

# **RUNES AROUND THE NORTH SEA AND ON THE CONTINENT AD 150-700; TEXTS & CONTEXTS**

**Proefschrift**

ter verkrijging van het doctoraat in de Letteren,  
aan de Rijksuniversiteit van Groningen  
op gezag van de  
Rector Magnificus, dr. F. van der Woude,  
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door

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4. *Toornwerd* (Groningen), comb, antler, found in 1900 in the *terp*, dated 8th c. Seen at the GM, Groningen. It bears four runes **ko[m]bu**.

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*ko(m)bu* nsm. *a*-stem, Gmc. *\*kambaz* 'comb', cf. above *Oostum kabu*. According to Steller (1928:9) Gmc *a* > *o* before nasal in Old East-Frisian and it became *a* or *o* in Old West-Frisian. Toornwerd lies east of Oostum, the places are separated by the river Hunze.

The interchanging of *a* and *o* in words with the same meaning may have led in earlier times, probably the 5th c., to the development of the *āc* and *ōs* runes (Looijenga 1996<sup>2</sup>:111).

An excavation of the Viking-age settlement near the *terp Elisenhof* at the Eider mouth in Schleswig-Holstein revealed a non-inscribed comb similar to the Toornwerd one. Another comb from *Elisenhof*, dated to the end of the 10th c., bears the inscription: **kabr** 'kam', which shows the North Gmc development *\*kambaz* > *kambr*.