

CHRONOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND DATING

3.1 THE MIGRATION PERIOD

Since the types of dress-accessory of the Migration Period that constitute the primary evidence for these investigations occur mostly in Norway, it is logical to start from the chronologies that have been produced on the basis of jewellery from Norwegian regions.¹ There are two chronological schemes in particular that have been used for dating finds of jewellery from the Migration Period in Norway: Egil Bakka's (1973) grouping into the phases *Völkerwanderungszeit* (VWZ) I–IV, and Eldrid Straume's (1987)/Siv Kristoffersen's (1999; 2000) definition of phases D1 and D2.² Kristoffersen (1999; 2000) further developed Straume's phase-system to distinguish phases D2a and D2b. The chronologies are based first and foremost on Norwegian finds. Bakka's chronology has been debated in respect of two issues in particular. The first is the basis for distinguishing VWZ I and VWZ II by reference to the Sösdala and the Nydam Styles respectively. Since these two styles not only can appear in the same find-contexts but also can even appear on one and the same artefact, they have to be regarded as contemporary, or at the very least partially overlapping (Hansen 1970:93). A second aspect of Bakka's phasing that has been criticised is his attribution of D-bracteates to the last of the phases, VWZ IV, which several scholars believe is too late (see, e.g., Carlsen 2004), along with the rather vague reference to 'late Style I' (Hansen 1988:27; Hines 1984:20–2; Kristoffersen 1999:97). Bakka (1981:27) himself subsequently proposed an adjustment in which the D-bracteates were moved back in time. Nevertheless, Bakka did aim to make his chronology applicable as a trans-regional system, which is an advantage. With certain modifications it has been used in precisely such contexts, where the

objective is the dating of cross-regional artefact-types (see, e.g., Hines 1984; 1993a).

With reference to Norway, it is, however, Straume's (1987) chronological phasing, and Kristoffersen's (1999; 2000) development of it, that have been referred to most in more recent years, and this is the relative chronology that I prefer to employ in the analysis of the evidence. Kristoffersen based her work on Eva Nissen Meyer's (1935) grouping of silver-sheet and relief brooches into six *stadia*, and on Straume's (1987) division of the Migration Period into two phases, D1 and D2, which again are constructed mainly on the basis of the development of the style of cruciform, silver-sheet and relief brooches, together with bracteates. The boundary that Straume identified between phases D1 and D2 represents a transition from the Sösdala and Nydam Styles to the Sjørup Style and Style I. In absolute-chronological terms the phases cover the periods of c. AD 400–475 and c. AD 475–550/575 respectively (Straume 1987:15).³ Kristoffersen linked Meyer's *stadia* and Straume's phases with the aid of Bakka's (1973) phasing in which he picked out Meyer's stadium 2 as being represented by the Nydam Style while *stadia* 3–6 are those in which Style I is the dominant form of decoration (Kristoffersen 1999:97, tab. 6.2). Kristoffersen further sub-divided phase D2 into phases D2a and D2b on the basis of the difference between an early and a later stage of relief brooches defined by Meyer (1935). Relief brooches of the early stage (*stadia* 2–4) are found in combination with cruciform brooches while brooches of the later stage (*stadia* 5–6) are not, but are in contrast often found together with small equal-armed brooches. The latter brooch-type is practically never found together with cruciform brooches. The late relief brooches of stadium 6 are

1 Scandinavian chronological overviews of the Migration Period which are based (amongst other things) on jewellery have also been worked out for Gotland (Almgren and Nerman 1923; Nerman 1935) and Bornholm (Jørgensen 1989). For mainland areas there are also some locally related phase-systems, such as that for the Lunda cemetery on Lovö in Uppland (Petré 1984). There are no super-regional phasings of the Migration Period in relation to Denmark or Sweden otherwise (Bennett 1987:5–13; Hansen 1988:25–7; Waller 1996:19).

2 The label *D* for the Migration Period was first introduced by Otto Tischler and H. Kemke (1902:10–13) in relation to a Continental phasing (Bitner-Wróblewska 2001:15).

3 The transition from D1 to D2 is adjusted to c. AD 450 in Kristoffersen and Magnus 2010:75–81.

also found associated with bucket-shaped pots with surface-covering bead-/knot- or interlace decoration (Kristoffersen 1999:97–8).

NISSEN MEYER 1935	BAKKA 1973	STRAUME 1987
Stadia 3-6	Style I (VWZ III-IV)	D2
Stadia 1-2	Nydam style ----- Søsådal style (VWZ I-II)	D1

Table 3.1. *Straume and Kristoffersen's chronology correlated with Nissen Meyer (1935) and Bakka (1973). After Kristoffersen 2000:table 2.*

The phasing of Straume and Kristoffersen can, as Kristoffersen (1999:97, tab. 6.2) points out, be combined with Bakka's (1973) system, with phase D1 corresponding to VWZ I–II, and D2 to VWZ III–IV (Tab. 3.1). This is of interest, amongst other reasons because I partly follow Hines's (1993a) dating of clasps, and he used Bakka's phasing. Bakka (1973) also defined the transition from VWZ III to VWZ IV on the basis of, inter alia, the disappearance of cruciform brooches, which, as noted, is also used to define the distinction between Kristoffersen's phases D2a and D2b. If we set to one side the disputed D-bracteates (Axboe 1999; Hansen 1988:27; Hines 1984:20–2; Kristoffersen 1999:97), VWZ IV is defined by Bakka on the basis of late relief brooches of stadium 6. However he assigns relief brooches of stadium 5 to VWZ III. This means that while finds that are datable to VWZ IV can securely be assigned to phase D2b, finds which are dated to VWZ III could belong to either D2a or D2b. I am not, here, considering finds that are dated on the basis of D-bracteates. This class of bracteates is found in only five assemblages in the evidence collected for analysis, and only two of those also include clasps. All of the finds with D-bracteates can also be dated on the basis of relief brooches, so this will not introduce errors.

One problem, however, in respect of Straume and Kristoffersen's phasing is that it is not explicitly related to Joachim Reichstein's (1975) chronological schematization of cruciform brooches from across periods C3/D1–D3. Since I shall make use of Reichstein's relative datings in my study of the cruciform brooches, it is necessary to establish a connection between the phase-systems of Straume/Kristoffersen and Reichstein. A potential problem here is the danger of circular reasoning, as both Straume and Kristoffersen, as noted, base themselves on Meyer's schematization of the relief brooches, which in turn is

correlated with the development of cruciform brooches (Meyer 1935:99–104). Meyer relied upon Haakon Schetelig's (1906) work on cruciform brooches in which he attributed technical details of the manufacture of this type with chronological significance (cf. Ch. 4.2.1.1). As I wish to link Reichstein's phasing with Straume/Kristoffersen's chronological scheme, there is consequently a risk of closing a circle. I shall argue, however, that this is not really a problem, since it is stylistic features of the art of the period to which Straume/Kristoffersen attach importance in distinguishing phases D1 and D2a (Straume 1987:14), and in respect of the boundary between phases D2a and D2b, it is only the presence or absence of cruciform brooches, along with the decoration of bucket-shaped pottery, the style of relief brooches, and the presence of equal-armed brooches or relief brooches with a spatulate footplate they see as important (Kristoffersen 1999:98; 2000:83). I shall therefore attempt to position Reichstein's phasing in relation to Kristoffersen's (1999; 2000) relative chronology in order to facilitate analysis of the distribution pattern of the cruciform brooches in relation to the latter's phases D1, D2a and D2b.

3.1.1 Reichstein's phasing of the cruciform brooches in relation to Straume/Kristoffersen's chronology

The main problem posed in correlating Reichstein's phase with Kristoffersen's scheme is that Reichstein does not draw a chronological distinction between different relief brooches, so that find-assemblages incorporating relief brooches are usually encountered in his 'late' phase (i.e. Stufe D3). This means that Reichstein's three phases of Stufen C3/D1, D2 and D3, defined by *ältere*, *jüngere* and *späte* cruciform brooches respectively, should a priori coincide with the span of Kristoffersen's phases D1 and D2a. A comparison is further complicated, however, by the fact that Reichstein's earliest phase, Stufe C3/D1 with the 'older' types of brooch, represents both pure Roman Iron-age finds of phase C3 and transitional finds between the Late Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period (Reichstein 1973:67). This is because Reichstein included amongst the cruciform brooches what are usually defined as notional prototype forms and/or Nydam brooches, and he assigned these to the transition to the Migration Period by defining them as cruciform brooches. In this regard, it should be noted that there is a debate concerning the criteria for defining a cruciform brooch; this is a question to which I return in due course (Ch. 4.2.1).

The great majority of the brooches assigned to Reichstein's Stufe C3/D1 are associated with Roman

Iron-age dress-accessories and can therefore be dated to phase C3 of the Roman Iron Age. A few specimens, however, belong to Straume/Kristoffersen's phase D1. This is the case with some brooches of the older Type Tveitane-Hunn. Type Tveitane-Hunn is also the only one of Reichstein's older types that occurs in combination with cruciform brooches of pure Migration-period types – i.e. the later Type Lunde, which Reichstein puts in his Stufe D2. These two types are found in the same grave-assemblage on four occasions.⁴ This shows that, in part at least, they share a period of distribution, and overlap in time. The definition of Stufe D2 is based upon the associated finds of various 'younger' types with Type Lunde and so with Type Tveitane-Hunn as well (Reichstein 1975:67).⁵ It would, a priori, therefore appear logical for all of the 'younger' brooches of Stufe D2 to belong to Straume/Kristoffersen's phase D1 while the 'late' brooches of Stufe D3 are equated with phase D2a. A systematic survey of cruciform brooches associated in closed finds with relief brooches (which, together with the silver-sheet brooches, are the basis of Straume/Kristoffersen's phasing) shows that there are five finds which contain both phase-D2a relief brooches and assorted principal types of late cruciform brooch,⁶ which corroborates this linkage to a certain extent. There are also, however, not only instances of Reichstein's late leading types of cruciform brooch being associated with relief brooches dated to late phase D1, but also finds in which late cruciform brooches are associated with relief brooches dated to phase D2b. I shall evaluate these assemblages in what follows.

In three finds Reichstein's *späte* ('late') types of cruciform brooch are associated with relief brooches decorated in the Nydam Style and so datable to phase D1. This is the case with a cruciform brooch of Type Mundheim variant 4 from Tu in Rogaland,⁷ a cruciform brooch of Type Varhaug from Hol in Nord-Trøndelag,⁸ and one of Type Stoveland from Stoveland

in Vest-Agder.⁹ Type Mundheim is also represented, as already noted, in another context (see footnote 6)¹⁰ in combination with a relief brooch that is dated to phase D2a or stadium 3. Type Mundheim is a very large group, with 72 specimens in total. The type occurs in one case in association with an early main type of cruciform brooch,¹¹ but in many more finds together with other late main types such as Types Skogøya,¹² Lima,¹³ Søndre Gammelsrød¹⁴ and Bradwell.¹⁵ The type is, however, associated with a cruciform brooch of Type Byrkje in one of these assemblages.¹⁶ This type is associated in another find with the late leading type Lima,¹⁷ which in two further cases is associated with relief brooches of the 'simple bronze group'. Combination with the simple bronze group of relief brooches puts the type at the transition to phase D2b (see below). This may indicate that the brooch-type had a long period of use, as its indirect link to Type Varhaug indicates a functioning period that goes back to the transition of phase D1 to D2a. Type Stoveland has six specimens, but is found in only three finds in Scandinavia: two from Vest-Agder in Norway, and one from Västergötland in Sweden. The latter find had no other artefacts of chronological relevance, but the second Norwegian find has two cruciform brooches of Type Lima: a type that is identified as 'late'. Thus the find-assemblages once more suggest that the functioning period of this type runs from the transition of phases D1/D2a to that of D2a/D2b.

The combination of late cruciform brooches with relief brooches dated to phase D1 or the transition of phases D1/D2a can be interpreted in two different ways: either that the types of cruciform brooch in question should be dated earlier, or that the relief brooches were old when they were deposited – in other words that they were buried right at the end of their period of use. As shown, other associated late types of cruciform brooch appear in clearly late contexts, which argues against a general 'shift backwards' of the relevant forms

4 B5302, C2458–66, C20848, C21648.

5 With regard to the criteria for the distinction of Reichstein's *jüngere* phase, Stufe D2, very few leading types are involved apart from this.

6 Types Skjervum, Mo, Foldvik-Empingham, Mundheim (variant 1) and Skogøya.

7 C21407.

8 T9822.

9 C8933–50.

10 T2809: Hole, Møre og Romsdal.

11 T18453: Type Røssøy.

12 Ts1117–21, S5853.

13 S2589, S4890, S6296, S6385, S5046, B4226.

14 B5984, S1433–37.

15 Skara Museum 4537–39.

16 S5068: Byrkje, Hjelmeland, Rogaland.

17 S4476: Soppaland, Hjelmeland, Rogaland.

of cruciform brooch to phase D1. Wear on some of the relief brooches also indicates that they had been in use for a considerable period before ending up in the grave (Kristoffersen 2000:318). The Stoveland find can also be dated through the equivalent relief brooch in the Lunde find to the transition of phases D1/D2a or to the very start of phase D2a (Kristoffersen 2000:287, 381; Straume 1987:91–2). This also implies that this relief brooch was fairly old when buried.¹⁸ The Hol find, on the other hand, includes artefacts that imply a dating in phase D1: the scutiform pendant with a star design and equal-armed brooches with Sösdala-style decoration (Magnus 1975:72). All the same, as demonstrated, two of the three finds combining early relief brooches and late cruciform brooches can be located towards the end of phase D1 and probably represent the transition to phase D2a.

Relief brooches dated to phase D2b are found with cruciform brooches of Reichstein's late types in four assemblages.¹⁹ In three of those these are, however, relief brooches of the simple bronze group. That type is assigned to stadium 5 by Meyer (1935:60, 102), but close to the transition from stadium 4 to stadium 5, which in respect of Straume/Kristoffersen's chronological scheme is the transition from D2a/D2b. One of the types of cruciform brooch that is associated with these relief brooches, Type Skogøya, is also present in another find along with a relief brooch of phase D2a. The cruciform brooches that are associated with the simple bronze group²⁰ were therefore probably mainly in use in phase D2a although their period of use continued a short way into phase D2b. In addition to the finds involving combinations with the simple bronze group, one relief brooch of the northern ridge-foot group of phase D2b occurs together with a cruciform brooch of the late Type Mo in a find from Nornes in Sogn og Fjordane.²¹ This type also appears in combination with a ridge-foot brooch of phase D2a in a find from Kvåle,²² showing that cruciform brooches of Type Mo were also in use in that phase (see above). The find from Nornes can consequently plausibly be regarded as a transitional find in which a

couple of earlier cruciform brooches were used along with later brooch-types. Once again, it appears that the combination of phase-D2b relief brooches and late cruciform brooches can be assigned to the transitional zone between the phases.

This systematic review shows that, even though there are certain apparent inconsistencies between Reichstein's chronological sequence of development and Straume/Kristoffersen's phase-system, Reichstein's older and younger brooch-types can on the whole be assigned to Straume/Kristoffersen phase D1 while the late types are predominantly to be placed in phase D2a (Tab. 3.2). The relative chronology therefore can be used as a starting point for analysis of the distribution of cruciform brooches across the period.²³

Kristoffersen 1999/2000	Reichstein 1975	
	C3/D1	ältere
D1	D2	jüngere
D2a	D3	späte
D2b	–	–

Table 3.2. Kristoffersen's phases correlated with Reichstein.

3.1.2 The last phase of the Migration Period and the transition to the Merovingian Period: dislocations between phases?

It has been argued that Migration Period phase D2b in south-western Norway actually represents, to some extent, the same period of time as the first phase of the Merovingian Period in eastern Scandinavia (Näsman 1984:70). Bjørn Myrhe (2005) has reassessed this argument in connection with a crucial weapon-grave found at Nerhus in Kvinnherad, Hordaland. Jan Bemmann and Güde Hahne (1994) have defined what they call a 'Nerhus phase' in the transitional zone between the Migration Period and the Merovingian Period on the basis of this find, together with other Norwegian weapon finds. Anne Nørgaard Jørgensen (1999) placed the Nerhus phase in Nordic phase I of her trans-regional Scandinavian chronology of weapon graves, and equated these two phases with

18 Hines (1984:22–3) criticized Reichstein's phasing on the basis that, amongst other things, a cruciform brooch of Reichstein's *späte* types was found together with a relief brooch decorated in the Nydam Style in a find from Lunde, Lista in Vest-Agder. The cruciform brooch in the Lunde find is, however, classified as of individualistic form by Reichstein, and I cannot see that this brooch is dated as 'late' by Reichstein through the associated finds. It may be the Stoveland find that Hines had in mind.

19 These comprise cruciform brooches of Types Lima, Skogøya and Mo, as well as a combination of Types Søndre Gammelsrød and Lima in one grave-assemblage.

20 Types Lima, Søndre Gammelsrød and Skogøya.

21 B9688.

22 B13954. There were two individuals in the grave (see below), but the cruciform brooches of Type Mo were probably with the same person as the relief brooch.

23 Despite criticism of and problems with particular details in Reichstein's relative-chronological framework, it was nonetheless regarded as usable in an earlier overview of chronological relevance (Hines 1984:23).

the Continental phase AM II of Herman Ament (1977). This is dated to c. AD 520/30—560/70. The identification of this phase on the basis of Norwegian weapon finds is debatable,²⁴ but I shall not go more deeply into that question in this context, since here it is the chronological placement of jewellery rather than of weaponry that is central. The Nerhus phase, however, according to Myhre (2004:294–5), covers the same period as Meyer's relief brooches of stadia 5 and 6: in other words phase D2b, which is a point of interest in this context which is almost exclusively concerned with dress-accessories. Myhre (2005:296–7) suggests that it is a matter of definition whether the so-called Nerhus phase is assigned to the end of the Migration Period or the beginning of the Merovingian Period, as there are clearly transitional finds from this period. As far as stylistic criteria are concerned, however, Style II B – in other words true, early, Style II – occurs first in Jørgensen's Nordic phase II. The decoration of the preceding phase is dominated by punched decoration and ribbon interlace (Jørgensen 1999:183, 195; Myhre 2005:296; Solberg 2000:184). Punched decoration is also highly characteristic of the beginning of the Merovingian Period (phase 1, see below). Ribbon interlace is prominent both in late Style I and in Style II, and the late variant that is found on some relief brooches of stadium 6 can be considered a transitional form between these two styles (see also Kristoffersen 2000:211). It is normal to attach significance to precisely the difference between Style I and Style II in defining the beginning of the Merovingian Period (e.g. Solberg 1981:153; 2000:183). I also opt to go along with the traditional periodization, which places the boundary on the basis of this stylistic criterion amongst other things (see also Engevik 2007:124–6, 238, who also places the Nerhus phase/group parallel to phase D2b and furthermore points out that the group includes a Style I-decorated sword pommel, and Kristoffersen and Magnus 2010:77–81, who come to similar conclusions).

What has long been a problem in respect of the establishment of the chronological boundary between the Migration Period and the Merovingian Period in

the case of Norway is that finds of types of dress-accessory that are typical of the earliest phase of the Merovingian Period are almost completely absent from southern and south-western Norway. The lack of finds from Rogaland has been particularly striking because this province stands out with a very high number of finds of jewellery throughout the Migration Period. Attempts have been made to explain this state of affairs by postulating that relief brooches and other types characteristic of the Migration Period remained in use in the west while new Merovingian-period types had been introduced in the east. In this respect the lack of finds of early Style II from western Norway has also been stressed (Solberg 1981:169–70). This picture can now be adjusted. There have, for instance, been several finds in Rogaland of conical brooches with geometrical decoration – the most common brooch-type in Norway at the beginning of the Merovingian Period (cf. Ch. 4.3.1.).²⁵ Conical brooches are also found generally distributed in the provinces of Hordaland, Sogn og Fjordane and Møre og Romsdal that make up Vestlandet (cf. Ch. 4.3.1.3). Several of the finds from western Norway are also decorated in Style II of a variant that I shall argue represents a North Scandinavian version of Style II B (cf. Ch. 3.2.3.1).²⁶ The punched decoration on the conical brooches with geometrical designs is, furthermore, related to that which occurs on weaponry of the early Merovingian Period (the so-called Åker assemblage).

The image of an extended or continuing Migration-period culture in the west thus starts to break up. This does not mean, though, that there are no 'overlapping' finds that combine artefacts of the Migration Period and the Merovingian Period. I shall return to this matter in connection with the discussion of conical brooches (see Ch. 3.2.3.1). It is likely that the replacement of jewellery fashions was a gradual matter, and that changes took place more swiftly in some areas than in others. The situation does not imply, however, that there was a chronological discrepancy between western and eastern areas which covers an entire phase, as some scholars have suggested in the past (see also Myhre 2005:298).²⁷

24 Jørgensen (1999:181, 183) points out that there are no Norwegian closed finds that can be assigned to this phase although she refers to five finds that Bemann and Hahne (1994) ascribe to the Nerhus group.

25 In addition, a couple of finds of equal-armed brooches (of Jenssen 1988, type II.4) from Rogaland represent finds of jewellery that belongs to the first phase of the Merovingian Period.

26 There is also a spindle-whorl from Møkjaländ, Iveland, Aust-Agder (C25677) that is decorated in the same northern Scandinavian variant of Style B, showing that the style was found in southern Norway too, even though, so far, no finds of dress-accessories of the early Merovingian Period have been made in Aust-Agder.

27 The Nerhus phase should perhaps also be understood as made up of transitional finds rather than being defined as a distinct chronological phase, since the find contexts it is based upon are both few and in most cases extremely uncertain (see Myhre 2005:294–8).

3.2 THE MEROVINGIAN PERIOD

In contrast to the chronology of the Migration Period, no common chronological scheme for the Merovingian Period based upon jewellery-types that is valid for the whole of Norway has been devised.²⁸ Gutorm Gjessing (1934) did not attempt any direct phasing of the Merovingian Period but dated artefacts in terms of centuries. This was also Thorleif Sjøvold's (1974) approach. More recently, Synnøve Vinsrygg (1979), Hans Gude Gudesen (1980) and Geir Helgen (1982) have produced phased schemes for northern Norway, Østlandet (south-eastern Norway and its interior), and parts of western Norway respectively, while the material from southern and south-western Norway and from Trøndelag remains unprocessed. The phased schemes for these three areas are, however, based upon inconsistent criteria, and differ amongst themselves in various ways, not least in terms of absolute chronology, so that they cannot simply be joined to one another. Vinsrygg based her divisions on jewellery and beads, while both jewellery and weaponry were used to establish the various phases of Gudesen's scheme. Helgen's starting point for defining phases was principally types of weaponry and their combinations, in addition to decoration, and the dating of individual artefact-types.

Nonetheless it is a matter of fundamental importance to succeed in establishing a common chronology for Norway in order to be able to determine what are contemporary regional differences and which differences in the evidence are chronologically determined. In order to be able to undertake comparisons and to bring together types of dress-accessory from the whole of Norway and a wider zone of Scandinavia and north-western Europe, it is also necessary to modify the Norwegian Merovingian Period chronology in relation to a more general (southern) Scandinavian and Continental chronological system. In this chapter, therefore, I shall review the main lines of Vinsrygg's, Gudesen's and Helgen's chronologies and discuss these in comparison with Mogens Ørsnes's (1966) South Scandinavian chronology and with Nielsen's (1991; 1999) chronology for Bornholm, Sweden and Gotland, in order to try to establish a common phase-system for the *entirety* of Norway that can be relevant to a broad Scandinavian context. The discussion will be focused primarily on the jewellery finds, since this evidence is at the heart of the present investigation. The objective is to be able to link Norwegian chronology into a system which renders comparisons over wide areas more straightforward. Greatest importance is

placed upon the integration of chronology for the early Merovingian Period because this is the period that is relevant to the core questions and analysis of the present research project.

I have chosen to keep to Ørsnes's (1966) chronology, because that has been the system of dating that is generally most widely used for reference. Most of the more recent chronological studies concerned with southern and eastern Scandinavia are also based upon Ørsnes's phasing and typology (Jørgensen and Jørgensen 1997:24; Nielsen 1987:65; 1991; 1999). In several of these later works comparisons have also been made with Ament's (1977) chronology for the entire Merovingian area on the Continent (Jenssen 1998:24–5). Although minor alterations have been made to typology and the absolute dating of the phases in more recent research, Ørsnes's framework has proved to be robust and his principal phase-division has survived more or less intact. Nielsen (1991; 1999) has constructed an overall chronological scheme for an extensive zone of southern and eastern Scandinavia, starting from Ørsnes's typology and phasing, and her system will be crucial for this study, because she includes more types of dress-accessory from eastern Scandinavia and this makes cross-reference to the Norwegian evidence feasible.

Turning to differences in absolute chronology, there has been a definite tendency in recent years to move Ørsnes's datings further back in time. This can be seen in the research of both Jørgensen and Jørgensen (1997) and Nielsen (1987; 1991; 1999). The absolute datings in Nielsen's system (1999:189) are presented as *provisional* and should consequently be used with some reservation and caution. Nonetheless, radiocarbon datings from eastern Swedish grave finds indicate that Ørsnes's chronology is a little late with regard to the boundary between the Migration Period and the Merovingian Period (e.g. Waller 1996:147). At the same time, Märit Gaimster (1998:169–70) has drawn attention to clear similarities in decorative motifs between Scandinavian and Continental disc brooches. She argues that Scandinavian brooches which are derived from Continental disc brooches of the 7th century are given a much earlier absolute dating in Nielsen's chronology. This has consequences for Nielsen's early dating of the first phase of the Merovingian Period. I shall in fact leave questions about absolute dating alone, since it is the *relative* not the absolute dating that is of decisive importance in the present context.

²⁸ Jørgensen (1999), however, has produced a common Scandinavian chronological scheme for weaponry.

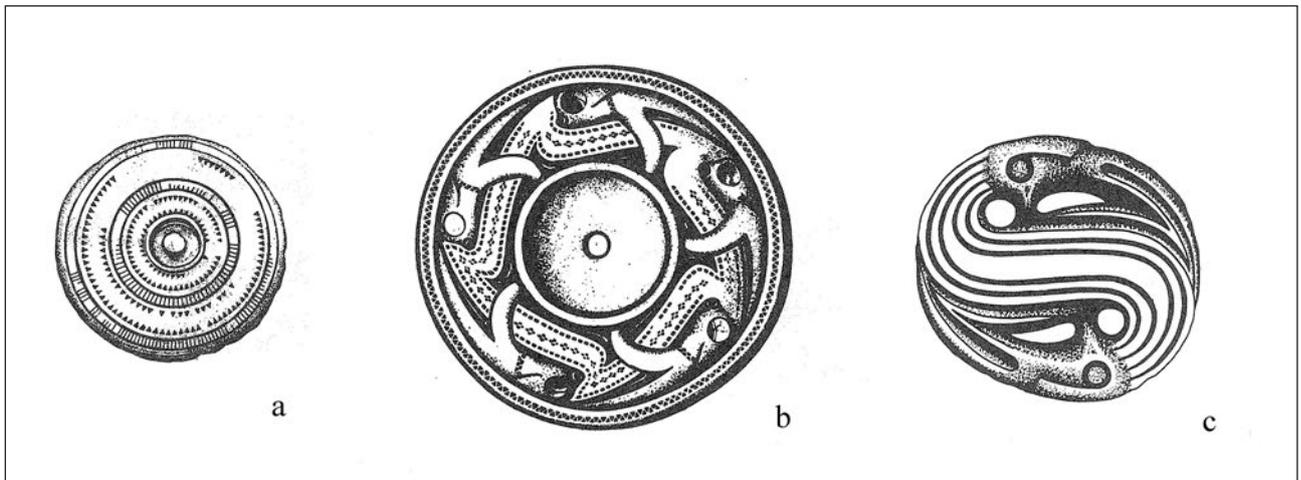


Figure 3.1 Brooch-types of Vinsrygg (1979) Phase 1: **a**) conical brooch with geometric decoration from Ytre Elgsnes, Harstad, Nordland (T33071), **b**) conical brooch with animal-style decoration from Heggstad in Lødingen, Nordland (T34295) and **c**) S-shaped brooch from Horvik in Tjeldsund (T32155). Drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen.



Figure 3.2 Beads of orange-red shades of Phase-1 types, from Dønna, Høy, Nordland (T7351). Photograph: Ole Bjørn Pedersen. © NTNU University Museum.

In what follows, the various Norwegian and the South and East Scandinavian chronological schemes will be presented, after which their phasing schemes will be discussed comparatively. The three Norwegian systems are presented in rather more detail than those relating to southern and eastern Scandinavia. In connection with the latter, only the jewellery evidence is discussed, while weapon-types are also included in relation to the Norwegian schemes. This is because the object is to demonstrate what the basis of the three different Norwegian schemes is, in order subsequently to be able to propose an overall phase-structure for the whole area of Norway or indeed northern Scandinavia.

3.2.1 Chronology in Norway

Vinsrygg (1979) divides the Merovingian Period into two main phases, 1 and 2, with phase 2 further sub-divided into phase 2A and phase 2B. The basis for this phasing was combinations of brooches and forms of style, while the relative chronology was based upon earlier observations such as those of Gjessing (1934) concerning which types of brooch were the earlier and which the later. The leading types of phase 1 are conical brooches with geometrical decoration, along with the 'sub-categories' of conical brooches with animal art and S-shaped brooches 'of Merovingian type' (Fig. 3.1). Through association with conical brooches, three other types of brooches are also included in

phase 1: brooches formed as a bird seen in profile, wheel-shaped brooches and a particular form of ring brooch are also included in phase 1. In the case of the latter type, some reservation is called for, as this may be a belt buckle (Vinsrygg 1979:26). The bead-strings from this phase comprise relatively large quantities of beads, and their composition is dominated by barrel-shaped opaque orange glass beads, walrus-tusk or bone beads, and barrel-shaped copper-alloy beads produced from rolled copper-alloy wire (Fig. 3.2). The beads are of consistent sizes and are relatively small (Vinsrygg 1979:18–33).

Phase 2A has quadruped ‘creeping-beast’ brooches (*krypdyrspanner*)²⁹ as its leading type, with disc-on-bow brooches as a ‘sub-category’ (Fig. 3.3). Rectangular plate brooches and a few specimens of brooches like Oluf Rygh’s (1885) figure 643,³⁰ decorated with two animals (cf. Ch. 3.2.3.2), are also included in the inventory of phase-2A brooches through assemblages in which they are associated with the leading types and/or the bead-strings of this phase (Fig. 3.4). Those bead-strings consist principally of translucent glass beads, usually of green and blue shades, millefiori beads and rock crystal beads. The beads vary in size, and there is often one prominent bead of greater size. That is, as a rule, a millefiori or a rock crystal bead (Fig. 3.5). The millefiori beads are regarded as diagnostic of this phase. The bead-strings otherwise clearly tend to be more limited, consisting of fewer beads, than in phase 1 (Vinsrygg 1979:34–43, 45–6).

Phase 2B has undecorated oval brooches like R640 and oval brooches like R643 as its leading types (Fig. 3.6). An eastern (Finnish) type of equal-armed brooch is also included in the inventory of phase-2B brooches through association with a bead-string. The bead-sets of this phase are, as a rule, more limited than those of the preceding phase, but they are still dominated by translucent glass beads of blue and green shades together with millefiori beads. These, however, are generally smaller in size than those of phase 2A. Rock crystal beads appear to have largely gone out of use, but a new type that appears in this phase are gold-in-glass beads. There is also a tendency for the bead-sets of this phase to be less varied than those of the preceding phase (Vinsrygg 1979:43–6, 56–7).

Vinsrygg’s absolute dating of the phases is imprecise, presumably because her intention was only to map

out the relative-chronological sequence in northern Norway. Phase 1 covers the period from the end of the 6th century to around the end of the 7th century or a little earlier; phase 2 is more loosely described as covering the subsequent period down to the Viking Period, around AD 800. Vinsrygg does not offer a date for the boundary between phases 2A and 2B, although the latter is the final segment of the phase (Vinsrygg 1979:18–19, 52–3, 58).

Gudesen’s phasing was produced on the basis of changes in weaponry and types of jewellery. He devised a new typological classification of one-edged swords of the types R498–R500 which he used as a control on the chronological phase scheme. He divided the Merovingian Period into three principal phases, phases 1–3, dated to c. AD 550–650, 650–750 and 750–800 respectively. Phase 1 has the following types of weaponry as leading types: arrows like R535 and R540, one-edged swords (of the main type like R498–R500) – akin to Gudesen’s (1980) group I and group II, ring-swords, two-edged swords with no hilt, leaf-shaped spearheads, spears with a small head, spearheads with convex edges, spears like Gudesen (1980) plate 12C and spears like R519 of Gudesen’s (1980) sub-group A, and shield bosses with an apical button. Shield-on-tongue buckles also belong to this phase. Types of jewellery that are identified as leading types of phase 1 are: conical brooches, dress pins with polyhedral/polyhedral heads, wheel-shaped brooches and barrel-shaped copper-alloy beads (Fig. 3.7). There are also S-shaped brooches, disc-on-bow brooches and rectangular ‘ornamental plates’ in this phase; the latter two, however, also appear in both of the following phases.

In phase 2 the so-called broad seax, spears like R519 of Gudesen’s (1980) sub-group B, swords like R498–R500 of Gudesen’s (1980) group III, bird brooches (of the viewed-from-above type) and oval plate brooches, are leading types (Fig. 3.8).

In phase 3 one-edged swords like R498–R500 of Gudesen’s (1980) group VI and VII, and swords of Jan Petersen (1919) types A, B and H and special type I, are leading types. There are no brooches identified as leading types for this phase. Undecorated oval brooches such as R640 and quadruped creeping-beast brooches are, in fact, dated to the period c. AD 700–800 and thus belong to both phases 2 and 3; the same is true

29 The term ‘creeping-beast brooch’ is a new coinage. *Krypdyr* would usually be translated ‘reptile’, but the creatures portrayed on these brooches do not resemble reptiles. Attempts to find an English term for these brooches in the past have been rather awkward: e.g. ‘tortoise brooches decorated with a crouching four-footed animal’, ‘oval crouching animal brooch’ and ‘domed oblong brooches with small flattened quadruped animals’. It is hoped that *krypdyr*: ‘creeping beast’ will prove as clear and memorable as the familiar *gripedyr*: ‘gripping beast’.

30 References to figures in Rygh 1885 will be abbreviated to R + the figure number from here onwards.



Figure 3.3 Brooch-types of Vinsrygg (1979) Phase 2A: a) small zoomorphic oval brooches from Ytre Kvarøy, Nordland, grave 8 (Ts6377b-c) and b) disc-on-bow brooch from Ytre Kvarøy, Nordland, grave 9 (Ts6378a). Photograph: June Asheim. © The Arctic University Museum of Norway.

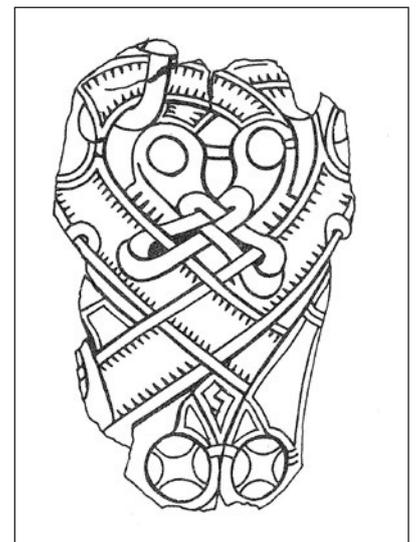


Figure 3.4 Rectangular plate brooch from Ytre Arnestad, Sogn og Fjordane (B10058). Photograph: Svein Skare, © University Museum of Bergen and oval brooch of type R.643 with twin-animal decoration from Skagstad in Steigen, Nordland (Ts3426). Drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen.



Figure 3.5 Beads in blue tones of Phase 2A-type, from Haukland, Lund, Rogaland (S3543b). Photograph: Terje Tveit. © Arkeologisk Museum, University of Stavanger (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).

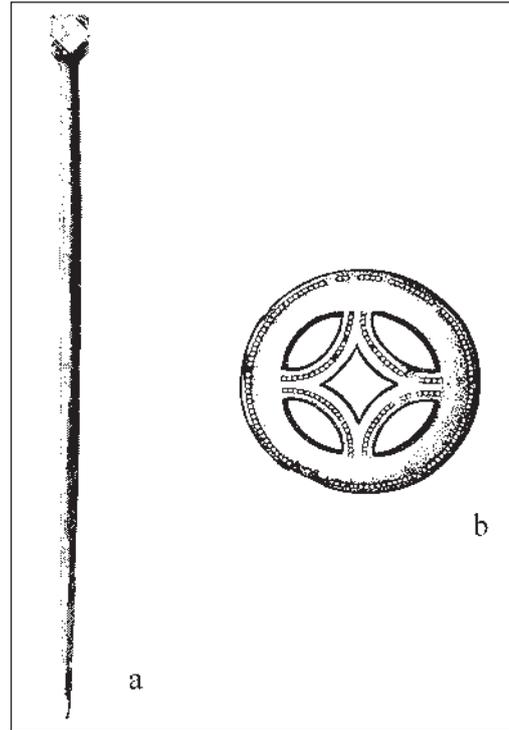


Figure 3.7 a) Dress-pin with polyhedral head of unknown provenience, Gotland (GF c419), after Nerman (1969:Taf. 14, fig. 115) and b) wheel-shaped brooch from Ytre Elgsnes in Harstad (Ts3071). Drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen.

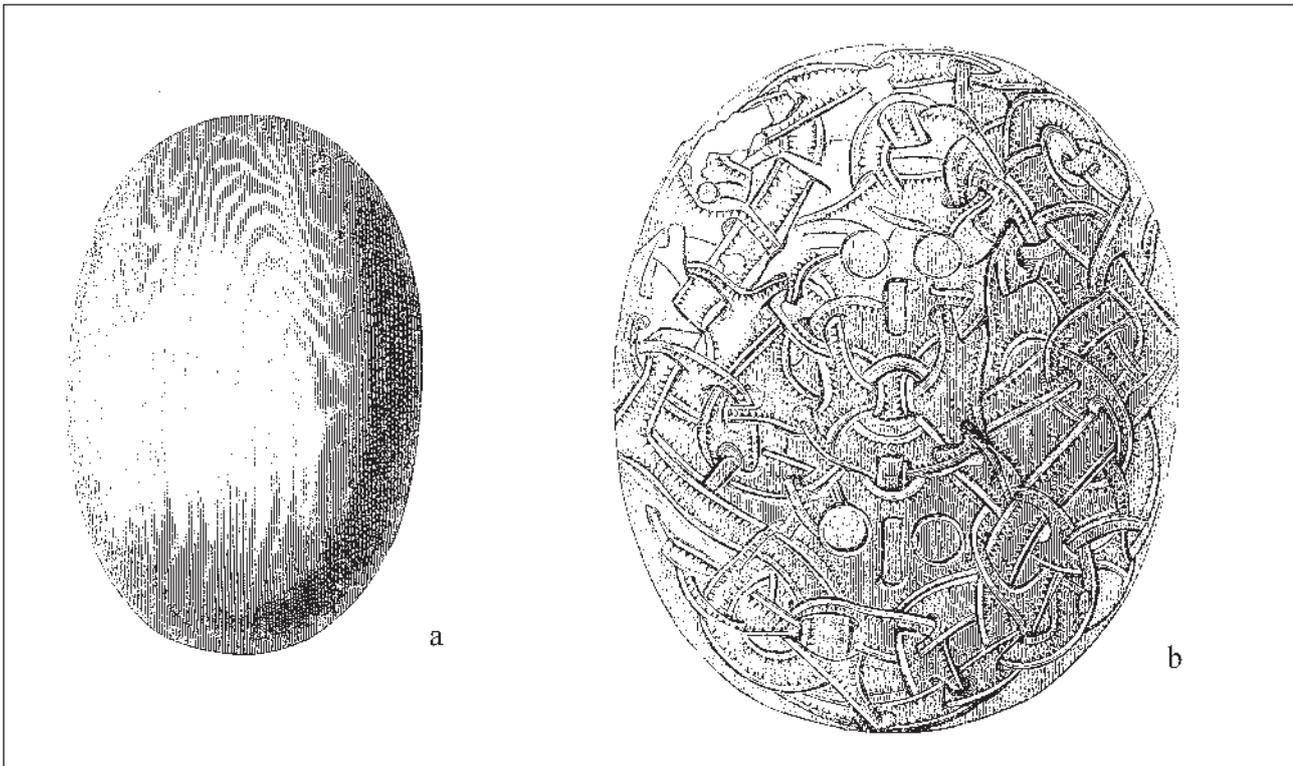


Figure 3.6 Brooch-types of Vinsrygg (1979) Phase 2B: a) type R.640 from Grindberg, Steinkjer, Nord-Trøndelag (T2374) and b) R.643 of unknown provenience (T1945), after Rygh (1885:figs 640 and 643).



Figure 3.8 a) Bird-shaped brooch from Gjesvald, Hole, Buskerud (C58110). Photograph: Ellen C. Holte, © Museum of Cultural History; and **b)** oval plate brooch from Borge, Råde, Østfold (C59622). Photograph: Birgit Maixner. © Museum of Cultural History.

of spears of the form of R520 and R522, Schetelig (1917a) figure 104 and those of Gudesen's group V, and of axes of Petersen (1919) type B. Disc-on-bow brooches and rectangular brooches were in use in all three phases, according to Gudesen. Swords of Gudesen's group IV, shield bosses of the Galgenberg Type and like R564, and axes of Petersen (1919) type C are assigned to both phases 2 and 3 (Gudesen 1980:19–20, 71–2).

Helgen (1982) divided the Merovingian-period material into three groups, groups I–III, which are referred to respectively as 'the earliest finds' from the transition between the Migration and the Merovingian Periods, 'typical finds', and, thirdly, 'transitional finds' – i.e. finds from the period of transition to the Viking Period. Leading types of group I are relatively short one-edged swords with a long pointed terminal, spearheads like R519, Schetelig (1917a) figure 104, and spears of the Vendel type, along with narrow battle axes of rectangular cross-section and low rounded flanges alongside the shaft-hole like the earliest variants of Petersen (1919) types A and B. Spearheads

of type R520 may also occur. Helgen (1982:12–13) included all artefacts with Style II decoration in this early group. The survey of finds includes, amongst the earliest items, conical brooches, S-shaped brooches, disc-on-bow brooches, rectangular brooches and creeping-beast brooches, as well as a small oval brooch that is decorated only with a simple beaded strip along the central ridge (Fig. 3.9). This group is dated from the end of the 6th century, between AD 550 and 600, down to c. AD 675 (Helgen 1982:12–25, 55–6).

Group II includes combinations of one-edged swords with blades of 70–85 cm, spearheads like R520 and Schetelig (1917a) figure 104, and axes like Petersen (1919) types A, B, D and E with more pointed flanges and protuberances parallel with the edge, in addition to rich collections of tools, and finds with Style III decoration. The types of jewellery that appear in the survey of finds from this group are: rectangular brooches, creeping-beast brooches, undecorated oval brooches of type R640 and oval brooches of type R643, and armrings of type R719 (Fig. 3.10). This group is dated c. AD 675–775 (Helgen 1982:25, 56–7).

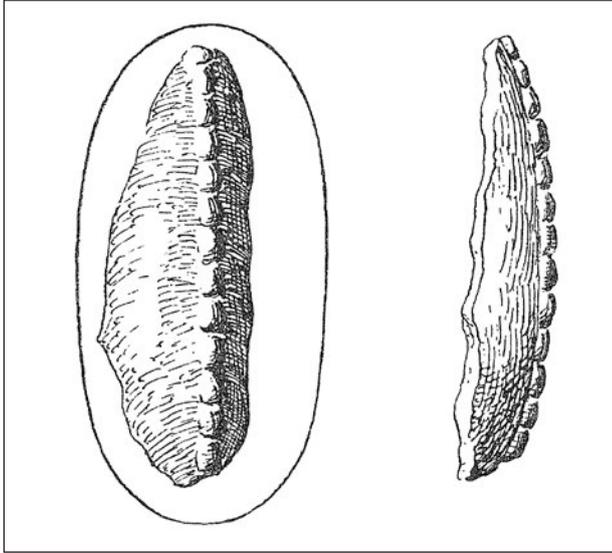


Figure 3.9 Small oval brooch with beaded rim decoration from Birkeland, Jondal, Hordaland (B7163), after Schetelig (1922b:fig. 3), © University Museum of Bergen.

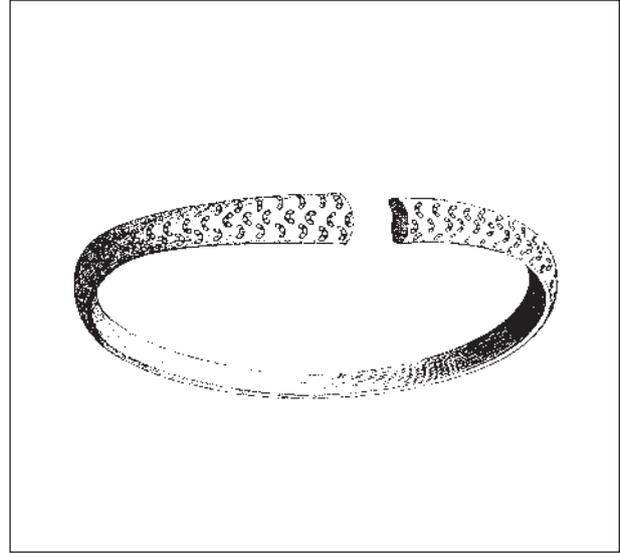


Figure 3.10 Armring of type R.719 from Vågå, Bodø, Nordland (B623), after Rygh (1885:719).

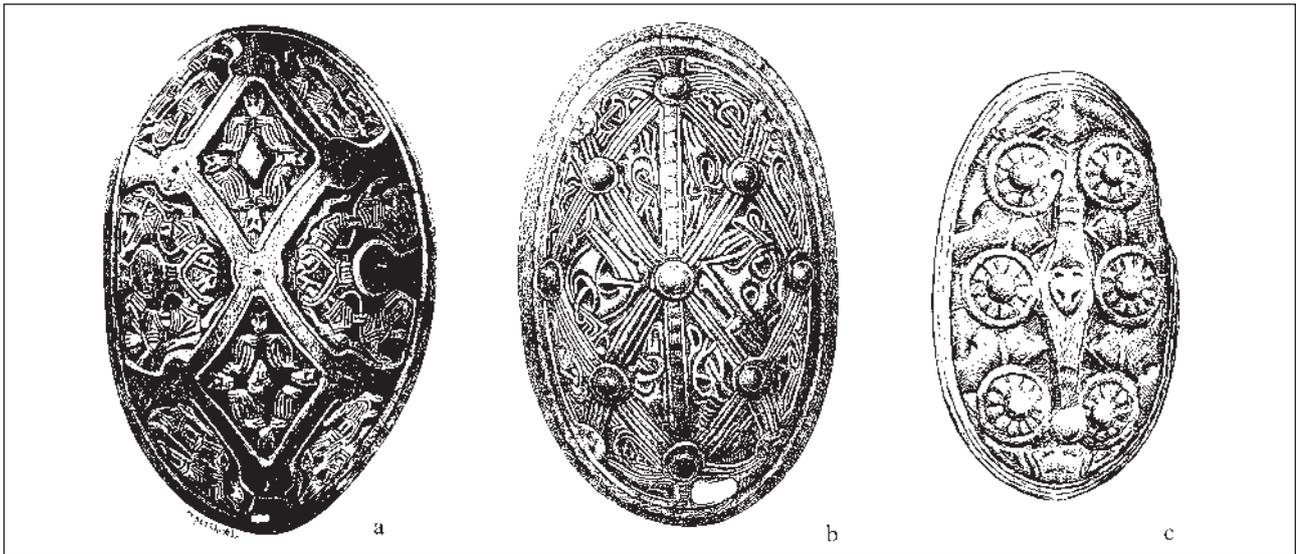


Figure 3.11 Viking-period jewellery—types of Helgen's (1982) Group 3: Oval brooches of type **a**) R647 from Nord-Mageli, Øyer, Oppland (C5324), **b**) R.650 from Øien, Nord-Fron, Oppland (C4584), after Rygh (1885:figs. 647 and 650), and **c**) the Berdal Type from Hurum, Buskerud (C707b), © Museum of Cultural History.

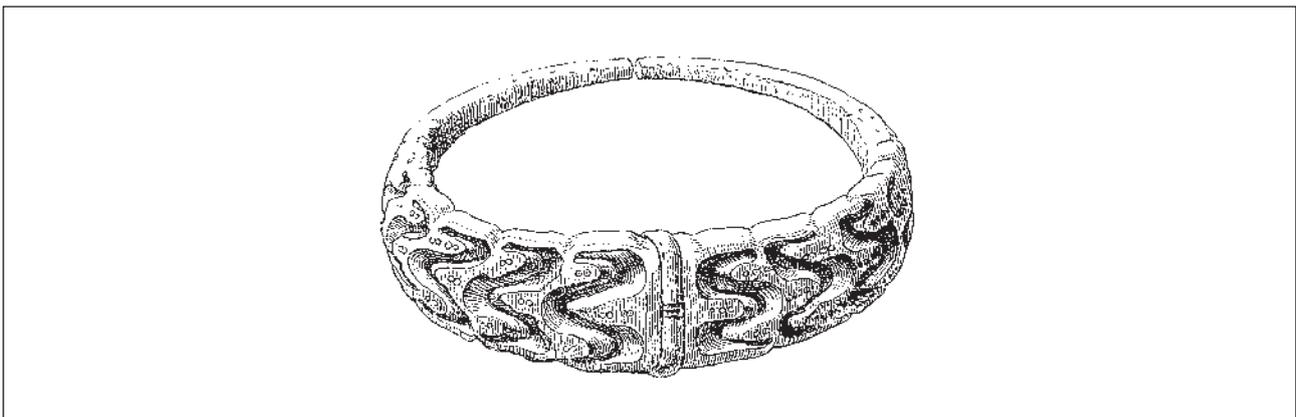


Figure 3.12 Armring of type R.721 from Klungervik, Lekø, Nord-Trøndelag (C8047), after Rygh (1885:fig. 721).

The final group, group III, comprises finds with 8th-century weapon-sets combined with objects that are dated to the 9th century or with Irish or Anglo-Saxon artefacts. This group also includes objects decorated in late Style III, or Style III hybridized with motifs from the earliest forms of Viking-period art such as gripping beasts. Of 'local', Norwegian/Scandinavian types of jewellery, the following are included in the inventory of this group: one disc-on-bow brooch, creeping-beast brooches, oval brooches of types R643, R647 and R650 and of the Berdal Type (Fig. 3.11), as well as armrings of types R719 and 721 (Fig. 3.12). This group does not really constitute a phase as such but rather represents the transition between the Merovingian Period and the Viking Period, and it can be dated to the period around AD 800, i.e. c. AD 775–825 (Helgen 1982:39, 56–7).

On the question of whether the phase-structures of the three chronological schemes can be put together in order to gain an overview of how the results of each piece of research might be used in the present context, it is clear that Helgen's (1982) chronological division of the Merovingian Period is a bit too general to be employed as a basis for the collation of types of dress-accessory from a wider area in the Early Merovingian Period. As noted, he dates all Style II finds to the 7th century, even though identified features or stages of development of Style II are also used for assigning finds late or early within the range of the group. An example of this is the rectangular brooches with decoration of Vendel Styles B and D respectively (Helgen 1982:15, 23). Helgen, moreover, does not systematize his observations concerning the execution of Style II in his phase divisions as he does with Style III decoration, where he picks out stylistic features which point forward to or merge into Viking-period animal art as a distinct group with chronological significance. The reason for this is that he believes that the Style II material is essentially too slight for any such sub-division (Helgen 1982:11, 15). The finds of jewellery that are included in group I include not only conical brooches, but also disc-on-bow brooches of both earlier and later forms, rectangular brooches, S-shaped brooches and one creeping-beast brooch with incised decoration (Helgen 1982:15–25). The latter type is assigned by both Vinsrygg and Gudesen, as noted above, to a later phase than the conical brooches. Vinsrygg also assigns rectangular brooches to her phase 2 while, according to Gudesen, they occur throughout the Merovingian Period. In this respect, it is important

to note that Gudesen includes everything to which he gives a general designation of 'rectangular ornamental plates' in his survey of this type, and that the finds very clearly include what can be distinguished as rectangular sword-belt mounts. I shall return to this subsequently, as it is of chronological significance.

This overview shows that disc-on-bow brooches appear in the earliest phase in both Gudesen's scheme and Helgen's while they appear first in phase 2A of Vinsrygg's scheme. Vinsrygg (1979:45–6) points out, however, that some of the disc-on-bow brooches which contextually fall into her phase 2A have stylistic features which indicate that they really date to – i.e. were produced in – the first phase of the Merovingian Period. According to Gudesen, this type continued throughout the Merovingian Period, while it is only found amongst the finds that are assigned to Helgen's first and last groups. Common to Gudesen's and Vinsrygg's first phase is the occurrence of wheel-shaped brooches, but this type does not occur in Helgen's material, presumably because of a lack of finds from his study area.

Conical and S-shaped brooches appear in all of the chronological schemes in the first phase of the period. From Gudesen's (1980:72) overview, figure 16, it appears that the S-shaped brooches remained in use until around the year 700, although in the review of this type he locates all of the finds of 'real' S-shaped brooches to his first phase, or before c. AD 600/650. The only brooch that is dated later is a brooch which both Gjessing (1934:132–3) and Gudesen see as commensurable with S-shaped brooches but which is really an oval plate brooch,³¹ as indeed Gudesen (1980:60–1) points out. It is unclear, though, if it is just this specimen which has induced the extension of the period of use in Gudesen's table (Gudesen 1980:fig. 16). In this table oval plate brooches are in fact presented as a group of their own, and located chronologically in phase 2, which is in agreement with Ørsnes's (1966) chronological determination within his South Scandinavian phasing (see below). Both Gjessing and Gudesen are also of the opinion that this brooch was probably imported from Denmark, or from southern Scandinavia. Helgen (1982:21) has only two S-shaped brooches in his material.³² These are quite idiosyncratic in form, almost 'naturalistically' produced, and are similar to no other Norwegian brooch (see Schetelig 1910:fig. 88). The brooches are from a boat grave, and can be dated to the end of the Migration Period, in Helgen's view. From the other

31 C23173b.

32 B5815.

finds in the (boat) grave, including a belt buckle/key ring,³³ a socketed weaving sword, thread-picker and wool-comb, Helgen nevertheless dates the burial itself to the 7th century. This is consistent with the dating that Müller-Wille (1970:58–9) assigns to the find, while according to Schetelig (1910:95) the brooches date to the early Viking Period. Petersen (1951:501) for his part dates a button that was within the grave to the end of the 9th century. The brooches are not referred to alongside S-shaped brooches by Gjessing (1934:130–3), indicating that he did not consider them as representing the Merovingian-period type. Vinsrygg (1979:25) also has two S-shaped brooches in her material.³⁴ These differ in being almost round (Fig. 3.1c). The brooches are practically identical and may be from a single mould. Both their stylistic execution and their find contexts indicate that they are contemporary with conical brooches (Gjessing 1934:132; Vinsrygg 1979:250).

In respect of jewellery from the earliest phase, therefore, only conical brooches and S-shaped brooches are common leading types in all three Norwegian schemes. Both of these types also appear in Ørsnes's earliest phase (cf. below). Common jewellery-types for the next phase are disc-on-bow brooches, rectangular brooches and creeping-beast brooches, but, as noted above, these types also occur in various other phases in some of the schemes. It is less easy to bring together the types of jewellery from the last phase in the three schemes because a high proportion of the jewellery finds that are included in the overview of Helgen's group 3 are usually dated to the Viking Period. Nonetheless there are also some Merovingian-period types here, such as late creeping-beast brooches, a disc-on-bow brooch, oval brooches of type R643 with Style III decoration, and an armring of type R719. All of these brooches were found in association with Insular artefacts, a fact which would traditionally date the finds as a whole to the Viking Period (but see Myhre 1993:187, who argues that the finds are earlier). The brooch-types noted are, with the exception of the disc-on-bow brooches, also included amongst

Helgen's 'typical finds' in group 2. Both brooch-types R640 and R643 appear in Vinsrygg's and Gudesen's concluding phases. There is thus a considerable degree of agreement between the three Norwegian phase schemes, but the picture is complicated by regional differences, and by inconsistencies in respect of the absolute dating of the phases.

Table 3.3 illustrates the inconsistent phase-boundaries in the three schemes. The beginning of the Merovingian Period is placed rather differently: Gudesen seeks to bring phase 1 back to AD 550, which Helgen is also open to, while Vinsrygg dates the start of the period to c. 575 or the end of the 6th century AD. With regard to the transition of phases 1/2, Gudesen places this boundary at AD 650 while the other two locate it in the last quarter of the 7th century. Gudesen, however, includes brooches which first appear around 700 in his phase 2, and it appears curious that he does not place a phase boundary at this date that would be more or less concurrent with a boundary identified and dated by both Vinsrygg and Helgen. Helgen, for his part, has indicated that there is some basis for a sub-division of his earliest finds of group 1 through the sequence of development of Style II even though, as he points out, there are few finds to make use of. Since the boundaries within the individual schemes are presented with a margin of up to 50 years (e.g. the date for the start of Helgen's first phase), it is difficult to determine whether or not the discrepancies in the phase structure of the three systems are due to regional differences. I shall return to this below. All three of these Norwegian chronological studies are related to some extent to Ørsnes's chronology, but none of them corresponds fully to it. Before I proceed to discuss the absolute datings and the scope for re-defining the phase-structures of the three separate Norwegian chronological systems, I shall therefore briefly describe the contents of Ørsnes's framework and compare it with Nielsen's super-regional scheme for a wider zone of southern and eastern Scandinavia.

33 In the catalogue description, B5818c is identified as a 'ring brooch'. This, however, is not a Viking-period ring brooch but rather a ring-shaped belt buckle or key ring (pers. comm. Zanette T. Glørstad).

34 Ts2155 and Ts1492.

Date	550	575	600	625	650	675	700	725	750	775
Vinsrygg		Phase 1 (end of 6th c.-end of 7th c.)				Phase 2A (end of 7th c.-mid/end of 8th c.)			Phase 2B (mid/end of 8th c.-ca. AD 800)	
		Conical brooches				Creeping-beast brooches			Oval brooches R.640	
		S-shaped brooches	← ?	←	←	Oval brooches R.643 with two animals			Oval brooches R.643	
		Wheel-shaped brooches				← Disc-on-bow brooches			Equal-armed brooch (eastern/Finnish)	
		Bird-of-prey brooches				Rectangular brooches				
		Ring brooch (special form)								
		large bead sets dominated by opaque orange glass beads, walrus-tusks and bone beads, barrel-shaped beads formed of copper-alloy wire				Smaller bead sets principally of green and blue translucent glass beads, big millefiori beads and rock crystal beads, beads vary in size			Even smaller bead sets, gold-in-glass beads, none locally produced beads, green and blue translucent glass beads, less variation	
Gudesen	Phase 1 (550-650)				Phase 2 (650-750)				Phase 3 (750-800)	
	Conical brooches				Bird-shaped brooches (viewed from above)					
	S-shaped brooches				Oval plate brooches					
	Wheel-shaped brooches						Creeping-beast brooches		→	
	Dress pins with polyhedral heads						Oval brooch R.640		→	
	Barrel-shaped copper-alloy beads									
	Disc-on-bow brooches			→			→		→	
	Rectangular 'ornamental plates'			→			→		→	
Helgen	Group 1 (ca. 550/600, end of 6th c.-ca. 675)					Group 2 (ca. 675-775)			Group 3 (ca. 775-825)	
	Creeping-beast brooch (with Style II)					Creeping-beast brooch/oval animal-brooch with Style III	→	→	→	Creeping-beast brooches
	Disc-on-bow brooches									Disc-on-bow brooch
						Oval brooches R.643 (with Style III)	→	→	→	Oval brooches R.643 with Style III + Oseberg style
	Rectangular plate brooches (with Style II)				→	Rectangular brooches, undecorated				Oval brooches R.647
	S-formed brooches					Bronze arming with tongue-shaped ornaments				Oval brooches R.650
	Conical brooches					Arming R.719				Arming R.719
	small oval brooch decorated with a simple beaded strip along central ridge					Oval brooches R.640/undecorated oval				Arming R.721

Table 3.3. Correlation of Vinsrygg, Gudesen and Helgen's Merovingian Period phases.

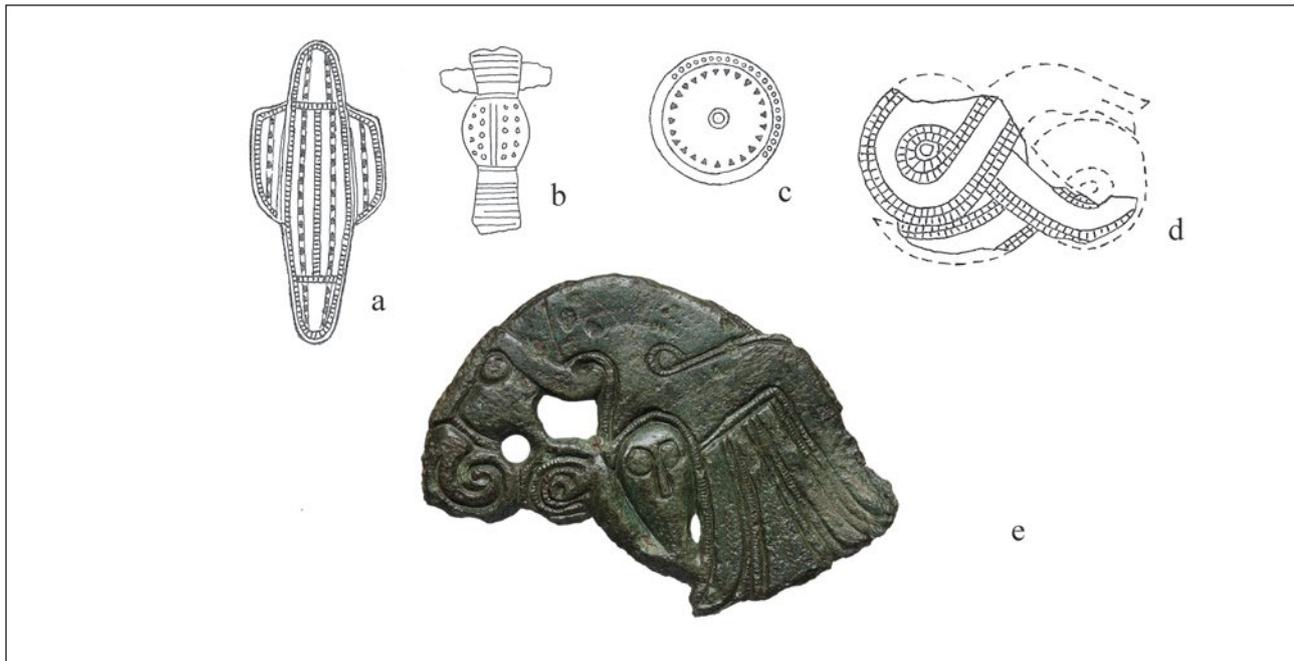


Figure 3.13 Individual brooch-types of Ørsnes (1966) Phase 1: **a**) beak brooch, **b**) equal-armed brooch, **c**) disc brooch, **d**) 'serpent-eye' brooch, after Ørsnes (1966:figs. 105, 94, 131 and 166) and **e**) 'bird-of-prey' brooch from Hornsgård, Jutland. Photograph: Søren Greve. © National Museum of Denmark (CC-BY-SA).

3.2.2 South and East Scandinavian chronology

Ørsnes (1966:180–241) divides the Later Germanic Iron Age of Danish archaeology into three principal phases: phase 1, c. AD 550/75–650; phase 2, c. AD 650–725; and phase 3, c. AD 725–800.

Phase 1 has the following dress-accessories as leading types: so-called 'prototypes' for the disc-on-bow brooch (E0);³⁵ disc-on-bow brooches (E1, E2 and E4); equal-armed brooches (F1–F5); beak brooches (G1–G2, and some examples of G3); special forms of plate brooch (H1–H2); round plate brooches (I1–I2); so-called 'animal-shaped plate brooches' of types L1–L3: i.e. S-shaped brooches (L1), 'serpent-eye'/snake(-coil)-shaped brooches (L2) and early bird-shaped brooches of the type with a profile bird ('bird-of-prey' brooches: L3); round dished brooches with geometrical ornament: i.e. conical brooches (M); dress pins of the type with polyhedral, box-shaped or conical heads (P1–P3), sometimes with a ring or loop (P4–P5); simple armrings (Q7); neckrings or diadems (Q8); bead-sets dominated by opaque orange glass beads (R1); polished amethyst beads (R2); and bead strings of type R1 worn in parallel strands fastened in terminal pieces (R3) (Fig. 3.13). Some bird brooches, namely bird brooches of the type viewed from above (D1), also occur in phase 1. The jewellery of this earliest phase can be divided into two groups, a and b, of which group b is characterized by richer sets of jewellery

than group a. Ørsnes (1966:80) notes the possibility that these groups represent a social rather than a chronological division. The leading types of group b, however, are still found at the beginning of phase 2 (see below; Ørsnes 1966:181). Phase 1 is otherwise typified especially by rich punchmark decoration, Style II of the southern Scandinavian form B, interlace patterns formed in simple two-strand ribbon interlace and a simple wavy line, combined in some cases with animal heads, cloisonné decoration, and encrustation (Ørsnes 1966:42, 180–2).

The range of jewellery of phase 2 is characterized first and foremost by bird brooches of the viewed-from-above type (D2–D6, and possibly D1), beak brooches with an unperforated headplate and no punched decoration (G3), oval plate brooches (J1–J5) and rectangular plate brooches (K1–K3). The introduction of these four principal types defines the beginning of the phase. In addition, there are also disc-on-bow brooches (E2–E3, E5–E6); epaulette-shaped plate brooches with openwork zoomorphic decoration (H3); round plate brooches with cast decoration and a shallow rim (I3); late forms of animal plate brooch of the type with a bird seen in profile (L3) and horse brooches (L4–L5); and some oval (dished) brooches (N1) with Style C decoration (Fig. 3.14). There are also dress pins with symmetrical composite heads (P6–P8) or asymmetrical heads (P9); simple iron pins (P10); spiral

³⁵ Ørsnes's type labels are given in brackets.

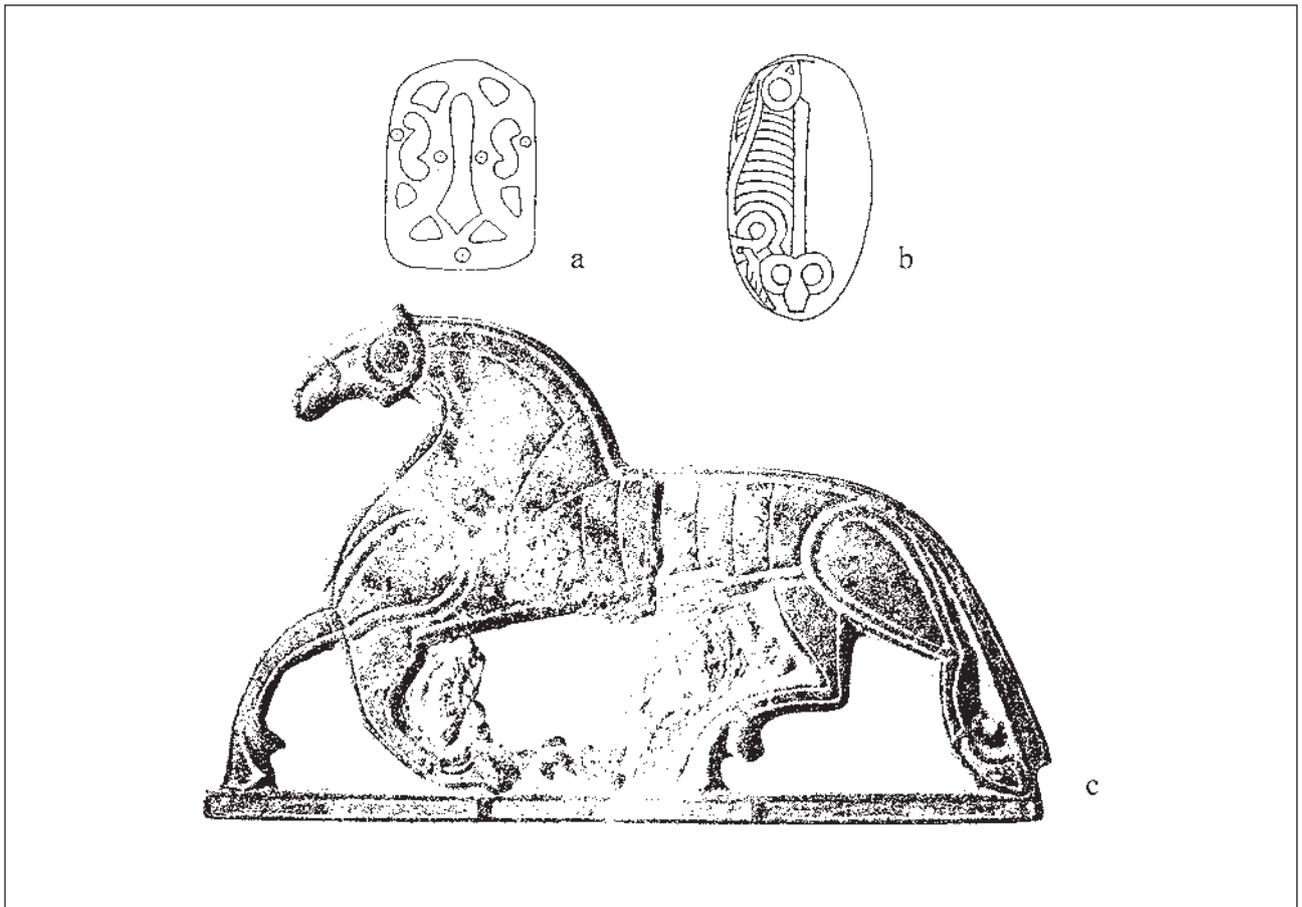


Figure 3.14 Individual brooch-types of Ørsnes (1966) Phase 2: **a)** epaulette-shaped plate brooch, **b)** oval brooch with Style-C decoration, and **c)** horse-shaped brooch, after Ørsnes (1966:figs. 127, 173 and 163 respectively).

armrings (Q1–Q3) and simple armrings with pointed flattened terminals (Q4); large bead sets dominated by orange hues (R1) sometimes worn with hook-shaped bead-distributors (R3); polished amethyst beads (R2); wooden beads with metal tubes and metal end-pieces (R4); some ‘sewn-on ornamental plates’ (S1); special types of ornamental plate (S2); slender iron chains (S3); and cylindrical jewellery cases (S4). According to Ørsnes, this range of jewellery can also be sub-divided into three groups, 2a–2c, which represent distinct chronological phases (1966:207). The range of beads which Ørsnes (1966:171–3) describes for his phases 2b and 2c comprises cool colours along with red and yellow, together with the introduction of some polychrome beads and haphazard bead combinations, while bead sets of type R1 appear only in phase 2a.

Phase 2 is also characterized by zoomorphic art of Style II in the form of South Scandinavian Style C, and interlace decoration in the form of regular plaitwork patterns, wavy lines and knotwork. The interlace patterns also occur in this period in combination with animal heads. Punched decoration is much less frequent in this phase, and to the extent that it does appear is largely confined to simple rows

or single examples of punchmarks. The ornament of this phase is otherwise characterized also by white metal appliqué, a special mask motif, and cloisonné decoration (Ørsnes 1966:207–8).

The most typical types of jewellery of phase 3 are oval (N1–N2) and zoomorphic dished brooches (O1–O3). There are, in addition, disc-on-bow brooches (E5–E6); round plate brooches with high rims (I4); and rectangular plate brooches (K1, K3–K5), which in some cases are reworked mounts. Ørsnes also includes in the inventory of jewellery of this phase a special plate brooch that was made of a three-sided mount (H4). Armrings with markedly splayed terminals or central parts (Q5–Q6) are typical of the phase (Fig. 3.15). The range of dress-accessories also includes a number of pins (P8–P9) and spiral armrings (Q3), ornamental plates (S1–S2) and slender bronze chains (S3). Phase 3 is further sub-divided into two chronological phases: phase 3a, which is characterized by small oval or zoomorphic dished brooches; and phase 3b, which is characterized by large oval dished brooches. In this phase, rich surface-covering punchmark decoration becomes common again, especially on the heavy armrings. Fine-lined and regular interlace decoration

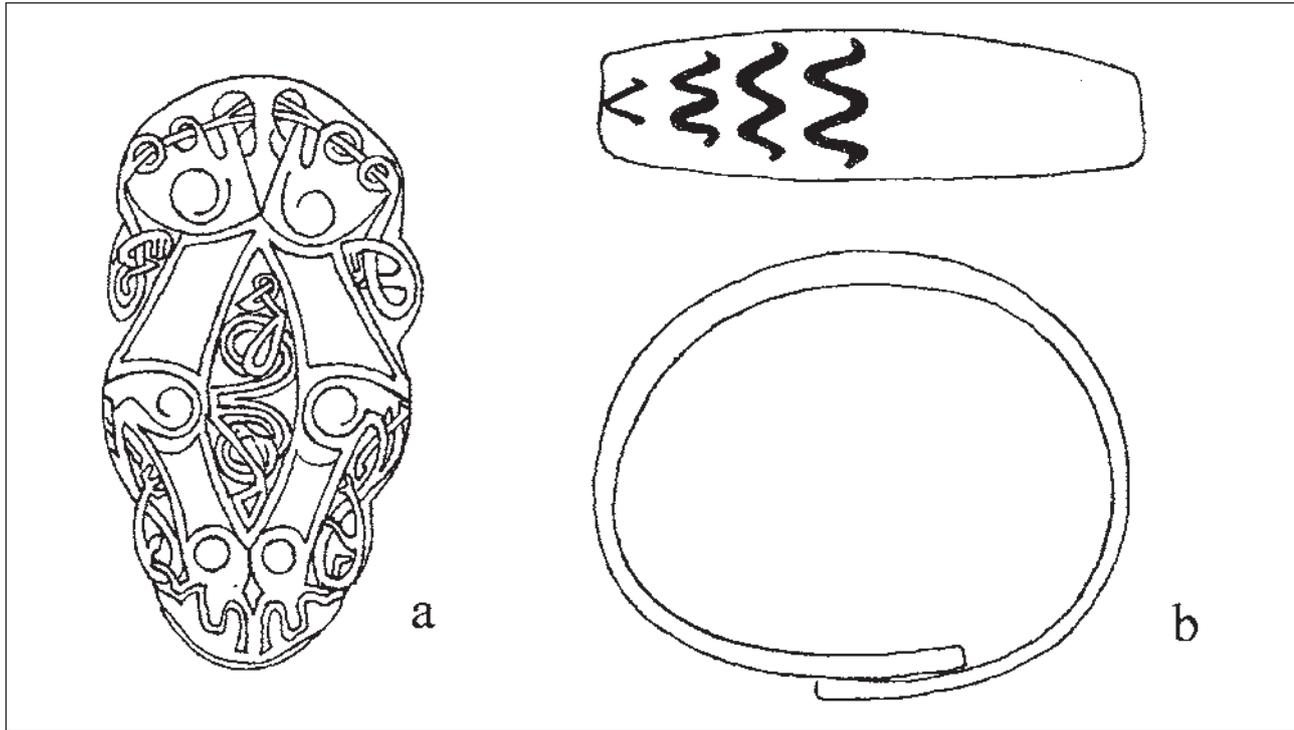


Figure 3.15 Individual brooch-types of Ørsnes (1966) Phase 3: **a)** zoomorphic oval brooch and **b)** armring with an expanded central field, after Ørsnes (1966:figs. 194 and 216).

with knotwork and loops formed out of a single ribbon is typical, and interlaced rings also occur. South Scandinavian animal styles (Style II) D, E and F are dominant in this phase: Style D in phase 3a and Style E in phase 3b. The more precise dating of Style F is less secure, but it is tentatively assigned to the later part of the phase. Cloisonné decoration occurs too, as well as inlays of red, yellow or blue enamel in some cases (Ørsnes 1966:224–6).

Nielsen (1991; 1999) has preserved Ørsnes's three principal phases more or less intact in her super-regional scheme, although she has made some minor changes to the typology. These affect the sub-classification of certain types of jewellery, such as the equal-armed brooches, round plate brooches and oval brooches (see also Nielsen 1987). The recasting of the typology has not had direct consequences for the chronological division into the principal phases, apart from the fact that finds which in Ørsnes's scheme fall into his sub-phase 2c are assigned by Nielsen (1999:175) between the two adjacent phases.

This does not intrinsically challenge Ørsnes's chronological scheme, since he noted that the finds of this phase belong to the transition between his phases 2 and 3 (Ørsnes 1966:207–9). Otherwise the most important difference between Nielsen's chronological system and Ørsnes's is that Nielsen includes

more eastern Scandinavian dress-accessories in her chronological scheme, with the result that this system is more applicable in working out a Norwegian or North Scandinavian chronology, providing more types and cross-finds to make use of.

Nielsen (1991; 1999) divides the Late Germanic Iron Age into four principal phases, which are labelled phases VIIA–VIID (Fig. 3.16). Phases A and B correspond to Ørsnes's phases 1 and 2, while phases C and D correspond to Ørsnes's phases 3a and 3b. In respect of artefact-types which characterize the individual phases, Nielsen has added the eastern Scandinavian types the Husby brooch (F4),³⁶ wheel-cross/wheel-shaped brooches (S2c) and early animal-head/crab brooches (G4a) to the leading types of the earliest phase, VIIA, which she dates c. AD 550–600. The second phase, VIIB (c. AD 600–700), includes animal-head brooches with lines (G4b) and small undecorated dished brooches (N1a), horse-shaped plate brooches (L4) and discoid ornamental plates with openwork zoomorphic ornament (S2a) in addition to the brooch-types listed by Ørsnes for phase 2. In the third phase, VIIC (c. AD 700–750), the leading types are expanded to include animal-head brooches with eyes (G4c) and heavy-cast animal-head brooches (G4d), bead-distributors (S1) and half-moon-shaped pendants (S2f). The concluding phase, VIID (c. AD

³⁶ Nielsen's type labels are given in brackets.

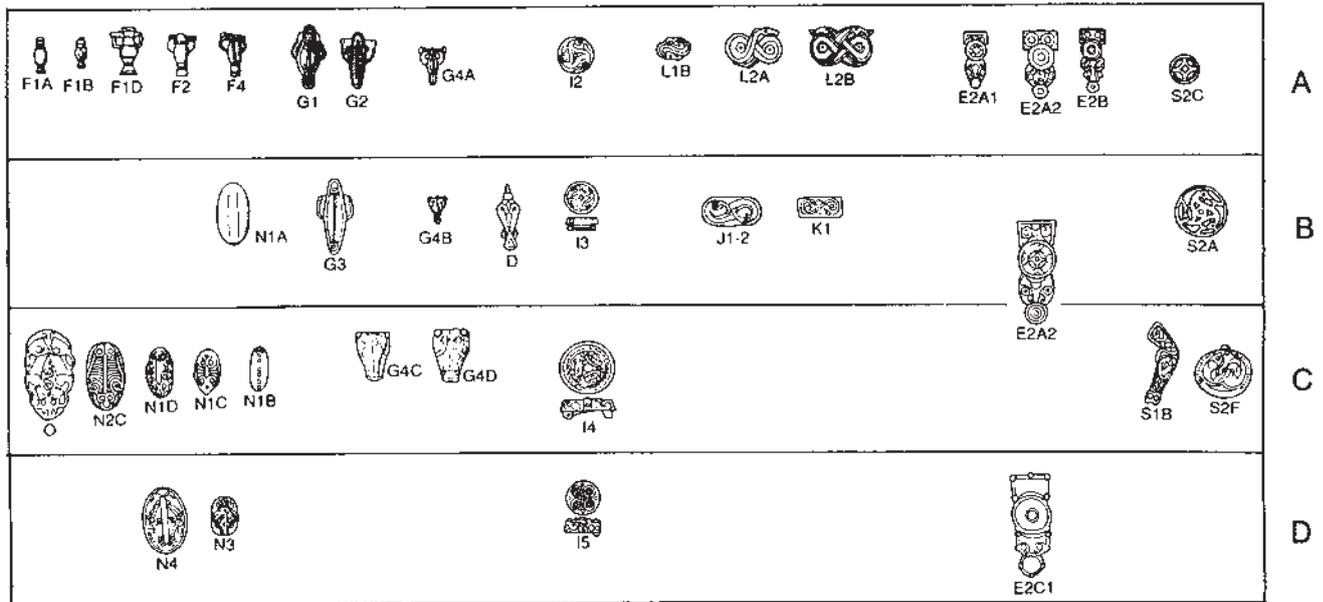


Figure 3.16 Nielsen's (1999) phasing, after Nielsen (1999:fig. 10,39).

750–800), includes only types that are also found in Ørsnes's phase 3: oval dished brooches (from 57–112 mm, N3–N5, which correspond to Ørsnes's N1–N2), round plate brooches with a high rim (16–17 mm: I5, which falls within Ørsnes's I4³⁷), and late, large, 'baroque' types of disc-on-bow brooch without profile heads on the footplate (E2c1, corresponding to Ørsnes E6).

Thus in Nielsen's system a final principal phase from c. AD 750 onwards is identified, phase VIID, in contrast to Ørsnes who allows this period to form a sub-phase which is part of one of the principal phases (phase 3). A difference between Nielsen's and Ørsnes's leading types, however, is that rectangular brooches serve as a leading type only for the second phase in Nielsen's scheme, while this type also occurs in both of phases 2 and 3. This is because rectangular brooches recur in both phases only in western Denmark (Ørsnes 1966:142) but fell out of use before phase 3 elsewhere in southern and eastern Scandinavia. In Norway too, however, it appears that rectangular brooches do occur in both phases 2 and 3 (cf. Ch. 3.2.3 and 3.2.4, below).

3.2.3 Bringing the Norwegian, South Scandinavian and East Scandinavian chronologies together

If Ørsnes's chronology is placed alongside the Norwegian schemes (Tab. 3.4), it transpires that there is most agreement between Ørsnes's phasing

and that of Gudesen with respect to which types of dress-accessory belong to the three principal phases of either framework. With the exception of local artefact-types that are limited to either southern or northern Scandinavia respectively, such as the zoomorphic dished brooches (Ørsnes Type O) on the one hand, and wide, undecorated oval brooches of type R640 on the other, and also with the exception of the frequent presence of many more individual types of jewellery in southern Scandinavia, the phasings differ from each other in that Gudesen includes rectangular brooches in phase 1, unlike Ørsnes. As I have discussed above, however, Gudesen defines this type of dress-accessory as 'rectangular ornamental plates' and thus also includes rectangular mounts amongst the examples. Rectangular mounts are also included in Ørsnes's first phase as features of male accoutrement (Ørsnes 1966:180). Gudesen includes creeping-beast brooches in the final part of phase 2, from around the year 700, and Ørsnes dates some brooches of this type, namely the 'oval dished brooches' of type N1 that are decorated with South Scandinavian Style C, to his phase 2. He draws attention, however, to aspects of uncertainty concerning such an early dating of the brooches, and in Nielsen's 'revised version' of Ørsnes's phasing this type of oval brooch is excluded from phase 2, which is her phase VIIB. Ørsnes otherwise places the start of phase 3 at around AD 725, which is 25 years earlier than Gudesen. Apart from that, there is, on the whole, agreement between the two schemes.

37 It is difficult to define the agreements between Nielsen's and Ørsnes's types of disc brooch, as Nielsen worked with precise measurements while Ørsnes used approximate measurements.

Date	550	650	700	725	750
Gudesen	Phase 1 (550–650)	Phase 2 (650–750)			Phase 3 (750–800)
	Conical brooches	Bird-shaped brooches (of the type viewed from above)			
	S-shaped brooches	Oval plate brooches			
	Wheel-shaped brooches		Creeping-beast brooches	→	
	Dress pins with polyhedral heads		Oval brooches of type R.640	→	
	Barrel-shaped copper-alloy beads				
	Disc-on-bow brooches	→		→	
	Rectangular 'ornamental plates'	→		→	
Ørsnes	Phase 1 (550/75–650)	Phase 2 (650–725)		Phase 3 (725–800)	
	Bird-shaped brooches (D1)	Bird-shaped brooches (D2–D6)			
	Beak brooches (G1–G2)	Beak brooches (G3) (unperforated headplate and no punched decoration)			
	Round plate brooches (I1–I2)	Round plate brooches (I3)		Round plate brooches (I4)	
	Round dished brooches (M) = conical	Rectangular plate brooches (K1–K3)		Rectangular plate brooches (K1, K3–K5)	
	Equal-armed brooches (F1–F5)	Oval plate brooches (J1–J5)		Zoomorphic dished brooches (O1–O3)	
		Some oval 'dished' brooches (N1 with Style C decoration)		Oval dished brooches (N1–N2)	
	Simple armrings (Q7), neckrings or diadems (Q8)	Spiral armrings (Q1–Q3), simple with pointed flattened terminals (Q4)		Some spiral armrings (Q3), armrings with splayed terminals and central parts (Q5–Q6)	
	Disc-on-bow brooches (E0, 1, 2- og 4)	Disc-on-bow brooches (E2–E3, E5–E6)		Disc-on-bow brooches (E2–E3, E5–E6)	
	Dress pins with polyhedral, box-shaped or conical heads (P1–P3) and as P1–P3 with 'ring/loop' (P4–P5)	Dress pins with composite heads (P6–P9), simple iron pins (P10)		Some dress pins (P8–P9)	
	Bead-sets dominated by opaque orange glass beads (R1), polished amethyst beads (R2), bead strings of type R1 in parallel strands fastened in terminal pieces (R3)	Beads R1, R3 (in beg. of phase), R2 (pol. amethyst) and R4 (=wooden beads with metal tubes and metal end-pieces)			
	Animal-shaped plate brooches (L1–L3) 1=S-shaped, 2=snake, 3= bird-of-prey	Animal-shaped plate brooches (late L3, horse brooches L4–L5)			
	Special forms of plate brooches (H1, and possibly H2)	Epaulette-shaped plate brooches with openwork zoomorphic dec. (H3)		Plate brooch (H4)	
		Sewn-on' and special types of ornamental plates (S1–S2), iron chains (S3)		Some ornamental plates (S1–S2), slender bronze chains (S3)	

Table 3.4. Correlation of Gudesen and Ørsnes's Merovingian Period phases.

Placing Ørsnes's and Vinsrygg's chronologies side-by-side reveals that their phases 1 also largely correspond with one another. There are no directly disruptive issues, except that Vinsrygg's phase has a longer duration. The differences are limited to the presence of local northern and eastern as opposed to southern Scandinavian types, such as, for instance, the wheel-shaped and ring brooches in the former as

opposed to beak brooches and round plate brooches in the latter. All of the types, meanwhile, recur in Nielsen's trans-regional phase VIIA, so that contemporaneity between these phases can be established to a certain extent. A difference between the schemes, however, is that bead strings with opaque orange glass beads are typical of Vinsrygg's phase 1 while this type of necklace is found in both phases 1 and 2a in

Ørsnes's scheme. The types of jewellery of Vinsrygg's phase 2A otherwise fit well with those that belong to Ørsnes's second phase, albeit with the exception of the fact that creeping-beast brooches are the key leading type for Vinsrygg's phase 2A while, according to Ørsnes's system, this type belongs primarily to phase 3. In addition to this important difference, the second phases of the two different schemes differ from one another in respect of Ørsnes including a range of types that simply do not occur in Vinsrygg's material. This is primarily a matter of local southern and eastern Scandinavian types. There is also a chronological disjunction in that Vinsrygg's phase 2A is placed about 25–50 years later than Ørsnes's phase 2. The key artefact-types of Vinsrygg's concluding phase, 2B, are oval brooches of type R640 and R643. Both of those are distinctly Norwegian brooch-types (Gjessing 1934:145–7; Vinsrygg 1979:56; Ørsnes 1966:155–6). These types consequently do not occur in the South and East Scandinavian chronology. These brooch-types can, however, be treated as representing a common Scandinavian oval-brooch fashion (Ørsnes 1966:154–5), and the Norwegian types appear from their size to correspond to southern and eastern Scandinavian types that are assigned to Ørsnes's phase 3 and Nielsen's phase VIIC.

Helgen's phasing is the one which agrees least with Ørsnes's and Nielsen's schemes, because, as noted earlier, he includes both rectangular brooches and creeping-beast brooches with Style II decoration in his earliest phase, along with a small oval brooch with a single beaded rim along its central axis, in addition to more widely accepted 'early types' such as disc-on-bow brooches, S-shaped and conical brooches. Moreover Helgen's phasing breaks with Ørsnes's and Nielsen's in that he includes both undecorated oval brooches of types R640 and brooches like R643 with Style III decoration in his second phase. As noted above, there is probably evidence to justify a further division of Helgen's first phase, group 1, which, like Vinsrygg's earliest phase, covers a period of around a century.

The discussion of the different chronological schemes has shown that two brooch-types stand out as particularly crucial to the correlation of the Norwegian phasing with that of southern and eastern Scandinavia: conical brooches and creeping-beast brooches. In order to establish a common Norwegian or North Scandinavian scheme that corresponds with Ørsnes's and Nielsen's chronology, the chronological positioning of these two types in relation to the South

and East Scandinavian framework is going to be of great importance. I shall therefore discuss these types in detail immediately below. Once again, the focus is upon the two earliest phases of the Merovingian Period.

3.2.3.1 Conical brooches

In order to establish a Norwegian or North Scandinavian phase 1 that corresponds with a South and East Scandinavian phase 1, the chronological placement of conical brooches in relation to Ørsnes's and Nielsen's scheme will be important, because this is the most widespread brooch-type in Norway of the early Merovingian Period (cf. Ch. 4.3.1). Such a placement has to some extent already been undertaken by Vinsrygg and Gudesen on the basis of, respectively, the northern and eastern Norwegian finds of the type, and by Ørsnes through one Danish and two Norwegian finds. Ørsnes (1966:148) dated conical brooches with geometrical decoration to his phase 1 on the basis of a grave find from Øster Tørslev in Jutland in which such a brooch was found together with a round plate brooch of an early type, with no rim and with punched decoration, and two northern Norwegian grave finds in which conical brooches were found associated with types that are diagnostic of his phase 1. These comprise a bird-shaped brooch of the bird-seen-in-profile type and copper-alloy pins with polyhedral heads. However, he dated two conical brooches with zoomorphic ornamentation from Madsrud Allé in Oslo,³⁸ and Søm in Telemark (Fig. 3.17),³⁹ to his phase 2 (Ørsnes 1966:212, fn.9). That was done on stylistic grounds, since both finds are stray finds. He thus attributed the decoration on the brooches with chronological significance. As noted above, Vinsrygg used association with conical brooches as a criterion for defining other early brooch-types that she incorporated in her phase 1, and some of these also occur in the earliest phase of Ørsnes and Nielsen: S-shaped brooches, wheel-shaped brooches, and a bird brooch with a bird seen in profile with Style B features. She also noted, as did Gudesen, the combination of conical brooches with pins with polyhedral heads (Gudesen 1980:59; Vinsrygg 1979:47). Gudesen also drew attention to conical brooches associated with S-shaped brooches. In contrast to Ørsnes, Gjessing (1934:124, 128), Vinsrygg (1979:25) and Gudesen (1980:59–60) have all argued that conical brooches with geometrical decoration and those with zoomorphic art are contemporary. In agreement with Ørsnes,

38 C22744.

39 C13395.



Figure 3.17 Conical brooches with animal-style decoration from **a)** Madsrud allé in Oslo (C22744) and **b)** Søm in Telemark (C13395). Photograph: Kirsten Helgeland. © Museum of Cultural History.

Gjessing (1934:127–8) described the animal art on the brooch from Søm in Telemark as late, but he nonetheless claimed that the brooch is not to be dated any later than the first half of the 7th century. He also pointed to a grave find from Grefsheim in Hedemark⁴⁰ in which a conical brooch with zoomorphic decoration was found together with copper-alloy pins with a polyhedral head. Vinsrygg (1979:25, 47) also noted two grave finds from Øyjord in Lødingen⁴¹ and Vang in Oppdal⁴² in which brooches with geometrical decoration and with animal art occur in association.

All in all, relatively few conical brooches have been found in combination with southern or eastern Scandinavian artefact-types, or with diagnostic, ‘common Scandinavian’ phase-1 types such as, for instance, dress pins with polyhedral heads. There are altogether five cases of a combination of conical brooches with polyhedral pins: four of these finds involve brooches with geometrical decoration,⁴³ including one find from Sweden, and one find has a brooch with zoomorphic decoration.⁴⁴ In addition, there is a conical brooch with geometrical decoration that was found in association with pins of bone or antler

with polyhedral heads.⁴⁵ S-shaped brooches have been found combined with conical brooches in two cases, comprising brooches with both geometrical ornament⁴⁶ and animal art.⁴⁷ A wheel-shaped brooch occurred in association with two conical brooches with geometrical decoration in a find from Ytre Elgsnes in Troms.⁴⁸ In a Swedish find from ‘Flygfeltet’ (The Airfield) in Uppsala, grave 71,⁴⁹ two conical brooches with geometrical decoration were found together with polyhedral pins and a ring brooch of an early type (Nielsen type A2e; see Klindt-Jensen 1957:fig. 60:8) which belongs to Ørsnes phase 1/Nielsen phase VIIA (Nielsen 1987:75, Appendix A; 1999:185, 189). As noted earlier, there is also a find involving a pair of conical brooches with geometrical decoration that were found along with a bird-shaped brooch with a bird seen in profile from Prestøy, Alstahaug in Nordland.⁵⁰ The bird brooch is executed in Style B, meaning that it belongs to Ørsnes phase 1. Finally there is also, again as noted earlier, a conical brooch with an early form of round plate brooch in a find from Øster Tørslev in Jutland. Although this does not in total involve more than eleven finds with twelve diagnostically phase 1/

40 C22394.

41 Ts4295.

42 T18758.

43 Ts3071, Ts6387, T15808, SHM23304.

44 C22744.

45 Ts3978.

46 C15714.

47 Ts2156.

48 Ts3071.

49 SHM23304.

50 T13498.

VIIA types of dress-accessory, it is sufficient for us to be able to define phase 1 confidently as the main period of distribution of conical brooches.

Of the total number of eleven cross-combinations, nine have brooches with geometrical decoration and there are only two cross-combinations involving brooches with zoomorphic decoration. In addition, however, there are, as already noted, two finds with conical brooches with the two different forms of decoration associated with one another. Four brooches with animal decoration can thus be assigned to phase 1 on the basis of find-associations. Of a total of 16 finds of this variant, only five have secure contexts, while eight are stray finds and three are mixed finds. Four finds is consequently quite a high proportion of the datable contexts. The fifth find with a secure context⁵¹ was also found together with 63 beads of which the majority were opaque glass beads of red or yellow. According to Ørsnes such bead sets can belong to either phase 1 or phase 2a.

As far as the possible presence of conical brooches in Ørsnes's phase 2 is concerned, there are no finds of such brooches associated with dress-accessories diagnostic of this phase as identified by Ørsnes or Nielsen. I am not including here combinations with bead sets that are dominated by opaque orange glass beads (Ørsnes's R1 beads) which, according to Ørsnes, do also occur in his phase 2a. I have excluded these assemblages because I believe that the finds that Ørsnes ascribed to phase 2a can be defined as transitional finds between phases 1 and 2, as I shall discuss further below (Ch. 3.2.4). Nevertheless, Ørsnes (1966:212 fn.9) placed two Norwegian Style II brooches in his phase 2 on the basis of the form of the animal art, which he believed was related to South Scandinavian Style C. However, the design on one of these brooches, the specimen from Madsrud Allé, is very similar to a brooch from Horvik in Tjeldsund⁵² which was found in a reasonably certain phase-1 context along with an S-shaped brooch (cf. Figs. 3.17a and 3.18). The bead set in this find, meanwhile, comprises altogether 92 opaque monochrome glass beads of which 44 are dark or light red and 46 dark or light green, plus two grey-white beads (probably of whalebone or walrus tusk). The high proportion of green beads could possibly be evidence for a relatively late dating in phase 1 or around the transition to phase 2. Vinsrygg (1979:29), however, counted this find amongst her early group within phase 1. The beads in the find are relatively small, and very consistent in size and

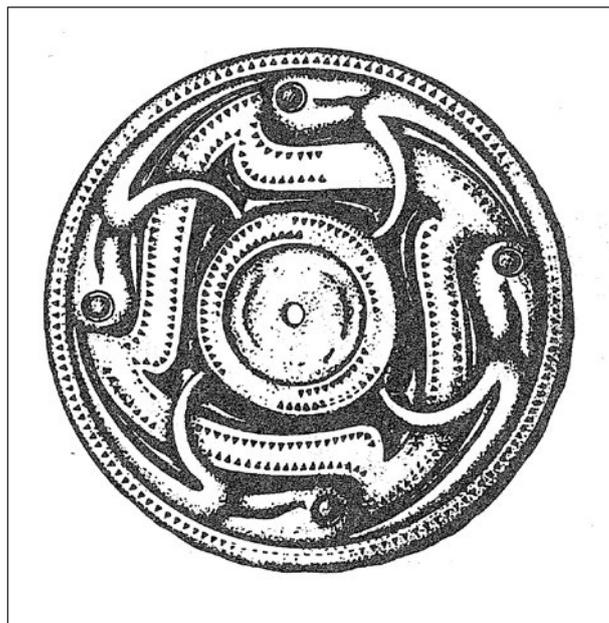


Figure 3.18 Conical brooch with animal-style decoration from Horvik in Tjeldsund (Ts2156). Drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen.

form, a feature that is typical of the earliest phase, as is also the case with the large number of beads in the necklace. The consistent size of the beads, and the composition of various shades of opaque reds and greens that are quite evenly numbered between them, could possibly be associated with the Migration-period bead fashion, although the number of beads is much greater than is typical of bead sets of the end of the Migration Period (Røstad 2008a). It is also possible that the presence of the cool colour tones is a local phenomenon: a find from Ytterstad, Lødingen,⁵³ in the adjacent district, comprises two conical brooches with geometrical decoration and a bead set dominated by blue and green beads. Vinsrygg (1979:29–30) located this find amongst the latest finds of her phase 1 on the basis of the bead set which is highly varied and includes, inter alia, several large mosaic beads, spiral-rolled barrel-shaped copper-alloy beads, glass beads, stone beads and a cowrie shell. In this case the combination of colours thus probably represents the outcome of a chronological development. Two other finds from the same districts (Tjeldsund and Lødingen) of conical brooches with geometrical decoration,⁵⁴ of which one was associated with a conical brooch with zoomorphic decoration,⁵⁵ include, however, the more common opaque orange glass beads. It is uncertain, as a result, whether the predominance of the cool

51 Ts4460.

52 Ts2156.

53 Ts947–48.

54 Ts4465, Ts4295.

55 Ts4295.

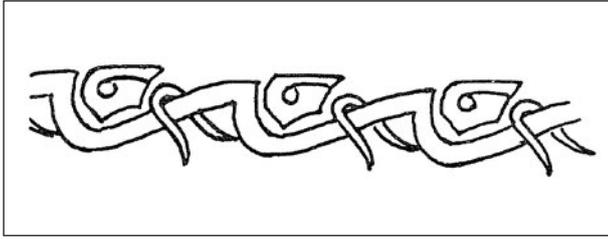


Figure 3.19 A wave-pattern with added zoomorphic elements, after Ørsnes (1966:tav. 5g).

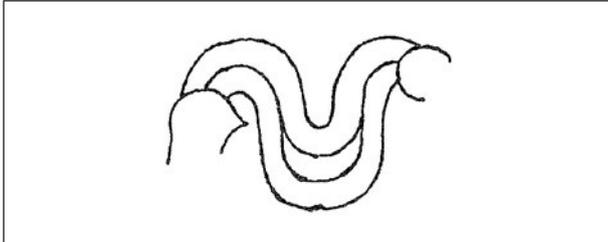


Figure 3.20 Animal body, after Ørsnes (1966:tav. 2.2b).

colour tone in the find from Ytterstad is a reflex of a local fashion. The possibility that the find should be assigned a late date in relation to Ørsnes's phase 1 and be considered a transitional find to the following phase has to be kept open; or that the combination of colours simply represents an exception from the norm of the predominance of orange tones in the early Merovingian Period.

Turning back to the question of the stylistic production of conical brooches with zoomorphic decoration and this type's possible dating to South Scandinavian phase 2, in reality none of the individual elements of the style illustrated by Ørsnes (1966) can be described as close to the design that appears on both of the Norwegian conical brooches. The design that is most similar to that on the conical brooches is what is referred to as a 'zoomorphized wavy line design' that is illustrated by Ørsnes (1966:tav. 5g, fig. 224). The ribbon wave is composed of animals with Style-B heads with open jaws that bite across ribbon-shaped bodies (Fig. 3.19). According to Ørsnes (1966:58) this is a very unusual motif in a southern Scandinavian context, with only one example – on an ornamental plate from western Sjælland. He pointed out, however, that the motif is related to a triskele motif which is also found on, inter alia, round plate brooches, where elements of Styles B–D can be identified. This design is found in southern Scandinavian contexts, primarily on Bornholm and in Skåne. A more detailed examination of the head- and body-elements that Ørsnes identified as typical of the different southern Scandinavian styles shows that bodies of the type of Ørsnes (1966) tavle

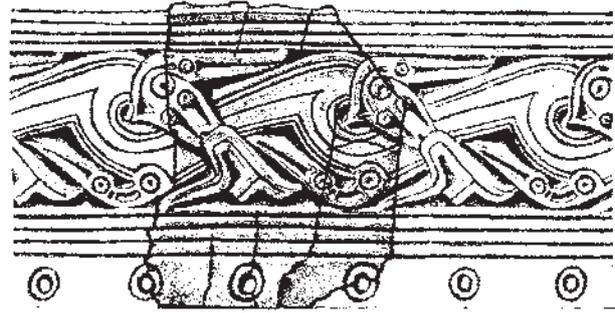


Figure 3.21 Animal-style motif on a bone fragment from the western mound at Gamla Uppsala, after Lindqvist (1936:fig. 103).

2.2, with punched decoration, are closest to those that usually appear on the conical brooches (Fig. 3.20). This is a form of representation that is assigned to Style B. Another type of animal body which recurs on the brooches is a body that is divided up lengthways by several ribbons, rather like Ørsnes (1966) tavle 2.6 and 2.4. These represent South Scandinavian Styles B and C respectively. None of the illustrations, however, are identical or even persuasively similar to the forms on the conical brooches. The forms on the brooches probably represent a particular, local northern Scandinavian stylistic variant. There is also a certain similarity between the zoomorphic design on the conical brooches and the example of animal art on a bone fragment from Västhögen at Gamla Uppsala (Fig. 3.21) (Lindqvist 1936:fig. 103). Nielsen (1991:137–8, 140, fig. 11) put the artwork from Västhögen in her period VIIA, corresponding to Ørsnes's phase 1 (see above). This may therefore corroborate the assignation of the Style II designs on conical brooches to phase 1. Nielsen also argued, however, that this style-variant was from Gotland or southern Scandinavia, although she pointed out herself that 'this position is based partly on negative evidence'. A further relevant point is that she excluded conical and disc brooches from her study (Nielsen 1991:135), which may be crucial for how she places this form of art in the southern Scandinavian area.

A further argument for broad contemporaneity between these two variants of conical brooch is the fact that some examples are decorated in a blend of animal-style ornament and geometrical decoration.⁵⁶ In addition, the presence of punchmark decoration on the Style II brooches suggests a position in Ørsnes's phase 1 because that phase, in contrast to the following one, is characterized by rich punched ornament (Vinsrygg 1979:32). The brooch from Søm in Telemark which

⁵⁶ T18758, B4719 III₀, Ts4295, Ts2156.

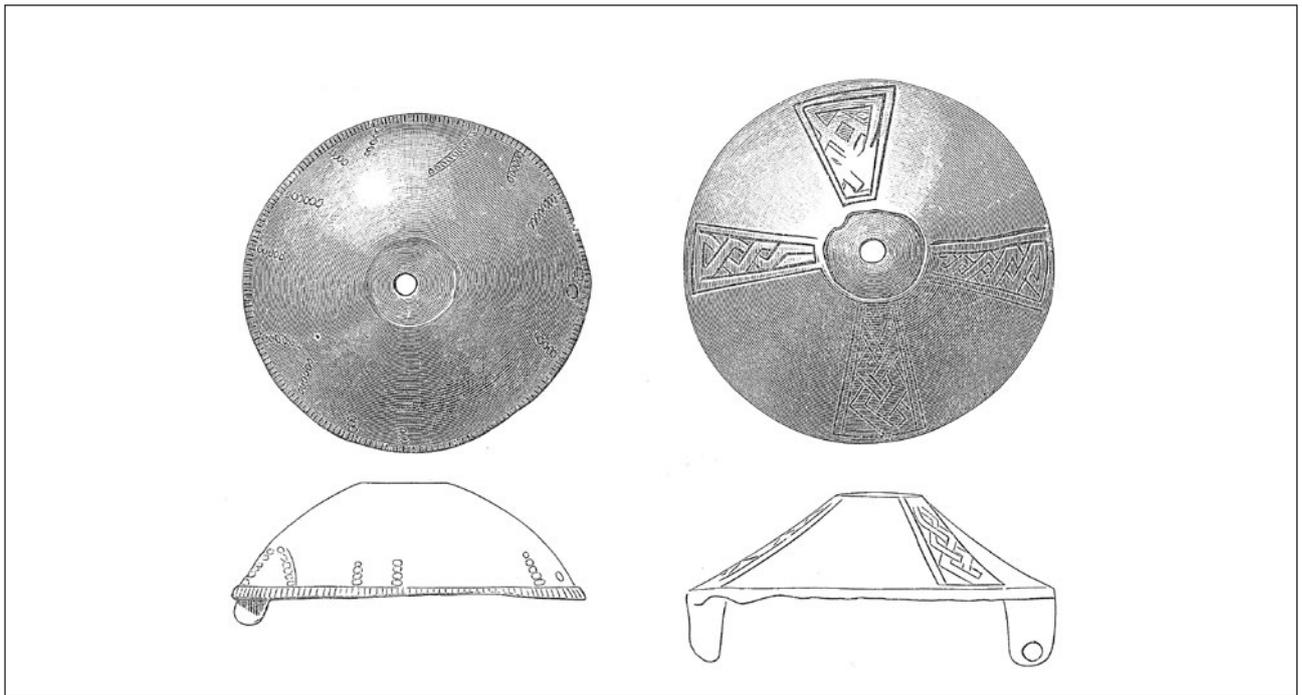


Figure 3.22 Conical brooches with peculiar decoration from Krutberg, Vilhelmina, Lappland (SHM10321), after Salin (1904:figs. 210 and 211).

Ørsnes, as noted above, assigned to his phase 2 does stand apart, however, in that the bodies and animal jaws together from a sort of plaitwork (Fig. 3.17b). This creates the impression of a slightly later style than the other brooches. A find from Nordgården, Seljord in Telemark, contained an unusual S-shaped brooch with a similar zoomorphic design (see Gjessing 1934:pl. XXXIIa, left). This S-shaped brooch can, however, be counted as an intermediary form between S-shaped and oval plate brooches, which in turn could mean that it belongs relatively late in Ørsnes phase 1. The form of the animal on the Søm brooch may thus be interpreted as a reflex of a later stage of development. The artwork is also similar to a motif which appears on several of the southern Scandinavian rectangular and oval plate brooches (see, e.g., Ørsnes 1966:figs. 122–5, fig. 151, and Fig. 3.8b above). The conical brooch from Søm can for this reason be assigned within or around the transition to South Scandinavian phase 2.

As already noted, there is no example of a conical brooch combined with diagnostic phase-2 types. There are, though, two finds with conical brooches combined with creeping-beast brooches: one from Ytre Kvarøy in Nordland⁵⁷ and the other from Krutberg, Vilhelmina, Lappland.⁵⁸ At Krutberg in the 1880s five conical

brooches with partially unparalleled geometrical decoration were found together with two creeping-beast brooches and a number of glass beads (Fig. 3.22). The find was made at a Saami camp site, and it is usually interpreted as a Saami hoard (Petersen 1905:212; Serning 1960:29–32, 153–4). The creeping-beast brooches were placed by Ørsnes (1966:155) with his phase-3 brooches. Since information on the find is sparse, it is difficult to say much that is certain about the dating of this find. The brooches in the assemblage are not necessarily contemporary in terms of having the same date of manufacture. In many cases, hoards of the Late Iron Age contain objects produced over a period of several centuries. The find from grave 9 on Ytre Kvarøy is from a boat grave that was properly excavated (Bjørge 1969). In this grave, a conical brooch with geometrical decoration was found in association with a disc-on-bow brooch and two creeping-beast brooches (Figs. 3.23 and 3.3b). It is unlikely, however, that the three different types of brooch had been worn together: the creeping-beast brooches and the disc-on-bow brooch were found at the neck and chest of the deceased together with a large number of beads, while the conical brooch lay alongside the left hand together with a smaller collection of beads (Bjørge 1969:8–10; Vinsrygg 1979:21). The disc-on-bow brooch is of a

⁵⁷ Ts6378.

⁵⁸ SHM10321.

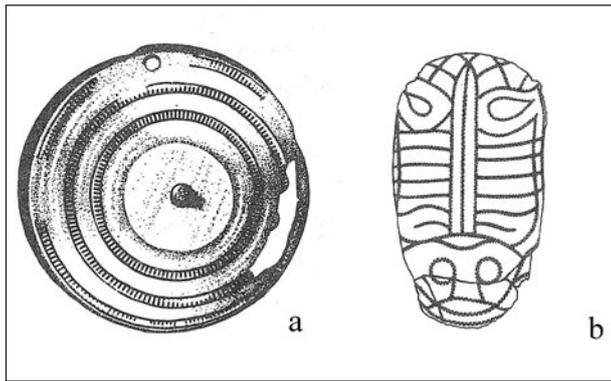


Figure 3.23 a) Conical brooch and b) small zoomorphic oval brooch from grave 9 on Ytre Kvarøy (Ts6378), after Vinsrygg (1979:figs. 3b and 8a).

type that can probably be dated to Ørsnes's phase 1.⁵⁹ According to Vinsrygg it was old when the burial took place, and might be interpretable as an heirloom. The creeping-beast brooches are of the earliest type, with Style C elements in the artwork. According to Ørsnes, these are datable to southern Scandinavian phase 2. The find is therefore probably a phase-2 find with which a conical brooch is associated, but since the conical brooch was not one of the dress-accessories in the normal way – it clearly was not attached to the costume – it is problematic to regard this particular conical brooch as a phase-2 find.⁶⁰ I return to this find in the course of the discussion of the chronological location of creeping-beast brooches.

As far as the terminus post quem for the occurrence of conical brooches is concerned, there are three conical brooches with geometrical decoration which have been found together with bucket-shaped pottery of the Migration-period type in a grave find from Fiskå in Møre og Romsdal.⁶¹ This find was uncovered in the course of an archaeological excavation, and Vinsrygg (1979:19–22) has argued that the pottery and the brooches belong to one and the same deposit. If this is correct, this represents one of the oldest finds of conical brooches, and it can concurrently be regarded as one of extremely few transitional finds between the Migration and Merovingian Periods. In addition

to the Fiskå find, a find from Øysund in Nordland⁶² could also possibly be interpreted as a transitional find in the same way. In this, a conical brooch with geometrical decoration was found in a burial mound that covered both a male grave of the end of the 7th or the 8th century and a female grave of the Migration Period with a spindle-whorl and pottery datable to the 6th century. Gjessing (1934:125) argued that the conical brooch must belong to the woman's grave because it is a typical 'female artefact' that was not normally associated with male equipment. Sjøvold (1974:197) agreed, although because of the lack of information on the find this is difficult to prove. In light of the relatively recent find from Fiskå, though, it is not implausible. It also seems quite unlikely that the brooch came from the later man's grave. There are in addition a couple of finds from Ytterstad in Nordland and Lyhus in Vestfold⁶³ in which conical brooches were apparently associated with bow brooches of the Roman Iron Age. Both of these very probably represent confused grave deposits (Gjessing 1934:124; Vinsrygg 1979:19). There is also a series of finds in which conical brooches are associated with late Merovingian-period types of weaponry,⁶⁴ or Viking-period items.⁶⁵ All of these apparently late contexts can be explained as confused grave deposits, because the objects either come from different places within the individual burial mounds, or the mounds had not been excavated in a proper archaeological manner, and/or because the finds were mixed up after the find was brought in to the museum and there are no records of the finds etc. (see also Gjessing 1934:124–5).

This review has shown that the chronological distribution of conical brooches falls first and foremost in a period that corresponds with South Scandinavian phase 1. There has hitherto been disagreement over where the variant with zoomorphic decoration belongs, but I have made the case that the majority of finds of this type are to be assigned to phase 1 along with the examples with geometrical decoration. One possible exception is the brooch from Søm in Telemark, which can plausibly be dated to (the transition to)

59 The brooch is quite like Ørsnes's type E3 although the edges on the sides are undecorated and those of the bow disc carry a simple two-strand interlace.

60 The conical brooch should perhaps be regarded as an amulet. In the Iron Age it is quite common, over large parts of Europe, to deposit older artefacts as amulets in graves. From Anglo-Saxon England and the Continent there is also evidence of a similar positioning of amulets in or by the hand (Meaney 1981:68, 89, 123, 134, 222–5). A perforation close to the outer edge of the brooch may also indicate that it had been used as a pendant, which is also common for other types of amulet such as bracteates. A similar find with a clasp of the Migration Period in a phase-2 Merovingian-period context is from Ärvinge, Spånga in Uppland (RAÄ162, anlegg 47).

61 B12533.

62 Ts1631.

63 Ts893 and C18752 respectively.

64 B4719: Hovland in Hordaland.

65 C17311, C18612, T8268, T18758, B11304.

Ørsnes's phase 2. Find contexts indicate that conical brooches were in use all the time from the transition from the Migration Period to the transition to South Scandinavian phase 2, and the type emerges as the most important leading type for a Norwegian phase 1 which corresponds with South and East Scandinavian phase 1.

3.2.3.2 *Creeping-beast brooches*

Overall, the greatest problem in reconciling the South and East Scandinavian chronology with that of Norway is the dating and establishment of a general Norwegian or North Scandinavian phase 2 which is correlated with Ørsnes's second phase and Nielsen's phase VIIB. This phase in southern and eastern Scandinavia can be recognized in Norway, to a certain extent, through the distribution of some types of dress-accessory that are identifiable with southern and/or eastern Scandinavian types: bird brooches, rectangular brooches, disc-on-bow brooches, oval plate brooches and horse-shaped mounts. There is also a find of a small oval brooch of an undecorated 'eastern Swedish' type from Sele in Klepp, Rogaland, which can be put into this phase (Gjessing 1934:145; Petersen 1928:5 and fig. 1; Ørsnes 1966:155). Unlike the earliest phase, however, it appears that specifically 'Norwegian' types of jewellery are lacking in this phase, with the exception of the conical brooch with Style C decoration discussed above.⁶⁶ This was presumably decisive for both Vinsrygg and Helgen when they extended the range of the earliest phase down to the point at which the oval-brooch fashion had fully emerged, towards the end of the 7th century or around AD 700. Gudesen, by contrast, incorporated many of the southern and eastern Scandinavian forms of jewellery and drew the starting point of phase 2 in eastern Norway back so that it coincides with Ørsnes's phase boundary; at the same time, though, he extended the phase so that it also incorporates later oval brooches which in Ørsnes's scheme belong the next phase, phase 3.

Norwegian finds of types of dress-accessory from Ørsnes's phase 2, meanwhile, 'lie hidden' amongst artefacts which in the Norwegian schemes are ascribed to both the early phase in which conical brooches are predominant and/or to the late 'oval brooch phase' which continued down to the transition to the Viking

Period c. AD 750/800. At first glance this creates the impression that the period which corresponds with Ørsnes's phase 2 is virtually void of finds, especially in the north and in western Norway, in respect of jewellery at least. A revision of the Norwegian Merovingian-period evidence on the basis of Ørsnes's and Nielsen's typologies redresses this impression somewhat. Ørsnes (1966:114, 142, 211), for example, offers dates in his second phase for some Norwegian rectangular brooches, disc-on-bow brooches and horse-shaped mounts and, as I shall explore in more detail below, some of the creeping-beast brooches with Style C decoration, and these include finds from southern, western and northern Norway alike.

New finds that have been made in recent years also help to change the picture and to make phase 2 more visible in the case of Norway. Finds of bird brooches from Norway, for example, now count some 49 specimens of which at least 47 can be dated to phase 2 (Rødsrud and Røstad 2020; Røstad 2008b:103–8).⁶⁷ Their distribution is focused upon eastern Norway, but there have also been finds from Karmøy in Rogaland, Jøa in Nord-Trøndelag and Lunde in Vest-Agder. Finds of rectangular brooches and disc-on-bow brooches have also been made following Ørsnes's publication (Glørstad and Røstad 2015; Munch 1979:65–6; Rønne 2008:74–80; Vinsrygg 1979:45), and some of these brooches can be dated to phase 2. From Ørsnes's typology,⁶⁸ for instance, and/or on the basis of their size, as many as nineteen of the Norwegian disc-on-bow brooches can be dated to phase 2 (Glørstad and Røstad 2015). These brooches are from Vestlandet, northern Norway, Østlandet and Trøndelag. A quick glance at the published and/or catalogued artefacts of this group shows that there are around 77 artefact finds altogether: 47 bird-shaped brooches, 4 rectangular plate brooches, 19 disc-on-bow brooches and one or two (if the hybrid specimen from Telemark, referred to above, is included) oval plate brooches, plus one or two undecorated oval brooches and three horse-shaped mounts. This, however, represents relatively few items in comparison with these types' distribution elsewhere in Scandinavia. Finds of southern and eastern Scandinavian jewellery-types in Norway are, though, also relatively few in phase 1, especially when contrasted with the distribution of conical brooches.

66 A small, undecorated, oval brooch from Vang in Hedmark (C23173; previously T5900–01: illustrated by Petersen 1928:fig. 2) is counted by Petersen (1928:5) as one of the earliest specimens of R640. He emphasizes that this is earlier than the more common, larger examples, and the brooch could then be datable to phase 2.

67 New finds of bird brooches are being produced by metal-detecting all the time. All of these are stray finds, but they can usually be dated to phase 2 on stylistic grounds.

68 Ørsnes's classification needs, however, to be adjusted somewhat, as several of the Norwegian finds, as both Gjessing (1934:138–9) and Ørsnes (1966:114) themselves pointed out, constitute distinct Norwegian variants.

There are, therefore, a number of finds of jewellery from Norway which can be placed within South and East Scandinavian phase 2, while any distinctly 'Norwegian' or northern Scandinavian types are apparently wanting from this phase. One possible exception, however, is the disc-on-bow brooch-type of Gjessing's (1934:138–9) Trøndelag and Jämtland group (*trøndsk-jemtsk*) (Glørstad and Røstad 2015). In Sweden, and in particular in Uppland and on Öland, there is also a peculiarly eastern Swedish or eastern Scandinavian form of small, undecorated, narrow oval brooch which has conventionally been supposed to be early. Both Ørsnes (1966:155) and Nielsen (1991:132, fig. 3; 1999:182) dated this form to phase 2. Ørsnes (1966:157) claimed that the earliest creeping-beast brooches, examples with Style C decoration, are equally early as these East Swedish oval brooches. From Sweden and Denmark, Ørsnes (1966:151, 155–6) noted a total of four finds, along with two finds of such early creeping-beast brooches from Norway: a brooch from Nervik in Hordaland⁶⁹ and Utakleiv, Leknes, in Nordland.⁷⁰ He also referred to a Norwegian find from Skagstad in Nordland⁷¹ of an oval dished brooch, of a type quite similar to R643, which has Style C details in its decoration. Ørsnes nonetheless assigned oval dished brooches in general to his phase 3. Egil Bakka (1972:61–2), however, argued that more specimens than those referred to by Ørsnes must belong to phase 2: including a Norwegian find from Rise in Oppland (Fig. 3.24).⁷² He based this position on the fact that the examples have no clear features of Style D but do have a feature which he, in contrast to Ørsnes, found paralleled in Style C, and he averred that Ørsnes had not been consistent in his dating. In his opinion this was because Ørsnes had been dealing primarily with finds from Bornholm, and that, since the earliest creeping-beast brooches did not occur there, the type was not treated as determinative in the phasing.⁷³ A question which arises in this regard is therefore whether or not creeping-beast and/or other early oval brooches actually came into use more widely in Norway than in southern Scandinavia in phase 2, and whether in fact a particularly 'Norwegian' type can be recognized amongst these brooches. To address this issue, a typological assessment of the brooch-types and a more thorough examination of the find contexts of



Figure 3.24 Small creeping-beast brooch from Rise in Oppland (C29479). © Museum of Cultural History.

these brooches are required. I shall therefore discuss particular finds that are crucial to this question.

According to Ørsnes (1966:151–7, 227), the creeping-beast brooches were introduced in Norway, as has been noted, during phase 2, and concurrently in western areas of southern Scandinavia (western Sweden and Denmark); but they are not commonly found before phase 3. Helgen included the creeping-beast brooches with Style II decoration with his early finds of group 1, while Vinsrygg and Gjessing reckoned the type as a whole as dating only from c. AD 675/700 or 700. Gjessing (1934:144–5), however, dated early creeping-beast brooches back to around the middle of the 7th century. He divided them into two groups: an early group consisting of small brooches (c. 40–60 mm) with incised decoration, and a late group of larger brooches (c. 58–115 mm) with cast decoration, often with Style III details. Ørsnes also distinguished between two groups of oval brooch on the basis of size: type N1 (c. 36–75 mm) and N2 (c. 80–112 mm), and it is currently widely accepted that the overall trend was for the size of the brooches to increase during their period of use, so that the earliest specimens are usually the smallest. One problem in the dating of the introduction of the creeping-beast brooches, however, is the lack of secure contexts, and another is that potentially early finds are rarely part of assemblages including other datable evidence (Bakka

⁶⁹ B4213.

⁷⁰ Ts3497a.

⁷¹ Ts3426.

⁷² C29479.

⁷³ A later publication concerning finds at the Bornholm cemetery of Nørre Sandegård Vest (Jørgensen and Jørgensen 1997:pl. 9) shows, meanwhile, that creeping-beast brooches do occur in combination with Style C-decorated items of jewellery (Fig. 3.28): in other words, just as early as the first finds from the mainland.



Figure 3.25 Small creeping-beast brooches from grave 8 on Ytre Kvarøy (Ts6377), after Vinsrygg (1979:figs. 8b, 9b and 9c).

1972:60; Vinsrygg 1979:58). The dating of the type has consequently relied to a large extent on stylistic criteria alone.

Subsequent to Ørsnes's publication finds have been made, such as that from Kvarøy in Nordland, which have to be included within the earliest group of creeping-beast brooches (Ørsnes type N1) and which can be plausibly dated to phase 2. In these cases the contexts are well recorded. In grave 9 on Kvarøy the type was, as already noted, associated with a conical brooch with geometrical decoration and a phase-1 disc-on-bow brooch. The find circumstances are rather unusual in that the conical brooch, as already noted, was probably not in functional use along with the creeping-beast brooches and the disc-on-bow brooch. Nonetheless, this find is potentially to be seen as a key find in connection with the chronological definition of phase 2 in Norway. Vinsrygg (1979:37–8, 45–6, 57–8) assigned the find to the end of her phase 1, at the transition to phase 2A. The bead sets in the find consist of a large number of beads of various forms and materials: opaque and translucent glass beads, primarily of green and blue shades, stone beads of green and blue tones, mosaic beads, amber beads and copper-alloy beads. The beads therefore are quite different from the orange 'horizon' that is generally predominant in Scandinavia in the early Merovingian Period, and which is characteristic of Ørsnes's phases 1 and 2a. The bead necklace also includes none of the typically 'new' bead-types that are diagnostic of Vinsrygg's phase 2A, namely large rock crystal beads or millefiori beads, although conversely it does have the characteristically early bead-type of copper-alloy

spiral beads. Otherwise the composition of beads agrees with the bead evidence that Ørsnes (1966:170) described for his phases 2b and 2c: cool colours in equal proportion to red and yellow; some presence of polychrome beads and inconsistent bead-assemblages. This appears in fact to have been a general trend in Scandinavia at that date (Nielsen 1987:59; 1997a:189–93; 1999:167–73; Vinsrygg 1979:57–8). On the evidence of the creeping-beast brooches and the bead set, I would argue that this find can be assigned to Ørsnes phase 2 (b or c).

Creeping-beast brooches were found in two further graves on Kvarøy. In grave 8,⁷⁴ three small creeping-beast brooches (Figs. 3.25 and 3.3a) were associated with a typically diverse set of beads such as Vinsrygg has identified as definitive of her phase 2A: a large, spherical rock crystal bead, three relatively large globular millefiori beads, and two barrel-shaped and three cylindrical millefiori beads plus a few opaque and translucent monochrome glass beads, bone beads, and walrus-tusk beads. An undecorated simple arming with pointed and flattened terminals is probably from the same grave. The arming supports the assignation of the find to Ørsnes phase 2, but there is some uncertainty over the dating because the grave was partly disturbed by ploughing. In grave 2,⁷⁵ two creeping-beast brooches were found, again together with a mixed set of beads of various materials and forms, including one millefiori bead but dominated by blue and green beads (Fig. 3.26). Also found between the creeping-beast brooches were remains of what was probably a round, discoid copper-alloy brooch. Vinsrygg (1979:34) noted a possible link to phase 1 for the round brooch since

74 Ts6377.

75 Ts6371.

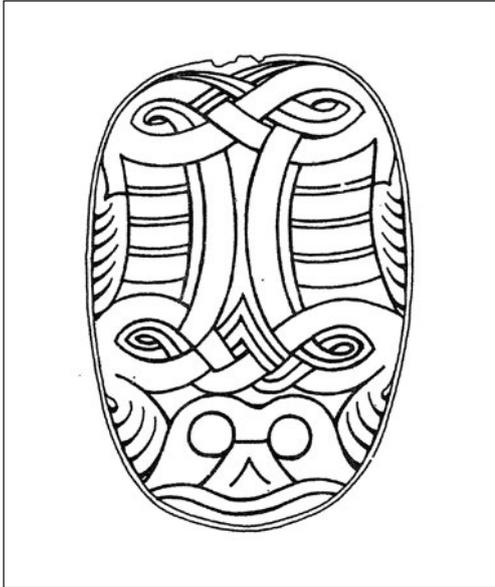


Figure 3.26 Small creeping-beast brooch from grave 2 on Ytre Kvarøy (Ts6371), after Vinsrygg (1979:fig. 9a).



Figure 3.27 Figure-of-8 loops and interlace patterns in southern Scandinavian Style C on oval plate brooches, after Ørsnes (1966:figs. 124 and 125).

that was the main period in which round brooches were found in the north of Norway. There are otherwise no diagnostic artefact-types in the grave-assemblage. The creeping-beast brooches from both of these graves do, though, have stylistic elements which in my judgment can be associated with general trends in South Scandinavian Style C, in the way that style appears on, for instance, oval plate brooches (Fig. 3.27). This applies both to the form of the looped or figure-of-8 shaped thighs or hindlegs on two of the creeping-beast brooches, and the plaitwork on the back of one of the brooches from grave 8 (cf. also Ørsnes 1966:figs. 122–5 and Vinsrygg 1979:pls. IVa and Vb). The brooches therefore probably belong to phase 2.

According to Vinsrygg (1979:34) all of the northern Norwegian creeping-beast brooches have incised designs, meaning that they belong to Gjessing's earliest group. She has devised a chronological sequence of development for these northern Norwegian brooches, and the brooch, mentioned above, from a grave at Utakleiv on Vestvågøy⁷⁶ is judged by her to be one of the latest brooches (Vinsrygg 1979:tab. VI). This is significant, because in Ørsnes's (1966:156) view this brooch is decorated in Style C and therefore belongs to his phase 2 (see above). This specimen was found together with an oval brooch of type R643. Vinsrygg (1979:39–4) placed this into a distinct sub-group of R643 brooches that she called 'two-animal' brooches, with decoration consisting of a blend of Style C and

Style D (Fig. 3.5b). If Vinsrygg's sequence of development is correct, it implies that the majority of northern Norwegian creeping-beast brooches she refers to are older than the R643 brooch, which from its decoration is to be dated to the transition between Ørsnes's phases 2 and 3. This involves altogether eleven brooches from five finds. There are also individual brooches from other parts of Norway to be considered as well, including the brooches from Hordaland and Oppland noted above (which both Ørsnes and Bakka have described as phase-2 brooches), and a couple from a grave-find at Ferkingstad on Karmøy in Rogaland (Vinsrygg 1974:121–2) and at Sandvik on Jøa in Nord-Trøndelag (Marstrander 1978:21–2). There are also a couple of brooches of the R643 type with combined Style C and Style D decoration,⁷⁷ including the find from Utakleiv already referred to. Both of these examples are from Nordland (Vinsrygg 1979:39) and can be interpreted as transitional finds between phases 2 and 3. Vinsrygg (1979:58) also asserted that only a few northern Norwegian specimens are decorated in Style C while others are in Style D. The latter, in her judgment, are characterized by 'regularly curved lines and the typical figure-of-8 loops'. This appears to be supported by Ørsnes (1966:156), who emphasized figure-of-8 shaped bodies as a feature that belonged to South Scandinavian Style D. I have argued, however, that 'figure-of-8 loops' are also present in South Scandinavian Style C, for instance on the oval plate

⁷⁶ Ts3497. Ørsnes refers to this brooch as from Leknes.

⁷⁷ Ts3426, Ts3497.

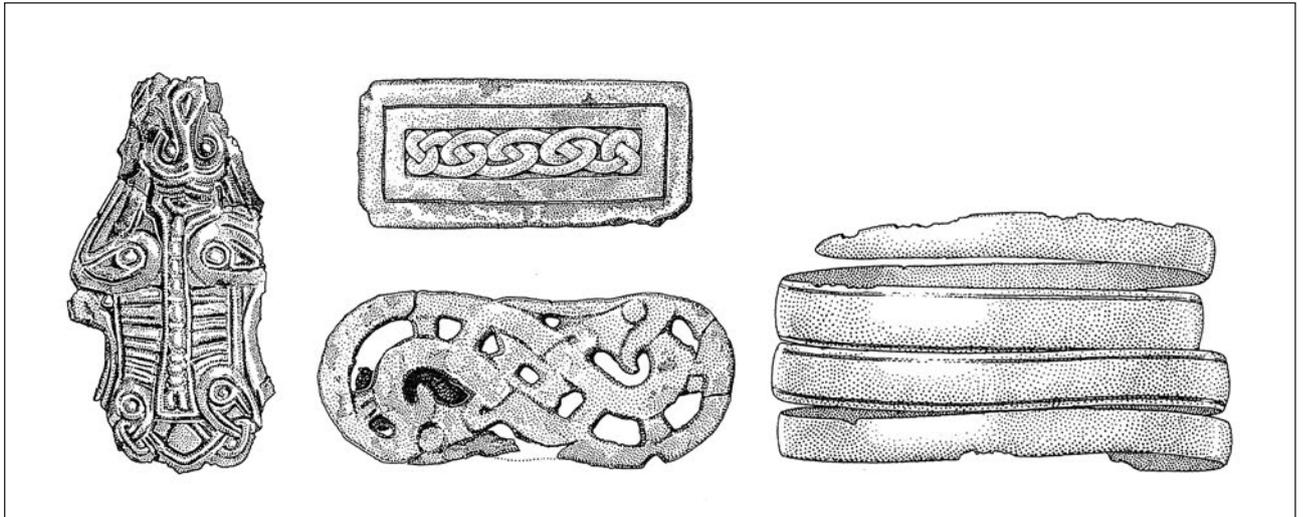


Figure 3.28 Zoomorphic brooch, rectangular and oval plate brooch, and a spiral armring from grave 16 at Nørre Sandegård Vest on Bornholm, after Jørgensen and Jørgensen (1997:pl. 9).



Figure 3.29 Rectangular brooch, small zoomorphic oval brooch, zoomorphic brooch and bead distributor from grave 58 at Nørre Sandegård Vest on Bornholm, after Jørgensen and Jørgensen (1997:pl. 22).

brooches. The Danish ‘parallels’ to Norwegian specimens which Ørsnes (1966:155–6) referred to are not, in my view, particularly similar to the Norwegian versions (apart from his figures 171–4),⁷⁸ since the Norwegian brooches are characterized by simpler and more schematic designs. The decoration on the majority of the Danish brooches is perhaps more similar to that which appears on Norwegian R643 brooches (see Ørsnes’s figures 175–95). The early Norwegian creeping-beast brooches are reminiscent, however, of brooches from, *inter alia*, Nørre Sandegård Vest on Bornholm. The latter were found together with ornamental artefacts with Style C decoration and so can be dated to phase 2. The creeping-beast brooches are included here along with, *inter alia*, an oval plate brooch (Fig. 3.28, grave 16, in which the two unmatched brooches functioned as a pair), along with a rectangular plate brooch and zoomorphic bead-distributors (Fig. 3.29, grave 58) (Jørgensen and Jørgensen 1997:pl. 9, and 22, 178–9, 187). This reinforces the inference that several of the similar Norwegian specimens are also datable to Ørsnes phase 2.

This survey shows that there is a definite distribution of creeping-beast brooches in phase 2 in Norway. It is, however, a little less certain whether or not this type of brooch represents a specifically ‘Norwegian’ or northern Scandinavian form of jewellery in phase 2. The Norwegian examples do stand apart, as noted, from finds from central parts of Denmark but are quite similar to finds from Bornholm. The Norwegian finds are probably in the majority, however, and in that light it is possible that the southern Scandinavian finds should be interpreted as what are known as ‘cross-finds’ (cf. Ch. 6.3): in other words, that they actually represent a northern Scandinavian brooch-type.

3.2.4 Summary: consequences for the chronology of the Merovingian Period

This discussion of the conical brooches and the creeping-beast brooches has shown that these two forms of jewellery can be dated principally to South and East Scandinavian phases 1 and 2 respectively. Stylistic features which can be linked to South Scandinavian

Style C, and associated finds, show, moreover, that the distribution of creeping-beast brooches in phase 2 is wider than previously understood. On the basis of the discussion of the chronology above, the following phase-scheme for jewellery of the Norwegian or North Scandinavian Merovingian Period is proposed (Fig. 3.30):

Phase 1

- Conical brooches with geometrical decoration.
- Conical brooches with Style II decoration in the North Scandinavian variant of Style B.⁷⁹
- S-shaped brooches.
- Disc-on-bow brooches (Ørsnes’s types E0, E1, E2 and E4).⁸⁰
- Equal-armed brooches (Jenssen’s type II.4).
- Wheel-shaped brooches/Quadruped brooches.
- Bird-shaped brooches with Style B features (Ørsnes’s type L3: ‘bird-of-prey’ brooches).
- Dress pins with polyhedral heads.
- Bead sets dominated by equally sized barrel-shaped or tubular opaque orange glass beads; barrel-shaped, rolled spiral copper-alloy beads; and beads of bone or walrus tusk.

Phase 2

- Creeping-beast brooches with incised Style C decoration in its North Scandinavian variant.
- Oval brooches of type R643 with Style C decoration (Vinsrygg’s ‘two-animal’ brooches).
- Bird-shaped brooches of the viewed-from-above type (Ørsnes’s types D2–D6).
- Disc-on-bow brooches of the Trøndelag-Jämtland/northern Scandinavian type.⁸¹
- Oval plate brooches.
- Rectangular brooches with Style C decoration.
- Conical brooches with Style C decoration.⁸²
- Small oval brooches of the eastern Scandinavian type with no decoration.
- Armrings with pointed and flattened terminals (Ørsnes’s type Q4).
- Bead sets dominated by blue and green glass beads, large rock crystal or millefiori beads, often globular; a diverse range of beads and bead-sizes; and fewer beads than in the previous phase.

78 Ørsnes’s figure 173 (here Fig. 3.14c) also illustrates a creeping-beast brooch with Style C decoration.

79 Together, probably, with discoid brooches with the same form of Style II decoration. Cf. Ch. 4.3.1.3.

80 For a revised typology of the Norwegian and mainland Swedish disc-on-bow brooches, see Glørstad and Røstad 2021.

81 In other words, northern Scandinavian variants of the disc-on-bow brooch on which two circular settings/roundels on the sides of the footplate are located *above* the profile heads, in contrast to the southern Scandinavian form on which the profile heads are found uppermost on the footplate, directly below the bow (Gjessing 1934:138–9; Ørsnes 1966:114). See also Glørstad and Røstad 2015.

82 So far there is only one find with Style C, from Søm in Telemark (see above).

In the foregoing discussion I have not paid attention to explicating the last phase of the Merovingian Period, as this period falls outside the period under examination. It has nevertheless been necessary to be clear what is representative of Merovingian Period phase 2 and to draw a boundary line between that phase and both its predecessor and the following phase. In these circumstances, the differentiation of the following types of jewellery have served to mark a division between the phase 2 and the concluding phase of the Merovingian Period:

Phase 3

- Creeping-beast brooches with Style D decoration.
- Oval brooches of type R643 with Style D, E and F decoration.
- Undecorated oval brooches of type R640.
- Large disc-on-bow brooches without profile heads of type R639.⁸³
- Rectangular brooches with Style D (or Style E or F) decoration.
- Rectangular brooches without decoration: merely rectangular frames.
- Armrings of type R719/Ørsnes's type Q5.
- Gold-in-glass beads;⁸⁴ less varied bead combinations dominated by green and blue glass beads. Fewer millefiori beads in individual bead sets. The bead sets are generally smaller: i.e. consisting of fewer beads than in the previous phase.

Phase 3 can also probably be sub-divided into early and late phases that overlap with the Viking Period and which correspond more or less to Ørsnes's phase 3b and Nielsen's phase VIID. Since such a refinement is irrelevant to the current context, this issue is not pursued further here.

In relation to previous Norwegian chronological schemes, the proposed phasing means that Helgen's group 1 is broken up through the tripartite division of Style B, Style C and Style D finds which are assigned to phases 1, 2 and 3 here. Similarly, certain types of dress-accessory which Helgen combined in his group 1 are separated into different phases in the scheme proposed here. Conical brooches, for example, belong primarily to phase 1. Helgen's group 2 is incorporated in its entirety in Norwegian or North Scandinavian

phase 3, where his late 'transitional finds' (group 3) can also be placed, constituting the transition to the Viking Period. One exception, however, is a small creeping-beast brooch from Nervik, Ølen in Hordaland (B4213), which Helgen included in his group 2, but which is decorated in Style C according to Ørsnes and so belongs here in phase 2. Vinsrygg's phase 1 is largely congruent with the proposed phase 1 here, except for some of her late finds (e.g. Ytre Kvarøy grave 9) which have not only a set of beads but also creeping-beast brooches of forms that match the criteria stated for phase 2 here. Vinsrygg's phases 2A and 2B also coincide on the whole with phases 2 and 3 as described above, although the start of phase 2 is placed earlier. The exceptions are a number of creeping-beast brooches with Style D–F/Style III decoration, which belong to phase 3 here, along with some oval brooches of type R643 with Style C decoration that belong to phase 2 in the new chronological scheme. In relation to Gudesen's phasing, the proposed chronology means that rectangular brooches are removed from phase 1 and that further sub-division of the decoration of creeping-beast brooches means that these belong to either phase 2 or phase 3. Oval brooches of type R640 are primarily of phase 3, apart from isolated exceptions such as a small brooch from Vang in Hedmark⁸⁵ which should perhaps be placed in phase 2 because it appears to be of a type that is found in eastern Sweden.

In this proposed general Norwegian phasing, bead sets dominated by opaque orange beads are identified as characteristic only of phase 1, while Ørsnes has this type of necklace (R1) – as discussed above – as a feature of both phase 1 and phase 2a. A review of Ørsnes's (1966:246–63) catalogue reveals, though, that there are six finds from phase 2a, and, in addition, two finds dated to 'phase 1 or phase 2a'. Of these finds there are only two which include two or more unambiguously phase-2 artefact-types associated with bead sets dominated by opaque orange glass beads (R1). The remainder of the finds appear either to be transitional assemblages which contain types of jewellery that belong to both phase 1 and phase 2, or as highly doubtful because they contain, for instance, only one solitary dress pin that can be assigned to phase 2, or an unclassifiable beak brooch that cannot be assigned to any specific phase with certainty.

83 Disc-on-bow brooches of this type are also found in a number of Viking-period graves, but their period of manufacture was phase 3 of the Merovingian Period: cf. Glørstad and Røstad 2015. See also Gjessing (1934:142) and Theodor Petersen (1907:18) on the date of cessation of production of Norwegian disc-on-bow brooches.

84 In Ribe, segmented gold-in-glass appear first in layers that are dated c. AD 780–90 (Feveile and Jensen 2000:23).

85 C23173 (L 49 mm).



Figure 3.30 A schema of the proposed phase-division of Norway/northern Scandinavia in the Merovingian Period. Figures, respectively, for Phase 1: Conical brooches drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen, equal-armed brooch after Jenssen (1998:plansje 13e), S-shaped brooch after Schetelig (1910:fig. 86), wheel-shaped brooch drawn by: Lars Tangedal. © University Museum of Bergen, disc-on-bow brooch and 'bird of prey brooch' after Gudesen (1980:plansje 33a and 26c) and dress pin, after Nerman (1969:taf. 14, fig. 115). Phase 2: Schetelig (1910:fig. 91), © University Museum of Bergen, Vinsrygg (1979:figs. 9a and 11b), Gudesen (1980:plansje 25a), Gjessing (1929:fig. 4), © Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab; Schetelig (1910:figs. 87 [upper] and Helgen (1982:fig. 18). Phase 3: Rygh (1885:fig. 640), creeping-beast brooch (drawing © Museum of Cultural History), Rygh (1885:figs. 643, 639 and 719), and Gudesen (1980:plansje 29b).

3.3 PRODUCTION, PERIODS OF USE, AND DATE OF DEPOSITION

The chronological framework presented here is the basis for the relative dating of the various types of dress-accessory. It is possible, however, for the periods in which the objects were produced and used to diverge from the date at which the items of jewellery were buried, whether as grave goods or in hoards. The period of use may, furthermore, be significantly longer than the period in which the types were produced, as so-called 'heirlooms' in the form of old relief brooches and disc-on-bow brooches are able to bear witness to. The starting point for the study of the evidence will be the premiss that finds from a single grave were part of the same costume, and so were in concurrent use (Hines 1984:2). There will inevitably be exceptions (e.g. the conical brooch from grave 9 on Kvarøy, which represents an object that was probably included in

the grave as an amulet, and the clasps from feature 47 at Ärvinge, noted above), but since the primary evidence is relatively large, this should not distort the overall pattern. It is, then, the *period of use* of the jewellery which importance is attached to, while the date of production in this regard is less significant.

It may, however, be more difficult to produce relative datings of hoards, since it has to be regarded as uncertain that the objects were all buried at the same time and that they were used together – as one may assume to be the case with grave deposits (Hines 1993a:8). In deposits such as the great war-booty offerings from southern Scandinavia, for example, it was normal for successive deposits to be made at the same site. The regular southern Scandinavian jewellery hoards (cf. Ch. 4.1.3) may possibly be datable to a limited period which represents the period of use of the objects. Hines (1989:198–9; 1993a:91) has argued

that these forms of deposits of jewellery represent a sort of surrogate burial, which would also appear to argue for contemporaneity when it comes to actual use of the items of jewellery included. Otherwise, though, isolated cruciform brooches from the same southern Scandinavian area have been found (usually in the course of peat-cutting) in contexts which indicate that

they may represent caches or hoards. In such cases, it is reasonable to assume that deposition took place during the period of use of the brooches. The problems associated with the dating of jewellery from hoards, and the issue of use in this connection, are discussed more fully in the context of the examination of the evidence in the next chapter.