

## FROM INSPIRATION TO IMITATION – THE UNUSUAL IMITATION OF A SOLIDUS OF HONORIUS FROM ÅRS (VESTHIMMERLANDS KOMM. / DK)

In a deposit of gold objects found at Års (Vesthimmerlands Komm./DK) in Northern Jutland in 1902, two gold coins were discovered together with three D-type bracteates and three gold rings. One of the coins was a Gallo-Roman imitation of the solidus of Valentinian III (RIC X, 3727), while the other was an imitation made in a style indicative of local, barbarian production (fig. 1)<sup>1</sup>. Currently, the coin is kept in the National Museum of Denmark, along with the other items that were in the hoard.

In the same locality, a second deposit was found in the immediate vicinity in 1914, consisting of a total of 15 B-, C- and D-type bracteates, some ring gold and half of a glass bead<sup>2</sup>. Another deposit of bracteates was found nearby, in Stenildvad (Vesthimmerlands Komm./DK), in 1916, consisting of eight D-type bracteates.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE FIND

The barbarian imitation, weighing 3.9 g with a diameter of 21 mm, was modelled on a solidus of Honorius, type RIC X, 1310, which was minted between AD 408 and 410/413 (fig. 2)<sup>3</sup>. Both the obverse and reverse dies of the imitation were inverted, and most parts of the legends are retrograde. The imitation was originally provided with a loop, attached to the obverse side at 12 o'clock, above the emperor's head, which damaged a section of the legend.

On the obverse side of the imitation, a bust of Honorius to the left can be seen wearing a crested helmet and armour. The corrupted legend can be at least partially read and reconstruction is possible. The key factor to understanding the coin is that in this case, we are dealing with an engraver who, not knowing Latin well, tried to imitate the shapes of the letters. Thus, the letter R took the shape of +/X, while F was written as S. We can only suspect that either both letters were too difficult to engrave in the die, which may explain the repetition of the letter +/X replacing R, or that the piece that served as a prototype was worn out in a few spots and some of the letters were poorly legible.

Reading from the left, at 12 o'clock<sup>4</sup>, the obverse legend is as follows: P 2 VV D, which can be identified as P F A V G. It is followed by V V I which can probably be identified with an additional AVG placed on the imitation, probably to fill the space left in the lettering on the flan. At 12 o'clock, above the emperor's head, we can see the letter O and two additional marks damaged by the loop, resembling the letter O. On the right side, on the other hand, the legend is written correctly. We can identify the letters + I V D with R I V remembering that the + was used to denote the letter R. The last of the reconstructed letters D probably represents S, which perhaps was written differently to distinguish it from F (engraved as S on the left side), or again we are dealing with a somewhat worn prototype.

Thus, reading from 12 o'clock to the right, we would have the legend OOO +IVD, and from 12 o'clock to the left DVV P 2 VVI. The whole can therefore be reconstructed as (H) ONO RIVS AVG P F AVG.



**Fig. 1** Imitation of a solidus of Honorius from the deposit of Års. – **1** obverse. – **2** reverse. – (© Nationalmuseet, photos R. H. Nielsen, CC BY-SA). – Not to scale.

Therefore, certainly the legend, as well as the depiction on the obverse, indicates a solidus of Honorius as the model. An additional element of the obverse is another +/X located in the left field. Presumably, it should be interpreted as the letter R being part of the abbreviation R V, which should be placed on the reverse, but the letter R did not fit there in its entirety.

The reverse of the imitation, also made as an inverted, mirrored image, depicts a standing emperor holding a long  $\text{✠}$ -cross in his left hand, in which the  $\text{✠}$  has been simplified to the symbol +. The emperor's left leg rests on a serpent-shaped figure, probably a lion, which is partially worn on the copy in question. Four or five small dots are visible above the emperor's head, probably symbolising the hand of God (*Manus Dei*) crowning him. In the emperor's right hand, on the other hand, there is an object that, at first glance, should be identified with the scabbard of the sword (that on the piece in question resembles of a parazonium) visible near the emperor's left hand on the original. However, on the imitation, there is a second sword scabbard placed at the height of the figure's hips, between his legs, so that the one visible by his right hand would have to be interpreted differently. A clue that proves helpful in this case is the eight-pointed star placed in the right field of the imitation. Analogous stars are known from issues for Honorius minted in Thessaloniki and Constantinople by Arcadius and Theodosius II with a depiction of Constantinopolis seated on a throne and holding a Victoria on a globe, or an issue with an identical reverse of Theodosius II. The object placed on the left, by his right hand, could therefore be identified with the globe Constantinopolis is holding on the prototype. This could possibly be confirmed by the dot placed immediately above it, which may be a simplified figure of Victoria or the wreath that Victoria is holding (on original solidi) which is included on the imitation<sup>5</sup>. Regarding this imitation, therefore, we would be dealing with a hybrid combining the solidus type of Honorius RIC X, 1310 with that of Arcadius RIC X, 30 or 43 or Theodosius II RIC X, 202, 348–359.

In the left field of the imitation, there is a letter V, while in the right field are traces of a letter, probably R, placed under an eight-pointed star. The letters indicate a Ravenna-type solidus of Honorius.

The reverse legend causes much less trouble than the obverse. At first glimpse Svante Fischer and Fernando López-Sánchez suggested that the letters shown in the legend XOT refer to VOT and at the same time to



**Fig. 2** Solidus of Honorius, type RIC X, 1310, which served as a model for the imitation. – **1** obverse. – **2** reverse. – (Images licensed by Public Domain Mark 1.0. Berlin, Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen, 18213682, photos L.-J. Lübke [Lübke und Wiedemann]). – Not to scale.

the VOT/MVLT-type, and therefore placed the coin after 441<sup>6</sup>. But knowing, that the letter R was replaced with the +/X sign, we may read the legend as follows:

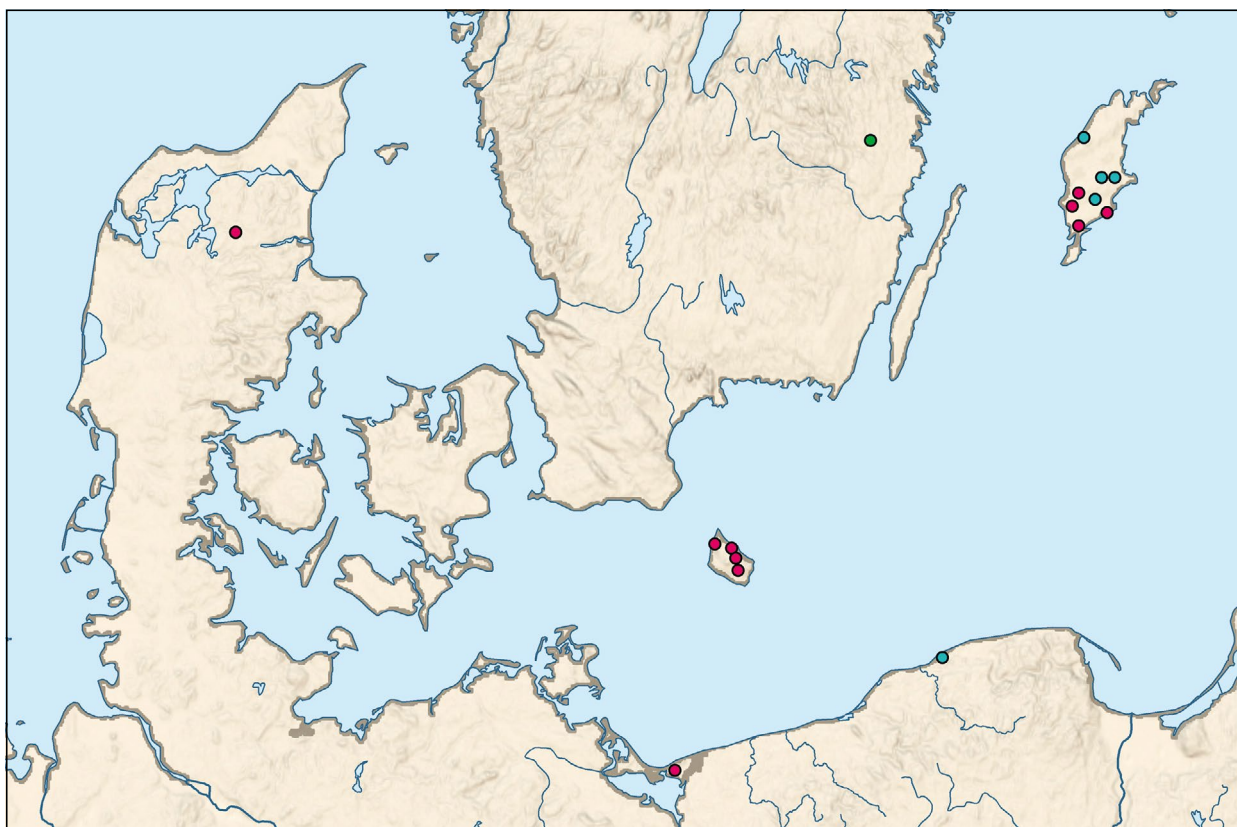
Reading from the bottom right, the characters V I C T O X are visible, while the left side shows Λ Λ I Λ CCC, which we can certainly reconstruct as VICTORIA AVGG. Interestingly, the punch that was used to impress the letter R-X in the legend of the reverse was probably also used to strike the cross held by the figure of the emperor depicted on the reverse.

An additional interesting detail visible on the obverse of the imitation is a crack running diagonally across the emperor's face, beginning at the height of the letter O on the right and ending behind the letter P on the left. This is probably the result of making the imitation on a flan that is too thin. Indeed, this copy weighs less than 4 g and is also one of the lightest imitations known from the Scandinavian region. However, it also seems likely that the imitation was not minted from pure gold, which should not break in this way<sup>7</sup>.

The imitation in question is practically the only known imitation of local production coming from western Scandinavia (fig. 3). Imitations modelled on late Roman solidi are known primarily from eastern Scandinavia, Bornholm and Pomerania<sup>8</sup>. From the areas of Jutland and the Danish islands primarily pseudo-imperial issues are known, as well as coin-bracteates, which had only the obverse, struck with an identical technique to that used to produce bracteates<sup>9</sup>. The presence of pseudo-imperial issues is due, among other things, to the fact that the pool of solidi that flowed into Danish areas came mostly from the Western Empire and did not flow like most solidi through Pomerania<sup>10</sup>. According to Helle W. Horsnæs and Mads Ravn, these solidi may have entered western Scandinavia as early as the early 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>11</sup>.

## TECHNOLOGY

The imitation in question, found in the company of bracteates, is therefore a rather unique specimen. Its mirrored image manufacture may point to a craftsman who was unfamiliar with the production of dies used to strike coins<sup>12</sup>. It is possible that we are seeing here the goldsmith who specialised in the preparation



**Fig. 3** Finds of imitations of solidi of Scandinavian origin. – ● hoards. – ● single finds. – ● grave find. – (Map A. Zapolska).

of matrices for bracteates, and who undertook the experiment of making the dies that were used to mint the imitation of a solidus (cf. below). Indeed, the techniques used to make bracteates differed significantly from the way coins were made<sup>13</sup>.

The imitation from Års was probably struck. Despite the rather extensive irregular surface abrasion, there is unlikely to be any indication that it was cast<sup>14</sup>.

From Scandinavia, we know of other imitations that were struck with a mirrored image, but only one has both obverse and reverse struck in this way. This is an imitation of a solidus of Honorius (F 28 [no. according to Fagerlie 1967]) with a depiction on the reverse of the emperor to the right trampling on a captive. It was found on Bornholm/DK in Kløvegård along with an original solidus of Honorius. Since only one coin (imitation) has survived, we cannot say whether it was the same type of coin (prototype?) on which the surviving imitation might have been modelled<sup>15</sup>. The remaining imitations are modelled on solidi of Theodosius II and have only the obverses reversed. Three of them (F 340–342) bear the same inverted obverse die and were found in two hoards on Gotland/SE – at Smiss (F 340) and Botes (F 341–342)<sup>16</sup>. In addition, one of the imitations is a hybrid of the solidi of Theodosius II and, probably, Marcian. It bears on the reverse a depiction of Victoria with a long cross and the legend VICTORIA AVGG (cf. below)<sup>17</sup>. Another imitation (F 753) from the group in question, unfortunately lost and known only from literature, was found in a grave in a cemetery in Tuna (Kalmar län/SE)<sup>18</sup> and the last one (F 752) comes from a deposit from Almindingen on Bornholm/DK<sup>19</sup>.

Cases of hybrids are also known among imitations produced in Scandinavia. Here we are usually dealing with a combination of an obverse with a reverse derived from another coin type, rather than, as in the case of imitations from Års, using only elements taken from another type of solidus<sup>20</sup>. One should mention here

first and foremost imitations modelled on solidi of Honorius with a reverse typical of Valentinian III (F 22–25), of which four specimens have been recorded. One comes from a hoard from Botes (F 22), another is a single find from Enbjeme (F 25) and from an unknown location (F 24) on Gotland/SE, while the last was recorded on Bornholm/DK in the deposit from Saltholm (F 23)<sup>21</sup>.

Hybrids, as mentioned earlier, are also known among imitations modelled on the solidi of Theodosius II. Indeed, they bear a depiction of Victoria standing to the left, holding a long cross and the legend VICTORIA AVGG. One (F 340) of the five specimens from the pool of finds from Scandinavia was classified by Joan M. Fagerlie and Svante Fischer as a locally produced imitation. They both also considered that the reverse of the coin was taken from an issue of Marcian, but nevertheless, the type with Victoria and the cross is known, among others, from solidi minted by Theodosius II with the legend VOT XX MVLT XXX. On the imitation in question, the legend is considerably corrupted. Due to the repetition of the GGG mark, Fagerlie concluded that what we are dealing with is a legend modelled on VICTORIA AVGG.

Given that the VICTORIA AVGG legend is known from issues for both Arcadius and Theodosius II, we cannot rule out that in this regard, we are dealing with a hybrid of two different reverses.

Analogous hybrids are known from at least one find from Ukraine, from the Volyn Oblast. As we do not know of similar solidi/imitations from the Danube area at this point, perhaps it should be considered that they may have been produced in post-Chernyakhiv areas, that is today's south-eastern Ukraine and Moldova, settled since the Late Roman period by the Goths<sup>22</sup>. Especially as we know of an imitation of a Marcian solidus from there, as well as a bronze imitation modelled on a solidus of Theodosius II. Nor can we exclude the possibility that the Scandinavian specimen was produced as a reproduction of a hybrid/imitation that arrived there from the post-Chernyakhiv culture area or from other areas around the limes.

It follows from the above that the imitation in question from Års is not the only imitation minted with a mirrored image and, moreover, a hybrid. What distinguishes it, however, is its rather low weight and the fact that it also uses elements of representation (star and globe) taken from another type of solidi, unlike the other imitations, which use the motif of the entire reverse, possibly supplemented by another legend. It is also one of two imitations from Scandinavia with both obverse and reverse inverted.

## THE PROTOTYPE

The prototype for the imitation in question was a solidus of Honorius minted in Ravenna in 408–410. Some elements of the reverse were taken, in turn, from the reverses of solidi minted for Honorius at the Eastern mints of Thessaloniki and Constantinople, which we can date to the years 403–408 in the case of the issue of Arcadius for Honorius, and 408–420 of the solidi of Theodosius II, respectively.

The solidi of Honorius RIC X, 1310 belong to issues that are quite rare. Despite the fact that it bears the letters RV in the reverse field, the exergue bears the legend COB instead of the typical COMOB. There was a religious significance attributed to this type due to the presence of a lion, symbolising the triumph of good over evil. However, this does not correspond with the depiction of the emperor in a helmet on the obverse, which rather indicates military connotations. Exemplars of this type are known from two hoards from areas of the Western Empire<sup>23</sup>. Three pieces were deposited in the hoard of Certosa di Pavia (prov. Pavia/IT), along with three solidi with a depiction of Honorius trampling on a captive struck in Milan, seven more of the same type struck in Ravenna and four tremisses. In addition, three pieces of jewellery were deposited with the coins<sup>24</sup>. Another hoard containing solidi of the type in question was discovered in the Tiber riverbed in Rome near Ponte Emilio, which consisted of issues of Arcadius and Honorius minted in Milan, Ravenna and Rome, including one piece of the RIC X, 1310 type<sup>25</sup>.

Another specimen comes from a deposit found in the Barbaricum, in Trąbki (formerly Trąbki Małe/Klein Tromp [pow. Braniewo/PL]). This deposit contained solidi minted from Valens to Valentinian III (*terminus postquam* 441) and additionally one aureus of Gordian III<sup>26</sup>.

Solidi minted in Honorius' name by Arcadius with a depiction of Constantinopolis on the throne with a star in the field are dated 402–408 and occur much more frequently than the aforementioned RIC X, 1310 type, although they are not as numerous as analogous issues with Arcadius' name (2:3 ratio). Similarly, issues with the analogous reverse minted with the name of Honorius by Theodosius II are quite numerous, and, as with Arcadius, copies minted with Theodosius II's name on the obverses are more common<sup>27</sup>.

Surprisingly, no solidi of the RIC X, 1310 type have been found on the territory of western Scandinavia<sup>28</sup>. There is one specimen in the collection of the National Museum in Denmark, acquired for the collection probably in the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when there were quite a few acquisitions made by Georg Zoëg in Rome. It is currently impossible to determine whether it can be traced back to local finds and whether it was already part of someone's collection at the time of purchase<sup>29</sup>.

Similarly, no copies of Arcadius or Theodosius II (minted with his own name or for Honorius) with a depiction of Constantinopolis on the reverse are known from areas of western Scandinavia. However, it cannot be ruled out that an influx of these types of solidi took place in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century, but that these coins were melted down. Indeed, the fact that late Roman coins were melted down is confirmed by finds of gold rods or gold rings, which are often found together with gold coins and bracteates, as well as intentionally cut solidi<sup>30</sup>.

## ICONOGRAPHY

The imitation from Års, as already stated, was found in the company of type D bracteates. However, several B-, C- and D-type bracteates were also found in the immediate vicinity, which led the author to assume that the maker of the dies for the imitation may have been a goldsmith trained in the manufacture of bracteate matrices. This can be further confirmed by two characteristic elements, i. e. the way in which the helmet of Honorius or the hair, that replaced the helmet on the discussed imitation, and the eye are depicted. Analogous representations of the hair, framed by the distinctive pearlwork, are known precisely from B-type bracteates, e. g. IK 13,1 from Allesø (Odense Komm./DK) on Funen<sup>31</sup>. It is difficult to decide unequivocally whether the lines visible on the obverse are the hair or the helmet of Honorius, but the manner of depiction indicates inspiration taken from the bracteates. Another similarity is the eye, made in the form of a circle without a marked pupil, known, among others, from the aforementioned specimen from Allesø, Funen, or from the type A bracteate IK 254 from Geltorf (Kr. Schleswig/DE) and IK 47,1 from Elmelund (Odense Komm./DK), Funen. Significantly, on the bracteates the diadem terminations were depicted in the form of rings, which are also visible on the imitation in question<sup>32</sup>. The ways in which the eyes were depicted on the bracteates evolved and took on a more oval, angled form on the C-type bracteates. In addition, pupils, and also eyebrows and eyebrow arches, appear on some specimens<sup>33</sup>. Slightly different representations of the eye are known from other imitations, but speaking of the imitation from Års, the inspiration from the style of the bracteates seems quite clear.

## CHRONOLOGY

Imitations of solidi of Scandinavian manufacture probably began to be produced in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, from the year 476 at the latest<sup>34</sup>. Given that the Gotland finds show a number of combina-

tions of dies with other finds, and because this is where most of the finds, which are additionally concentrated in two hoards, come from, it is likely that Gotland was the place of production for most of the specimens<sup>35</sup>.

The imitation in question was found with type D bracteates; in addition, in the immediate vicinity, type B and C bracteates were recorded in two further hoards. The chronology of the bracteates themselves is quite difficult to establish, especially in the case of type D bracteates. As they are usually found in hoards with less wear than type C specimens, it is presumed that their production began somewhat later than type C bracteates. It is therefore likely that we can date the deposit from Års to the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>36</sup>.

Unfortunately, the chronology of the imitation in question cannot be established very precisely, but several observations can be made. Firstly, it is limited by the date of the minting of the prototypes and the time of deposition of the hoard, i. e. ca. 410–420 to the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. In the Års hoard, apart from bracteates, non-monetary gold was accumulated in the form of three gold rings, which probably served as a source of raw material for melting down. The imitation, due to the visible degree of wear and the fact that the loop had been removed (perhaps due to abrasion or damage), probably remained in use for some time. It can thus be assumed that it was also placed in the deposit for further remelting. The implication is that it must have been made much earlier, but there is nothing to suggest that it could have been made before bracteate production began, around the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century. Given the inappropriate technique used to make the dies, we can very cautiously assume that this is one of the first Scandinavian imitations of solidi, made by hand-engraved dies by a local craftsman.

## CONCLUSION

The imitation in question is a unique find among Scandinavian imitations. It is the only known imitation to date of local production, modelled on a solidus, and struck on both faces, from areas of western Scandinavia. More common from the area are bracteates, imperial and pseudo-imperial issues, as well as so-called coin-bracteates. In addition to these, imitations of Roman medallions also appear in West Scandinavian materials. The imitation in question is, moreover, one of the lightest imitations, which is quite unusual, since imitations generally kept the weight of the originals.

Making it with a mirrored image, although not an isolated case for Scandinavia, may indicate that the dies were made by a goldsmith specialised in the production of bracteate matrices<sup>37</sup>. In addition, he may have improperly prepared the flan, which may have resulted in it cracking on the obverse side, presumably due to the impact of the strike, or he may not have made it from pure gold.

Given that the solidi which served as prototypes for the imitation in question are dated 408–410/413 (type RIC X, 1310) and 402–420 (type with seated Constantinopolis), we cannot exclude the possibility that this is one of the first Scandinavian imitations made using hand-engraved dies, but it is unlikely to have been made earlier than around the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century, when bracteate production began.

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## Notes

- 1) Mackeprang 1952, 123–124 no. 71; Balling 1962, 64 no. 89; Fagerlie 1967, 206 no. 184; Axboe 2004, 266–268. 321; Horsnæs 2009, 258 no. 17; IK 401,1.
- 2) Mackeprang 1952, 123–124 no. 72.
- 3) A broader chronology is presented in RIC X and DOC, 201, but Fernando López-Sánchez proposes a narrowed dating of the coin: »The remarkable reverse with the lion under the feet of the Emperor struck at Ravenna probably makes a direct allusion to the fight against Heraclian, or to the suppression of the revolt of Heraclian, count of Africa (Lion as a symbol of Africa). This is why Kent [RIC X] thought about this chronology extended until 413, precisely the year of the celebration of the defeat of Heraclian. It is not impossible that some Central and Northern Europeans [Germans] were involved in the Honorian campaign that crushed Heraclian. Or at least they could have been close to the Ravennate circle (palatine guards) who celebrated it.« (interpretation mentioned in an email exchange by Fernando López-Sánchez to whom I am grateful for consultation).
- 4) I thank Fernando López-Sánchez and Kyrlo Myzgin for their help in deciphering parts of the legend.
- 5) Simplifications of any kind are very unusual regarding the Scandinavian bracteates, but the example we are dealing with here is neither bracteate nor imitation, but something in-between. In such a case, according to the author, simplifications of the original motive might be well justified. The presence of such a dot on the other side could also result from a horror vacui and the need to fill the whole surface of the flan.
- 6) Oral information, cf. Fagerlie 1967, 79–80; Fischer 2021, 16–20.
- 7) I would like to thank Dr Tomasz Więcek and Prof. Renata Ciołek for this insight.
- 8) Fagerlie 1967; Fischer 2021; Bursche/Zapolska 2021; Zapolska in print.
- 9) We know of at least three pieces of imitations on which only the obverse has been pressed – modelled on the solidus of Julius Nepos from Kinbjerg (National Museum of Denmark, inv. no. RP 1141.1; Fagerlie 1967, no. 184), modelled on the solidus of Constantine(?) from Strangegården (National Museum of Denmark, inv. no. FP 1733) and another without provenance (National Museum of Denmark, inv. no. KP 176.31), cf. Horsnæs 2009; Horsnæs/Ravn 2021, 169–171.
- 10) Ciołek 2003; 2009; Horsnæs/Ravn 2021, 169–171; cf. Fischer/López-Sánchez 2016.
- 11) Horsnæs/Ravn 2021, 171.
- 12) Mirrored images are not unusual for bracteates, but thinking of imitations production we tend to treat them as a mistake during the manufacturing of dies. Hence in terms of dies production that the craftsman could be perceived as untrained.
- 13) Cf. Axboe 2004, 13–18.
- 14) Pers. comm. from Dr Arkadiusz Dymowski.
- 15) Fagerlie 1967, 209 no. 209.
- 16) The biggest number of imitations have been discovered in these hoards, and on this basis, it is presumed that Gotland was the site of their production. Fagerlie 1967, 196 no. 122; 198–199 no. 137b; cf. Fischer 2021 (on imitations); cf. Zapolska in print.
- 17) Fagerlie 1967, 42; this was then repeated by Fischer 2021, 18.
- 18) Fagerlie 1967, 178 no. 12.
- 19) Fagerlie 1967, 211 no. 220.
- 20) The question of imitations modelled on the solidi of Theodosius II using the standing Victoria motif and the legend VICTORIA AVGG on the reverse remains unresolved at this moment (cf. below).
- 21) Fagerlie 1967, 197 no. 127; 198–199 no. 137b; 205 no. 182a; 210 no. 212; pl. XIII. The photo of the F 22 imitation that the author of the text got from the Stockholm Museum shows the reverse with the emperor standing to the right and trampling on a captive. Fagerlie must therefore have used the wrong picture to illustrate this find, or there must have been a shuffling of coins later in the museum. The deposit from Botes actually contained an imitation minted with the same pair of stamps as the specimen from Saltholm.
- 22) Lyubichev/Myzgin 2020.
- 23) DOC, 201; RIC X, 132 (cf. note 3).
- 24) DOC, 281.
- 25) DOC, 289.
- 26) The history and circumstances of the discovery of the treasure have been published (Dahmen 2014). Analysis of the treasure is subsequently planned by the author.
- 27) RIC X, 64. 73.
- 28) Fagerlie 1967; Horsnæs 2009.
- 29) Inv. no. RP 1336.1; Ramus 1816, 315 no. 29.
- 30) Cf. Fagerlie 1967; Horsnæs 2009, esp. list of finds 1, nos 16. 18. 27b; list of finds 2, nos 9–10; 2010, 172; 2013, 65; Fischer et al. 2011 (on the chronology of the earliest hoard found in eastern Scandinavia).
- 31) Axboe 2004, 65 fig. 8.
- 32) Axboe 2004, 79 figs 46–48. It is likely that the same punch was used to make the ends of the diadem as well as the eye and perhaps the mouth.
- 33) Axboe 2004, 79–85.
- 34) Cf. Fischer 2021; Zapolska in print.
- 35) Fischer 2021; Bursche/Zapolska 2021; Zapolska in print.
- 36) Axboe 1999, 168–169.
- 37) The assumption is based on the fact, that the production technique of bracteates matrices differed significantly to the production technique of dies for imitations. The remaining known imitations produced in Western Scandinavia, that is one-sided imitations of solidi of Julius Nepos, bear both – properly executed images and the mirrored ones (Horsnæs/Ravn 2021). We cannot then exclude, that the reversed images were aimed by the craftsman.



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## Zusammenfassung / Summary / Résumé

### Von der Inspiration zur Imitation – die ungewöhnliche Imitation eines Solidus des Honorius aus Års (Vesthimmerlands Komm./DK)

In einem Brakteatenfund aus Års in Nordjütland wurde eine lokal hergestellte Imitation eines Solidus des Honorius gefunden. Dies ist die bisher erste und einzige bekannte skandinavische Imitation eines spätantiken, beidseitig geprägten Solidus, die im westlichen Teil Skandinaviens entdeckt wurde. Tatsächlich sind analoge Nachahmungen typisch für den östlichen Teil, d. h. Gotland (wo sie wahrscheinlich hergestellt wurden), Öland, Südschweden und Bornholm. Zwei Funde stammen auch aus Pommern. Da es sich um eine spiegelbildlich geprägte Imitation handelt, ist davon auszugehen, dass sie von einem ungelernten Handwerker angefertigt wurde, der vielleicht mit der täglichen Herstellung von Matrizen für die Brakteatenherstellung beschäftigt war. Da sich die Herstellungstechnik von Brakteaten von der Herstellung von Matrizen und der Prägung von Münzen unterscheidet, war das Ergebnis des Experiments eine Münze, die spiegelverkehrt zum ursprünglichen Solidus des Honorius geprägt wurde, der als Vorlage diente.

### **From Inspiration to Imitation – the Unusual Imitation of a Solidus of Honorius from Års (Vesthimmerlands Komm./DK)**

An imitation of a Honorius solidus produced locally has been found in a deposit of bracteates from Års, in Northern Jutland. This is the first and only known Scandinavian imitation of a Late Roman solidus, minted on both sides, found in the western part of Scandinavia to date. In fact, analogous imitations are typical of the eastern part, i.e. Gotland (where they were probably produced), Öland, southern Sweden and Bornholm. Two finds also originate from Pomerania. Due to the fact that the imitation in question was minted in a mirror image, it can be assumed that it was made by an untrained craftsman, perhaps one who was engaged in the daily production of matrices for the manufacture of bracteates. Since the technique of producing bracteates differs from that of preparing dies and minting coins, the result of the experiment was a coin struck reversed to the original solidus of Honorius, which served as a model.

### **De l'inspiration à l'imitation – imitation inhabituelle d'un solidus d'Honorius d'Års (Vesthimmerlands Komm./DK)**

On a trouvé dans un dépôt de bractéates d'Års, dans le Nord du Jutland, une imitation d'un solidus d'Honorius produite sur place. Il s'agit de la première et seule imitation jusqu'ici d'un solidus du Bas-Empire en Scandinavie occidentale, frappée sur les deux faces. Des imitations analogues sont certes typiques de la partie orientale: Gotland (probablement la région de leur production), Öland, Suède méridionale et Bornholm. Deux exemplaires proviennent de Poméranie. Vu qu'elle a été frappée en miroir, on peut penser que cette imitation a été réalisée par un artisan peu expérimenté, engagé peut-être dans la production quotidienne de matrices destinées à la production de bractéates. Comme la technique de production des bractéates diffère de celle de la préparation des matrices et de la frappe des pièces de monnaie, l'expérience déboucha sur une pièce frappée à l'envers du solidus original d'Honorius qui avait servi de modèle.

Traduction: Y. Gautier

#### *Schlüsselwörter / Keywords / Mots-clés*

Völkerwanderungszeit / skandinavische Imitationen / spätantike Solidi / germanische Brakteaten / Goldhorte  
Migration Period / Scandinavian imitations / Late Roman solidi / Germanic bracteates / gold hoards  
Grandes Migrations / imitations scandinaves / solidi romains tardifs / bractéates germaniques / trésors d'or

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