

Imitation of the coinage of Æthelraed II in Central Europe

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It has long been known that Anglo-Saxon coins were imitated on the Continent, and research co-operation between Scandinavian and British scholars has provided us with ever more information on this subject. One of the most outstanding contributions in this field has been made by Brita Malmer, who by using new research methods as early as 1965 achieved very interesting results in her studies of the places and periods when Æthelraed II's pennies were imitated in Swedish territories (1). On the basis of the die-links between the imitations and the official coinage of Olof Skötkonung struck in the mint at Sigtuna, she has shown that at least some of these imitations were produced at this mint. Our knowledge of Scandinavian imitation of Anglo-Saxon coins has been further extended by the papers of M. Blackburn, M. Dolley and other scholars, published in the exceptionally useful volume, "Studies in Northern Coinages of the Eleventh Century" (København 1981) (2).

Less attention has however been paid to the problem of imitation of Anglo-Saxon coins in areas further South, in what is broadly termed Central Europe. Here, it is possible to distinguish northern, central and southern zones of Anglo-Saxon influences.

1. The first of these corresponds to the territory of Frisia and Lower Saxony, where, especially in the mints at Deventer and Stade, the types (but not the

legends) were copied from Æthelraed II pennies (Dbg 1237, 1607-1609) (3). It is thought that some kind of copies of these deniers were made further to the East in Slav areas: in Mecklemburg, and in particular in Pomerania. In this context, we should draw attention to the well-known mule which links an imitation of a type from Cologne coins with the name of Æthelraed II. The origin of this coin is unknown: it could equally well have been struck in Scandinavia, or the southern shores of the Baltic or North Sea (4).

2. The central zone covers the heart of the state of the first Piast rulers of Poland: Great Poland and Kujavia. Here, in the most important political centres of his kingdom, Bolesław the Brave (992-1025) struck not less than fourteen types of coins bearing his name, or the names of other rulers. The most interesting coin for us here is the mule which links a die bearing the name of Bolesław with one bearing the name of Aethelraed. To date, only two specimens of this kind of coin are known, struck with one pair of dies, and both were published more than half a century ago by the Rev. Edmund Majkowski. He discovered one in the collections of the National Museum in Prague (fig. 1), and identified the other among coins from the hoard found at Årstad, near Egersund in Norway (5). On one side of these mules there is an imitation of the obverse of the Aethelraed II penny. The bust of the



king is facing left, and there is a sceptre in front of him. The legend is somewhat blundered and not fully legible: + AED///AREDREXATGOR.

So far, the Anglo-Saxon prototype for this imitation has not been discovered. The greatest number of analogies are exhibited by the following types: Second Hand, Intermediate Small Cross, Crux and Last Small Cross. The bust probably has most features in common with the effigy from the Small Cross type (diadem, especially its finishing at the back of the head; the clasp fastening the cloak, under his chin). But this type does not have a sceptre, which is however present in the remaining two types. These exhibit greater differences in the design of the bust: in the Second Hand type, the clasp fastening the cloak is at the back, and in the Crux type there is no diadem. It would therefore seem that the obverse of the hybrid we are describing represents a conglomeration of ele-



Fig. 1. Poland, Bolesław the Brave. A mule between type V and XI, 9. Diameter 17-18 mm. Photo: J. Kouba.

ments taken from several types of coin. It is probably most likely that the Small Cross type was taken as a basis (although we do not know which issue of this type) (6) and that this was supplemented by the sceptre motif.

The other side of the coin was struck with an original die of Bolesław the Brave of the type known as INCLITVS. It has a bust very similar to that of Aethelraed on the obverse. It also faces left, but there is no sceptre, and the end of the diadem is not in the form of the letter A, but consists of four dots arranged as a rhomboid. The inscription can be reconstructed as follows: BOLIZLAS DVX (7).

The dies used on both sides are linked with further dies, forming a small chain (fig. 2). Thus the Polish

Fig. 2. Poland. Die-links between the official coinage of Bolesław the Brave and the imitations.

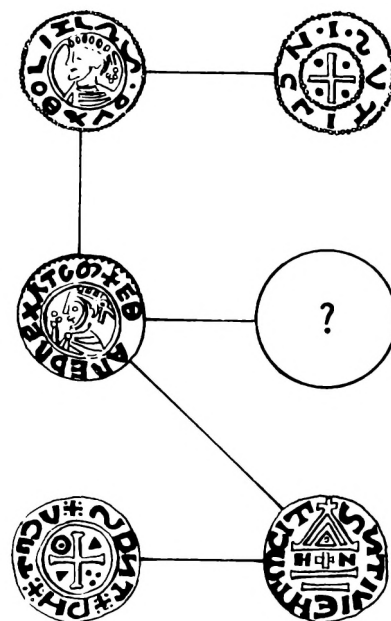


Fig. 3. Poland. Bolesław the Brave. Type XI, 17. Diameter 17-17.5 mm. Muzeum Narodowe, Kraków, inv. 13088. Photo: Z. Malinowski.





Fig. 4. Poland, Bolesław the Brave. A mule between type V and VI, 11.

Fig. 5. Poland, Bolesław the Brave. Specimen in Berlin, diameter c. 18 mm.

die with the name of Bolesław is supplemented by a die with a cross in the field, and around it there is the denomination of the ruler, INCLITVS (fig. 3). There can be no doubt that this arrangement of the dies, which forms a logical whole (*Bolizlas dux inclitus*) was the original, while the mule under discussion (linking the two obverses) was struck later.

The Anglo-Saxon side is linked with two further dies, with a representation of a Bavarian-style chapel, of which two specimens are known: one occurred in the Sochaczew hoard and is now in the National Museum in Kraków (fig. 4); the second is in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin (fig. 5). From the mistaken inscriptions, it is possible to decipher CIVITAS. The remaining letters probably come from the blundered name REGINA (Regensburg). Inside the chapel the letters H+N are discernible in one case, and ENC (retrograde) in the other. It was at first thought that we were dealing here with worn, but original Bavarian (Z. Zakrzewski) or Czech (E. Majkowski, V. Katz) dies (8). Today however, there is no doubt that these coins are imitative and were struck in Poland.

It has only relatively recently been possible to extend the chain of links between the dies of this group thanks to the discovery in a hoard from Kraków-Nowa Huta of three coins of the Bavarian type struck with one pair of dies. The reverse was identical with that of one of the reverses of the mules discussed above (H+N), while the obverse was previously unknown. This was a copy of the Bavarian deniers of King Henry II, from the first period of his reign (1002-1009) (9). In this case also, there can be no doubt that we are dealing with an original arrangement. It was only after it had been split, that the reverse of the Bavarian type was joined with the Anglo-Saxon – type obverse. In this situation, one

may put forward the hypothesis that the obverse with the name of Aethelraed also originally had a corresponding reverse of the Anglo-Saxon type. After this had quickly been worn out, the obverse die, which was still in good condition, continued to be used, either with dies of the Bavarian type, or with the name of Bolesław. We may hope that this missing die (marked in fig. 2 with a question mark) may still be discovered, either in new finds, or in existing numismatic collections. The large Scandinavian collections which are now being studied seem to offer particular hope in this connection, as do materials in the Staatliche Museen in Berlin and the Leningrad Hermitage which must also be taken into consideration.

The problem of the imitation of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Polish coinage should be examined within the broader context of Polish minting at the turn of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The Polish mints, as we have seen, produced coins that also imitated the types of the Bavarian coinage, and also Saxon types with the names of Otto and Adelheid, and Czech types with the names of Boleslav III and Vladivoi. Therefore, the inclusion of the name and effigy of Aethelraed II in the dies of Polish deniers was not an extraordinary “minting freak” as used to be thought, but rather a normal development in a new coinage. As we can see from the numerous links of dies, two sorts of coins were struck in the same coinage. The first carried current data: the name of the ruler and his titles, and sometimes the place where they were struck or the name of the patron saint. The second sort imitated the types of foreign coins that were in circulation at the time. In this way, the ruler ensured that his own coinage would be well-received, although at the same time giving up the opportunity for any kind of



Fig. 6. Bohemia, Boleslav II. Photo from P. Radoměřský & B. Hlinka, *Peníze, poklady, padělky*. Diam. 21 mm.



Fig. 7. Bohemia, Jaromir. Illustrations (1-5) from J. Smolík, *Nález denarů v Chrást'anech*.

display. It would have been possible to achieve this effect of display by linking the dies of both kinds of coins. Numerous mules seem to indicate that this was deliberate and not an accidental linking. They are not however generally known among the first group of coins with current data.

3. The southern zone of Anglo-Saxon influence was Bohemia. As early as the 980s, shortly after the beginning of minting of coinage, motifs began to appear on the Czech coins like a hand, bow and arrow, or sword, analogies for which have been found in the coins struck by the Danes in the British Isles. Direct Anglo-Saxon influence can be detected most clearly in the years 985-995, when two types of which we have large numbers of specimens were struck. One imitates the buste of Aethelraed II with the sceptre of the Second Hand type pennies (985-991), and also the hand between alpha and omega taken from the First Hand type (980-985). The second type, which was struck earlier, links analogous design of the hand with a design of a cross with various symbols in the angles, and later also the Bavarian-type chapel (10).

The Czech coins imitated only the types from Anglo-Saxon coins. The legends were replaced by current local data: the name of Duke Boleslav II (972-999), the name of the Prague mint, and the names of the moneyers. There are however, very many interesting exceptions to this rule. On one rare variety of the coins of the hand-cross type it is possible to read around the hand the retrograde inscription: +ANEI MO DEORADY, and around the cross: +EDEL ... RED ANG (fig. 6). Pavel Radoměský, who found these coins, identified in this a hitherto unknown moneyer from Derby called Anei or Ang (11). This name is in fact not known in either Hildebrand or the SCBI (cf. Cumulative Index). And it would seem that

there is little chance of finding it in the future. There are therefore two possibilities: this is either a description of the nationality of the moneyer (ANG), which in his new environment replaced his own name, or we may be dealing here with a distorted original name. In Derby the moneyer GVNER struck coins of the First Hand type which was used as a model for the Czech coinage. Perhaps in copying his name the first and part of the last letter were omitted? (The letter A on the Czech coin is upside down).

The name of Aethelraed and an Anglo-Saxon moneyer appear on Czech coins for a second time more or less 15-20 years later, in the reign of Jaromir (1003-1012). However, in this case, Anglo-Saxon influence is limited to the legend, and the type is still Bavarian (fig. 7). This is a cross with symbols in the angles and a chapel. (It is only rarely that motifs of Anglo-Saxon origin appear on other of Jaromir's coins or those of his successors – for example a head, a hand – and they are already clearly derivative. They were copied from older Czech coins, or through other mediation, and not from the originals). The legends referred to appear with several small variants. The most popular version is:

Obverse: AELFZIGE NO PINT

Reverse: EDELRED REX ANC

In the hoard at Chrašt'any, which was hidden after 1012, there were 4 deniers of this type (see fig. 7, variety 1), representing four variants of the obverse die and 3 of the reverse. In two cases, these reverses are linked with obverses of the same type as before, but with the legend carrying the name of the Czech prince who was currently ruling, and the name of his chief mint: IAROMIR D PRAGA

The mule produced in this way (fig. 7, variety 2) links the names of Jaromir and Aethelraed. These coins are somewhat more common than the previous ones. In the hoard at Chrašt'any, referred to above, there were 30 specimens, representing 17 die variants (12).

Moreover, there is another variant linking the name of Jaromir with that of the moneyer Aelfzige (fig. 7, variety 3, 1 variant), and one where the name of Aelfzige appears on both sides (fig. 7, variety 4, 2 variants).

We can see from the above that the name of Jaromir is found only on the obverse, and the name of Aethelraed only on the reverse, while the name of the moneyer appears on both sides. It would however seem that the two varieties described last (3 and 4) are later than the others and were probably struck fortuitously – the legends are somewhat blundered. If we therefore leave these varieties out of consideration, we discover that the name of Aethelraed on the reverse is linked either with the name of the moneyer, or with that of Jaromir. Naturally, we would be inclined to consider the linking of the two Anglo-Saxon legends as original, and the conjunction of the two names of rulers as accidental. But it is striking that despite the relatively large number of coins in the Chrašt'any hoard, with many die variants and combinations of these, there is no specimen with a Czech die of the reverse which could have formed the original set together with the obverse die with the name of Jaromir.

In the case of the type under discussion, there cannot of course be any dispute about the provenance of the dies with which these coins were struck. Since they are of the Bavarian type, they could not have been made in England. Neither is it possible that they were made in Bohemia by the moneyer Aelfzige of

Winchester. He is well-known from the Anglo-Saxon pennies struck in the reigns of Aethelraed II and Cnut, and there is nothing to suggest that he left England.

But in what other way can we explain the presence of such strong Anglo-Saxon influences in the Czech coinage at the turn of the tenth and eleventh centuries? Earlier scholars proposed no solutions, pointing only to the extraordinary nature of the question (E. Fiala, V. Katz) (13). It was after the second world war that two hypotheses were put forward. The author of the first suggestion is F. Cach, who believes that the use of Anglo-Saxon elements in the Czech coinage was dictated by economic considerations – that is, the desire to place on northern markets coins of the Bavarian and Anglo-Saxon types that were thought to be in demand there. The coins of Jaromir under discussion were thus intended for export (14).

This thesis has been rejected by P. Radoměřský, who has shown that there would have been no point in an operation of this kind, since in the Baltic zone the legends would have meant nothing, particularly when joined with another type. Unlike other Czech authors, but in agreement with the earlier view of H. Dannenberg, P. Radoměřský believes that these coins really were struck by Anglo-Saxon moneyers who came to Bohemia (15). The arguments in favour of this theory are the correctness of the legends, and in particular the fact that they were not mechanical copies of the originals. For as we have already noted, there are no Anglo-Saxon pennies known with the name of the moneyer "Anei" or "Angl". It is also material that the form of the name of the mint DEORADY (instead of DEORABY) appears here in full, instead of the abbreviation DEOR, DORB or DEORA which is much more often found on original coins. P.

Radoměský explains the presence of the Anglo-Saxon moneyers in Prague by a theory which he had previously suggested, that the Queen Emma-Elfgifa-Adivea, the wife of Boleslav II, was of Anglo-Saxon origin. This theory has not however been accepted by other scholars, who have shown that it is impossible to identify Elfgifa, the sister of King Aethelstan (924-939), with the Czech "queen" Emma, for chronological reasons – they were of different generations (16).

There are also numismatic considerations which argue against this hypothesis put forward by the Czech scholar: the style of execution of the die is not Anglo-Saxon, there are mistakes in the inscriptions (distortions, misplacements and inversion of letters), and finally there is the fact mentioned already above, that Aelfzige did not leave his native Winchester. I have tried to explain the genesis of the mysterious name of "Anei". I might add here that the form of the name Guner which has been suggested as a model for this occurs in conjunction with the rarer and more full form of DEORABY (cf. Hild. 351, p. 48); the legend on the obverse ends in the fairly rare form ANGLO R, which was unskillfully copied on the Czech coins.

But in rejecting the overall thesis put forward by P. Radoměský, it is impossible to ignore certain facts that he pointed to. It is true that in the Czech zone there were more Anglo-Saxon elements than in the two zones to the North – and which were therefore nearer to the area reached by not only large numbers of Anglo-Saxon coins, but also dies and the moneyers themselves. However, there have been no finds of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Czech lands. Such strong influence of designs from the British Isles is especially surprising in view of the widely known fact that Bohemia fell within the Bavarian-Swabian coinage province. And while admittedly also here it is possible to

find certain Anglo-Saxon influences in the types, they were very limited.

It is also impossible to explain the imitations by the economic theory, which holds that the Anglo-Saxon models were intended to facilitate the acceptance of the coins in the Baltic zone. This may be the truth, but it would not seem to be the whole truth. For in any case, Bavarian and Hungarian coins were exported into these areas in large numbers, and their issuers saw no need to adapt them to the tastes of their recipients. It is also finally doubtful whether Anglo-Saxon pennies aroused more confidence in the Polish territories at the end of the 10th century than for example Bavarian, Franconian or Saxon deniers, of which there were many times more. R. Kiersnowski has shown already that the majority of Czech coins reached the North through trading in stages, moving up gradually as further transactions were concluded (17). Only a certain number were transported directly through long-range trade. In Scandinavia, however, there are relatively few. In Sweden, we know 321 Czech coins from 104 finds, which gives an average of only a little over three coins per find (in a total of 210 000 specimens, of which 85 000 are German) (18).

If we accept that the main reason for such strong Anglo-Saxon influences on the Czech coinage was neither economic (although economic factors cannot be entirely eliminated) nor dynastic, nor the presence of moneyers (which would of necessity have been much more directly reflected), it only remains to accept that these influences were transmitted by other people coming from the British Isles, but who had no expert training in coining. These could not have been travelling merchants or pilgrims, as V. Katz suggested, but would rather have been people who sett-

led, and who moreover were able to write. These must be sought above all among the clergy, and rather the spiritual than temporal clergy. They may have been Anglo-Saxon or Scotto-Irish monks, who had houses at for example Regensburg and Fulda, from which they could easily have reached Prague (19). They would have been able to help in the choice of images and composing the legend, and perhaps also in making model dies and the organisation of production. They could have been responsible for introducing the custom of placing the name of the mintmaster, a practice hitherto unknown on the Continent, and perhaps also for the successive change of types.

One could argue against this hypothesis, that if this had been the case we might have expected greater Anglo-Saxon influence, especially in Regensburg itself. This objection is not however a major one, since the well-established and developed coinage of Bavaria would have been much more resistant to foreign influences than the new Czech coinage. Nonetheless, in the Bavarian coinage also it is possible to detect certain characteristics for which analogies can be found in England. As in Bohemia, this concerns primarily the division of the mint into smaller workshops under individual moneyers, and the periodic change of types.

Our hypothesis on the participation of monks from the British Isles in Czech minting would explain the way in which Anglo-Saxon influences on Czech dies developed. It would not however explain the reason for the changes introduced, for it is difficult to believe that foreign images or legends were initiated only to satisfy some whim. Here we may agree with the Czech scholars who believe that the reasons for these changes were economic. Motifs and legends that were well-known to the author of the dies were to provide a

guarantee that the coins would be well-received, although this could in fact have been of greater symbolic than practical significance. For not all actions, especially in that era, have to have a fully rational explanation. The fact that we do not see how some of these activities (for example the linking of an Anglo-Saxon legend with Bavarian types) could have achieved the required aim, and indeed seem to us illogical, does not in the least mean that this is how contemporaries saw the matter.

The Czech coins bearing the name of Aethelraed and his moneyers which were struck at the same time and in the same mint as ordinary coins, should be treated like other issues intended for special payments. None of them has current data, a state achieved either by introducing non-current data onto the die, or by the immobilisation of the type, or by the removal of the legend altogether. Coins like this had been struck even earlier in Bohemia, with the name of the Bavarian princes and that of the Regensburg mint (20). We have earlier discussed analogous products from Swedish and Polish mints. We must therefore come to the conclusion that what initially appeared an unusual, and indeed disturbing pattern, requiring special explanation, normally provided in the realm of political developments, was in fact fairly typical in a certain period and in certain economic circumstances. It is evident that chance also played a role in the choice of prototypes.

Notes

1. B. Malmer, *Olof Skötkonungs mynt och andra Ethelred-imitationer. Några svensk-engelska myntproblem. Antikvariskt arkiv* 27, 1965.
2. M. Blackburn, An imitative workshop active during Aethelraed II's Long Cross issue, pp. 29-88, *Studies in Northern Coinages of the Eleventh Century*, (ed. C. J. Becker, Copenhagen 1981); M. Dolley, Imitation and imitation of imitation: some problems posed by the non-English Helmet pennies with the name of Aethelraed II, pp. 89-111, *ibid*.
3. H. Dannenberg, *Die deutschen Münzen der sächsischen und fränkischen Kaiserzeit*, I, Berlin 1876.
4. B. E. Hildebrand, *Anglosachsiska mynt i Svenska Kongliga Myntkabinettet funna i Sveriges jord*, Stockholm 1881, p. 166, N° 1; see also M. Dolley, K. Jonsson, Imitative anticipation: Yet another dimension to the problem of Scandinavian imitation of Anglo-Saxon coins, in *Studies in Northern Coinages ...* (see note 1), p. 113.
5. E. Majkowski, Coins struck by Boleslav the Mighty, Duke of Poland (992-1025), with bust and name of Aethelred II of England, *Numismatic Chronicle*, 1934, pp. 168-182; *idem*, Ethelred-Boleslaus mynter, *Acta Numismatica Osloensia*, I, 1934, pp. 75-86. See also S. Suchodolski, Moneta polska w X/XI wieku. Mieszko I i Bolesław Chrobry (Polish coinage at the close of the 10th and the beginning of the 11th century), *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne* XI, 1967, pp. 99-103, 172-173, N°s 9-11.
6. In style, the bust mostly resembles the Last Small Cross issue (1009-1016). The rare ending of the legend (ANGLOR) occurs however in the earlier period, for example in the Intermediate Small Cross-Crux mule (Hild. Cb, according to M. Dolley c. 997).
7. See Suchodolski, *op.cit.*, (note 5), p. 176, N° 17.
8. Z. Zakrzewski, Pierwsza moneta polska (Les premières monnaies polonaises), *Slavia Antiqua*, V, 1954-1956, pp. 204-205; E. Majkowski, Coins struck by Boleslav the Mighty (see note 5), pp. 178-179; V. Katz, *Úvahy o chronologii českých denárů na počátku XI. století*, Praha 1937, p. 24, 29.
9. Suchodolski, *op. cit.* (note 5), p. 173, type VI; see also W. Hahn, *Moneta radasponensis. Bayerns Münzprägung im 9., 10. und 11. Jahrhundert*, Braunschweig 1976, p. 15, fig. 3; p. 83, n° 27d.
10. V. Katz, The first numismatic contacts between England and Bohemia in the X. century, *Spink Numismatic Circular* XLVI, 1938, pp. 209-213. M. Dolley (A note on the dating of Bohemian coins by alleged English prototypes, *HBN* 9/10, 1955/56, pp. 159-162), on the other hand, expressed some scepticism about Anglo-Saxon influence on the earliest Czech coinage, suggesting that Italian prototypes (Papal issues) were imitated.
11. P. Radoměský, Studie o počátcích českého mincovnictví. Nález českých denárů z 10. století v Poděbradech (Studie über die Anfänge des böhmischen Münzwesens. Ein Fund böhmischer Denare aus dem 10. Jahrhundert in Poděbrady), *Num. Sb.* 9, 1965-66, pp. 59-60, 91-92.
12. J. Smolík, *Nález denárů v Chrást'anech u Českého Brodu*, Praha 1897, pp. 19-24, N°s 29-34.
13. E. Fiala, *České denáry*, Praha 1895, p. 266; Katz, *Úvahy...* (see note 8), p. 28.
14. F. Cach, Mince českého knížete Jaromíra, *Num. Sb.* VI, 1960, pp. 46-48.
15. Radoměský, *op.cit.*, p. 91; H. Dannenberg, Der Münzfund von Rummelsburg, *Berliner Blätter für Münz-, Siegel- und Wappenkunde*, I, 1863, pp. 36-37.
16. P. Radoměský, Emma regina. Studie o původu kněžny Emmy a její úloze v ražbě českých mincí 10. století (Essay on the origin of the Princess Emma and her part in the striking of the Bohemian coins of the 10th century), *Časopis Národního Musea* CXXII, 1953, N° 2, pp. 157ff; Z. Fiala, Dva kritické příspěvky ke starým dějinám českým (Über zwei Fragen zur alten böhmischen Geschichte), *Sborník historický* 9, 1962, pp. 40-56; J. Hásková, Emma Regina in numismatic and historical sources, in *Proceedings of the 9th International Congress of Numismatics*, Berne 1979, Louvain-la-Neuve – Luxembourg 1982, pp. 793-797; W. Hahn, Blagota Coniunx und Emma Regina – einige Randbemerkungen zu den ältesten böhmischen Herzogsmünzen, *Jahrbuch f. Numismatik u. Geldgeschichte* 28/29, 1978/1979, pp. 65-80.
17. R. Kiersnowski, Česká mince v raně středověkém Pomořansku (La monnaie tchèque en Pomeranie dans les debuts du moyen âge), *Num. Sb.* V, 1958, pp. 67-98.
18. V. & G. Hatz, Böhmische Münzen des 10. und 11. Jahrhunderts in Schwedischen Funden, *Num. Sb.* XIII, 1973-74, pp. 85-100.
19. See L. Weissberg, Eine Irenwelle an Maas, Mosel und Rhein in ottonischer Zeit in: *Aus Geschichte und Landeskunde – Festschrift für F. Steinbach*, Bonn 1960, pp. 727-750; G. Schreiber, *Irland im deutschen und abendländischen Sakralraum*, Köln 1956.
20. W. Hahn, Imitativprägungen nach frühen bayerischen Münztypen in böhmischen und polnischen Schatzfunden, in: *Sborník III. numismatického symposia v Brně 1979* (in press); *idem*, Eine bayerisch-böhmische Allianzprägung des Jahres 977?, *Geldge-*

schichtliche Nachrichten 102, Juli 1984, pp. 205-206 (the exceptionally interesting material collected by the author does not however support his thesis).

Abbreviations

HBN	Hamburger Beiträge zur Numismatik
Num. Sb.	Numismatický sborník
SCBI	Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles