

ERRATUM

UNITS OF ACCOUNT IN GOLD AND SILVER IN SEVENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND: *SCILLINGAS*, *SCEATTAS* AND *PÆNINGAS* – ERRATUM

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Regrettably, there is one substantial factual error in the text of this article (Hines 2010): the figure quoted (page 156) as the sum paid in compensation for the death of the West Saxon prince Mul by Wihtried of Kent in the 690s was mistranscribed from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* as *ccc mil.* (300,000) when it should have been *xxx mil.* (30,000). This difference does not affect the key arguments of the paper, as summarized in the abstract, although the implications of that particular transaction are of course very different when considered comparatively (pp 161 and 169).

On page 156 (lines 8–9) the correct figures are as stated above. On page 161, paragraph 2, the fourth sentence should correctly read:

A 30,000-*sceatt/pæning* compensation payment for the death of Mul should not properly be described as a regular *wergild*, as our sources imply there was no such thing for a king or prince (*cyning* or *æþeling*) at this date; 1,500 Kentish *scillingas* or 6,000 West Saxon *scillingas* would, however, be exactly five times the stipulated nobleman's *wergild*, suggesting, plausibly, that the sum paid in settlement was based upon the norms prescribed in the law-codes.

In the next sentence but one (on *Myrcna laga*) all the figures should correspondingly be reduced by a factor of 10 (30,000 *sceattas*; 250 *sceattas* to the pound; 4.166 *sceattas* to the *scilling*), within a statement that otherwise remains the same. The supposedly comparable compensation payment recorded by Gregory of Tours noted in footnote 38 on page 161 is now much higher than this sum. A conceivable alternative is that the figure of 30,000 itself refers to *scillingas*, which would then in fact be the equivalent of 10,000 *solidi*. There is, then, the problem of what exactly *scilling* could refer to in the 690s. This underlines the point that a gold standard for social payments would have become an awkward instrument by the end of the seventh century in England.

On page 169 I referred to the newly found Staffordshire Hoard. The point stressed there – that both the exact quantity and in particular the fineness of the gold and silver in the hoard have yet to be precisely measured – remains crucial. Even so, the compensation payment for Mul would now be inferred to have been 1.95kg of gold or its equivalent, not 19.5kg – and thus is less, not more, than the contents of the hoard.

I should also have cited Stewart Lyon's 1969 paper, 'Historical problems of Anglo-Saxon coinage: III. Denominations and units' (*British Numismatic Journal*, 38, 204–22), and discussed his interpretation of the *sceatt*. I intend to do so thoroughly in a

long-planned supplementary paper undertaking a review of the origins and history of the terminology of monetary units in Anglo-Saxon England.

REFERENCE

- Hines, J 2010. 'Units of account in gold and silver in seventh-century England: *scillingas*, *sceattas* and *pæningas*', *Antiq J*, **90**, 153–73