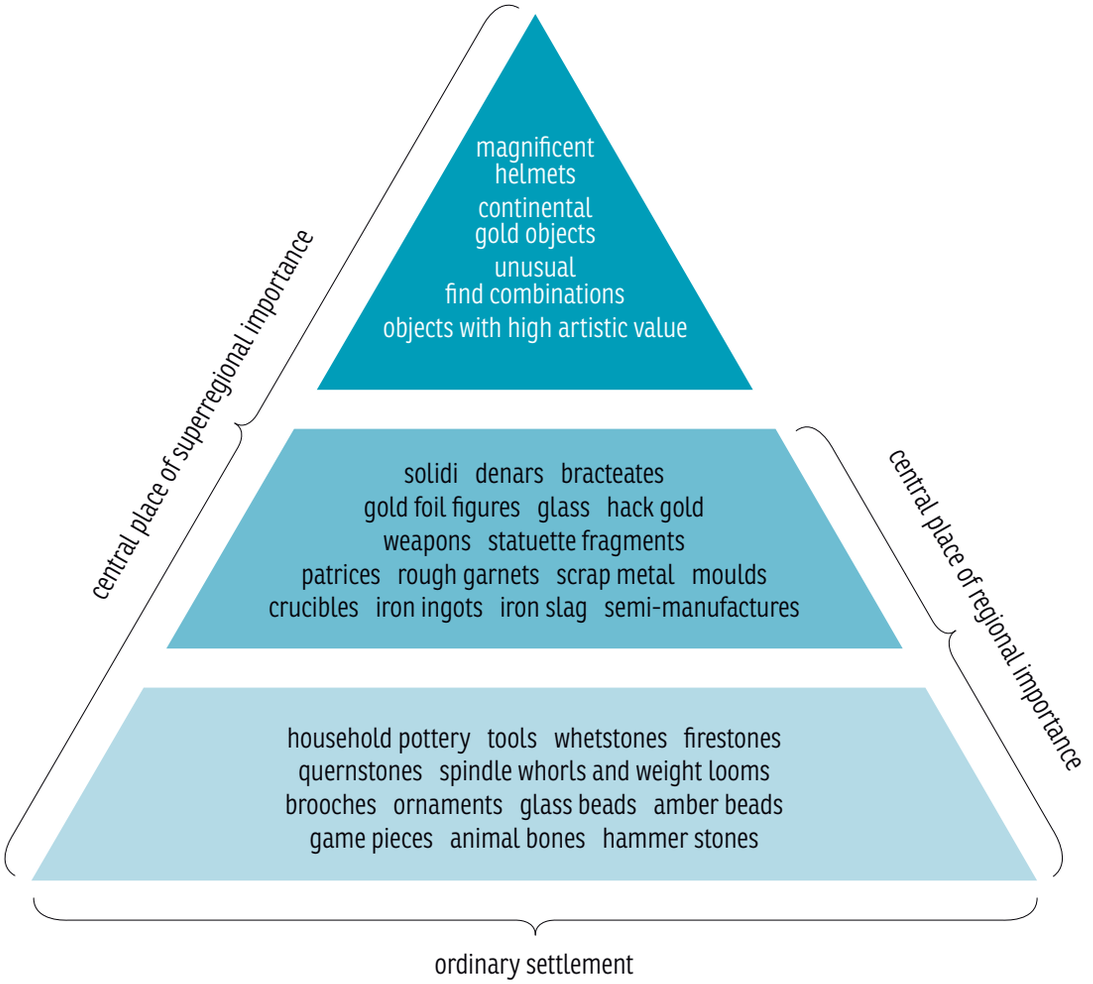
76 Christlein 1978, note 111, fig. 67.

77 Steuer 1982, 491-493, 517 ff.

78 Steuer 1982, 526; 1989, 107.

79 Steuer 1982, 523-525.

80 Donat 1989.



10.12 | The assignment of various categories of South-Scandinavian settlement finds (4th-6th centuries) to different levels of an assumed settlement hierarchy, representing Migration-period settlements with a surpra-regional, a regional and a local function (redrawn after Fabech & Ringtved 1995, fig. 2).

changes through time in the composition of such assemblages, the richest male graves are characterized by 1) (complete) weapon sets, 2) a large number and variety of bronze, glass and wooden vessels, and 3) exclusive items such as gold finger rings, gold-decorated knives, gold braid on garments and gold or silver belt fittings. The richest female graves also contain gold finger rings, gold-decorated knives and gold braid. Moreover, these are characterized by high-quality gold and silver jewellery. Within the group of male and female high-status graves, the very top stratum is represented by a small number of distinctive graves at Tournai, Krefeld-Gellep, Cologne and St. Denis (table 10.2).[81] Although for some of the group-D graves there was an apparent correlation between funerary assemblage on the one hand, and grave dimensions, structure and location on the other, no useful regularities could be found.[82]

Based on the social structure suggested by Steuer and on Donat's reassessment of grave assemblages representing quality groups C and D, a slightly different division into quality groups is suggested here – aimed at drawing a distinction between members of the royal family on the one hand, and those of royal, regional or local retinues and their families on the other. Below the level of the royal family (now group E), the complex group of followers will be subdivided into royal officials, including members of the royal retinue (most graves of Donat's group D), regional leaders and their retinues (group C) and local leaders and their retinues (group B). According to the patronage model presented above (fig. 10.1), the local elite was headed by members of the regional elite, which in its turn was headed by members of the royal elite. If Steuer's model is correct, group B may also include low-ranking members of families that are 'close to the king' (fig. 10.11). Moreover, as the circulation of prestige goods in *Beowulf* makes clear, members of the royal retinue might be presented with truly royal insignia, originating from the royal treasury of their own or another king.[83] As described above, however, these remained inalienable royal possessions, which were usu-

81 Donat 1989, 199-200; compare Sasse 1997, 97-104.

82 See also Christlein 1975, 160-172; Härke 2000b, 373, with references.

83 See section 1.6.

Table 10.2 | Combinations of high-status items in a selection of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon 'royal' or 'princely' burials (quality groups D and E), dating from the 5th to 7th centuries. The spear, vessel, etc may be represented by two or more items in a grave. Four of the burials have been attributed to historically known members of royal families: Childeric († 482, Tournai) and possibly Aregund (thought to have died ca 580, St. Denis), Sabert († 616, Prittlewell) and Rædwald († 624/625, Sutton Hoo) (Krefeld: Krefeld-Gellep, grave 1782; Sutton Hoo: mound 1; *: signet-ring; g: gold; s: silver; gd: gold-decorated, gs: gilded silver; b; bronze) (after Doppelfeld & Pirling 1966; Bruce-Mitford 1975; 1978; 1983; *Die Franken* 1996, cat. no. VI.2.10; Wieczorek & Périn 2001, cat. nos. 2.10, 4.16; Webster 2007; 2011; Blackmore 2008).

	WOLFSHEIM MALE 400-450	TOURNAI MALE † 482	KREFELD MALE 500-550	COLOGNE FEMALE 525-550	COLOGNE BOY 525-550	ST. DENIS FEMALE 550-600	TAPLOW MALE 590-610	PRITTLEWELL MALE 600-620	SUTTON HOO MALE 615-635
sword	+	+ (gd)	+ (gd, ring)		+		+	+ (gd)	+ (gd)
helmet			+		+				+
shield		+	+		+		+	+	+
axe (Francisca)		+	+		+				
spear		+	+		+		+	+	+
ango			+		+		+		+
horse gear		+ (gd)	+ (gd)						
gold belt-fittings	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
gold arm ring	+	+		+					
gold neck ring	+								
gold finger ring		+*	+	+	+	+			
gold brooch	+	+		+		+			
gold clasps							+		+
gold (hair) pin		+		+		+			
gold pendant/bead				+					
gold earring				+		+			
gold-decorated garments				+		+	+	+	
shoe fittings		+ (g)		+ (gs)		+ (gs)		+ (b)	
gold coin(s)	+	+	+	+				+	+
knife, gold-decorated			+	+	+				
silver 'relic box'				+					
silver vessel									+
silver spoon			+					+	+
bronze vessel			+	+	+		+	+	+
bronze hanging-bowl			+				+	+	+
glass vessel			+	+	+	+	+	+	+
wooden vessel					+		+	+	+
drinking horn				+	+		+	+	+
crystal ball		+		+					
wooden bucket			+	+	+		+	+	+
wooden tub							+	+	+
casket				+				+	
stool					+			+	
lyre							+	+	+
gaming pieces							+	+	+

ally not buried in a warrior's grave, unless, of course, he had become a king himself.

This slightly adjusted division into quality groups can be satisfyingly applied to Richardson's recent analysis of a large body of early Anglo-Saxon grave assemblages from Kent.[84] This social analysis is based on numerical scores given to different types of artifacts and other variables such as the size of the graves and any special features. The highest scores for artifact assemblages are given to 'exceptionally rich assemblages' (score 10) and 'high status signifiers', including (ring) swords, bronze bowls, wooden buckets, gold braid, gold bracteates or other pendants, and sets of a skimmer and crystal ball (score 8). The find assemblages with a lower score include other kinds of weapons, glass vessels, brooches and pendants (scores 6-7), belt accessories (score 5) and knives (scores 3-4). The 5th- and 6th-century assemblages with a score of 8 are closely Parallelled by the Alamannic-Frankish grave

84 Richardson 2005, 239-248 (the richest burials are presented in table 141).

goods belonging to quality group C.[85] Only assemblages with a score of 10 would reach a status level similar to those of group D, the small apex of 'royal' burials (group E) not being represented in Kent. The remaining objects are characteristic of quality groups B (scores 5-7) and A (scores 3-4). As in the Alamannic area, only a rough correlation could be observed between composition of the funerary assemblages and grave construction.

In southern Scandinavia the division of material culture into quality groups has not been applied to funerary assemblages, of which suitable finds are lacking, but to the more random collection of settlement finds (4th to 6th century). According to Fabech and Ringtved, three social levels of rural settlements can be distinguished, each characterized by a specific assemblage of finds (fig. 10.12).[86] At central places of supra-regional importance, magnificent helmets and gold ornaments with a high artistic value are found. Central places of regional importance yield bracteates, gold-foil figures, solidi, gold bars and hack or ring gold, while ordinary, agricultural settlements are devoid of any gold. The finds from supra-regional centres are Parallelled by the funerary assemblages of quality groups D and E, even including some of the Continental items that are typical of this group, the regional centres by those of group C, and the other settlements by those of groups B and A.

Besides these similarities in status levels between Alamannic-Frankish and Anglo-Saxon grave goods and Scandinavian settlement finds, a very similar, pyramidal structure is apparent in these data sets: unique or exceptional objects with the highest prestige value are found only in a small number of burials and settlements, representing the leading elite (the top of the 'social pyramid'), while less exclusive valuables are found at a larger number of sites, *probably* representing the more lowly social groups (the middle and lower part of the pyramid). 'Probably' is emphasised here, because only the *presence* of specific grave and settlement finds can qualify as evidence of social differentiation – and it is unknown what status-related items may have been 'kept back' as inalienable possessions or heirlooms.

To assign gold and silver prestige goods from the southern North Sea area to a social hierarchy, the 'social status' of the different categories of jewellery and other ornaments has to be established by looking at (1) the symbolic dimensions mentioned above, (2) the combinations of objects in 'closed' contexts, i.e. burials and hoards, and (3) the numbers of currently known finds of a specific type, as a reflection of more or less restricted access. Because all precious metals can be seen as 'exotic' goods and the cultural biography of individual objects is impossible to determine without historical information, the following indicators of prestige value and social status are of relevance for this study:

- The type of ornament;
- the quality of decoration;
- the (religious) symbolism of the object and/or decoration;
- the combinations of accompanying finds;
- the relative rarity of an item.

Because the research area is situated between the Frankish and Scandinavian worlds and culturally closely related to them, the find material from both these areas will be used as a reference sample below. The chronology of the finds and their assignment to five 'cultural phases' are based on the considerations set out in chapter 9.

1. Phase 1 (ca 390-500)

Inspired by late-Roman brooch forms and the decoration of late-Roman belt fittings, the development of regional-style brooches of bronze and silver took place in the late 4th- and 5th-century Elbe-Weser region. Besides, silver finger rings and silver decorative elements of necklaces (pendants, beads and wire rings) were produced locally in the northern part of Germany.

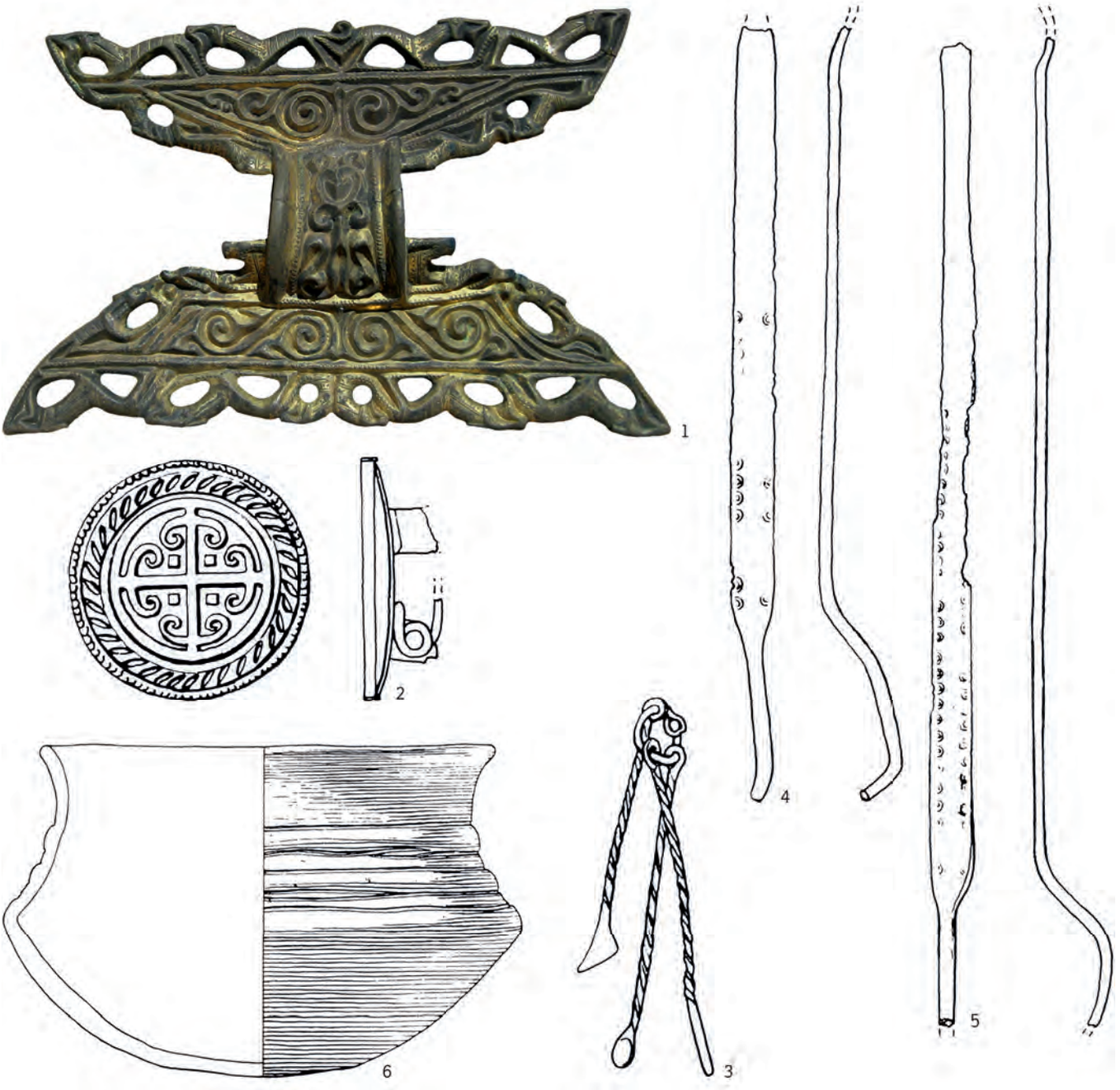
During the 5th century, silver equal-armed brooches of the Wehden, Dösemoor, Nesse, Hannover and Daudieck types were the most exclusive ornaments of precious metal in the research area. The brooches are fully decorated with chip-carving, the large pieces of Dösemoor type often also gilded. Although most equal-armed brooches are single finds, their social status is evident from the grave goods of some high-status females.[87] The ladies in the richest graves, located in the inland of the research area, have been dubbed the 'princesses' of Issendorf (Stade, Germany) and Zweeloo (Drenthe, the Netherlands).[88] Besides a silver-gilt equal-armed brooch (Dösemoor

85 A different correlation between scores and quality groups was suggested by Fischer (2008, map 16).

86 Fabech & Ringtved 1995; see also Fabech 1999b, 456-457.

87 For an overview of documented grave finds, see Bruns 2003, 31.

88 Häßler 1994, 40-41; 2002, 146-162 (Issendorf); Van Es & Ypey 1977 (Zweeloo).



type), the Issendorf grave contained a silver neck ring, two composite saucer brooches with a silver-gilt front-plate, bronze and iron belt accessories and silver beads and slip-knot rings from one or more necklaces (grave 3532, fig. 6.11). In the Zweeloo grave too, a silver-gilt equal-armed brooch was buried (Nesse type), as well as two composite saucer brooches with a gilt bronze front-plate, a bronze arm ring, silver and bronze belt accessories, two bead necklaces and a beaded girdle (grave 87, fig. 10.13).

Although the title 'princess' suggests otherwise, the women buried with silver or silver-gilt brooches can be regarded as members of a local elite, similar in status to the inhabitants of the Roman-period *'Herrenhof'* of Feddersen Wierde (Cuxhaven) and to those buried in the richest graves at the cemetery of Fallward (Cuxhaven).[89] Christlein would assign such burials to his group B or, in the case of Issendorf (silver neck ring), to group C. At the cemetery of Issendorf, silver finger rings, pendants, beads and slip-knot rings are found in several more 5th-century burials.[90] Like the contemporary saucer brooches, these ornaments can be assigned to quality group B.

After a strong population decline and in some regions even depopulation, the coastal area of the northern Netherlands was newly settled from the late 4th century on. At least part of the immigrants originated from the Elbe-Weser region; they

10.13 | Selected grave goods of the so-called 'princess of Zweeloo' (grave 87, Zweeloo, Drenthe). Scale of pot 1:2, scale of other items 1:1 (after Böhme 1986, fig. 63; brooch: coll. and photo Drents Museum, Assen). 1. silver-gilt equal-armed brooch, 2. one of two composite saucer brooches with a gilded bronze front-plate, 3. silver toilet set, 4-5. bronze latchlifters, 6. hand-made pot.

89 See also Häßler 1994, 40; 2004a, 24. For Fallward, see Schön 1999b, 132-133; 2004c, 528-529.

90 See section 6.2.

10.14 | Two fused fragments of a gold *Kolbenarmring* from Deventer (Overijssel). Melting traces suggest that the ring was to be melted down for re-use. Scale 2:1 (coll. Historisch Museum Deventer, photos F. Onland).

can be recognized by their typically 'Saxon' high-status symbols, including a silver supporting-arm brooch (Lower-Saxon type A, fig. 4.26, no. 1), silver equal-armed brooches (Wehden type, fig. 4.26, nos. 2-3), silver-decorated composite saucer brooches (Jouswier and Lippspringe types, fig. 4.27) and also a gold pendant (bell-shaped, fig. 9.2). All brooches can be assigned to quality groups B or C. The older pendant is typical of group C or perhaps even group D, as is suggested by the presence of similar pendants in a gold hoard from Lengerich (Emsland, 4th century) which also contains a gold crosswbow brooch, two gold arm rings and three gold finger rings.[91]

Southeast England, and more specifically Norfolk, presents a similar picture. The highest-status symbols of precious metal are imported or locally imitated equal-armed brooches, made of silver (groups B or C). More common jewellery, typical of quality group B, are silver finger rings, silver pendants and silver-wire rings, beads an wrist clasps.

Late 4th- or 5th-century 'royal' burials are unknown from the research area. The only objects that qualify for quality group E are the famous gold horns from Gallehus (southern Jutland, close to the German border), dating to around 400 and together weighing ca 7 kg (fig. 6.22). The horns not only are unique in their size and shape, but also have a highly symbolic value because of their decoration with mythical scenes.

2. Phases 2 and 3 (ca 475-600)

During the late 5th and 6th centuries, the southern North Sea area is characterized by a mixed set of high-status symbols, revealing cultural affinities with the Scandinavian north (phase 2, ca 475-550) and the Frankish south (phase 3, ca 500-600). Besides gold and silver ornaments imported from both areas, local imitation resulted in the development of regional-style jewellery in Kent, East Anglia and Friesland.

Richly decorated weapons from the research area are limited to 6th-century swords of the Frankish-Kentish Bifrons-Gilton type; no older, 5th-century gold-hilted swords ('*Goldgriffspathen*') have been found here.[92] The swords from Kent have a silver or silver-gilt pommel, executed in a regional style and often with a double ring attached to one side (fig. 9.15). Most if not all rings are later additions and could be removed for re-use. Steuer is of the opinion that such 'ring-swords' were given by a patron to members of his *Gefolgschaft*, thus symbolizing their personal bond.[93] The different materials and levels of workmanship put into the decoration of the currently known ring-swords reflect ownership by different levels of warrior-followers, which also seems visible in the range of swords that are depicted on contemporary helmets.[94] While the ring-swords with gold, garnet-decorated pommels probably symbolized membership of the royal retinue (group D), the more numerous Kentish swords with a silver pommel seem to

91 Lengerich: Häßler 2003, 78-83.

92 Menghin 1983, 67, 312-315; Fischer 2008; for '*Goldgriffspathen*', see Böhme 1994.

93 Steuer 1987a, 222-227.

94 Steuer 1987a, 203-205, 226-227; compare Jørgensen & Jørgensen 1997, 107-109, fig. 102.

Table 10.3 | Combinations of high-status ornaments in a selection of Danish gold hoards, dating to the 5th and 6th centuries, and their probable relation to quality groups. With the exception of the Gudme II and Sigerslev finds, all finger rings are spiral rings that may also belong to the more common group of ring gold (*: denarius-pendant; data after Geisslinger 1967, catalogue; Hedeager 1991, tables 1-3; Jørgensen et al. 2003, cat. nos. 7.7-8, 7.12, 7.15)

	QUALITY GROUP	ARM RING	NECK RING	(RING-) SWORD	BRACTEATE	OTHER PENDANT	FINGER RING	COIN	RING-/ HACK-GOLD	INGOT
Halsskov Overdrev	D	+	+		+		(+)		+	
Oure/Broholm	D	+	+		+		(+)	+	+	+
Gudme-Lillesø	D	+		+					+	
Bolbro	D		+	+	+		(+)			
Hesselagergård Skov	D		+		+					
Hvolbæk	D		+		+		(+)		+	
Gudme-Uhrenholtgård	D			+					+	
Darum	D			+	+	+				
Killerup	D			+	+		(+)		+	
Gudme II	C/D			+(?)	+	+ (coin)*	+			
Sorte Muld II	C				+	+				
Skovlund	C				+	+				
Sigerslev	C				+		+		+	
Rynkeby	C				+	+ (coin)	(+)	+		+
Gantofta	C				+	+ (coin)		+	+	
Års	C				+		(+)	+	+	
Sandegård	C				+			+	+	+
Lyngby	C				+				+	
Vedby	C				+				+	

have been given to followers of a lower social status, as represented by group C. Significantly, the sword with a silver ring-pommel from Finglesham (grave 204) was buried with a glass claw beaker, a bronze bowl and a silver, garnet-decorated buckle – objects that are typical of quality group C in the Frankish-Alamannic area (table 10.4, fig. 7.23).[95]

Arm rings made of gold or silver, usually of the open-ended type (in German: *Kolbenarmringe*), are well-known from Continental graves and Scandinavian hoards.[96] The only finds from the research area are a gold slip-knot ring from Helgoland (Nordfriesland, fig. 6.21) and silver open-ended rings from the cemetery of Rhenen (Utrecht, fig. 5.17) and a probable cemetery near Wassenaar (South Holland, fig. 5.7). At Deventer, in the direct hinterland of the North Sea world, two fused fragments of another gold arm ring were found with a metal detector (fig. 10.14).[97] With one exception (Cologne, fig. 10.16), the gold arm rings from graves are male insignia; they were worn on the right hand, that is the sword-hand, of both adults and children. The silver rings, by contrast, are female jewellery, worn on the left hand. According to Werner, the gold arm rings – like the contemporary gold signet rings – are symbols of the *stirps regia*, or royal family (*principes* and *reges*, group E).[98] However, Steuer is probably right in suggesting that they indicated rank and membership of the royal retinue, to which kings like Childeric (table 10.2) originally also belonged (group D).[99] Werner attributes silver arm rings to 'an elevated social stratum'.[100] The larger number of such finds and the material used, point to a social status below that of the royal elite's closest retainers (group C).

Gold and silver neck rings are very similar to the open-ended arm rings, in shape, decoration and probably also social status.[101] All rings from the research area have been found in northern Germany, including two Scandinavian-type rings made of gold (figs. 6.15, 6.20: Sievern and Schnelsen) and a Frankish-type ring made of silver (fig. 6.11: Issendorf). Similar rings are known from Scandinavian hoards (gold, probably worn by males and females) and Continental graves (especially silver, worn by females). Given their association with gold arm rings and gold-decorated swords (or gold sword fittings) both in hoards and in graves (tables 10.2-3), the gold neck rings can be assigned to quality group D. The silver neck rings probably had a lower social status; like

95 Compare the Frankish burials at Fürstenberg (G) and Saint-Dizier (F) (Fischer 2008, cat. nos. 13, 23-24)

96 Hansen 2001, 182-183 (catalogue).

97 Nicolay 2006b.

98 Werner 1980, 23, 39; see also Kyhlberg 1986, 70-72; Hansen 2001, 178-179.

99 Steuer 1982, 248; 1989, 108-109.

100 Werner 1980, 5 (quotation translated by the author); see also Hansen 2001, 179.

101 Steuer 1982, 249; Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991, 233-235.

Table 10.4 | Combinations of high-status ornaments in the richest 6th-century graves from Kent, all representing quality group C (silver-decor.: silver-decorated, m: male, f: female, s: silver pommel, ga: garnet-settings; data after Richardson 2005, table 141, appendix 2).

	(RING) SWORD	GOLD BRAID	GOLD BRACTEATE	GOLD PENDANT / BEAD	BRONZE VESSEL	GLASS VESSEL	WOODEN BUCKET	STRAINER / BALL	SILVER-DECOR. BELT	SILVER BROOCH
Finglesham, gr. 204 (m)	+ (s)				+	+			+ (ga)	
Sarre, gr. 88 (m)	+ (s)				+					
Bifrons, gr. 39 (m)	+ (s)								+	
Mill Hill I, gr. 91 (m)	+				+					
Sarre, gr. 39A (m)	+						+			
Finglesham, gr. 203 (f)			+	+ (ga)	+	+				+ (ga)
Buckland, gr. 391.2 (f)		+		+			+	+		+ (ga)
Lyminge II, gr. 44 (f)		+						+		+ (ga)
Mill Hill I, gr. 105C (f)		+								+ (ga)
Bifrons, gr. 41 (f)		+				+				+ (ga)
Bifrons, gr. 29 (f)		+	+							+ (ga)
Sarre, gr. 4 (f)		+	+			+		+		+ (ga)
Finglesham, gr. D3 (f)			+			+				+ (ga)
Buckland, gr. 20 (f)			+		+	+				+
Mill Hill I, gr. 25B (f)								+		+ (ga)
Bifrons, gr. 42 (f)								+		+ (ga)

the silver arm rings they may have belonged to group C.

An exceptional position is taken by some Scandinavian gold 'ring jewellery' with a deviating shape and ornamentation, belonging to the highest social level (group E). Not only some heavy, ribbed arm and neck rings from Denmark, but above all the three- to seven-ringed collars from southern Sweden can be assigned to this uppermost status level – the collars being richly decorated with religious symbols.[102]

Crowfoot and Chadwick Hawkes assume that gold-decorated clothing, of which gold braid is found mainly in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon graves (fig. 10.15), was worn by 'the wives of high court officials, royal concubines and even queens and princesses'[103] In the Frankish area, 6th-century gold braid is found in some of the richest female graves, including the burial assumed to be of queen Aregund at St. Denis (table 10.2).[104] Also the early 7th-century Taplow and Prittlewell 'princes' were buried with gold-decorated garments (table 10.2). The relatively large number of such finds from Kentish graves, however, indicates that this clothing was worn not only by male and female members of the royal elite (groups D-E), but by members of the regional elite as well (group C). The associated grave goods put none of the Kentish finds at a higher status level than that of quality group C (table 10.4).[105]

As originally Scandinavian ornaments, the gold bracteates were imitated along the North Sea coast on quite a large scale, partly in silver and bronze (table 9.1). In contrast to their religious symbolism and presumable use as amulets, the social status of this female jewellery has received little attention.[106] Bracteates are usually seen as 'symbols of rank and honour', though of a lower social status than the gold arm and neck rings.[107] In Danish gold hoards, bracteates are found in association with other types of pendants, finger rings and especially 'payment gold' (ring/hack gold, coins, ingots) (table 10.3) – items that typify Scandinavian central places of regional importance (fig. 10.12). This is in agreement with Kentish grave finds, where bracteates appear in association with valuable items representing the same status level (group C, table 10.4). In the central Netherlands, two silver-gilt bracteates, serving as decorative elements of wooden discs, were buried in association with a bronze-bound bucket and probably also a bronze bowl (Rhenen, grave 775, table 5.1, fig. 5.12) – items typical of Continental group-C assemblages.[108]

102 Swedish collars: Pesch 2011b, with further references.

103 Crowfoot & Chadwick Hawkes 1967 (quotation, p. 65); Crowfoot 1969.

104 Wamers & Périn 2012, 112-113, fig. 81 (compare figs. 49, 89-91 (imitated gold braid), 134-136).

105 See also Brugmann 1997, 117, 120-121 (in: Parfitt & Brugmann 1997).

106 See, for example, Axboe 2007; Pesch 2007.

107 Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991, 237-238, 243.

108 Ypey 1983.

10.15 | Remains of gold-decorated clothing, found in a female grave (no. 21) at Bifrons (Kent). The gold threads, originally woven into textile and found on top of the skull, probably decorated a headdress. The width of the individual strips of gold is a mere 0.8 mm (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/Maidstone Museum, photo Archival Images Limited).

In Scandinavian hoards, gold coin-pendants, other types of gold pendants and gold beads were buried in association with gold bracteates and 'payment gold', again representing quality group C (table 10.3). The same status level is reflected in Kentish female graves with such jewellery (table 10.4), one of the graves containing a set of bead necklaces with two gold bracteates and two garnet-decorated pendants and beads (Finglesham, grave 203, fig. 7.24). The shape and decoration of the largest bead are almost identical to the decorative elements of gold earrings from some Frankish graves, including an exceptionally rich female grave at Cologne (group E, fig. 10.16). The other gold and silver jewellery from the Finglesham burial, however, is not sufficiently exceptional to allow its assignment to royal status level. Instead, this should be seen as one of the richest assemblages of 6th-century Anglo-Saxon jewellery belonging to quality group C.

Silver and silver-gilt brooches are found in fairly large numbers all along the southern North Sea coast. The oldest brooches, buried in 6th-century Kentish female graves, are of the 'Jutlandic', square-headed type (fig. 9.13, no. 2). In the early 6th century, these were gradually replaced by Frankish-type bow, animal, garnet-disc and rosette brooches, as well as 'Kentish' square-headed (fig. 9.13, nos. 3-4) and keystone-garnet disc brooches (fig. 9.20) and the 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches of the Achlum type (figs. 4.30-31). These imported, imitated and regional-style brooches are often gilded and decorated with garnet- or glass-settings and niello. In the Frankish and Kentish regions sets of silver-gilt brooches with a similar decoration are typical of quality groups B and C, depending on their association with other grave goods (for group C, see table 10.4). Within the research area the highly symbolic 'Jutlandic' and closely related 'Frisian' and early 'Kentish' square-headed brooches probably were the most prestigious; like the younger, garnet-decorated square-headed brooches in Kentish style, they can be assigned to quality group C. In East Anglia, the same status levels are reflected by square-headed brooches (bronze, decorated with silver sheet and gilding/tinning), which are often found in association with silver finger rings, wrist-clasps and early scutiform pendants (groups B and C).

During the 6th century, imported and locally imitated Frankish-style items included silver belt fittings as well, which as male and female ornaments also belong to quality groups B and C.[109] A group of Eastern Mediterranean buckles and belt-plates, executed in iron, bronze or silver and in part decorated with garnets, can probably be assigned to quality groups C and D.[110] In the research area such (imported) buckles are known only from Lyminge (graves 17, 32 and 36) and Finglesham (grave 204, fig. 7.23, no. 5).[111] Because of their execution in iron and bronze, and the association of the Finglesham buckle with grave goods typical of group C (table 10.4), these exotic pieces in Kent are unlikely to represent a level above that of the regional elite.

3. Phases 4 and 5 (ca 590-700)

During the late 6th, and early decades of the 7th century, a further development of regional style groups can be seen, resulting in jewellery and other ornaments in 'Kentish', 'East Anglian' and 'Frisian' styles. After a short period with status symbols representing the whole range of quality groups, including royal

109 See Brugmann 1999 (catalogue, with find associations).

110 See Böhme 1994, 98-103, fig. 23.

111 Warhust 1956; Böhme 1994, find list I, nos. 4-6 (Lyminge: iron and bronze, garnets and glass, 1x in silver cells); Chadwick Hawkes & Grainger 2006 (Finglesham: iron, garnets and glass in silver-gilt cells).

10.16 | This and the next page: selected grave goods from a high-status female grave in the Cologne cathedral (see also table 10.1), comprising gold jewellery, in part garnet- and filigree-decorated, as well as gold and silver belt- and shoe-elements, gold braid of clothing, beads of crystal, glass and amber, and some gold and silver coins. Scale 1:2 (coll. and © Dombauarchiv Köln, Matz und Schenk).

insignia of group E (phase 4, ca 590-630/640), the 7th century is characterized by a more uniform and less exclusive range of gold and silver ornaments (phase 5, ca 600-700).

The late 6th and the early decades of the 7th century are characterized by a horizon of 'royal' or 'princely' male burials in East Anglia and Essex, with graves at Snape (Suffolk, ship burial), Sutton Hoo (Suffolk, ship burials, mounds 1 and 2), Broomfield (Essex, chamber burial) and Prittlewell (Essex, chamber burial).[112] A burial of similar date and status was located at Taplow (Buckinghamshire, chamber burial), in the Thames valley (fig. 10.17).[113] Although the Snape burial and Sutton Hoo mound 2 were re-opened in antiquity, all six graves probably contained a similar set of high-status ornaments, including bronze, silver, glass and more perishable vessels, silver spoons, wooden buckets and tubs, weapons, garnet-decorated jewellery, gaming pieces and a lyre (table 10.2). The assignment of these funerary assemblages to quality group E is based on 1) the large number and variety of valuables, 2) the exotic origin of the 'Coptic' bronze vessels, the 'Celtic' hanging bowls and some Byzantine silver vessels, 3) the high quality and unique character of the gold jewellery, in the case of Sutton Hoo mound 1 richly decorated with garnet-cloisonné, and 4) the religious, both pagan and Christian symbolism of many items.

The royal status of the other, male and female burials at the 'princely burial ground' of Sutton Hoo cannot be proven archaeologically; only a few grave goods like those from mounds 1 and 2 were selected for the burial ritual, representing quality groups C or D: bronze and silver vessels, hanging bowls, buckets, weapons, gaming pieces and gold/silver jewellery.

112 For a description of these graves and their inventories, see section 7.2-3.

113 Webster 2007.

Such items have rarely been found at the other, so-called 'folk cemeteries' in East Anglia. Outside Sutton Hoo, the royal elite is further represented by stray finds of 'East Anglian' garnet-decorated jewellery (e.g. fig. 9.25: Wilton cross) and a gold signet ring of Frankish origin (fig. 9.26), all representing quality group D. The association of garnet-decorated pieces with members of the royal elite is supported by the composition of sword elements in the Staffordshire hoard, as will be discussed in the epilogue of this book. Jewellery and other ornaments from East Anglia that are typical of regional and local elites (groups C and B) often cannot be dated quite as closely as 'royal' and 'princely' burials; they are part of the 7th-century 'North Sea jewellery' that will be discussed below.

In Kent, no late 6th- or early 7th-century royal burial has been discovered to this date. The richest male burials are usually characterized by weapons, bronze bowls, glass vessels, wooden buckets and silver or silver-decorated belt fittings, representing quality group C. Only when a gold-decorated shield-on-tongue buckle with a silver or bronze back-plate is part of the assemblage, can a grave be assigned to quality group D. One of these buckles, from a grave at Crundale Down, was buried in association with a rare, gold-decorated sword that represents the same status level (fig. 10.18).[114] The 'Kentish-style' buckles are closely related in shape to the more exclusive, *gold* buckles from the 'royal' or 'princely' burials of Prittlewell (fig. 7.12), Taplow (fig. 10.17) and Broomfield (fig. 7.14). The only Kentish piece that represents a similar status level is a single tongue plate, made of gold and found at a probable settlement site near Thurnham (fig. 10.19). Its decoration with animal interlace in garnet cloisonné is only Parallelled by some of the finest Sutton Hoo

114 Richardson 2005, appendix 1 (site 67).

10.17 | A selection of prestigious items from the chamber burial at Taplow (Buckinghamshire). Scales 1:1 (clasps and buckle) and 1:4 (beakers and horn) (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum). 1. gold, garnet- and filigree-decorated buckle, 2-3. gold-plated, filigree-decorated clasps with bronze cores, 4-5. two of four glass claw beakers, 6. one of two drinking horns decorated with silver-gilt mounts.

10.18 | A garnet- and filigree-decorated, gold-coated buckle with a silver core and the upper part of a gold-decorated sword grip from Crundale Down (Kent). In the centre of the buckle a gold fish is shown in high relief; the back of the buckle is stamped with wafered triangles. Scale 1:1 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

jewellery, which supports its assignment to quality group E (see fig. 7.5, nos. 4, 8).

Most contemporary gold and silver ornaments from Kentish burial sites are female jewellery, including composite, plated disc and keystone-garnet disc brooches of 'Kentish' type, gold and silver pendants and silver slip-knot rings. On the basis of the materials used, the type of decoration and associations with other valuables, three quality groups can be distinguished (table 10.5): plated and composite disc brooches and gold pendants, decorated with garnet cloisonné and filigree, including the well-known Canterbury pendant (group D, fig. 9.24, nos. 1-5), silver keystone-garnet disc brooches and gold pendants, with filigree or repoussé decoration (group C, figs. 9.20, 9.24, no. 6), and the more common silver pendants and slip-knot rings of bead necklaces (group B).[115] Within the body of items belonging to group D, a further division can be made between a relatively large number of plated disc brooches (24x), and a smaller group of composite disc brooches (8x) – the first group, together with most garnet-decorated pendants, possibly representing the top of a regional elite (group C+) and the second, with the Canterbury pendant, the level of the actual royal retinue (group D).[116] Again, the most exceptional piece is not a funerary but a settlement find: a garnet- and filigree-decorated finger ring from Dover, representing quality group D and perhaps even group E (fig. 10.19).[117]

In the northern Netherlands, the late 6th and early decades of the 7th century saw a variety of silver and especially gold ornaments buried as hoards and probably also as single objects at settlement sites. On the basis of their quality and ornamentation, three status levels can be distinguished.[118] The highest level (group E) is represented by a woman's 18-cm-long disc-on-bow brooch from Wijnaldum (Friesland), fully decorated with religious and other motifs in garnet-cloisonné (fig. 4.32). The Wijnaldum brooch is best Parallelled by the Sutton Hoo jewellery (fig. 7.5) and the unique brooch from an Alamannic 'royal' burial at Wittislingen (Germany, fig. 1.6).[119] A second piece of royal jewellery is a man's Kentish-type buckle from Dronrijp (Friesland, fig. 4.13). Although this buckle was buried in a fragmented state, its large size (original length ca 18 cm), the material used (gold) and its decoration (garnet

115 For find associations, see also section 7.4 (the cemeteries of Sarre, Gilton and Kingston Down).

116 Sizes and numbers are based on Avent 1975; Pinder 1995.

117 Philp 2003, 111 (no. 134), fig. 57.

118 See also Nicolay 2006a, 58-63.

119 For the relationship with Sutton Hoo, see Bruce-Mitford 1974, 270-273; Gerrets 1997; Schoneveld & Zijlstra 1999. For Wittislingen, see Werner 1950; Böhner 2000.

Table 10.5 | Combinations of high-status ornaments in Kentish female burials at Sarre, Kingston Down and Gilton, dating to the late 6th and 7th centuries, and their probable relationship to quality groups (br.: brooch, ga: garnet settings; data after *NIS*).

	QUALITY GROUP	KENTISH COMPOSITE DISC BR.	KENTISH PLATED DISC BR.	KENTISH KEYSTONE-GARNET DISC BR.	GOLD PENDANT OR BEAD	GOLD COIN-PENDANT	SILVER PENDANT	SILVER SLIP-KNOT RING	BRONZE BOWL	GLASS VESSEL
Sarre, grave A	D	+			+	+		+(?)	+	
Kingston, grave 205	D	+			+				+	+
Gilton, grave 108	D	+			+ (ga)					
Gilton, grave 42	D	+								
Kingston, grave 299	C+		+	+			+			
Gilton, grave XV	C+		+							+(?)
Kingston, grave 142	C+				+ (ga)		+	+		
Gilton, grave 27	C			+	+			+		+
Gilton, grave 41	C			+		+		+		+
Kingston, grave 161	C			+			+	+		
Sarre, grave 115	C			+			+			+
Gilton, grave 76	C			+				+		
Gilton, grave 81	C			+				+		
Sarre, grave 210	C			+				+		
Kingston, grave 15A	C			+				+		
Sarre, grave 162	C			+						+(?)
Gilton, grave XIII	C			+						
Kingston, grave 46	C						+	+		+
Kingston, grave 6	C							+		+
Sarre, grave 220	B/C						+			+
Kingston, grave 59	B						+	+		
Gilton, grave 32	B							+		
Kingston, 10 graves	B							+		

cloisonné) justify its assignment to the highest quality group.

Three lower social levels are represented by a collection of female jewellery that was hoarded at Wieuwerd (Friesland, fig. 4.9) and comprises the foot of a disc-on-bow brooch, pendants of various types and some finger rings (figs. 4.10-12). The brooch, like a second, intact specimen from Hogebeintum (Friesland, fig. 4.20), is of the same type as the Wijnaldum jewel, but decorated only with filigree. Being closely related to the set of gold-decorated buckles from Kent, such brooches can be interpreted as insignia of the royal retinue (group D). Other items that belong to this, and perhaps even to the highest status level are a unique, garnet- and filigree-decorated sword pyramid from Ezinge (Groningen, fig. 4.37), a garnet-decorated tongue plate of another Kentish-type buckle from Wijnaldum (fig. 4.38), a filigree-decorated hilt-mount from Wijnaldum (fig. 4.18), and a heavy, garnet-decorated finger ring that may have been produced in Friesland and was found at Jever in northern Germany (Jever, fig. 6.27).[120]

Parallelled by Kentish finds, a slightly lower social level is represented by two garnet- and filigree-decorated pendants (group C+) from the Wieuwerd hoard, and a single piece from Cornjum (Friesland, fig. 4.23, no. 1). Because of their rarity, a similar status level can be assumed for the coin-pendants with elaborate borders and a coin finger ring from the Wieuwerd hoard, as well as two single finds of coin finger rings, from Westergeest and Bolsward (Friesland, fig. 4.33).

The remaining objects from the Wieuwerd hoard are biconical finger rings, filigree-decorated pendants, gold bracteates and simple coin-pendants. Similar jewellery has fairly frequently turned up at other sites in the northern Netherlands (tables 4.3, 4.5). Again, Parallelled by Kentish grave goods, they can be assigned to quality group C.

Finally, the (finger) rings that were buried with the disc-on-bow brooch at Hogebeintum (fig. 4.19) are the only well-dated silver ornaments from the northern Netherlands that may represent quality group B.

Contemporary prestige goods from the western and central Netherlands show affinities with both the Anglo-Saxon and the Frankish cultural worlds. The highest status level in the western Netherlands is repre-

120 For the hilt-mount, see also Nicolay 2008a.

10.19 | A gold, garnet-decorated tongue plate of an exclusive belt-buckle from a probable settlement site at Thurnham (Kent, left), and a gold, garnet- and filigree-decorated finger ring from a settlement site at Dover (Kent, right). Scale of tongue plate 4:1, scale of ring 2:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photos Archives Images Limited; coll. Dover Museum, photos J. Iveson).

sented by two imported or locally imitated male attributes: a bronze-gilt, gold-decorated buckle from Rijnsburg (fig. 5.3), and the gilded bronze terminal mount of a drinking horn from Katwijk (fig. 5.6). The buckle is of a Kentish type and can be assigned to quality group D. Although drinking horns with similar mounts are well-known from 'royal' or 'princely' burials in East Anglia and Essex (group E), an assignment of the Katwijk find to group D is more appropriate because of its execution in bronze.[121] The few pieces of imported Frankish or locally imitated female jewellery from settlement sites in the central river area include some pendants and a bead from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht, fig. 5.36) and a pendant from Dorestad (Utrecht, fig. 5.43). These gold ornaments, some of them decorated with filigree, are typical of Alamannic and Frankish funerary assemblages representing quality group C.

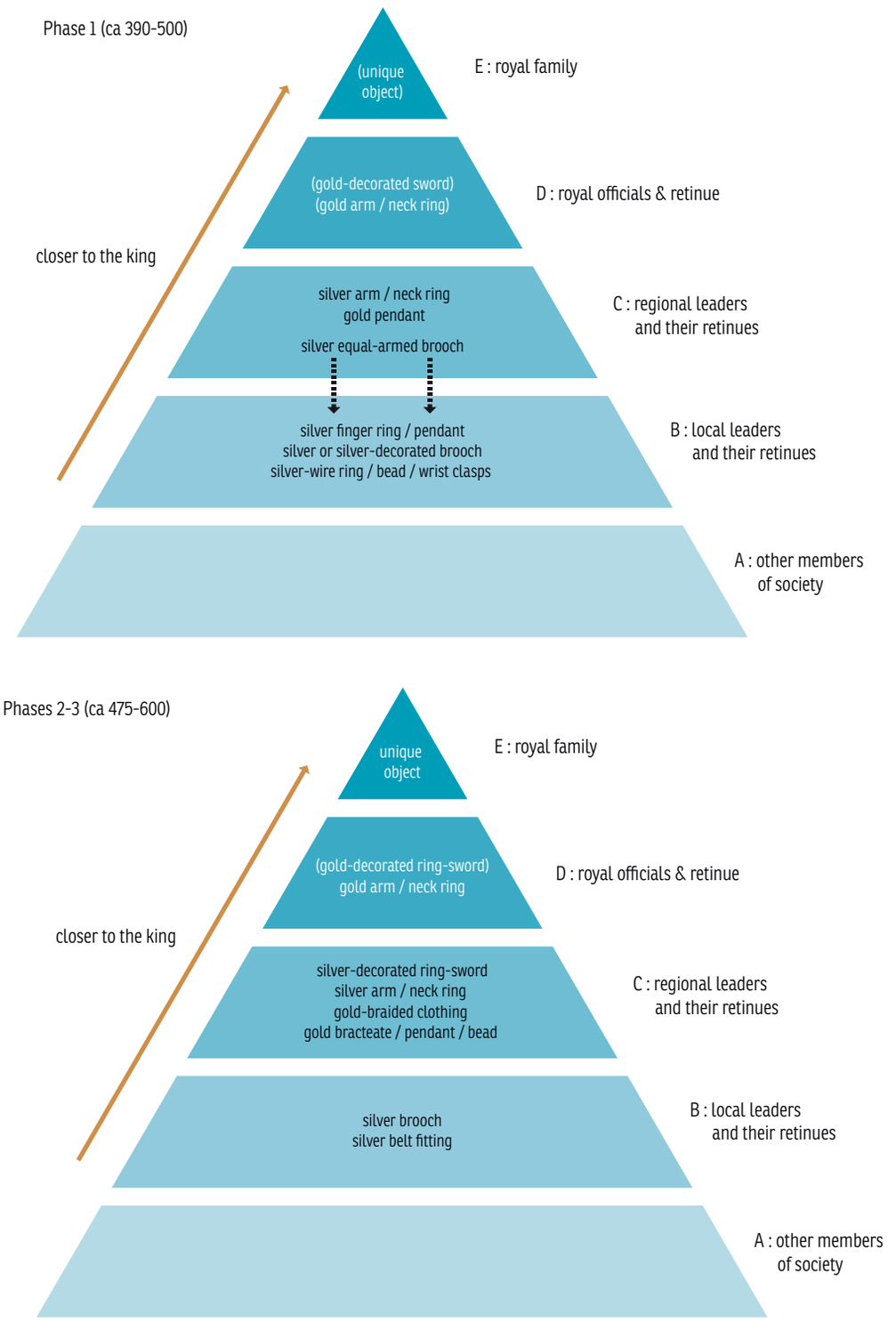
After the first quarter of the 7th century, the objects belonging to quality group E completely disappear from the archaeological record. Moreover, with the exception of silver and bronze composite disc brooches of a 'Kentish' type, the regional-style ornaments are replaced by a more uniform set of 'North Sea jewellery'. The 7th-century burial and settlement finds of precious metal are characterized by elements of women's necklaces, including various types of gold or silver beads and pendants, often worn with silver slip-knot rings and beads of amethyst and glass (e.g. fig. 7.25). In more exceptional cases also composite disc brooches, silver finger rings and gold or silver linked pins are found. The gold ornaments and the silver finger rings and linked pins can probably be assigned to quality group C, the silver pendants and slip-knot rings to group B again. Only in Kent is a higher status level represented by composite disc brooches (figs. 7.27, no. 1, 9.24, no. 1). Although the cloisons now are no longer made of gold but executed in bronze, the decoration of these brooches with garnet cloisonné is typical of items belonging to members of the royal retinue (group D).

10.3.3 *Assigning high-status ornaments to 'social pyramids'*

In figure 10.20 the early medieval gold and silver ornaments from the southern North Sea area are presented in three 'social pyramids'. The structure of these pyramids is based on a) Christlein's division of grave goods into quality groups, with the addition of groups C+ and E (fig. 10.10), b) Steuer's model of socio-political relations and 'distance to the king' (fig. 10.11), and c) the social pyramid of Scandinavian settlement finds (fig. 10.12). All three North Sea pyramids present a division into five layers of artefact groups, each relating to a specific quality group and degree of distance to the king. Unique, royal objects are very rare finds and represented by the apex of the pyramid (quality groups D and especially E); the other categories of valuables (quality groups B and C) are more frequently found and were owned by people with a lower social status, which is shown by the wide base of the pyramid and the greater distance to the king.

With the exception of the gold horns from Gallehus, which were found directly north of the German border, no 5th-century royal jew-

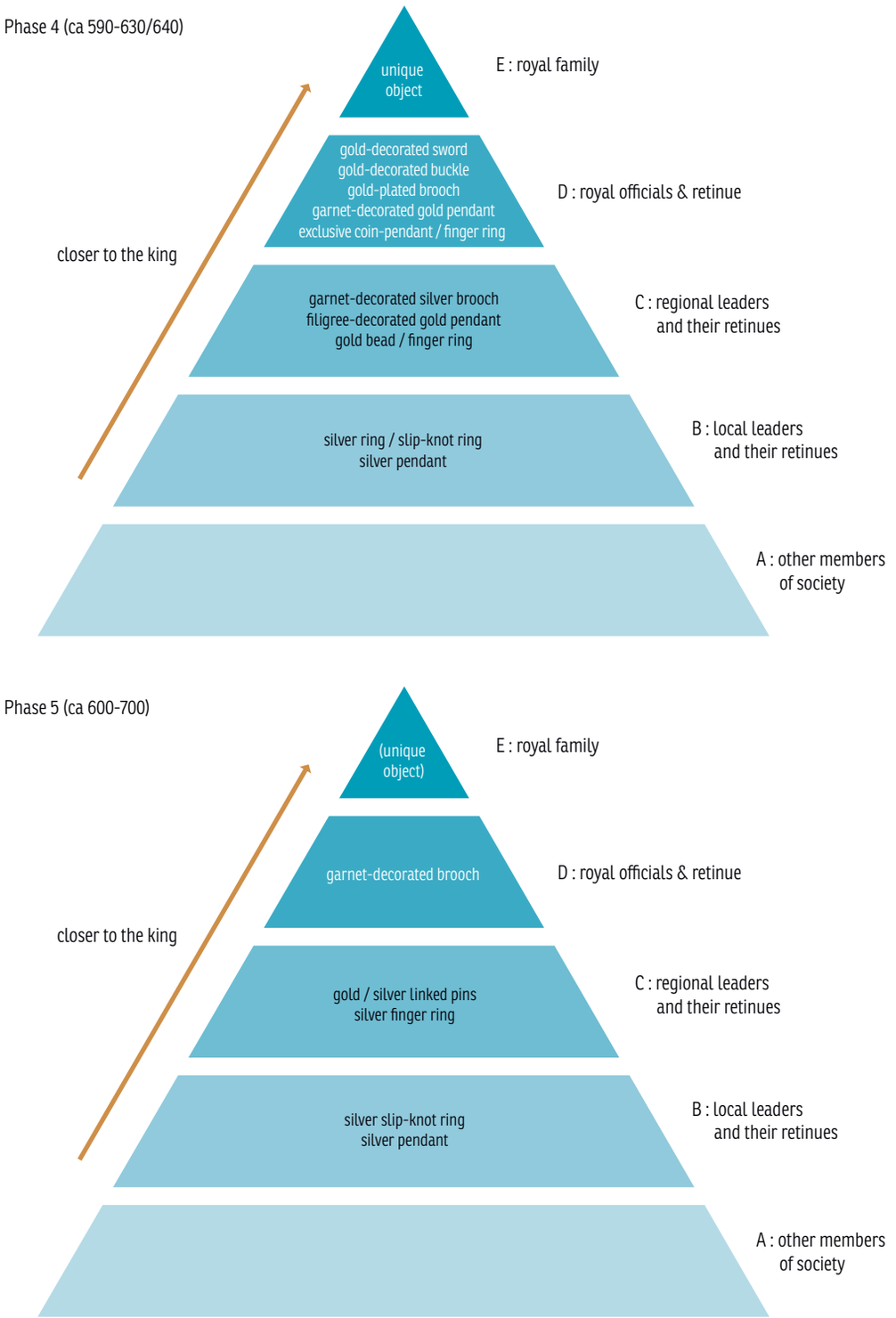
121 Compare the bronze terminal mount of a drinking horn from Loveden Hill (Fennell 1969, 215, fig. 2).



10.20 | A schematic arrangement of the various categories of gold and silver ornaments from the southern North Sea area in 'social pyramids', reflecting their wearers' social status and distance to the king. Valuable items denoting membership of a specific social level, but as yet not found in the research area, are shown in brackets.

ellery is known from the research area. The highest status symbols are the silver arm ring and silver-gilt equal-armed brooch buried with the 'princess' of Issendorf, who probably was a member of the regional elite. However, similar brooches were probably also worn by members of local elites – as were the other categories of 5th-century silver jewellery.

In the late 5th and 6th centuries, unique objects that represent a similar status level as do the exceptional gold collars from southern Sweden are lacking within the research area. Moreover, insignia of the royal retinue are rare finds, only known from northern Germany (gold arm and neck rings). The other gold jewellery (bracteates and other pendants/beads) was worn by a larger group of people, representing the regional elite. This social level too is characterized by silver arm and neck rings, ring-swords with a silver pommel, gold-decorated garments and sets of a silver strainer and crystal ball. Silver brooches and



belt fittings are more frequently found, especially in Kentish cemeteries, which suggests that they were worn by members of not only the regional, but also the local elite.

During the late 6th, and the early decades of the 7th century, members of the highest social stratum briefly became visible in the archaeological record. In East Anglia and Essex this royal elite is represented by high-status burials at Snape, Sutton Hoo, Broomfield and Prittlewell; in Kent, the northern Netherlands and northern Germany, by single finds. The same period is characterized by gold-decorated swords and a variety of garnet- and filigree-decorated jewellery and belt fittings that were probably worn by members of the royal retinue and their wives. The status of the regional elite is borne out by gold, filigree-decorated jewellery, and that of the local elite by silver rings and pendants. Moreover, the relatively numerous plated disc brooches from Kent are assigned

to a social level somewhere between those of quality groups C and D, and may represent the top of the regional elite (group C+). Interestingly, with the exception of the late group of 'Kentish' composite disc brooches, the typical kinds of exclusive royal insignia are no longer visible after ca 630/640; in the following decades, markers of the regional and local elite once more dominate the find material.

Although the wearing of gold, often garnet- and filigree-decorated ornaments seems to have been the preserve of members of the royal and regional elite, the relatively large number of gold coins from settlement sites in the northern and western Netherlands (figs. 4.41, 5.48) and southeast England (figs. 7.32-33) points to a more widespread use of payment gold in 'commercial' transactions. Besides silver and copper-alloy coins, gold tremisses and probably also small gold bars and the often small pieces of ring and hack gold may have been used in particular kinds of transactions, not only at a regional level, but at a local level as well. The same can be assumed for the Scandinavian world; although Fabech and Ringtved regard payment gold as a characteristic feature of central places of regional importance (fig. 10.12), the distribution pattern of gold spiral rings, bars and to a lesser extent gold coins indicates the existence of a wider exchange network, which also includes rural sites that lacked a regional or supra-regional function.[122]

10.4 Conclusion

During the 5th to 7th centuries, valuable items were exchanged as personal gifts between a leader and his retainers on the one hand, and as 'goods' in reciprocal exchange between members of supra-regional to local elites on the other. Despite regional and chronological variations, the distribution and use of prestige goods was regulated by the same elite, as is illustrated by the often uniform execution of particular categories of prestige items and by their find associations in graves and hoards. Moreover, there is clear evidence of generally agreed ideas about the wearing of jewellery and other ornaments by members of the different social ranks, symbolizing, and actually displaying, the personal relation between a patron and his clients – both within cultural regions and to the outside world. Before the proposed assignment of prestige goods to specific social groups is 'translated' into elite networks along the southern North Sea coast (chapter 13), the following two chapters will first examine the impact of so-called depositional and post-depositional factors on the archaeological visibility of royal families and their retinues.

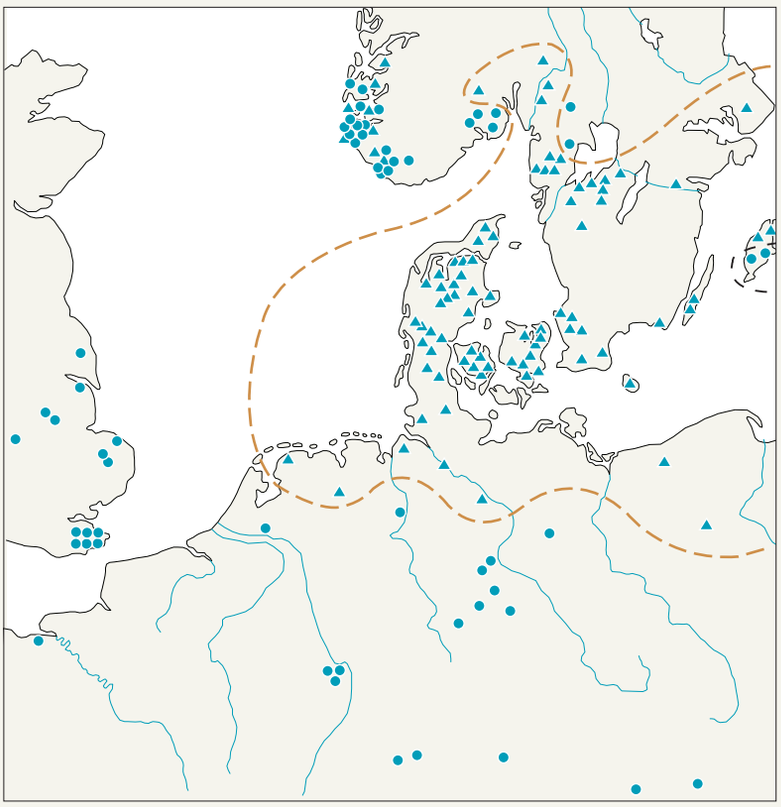
122 For spiral rings and bars, see Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991, fig. 11.

11

The deposition of valuables in hoards and graves

11.1 Introduction

In the course of the 5th to 7th centuries, an interesting patterning emerges in the deposition of valuables along the southern North Sea coast, both chronologically and geographically. After an early, late-Roman phase with relatively rich burials in northern Germany, the central Netherlands and southeast England, the river Vlie – long since engulfed by the present-day IJsselmeer – started functioning as an important cultural border between two different traditions of depositing valuables. From the late 5th century, a dividing line can be drawn between a *northern*, largely Scandinavian area, dominated by gold hoards, and a *southern*, largely Frankish area, dominated by rich burials with prestigious, partly gold and silver grave goods. During the 5th century and the first half of the 6th, bracteates, for example, were deposited as hoards in Scandinavia and the northern Netherlands, while many such pendants from the central Netherlands and southeast England are grave finds (fig. 11.1). In this chapter the *chronological development* of both traditions will be discussed, as well as their *representativity*: can hoards and grave goods be regarded as a one-to-one reflection of the range of objects that circulated in society at a specific time and location, or were particular items selected to be deposited on specific occasions?



11.1 | The find contexts of gold bracteates, showing a geographical division into a central zone with hoard finds (triangular symbols) and peripheral areas with grave finds (round symbols) (redrawn after Andrén 1991, slightly adjusted).

11.2 The northern tradition of gold hoarding

With its large number of gold finds, the 'Early Germanic Iron Age' or Migration period (ca AD 400-525/550) can be regarded as the 'Golden Age' of southern Scandinavia.[1] The finds comprise several kinds of ornament (arm rings, neck rings, finger rings and bracteates), hack and ring gold, ingots and coins. Although the number of currently known valuables is no more than a tip of the proverbial iceberg, an astonishing quantity amounting to ca 100 kg of gold dating to this short period has been found in Denmark and southern Sweden.

The way in which gold and, to a lesser extent, also silver items were deposited in southern Scandinavia is paralleled by the deposition of precious metals in the northern part of the research area, that is the coastal areas of the

1 For Denmark, see Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1991; Henriksen 2010.

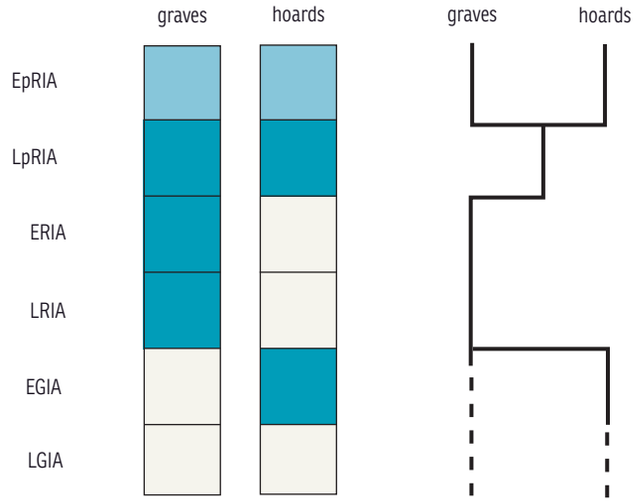
northern Netherlands and northern Germany.[2] In both territories, minted and unminted gold and silver were mainly deposited as *hoards*, which are defined here as collections of two or more items, as well as single items that were deliberately buried in a non-funerary context.[3] The coastal area of the western Netherlands, the central river area around Utrecht and Dorestad, and southeast England north of the river Thames formed a transitional zone between the northern, Scandinavian and the southern, Frankish world; although here the find material is dominated by prestigious grave goods, a modest number of gold hoards too are known from these parts.[4] In southeast England it was only during and shortly after the final phase of Roman occupation that a relatively large amount of gold and silver was hoarded (ca 390-450, table 7.2).

The traditions of gold hoarding in southern Scandinavia and in the adjacent North Sea area overlap chronologically during the late 5th, and the first half of the 6th century. The northern Netherlands and northern Germany, however, show a continuation of this Scandinavian tradition into the 7th century.

11.2.1 ***Danish gold finds: chronology and context***

During the Roman and Early Germanic Iron Age (ca AD 0/50-525/550), rich collections of luxuries and more basic items were deposited in graves and hoards all over southern Scandinavia. The decades around 400 mark significant changes in the composition of finds interpreted as ritual, and in the context and geographical location of their deposition – reflecting the growing importance of a hoarding tradition that was also to influence the northern part of the research area.

By analyzing the composition and context of the rich Danish find material dating to the Scandinavian Iron Age (ca 500 BC-AD 700), Hedeager observed interesting fluctuations in the material 'investment' in funerary and hoarding rites (fig. 11.2).[5] During the pre-Roman Iron Age (ca 500 BC-AD 0/50), a variety of luxury goods and more basic items were deposited both in graves and in bogs. The Early and Late Roman Iron Age (ca 0/50-350/400) are characterized by the deposition of foreign Roman luxuries and Scandinavian-style gold arm and finger rings in graves; the hoarding in bogs was limited to some Roman imports



11.2 | Diagram showing the varying inclusion of material culture in Danish graves and hoards from the individual phases of the pre-Roman, Roman and Germanic Iron Age (E/LpRIA: Early and Late pre-Roman Iron Age; E/LRIA: Early and Late Roman Iron Age; E/LGIA: Early and Late Germanic Iron Age) (redrawn after Hedeager 1992a, fig. 2.20).

and especially weapons, as well as simple brooches and pots. During the Early Germanic Iron Age (ca 350/400-525/550), the rich grave assemblages from the previous period seem to have been replaced by gold jewellery and weapon elements, which now were deposited as hoards. The gold ornaments are again executed in a Scandinavian style, with bracteates being decorated with highly symbolic, mythical scenes. Rather than a distinct break around 400, the growing popularity of hoarding practices should be seen as a gradual process, starting in the 4th century and reaching a peak in the 5th, and the first half of the 6th century.[6] The ritual deposition of gold and other luxuries finally came to an end in the Late Germanic Iron Age (ca 600-700), when only small numbers of simple brooches were deposited in graves and bogs.

A long-term perspective is adopted also by Fabech, who studied the development of hoarding practices in southern Scandinavia from the pre-Roman Iron Age into the Middle Ages (fig. 11.3).[7] After an initial phase with individual fertility sacrifices of pottery, food and ornaments in the pre-Roman Iron Age, the Roman Iron Age is characterized by a transition to large, communal manifestations (human and later especially booty sacrifices), both in lakes and in bogs. In the 5th and 6th centuries, when the collective offerings had come to an end, the deposition of gold bracteates and in the 6th century also gold-foil figures marks a third phase of cultic manifestations.[8]

2 See chapters 4 and 6.

3 See also Geisslinger 1967, 9, 15.

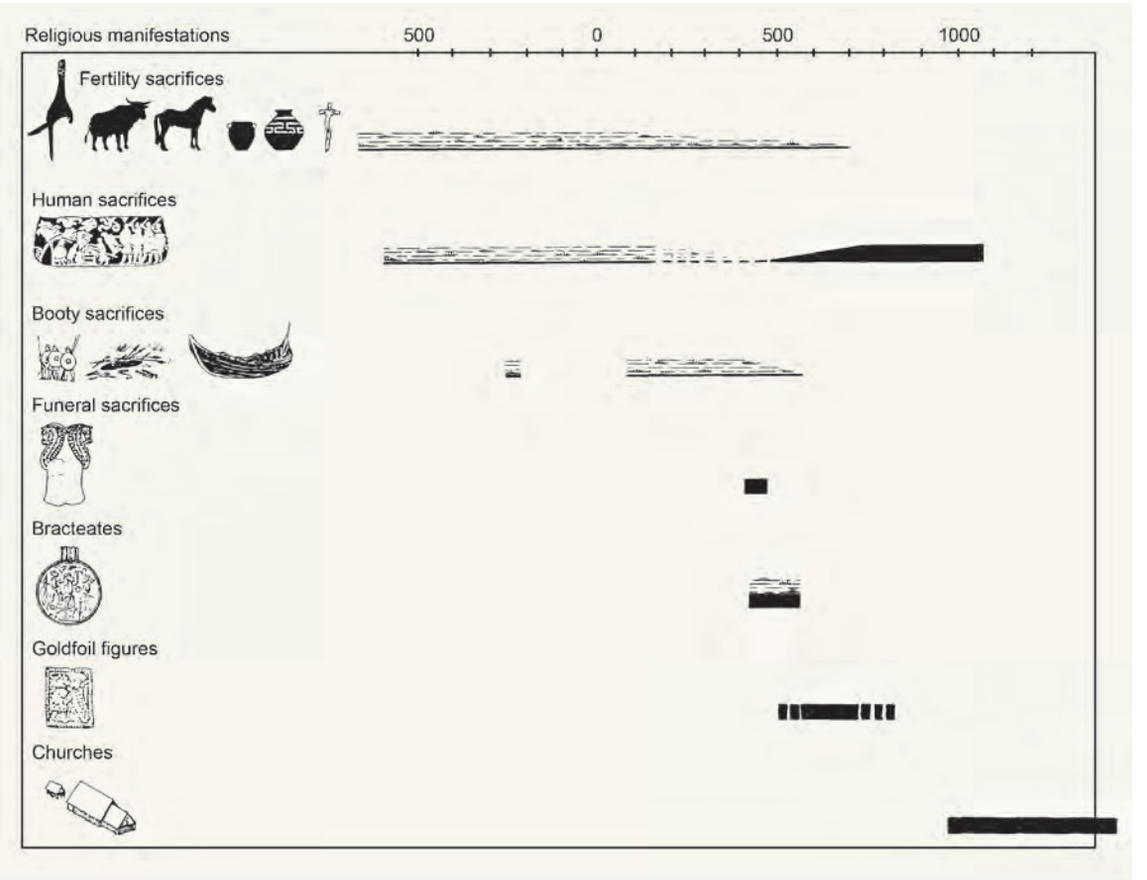
4 See chapters 5 and 7. For southeast England, see also Behr 2010 (deposits of single gold bracteates).

5 Hedeager 1992a, 37-70 (compare fig. 1.2).

6 Pers. comm. U. Näsman (Linnaeus University, Kalmar).

7 Fabech 1991; 1994a; 1994b.

8 According to Hines (1989, 196-197), the transition from large weapon offerings to the hoarding of sorted military accoutrements is part of the same development.



11.3 | The development of religious manifestations in southern Scandinavia, as found in wetland contexts (bog symbol) and on dry land (bold black line) (after Fabech 1994b, fig. 50).

While bracteates are found both in wetlands and on dry land, the foil figures are almost exclusively known from settlement sites – often the same sites where bracteates had been buried. Moreover, as more recent finds from Sorte Muld (Denmark) and Uppåkra (Sweden) indicate, weapons (especially spears and lances) were deposited within specific parts of settlement sites throughout the Roman and early Germanic Iron Age.[9]

Excavations at so-called central places, like Gudme (Denmark) and Uppåkra, have shown that gold-foil figures and a substantial part of the gold bracteates are associated not only with these central places, but, within these high-status settlements, also with specific buildings.[10] On the Danish island of Fünen, the largest concentration of gold and silver objects dating to the Early Germanic Iron Age was found at the settlement complex of Gudme. Several hoards were clearly buried inside houses.[11] For example, a silver male head and a small hoard consisting of ring and hack gold (fig. 11.4) were buried in two postholes of the younger of two 'royal halls' at the site of the 3th- to 6th-century, so-called 'magnate's residence'.[12] Also several pieces of gold jewellery were found in the cultural layers directly south of the hall complex (fig. 11.4).[13] Unfortunately, little is known about the function of a small, 5th-century house, which was located in a probable workshop area at Gudme. One of its postholes contained an impressive bracteate hoard (fig. 11.5).[14]

At Uppåkra, in southern Sweden, a bronze and silver beaker with gold-foil decoration, a glass bowl, some pieces of hack and ring gold, a collection of gold-foil figures and also five dies for making such foils were found in association with at least seven phases of a monumental 'cult house', which remained in use from the 3th or 4th into the 9th century.[15] The beaker and bowl were buried below one of the house floors, while the largest number of gold-foil figures came from the fill of a large

9 Helgesson 2004 (Uppåkra); Iversen 2008 (Sorte Muld).

10 For a recent overview, see Jørgensen 2009.

11 See Henriksen 2010, 419.

12 Jørgensen et al. 2003, 431 (cat. no. 7.10c). For the excavated hall buildings, see Sørensen 2010.

13 Jørgensen et al. 2003, 431 (cat. no. 7.10d).

14 Axboe 1987; Petersen 1994, 34-35, fig. 12; Jørgensen et al. 2003, 434 (cat. no. 7.15). Compare the deposition of 8 bracteates, a gold pendant and at least 42 glass, silver and bronze beads in a shallow pit between an inner and an outer post in the northern wall of a longhouse at Rugbjerg (Denmark) (Axboe 2007, fig. 88; Pedersen & Axboe 2010).

15 Larsson & Lenntorp 2004, 22-25, figs. 16-19; for the gold-foil figures, see also Watt 2004.

11.4 | Small hoard of hack and ring gold (bottom right) and a man's mask of silver (middle), found in the postholes of two roof supports of 'hall VII' at Gudme. The other gold items were found in the cultural layers directly south of Gudme's hall complex. Scale 2:1 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo K. Weiss).

posthole and the wall trenches of this building (fig. 11.6). During recent excavations, several gold items could be associated with two more buildings directly west of the 'cult house': a pendant and a fragment of a necklace recovered from two postholes of a burnt house, and three bracteates, a pendant and a finger ring from the layer of charred debris of another burnt house.[16]

In Scandinavian archaeology, the relatively short phase of gold hoarding has been related to the formation of regional and supra-regional kingdoms, including the rise of elite residences with a cultic function, like Gudme (meaning 'Home of the Gods') and Uppåkra.[17] According to Fabech, this development is also reflected in the changing location of ritual activities (fig. 11.7).[18] After a period in which individual and booty sacrifices were focused on local bogs and particular wetland areas, the 5th century is characterized by the hoarding of gold bracteates in wetlands and on dry land, near or within settlements of the elite. In the 6th century, wetland sites no longer functioned as places of individual and collective sacrifice.[19] Gold bracteates as well as gold-foil figures were now almost exclusively deposited at settlement sites with a central function – indicating that the elite had gained sufficient power to institutionalize the sacrificial customs, which were performed in a controlled settlement context.[20] This would explain the association of the gold-foil figures from Up-

16 Lenntrup & Hårdh 2009, 357, fig. 4 (house sequence: fig. 2); Larsson 2011, 180-182, figs. 5-6, 8.

17 Recently, Pesch 2011a. See also Thrane 1987; Hedeager 1992a; Jørgensen 1995; Näsman 1999.

18 Fabech 1991; 1994a, 174-176.

19 An exception is lake Tissø (Denmark), where weapons and other items were deposited during the 6th-11th centuries (Jørgensen 2009, 338).

20 Fabech 1994a, 171, 174.

11.5 | Bracteate hoard from a posthole of a small building at Gudme, comprising nine bracteates, two gold pendants, a denarius-pendant, a gold finger ring and a gold, garnet-decorated mount, probably from a sword scabbard. Scale 1:1 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo L. Larsen).

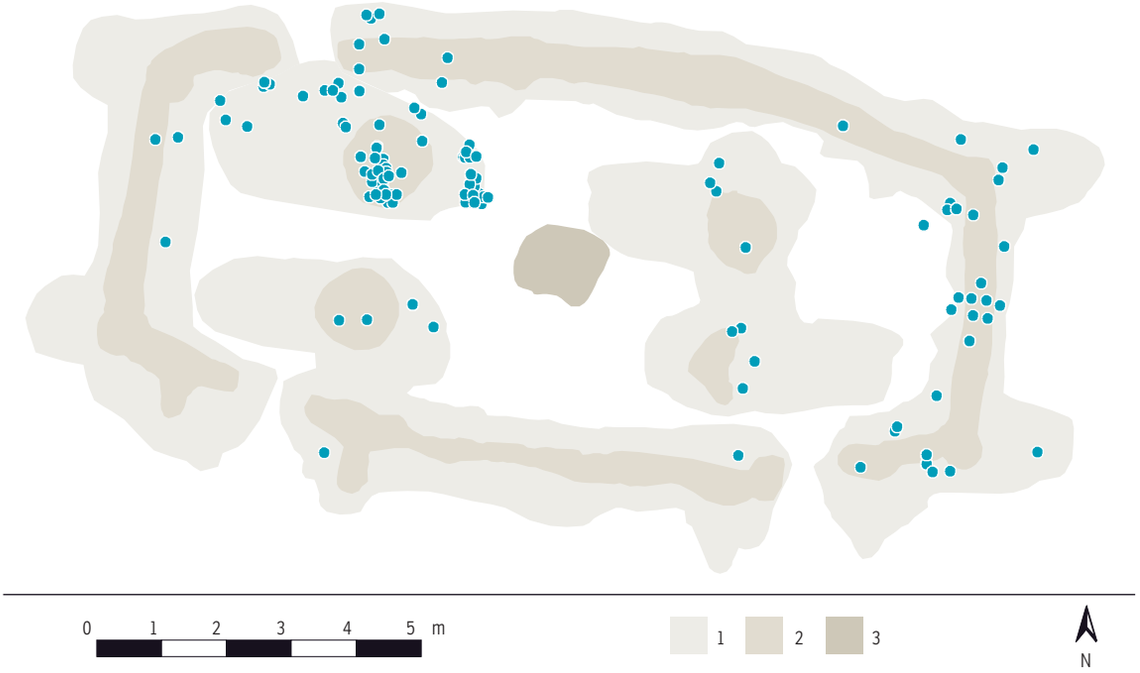
påkra with a 'cult house' that was part of the elite residence, a pattern that was to be repeated in the building of the earliest churches in the Scandinavian Viking Age (fig. 11.7).

In a recent article about the Late Roman and Early Germanic Iron Age gold finds from Fünen, Henriksen takes a closer look at their actual location in the landscape.[21] A division of Fünen into three 'deposition zones' is proposed. The first zone comprises the settlement complex of Gudme, where all types of hoards and single-item deposits are represented – including the most prestigious objects. Within this zone, gold was buried at farmsteads, often inside houses, and in the transitional area between the settlement and the surrounding fields. Several sub-centres, such as Ringe and Odense, represent the second zone; here too both hoards and single items were deposited, although the hoards are generally fewer and smaller. Moreover, they are not found at the actual farmsteads but in the surrounding fields, often near natural boundaries like streams. In the remaining part of Fünen, which forms the third zone, only single items were deposited. Again, an association with natural boundaries can be seen. The coast of Fünen may be added as a fourth zone. Here, especially arm and neck rings were often deposited at or close to distinctive features in the landscape, such as promontories or cliffs.[22] Depositions in open water or bogs, on the other hand, only rarely occurred.

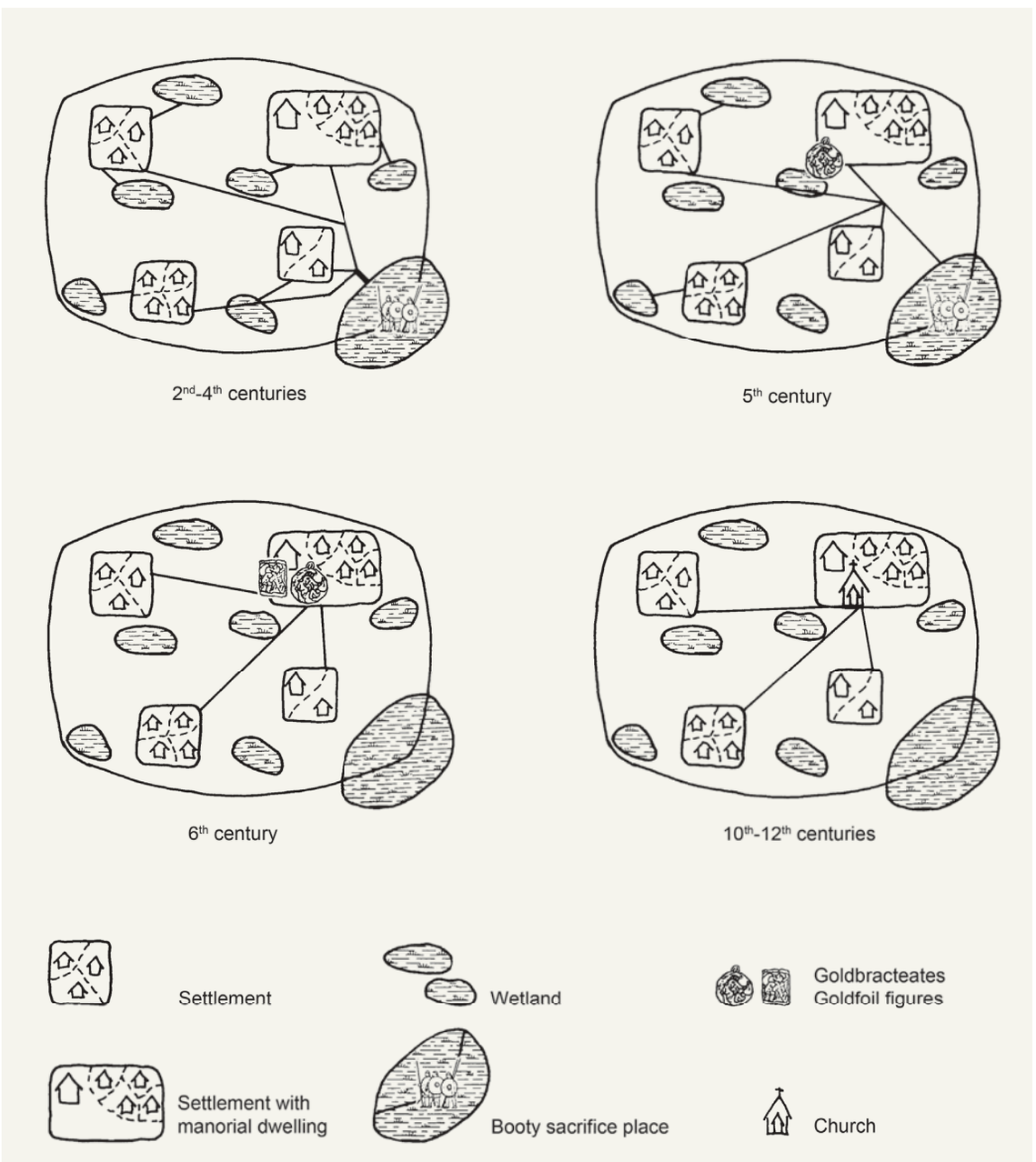
Despite the regional character of Henriksen's study, it prompts some important adjustments to the model presented by Fabech. First of all, the transition from wetlands to dry land probably started earlier, around the middle of the 4th century; many of the 'wetlands' where gold was found at the time were dry sites near natural boundaries. Secondly, most gold items from dry sites did not originate from settle-

21 Henriksen 2010.

22 Henriksen 2010, 412-414.



11.6 | Spatial distribution of gold-foil figures (blue dots) at the site of the so-called 'cult house' at Uppåkra. 1: pits and trenches, 2: posts and walls, 3: fireplace – as observed in the first level of excavation (after Watt 2004, fig. 2).



11.7 | Model showing the changing location of sacrificial activities: after an early phase with individual sacrifices in wetland areas and collective sacrifices in specific lakes (2nd-4th centuries), subsequent phases are marked by a closer association with central places (5th-6th centuries) – which often were also the locations of the earliest churches (10th-12th centuries) (after Fabech 1994b, fig. 59, slightly adjusted).

ments of the elite; this was the case only at sites of supra-regional importance, like Gudme. Thirdly and finally, most of the gold was buried in 'marginal or transitional zones', both near streams and along the coast. Rather than a uniform development from collective and individual sacrifices in bogs to controlled sacrifices at settlement sites of the elite, a more complex picture emerges, the central places showing a development that is different from their surrounding areas.

In a contemporaneous publication, Jørgensen convincingly argues that 'first-generation central places', like Gudme and Uppåkra, should be seen as important cult centres from their very foundation in the 3th century.[23] At both sites, next to the 'royal hall' a smaller, monumental building was erected from the start. These smaller buildings, including the 'cult house' at Uppåkra, are interpreted as cult building that stood under direct control of the leading elite – as their spatial association at the 'second-generation central place' of Tissø (6th-11th century, Denmark) nicely demonstrates.[24] In this light, the mid-4th- to 6th-century gold horizon not so much reflects the rise of elite residences and the transition to cult activities within a controlled settlement context, as the period when Scandinavian-type gold ornaments were most frequently deposited at or near such sites.

11.2.2 *Hoarding: a reflection of insecurity and warfare?*

Traditionally, both within and outside Scandinavia, hoards of valuable items have been interpreted as pre-banking safe deposits and related to periods of unrest and war.[25] In the first half of the 20th century, Bolin was the first to assume a correlation between the hiding of valuables and historically documented wars in Europe.[26] More recently, Martin interpreted most of the currently known West-European treasures from the late-Roman and Merovingian periods as valuable possessions that had been concealed in times of danger.[27] While arguing for a ritual interpretation, Heidinga also saw the late 4th- and early 5th-century offerings of arm and neck rings in the central Netherlands as a symptom of unrest and war: "Political instability, a permanent state of war, competition and other factors causing unrest made the help of the gods more necessary than ever."[28] In a similar way, Parker Pearson related the intensification of ritual hoarding in Migration-period Scandinavia to social instability and crisis.[29]

To analyze the assumed impact of unrest and war on hoarding, Sarvas studied the correlation between warfare and coin hoarding in 18th-century Finland.[30] His most important conclusion is that "...hoards were not concealed only during years of war but also in times of peace; in fact, the hoards dating from the years of peace outnumber those hidden during the war periods..."[31] When hoards are related to the numbers of coins that were issued in the same period, it appears that the hiding of capital was less related to war intensity than to the number of coins that were in circulation at the time, that is their *availability*. Although the situation is more complex when it comes to ritual hoarding, as will be discussed in the following chapter, a similar pattern can be assumed for the Migration-period gold in southern Scandinavia – dating to a period of massive tribute payments by the East-Roman Empire.[32]

During the past two decades, the influence of anthropological studies has brought about an interesting change in the interpretation of Scandinavian gold hoards: from hidden capital and sacrifices in periods of unrest and war, to hoarding activity in a period of social competition and power formation – Hedeager and Fabech being representatives of the latter view. The ritual depositions of substantial amounts of gold are now interpreted as part of the gift-exchange system, not only among people but also with entities in the supernatural world.[33] Similar to the exchange of gifts between a king and his followers, the performance of a sacrifice is interpreted in the context of reciprocity: the deposited objects were exchanged for 'services' to be rendered by gods and ancestors.[34] Moreover, the ability to communicate with entities in the supernatural world is now seen as a crucial part of social reproduction, legitimizing the political power and privileged position of the leading families.[35]

23 Jørgensen 2009.
24 Jørgensen 2009, 338-344, especially figs. 11, 13-14.
25 Bazelmans 1998b, 60-61.
26 Bolin 1929.
27 Martin 1997.
28 Heidinga 1990, 18.
29 Parker Pearson 1984.
30 Sarvas 1968.
31 Sarvas 1968, 143. For 17th-century England, Kent (1974, 192, figs. 1-2) argues the opposite, although on the basis of inconclusive distribution maps.
32 See also section 8.2.1.
33 See also section 1.3, fig. 1.3 ('society in the broad sense').
34 E.g. Hedeager 1992a, 77.
35 E.g. Hedeager 1991, 75; 1992a, 81; 1999.

11.2.3 *Interpreting Danish gold hoards: religious and profane*

Although hoards may be interpreted in very different ways – as sacrifices, as collections of scrap metal or as personal belongings hidden away in times of danger – a main division into two categories can be made: hoards with a religious, and hoards with a profane character.[36] Despite the tendency in present-day Scandinavian archaeology to interpret gold hoards as sacrifices, the question should be asked how these types of hoards can be distinguished in the archaeological record: by what criteria can we draw a distinction between a sacrifice and hidden wealth or scrap metal?

Before these criteria are discussed, a further division should probably be made within the group of profane depositions, between depositions of treasure to be used during life on the one hand, and in the afterlife on the other.[37] The second type of deposition is especially well-known from the 10th-century Icelandic 'Egil's saga', which describes two instances of a man burying a treasure shortly before he dies.[38] Because it is impossible to recognize this type of hoarding archaeologically, only the characteristics of religious and profane hoards will be studied here – in the realization that hoards with profane characteristics may be buried for later use both before *and* after death.

Traditionally, the *find circumstances* are used as a main criterion for the interpretation of hoards. Wetland and especially bog finds are regarded as sacrificial deposits, while finds from dry land are thought to represent hidden capital: "Non-funerary deliberate deposition of material is probably sacrificial or ritual where the context makes retrieval difficult, e.g. water or wetlands."[39] This criterion is difficult to use in Migration-period Scandinavia, however, where the majority of hoards are found on dry land.[40] The relatively small number of valuables from bogs, compared to the pre-Roman and Roman Iron Age, clearly is not the result of a decline in hoarding activities, but of a change in the execution of rituals, which in this period are closely related to settlement sites and 'transitional zones'. The interpretation of bog and other wetland finds as religious offerings too is partly invalid. Many hoards were buried in the vicinity of rivers and lakes and may only later have been overgrown with peat.[41]

Hedeager is of the opinion that we should not only look at where hoards were buried, but concentrate on what in fact was deposited: *which artifact classes* and *what combinations of artifacts*.[42] Essential to her division into religious and profane hoards is the assumption that profane hoards were buried with the aim of bringing the artifacts back into circulation. They are expected to have a random, mixed composition, also because they may have been put together during several actions over a considerable period of time. Ritual depositions, by contrast, will be characterized by a more fixed composition, comprising specific types of objects in specific combinations.

A different way of making a distinction between both types of hoards is by looking at characteristics of the *artefacts themselves*, such as their intactness, and, more importantly, at their *function* (e.g. raw material versus jewellery). In her study of Bronze Age hoards, which is based on ethnographic analogies and for that reason also applicable to later periods, Levy concludes that ritual hoards mostly include intact and highly symbolic objects, especially ornaments and weapons.[43] Non-ritual deposits, on the other hand, are often characterized by fragmented objects and raw material.

An essential part of both Hedeager's and Levy's analyses is the basic assumption that rituals are a form of 'patterned behaviour', which may leave recognizable traces for the archaeologist. Levy defines a ritual offering as "...a deposit, made in a stereotyped way, of symbolically valuable objects..., with the conscious purpose of communicating with – petitioning, blessing, thanking, propitiating – the supernatural world."[44] A patterned form of behaviour with stereotypical objects was necessary to make ritual communication understandable not only to entities in the supernatural world, but also to the people participating in the ritual.

Before the Danish gold hoards will be analyzed in more detail, we should consider whether fragmentation might not have been a ritual act in itself, making objects unsuitable for profane purposes. In Iron Age Europe, for example, votive gifts found at sanctuaries and in rivers had often been destructed, while many items from Scandinavian weapon deposits dating to the Roman Iron Age were bent and broken as well.[45] In the Migration period,

36 Levy 1982, 4; Hedeager 1992a, 76.
37 Hedeager 1991, 82-85; 1992a, 73-74.
38 *Egil's Saga*, chapters 59, 88.
39 Hines 1989, 194. Compare Zimmermann 1970.
40 See Fonnesbech-Sandberg 1985; Henriksen 2010.
41 See also Hedeager 1992a, 34.
42 Hedeager 1991; 1992a, 34-35.
43 Levy 1982, 17-44.
44 Levy 1982, 20.
45 E.g. Roymans 1990, 82-83; Biborski & Ilkjær 2006, 343-347. More general, see Gladigow 1984.

11.8 | A stereotypical bracteate hoard from Gummersmark (Denmark). The hoard shows a combination of a silver-gilt brooch with gold bracteates. The glass beads that also belonged to this hoard are not shown. Scale 1:1 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo K. Weiss).

however, fragmentation of gold objects probably had a very different, non-ritual purpose. Although ritual destruction cannot be fully excluded, the gold objects in most if not all cases seem to have been fragmented not to render them unsuitable for profane purposes, but, to the contrary, for the sake of convenience: gold ornaments or other objects were cut up to be used as raw material for new ornaments, while small bits of gold or silver were also useful in limited 'commercial' transactions.[46]

The relevance of the criteria mentioned above will be tested for Danish hoards containing intact ornaments, payment gold or raw material, and gold-foil figures, respectively – as well as for the related single finds.

The hoards with intact ornaments, as a first group, are characterized by bracteates, neck rings and arm rings. The bracteate finds can be subdivided into a large number of single bracteates and a smaller number of bracteate collections (hoards). About half of the Danish bracteate hoards comprise three or more bracteates, as well as a silver or silver-decorated relief brooch and/or glass beads (fig. 11.8).[47] Two of these hoards also contain some pieces of ring gold, probably belonging to the string of beads. The bracteate collections *without* a

46 For payment gold and silver, see section 10.2.2.

47 See Hedeager 1991, *Liste* 3.

11.9 | Sets of two gold neck-rings from Tåstrup (left) and two gold arm-rings from Svindinge (right), both in Denmark. Scale 2:3 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photos L. Larsen & K. Weiss).

brooch and/or glass beads show a greater variation in associated finds, often including items that are characteristic of mixed hoards – such as fragmented jewellery.

The intact neck and arm rings were mainly buried as single items, sometimes as sets of two (fig. 11.9), and in one case as a collection of five rings.[48] The hoards of two or more rings only comprise neck *or* arm rings and never combine both. When neck and/or arm rings were found in association with other artifact classes, they are always part of large, mixed hoards (fig. 11.11). Moreover, one or more of the rings belonging to such hoards are likely to be fragmented. The only exception to the rule is an intact neck ring from Hesselagersgårds Skov (Fünen), which was buried with a single bracteate (table 10.3).

Using Hedeager's criteria, the fixed sets of bracteates-brooch/beads and neck or arm rings, as well as the single finds of bracteates, neck rings or arm rings, can be seen as stereotypical deposits that were probably buried for religious reasons.[49] The religious interpretation is supported by the intactness of the hoarded items and their symbolic value as prestige goods, partly being decorated with mythical scenes (especially bracteates). A ritual deposi-

48 See Hedeager 1991, *Listen* 1-2.

49 Hedeager 1992a, 75.

11.10 | Hoarded sword elements: a hoard of three pommel-rings from Gudme-'Egsmosegård' (nos. 1-3), a single pommel-ring from Gudme-'Albjerg' (no. 4) and two single finds of scabbard mounts from Hov (no. 5) and Væth (no. 6), all in Denmark. Scale 2:1 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photos K. Weiss).

tion can also be assumed for collections of two or more intact bracteates, sometimes buried with other types of intact jewellery. Finally, weapon elements can be added to the group of religious deposits. Like the arm and neck rings, intact sword-rings and scabbard mounts were most often buried alone, but also as collections of two or more items (fig. 11.10).

A second group of Danish gold hoards is characterized by hack gold, ingots, coins and especially ring gold. Besides single finds, this group comprises some large, mixed hoards of minted and/or unminted gold (see table 10.3). The ornaments belonging to such hoards are often fragmented, which indicates that they were meant to be reused as a raw material or as a form of currency.

Collections with a random composition, often including ring or hack gold, are interpreted by Hedeager as profane depositions.[50] Again, this interpretation is supported by Levy's criteria: the often fragmented objects were scrap material and payment gold. The best example of a mixed hoard showing a random selection of ornaments, ring and hack gold, ingots, coins and fragmented items, was found near Gudme, at Broholm (fig. 11.11). Petersen is probably right in interpreting this hoard as a hidden 'treasury', from which ornaments or specific amounts of gold were taken to be distributed as gifts.[51] Other examples are the smaller, also mixed hoards from Bolbro (fig. 11.12), Rynkebygård (bracteate, coin-pendant, coins, ingot and ring gold), Gudme-'Uhrenholtgård' (fig. 11.12) and Slipshavn (figurine, ingot, pendants, ring and hack gold and drops of molten gold), all located on Fünen.[52] The bracteate hoard from Gudme (fig. 11.5) belongs to the group of profane hoards as well. Not only is the presence of a finger ring and a probable sword mount atypical for the group of stereotypical bracteate hoards, but this find also shows a mixture of feminine and masculine elements, which is unknown from any of the probably religious hoards mentioned above.

Hedeager does not specifically mention coins. Because of their use as a raw material and currency, and their association with all other artifact classes mentioned above (see fig. 11.11), coin collections as well as single coins may represent hidden wealth. At the same time they had a highly symbolic value, as their transformation into coin-pendants illustrates – suggesting a combined profane and religious use. The same may be assumed for single pieces of ring and maybe even hack gold, especially because some are found in association with stereotypical sets of jewel-

50 Hedeager 1992a, 75-76.

51 Petersen 1994, 39.

52 See Henriksen 2010, figs. 13 (Rynkebygård), 30 (Slipshavn).

11.11 | Large, mixed gold hoard from Broholm, on the island of Fünen (Denmark). The hoarded items include intact and fragmented neck and arm rings, intact and fragmented bracteates, a brooch, coins, hack gold, ring gold and ingots. Diameter of large, incomplete bracteate on the left 4.4 cm (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photo K. Weiss).

lery and gold-foil figures. Unfortunately, it remains impossible to assess the rationale of singly buried coins and pieces of ring or hack gold when no detailed context information is available. Indeed, it is quite likely that some of these small items were simply lost, especially at settlement and trading sites.

The 6th-century gold-foil figures should be dealt with as a third, separate group. Most of these figures are found as single items at settlement sites, or as collections of up to 2300 pieces in specific settlement areas.[53] Some of the figures are intentionally folded and only in exceptional cases are they found together with, or wrapped around, small pieces of hack gold. Because of their fragility and slight size and weight, and the absence of suspension holes, they cannot have been used as jewellery or currency. Instead, the figures probably functioned as a kind of temple tokens that were produced locally and acquired by visitors of a cult site to be deposited there.[54] This interpretation is supported by the association of 115 pieces of gold foil and five manufacturing dies with the 'cult house' at Uppåkra (fig. 11.6). Also, within the Migration-period fortification at Eketorp (Öland, Sweden) 15 gold-foil figures and some pieces of ring and hack gold were found near a probable open-air altar associated with several standing stones.[55]

It can be concluded that the criteria of Hedeager and Levy are a useful tool for distin-

53 Watt 1992; 2004.

54 Watt 1992, 224.

55 Fabech & Näsman 2013, 70, fig. 8 (interpreting the upright stones as the foundation of a larger standing stone).

11.12 | Two mixed gold hoards from Bolbro (left: bracteates, ring and hack gold) and Gudme-'Uhrenholtgård' (right: scabbard mounts and ingot), both located on Fünen (Denmark). Scale 1:1 (coll. Nationalmuseet, Copenhagen, photos K. Weiss).

guishing various categories of religious and profane hoards or single deposits, the profane deposits probably also including hidden capital for the afterlife. But how is this division related to the traditionally assumed association with wet and dry topography? For hoards of both types it seems a matter of chance whether they were deposited in a bog or meadow, on a beach or on dry land. Roughly similar numbers of intact neck rings and bracteate hoards with a brooch and/or beads are found in wet and dry contexts, although the latter when including a brooch are relatively frequently found in bogs.[56] The large, mixed hoards also originate from both contexts, the Rynkebygård hoard, for example, being a bog find.[57] Most intact arm rings, on the other hand, are dry-land finds, as are the smaller bracteate finds (one or two pieces) and single finds of coins, ingots and pieces of ring and hack gold.[58] Although there seem to have been specific guidelines for the composition and location of religious depositions (e.g. the burial of neck and arm rings near prominent landmarks along the coast), it is obvious that find location cannot be used as the principal criterion for drawing a distinction between religious and profane hoarding in Migration-period Scandinavia.

11.2.4 *Hoarding practices in the research area*

In the southern North Sea area, objects of gold and silver were deposited as hoards during the second half of the Early Germanic Iron Age and

56 Hedeager 1992a, 58, 60, figs. 2.14-15 (bracteates and neck rings).

57 For Rynkebygård, see Henriksen 2010, 408 (discovered during peat-cutting).

58 Hedeager 1992a, 60, 65, fig. 2.16 (arm rings); Hornæs 2009, 233 (coins).

the following century, that is roughly between 500 and 700. The hoarded ornaments include Scandinavian-type gold jewellery (phase 2, ca 475-550) and 'Frisian' jewellery executed in silver (phase 3, ca 550-600) and gold (phase 4, ca 590-650).[59] Moreover, coins of precious metal and pieces of hack or ring gold and silver were hoarded throughout the 5th to 7th centuries. Interestingly, the currently known finds, comprising collections of two or more pieces and a substantial number of single items, are similar in certain respects to the Scandinavian gold:

- Most of the 'Scandinavian-type and 'Frisian' jewellery is deposited as *hoards*, with a concentration of finds in the coastal areas of the northern Netherlands and northern Germany. The western and central Netherlands and southeast England lie outside the periphery of the Scandinavian 'hoarding world'; besides the relatively large number of late-Roman hoards from southeast England (table 7.2), only few hoarded items have been documented in these regions.
- Most hoards were buried on *dry land*, which also includes the higher parts of the salt-marsh areas. A remarkable difference can be seen between the Netherlands/southeast England and Germany: the Dutch and English hoards are all dryland finds, while the German hoards also include bog finds.
- At least part of the hoards from dry land originate from *settlement contexts*. During excavations at the Dutch settlement sites of Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland), Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht) and Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn' (Utrecht), gold objects – including three small hoards (see below) – were found at or in the vicinity of contemporary farmsteads.[60]

In the previous paragraph, the Danish find material was subdivided into three main groups: religious hoards, profane hoards and deposits of cultic tokens (gold-foil figures). Since the third group is unknown from the southern North Sea area, the finds from these parts may represent both religious and profane depositions, including hidden treasure for the afterlife.

Collections of two or more items of gold and/or silver from the coastal areas of the northern Netherlands (table 4.1) and northern Germany, including the border zone with Denmark (table 6.1), are represented by 17 finds. Eight more hoards, including four probable coin hoards, are known from the western and central Netherlands (table 5.2).[61] Finally, 19 hoards from southeast England can be added, including no fewer than 16 late-Roman finds (table 7.2). Before the criteria of Hedeager and Levy will be used for their interpretation, each of these hoards, as well as their most probable time of deposition and any context evidence, is presented briefly in the following list – not including the late-Roman hoards, which are published elsewhere.[62]

1. *Lions* (Friesland): solidus and tremissis, probably buried together, middle or third quarter of the 5th century. Context: settlement.

2. *Herbaijum* (Friesland): solidus and tremissis, probably buried together, second or third quarter of the 6th century. Context: settlement.

3. *Midlum* (Friesland, fig. 4.6): 15 solidi, middle or third quarter of the 6th century. Context: settlement, possibly buried in a small, hand-made pot.

4. *Achlum* (Friesland, fig. 4.15): five gold bracteates, including one coin-bracteate, first half of the 6th century. The missing loop of one of the bracteates probably is post-burial damage. Context: settlement.

5. *Scharnegoutum* (Friesland, fig. 4.7): three solidi, two with a suspension loop and the third with remains of a removed loop, probably buried together, late 6th or first half of the 7th century. Context: settlement.

6. *Wieuwerd* (Friesland, fig. 4.9): 39 gold (coin-)ornaments, second quarter of the 7th century. Although the missing loop of a coin-pendant and the lost almandine from two annular pendants may represent post-burial damage, the foot-plate of a large disc-on-bow brooch was clearly removed before burial. Its silver back-plate is missing and the front-plate shows traces of cutting. Context: settlement, buried in a hand-made pot.

59 For the assignment of jewellery from the research area to cultural phases (phases 1-5), see chapter 9.

60 See chapters 4 and 5.

61 Not included is a late-Roman gold hoard from Rhenen (central Netherlands, fig. 5.27).

62 See Bland & Loriot 2010.

7. *Dronrijp* (Friesland, fig. 4.13): 44 tremisses, a gold ingot, a damaged gold pendant, a gold triangular object of uncertain function and four cut-off pieces of a large gold buckle, ca 640-650. Context: settlement, buried in a (hand-made?) pot.

8. *Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma'* (Friesland, fig. 4.18): gold sword-hilt mount, folded around eight gold rivets and a small silver fragment, first half of the 7th century. Context: settlement (excavation find), possibly in the vicinity of a small sod-walled house. The mount functioned as a container.

9. *Hogebeintum* (Friesland, fig. 4.19): a gold-and-silver, fully intact disc-on-bow brooch, a string of 102 glass beads and several silver (finger) rings, second or third quarter of the 7th century. Context: settlement. Although the exact find location was documented at the time of discovery, no details about the find context are known.

10. *Marsum* (Groningen, fig. 4.16): two gold pendants, late 6th or early decades of the 7th century. The missing loop of one pendant probably is post-burial damage. Context: settlement.

11. *Krassum* (Groningen, fig. 4.17): two small mounts, originally from a drinking horn or a belt, first half of the 7th century. Four further mounts have been lost. It is unknown whether the original set of mounts was attached to an organic object, or buried as scrap. Context: settlement.

12. *Nietap* (Drenthe, fig. 4.8): one solidus and 88 tremisses, ca 630-635. Context: dry land.

13. *Sievern I* (Landkreis Cuxhaven, fig. 6.16): 11 gold bracteates, first half of the 6th century. Context: bog, ca 250 m southeast of a hillfort known as 'Heidenschanze'. According to the finder, there was no evidence of a container.

14. *Sievern III* (Landkreis Cuxhaven, fig. 6.17): two gold bracteates, first half of the 6th century. Context: dry land, directly northwest of the 'Heidenschanze'. During recent excavations of the area surrounding the findspot, no traces of a contemporary settlement were found.

15. *Sievern-'Mulsumer Moor'* (Landkreis Cuxhaven, fig. 6.15): gold neck ring and five solidus pendants, first half of the 6th century. Context: probably an older burial mound whose base was, or subsequently became overgrown by peat.

16. *Altenwalde* (Landkreis Cuxhaven): nine tremisses, probably belonging to a disturbed hoard, second or third quarter of the 7th century. Context: dry land.

17. *Larrelt* (Landkreis Emden): several gold coins, probably tremisses, 7th century. Context: unknown.

18. *Katharinenheerd* (Landkreis Eiderstedt, fig. 6.19): ca 50 gold (actually electrum) and silver objects, including a finger ring, intact and fragmented spiral rings and hack gold, 5th or early 6th century. Context: possibly an older cemetery; hoard buried in a small, hand-made pot, which may have sat within a larger pot with an iron lid.

19. *Gallehus* (southern Jutland, fig. 6.22): two or three gold horns, first half of the 5th century. Context: dry land.

20. *Velsen* (North Holland, fig. 5.24): six solidi and 11 tremisses, second or third quarter of the 6th century. Context: unknown.

21. *De Waal* (North Holland, Texel): two almost identical solidi, probably buried together, middle or third quarter of the 6th century. The coins are said to have been found together with a piece of leather, perhaps the remains of a purse. Context: dry land.

22. *Ouddorp* (South Holland): four tremisses, probably buried together, second or third quarter of the 7th century. Context: dry land.

23. *Wijk bij Duurstede- 'De Geer'* (Utrecht, fig. 5.26): one solidus, two tremisses and two pieces of hack gold, second half of the 6th century. Context: settlement (excavation find), buried in a posthole at a contemporary farmstead. Unfortunately, this posthole could not be assigned to a specific building or other settlement structure.

24. *Utrecht-'Domplein'* (Utrecht): 48(?) tremisses (and 20 sceattas?), probably buried together, 7th (or early 8th) century. Context: former Roman-period *castellum*.

25. *Remmerden* (Utrecht, fig. 5.25): a late-Roman solidus, 114 tremisses, two denarii, a silver ingot, a piece of hack silver and 165 sceattas, late 7th or early 8th century. The coin dates indicate that a 7th-century collection of gold coins was probably supple-

mented with silver coins in the late 7th or early 8th century. Context: dry land. The findspot was excavated, but no contemporary settlement traces were found.

26. *Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn'* (Utrecht, fig. 5.29): set of two gold pendants with stone settings, 8th century. The smallest stone of one pendant was missing at the time of deposition. Context: settlement (excavation find), buried in a ditch south of a storage building in the central part of the settlement.

27. *Binham* (Norfolk): five gold bracteates (one cut in half and folded, one folded, one folded and bent open again, three with loop being ripped or cut off, fig. 7.30), a gold arm ring (bent), and a gilt copper-alloy bracelet (cut into pieces), probably buried together, 6th century. Context: dry land (metal-detector find).

28. *Oxborough* (Norfolk, fig. 7.31): a solidus with a suspension loop, a tremissis (removed loop), an antique denarius with a piercing (broken open) and a fragment of a silver finger ring, late 5th or early 6th century. Context: dry land (metal-detector find).

29. *Chipping Ongar* (Essex): a normal and a light-weight tremissis, probably buried together, 7th century. Context: dry land (metal-detector find).

With the exception of the undistinctive Krassum find (no. 11), the gold hoards from the Netherlands, northern Germany and south-east England can be assigned to three groups. First of all, six *sets of intact jewellery* are represented by the neck ring and coin-pendants from Sievern-'Mulsumer Moor' (no. 15), the bracteate collections from Achlum, Sievern I and Sievern III (nos. 4, 13-14), the brooch, finger rings and beads from Hogebeintum (no. 9) and the pendants from Marsum (no. 10). Compared to the Scandinavian finds, some interesting differences can be seen in the composition of hoards from the research area. Although neck rings and bracteates are again represented, one of the neck rings was buried with, and the bracteates were buried without other ornaments. Moreover, the gold bracteates seem to be replaced in the late 6th and 7th centuries by pendants of other types, like the filigree-decorated pendants from Marsum (no. 10). This pattern is also reflected in the 7th-century Hogebeintum hoard (no. 9): a typically 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooch was buried in combination with silver rings and beads, the rings replacing the bracteates as one element of the stereotypical assemblages that we know from Migration-period Scandinavia. A ritual interpretation is most probable for these collections of intact jewellery, and can also be assumed for the unique find of two or three highly symbolic gold horns from Gallehus (no. 19).

Secondly, seven hoards have a more *random composition*. They contain hacked gold or silver items, in combination with intact or damaged jewellery (nos. 6, 27), jewellery and ring 'gold' (no. 18), jewellery and coins (no. 28), coins and an ingot (no. 7), and coins only (nos. 23, 25). The sword mount from Wijnaldum (no. 8), which was bent around eight gold rivets and a small piece of silver, and the coin-pendants from Scharnegoutum (no. 5), one of which showed the remains of a removed loop, can be assigned to this group as well. Finally, the gold pendants from 'Leidsche Rijn' (no. 26) may be added, with one of the pendants lacking a decorative stone at the time of deposition. Besides their random composition (especially nos. 7 and 18), the hoards are characterized by fragmented or 'damaged' objects that were meant to be melted down or to be used as a form of currency – which points to a profane rather than a religious function.

Thirdly, ten of the hoards are *pure coin collections*, comprising solidi and/or tremisses (nos. 1-3, 12, 16-17, 20-22, 24, 29). The stereotypical hoards of southern Scandinavia do not include coins, which are characteristic of the random hoards; this makes a profane interpretation most likely for the pure coin collections as well.

Finally, the late-Roman hoards of south-east England form a group of their own, comprising pure coin collections of solidi or aurei and often also siliquae (13x), and more random collections of gold and silver items (3x) (table 7.2). Besides coins, the mixed hoards may contain gold or silver jewellery and small silver tableware. The presence of coins in all hoards, and of fragmented items in one of the hoards (Burgate, Suffolk) indicates deposition for profane reasons.

A division into 'ritual' and 'profane' hoards can also be assumed for *single finds*, although the smaller items, such as coins, may have been lost accidentally. Religious hoarding is the most probable explanation for the items of intact jewellery that were buried at settlement sites in the western, the central and above all the northern Netherlands and in northern Germany. This jewellery comprises gold bracteates (phase 2, figs. 4.22, 6.26), silver brooches (phase 4, fig. 4.30), gold coin-pendants (phases 2-5, fig. 4.25) and especially gold jewellery (phases 4-5, figs. 4.23-24, 6.27). Behr also suggested ritual hoarding for the gold bracteates that were buried outside

Table 11.1 | Characteristics of religious and profane hoards from the late 5th to the 7th century, as found in the southern North Sea area.

RELIGIOUS HOARDS	PROFANE HOARDS
- stereotypical composition - predominantly ornaments: brooches, pendants, finger rings, etc. - intact objects - no container	- random composition - predominantly valuable items and raw material: hack/ring gold, coins and ingots - fragmented objects - container

11.13 | A 9th-century 'Viking treasure', found with a metal detector near Westerklief, on the former island of Wieringen (the Netherlands). This mixed hoard was buried in a wheel-thrown pot, which was probably plugged with a clump of grass. Diameter pot 16 cm (coll. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, photo P.J. Bomhof).

known cemetery sites in southeast England, which is fully in agreement with the interpretation of Dutch finds.[63] Furthermore, single finds of a gold neck ring, a gold arm ring and a gold bracteate from northern Germany belong to the group of Scandinavian stereotypical hoards (phase 2, figs. 6.20-21, 6.23). The neck ring and bracteate were probably buried in an older burial mound surrounded by peatbog, and the arm ring was reportedly found on a beach of Helgoland. Despite its fragmented character, an equal-armed brooch from the bog near Dösemoor (phase 1, fig. 6.24), which was found wrapped in a piece of textile, probably also is a ritual deposit.[64]

Although singly recovered coins and pieces of ring and hack gold may represent religious hoards, most of these items, like ingots, probably were hidden treasure intended to be re-used in the worldly domain of production and 'commercial' exchange. Significant in this respect is the 18-cm-long, garnet-decorated disc-on-bow brooch from Wijnaldum-'Tjitsma' (Friesland, fig. 4.32). A ritual interpretation would be most probable for this highly symbolic object if it were fully intact; however, cutmarks indicate that the brooch was buried for repair or to be dismantled and melted down at a later date.[65]

The proposed division into profane and religious hoards, at least within the southern North Sea area, is supported by the presence or absence of *containers* (table 11.1). The use of a container is documented only for some of the profane hoards containing two or more items: those from Wieuwerd (no. 6), Dronrijp (no. 7), Katharinenheerd (no. 18) and possibly Midlum (no. 3) were buried in a pot, the coins from De Waal (no. 21) may have been deposited in a purse, while the sword mount from Wijnaldum (no. 8) itself functioned as a container. Moreover, a container has been documented for six of the late-Roman hoards from southeast England, consisting of a hand-made or wheel-thrown pot or a wooden box.[66] Interesting parallels from a later period are two 'Viking treasures' from the former island of Wieringen (North Holland), both found with a metal detector near Westerklief (fig. 11.13).[67] These mixed hoards comprise silver, partly hacked ornaments, ingots and coins, both of them buried in a wheel-thrown pot. One of the pots was proba-

63 Behr 2010, 77-80.

64 For the wearing of repaired and even broken brooches, because of their value as heirlooms, see section 10.3.1, fig. 10.9.

65 Nijboer & Van Reekum 1999.

66 See section 7.5.

67 Besteman 1999; 2008.

11.14 | Geographical distribution of 5th- to 7th-century gold and silver hoards of two or more items in the southern North Sea region, subdivided into religious (triangular symbols) and profane depositions (square symbols). The coastal areas of the northern Netherlands and northern Germany are part of the northern, Scandinavian world, which is characterized by religious deposits (drawing by the author).

bly plugged with a clump of grass, which nicely illustrates the function of a container: to keep the buried treasure together until the moment of recovery. This also explains why no containers have been found with any of the religious hoards, which were permanent property of the gods and not intended to be retrieved.

When the collections of two or more items and their interpretation as religious or profane hoards are plotted on a distribution map, an interesting picture emerges, again supporting the suggested division (fig. 11.14). Stereotypical and related jewellery hoards have only been found in the northern Netherlands (3x) and in northern Germany, where a clustering of finds in the Sievern area can be seen (3x). The profane hoards, on the other hand, show a more scattered distribution, being found all along the southern North Sea coast. Interestingly, ritual deposition of valuable items outside a funerary context may have occurred in the 'southern' area as well (e.g. southeast England: bracteates), but – compared to the 'northern' area – only on a small scale, and apparently only in the form of single items.

11.2.5 *The hoarding of valuables in relation to life-cycle ritual*

The studies by Hedeager and Fabech showed that since the 4th century valuables of gold and silver were buried as hoards rather than grave goods in southern Scandinavia, the ritual deposition of valuable items at sites like Gudme probably being controlled by members of the leading elite. Surprisingly little attention, however, has been paid to the significance of individual objects and the reasons why they were selected for ritual hoarding, while other valuable items were kept in circulation or melted down. Although Fabech suggested that ritual gold hoarding during the Early Germanic Iron Age was centred on the lives of a 'new ruling class', researchers have not studied the role of the hoarded valuables in life-cycle rituals of kings or other leaders and members of their retinues – thus ignoring the importance of ritually embedded gift-exchange at birth, coming of age and marriage, and, at death, in the transformation of the deceased into an ancestor.[68]

The gold ornaments that were selected for ritual use comprise neck and arm rings, bracteates, sword fittings and, in the southern North Sea area, also disc-on-bow brooches and pendants of various types. In the previous chapter, these 'prestige goods' have been associated with different social groups, ranging from members of the royal retinue (neck and arm rings, sword fittings and disc-on-bow brooches) to lower groups of followers (square-headed brooches, bracteates, etc.).[69] Unique, 'royal' objects are less frequently included in hoarding ritual, the gold horns from Gallehus and the stunning gold collars from southern Sweden being among the exceptions.[70] In southern Scandinavia and northern Germany, the weapon elements and probably also the arm rings can be associated with men, while the bracteates, brooches and strings of beads are usually seen as female jewellery. The neck rings were probably worn both by men and women. In the northern Netherlands the situation is different: probably all of the jewellery, including the large disc-on-bow brooches, was worn by women.

It is hard to establish at what stage or stages in the life cycle of men and women prestigious objects were used in hoarding ritual.

68 Fabech 1994b, 134. For the importance of life-cycle rituals, see section 1.5.

69 See section 10.3.

70 For the collars, see Lamm 1998; Pesch 2011b.

Although the ornaments described above could have been deposited during the lifetime of their 'owner', for example at the significant moments of reaching adulthood and marriage, there are two reasons why an association with death and the creation of ancestors is more likely for the majority of religious hoards.

First of all, in 4th-century southern Scandinavia the tradition of using valuable items in funerary ritual was gradually replaced by hoarding. This meant that cemeteries lost their function as ritual sites where members of the elite were transformed into ancestors, a function that may have been taken over by settlements of regional and of supra-regional importance, like Gudme and Uppåkra.

Secondly, some of the hoard finds display a striking similarity to (parts of) contemporary funerary assemblages from the Frankish and Anglo-Saxon areas. The bracteate hoards with a brooch and/or beads from southern Scandinavia are most convincing in this respect, being similar in composition to some female grave assemblages in Kent (e.g. fig. 7.24).[71] According to Hines, such hoards represented a kind of 'surrogate burials', an interpretation that would also fit the larger number of single bracteate finds.[72] As a male equivalent of such 'burials', the arm rings (single finds and sets) and the sword fittings (single finds) are paralleled by similar items in some of the richest male graves on the Continent – for example, at Pouan and Tournai (table 10.2). In a similar way, the neck rings are paralleled both by gold (male) and especially silver pieces (female) in Continental graves. Within the northern part of the research area, the association between hoarding and burial ritual is nicely reflected in the deposition of neck rings and bracteates as hoards along the coast, and in the direct hinterland as grave goods, the latter illustrated by a bracteate from the cemetery of Issendorf (fig. 6.14) and a neck ring (fig. 9.12) and a bracteate from that of Liebenau.[73] It is very well possible that Scandinavian gold-foil figures, showing all kinds of 'personal' attributes such as clothing, weaponry and jewellery, should also be interpreted as substitutes for grave goods.[74]

Single coins and pieces of ring gold that may have been ritually hoarded, as well as collections of two or more neck rings and sword fittings, are more difficult to explain. Although the imitation of an *obolus* custom cannot be fully excluded for coins and ring gold, it is more probable that their deposition related to another life-cycle ritual, like the reaching of adulthood, or a very different occasion that required communication with the supernatural world. The last explanation may also apply to the collections of two or more neck rings and sword fittings when they appear not to represent items relating to a sole individual. Such larger hoards – like the gold horns from Gallehus – may have been buried by members of the regional or supra-regional elite as a part of incidental, collective rituals.

For a better understanding of the importance to elite families of transforming all or some of their dead members into ancestors by directly or indirectly supplying them with prestigious items through burial *or* hoarding rites, the grave goods from the southern part of the research area offer valuable evidence.

11.3 The southern tradition of grave goods

During the period when large amounts of precious metal were deposited as hoards in southern Scandinavia and its southwestern periphery, the southern North Sea coast saw valuable items used also as grave goods. After the burial custom had been part of a late-Roman tradition for about a century, it became strongly influenced by that of the Frankish kingdom to the south. Besides the appearance of Frankish-type cemeteries in the area around Utrecht and Dorestad (central Netherlands), imitation of the Frankish burial rite is evident also in the western Netherlands and southeast England. Interestingly, the richest graves in the research area date to a period when the frequent deposition of gold and silver in graves had come to an end in most of the Frankish kingdom itself – which again shows the continuation of a 'foreign', imitated tradition in the periphery of a powerful neighbour.

11.3.1 *Late-Roman and Frankish burial finds: chronology and characteristics*

A renewed analysis of the composition of Frankish and closely related Alamannic burial finds from so-called row-grave cemeteries (in German: *Reihengräberfelder*) in the Middle and Lower Rhine area has resulted in a detailed chronology.[75] The 5th-century finds are typically late-Roman in execution; they include late

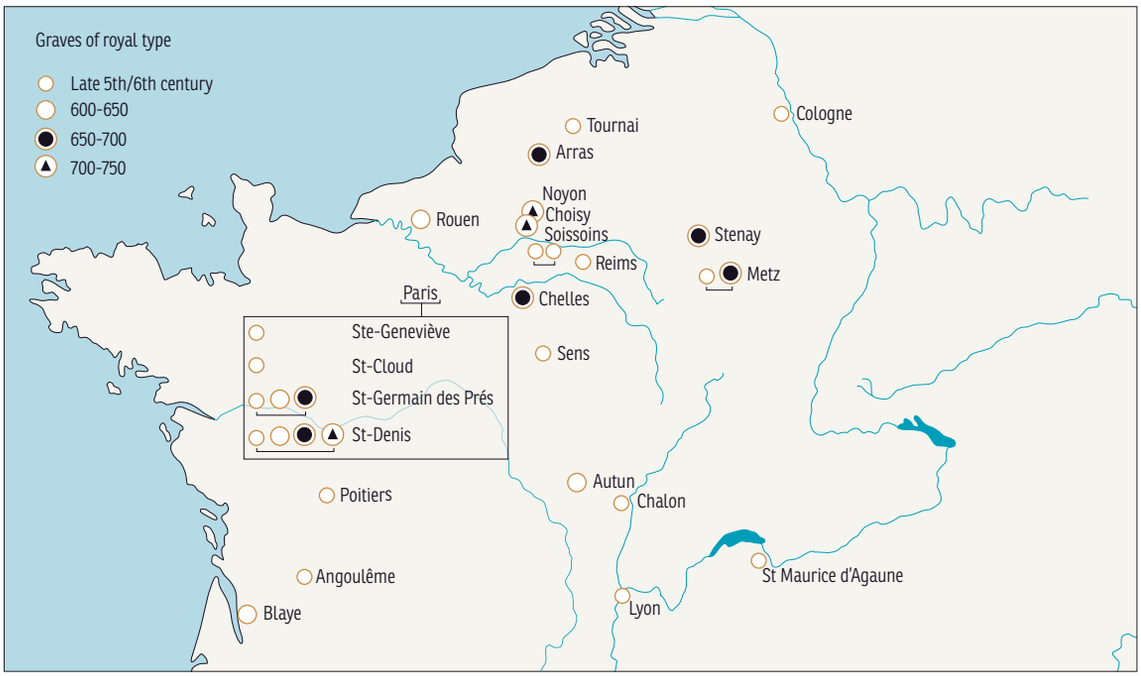
71 Compare Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, figs. 4-11.

72 Hines 1989, 198-199.

73 Häßler 2003, 114-115, 129-133. For Issendorf, see also section 6.2.

74 For the attributes depicted on gold-foil figures, see Watt 1992; 2004.

75 Siegmund 1998; Nieveler & Siegmund 1999; Theune 1999; Müssemeier et al. 2003. For critical remarks on the dating of individual, often short phases, see section 1.8.



11.15 | The locations of dynastic Frankish graves historically documented for the late 5th to the middle of the 8th century (redrawn after Müller-Wille 1983, fig. 1).

Antique belt fittings, brooches and axes (Lower Rhine phase 1: ca 400-440).[76] The middle of the 5th century saw the introduction of locally produced belt fittings, (bow) brooches and weapons (phase 2: ca 440-480/490). The late 5th and the 6th century represent the heyday of the Frankish and Alamannic burial tradition: the richest male burials are characterized by helmets, gold-decorated swords and gold ornaments; the richest female burials by arm rings, brooches, pendants and earrings of gold and silver (phases 3-6: ca 480/490-580/590, table 10.2).[77] From the late 6th century on, weapons and items of precious metal were less frequently used as grave goods. The large variety of bow, animal and disc brooches in female graves is replaced by more rarely found gold or gold-decorated disc brooches, while the silver inlay of iron belt fittings now often is the only precious metal in male graves (phases 7-9: ca 580/590-670).[78] Other luxuries that can be found among the 5th- to 7th-century grave goods are glass vessels (all phases) and, to a lesser extent, bronze bowls (phases 3-7) and bronze-bound buckets (phases 3-7), often found in combination with wheel-thrown pottery.

The line of Frankish 'royal' or 'princely' graves started with the burial of Childeric at Tournai (Belgium, † 482).[79] Childeric was probably buried below a large mound, in a rural cemetery that had been in use from the mid 5th to the 7th century. On the eastern side of his grave two large pits with the remains of at least 21 horses were found. The grave itself contained an arm ring, signet ring and cross-bow brooch, all of gold, as well as gold- and garnet-decorated weaponry and horsegear (table 10.2). Clovis († 511), Childeric's son, converted to Christianity and was buried in the Parisian church of St. Geneviève, which he himself had founded.[80] Other members of the Frankish royal family followed his example and were buried in various churches, especially in Paris (fig. 11.15).

Unfortunately, only a few of these aristocratic burials have been excavated, such as the possible grave of Aregund, one of the wives of king Chlothar I († 561), in the church of St. Denis in Paris (ca 550-600, table 10.2), and a female and a boy's grave in the cathedral of Cologne (ca 525-550) (fig. 10.16, table 10.2). All three burials are characterized by a rich collection of prestige goods, including ornaments of gold and silver, gold-embroidered garments, glass and bronze vessels, drinking horns and bronze-bound buckets – indicating that the Frankish upper elite continued to bury its members with prestigious valuables even after adopting Christianity. This tradition was kept alive well into the 7th century, as the gold and silver ornaments from the putative burial of Childeric II († 675, Paris) illustrate.[81] This starkly contrasts with most contemporary rural cemeteries, where after the 6th century items of precious metal had become rarities.

76 The dating of the Lower Rhine phases, as mentioned in this chapter, is based on Nieveler & Siegmund 1999.

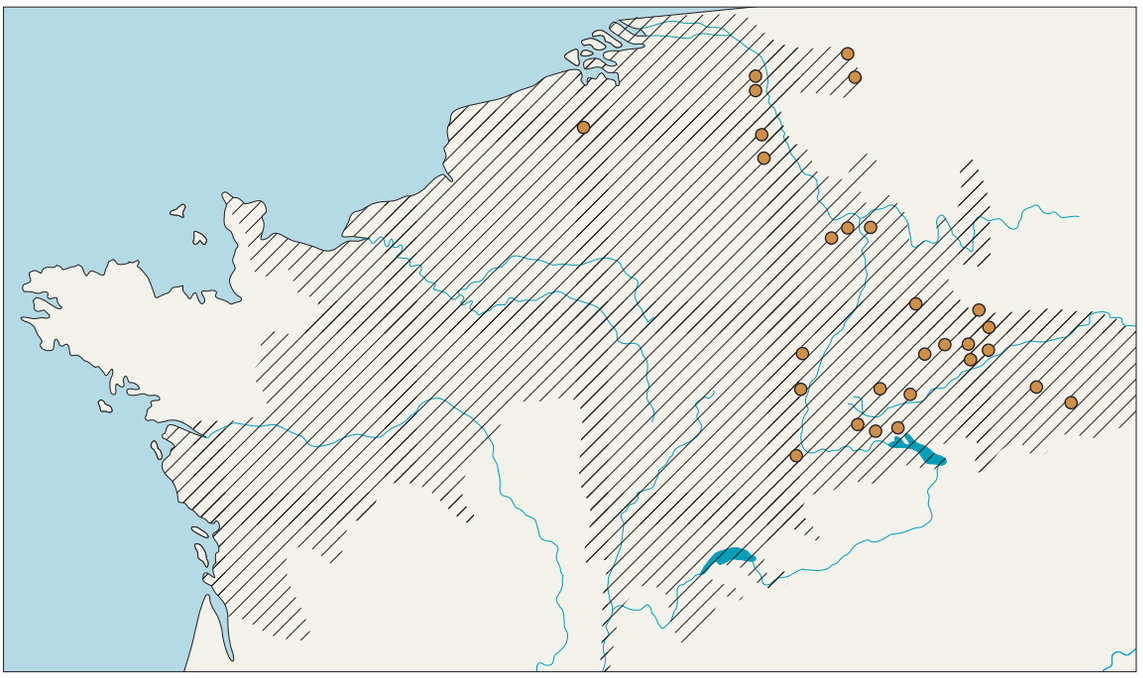
77 Christlein 1975; 1978, 85-88; Donat 1989.

78 E.g. Christlein 1978, *Taf.* 92, 100.

79 Böhner 1981; Wieczorek & Périn 2001, cat. no. 4.16.

80 For Frankish aristocratic burials, see Müller-Wille 1983; 1996; James 1992; *Die Franken* 1996, 931-942.

81 James 1992, 250-251.



11.16 | Geographical distribution of row-grave cemeteries in the 7th century (shaded areas) and the location of 'exceptionally rich graves' (dots), dating to the decades around AD 600 (redrawn after Müller-Wille 1983, fig. 2).

While members of the Frankish royal house were usually buried in the heartland of the Frankish kingdom (fig. 11.15), a 'horizon' of high-status graves dating to the late 6th, and early decades of the 7th century characterizes the realm's northern periphery and the adjacent Alamannic area (fig. 11.16). Besides female graves with gold disc brooches, such as the garnet- and filigree-decorated piece from Rosmeer (Belgium, fig. 11.17), some of the richest male graves can be found here, the latter probably setting the standard for contemporary 'royal' or 'princely' graves in early Anglo-Saxon England.[82] These male graves often contain a complete weapon set, glass and bronze vessels, drinking horns, bronze-bound buckets, belt-sets and sometimes gold ornaments and/or a gold coin. Both the male and female high-status graves have been found within and outside churches, sometimes in a separate part of the cemetery.

11.3.2 *Grave goods: a mirror of life?*

In his famous book about the Alamanni, Christlein presents a rich and varied collection of grave goods as the cultural heritage of a homogeneous ethnic group.[83] The selection of burial gifts was thought to be based on the needs of the deceased in the afterlife and, as an 'objective' dataset, to mirror his or her function and social status during life.[84] Having no serious doubts about the representativity of the dataset, Christlein used some standardized combinations of grave goods for making one-to-one reconstructions of the dress, weaponry and jewellery of Alamannic males and females in specific periods. Moreover, the varying number and quality of grave goods are interpreted in socio-political terms, as 'quality groups' representing the hierarchical ranking within Alamannic society (fig. 10.10) – as discussed in the previous chapter.[85]

Since Christlein's book was published in 1978, several articles have drawn attention to the chronological and geographical diversity among the burial customs reflected in row-grave cemeteries, which do not represent a uniform model.[86] Moreover, the ethnic interpretation of grave goods has been questioned, although more recently specific grave assemblages have again been associated with 'Franks', 'Alamanni' and 'Saxons'.[87] The problem of linking historically known ethnic groups to artefact types, however, can be illustrated by sword finds of 'Alamannic', 'Frankish' or other types; these show a mixed distribution that is *not* related to ethnic territories, but above all is determined by the exchange and circulation of swords within and also between elite networks.[88] And what about the value of grave goods as *mirrors of life*: do they show the function and status of the deceased at the time of death, or is a different, wholly

82 Müller-Wille 1983, 112-114. For the Rosmeer brooch, see Roosens 1970; Hartoch 2006.

83 Christlein 1978. For Christlein's position within the German tradition of cemetery research, see Härke 2000b.

84 Christlein 1978, 9.

85 Christlein 1975; 1978, 83 ff.

86 See Steuer 1989, 103-104; Donat 1989, 189-190.

87 Siegmund 1999; 2000.

88 Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 427-446.

11.17 | Gold, garnet- and filigree-decorated disc brooch, dating to around AD 600 and buried in a rich female grave at the cemetery of Rosmeer (Belgium). Scale 1:1 (coll. Gallo-Romeins Museum Tongeren, photos G. Schalenbourg).

or partly fictional situation presented by those burying the dead – and if so, for what reason?

Samson was the first to doubt a one-to-one relation between grave goods and the social position of the deceased in life, moving from a death-centred to a mourner-centred perspective.[89] Death means a re-ordering of social relations, the burial ritual being a medium for the burying group to claim inherited possessions and positions: "...grave goods were not the uninheritable goods of the deceased, but rather were the possessions of those burying the body. In practice, those conducting the burial had inherited the deceased's property and dressed the corpse as they saw fit."[90] Rather than the deceased, the *burying group* should be seen as the central character in the funerary ritual, which means that an interpretation of grave goods should focus on how and why they treated the dead in a specific way – placing carefully selected items in the grave and keeping other items for themselves.

Steuer agrees with Samson that grave goods cannot simply be regarded as a mirror of life; instead, elements of a specific, *status-related lifestyle* were expressed through the burial ritual.[91] Within the context of the Frankish kingdom, characteristic elements of the elite lifestyle were: a) the personal bond between a leader and his retinue, b) warfare, c) banquets and d) heroic ballads. The funerary expression of these values is thought to have its origin in the grave of Childeric († 482), which set a standard for high-status Frankish and also Alamannic burials in the following centuries (fig. 11.18). Differences in the assemblages of grave

11.18 | A reconstruction of the Frankish king Childeric († 482) in full regalia, based on the jewellery and other apparel selected for his burial with the aim of presenting the deceased as an ideal Frankish king and ancestor (after *Die Franken* 1996, Kat. V.1.1).

89 Samson 1987. For the change in perspectives, see Kars 2011, 35-62.

90 Samson 1987, 123.

91 Steuer 1989, 104-107; see also Kossack 1974, 4-5; Steuer 1982, 491-493.

goods are related to the wealth and possessions of the deceased and their households (*familiae*), and demonstrate social ranking both within and among families (fig. 10.11). It was not the preparation of the deceased for the afterlife that was at issue in Christianised Frankish society, but an affirmation of the social status of that person's family, and especially of its head, with the primary aim of impressing members of other social groups.

According to Bazelmans, early medieval burial rites were aimed not only at expressing and, in doing so, legitimising social differences; even more important was their role in *transforming the dead into ancestors*.[92] The human person is seen as a 'cultural project'. It was given shape during successive rites of passage, which had the purpose of joining together, developing and breaking down a person's 'constituents' (fig. 1.5).[93] Because none of these transformations were part of an automatic, natural process, they had to be realized through the ritual exchange of gifts, both between leaders and their followers and with entities in the supernatural world. These gifts often included jewellery and other ornaments that referred to a person's reputation and honour ('worth'), which explains why in early medieval times the dead body, as part of the final rite of passage, was often dressed as a living person.

In their study of sword depositions in 4th- and 5th-century northern Gaul, Theuws and Alkemade focussed on the grave goods themselves, as well as on their 'active' role in the rites in which they were used.[94] The deposition of weapons and other prestige items is seen as a 'ritual of power', which was embedded in an elite lifestyle and closely bound up with the life-cycle of men and women. The elite lifestyle was characterized by an emphasis on a) *martial values*, as a set of ideas structuring the behaviour of young men in society (weapons), b) *body-display*, as the reflection of a person's being, reputation and honour, showing his/her position in society (personal ornaments), and c) *feasting*, as the context of highly ritualised eating, drinking and gift-giving defining a person's position within a particular group (tableware).[95] The use and exchange of items that symbolized such a lifestyle were part of male and female life-cycle rituals, in which various relationships within society and between humans and supernatural beings were newly established or consolidated. A death might have far-reaching consequences for society and meant that established relations temporarily broke down and had to be realigned. The funeral played a crucial role in this process and offered the burying group an opportunity to (re-)define itself by creating a new ancestor.

Again working on late-Roman weapon depositions in northern Gaul, Theuws has further elaborated on the 'rhetoric of the burial'.[96] He argues that funerary ritual should be seen as a (fictional) construct in a specific historical and social context, like the description of saint's lives in Late Antique texts. The social context was the triangular relationship between the *main character* (the deceased), the *authors* (the next of kin) and the *audience* (those attending the funeral).[97] According to Theuws, the analysis of grave goods should be aimed at understanding the 'rhetorical strategies' that were employed in promoting the political and ideological agendas of the burying group. Using Childeric's grave as an example, it is argued that the principal character is not represented as a historical person; more probably, the grave goods, projecting Childeric as an ideal king and ancestor, were part of a grand strategy in the creation of the Frankish kingdom – a successful ploy that was repeated not only by his successors, but by Alamannic and other leaders as well.[98] In Anglo-Saxon archaeology the rhetoric of the burial is in a similar way linked to the political and ideological agenda of the burying group. Richards, for example, compares the burial ritual to *music*, with 'an audience, a performance, and an underlying score', while Carver draws a comparison to a *poem*, written by the burying group and aimed at showing 'the multiple roles of the dead person as an ambassador for the living.'[99]

According to Davidson, the aim of a 'royal' or 'princely' funeral was to present a wordly leader both as a political and a *sacral figure*.[100] Members of the royal families stood in close contact with the world of the gods and ancestors, and by using their supernatural influence could lead their people to victory and prosperity, as Scandinavian, Icelandic and English poetry and tales reveal. Davidson also regards a king's death as an important transitional phase, in which society had to be redefined: "The great burial mound of a king was not only a fine memorial and a new landmark, but a pledge of the continuation of the established order and of prosperity for the new king, who would now have the support of his predecessor as well as

92 Bazelmans 1999, 149 ff.; 2002.
93 See section 1.5.
94 Theuws & Alkemade 2000; see also Alkemade 1997.
95 Alkemade 1997, 184; Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 411-412.
96 Theuws 2009.
97 See also Samson 1987, 123-125.
98 Theuws 2009, 295.
99 Richards 1992, 131; Carver 2000; 2005, 313 (quotation).
100 Davidson 1992.

11.19 | Bronze buckle and decorative mounts of a typically late-Roman belt (leather reconstructed) from grave 846 at the cemetery of Rhenen-'Donderberg' (the Netherlands). The mount at the top right should actually be placed next to the lower two. Scale 1:2 (coll. Museum het Rondeel, Rhenen, photo O. Odé).

that of the gods."[101] The grave goods that were selected for royal burials had a deeper significance than just symbolizing the lifestyle, social status and future ambitions of the royal family: they also referred to the sacral power of the new ancestor and, of course, to that of his successor. Of special importance are the objects that, according to historical sources, were possessed both by gods and kings, including swords and spears that brought good fortune in battle and ensured victory, cauldrons and other vessels that symbolised hospitality, and board games that played a role in divination.[102]

Although funerary assemblages still are often interpreted as a mirror of life, this summary of older and current ideas about the significance of late-Roman and Merovingian-period burial ritual clearly demonstrates that such assemblages were *highly symbolic* and *largely focused on the creation of ancestors*. The grave goods were carefully selected to express various aspects of an elite lifestyle, in order to define new ancestors and, in doing so, to define or re-define the families or other social groups that participated in the ritual; in this way the latter sought to legitimise their present or aspired position within society. While objects referring to an elite lifestyle do not automatically show the deceased as a historical person, they certainly do express social differences between families or other social groups – as a reflection of the mourners' ability not only to distribute valuables among the living, but also to invest valuables in the funeral.[103] In brief, the early medieval burial ritual probably had four – largely overlapping – goals:

1. To honour the dead person by transforming him or her into an ancestor.
2. To define or redefine the position of the burying group within the complex network of relations with other members of society and entities in the supernatural world.
3. To legitimise the current position and future ambitions of the burying group by presenting their dead member as a participant in the sacral, elite lifestyle.
4. To demonstrate the ability of the burying group to 'invest' gold, silver and/or other prestigious items in the burial ritual – and by doing so, to express social status.

11.3.3 *Burial customs in the research area*

The burial ritual in the southern North Sea area shows a development similar to that in the northern part of the Frankish area: an early, 4th- and 5th-century phase with late-Roman-style grave goods is followed by a 'horizon' of relatively rich 6th-century burials and a brief peak of 'royal' or 'princely' burials dating to around 600, after which items of gold and silver tend to disappear from funerary contexts. For each of these phases the prestigious items that were selected as grave goods over different parts of the research area will be briefly discussed, as well as their association with aspects of the elite lifestyle. Along the German North Sea coast only the first phase is represented, most excavated cemeteries having been abandoned in the late 5th century.

During the 4th and 5th centuries, the grave goods of members of the regional and local elite are characterized by items that were imported from the late-Roman empire or imitated locally, partly as regional-style jewellery

101 Davidson 1992, 27.

102 Davidson 1992, 29.

103 See the discussion in section 10.3.

11.20 | Roman-type hunting scene on the underside of a footstool from an exceptionally well-preserved 5th-century boat burial in the cemetery of Fallward (Germany). Scale 1:2 (coll. Museum Burg Bederkesa, Bad Bederkesa, photo H. Lang).

(phase 1, ca 390-500).[104] Within the research area, typically late-Roman graves have been found mainly in the central river area of the Netherlands, which in this period was part of the border zone of the Roman Empire. Excavations at several cemeteries, including the famous and relatively rich cemetery of Rhenen-'Donderberg', have shown that the richest male graves are marked by weapons and the late-Roman belt (fig. 11.19).[105] With the exception of a sword (Rhenen, grave 821) and a shield (grave 833), the weapons are limited to one or more spears or lances, often found in combination with an axe. Two of the male graves at Rhenen contained a wooden bucket with iron mountings (graves 842 and 846). Moreover, a gold solidus (grave 842) and an antique denarius (grave 818) were found near the skull and in the mouth, respectively, of armed men buried at Rhenen, obviously serving as *oboli*. The richest female graves contained a late-Roman brooch and/or a hairpin, one of the pins being the only 4th- or 5th-century ornament from Rhenen that was executed in silver (grave 356, fig. 5.17).

A second cluster of graves containing late-Roman or late-Roman-style objects is known form the northern part of the German Elbe-Weser region.[106] While the richest male burials are again characterized by weapons (especially spears/lances and arrows) and bronze belt fittings, the richest female burials contained one or more silver brooches or other silver ornaments (rings, pendants and/or beads) and in one case a gold coin-pendant (fig. 6.7). According to Böhme, late-Roman belts, including those with fittings in the chip-carved style, were owned by 'Saxon' soldiers who had served in the Roman army.[107] After completing their term of service they would not only have taken home their military belts, but also new ideas about burying the dead (inhumation) and about shaping and decorating personal ornaments, which is reflected in the female jewellery. Although the military association of most belts can be questioned and inhumation was not newly introduced in the late-Roman period, the development of regional-style brooches was clearly inspired by late-Roman decorative shapes and techniques – reflecting a southern cultural focus among the elite.[108]

Unfortunately, the Dutch and German grave goods are difficult to interpret in terms of an elite lifestyle. Most belts and brooches, as elements of personal ornamentation, were found in combination with simple knives, strings of beads and hand-made pots. Especially the 'military' belt and regional-style brooches will have advertised the personal relation between a local or regional leader and his followers. Moreover, the few swords and shields can be associated with warfare and martial values. Only at Helle (Ammerland), situated in the direct hinterland of the German North Sea coast, do bronze vessels also refer to feasting.[109]

Thanks to exceptional conservation conditions, a rich collection of wooden objects were discovered in the 4th- and 5th-century cemetery of Fallward (Cuxhaven, northern Germany), revealing aspects of the burial rite that otherwise remain invisible to the archae-

104 For the assignment of jewellery from the research area to cultural phases (phases 1-5), see chapter 9; for their social status, see section 10.3.

105 For the late-Roman graves at Rhenen, see Van Es & Wagner 2000. See also section 5.2.

106 Böhme 1974; 1986; 1999; 2003. See also section 6.2.

107 Especially Böhme 1999.

108 For the 'military' belt, see Halsall 1992, 200-201; for the origin of the inhumation rite, see Schön 2003, 43-49. The regional-style brooches are discussed in section 9.2.

109 Böhme 1974, 234 (cat.no. 22), *Taf.* 21.4-14; 1999, 60, fig. 7. See also section 6.2.

11.21 | A 6th-century collection of Kentish items from female grave 44 at the cemetery of Lyminge (England), including gold braid, silver-gilt square-headed and disc brooches, a set of skimmer and crystal ball, and one of the iron coffin clamps. Scale 1:1 (coll. The Kent Archaeological Society/ Maidstone Museum, photo Archival Images Limited).

ologist.[110] Most important for reconstructing an elite lifestyle is the grave of a male person, wearing a late-Roman belt decorated with silver studs (grave 265). The dead man was interred in a roofed dugout boat (fig. 6.5), together with several objects that seem to refer to the hall of the burying group as a place of gathering, gift-giving and feasting (fig. 6.6): a wooden 'throne', footstool and table, a wooden dish, a bird-shaped wooden vessel, and a bronze cauldron. Interestingly, no sword or other military attribute was selected for burial. A Roman-style hunting scene on the underside of the footstool from grave 265 (fig. 11.20) and the presence of a wooden bow and a set of arrows in grave 407 point to yet another element of the elite lifestyle: hunting. For late-Roman Gaul, Theuws has shown that 'true' weapons (swords and shields) are quite rare in comparison to the relatively large number of axes, arrows and lances – a situation comparable to that in the central Netherlands and northern Germany. Most of the 'weapons' probably symbolize the clearing of land (axes) and especially hunting (arrows and lances), a highly regulated activity of the elite, which involved leadership, prowess and territorial claims.[111]

Besides late-Roman belts and weapons, contemporary 'Saxon' brooches were selected as grave goods in southeast England, where they are associated with the arrival of 'Saxon' mercenaries and their families.[112] Apart from body-display (silver brooches of 'Saxon' type and late-Roman belts), warfare and probably also hunting (weapons), and to a lesser extent feasting (glass and wooden vessels), yet another characteristic element of the later, 'royal' or 'princely' burials is represented, notably at Spong Hill (Norfolk): bone playing pieces that refer to gaming.[113] The large number of graves with such items in this period does not suggest an association with divination.

By the 6th century, all along the southern North Sea coast the late-Roman belt and 'Saxon' jewellery had been replaced as high-status grave goods by Frankish-type weaponry, dress accessories and vessels (phases 2-3, ca 475-600). In the central river area and western coastal area of the Netherlands the burial rites and assemblages are typically Frankish. The richest male graves are characterized by weaponry (fig. 5.11), and the richest female graves by some gold, but above all silver jewellery (figs. 5.13-17, 5.19-20).

The 6th-century Kentish burial ritual is also dominated by Frankish items, or by local imitations, which were buried in combination with Scandinavian-type gold bracteates and silver square-headed brooches (phase 2, ca. 475-550), as well as locally produced silver and bronze items, executed in a 'Frankish-Kentish' style (phase 3, ca 500-600) (fig. 7.26). The richest male burials contain weapons and belt fittings; and the richest female burials have gold and silver jewellery, gold-embroidered garments, iron weaving battens and sets of a skimmer and crystal ball (fig. 11.21).[114] Moreover, both male and female burials may yield bronze and glass vessels and wooden buckets, as well as wheel-thrown pottery. Finally, one of the burials at Mill Hill I (grave 91) contained what may have been a lyre.[115]

In the Netherlands and Kent, the early-Merovingian grave goods can be associated with the very aspects of an elite lifestyle that Steuer enumerated for contemporary Gaul: the expression of personal relations and status display (belt fittings, gold-embroidered garments and jewellery), warfare (swords and shields), banquets (tableware and sets of skimmer and ball) and heroic ballads (the possible lyre). Moreover, hunting attributes may again be represented in the burials, which would explain the popularity of throwing-spears in 6th-century Anglo-Saxon graves.[116] As new elements, the sacral power of the leading elite and their role in (inter-)regional exchange were also expressed through the funerary ritual. The mythical scenes and Animal Style I motifs on Scandinavian-type bracteates and brooches probably refer to the (fictional) origin and sacral power of the elite.[117] Moreover, sets of scales and weights (fig. 10.4) and the 'foreign' origin of a substantial part of the prestigious goods reflect participation in regional and inter-regional exchange networks.

Although the number of elite burials decreased in the late 6th, and the early decades of the 7th century, some members of the highest aristocracy now for the first time become visible in a funerary context (phase 4, ca 590-630/640). Besides a concentration of high-status burials in Kent, probably representing members of the royal retinue and their female relatives,

110 Schön 1999b, 40 ff.; 2002; 2003, 44-45; 2004c; 2010. See also section 6.2. At Issendorf (northern Germany), similar items were only preserved as organic stains (Häßler 2002, 27-29).

111 Theuws 2009, 301-307.

112 Böhme 1986. See also section 2.5.

113 Hills 1977a, 29.

114 Richardson 2005, 210-248, especially table 141.

115 Richardson 2005, 155 (appendix 1).

116 Härke 1989, 58.

117 Especially Hedeager 1999.

11.22 | The famous whetstone 'sceptre' from mound 1 in the 'princely' cemetery of Sutton Hoo, and a detail of its upper end. The lower and the upper end both are decorated with four bearded faces, probably representing ancestors of the East Anglian royal house. The upper end is topped with an iron ring and a bronze stag, as known also from Roman consular sceptres. Scale 1:3 (coll. British Museum, London, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

the only 'royal' or 'princely' burials from the research area are some 'isolated' burials at Snape (Norfolk, ca 600: ship burial), Prittlewell (Essex, ca 600-620: chamber burial, fig. 7.11) and Broomfield (Essex, ca 600-630: chamber burial), as well as those in the famous cemetery at Sutton Hoo (Norfolk, especially mounds 1 and 2, ca 615-635: ship burial, fig. 7.4).[118] Moreover, a closely related burial was discovered at Taplow (Buckinghamshire, ca 590-610: chamber burial), west of London, in the Thames valley.[119]

The 'royal' and 'princely' grave constructions and assemblages were inspired by contemporary chamber burials in the Frankish Rhineland, barrow burials in Kent and ship burials in Scandinavia. The grave goods, at least those that were not robbed, represent versions of the 'standard Germanic princely kit', comprising weapons, gold belt fittings and other jewellery, gold coins, a variety of bronze and glass vessels, silver spoons, drinking horns, wooden buckets, a lyre and gaming pieces (table 10.2).[120] More exceptional items are a set of gold shoulder-clasps (fig. 7.5, no. 4), an iron standard, a whetstone-'sceptre' (fig. 11.22), a gold-decorated 'staff', silver vessels, including a Byzantine dish (fig. 8.12), and an iron axe-hammer from mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, as well as a folding chair and a set of gold-foil crosses (fig. 7.12, no. 2) from Prittlewell. Besides imported luxuries, these male grave goods are dominated by regionally made prestige goods, executed in an 'East Anglian' style.

The 'royal' and 'princely' grave assemblages clearly reflect an elite lifestyle, with some interesting new elements being added to the earlier repertoire.[121] On the one hand, the selected grave goods follow the 'traditional' pattern, referring to status display (gold or gold-decorated jewellery), warfare (weapons and armour), banquets (all kinds of vessels, dishes and other equipment), heroic ballads (lyre), gaming (gaming pieces) and perhaps hunting again (spears). On the other hand, some of the dead are for the first time presented as political and sacral leaders. Of special significance are the objects that were placed within and on top of the coffin in mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. By burying the deceased with a parade helmet, shoulder-clasps and a 'staff', as well as a 'sceptre' that was placed outside the coffin, he is presented as a Roman emperor.[122] The ability of this leader to wield power by distributing wealth and by controlling inter-regional exchange is reflected in the purse with gold coins and the international character of the grave goods, which include items from the Frankish, Byzantine, Scandinavian and Celtic worlds. At the same time, he was a sacral leader who played a role in pagan as well as Christian rites: the axe-hammer was probably used for the sacrificial killing of animals, while the spoons and silver bowls were highly symbolic in a Christian context.[123] The animal scenes in Style II also underlined the sacral power of the deceased (mythical, Scandinavian origin), as did the gaming pieces (divination) and the 'sceptre', with carvings probably showing the heads of former rulers and ancestors (fig. 11.22).[124]

Important for understanding the significance of bronze bowls, glass beakers and also sets of a skimmer and ball in contemporary and older burials are the drinking horns and bottles that were placed together on top of the coffin in mound 1 at Sutton Hoo. According to Neuman de Vegnar, these items played a crucial role in a typically Germanic drinking ritual, in historical sources known as *symbel*.[125] It was during such a ritual, which also included speech-making and gift-giving, that agreements of a binding character were made between a king and his followers – like the oath that Beowulf took to kill Grendel or die in the attempt.[126] If this interpretation is correct, the drinking equipment from Sutton Hoo and other high-status burials not only symbolized feasting in the great hall, but also the leader's role in establishing social bonds both within and between kingdoms.

After the third or fourth decade of the 7th century, members of the royal elite along the North Sea coast were no longer buried with their insignia (phase 5, ca 600-700). As in the 5th and 6th centuries, weapons, as symbols of warfare, martial values and perhaps hunting, were once more mainly given to male members of local and regional elites, and gold and silver jewellery, symbolizing a person's social relations, to females of a similar status. The female jewellery

118 See sections 7.2-3.

119 Webster 2007; see also Webster 2011.

120 Webster 2000, 56 (quotation); 2011, 272.

121 For the symbolism of such burials, see Webster 1992; 2000; Davidson 1992, 30; Neuman de Vegnar 1992; Filmer-Sankey 1996; Carver 2000; 2005, 312; Dobat 2006.

122 Filmer-Sankey 1996; see also Webster 2000, 56-57.

123 Dobat 2006 (axe-hammer); Bruce-Mitford 1975, 707-709; Werner 1986, 476-478 (Christian symbols).

124 Davidson 1992, 30 ('sceptre' interpretation); Nielsen 1999 (Animal Style II).

125 Neuman de Vegnar 1992; see also Enright 1988. Compare the discovery of a beaker and bowl in the 'cult house' at Uppåkra (Larsson & Lenntorp 2004, 23-24).

126 *Beowulf*, lines 631-638.

Table 11.2 | The dominant aspects of an elite lifestyle and the expression of sacral power, as reflected in 5th- to 7th-century funerary assemblages and probably ritual hoards from the southern North Sea area (for the phases and quality groups, see chapters 9-10).

PHASE	CONTEXT	QUALITY GROUP	PERSONAL DISPLAY	WARFARE	HUNTING	FEASTING/ GAMING	SACRAL POWER
1	grave	B-C	+	(+)	+	(+)	
	hoard	B-C	+				
2/3	grave	B-C	+	+	+?	+	+
	hoard	B-D(+E)	+				+
4	grave	B-E	+	+	+?	+	+
	hoard	C-D	+				+
5	grave	B-C	+	+	+?	(+)	
	hoard	-					

comprises small and often simple ornaments of gold or silver, mainly belonging to necklaces (fig. 7.25). These items are executed in a 'North Sea style', which again shows cultural affinities with the late-Antique, now Byzantine fashion.

Although on archaeological grounds no more than fragments of the original rhetoric of the burial can be reconstructed, different find categories do show the importance for members of local, regional and sometimes even royal elites to emphasize significant aspects of their lifestyle. The ideal way of life was directly or indirectly inspired by that of the royal and lower elites of the late-Roman Empire, the Frankish kingdom and the Byzantine world. Despite regional and chronological variations, some general trends can be observed, with dead members of the elite – as future ancestors – being presented as individuals who established social bonds, organized feasts, etc. When these characteristics are compared with the description of good and successful kings in *Beowulf*, some interesting parallels emerge. The kings who are mentioned in the poem have several overlapping roles: they are rulers, war leaders, distributors of treasure, organizers of feasts, keepers of the great halls, and protectors of their followers, people and land.[127] As Carver already suggested, the early medieval burial ritual should indeed be 'read' as a heroic poem, aimed at presenting the royal or high-ranking deceased as ideal ancestors and thus legitimising the privileged position and future ambitions of their heirs.[128]

11.4 The creation of ancestors in different ritual arenas

When we compare the composition of 5th- to 7th-century grave assemblages and ritual hoards from the research area, some interesting similarities and differences can be observed (table 11.2). First of all, personal display and the expression of social relations between a leader and his followers was of central significance both in burial and hoarding rituals throughout the period (phases 1-5). Secondly, during the same period the importance of warfare, hunting, feasting and/or gaming was referred to only in a funerary context. Thirdly, the sacral power of the elite was a dominant theme both in burial and hoarding rituals, but only during the late 5th to early 7th century (phases 2-4).

Given their association with a dead person, assemblages of grave goods were an obvious part of the burial ritual, materializing the transition of the deceased from a living member of society to an ancestor in the supernatural world. Hoard finds are more difficult to interpret and may relate to other transitional rituals or different occasions that also required communication with gods or ancestors. As discussed above, the 'stereotypical' hoards with Scandinavian-type gold jewellery (phase 2) and 'Frisian' gold and silver jewellery (phases 3-4) are closely related to contemporary grave goods in more southerly regions, probably being sacrificed during or shortly after, but *separately* from the actual interment – as the occurrence of contemporaneous cemeteries indicates. In these sacrifices first of all the personal bond between a leader and his followers or their female relatives is expressed through one or more carefully selected and highly symbolic items of personal display. Moreover, the sacral power of the elite is reflected in the religious and mythical scenes on bracteates, and in the Animal Style I and II motifs on many other, both Scandinavian- and regional-type ornaments.

An intriguing question is why in southern Scandinavia and the northern part of the

127 See Bazelmans 1999, 125-126, 134-135.

128 Carver 2000.

research area the ritual hoarding of valuables in a *non*-funerary context was preferred to a ritual more directly associated with the dead person and future ancestor. The transition from rich graves and collective human and booty sacrifices in wetlands to gold and silver hoarding at, or in the vicinity of settlements of the local, regional and supra-regional elite is a crucial point for answering this question. By burying one or more of the deceased's – or his/her family's – status symbols in the context of the actual elite residence, the transformation into an ancestor could be visualised in the most powerful way. Whether the hoarding of jewellery was institutionalised or not, these sacrifices offered the elite a much better opportunity to demonstrate their sacral power and personal relations with the supernatural world than grave goods could – especially if they were conducted inside or within sight of a 'royal hall' or 'cult house'.

To follow up this preliminary discussion, future research into the role of valuables in the creation of ancestors should focus on the pattern of ritual behaviour within supra-regional central places on the one hand, and on how this relates to the deposition of prestigious items both at other settlement sites and near natural boundaries, including the coast, on the other. The excavations at Gudme, and especially those currently taking place at Uppåkra, are of special significance in this respect, offering insight into the spatial relation between ritual depositions and the function of particular structures, such as the 'cult house' and other hall buildings.[129]

11.5 Conclusion

The deposition of valuable items in the southern North Sea area was not a uniform tradition, nor a mirror of daily life. Within the research area, a geographical distinction can be made between a 'northern world', where gold and to a lesser extent silver ornaments were mainly buried as hoards, following a Scandinavian tradition, and a 'southern world', where most valuables were buried as grave goods, in accordance with a late-Roman and a Frankish tradition. Both the high-status hoards and the funerary assemblages, however, are characterized by various elements of an elite lifestyle, which was primarily focussed on the social relations between a leader and his followers. The act of depositing gold, silver and other valuables in graves *and* ritual hoards should be seen as a 'ritual of power', having one major goal: to establish or secure and, in doing so, to legitimise royal and other power positions by creating powerful ancestors. When the rhetoric of such a ritual is understood, it is no surprise that its purpose and socio-political context strongly influenced the selection of objects that ended up in the ground. To what extent these and later, so-called post-depositional factors affected the distribution maps that we need for reconstructing elite networks is the subject of the following chapter.

129 See also Jørgensen 2009. For recent excavations at Uppåkra, see Lenntrup & Hårdh 2009; Larsson 2011.

12

The geographical distribution of valuable items: the effect of depositional and post-depositional factors

12.1 Introduction

In this and the next, final chapter, distribution maps of prestigious items of gold and silver are used for reconstructing early medieval elite networks around the southern North Sea coast. Before geographical patterns and their chronological variations can be interpreted in social terms, however, it should be questioned what they actually represent: a reflection of the historical, early medieval circulation of such valuables, or of the effect of so-called depositional and post-depositional factors on their archaeological visibility?[1] The continental row-grave cemeteries nicely illustrate the importance of this question. These often rich cemeteries are only found in the northern half of the Frankish kingdom and in the adjacent Alamannic area, while the richest graves, dating to around 600, show an even more restricted distribution, along the Rhine (fig. 11.16). Without the historical evidence, the obvious conclusion might be that the socio-political heart of the 6th- and 7th-century Frankish kingdom was located not at Paris (compare fig. 11.15), but further north, somewhere in the Rhine valley. Werner's division of the Frankish realm into two different 'economic landscapes' (fig. 10.3) is one of the clearest examples of such a misinterpretation, reflecting not a historical reality but the distribution of row-grave cemeteries.[2]

In this chapter, the impact both of *depositional factors* and of the mostly ignored *post-depositional factors* on the geographical distribution of valuables is studied for the research area as a whole. A discussion of the effect of social competition on the investment of valuable items in graves and hoards, often in the periphery of the more stable power centres (section 12.2), is followed by an exploration of the implications of changes in the landscape, the use of metal detectors and other factors affecting the visibility of such 'investments' in the archaeological record (section 12.3).

12.2 The effect of depositional factors

Distribution patterns of prestige goods are first of all determined by their availability, their circulation within and between elite networks and, of course, their degree of use in hoarding, burial or other rituals which to the archaeologist are less detectable, such as coming-of-age and marriage.[3] The uneven geographical distribution of valuable items, however, cannot be explained by these factors alone. A different explanation is required to understand why the often short phases when power positions were expressed through hoarding or funerals should characterize *peripheral zones* rather than socio-political core regions, and thus affect supra-regional distribution patterns.

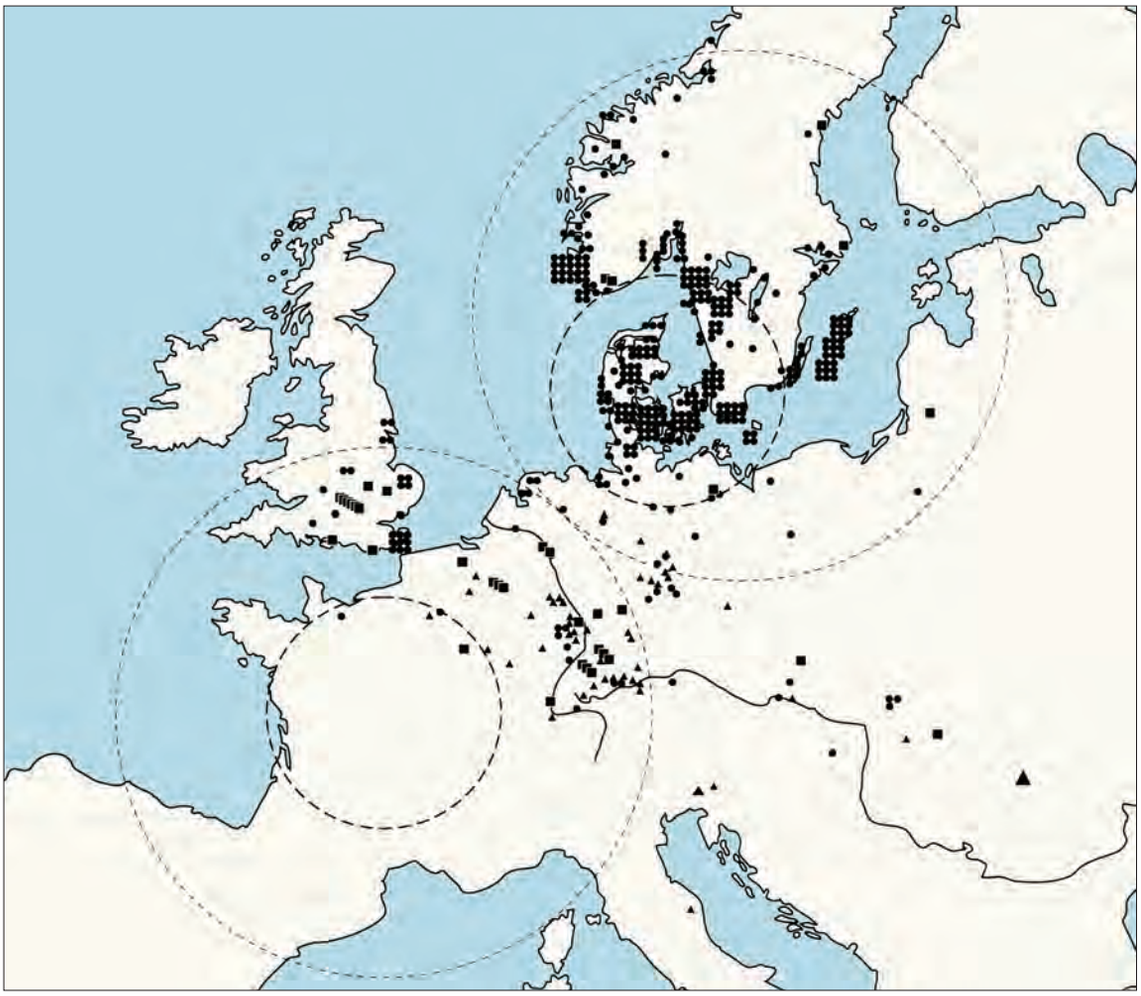
12.2.1 *Deposition and social competition: power in the periphery*

Discussing the representativity of 'princely' or 'royal' burials ('*Prunkgräber*') in Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean, Kossack was the first to note the similar elements of an elite lifestyle in high-status burials right from the Bronze Age into the Middle Ages – despite, of course, chronological and regional varia-

1 See also Fokkens (1998, 56 ff.), who speaks of 'map formation processes'.

2 See the discussion in section 10.2.2.

3 See chapters 8, 10 and 11.



12.1 | The geographical distribution of 5th- and early 6th-century Scandinavian-type bracteates (circles), brooches of Scandinavian type on the Continent (triangles) and double-edged prestige swords with Style-I decoration (squares) (after Hedeager 1993, fig. 1).

tions.[4] When we compare the duration of royal or other rule and the location of elite centres with the dating and location of high-status burials, however, a more 'fragmented' picture emerges. On the one hand, such burials are often single graves or isolated cemeteries covering a short time-span, the elite who express their social status through the burial ritual not doing so throughout their period of rule. On the other hand, the richest burials are not located in socio-political core regions, but in the border zones of tribal groups or kingdoms. According to Kossack, these were the contact zones between a region enjoying a 'high civilization' (*Hochkultur*) and neighbouring areas, or between areas with differing 'cultural systems'. The burials are thought to reflect short periods of socio-political instability and, by displaying 'foreign' items and customs, to reflect the attempt of peripheral groups to emulate a more powerful neighbouring group – both culturally and socio-politically.

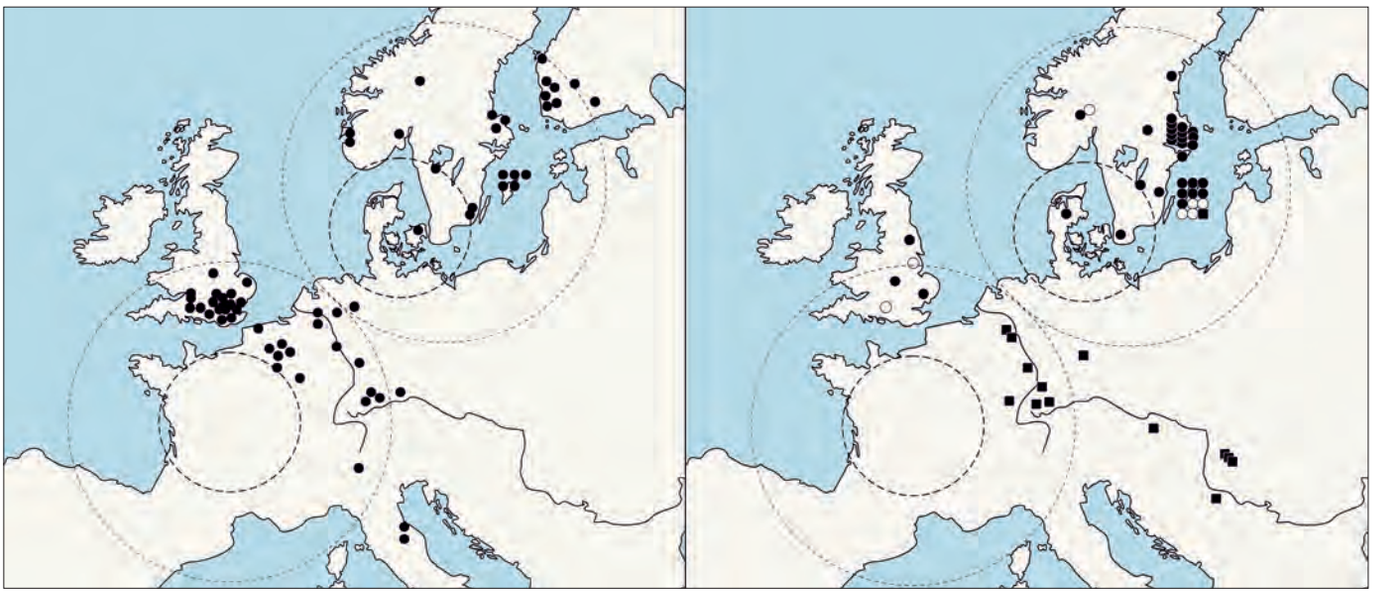
On a western European scale, Hedeager also interpreted the clustering of Migration- and Merovingian-period elite burials in socio-political border zones as a reflection of unstable power positions.[5] During the 5th and 6th centuries, an ideological polarization in western Europe is assumed, between a pagan, Scandinavian world in the north, and a Christian, Frankish world in the south.[6] Within both worlds, an interesting distribution of gold and silver ornaments and weaponry can be seen. The second half of the 5th and early decades of the 6th century show a clustering of gold bracteates in the Scandinavian world, most of these pendants probably being ritually hoarded in its core region (Denmark and southern Sweden) (fig. 12.1).[7] Bracteates that were deposited in graves show a very different distribution: they are mainly found in the northern periphery of the Frankish kingdom, also including Anglo-Saxon England and the central Netherlands. Contemporary 'display-swords' with Animal Style I decoration support the historical validity of this pattern: these were buried as grave goods mostly in the northern periphery of the Frankish core region, and, in smaller numbers, in the northern and eastern

4 Kossack 1974; see also Steuer 1978.

5 Hedeager 1992b; 1993.

6 See also Steuer 1987a, 202-203.

7 For the current dating of Scandinavian-type bracteates, see section 9.3.



12.2 | The geographical distribution of 6th-century ring-swords (left) and crested helmets (right). The crested helmets belong to 'Frankish' (squares, from graves) and 'Scandinavian' types (solid circles, from graves; open circles, uncertain context) (after Hedeager 1993, figs. 3-4).

periphery of the Scandinavian core region as well (fig. 12.2). In the 6th century, when the ritual hoarding of bracteates gradually came to an end, the graves with prestigious ring swords and crested helmets again show a clustering in the peripheral zones of both ideological worlds (fig. 12.2).

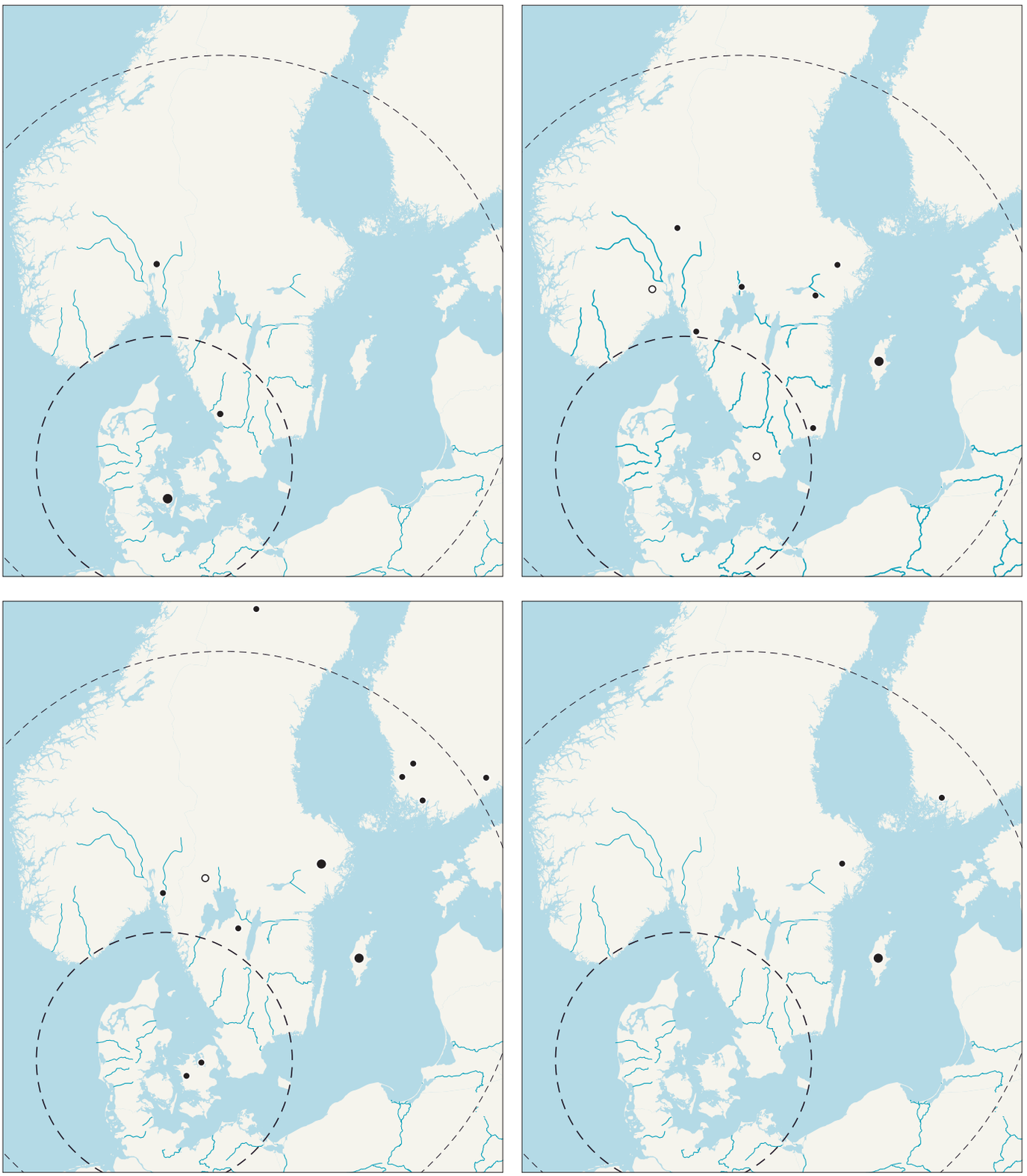
According to Hedeager, the ritual use of prestigious items outside the socio-political core region of the Scandinavian and the Frankish worlds is a sign of social instability and competition, characterizing "...areas where political power was not ideologically securely founded and which therefore needed special legitimizing rituals."[8]

She explains the ritual hoarding of gold bracteates in southern Scandinavia as a signal of stabilized power positions, after a formative phase with 'princely' burials (Roman Iron Age). Yet it is more likely that the ritual investment of bracteates had a similar goal as the deposition of contemporary and later grave goods: to establish and legitimize new power positions on the one hand, and to express the creation of a new political and religious ideology on the other.[9] During the period of gold hoarding, Scandinavia as a whole should be seen as a peripheral area, with the Roman empire and its Frankish successor kingdom as the core region. It was not before the first half of the 6th century that southern Scandinavia became a stable socio-political core region in its own right, no longer necessitating the native elites to invest valuables in funerary or hoarding rituals. The ritual use of bracteates now characterizes the periphery of southern Scandinavia, including the North Sea world, where most Scandinavian-type bracteates were buried as hoards (northern Germany and the northern Netherlands) and as grave goods (southeast England and the central Netherlands) during the late 5th, and first half of the 6th century.

A similar development is reflected in the distribution of Frankish- and Scandinavian-type prestige swords, or single elements of such swords (figs. 12.3).[10] While most early-6th-century pieces, which were buried both as hoards and grave goods, have turned up in Denmark and southern Sweden, there is a clustering of grave finds dating to the following 6th, and early 7th century in its northern and eastern periphery. The younger, 7th-century prestige swords, deposited only as grave goods, show a wider distribution across southern Scandinavia, followed by a marked decrease in their ritual use in the late 7th, and 8th century. According to Jørgensen, the 6th- and early 7th-century phase of social competition among leading families in the Scandinavian heartland and, later, in its periphery, is followed by a situation when "...a stable social hierarchy had been established in which competition through expenditure on prestige grave goods had become redundant."[11]

In their study on late-Roman Gaul, Theuws and Alkemade too explain the deposition of swords as a signal of social instability and competition.[12] The sword finds, mainly originating from graves, show no regular distribution across the northern part of Gaul; instead, several find clusters along the rivers Rhine and Meuse can be seen, while other re-

8 Hedeager 1992b, 294.
9 Hedeager 1992b, 283; 1993, 128. Compare the discussion in chapter 11.
10 Jørgensen & Jørgensen 1997, 112-116; see also Jørgensen 1991.
11 Jørgensen 1991, 125.
12 Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 461-465.



12.3 | The geographical distribution of early medieval 'prestige swords' in southern Scandinavia, including solid gold ring-buttons of early 6th-century swords (top left), 6th-, and early 7th-century swords with cloisonné and/or ring-buttons (top right), 7th-century swords, partly with cloisonné or ring-buttons (bottom left), and 8th-century swords (bottom right). Large symbols: two or more finds, open symbols: exact find spot unknown (redrawn after Jørgensen & Jørgensen 1997, figs. 105-108, slichtly adjusted: circles added in accordance with figs. 12.1-2).

gions are 'empty'. Since contemporary texts do mention kings and aristocratic groups in the areas without weapon graves, like that of the Salian Franks, it is highly unlikely that no swords circulated here. More probably, the deposition of swords in late-Roman times too is a characteristic of regions in the socio-political periphery, where power positions were not (yet) fixed and regularly had to be redefined. The creation of ancestors by highlighting attributes of an elite lifestyle, including weapons, in the funeral, was of

special importance in this process of power formation – which is discussed in detail in the previous chapter.[13] The areas without such a ritual use of weapons, on the other hand, can be seen as socio-political core regions, where a more stable rule prevailed. Here, swords were usually kept in circulation, which expressed *continuity* in power positions, while failing to leave any traces for the archaeologist.[14]

A similar pattern can be observed in the coastal areas around the southern North Sea: social rank was not continually demonstrated in the burial or hoarding ritual, but only during relatively short phases and in specific regions, reflecting socio-political contexts in which power positions had to be established or secured.[15] The short-term ritual investment of valuable items was an effective way of doing so, displaying the material wealth, life style and related status of the leading families, and, at the same time, resulting in the creation of powerful ancestors.[16] Moreover, as Kossack noted for high-status burials in general, the items that were selected as grave goods, or their style of execution, are often inspired by 'regalia' from neighbouring core regions, such as the Frankish kingdom and southern Scandinavia.[17]

One of the few areas where the actual transition from a *formative* phase to *more stable* power positions can be traced archaeologically is Kent. Richardson is probably right in stating that a decline in the use of grave goods from the late 6th century signalled the development of a more stable socio-political situation, in which it is was no longer necessary to express social status through grave goods.[18] Instead, longer-lasting expressions of power were required, which would remain visible after the funeral. This would explain the increasing use of burial mounds during the late 6th and 7th centuries, as well as their location at conspicuous sites along major roads and waterways – a development that was paralleled and continued by the elite's investment in early-medieval churches, which were built at prominent locations and replaced the traditional contexts of power manifestation (see fig. 11.7).

13 Theuws & Alkemade 2000, 417, 454-461, 466-467.

14 See also Theuws 2001, 198-199; compare Härke 2000a, 383-386, 393-395.

15 See also Carver 1992, 178-179 (presenting a table of 'demonstrative aristocracies').

16 See chapter 11.

17 Carver 1992, 180. See also chapter 9.

18 Richardson 2005, 255-256.

12.3 The effect of post-depositional factors

Distribution maps of valuable or indeed any other items always are a reflection not only of distribution mechanisms and depositional customs, but also of a variety of factors that affect the chance that an item is discovered and recorded, such as the covering of sites by natural sedimentation, the impact of quarrying, or national legislation regarding the use of metal detectors. Without an analysis of the impact of such factors on the archaeological datasets presented in chapters 4 to 7, we cannot be sure whether any geographical distribution represents a historical or a modern reality. For the different regions making up the research area, we shall therefore first examine the changing landscape, which is followed by a discussion of the relevant post-depositional factors in relation to chance finds, excavation finds and metal-detection finds.

12.3.1 *A changing landscape: the impact of erosion and sedimentation*

The geographical distribution of metal finds is closely related to natural conditions, which had or still have a major impact on: a) the areas that were suitable for habitation during the research period, b) the covering up of these areas by younger geological formations, and c) the destruction of such areas as a result of marine or fluvial erosion – the last two factors affecting the representativity of our archaeological dataset. Despite differences in soil types, recent excavations at settlement and cemetery sites have shown that conservation conditions for metal objects were very similar all along the southern North Sea coast, and did not, or only on a very limited scale, affect original distribution patterns.

For the Netherlands a recently published set of palaeogeographic maps shows the development of the natural landscape since 9000 BC.[19] In the early medieval period, the coastal area of the northern Netherlands (the provinces of Friesland and Groningen) was protected by a line of beach barriers and dunes, intersected by tidal gullies (fig. 12.4). Between the present-day Wadden Isles and the Pleistocene soils to the south, extensive mudflats, salt marsh and peatland dominated the landscape. Since its earliest colonization in the Iron Age, the salt marshes gradually expanded at the expense of the mudflats, until the first sea dikes were constructed in the 12th or 13th century.[20] Outside the dune ridges, early habitation in

19 Vos et al. 2011.

20 Especially Vos 1999; Vos & Knol 2005.

12.4 | Palaeogeographic reconstruction of the Netherlands around AD 800. The salt-marsh and river clays are shown in green, the peatlands in brown, the river and stream valleys in grey, and sandy or morainic soils in buff, yellow or orange (after Vos et al. 2011, 67).

this maritime landscape was possible only on the higher parts of the salt marsh, where hundreds of early-medieval settlement sites and their cemeteries were located on man-made dwelling mounds (*terpen* or *wierden*, fig. 3.1) – many of which are visible in the landscape even today. It is unknown whether contemporary cemeteries too were located on the actual salt marsh, as has been documented for northern Germany (see below). Destruction of Migration- and Merovingian-period habitation areas as a result of marine erosion has been limited to the dunes on the offshore islands (especially Vlieland), and parts of the salt marshes where tidal estuaries (especially the Middelzee and Hunze) expanded in Carolingian times.

Along the west coast and in its hinterland (the provinces of North Holland, South Holland and Utrecht), the landscape had a different character (figs. 3.6, 12.4).[21] A *closed* row of beach barriers and dunes bordered extensive peatlands to the east, intersected only by estuaries of the rivers Oer-IJ, Old Rhine and Meuse. Other dominant landscape elements were the Pleistocene outcrops of Texel and Wieringen, at the northern tip of North Holland. Most settlements were located on the beach barriers/dunes and Pleistocene elevations, on the riverbank levees and, downstream, on the higher parts of the marshes in the river estuaries, partly on dwelling mounds again. Because of

21 Bazelmans et al. 2004, 5-7.

the formation of the so-called 'Younger Dunes' since Carolingian times, it is estimated that roughly half of the formerly habitable area along the coast has been covered by up to several metres of sand, which makes it difficult to detect settlements and their cemeteries.[22] Sedimentation in the river estuaries had a similar effect: most sites, including dwelling mounds, are hidden below a layer of clay. Moreover, an unknown percentage of sites were partly or entirely destroyed by changing river courses and coastal erosion, the 'Older Dunes' originally having extended ca 1-2 km further west.

The southern part of the west coast (province of Zeeland) had a roughly similar landscape to the northern Netherlands (figs. 3.6, 12.4). After an extensive Roman-period peat zone had been eroded by flooding in the 4th century, the coastal area was characterized by a line of beach barriers and dunes, intersected by tidal gullies and bordering extensive mud flats and salt marsh.[23] In contrast to the northern Netherlands, permanent habitation was restricted to the Older Dunes; the salt marsh did not silt up high enough for settlement before the late-Carolingian period. Again, the visibility of archaeological sites is strongly affected by coastal erosion on the one hand, which destroyed most of the early-medieval beach barriers and dunes, and the covering over of the surviving parts by Younger Dunes on the other.[24]

For most of northern Germany, a palaeogeographic reconstruction of the landscape in early-medieval times is lacking; only the former coastline has been reconstructed for the Roman and early/late medieval periods (fig. 3.12). Recently, however, a landscape reconstruction has become available for Schleswig-Holstein, including its west coast – although it has sparked some debate about the coastal plains of Nordfriesland.[25] On the basis of the available data we can make a rough division of the German North Sea coast, again into three zones.[26] The first zone comprises Ostfriesland, the districts of (German) Friesland and the Wesermarsch, as well as the northern Elbe-Weser region (northern Niedersachsen). The coastal area of these regions is very similar to that of the northern Netherlands, although two differences stand out: the often smaller distance from coastline to Pleistocene uplands, which affects the number of settlement sites on the salt marshes, and the general absence of an extensive peat area between the two. Exceptions are the Jade-Weser and the eastern Elbe-Weser regions, which are characterized by a wide (river-)clay area and peat zone (fig. 3.11). The early-medieval coastline was not very different from the modern one; only small parts of the former salt marsh area were destroyed by coastal erosion (Ostfriesland and parts of the lower Weser region) and the late-medieval formation of the Dollart and Jadebusen inlets (fig. 3.12). In the salt-marsh area, the settlements were located on large numbers of dwelling mounds (*Wurten* or *Warften*, fig. 3.13), of which many are still visible in the landscape. Excavations near Ostbense (Ostfriesland) and at Fallward and Otterndorf (Elbe-Weser region) have shown that the cemeteries, at least partly, were located not on mounds but directly on salt-marsh ridges, and are much more difficult to detect – which explains why most cemetery finds originate from the adjacent Pleistocene area. (fig. 3.14).[27]

The second zone comprises the extensive salt-marsh areas of Dithmarschen and Eiderstedt, bordered to the east by Pleistocene uplands. Like the northern Netherlands and the northern Elbe-Weser region, this area is characterized by an expanding coastline. Not affected by erosion, most settlement sites are easily detectable as dwelling mounds. Moreover, settlements that were not situated on artificial elevations and therefore are harder to detect, cluster on the east-west Holocene ridge that forms the backbone of the Eiderstedt peninsula.

Little information is available about the coastal plains of Nordfriesland, of which large parts were destroyed by flooding in the 14th to 17th centuries (fig. 3.12).[28] All that remains of the originally extensive, Roman-period to early-medieval salt marsh and peat area extending north of Eiderstedt is a relatively narrow zone of salt marsh along the present-day coast, several marsh islands (including Nordstrand, Pellworm and Wiedingharde), and the salt marshes, beach barriers and dunes on the islands of Amrum,

22 Besteman 1990, 96 (North Holland); Bult & Hallewas 1990, 73 (South Holland). For a more recent summary of post-depositional factors, see Bult et al. 2006, section 3.3.

23 Van Heeringen 1995, 41-42, fig. 30; Bazelmans et al. 2004, 6.

24 For the erosion of the trading site at Domburg, for example, see Van Heeringen 1995, 41-44.

25 Meier 2011, 18. Instead of mudflats, the area east of the islands Sylt and Amrum in Roman and early medieval times probably consisted of an extensive peat and salt-marsh zone, intersected by tidal gullies (pers. comm. M. Segschneider, Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Schleswig; compare fig. 2.1).

26 See Kossack et al. 1984; Meier 1997; 2011; Behre 1999; 2008, 23-37; Kühn 2007.

27 See section 6.2, with references.

28 Segschneider 2004; Kühn 2007; Meier 2011, 110 (reconstruction of the early medieval landscape).

Föhr and Sylt. Although the still inhabited dwelling mounds on the present-day 'Halligen' do not predate the late-medieval period, settlement and single finds indicate that early-medieval sites too were present in various parts of this nowadays fragmented landscape.[29]

In contrast to large parts of the Netherlands and northern Germany, the North Sea coast of southeast England was hardly affected by sedimentation or erosion in post-Roman times, at least not in a way that former settlement areas were destroyed or covered over with thick layers of sediment. The most important changes to the landscape are the silting up of the former Wantsum Channel in the easternmost part of Kent, and further north of riverbeds in Essex and East Anglia.[30] Early Anglo-Saxon settlements and cemeteries are 'dry-land sites', mainly located on the light soils and gravels of river valleys on the one hand (East Anglia and Essex, fig. 3.19), and on the fertile soils on both sides of a prominent chalk ridge on the other (Kent, fig. 3.20). An important difference from the regions where people lived on dwelling mounds is the visibility of archaeological sites. With the exception of cemeteries with monumental barrows, the English sites are barely detectable above ground.

12.3.2 ***Chance finds: the impact of quarrying***

During the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, most early-medieval valuables were found accidentally, mainly at the sites of construction and quarrying. The chance that an item was discovered and also recorded depended on: a) the 'good fortune' that an archaeological site was disturbed, b) the ability of labourers or other finders to appreciate the historical (or monetary) value of archaeological finds, and c) the vicinity of regional museums or the homes of interested intellectuals who were keen to record and often to buy and collect these finds, many of which now form part of the archaeological collections of regional and national museums.

The chance that archaeological items were discovered during various construction works, such as house and road building, probably was the same throughout most of the research area, although urban and industrial development in the western and central Netherlands (South Holland and Utrecht) may have affected the distribution pattern to some extent. The often large-scale extraction of peat for fuel, of the fertile soil from dwelling mounds, and of sand, clay and gravel had a different effect, resulting in some remarkable clusters of finds. For each of these clusters we need to question whether they actually reflect a historical situation, or should be seen as a modern phenomenon.

During the cutting of peat on the Pleistocene uplands close to the German North Sea coast, a silver-gilt equal-armed brooch at Dösemoor (5th century, fig. 6.24) and in the area around Sievern some gold jewellery, including bracteates, coin-pendants and a neck ring (late 5th-first half of 6th century, figs. 6.15-16), were uncovered. Although the number of valuables is small, they show a clustering in the northern part of the Elbe-Weser region, especially around the Iron Age and Roman-period hillfort named 'Heidenschanze' near Sievern – which is the very area where recently a small bracteate hoard was discovered with a metal detector (fig. 6.17). Because peat was exploited all along the eastern part of the North Sea coast and no similar finds have been reported for any of the other research regions, this cluster probably is the reflection of a historical situation. In the province of Drenthe (northern Netherlands), for example, peat was exploited on a huge scale, which uncovered a variety of finds from the Bronze Age up to the late-medieval period, but no single gold or silver ornament from the 5th or 6th century.[31]

The *number* of valuables from the northern Elbe-Weser region, however, will be underrepresented, and it is unknown how this may affect the distribution pattern at the regional level. Without any doubt, many gold, silver and other items disappeared into melting pots or domestic stoves, unrecognized during the peat-cutting or sold off by finders who did not know or care about their historical value.[32] A description of the find circumstances of the largest bracteate hoard from Sievern (fig. 6.16) exemplifies this: "The peat spade had gone in right among the 'coins' – a little more to the left or to the right, and they would have remained hidden in the block of peat, ending up in a stove and presumably vanishing without a trace."[33]

Dramatically affecting the cultural heritage of the northern Netherlands, but at the same time resulting in an exceptional collection

29 E.g. Segschneider 2004, 49, 145-146, 151. For a Migration-period landing place on the island of Amrum, see Segschneider 2002a; 2002b.

30 For Kent, see Brookes 2003, 86, fig. 8.1; Richardson 2005, 42.

31 Pers. comm. V. van Vilsteren (Drents Museum, Assen).

32 See also Häßler 2003, 125-126 (who speaks of a 'tip of the iceberg').

33 Schröter 1957, 113-114 (translation JN).

12.5 | The quarrying of fertile settlement soil from the *terp* Blija (Friesland), in 1912. The soil was dug away manually and transported by barge to the poorer soils in the interior (photo coll. Fries Museum, Leeuwarden).

of settlement and grave finds, was the systematic quarrying of ancient dwelling mounds for their fertile soil, which contained a great deal of dung and other organic remains (fig. 12.5).[34] This meant that between 1840 and 1945 hundreds of archaeological sites were partly or entirely dug away. By the end of World War II, when ancient soil was replaced by modern fertilizers, 689 of the 910 settlement mounds (76%) then known in the province of Friesland had been affected or destroyed.[35] The digging of *terp* soil was done manually, which resulted in the discovery of thousands of archaeological items, of which only a fraction were collected by local antiquarians and the regional museums of the provinces of Friesland (Fries Museum, Leeuwarden) and Groningen (Groninger Museum, Groningen). Still, a large number and variety of items, including pottery, metal objects and organic materials, were documented for over 600 sites (e.g. fig. 8.17).[36] The fertile soil and undiscovered artifacts were carried off by barge to enrich the less fertile peatland, heath and sandy soils further inland, where pottery and metal finds (including a gold bracteate from De Valom, fig. 4.22), may be recovered up to this day.

Distribution maps of the soil quarrying are available only for the province of Friesland (fig. 12.6). The greatest number of sites were dug away in the western half of Friesland, in the Westergo district, where indeed most dwelling mounds are located (ca 75% of all sites in Friesland).[37] Elsewhere, the exploitation of mounds focused on the former salt-marsh area in the western and northern part of Oostergo. In one particular area, however, the majority of sites were left intact: the northernmost part of Westergo. The settlement mounds in this area are usually very sandy and devoid of dung, which makes them unsuitable as fertiliser.[38] Despite the poor representation of finds from northern Westergo, the large scale and systematic nature of the quarrying produced a collection of finds that is representative for the early-medieval situation in large parts of the northern Netherlands. Within the southern North Sea area as a whole, however, this wealth of settlement finds is unique and difficult to compare with archaeological data from the surrounding regions. The picture is complicated by the fact that settlement mounds in northern Germany were only occasionally exploited for their fertile soil.

In the western Netherlands, sand quarrying and the levelling of dunes for growing bulbs has destroyed large parts of the ancient coastal landscape.[39] Moreover, clay was extracted on a large scale along the Old Rhine for the brick and tile industry. Because of the relative vicinity of the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden

34 Especially Halbertsma 1963, 23 ff.; Arjaans 1991; Knol 1993, 47-50.

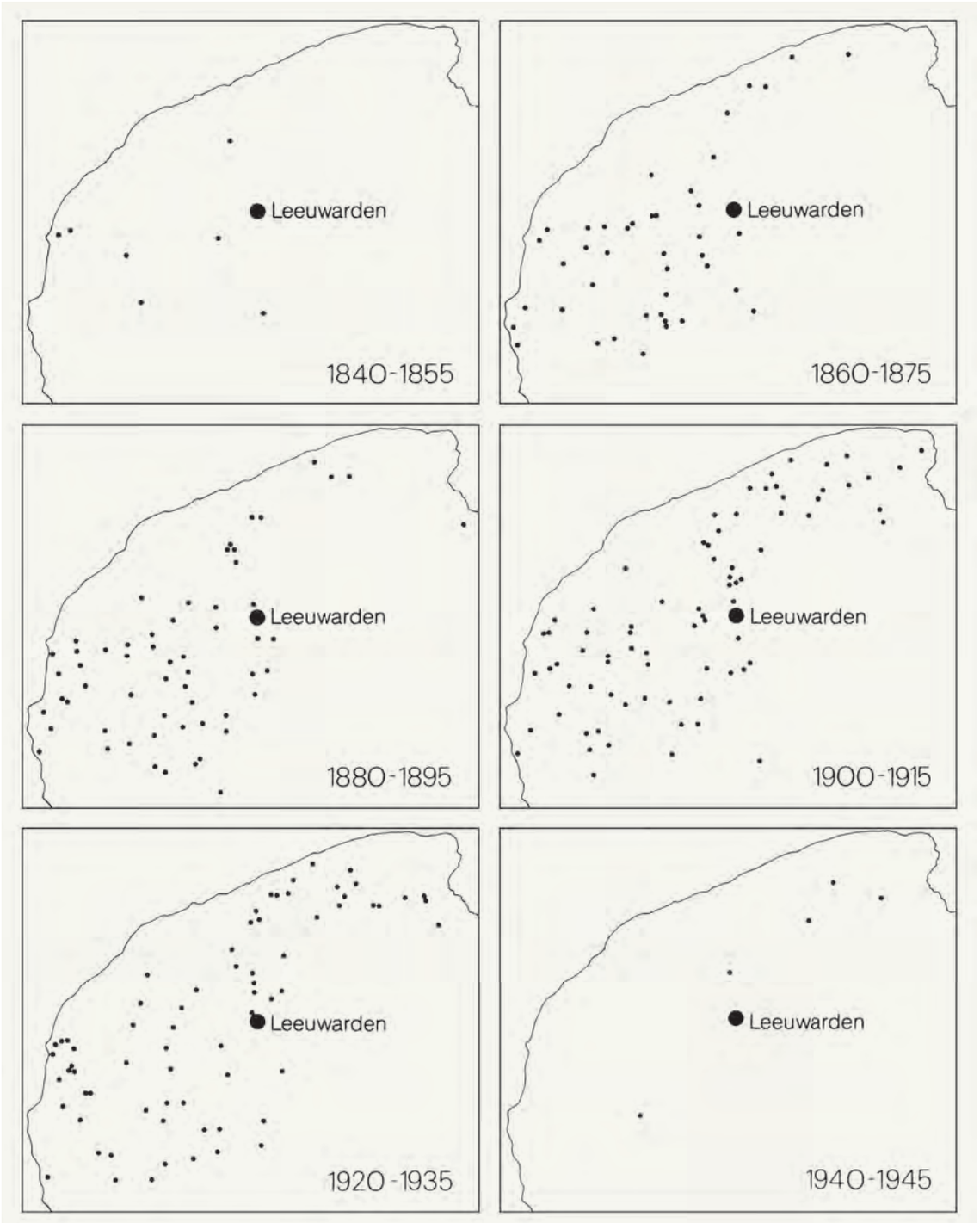
35 Arjaans 1991, 54.

36 For Friesland, see Galestin & Volkers 1992, catalogue (520 sites).

37 Arjaans 1991, 53.

38 Bazelmans et al. 2002, 233. The criteria for selection are discussed by Halbertsma (1963, 27-29).

39 Bult & Hallewas 1990, 73; Bult et al. 2006, section 3.3; Dijkstra 2011, 65.



12.6 | The locations of commercial *terp*-quarrying activity in the province of Friesland, during the period 1840-1945 (after Arjaans 1991, fig. 7).

(National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden), the quarrying of sand in South Holland led to the early excavation of some rich cemeteries, at Katwijk-'Klein Duin' (1906-1911, fig. 5.5), Rijnsburg-'De Horn' (1913 and 1924, fig. 5.2) and The Hague-'Solleveld' (1955).[40] Although the number of sites is small, these excavations produced some of the most prestigious early-medieval items known from the western Netherlands (figs. 5.3, 5.6). The often invisible wealth of rural settlement sites in the same area was illuminated by the recent discovery of brooches, coins and other items by metal detector in a former sand quarry at Katwijk-'Zanderij' (South Holland, fig. 5.34), a site that otherwise would have remained hidden below a thick cover of sand .[41] Their fortuitous discovery and documentation is an important indication that these finds are just a fraction of the original number of metal items that circulated in early-medieval times, not only in South Holland, but, as recent metal-detection finds indicate (e.g. figs. 5.22-23), also in North Holland. In con-

40 For Rijnsburg and Katwijk, see section 5.2. The Hague: Braat 1956; see also Waasdorp & Eimermann 2008.

41 Van der Velde 2008.

12.7 | Four gold tremisses (nos. 1-4) and one gold-plated tremissis (no. 5) from the rural settlement complex Utrecht-'Leidsche Rijn', found during recent excavations that were carried out in the framework of the Malta Convention (1: site 'LR 51/54', 2-5: site 'LR 55'). Scale 3:1 (coll. Gemeentelijk Archeologisch en Bouwhistorisch Depot, Utrecht, photos H. Lägers).

trast to sand extraction, which resulted in the discovery of several burial grounds, including one or two on a morainic hill near Rhenen (Utrecht, fig. 2.4), the extraction of clay in the central river area has revealed just a few early-medieval sites – probably because this activity is mainly focused on low-lying areas in the floodbasins.[42]

Across the Channel, most valuable items originate from cremation and especially inhumation graves. A relatively large number of early Anglo-Saxon cemetery sites have been discovered during various forms of mineral extraction, especially in eastern Kent – the area where since the 18th century no fewer than 5400 early Anglo-Saxon graves have been recorded, at ca 290 sites (fig. 3.20).[43] Although the extraction of, amongst others, gravel, chalk and clay is the largest single factor in the discovery of Kentish cemeteries (36x), this is only one of many factors, which also include the construction of buildings (35x), archaeological prospections and excavations (26x), road and railway construction (23x), recognition of visible features (20x) and agricultural work (3x).[44] This diversity of factors, which are not restricted to specific regions, is an especially strong indication that the distribution pattern is an accurate reflection of the early-medieval situation.[45] Similar factors have also played a role in the discovery of sites in the area north of the Thames, although the presence of a chalk ridge in eastern Kent may have affected the distribution pattern to some extent. Since the graves on the North Downs and their slopes were cut into the chalk bedrock, they tend to be easily detectable when a site is exposed, even to the untrained eye.[46] In areas dominated by sand, gravels and especially clay, detection is more difficult.

42 For Rhenen, see Heidinga 1990 and section 5.2. Pers. comm. J. van Doesburg (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort).

43 See Richardson 2005, appendices 1-2.

44 The numbers refer to the situation in 2005 (see Richardson 2005, 59-62, table 12).

45 Richardson 2005, 62.

46 Richardson 2005, 47. Compare Welch 2007, figs. 1.2 and 6.5.

12.3.3 ***Excavation finds: the impact of commercial archaeology***

After an 'experimental' phase in the 19th century, the 20th century saw a growing number of systematic excavations being conducted all along the southern North Sea coast, both at settlement and at cemetery sites. While the initially small number of these excavations had little effect on the distribution pattern of early medieval valuables, the advent of commercial archaeology in the 1990s markedly affected both the number of sites that were excavated and their geographical distribution.

In the Netherlands the traditional role of museums, universities and the State Service in conducting archaeological excavations has changed dramatically over the past two decades. Since the ratification of the Malta Convention by the Dutch government in 1992, an ever-growing number of excavations have been carried out by commercial companies. According to this convention and the related heritage legislation, building or other activities have to be preceded by prospective research (coring or test trenches) and both this research and any subsequent excavations must be paid for by the 'disturber' (the cost-by-cause principle). While not part of the same legislation, an important aspect of modern archaeology is also the systematic use of metal detectors at all excavations, which has resulted in unprecedented numbers of metal finds from individual sites.

The early medieval sites excavated by commercial companies since 1992 are mainly rural settlements, and show a remarkable clustering in the river and coastal regions of the central and adjacent western Netherlands – areas that previously were dominated by cemetery finds. At two rural settlements near Utrecht, for example, a set of gold pendants, a fragment of a silver keystone-garnet disc brooch and four tremisses were found (figs. 5.29, 5.40, 12.7), as well as a silver buckle and five further tremisses (fig. 12.7). Other excavation finds from the same areas are a small gold hoard from Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht, fig. 5.26), single gold bracteates from Leiden-'Roomburg' (South Holland, fig. 5.41) and Dorestad (Utrecht, fig. 5.44), and one or more gold coins from Dorestad and from rural settlements near Houten (Utrecht), Katwijk (South Holland) and Oegstgeest (South Holland).[47] The most relevant point about these finds is the revelation that the occurrence of 'gold-rich' settlement sites is not restricted to the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. Although North Holland and most of South Holland are still 'empty', sites with a similar material culture are to be expected all along the North Sea coast of the western Netherlands.

The Malta Convention resulted in the introduction of the cost-by-cause principle and commercial archaeology in England too. Whereas archaeology in southeast England was dominated by cemetery research throughout the 19th, and most of the 20th centuries, a growing number of settlements have been excavated during the past decades. Although metal detectors are systematically employed in all excavations, this has resulted in the discovery of just a few early Anglo-Saxon items of gold and silver at rural settlement sites, such as a silver-gilt Nydam-style brooch from Gillingham.[48] As a post-depositional factor, settlement excavations clearly have not changed the distribution of such finds in the way that they have in the Netherlands.

In Germany the situation is completely different. Owing to the federal structure and the cultural sovereignty of the sixteen German states (*Bundesländer*), there is no nationwide heritage legislation but sixteen heritage laws, differing in some principles and many details.[49] Although commercial archaeology does exist in most of the German states, excavations are generally performed by the heritage agencies.[50] Moreover, the Malta Convention has not yet found its way into all heritage laws, although the German government signed it even in 1992 and ratified it in 2003. While the cost-by-cause principle was soon established in the eastern German states (early 1990s), it was not incorporated into the heritage laws of those along the North Sea coast. Therefore, most of the excavations in the German part of the research area have been financed by public authorities or foundations. Builders have often shared in the cost merely to quicken the archaeological investigations. As a result, recent decades have seen only a few large-scale excavations at settlement sites (e.g. Loxstedt and Wittstedt, in the Elbe-Weser region).[51] Despite the systematic

47 See chapter 5.

48 Gillingham: *TAR* 2005/2006, no. 197. Compare the absence or scarcity of silver items from rural settlement sites that were excavated at West Stow (Suffolk, West 1985), Mucking (Essex, Hamerow 1993), Spong Hill (Norfolk, Rickett 1995), Kilverstone (Norfolk, Garrow et al. 2006) and Bloodmoor Hill (Suffolk, Lucy et al. 2009). No gold items were discovered at any of these sites.

49 Pers. comm. H. Jöns (Niedersächsischen Institut für Historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).

50 In some of the heritage laws it is even stated that these states *must* perform the excavations.

51 Zimmermann 2001 (Loxstedt); Schön 2005 (Wittstedt).

use of metal detectors, these excavations did not result in any finds of early-medieval gold or silver that might be added to the traditional collection of grave and hoard finds. The legal situation, however, has recently changed: as from the beginning of 2012, the cost-by-cause principle is also incorporated in the heritage laws of Niedersachsen and Schleswig-Holstein. Future excavations will reveal to what extent their implementation will result in the discovery of early-medieval valuables and affect the latter's current distribution pattern.

12.3.4 ***Metal-detection finds: the impact of national legislation and regional find conditions***

Since the metal detector was introduced in the 1980s, a huge peak in the recovery of metal objects has occurred. Because of differences in national legislation, however, it is hardly possible to compare the numbers and distribution of metal-detection finds from different countries. Moreover, within countries where searching with a metal detector is allowed, various post-depositional factors may have affected the distribution pattern even further.

In England the 'Portable Antiquity Scheme' (PAS) is proof of very successful collaboration between professional archaeologists and about 10,000 metal detectorists.[52] This registration system, in operation since 1997, is founded on a network of 39 so-called 'Finds Liaison Officers', who – supported by six 'National Finds Advisers' – systematically record metal-detector finds in the different counties of England and Wales. In both countries it is legal to recover archaeological items with a metal detector, as long as the landowner has given permission and protected sites are avoided. While finders have the obligation to report potential 'Treasure' (generally items of gold and silver that are at least 300 years old), the PAS is entirely voluntary. Nevertheless, over 880,000 metal items have been recorded during the past decade and a half – including thousands of finds from Norfolk (ca. 50,000), Suffolk (ca 81,000), Essex (ca 22,000) and Kent (ca 33,000).[53] All finds, including their findspot to within 1 km, are published on the PAS website, which is accessible not only to researchers, but also to the broader public.

In the Netherlands, metal detection occupies a more difficult position. Although about 5,000 people own a metal detector, probably half of whom search on a regular basis, there are no clear regulations about metal detection.[54] Between 1990 and 1995 several articles were published on the question of whether metal detection is actually forbidden by law, or not.[55] In most articles it is argued that removing objects from the topsoil is not equivalent to 'disturbing the soil' – unlike excavating, which, according to the Dutch Heritage Law, requires a licence. Yet an article written by the then head of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed) takes an opposite position: digging into the topsoil is put on a par with excavating, which makes it an illegal activity. The Agency has since then not relinquished this stance.[56] About the reporting of metal-detection finds, including Treasure Trove, the Dutch legal system leaves no room for debate: as objects of historical value they must be reported at all times. In practice, however, the majority of finds end up in private collections without any report being made.

Because the use of a metal detector by others than professional archaeologists has always been condemned by the Cultural Heritage Agency, the Netherlands have failed to develop a satisfactory registration system like the PAS. Although a national database for all archaeological finds (ARCHIS), in operation since 1992 and on the internet since 2002, now includes over 86,000 find records, only ca 2,200 sites or individual items have been contributed by metal detectorists.[57] The relatively small number of reported metal finds is due to the general fear among detectorists that their finds will be taken off them and site information will be made public and hence available to other searchers. Moreover, the recording of the few metal-detection finds that have been reported is inadequate, often without a proper description and dating, or even a photo, which makes ARCHIS unsuitable for scientific research.[58] More successful is the national database for coins and other numismatic items (NUMIS), in operation since 1997 and on the internet since 2004, which currently encompasses informa-

52 Dawson & Lewis 2004.

53 Situation in July 2013. PAS: www.finds.org.uk. Pers. comm. R. Bland (British Museum, London).

54 Number of searchers: pers. comm. J. Koning (Leeuwarden, staff member of 'De Detectoramateur').

55 Especially Bos 1990; Gerrets 1995b.

56 Willems 1990. The negative attitude towards metal detection by the Cultural Heritage Agency is reflected in the remark that "…a metal detectorist cannot be trusted unless the opposite is proven." (Willems 1990, 272 [translation by the author]).

57 Situation in July 2013; each record covers one or more items from the same site. ARCHIS: www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/werken/archis (managed by the Cultural Heritage Agency at Amersfoort). Pers. comm. A. Sloos (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort).

58 See also Heeren & Cruysheer 2002.

tion about ca 276.000 finds.[59] This database is very popular among metal detectorists, because, other than in ARCHIS, their site information is properly protected and they themselves do not need to record the finds; this is done by experienced coin specialists of the Money Museum at Utrecht. Like the PAS database, the coin finds can be consulted on the internet, where findspots are only roughly identified. Despite the existence of two national databases and the wealth of metal-detection finds in the Netherlands, the sad conclusion has to be that the majority of metal finds are inaccessible to international and even Dutch scholars.[60]

In contrast to England, all German states demand a permit from the responsible heritage authorities to search with a metal detector.[61] Within northern Germany an exceptional position is taken by Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the first German states where professional archaeologists and metal detectorists successfully collaborate – adjusting the Danish system to the German situation.[62] In Schleswig-Holstein, the Archaeological State Office organizes an annual five-day theoretical and practical course for people who want to search with a metal detector. After successfully completing this, they are granted a licence, which is valid only for a restricted, clearly defined search area, usually close to the searcher's home. Although since 2005 about 100 licences have been granted in Schleswig-Holstein, only few people are searching along the North Sea coast, which explains the relatively small number of recent finds from this area. Still, these include a 5th- or 6th-century piece of hack gold, found at a rural settlement site on the island of Föhr (figs. 6.28-29).[63] In most regions of Niedersachsen few if any permits have been issued, which explains the small number of metal objects that have been found and reported here – including the small hoard of bracteates from Sievern (fig. 6.17). Inspired by the good results of collaboration with metal detectorists in Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Niedersachsen is currently preparing a similar system of education and licensing.[64] In Germany all finds of archaeological value must be reported, and in Schleswig-Holstein must usually be handed over to the State Office.

Within the countries where metal detection is legal – or tolerated – several factors may affect the chance that metal items in a specific region or at a specific site are actually found. The most important factors are the presence of early-medieval sites, not destroyed by erosion or covered over by thick layers of sediment, and their present-day use as arable land, which means that ploughing will result in the progressive disturbance of habitation layers or other features (e.g. pits or graves) containing metal items. Within the research area this combination of factors can be found in four areas that are all characterized by rich collections of early-medieval metal-detection finds: the salt-marsh area of the northern Netherlands (Friesland and Groningen), the Pleistocene outcrops of Texel and Wieringen (North Holland), the river region in the central and adjacent western Netherlands, especially along the Old Rhine (Utrecht and South Holland), and southeast England.

The varying opportunities for metal detection in different parts of the northern Netherlands can be illustrated by comparing the distribution of gold objects found with and without a metal-detector (figs. 12.8-9).[65] The pre-metal-detection finds show a widespread distribution, reflecting the areas where dwelling mounds were dug away for their fertile soil (for Friesland, compare fig. 12.6). The metal-detection finds show a very different distribution, with a striking concentration of finds in the northern part of Westergo. Given the small number of *terp* sites that were quarried here, this pattern is clearly affected by the presence of early-medieval layers near the surface in these dwelling mounds and the use of the latter as arable land, which results in gradual erosion and the progressive ploughing-up of habitation layers.[66] Not without significance is also the self-reinforcing nature of metal detection in gold-rich areas: metal detectorists prefer to search in areas known already to have yielded metal items, especially of gold and silver, even if this takes them far from home.[67]

59 Situation in July 2013. NUMIS: www.geldmuseum.nl (managed by the Geldmuseum at Utrecht). Pers. comm. J. Pelsdonk (Geldmuseum, Utrecht).

60 An exception are the finds collected during a systematic metal-detection survey in 1992-1996 (De Langen&Hommes 1998), including a gold finger ring (fig. 4.34, no. 7).

61 Pers. comm. H. Jöns (Niedersächsischen Institut für Historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).

62 Segschneider 2008. For the Danish system, see Henriksen 2006.

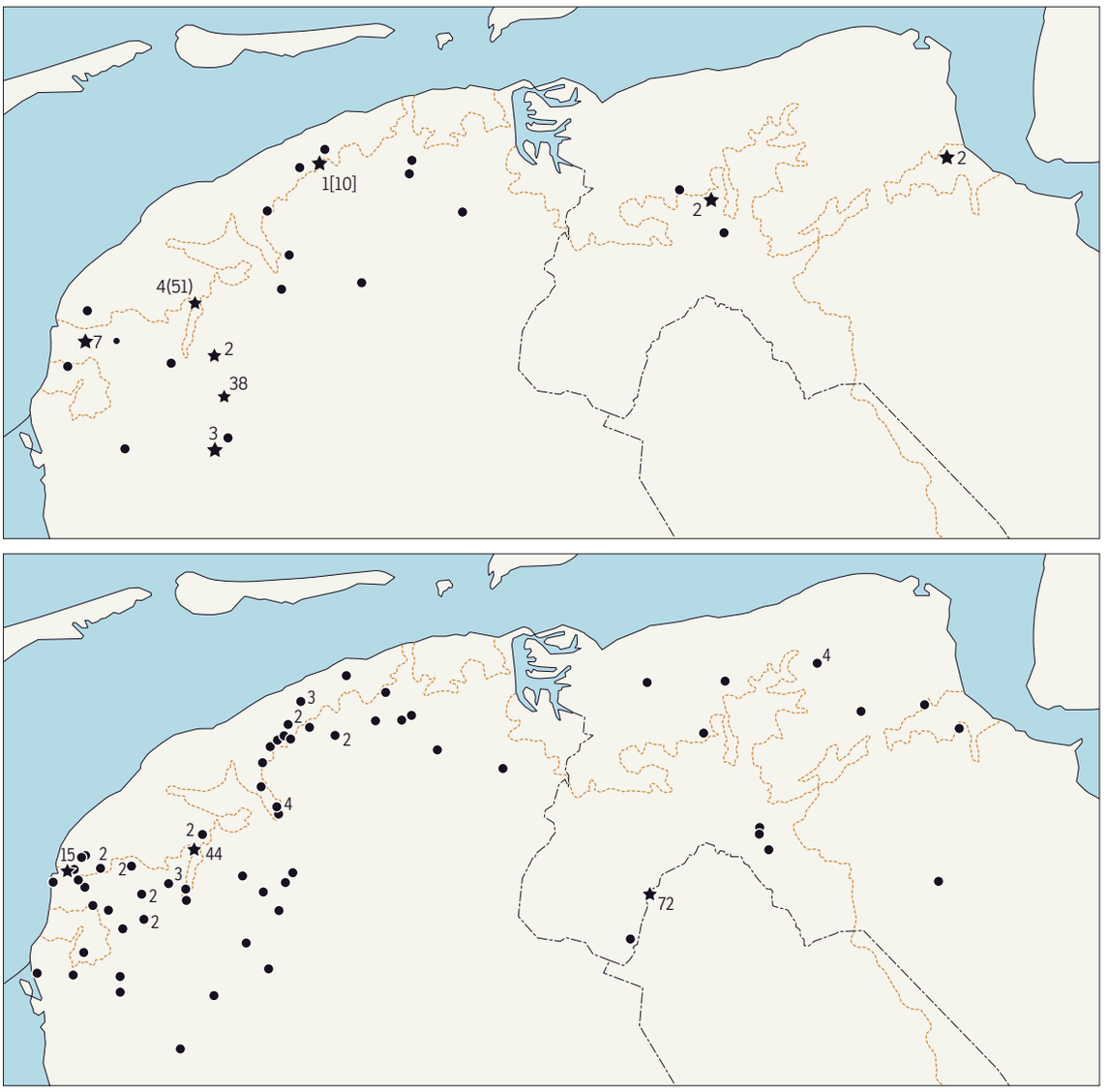
63 Pers. comm. M. Segschneider (Archäologisches Landesamt Schleswig-Holstein, Schleswig).

64 Pers. comm. H. Jöns (Niedersächsischen Institut für Historische Küstenforschung, Wilhelmshaven).

65 Bazelmans et al. 2002; compare Bazelmans 2003 for Roman coins.

66 Bazelmans et al. 2002, 233-235.

67 It is common knowledge that northern Westergo attracts metal detectorists not only from the whole of Friesland, but also from the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe and North Holland.



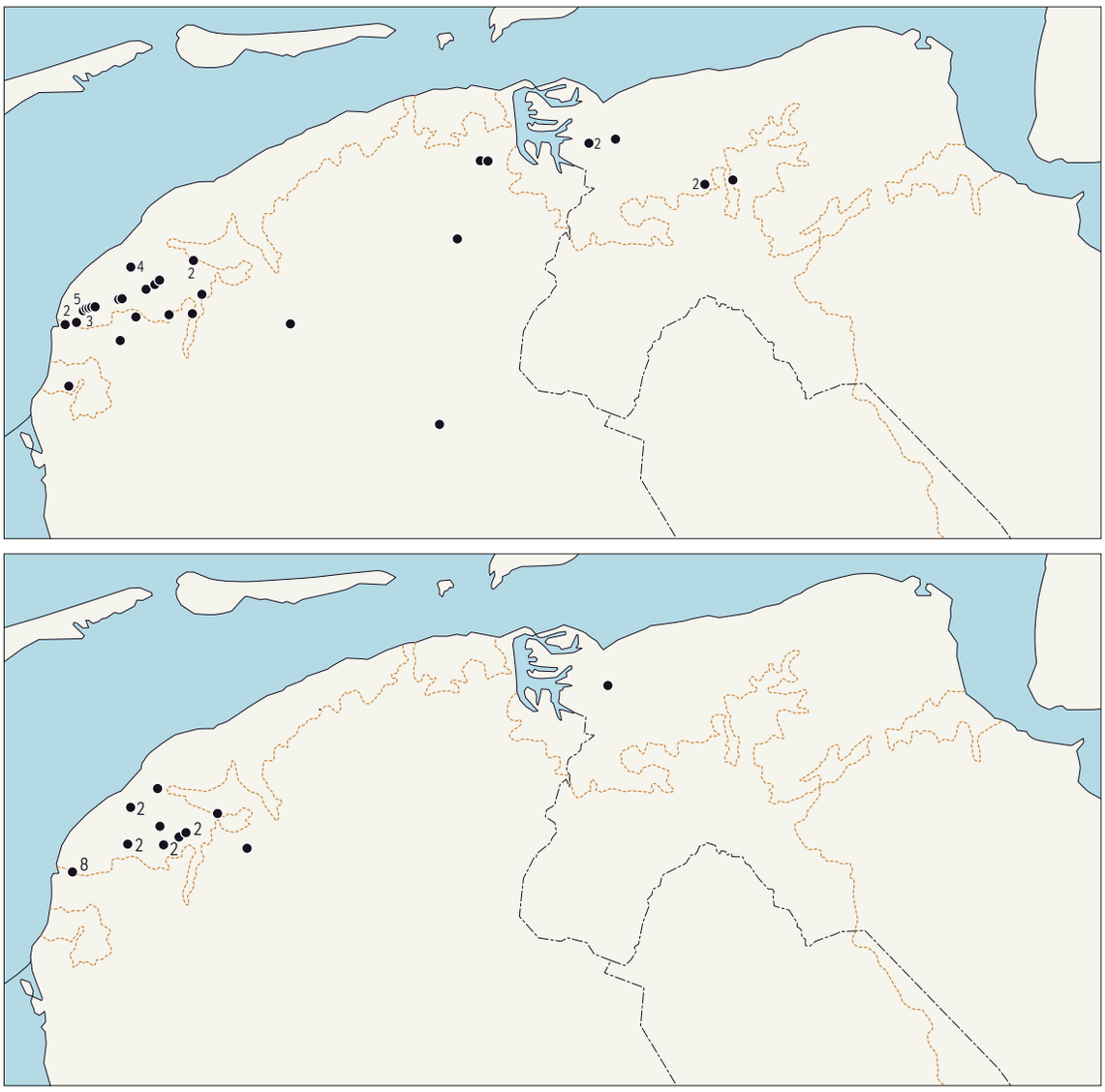
12.8 | The geographical distribution of 5th- to 7th-century gold ornaments (top) and coins (bottom), found *without* a metal detector in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands (figures indicate multiple finds; in the case of a hoard with coins or silver jewellery, these numbers are shown in round or square brackets, respectively). The dotted line marks the boundary between arable (north of this line) and pasture in the *terp* region (redrawn after Bazelmans et al. 2002, figs. 4-5).

Outside northern Westergo a different picture can be observed. Despite the relatively large number of *terp*-quarrying finds from southern and especially central Westergo, hardly any metal-detection finds have been recorded here. Besides the impact of quarrying on the number of dwelling mounds that still (partly) survive, this can be explained by the fact that the area is predominantly under grass. The dearth of metal-detection finds from northern Oostergo and Groningen, where the remaining dwelling mounds are predominantly part of arable land, is more difficult to explain. Although a relatively large number of *terpen* in Oostergo are built over by modern villages, which renders them inaccessible for metal detection, there are no indications that the small number of finds both from Oostergo and Groningen results from post-depositional factors. It is highly relevant that a small group of metal detectorists have systematically searched both regions over the past years, finding Roman coins and early-medieval brooches or other copper-alloy items, but hardly any objects of gold or silver.[68] Although the number of metal-detector finds from North Holland is small, they show a clustering on the Pleistocene outcrops of Texel and Wieringen. Both areas are characterized by the presence of well-preserved early-medieval sites, not covered over by younger sediments and now partly in use as arable land.

In the western and central Netherlands, the best opportunities for metal detection are found in the river area, especially along the Old Rhine. Despite the negative impact of clay extraction on the conservation of the early-medieval landscape, many intact settlement and cemetery sites can still be found on the sandy and relatively high natural levees along defunct channels of the Rhine, Lek, Waal and Meuse, as excavations in the Houten and Leidsche Rijn areas, near Utrecht, have shown.[69] Many of these levees are at least partly used as arable fields.

68 For the find distribution of Roman coins, see Bazelmans 2003, figs. 20-21.

69 See section 5.4.



12.9 | The geographical distribution of 5th- to 7th-century gold ornaments (top) and coins (bottom), found *with* a metal detector in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands (figures indicate multiple finds). The dotted line marks the boundary between arable (north of this line) and pasture in the *terp* region (redrawn after Bazelmans et al. 2002, figs. 6-7).

Table 12.1 | The impact of various post-depositional factors on the archaeological visibility of early-medieval elites, as reflected in the discovery and geographical distribution of minted and unminted gold and silver, in different parts of the research area. Visibility score: -2: very negative impact, -1: negative impact, 0: no or hardly any impact, 1: positive impact, 2: very positive impact (*: including the adjacent Pleistocene upland).

PROVINCE, COUNTY OR DISTRICT	EROSION AND/OR SEDIMENTATION	QUARRYING	EXCAVATIONS	METAL DETECTION	OVERALL ELITE-VISIBILITY SCORE
Nordfriesland	-2	0	0	1	-1
Eiderstedt	0	0	0	0	0
Dithmarschen	0	0	0	0	0
N. Elbe-Weser region*	0	2	0	1	3
Ostfriesland	0	0	1	0	1
Friesland (N. Westergo)	0	1	1	2	4
Friesland (remainder)	0	2	0	1	3
Groningen	0	2	0	1	3
Texel / Wieringen	0	0	1	2	3
North Holland	-2	0	0	1	-1
South Holland	-2	1	2	1	2
Utrecht	-1	0	2	2	3
Zeeland	-2	0	0	1	-1
East Anglia / Essex	0	1	1	2	4
Kent	0	2	1	2	5

Despite its different landscape, the situation in southeast England is quite similar to that of the northern and central Netherlands. Most early-medieval sites are still present, not covered over by younger sediments, and now in use as arable land. In southeast England, however, arable fields cover a much larger proportion of the land than in any of the Dutch regions, which positively affects the chance of finding metal items in Kent, Essex and East Anglia.

12.4 Conclusion

Being situated between the Frankish kingdom and southern Scandinavia, the southern North Sea world was influenced by different socio-political core regions, each having their own cultural and ideological characteristics. It is exactly in such a 'contact zone' that social competition, taking the form of investment of valuable items in burial and hoarding rituals, is expected to be visible archaeologically. The chance of prestigious grave goods and hoarded items actually being discovered, however, is strongly affected by various post-depositional factors. This impact is presented as 'elite-visibility scores' in table 12.1, which clearly shows the varying opportunities for tracing elites through valuables of gold and silver in the research area. While elites are almost invisible in large parts of northern Germany and the western Netherlands, the situation is much better in the northern Elbe-Weser region, in the northern Netherlands, on the Pleistocene outcrops of Texel and Wieringen, in the central river area (Utrecht) and in southeast England (especially Kent).

In the following chapter, the geographical distribution of valuable items and their social status will be 'translated' into elite networks – of course taking into account the effects of post-depositional factors. The highest status symbols can be used for tracing elite residences and central places, while at a regional level only the geographical distribution of valuable items in areas with a high visibility score may shed light on the network of personal relations between a king or other leader and his followers.

13

The reconstruction of elite networks: a comparative approach

13.1 Introduction

The starting point for the *reconstruction of elite networks* is the premise that both the import and circulation of gold and silver was based on a complex and hierarchical system of exchange, which combined gift-giving and more commercial transactions – besides the influx or outflow of booty, tribute and other political payments. The different elements of import and circulation, as brought together in figure 10.8, show that:

1. not all Germanic people had access to gold and silver. Only those members of the upper, often royal elite who participated in inter-regional networks of gift- and long-distance exchange were able to obtain these precious metals;
2. gold and silver reached the research area through a network of 'horizontal' exchange relations, while the distribution of gold within society was based on a pyramidal system of patron-client relations: from regional or supra-regional kings, via the regional elite, to people of lower social status;
3. jewellery and other ornaments of gold and silver circulated as prestigious gifts among members of the royal, the regional and, to a lesser extent, the local elite;
4. gold and silver 'currency' (coins, ingots and hack or ring gold/silver) circulated both as gifts and in limited transactions between members of this royal, regional and local elite.

In this chapter, the reconstruction of elite networks is based on the geographical distribution of valuable items of gold and silver that were shared out by a king or by lower-status leaders (the patrons) among their groups of followers (clients). This distribution will, in theory, reflect their power range, especially when such items gave expression to a regional or supra-regional group identity. Because the distribution pattern of prestige goods is strongly affected both by depositional and post-depositional processes, this chapter will focus on areas with a relatively high 'elite-visibility score' (table 12.1, scores of 3-5). It is demonstrated, however, that elites are traceable only during periods and in areas that saw social competition, resulting in the 'ritual investment' of valuables in graves and hoards, leaving more stable elite networks largely invisible to the archaeologist.[1] By adopting a supra-regional perspective and a long-term, *comparative approach*, the research area is seen as a draughts board, where power positions are apparent only on no more than a few fields at any specific time. This approach is based on the hypothesis that archaeological data from one region, in combination with the evidence from earlier and later periods, can be used for reconstructing socio-political developments in other areas – as will be tested below.

For each of the 'cultural phases' distinguished in chapter 9, there is a brief review of the typical jewellery, weaponry and belt-elements. Their geographical distribution is compared with that of contemporary coins and linked to the presence of any other elements of the 'socio-political landscape', such as hillforts, landing places or trading sites.[2] On this basis attempts are made to translate the archaeological distribution patterns into regional or supra-regional elite networks indicat-

1 See section 12.2.1.

2 See chapter 3.

ing the extent of individual kingdoms, and to trace the location of central places (or 'central areas') along the southern North Sea coast (sections 13.2-7). Finally, it will be debated to what extent the material culture defining individual elite networks might have expressed ethnic identities, or whether distributing valuables was no more than a tool of the elite to create a sense of solidarity – as a 'political identity' – within the area they controlled (section 13.8). In the present chapter, the 'nuclear regions' that are presented in chapter 3 are regarded as basic units of the social and elite networks on which the socio-political structure of early medieval kingdoms was based.

13.2 Regional kingdoms after the fall of the West-Roman Empire (late 4th-5th century)

The decades around AD 400 are chosen as a starting date for the research period, as they mark the beginning of two important changes: the gradual transformation of the West-Roman empire into a Frankish successor kingdom, and, in its northern periphery, the migration of 'Saxons', 'Angles' and to a lesser extent also 'Scandinavians' to the Dutch and English coasts of the southern North Sea (fig. 1.8).[3] The Dutch coastal areas were probably deserted or inhabited by no more than a small remnant of the Roman-period population by this time. It is generally assumed that a more substantial part of the original population still inhabited southern *Britannia* after it was abandoned as a Roman province around 410. Most if not all known settlement and cemetery sites in southeast England, however, show a disruption after the Roman period, the grave goods of the newly established cemeteries being characterized by 'Anglo-Saxon' items.[4] The situation was different in northern Germany, or at least in the northern Elbe-Weser region, where not the late-Roman but the Merovingian period was a time of population decline and in some areas even depopulation. Despite their different traditions and habitation histories, it was the common background of the 'Anglo-Saxon' newcomers and the relations to their homelands that tied the southern North Sea regions together in the following centuries – resulting in a network of socio-political, economic, cultural and ideological bonds that have traditionally been labelled a 'North Sea culture'.[5]

Although the size of the migrating groups and their exact origin still are heavily debated, the process of early medieval 'power formation' in the coastal areas of southeast England and the Netherlands was initiated or, at least, accelerated by members of the new arrivals. Archaeologically, the first stage of this process is visible in the appearance of 'Saxon' brooches, made of silver or bronze, in the burial rite of southeast England and at settlement sites in the northern Netherlands.[6] Because the number of finds from England and the Netherlands is too small to reveal any regional patterning that can be used for reconstructing elite networks, the relatively large collection of late 4th- and 5th-century brooches from northern Germany will be taken as a starting point.

Within Germany, most of these crossbow brooches (*Armbrustfibeln*), supporting-arm brooches (*Stützarmfibeln*), equal-armed brooches (*Gleicharmige fibeln*) and saucer brooches (*Schalenfibeln*) have been found at the rich cemetery sites of the northern Elbe-Weser region – giving this area a relatively high elite-visibility score (table 12.1). On the basis of the geographical distribution of saucer and equal-armed brooches, Genrich was able to distinguish two regional style groups: a western group, between the rivers Weser and Oste, of *composite* saucer brooches and equal-armed brooches *without* crouching animals along the edge and an eastern group, between the rivers Oste and Elbe, of *cast* saucer brooches and equal-armed brooches *with* such animals – each, according to Genrich, representing the products of one specific workshop.[7] Interestingly, the distribution area of the first group coincides with that of cemetery sites of Böhme's '*Westerwannagruppe*' and the second to that of his '*Perlberggruppe*', both probably representing the extent of a nuclear region (fig. 3.14, nos. 1-2).

When more recent finds are added to Genrich's map, a similar picture can be observed for equal-armed brooches of the western group, including brooches of the Seraing, Sahlenburg and Wehden types (fig. 13.1).[8] However, the more exclusive, partly silver-gilt pieces

3 For the Migration- and Merovingian-period habitation history of the research area, see chapter 3. In contrast to the northern Netherlands, migration to the western Netherlands probably took place on a smaller scale and did not start before the late 5th century, as the absence of early 'Anglo-Saxon' pottery and 'Saxon' brooches indicates (Dijkstra 2011, 84-86, 104-105; De Koning 2012).

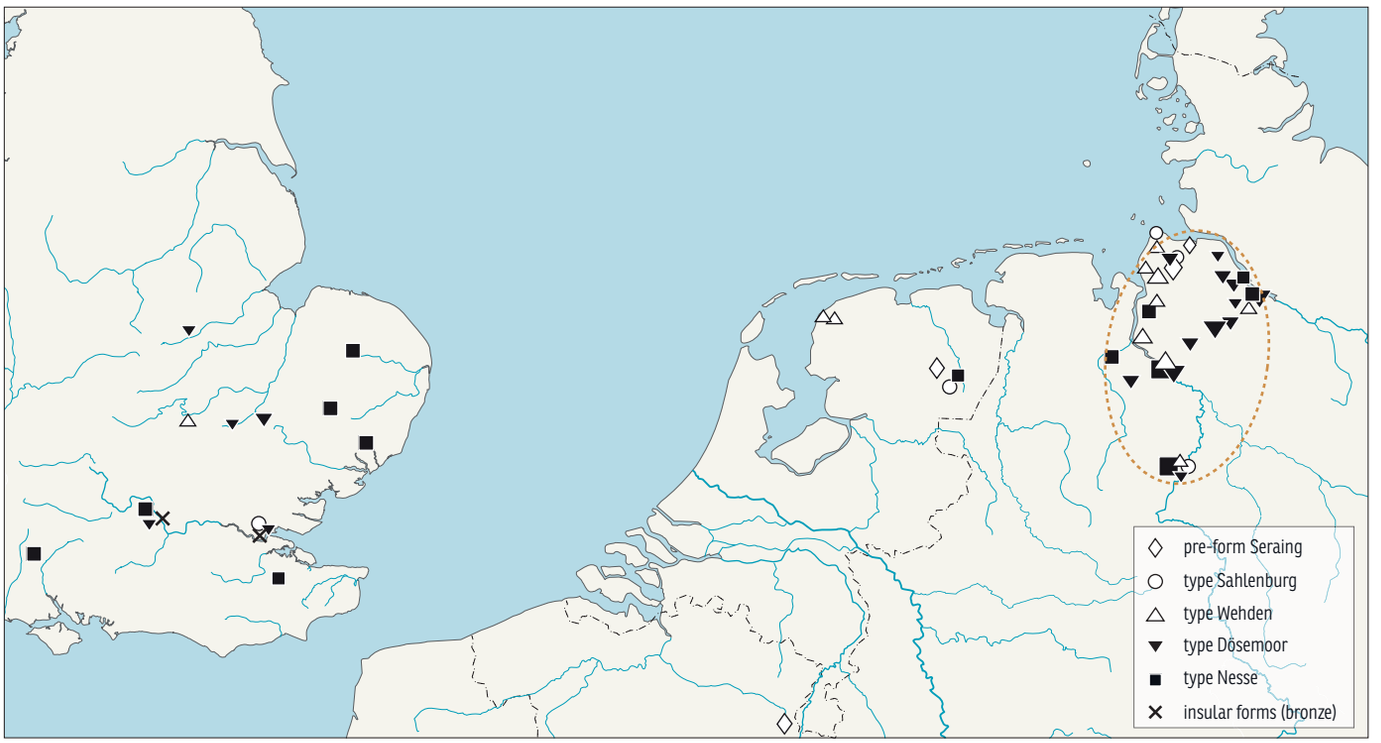
4 E.g. Brugmann 1997, 110-117 (in: Parfitt & Brugmann 1997).

5 See section 1.9.

6 See section 9.2.

7 Genrich 1951, 27-29, fig. 30; see also Genrich 1952, 188-189.

8 Bruns 2003, 25-28, map 5.



13.1 | Geographical distribution of 5th-century equal-armed brooches *without* crouching animals (white symbols), and *with* such animals (black symbols). Within the northern Elbe-Weser region these brooches appear to cluster into a 'western group' and an 'eastern group'. On the basis of the distribution of brooches belonging to these groups and of *Buckelurnen* in graves (see fig. 3.14), the extent of a regional 'Saxon' kingdom around AD 450 is reconstructed (data after fig. 9.4).

of the Dösemoor and Nesse types, belonging to the eastern group, have turned up not only between the rivers Oste and Elbe: they show a more scattered distribution also across the area of the western group (fig. 13.1). The geographical distribution of saucer brooches shows an interesting picture as well: while the cast pieces indeed are characteristic of the eastern group, the composite saucer brooches again show a more scattered distribution across the areas of the eastern and western groups.[9]

Although there is little evidence that the Dösemoor and Nesse brooches were worn by people of a social status higher than a local elite (fig. 10.20, group B), their distribution points to the existence of an elite network exceeding the scale of an individual nuclear region. This network covered the areas of the *Westerwannagruppe* and *Perlberggruppe*, and probably also that of the more southerly *Mittelwesergruppe*, areas that are also characterized by the common use of *Buckelurnen* in the burial ritual (fig. 3.14). Although equal-armed brooches have only been found at a few sites in the *Mittelwesergruppe* area, they are represented at the cemetery of Liebenau by no fewer than five different types, including the Dösemoor type.[10] A similar elite network is reflected in the geographical distribution of composite saucer brooches. The cast saucer brooches, on the other hand, have only been found in the area of the *Perlberggruppe*, where they represent a smaller regional group. It is very likely that the nuclear regions mentioned above operated as individual socio-political units during the Roman period, before being incorporated into a larger, regional kingdom sometime in the late 4th or early 5th century – some of the equal-armed and saucer brooches referring to the traditional networks and others to this larger network in which they were distributed.

The presence of all types of equal-armed brooches in the area of the *Westerwannagruppe*, including 'pre-form Seraing', is a strong indication for their production in one or more workshops in the western part of the northern Elbe-Weser region. The Dösemoor- and Nesse-type brooches were probably also produced in these 'western' workshops and distributed as gifts among members of the local elite living across the larger, regional kingdom. One of the recipients was the so-called 'princess of Issendorf' (grave 3532, fig. 6.11), who lived in the area of the *Perlberggruppe*. The socio-political importance of the western area is supported by excavations in the salt-marshes of *Landkreis* Cuxhaven, at the famous sites of Feddersen Wierde and Fallward (fig. 3.16). At Feddersen Wierde a 'grand hall' could be traced within the settlement (2nd-3rd century), while some wooden furniture, probably from a similar hall, was buried in one of the richest graves at Fallward (boat grave 265, shortly after AD

9 Böhme 1974, maps 7-8.

10 Bruns 2003, table 1.

420, figs. 6.5-6).[11] Like the 'princess of Issendorf', the lords of both Feddersen Wierde and Fallward can be seen as people of local importance; the seat or burial of a regional king and members of his closest retinue have not yet been located. On the *Geest* (sandy upland) near Sievern, however, a walled enclosure covering an area 4.3 ha was constructed around this time (figs. 3.16-17). Although it was traditionally dated to the late Iron Age and thought to have been re-used in the Migration period, new excavations have suggested a construction date in the 4th or 5th century.[12] It is assumed that this gathering and possibly cult site was an important element within a Scandinavian-type central-place complex, especially in the following period (see below).

As Böhme has shown, the leading elite of the 5th-century Elbe-Weser region was culturally focused on the late-Roman Empire to the south.[13] Not only did most of the silver that was used for producing high-status symbols originate from the West-Roman Empire, the development of regional-style jewellery was also strongly affected by the shape and decoration of late-Roman belt-elements and brooches – an adoption of 'foreign' elements that is also reflected in the shape and decoration of the wooden furniture from Fallward (fig. 6.6). The mixture of indigenous brooch forms and Roman elements resulted in the development of several regional-style brooch types, which according to Böhme reflected the ethnogenesis of the *Saxones* as a tribal group.[14] Although this ethnic association cannot be proven, the expression of a regional identity by people living in the northern Elbe-Weser region was probably related to the formation of a regional kingdom, which may have extended from the Lower Weser in the west and the Lower Elbe in the East to the area along the Middle Weser in the south (fig. 13.1).

Is it possible to extrapolate this 'Elbe-Weser model' to other parts of the southern North Sea area, which were inhabited by 'Anglo-Saxons' in the late 4th and 5th centuries? The presence elsewhere of probably imported pieces and the local imitation of 'Saxon' brooches demonstrates the value of these items as high-status symbols in the areas where such immigrants settled, even where a substantial indigenous population may have been present. In contrast to the Elbe-Weser region, however, these parts saw a less distinct distribution pattern of the 'Saxon' or Saxon-like brooches (figs. 13.1). Within the Netherlands, just a few supporting-arm, saucer and equal-armed brooches have been found, and only in the province of Friesland, in the northern part of the nuclear regions of Westergo and Oostergo. In southeast England a larger number of Saxon-style brooches have been recovered in the area north of the river Thames (East Anglia and Essex), which functioned as an important cultural border with the 'Jutish' south (Kent).[15] With the exception of several brooches of different types from the cemeteries of Spong Hill in northern Norfolk, and Mucking (Essex) near the Thames estuary, no significant clustering of such finds can be observed.[16]

An additional source of evidence about the socio-political situation in southeast England is the exceptional number of late 4th- and early 5th-century solidus finds, the gold coins being buried as hoards, often in combination with contemporary siliquae (table 7.2, fig. 7.28), and as single pieces at probable settlement sites (fig. 7.32). Interestingly, no significant clustering of finds in one or a few nuclear regions can be seen, but instead a more scattered distribution along most of the North Sea coast and its hinterland. The large number of coin finds and especially their wide distribution in the countryside not only supports the idea of a substantial indigenous population in late-Roman times, but also points to the presence of a powerful elite. Such a local or regional elite clearly benefited from the distribution of gold and silver coins as political payments by the Roman government, which in this way tried to secure its position in the final days of *Britannia* as a Roman province.[17]

Despite the earlier focus on the West-Roman Empire and the presence of a Romanized elite in southeast England, an intriguing transition in the use of status symbols along the southern North Sea coast can be seen: after ca 400, late-Roman items (e.g. the late-Roman belt) were replaced by imported, 'Saxon' items (e.g. the equal-armed brooch). The appearance of insular brooch forms clearly indicates that such symbols were not only worn by the immigrants, but also adopted by the insular elite

11 Recently Schmid 2010 (Feddersen Wierde); Schön 2010 (Fallward). For Fallward, see also section 6.2.

12 Schön 2009, 194-201 (in: Aufderhaar et al. 2009).

13 Böhme 1974; 1999, 64-72; 2003, 56-57. See also Nielsen 2003, 194-200.

14 Especially Böhme 1999, 71-72; 2003, 257. See also Nielsen 2003, 205-206.

15 See Böhme 1986. For the 'Jutish' influence in Kent, see below (section 13.3).

16 See also Böhme 1986, maps 54, 69.

17 Compare Guest 2005, 24-26 (interpretation of the Hoxne hoard).

– after the fall of the West-Roman Empire in need of a new repertoire of status symbols to express their social position and ambitions.

Unfortunately, it is unknown to what extent and in what specific areas members of the 'traditional' elite and leaders of the new arrivals struggled for power in southeast England. Scull is probably right arguing that political structures after the disintegration of the Roman administration devolved to local aristocracies, basing their authority on rural landholding and the personal relationship between patron and client.[18] This politically fragmented society "...would offer a plausible context both for the permanent settlement of incoming groups, and for their subsequent establishment of a political ascendancy."[19] The dissolution of the Roman-period social order offered the 'traditional' elite and 'Anglo-Saxon' leaders, who had probably arrived with their own military retinues, roughly equal opportunities for gaining local or regional power positions. Although it is uncertain to what extent the indigenous elite was replaced by new leaders, the broad adoption of a new material culture, both by the indigenous elite and the local population, seems to indicate that the newcomers soon became a dominant force in the 5th-century process of *power formation*.

Interestingly, in contrast to 'Saxon' brooches, 'Anglian' status symbols do not seem to have played a significant role in social competition before the late 5th century. The arrival of 'Anglian' immigrants is best reflected in the appearance of cruciform brooches. These commonly found brooches are all executed in copper alloy, their use probably being limited to that of ethnic markers at a local level.[20]

It can be concluded that the socio-political situation in the northern Elbe-Weser region is difficult to extrapolate to the coastal areas of the Netherlands and southeast England. Although the status symbols used were similar to those in the 'Saxon' homeland, the number of finds is too small for reconstructing elite networks of individual leaders.

13.3 Regional kingdoms in a 'Scandinavian world' (late 5th-first half 6th century)

While in Kent brooches executed in the Scandinavian Nydam style had been produced as early as the middle or the third quarter of the 5th century (fig. 9.13, no. 1), the final quarter of the 5th century saw a cultural transition from these and Saxon-style ornaments with a late-Roman influence, to the importation and imitation of Scandinavian-style jewellery.[21] Most jewellery is executed in gold now, including neck and arm rings, bracteates and coin-pendants. In contrast to the Scandinavian finds, a small number of North Sea bracteates are also executed in (gilded) silver or bronze. Moreover, silver-gilt 'Jutlandic' brooches were imported to Kent and imitated locally. It is during this 'Scandinavian phase' that for the first time a cultural-ritual distinction can be made between a 'northern world', which includes southern Scandinavia, that is dominated by gold hoards, and a 'southern world', including the Frankish realm, that is dominated by rich grave goods – the river Vlie (the present-day IJsselmeer, see fig. 3.6) forming the boundary.

While the neck and arm rings show a limited geographical distribution, found only close to southern Scandinavia, the gold bracteates and related pieces of silver and bronze have been found in northern Germany, the northern and central Netherlands and southeast England (figs. 9.7-9). Instead of a regular distribution, however, most of these finds cluster in small areas with extensive 'empty' zones in between (especially fig. 9.9). The most relevant clusters can be seen in the northern Elbe-Weser region, in northern Friesland, in northern Norfolk and especially in eastern Kent, where most imported and/or imitated 'Jutlandic' brooches have been found. The gold bracteates were probably worn by members of the regional elite, the neck and arm rings symbolizing membership of a royal retinue (fig. 10.20). With the exception of Norfolk, all areas with clusters of gold bracteates have a relatively high elite-visibility score (table 12.1).

The bracteate finds from the Elbe-Weser region comprise two (probable) hoards and a single find from a small area on the *Geest* northeast of present-day Sievern (figs. 6.16-17, 6.26, no. 1), as well as a single find from nearby Nordholz (fig. 6.26, no. 2). A third, contemporary hoard from the Sievern area contained no bracteates, but a Scandinavian-type neck ring and six coin pendants, all of gold (fig. 6.15). The Sievern finds were probably buried as votive deposits near two impressive landmarks: the enclosures of 'Heidenschanze' and 'Heidenstadt' (fig. 3.17), the latter of which was probably in use at the time of their deposition. Whether Heidenstadt functioned as a

18 Scull 1992; 1995.

19 Scull 1995, 73.

20 See Böhme 1986, 532-536 (England); Bos & Brouwer 2005 (Friesland). For Kentish finds, see Richardson 2005, 30.

21 See section 9.3.

cult site, as has recently been suggested, or as a gathering place or 'Thing site', is difficult to determine.[22] Still, a significant cluster of gold finds and the presence of a probably contemporary enclosure in an area where an extensive settlement site and several landing places are to be expected is enough evidence to argue for a Scandinavian-type central place near Sievern.[23] Unfortunately, it is unknown what area was controlled by the elite residing at this complex; besides the bracteate from Nordholz, 19 km north of Sievern, no other 5th- or 6th-century gold finds are known from the Elbe-Weser region. The location of Sievern in the same area as where the older equal-armed brooches were probably produced, however, may point to a continuity of power positions and perhaps even the operation of an elite network similar to that of the 5th century.

Other finds that relate to elite residences along the German and adjacent Danish North Sea coast are the 5th- or early 6th-century ring and hack silver hoard from Katharinenheerd (Eiderstedt, northern Germany, fig. 6.19), a contemporary 'runic solidus' from Schweindorf (Ostfriesland, fig. 9.11) and a piece of hack gold from Wrixum on the island of Föhr (Nordfriesland, fig. 6.29). Slightly older are the gold horns from Gallehus (produced ca 400), found close to the German border (southern Jutland, Denmark, fig. 6.22). These horns, as unique and highly symbolic valuables, are of special importance, probably representing ancient regalia from a royal thesaurus (fig. 10.20, group E). Moreover, in their vicinity a gold bracteate was found, near Tønder (fig. 6.26, no. 3). Finally, on the nearby islands of Föhr and Amrum (Nordfriesland) are the sites of a local *Herrenhof* (the findspot of the piece of hack gold, fig. 6.28) and a 5th-century landing place, respectively – all indicating the presence of a central-place complex near the German-Danish border.[24] Unfortunately, no further indications for the presence of an elite centre are known from the surroundings of Katharinenheerd and Schweindorf.

Two small 'clusters' of bracteate finds are visible along the Dutch North Sea coast, both in the province of Friesland. One comprises a bracteate hoard (fig. 4.15) and two single bracteate finds from the northern part of Westergo (fig. 4.22, nos. 1, 5), and the second consists of two, possibly three single finds from the northern part of Oostergo (fig. 4.22, no. 2-4). Comparing the distribution of these bracteate finds with that of late 5th- and 6th-century gold coins, we find two similar, more prominent clusters – the majority of coins being found in northern Westergo (fig. 4.41). Since gold arm or neck rings are unknown from the coastal area of the northern Netherlands, no royal elite can be traced here. The relatively large number of coins that have been found in the northern part of Westergo, including another 'runic solidus' (Harlingen, fig. 9.11), and the presence of the only bracteate hoard, however, are circumstantial evidence for the presence of a central-place complex similar to that in the Sievern area.[25] The distribution of gold bracteates indicates that these circulated within a regional elite network, covering at least the nuclear regions of Westergo and Oostergo. The socio-political structure of what is today the province of Groningen is wholly unknown; with the exception of some gold coins, the elite in this area has left no visible traces.

From the river area of the central Netherlands only two Scandinavian-type bracteates are known, executed in silver-gilt and reused as decorative elements on wooden discs of unknown function (fig. 5.12). These discs were buried in a late 6th- or early 7th-century male grave at the cemetery of Rhenen-'Donderberg', which is strategically situated on an ice-pushed ridge along the river Rhine (fig. 2.4). In the vicinity of this Frankish-type cemetery a 5th-century gold hoard was found, comprising two gold neck rings and the lower part of a gold necklace (fig. 5.27). Both rings belong to the regional 'Velp type', which can be dated to the late 4th or early 5th century.[26] Because similar rings are known from several other hoards in the central Netherlands, Heidinga convincingly postulated the existence of a Migration-period regional kingdom in this area, controlled by a royal elite living at Rhenen and probably extending from the river Vecht in the west to the river IJssel in the east.[27] To these hoards a metal-detector find can now be added: a gold *Kolbenarmring* from Deventer (Overijssel, fig. 10.14), found in the northern part of the assumed kingdom.[28]

22 For its interpretation as a cult site, see Jöns 2010, 73-74; Aufderhaar et al. 2009, 213.

23 See also Zimmermann 2005; Aufderhaar et al. 2009; Jöns 2009a; 2010, 72-80; Pesch 2011a, 256-261; Aufderhaar & Brandt 2011.

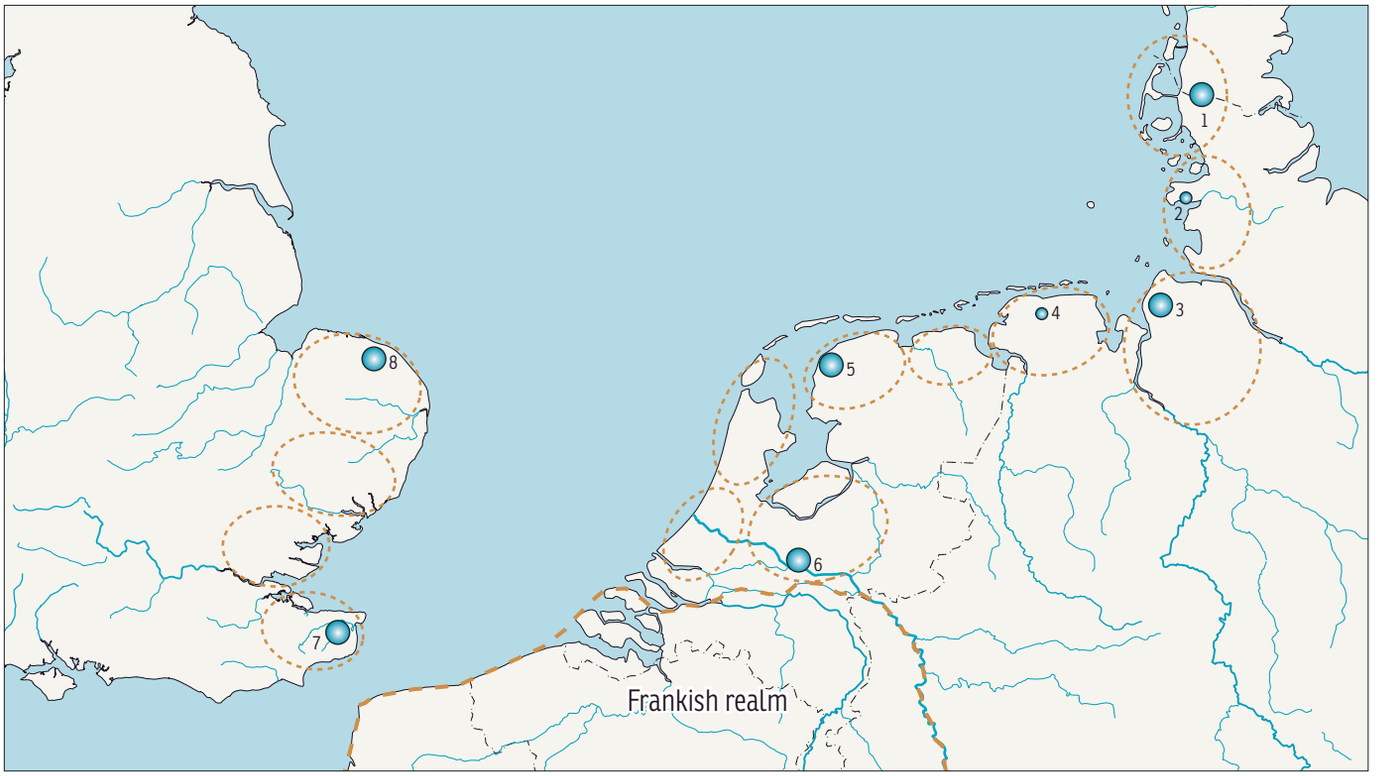
24 See section 6.4 (Föhr); Segschneider 2002a; 2002b (Amrum). For the assumption of a regional elite centre, see also Segschneider 2004, 151.

25 See also Nicolay 2005; 2010a, 125-126; 2010b, 92.

26 Most recently, see Quast 2009.

27 Heidinga 1990 (speaking of a 'petty kingdom').

28 Nicolay 2006b.



13.2 | Hypothetical reconstruction of regional kingdoms along the southern North Sea coast around 500. Large symbols: probable central-place complexes; small symbols: elite centres. The central place at Sievern may have controlled the area all the way south to the Middle Weser (compare fig. 13.1). For the western Netherlands hardly any archaeological evidence indicating the extent of elite networks is available; the reconstructed territories are based on the clustering of settlement sites in nuclear regions, as shown in figure 2.1. 1. Gallehus, 2. Katharinenheerd, 3. Sievern area, 4. Schweindorf, 5. northern Westergo, 6. Rhenen, 7. eastern Kent, 8. northern Norfolk.

The silver bracteates and other gold and silver items from the Rhenen cemetery, as well as the construction of a fortification and the burial of an impressive coin hoard on the same ridge, indicate that this location retained its importance as an elite centre at least throughout the 6th and 7th centuries (see below).

Within southeast England most gold bracteates and all of the silver 'Jutlandic' brooches were buried as grave goods in the eastern part of Kent. This is the same area where most late 5th- and 6th-century gold coins have been found (fig. 7.32). Although gold arm or neck rings are unknown from Kent, this clustering of finds is typical of Scandinavian-type central places. It is generally assumed that the 'kingdom of Kent' in this period encompassed only the eastern half of the present county, that is the area east of the river Medway, historically known as a political border.[29] A second, though less convincing cluster of gold bracteates is known from the northern part of Norfolk, where the presence of a central place was recently suggested by Behr.[30] This cluster may represent the socio-political centre of the 'North Folk' (hence 'Norfolk'), comprising the nuclear regions north of the river Waveney. In the intermediate zone (Suffolk and Essex) clusters of bracteates and/or contemporary gold coins are lacking, although some finds indicate that such items may yet have circulated in these regions with a low elite-visibility score.

During the late 5th and first half of the 6th centuries, indications for the presence of elite centres along the southern North Sea coast are limited to clusters or single finds of minted and unminted gold, in one instances found in association with a probably contemporary enclosure. Although coin finds only allow a reconstruction of the original elite network for Friesland and to a lesser extent Kent, the existence of regional kingdoms all along the North Sea coast can be assumed (fig. 13.2): in Nordfriesland/southern Jutland (central place at Gallehus), in Eiderstedt/Dithmarschen (elite centre at Katharinenheerd), in the northern Elbe-Weser region (central place at Sievern), in Ostfriesland (elite centre at Schweindorf), in Groningen (elite centre unknown), in Friesland (central place in northern Westergo), in Kent (central place in eastern Kent), in Suffolk and/or Essex (elite centre(s) unknown), and in Norfolk (central place in northern Norfolk). The situation along the coast of the western Netherlands and in the adjacent river area is less clear; hardly any items of gold are known from the provinces of North Holland, South Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. Only at Rhenen can a central place be traced archaeologically, from which a regional kingdom probably extending north – and largely falling outside the research area – was controlled.

29 Brooks 1989, 68-69; Welch 2007, 189-190; see also Yorke 2005, 27.

30 Behr 2010, 76; see also Behr & Pestell, in prep. The recently discovered C-bracteate die from Morley (Norfolk) can be added to this find cluster now (IK 637; pers. inf. C. Behr, Roehampton University, London).

Despite the execution of gold bracteates and silver brooches in a typically Scandinavian style, the majority of finds from the research area show regional characteristics, pointing to production in a range of workshops along the southern North Sea coast.[31] The gold neck ring from Sievern too was produced in a North Sea workshop; although the shape and decoration are typically Scandinavian, its manufacture as a hollow rather than a solid ring is typical of northern Germany.[32] Although there is both archaeological and historical evidence that Scandinavian people, at least in part originating from Jutland, settled in the research area, the common use and even local production of Scandinavian-type jewellery by the North Sea elite cannot be explained by migration alone.[33] The style must have been adopted by the indigenous elite, who needed status symbols apparently not expressing their regional identity but a true or fictional ancestral link with Scandinavia. After the fall of the West-Roman Empire and before the Frankish royal house had become sufficiently prestigious to inspire emulation, it was the 5th- and early 6th-century Scandinavian elite that was seen as a powerful role model by the North Sea aristocracy. In this political context, the creation of a visual link with Scandinavia may have been an important tool in the process of *legitimizing* the new status positions resulting from the rise of central places along the southern North Sea coast.

After the idea was first put forward by Chadwick Hawkes and Pollard, Kruse has more recently postulated an elite takeover of late 5th-century Kent by Scandinavian newcomers, a model that the present author has suggested for the coastal area of the northern Netherlands as well.[34] Instead of a direct importation of bracteates by immigrants, however, Behr suggests an indirect introduction of such Scandinavian elements in southeast England via the central place at Sievern – which served as a 'bridgehead' linking Scandinavia to the southern North Sea world.[35] Most probably, both routes played a part. Although an actual elite takeover is difficult to distinguish on archaeological grounds from the adoption of new status symbols by an existing elite, the rulers of the early kingdom of Kent clearly took the Scandinavian elite as their direct example. For East Anglia, Essex and also Friesland a more indirect adoption of new jewellery styles and related Scandinavian ideology can be assumed. The dominant immigrant groups in these areas originated from the northern Elbe-Weser region and will have considered Sievern as the centre of their homeland. They and the indigenous population who adopted 'Saxon' elements in expressing their group identity, may have regarded the Scandinavian styles introduced into the Elbe-Weser region as elements of a new, now 'Scandinavian' or 'Saxon-Scandinavian' identity, which were also being imitated further west.

13.4 Regional kingdoms and the creation of regional identities (6th century)

In Kent most Scandinavian-type bracteates and brooches were buried as grave goods in a period dominated by the production of regional-style jewellery, which expressed group identities for the first time. These high-status ornaments, mainly executed in silver now, are characterized by 'Kentish' square-headed and disc brooches and by 'Frisian' disc-on-bow brooches.[36] The expression of a regional identity is less clearly visible in East Anglia, where the silver jewellery and gilded, tinned and silver-plated great square-headed brooches belong to a broad 'East-English' group. The situation is different again in the western and central Netherlands, which by now belonged to the Frankish cultural world – as the adoption of Frankish-type status symbols by the indigenous elite demonstrates. After the 5th century, the coastal area of northern Germany had entered the 'dark ages', with many settlement and cemetery sites being abandoned. The river Vlie continued to function as an important border throughout the 6th century, separating the areas where regional-style ornaments were dominantly buried as hoards (the northern Netherlands) and as grave goods (southeast England and the western/central Netherlands).

The rich cemetery finds from Kent nicely reflect the transition from 'Scandinavian' jewellery to regional-style ornaments, influenced by the Scandinavian prototypes on the one hand (large and small square-headed brooches), and by Frankish prestige goods on the other (keystone-garnet disc brooches of classes 1-2, sword pommels of type Bifrons-Gilton and sets of a skimmer and crystal ball). The silver brooches (fig. 9.16), sword pommels

31 See section 9.3.

32 Brieske 2001, 149-151 ('Mulsum type'); see also section 9.3.

33 For migration as an explanation, see Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981; Hines 1984; 1992; Kruse 2007; Nielsen 2009.

34 Chadwick Hawkes & Pollard 1981, 321-327, 352; Kruse 2007, 321-329, 339-348 (Kent); Nicolay 2005, 76-85 (northern Netherlands).

35 Behr 2010, 74-76.

36 See section 9.4.

(fig. 9.17) and skimmers (fig. 9.19) have a similar geographical distribution, with a clustering of finds in the eastern part of Kent. Most late 5th- and 6th-century mounted and unmounted gold coins cluster in the same area; only few coins have been found west of the river Medway and north of the Thames (fig. 7.32). Since recent finds of especially gold coins have not changed the picture presented by earlier grave finds, we may assume a representative distribution pattern for this area with a high elite-visibility score (table 12.1) – which supports the idea of a 6th-century power centre in eastern Kent. There are no indications that the area west of the river Medway, where the cemeteries are characterized by 'Saxon' rather than Scandinavian and Frankish grave goods, was by then incorporated by the 'kingdom of Kent'.

Chronologically, the Kentish finds show an interesting development in the use of high-status symbols as grave goods. Once most of the Scandinavian-type bracteates and brooches, by now old and heavily worn heirlooms, had been buried together with 'Kentish' and Frankish-style jewellery in some of the richest Kentish graves during the second quarter of the 6th century (ca 510/530-550/560, see fig. 7.26), a certain 'inflation' in the use of silver for grave goods can be seen. The 'Kentish' keystone-garnet disc brooches of classes 1 and 2 (ca 530-590), for example, were represented by over 70 pieces even in 1975, no fewer than 20 specimens having turned up at the cemetery of Faversham.[37] This 'ritual investment' of precious metal is a clear reflection of social competition at the level of the regional elite and, especially after the middle of the 6th century, at that of the local elite (fig. 10.20, groups B-C). No members of the royal elite and their closest retinue (groups D-E) are represented in any of these graves, which also for this period makes it hard to point out a specific site or cluster of sites that may have functioned as a central place.

In East Anglia, silver was used only for the manufacture of simple ornaments such as finger and other rings, wrist clasps and early scutiform pendants, and for the decoration of great square-headed brooches (silver-plating). Although some of the earliest silver jewellery was probably imported from Denmark or western Norway during the late 5th and early 6th centuries, local imitation resulted in the development of ornaments with insular, to some extent 'East-English' features. The small silver ornaments show a relatively wide distribution across eastern England and cannot be related to a higher social level than that of the local or regional elite (groups B-C, fig. 10.20). A similar social status can be assumed for the great square-headed brooches, which also show a wide geographical distribution. Only the type-XVI brooches might reflect a regional, 'East-Anglian' elite network, although similar brooches are also found further west. Moreover, neither the silver- or silver-decorated jewellery nor the gold coins (fig. 7.32) show a clustering of finds indicating the location of a central place in northern Norfolk (see above), or suggesting the rise of an elite centre in the more southerly 'Sandlings area' (Suffolk, see below).

Although Scandinavian prototypes are unknown from the northern Netherlands, a regional-type brooch with close affinities to the 'Jutlandic' brooches was produced in the province of Friesland during the second and third quarters of the 6th century. This silver-gilt brooch, with a small disc on the bow and a foot terminating in two stylized bird's heads, is only represented by single finds from probable settlement sites (figs. 4.30-31). Although the number of such finds is small, all currently known brooches of this 'Achlum type' cluster in the northern part of Westergo (fig. 9.16) – that is the same area where several gold bracteates were found. The existence of an elite network that encompassed *both* the nuclear regions of Westergo and Oostergo is indicated by the geographical distribution of contemporary gold coins (fig. 4.41). Still, the 'Frisian' brooches cannot be assigned to a higher status level than that of a regional elite (fig. 10.20, group C), again leaving the royal family and its closest retinue invisible to the archaeologist.

During the 6th century, the western and the central Netherlands at least partly belonged to the Frankish cultural world. The grave goods from cemetery sites like Rhenen-'Donderberg' (Utrecht), Elst-'Het Woud' (Utrecht) and Rijnsburg-'De Horn' (South Holland) are typical of Frankish row-grave cemeteries in the south, the richest male graves being marked by weaponry and the richest female graves by silver or silver-gilt bow brooches (see figs. 5.11, 5.13). The silver jewellery can be attributed to members of the local or regional elite (fig. 10.20, groups B-C), the most exclusive piece being a silver *Kolbenarmring* from a probable cemetery near Wassenaar (South Holland, fig. 5.7). Contemporary with these cemetery finds are three small gold hoards: two coin hoards from Velsen (North Holland, fig. 5.24) and De Waal (North Holland), and a mixed hoard of coins and hack gold from the rural settlement of Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer' (Utrecht, fig. 5.26) – all probably buried between ca 540 and 600 (table 5.2). These hoards are found at strategically important locations,

37 See the inventory of Avent (1975).

along the Oer-IJ (Velsen), on the island of Texel (De Waal) and near the junction of the rivers Rhine and Lek (Wijk bij Duurstede). Although only few single finds of gold coins can be dated to the 6th century and the picture is still vague, some areas or sites that were to become 'central' in the following phase can already be recognized. From north so south these are: the island of Texel (North Holland), the former island of Wieringen (North Holland), the Rhine estuary (South Holland), the central river area west of Rhenen, including the area around Wijk bij Duurstede (Utrecht), and Domburg (Zeeland).

In 6th-century southeast England and the northern Netherlands a fascinating transition can be seen, from 'foreign' jewellery, reflecting a cultural bond with Scandinavia, to regional-style jewellery, reflecting a cultural bond with the Frankish realm and, more importantly, the expression of group identities. These regional-style pieces reveal a mixture of Scandinavian, Frankish and indigenous influences, the Frankish aristocracy in this period clearly being prestigious enough to replace their Scandinavian counterparts as a role model for the North Sea elite. As no new central places seem to have appeared in the areas where regional identities were expressed, this transition must demonstrate a *consolidation* of power positions, the regional (and higher) elite no longer needing 'ancestral', Scandinavian pieces for the purpose of legitimising their privileged position. This also explains why Scandinavian-type bracteates and 'Jutlandic' brooches were no longer kept as valuable heirlooms after the early 6th century. Within a few decades, these 'old' pieces were buried in association with the now more relevant, regional-style jewellery and imported or imitated Frankish-style prestige goods.

In the western and central Netherlands, the first glimpse of a new political landscape is archaeologically visible in the geographical distribution of rich graves, gold hoards and single gold-coin finds. The total absence of regional-style jewellery in these areas and the adoption of Frankish status symbols are proof of a strong Frankish cultural influence. Not only is it unclear in this period to what extent the regions south of the Rhine, as former Roman territory, already belonged to the Frankish political world, but also what regional elite networks operated in the 'Frankish' area north of this.[38]

13.5 The formation of supra-regional kingdoms and larger confederations (late 6th-early 7th century)

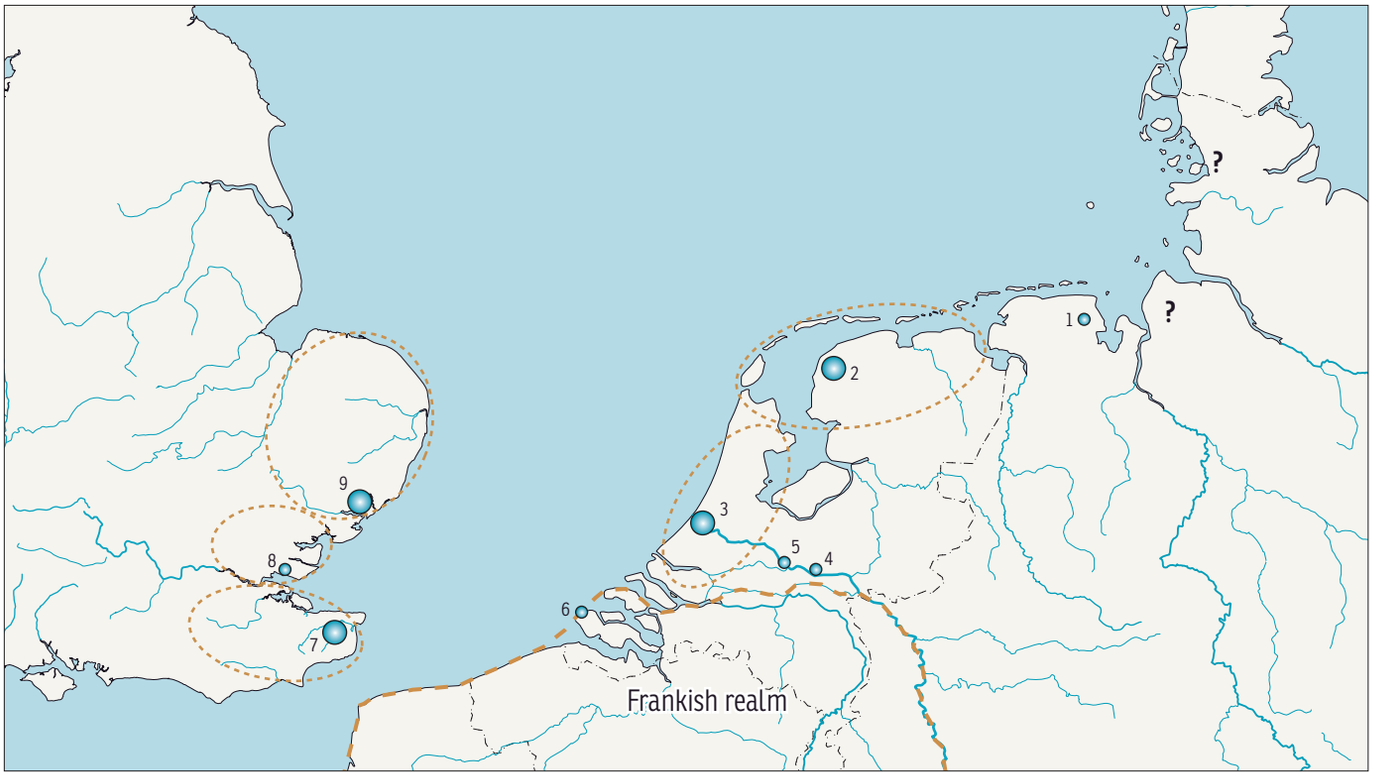
The late 6th, and early decades of the 7th century are once more a period of change and transition. The formation of supra-regional kingdoms and even larger confederations is manifested by the unprecedented investment of valuable items, primarily made of gold, in graves and hoards. In southeast England and the western and central Netherlands this relatively short phase is characterized by a 'horizon' of high-status graves, while a large number of gold status symbols were at the same time hoarded at settlement sites in the northern Netherlands – the river Vlie still functioning as 'ritual border'. The gold jewellery and other ornaments such as belt-buckles and mounts on drinking vessels, show a further development of regional styles, their decoration with garnet cloisonné and gold filigree at the same time reflecting close ties between the North Sea elites. In their cultural focus not only an appreciation of the Frankish aristocratic lifestyle becomes evident, but also a re-appraisal of the Scandinavian ideology (introduction of Animal Style II).

As icons of early Anglo-Saxon kingship in southeast England, the 'royal' and 'princely' graves at Sutton Hoo (Suffolk), Snape (Suffolk), Prittlewell (Essex), Taplow (Buckinghamshire) and Broomfield (Essex) characterize some decades of social competition at the highest social level. The 'princely burial ground' at Sutton Hoo and the nearby cemetery of Snape are situated in the 'Sandlings area', that is the same area where a historically known 'royal vill' (Rendlesham) and important artisanal and trading sites (Barham, Coddenham and the later emporium of Ipswich) are located near the mouth of the rivers Orwell, Deben and Alde.[39] Although ship burials represent the highest social stratum both at Sutton Hoo and at Snape, these sites show important differences in the social status of the burying community (elite burials versus elite and 'commoner' graves) and their dating (Sutton Hoo started when Snape came to an end). According to Filmer-Sankey, the location of the ship burial at Snape (ca 600) *within* a traditional 'folk cemetery' and that of the ship burials at Sutton Hoo (c. 620-630) at a *separate*, 'princely burial ground' reflects the transition from smaller units of lordship to more permanent, regional kingship – i.e. the formation of the historical 'kingdom of East Anglia'.[40]

38 According to Blok (1974, 23-25), only the Dutch area southeast of Nijmegen was now Frankish territory; see also Van Es 1994, 83-84, fig. 74 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994).

39 See Scull & Newman 2009, 305-313, figs. 4.1-3 (in: Scull 2009).

40 Filmer-Sankey 2001, 264-266 (in: Filmer-Sankey & Pestell 2001). For an origin of the kingdom of East Anglia in the late 6th or early 7th century, see also Carver 1989, 152-155; 1992, 177-178; 2005, 497-499; Scull 1992, 6-7, 20-22.



13.3 | Hypothetical reconstruction of regional and supra-regional kingdoms along the southern North Sea coast around 600. Large symbols: probable central-place complexes; small symbols: elite centres and trading sites. For the coastal area of northern Germany no information is available: most late-Roman and Migration period settlement and cemetery sites were abandoned after the 5th century. It is assumed that Domburg by this time was a Frankish trading site. 1. Jever, 2. northern Westergo, 3. Rhine-mouth complex, 4. Rhenen, 5. Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', 6. Domburg, 7. eastern Kent, 8. Prittlewell, 9. Sandlings area.

The people buried at Sutton Hoo are usually thought to be members of the East Anglian royal family (the Wuffingas, group E), of whom king Rædwald († 624/5) might be buried in the famous ship burial of mound 1.[41] According to their royal genealogy, the earliest kings of the Wuffinga dynasty were in power during the second half of the 6th century, beyond which they trace their origin back to Caesar and Wodan/Odin (fig. 2.7). It is also known from historical sources that the Wuffingas not only ruled the kingdom of East Anglia; during part of his reign, Rædwald as overlord or *bretwalda* also headed several other kingdoms in southern England.[42] The extent of the East Anglian kingdom is nicely reflected in the geographical distribution of late 6th- and 7th-century gold coins (fig. 7.33). Moreover, the similar geographical distribution of insignia of the East Anglian royal retinue (group D, fig. 9.23), which include the garnet-decorated crosses from Wilton (Norfolk, fig. 9.25) and Ixworth (Suffolk), points to the existence of an elite network covering both Norfolk and Suffolk.

The ship burials at Snape and Sutton Hoo clearly represent highly symbolic acts in a context of social competition at the highest level. While the construction of a ship burial at Snape may relate to the formation of a supra-regional kingdom in the late 6th century, now including the areas of the 'North Folk' (Norfolk) *and* the 'South Folk' (Suffolk), the creation of a separate burial ground at Sutton Hoo around 600 seems to demonstrate a stabilisation of power positions. The reason that two ship burials were constructed and an unprecedented collection of royal regalia was invested in the funerary ritual at Sutton Hoo around 620-630 (mounds 1-2, fig. 7.2) can only be understood in the context of a different development: the struggle for overlordship in southern England – a tussle that was won by king Rædwald for a short period after his Kentish rival Æthelbert died (see below). Within East Anglia, the presence of ship burials, a royal vill and several trading sites in a small area with direct access to the North Sea points to the existence of a central-place complex in the Sandlings area (fig. 13.3).[43]

No burials of 'royal' or 'princely' status are known from Kent. The late 6th- and early 7th-century high-status grave goods are dominated by gold-decorated buckles and belt-plates (male) and various types of gold jewellery (female), representing members of the regional elite and the royal retinue (fig. 10.20, groups C-D). The only ornament of 'royal' status is a small buckle-shield from Thurnham, decorated with animal motifs in garnet cloisonné and originally belonging to a gold belt-buckle (fig. 10.19). Because of its quality of decoration,

41 See, for example, Carver 2005, 502-503.

42 Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* II, 5 (speaking of 'all the provinces south of the river Humber', which separated the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria from the southern kingdoms).

43 See also Scull 2009, 317.

only paralleled by some of the finest jewellery from Sutton Hoo mound 1, this probable settlement find clearly demonstrates that people with a status comparable to the Wuffingas were present also in late 6th- and early 7th-century Kent.

In the origin story and genealogy of the Kentish royal house (the Oiscingas), two historically known kings are mentioned: Irminric or Iurminric and his successor Æthelbert (ca 560-616), the latter being married to a Frankish princess.[44] Æthelbert not only was the first Anglo-Saxon king to be baptized, he also was one of the earliest rulers to become *bretwalda* in southern England, probably around 595. During most of the 6th century, the Kentish kingdom comprised what is today eastern Kent (east of the river Medway); the western part of Kent was probably not annexed before the reign of Æthelbert.[45] From the (late) 6th century, the more western areas of southern Hampshire and the Isle of Wight seem to have been controlled by the Kentish royal house as well.[46] There are good reasons to assume that the Oiscingas became the leading force in Kent and, later, also in other parts of southern England, with Frankish interference. The kingdom of Kent and its satellite areas may even have accepted Frankish overlordship for some time.[47] Frankish support would also explain the lack of 'royal' or 'princely' graves in Kent: the struggle for royal power was won by the Oiscingas in a different arena of social competition, via the network of personal relations with the Frankish royal house.

The incorporation of western Kent into a larger kingdom is not reflected in the geographical distribution of coin finds. As in earlier periods, most finds cluster in eastern Kent, although now some coins are also known from further west in the Thames area (fig. 7.33). The insignia of the regional elite (gold pendants, plated disc brooches and keystone-garnet disc brooches, groups B-C+) and the royal retinue (gold-decorated buckles and composite disc brooches, group D) show the familiar distribution pattern, mainly buried as grave goods in the eastern part of Kent (fig. 9.23). Within eastern Kent, Canterbury is the best candidate for the site of a royal residence. This former Roman town was situated at an important crossing of Roman roads, had a Roman theatre that could be used as an assembly place, while its name, *Cantwaraburh*, meant 'the borough of the people of Kent'.[48] In combination with several landing places (e.g. Reculver, Sarre, Dover and Fordwich), as well as some royal vills (Eastry, Lyminge and Wye, fig. 3.23) and related cult sites (Woodnesborough: 'Wodan's hill' and Wye: 'Altar') in its vicinity, Canterbury may have functioned in a similar way as the central-place complex in the Sandlings area (fig. 13.3).[49]

There is little archaeological and historical evidence about the formation of the 'kingdom of the East Saxons' (Essex), which was situated between the kingdoms of East Anglia and Kent. During the 7th century, the East Saxon royal family (the Sleddingas) accepted a variety of *bretwaldas*, including Æthelbert and Rædwald, with at best only short periods of political independence. When the East Saxon kingdom is first mentioned in historical sources it is headed by king Sabert († 616). As his father Sledd had married a sister of Æthelbert, the Sleddingas may have acquired their leading position in the late 6th century with Kentish support.[50] During the early days of the East Saxon kingdom two 'royal' or 'princely' chamber burials were constructed, at Broomfield (early 7th century) and Prittlewell (ca 620, possibly the grave of Sabert), probably as an attempt by the Sleddinga dynasty to legitimize its privileged position. In contrast to East Anglian and Kentish high-status grave goods, the gold ornaments from these burials give no expression to a regional, 'East Saxon' identity. Instead, the gold buckle from Prittlewell (fig. 7.12, no. 1) and the gold items from Broomfield (fig. 7.14), like the gold ornaments from other sites in Essex, reflect close cultural ties both with Kent and with East Anglia – which is in agreement with the historically known political situation. The area around Prittlewell is the most probable location for a royal vill and other elements of a central place, strategically situated near the Thames estuary (fig. 13.3).

Along the mouth of the river Rhine, in the western Netherlands, a cluster of relatively rich cemetery and settlement sites can be dated to the late 6th and 7th centuries, two of the richest burials being contemporary to the horizon of 'royal' and 'princely' graves in England. One of the graves, at the cemetery of Rijnsburg-'De Horn', contained a gold- and garnet-decorated, Kentish-type buckle and belt-plate (fig. 5.3), representing the insignia of a member of a royal

44 Brooks 1989, 64-67; for Æthelbert, see also Yorke 2002, 113-117.

45 Brooks 1989, 68-69; Welch 2007, 189-190.

46 Yorke 2002, 122-125.

47 See Wood 1992; Yorke 2002, 125-129; 2005, 28-29 .

48 Brooks 1989, 68-69.

49 See Chadwick Hawkes 1982, 76-76; Behr 1994.

50 Yorke 2005, 46.

retinue (group D). A similar status level can be assigned to the gilded bronze terminal of a possibly East Anglian drinking horn from the cemetery of Katwijk-'Klein Duin' (fig. 5.6). At rural settlements in the vicinity of both cemeteries pseudo-Dorestad/Madelinus coins were minted (Katwijk-'Zanderij', fig. 8.5), glass beads were produced (Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein') and mooring facilities were present (e.g. Oegstgeest-'Nieuw Rhijngeest Zuid', fig. 3.8).[51] Moreover, it would appear that from the 8th century on, the cemetery of Katwijk was the site where Frankish and later counts were inaugurated and honoured, while a monumental circular fortress was built at the site of Rijnsburg-'Abdijterrein' in the late 9th century.[52]

The presence of insignia of a royal retinue in graves at Rijnsburg and Katwijk is important evidence that this 'Rhine-mouth complex' (fig. 13.3) was controlled by a royal family of a status similar to that of the East Anglian Wuffingas and the Kentish Oiscingas.[53] Their residence may have been located within or near the *castellum* of Valkenburg, or perhaps Leiden-'Roomburg', where the visual link with the Roman past could be used as a significant tool for legitimising the royal elite's privileged position.[54] At 'Roomburg', Merovingian-period re-use of (a part) of the former *castellum* can indeed be proven on archaeological grounds: the revetments of a canal dug along the camp was repaired in 620-625 and 689-690, and in the canal fill a 7th-century gold pendant was found (fig. 5.41).[55] The geographical distribution of late 6th- and 7th-century gold coins in the western Netherlands suggests that the area controlled from the Rhine mouth at least covered a large part of the later province of South Holland (fig. 5.48).

Although there are no indications for the presence of a royal elite in the central Netherlands during the same period, two centres of regional importance can be traced here, near Rhenen and Wijk bij Duurstede. One of the richest graves at the 'Donderberg' cemetery is contemporary with the horizon of English 'royal' and 'princely' graves. This female grave, dating to around 600 and belonging to a member of the regional elite (group C), contained a rich collection of Frankish-type silver jewellery, including four bow brooches, a *Kolbenarmring*, earrings and a finger ring (grave 413, fig. 5.17). Moreover, one of the largest coin hoards known from the Merovingian period was buried near Rhenen, at Remmerden (fig. 5.25). Although this hoard is relatively late, having been buried around 700, its discovery is important evidence that this strategic location functioned as an elite centre throughout the 6th and 7th centuries.

About 15 km west of Rhenen, near the junction of the rivers Rhine and Lek, a second elite residence can be traced: at the site of Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer'. The excavation finds from this rural settlement site include gold, filigree-decorated jewellery of Frankish type, which would have been worn by members of the regional elite (group C, ca 550-610, fig. 5.36). Interestingly, the later emporium of Dorestad is situated directly southeast of 'De Geer', which itself in the 7th century became the site of an impressive, rectangular fortified structure (fig. 5.35).[56] When the location of Rhenen and Wijk bij Duurstede is compared with the geographical distribution of late 6th- and 7th-century gold coins (fig. 5.48), a political core region in the central Netherlands does emerge – although the function and interrelationship of the two elite centres remain unclear. Unfortunately, even for the 7th century it is unknown to what extent the river area of the central and western Netherlands was part of Frankish territory.

The late 6th- and early 7th-century investment of valuable items in cemeteries west and south of the river Vlie is paralleled by the ritual hoarding of gold female ornaments in the coastal area of the northern Netherlands. By linking the geographical distribution of these regional-style, 'Frisian' ornaments to their social status, a central region and several related, more peripheral regions can be reconstructed (fig. 2.2).[57] Most jewellery and contemporary gold coins have again turned up in the northern part of Westergo, including the only royal pieces (group E): a disc-on-bow brooch from Wijnaldum (fig. 4.32) and a Kent-

51 See Pol 2011 (Katwijk); Dijkstra et al. 2010 (Rijnsburg); Dijkstra & Van der Velde 2011, 19 (Oegstgeest).

52 Dijkstra & De Koning 2002 (Katwijk); Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, 205-210 (Rijnsburg).

53 For the interpretation of the Rhine mouth as a central-place complex, see also Van der Velde & Dijkstra 2008, 443-445; Dijkstra 2011, 336-339, fig. 7.12. There is no archaeological evidence for the existence of a second, contemporary central-place complex in the western Netherlands, as reconstructed by Dijkstra (2011, 333-334, fig. 7.11) for the district of Kennemerland (North Holland).

54 For the importance of Valkenburg, see also Dijkstra 2011, 328-329.

55 Hazenberg 2000, 37; Brandenburgh & Hessing 2005, 60, 62; see also section 5.4.

56 Heeren, in press.; see also section 5.4. Compare Van Doesburg (2010) for the role of 'De Geer' in the 8th and 9th centuries.

57 See also Nicolay 2006a; 2010b, 126-127, fig. 11.

ish-type buckle from Dronrijp (figs. 4.13-14), both decorated with garnet cloisonné. In the central part of Westergo and in Oostergo relatively large numbers of gold ornaments and coins have also been found, the highest social status being represented by insignia of the regional elite and the royal retinue (groups C/C+ and D). The third, surrounding zone covers the province of Groningen and the northern part of North Holland (Texel and Wieringen), where some filigree-decorated ornaments and small numbers of gold coins have been found. The only exception is a garnet- and filigree-decorated sword pyramid from Ezinge (Groningen, fig. 4.37), which probably represents the level of the royal retinue (group D). It is uncertain whether Ostfriesland too should be included in this third zone. The only late 6th- or early 7th-century gold find from this area is a gold finger ring from Jever (group D, fig. 6.27), which could have been produced in the Frisian or the Frankish area.

When the distribution of late 6th- and early 7th-century gold jewellery and coins is compared with that of Scandinavian-type gold bracteates and 'Frisian' brooches of the Achlum type, an expansion of the 6th-century elite network towards the east (Groningen) and southwest (Texel and Wieringen) can be reconstructed (fig. 13.3). Similar to southeast England, this extensive 'Frisian' kingdom should probably be seen as a confederation of smaller kingdoms, headed by a *bretwalda* around 600. This overlord had his residence in northern Westergo, probably at the row of *terpen* of Wijnaldum – which includes the well-known site 'Tjitsma'.[58] Besides the large disc-on-bow brooch (group E), an exceptional collection of high-status symbols have been found here, including the hilt-mount of a gold-decorated sword (group D, fig. 4.18), the tongue-plate of a garnet-decorated buckle (group D, fig. 4.38), strands from gold-decorated clothing (groups C-E, fig. 4.40), gold pendants (groups C/C+, figs. 4.23-24) and over 10 'civic' tremisses. Moreover, the discovery of a bronze die for producing 'special boxed' gold foils (fig. 9.28) and an unfinished cloisonné panel (fig. 4.23, no. 3) are evidence that a goldsmith produced status symbols for the highest elite at this site. Like the royal residences of other contemporary kingdoms, Wijnaldum will have functioned as part of a larger central-place complex that also included strategic landing places, which may have been situated along the main tidal gullies and on the island of Texel and the former island of Wieringen (see fig. 3.6).[59]

While on the one hand the expression of group identities through high-status ornaments seems to relate to a period of *consolidation* of power positions in the 6th century, on the other they played a crucial role in *social competition* through their ritual investment both in graves and in hoards during the decades around 600. The formation of larger kingdoms, the struggle for overlordship and the legitimisation of new power positions also explain why the expression of an ancestral link with Scandinavia was re-activated by the leading elite, as is apparent from the introduction of Scandinavian Animal Style II in ornaments and the incorporation of Scandinavian deities in royal genealogies, like that of the Wuffingas (fig. 2.7).[60]

13.6 Supra-regional kingdoms in a 'Byzantine world' (7th century)

After the early decades of the 7th century, female members of the elite wore a less exclusive and more uniform set of 'North Sea' jewellery, no longer expressing regional identities. All along the southern North Sea coast a renaissance of antique, now Byzantine types of jewellery is reflected in the grave and hoard finds, including gold and silver pendants, silver pins and rings, and amethyst beads. Like the reactivation of the Scandinavian link, the adoption of 'Classical' jewellery was probably initiated by the royal families to legitimise their privileged position: they presented themselves as successors to the Roman imperial authority, also by incorporating Caesar in their genealogies (fig. 2.7).[61] The wearing of Byzantine-style jewellery was soon imitated by members of the regional and local elites, and they in their turn invested these status symbols in their funerary ritual. The absence of 'royal' or 'princely' burials with such jewellery indicates a renewed *stabilisation* of power positions at the highest social levels after the early 7th century. Although hoards are rare

58 See also Nicolay 2008a; 2010a, 96-97, fig. 9. Gerrets (1999b, 338-340), however, is of the opinion that it "...was not the highest aristocracy itself who was living here, but people who belonged to their clientele." (quotation pp. 339-340); see also Gerrets 1999a.

59 For a landing place on one of the islands, compare Amrum (Nordfriesland, Segschneider 2002a; 2002b). Such locations offer seafarers unfamiliar with mudflats and salt-marshes a safe landfall.

60 Nielsen 1999.

61 Geake 1997, 132-136; 1999, 212-214.

13.4 | The political situation in the southern North Sea area around 719, after the annexation of the western Netherlands by Charles Martel and when most of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were controlled by Mercia. Black symbols: early emporia; white symbols: enclosures, including elite centres constructed in the (late) 7th or early 8th century within former, Roman-period *castella* or city walls. It is assumed that Domburg and Dorestad at this time were Frankish emporia. The socio-political situation east of the area conquered by the Franks is unknown. 1. 'Gross Thun', near Stade, 2. Rhenen, 3. Wijk bij Duurstede/Dorestad, 4. Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', 5. Utrecht-'Domplein', 6. Domburg, 7. Canterbury, 8. London/Lundenwic, 9. Ipswich, 10. Southampton/Hamwic.

finds in the northern Netherlands after the mid 7th century, the river Vlie seems to have continued functioning as an important 'ritual boundary'.

The more-or-less uniform character of 7th-century jewellery and its common use as grave goods by members of the regional and lower elites (groups B-C) no longer allows us to trace areas with a high centrality of power along the North Sea coast. Instead, the emergence of a new type of central place can be observed, which is characterized by specialized craft and trading activities: the predecessors of the emporia at Ipswich, Wijk bij Duurstede (Dorestad) and Domburg (possibly called Walcheren) (fig. 13.4). Ipswich, situated ca 15 km southwest of Sutton Hoo, probably is a new, 7th-century foundation, as both settlement and cemetery finds indicate.[62] Although little is known about the layout of 7th-century Ipswich, there is evidence for craft production and interregional exchange from the outset – suggesting that this rural site was "... a special-purpose settlement whose primary purpose was to channel overseas exchange contacts."[63] The import and distribution of luxury goods and more everyday commodities via Ipswich may have been controlled from two 'magnate residences' in its direct hinterland: Barham and Coddenham.[64] Besides the discovery of gold coins and foreign luxuries at both sites, a fragment of a gold, garnet-decorated pendant cross was found at Coddenham; the removal of its garnets suggests the presence of a workshop where high-status jewellery was produced.[65] The more southern English emporia, at London (*Lundenwic*) and Southampton (*Hamwic*), show a similar pattern of development, probably also having a 7th-century predecessor.[66]

Unfortunately, little is known about the origin and early development of emporia in the Netherlands. An important indication for an early function as a trading site and elite centre is the minting of tremisses at Dorestad by the Frankish *monetarius* Madelinus, an activity that is thought to date from the middle of the 7th century.[67] Moreover, relatively large numbers of late 6th- and 7th-century gold coins have been found at Wijk bij Duurstede (15x), and especially at Domburg (86x). Some gold jewellery, including two pendants from Wijk bij Duurstede (figs. 5.43-44) and a third from Domburg (fig. 5.47), probably has a similar date. During the large-scale excavations at Wijk bij Duurstede (1976-1977), however, no evidence for a 7th-century predecessor of the historically known trading site was found. The wood

62 Wade 1988; Scull & Wade 2009, 313-316 (in: Scull 2009).
63 Scull & Wade 2009, 314 (in: Scull 2009).
64 Newman 2003; Scull & Newman 2009, 307-313 (in: Scull 2009).
65 West 1998, 20 (no. 19.10); Newman 2003, 104.
66 Scull 2009, 319, with references.
67 Most recently, Pol 2010, 94 (ca 630/640-650). Theuws (2003, note 50), however, is of the opinion that these coins were minted in the late 7th century.

used for constructing the harbour facilities and the wells in the settlement area seems not to have been felled before ca 680-690.[68] More recent excavations ('Veilingterrein', 2007) uncovered the first traces of Merovingian-period occupation: two 7th-century house plans and a small cemetery that was dated to around the middle or the second half of this century – features typical of a simple rural settlement rather than an early trading site.[69] At Domburg no contemporary features are known. Since early medieval times the former trading site has been largely washed away by the sea, leaving few traces for the archaeologist.[70]

Most probably, 7th-century Dorestad should be envisaged as an elite centre, which was rural in character and situated close to or within a former Roman fort, long since destroyed by river erosion.[71] It was the construction of the harbour and the foundation of a specialized production and trading site in the late 7th century that turned Dorestad into a specialized trading site. Unfortunately, it is impossible to say whether the chronological development of Domburg is best paralleled by Ipswich or by Dorestad, although the large number of gold coins suggests the former. The origin of a third emporium, called Witla, is fully unknown; according to historical sources it was situated in the Meuse estuary, near present-day Rotterdam (South Holland).[72]

Like the trading components of older central-place complexes that probably continued to function throughout the 7th century in eastern Kent, northern Westergo and along the Rhine mouth, the predecessors of the English emporia can be interpreted as a crucial element of the power centres of supra-regional kingdoms or larger confederations. According to Scull and Wade, the foundation of Ipswich should be seen as a royal initiative, taken by the Wuffingas to stimulate, to regulate and, most importantly, to tax the exchange of luxuries and a growing number of commercial transactions – considerations which, from a Frankish perspective, are likely to have applied to the Dutch trading sites as well.[73] Although Domburg may have functioned as a Frankish trading post that was contemporary to Ipswich, it is not before the middle, or more probably the late 7th century, that Frankish interference can be assumed for Dorestad. Historical sources, however, tell us that Frankish kings could not securely control Dorestad before ca 720: for short periods (ca 675-690/695 and 714-719) the area around Utrecht and Dorestad was occupied by the regional 'king' Aldgisl and his probable successor Radbod.[74]

Some fortified sites can probably also be dated to the (late) 7th century – besides the rectangular fortification at Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', mentioned above (fig. 5.35), and the re-used Roman town of Canterbury, now functioning as an important elite and religious centre.[75] These were located near Rhenen ('Heimenberg'), in the present-day city centre of Utrecht ('Domplein') and near Stade, in the Elbe-Weser region ('Gross Thun') (fig. 13.4). At Rhenen, close to the cemetery on the 'Donderberg' (fig. 2.4), a monumental fortification was probably constructed between ca 650 and 710 (fig. 3.9). Around the same time, an impressive gold and silver hoard was buried nearby (fig. 5.25). Although excavations are still in progress, the first phase of the fortification at 'Gross Thun', strategically situated on the river Swinge, has also been dated to around 675.[76] Finally, the former Roman *castellum* at Utrecht had become an important elite centre at least a century before it was transformed into the missionary post of Willibrord and his successors. Not only was the former *castellum* wall repaired sometime in the (late?) 7th century, a probable gold (and silver?) hoard was also buried within the *castellum* walls in the second half of the 7th or early 8th century.[77] Again, it is unclear how sites like Rhenen, Wijk bij Duurstede and Utrecht functioned within the border zone of the Frankish realm; for 'Gross Thun' a function similar to 7th-century Ipswich and Domburg can be assumed – unfortunately, in the context of an archaeologically invisible kingdom.

68 Van Es 1990, 162-163. For the dating of the harbour and wells, see Verwers & Botman 1999; Theuws 2003, note 50; Van Es & Verwers 2009, 283-293 (pottery: pp. 158-159).

69 Dijkstra & Williams 2010; Dijkstra 2012.

70 Van Heeringen 1995, 42-44, fig. 35.

71 Compare Verhulst 2000, 107; see also Van Es 1990, 165. Among the dredger finds from the Rhine near the *castellum*, however, the early to mid 7th century is not represented (Van Es & Verwers 1986, 75).

72 See Van Es 1990, 171; Bazelmans et al. 2004, 29.

73 Scull & Wade 2009, 316 (in: Scull 2009); Scull 2009, 316-317; see also Verhulst 2000, 111-113.

74 Especially Halbertsma 1965/1966; Van Egmond 2005; 2010; see also section 2.3.

75 For Canterbury, see Brookes & Harrington 2010, 112-117, fig. 33.

76 Nösler 2011; Schäfer 2011.

77 For early medieval repair work on the castellum wall, see Van Es 1994, 96, fig. 84 (in: Van Es & Hessing 1994); Van Rooijen 2010, 158.

13.7 Aftermath: Carolingian, Mercian and Danish expansion (late 7th-early 9th century)

The 8th and early 9th century saw the incorporation of supra-regional kingdoms and confederations into the even larger Carolingian, Mercian and Danish kingdoms (figs. 13.4-5). The areas along the southern North Sea that Charles Martel (ca 688-741) and his Carolingian successors conquered between ca 719 and 804 were labelled 'Frisian' and 'Saxon'. The 'Frisian territory' comprised the coastal zone from the then Sincfal estuary (at the Dutch-Belgian border) in the south to the river Weser in the northeast, and the 'Saxon territory' extended to the east of this (the Elbe-Weser region and southern Schleswig-Holstein, including its southern hinterland between the rivers Rhine and Elbe). The remaining part of Schleswig-Holstein became part of the northern, Danish kingdom – separated from the 'Saxon' south by the famous *Danevirke*.[78] The English kingdoms, on the other hand, were controlled by the Mercian kingdom since the early 8th century.[79] Van Egmond rightly argues that in Carolingian times the labels 'Frisian' and 'Saxon' had no ethnic but a purely geographical significance; like the codification of a *Lex Frisionum* and a *Lex Saxonum* in 802/803, they expressed the wish of the Carolingian court to divide its conquered territory into provinces, each inhabited by a single *gens* which had its own laws.[80]

The gradual annexation of the 'Frisian' area between the rivers Rhine and Vlie, Vlie and Lauwers, and Lauwers and Ems during the 8th and early 9th centuries supports the idea that this area belonged not to one but to several Merovingian-period kingdoms, which had to be conquered one after another (fig. 2.3).[81] The *Lex Frisionum* also follows a triple division, with different laws applying to the people living between the rivers Sincfal and Vlie, Vlie and Lauwers, and Lauwers and Weser.[82] Interestingly, these areas at least partly coincide with those controlled by royal families living at the 'Rhine-mouth complex' (the western Netherlands) and in northern Westergo (the northern Netherlands and perhaps Ostfriesland). The stepwise conquest of the northern Netherlands may indicate that the 7th-century 'Frisian' kingdom indeed functioned as a confederation, comprising at least two kingdoms: one west and one east of the Lauwers. Despite its relatively small size, the laws applying to the area between Vlie and Lauwers (Westergo and Oostergo) take the lead within the *Lex Frisionum*. This can be explained by the area's dominant role in elite competition throughout the 6th and 7th centuries – when a central-place complex is thought to have flourished in northern Westergo.

In the eastern, 'Saxon' area, the Carolingian armies had to fight confederations of regional kingdoms or supra-regional kingdoms as well.[83] These are known from historical sources, including the *Lex Saxonum*, as Westfalen, Engern and Ostfalen, each with a military leader who was replaced by a central military authority in a period of external threat.[84] Although Becher is of the opinion that such tribal confederations, which are first mentioned in 770, had their origin in the period of Carolingian expansion, they are probably much older, dating back to the 7th century, when overlords are recorded for Anglo-Saxon England and were probably present in the northern and western Netherlands as well.[85]

In the coastal areas of South Holland, Friesland, Groningen and Ostfriesland the period of Carolingian occupation is characterized by a 'horizon' of relatively rich weapon graves – indicating that the river Vlie no longer divided two ritual worlds.[86] These graves contain weaponry, horsegear and/or glassware, which are typical of the late 7th to early 9th centuries. The grave goods reflect an elite lifestyle (martial values and feasting), which was expressed in the funerary ritual of males probably belonging to the regional and local elite. Interestingly, they date to the same period when large parts of the southern North Sea coast were gradually conquered by Charles Martel and his successors, i.e. a period of socio-political *change and instability*. Annexation by the Carolingian kingdom offered members of the traditional elite, as well as their rivals, an opportunity to acquire new power positions, which had to be secured and legitimised at a regional and a local level. To this end, highly symbolic items were invested in the burial ritual, which can be seen as a rep-

78 See Dobat 2009 (the early 9th-century *Danevirke* probably is a renovation of older, pre-existing structures).
79 See Yorke 2005, 112-114.
80 Unpublished research by W.S. van Egmond (Utrecht).
81 See also Halbertsma 2000, 303-304; Noomen 2005, 62.
82 See Halbertsma 1965/1966, 73-74; Dijkstra 2011, 359-362.
83 For the history of Carolingian-Saxon wars, see Zettel 1987; Lampen 1999.
84 See Becher 1999. This is also suggested for the 'Frisian' area by Heidinga (1997, 22).
85 Becher 1999, 153-154, 158.
86 Stein 1967; Knol & Bardet 1999; Knol 2001; see also Nicolay 2010b, 128-129.

etition of the ritual manifestations described above for the earlier periods.[87]

The only central places within the research area that can be traced both archaeologically and historically in this changing socio-political landscape are the English and Dutch emporia (fig. 13.5). Other important sites are the fortified locations mentioned above, which remained in use throughout the 8th century, as well as three newly-constructed fortifications, on the island of Texel (Den Burg, fig. 3.9) and in the Dithmarschen area (Stellerburg and Kudensee) (fig. 13.5).[88] While most of these probable elite residences are traceable only because of their defensive works, trading sites like Ipswich, Dorestad and Domburg show an unprecedented flowering in the 8th and 9th centuries. This is reflected not only in their rapid expansion, as documented for Ipswich and Dorestad, but especially in their rich find material, including hundreds of silver denarii and sceattas.[89] While coastal Ipswich and Domburg were still situated in a boundaryzone between different cultures and economic systems, Dorestad by now belonged to the interior of the Carolingian kingdom – its gateway role in the 9th century taken over by Hedeby (Schleswig-Holstein), on the border between the Frankish realm and the Danish kingdom (fig. 13.5).

13.8 North Sea kingdoms and the expression of group identities

Throughout the 5th to 7th centuries, valuable items of gold and silver were executed in regional or supra-regional styles along the southern North Sea coast. After the 5th and first half of the 6th centuries had been dominated by 'Saxon' and 'Scandinavian' female jewellery, the 6th and early decades of the 7th centuries saw regional group identities being expressed through male and female ornaments; and finally a more general 'North Sea identity' was expressed through female jewellery during most of the 7th century. In chapter 10 it is argued that such 'foreign' or regional-style valuables were highly symbolic items; they were worn only by specific members of society, visualizing a person's social relations, 'worth' and related status. But what about their use as ethnic markers of regional or larger groups: did they also express the identity of a people or *gens* belonging to such groups, or merely a solidarity that was only felt among members of the higher and lower elites?

Instead of an objective and fixed attribute, which can be defined by objective features such as language, customs or law, ethnicity is nowadays seen as "...a subjective process by which individuals identified themselves or

13.5 | The political division of the southern North Sea area into territories belonging to the Frankish kingdom, the kingdom of Mercia and the Danish kingdom around 804. Black symbols: emporia and other specialized trading sites; white symbols: enclosures, including elite centres and missionary posts within former, Roman-period *castella* or city walls, in use during the early 9th century.
1. Ribe, 2. Haithabu/Hedeby, 3. Stellerburg, 4. Kudensee, 5. 'Gross Thun', near Stade, 6. Den Burg, on the island of Texel, 7. Medemblik, 8. Rhenen, 9. Wijk bij Duurstede/Dorestad, 10. Wijk bij Duurstede-'De Geer', 11. Utrecht-'Domplein', 12. Witla, near present-day Rotterdam, 13. Domburg, 14. Canterbury, 15. London/Lundenwic, 16. Ipswich, 17. Southampton/Hamwic, 18 York.

87 See also Knol & Bardet 1999, 218-219; Knol 2001, 119; Dijkstra & De Koning 2002, 143-147.

88 For Dithmarschen, see Lemm & Wilschewski 2009, 163-166.

89 See Wade 1988 (Ipswich); Van Es & Verwers 1980; 2009; Van Es 1990; Dijkstra 2012 (Dorestad); Van Heeringen 1995, 42-44; Pol 1995 (Domburg).

others within specific situations and for specific purposes."[90] Researchers now generally agree with scholars like Geary and Pohl that ethnic identities, as 'situational constructs' and 'strategies of distinction', were highly fluid and subject to manipulation.[91] Moreover, ethnic labels enjoyed a very limited and selective use in early medieval written sources. Group identities were most often mentioned in connection with kings (as the kings of people) and with war. For individuals a similar trend can be observed: a person's identity was especially significant when he or she had close personal ties with the king, or served in his retinue or army. According to Geary, the sources in such cases do *not* refer to ethnicity, but to 'political identities', which were activated and manipulated by the leading elites to create or to re-create a sense of unity among the social networks they controlled – as a strategic formation of ethnic consciousness.[92] Pohl also argues that ethic identities were especially relevant for the members of relatively small elite groups.[93] It was these people who participated in gift exchange and other forms of (ritual) communications in which group identity was reproduced: "For them, ethnicity was an opportunity to reinforce loyalties and facilitate integration."[94]

Is this modern view of ethnicity supported by the archaeological evidence presented in this book? As described above, the introduction and adoption of new types of valuables or decorative motifs was related to periods of immigration and socio-political change or consolidation. In all situations, members of the elite played a crucial role: they were responsible not only for the importation of gold and silver, but also for their transformation into status-related prestige goods, and, directly or via members of their retinue, for their distribution. The items to be distributed as gifts were carefully chosen, to show similarities to the insignia from neighbouring kingdoms on the one hand, and differences on the other. As such, they were useful tools for creating unity among members of the group and to express differences from other, often neighbouring groups – indeed as a *political* identity. For each of the phases described above we shall examine to what extent group identity was expressed through valuable items, whether males or females played a dominant role in this respect, and how the expression of a group identity might be related to a specific socio-political situation.

For most of the research area, the late 4th and 5th centuries are a period of ethnogenesis (*Stammesbildung*), as it is defined by Wenskus.[95] The coastal areas of the Netherlands and southeast England were inhabited by new settlers (the 'Anglo-Saxons'), arriving in areas that were depopulated or inhabited only by a varying portion of the original, Roman-period population. In both areas, the status symbols of the dominant immigrant group, the 'Saxons', were adopted by other Germanic newcomers and members of the indigenous population. Both within and outside the Elbe-Weser region 'Saxon' brooches of silver and bronze were worn by female members of the regional and local elites. Within the Elbe-Weser region the wearing of such brooches expressed a kind of unity among the nuclear regions that seem to have become part of a 'Saxon kingdom'. Outside this region, the adoption of a similar identity had a different purpose: by visualizing a true or a fictitious ancestral link with the 'Saxon' royal family, the leading families could legitimise their newly acquired positions.

Since the late 5th century, the entire southern North Sea coast saw a remarkable transition from 'Saxon' to Scandinavian-type jewellery, worn by the female members of the regional elite. Although it is very probable that small groups of immigrants, including 'Scandinavians', settled along the southern North Sea coast throughout the 5th and 6th centuries, this adoption of 'foreign' jewellery, decorated in Animal Style I, should not be seen as a next stage in the process of ethnogenesis. Convincing archaeological evidence for Scandinavian newcomers is only available for Kent (e.g. the appearance of 'Jutlandic' brooches), where these outsiders may have played a leading role in the formation of the 'Jutish kingdom' of Kent. The adoption of Scandinavian gold bracteates outside Kent, however, had a different background. As stated above, these status symbols were probably introduced via the central-place complex at Sievern, as an element of the new identity of the royal family in the 'Saxon' homeland. At the same time, they will have been used by the North Sea

90 Geary 1983, 16.

91 Especially Geary 1983; 2002; Pohl 1991;1998a; 1998b. See also the more recent contributions in Derks & Roymans 2009.

92 Geary 1983, 22-25.

93 This is reminiscent of the '*Traditionskern*' that is described by Wenskus (1961 66-76, 134-142), although "...the image of a kernel implies a misleading sense of solidity and immutability." (Pohl 1998b, 67).

94 Pohl 1998a, 4-5; 1998b, especially 64-67 (quotation: p. 67).

95 Wenskus 1961.

elite to claim cultural, as well as ideological and ethnic affinities with powerful kingdoms in southern Scandinavia, again to legitimise their privileged position.

After a phase when the expression of ethnic relations with the homeland of the dominant immigrant group was more important than showing the 'ethnic' unity of individual kingdoms, a stabilisation of power positions in the 6th century changed the use of valuable items as markers of group identity. Instead of imitated, 'foreign' status symbols, regional-style jewellery and other items of silver (e.g. belt-fittings, weaponry and skimmers) were now distributed among both male and female members of the regional and local elites. Although the shape and decoration of these items were clearly inspired by insignia of the Scandinavian and the now highly prestigious Frankish elites, cohesion within the regional elite network and cultural differences between elite networks now first become visible. Distributed by kings and lower leaders among members of their retinues, the regional-style items were clearly meant to express political identities – not only in the context of independent kingdoms (southeast England and the northern Netherlands), but also in the context of the Frankish kingdom (the central and western Netherlands).

During the late 6th, and the early decades of the 7th century, a continuous use of valuable items both as status-related insignia and as markers of group identity can be seen. The unity of expanding elite networks, even within larger political confederations, was now expressed by male members of the royal elite in southeast England and the western Netherlands, and in the northern Netherlands by their male and especially their female members. At the same time, a general adoption of Scandinavian Animal Style II reflects a reactivation of cultural, ideological and ancestral links with Scandinavia. The importance of such links is best documented for East Anglia, where the Scandinavian-type ship burial was introduced by the Wuffingas, imported Scandinavian weaponry was buried in one of the 'royal' graves at Sutton Hoo (mound 1), and Wodan was incorporated into the royal genealogy (fig. 2.7). This visualisation of ethnic ties with southern Scandinavia should be seen as an attempt of the leading elite to legitimise not only their newly acquired status, but also their future ambitions as supra-regional kings and indeed as *bretwaldas* or overlords.

After the third or fourth decade of the 7th century, the unity of territorial kingdoms was no longer visualized through the distribution of 'ethnic' markers. Instead, a more general 'North Sea jewellery' was adopted by female members of the regional and local elites all along the southern North Sea coast, probably during a new period of stabilized power positions. Although the expression of continuity with a Roman and Byzantine past, also by including Caesar in royal genealogies (fig. 2.7), is another attempt to legitimise power positions, it is difficult to understand why the unity of kingdoms was no longer visualized through the distribution of high-status ornaments.

The 8th- and 9th-century expansion of the Carolingian, Mercian and Danish kingdoms meant that the older, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and confederations became integrated into even larger configurations. Their ethnic label from now on was dependent on the 'ethnic' background or administrative structure of the dominant power: in southeast England the inhabitants of East Anglia, Essex and Kent became 'Mercians', along most of the Dutch and German North Sea coast the people became 'Frisians' and 'Saxons', and the inhabitants of the northern part of Schleswig-Holstein became 'Danes'. Although the names 'Frisian' and 'Saxon' are much older, it is now possible for the first time to link them to historically well-defined territories: the two northernmost provinces of the Carolingian realm.[96] Despite the fact that regional or supra-regional structures, such as pre-existing elite networks and laws, were often left intact after their incorporation into Frankish provinces, the former kingdoms are no longer traceable in the archaeological record – being hidden under the blanket of a new socio-political landscape.

It can be concluded that identities, in a political rather than an ethnic way, were indeed created and manipulated by leading families to unite elite networks in opposition to neighbouring, competing elite networks. Interestingly, however, the expression of group identity became relevant only after a formative phase of ethnogenesis, a process in which successful and charismatic leaders struggled for power amongst the newly formed Anglo-Saxon and other Germanic populations. One way of legitimising their privileged position was to create an ethnic link with true or fictional ancestors, in the Elbe-Weser region and southern Scandinavia, or in the Roman or Byzantine Empire, respectively. The ex-

96 For the origin and possibly Frankish reintroduction of the Frisian name, see Bazelmans 2009.

pression of group identity lost its significance again after supra-regional elite networks had become stable, territorial kingdoms or larger confederations around the middle of the 7th century. Finally, these structures were incorporated into even larger confederations, their identity henceforth being defined by more general 'ethnic' names and legal codes, assigned to them by the new ruling elite.

13.9 Conclusion

Although the reconstruction of kingdoms, as proposed in this chapter, is to a large extent hypothetical, the combination of a supra-regional perspective and a long-term, comparative approach seems to be fruitful. Not only is such an approach needed for recognizing the differences and similarities between insignia that are typical of specific regional or supra-regional elite networks, but it is useful also for extrapolating socio-political developments that are archaeologically visible in areas or periods with a rich material culture to less well-documented areas or periods. On the basis of this approach, the fascinating process of power formation was reconstructed for the southern North Sea area – showing the rise of regional kingdoms in the 5th century and their development into larger kingdoms and confederations during the 6th and 7th centuries, followed by their historically documented annexation by the expanding Frankish, Mercian and Danish kingdoms.

Hopefully, this study will not be an end point, but provides a starting point for further research into the socio-political structure of societies along the southern North Sea coast – which formed a crucial link between the northern, Scandinavian and the southern, Frankish worlds. After the sweeping and to some extent over-simplified views on early medieval power formation presented here, it is up to future archaeologists to analyse the suggested elite networks and their 'political identities' in greater detail, for example by including bronze and iron items, glass vessels, and wheel-thrown and handmade pottery in the debate, and to focus more closely on the fluctuating boundaries and internal structure of individual kingdoms.

Epilogue

A comparison with the Staffordshire hoard

Introduction

One of the most fascinating archaeological discoveries of recent decades, certainly concerning the early medieval history of northwestern Europe, is the so-called Staffordshire hoard (fig. 1).[1] This impressive collection of mainly gold and silver weapon elements was found with a metal detector in 2009, in the core region of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia. Mercia was situated outside the southern North Sea area, but the hoard still offers a unique opportunity to confront the ideas presented in the previous chapters with a collection of high-status weaponry that once belonged to an early Anglo-Saxon king and his *Gefolgschaft*. After a brief presentation of the find location, composition and probable date of burial, the origin, circulation and deposition of the high-status ornaments in the hoard are discussed. Finally, the finds are compared in terms of social status with similar or related items from the research area, with a view to assigning their early medieval users to specific social groups.

The hoard: find location, composition and date of burial

The hoard was discovered southwest of the present-day village of Lichfield, in the county of Staffordshire. The find location is directly south of the modern A5 motorway or Watling Street, a Roman road that was probably still in use during the early Anglo-Saxon period. At the find site a shallow ridge is present as a natural 'marker'. The hoard was buried at the northwestern end of this ridge, slightly below its highest point. Excavations at the site have failed to identify any surviving evidence of the immediate archaeological context of the hoard: all hoarded items were found within the ploughsoil, no traces of a container were found, and none of the excavated features can with any certainty be associated with the hoard.[2] Moreover, no other early Anglo-Saxon sites or finds are known from its direct vicinity, which probably was marginal, open woodland and heath at the time of burial.[3] More to the east, however, three important political and religious centres are known: the 'royal vill' and later Mercian capital of Tamworth, the cathedral city of Lichfield and the monastery of Repton.[4]

Although a detailed analysis of the hoarded items is still awaited and the original function of many items has not yet been established, some general remarks about the find composition can be made.[5] Many of the ca 3.500 hoarded items were made of gold (total weight 5.1 kg), followed by a smaller number of items made of silver (1.4 kg) and copper alloy (0.3 kg).[6] Many pieces are richly decorated, with animal and geometrical patterns in garnet cloisonné, filigree and/or relief. The majority can be identified as belonging to weaponry and armour, such as helmet fragments, probable shield and saddle fittings, and especially sword-hilt fittings – including over 70 pommels of spathas and at least one seax (fig. 4). Moreover, some clearly Christian items of

1 Leahy & Bland 2009; Leahy et al. 2011.

2 Jones 2010.

3 Hooke 2010 (for Anglo-Saxon sites in the vicinity of the hoard, see fig. 7).

4 Yorke 2005, 102.

5 For a preliminary presentation of the finds, see Leahy & Bland 2009; Leahy 2010; 2011. All finds can be viewed on: www.staffordshirehoard.org.uk.

6 For comparison: the impressive collection of gold buried in Sutton Hoo mound 1 weighed 'only' 1.7 kg (see Bruce-Mitford 1978, 432 ff.).

1 | A selection of gold weaponry and weapon-related items belonging to the Staffordshire hoard (before cleaning), including decorative parts of swords, one or more helmets and shields and probably a processional cross. Length of the helmet cheek piece (top left) 8.2 cm (© Birmingham Museums Trust).

gold are present: a great cross (fig. 2), which may have been mounted on wood as a processional cross, a pendant cross and two cross-shaped mounts. Although many items have no parallels or have at first been interpreted as non-military, the hoard as a whole should be seen as a collection of war gear – comprising 'true' weaponry of different kinds, as well as Christian symbols that were meant to assure the war band or army of divine protection and victory.[7] This mixture of secular and sacred power is also reflected in the Biblical text on a gold strip, which may be the arm of another gold cross: "Rise up, Lord, and may your enemies be dispersed and those who hate you flee from your face" (after Book of Numbers 10:35, fig. 3).[8]

Most of the hoarded items are fragmented, less than 14% weighing more than 10 gr. Because no sword-blades and other weaponry of iron, like spear or lance heads and shield bosses, are represented in the hoard, it is obvious that the original weapons and other military items were dismantled and roughly stripped of their gold and silver elements. Several objects were also deliberately bent or folded (e.g. the gold cross) to make them more compact, which suggests that they were buried in a now lost, probably organic container of limited space.

The shapes and decorations of the hoarded items are typical of the early Anglo-Saxon or Merovingian period. The decoration in Animal Style II and the execution of the garnet cloisonné date the hoarded valuables roughly to the 7th century. As far as the Animal Style can be matched to the decoration of Kentish and East Anglian ornaments, both early and late 7th-century pieces seem to be present.[9] The sword pommels, of which many are heavily worn, show an even greater time depth: the oldest pommels, made of silver (Bifrons-Gilton type) and copper alloy, can be dated to the 6th century, and the youngest pommel, made of gold, to the late 7th and perhaps even to the early 8th century.[10] Although the exact time of deposition cannot yet be established,

7 See also Webster 2012, 122-126.

8 Okasha 2010; 2011, 215-220 (in: Leahy et al. 2011).

9 Nielsen 2010.

10 Fischer & Soulat 2010 (compare pommels 559 and 711 to pommel 358).

2 | A folded gold cross, decorated with Animal Style II in relief (object no. K1314), and five mounts with (removed) garnets that belonged to this or another cross (object nos. K655-659). The gold cross may have been attached to a wooden processional cross. Scale 1:1; original measurements of cross ca 29 x 19 cm (© Birmingham Museums Trust).

the hoard was most probably buried sometime in the late 7th century.[11] This corresponds with the final phase of a period when the kingdom of Mercia was aggressively expanding under Penda (ca. 630-655), Wulfhere (658-675) and Æthelred (675-704) – the last two being Christian kings.[12]

High-status weaponry: origin, circulation and deposition

Chronologically, the weapon elements and Christian symbols in the Staffordshire hoard are contemporary with the gold and silver ornaments from the southern North Sea area that in chapter 9 are assigned to phases 3 (ca 500-600, silver sword pommel), 4 (ca 590-630/640, garnet- and filigree-decorated pieces) and to a lesser extent also 5 (ca 600-700, e.g. the gold cross). Phases 3 and 4 are typified by the execution of high-status ornaments in regional or a supra-regional styles, producing items with a 'Kentish', 'East Anglian' or 'Frisian' signature – which allows the assignment of individual valuables from the research area to specific areas of origin.

In the case of the Staffordshire hoard such attributions are much more difficult to make, because many items are unparalleled in shape and/or style of decoration. As far as the origin of the weaponry can be established, their 'owners' seem to originate from the kingdoms of Kent (the silver pommel of Bifrons-Gilton type and filigree animal interlace), East Anglia (garnet and relief decoration, including lidded cells), Northumbria (garnet and filigree decoration) and perhaps also Mercia itself – that is the whole eastern and central part of early Anglo-Saxon England.[13] In only one case can the origin be established more securely: the close similarities between the decorative elements of a seax with garnet inlay and some of the jewellery from Sutton Hoo indicates production in East Anglia, probably by the same goldsmith.[14]

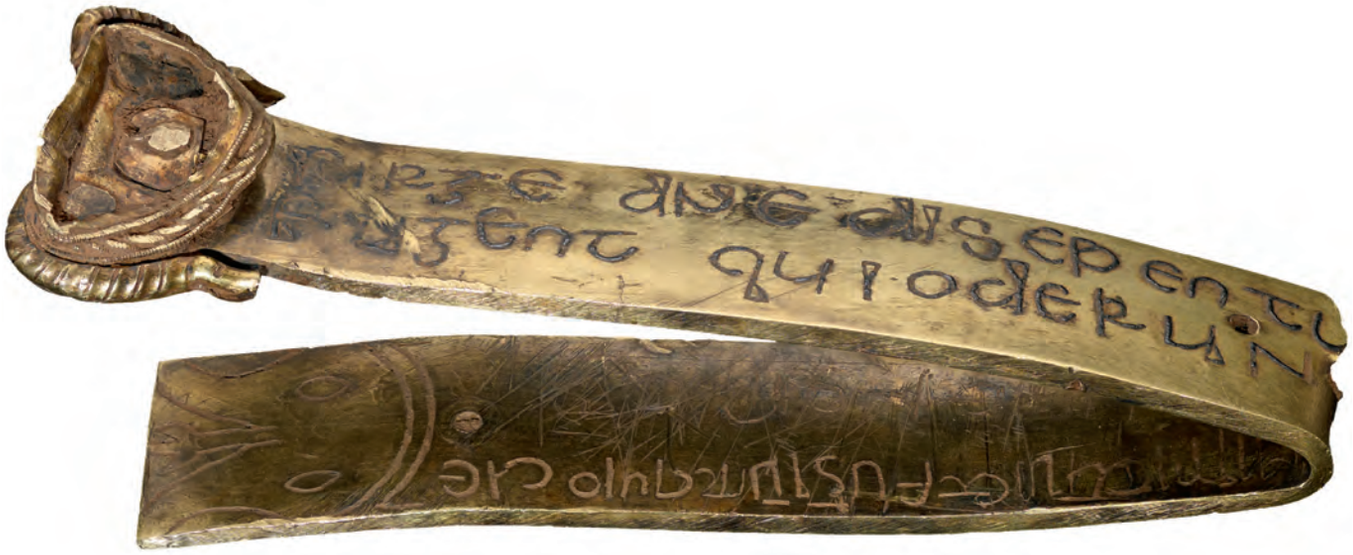
Whereas valuables of gold or silver from different parts of the research area tend to form more-or-less homogeneous groups within the territories of regional or supra-regional kingdoms during the 6th and early decades of the 7th century, the Staffordshire hoard shows

11 See also Webster 2011, 223-223 (in: Webster et al 2011).

12 Yorke 2005, 103-105 (including the genealogy of the Mercian royal house); for the extent of the kingdom of Mercia and its 7th-century 'satellite provinces', see Yorke 2005, 9-11, 106, map 1.

13 Nielsen 2010 (Kent and East Anglia); Fischer & Soulat 2010 (Kent and Northumbria); both also refer to a link with Scandinavia. See also Webster 2012, 124. 'Lidded cells' are hollow cells covered with gold sheet among the garnet-cloisonné.

14 Webster 2012, 124.



3 | Silver-gilt strip, perhaps the arm of a cross. It has a nielloed inscription in Latin, reading "Rise up, Lord, and may your enemies be dispersed and those who hate you flee from your face" (object no. K550). Scale 2:1 (© Birmingham Museums Trust).

a completely different picture. This can be explained in two ways, both of which are related to the military nature of the find complex.

First of all, the late 6th century saw the appearance of so-called *bretwaldas* or overlords, who according to Bede ruled the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms south of the river Humber.[15] After the death of the East Anglian king and *bretwalda* Rædwald in 624 or 625, the balance of power shifted to the north, and overlordship was disputed between Northumbria and Mercia.[16] Such overlordship was mainly aimed at making other kingdoms tributary, and usually did not result in annexation of the other kingdom's land. Moreover, military service could be demanded from subjected kings; the Mercian king Wulfhere, for example, is said to have led an army raised from all the southern kingdoms when he fought Northumbria in ca 673.[17] His predecessor Penda headed a similar army to fight Northumbria in 655, in which no fewer than 30 *duces regii* ('royal commanders', presumably leaders of subjected kingdoms) fought on his behalf.[18] The formation of such large, mixed armies meant that warriors carrying weaponry that manifested personal relations to a variety of patrons fought side by side, at least in the larger battles of the 7th century.

Secondly, the war bands of particular kings or sub-kings should be seen as dynamic entities, in which individual warriors of different origins (and hence with different weaponry) might operate side by side. As explained in section 1.5, it was expected from members of a king's retinue, especially if they were of aristocratic descent, to show their valour and courage by participating in raids or wars, and in doing so to gain honour, prestige and status – which contributed to their personal 'worth'. Moreover, winning a war could result in an impressive amount of booty. Halsall vividly describes how early-medieval armies carried their wealth with them; and the most effective way to purloin such valuables was to seize them on the battlefield.[19] As the story of *Beowulf* illustrates, heroic enterprises were not only conducted within the context of one's patron's war band, but also – and maybe especially – by temporarily joining the war bands of allied kingdoms. The Staffordshire hoard therefore may include weaponry not only from different war bands, but also from warriors aiming to increase their worth outside their homeland.

Another fascinating aspect of the valuable items in the hoard is the great time-depth they represent, apparently ranging from the mid-6th to the late 7th century – a pattern that is well-known from the inventories of 'royal' or 'princely' graves in Anglo-Saxon England.[20] The contemporaneous hoarding of both (very) old and new pieces of weaponry supports the idea that such valuables were *not* personal belongings: the high-status weaponry and other ornaments were given by a king or lower leader to a member of his retinue, or by a father to his son or daughter, to be returned to the donor upon reaching a new phase in life (e.g. adulthood) or after death. These items could be used again as gifts to new followers or other children, or be melted down and transformed into updated status symbols.[21] Consequently, it was common practice to keep items in cir-

15 Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* II, 5.
16 Yorke 2005, 62, 157-158.
17 Yorke 2005, 105 (Wulfhere), 158-159 (military overlordship).
18 Yorke 2005, 105, 158.
19 Halsall 2010.
20 E.g. the examples mentioned in section 1.8.
21 For the transformation and circulation of valuables, see chapters 9 and 10.

4 | A selection of gold pommels from the Staffordshire hoard, originally belonging to spathas (left, object nos. K452, 674 and 1200), and the hilt-fittings of a seax (right: object nos. K354, 370, 376, 449 and 690). Scale 2:1 (© Birmingham Museums Trust).

culation for several generations, rather than burying them in a grave or as a hoard after the user entered a new stage of life or died. As discussed in sections 1.6 and 10.3.1, not only the worth of the user but also that of a sword or piece of jewellery could evolve in the course of their 'lifetime'. Because of their so-called cultural biography, which would have included real or fictional stories about former users and heroic achievements, the high-status items of weaponry represented in the Staffordshire hoard at least in part were ancient heirlooms – as their wear also indicates.

The importance of heirlooms for the identity of a tribal group, a kingdom and the leading elite makes it even more astonishing that such a large collection of highly symbolic items were taken out of circulation, dismantled and (without their iron parts) buried as a hoard. This purposeful action can be understood only when the usual life-cycle of these valuables was interrupted, almost certainly because they were lost during battle and taken as war booty by a victorious king.[22] Although it is unknown whether this specific battle was won by a Mercian army (including the warriors of subject kingdoms) or by that of an opponent (and its allies), the different treatment of the weapon parts made of iron and those made of gold and silver is not surprising when the latter are considered in their role of identity markers.

22 For other, less probable interpretations, see Webster 2011, 223 (robbery of an escort that travelled along Watling Street), Sparey-Green 2011, 225 (product of Viking raids on some royal hall), and Périn 2011 (product of raiding a pagan sanctuary) (all in: Webster et al. 2011).

A sword, shield, helmet or other weapon was made out of structural or functional parts and more decorative ones. In the case of the high-status swords that are represented in the Staffordshire hoard, these were the iron sword blade and wooden scabbard on the one hand, and the mainly gold and silver hilt and scabbard fittings, including the sword pyramids, on the other. For expressing a symbolic language, the decorative parts made of precious metal were most useful: by adding garnet cloisonné, filigree or a different decoration, not only social status and prestige could be visualized, but also the 'political identity' of the elite who had bestowed such weapons.[23] Although the Migration- and Merovingian-period rulers of northwestern Europe used similar repertoires of markers to express such an identity (e.g. garnet inlay or the use of Animal Style II), it is shown in chapter 9 how regional or supra-regional variations in combining such symbols at the same time visually distinguished the elite networks and the kingdoms that they referred to.

When we return to the weapon elements in the Staffordshire hoard, it is clearly not the constructive or functional parts that are represented, but the highly symbolic, decorative elements – i.e. the items that gave expression to the political identity of the overlord and the *duces regii* who, in this case, had *lost* the battle. While the iron and wooden parts of the captured swords, shields and spears or lances apparently lacked such a value as identity markers and were probably re-used in their original shape, the careless removal of gold and silver elements points to a different treatment: they were meant to be melted down and transformed into symbolic markers that gave expression to the political identity of the overlord who had *won* the battle.[24] After this transformation process, the newly made gold and silver fittings could be mounted to the iron sword blades and wooden shields that were also part of the collected booty, or to newly made weapons – which in their turn would be given to new members of the king's *Gefolgschaft*. Alternatively, the hacked pieces could be used in a more commercial sphere, as 'payment gold' or be transformed into coins.[25] Because the Christian symbols in their shape and decoration probably expressed a political identity similar to that of the weapon fittings, they were treated in the same way. An interesting parallel to the stripped items from the Staffordshire hoard is the gold, filigree-decorated sword pommel from Ardleigh (Essex) – a piece that might very well originate from Northumbria or Mercia.[26] The damage and distortion of this pommel indicates that it was wrenched from its blade, probably after it was captured as booty.

More difficult to understand is the absence of prestigious buckles or other belt elements, like the triangular pieces that are well-known from Kent (fig. 9.22). These often richly decorated items, which were clearly also meant to express a political identity, must have been present among the collected booty. For whatever reason, they were treated differently and kept apart from the buried ornaments.

The question whether the items from the hoard were buried as a ritual deposit or as hidden capital has indirectly been answered already. When we assume that the buried items were meant to be melted down, this implies temporary burial for later re-use. This interpretation is in agreement with the criteria presented in section 11.2.3 for recognizing religious and profane hoards. While the religious hoards are characterized by stereotypical sets and intact pieces of jewellery (or weapon elements, like scabbard mounts), the profane hoards have a more random composition, often including raw materials and/or 'payment gold' (table 11.1). Moreover, at least some of the profane hoards were buried in a container, which is usually not the case among the religious hoards. Although the Staffordshire hoard is more-or-less uniform in character (weaponry and war-related items), the fragmentation and bending of the valuables and the probable use of a container are typical of hoarding for non-religious purposes. The find location directly beside the Watling Street and close to a natural marker supports the idea that this was a hidden treasure that was meant to be recovered and re-used.

A king and his *Gefolgschaft*

In section 10.3 the valuable items of gold and silver from the southern North Sea area are attributed to various social levels, representing kings, members of their royal retinue, etc. This assignment is based on their 'social status', which is expressed by a) the type of

23 For 'political identity', see section 13.8.

24 An alternative explanation is given by Halsall (2010), who sees the sword blade as the most important part of a sword – which would explain why this part was re-used and not the hilt and scabbard fittings. This would not, however, explain the absence of spears, lances and shield bosses.

25 See section 10.2.

26 *TAR* 2004, no. 105. First suggested by Fischer & Soulat (2010).

Table 1 | The assignment of the sword pommels from the Staffordshire hoard to quality groups, based on the material used and their decoration. Pommel fragments are excluded. The first pommel belonged to a seax (quality group E), the other pommels to spatha (*: 1x gilt; data: pers. inf. K. Leahy, Portable Antiquity Scheme, British Museum, London).

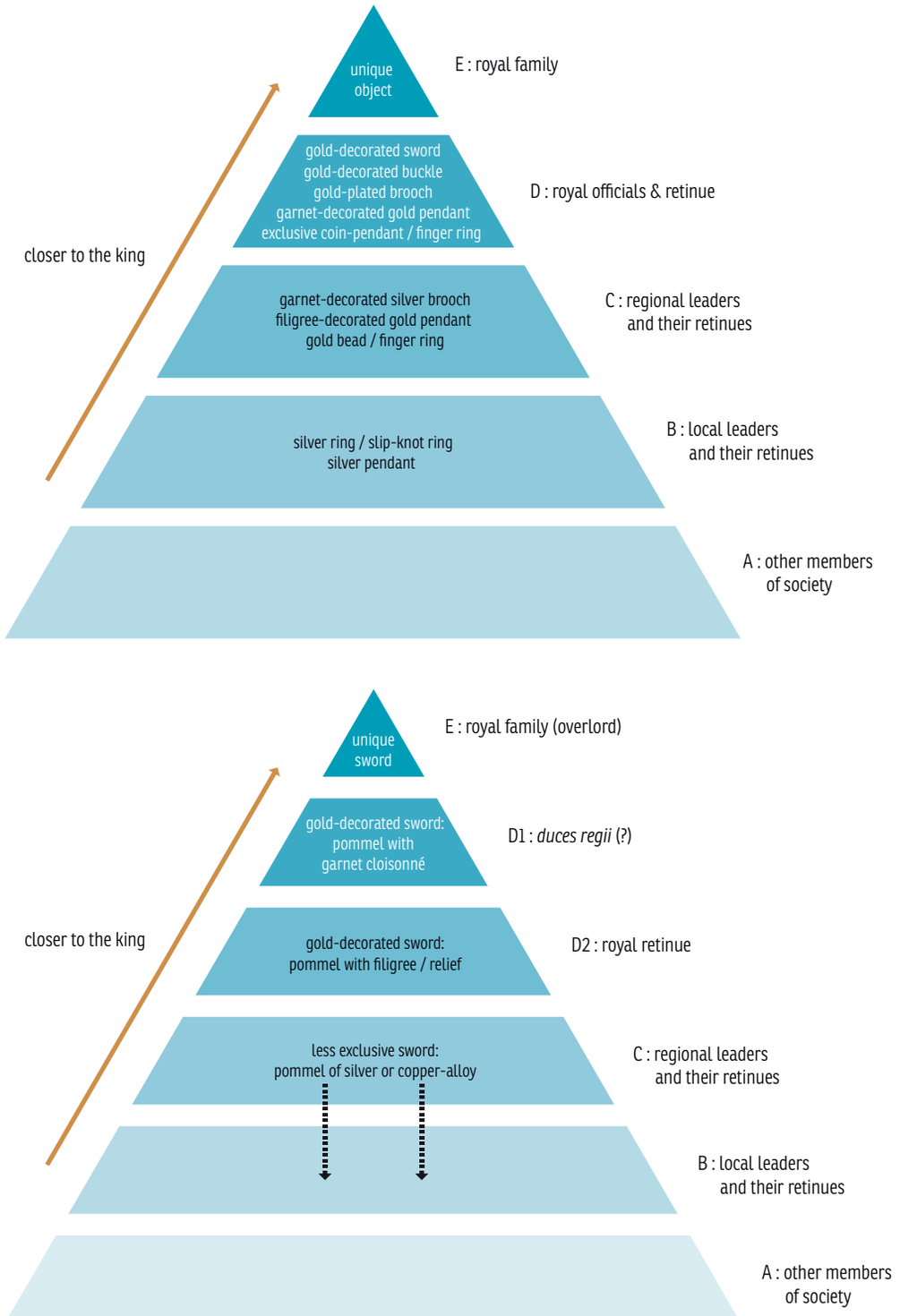
MATERIAL	DECORATION	NUMBER	QUALITY GROUP
gold	garnet cloisonné, lidded cells	1	E
gold	garnet cloisonné	17	D1
gold	garnet and filigree	2	D1
gold	filigree	42	D2
gold	relief	1	D2
silver	relief	4	B/C
silver	plain	1	B/C
copper alloy*	relief	2	B/C
copper alloy	plain	1	B/C
	total:	71	

ornament, b) the quality of decoration, c) the religious symbolism of the object/decoration, d) the association with other finds in graves and hoards, and e) the quantity of currently known parallels. Among the finds that are typologically most closely related to the items from the Staffordshire hoard (phase 4, ca 590-630/640), five social levels have been distinguished, each characterized by a specific set of valuables and representing a specific 'quality group'. These levels are presented as a social pyramid in figure 5, every social level showing the 'distance to the king'. An interesting question is to what extent this social stratification is also recognizable among the finds from the Staffordshire hoard, and what this may tell us about the social groups that were involved in the lost battle.

The large number of gold items decorated with garnet cloisonné, in some cases combined with filigree, makes it clear that the top level of society is represented in this hoard. Because of the high degree of fragmentation of the buried items, as yet only the sword pommels can be used to gain more insight into the composition of a king's retinue. The pommels, belonging to spathae and one seax (fig. 4), are interpreted as representing one warrior each. The total number of 91 pommels (including 20 fragments, which in part may fit together) can be subdivided into three main groups: pommels made of gold (73x), those made of silver (13x) and those made of bronze (5x). When the fragments are excluded, a further subdivision of the 71 remaining pommels into five (sub) groups can be made on the basis of their decoration (table 1).

As shown in the social pyramid made for the pommels from the hoard (fig. 5), the majority of items belong to members of the royal retinue, comprising the closest group of warriors surrounding a king (quality group D, 62x). Within this group a further division into two subgroups can be made (D1 and D2), a division that has not been recognized among the material presented in chapter 10. Possibly, the 19 pommels of quality group D1 belonged to subjected kings or *duces regii* who were incorporated into the overlord's army. As shown above, up to 30 of these 'royal commanders' could be part of such a 7th-century army. The quality of decoration of at least one pommel, which belonged to the seax (fig. 4), may indicate that it was worn by the overlord himself, or perhaps by his son or another member of the royal family (group E). The remaining 43 pommels probably represent the warrior-followers belonging to the retinue of the overlord himself, or to that of the subjected kings who fought on his behalf (group D2). The silver and copper-alloy pommels would normally represent two lower social ranks (groups C-B, 8x). Given their small number, however, these could also be pommels with a highly valued cultural biography, which were attached to exclusive, perhaps even gold-decorated swords. The fact that this category includes the two oldest pommels, a 6th-century bronze pommel and a contemporary silver piece of the Bifrons-Gilton type, supports this interpretation.

Although a detailed analysis of all ca 3.500 items in the hoard is needed to provide definite numbers of items and to allow the distinction of social levels in more detail, the present data seem to indicate that the high-status weaponry belonged to an overlord or *bretwalda* (the seax), about 20 *duces regii* (gold- and garnet-decorated swords) and at least 43 members of the royal retinue (gold-decorated swords). If the silver and copper-alloy pommels too are also assigned to this rank, the retinue may have numbered around 50. Whether



5 | Two social pyramids, showing the assignment of valuable items of gold and silver from the southern North Sea area (top, phase 4) and the Staffordshire hoard (bottom) to specific social levels (drawing by the author).

the helmet and probable shields and saddles belonged to the overlord or to one of his sub-kings is impossible to say at this stage. The same is true for the religious items, although the processional cross with the gold mount may well have been part of the royal treasure, as an 'inalienable possession'.[27]

Interestingly, any weapons of warriors of ranks below that of the royal retinue seem to be underrepresented if at all represented among the hoarded items. These probably included swords with hilts made of bone or wood; such hilts would have been less elaborately decorated than those of the high-status swords described above, and therefore less significant as identity markers. Like the iron and wooden parts of the high-status weaponry, such ordinary items may have been re-used in their original forms, while *only* those elements that expressed a 'foreign' political identity and hence were negatively valued were selected for melting down.

27 See section 1.6.

Conclusion

This preliminary and in no way exhaustive analysis of the Staffordshire hoard indicates that this tremendous find can be interpreted as 7th-century war booty, collected on the battlefield and meant to be transformed into status symbols expressing the political identity of the victorious king – or to be used as 'payment gold'. This find not only illustrates the importance of warfare and raiding to maintain the early medieval system of gift-giving, but also presents a collection of high-status weaponry and other war-related items that were usually kept in circulation and that only in exceptional cases are archaeologically visible in graves or hoards. Most important for the present study is that the dating, execution and variety of prestige goods in the Staffordshire hoard support the ideas presented in chapters 8 to 13, including those about gift-giving and the personal bond that prestigious gifts created between a leader and his followers, the importance of heirlooms and their cultural biography, and the transformation of 'foreign' items into weapon elements or jewellery expressing the political identity of the leading elite.

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Photo R. Blankenfeldt, taken at the find site of the Gallehus horns.