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**SAMBOR I AND OTTO OF BAMBERG
ON EARLY GDAŃSK COINS**

ABSTRACT: Recent archaeological discoveries have allowed us to examine a series of bracteates from East Pomerania from the late twelfth and the thirteenth century, which has enabled us to construct a new view of medieval coinage in this province. A pivotal role may be attributed to the coins inscribed with the name of Sambor I, the first historical master of Gdańsk, and with the monogrammed name of Otto, which is supposed to refer to St Otto of Bamberg.

The modesty of Gdańsk coinage of the pre-Teutonic period contrasts with the distinct and rich coinage activity of the city after the overthrow of the Teutonic Order in the fifteenth century. The thorough research of generations of numismatists yielded very poor results. The first monographist of the coinage of medieval Pomerania, Friedrich August Voßberg, in his search for coins of the East-Pomeranian predecessors of the Teutonic Knights, directed his attention to a penny with a partially readable legend ...TPLV..., found in 1835 in a hoard of pennies from Brandenburg, Mecklenburg and Pomerania. However, he rightly warned against ascribing this coin to Świętopełk of Gdańsk (c.1220–1266) before obtaining a more readable copy.¹ Indeed, the following research proved that although it still is a mysterious coin from the Pomeranian-Brandenburg borderland, it is in no way related to the rulers of Gdańsk.² In his other work, Voßberg presented a bracteate with the inscription DVX VRATIZ as a coin of the East-Pomeranian ruler, Warcisław II (1266–9).³ This time his error was more serious, as the item in question is actually a century older coin from Wrocław. Only Hermann Dannenberg

¹ Voßberg 1841, pp. 3–4.

² Dannenberg H.-D. 1997, pp. 170–171.

³ Voßberg 1843, pp. 90–91.

was able to make a more successful attempt at ascribing coins to the rulers of Gdańsk, as he had at his disposal the first East-Pomeranian hoard from the ducal period, found in the village of Sarbsk near Łeba, as well as not too distant hoards from Western Pomerania (Żeńsko) and Greater Poland (Wieleń). Based on those sources he attributed a few anepigraphic hohlpfennings of the close of the thirteenth century to the last Samborids.⁴ The same sources were later used by researchers of the twentieth century: Emil Waschinski, Marian Gumowski and Edwin Rozenkranz.⁵ Although the two latter authors had been working on that issue from the close of the 1950s, they did not take into consideration the new sources that archaeological research in Gdańsk and Gdańsk Pomerania had begun to uncover in that very decade.⁶

Henryk Paner drew attention to this type of source by publishing a find of a bracteate with a gryphon from Gniew, assuming an analogy with coins from Sarbsk, associated by the other authors with Tczew.⁷ In 1992, Stanisław Suchodolski recapitulated the previous research achievements and introduced other archaeological finds to the discussion: a few single coins from Gdańsk and Gruczno as well as small find complexes from Zamek Kiszewski and Raciąż.⁸ As we can now say, looking back at this some years later, these finds were only a harbinger of the breakthrough to come due to the discoveries of the following decades. The most significant were the results of research work in Gdańsk's Old Town urban district, in the excavation sites on the streets of Olejarna in the 1990s and Tartaczna in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Although in this work we shall focus on the latter research area, the former will also be mentioned.

In the course of excavation works in Gdańsk, conducted by Zbigniew Misiuk in the area of a twelfth-century settlement of early urban character, on the Tartaczna site between Tartaczna and Panieńska Streets (no. SAZ 255/04/04), nearly 500 coins and jettons were acquired, including early bracteates which were successfully restored and identified in the following months. A most notable find among the coins is a set of 25 bracteates recovered on 25 May 2009 in Tartaczna/Panieńska trench, layer 3024. The coins were arranged in a roll, originally probably wrapped in a cloth that did not survive. As a result of post-depositional process some of the coins were bent.

⁴ Dannenberg H. 1893, pp. 47–50.

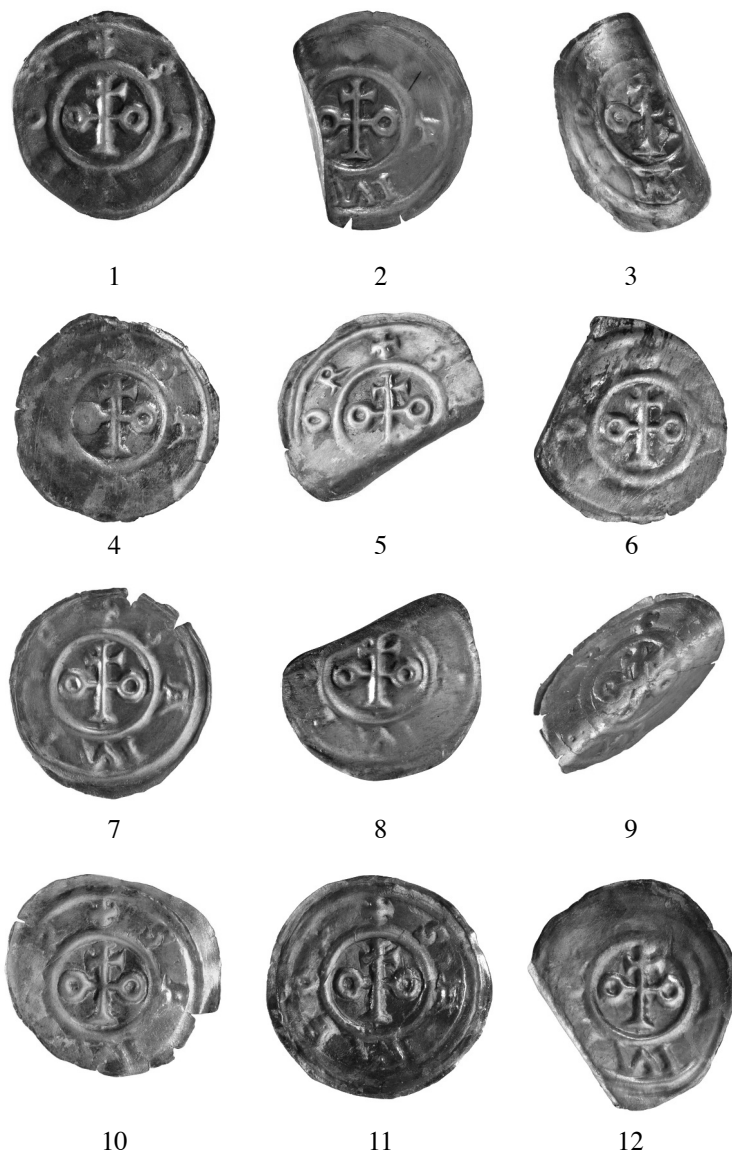
⁵ Waschinski 1937; Gumowski 1990, pp. 10–16 – in fact this work was finished in 1960 and is based on contemporary knowledge; Rozenkranz 1990 and other works of this author.

⁶ Gupieniec 1963, pp. 170, 176–7.

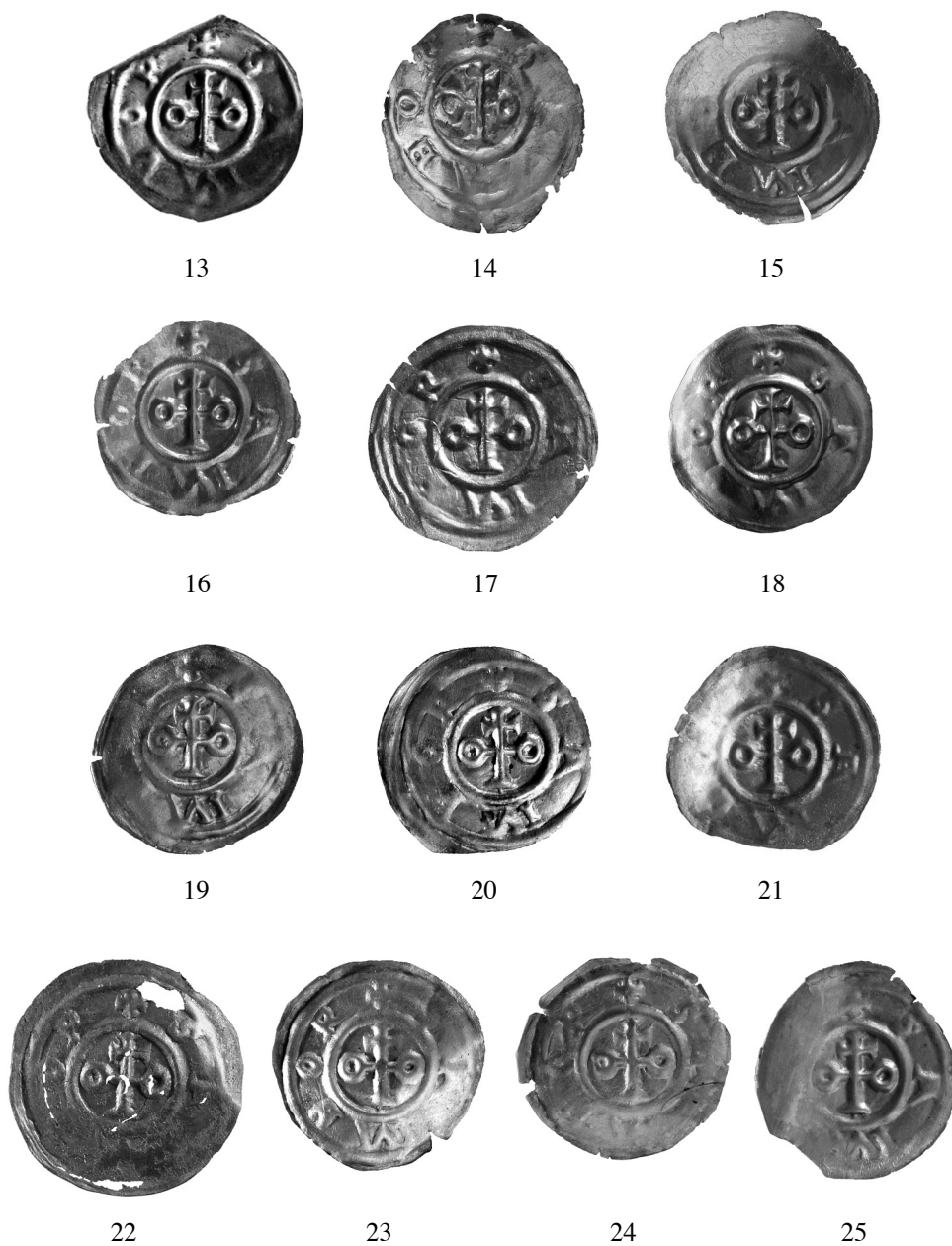
⁷ Paner 1985; actually, the bracteate found in Gniew was a coin of Mecklenburg.

⁸ Suchodolski 2002; a paper from 1992.

Not only were all of the coins in the set (Figs. 1–25) of the same type, but they were also struck with the same die. There is a cross in the field of each bracteate. Its arms end as follows: with a small cross, an annulet, a crosspiece and an annulet. There is a legend +SAMBOR on the margin. The lettering of the inscription is almost classic epigraphic capitals, although the letter S is slightly sloping and



Figs. 1–12. Coins from the Tartaczna I hoard; the numbers correspond to the list, scale 1.5:1. Museum of Archaeology, Gdańsk. Photo R. Janczukowicz.



Figs. 13–25. Coins from the Tartaczna I hoard; the numbers correspond to the list, scale 1.5:1. Museum of Archaeology, Gdańsk. Photo R. Janczukowicz.

the asymmetrical. A with its leg protruding right, upper serif lengthened to the left and a sloping crossbar resembles the Romanesque pseudo-uncial script. The most irregular is the shape of the letter M, which apparently occurred by mistake. It might have been the die sinker's intention to make this letter asymmetrical in a manner similar to the letter A, with the protruding right leg (or both legs sloping) and the midpoint slightly raised, but the line of the left leg drawn upwards from the bottom (or perhaps the die sinker started cutting a letter B by mistake?) did not meet the other part of the letter. In that case, its shape would be similar to codex script. It should be emphasized that this is the only defect of a very carefully made and otherwise flawless die.

No coins such as these were known before this discovery. The name of Sambor, although bereft of a noble title, does not leave many possibilities. Only two members of the East-Pomeranian family of Sobiesławice can be considered: Sambor I (who ruled Gdańsk in 1177/87–1207?) or Sambor II (the Duke of Lubiszewo in 1229–36, 1237?–43, 1248–50, and 1252?–71). The determining factor in the choice between the two is the form of the coins. Their shape is characteristic for the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as shown in an example of a bracteate of Mieszko III the Old or Mieszko IV the Young from the 1190s (Fig. 26)⁹ with its striking similarity of the letter S (although the letters O and M are different). However, further examination shows some differences in workmanship: the borders of Mieszko's coin consist of densely arranged pellets, while on Sambor's ones they are plain and continuous. A slightly more distant affinity may be observed on the coins of Helen, the Duchess of Cracow (1194/5–98)¹⁰ and of Prince Jaromar I of Rugia (after 1170–after 1209).¹¹ This style of forming a bracteate had had its day in the third decade of the thirteenth century, as a coin of Gerard, the Abbot of Wąchock (after 1219–before 1234) shows.¹² Since Sambor II did not commence his reign until 1229 at the earliest, the beginnings of his coinage probably date later than that time. Due to the unstable nature of his reign, coins issued by him might have only been accepted shortly before the relocation of his capital to Tczew in 1252, when the duke reserved the profits from 'the coin' (probably from *renovatio monetarum*) and customs duties,¹³ and soon after that, in 1255, awarded the right to mint the coin to the Cistercians of Łekno.¹⁴ Therefore,

⁹ S. Suchodolski is in favour of attribution to Mieszko III of Cracow (Suchodolski 2009, p. 20); B. Paszkiewicz ascribed this coin to Mieszko IV, back in the time when he was a provincial ruler in Racibórz (Paszkiewicz 2004a, pp. 205–214). We are not addressing this issue here, since it is of minor significance for the discussed topic.

¹⁰ Paszkiewicz 2000.

¹¹ Dannenberg H. 1893, nos. 28 and 28a.

¹² Suchodolski 1987, pp. 99–101, Table VIII:3.

¹³ Paner 1985, p. 174.

¹⁴ Suchodolski 1987, p. 97.

Sambor on the bracteates found at Tartaczna Street was the first East-Pomeranian dynasty of this name.



Fig. 26. The DVX MESCO bracteate, either of Mieszko III of Cracow (after Suchodolski), or of Mieszko IV as the duke of Racibórz (after Paszkiewicz), scale 1.5:1. Princes Czartoryski Museum, Cracow. Photo P. Maciuk.

Very little is known about him. Even the dates of the beginning of his reign (it is most commonly believed to have taken place between 1177 and 1179, however there are also theories pushing this moment forward to the 1180s) and of his death (1207) are uncertain, as well as the very nature of the reign. He is known chiefly from one, highly debatable document, the founding of the Cistercian Abbey in Oliwa¹⁵ and from the Chronicles of Master Vincentius, where in the description of Kazimir the Just assuming power (1177) it is said: ...*Samborio Gdanensi marchia instituto...*, i.e. ‘having given the Gdańsk March to Sambor’.¹⁶ It is in dispute whether to take it literally, supposing that Gdańsk (like Głogów) had a status of capital of a march, ‘a castle district of a larger area and a higher authority of governors’ and Kazimir gave this march as an office to the Polish magnate Sambor (supporters of this theory avoid using the title of margrave and call Sambor ‘the governor of Gdańsk Pomerania’ instead),¹⁷ or was it just flowery language (or even ‘a chaotic combination of words’) and Sambor was in fact an heir of the princes of Gdańsk and Kazimir only approved him. Views of the ‘prince camp’ were most clearly expressed by A. Bogucki.¹⁸ Arguments for the ‘governor camp’ were presented at an earlier date by B. Śliwiński.¹⁹ There is no reason to take any side in this dispute here, but identifying the coin with Sambor’s name on it may actually become an argument in further discussion.

¹⁵ See Kozłowska-Budkova 2006, pp. 152–153; Labuda 2004, pp. 29–30. Reproduction of the document: http://dziedzictwo.polska.pl/katalog/skarb,Przywilej_namiestnika_gdanskiego_sambora_dla_klasztoru_cystersow_w_Oliwie_z_dnia_18_III_1178_roku.gid,183344.cid,1960.htm.

¹⁶ Wincenty 1994, p. 147.

¹⁷ E.g. Smoliński 2000, p. 18 and passim.

¹⁸ Bogucki 2007, pp. 71–78.

¹⁹ Śliwiński 2003, pp. 285–287.

Even the name and origin of the wife of Sambor I remain unknown,²⁰ although these details could also help in the interpretation of symbols on the coin. What we can say is the area that was under Sambor's authority: the coast from the Łeba River to the east edge of the Vistula delta and its area north of the basins of the Brda, Wda and Wierzyca Rivers.²¹ These basins were already parts of a separate territory with centres in Lubiszewo and Świecie, ruled by Grzymiśław.²²

Since we have deciphered and interpreted the legend of the coin, we can now focus on its type. It has an analogy in a mint die found in 1996 in the course of excavations conducted by Bogdan Kościński on Olejarna Street in Gdańsk, which is several dozen meters away from the currently discussed hoard (Fig. 27).²³ This die (the oldest mint die found in Poland to-date) was used to strike anepigraphic bracteates and the difference between the images is that one of the arms of the cross terminates with another small cross instead of a crosspiece, and moreover, in each angle of the cross there is a single pellet. No coins struck with this die were found. The second, slightly more distant analogies are anepigraphic bracteates found individually in Gruczno near Świecie²⁴ and in Gdańsk. The latter find was 20 meters away from the discussed hoard (Fig. 28).²⁵ These two coins represent the same type. This time instead of an arm terminating in a crosspiece there is a chevron at the base and in the upper angles of the central cross two pellets are placed, but the whole depiction has been changed in its proportions, the central cross became minor, additional, and the image is dominated by the upper cross. Images on the die and bracteates have not been interpreted to-date, yet both of the artefacts – due to location of the finds – were ascribed to the dukes of Gdańsk, with the highest probability of them being issued by Świętopełk, whose coinage activity was nearly *expressis verbis* documentarily evidenced in 1236.²⁶ In light of the Tartaczna Street find these speculations turned out to be accurate, the three groups of artefacts – the bracteates with a name on them, the anonymous bracteates and the die – belong to a single strand of East-Pomeranian coinage. Since there is no connection to any of the bracteates recognized in nineteenth-century hoards, it was probably one of many such strands. Nevertheless, although the

²⁰ Rymar 2005, pp. 231–232.

²¹ Powierski et al. 1993, p. 150. It is unclear whether the corrections to the range of the Pomeranian diocese and the duchy of Słupsk made in the past few years (Śliwiński 2003) widen the reconstructed range of Sambor's power to the West.

²² Powierski et al. 1993, p. 204.

²³ Kościński 2003, pp. 34–36.

²⁴ Suchodolski 1975, pp. 90, 92–93, Table IV.

²⁵ Gupieniec 1963, pp. 170, 177.

²⁶ Suchodolski 2002, pp. 35–36.

die dates back to the middle of the thirteenth century and the bracteates with a cross on a chevron to 1275–1295 according to stratigraphical findings,²⁷ (it might actually mean that they are in fact a little earlier), Sambor's bracteates, as we can see, came into existence before 1207. Therefore, given the new time frame, we need to look into the motif of a cross with annulets, unexplained to-date.



Fig. 27. The bracteate die found in Gdańsk at the Olejarna site, and its impression, scale *c.*1.5:1. Museum of Archaeology, Gdańsk; after B. Kościński.



Fig. 28. The East-Pomeranian bracteate from the last quarter of the thirteenth century, found in Gruzno, Świecie powiat; after B. Kościński.

As the analogies show, this motif became established in Gdańsk and was modified by successive generations, and is in its earliest form on the bracteates from Tartaczna Street, even though we are uncertain if this is the original one. Nevertheless, this image clearly refers to Constance coins with the name of Otto inscribed in a form of a cruciform monogram (Fig. 29), struck at the close of the tenth century and at the beginning of the eleventh century.²⁸ A similar style of inscribing a name, but in separate letters, appeared also in other Swabian and Franconian cities, *e.g.* Esslingen and Würzburg.²⁹ This manner of presenting the name of a ruler is derived from the monogram of Charlemagne and no doubt refers to imperial Carolingian tradition. The monogram of Charlemagne had been

²⁷ Gupieniec 1963, p. 176.

²⁸ Dannenberg H. 1876, nos. 1009–1011.

²⁹ De Wit 2007, no. 2311.

formed in accordance with the Byzantine standards at the close of the eighth century, yet it kept appearing in the following centuries on French and Lotharingian coins due to the immobilization of dies, characteristic for this region (caused by political transformations).³⁰ In addition, monograms of other rulers, especially the kings of France, were patterned on it. The monogram of Otto did not undergo such a process, but other immobilized forms of the inscription of the name *Otto* appear throughout several decades on German coins, and on Italian ones even to the very thirteenth century, as grounds for the coinage rights of a state. The only thing that differentiates the monogram on the Pomeranian coin from the one used in Constance is that the upper part took the shape of a cross, yet the form of the letter T remained. Monograms of the cities of Zurich (TV RE CV' DC') and Breisach (PRISACHA) were constructed in a similar manner and appeared on coins in the second quarter of the tenth century, parallel with the monogram of Otto.³¹



Fig. 29. Swabia, King Otto III, pfennig, Constance mint, 983–996; found at Zakroczym, Nowy-Dwór-Mazowiecki powiat, scale c.1.5:1. Private collection.

In German coinage, the cruciform monogram vanished in the eleventh century, and in Central Europe it did not appear at all (until the find of Sambor's coins). It only survived in Würzburg, where, probably in 1085, the mysterious letters PFX HOE were used in this form on a coin presumably referring to Christ.³² It might have been related to Byzantine invocative cruciform monograms *Θεοτόκε βοήθει* from the bulls of the eighth–eleventh centuries.³³ On the hypothetically identified Würzburg coins from the first half of the twelfth century the monogram had been slightly modified to the form of BRVNO EPS (*episcopus*), representing the

³⁰ Kiersnowski 1988, pp. 92–93.

³¹ Dannenberg H. 1876, nos. 893, 895, 897, 989 and 990. For early examples of monograms, see Kiersnowski 1960, pp. 320–321.

³² Kellner 1974, pp. 119, 158–62.

³³ McGeer et al. 2005, s.v. *monograms (cruciform invocative)*, according to the index.

new patron saint of the bishopric, Bruno of Carinthia. He was a bishop in Würzburg in 1034–45, and the use of the form of the imperial monogram might have been related to the fact that he came from the imperial Salian dynasty, or to an invocation of a saint, following the Eastern tradition.³⁴

After a period of absence, the Bruno monogram once more appears on the Würzburg coins of Bishop Gottfried I de Spitzenberg-Helfenstein (1186–90)³⁵ (Fig. 30) at the close of the twelfth century, exactly in the period of our interest. In Pomerania, this form had been used at the same time or a few years later. Furthermore, one more monogram appeared on a Polish coin in this period, not a cruciform one but still exceptional – the one of Piotr Wszeborzyc, voivode of Kujawy (c.1195-?).³⁶



Fig. 30. Bishopric of Würzburg, Gottfried I (1184–90) or II (1197–8), pfennig with the St Bruno monogram, scale c.1.5:1. Lanz München, sale 146, no. 1071.

In the case of a pattern as distant in time and space as the Franconian pfennig of Otto III, it would be hard to assume an imitation without understanding the symbol – for instance, caused by the popularity of the pattern coin. Pfennigs with the monogram of Otto did not play any part in Gdańsk Pomeranian currency 200 years after they were minted. We cannot assume that it is a randomly arranged motif with no meaning either. After a few decades of *renovatio monetae*, in the second half of the thirteenth century, the mints were indeed forced to use motifs more and more distant from the usual set of symbols of power, although still not devoid of meaning, but this was not yet the case around the year 1200.³⁷

³⁴ Dannenberg H. 1876, no. 866, see also Dannenberg H. 1905, no. 2066; Kellner 1974, nos. 84–85; Ewald 1988, pp. 24–25, nos. 2308–2310. For controversies over attributions, see Hartinger 1996, pp. 44, 70. Bruno himself inscribed his name on coins in the form of a cross, but it was not yet combined to form a monogram (although this motif is called so in publications; Kellner 1974, pp. 113, 142ff.).

³⁵ Ewald 1988, p. 33, no. 3102.

³⁶ Suchodolski 1987, pp. 45–66. In addition, the mysterious motif on one of the types of pennies of voivode Sieciech (around 1085) is sometimes called a monogram (of the duke's name or the voivode's title), but this is uncertain.

³⁷ For cases of returning to models of coins distant in time in the Middle Ages, see Kiersnowski 1988, pp. 86–87.

The bracteates of this period quite often referred to foreign types, but those were not too old, at most several decades, and those borrowings can be interpreted as a kind of adaptation – symbols were given a new meaning or referred directly to the original meaning – and were not simply copies of random motifs.³⁸ Therefore, we need to assume that it was an intentional reference to an Otto and, at the same time, a manifestation significant for Sambor, defining the basis of his reign. Therefore, Otto had to be either a ruler or a patron saint.

Among the rulers named Otto that were contemporary to Sambor I there was Duke Otto of Greater Poland, often called Odo (which is a Lower German version of the same name), Emperor Otto IV, and Otto II, Margrave of Brandenburg. The shape of the symbol does not help to determine which one it is: no example of this monogram was found on the coins of any of those rulers. Therefore, we have to analyse the political situation, alliances and sympathies of Sambor. The problem is that no such details are available. It is believed that the master of Gdańsk had to be somehow affected by Danish expansion along the coast of the Baltic Sea, that was supposed to reach Hel³⁹ and was aimed at gaining control over East Pomerania. In 1205, Duke Ladislas the Spindleshanks attempted to end Danish control over Western Pomerania and lost Słupsk to Denmark,⁴⁰ but still nothing suggests his involvement in Gdańsk.⁴¹ What we do know is that in 1210, after Sambor's death, the next master of Gdańsk paid homage to King Valdemar II the Victorious.

We need to examine the three Ottos on the thrones. Odo Mieszko's son came to power in Poznań after he had overthrown his father in 1179, but he ruled there only to 1181 or 1182. In 1182, he was given a small appanage in Przemęt, expanded into Kalisz in 1193. He died the next year. There appear to be no circumstances that would make the ruler of Gdańsk put his name on a coin.

Otto IV of the Welf dynasty, a son of Henry XII the Lion, the duke of Aquitaine, count of Poitou and the duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, was elected and crowned as king of the Romans with English support in July 1198 and then as the Roman emperor in October 1209. However, he was struggling with another German king, Staufen Philip of Swabia (1198–1208), elected before him. He formed an alliance with the Danish king Cnut VI. In 1201, the dukes of Mecklenburg, Henry Borwin I and Nicholas I, joined this camp, as well as German barons endangered by the Danes and looking for protection, *e.g.* Adolf of Dassel about 1204.⁴² Eventually the Danish king decided to support the Staufer in 1210. In

³⁸ Haczewska 2006, pp. 61–67; Szczurek 2006, p. 79.

³⁹ Szacherska 1972, pp. 140–141.

⁴⁰ Śliwiński 2003, pp. 282, 287.

⁴¹ Smoliński 2000, pp. 32–33.

⁴² Smoliński 2000, p. 34.

1214, Otto suffered a resounding defeat near Bouvines and abdicated the next year. He died on 19 May 1218.

Otto II the Generous of the Ascanian dynasty, the margrave of Brandenburg, a son of Otto I and Judith of Poland and a grandson of Albert the Bear and Boleslaus III the Wrymouth, came to power in 1184. In the conflict between the Staufer and the Welfs he sided with Philip of Swabia, against Otto IV, and therefore against Denmark. In 1198–1199 while fighting with Denmark he also attacked Western Pomerania and probably conquered considerable territories north-east of Berlin.⁴³ He died on 4th July 1205.

A review of the rulers named Otto does not provide us with a direct answer, but such an answer is most likely not available at all, since Sambor I hardly appears in any sources. No direct relation between Sambor and any of the Ottos is documented, but a connection to either of the two latter ones seems feasible. Nevertheless, Sambor, menaced by Denmark, would not search for the protection of such a distant enemy of the Danes as Otto of Brandenburg – since he could not count on any military help – but rather, just like Adolf de Dassel, he would seek a ruler with good relations with Denmark, who had a political influence there. Therefore, Otto IV seems more probable. His rank weighs in his favour as well as the placing of the name of the king of the Romans, emperor *in spe*, on a coin has a different significance than inscribing the name of a margrave, even a mighty one. Furthermore, the cruciform monogram itself has an imperial character. Thus, Sambor may have vied for the king's protection as a basis for the relative independence of Poland and Denmark. This could explain why there is no evidence of him taking part in the military expedition to Pomerania against the Danes, led by Ladislas III the Spindleshanks of Poland in 1205 – that is a question that intrigues many historians.⁴⁴ The use of a king's monogram would mean the establishment of some kind of a direct relationship of dependence. However, the lack of any evidence of Otto IV's interest in Gdańsk and its master in the German sources does not support this explanation (chosen here only as the most probable option when assuming that the monogram OTTO was supposed to refer to a ruler).

The alternative solution is to take the monogram as a reference to a patron saint, as it was with the Bruno monogram in Würzburg. Such a solution is supported by the form of the sign in question, undoubtedly sacralised with the cross

⁴³ Assing 1997, quoted from: http://www.genealogie-mittelalter.de/askanier_2/otto_2_markgraf_von_brandenburg_1205_askanier/otto_2_der_freigebig_e_markgraf_von_brandenburg+_1205.html (access in 2009; unfortunately, the website disappeared later).

⁴⁴ Discussion on the meaning of Ladislas's expedition was summarized by M. Przybył (1998, pp. 59–62). For the possible participation of Sambor, see Smoliński 2000, pp. 29–30.

inserted into the upper letter T, and at the same time, if slightly deformed, as the lower T resembles more a stand than an overturned letter. This suggests that the die sinker carefully copied the monogram from a design project but did not comprehend its meaning. St Otto (born c.1061, the bishop of Bamberg from 1103, died in 1139), organized two Christianizing missions in Pomerania: in 1124–5 and in 1128. Sometime after his death, he was titled the apostle of the Pomeranians, and is credited as the creator of the Pomeranian state's cult specificity,⁴⁵ and was canonized by Pope Clement III in 1189. The canonization bull was announced on 10 August that year at the Imperial Diet in Würzburg,⁴⁶ where not much earlier the idea of a cruciform monogram for the patron saint had appeared. Therefore, it was a newly-sanctioned cult when our coins were struck, although it was still before the canonization when wax for lighting the bishop's grave in Michelsberg Abbey had been sent from Pomerania.⁴⁷ However, the cult had not spread widely, even in Western Pomerania it became noticeable only in the fourteenth century in church and altar dedications.⁴⁸ There is no evidence of it ever appearing in Gdańsk Pomerania – not a church, not even an altar of such dedication was founded in the Middle Ages (but it would require further research into liturgical books to be certain of that). On the other hand, the only act historians quite unanimously ascribe to Sambor I is the one of bringing the Cistercian convent from West-Pomeranian Kołbacz, a place connected with the tradition of Otto's mission and the centre of his cult,⁴⁹ to Oliwa near Gdańsk (in 1186?).⁵⁰ Moreover, it is the Oliwa monastery that provided the intellectual base for the Gdańsk court, where the author of the original symbol, which was used at this court, should be looked for. Furthermore, the author, coming from Kołbacz, practically had to be conscious of a connection between the name of Otto and the venerated bishop of Bamberg. Returning to the analogy of the coin with the name of Mieszko (the Old or the Young), we can point out that its type – two crosiers and a palm surrounded by a halo – has been interpreted by S. Suchodolski as a reference to the veneration of the saints, in this case Wojciech (Adalbert) and the then yet to be canonized Stanislas. Therefore, the analogy here would not be only about the form, but also about the concept of the die, presenting a ruler in the legend and a patron saint in the type.

Both ways of interpreting the Otto monogram – as a foreign ruler or a patron saint – although rather attractive, are open to the charge of a lack of evidence in sources: both for possible clientage or vassal contacts between Sambor and the

⁴⁵ Petersohn 1979, pp. 224–258, 465.

⁴⁶ Lec 2004, p. 32.

⁴⁷ Petersohn 1979, p. 467.

⁴⁸ Petersohn 1979, pp. 468–469; Wejman 2004, p. 44–45.

⁴⁹ Lec 2004, p. 21; Wejman 2004, pp. 43–44.

⁵⁰ Powierski et al. 1993, pp. 187, 189.

king or the margrave, and for the possible cult of St Otto in the Gdańsk district. However, since we were able to formulate only those two poor hypotheses, we need to choose the better one. We know little about Sambor, but this is not the case with the Ottos of Brunswick and of Brandenburg, so we can assume that if they were somehow involved in the affairs of Gdańsk, reports about this would have survived in the sources. Since there is no such mention, associating the coin with the cult of St Otto seems to be the better option, especially considering the fact that this cult was never institutionalized, so we cannot expect its peripheral manifestations to be diligently recorded.

Using the name of a ruler on a coin is surprising not only on account of the person of Sambor I, who hardly appears in any other sources. It is relatively rare on contemporary coins of Central Europe in general, as those were usually anonymous. Furthermore, in Poland, even the names belonging to dukes at first glance were often in fact not of the actual issuers but their ancestors, authorizing the coin of the descendant *in absentia*.⁵¹ Our analysis demonstrates that on the newly-found bracteates there are as many as two personal names, which constitutes a particularly strong message. Considering that the status of Sambor as a ruler was vague, we can assume that the coins carrying such message must have fulfilled an essential role in the formation and stabilization of this status. There is no noble title on them – instead there is a name, as we believe, of a patron saint, inscribed in an almost iconic fashion. Since we expect it to be one of the measures aimed at declaring status and serving as the basis for Sambor's reign, these status and basis might appear strange, probably because of sources lost to us. Still, the very name of Sambor used on a coin must have been *ipso facto* a demonstration against the Polish ruler,⁵² and the monogram of Otto, his patron saint, different from those of Polish dukes, could actually strengthen this demonstration. As Jürgen Petersohn emphasized, Otto of Bamberg during his mission in the state of Wacław I created 'a cult branch of the bishopric of Bamberg, and Poland played no part in its sacred foundation'.⁵³ This belief that the newly created Pomeranian bishopric, despite its patron saint being St Adalbert, was totally isolated from Poland in terms of cult – as Stanisław Rosik proved – does not seem to be correct.⁵⁴ However, it reflects the otherness of religious ties, associated with the cult of St Otto. Therefore, it may be that a reference to Otto the patron saint had a stronger separatist meaning than a reference to Otto the German king.

⁵¹ Suchodolski 1993.

⁵² Discussing an earlier find from Olejarna Street, B. Paszkiewicz admitted: 'We cannot state whether the coins found in Gdańsk were minted on the strength of Gdańsk *principes*' power or on the behalf of the great duke of Cracow – there are no names on them' (Paszkiewicz 2004b, p. 14).

⁵³ Petersohn 1979, pp. 261, 456–471.

⁵⁴ Rosik 2010, pp. 620ff.

Judging by later coins and the die from Olejarna Street, the following rulers of Gdańsk did not understand the original meaning of the monogram of Otto, nor its significance. The fact that the cult of St Otto never became popular in Gdańsk Pomerania may be the cause. The out-dated monogram was probably regarded as a characteristic emblem of Gdańsk coins, one of the symbols of its master, and it was sporadically used – in new stylizations – on the following issues, introduced as a part of the cyclic *renovatio monetae*. The survival of the modified monogram of Otto Gdańsk coins is yet more proof that the bracteates from the hoard found on Tartaczna Street belonged to Sambor I, because Sambor II not only never ruled in Gdańsk, but was also often an enemy of its rulers.

Above we raised the issue of the stylistic similarity of the bracteate of Sambor I and the one with a name of Mieszko (the Old of Cracow or the Young of Racibórz) on it. Building any historiographic entities on such grounds does not seem prudent, as it is distinctly proven by the striking similarity of the bracteate of the Polish Duchess Helen from the close of the twelfth century and a contemporary coin of the Jaromar I, Duke of Rugia.⁵⁵ The makers of coin dies – at least those well-made – of this period, as we can see later, were probably travelling experts, rather uninfluenced by political connections between rulers. However, we cannot ignore the fact that Sambor I was undoubtedly an ally of Kazimir II the Just (1177–94),⁵⁶ just as Mieszko the Young after receiving Bytom and Oświęcim from him, his uncle. After the death of Kazimir, Mieszko the Young returned to the camp of Mieszko the Old. We do not know what were the political choices of Sambor in that period, but we can surmise that the all-important factor was who controlled Kujawy; and this was Mieszko the Old until 1202, followed by his son Ladislas the Spidleshanks and, from 1206, by the sons of Kazimir the Just: Lestek and Conrad. All the chaos in the circles of central power possibly helped the master of Gdańsk to broaden the scope of his authority and brought him closer to independence, regardless of his actual aspirations.⁵⁷ It appears that although Duke Kazimir after his accession could change the master of Gdańsk, it was not the case for Mieszko when restored to power to be able to dismiss Kazimir's nominee. This may be the very moment – Kazimir's unexpected death, factional struggles in Cracow and the inconclusive, bloody battle on the Mozgawa – when Sambor was able to use his own name on a coin – a step undoubtedly reflecting the strengthening of his position and prestige. This hypothesis let us date the bracteates with the name of Sambor back to c.1195 but it needs to be stated that the ground of this hypothesis is not certain enough. One can only assume the period between the years 1195–1207 as highly probable.

⁵⁵ Paszkiewicz 2000.

⁵⁶ Powierski et al. 1993, p. 195.

⁵⁷ Cf. Powierski et al. 1993, pp. 196–197.

Are the newly-found bracteates the first coins of Sambor I? Probably not, although his name appears exclusively on these. On eight of the coins found on Tartaczna Street there are traces of cold restriking from other bracteates (Figs. 31–33). The phenomenon of striking bracteates on older coins without re-melting them was rather common, but is hardly noted in any publications as it is hard to recognize.⁵⁸ It was connected with *renovatio monetae* – the coinage system that resulted in the bracteate form of money. It required the instant restriking of all the coins circulating in a certain district to new ones, and the coinage profit was not necessarily made on the change of the rate of mintage, but rather on the non-equivalent relation of the exchange.⁵⁹ In this situation, restriking an old coin with a new die saved time, silver (every re-melting causes losses) and labour. Of course, there is no rule saying that it was always the previous issue of bracteates restruck in the same district, but it is the most probable situation.



Fig. 31. Traces of a previous die impression over bracteate No. 11 from the Tartaczna I hoard, Gdańsk; scale 3:1. Photo R. Janczukowicz.

On five out of 25 coins of Sambor the traces of restrike are clear enough to let us recognize beyond doubt their original types – the same for all of them. In such a situation, we can suppose in all likelihood that it was the previous, directly preceding issue of Gdańsk Pomerania. We cannot assume that it was also one

⁵⁸ Paszkiewicz 2006, p. 121.

⁵⁹ Szczurek 2007, pp. 42–47; also about restriking.



Fig. 32. Traces of a previous die impression over the bracteate No. 17 from the Tartaczna I hoard, Gdańsk; scale 3:1. Photo R. Janczukowicz.



Fig. 33. Traces of a previous die impression over the bracteate No. 22 from the Tartaczna I hoard, Gdańsk; scale 3:1. Photo R. Janczukowicz.

of Sambor's, since it is possible that he had begun his coinage with the OTTO monogram type, so it requires further research.

On the restruck type of coins, there was an upper part of a male figure en face, his hands raised in a gesture of prayer, his head bare or covered with a flat cap, dressed in a coat fastened by a round fibula on the chest. On the top of his head, there is an indistinct pellet. This *Orans* type is already known, although it only

recently appeared in publications. One specimen was in a hoard found in the area of Cracow's historical centre in 1999 (Fig. 34). It weighs 0.21 g and measures 18.4 mm in diameter.⁶⁰ In the context of that hoard, in respect of style and measurements, it seemed similar to the so-called Rataje bracteates from the 1220s and the 1230s, but eventually it was categorized as an unspecified Polish coin. The hoard from Cracow was characterized by a considerable time range of Polish coins, containing coins of Mieszko III from 1173–1177/9, as well as a penny from Greater Poland, belonging to Przemysław I and Boleslaus the Pious, only struck since 1249.⁶¹ In addition, its geographical range was extensive as it contained coins from North and South Germany and from England. A Gdańsk coin from the last decade of the twelfth century is unexpected here, but not very unusual. This conclusion drawn from the analyses of the hoard containing Sambor coins, proved correct in less than a year, on 1 April 2010, when a similar hoard was excavated from the same trench. This 'Tartaczna II' hoard contained c.12 bracteates glued together. All of them represent the *Orans* type.



Fig. 34. East Pomerania, the *Orans* type bracteate from the 1999 Cracow hoard (Haczewska and Paszkiewicz 2004, no. II.5), scale c.1.5:1. Private collection.
Photo Warszawskie Centrum Numizmatyczne (sale 20, no. 68).

The form of the bracteate with an orans is by no means similar in appearance to the coin with Sambor's name on it: it is composed and made in a different way, and most importantly, it is purely iconic, while the other one was epigraphic, so it uses different means of communicating ideas. However, it is coincident in composition, style, technique and means of communication with a bracteate with a helmeted half-figure facing, found in the hoard from Olejarna Street in Gdańsk (Fig. 35). The aforementioned Olejarna site contained not only a mint die, but also a hoard of bracteates, just as small and consisting of only two types, known from no other source: those with an armed man (twelve) and with a dragon (one). Such homogenous, small bracteate hoards are typical for the system of *renovatio*

⁶⁰ Haczewska and Paszkiewicz 2006, p. 92, no. II.5, Fig. 29; Garbaczewski 2002, p. 111, no. 202; Garbaczewski 2007, pp. 256–257, Fig. 502.

⁶¹ On the matter of the dating of the latter coin, see Paszkiewicz 2009.

monetae and usually consist of one group of coins from the same circulation and period. Therefore, we can assume in all likelihood that the coins from the Olejarna hoard, firstly, those with the armed man, are also from Gdańsk. The general analysis of their form places them in the first half of the thirteenth century. Dating by archaeological criteria suggests the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth century, as far as the 1220s,⁶² and in light of our research only the beginning of this period is plausible.



Fig. 35. East Pomerania, the *Armed bust* bracteate from the Olejarna hoard, Gdańsk; scale c.1.5:1. Museum of Archaeology, Gdańsk. Photo K. Wiącek.

Coins from Olejarna Street weight 0.20–0.27 g and measure c.18 mm in diameter. Those parameters are similar to or slightly higher than those of Tartaczna Street. There are no traces of restrikes, but it is possible – although uncertain – that one of the bracteates with the name of Sambor was restruck using a bracteate with an armed ruler like those found in Olejarna. Even if it was not, the *Sambor* bracteates and the ones with an armed ruler are from a similar time frame, despite their completely different styles. In the case of the bracteate with an orans and those with an armed ruler, the similarity lies in their only slightly protruding convex ring and flat margin, as well as the manner of depicting faces. As we already know, after minting the *Orans* bracteate, a die-cutter working for Mieszko III or IV was entrusted with the cutting of a new die, the one with the OTTO monogram. It does not seem likely that this die-cutter was employed just for this one issue and the next dies were again made by the previous craftsman, so it appears that firstly the coins with the armed ruler from the Olejarna Street hoard were made, than the *Orans* bracteate, and lastly, the bracteates with the name of Sambor found on Tartaczna Street. Such a conclusion might seem surprising since the form of the bracteates from Olejarna Street, with a wide collar and a slightly convex edge – a harbinger of the future convex ring – seems more developed than the flat bracteates that have a legend in the margin as the coin with a monogram. This is not an unreasonable impression, but both forms are actually Polish miniaturizations of the shapes used in Germany in the twelfth century. Bracteates

⁶² Kościński 2003, pp. 33–34.

with a collar and a convex ring were minted in Germany already in the 1170s.⁶³ Thus, there is no anachronism in dating the coins from Olejarna back to the close of twelfth century.

The depiction of the frontal half-figure of an orans devoid of attributes is hard to interpret. A saint seems to be the most probable option here. Analogies which are the closest in time and space are the coins of West-Pomeranian Duke Bogislaw I from the years 1180–c.1183 (formerly ascribed to Sławno). The bust of an orans on those coins is characterized by curly hair and a distinctive beard, which is not the case with the Gdańsk bracteates, so the meaning of the depiction is different. Due to the lack of a halo, this orans is interpreted as a ruler.⁶⁴ Perhaps the Christianization of Pomerania that took place at that time made the masters of Szczecin and Gdańsk use such untypical depictions on their coins, but since there is no other analogy to secular rulers, showing a saint in that pose is much more probable. The lack of a halo on such a limited space is no obstacle in this interpretation, as there exists a number of such examples. In West Pomerania, this orans may represent St Bartholomew or St James the Greater, the local patron saints.⁶⁵ Similar depictions of St Stephen appear on the bracteates of the bishopric of Halberstadt. St Stephen is depicted in the robe of a deacon, with no similar round fibula visible. It seems reasonable to simply assume that the theme of the earlier Gdańsk coin is the same as of the next one – St Otto the Bishop – just expressed by different means. The pellet on the top of the head might be a reduced tonsure – such a shape appears on early bracteates of Archbishop Conrad I of Magdeburg⁶⁶ and this interpretation would also answer the question as to why there is no mitre which became widespread around the close of the twelfth century.⁶⁷ Alas, it does not dispel all doubts.

Our observations lead us to believe that when Sambor I came to power in the Gdańsk district he also began to issue coins for the local market (and for the prince's treasure, regardless of if it was his own). At this point we cannot determine whether it was a continuation of coinage existing in Gdańsk by then or did Sambor himself start it – and if the latter, was it very shortly after taking office (rather than a throne) about 1177–79, or only in the 1190s, since the sequence of three types we have just established seems to be from the latter period. Either way, he did act initially in the name of a supreme duke whose figure (an armed ruler) or allegory (a dragon), known from Polish coins, appear on the Gdańsk bracteates

⁶³ Cf. e.g. Berger 1993, nos. 1659–73 – coins of Brandenburg; Hävernäck 2009, plates I–VI.

⁶⁴ Horoszko 2008, pp. 139–141.

⁶⁵ Paszkiewicz, in press.

⁶⁶ Bonhoff 1977, nos. 625 and 626.

⁶⁷ Bogacka 2008, pp. 41–49, 98–99.

from Olejarna Street. The third small hoard from the Tartaczna site consisting of various Polish bracteates concealed c.1200, suggests that coins from outside Gdańsk Pomerania were considered silver only. In the face of a power struggle in the Cracow centre, Sambor gradually became independent – also by means of coinage. The cult of a different patron saint was also supposed to be a step towards emancipation, and the canonization of Otto of Bamberg, a missionary once working in the Pyrzyce–Szczecin district, in 1189 gave him this opportunity. Then it was decided that both the name of the master and of the patron saint supporting him, should be emphasized on a coin. An outside die-sinker, from the area of Cracow or Racibórz, was assigned the task. The continuation of Gdańsk monetary history is still only known in fragments.⁶⁸

One more matter we wish to emphasize is that the Gdańsk coin identified in the hoard from Cracow – the bracteate with the orans – is the first recognized pre-Teutonic East-Pomeranian coin found outside of its motherland. It seems that, contrary to current beliefs, coins struck in Gdańsk could circulate around the whole country; we were just unable to recognize them until now. It is yet another observation that might find its continuation in the course of research into coins from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries found on Tartaczna Street.

As we can see, the find of coins with the name of Sambor is not only a numismatic and archaeological discovery, but *sensu stricto* also a historical one, and since it touches upon a controversial period that former sources did not shed much light on – it is indeed a discovery of utmost importance for the early medieval history of Gdańsk Pomerania. Our attempts to interpret it are just hints towards the directions that future research may pursue.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Paszkiewicz 2014.

⁶⁹ This paper, presented in its early form at the symposium of ‘Early Medieval Pomerania in the light of archaeological evidence’ in Gdańsk, October 2009, was delivered a month later in an expanded form in a session of the Numismatic Commission of the Historical Sciences Committee, Polish Academy of Sciences, in Warsaw on 27 November 2009. We are grateful for all the comments that helped us in a critical presentation of the issues, and would like to thank all the participants from both meetings, especially Professors: Klemens Bruski, the late Andrzej Zbierski, Sławomir Gawlas and Stanisław Suchodolski. Of course, responsibility for any mistakes and oversights lies with the authors of this work. For the Polish version see Ceynowa & Paszkiewicz 2014.

List of the coins from the Tartaczna Street I hoard, Gdańsk

Fig.	catalogue number	field number	weight	diameter	notes
1	1025	3716/1	0.260 g	17.1 mm	
2	1026	3716/2	0.174 g	18.1 mm	bent in 1/3
3	1027	3716/3	0.208 g	18.1 mm	restruck on a bracteate with an orans , bent in 1/2
4	1028	3716/4	0.155 g	17.1 mm	
5	1029	3716/5	0.156 g	17.2 mm	bent in 1/3
6	1030	3716/6	0.134 g	17.0 mm	bent edge
7	1031	3716/7	0.180 g	17.2 mm	two cuts by the edge
8	1032	3716/8	0.164 g	17.5 mm	bent in 1/3
9	1033	3716/9	0.174 g	17.1 mm	bent in 1/2, slightly chipped edge
10	1034	3716/10	0.154 g	18.0 mm	restruck , chipped edge
11	1035	3716/11	0.155 g	18.3 mm	restruck on a bracteate with an orans
12	1036	3716/12	0.180 g	18.9 mm	restruck , chipped edge, bent edge
13	1037	3716/13	0.186 g	18.0 mm	bent edge
14	1038	3716/14	0.122 g	18.2 mm	slightly bent
15	1039	3716/15	0.162 g	17.5 mm	restruck on a bracteate with an orans
16	1040	3716/16	0.149 g	17.3 mm	
17	1041	3716/17	0.175 g	18.0 mm	restruck on a bracteate with an orans
18	1042	3716/18	0.164 g	17.4 mm	
19	1043	3716/19	0.216 g	17.9 mm	
20	1044	3716/20	0.179 g	18.0 mm	restruck, possibly on a bracteate with a knight
21	1045	3716/21	0.165 g	17.8 mm	chipped edge
22	1046	3716/22	0.146 g	19.0 mm	restruck on a bracteate with an orans ; chipped
23	1047	3716/23	0.188 g	17.7 mm	slightly bent
24	1048	3716/24	0.097 g	17.8 mm	
25	1049	3716/25	0.183 g	18.3 mm	

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SAMBOR I i OTTO Z BAMBERGU NA WCZESNYCH MONETACH GDAŃSKICH

(Streszczenie)

Podczas wykopalisk prowadzonych od lutego 2008 r. przez Zbigniewa Misiuka na terenie dwunastowiecznej osady miejskiej w Gdańsku, na stanowisku Tartaczna, znaleziono wśród blisko 500 monet skarb złożony wyłącznie z 25 nieznanych dotąd brakteatów. Opatrzony są w pełni czytelnym imieniem SAMBOR oraz figurą zinterpretowaną jako krzyżowy monogram imienia Otto, dodatkowo uświęcony przekształceniem jednej z liter T w krzyżyk. Chronologia znaleziska i jego analogii wskazuje, że chodzi o Sambora I, uważanego przez jednych historyków za namiestnika (margrabiego), przez innych za księcia gdańskiego (1177/9–1207). Monogram Ottona stanowi najprawdopodobniej odniesienie do św. Ottona z Bambergu, kanonizowanego w 1189 r. i określanego jako apostoł Pomorzan.

Użycie imienia władcy na polskiej monecie z tego czasu jest rzadkie, a w przypadku władcy o tak niejasnych kompetencjach jak Sambor, ma szczególne walory manifestacji politycznej. Koresponduje z tym odwołanie do św. Ottona, które może w takiej sytuacji odzwierciedlać dążenie władcy Gdańska do niezależności od polskich książąt również w aspekcie kultowym. Być może, jest to rezultat szczególnie sprzyjającej takiemu dążeniu sytuacji politycznej, jaka powstała w 1195 r.

Część brakteatów nosi ślady przebiccia i tam, gdzie można zidentyfikować poprzedni typ, jest to za każdym razem typ *Orant*, znany dotychczas tylko z jednego egzemplarza ze skarbu z Krakowa (1999). Wniosek, że był to poprzedni typ brakteatów gdańskich, został potwierdzony ujawnionym w rok później drugim skarbem brakteatowym z tego samego wykopu, złożonym z ok. 12 brakteatów tego właśnie typu. Wykazuje on z kolei podobieństwo warsztatowe i zbieżność metrologiczną z typem odkrytym wcześniej w podobnie homogenicznym skarbie z niedalekiego wykopu przy ul. Olejarnej: popiersie zbrojnego władcy. Byłyby to więc jeszcze jeden wczesny typ brakteatów gdańskich, może wybity przez Sambora jeszcze w imieniu zwierzchniego władcy Polski. *Orant* z brakteatów mógłby być również św. Ottonem, a wszystkie te typy (i może także brakteat ze smokiem, pojedynczo znaleziony w skarbie z ul. Olejarnej) byłyby początkiem gdańskiej emisji brakteatów.

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