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On the importance of using definitions. KG 7, KG 9a and the Bachbett of Hedeby

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A reference to a picture is often not enough to identify a coin correctly, especially not anonymous coins without intelligible legends. Sometimes one picture, for instance Hauberg 1900, Tab. I, Halvbrakteater, no. 1, has been used to determine different groups of coins, in this case minted during nearly 100 years. Lack of definitions causes chronological confusion.

Charlemagne's Dorestad denier was minted for about 20 years (771-793/4), but as a prototype for Scandinavian imitations it survived for another 200 years. It was rather long before the imitations of the Dorestad denier were investigated. In his publication of the Vaalse hoard in 1842 C.J. Thomsen noticed that there are different groups of such imitations, some very early and some from the 10th century, as in the Vaalse hoard. In 1891 P. Hauberg published a plate with drawings of seven specimens of the 10th-century imitations, *Demi-bractéates danoises au type de Duerstede* (**Fig. 1:1**). Hauberg distinguishes two groups, one earlier, weight 0.56-0.49 g, nos. 1-4, and one later group, 0.40-0.27 g, nos. 5-7. The later group represents typical thin half-bracteates where the die impression of one side is visible on the other side. Hauberg's earlier, heavier group corresponds to KG 7, 8 and 9a, and Hauberg's later, lighter group

corresponds to KG 9b-d.¹ According to Hauberg all half-bracteates, including the Cross types, were minted during a very short period, c. 940-960. However, during the 20th century the number of well-dated hoards increased considerably. The period of minting of KG 7-9 has turned out to be more than 75 years, and even more if the Cross types, KG 10-12, are included.

Hauberg often used tinfoil impressions as models for his drawings. This means that very small details, especially when it is a question of thin half-bracteates, have disappeared or have been misinterpreted on the drawings. Nevertheless, on **Fig. 1:1** most combination groups can easily be defined: KG 7, KG 8, KG 9a, KG 9b, and KG 9d. In his well-known, still indispensable manual, *Myntforhold og Udmyntninger i Danmark indtil 1146* (1900), Hauberg chose a slight variation of **Fig. 1:1:2** (probably

1 'KG' = Combination group, in Swedish *Kombinations-Grupp*. KG 1 = the original Duurstede denier; KG 2 = early imitations as in the Krinkberg hoard; KG 3-12 = the anonymous Scandinavian coinage before c. 995. Verbal definitions of the pictures of KG 1-12 are presented in Malmer 1966, 48-57, as well as the weight of KG 1-12, Malmer 1966, 136, Tab. 14. For a more detailed survey of research see Malmer 1966, 7-26.

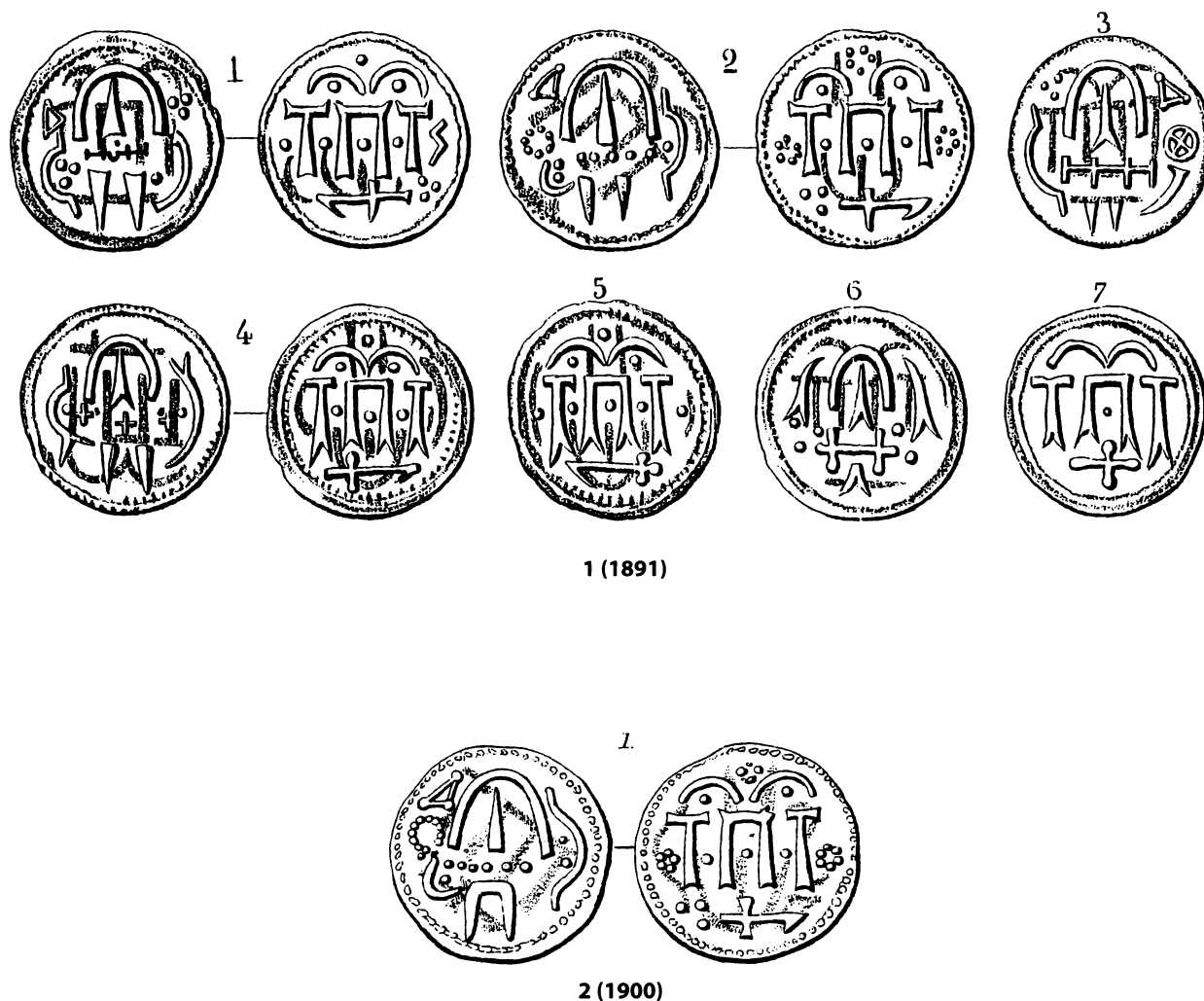


Fig. 1. Hauberg.

1. Hauberg 1891. *KG* 7 (1), *KG* 8 (2), *KG* 9a (3), 9b (4), *KG* 9a or 9b (5), *KG* 9d (6-7).
2. Hauberg 1900, Tab. I, Halvbrakteater, Hedeby, 1 ('Hauberg 1'). *KG* 8.

1.5:1

the same coin), to represent all half-bracteates of Carolingian type, from *KG* 7 to *KG* 9d, still believing that the period of minting was very short. Furthermore, exactly the obverse picture of Hauberg 1900, Tab. I, half-bracteates no. 1 (**Fig. 1:2**) seems to be a misinterpretation.² For a long period of time this picture, 'Hauberg 1', was used as reference for all half-bracteates of Carolingian type. This led to a number of chronological consequences, for instance at Hedeby.

A rectification of 'Hauberg 1' (1900) was pub-

lished 1923 by Erwin Nöbbe, who points out that there is an intermediate group between *Ældste Myntgrupper* and *Halvbrakteater* in Hauberg's Tab. I.³ The weight of this intermediate group is 0.66-0.50 g, that is, *KG* 7. Later on (1936) Nöbbe specified his datings of Carolingian imitations (**Fig. 2**). He distinguishes three groups: **Fig. 2:1-2** (= Hauberg, *Ældste Myntgrupper*, no. 1), which is dated to *c.* 825-50; **Fig. 2:4** (= Hauberg, *Halvbrakteater*, no. 1), which is dated to *c.* 850-75; and **Fig. 2:5**, dated to *c.* 875-900. Nöbbe presents no detailed definition of how to dis-

2 Malmer 1966, 10.

3 Nöbbe 1923, 283; Malmer 1966, 16.

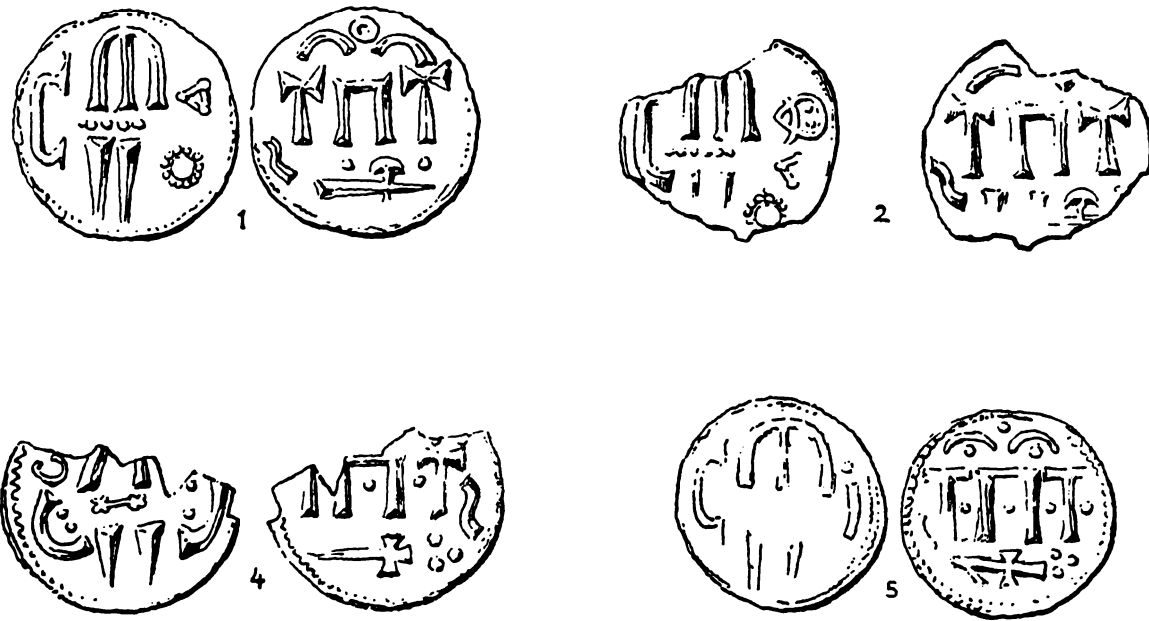


Fig. 2. Nöbbe 1936.

1. Find inside the semicircular wall before 1910. KG 3
 2. Chamber grave I, 1931. KG 3.
 - [3. Fragments, chamber grave III, 1931. KG 3]
 4. Grave inside the semicircular wall, found 1905. KG 7.
 5. Chamber grave IV, 1931 KG 7.
- 1.5:1.

tinguish between the groups.⁴ The two later groups, Fig. 2:4-5, both belong to KG 7. At this time it was generally accepted that most imitations of Charlemagne's Dorestad denier were minted at Hedeby, as Hauberg had already suggested in 1900.

The excavations at Hedeby in 1937-39 were published by Herbert Jankuhn (1943). Among other things a brook running through the town had been discovered. The bed of the brook (*Bachbett*) showed an extremely good stratigraphy of crucial chronological importance. It was divided into 15 layers, with Layer 15 at the bottom. Layer 9 and Layer 6 contained an anonymous Scandinavian coin each (Fig. 3:1-2 and Fig. 3:4-5). The coin from the lowest layer is a typical KG 7 coin, and the coin found two layers higher up is a KG 9a coin, but pictorially reminiscent of KG 8. With reference to Nöbbe, Jankuhn dated the coin in Layer 9 to the period *c.*

850-75, and the coin in Layer 6 to *c.* 875-900. The datings are displayed on a summarising table of the *Bachbett* (Jankuhn 1943, 88), with the commentary that the *Bachbett* 'vermittelt uns also einen zeitlichen Querschnitt durch die ganze Wikingerzeit'.

Nevertheless, Jankuhn did not accept Nöbbe's datings uncritically. Referring to a paper by G. Wegemann (1935), Jankuhn thinks that the coin from Layer 6 (Fig. 3:4-5) rather belongs to the 10th century. With reference to Nöbbe, Jankuhn pays attention to a coin similar to Fig. 3:4-5 ('gerade dieser Typ', Jankuhn 1943, 82) which was found in a grave at Ketting, island of Als, Denmark, published in 1936 by J. Brøndsted. According to Brøndsted the Ketting grave belongs to the period *c.* 900-950.

The Ketting coin (Fig. 3:3) belongs to KG 7, the same combination group as the coin from Layer 9, Fig. 3:1-2. The obverses are nearly identical. The importance of verbal definitions is obvious. Without the support of definitions Jankuhn mixes the three coins from Layer 9 (KG 7), Layer 6 (KG 9a) and the Ketting grave (KG 7). The Ketting coin (KG 7) is used by Jankuhn for the dating of Layer 6 (KG 9a), be-

4 Nöbbe 1936, 131-32. Also Nöbbe's drawings are partly incorrect, for instance Fig. 2:4 obverse top left, where there should be a triangle, not part of a circle.

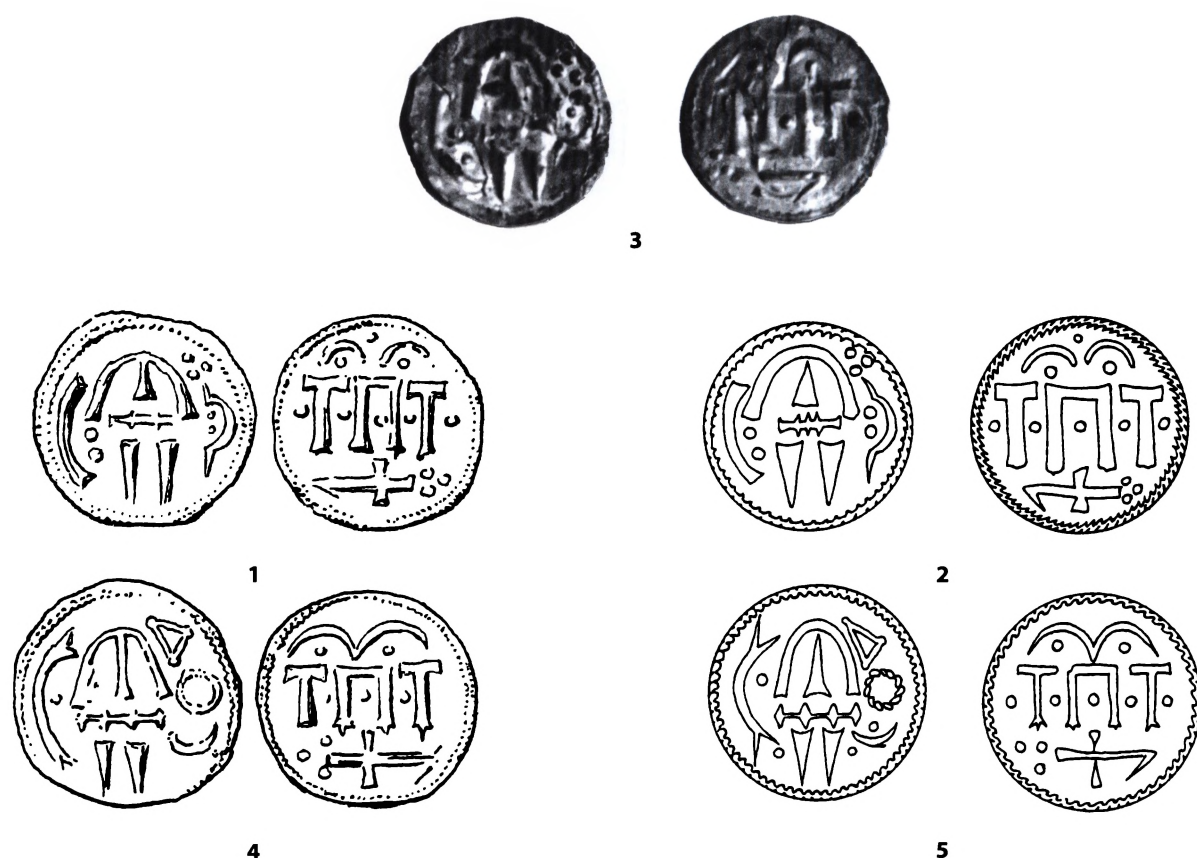


Fig. 3. Jankuhn 1943.

1. Hedeby, Bachbett, Layer 9. Jankuhn 1943, 75. *KG 7*.
2. The same coin according to Malmer 1966, Pl. 7:20/18:8.
3. The Ketting coin. Photo B. Malmer. Cf. Brøndsted 1936, 137, Fig. 47. *KG 7*.
4. Hedeby, Bachbett, Layer 6. Jankuhn 1943, 83. *KG 9a*.
5. The same coin according to Malmer 1966, Pl. 8:18/20:12. 1.5:1.

cause he thinks that those coins are 'similar', that they represent the same type. On the contrary, the Ketting coin should be used to date the coin from Layer 9, not Layer 6. This misdating has consequences for Jankuhn's great vision concerning the inflow of Islamic coins to Hedeby and its surroundings.

Since 1966, when *KG 7* consisted of only 77 specimens, it has grown considerably, for instance with 30 coins from the Steinfeld hoard (Ilisch 1985) and 31 coins from the Hedeby excavations in the 1980's (Wiechmann forthcoming). In 1966 *KG 7* was cautiously dated to *c.* 900-950. This date can now be specified to a decade or a little more around 900, thanks to the Cuerdale hoard, *t.p.q.* *c.* 905 (Archibald 1985). *KG 8* is a clearly different group based on a comparison with *KG 7*, and there seems to be a rather long period of time between *KG 7* and *KG 8*. The

relative chronology of the Carolingian types is clear: *KG 7*, *KG 8*, *KG 9*. The absolute chronology is more difficult. *KG 8* seems not to appear in the hoards before the 950's. Possibly the minting started already in the 940's. *KG 9a* follows close behind *KG 8*, and has been dated to the 950's or 960's. Mass minting of Carolingian types has been estimated to start in the 960's. The mean weight of the Carolingian types falls continuously: 0.56 g. (*KG 7*), 0.47g. (*KG 8*), 0.41 g. (*KG 9a*). In *KG 9d* (from *c.* 980) the mean weight has decreased to only 0.25 g.⁵

In the light of these facts, unknown to Jankuhn,

5 For a description of the combination groups, their design, weight and date, see Malmer 1966, 50-51, 136, and 210 ff. Slight corrections of dating in Malmer 2002, 125, Tab. 1. For slight correction

it is interesting to follow his further opinion of the Carolingian type of half-bracteates. *Ein Münzfund der Wikingerzeit aus Steinfeld, Kreis Schleswig* (1952) is the modest title of a grand attempt to incorporate the half-bracteates in an international connection with the stream of Islamic dirhams as the main point.⁶ According to Jankuhn the mass-minting of half-bracteates started at Hedeby c. 950, 'obviously'⁷ by means of silver from melted Islamic coins. Jankuhn distinguishes six hoards found in Schleswig-Holstein, with bars, rings, Islamic coins, but no half-bracteates, and dates them to 850-950, a period of transit trade. To this group belongs the coin from layer 9 in the *Bachbett*. Jankuhn contrasts the six older hoards with three later hoards, among them the Steinfeld hoard, with only half-bracteates, dated to 950-980, a period of money economy. This fits with Jankuhn's 'Arabic hypothesis', according to which the decrease in the import of Islamic coins c. 950 coincides with the mass minting of Hedeby half-bracteates. First, 850-950, *transit trade* through a thinly populated area, then, 950-980, *money economy* at the town of Hedeby.

This important conclusion presupposes that the dating of the hoards is correct. The three later hoards are Steinfeld (found in 1945), Gremmerup (found in 1739), and Frörup (found in 1811). Only the Steinfeld hoard (now 67 coins) is complete.⁸ All coins are KG 7. Only a few Gremmerup half-bracteates (originally 314+x) are still available, some further coins are known by drawings. There is no KG 7 in the hoard, all determinable Gremmerup coins are later. The Frörup hoard (4 coins) is dispersed. The coins are described as Carolus Dorestad imitations, and the combination group is not known. Therefore only one hoard of Jankuhn's later group, the Steinfeld hoard, is completely known. But the Steinfeld coins are all KG 7, the same combination group as the coin in layer 9, which Jankuhn dates to the end of the 9th century. Besides the coin (**Fig. 3:1-2**) Layer 9 contained two weights, of essential significance for

the dating of rings and bars in the older group. This means that the same type of coins, KG 7, has been divided into two contrasting groups with a considerable space of time between them. The consequence of Jankuhn's mistake is that his hypothesis of more coin hoards in Schleswig-Holstein from c. 950 has lost its reliability. On the contrary, the number of hoards seems to decrease after 950.⁹ The reason for Jankuhn's mistake and his mixing of older and later combination groups is of course the undefined denomination 'Hauberg 1'.

More Hedeby excavations and more chronological discussions followed from the 1960's to the 1980's. Excavations south of the semicircular wall took place in 1962-65. In 1963 Jankuhn discussed the dating of a grave excavated in 1962, and containing a typical KG 8 coin. According to Jankuhn the coin is much older, 'eine Münze des älteren Haithabutyps', through which the grave is dated to the middle or the latter half of the 9th century.¹⁰ As the grave is placed over a house, the coin is important for the dating of the settlement south of the semicircular wall. Jankuhn concludes that the southern settlement of Hedeby was abandoned already in the first half of the 9th century, or about 800. Jankuhn's dating of the new coin to the 9th century would mean that the Steinfeld hoard (KG 7) and Layer 9 (KG 7) of the bed of the brook also belong to the 9th century. But this is contrary to Jankuhn's 'Arabic hypothesis', according to which the Steinfeld hoard is typical of the period 950-980. The confusion seems complete.

In 1968 Torsten Capelle discussed the *Bachbett* topography, important for the dating of jewellery found at Hedeby. Capelle dates the KG 9a coin (Layer 6) to c. 875-900, and the KG 7 coin (Layer 9) to c. 850-75, both dates with reference to Nöbbe. In 1974 Heiko Steuer published his monograph *Die Südsiedlung von Haithabu*. Grave no. 1, the same one that was excavated in 1962 and discussed by Jankuhn in 1963, is now more correctly dated to c. 950 (coin: KG 8).¹¹ 1985 was an important year with regard to the problem of 'Hauberg 1'. Marion Archibald published a KG 7 coin from the Cuerdale hoard (*t.p.q.* c. 905), presented to the British

of the weight of KG 7, see Ilisch 1985, 155, and Wiechmann 1996, 438-439.

6 For a summary, see Malmer 1966, 29-33, 226-29.

7 Jankuhn 1952, 97.

8 Jankuhn 1952 16 coins, Ilisch 1985 another 30 coins, and Wiechmann 1996 another 21 coins, total 67 coins.

9 Wiechmann 1996, 97, Tab. 7, with a list of all Viking Age coin hoards in Schleswig-Holstein.

10 Jankuhn 1963, 72.

11 Steuer 1974, 33, cf. Hatz 1965, 76-77.

Museum in 1920, together with some other coins from the hoard, but described in the accession register as 'uncertain medieval' and not previously taken into account. The same year, 1985, Peter Ilisch published another 30 coins of KG 7, belonging to the Steinfeld hoard, but unknown to Jankuhn in 1952. Ilisch's analysis demonstrated that KG 7 has a carefully regulated weight and that the die axis is regular. Later on Wiechmann was able to add another 17 KG 7 coins to the Steinfeld hoard (1996). Further excavations at Hedeby have revealed more than 30 KG 7 coins (Wiechmann forthcoming). Today the KG 7 is firmly established as an easily recognisable rather large group of coins, belonging to the time around 900. Confusing of imitations of Charlemagne's Dorestad denier, namely KG 3, KG 7, KG 8 and KG 9, is no longer possible.

All Viking Age hoards of precious metal in Schleswig-Holstein were published by Ralf Wiechmann in 1996, including an extensive analysis of the means of payment and the significance of the mint of Hedeby. Heiko Steuer returns to the Hedeby coinage, for instance in a paper from 2002. Steuer distinguishes four phases:

Phase 1. 8th century to about 880. Barter is predominant, but there is a first attempt at a monetary economy (*Münzgeld*, KG 3). Import of Carolingian coins.

Phase 2. 880-950/70. Now a system of weighed precious metal (*Gewichtsgeld*) is introduced, founded upon a handy foldable scale and a regulated system of weights. Simultaneously, inside Hedeby, there was a local monetary economy (KG 7-8). Import of Islamic coins.

Phase 3. (950)/970-1050/70. Second attempt at a monetary economy (KG 9). Import of German and English coins.

Phase 4. 1050-. Monetary economy.

Steuer's phases are rather coarse from a numismatic point of view, but there is no confusion of combination groups.

The above observations concerning the importance of using definitions have an ironic dimension as well. KG 7 has the central role in this story of con-

fusion. Already in 1891 Hauberg was quite aware of the existence of intermediate groups of the Carolus Dorestad imitations. Hauberg's mistake was to concentrate his knowledge on one single picture in his manual of 1900, that is, 'Hauberg 1'. If Hauberg had included his pictures of 1891 (**Fig. 1:1**) in his manual of 1900, instead of only one picture (**Fig. 1:2**) the dating of important layers and objects at Hedeby throughout the 20th century would certainly have been much more accurate much earlier.

To conclude, here is a chronological scheme of the Scandinavian imitations of Charlemagne's Dorestad denier, all combination groups most probably minted at Hedeby.

KG 3	Time of Louis the Pious, probably the 820's
KG 7	Around 900, represented in the Cuerdale hoard, <i>t.p.q.</i> c. 905
KG 8	940's, 950's, earliest hoards have <i>t.p.q.</i> 953/54, 954/55, 958/59 ¹²
KG 9a	950's, 960's, mass minting probably starts
KG 9 b,c,d	960's, 970's, 980's. Mass minting. After about two decades minting ends with very thin, almost one-sided coins in KG 9d.

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