

МУЗЕЙНЫЕ КОЛЛЕКЦИИ

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A history of Slav princes and Russian grand duchesses — the Schwerin Coin Cabinet

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Located in the northeast of Germany and once inhabited by the Slavs, Mecklenburg-Schwerin enjoys more than a thousand-year history. The collection of the Schwerin Museum was formed from a collection of Dutch paintings, collected by Christian Ludwig II of Mecklenburg, who lived in the 18th century. Over time, the collection expanded. Now in its funds are stored such masterpieces, as works of Rembrandt, Rubens, Brueghel the Elder. The twentieth century is represented by the works of Picasso, Lieberman, Duchamp. In the Engraving Room — a collection of engravings from Durer to Nolde. Department of arts and crafts stores a collection of weapons, porcelain, coins and medals. Schwerin coin (numismatic) cabinet is a part of the State Museum of Schwerin. It is located in the historic part of the city. The collection of the Cabinet includes 30 000 coins and medals, cover a vast historical period, beginning with the Middle Ages (from the 10th century) and up to the present day. Most of the museum items in this collection were made in Mecklenburg. The numismatic cabinet has a collection of German and European coins, Mecklenburg marks and letters with extremely rare postmarks of the 18th and 19th centuries. Coins and medals are an important historical source, can serve as a basis for solving a number of problems of historical chronology: they are an excellent material for establishing (specifying) dating. Numismatic collections allow you to reconstruct important aspects of political, economic and cultural life in the Middle Ages, as well as in the era of early modern times. The article introduces the history of Mecklenburg, and also offers a characterization of the Schwerin numismatic cabinet. The text of the article uses selected samples of coins and medals from the collection, which illustrate important historical events.
Keywords: Coin Cabinet, Mecklenburg, bracteate, crown, Albrecht von Wallenstein, Glückstaler, medal, Russia.

1. Mecklenburg — a brief historic outline

Mecklenburg can look back over a thousand years of history: once populated by the Slavs (Obotrites), the state was later shaped in the High Middle Ages by the eastward expansion of the Germans.¹ In 1348, the future Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1346–1378) elevated Mecklenburg to a direct imperial fiefdom, promoting the ruling lords or princes to dukes.² At the start of the Early Modern era, the state was a serious power in the southern Baltic region. The dukes made full use of their freedom of action, and had strong national and international networks.³ Subsequently however conflicts within the Obotrite dynasty weakened this position — territorial partition became the rule. During the Thirty Years' War, Mecklenburg was caught between all the fronts, and for a brief time was even ruled by Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583–1634) as duke at the royal residence in Güstrow.⁴

In the “Stände” or estates (bodies made up of the knights and the townships), the dukes faced powerful forces which succeeded in withstanding their absolutist efforts.⁵ Frequently — not only in this confrontation — the Holy Roman Emperor intervened in events in Mecklenburg, which eventually led to him making an example of it, almost unparalleled in the Holy Roman Empire: issuing a decree that suspended the rule of Duke Charles Leopold (1713–1747) and passed it to his younger brother Christian Louis (1747–1756) as imperial administrator. However, one thing always united all the Dukes of Mecklenburg: as courtly life evolved they constantly endeavoured to maintain connections with the leading dynasties at home and abroad. Economic life in Mecklenburg was shaped by agriculture, with the nobility substantially expanding their domains into the hinterland of the Baltic.⁶ Above all, the port cities of Rostock and Wismar played an important part in the history of Mecklenburg. Both cities belonged to the Hanseatic League, which had an exceptional influence on the region of north-east Germany.

The violent dispute over sovereignty between the reigning dukes and the estates in Mecklenburg in the first half of the 18th century ended with the conclusion of the fundamental law of the state, the hereditary settlement of 1755.⁷ In this settlement, Duke Christian Louis II of Mecklenburg-Schwerin confirmed all the rights and freedoms of the estates. At the same time he accepted the co-governance of the estates. In return, the duke declared his willingness to pay taxes based on “half of the hooves of his animals”. However, the hereditary settlement applied not only to Mecklenburg-Schwerin: Duke Adolf Frederick IV (1738–1794) of Mecklenburg-Strelitz also consented to the agreement (the two areas of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz arose after the Treaty of Ham-

¹ Cf. in general North, 2008; Karge, Münch, Schmied, 2011.

² Cf. Münch, 1999; Schmidt, 1999.

³ Cf. Jörn, North, 1999; Auge, 2009; North, 2011.

⁴ Cf. finally the volume: Terra felix Mecklenburg — Wallenstein in Norddeutschland. Fiktion und Machtkalkül des Herzogs von Mecklenburg, International Conference 7–9 November 2008 at Schloss Güstrow, pub. by Staatliches Museum Schwerin / Ludwigslust / Güstrow and Landesmarketing Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (Publikationen des Lehrstuhls für Nordische Geschichte 12) // Greifswald: Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-University of Greifswald. 2010.

⁵ Cf. Wick, 1964; on the conflict of the Mecklenburg Stände as a whole cf. Jahns, Sigrid. “Mecklenburgisches Wesen” oder absolutistisches Regiment. Mecklenburgischer Ständekonflikt und neue kaiserliche Reichspolitik (1658–1755), in: Heinig (ed.), 2000.

⁶ On the role of the nobility in Mecklenburg cf. Karge (ed.), 2012; Karge (ed.), 2013; Jacobs, 2014.

⁷ Cf. Krüger, 1999. p.91–108; Manke, Münch (ed.), 2006 (printed in the annex to the Landesgrundgesetzliche Erbvergleich of 18 April 1755); Busch, 2013.

burg in 1701). The fundamental law of hereditary settlement was effectively a victory of the estates, sanctioning as it did the dominant position of the knights and the townships, but above all the knights. Efforts by the Duke of Schwerin Frederick (1756–1785) and Grand Duke Frederick Francis I (1785–1837) to profit from later urban disputes and drive back the co-governance of the estates failed. Uniquely in German constitutional history, the hereditary settlement of 1755 remained part of the fundamental law of Mecklenburg until 1918.

2. The Schwerin Coin Cabinet

The capital of what is now the Federal State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schwerin lies in the north-east of Germany — roughly 200 km north-west of Berlin and 80 km east of Hamburg.⁸ The Schwerin Coin Cabinet is part of the Staatliches Museum Schwerin, which itself is part of the larger association of the Staatliche Schlösser, Gärten und Kunstsammlungen Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. The museum is situated in Alter Garten, at the heart of the old royal seat of Mecklenburg. Efforts to have the parts royal estate declared a UNESCO world heritage site have been under way for some time. The coming years will show whether Schwerin becomes renowned worldwide as a result. The museum primarily displays paintings — it has an internationally-renowned collection of Dutch Masters.⁹ The collection of coins and medals is housed in a villa near the museum, beside Lake Schwerin (Fig. 1). The villa at Werderstraße 141 was constructed between 1862 and 1864 as a prestigious residence for the Grand-Ducal Hofmarschall Otto Henning Freiherr von Stenglin (1802–1885). Following decades of private use, after the Second World War it served as the headquarters of the Soviet military command. When the Russian forces withdrew in 1994, the villa passed into the ownership of the Federal State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, which then transferred it to the museum. Essential conversion work on the building led to the installation of stores, offices, workshops, and a library for the graphic collection and the Coin Cabinet; visitors can also examine the pieces in a study room.

The Coin Cabinet has an inventory of 30,000 coins and medals.¹⁰ These date back to the Middle Ages, the Early Modern era and the Modern era — in other words, from the 10th century to date. Most are pieces which were manufactured in Mecklenburg. Hence, the Cabinet has the most complete collection of such pressings not only in Germany, but also worldwide. Rounding off the numismatic department there is an array of German and European coins. The cabinet also holds a selection of historic decorations and medals. The collection of Mecklenburg stamps and letters with extremely rare postmarks from the 18th and 19th centuries is probably also unique. An exhibition on the history of Mecklenburg coins can be seen at Schloss Güstrow. Medals are also on display at the castles of Schwerin and Ludwigslust.

As with many other museums in cities which were royal seats, the collections were originally made by the nobility. In other words, they derive from the collection of art as a means of representation of rulership.¹¹ This gave rise to special chambers of art and

⁸ On the history of Schwerin, cf. Kasten, Rost, 2005; Ruchhöft, 2017.

⁹ Cf. Berswordt-Wallrabe (ed.), 2000; Berswordt-Wallrabe, (ed.), 2003; Seelig, 2010.

¹⁰ Cf. Virk, 1988.

¹¹ It is hard to sum up the literature on royal connections by now; for a quick introduction cf. North (ed.), 2002; Korsch, 2005. p. 347–355; Spénlé, 2008. Spec. 351–359.



Fig. 1. The Schwerin Coin Cabinet. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

of wonders, where every variety of item was stored and displayed, naturally including coins and medals.¹² This was also the case in Schwerin. The first inventories recording the coins date back to the 16th century. Naturally not every duke was a keen numismatist — but there were exceptions. The heir to the Mecklenburg-Schwerin throne, Louis (1725–1778), father of Frederick Francis I, had a truly impressive collection of coins and medals which was often cited as an example of a royal collection. As early as 1700, Johann Gröning, a scholar from Wismar, stated with regard to coins, “Die Fürsten / welchen oft ihre Tugenden mehr Glantz als ihre Geburth ertheilet / finden darinnen nicht geringen Theil ihres Divertissements, und wird man wenig in Europa finden / so sich nicht für eine sonderliche Ehre halten / davon ein schön Cabinet zu haben.” [“The princes / that often their virtues more glory than their birth do give / find in them not a little part of their diversions, and one will find few in Europe / who do not feel it a special honour / to have a fine cabinet of them.”]¹³

Hereditary Prince Louis was intensely interested in the pieces and understood their significance — his collection later formed the basis of the Schwerin Coin Cabinet. The English scholar Thomas Nugent (circa 1700–1772) wrote of his visit to Louis on 1st December 1766, “Gestern war Prinz Ludwig so gnädig und zeigte mir seine Münzsammlung, sie ist, nächst der Neumannschen in Rostock, wohl die vollständigste hier im ganzen Lande. Es verging uns dieser ganze Morgen mit diesem Geschäfte und bei dieser Gelegenheit bemerkte ich, daß der Prinz ein sehr großer Kenner von Münzen ist.” [“Yesterday, Prince Louis was so gracious and showed me his coin collection, it is, besides that of Neumann in Rostock, by far the most complete here in the entire land. We passed the entire morning

¹² Cf. DaCosta Kaufmann, 1993. p. 174–194; Collet, 2008; Bredekamp, 2012; Befler, 2012.

¹³ [Gröning, Johann.] Das geöffnete Müntz-Cabinet, Oder Einleitung / wie solche Wissenschaft leichte zu erlernen / was zu Erkäntnüß der Antiquen und Modernen Müntzen erfordert werde / und wie solche nützlich zu gebrauchen. Sampt Beschreibung der berühmtesten Müntz-Cabinetten und Scribenten in Europa // Hamburg: Schiller. 1700 (4th Edition 1715). P.2.

with this activity and at this opportunity I noted that the Prince is a very great expert on coins.”]¹⁴ The following passage does not relate directly to the Ludowinger coin collection, but it is repeated here nevertheless, as it remains true today, “Überhaupt ist die Kenntnis der Münzen eines Landes gewiß eine beträchtliche Hilfsquelle zur Geschichte desselben, denn sie befriedigt nicht nur auf eine angenehme Art unsere Neugierde, sondern klärt uns auch viele Begebenheiten auf, die uns ohne Numismatik immer dunkel geblieben sein würden.” [“In general, the knowledge of the coins of a land is surely a considerable source to the history thereof, for it not only satisfies in a pleasing way our curiosity, but also clarifies for us many incidents, which without numismatics would have remained forever dark to us.”] With this in mind, I would like in the following to present various coins and medals from the inventory of the Schwerin Coin Cabinet that uniquely illustrate the mediaeval and Early Modern history of Mecklenburg.

3. Ad fontes

3.1. The Middle Ages: Bull’s Head Bracteates and Crowns

The Mecklenburg dukes began to issue coins after 1200.¹⁵ The first minting period stretches from 1201 to 1220, the second from 1225 to 1245; there are a great many coin finds for these periods.¹⁶ The bull’s head was used as a coin image, which became known as Stierkopfabrakteates, or “bull’s head bracteates” (Fig. 2). Choice of this symbol can be seen as a reference to an indigenous animal that is characterised by its power and strength: the aurochs.¹⁷ The Slav lords were familiar with the use of symbols of authority through their contact with German rulers, such as Duke Henry the Lion (Duke of Saxony 1142–1180, Duke of Bavaria 1156–1180, died 1195), whose lion bracteates had been widely distributed.¹⁸ In a rare instance of disclosure, the lord of the mint named himself on a pressing: “Heinricvs de Brvnswic svm leo” (I, Henry of Braunschweig, am a lion).¹⁹ The rulers of Mecklenburg used the bull’s head as the central heraldic figure from around 1219.²⁰

As already mentioned, the history of Mecklenburg cannot be written without the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, for he it was that in 1348 raised the land to the rank of a direct imperial fiefdom. So naturally a prestigious coin of the Luxembourger had to be acquired for the Schwerin collection when the opportunity arose in the coin trade. Therefore, a crown that the Emperor is believed to have had struck in Antwerp after 1355 was purchased in 2007 (Fig. 3).²¹ The oldest French gold coin is the écu d’or (its

¹⁴ Nugent, 2000. P.370, there also the following quotation.

¹⁵ Cf. Uecker, Kunzel, 1989. P. 29–64. — Shortly prior to this, the Counts of Schwerin struck bracteates with their symbolic figure, the lindwurm.

¹⁶ The early rulers’ coins are above all evident in the finds from Bünstorf (1827), Bokel (1928), Tommerup (1775), Stintenburg (1842), Roggentin (1869), Kanneberg (1885), Eutin (1904), Karrin (1937) and Gielow (1974).

¹⁷ Cf. Schütt, 2011. P. 43.

¹⁸ For quick reference: Berger, 1993; Leschhorn, 2015, here 1. Cf. Stieldorf, 2016. here p. 107-109.

¹⁹ Berger, Brakteaten, p. 78f. No. 582–585; Leschhorn, Münzen, p. 252 No. 1268. Cf. Jäckel, Dirk. Der Herrscher als Löwe. Ursprung und Gebrauch eines politischen Symbols im Früh- und Hochmittelalter. *Beihefte zum Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 60 (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna: Böhlau. 2006), 55f.

²⁰ Schütt, Schild und Flagge. P. 43.

²¹ Fried, 2016. P. 587.



Fig. 2. Mecklenburg, principality, bracteate, undated [1225–1245], Ø 19 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

names in French and German — Schildgulden — meaning literally “golden shield” derive from the coin image). On the face are the three fleur de lys — the emblem of the French monarchy since the 12th century. Later crowns portrayed the enthroned king, resulting in the term “écu à la chaise” or simply “chaise”. This type of coin was much copied, for instance in south-western Europe (Navarre, Portugal), but also in the Netherlands. The Holy Roman Emperor Louis (known as “the Bavarian”) (1314–1347) initiated a sizeable issue of such pieces in Antwerp. This was continued by his successor Charles IV, however in far smaller quantities. So today such pressings are very rare, unlike those that Louis the Bavarian had made.²² The crown of Charles IV shows the Emperor seated on a Gothic throne with sword raised, with the double-headed eagle shield on the right. The circumscription reads: KAROLVS DEI — GRA — ROMANORVM IMP (Karolus Dei Gratia Romanorum Imperator). The reverse is dominated by an ornamental cross in quatrefoil. Here, the circumscription reads: XPC VINCIT XPC REGNAT XPC IMPERAT (Christus vincit Christus regnat Christus imperat).

shield on the right. The circumscription reads: KAROLVS DEI — GRA — ROMANORVM IMP (Karolus Dei Gratia Romanorum Imperator). The reverse is dominated by an ornamental cross in quatrefoil. Here, the circumscription reads: XPC VINCIT XPC REGNAT XPC IMPERAT (Christus vincit Christus regnat Christus imperat).



Fig. 3. Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, Crown after 1355, Ø 29 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

Initially, crowns were used as a means of payment, although the vast majority of the people will never have held such coins in their hands, since their high value meant that they could hardly be used for everyday transactions. Nevertheless, crowns were greatly

²² Cf. Fried, 2009. P.465–491, here p. 475–477.

appreciated in politics and trade for major monetary transactions. Besides their monetary function, the pieces served yet another purpose, that is, as a means of representation of royal power, since rulers constantly needed to legitimise their power in the Middle Ages. Therefore, the dukes had to use money to present themselves as rulers, and at the same time the coins they minted also served as a means of this representation. The gold coins issued by Charles IV are a unique indication of how the Luxembourgger demonstrated his power in images and text.

3.2. Albrecht von Wallenstein [Valdštejna]

Today, Albrecht von Wallenstein is known to many as a great commander in the Thirty Years' War, not least on account of the play by Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). However, Wallenstein was also Duke of Mecklenburg. The neutral position held by the two Dukes of Mecklenburg Adolf Frederick I (1592–1658) and John Albert II (1611–1636) at the start of the Thirty Years' War could not be maintained in the long term. Their distant relative, the Danish king, Christian IV (1588–1648) persuaded them to join an alliance that aimed to counter the threat to the north from the troops of the Holy Roman Emperor. Defeated at the Battle of Lutter in 1626, Christian IV retreated to Denmark, and led by Tilly (1559–1632) and Wallenstein (1583–1634) the Emperor's troops advanced into Mecklenburg. Wallenstein of Friedland claimed the land for himself — the Emperor first pledged it to him in 1628, then granted it as a hereditary fiefdom. On the other side, following their deposition as “Reichsrebellen” or traitors, the Dukes of Mecklenburg fled into exile in Lübeck.

In just a few years, Albrecht von Wallenstein had risen like a comet, bringing him — a low-ranking Bohemian noble — a foreign Catholic upstart — to the peak of the Duchy of Mecklenburg. Wallenstein well knew that such a change in status had to be set in the right light. As a war entrepreneur and juggler of capital, he was very familiar with coins and other forms of money.²³ And so, from his enfeoffment in 1629, the coins struck in Gitschin (Jičín) and Sagan bore both his new title and the Wallenstein arms with added symbols of Mecklenburg. On a Taler from 1629 the complete inscription on the front and reverse reads: ALBERTVS D(ei) G(ratia) DVX MEGA(polensis) FRI(dlandiae) ET SA(ganae) P(rinceps) VA(ndalorum) COM(es) SVER(ini) DO(minus) ROST(ochii) ET STARGAR(diae), previously however it read ALBERTVS D(ei) G(ratia) DVX FRIDLAN(diae) ET SAGAN(ae) SACRI ROMANI IMPERII PRINCEPS.²⁴

Yet the coins themselves are not the sole proof of Wallenstein's deliberate use of them as a means of depicting political power. We even have directions from him to this effect in written form. His decree states, “Weil auch nach numehr erlangeter investitur wegen dero Herzogthumb Meckelnburg auch die Müntzstöcke geendert Vnd daß geprege nach dero vormehrten Furstlichen wapen vff der Münze wißen wollen, Alß ist auch gleichsals der Cammer anbefohlen, Solchs gehorsamblich zu uorrichten.” [“Since having now achieved investiture on account of his dukedom of Mecklenburg wishing to know the coinage amended and his augmented princely arms struck on coins, as is also likewise recommended to the chamber to undertake such obediently. Date Güstrow on 3 Augusti/24 Julii

²³ Cf. Redlich, 1964f.; Kunisch, 1992. P. 153–161; Leins, 2012.

²⁴ Nohejlová-Prátová, 1969. P. 78.

Anno 1629.”²⁵ Wallenstein expressed himself even more clearly about his motivation for minting coins in a letter from Güstrow to his distant cousin, Maximilian von Waldstein (1599–1655), dated 18th December 1628. This concerned a contract with the Hauptmann of Sagan regarding the mint there, “Du musst nur verkünden, dass ich weder Groschen noch Kreuzer mit dem kaiserlichen Adler prägen will, oder wenn dies (doch) der Fall sein sollte, müsste ich viel mehr Nutzen aus ihnen ziehen (können). Jedoch tue ich dies **nicht um des Nutzens Willen, sondern für das Ansehen (Reputation)**, deswegen verordne es in einer Dir angemessen scheinenden Weise und schau darauf, damit man umgehend Münzen prägt.” [“You (Maximilian von Waldstein — T.F.) must only report that I do not wish to emboss either Groschen or Kreuzer with the Emperor’s eagle, or if this should have to be the case, I would have to get far more benefit from them. However I **do not do this just for its use, but for the prestige (reputation)** (emphasis — T.F.), therefore order it in a way that you believe appropriate, and see to it that coins are struck without delay.”]²⁶

Historical scholarship today sees reputation as a guiding factor in international relationships of the Early Modern era (alongside dynasty, faith, national interest and tradition).²⁷ Therefore, the reason given by Wallenstein for minting coins cannot be rated too highly, making him a war entrepreneur par excellence, who now truly knew how to use money. The fact that he placed his economic interests behind those of his reputation indicates the extraordinary importance that Wallenstein placed on this motif in his conception of himself as a major influence on the interplay of European powers.



Fig. 4. Medal for Albrecht von Wallenstein 1631, 39 × 33 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

Given Albrecht von Wallenstein wished to have coins struck for the sake of his reputation and the financial gain was secondary, it is therefore even more astonishing that he paid no attention to the medium of medals. The only known pieces are those struck by

²⁵ Lisch, *Georg Christian Friedrich*. Wallensteins letzte Kammer- und Hofverordnung bei seinem Abzug aus Mecklenburg, in: *Mecklenburgische Jahrbücher* 36 (1871). P. 49–54, here p. 53.

²⁶ Edition and translation of the letter written in Czech by von Wallenstein [Valdštejna] dated 18 Dezember 1628, in: *Fried*, 2015. P. 491f.

²⁷ Cf. Rohrschneider, 2010.

the medal and coin engraver from Breslau, Hans Rieger (1580–1653) dating to 1631, so we do not know whether Wallenstein had any influence on this minting at all (Fig. 4).²⁸ Yet again it is clear that the use of numismatic means to depict royal rule was not a rigid guiding principle. Coins and medals are ideally suited to this purpose, however every ruler decided for himself in each case whether to use them and if so how. Wallenstein was of course aware of medals. He could not fail to have noticed that his opponents made extensive use of this means of propaganda.²⁹ Yet Wallenstein not only failed to use medals, there are also no known special coins bearing a topical message from him. This despite the fact that the issue of propaganda coins reached a veritable peak precisely at the time of the Swedish siege, 1631 to 1633, in the Thirty Years' War. Whatever the case may be, Albrecht von Wallenstein thoroughly enjoyed knowing that his portrait was on coins commonly in circulation. Here, the generalissimo was perhaps really the “grand economo”, who, besides the royal function of the coins, only recognised their function as a means of payment. This attitude clearly had a bearing on medals: without a monetary function, he was indifferent to such coin-like pressings.

3.3. Glückstaler or lucky coins

Even before Wallenstein came to Mecklenburg, Duke Adolf Frederick I had had coins struck of a kind that had not previously existed and which soon became famous far beyond the country's borders (Fig. 5). Peter Ambrosius Lehmann (1663–1729) included one of these pieces created in 1612 and 1613 in his *Historische Remarques über die neuesten Sachen in Europa*, published in Hamburg in 1699/1700.³⁰ Later, a numismatic term was introduced for these coins: Glückstaler.³¹ Even today, it is hard to ignore the fascination of these extraordinary pressings. On the face, the ruler is shown in magnificent garb, on the reverse, Fortuna, is the goddess of luck, with the motto “Fortune infortune fort une” (fortune, misfortune, and one strong to meet them).³² However, the coin image was not the only difference, but also the metal. Besides the silver normally used for Taler, gold was also minted. And the silver specimens were many times heavier than usual — instead of a normal 28g, some of them reach the astonishing weight of 146g. Were such pieces really needed for everyday cash transactions? Or what moved Adolf Frederick to issue such pressings? Even the ancient master of Mecklenburg numismatics, Carl Friedrich Evers (1729–1803), did not call them coins; for him, they were more like medals.³³

The issuing of such pressings can be identified as one of the processes from around the time of the end of the shared regime of the brothers Adolf Frederick I and John Albert

²⁸ Nohejlová-Prátová, 1969. P.53–55 No. 1–4.

²⁹ Cf. *Münzen in Brauch und Aberglauben. Schmuck und Dekor — Motiv und Amulett — Politische und religiöse Selbstdarstellung*, pub. by German National Museum Nuremberg, catalogue and exhibition: Maué, Hermann, Veit, Ludwig. Mainz: von Zabern. 1982, especially p.11–34 (pieces by Ludwig Veit and Bernhard Overbeck); Heß, Wolfgang. Taler als Träger politischer Ideen, in: Albert (ed.), 1991. P.93–103; Dethlefs, 2005. P.28–45, here p.36.

³⁰ Lehmann, Peter Ambrosius (ed.). *Historische Remarques über die neuesten Sachen in Europa*, 6 (1704). p.25f., p.196; *ibid*, 7 (1705), p.382–384.

³¹ Cf. Schrötter, Friedrich Freiherr von. Glückstaler, 1970. P.227.

³² Kunzel, 1994. P.367 No. G 219–221.

³³ Evers, Carl Friedrich. *Mecklenburgische Münz-Verfassung (1798). Schwerin: Bärensprung*. Reprint with academic introduction by N. Klüßendorf. (Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1983), 83–85; 88–91.



Fig. 5. Duke Adolf Frederick I of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, broad Glückstaler 1613, Ø 45 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

II, which was sealed with the testamentary contract of Fahrenholz on 9th July 1611.³⁴ With it, Adolf Frederick won out after a lengthy struggle. Shortly after signing the contract, he stated with satisfaction, “Also kam dieser schöne revers heraus, worauf dann die losung folgte und mir durch Gottes verhengnus mein von natur und recht mein gebührens väterliches erbe fiel.” [“So this fine reversal [of fortune] arose, whereupon the draw took place and, by God’s good favour, my paternal inheritance due by nature and law fell to me.”] For John Albert however the result of drawing lots led to “melancholy”, as recorded by Samuel von Behr (1575–1621), who was the Privy Council for Adolf Frederick.³⁵

In the end, Adolf Frederick knew that luck had been on his side, and so he had coins minted featuring Fortuna. The motto of Fortuna had been known to him since his youth. He was in particular aware that Archduchess Margaret of Austria (1480–1530, Governor of the Habsburg Netherlands 1518–1530), daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I and Mary of Burgundy, had taken it as her own. This he learned on his trip to France in 1607, when he visited the place where Margaret was buried. In his diary he noted, “Ein virtel Stundt von Bourg hab das Closter Saint Brouy gesehen, welches ein sehr schönes Closter undt schöne Kirche, dieses Closter hadt gestiftet Magireta geborne auß dem Hause Osterich, Hertzogin von Soffoien undt gräffin von Bourgund, welche auch hie begraben, dieselbe hat diese Kirche städtlich gezieret gehabt mit allerley gulden Tapecerey, in sonders mit einem schönen herlichen Althar, welcher auf eine große Suma geldts geschetzt worden [...] in dieser Kirche stehet rings her umb diese Deviso: Fortune infortune fort une.” [“A quarter hour from Bourg [I] saw the Cloister of Saint Brou, a very fine cloister and fine church. This cloister was founded by Margaret born of the house of Austria, Duchess of Savoy and Countess of Burgundy, who is also buried here. The same had this church grandly ornamented with all kinds of golden tapestry, in particular with

³⁴ Cf. Duncker, Gustav. Die zweite mecklenburgische Hauptlandesteilung 1621, in: *Mecklenburgische Jahrbücher* 73 (1908). P. 177–292, here p. 209–221, the following quotation p. 215. For the general context cf. Bei der Wieden, 2012. P. 10–22.

³⁵ *Rosen, Gottlieb von*. Hans Behr der Aeltere, Fürstlich Pommerscher Landrath, Erb-, Leh- und Gerichts-Herr der Hugoldsdorfer Güter und seine Söhne Daniel, Hugold und Samuel. *Lebensbilder aus dem 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: Stargardt, 1896. P. 127.

an exceptionally fine altar, which is valued at a great sum of money [...] in this church is written all around this motto: Fortune infortune fort une.”]³⁶

In any case, Duke of Mecklenburg Adolf Frederick understood that the success of his political actions was an act of providence. So, as well as the Glückstaler he also had medals produced bearing the motif of Fortuna.³⁷ He used them as Gnadenpfennige, that is, honorary awards for exceptional service.³⁸ In the records he himself kept of gifts made in 1614 and 1615, these pieces, also referred to as “conterfeys”, appear repeatedly in different variants: gold and silver, with and without chains, some even set with diamonds.³⁹ After each gift, the duke usually noted its value. Gnadenpfennige functioned as a “social currency”, in which both the ideal and the material worth were perfectly combined. In one case, he even speaks emphatically of a medal (not “conterfey”), and a very special one to boot: “den 28 [April 1614] habe ich Samuel Behren eine Medalie verehret mitt Rubin und Demanten versetzt und in der Mitten die fortune.” [“On the 28th [April 1614] I honoured Samuel Behren with a metal set with rubies and diamonds and in the centre Fortuna.”] Samuel von Behr was none other than the Hofmeister and Privy Council of Adolf Frederick, who had a significant involvement in the Fahrenholz contract. April 28th was not a random choice, as Behr celebrated his birthday on this day. However, Behr does not mention the gift of the medal in his diary, although he does mention a horse which he also received.⁴⁰ The Duke’s esteem of Behr endured even after his death — as he had a magnificent tomb elected for him in the Minster at Doberan.

3.4. Medals

The dynastic relationships between Mecklenburg and Russia first reached a peak when Duke Charles Leopold of Mecklenburg-Schwerin married Catherine Ivanovna (1692–1733), niece of the Tsar Peter I (1672–1725), in April 1716.⁴¹ As part of the celebrations of this event, the Mecklenburg duke was admitted to the Russian Order of St Andrew.⁴² And although Catherine Ivanovna returned home as early as 1722, her abandoned husband retained membership of this order until his death. A not uncommon practice then occurred, i.e. the successor requested to assume the decoration of his predecessor. On 8th November 1749 the “Mecklenburgische Nachrichten” read as follows, “Mittwoche, Vormittags, ist der Herzogl. Ober-Jägermeister, Herr von Bergholz, aus Moscau, dahin er von Ihro Herzogl. Durchl. um den von dem höchstseeligen Hertzoge, Carl Leopold, hinterlassenen Orden

³⁶ Landeshauptarchiv Schwerin (LHAS), 2.12-1/7 Reisen mecklenburgischer Fürsten, No. 79: Tagebuch des Herzogs Adolf Friedrich I. über die Reise von Straßburg nach Lyon 1606–1607.

³⁷ Kunzel, 1995. P.69 No. 22.

³⁸ Cf. Fried, 2017.

³⁹ LHAS, 2.12-1/25 Verschiedene Angelegenheiten des Herzogshauses, No. 2.

⁴⁰ LHAS, 2.12-1/23 Korrespondenzen der Herzöge mit Räten und anderen Amtspersonen, No. 1545: Samuel von Behr’s diaries, 1605–1620.

⁴¹ Cf. Graff, Wilhelm Paul. Die zweite Ehe des Herzogs Karl Leopold. Ein Kulturbild aus Mecklenburg im ersten Viertel des 18. Jahrhunderts, in: Mecklenburgische Jahrbücher 60 (1895). P. 199–308; Lindemann, Martha. Die Heiraten der Romanows und der deutschen Fürstenhäuser im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert und ihre Bedeutung in der Bündnispolitik der Ostmächte (Das Reich und Mitteleuropa 2). Berlin: Dümmler. 1935. P.22f.; Grigorian, Valentina G. Die Romanows und die Mecklenburger Fürsten. Verwandtschaftliche Verflechtungen und Schicksale. Schwerin: Demmler, 2007. P. 10–45; Roll, Christine. Dynastie und dynastische Politik im Zarenreich, in: Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte 8 (2007). P. 77–102, here p. 86–89.

⁴² On the Order of St Andrew cf. *Спасский*, 1963; *Дуров*, 2003.

vom St. Andreas, an Ihre Russisch-Kayserl. Majest. wieder abzugeben, verschickt war, hier zurück gekommen, und hat im Nahmen der Kayserin eben den Orden, welcher in einer besonderen Audienz ihm für Ihre Herzogl. Durchl. zurück gegeben, Höchst-Denenselben überreicht.“ [“Wednesday morning, the Duke’s head huntsman, Herr von Bergholz returned from Moscow, whence he was sent by his Ducal Highness in order to return the Order of St Andrew left by the late Duke, Carl Leopold, to his Imperial Russian Majesty, and did on behalf of the Empress present that Order, given to him in a special audience for his Ducal Highness.”]⁴³ Now, it was important to Christian Louis II to promote his new membership of an imperial order; to do this, he used medals as a medium as well. Whereas previous pieces had featured the Danish Order of the Elephant (Fig. 6)⁴⁴, now, the Order of St Andrew was also placed around the coat of arms (Fig. 7).⁴⁵



Fig. 6. Duke Christian Louis II of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, 1749 medal, Ø 46 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)



Fig. 7. Duke Christian Louis II of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, 1750 medal, Ø 46 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

⁴³ Mecklenburgische Nachrichten, Fragen und Anzeigenungen dated 8 November 1749.

⁴⁴ Kunzel, Ereignismedaillen, p. 80 No. 53.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 80f. No. 54–56a.



Fig. 8. Duke Frederick Francis I of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, medal 1800 commemorating the arrival of Hereditary Prince Frederick Louis with his wife Elena Pavlovna in Mecklenburg, Ø 38 mm. Staatliches Museum Schwerin, Coin Cabinet (Photo: Gabriele Bröcker)

At the end of the 18th century the dynasties in Mecklenburg and Russia united once again. On this occasion, Duke Frederick Francis I had a medal struck — a memento of the arrival of his son, the Hereditary Prince Frederick Louis (1778–1819), and his wife Elena Pavlovna, Grand Duchess of Russia (1784–1803), in Mecklenburg (Fig. 8).⁴⁶ Their wedding had taken place in St Petersburg on 23rd October 1799; on the 15th February 1800 the young couple arrived in Schwerin, moving two days later to Ludwigslust.⁴⁷ (Under Duke Frederick II the ducal residence was moved to Ludwigslust, approximately 35 km south of Schwerin.⁴⁸) The face of the medal is decorated with an obelisk set against the sun's rays with two upright oval shields bearing the letters F (Friedrich [Frederick]) and H (Helena [Elena]); on the base of the obelisk are the words DELICLÆ / PATRIÆ (ornament of the Fatherland). In addition there is a temple standing on rocks in the sea, a reference to the long journey of the couple and the Grand Duchess' origin in far off St Petersburg. The circumscription is a prayer for the future: SERI IN COELVM REDEATIS DIVQVE LAETI INTERSITIS POPVLO. (May you return late to heaven and bless your people for a long time.) This hope proved sadly delusory, for Elena Pavlovna died just two years later at the age of just 19; Frederick Louis went to his grave in 1819, without ever ascending to the throne.⁴⁹ On the reverse of the medal, an inscription encircled by a wreath of oak leaves declares the reason for the minting: PRINCEPS / CONNVBIO FELIX / REDIT / PATRIA

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 84 No. 61.

⁴⁷ Cf. Lindemann, Heiraten, p. 56–62; Lübeß, Hugo. Friedrich Ludwig Erbgroßherzog von Mecklenburg-Schwerin 1778–1819, in: Mecklenburgische Jahrbücher 92 (1928). P. 201–300, here p. 210–225; Jena, Detlef. Maria Pawlowna, Großherzogin an Weimars Musenhof // Regensburg and Graz/Vienna/Cologne: Pustet und Styrial 1999, p. 37f. und passim; Данилова, 2004; Grigorian, Fürsten, p. 48–87.

⁴⁸ Cf. the volume: Schloss Ludwigslust, pub. by Staatliches Museum Schwerin / Ludwigslust / Güstrow and the Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Berlin, Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2016.

⁴⁹ On Frederick Louis cf. Jandausch, Kathleen. Friedrich Ludwig, Erbgroßherzog von Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in: Röpcke, Andreas (ed.). Biographisches Lexikon für Mecklenburg, with the cooperation of Jörn, Nils, Karge, Wolf, Kasten, Bernd, Münch, Ernst, Rakow, Peter-Joachim (publications by the Historische Kommission für Mecklenburg series A, 7). Rostock: Schmidt-Römhild, 2013. P. 112–118.

IVBILANTE / MENS(e). FEBR(uario). / M. DCCC. (The Prince returns home blessed by his bond of matrimony to the jubilation of the Fatherland in February 1800.) Even if the marriage of the Mecklenburg Prince to the Russian Grand Duchess was of short duration, the medal still bears witness to this union — so it is without doubt a successful memento.

5. Conclusion

The German author Christa Wolf (1929–2011) had extensive contacts with Russian colleagues. Recently her exchange of letters over many years with Lev Kopelev (1912–1997) was published.⁵⁰ A native of Berlin, Wolf still felt a very strong connection to Mecklenburg, which became her second home. She also visited the Schwerin Museum at Alter Garten many times — although sadly not the Coin Cabinet. In one of her last books she describes a woman's hospital stay. For weeks she struggles against a life-threatening condition. She talks about her contact with the doctors and nursing staff, yet reflections on her own self occupy a major part too. It is easy to discern that Christa Wolf herself is the protagonist of the tale and that the hospital is in Schwerin. In passing, she learns that the senior consultant grows roses his spare time. She asks the consultant about his interests, "His hobby? You'll laugh at this. He collects coins. That gradually makes you a historian." Later, the narrator adds, "As it slowly and belatedly grows dark [...] she imagines the consultant sitting with his coin collection, studying individual pieces with the magnifying glass, and a terrible barrenness shines upon her. Of course, everything has its price, she thinks, the price for the serenity of the uninvolved is a consuming boredom."⁵¹

So are coins really that boring? Is numismatics really such a dry and unworldly study? I hope my essay has shown that numismatics is a serious ancillary historic discipline and that engagement with coins and medals can be thoroughly interesting. In defence of Christa Wolf I should however add that she in no way undervalued coins as a source of historical knowledge. Although I was not able to ask her — she died in 2011 — her husband, Gerhard Wolf, assured me in conversation that she only intended this image to express the extreme distance between the doctor and the patient.

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⁵⁰ Wolf, Kopelew, 2017.

⁵¹ Wolf, 2009 (first edition Munich: Luchterhand. 2002). P. 169f.

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История славянских князей и русских великих княжеств — Шверинский нумизматический кабинет

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Расположенный на северо-востоке Германии и некогда населенный славянами Мекленбург-Шверин может похвастаться более чем тысячелетней историей. Собрание музея Шверина, находящегося в исторической части города, сформировалось на основе коллекции голландской живописи, собранной Кристианом Людвигом II Мекленбургским, жившим в XVIII в. Со временем коллекция расширялась. Сейчас в ней находятся полотна Рембрандта, Рубенса, Брейгеля Старшего. Двадцатый век представлен работами Пикассо, Либермана, Дюшана. В Гравюрном кабинете находится коллекция гравюр от Дюрера до Нольде. Отдел декоративно-прикладного искусства представляет собой коллекцию оружия, фарфора, монет и медалей. Шверинский монетный (нумизматический) кабинет входит в состав Государственного музея Шверина. В коллекции Кабинета насчитывается 30 000 монет и медалей, которые охватывают обширный исторический период, начиная с эпохи Средних веков (с X в.) и вплоть до настоящего времени. Большинство музейных предметов данной коллекции изготовлены в Мекленбурге. Нумизматический обладает коллекцией немецких и европейских монет, мекленбургских марок и писем с чрезвычайно редкими почтовыми штемпелями XVIII и XIX вв. Монеты и медали представляют собой важный исторический источник, могут служить основой для решения ряда проблем исторической хронологии: являются прекрасным материалом для установления (уточнения) датировки. Изображения на монетах государственных и личных гербов, а также различных геральдических фигур определяют связь нумизматики с геральдикой и сфрагистикой. Нумизматические коллекции позволяют реконструировать важные аспекты политической, экономической и культурной жизни в эпоху Средневековья, а также в эпоху раннего Нового времени. Статья знакомит с историей Мекленбурга и предлагает характеристику Шверинского нумизматического кабинета. В тексте статьи используются выбранные образцы монет и медалей из коллекции, которые иллюстрируют важные исторические события.

Ключевые слова: Нумизматический кабинет, Мекленбург, брактат, корона, Альбрехт фон Валленштейн, глуксталер, медали, Россия.

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