

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XV

MUZEUM NARODOWE W KRAKOWIE
SEKCJA NUMIZMATYCZNA
KOMISJI ARCHEOLOGICZNEJ PAN
ODDZIAŁ W KRAKOWIE

Kraków 2020

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It is with great pleasure that we present volume XV of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne* to you. In accordance with the principles that we have adopted, our texts are published in the conference languages with English and Polish abstracts. The whole of the present volume can be found as PDF's on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>), as are previously published volumes of the journal. The website also contains general information about the journal as well as information for prospective authors and reviewers.

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A Celtic Stater of the Krakow Type from the Opatów Area (Opatów County, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship)

ABSTRACT: The paper discusses a new find of a Krakow type Celtic stater. The coin was discovered accidentally in the Opatów area (Opatów County, Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship). The specimen represents variant II: C/4 according to Marcin Rudnicki, although the weakly preserved motifs visible on the obverse show some differences compared to the reference variant. The reverse bears traces of die repair. A high content of silver indicates a relatively late chronological position of the Opatów find. The discussed coin is the twentieth known stater of the Krakow type.

KEY WORDS: Krakow type stater, Tyniec group, Przeworsk culture, Celtic import

ABSTRAKT: *Celtycki stater typu krakowskiego z okolic Opatowa, pow. loco, woj. świętokrzyskie*

W artykule omówiono nowe znalezisko celtyckiego statera typu krakowskiego. Monetę odkryto przypadkowo w rejonie Opatowa, pow. loco, woj. świętokrzyskie. Okaz reprezentuje odmianę II: C/4 według Marcina Rudnickiego, jednak niewykluczone, że słabo zachowane motywy widniejące na awersie wykazują pewne różnice względem odmiany referencyjnej. Rewers nosi ślady naprawy stempla. Wysoka zawartość srebra potwierdza relatywnie późną pozycję chronologiczną znaleziska z Opatowa. Omawiana moneta jest dwudziestym znanym staterem typu krakowskiego.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: stater typu krakowskiego, grupa tyniecka, kultura przeworska, import celtycki

In November 2019 a Celtic stater of the Krakow type was delivered to Marek Florek at the Sandomierz branch of the Provincial Heritage Protection Office (WUOZ) in Kielce.¹ The handover of the coin was facilitated by Kamil Bartosz Bilski and Rafał Świerkula from the Opatów-based „Wspólne Dziedzictwo” Association. According to the finder, he came across the coin while digging for worms on a loess slope, south east of one of the fishponds near Opatów. During surface prospections in 1989 an archaeological site was located in this area, known as Opatów 28 (AZP 87–70/59) and described as a Late Bronze Age and Halstatt period Lusatian culture settlement and a 11th–13th century Early Medieval settlement, along with traces of prehistoric occupation of unspecified chronology.

The specimen in question was made from an alloy with a high content of silver and containing an admixture of copper.² The coin is 16.3 mm wide,³ 18.1 mm high and 3.7 mm thick and weighs 5.114 g. The 0 axis (for a coin positioned according to M. Rudnicki).

The obverse: a circular bulge is visible, with a flattened lower side that gradually merges into the background. The image is not well preserved (Pl. 1, Figs. 1a–c). Most likely it is a strongly obliterated simplified depiction, initially comprising a globule with three straight ribs („rays”) protruding upwards. At present only two delicately marked grooves are discernible, which once separated the ribs. Such a picture is typical for the C variant of Krakow type staters, according to M. Rudnicki.⁴ However, it seems that the remnants of further elements, not recognized on the coins described by M. Rudnicki, are also weakly preserved on the obverse. Small knobs-bulges, more or less regularly spaced, can be seen (Pl. 1, Fig. 1b). Some of them are accompanied by darkening resulting from copper oxide precipitation, and it is difficult to unambiguously ascertain, whether the knobs are elements of the die stamp or evidence of advanced corrosion. It is also possible that some of them were created by the striking, the rest being patches of corrosion. Nevertheless, such knobs are absent on the reverse, though similar signs of corrosion may be expected on both sides of the coin. On the other hand the knobs are relatively well visible, whereas the main element of the obverse, i.e. the depiction of the globule with three ribs, is rather poorly preserved. This observation may point towards

¹ I would like to thank Dr Hab. M. Florek for his help with preparing the paper.

² An X-ray fluorescence analysis was performed in the Laboratory of Analysis and Nondestructive Investigation of Heritage Objects (LANBOZ), National Museum in Krakow. Sample AV: Ag 80.71%; Cu 11.47%; Zn 2.36%; Sn 2.25%; Pb 1.94%; Au 0.71%. Cr 0.28%; W 0.11%; Bi 0.09%. Sample RV: Ag 77.31%; Cu 14.98%; Sn 2.51%; Zn 2.48%; Pb 1.65%; Au 0.60%; Cr 0.27%; Bi 0.05%; Ni 0.03%. I would like to thank Head of LANBOZ, Julio del Hoyo-Meléndez, who did the metallurgical analysis.

³ The terms “width” and “height”, as well as “lower”/“upper” and “left”/“right” part used in the text, relate to a coin positioned according to M. Rudnicki (RUDNICKI 2012).

⁴ *Ibidem*: 28.

a post-depositional origin of the knobs. Moreover, a row of c. 6 fine-sized dots and weakly marked oblique lines were identified on the left side of the obverse (Pl. 1, Fig. 1c). If indeed these are die imprints, then the described motif should be regarded as a more complex obverse type of the C variant according to Rudnicki. The poor preservation of the obverse does not allow for a clear definition of this type; at this moment only certain differences in relation to the C variant may be outlined. Further discoveries of Krakow type staters will potentially lead to a refinement of these remarks. A deep scratch is also visible on the obverse, possibly made intentionally to test alloy purity or the authenticity of the coin.

The reverse: in the lower part a crescent-shaped boss is perceptible, with two poorly conspicuous dots on its left terminus and one dot on its right terminus (Pl. 1, Fig. 1d). The small visibility of the dots may reflect use-wear of the die. Three dots in a horizontal row are found above the left part of the boss, and a fourth dot, slightly smaller, is located higher up. The three dots are connected by a straight line, probably engraved in the die to facilitate positioning of the tool.⁵ Additional protuberances marked on the dots indicate possible retouch of the die (Pl. 1, Fig. 2). The straight line and the signs of adjusting the die's imprint, don't find analogies among other known Krakow type staters. From the central part of the boss's upper edge stems a crescent-shaped bulge, bent towards the right above two dots situated one over the other; beside there is a pointed protrusion of two triangular elements slanting leftwards. Above the crescent-shaped boss, near the left edge of the coin, a T-shaped mark is visible – its base is formed by a section of the linear rim; just behind it, at the edge of the coin an irregular knob is located; in the upper part of the coin, along the edge, runs a rim of filamentous rays directed towards the centre.

A comparison of the obverse and reverse positions shows that they are arranged towards each other along the 0 axis. In result, the circular bulge on the obverse is slightly shifted towards the upper part of the coin, whereas the crescent-shaped boss visible on the reverse is found in its lower part. Consequently the mass of metal (bullion) is more or less uniformly spread within the coin, what facilitated the minting process – in case of an asymmetrical distribution of the mass, the planchet has a tendency of slipping from under the die.⁶

A comprehensive review of Krakow (“Cracovian” according to M. Rudnicki) type staters, their definition and typology was prepared by M. Rudnicki.⁷ He managed

⁵ For turning my attention to this technical detail I would like to thank Łukasz Kieferling (M.A., Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow), who works on reconstructions of the minting process and manufactures replicas of ancient coins.

⁶ I kindly thank Łukasz Kieferling (M.A.) also for this remark.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

to confirm previous hypotheses suggesting a local (Lesser Poland) origin of the coins⁸ and based on 17⁹ then-known specimens, he identified two groups of staters: I – prototypes, and II – specimens representing a fully developed variant of the Krakow type. Among the first group two kinds of obverses (A, B) and reverses (1, 2) were noted, while the second group comprises four kinds of obverses (A–D) and reverses (1–4), corresponding with distinct evolution phases of depictions on both sides of the coins.¹⁰ Not only the sequence of groups and obverse/reverse kinds, but also the weight of the coins has some chronological significance – the latter growing smaller with the decrease of gold content in the alloy¹¹ (Pl. 2).

M. Rudnicki's findings are still valid and their accuracy was confirmed by newer discoveries, which are fully classifiable according to principles outlined in his publication. The list compiled in 2012 should be supplemented by a variant II: D/2 coin from Czechy (Krakow County)¹² and a variant II: A/1 specimen sold on an auction at Nomos AG in Zurich (lot 14) on November 17th 2019.¹³ The latter was previously a part of the Trausnitz Collection, (Germany) and was bought in 1998 at Münzhandlung Athena. The auction statement only mentions „Central Europe” as a source-location. Unfortunately, among the 20 currently known Krakow type staters, not a single one was found during archaeological fieldwork. Uniquely, the precise location of the Czechy specimen is known. Twice (Folkušová, okres Martin, Žilinský kraj, Slovakia and Tuklaty, okres Kolín, Středočeský kraj, Czechia) Krakow type staters were elements of Celtic coin hoards uncovered by amateurs-explorers. The places of discovery of ten further specimens remain unknown, and the remainder originate from “the Krakow area”, “presumably the Zagrzeb region” or “the Sochaczew area” – these descriptions should be treated as rough approximations.

The coin from the Opatów area is the twentieth published specimen of a Krakow type stater. It represents a late II: C/4 variant, similar to finds dated by M. Rudnicki to the phase LT D1 or subphase B1a of the Roman period. A coin of this kind (II: C/4) was discovered before 1847 in Pełczyska (presently Pińczów County)¹⁴ and

⁸ CASTELIN 1976: 260–269; WOŹNIAK 1977: 70; IDEM 1978: 104–108.

⁹ While discussing the find from Tuklaty, okres Kolín, Středočeský kraj (Czechia), M. Rudnicki mentions receiving information about one more Krakow type stater from Tuklaty. However, due to the lack of basic identification data this find was not included in his catalogue (RUDNICKI 2012: 72).

¹⁰ *Ibidem*: 22–37.

¹¹ RUDNICKI 2012: 11.

¹² DULĘBA and WYSOCKI 2017: 54, 56–58; Fig. 3:15.

¹³ <https://www.bidder.ch/auctions/nomos/browse?a=793&l=836811>, accessed on January 22, 2020. The specimen was first described at the Nomos AG website as a Boii stater. I kindly thank Prof. J. Bodzek (Numismatic Cabinet, National Museum in Krakow and the Institute of Archaeology, Jagiellonian University in Kraków) for information regarding this specimen.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*: 68, 69; Fig. 35, earlier references therein.

another exemplar was found in Folkušová, within a hoard of Puchov culture coinage dated to the onset of the Roman period¹⁵ (which may have started slightly earlier in Slovakia than in Polish lands). Let us note that such a chronology corresponds *grosso modo* with the chronology of feature no 187/54 from Krakow Nowa Huta – Mogiła, where two fragments of planchet moulds were revealed.¹⁶ Also the composition of the alloy from which the coin was made, points towards a late dating of the Opatów find. Noteworthy is not only the high content of silver, but also the presumed admixture of copper. The addition of this metal, most likely for a yellowish colouring of the alloy, has a disadvantageous impact on the hardness of planchet. An alloy with a share of copper is noticeably harder than a combination of gold and silver, what can hinder cold-minting and speed-up use-wear of the die. On the other hand, heating of the planchets may lead to dehardening of the die and its progressing degradation.¹⁷ Obviously, the low content of gold corresponds with a small weight of the Opatów specimen – it weighs only 5.114 g what makes it the lightest known Krakow type stater.

As mentioned above, according to the finder the coin in question was discovered near a fishpond in Opatów. This information cannot be verified and its credibility is similar as in the case of other archaeological finds without context. The Opatów region and the whole Sandomierz Upland, were not settled by Tyniec group communities, so the described stater was a Tyniec import in the Przeworsk culture environment.

The discovery of a Celtic stater north-east of Krakow, in an area situated between the Vistula and the Holy Cross Mountains (Świętokrzyski) metallurgical centre, can be tied *grosso modo* with the distribution model proposed by M. Rudnicki, who underlined the role of the Vistula when discussing Krakow type staters uncovered in Kunów (Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski County) and Sochaczew (Sochaczew County)¹⁸ (Map 1).

These conclusions coincide with the opinions of Teresa Dąbrowska and Tomasz Bochnak, regarding the general influx of Celtic imports from the south, into Przeworsk culture territories.¹⁹ Zenon Woźniak brought attention to the connections of the Sandomierz Upland with the La Tène zone, especially the Tyniec group.²⁰ The presence of incomers from the Celtic domain is suggested by finds of graphite

¹⁵ *Ibidem*: 51, 68; Fig. 19.

¹⁶ WOŹNIAK 1978: 107–108.

¹⁷ KIEFERLING 2014: 37.

¹⁸ RUDNICKI 2012: 51.

¹⁹ DĄBROWSKA 1988: 123–125; BOCHNAK 2014: 191–193, Fig. 82.

²⁰ WOŹNIAK 1970: 192; IDEM 1994: 133, 134; ORZECHOWSKI 2007: 221.

ware in Baranów Sandomierski²¹ (Tarnobrzeg County), Grzegorzowice (Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski County), Samborzec (Sandomierz County), Świniary²² (Sandomierz County), and above all at the cemetery in Błonie (Sandomierz County, graves 51 and 211). Imported glass beads, as well as type A.18a and A.65 fibulae and militaria²³ are also known from this necropolis, however these categories of finds to a lesser extent than pottery indicate the physical presence of people from the Celtic cultural sphere.²⁴ Nevertheless, also these artefacts are evidence of relations with the Celtic world. According to Z. Woźniak, La Tène cultural patterns are likewise visible in local ceramic forms (especially from the Błonie cemetery).²⁵

Contacts between communities of the Tyniec group and the Przeworsk culture may be significant in the context of the Holy Cross metallurgical centre, the origins of which surely reach the Early Pre-Roman period. The Sandomierz Upland was a demographic base for ancient iron smelting in the Holy Cross Mountains. Opatówka, a minor left-bank tributary of the Vistula which flows through Opatów, is a natural corridor leading towards the Holy Cross Mountains. No signs of Przeworsk culture settlement dated unambiguously to the A3 phase and the beginning of the Roman period were so far discovered near Opatów, but the Opatówka valley surely played an important role in the contacts between Tyniec group communities and Przeworsk culture societies inhabiting the western part of the Sandomierz Upland and the Holy Cross metallurgical region, where fragments of graphite ware and grey ware were found (Stara Słupia, Kielce County and Pokrzywnica, Starachowice County),²⁶ along with the above-mentioned stater from Kunów uncovered accidentally in 2006. As shown by research, the Sandomierz Upland was intensely occupied between phase A2 of the Early Pre-Roman period and the Late Roman period and no settlement hiatuses are visible in the archaeological record of the region; thus it may be assumed, that Przeworsk culture settlements existed along the Opatówka also at the turn of the eras.

Therefore, the Opatów coin is further proof of contacts between local Przeworsk culture populations and representatives of the Tyniec group from the Krakow area.

²¹ The site at Baranów Sandomierski is located on the right bank of the Vistula, outside the area of the Sandomierz Upland, however both Z. Woźniak and S. Orzechowski connect the site with settlement clusters on the left Vistula bank (WOŹNIAK 1994: 133; ORZECOWSKI 2007: 218).

²² WOŹNIAK 1970: 162, 347, 349, 250; ORZECOWSKI 2007: 54.

²³ WOŹNIAK and MYCIELSKA 1988.

²⁴ BOCHNAK 2014: 166.

²⁵ WOŹNIAK 1994: 133.

²⁶ MYCIELSKA 1968: 331; Tabl. I:9; ORZECOWSKI 2007: 74, 75; Tabl. I:2, 3.

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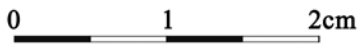
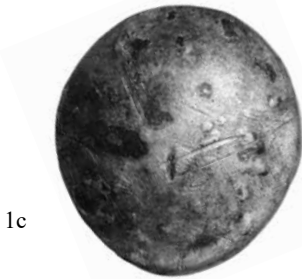
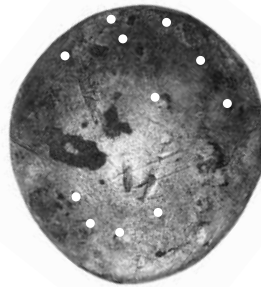
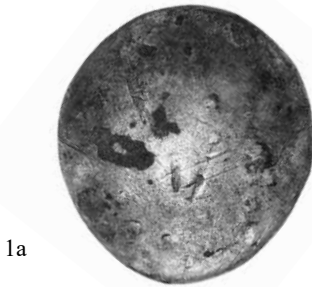
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Translation: Mateusz Krupski

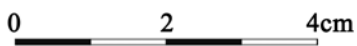
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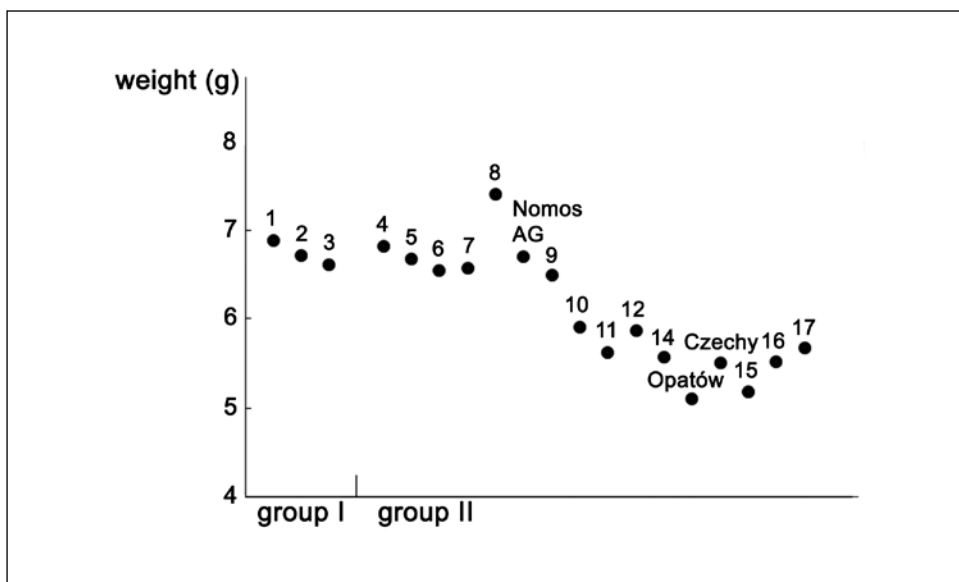
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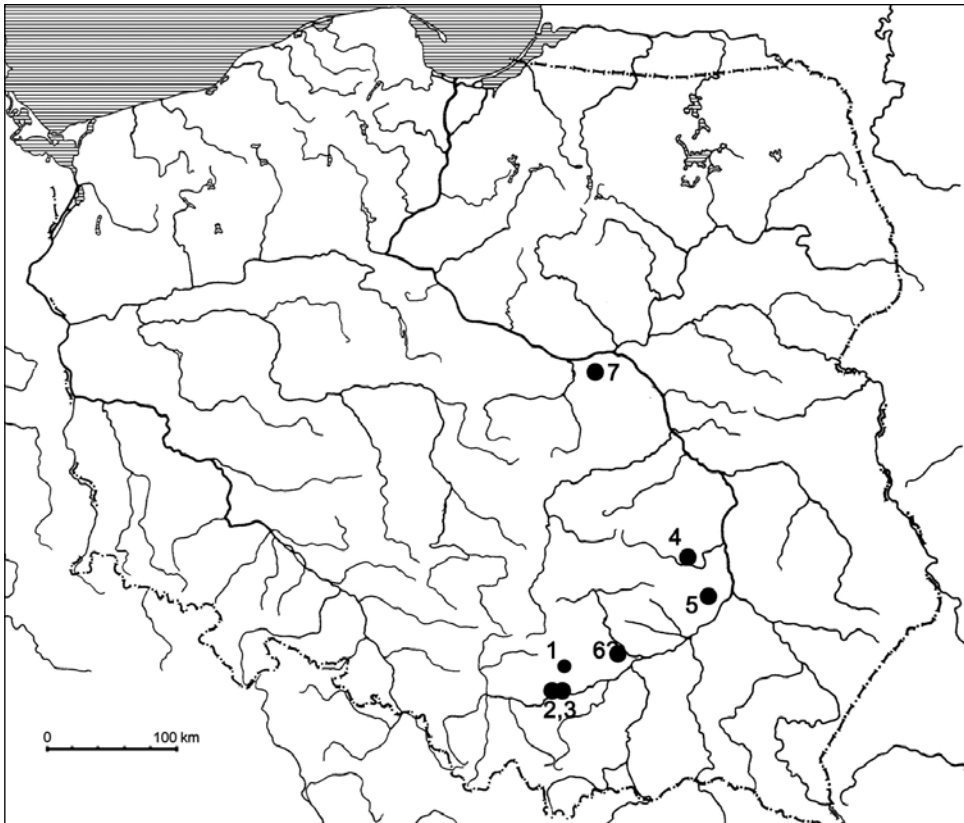
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- PLATE 1 Figs. 1a–d. Celtic stater of the Krakow type from the Opatów area; a) the obverse, b) the obverse with marked small knobs-bulges, c) the obverse, d) the reverse. Scale 2:1
Photo: T. Bochnak
- Fig. 2. Celtic stater of the Krakow type from the Opatów area, pow. loco – detail. Traces of die repair. Scale 4:1
Photo: T. Bochnak
- PLATE 2 Chart showing weight differentiation of Krakow type staters ordered according to M. Rudnicki's typology – including new discoveries. Numerals beside the dots correspond with M. Rudnicki's (2012) catalogue numbers. According to M. Rudnicki, with additions
- MAP 1 Distribution of Krakow type staters in Polish lands. Most finds (except stater from Czechy) without archaeological context and precise location



2







Map 1. Distribution of Krakow type staters in Polish lands. Most finds (except stater from Czechy) without archaeological context and precise location

1 – Czechy, Krakow County; 2 – Krakow Grzegórzki; 3 – Krakow, vicinity; 4 – Kunów, Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski County; 5 – Opatów, Opatów County; 6 – Pełczyska, Pińczów County or vicinity of Pełczyska; 7 – Sochaczew, Sochaczew County