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Published in:
Viking and Medieval Scandinavia

DOI:
[10.1484/J.VMS.5.109601](https://doi.org/10.1484/J.VMS.5.109601)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2015

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

IJssennagger, N. L. (2015). A Viking Find from the Isle of Texel (Netherlands) and its Implications. *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 11, 127-142. <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.VMS.5.109601>

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A VIKING FIND FROM THE ISLE OF TEXEL (NETHERLANDS) AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

Nelleke L. IJssennagger

Introduction

At the beginning of 2015 metal detectorist Jan Jaap Waverijn found a piece of silver at one of his search spots on the island of Texel, the Netherlands, and reported it to the local authorities. Texel, the largest and most western of the so-called Wadden Islands that lie in front of the coast of the Netherlands up to Denmark, is part of the Province of North Holland but historically belongs to the area called Frisia, which stretched along the entire Dutch coast from the border with Belgium in the south-west to the river Weser in Germany in the north-east. Part of North Holland is still known as West-Frisia today. The main town on Texel is Den Burg, a name that refers to an early medieval ring-fortress or *burg*. The find was uncovered 1.6 kilometres south-west of this town, on the higher ground inhabited in the early medieval and Viking period. At the time the silver strip was collected a small piece of the narrowest side broke off. Nevertheless, the find is still readily recognizable as a fragment of a silver Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-ring of late ninth or early tenth century.¹

¹ To compare, close parallels occur amongst others in the hoard from Vestre Rom, Vest-Agder, and Grimestad, Vestfold, Norway: Sheehan 1998, 177; Grieg 1929, 239.

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Abstract: Early in 2015 a fragment of a silver, Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-ring was found on the island of Texel, in former Frisia. It is the first find of this type in the Netherlands. A dirham was uncovered at almost the same find-spot a few years earlier. The find may thus possibly be seen as part of a small hack-silver assemblage or hoard, dispersed through ploughing. Although still very few and far between, Viking finds by detectorists have been increasing in the Netherlands, particularly in former Frisia. The Texel find can be seen in the light of these finds. As a Hiberno-Scandinavian type of object, it relates to the Irish Viking kingdom and possibly to the activities of the Great Heathen Army, to which the Frisian coastal area in some way seems connected.

Keywords: Frisia, Vikings, arm-ring, metal detecting, Hiberno-Scandinavian, North Sea World

Figure 4.1. Side view, frontal view, and rear view of the find from Texel.

Drawing: Rachel Onstwedder, Groningen Institute of Archaeology, University of Groningen.

Although only a single fragment of a type of which hundreds of complete and fragmentary finds are known from the British Isles and Scandinavia, it is a 'unique' find inasmuch as it is the first of this type in the Netherlands, and first outside Scandinavia and the British Isles, as far as we know. As such, the find tells us more about Texel in the Viking Age, along with the broader Viking Age Frisian coastal area, and in particular it sheds light on the relation between this region and the Insular and Scandinavian Viking world. In addition, it shows how important metal detecting is for the study of the Viking Age in the Netherlands, particularly former Frisia.

The Find

The fragment² of the arm-ring is a broad strip of silver, of which, as noted, the narrowest part is broken off. The strip of approximately rectangular cross-section is tapering both in width and in thickness. On the broadest and thickest end, the maximum width of the strip measures 13 mm and is 2.5 mm thick. The minimum width is 5 mm at the narrowest end, where the strip has a thickness of 1 mm. In total the pieces are 103 mm in length, the largest part being 86 mm and the small piece that is broken off 17 mm. Together the pieces of silver weigh 13 grams. Although the silver is slightly dirty and corroded and has up to now not undergone any cleaning or conservation, the clean inside of the smallest piece makes it clear that it is indeed silver. The quality of the silver remains to be tested, however.

The fragment is slightly less than half of an arm-ring, which would have been penannular in shape and would have had slightly rounded-off terminals. The strip is bent or folded and appears to have been chopped off at the broadest end. This would have been towards the central part or middle of the arm-ring, which is typically expanded (Sheehan 2011, 94). The terminal at the narrow-

² When referring to the find or fragment, the entire silver strip including the small piece that is broken off is meant.

est end seems to have been broken off just before the start of the terminal. In addition, minor damage and test marks can be seen on the rim of the fragment. Some of these probably represent relatively recent damage, whereas others are more likely Viking Age test marks. This, in combination with the possibility that the fragment was chopped off, indicates that it can be considered a piece of hack-silver.

On the outer side, the silver is decorated with a stamped pattern of bar-shapes with pellets in relief (Graham-Campbell 2011, 142). At 20 mm from the widest end, there is a cross-shape made of two crossing bar-stamps with pellets. As suggested by Jan Besteman, most likely the same stamp was used for all the individual bars on the arm-ring fragment (Jan Besteman pers. comm.).

Hiberno-Scandinavian Broad-Band Arm-Ring

From its form and decoration the fragment is immediately recognizable as originating in a Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band type of arm-ring. These arm-rings were made by hammering out a silver ingot into a broad strip or band, naturally creating a tapering shape. Subsequently, the stamped decoration was applied, after which the strip was bent into shape (Graham-Campbell 2011, 141). Most of the rings are penannular in form but some have terminals that are round in cross-section and wrapped around each other or knotted together (Sheehan 2011, 94).

Stamped bar-shaped or transverse groove decoration is a typical feature of the broad-band arm-rings as defined by Sheehan (2011, 94–95; 1998) and earlier by Graham-Campbell (1976, 51). This ornamentation is closely paralleled by some broad-band arm-rings in Ireland, Britain, and Scandinavia; they appear in four hoards in Ireland, for example, and one complete example occurs in the Cuerdale hoard from Britain (John Sheehan pers. comm.). Although plain examples exist, most finds have the stamped decoration, which occurs only on the outside of the arm-ring. Quite a number have the cross-shape in the central area, as well as two cross-shapes towards the two terminals. It follows that the fragment from Texel could well have had one or two additional areas with stamped crosses, now lost. The possibility has been raised that the cross-shapes could have been intended to mark standardized weight, by analogy with the evidently standardized weights of coins bearing a cross (Kilger 2007, 286). Whether this is the case or not, about two-thirds of the broad-band arm-rings of Hiberno-Scandinavian type have a standardized weight of around 26.15 grams (Sheehan 2011, 99; Kilger 2007, 286; Sheehan 1998, 178–79). This

reflects their primary use as a means of storing and circulating silver, like the silver ingots from which they are made. Simultaneously they would have functioned as wearable status objects. The one-third not weighing around 26 grams could have primarily been status objects, possibly gifts (Sheehan 2011, 99).

The term Hiberno-Scandinavian (previously alternating in usage with Hiberno-Viking but now emerging as the favoured term) — from Latin *Hibernia* meaning Ireland — refers to the Irish Viking sphere and to an Irish-Scandinavian cultural background. It is here that the arm-ring type presumably developed, based on Scandinavian prototypes. According to Sheehan (2011, 98), the inspiration for the arm-rings is typically Scandinavian, the prototypes occurring in southern Scandinavia in particular (see Skovmand 1942, 29–36 for examples). In Ireland, the prototypes are absent. From ninth-century Denmark, the design idea was transmitted to a Scandinavian milieu in Ireland where the Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-ring subsequently developed (Sheehan 2011, 98–100; Sheehan 2000, 51). According to Sheehan (2011, 96–99), two finds of Hiberno-Scandinavian prototype broad-band arm-rings in Danish hoards connected to the Great Army and dated to *c.* 870 indicate the context in which the idea for the arm-rings could have been brought to Ireland from Denmark. The army was active in England between 865 and 878 and one of its leaders was the Irish Viking king Ívarr of Dublin (Sheehan 2011, 98; Downham 2008, 64–65). In general, the type can be dated to the period between 850 and 950, with the majority being produced between 880 and 930 (Sheehan 2011, 100). The Texel fragment, as well as its parallels, was probably produced in Ireland or the Irish sea area in this period (John Sheehan pers. comm.).

Hundreds of fragments and whole arm-rings of the Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band type have been found in the British Isles and Scandinavia, both as single finds and in hoards such as the Cuerdale hoard (*c.* 905) (Graham-Campbell 2011, 93–94; Sheehan 2000, 55–56; Graham-Campbell and Sheehan 1995). In Ireland and England together more than 350 finds are known (Sheehan 2011, 94). This is one of the reasons why it is seen as the most important and distinctive type of object from the Hiberno-Scandinavian silver-working tradition. From Scandinavia, finds are mostly known from coastal Norway and from Denmark, with one find from Uppåkra in Sweden. Outside of Scandinavia and the British Isles, the Texel fragment is the first find of a Hiberno-Scandinavian broad-band arm-type. It is interesting that it is found on an island in former Frisia, a region that is increasingly revealing its Viking Age past, not least through metal detecting finds.

Hack-Silver and Hoards

About 52 m from where he found the arm-ring fragment, the same metal detectorist had some years earlier discovered a fragment of a dirham. The two objects were found on either side of a road between two recently ploughed fields. The dirham, which is slightly bent and, like the arm-ring, fragmented and exhibits test marks, is from the Abbasid region, minted during the caliphate of Harun Al Mansur (136–38 AH / AD 754–74).³ Considering the find-location and the nature of the two objects, it is a possibility that they are connected. They might once have composed a small hack-silver assemblage or hoard, but this remains uncertain.

In the Viking Age economy, silver was the most commonly used commodity (Besteman 2004, 24–26; Hårdh 1996). From the second half of the ninth century onwards in particular, this is reflected in the bullion economy, in which ingots, artefacts made from ingots, dirhams, and cut up coins and jewellery as hack-silver were distributed throughout the Viking world. They have ended up in hoards and as single finds. In the Netherlands, at least two (further) Viking hoards are known, one with ingots amongst others things and one containing hack-silver, and tens of single finds of dirhams are recorded. All are indicative of either Scandinavian presence in Frisia or close relations to the Viking world.

The two hoards are Westerklijf I (c. 850) and II (buried c. 880), the former found by metal detecting in 1996 and the latter in two parts in 1999 and 2001, on the former island of Wieringen in Frisia. Ever since they were unearthed, they have been recognized as the first and only tangible evidence of the Danish Viking presence in the Netherlands that is referred to in the Frankish chronicles and other written sources (Besteman 2006–07, 5–6). The stray dirhams are believed to have reached the area via Scandinavia as well, since they are from the Viking Age and the majority have the characteristic peck marks, bends, and cuts of Viking bullion economy (Besteman 2004, 31–33).

Notably, the distribution of Arabic coins is restricted to the modern provinces of North Holland, Friesland, Groningen, and Drenthe in the north and Zeeland in the south-west, aside from two dirhams that are known from Dorestad in the Province of Utrecht (Besteman 2004, 30–34; 2006/07, 72–74). If we look at the find-spots within these provinces, we see a small cluster on the island of Walcheren, a large cluster on the former island of Wieringen,⁴ and a

³ NUMIS-registration 1035493.

⁴ Partly belonging to the famous Westerklijf hoards, partly single finds.

Map 4.1.
Distribution of Arabic
coins and mixed hoards
from the Viking Age
in the Netherlands as
recorded in 2007.
Map: Jan Besteman, 2007,
73 (with permission).

cluster in the north-west of Friesland, in the area known as Westergo. These are all core areas in former Frisia, known to have seen Viking activity in one way or another.

Vikings on Texel and in Frisia

The two silver finds from Texel draw our attention to the Viking Age history of that island, as well as of the larger coastal region of Frisia, and the relation to the Viking world. As indicated, Texel in the early medieval and Viking period was part of Frisia, the same as for instance Wieringen and the current province of Friesland situated just across the water. Although still named as a distinctive area with its own laws after 800, Frisia had come to lie within the Frankish realm in the eighth century and had simultaneously been subject to missionary activ-

Map 4.2.

Schematized map of Frisia at the beginning of the Viking Age, with higher-lying areas (tidal islands) and inhabited areas.

Map: R. van der Pluym/author after Dijkstra & De Ridder 2009, 202.

ity leading to official conversion to Christianity (see IJssennagger 2013 for a fuller introduction to the history of the Frisian area and Frisians). In the ninth century, written records name *Texla* (Texel) and *Wiron* (Wieringen) as Frisian ‘gaue’ (districts),⁵ indicating that they were recognized as core areas in Frisia (Woltering 2000, 341; Besteman 2006/07, 7–8; Henstra 2012, 16). It is known that at least the higher-lying areas of both islands were relatively densely populated in the early medieval period and the Viking Age. On Texel, where later the town of Den Burg would be built, a circular fortress was present from the second half of the eighth century (Woltering 2002; Dijkstra and de Ridder 2009, 203–04). Located next to the Vlie, the waterway leading inland and southwards from the North Sea, and with Texel directly facing the North Sea, these islands were highly strategic locations. The Vlie was an important route for ships from

⁵ Gau (Dutch *gouw*, Frisian *gea*) was the administrative area within the Frankish empire, comparable to Latin *pagus*.

the north, from Scandinavia and the British Isles, sailing to the well-known town of Dorestad and vice versa (Besteman 2006/07, 8). Texel and Wieringen must both have been logical locations for mooring along the way and for contact.

From written sources, primarily the various Frankish chronicles, we know that the area underwent Danish Viking activity from 810 onwards, when the first Viking attack on Frisia is recorded, and it is mentioned that 'all the islands off the Frisian coast' were sacked in the action (*Annales regni Francorum s.a.* 810: Rau 1977, 94; IJssennagger 2013, 69, 76). Viking activity would continue for at least two centuries, with varying intensity. The same chronicles inform us about certain parts of Frisia becoming fiefs in Danish hands, either because the Danes commended themselves to the Frankish overlords or because they forced the Franks to grant them an area to stop their Viking activities (Coupland 1998; Besteman 2006/07, 5; IJssennagger 2013, 71–72). This happened in Rüstringen (Germany), the island of Walcheren, Dorestad and its surroundings and the area of Wieringen, Texel and the attached mainland as one fiefdom in West Frisia. The latter was ruled by the Danish warlords Rorik and, for a brief period, Godfred between 850 and 885 (Besteman 2006/07, 5; 2004, 24; Coupland 1998, 95–101, 108–11).

Because of this history, the Westerklijf hoards are of great interest. They are Danish in composition and both deposited during the time when Wieringen was in Danish hands. The assumption is therefore that they were buried by Danish Vikings temporarily living in Frisia and located on Wieringen (Besteman 2006/07, 68–69; 2004, 21–25). The finds from Texel with a late ninth- to early tenth-century date could equally have been left behind by Vikings temporarily present on the island or been from Frisians who had contacts with the Viking world. In any case, they are not necessarily connected to the Danish fiefdom like the hoards but more likely are from the time Texel ceased to be a Danish fiefdom. If so, it is clear that even after the fiefs were no longer in Danish hands, affiliation and contact between this coastal region of the Frisians and the Viking world continued to exist.

Viking Finds from Frisia: Links between Frisia and the (Insular) Viking World

It is of course difficult and somewhat hazardous to make assumptions concerning historic relations between Frisia and the Insular Viking world on the basis of a single find. At the same time, there are some possibilities that we can consider and some tentative conclusions we can draw. In order to do so, we have to look into what we know from the historic sources and from similar finds else-

where, and we have to place the Texel find in the context of other Viking finds that have been made in Frisia over the last few years.

Apart from the Westerklief hoards, the relatively few finds from Frisia identifiable as 'Viking' are usually single finds — just like the dirhams. Apart from some older finds from Dorestad, they are usually from recent decades and discovered by metal detectorists. The majority are from around the waters connecting Texel with the rest of Frisia. Together with the older finds they provide a context for the Texel silver. Mostly, they are silver and gold jewellery or ornaments, such as a golden Viking ring from Gaasterland in Friesland and another one on Wieringen, just across the Vlie from Texel (IJssennagger 2013, 89–90; Besteman 2009), but some bullion silver is found as well (IJssennagger 2013, 84–93; Besteman 2006/07, 72–74; Willemsen 2004). An example is the silver arm-ring with five pendant rings of which the find-spot is recorded as Callantsoog, North-Holland, but which was in fact recovered from the North Sea just off the coast near Huisduinen, North-Holland during dredging (personal comm. Jan Besteman). Another is a silver ingot from Warffum, Groningen, which is considered a Viking silver ingot. The test marks and the standard weight of 26 grams — like most of the Hiberno-Scandinavian broadband arm-rings and the ingots they were made from — indicate that this ingot was circulating within the Viking economy (Besteman 2004, 28; Knol 1999).

It used to be the case that only items that were directly recognizable as Scandinavian Viking imports were considered when studying the archaeological traces of Viking activity, partly based on the fact that we have the testimony of the Frankish sources as to the activities of Danish Vikings in Frisia. In recent decades, however, the scope has been widened and other items (and sources) that may be related to Frisian-Viking relations have begun to be taken into consideration as well. The starting point is the idea that the Vikings were responsible for the distribution of Viking silver like the dirhams and the two hoards, and perhaps more (Besteman 2006/07, 72–74). A case in point is the silver hoards buried during the Viking Age whose distribution from the continental perspective is restricted to the northern coastal zone in former Frisia. This coincides with an area of Viking activity (Knol 2005, 2010; Coupland 2006). The hoards are neither Scandinavian in composition nor typically continental, as they are mixed hoards of continental silver. This may have been the case because Frisia was dealing with both the coin-based economy of the Franks and the bullion economy of the Vikings, meaning that people in Frisia were obliged to accept both (Besteman 2004, 35). It has been argued that the hoards may have been buried out of fear of Viking attacks, and Coupland (2006) convincingly showed that they indeed related to periods of Viking activity in the

area. Similarly, it has been suggested that they may be hoards representing war-booty from joint Viking-Frisian activities or unrecognized (and unrecognized) Viking hoards composed of local silver (IJssennagger 2013, 88–89; Knol 2010, 48; Besteman 2006/07, 72–74; Coupland 2006, 258; Sawyer 1971, 101 and footnote). Either way, the finds that are not on the face of it ‘Viking’ can nevertheless be related to Viking activity.

Significantly, an increasing number of objects do not point to an origin in or connection to only Scandinavia proper — which is what we always think of when looking for Viking finds in the Netherlands — but to a connection with the Viking world in general, including the British Isles. From metal detecting collections, four copper-alloy Viking disc brooches from the late ninth and early tenth centuries are now known in the Netherlands, all from the provinces of Friesland and Groningen (IJssennagger 2013, 86). The small disc brooches were particularly popular in Scandinavia in the ninth and tenth centuries as part of women’s costume and were also popular amongst Scandinavian women in the Danelaw (Paterson 2002, 268; Kershaw 2009; 2013). Plotting the distribution of the types found in Frisia, consisting of two Borre-style types, one Jellinge-style type and one miscellaneous item, it becomes clear that their parallels occur as much in the Danelaw as in Scandinavia proper. Their distribution is primarily concentrated from southern Scandinavia to the Danelaw, forming a wide band of finds across the North Sea, but the Jellinge type brooch is spread even wider with examples from Birka in the east to Dublin in the west and from Kaupang in the north and Frisia in the south. In all cases, the finds in Frisia form the bottom of this band and fill a blank spot on the map.⁶

Another type of brooch is the ring-pin or ring-brooch, either annular or penannular. Although they are best known from Insular contexts, where many different types developed over time, they also occurred regularly in the Viking Age as imports from the Insular world or as Scandinavian copies or types based on the Insular ones. From Frisia, one complete example and one fragment from the Viking Age are known. The complete example is a silver pin from Dorestad, Petersen type 215 (Petersen 1928, 179–80), which has parallels in Norway. The fragment is a copper-alloy piece from the northern Dutch coastal region, comparable to finds from Kaupang and Ferkingstad in Norway (Zijlstra 1990;⁷ Graham-Campbell 2011, 99–100; Wamers 1985, 111, list

⁶ More details on these finds will be presented in the author’s forthcoming dissertation.

⁷ The find is illustrated on the frontispiece of this publication and discussed on an unnumbered page in the introduction.

1.15, pl. 36.2; Petersen 1928, 180). For these pieces, a provenance in southern or western Norway based on Insular prototypes is expected and clearly they represent Viking-Insular styles. Again, the objects can be dated between c. 850 and 950 and show a connection between Frisia and the wider Viking world.

Also pointing to such links is later ninth-century material from presumably the Frisian/Frankish coastal area that is found in context with broad-band arm-rings in the Cuerdale hoard and in the further Irish Sea region. Most likely they represent the outcome of raid or tribute, possibly from Viking war-bands who were active in the Frisian area before turning to Britain and Ireland (Ager 2011, 127–28; Wamers 2011, 135–39).

Historical Evidence

Sources indeed suggest that Danish Vikings were active in Frisia before turning to the British Isles (Sawyer 1972, 101). Presumably, they were joined by some Frisian coastal dwellers (IJssennagger 2013, 80–83). Besides the aforementioned Ívarr, another leader of the Great Army who is referred to in the *Annals of Lindisfarne* (*Annales Lindisfarnenses* s.a. 855, 858; Pertz 1866, 502–07), the *History of St Cuthbert* (*Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* 10, 14; South 2002) and Saxo's *History of the Danes* (*Gesta Danorum* VIII; Davidson 1979, 242), is Ubbe (or Ubba) *Dux Fresonum* or *Ubbe Fresicus*. In some sources it is suggested that Ubbe and Ívarr were both sons of Regnerus/Ragnarr.⁸ Although it is not clear if Ubbe was regarded as a Frisian or — perhaps more likely — a Dane who had lived in Frisia for a while, it does indicate that he came to the British Isles from Frisia. If Ubbe was a *dux* and was involved with one of the Danish benefices, then it would be likely that he brought not only his band of Danes but also some Frisian coastal dwellers across the sea. Part of the war-band could have been recruited in Frisia. Similarly we can expect the Danes to have resided in Frisia for some generations and to have connected with the local population, which may have led to a generation of 'Frisian Danes', some of them even born in Frisia (MacLeod 2014, 132–58). The *Annales Lindisfarnenses* mention Ubbe and two

⁸ The names of these leaders vary in the sources. In the Lindisfarne Annals (*Annales Lindisfarnenses* 855: Pertz 1866, 506) we find mention of Halfdene, Ubba, and Inguar, who according to the editor are 'Lodebrochi filii' (sons of Lodebrochus), whereas the *Annals of St Neots* (Dumville and Lapidge 1984, 56, 78, 149) name Hubba, son of Lodebrochus, and Saxo (*Gesta Danorum* IX: Davidson 1979, 286) names Ubbi, son of Regnerus Lothbrog. The last-named along with Lodebrochus can presumably be identified as the Ragnarr loðbrók of the Icelandic *Ragnars saga loðbrókar*.

Figure 4.2. The find from Texel. Photo: A. Allema, Fries Museum.

of his brothers as the leaders of an army of *Dani et Frisones* — Danes and Frisians — on Sheppey in 855, a decade before the commencement of systematic attacks by the Great Army (Smyth 1977, 195). It has been suggested that the Great Army came via Ireland, where they arrived in 851, leaving for East Anglia in 865, and that part of the army came directly from Frisia as Danish-Frisian war-bands or from Frisia via Ireland (McLeod 2014, 132–58; Woolf 2007, 71–73). Tentatively, we could suggest that Danes and/or Frisians who joined campaigns of the Great Army and then came or returned to Frisia could have brought the arm-ring fragment to Texel. In any case, it will have been these networks and connections that made the arrival of Viking silver in Frisia possible.

Epilogue: A Viking Age in Frisia?

The main question traditionally raised in studies of Viking traces in the Netherlands is if there was a Viking Age there or not. This primarily was done with Viking activity and Scandinavian influence in Britain as point of reference (Van Regteren Altena and others 1971). Although the temporary presence of Danish Vikings as described in the Frankish annals is not at all doubted, it has more than once been argued that there was no ‘real’ Viking Age in the Netherlands, since we do not have a Viking presence, impact, or traces in either onomastic or archaeological terms comparable to for example the British Isles.⁹

⁹ See Van Regteren Altena and others 1971, 149–53 as one example, but the point is most often made in oral presentations, not in print.

The Netherlands as such were not ruled by Viking kings and no substantial archaeological imprint has been found, making it hard to claim or discern an actual Viking Age. This of course is a matter of definition. One can equally argue that there was a 'Viking Age' insofar as there were Viking attacks along the Dutch coast and rivers from 810 to just after the turn of the millennium and some areas were Danish fiefdoms for some decades. In addition, the archaeological traces of these events and of the connections have begun to be revealed, if on a relatively limited scale, with the discovery of the Westerklijf hoards and they have changed ideas regarding the Viking impact, particularly of the Danish presence. The areas of Danish fiefdom were all in former Frisia, and there especially the case for a Viking Age is quite strong (cf. Besteman 2006/07, 74). It is therefore important to make a distinction between the story of the Netherlands as a whole and former Frisia as a specific (cultural) area.

Furthermore, the significance of Viking Age Frisia should probably be sought more in Frisia's close connections to the Viking world, and its place in connection to the Viking world, than in archaeological traces in Frisia alone. On the basis of the above, and further details listed elsewhere (see references in IJssennagger 2013), it is fair to say there is considerable evidence suggesting that Frisian coastal dwellers were involved with the Danish Vikings and with the Viking areas in Britain in a number of ways. Finds by metal detectorists in the past decades have enhanced the idea of Frisia's connections to the Viking world, as referred to by written sources from the Viking Age and later. Although still few and far between, especially if compared to the British Isles or Scandinavia itself, finds like the one from Texel give us a better understanding of Frisia in Viking Age context or at the least make us rethink the *status quo*.

Acknowledgements

With many thanks to John Sheehan, Barry Ager, and Jan Besteman for discussing the find and parts of this paper. I am indebted to Jan Jaap Waverijn for reporting the find and for providing the opportunity to study and publish it.

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