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MICHAŁ WOJENKA

**THE HERALDIC MOUNT FROM CIEMNA CAVE AT OJCÓW.
FROM STUDIES IN THE MEDIEVAL CULTURE OF CHIVALRY**

ABSTRACT

M. Wojenka 2013. *The heraldic mount from Ciemna Cave at Ojców. From studies in the medieval culture of chivalry*, AAC 48: 227–263.

The focus of the article is analysis of a mount in the form of an heraldic escutcheon from the archaeological excavation of Ciemna Cave at Ojców, powiat Kraków, Poland. The shape of the mount appears to be that of a medieval European heater shield, with a maximum length of 3.9 cm and three rivets for attachment. Non-destructive metallography analysis established its material as copper (with traces of lead and arsenic) and the presence of a thin layer of tin on the outer face of the mount, the tin layer now largely eroded. The rivets are presumably copper too. The design, in repoussé and engraving, presumably is modelled on heraldic devices: the field halved vertically (party per pale), the dexter field with horizontal bars (barry), the sinister field with diagonal bars (bendy). The design seen on the mount could not be attributed to any concrete coat-of-arms.

The mount from Ciemna Cave was found to have a series of analogies, mainly from Central and Western Europe, most notably, in a deposit from Felsőszentkirály in Hungary with fittings similar in their decoration and execution method to the find from Ciemna Cave.

Drawing on insights afforded by some of its analogies the author proposes to interpret the mount from Ciemna Cave as an element from a knight's belt. This view is supported by the discovery during the archaeological investigation of Ciemna Cave of another medieval belt fitting.

The heraldic mount from Ciemna Cave may be dated, drawing on the chronology of its analogies and that of the rest of the medieval finds inventory from the cave, to the second half of the thirteenth-fourteenth century. It is not impossible that the mount from Ciemna cave (similarly as "military" artefacts recovered from the caves of Kraków–Częstochowa Upland) is a material reflection of the Legend of Ojców — an account on how Duke Władysław the Elbow-High found shelter in the caves of the region, still alive today.

Key words: Poland; High Middle Ages; Ciemna Cave; heraldic mount; chivalry, chivalric belt

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INTRODUCTION

In 2010 the research team from the Jagiellonian University Institute of Archaeology (in cooperation with researchers from the Polish Academy of Sciences Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals) completed the fourth season of archaeological fieldwork in the main chamber of Ciemna Cave at Ojców, powiat

Kraków (cf. Sobczyk 2011; Sobczyk, Valde-Nowak 2012; Ginter et al. 2012)¹. Irrespective of the main focus of the excavation, which is to specify the nature of occupation of the cave during the Palaeolithic, the fieldwork furnished much significant input on human activity during younger periods of prehistory and the Middle Ages. On the force of archaeological evidence secured during the research the Ciemna Cave may be regarded at present as one of the more valuable medieval cave sites in Poland (cf. Wojenka 2012, 30–31). Out of the many portable finds that document the medieval phase of occupation of the cave definitely the most noteworthy is a tinned copper mount in the shape of a heraldic shield recovered from the upper layers of the deposit built up in the south-eastern area of the main chamber. A closer description of this striking and as yet only briefly published artefact (Wojenka 2012, 29, Pl. II:1, 31–32) is the subject of the present article.

THE SITE AND ITS STRATIGRAPHY

Lying in the Ojców National Park, Ciemna Cave is found on the eastern slope of the Prądnik Valley within the massif of Koronna Góra about 1.5 km to the south of the town buildings of Ojców, some 18 km north of Kraków (Fig. 1). Found 62 m above the valley bottom, at an absolute elevation of 372 m, the cave entrance has a south-western exposure (Gradziński et al. 2007, 16).

Archaeological excavation launched in 2007 aims on investigating the main chamber of the cave. With a length of 88 m and a maximum width of 23 m, Ciemna Cave is one of the largest in the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland (Gradziński et al. 2007, 16). The excavation trench laid out in 2007 lies at a distance of 5 m from the cave opening in the southern area of the main chamber. In 2007–2009 the excavation focused on an area of 4 × 4 m. After the cave rock bottom was reached the trench was extended on its south-eastern side all the way to the wall of the main chamber (Fig. 2).

In terms of its stratigraphy the main chamber of the cave is definitely a multilayer site. The time of formation of the larger part of its deposits is Pleistocene (Sobczyk, Valde-Nowak 2012, 49–51; Ginter et al. 2012, 17). The layers of most interest to us are found at the very top of the cave

¹ The archaeological excavation of Ciemna Cave at Ojców is financed from the National Science Centre project N N109 185240: *Jaskinia Ciemna w Ojcowie. Zespoły kulturowe oraz chronostratygrafia (Ciemna Cave at Ojców. Culture assemblages and chronostratigraphy)*. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Project Leaders, especially to Professors K. Sobczyk and P. Valde-Nowak, for placing in my care the medieval and post-medieval materials from this research. My special gratitude goes to Professor B. Ginter and staff members of the Archaeological Museum in Kraków, M. Zając and D. Stefański, for their contribution made to the fieldwork at Ciemna Cave.



A



B



C

Fig. 1. Ciemna Cave in Ojców, powiat Kraków, województwo małopolskie, Poland.
The location of the research area.

A — *Koronna Mountain* in Ojców. The arrow marks the location of the cave; Photo by M. Wojenka;
B–C — general and detailed location; drawn by I. Jordan
(C — after the map of P. Łotock — *cf.* <http://www.opn.org.pl>).

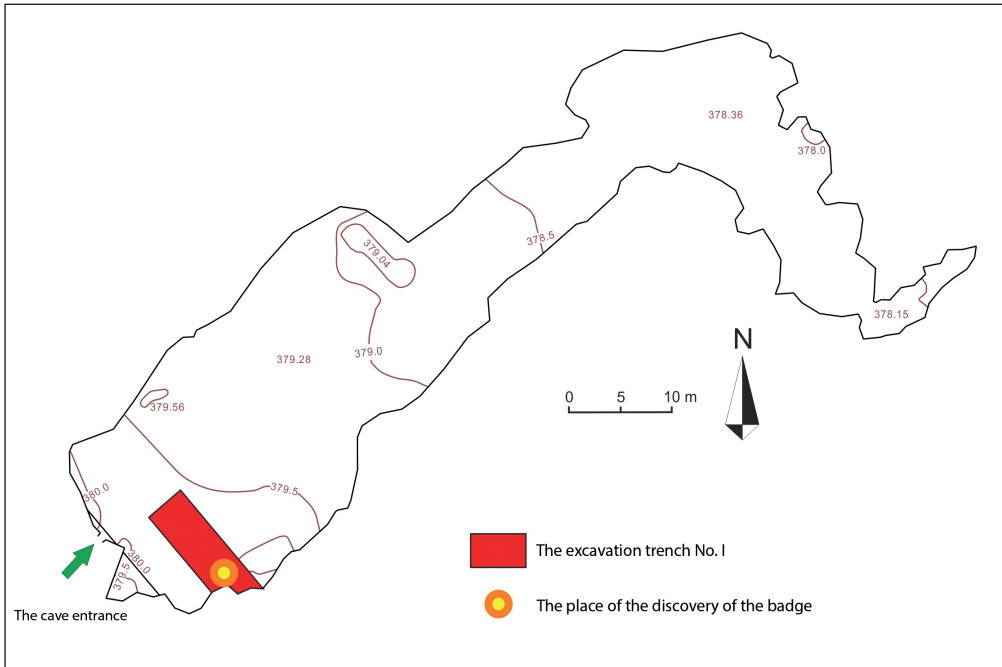


Fig. 2. Ciemna Cave in Ojców, powiat Kraków, województwo małopolskie, Poland.

Plan view of Ciemna Cave showing the place of the discovery of the badge; computer design by M. Wojenka after the original documentation of the Ciemna Cave project.

deposit and are associated with accumulation during the Holocene. Unfortunately, they are largely eroded and intermixed². The only survivors of the original Holocene deposit were identified next to the wall of the cave.

The stratigraphic situation in the area of discovery of the mount is not straightforward. The artefact surfaced right on the interface of an intermixed levelling layer (mostly humus) and a culture deposit accumulated next to the cave wall. The finds inventories recovered from these two layers were very similar. Next to numerous sherds of medieval pottery there were objects from the Late Roman Period or, possibly, from the early stage of the Migration Period, and some artefacts associated with Neolithic occupation. The presence within the levelling layer of a relatively high percentage of post-medieval pottery fragments suggests that the cave was levelled relatively recently.

² Today the cave floor is level and even. Too level and even to be natural. One interpretation is that the top of the cave deposit was levelled at some time, possibly in connection with a visit paid to the cave in 1787 by King Stanisław August Poniatowski (Naruszewicz 1787, 258–259; Olszyński 1871, 382).

THE MEDIEVAL HERALDIC MOUNT

The mount (Fig. 3) was discovered in 2010. It is triangular, its two slightly arched sides definitely give it the appearance of a medieval shield of a type known as “heater shield” (Mrozowski 1993, 80–81; Szymański 2006, 654, 655, Fig. 81). The specimen is 3.9 cm × 3.4 cm. Its average thickness is 0.7–.8 mm. The edge of the shield is slightly inverted. The mount retains three rivets, 1.5–3 mm in diameter.

The mount was subjected to a non-destructive metallographic analysis³. Its material was identified as copper (with traces of lead and arsenic) with a thin layer of tin on its outer face. The rivets were not investigated but their material is presumably also copper.

The design seen on the mount has all the marks of a heraldic device, possibly, pseudo-heraldic, executed presumably by repoussé and engraving. It has the form of a heater shield divided vertically (per pale) into two, with individual parts separated by distinct grooves (Fig. 3:2–3). The left (dexter) field is with horizontal bars (“barry”), the right (sinister) field — with diagonal bars (bendy). Of the four horizontal bars in the dexter field four are evidently wider and alternate with narrower bars which are with an ornament in the form of raised dots, some of them sub-triangular (Fig. 3:3).

A similar pattern is seen also in the sinister field — nine diagonal bars, five wider, alternating with four narrower bars, the latter with the same pattern of raised dots as that observed in the dexter field and on the border of the shield which is separated by a groove from its main field.

In describing the decorative design it is worth noting that the thin layer of tin is observed at present only mostly on the wider bars of the shield and is missing from the narrower bars. It is possible therefore that the uneven distribution of the tin layer reflects, not so much the preservation status of the find, as its original pattern (Fig. 3:3).

Unfortunately even with some effort the pattern represented on the mount could not be identified as representing any specific coat-of-arms⁴. It is possible that this is not so much a heraldic device as a pseudo-heraldic ornament of sorts. Whatever the case may be, in the present study the find from Ojców shall be referred to as a heraldic or coat-of-arms, similarly as specimens of a similar design invoked here as analogies.

At the time of discovery of the mount it retained a substantial amount of organic residue. Analysed at the Jagiellonian University Institute of Botany—these remains were identified as conifer wood, the periderma of willow (*Salix*

³ Made by T. Tokarski PhD University of Science and Technology in Kraków.

⁴ Among examples known to me only the coat-of-arms of the Viscounts of Uzès (France) corresponds to the pattern seen on the mount from Ciemna Cave. However, this heraldic device took form only at the end of the fifteenth century (see Bouillet 1878, 480). Its similarity to the specimen of interest must be random.

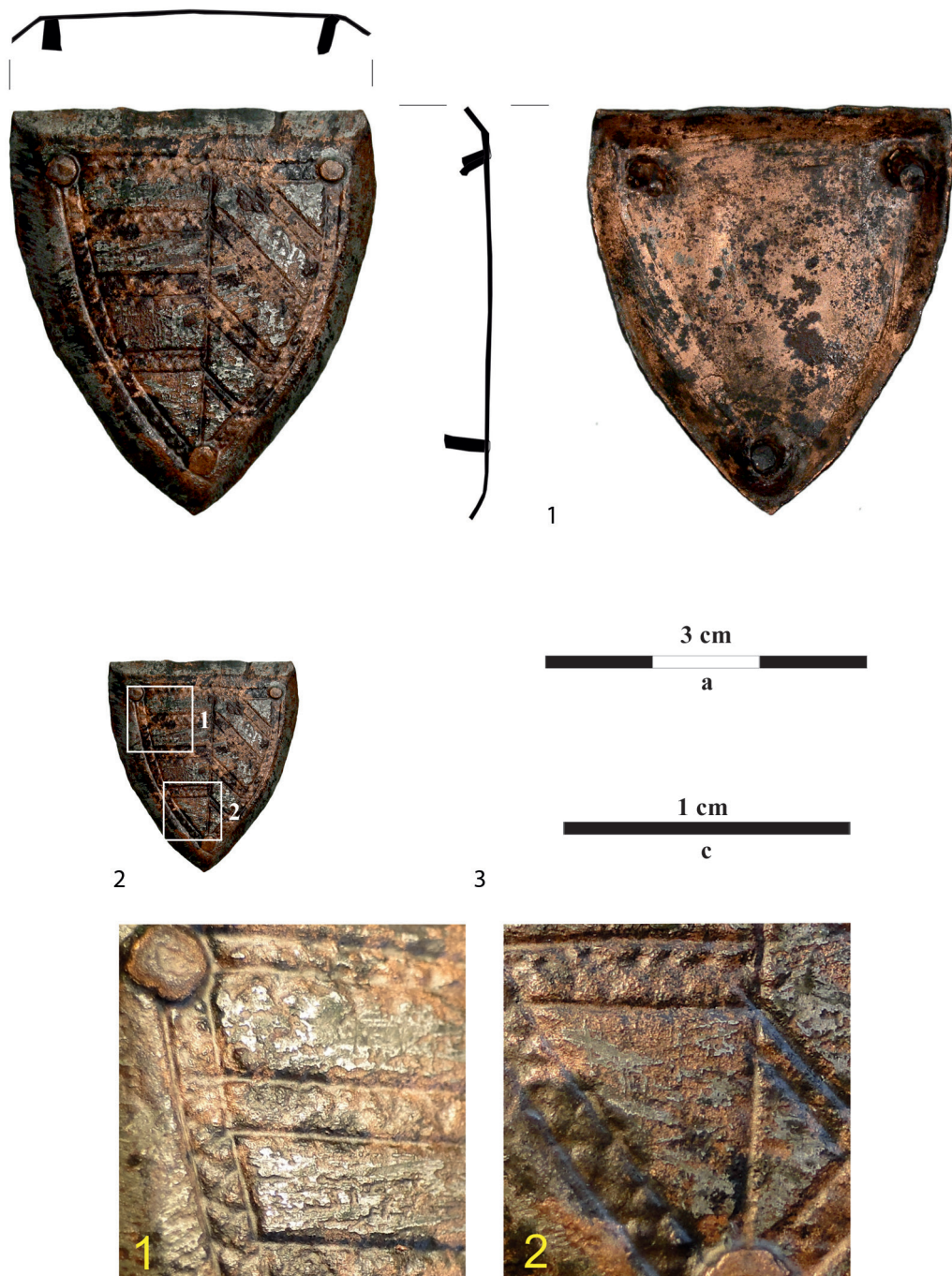


Fig. 3. Ciemna Cave in Ojców, powiat Kraków, województwo małopolskie, Poland.
 1 — heraldic badge from Ciemna Cave; Photo by A. Susuś; 2–3 — tin coating on the badge;
 Photo by M. Wojenka.

sp.) and fragments of small uncharacteristic twigs⁵. No presence of pollen, seeds or fruits was confirmed. Given the nature of the stratigraphy near to the place of discovery of the mount the organic residue cannot be attributed conclusively to the medieval occupation phase of the cave.

ANALOGIES

Small metal shield-shaped mounts and studs are little known and seldom encountered. This applies especially to specimens which in their form and ornament resemble heraldic shields or actually are heraldic shields. Other than the find from Ciemna Cave under discussion here only eight similar mounts have been recorded in Poland and what is notable nearly all of them in the southern region of our country. Three mounts were unearthed during an archaeological excavation in the Main Square in Wrocław. Only two of them are of interest to us here, both made of tin. One represents a shield, quartered, with a length of cca. 4 cm, one of its sides provided with an attachment loop (Fig. 4:2). In the corners of the shield are three small rivet holes (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 128, Fig. 24:d; 129, Fig. 26). The other mount is triangular and smaller (length of cca. 2.4 cm), and represents a griffin (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 111), or — which I believe is more likely — a lion rampant (*cf.* Fig. 4:5). In contrast to the first mount this specimen apparently is without rivet holes as far as may be ascertained by examining its drawing and photograph (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 128, Fig. 24:f; 129, Fig. 27). Consequently the use of the griffin/lion mount in our analysis of the find from Ciemna Cave is only complementary.

The next, this time, quite an attractive stud in the shape of a heraldic shield is known from Silesia, from Opole (Fig. 4:1). This gilded silver piece (L. cc. 5.2 cm) was part of a pledge deposit discovered back in 1902 next to a florin struck after 1310 and reused in a finger-ring (Masner 1904, Pl. I:12; Wrzosek 1961, 263, Pl. X:20; Wachowski 2002, 247–248; 2012, 323–324). From the heraldic point of view this exceptionally valuable artefact is quite straightforward as its depiction is that of an eagle, the heraldic device of the Piast dukes of Lower Silesia (Wachowski 2002, 247; 2012, 323). The upper right corner of the shield from Opole is damaged (Fig. 4:1), nevertheless, presumably — like the other two corners — it too was originally with a rivet hole (*cf.* especially Masner 1904, Pl. I:12).

The eagle is depicted on another mount, discovered before 1939 during the investigation of an inhumation cemetery at Ostrów Lednicki (Fig. 4:4). Its size

⁵ By A. Mueller-Bieniek PhD, J. Madeja PhD, A. Obidowicz PhD and K. Cywa MA to whom I extend my warm thanks for their contribution.

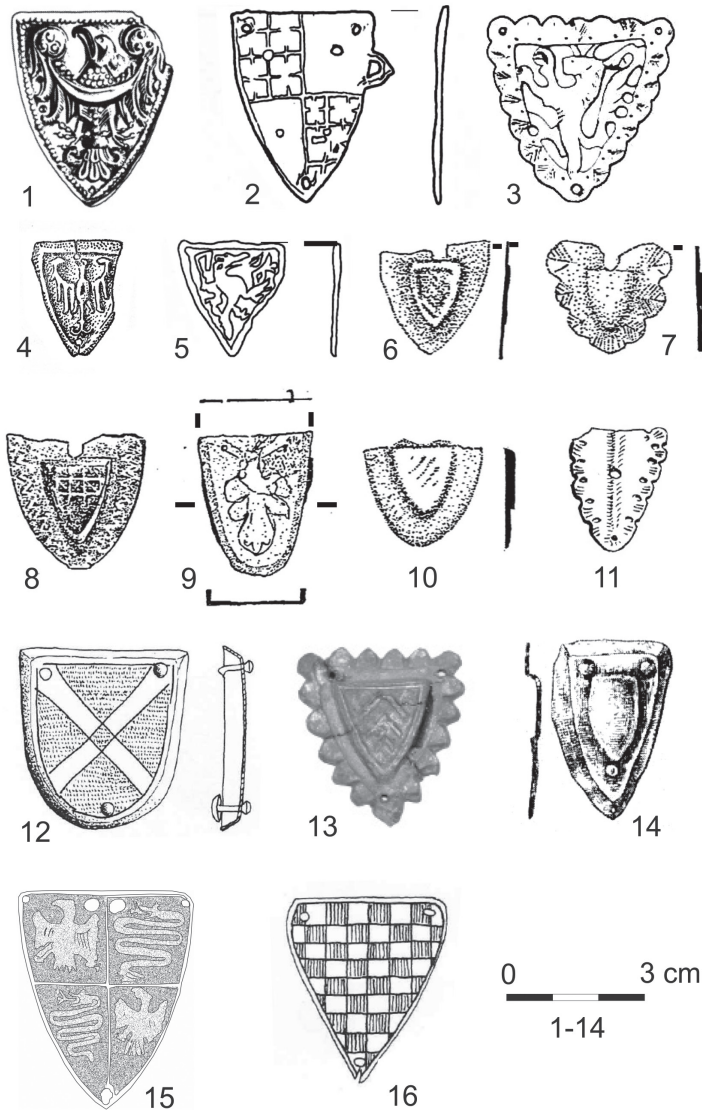


Fig. 4. The selection of badges constituting the analogies for Ojcowian badge; computer design by M. Wojenka

1 — Opole, powiat Opole, województwo opolskie, Poland; after K. Masner (1904, Pl. I:12); 2 — Wrocław, powiat Wrocław, województwo dolnośląskie, Poland; after J. Bresch, C. Buśko (2001, Fig. 24:d); 3 — Biśnik stronghold in Strzegowa, powiat Olkusz, województwo małopolskie, Poland; after B. Muzolf (1996, Fig. 2); 4 — Ostrów Lednicki, powiat Gniezno, województwo wielkopolskie, Poland; after A. Wrzosek (1961, Pl. X:20); 5 — Wrocław, powiat Wrocław, województwo dolnośląskie, Poland; after J. Bresch, C. Buśko (2001, Fig. 24:f); 6–10 — Zvolen, okres Zvolen, Slovakia; after R. Ragač (2001, Fig. 1:9–12, 14); 11 — Voinești, județul Iași, Romania; after D. Teodor (1961, Fig. 9:3); 12 — Felsőszentkirály, Bács-Kiskun megye, Hungary; after A. Pálóczi-Horváth (1972, Fig. 12:3); 13 — Paka, Varaždinska županija, Croatia; after M. Šimek (2012, Fig. 23); 14 — Novgorod, oblast' Novgorod, Russia; after M. Sedova (1981, Fig. 59:15); 15 — Italian badge (place of origin undetermined); after M. Campbell (2009, Fig. 117); 16 — Zámoly, Fejér megye, Hungary; after A. Pálóczi-Horváth (1972, Fig. 13:8).

is similar to that of the griffin/lion mount from Wrocław — its length a mere 2.48 cm, its width — 1.9 cm (Wrzesiński 1991, 134). Even if incomplete this specimen is almost certain to have had only two rivet holes, at two ends of its longer axis. It is worth noting also that the mount from Ostrów Lednicki is the only of its kind to be published in monographic form (Wrzesiński 1991).

The next two Polish finds of medieval mounts in the form of a heraldic shield were discovered in the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland, in the hilltop stronghold at Biśnik, outside the locality Strzegowa. Although slightly different in their preservation status these two specimens may be regarded not only as identical but even as belonging to the same suite of belt mounts. Depicted on them both is a lion rampant set at centre of an openwork shield. Unfortunately only one of these specimens comes from regular archaeological fieldwork, made in 1993–1994 by B. Muzolf (1996; 1997). The second mount (similarly as three openwork circular studs with a depiction of an eagle) was lifted from the site at Biśnik during illegal prospecting with the use of a metal detector⁶. For obvious reasons only the mount discovered during archaeological excavation is useful for our analysis (Muzolf 1996, 109, 116, Fig. 2:1; 1997, 146, Fig. 3:1; see Fig. 4:3). Seen on it is a lion rampant, crowned, set at the centre of a cca. 4 cm high openwork shield. The outer border of the shield is roughly scalloped⁷. This find, published by B. Muzolf, is in bronze, possibly copper (Muzolf 1996, 109).

Closing this review of shield-shaped mounts from Polish finds I wish to invoke a problematic mount from Gródek powiat Hrubieszów (site 1), which at least in theory could round off the brief list reviewed here. This bronze specimen resembles in its shape mounts which resemble the “Spanish” shield, the only difference is that in its lower part the find from Gródek has a small, knob-like protrusion. In its central section the 2.5 cm mount has two rivet holes. To judge from its published drawing this specimen was without ornament (Rudnicki, Trzeciecki 1994, 153–154, 162, Pl. V:6). Unfortunately the fieldwork method used in investigating Gródek was such that in attempting to date the mount we have no stratigraphic observations to rely on and we have to note that the archaeological site at Gródek is a multicultural one. According to the authors of research the mount could be associated with an Avar environment and the onset of occupation of the site during the Early Medieval Period, i.e., eighth century (Rudnicki, Trzeciecki 1994, 154). Slightly different conclusions were reached by I. Mellin-Wyczółkowska and A. Gołębiowska-Tobiasz, inclined to attribute the site at Gródek to the younger phases of the Early Medieval Pe-

⁶ These finds are known to me only from a photograph. The remarkable finds from the hilltop stronghold at Biśnik are currently being analysed by J. Pierzak PhD from the regional Monuments Office in Katowice (Urząd Ochrony Zabytków).

⁷ A similar outer border is seen also on the round mounts from the stronghold at Biśnik. The author of the present contribution this is sufficient argument to attribute all the finds from Biśnik to the same belt-set, presumably from a knight's belt.

riod, stressing at the same time the similarity of the stud to “heraldic” mounts observed in the steppe environment of East Europe during the early Middle Ages (Mellin-Wyczółkowska, Gołębiowska-Tobiasz 2009, 573).

Given the presence of a distinctive protrusion in the lower part of the shield (Rudnicki, Trzeciecki 1994, 153–154, 162, Pl. V:6), more typical for the belt fittings of nomad belts (Mellin-Wyczółkowska, Gołębiowska-Tobiasz 1994) and the discovery of nomad weaponry in the neighbourhood of the site (Kuśnierz 2006, 83, Pl. IV), the attribution of the mount to a nomad environment appears plausible, especially that similar specimens are known from the territory of Kievan Rus, e.g., from a cemetery at Subotsi, Kirovohrad oblast’ (Bokiy, Pletneva 1988, 99–100) and a hoard from Mishelovka, Kiev oblast’ (Korzukhina 1954, 133, Pl. LVI:12–13). It seems therefore that we can safely leave the specimen from Gródek out from the group of analogies of interest to us here.

Specimens presented above mostly exhaust the very brief list of mounts from Polish finds which were attached using rivets and resemble in their shape a heraldic shield. Specimens similar in their morphology may be said to be equally infrequent also in the finds inventories from Central and Western Europe. In contrast to mounts known from Poland some of these were discovered in an unambiguous functional context. We may regard as particularly valuable specimens definitely used as belt ornaments. This applies especially to the unique series of not less than fourteen heraldic mounts discovered in 1934 in Hungary at Felsőszentkirály (Szabó 1938, 72–78; Pálóczi-Horváth 1972; see Fig. 4:12, 5, 6:1) in a grave inventory of an elite Cuman burial⁸ as integral elements of a belt-set which — next to the mounts — included a buckle, a tongue-shaped strap end and fifteen strongly profiled mounts with a central rivet hole and lily (German *lilienförmigen*) terminals. Both the buckle and the strap end were decorated with an attractive design of a tendril ornament. All the belt fittings from Felsőszentkirály were in gilded silver (Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 182–187).

Except for other finds from Hungary: from Csólyos (Pálóczi-Horváth 1969) and from Kígyópuszta (Éri 1956)⁹, the assemblage from Felsőszentkirály may be regarded as one of the most valuable and most attractive examples of a medieval belt set in Central Europe. Poorly known in Poland, this find has been addressed by many Hungarian researchers, most notably, A. Pálóczi-Horváth (1972; 1973; 1982; 1989: 137; 1994, 294; Havassy 1996, 114, Cat. No. 192).

In several respects the finds from Felsőszentkirály resemble the mount from Ciemna Cave. First of all, their ornament — both in the Hungarian

⁸ Some of the metal finds recorded in “royal” Cuman burials document a lively exchange with other cultures, as expressed e.g., by belt buckles and mounts which definitely hail from the Western European tradition (see Woodfin et al. 2010: 155, 165–166).

⁹ No heraldic mounts were present in the grave inventories from Csólyos and from Kígyópuszta.

assemblage and in the find from Ciemna Cave the design is simple, “geometric” (horizontal bars, diagonal bars, chequered pattern; Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 184, Fig. 6; see Fig. 5:1–2, 4–5). The closest in their style design to the mount from Ciemna Cave would be two mounts divided into two fields (parted per bend sinister; *cf.* Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 184, Fig. 6:6–7; see Fig. 5:2). Similarly as in the mount from Ciemna Cave individual elements of the design differ from one another through on contrast — some fields are plain, others are provided with small raised dots in repoussé (*cf.* Fig. 5). The find from Ciemna Cave is brought closer to the Hungarian specimens also by its inverted edge (Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 185, Fig. 7; see Fig. 4:12), and this is worth stressing that this is a feature not seen in the mount from Wrocław (Fig. 4:2). Another similarity would be size (the finds from Felsőszentkirály are 4.15–4.22 cm; see Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 181) and the position of the rivets, although this can hardly be regarded as a distinctive trait.

But for all the similarities discussed here there is no avoiding the differences between the artefact from Ciemna Cave and those from Felsőszentkirály. Of these, the most significant is definitely their material. The specimen from Ciemna Cave is in tinned copper, the Hungarian finds are gilded silver. Also different is the shape of the heraldic shields, as the specimens from Felsőszentkirály correspond in their form to the “Spanish” shield (Szymański 2006, 655, Fig. 81; Kohlmorgen 2002, 43) rather than to the heater shield, the shape of the mount from Ciemna Cave.

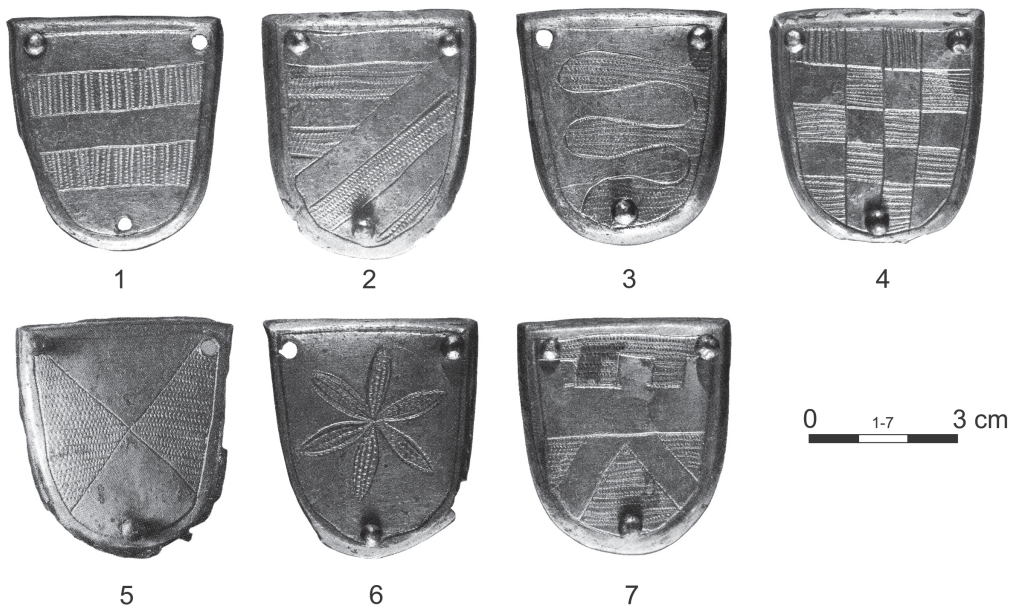


Fig. 5. Felsőszentkirály, Bács-Kiskun megye, Hungary. The selection of the badges; computer design by M. Wojenka after A. Pálóczi-Horváth (1989, Fig. 26, 28–33).

The group of belt fittings from Felsőszentkirály does not exhaust the list of relevant finds related to the medieval belt, further valuable analogies for the specimen from Ojców. Most, if not all of them, have their roots in Western Europe. Quite a few interesting observations are afforded especially by specimens listed in an excellent analysis of I. Fingerlin on medieval belts (Fingerlin 1971). According to this work one mount in the form of a Spanish shield (party per pale) was discovered in the late nineteenth century still attached to a rich belt fished out of the Loire. This find is at present in Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris (Cluny; cf. Fingerlin 1971, 425–427, Inv. No. 364, Fig. 502; Stürzebecher 2010, 289, Fig. 144, Cat. No. 69). The mount from this belt resembles, to some extent, the miniature shields from Felsőszentkirály, not the least in its material – gilded silver. It is worth noting at the same time that the mount from the Loire belt may have been partly enamelled too — this is suggested by its photograph published by M. Stürzebecher (2010, 289, Fig. 144).

At least three mounts having the form of a heraldic were appeared on a medieval velvet belt auctioned off in Paris in 1898. The belt had several assorted fittings in gilded silver and some enamelled specimens too (Fingerlin 1971, 437, No. 419, Fig. 512). Its drawing published by I. Fingerlin dates back to the late nineteenth century but does not make it possible to examine the heraldic mounts more closely although their form is unmistakably that of a “Spanish” shield (Fingerlin 1971, 437, Fig. 512).

Exceptionally rich belt fittings, both heraldic and specimens in the form of attractive enamelled lily mounts, were part of a group published by W. Froehner in 1897 in his catalogue of the Gołuchów collections (Froehner 1897, 89, Pl. XX; see Fig. 6:2)¹⁰. These are thirteen heraldic fittings in the form of a Spanish shield arranged at regular intervals and alternating with transverse lily mounts. The fittings of interest to us here were in silver and enamel. The designs seen on them definitely recall the motifs known from the belt set from Felsőszentkirály (cf. Fig. 6). At the same time, I regard the belt set published by W. Froehner as contaminated: very likely it does not include a buckle (cf. Fig. 6:2) instead, there are no less than two mounts from an “overlong belt” (German “die ‘überlangen’ Gürtel”; see Fingerlin 1971, 84; Wachowski 1997a) decorated with attractive images of dragons. I suspect that the specimen published by W. Froehner (let us add that the fittings were mounted on a piece of velvet, definitely non-original; cf. Froehner 1897, 89) had been put together from elements which originally belonged to at least two separate belt sets.

Even so, we have to note that the stylistic similarity of the heraldic studs forming the “Gołuchów group” gives an impression that it belonged to the same belt set. The practice of “improving upon” exhibits by adding the missing ele-

¹⁰ Regrettably this belt-set presumably is lost to research.

ments or putting together entire “pieces” from more or less random elements was typical for late nineteenth and early twentieth century collecting (*cf.* for example, Hirsch 1970).

Heraldic studs are known also from an exceptionally rich belt set discovered in 1942 in Santa María Regalis de Las Huelgas monastery in Burgos in the tomb of Fernando de la Cerda († 1275), Infante of Castile, son of Alfonso X el Sabio (Gómez Moreno 1946; Wild 2011 [with a list of references]). This valuable group includes nineteen heraldic representations in the form of a Heater shield: ten heraldic shields embroidered onto the fabric of the belt, and nine enamelled polychrome appliqués decorating the buckle and the strap end (see Wild 2011, 379, 387). The average size of the enamelled specimens attached to the metal elements of the belt is 1.8 × 1.6 cm. Both the buckle and the strap end were in gilded silver. In view of its context, mastery of execution and symbolism of the heraldic representations (*cf.* Wild 2011), the belt from Burgos may be recognized as a distant, albeit interesting analogy for the find from Ciemna Cave.

Miniature heraldic shields are recorded also in assemblages other than belt sets. In a find from Visby, Gotland, three heraldic fittings appeared on a coat of plates. The exact size of these pieces is not known to me but they cannot exceed 7–8 cm (*cf.* Thordeman 1940, PL. 32–38; see Fig. 7:2). All without exception resemble rosettes (Fig. 7:2). Let us note that the coat of plates of interest with the rosette fittings was discovered in mass grave No. 2, from the Battle of Visby of 1361 (Thordeman 1939, 227, Fig. 206; 228–229; 354–359).

Other fittings are mostly single finds. Six of them were recovered during the investigation of the castle Pustý Hrad at Zvolen (Ragač 2001; Šimkovič et al. 2011, 28, Fig. 26; see Fig. 4:6–10). At least three are in bronze (Šimkovič et al. 2011, 28; see Fig. 4:6–7, 10). They were mostly of medium size (L. in the range of 2–5–3 cm). Stylistically the finds from Zvolen represent a special type as in most of them the raised “heraldic” shield is at the centre of the mount, which itself is in the shape of a Heater shield (Fig. 4:7–8, 10). Except for two fittings. One of them, with a floral ornament, does not necessarily have anything to do with a heraldic shield (Fig. 4:9). The other mount, with an outer edge in the form of semicircular scalloped “wings” has a central part in the form of a Heater shield (Fig. 4:7). This last specimen has a relatively good stylistic analogy in a find from Castle Paka, žup. Varaždin in Croatia (Fig. 4:13). In this specimen also the heraldic shield “proper” rises from a triangular plaque with a border of scalloped “wings”. Unlike the fittings from Zvolen the one from Paka is in lead (Šimek 2012, 86, Fig. 23). This makes it the only heraldic fitting made of that material known to date.

A group of analogies more distant to the find from Ciemna Cave includes a fitting from Zámoly, Hungary, shaped a little like a Heater shield, decorated with a chequered pattern (Páloczi-Horváth 1972, 192; Fig. 13:8; see Fig. 4:16). A triangular mount in gilded silver reminiscent to some extent of

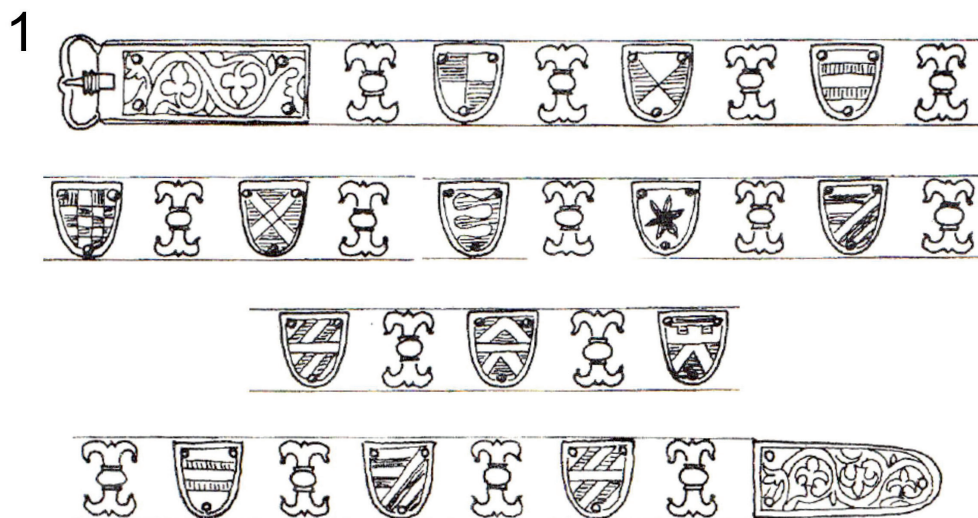


Fig. 6. The reconstruction of the selected belt's garnitures; computer design by M. Wojenka.

1 — Felsőszentkirály, Bács-Kiskun megye, Hungary; after A. Pálóczi-Horváth (1982, Fig. 7);
 2 — the so-called Gołuchów collection; after W. Froehner (1897, Pl. XX).

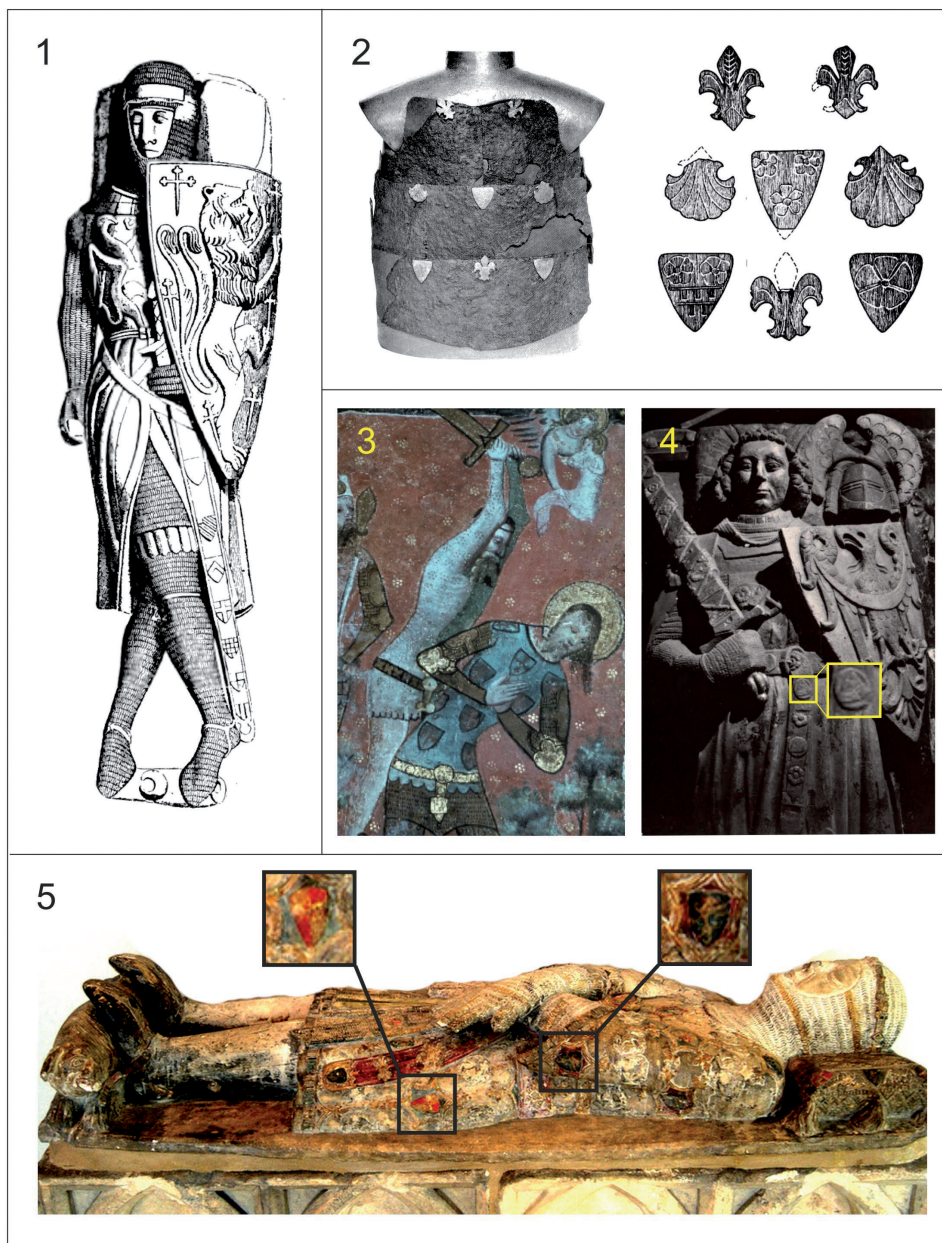


Fig. 7. Possible use of heraldic badges; computer design by M. Wojenka.

1 — the effigy of sir Richard Wellesbourne de Montfort († 1265); after J. Foster (1902, 212); 2 — plaques riveted to the coat-of-plates from Wisby, kommun Gottland, Sweden; after B. Thordeman (1939, Fig. 206; 1940, Pl. 33); 3 — *The martyrdom of St. George* from Stralsund Cathedral, Germany; after www.kulturwerte-mv.de; see also: B. Thordeman (1939, Fig. 207); 4 — the effigy of Bolko I of Świdnica; after J. Kępcowski (1969, Fig. 11 [modified]); 5 — the effigy of don Ramon de Peralta; after www.flickrriver.com (author unknown), see also: B. Thordeman (1939, Fig. 208).

the find from Ciemna Cave (its field party per pale?) is recorded in an assemblage from Voinești (Teodor 1961, 258–259; see Fig. 4:11). Nevertheless this specimen is hard to analyse and we cannot confirm conclusively whether its shape was really modelled on that of a heraldic shield (*cf.* Teodor 1961, 259, Fig. 9:3; 260, Fig. 10:3). Similarly problematic is the interpretation of a mount, presumably ornamented, in the form of a slightly elongated Heater shield, presumably recovered during an archaeological investigation in the Republic Square (Náměstí Republiky) in Prague. This mount has three rivet holes, set at the top of the shield (*cf.* Vyšohlíd 2011, 213, Fig. 6:d). Another possible analogy would be the find from Novgorod, Novgorod oblast', I am not familiar with its raw material, but it does not necessarily imitate specimens with a heraldic content (Sedova 1981, 151, Fig. 59:15; see Fig. 4:14)¹¹. Finely ornamented but entirely dissimilar in its style design is a plaque from Luxembourg (Zimmer 2002, 116, Fig. 114).

Valuable input to the question of heraldic, shield-shaped fittings it to be found also in some medieval hoards known from Western Europe. Musée national du Moyen Âge, Paris (Cluny) has in its keeping an invaluable deposit from Colmar, Alsace, with at least one heraldic fitting provided with rivet holes. This object, is a gilded silver heraldic shield with a representation of an eagle (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 41, Fig. 21; Stürzebecher 2010, 293, Fig. 155:a, Cat. No. 80). A similarly executed plaque, this time, with a lion rampant, is known from Weißenfels, Germany (Stürzebecher 2010, 294, Fig. 158, Cat. No. 83). A mount in the form of a Heater shield with a representation of an eagle is known also from Gransee, a deposit of mostly heavily eroded silver ornaments (from: Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 39). A very interesting group of four fittings in the shape of a Heater shield was present in a deposit from Meldorf. Seen on them is a design of stylized lilies, and interestingly, the rivet holes are only in the upper part of the shield¹² (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 44, 47, Fig. 31). The deposit from Dune in Gotland included at least two specimens in the form of a heraldic shield, but they are not known to me in greater detail (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 26–27, Fig. 10). I am not familiar with the dimensions of these specimens but there is no question that some of the Western European specimens are very small. A good example in this respect is a silver fitting from the rich deposit from Pritzwalk, in the form of a shield, closer details unknown, with a chequered pattern, divided into four quarters (party per cross) not more than 16 mm in width (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 123, 138, Cat. No. 393). A finely decorated fitting in the form of a Heater shield is known also from

¹¹ Regrettably, while preparing this paper I was unaware of the other heraldic badges from Novgorod. These specimens were published by A. Musin after I had completed the text; see Musin 2012.

¹² This applies only to three of these fittings. The fourth, as I was able to judge from a photograph, has no rivet holes at all (*cf.* Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 47, Fig. 31).

an Italian find which lacks a closer provenance. This gilded copper piece represents a shield divided into four quarters (party per cross) with the House of Visconti and the House of Sforza coats of arms (Campbell 2009, 102, ig. 117; see Fig. 4:15).

In discussing metal plaques in the form of a heraldic shield it is worth paying attention also to finds which instead of rivets have a prong on their reverse. Some of these specimens are much smaller than the mount from Ciemna Cave. They include the specimen from Zvolen, which has a length of less than 1.5 cm (Ragač 2001, 443, Fig. 5:6). Other mounts with a prong for attachment are known to me almost only from Western Europe. From Moorfields, London, comes a fragment of a terminal of a 0.8 cm wide leather strap retaining two miniscule (9.2×10 mm) studs in the form of a Heater shield (Fingerlin 1971, 87, No. 273, Fig. 124; 395; Egan, Pritchard 2002, 200–201, No. 1087); their position suggests that this part of the belt strap was worn in a vertical position. Among other finds from London is a mount with the coat-of-arms of England (Griffiths 1995, 70, Cat. No. 77–78).

Fittings with a prong were present also in an invaluable hoard find from Michaelisstrasse in Erfurt: fifteen nearly identical 1.5 cm long specimens in enamelled and gilded silver, featuring a red crayfish on a silver background (Stürzebecher 2010, 234, Cat. No. 30). As mentioned earlier, specimens with a prong tend to be quite small, but there are some exceptions. This is suggested by another find from London, approximately 4 cm long (Griffiths 1995, 70, Cat. No. 80) and by a slightly mangled iron piece recovered in the Main Square in Wrocław (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 127, Fig. 23:e) that I am inclined to add to the group of fittings discussed here.

We may also wonder whether in typological terms the mounts with a prong do not find correspondence in a much published miniature heater shield with a representation of the House of Piast eagle which is now seen on the blade of the Coronation Sword of the kings of Poland — Szczerbiec, the Notched Sword, originally probably attached to its scabbard (*cf.* more recently: Żygulski 2008, 323; 326; Biborski et al. 2012, 100, 113). This specimen is without rivet holes, its reverse is fixed to the blade of the sword by means of a thick-set tang, hammered to flare out at the end (*cf.* Żygulski 2008, 328, Fig. 18), presumably added on only later¹³. It is only to be regretted that owing to the exceptional wealth of ideological content represented both on the hilt and the blade of the Coronation Sword this particular fitting has not been subjected to a more in-depth study (*cf.* Biborski et al. 2012, 140). Its material is presumably partly gilded silver (Nadolski 1968, 111). As for its red background, according to the most recent research, this is a later addition, very late indeed, given that it is in oil paint (Żygulski 2008, 353; Biborski et al. 2012, 140).

¹³ This specimen is $4.5 \times 4.2 \times 4$ cm (Biborski et al. 2012, 111).

To conclude the review of finds analogical in their form to the specimen from Ciemna Cave let me refer to the specimens on which the heater shield is featured but its form is slightly different. In a small group of these finds with which I am familiar the most outstanding is a specimen from Sadłowo, in which the Heater shield is set over a gilded sheet copper disc about 12 cm in diameter (Kajzer 2004, 202–203; 223, Fig. 32:4). On the shield are three raised ovals (Kajzer 2004, 203). This piece in terms of its style design is close to a brooch discovered at Komjatice, Slovakia (Ruttikay 1983, 354, Fig. 5:16), something already noted in literature (Wachowski 2002, 248). The heraldic shield with the coat-of-arms of England is known from four circular bronze openwork fittings from Norwich, county Norfolk (Green 1965, 163; Fig. 33; Popescu et al. 2004, 217–219, Fig. 6–7). Circular mounts with a heraldic shield are known also from London (Egan, Pritchard 2002, 182–183, No. 933), and from the strap of the Savernake Horn, in the British Museum (Cherry 2005 [with a list of references]).

FUNCTION

Defining the function of the mount from Ciemna Cave is not an easy task. This is largely due to the sheer number of sources which potentially may have been fitted with shield-shaped mounts and could be a useful reference for our specimen. Given the number of these potential references we decided to narrow down our focus to a few key interpretations admitting that the mount from Ciemna Cave may have been a decorative element of: 1) a brooch; 2) a knight's belt; 3) a sword scabbard; 4) armour; 5) clothing; or 6) an unspecified object¹⁴. The first solution appears to me the least feasible despite the fact that, not infrequently, small metal heraldic shields were a decorative element of various types of brooches. They are encountered e.g., on type Tassel brooches used as cloak fasteners. These are relatively well documented in iconography, e.g. in the pictorial Legend of Saint Hedwig of Silesia in the Lubin Codex (Wachowski 2012, 323–324) and on the tomb effigy of King Casimir III the Great (†1370; Muczkowski 1923; Mrozowski 1994, Fig. 25:b). According to K. Wachowski, two finds from Poland may have belonged to the heraldic variant of type Tassel brooches — the fitting from Opole and one of the fittings from Wrocław (Wachowski 2012, 324, Fig. 12)¹⁵. Moreover, heraldic motifs

¹⁴ I reject the interpretation of the mount from Ciemna Cave as a horse harness ornament. Heraldic emblems used in this way, mostly known from western Europe (England especially), have an entirely different form and much smaller dimensions (cf. Krabath 2001, 248–249; Fiedler 2002; Gossler 2011, 124; cf. notably the recent extra ordinary find from Caherduggan, County Cork, Ireland: *Caherduggan...* 2012).

¹⁵ I believe that the specimen from Wrocław may have served as a fastening (brooch), this is supported by the presence of a loop (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 128, Fig. 24:d; 129, Fig. 26). But I am not convinced that the specimen from Opole really belonged to a type Tassel brooch (cf. Wachowski 2012, 324, Fig. 12).

are encountered on some types of round brooches (*cf.* Ruttkay 1983, 354, Fig. 5:16; Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 54, Fig. 36, 132, Cat. No. 5), but most notably they appear on type Haftel brooches (Wachowski 2012, 324); this is conclusively established not the least by the impressive series of heraldic specimens present in the Pritzwalk hoard (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 56, Fig. 38, *cf.* especially: 62, Fig. 44, No. 275–279). At the same time, the miniature shields which are an element of type Haftel brooches have on their reverse a distinctive hinge used for attaching other parts of the brooch whereas the specimen from Ciemna Cave has three rivets. Their presence, and the absence of evidence of any other fastening device (e.g., clasp) is sufficient proof to discard brooches as a potential functional reference for the mount from Ciemna Cave.

Let us pass to the next possible solution. According to K. Wachowski, reconstructing the appearance of belts featuring heraldic motifs is not an easy matter today, mainly because coat-of-arms were reserved for some special purposes (Wachowski 1997b; 2002: 247; *cf.* also other analyses of belts: Wachowski 2001; 2005, Ławrynowicz 2005; Głosek, Ławrynowicz 2006, Wachowski 2007). It seems nevertheless that we are not condemned to complete failure. We do have a reference in the complete or almost complete belts with heraldic motifs from Western and Central European finds. In the specimen from the Loire next to various other fittings a single heraldic mount in the form of a Spanish shield appeared in the company of transverse lily mounts (Fingerlin 1971, 425–427, Cat. No. 364, Fig. 502). The next specimen is the nearly identical, elaborate belt from the 1898 Paris auction, its drawing reproduced in I. Fingerlin's publication (Fingerlin 1971, 437, Cat. No. 419, Fig. 512). In it, next to a number of lily and rosette fittings were at least three heraldic mounts. An interesting input — and let us add — quite close to the two specimens named earlier — comes from the belt set forming the “Gołuchów group” (see earlier discussion), its likeness published by W. Froehner (Froehner 1897, 89, Pl. XX; see Fig. 6:2). Definitely the group of lily-shaped and heraldic shield fittings (no less than fourteen) from the Felsőszentkirály burial belonged to an elaborate belt (Páloczi-Horváth 1972). In correspondence with the model represented by specimens just named is to a certain extent also the style design of the belt of Fernando de la Cerda from Burgos, despite the fact that the heraldic shields of interest were embroidered (Wild 2011, 380, Pl. 1). Also in this case we do find the already known pattern in which heraldic shields alternate with another type of mount, one could say, separated by them (which in the Burgos belt are not lily-shaped) and with other decorative motifs.

It is interesting at the same time that in the case of belts decorated with heraldic motifs we find so little assistance from iconography. Making a review of the documentary record I succeeded in finding just one representation, and not too accurate at that — the tomb effigy of Duke Bolko I the Strict (†1301) in the mausoleum of the Silesian Piast dukes at Krzeszów (Kębłowski 1969,

112; Wawrzonowska 1976, 102–103). The fittings seen on the duke's girdle do not lend themselves to a conclusive interpretation (Fig. 7:4). Next to rosettes there are miniature Heater shields which appear to be mounted over small discs¹⁶, or possibly, are their integral element (*cf.* for example, Green 1965, 163, Fig. 33; Popescu et al. 2004, 217–219, Fig. 6–7; Egan, Pritchard 2002, 182–183, No. 933, more notably: Cherry 2005; Fingerlin 1971, 113, Fig. 179).

The interpretation of the specimen from Ciemna Cave as a sword scabbard ornament while it finds no evident support from archaeology is well documented in western European iconography. Particularly valuable input comes from English tomb effigies. On the monumental brass of the crusader knight sir Roger de Trumpington (†1289) the sword scabbard is with four fittings in the form of a Heater shield (Foster 1902, 193). No less than seven small heraldic shields appear on the sword scabbard of sir Richard Wellesburne de Montfort (†1265; Foster 1902, 212; see Fig. 7:1). Naturally, it is hard to say whether the details depicted on the effigies imitated metal mounts in the form of shields or for instance, their painted representations (*cf.* Foster 1902, 193, 212). A specimen with a firmly established interpretation of a scabbard mount is the miniature shield with the representation of the Piast eagle now gracing the upper blade of the Szczerbiec Coronation Sword (Sadowski 1894, 73–76; Nadolski 1968, 113; Żygulski 2008, 317; Biborski 2010, 82, Footnote 1; Biborski et al. 2012, 100). Given the evidence from iconography invoked here the conviction as to the relationship of the miniature shield on the Sword with the sword scabbard may be accepted as correct¹⁷.

Both the iconographic and the archaeological record offer interesting examples of the use of metal plaques as elements fitted to armour, or to more precise — to the coat of plates. An excellent illustration of the above statement are especially three heraldic fittings, which — next to the shells of Saint James — survive on the coat of plates from Visby (Thordeman 1939, 227, Fig. 206; 228–229; 354–359; see Fig. 7:2). The presence of heraldic fittings on a coat of plates is apparently confirmed by iconographic sources, as in the scene of martyrdom of St George in St Nicholas church at Stralsund (Fig. 7:3).

The next possible interpretation, that the plaque from Ciemna Cave was used as a decorative element of clothing draws only on the evidence from iconography. Heraldic shields are represented e.g., on the tomb effigy of William de Valence, Earl of Pembroke (†1296), don Ramón de Peralta (†c. 1300), Gau-

¹⁶ In the carefully executed drawings published by M. Głosek and O. Ławrynowicz the fittings on the belt of Bolko I appear to be more triangular than shield-shaped (*cf.* Ławrynowicz 2005a, 6, Pl. I:4; Głosek, Ławrynowicz 2006, 150, Fig. 1). Let us recall too that the effigy in question had undergone a thorough “refurbishment” in the eighteenth century, which probably caused deformation of some of its details (Kębłowski 1969, 13).

¹⁷ An additional argument to support this relationship comes from chronological convergence of the fitting on the Szczerbiec Coronation Sword with iconographic sources invoked here (*cf.* Biborski 2012, 139).

tier de Machecoul (†c. 1300) and Gérard de Soucelles¹⁸ (†c. 1339) to name just a few (Adhemar 1974; Foster 1902, 196). While in the two latter the representations may be of original painted shields, the tomb effigies of William de Valence and of don Ramón de Peralta definitely include depictions of heraldic shields in the form of plaques (*cf.* Fig. 7:5). This is indicated primarily by the tomb effigy of William de Valence, which was in oak and had several small heraldic shields riveted to it (only three survived by the early twentieth century; *cf.* Foster 1902: 196). This testimony seems to leave no doubt as to the use of at least some of the shield-shaped fittings.

In attempting to specify the function of the miniature heraldic shield from Ciemna Cave we need to take into account that some mounts were applied to various portable objects (*cf.* e.g., Ragač 2001, 442). For this my sole reference here is the reliquary of Saint Bridget of Sweden, in the monastery church at Vadstena, Östergötland, on which appear at least three shield-shaped mounts (Stürzebecher 2010, 293, Fig. 154, Cat. No. 79). Since the method used to attach the miniature shields to the reliquary is unknown to me it is possible that the reliquary fittings differ substantially in their typology from the Ciemna Cave find. Altogether different from our find are small shields with the coats-of-arms of Bohemia, Poland and Austria decorating the base of five silver hexagonal drinking vessels from the Kutná Hora hoard, Středočeský kraj (Stürzebecher 2010, 173, Fig. 36; 174–176; 267, Fig. 80, Cat. No. 4).

It follows from the review of references available for the fitting from Ciemna Cave given here that a conclusive definition of its original function is not fully within our reach. Guided more by intuition than anything else I claim that the mount is most likely to be a fitting from a knight's belt, or a scabbard, or a sword, or a coat of plates. Of these the first I consider the most feasible, mainly because the investigation of Ciemna Cave has also yielded a lily mount that we can safely interpret as a belt fitting.

CHRONOLOGY AND PROVENANCE

Owing to the stratigraphic situation in the area of the discovery of the shield-shaped mount in Ciemna Cave when attempting to establish its chronology we need to take into account two key factors — the dating of objects analogical to it and other medieval finds recovered in the same cave. I also propose to use as supplementary material *ad interim* conclusions from the analysis of medieval objects discovered in other caves investigated in the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland.

The analogies most promising for us here are artefacts discovered in closed assemblages. Deposits of this type, containing “heraldic” fittings, are known from Opole, Felsőszentkirály, Voinești, Burgos, Weißenfels, Pritzwalk, Gransee,

¹⁸ In the two latter examples this may be an illustration of plaques fastened to a coat of plates.

Meldorf and — in a sense — Visby. A brief overview of their chronology is given below.

The heraldic fitting from Opole with a representation of the Lower Silesian Piast eagle (Masner 1904, Pl. I:12) was an element of a pledge deposit, as noted earlier, next to a florin, struck after 1310 but already reused as a mount in a finger-ring (Wachowski 2012, 323). More valuable data, not the least thanks to the presence of non-heraldic elements, comes from the analysis of the elite Cuman weapon burial from Felsőszentkirály. By A. Pálóczi-Horváth it is placed in the period late thirteenth-early fourteenth century (Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 204). The dating of the assemblage from Felsőszentkirály is likely to have been influenced by other elements of the belt set which have quite good analogies. Of these the most notable would be the deposit from Voinești which, next to elements of the belt set included some reliably dated forms (there were 31 silver and gilded silver objects in this deposit altogether). Next to the elements of the belt set more notable are attractive, exquisitely ornamented cuff bracelets, a *kolt* and earrings with three beads, a form very popular in Rus (Teodor 1961, 252, Fig. 5, 253, Fig. 6, 254, Fig. 7:1–2; cf. Wołoszyn 2000). The belt set consisted of an intricately ornamented buckle, a strap end, three lily mounts and a “heraldic” fitting (all in gilded silver; Teodor 1961, 259, Fig. 9). By D. Teodor the deposit from Voinești is dated to the first half of the thirteenth century and the thesaurisation attributed to the aftermath of the Mongol invasion of 1241 (Teodor 1961, 262). I feel that the chronology proposed for the Voinești hoard by D. Teodor is too early. This is mostly because the finely ornamented strongly profiled belt buckle plate (Teodor 1961, 259, Fig. 9:1) has the marks of the early Gothic style design. In many respects its decoration is reminiscent of the specimens from Felsőszentkirály (Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 182, Fig. 4), Csólyos (Pálóczi-Horváth 1969, 115, Fig. 5) and Szentgyörgy (Havassy 1996, 105, No. 122) whereas the shape and ornament of the buckle itself recalls the impressive specimen from Kigyóspuszta (Éri 1956; Campbell 2009, 65, Fig. 65). Hungarian researchers date these finds to not earlier than the second half of the thirteenth century (Havassy 1996, 96, 105, 114) and it is worth noting that, according to the findings of I. Fingerlin, this particular buckle form is recorded broadly within the time-frame of the second half of the thirteenth — first third of the fourteenth century (Fingerlin 1971, 218, Pl. 336). In the light of the conclusions just presented it may be legitimate to revise the dating of the assemblage from Voinești and place it in a later period, especially as it contained objects which are compatible in their typology and form with specimens present in the hoard from Oțeleni (Teodor 1964), dated by the coins of the Golden Horde from 1280–1299 (Iliescu 1964; Teodor 1964, 359; cf. recently also: Liwoch 2013, 9).

Interesting chronological conclusions are afforded by the heraldic mounts of the rich belt in the burial of Fernando de la Cerda at Burgos. The belt is dated broadly to 1252–1275 and, in the light of the most recent findings made

by Benjamin Wilde, had passed to the Infante through Thibault II Count of Champagne, in 1269, as a wedding gift (Wild 2011, 378–379).

Early fourteenth century would be the proper dating of the mount from Weißenfels (Stürzebecher 2010, 294, Cat. No. 83). In the light of the available data, also the fitting from Colmar should be dated to at least the first half of the fourteenth century, as it belongs to a deposit presumably placed in hiding during the persecution of the Jews of 1348/49 (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 41, Fig. 21; Stürzebecher 2010, 293, Fig. 155:a, Cat. No. 80). The heraldic fitting from the Pritzwalk deposit is attributable to the first half of the fourteenth century even though the assemblage itself is dated by a coin of the city of Lubeck to the period later than 1392 but it does contain earlier forms, datable even to the onset of that century (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 130). Similar remarks may apply also to the fitting present in the hoard from Gransee deposited around 1370 (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 39–40). The hoard from Meldorf containing three heraldic fittings (Krabath, Lambacher 2006, 47, Fig. 31) was hidden much later, around 1415 but we cannot rule out that, similarly as the deposit from Pritzwalk, it contained objects much older than early fifteenth century.

The next assemblage to be analysed in the context of dating the fitting from Ciemna Cave is the coat of plates discovered in mass grave No. 2 at Visby on Gotland to which were riveted three bronze fittings in the form of rosettes (Thordeman 1939, 227, Fig. 206, 228–229, 354–359). The fittings from Gotland and its assemblage may be said to have a reliable *terminus ante quem* as that they come from a burial of a casualty in the Battle of Visby of 1361.

Extremely hard to date is the mount with the House of Piast eagle now seen on the upper part of the blade of the Szczerbiec Coronation Sword. Even if its medieval age is never challenged. According to most researchers at first the fitting may have decorated the scabbard of the Coronation Sword, in the early fourteenth century, the time of the reign of Władysław the Elbow-high (Sadowski 1894, 116–117; Lileyko 1987, 72; Piech 1994, 119; Żygulski 2008, 317, Biborski et al. 2012, 113).

Some objects analogical to the find from Ciemna Cave can be dated on the evidence of either their stratigraphic position or their style design. According to R. Ragač the fittings from Zvolen belong in late thirteenth century, except for the specimen with a floral design, as its shield is of a form more likely to belong in the fourteenth century (Ragač 2001, 442). This would also be the time-frame of the mount from Ostrów Lednicki which J. Wrzesiński has placed in the first half of the fourteenth century, possibly even its very beginning (Wrzesiński 1991, 150). The close of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth century would be an appropriate time-frame for the fitting from Biśnik. Of major help in dating this specimen are finds of spurs, early rowel type (Muzolf 1997: 147). All three fittings discovered in Wrocław (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 111, 127, Fig. 23:e, 128, Fig. 24:d, f, 129, Fig. 26–27) come from a layer of muck

Table 1

The dating of medieval heraldic mounts (analogies for the Ciemna Cave specimen).

Place of discovery	Number of heraldic badges	Closed assemblage (+/-)	Chronology	Basis for the dating	Literature
Biśnik, powiat Olkusz, Poland	2	-	2 nd half of 13 th – 1 st half of 14 th c.	other finds	Muzolf 1996; 1997
Burgos, Castilla y León, Spain	9	+	before 1275 (before 1269?)	historical context	Wild 2011
Colmar, département Haut-Rhin, France	1?	+	before 1348/1349	other finds; other factors	Krabath, Lambacher 2006
Felsőszentkirály, Bács-Kiskun megye, Hungary	14	+	end of 13 th – early 14 th century	other finds (grave goods)	Páloczi-Horváth 1972
Gransee, Landkreis Oberhavel, Germany	1	+	before 1370	other finds	Krabath, Lambacher 2006
Meldorf, Landkreis Dithmarschen, Germany	3	+	before 1415	other finds	Krabath, Lambacher 2006
Opole, powiat Opole, Poland	1	+	after 1310	florin, reused in a finger-ring	Masner 1904
Ostrów Lednicki, powiat Gniezno, Poland	1	-	1 st half of 14 th c. (early 14 th century?)	style design, other finds	Wrzesiński 1991
Pritzwalk, Landkreis Prignitz, Germany	1	+	1 st half of 14 th c.?	other finds, style design	Krabath, Lambacher 2006
Voinești, județul Iași, Romania	1	+	2 nd half of 13 th – 1 st half of 14 th c.	other finds	Teodor 1961

Place of discovery	Number of heraldic badges	Closed assemblage (+/-)	Chronology	Basis for the dating	Literature
Weißenfels, Landkreis Weißenfels, Germany	1	+	early 14 th c.	other finds	Stürzebecher 2010
Visby, kommun Gotland, Sweden	3	+	before 1361	site chronology	Thordeman 1939, 1940
Wrocław, powiat Wrocław, Poland	1	-	2 nd half of 13 th -14 th c.	cultural layer content	Bresch, Buśko 2001
Zvolen, okres Zvolen, Slovakia	4	-	end of 13 th c.	style design of the fittings; stratigraphy?	Ragač 2001
Zvolen, okres Zvolen, Slovakia	1	-	14 th century	style design of the fittings; stratigraphy?	Ragač 2001
Fitting from the belt from the river Loire	1	-	3 rd and 4 th decade of 14 th century	style design of the belt	Fingerlin 1971
Fittings from the belt auctioned off in Paris in 1898	at least 3	-	3 rd and 4 th decade of 14 th century	style design of the belt	Fingerlin 1971
Italian mount with Visconti and Sforza coats of arms	1	?	2 nd half of 14 th century	no data	Campbell 2009

which contained material from earlier phases of the early Middle Ages, e.g., an unspecified bracteate, dated nevertheless to the second half of the thirteenth century (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 120, Footnote 1)¹⁹.

In some cases the dating of the mounts is based only on the style design of the belt. This applies to the specimen recovered from the river Loire and to the one auctioned off in Paris in 1898. I. Fingerlin proposes to date these two belts to the 1330s and 40s (Fingerlin 1971, 425–427, Inv. No. 364, Fig. 502, 437, No. 419, Fig. 512). The dating of the miniature heraldic shields from the belt set from the “Gołuchów group” is less firm as this specimen may be a compilation of earlier and later elements. If we take into account the style design of the heraldic mounts, very similar to that of the specimens from Felsőszentkirály, the Loire and from the belt auctioned off in Paris, the time-frame for the Gołuchów specimen would be second half of thirteenth — first half of fourteenth century. In the catalogue the dating proposed for this belt set is fourteenth century (Froehner 1897, 89).

Closing our review of the chronology of mounts analogical to the specimen from Ciemna Cave we also need to note that in western European museum inventories there is a record also on slightly younger heraldic fittings. One of these, provenanced only broadly to Italy and attributed to the latter half of the fourteenth century, has on it House of Visconti and House of Sforza coat-of-arms (Campbell 2009, 102, Fig. 117)²⁰. It may be seen therefore (Table I) that almost all the specimens similar to the mount from Ciemna Cave fall within the time-frame of the second half of thirteenth — first half of fourteenth century. This may be useful input to establishing the chronology of our find.

The next step is to examine other medieval finds recovered during the investigation of Ciemna Cave so far, noting at the same time, that they do not form any closed assemblage and only document human presence in the Ciemna Cave during the Middle Ages.

The dominant category of relics from the medieval phase of occupation of the cave are pottery finds (Fig. 8:6–10), hardly a good dating tool, similarly as a loop fire steel (Fig. 8:4). Other finds are more useful in this respect, most notably a parvus, i.e. a small penny of King Wenceslaus II (Fig. 8:1), struck 1283–1305, attributable to types 37–39 of J. Hášková (1991, 24). A fragment of a spur recovered in 2007 is an early variant of rowel spurs. Despite its poor preservation (Fig. 8:5) some of its metric traits could be measured (rowel diameter of cca. 3.5 cm, shank length of cca. 2.5 cm) in which it corresponds to rowel spur type A, possibly, type C, of S. Kołodziejski, known to have been in use in the second half of the thirteenth — first half of the fourteenth century (Kołodziejski 1985, 165–166; cf. Hilczerówna 1956, 63 et passim).

¹⁹ The same layer yielded a fifteenth-century heller interpreted by the authors as an intrusive find, chronologically incompatible with the rest of the inventory from the muck layer (Bresch, Buśko 2001, 120, Footnote 1). In any case, the only good analogy for the find from Ciemna Cave is the find from Wrocław provided with rivets (Fig. 4:2).

²⁰ Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the grounds for dating the Italian find.

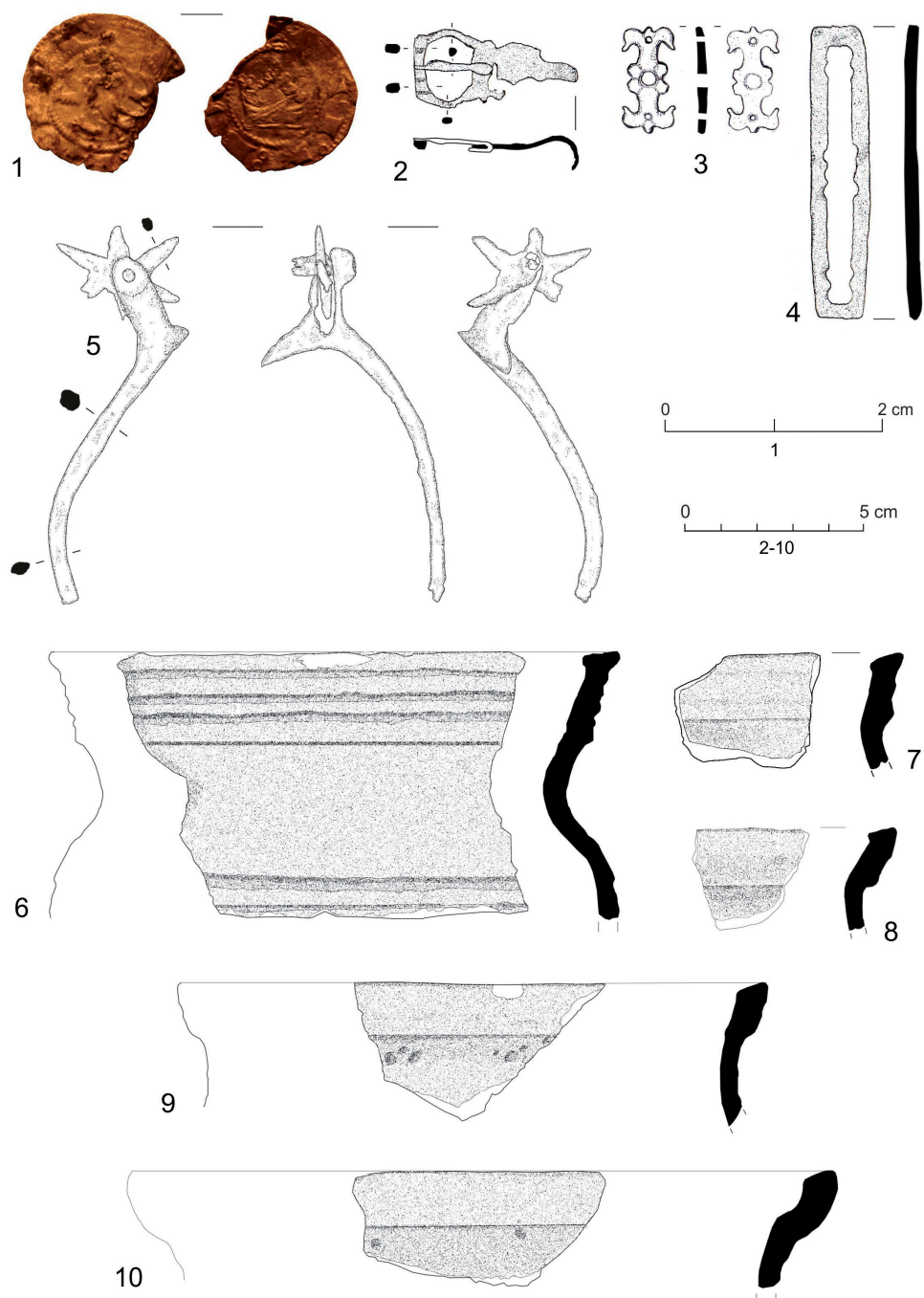


Fig. 8. The selection of the medieval assemblage from Ciemna Cave; drawn by M. Wojenka.
 1 — a small penny of King Wenceslaus II (struck 1283–1305); 2 — buckle; 3 — an iron equal-armed fitting;
 4 — a loop fire steel; 5 — a fragment of a spur; 6–10 pottery (1 — silver; 2–5 — iron; 6–10 — clay).

I propose to interpret the small iron buckle (Fig. 8:2) as a spur fastener; this is suggested both by its length of less than 5 cm, and the hook-like terminal (*cf.* Whitehead 1996, 29–30). Although this find does not lend itself to any closer dating the distinctive profiling of its frame corresponds to a style design characteristic in Western European inventories for the period 1250–1330 (Fingerlin 1971, 218; *cf.* Egan, Pritchard 2002, 22; Woodfin et al. 2010, 166). Consequently it is not impossible that we can place the mount recovered in the Ciemna Cave in a similar time-frame.

Also worth invoking here is another interesting find from the cave, an iron equal-armed fitting, about 3 cm in length, with two characteristic lily terminals, each with a rivet hole (Wojenka 2012, 29, Pl. II:2; see Fig. 8:3). This object, which we can identify as a belt or strap mount, used to separate its individual “segments”, has a series of analogies, mainly in Western Europe (*cf.* e.g., Fingerlin 1971, 85, Fig. 105–110). These forms are certain to be the next stage in the evolution of “bar fittings” (German *langrechteckigen Bortenstreckern*), present in Western Europe from at least the middle of the twelfth century (Krabath 2001, 162, 164; Egan, Pritchard 2002, 26). That they appear also during the later phases the Middle Ages is confirmed by the belt of Fernando de la Cerda († 1275; *cf.* Wild 2011, 380, Pl. 1) and the statues of Ekkehard II and Uta in Naumburg Cathedral from 1249–1255 (Campbell 2009, 39, Fig. 37). Forms with lily terminals appear to be later (*cf.* Fingerlin 1971, 85–86). A notable, relatively early assemblage in which this form of mount was present, next to a suite of belt fittings, is the deposit from Judengasse in Salzburg dated reliably by coins struck in 1290–1300 (Theune 2010, 292, Fig. 1, 294). Let us note that bar mounts with lily terminals are known also from the deposits from Felsőszentkirály and Voinești (Pálóczi-Horváth 1972, 182–187; Teodor 1961, 259), assemblages relatively firmly dated within the confines of the second half of thirteenth — first half of fourteenth century. A valuable group of thirteen gilded silver fittings of a very similar type is known from Zdravec, s. Targoviško, Bulgaria, but their dating was established only by analogy with the Voinești hoard (Antonova 1964, 46, Fig. 1:7, 48). Recently mounts with lily terminals came under scrutiny of S. Krabath who went on to develop their typology. Taking our cue from his findings we are inclined to classify the specimen from Ciemna Cave as type 16. S. Krabath proposes to date mounts with lily terminals to the period second half of thirteenth — early fourteenth century (Krabath 2001, 166). The youngest iconographic representation of mounts of the discussed type would be the lily mount seen on the tomb of Gottfried von Bergheim (†1335) in Saint Chrysanthus and Daria church in Bad Münstereifel (Krabath 2001, 166).

For the present²¹ the small finds presented above exhaust the list of relatively soundly dated medieval finds from Ciemna Cave. It appears that there

²¹ Archaeological fieldwork in Ciemna Cave is to be continued in the coming years and may be expected to add new medieval artefacts to our data base of sources.

are no artefacts among them that we can date conclusively later than to mid-fourteenth century. It is interesting that a similar situation is observed in other caves of the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland.

Medieval inventories from the caves of the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland are mostly made up of pottery vessel fragments (Wojenka 2012) not easily dated owing to their generally known negligible chronologically diagnostic value. Fortunately this is not the only class of find. Also available for our analysis is a group of finds from the cave sites which may be said to belong to a “military horizon” (on which, nevertheless, see closing remarks), a record on the activity in the caves of unspecified armed groups. This horizon is designated mainly by finds of rowel spurs, which must be known at present from more than ten finds (Wojenka 2012, 28). Apart from the specimen recovered at Ciemna Cave rowel spurs surfaced in the nearby rock shelter Boczne w Ogrójcu, between the villages Prądnik Korzkiewski and Maszyce (Czarnowski 1914a, 46; Pl. VII:O:8). Four similar spurs are recorded in the cave Bębłowska Dolna at Bębło (Rook 1963, 338–339, 341–342, Pl. I:6), and a single specimen is known from the studies made by G. Ossowski in the cave Na Gołabcu, at Piekary (Ossowski 1880, 51–52; Dąbrowska 1962, 56). An unspecified spur said to be from “a historic age” and as such, presumably, a rowel form, comes from the fieldwork of S. J. Czarnowski at Oborzysko Wielkie next to the Ciemna Cave (Czarnowski 1924, 18). This specimen must be regarded as lost to research, similarly as the finds from Cave Wierzchowska, at Wierzchowie, discovered by G. Ossowski (Ossowski 1887, 23; Mączyńska, Rook 1972, 122). From brief references in literature we know also of some incomplete spurs unearthed quite a distance from Ciemna Cave, in Jasna Smoleńska Cave. These finds date to thirteenth-fourteenth centuries (Stefaniak et al. 2009, 263).

Owing to their largely unpublished state and in many cases, the loss of some specimens, most of the finds discussed above cannot be specified as to type. Nevertheless it is worth noting that without exception the better published specimens represent the older variants of the rowel spur, more likely attributable to type A–C of S. Kołodziejski (Kołodziejski 1985; cf. Hilscherówna 1956, 63 et passim; Wojenka 2012, 28–30). We can assign them to the time-frame of second half (third quarter?) of the thirteenth — first half of the fourteenth century (Kołodziejski 1985, 166).

All other military finds known from the caves cannot be dated more closely. They include quite a few bolt-heads and arrowheads (e.g.: Ossowski 1887, 23; Rook 1963, 339, Pl. I:9–10, 12; Mączyńska, Rook 1972, 122; Dagnan-Ginter et al. 1992, 9, Pl. II:5; see also: Wojenka 2012, 30). As a rule they are single finds. An exception in this respect is W Skale Kmity Cave, at Zabierzów, which yielded more than thirty bolt-heads and two arrowheads with a distinctive lozenge-shaped blade (Ossowski 1880, 52, Dąbrowska 1962, 75–78). At least the two latter may be suspected of having a non-local prov-

enance, very likely associated with the steppe/nomad environment (Liwoch, in print; cf. e.g., Świątosławski 1997, 65, 82)²².

Not much can be said about the other finds from the caves. Two spearheads are known from two rock shelters: Boczne w Ogrójcu and Boczne przy Jaskini Łokietka, discovered by S. J. Czarnowski (Czarnowski 1914a, 46, Pl. VI–I:O:7; 1914b, Pl. XVI:1). G. Ossowski reported on a sword fragment from Na Gołębcu Cave, at Piekary (Ossowski 1880, 51–52) which however was not confirmed during a museum review made by E. Dąbrowska (1962, 56). From Jasna Smoleńska Cave comes a fragment of chain mail (Muzolf 1999, 14).

We may say that the “heraldic” mount from Ciemna Cave, the subject of the present study, rounds off the list of military finds from the caves of Kraków–Częstochowa Upland, or at least, may be understood as an element of the medieval culture of chivalry. Given its analogies assembled here, the character of other medieval artefacts from Ciemna Cave and the overall context of occurrence of military finds in the caves of Kraków–Częstochowa Upland, I propose to date this specimen in the time-frame of the second half of the thirteenth century — end of fourteenth century. I propose to place the lily belt mount in a similar, although somewhat less broad chronological frame (second half of thirteenth — first half of fourteenth century). At the same I believe that the most likely time-frame of the deposition of these two artefacts is more narrow — between the end of the thirteenth and the middle of the fourteenth century. Although I am justified in doing so by the dating of the majority of analogies and the medieval inventory recovered so far from Ciemna Cave I believe that this narrow chronology cannot be fully validated by the sources.

We cannot really hope to determine the provenance of the mount from Ciemna Cave. We can only accept that its ornamentation and style design are typical for the medieval chivalric culture, definitely one with a western European pedigree.

CONCLUSIONS

In examining the medieval military objects known from the caves of the Kraków–Częstochowa Upland we can hardly expect all of them to represent a single time horizon. The caves may harbour relics from the times of warfare but, equally well, they could have been visited by groups of robbers, hunters or poachers. Looking at the chronology of the artefacts of interest to us what appears to be more important is this: among military objects from cave finds there are no specimens dated reliably to later than cca. 1350. Not only the spur finds

²² For drawing my attention to this exciting assemblage I am indebted to R. Liwoch from the Archaeological Museum in Kraków who also kindly let me read the typescript of his study on the finds discussed here.

belong in the time frame of the second half of thirteenth — first half of fourteenth century, but very likely, this applies to both finds from Ciemna Cave: the “heraldic” mount and the lily belt fitting. Also worth noting is the fact that both categories of object bring to mind the world of knights and chivalry.

Activity of armed groups in the caves of Kraków–Częstochowa Upland finds no confirmation whatsoever in the medieval written record. Even so, a cave and a military context come together in the story of how the Polish Duke Władysław the Elbow-high found refuge in a cave near to the village of Ojców, possibly in the spring of 1306, as he struggled to wrest the throne in Krakow from King Wenceslaus III (Długopolski 2009, 80). According to some researchers there could be a grain of truth in this old folk tale (Rokosz 2003). Others have discarded the legend as no more than a fabrication, quite a late one at that (Samsonowicz 2000). It seems however that the archaeological record secured from some of the caves in the region could prevent us from dismissing the veracity of the legend altogether (*cf.* Kołodziejcki 1997, 71; Wojenka 2012, 33). Next to the military objects (including the reliably dated mount with a lily terminal) an appropriate chronological marker for the activity in the caves during the period of unrest when Władysław the Elbow-high was struggling to win the throne would be the Czech parvus of Wenceslaus II, although it is also possible that this coin was dropped only after longer circulation. To conclude, we need more fieldwork to confirm the veracity of the tale of Władysław the Elbow-high and the caves of Ojców, if this is possible at all. One thing is certain, the last word on this matter belongs to none other than archaeology.

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