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THE SICILIAN DESIGN ON THE OPOLE COIN AND THE GENESIS OF THE WHITE EAGLE

The bracteate with eagle, of which the bottom part of the trunk is replaced by a human head turned to the right (according to the heraldic order), with the legend VLADIZLAVS (known as the *Uladi-zlaus* bracteate, thanks to the specific type of the inscription) has been known since the publication of the hoard at Brzegi on the Nida,¹ where two such specimens occurred (fig. 1). Only later was the specimen that had been found in Radzanowo near Płock² a few decades earlier, pu-

¹ M. Gumowski, *Wykopalisko monet z XIII w. w Brzegach nad Nidą* (Coin Hoard from the 13th Century from Brzegi on the Nida), Kraków 1917, pp. 61–62.

² *Idem*, *Wykopalisko brakteatów w Radzanowie* (The bracteate hoard at Radzanowo), WNA, XIX, 1937, p. 13, no. 62; E. Jędrysek-Migdalska, *Skarb brakteatów z Radzanowa nad Wkrą* (The Bracteate Hoard from Radzanów on the Wkra), Płock 1976, p. 21, no. 93. I conjecture – which is not certain, though highly likely – that in both works the selfsame example is described.

blished, along with another specimen from the hoard at Zalesie near Sławięcice.³

Although the presence of a name on Polish bracteates of the thirteenth century is very rare, our coin for many decades drew no interest from researchers other than from Marian Gumowski, who, as his fancy took him, attributed it at times to Władysław Odonic, at times to Władysław the Spindle-Legged. Only in the last decade has the attribution of the *Uladizlaus* bracteate become the subject of discussion between Wiesław Kopicki and myself.⁴ In reply to my suggestion that the coin be attributed to Władysław I of Racibórz and Opole (1246–1281/2), W. Kopicki put forward the candidature of Władysław I duke of Wrocław (1266–1270) and archbishop of Salzburg. In this way the stock of Polish Władysławs' of the thirteenth century has been exhausted, and for other rulers of the same name we shall have to search in Hungary, which indeed was Ferdinand Friedensburg's suggestion for this coin.⁵

As far as the attribution is concerned, all arguments have been expressed, and there remains but one still candidate not eliminated: even my opponent has admitted that 'the personage of Władysław Opolski is possible to accept...' This is an individual both interesting and forgotten. With regards to the latter this is proved simply by the fact that he has not been considered as the issuer of the *Uladizlaus* bracteate for over 70 years. He is also often mistaken for his better-known great grandson, the second Duke of Opole⁶ of this name. However, he remained on the political scene for the best part of the 13th century. This was not the result of any particular longevity – he died before he had turned sixty – but rather of the untimely death of his father, Kazimierz I (1229/30).

³ F. Friedensburg, *Schlesische Münzfunde*, Altschlesien, 1, 1922, pp. 30–31.

⁴ The literature on this subject I have compiled in the work: *Nowy Sącz, Trzebiatów, „Uladizlaus”*. *O interpretacji brakteatów guzickowych* (Nowy Sącz, Trzebiatów, 'Uladizlaus'. On the interpretation of the hohlpennigs), WN, XLI, 1997, no. 3–4, p. 142. Z. Piech has turned his attention to this coin, *Wokół genezy Orła Białego jako herbu Królestwa Polskiego* (Around the Genesis of the White Eagle as the Coat of Arms of the Kingdom of Poland), [in:] *Orzeł Biały – 700 lat herbu państwa polskiego* (The White Eagle – 700 Years of the Polish Coat of Arms), Warszawa 1995, pp. 21, 26.

⁵ F. Friedensburg, *Der Fund von Salesche*, *Blätter für Münzfreunde*, LIV, 1919, p. 556. The author later refutes this idea, see footnote 3.

⁶ See recently J. Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy. Studium z dziejów polskiej elity możnowładczej w średniowieczu*, Kraków 1997, p. 666 – the index includes references to Władysław I in the description of Władysław II.

While in the care of his mother, the Bulgarian princess Viola, he was lord of Ruda and Kalisz (from 1238?⁷), and in the years 1243–1244 also the autonomous duke of these territories. Although he lost Kalisz quickly, and in 1249 Ruda also, he ruled from 1246 over Opole and Racibórz, inherited from his father and brother. Here his authority was never questioned. In 1273 he was the rebellious magnates' candidate for the Cracow throne, though in effect he only extended his patrimonial duchy to Tyniec.⁸ After 1255 he belonged to the political camp of Přemysl Otakar II (the king called him *compater*, which attested to great familiarity⁹) and in Poland his greatest ally was his brother-in-law, Kazimierz I of Kujawy.¹⁰ The first son of Kazimierz and Władysław's sister, Eufrozyna, the future king, was given his name Władysław¹¹ after his uncle from Opole. The deal between Władysław of Opole and Henryk IV Probus of Wrocław is often quoted, known from the so-called Nicolaus' Formulary, in which Władysław promises Henryk support in his coronation designs on the condition that Henryk's wife (Władysław's daughter) was to be crowned also. The authenticity of this document has been recently called into question by Norbert Mika, who has pointed out a considerable number of anachronisms in it.¹² From Władysław are descended all the later Piast dukes of Upper Silesia. He was also the founder of several important monasteries (e.g. Rudy and Orlová).

Władysław's father, Kazimierz I of Opole was the first Piast to use a he-

⁷ In relation to this date see J. Rajman, *Mieszko II Otyły książę opolsko-raciborski (1239–1246)*, Kwartalnik Historyczny, C, 1993, pp. 26–27.

⁸ O. Halecki, *Powołanie księcia Władysława Opolskiego na tron krakowski w r. 1273*, Kwartalnik Historyczny, XXVII, 1913, pp. 213–315.

⁹ A. Barciak, *Ideologia polityczna monarchii Przemysła Otokara II. Studium z dziejów czeskiej polityki zagranicznej w drugiej połowie XIII wieku* (The Political Ideology of the Monarchy of Přemysl Otakar II. A Study on Czech Foreign Policy in the Second Half of the 13th Century), Katowice 1982, p. 94; idem, *Czechy a ziemię południowej Polski w XIII oraz w początkach XIV wieku*, Katowice 1992, p. 93.

¹⁰ For the latest biograms on Władysław see J. Sperka, [in:] *Książęta i książęta Górnego Śląska* (The Dukes and Duchesses of Upper Silesia), Katowice 1995, pp. 120–123; T. Jurek, [in:] *Słownik władców polskich* (A Dictionary of Polish Rulers), Poznań 1997, pp. 409–410.

¹¹ K. Jasiński, *Genealogia Władysława Łokietka i jego najbliższej rodziny* (The Genealogy of Władysław the Elbow-Sized and his Immediate Family), [in:] *Zapiski Kujawsko-Dobrzyńskie*, 6, Historia, Wrocław 1988, pp. 13–14.

¹² N. Mika, *Ekspansja czesko-morawska na ziemię raciborską w XIII wieku* (The Czech Moravian Expansion into the Racibórz Lands in the 13th century), *Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Śląska* (Studies into the History of Silesia), 21, 1996, pp. 12–13.

raldic eagle,¹³ at least in view of the known sources to date. This was done by him at the latest in 1222, or possibly even in 1217. Władysław himself, like his elder brother Mieszek, did not initially use the eagle, which has been explained by Małgorzata Kaganiec as due to their having been removed in their inheritance from their father by Henryk I the Bearded.¹⁴ These explanations have undermined the most recent research by Jerzy Rajman, who opposes the suggestion that the Opole juniors were removed from their inheritance.¹⁵ Moreover, after the brothers returned to Opole they did not reinstate the eagle. Only in the years 1257–1260 did Władysław in his pedestrian and equestrian seals appear with an escutcheon adorned with an eagle.¹⁶ This is probably connected with the appearance of the eagle in the symbolism of St. Stanislaus,¹⁷ in whose canonisation process¹⁸ and solemn translation on May 8, 1254, the Duke of Opole personally participated. Hence the appearance of the eagle on Władysław's coin is not surprising. This ruler used the symbol in a shape which was at least protoheraldic. However, what is to be made of the profile of the human head clearly visible in the bottom part of the impression? The inscription around suggests that this is Duke Władysław.

Just such an iconographic scheme can be met in the second quarter of the 13th century on southern German coins from the royal mint at Ulm in Swabia (fig. 2), and Enns in Austria.¹⁹ The human face en face and topped with a clearly visible crown on the first coin relates, probably, to the emperor Frederick II or his son Conrad IV, although some suggest

¹³ Z. Piech, *Ikonomia pieczęci Piastów* (The Iconography of the Piasts' Seals), Kraków 1993, pp. 78, 244–245, no. 83.

¹⁴ M. Kaganiec, *Heraldyka Piastów Śląskich 1146–1707* (The Heraldry of the Silesian Piasts 1146–1707), Katowice 1992, p. 41.

¹⁵ J. Rajman, *Mieszko II...*, p. 37.

¹⁶ Z. Piech, *Ikonomia...*, pp. 246–247, nos. 88–89.

¹⁷ M. Kaganiec, *Orzeł Śląski a Orzeł Biały – wzajemne relacje* (The Silesian Eagle and the White Eagle – Mutual Relations), [in:] *Orzeł Biały. Herb państwa polskiego* (The White Eagle. The Coat of Arms of the Polish State), Warszawa 1996, p. 54.

¹⁸ Wincenty z Kielczy, *Żywot większy świętego Stanisława* (Vita maior Sancti Stanislai), [in:] *Średniowieczne żywoty i cuda patronów Polski* (The Medieval Vitae and the Miracles of Poland's Patrons) published by J. Pleziowa, M. Plezia, Warszawa 1987, p. 298: the testimony of Duke Władysław concerning his miraculous cure.

¹⁹ W. Kopicki, *Monety z napisem '[U]LADIZLAUS'* (Coins with the Inscription '[U]LADIZLAUS'), WN, XXXIX, 1995, booklet 1–2, pp. 78–80.

here his grandson Conradino.²⁰ The second coin was minted during the period when Austria was directly subordinated to the emperor in the years 1236–1239,²¹ thus also depicting Frederick. Within the context of this coinage circle one could put forward the proposition that the motif of the eagle embracing the head of the king with its wings is one of the symbols of Stauf rule.

On the *Uladizlaus* bracteate the figure differs somewhat: the human head is bare headed and shown in profile. We come across it only on the gold coins of the Sicilian king²² Manfred (1258–1266). Both the manner of depiction, as well as the inscription of the king's name +MAYNFRIDVS·R·, surrounding him (fig. 3), show a direct connection between the Sicilian multiples *tari d'oro*²³ and the Opole bracteates. It might be supposed that the Sicilian coin was the model and the Opole one an imitation. We should recall that already one of the first Polish coins – the *Princes Polonie* denarius – quoted Beneventine coinage. Sicilian motifs can also be noticed on later Polish bracteates,²⁴ though they are not as straightforward.

Count Manfred of Taranto, the illegitimate but legitimised son of Frederick II and Blanca Lancia, following the death of his step-brother Conrad IV in 1254, was initially loyal to Conrad, known as Conradino, the two-year-old heir to the throne of Sicily and Jerusalem, who was with his mother in southern Germany. The firm measures taken by the pope to ensure total control over the kingdom persuaded him to act.²⁵ He took over the regency and in August 1258 crowned himself King of Sicily in Palermo.

²⁰ E. Nau, *Der Brakteatenfund von Elchenreute vergraben im 4. Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts*, *Hamburger Beiträge zur Numismatik*, Bd. VI, H. 18–19, 1964/65, pp. 62, 85; *Münzen und Medaillen A. G. Basel. Auktion 77*, 1992, no 479.

²¹ B. Koch, *Der Wiener Pfennig. Ein Kapitel aus der Periode der regionalen Pfennigmünze*, *Numismatische Zeitschrift*, 97, 1983, p. 77 (no. 144, i.e. L 45).

²² The then Kingdom of Sicily covered, besides the island, also southern Italy – that which following divisions and unifications was later known as the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies.

²³ R. Spahr, *Le monete siciliane dai bizantini a Carlo I d'Angiò (582–1282)*, Graz 1976, no. 184 (*non vidi*, cited after *Monete della Sicilia e dell'Italia meridionale. Vendita all'asta pubblica 11 marzo 1987*, Zurigo 1987).

²⁴ B. Paszkiewicz, *Brakteaty polskie w I. tercji XIV wieku* (Polish Bracteates in the First Tierce of the 14th century) *WN*, XXXVIII, 1994, booklet 1–2, pp. 5, 15, 18, 23, 29, 39.

²⁵ S. Runciman, *The Sicilian Vespers. A History of the Mediterranean World in the Later Thirteenth Century*, Cambridge 1958, pp. 31–33.

A contemporary stressed his similarity to his father (best illustrated by Niccolò da Iamsilla in the paraphrase of the name 'Manus Frederici'). A poet and a patron of poets, famous for his looks and courtesy, an epicure surrounded by beautiful women, he was partial to alchemy and magic. His ring with an enchanted spirit was later given to Boniface VIII by Arnaldo da Villanova. That ring possessed for the pope the value of a symbol, because Manfred within the course of a few years surrounded the Holy See with his dependencies. Urban IV forbade Christians to pay off those credits that had been taken out in Siena banks supporting Manfred, and ordered the confiscation of goods of Florentine Ghibelline merchants in Europe, and eventually employed a hired killer in the person of Charles, count of Anjou and Provence.²⁶ The danger for the pope was not the undoubtedly unorthodox nature of Manfred but the threat of Italian unity, which it was possible to delay with immense success for a further 600 years. Charles, crowned in Rome King of Sicily, defeated Manfred at Benevento on the February 26, 1266, where Stauf was killed. Two years later Charles murdered the last of the line, the King of Jerusalem, Conradino.

In Lucia Travaini's opinion that figure had to represent Manfred as "filius aquilae" and descendant of Emperor Frederick.²⁷ The thirteenth century encyclopaedist Brunetto Latini, the deadly enemy of King Manfred, said: 'Nature has seen to it that the eyes of the eagle are able to stare without moving straight at the sun: therefore this bird takes its young in its talons and holding them flies in the direction of the rays so as to keep and rear only those which look at the sun without a flicker and to throw out of the nest like bastards those which blink their eyes. This act is not motivated by natural cruelty but from a desire to be sure that the young are in fact the descendants of eagles...'²⁸ These words, of course, do not describe the real bird of prey, but one appearing in the coats of arms, the symbol and the moral parable. The connections of the eagle with the sun go back, as is known, to the remotest years of antiq-

²⁶ J. Larner, *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch 1216–1380*, London – New York 1980, pp. 40–43.

²⁷ The opinion was expressed in a conversation in September 1997 – for which I am very grateful.

²⁸ B. Latini, *Skarbiec wiedzy (Li livres dou Tresor)*, translated by M. Frankowska-Terlecka, T. Giermak-Zielińska, Warszawa 1992, p. 166.

uity, as in the Physiologus' legend, but here – perhaps in the Ambrosian interpretation – the eagle is Christ himself.²⁹ Just such an eagle we observe on the coin, and it is no coincidence that this is a gold coin, corresponding to the sun's disk. The King of Kings confirms the legitimacy of the king. The king and the eagle look on the coin to the same right side – towards the sun. Since the times of the famous *augustales* of Frederick II, Sicilian gold coinage had served as a presentation of the sublime ideology of power.

The occasion for contacts between Poland and Manfred's kingdom could have been two southern Italian cults, those of Saint Nicholas of Bari and Saint Vitus.³⁰ However, the decision over the choice of symbol for the coin, and the singled out with the name of the duke, must have been politically motivated. If one were to accept that the figure from Manfred's coin was understood generally as the symbol of power of the emperor's heir, one could accept its usage as a declaration on the side of the Ghibellines. In the political camp of Přemysl Otakar II such a declaration was possible: on the broad Moravian bracteate of 1270–1278, where is visible the motif of an eagle surrounding with wings a crowned human head en face, exactly the same as we have seen on the coins of Frederick II³¹ cited above, and as we have taken for the symbol of Stauff power. The Czech king was on the distaff side the grandson of Frederick Barbarossa, and this kinship he played on in Germany in building up his party.³² It is advisable, however, to think that the symbol from Manfred's coin was understood on the Oder in all its depth – the parable about the eagle cited by Latini belongs to the general knowledge of educated people of this period. The solar connotations of the eagle are visible in the Legend of Saint Stanislaus.³³ Władysław of Opole used the sign of

²⁹ D. Forstner OSB, *Świat symboliki chrześcijańskiej*, Warszawa 1990, pp. 240–243.

³⁰ A. Paner, *Z dziejów kultu św. Wita na Słowiańszczyźnie Zachodniej* (From the History of the Cult of Saint Vitus in the Western Slavonic Lands), *Studia Lednickie*, II, 1991, pp. 43–50.

³¹ F. Cach, *Nejstarší české mince* (The Oldest Bohemian Coins), III, Praha 1974, no. 987.

³² A. Barciak, *Ideologia polityczna...*, p. 53.

³³ Wincenty z Kielczy, op. cit., p. 278. For more on aquilarian symbolism in medieval Poland see J. Wrzesiński, *Lednicka plakieta z orłem oraz kilka uwag na temat adaptacji i rozpowszechniania się orła-symbolu* (The Plaque from Lednica with the Eagle as well as Several Comments on the Subject of Adaptation and Prevalence of the Eagle Symbol), *Studia Lednickie*, II, 1991, pp. 151–154.

the eagle on his seals, also certainly consciously. He wanted, therefore, to show the *Uladizlaus* represented on the coin as the ruler of divine mercy (his subjects did not have to be assured of the legitimate origins of their duke), looking without fear at truth and good. The silver ore of the coin, brought about by circumstances, should not lessen the force of the symbol.

Can one connect our coin with Władysław's attempts to obtain the duchy of Cracow in 1273? In discussing the question of the attribution I have conjectured that the *Uladizlaus* bracteate may have been a prestigious equivalent for Władysław of Henryk III the White's *Heinricus dux* bracteate, minted in about 1250, or of the coin with a bishop and legend *Dux Boleslaus*,³⁴ connected with Bolesław the Shy and the translation of St. Stanislaus in 1254. They create a group of demonstrative bracteates from the third quarter of the 13th century, minted in neighbouring duchies, with the rare placing of the dukes' names. Władysław's coin must have been minted after 1258, the earliest its Sicilian prototype could have been minted. Among the hoards in which the *Uladizlaus* coin has occurred, the oldest is the deposit at Brzegi which W. Kopicki dates as being after 1266³⁵. Though in my opinion it is a mistake to base this conclusion itself on his attribution of the *Uladizlaus* bracteate, he makes no mistakes in the overall conclusions – I likewise feel that the hoard should be dated around then, possibly ca. 1270, because of the types of Teutonic coins which are represented in it³⁶. If the *Uladizlaus* bracteate presented in 1273 the virtues of Władysław as a candidate for the Cracow throne, then it must have been extremely recent in the Brzegi hoard. Besides, it was propaganda directed to the inhabitants of Opole duchy, and not of Cracow one. It is more probable to place this coin in a slightly earlier period, in the 1260s, and see in its historical context the strengthening of the duke's position and the eventual preparation of the grounds for action in the Cracow territories. According to Oskar Halecki, already certain acts of Władysław in 1260 were preparation for the expansion towards

³⁴ K. Stronczyński, *Dawne monety polskie dynastii Piastów i Jagiellonów* (The Old Polish Coins of the Piast and Jagiellonian Dynasties), part 2, Piotrków 1884, no. 186.

³⁵ W. Kopicki, *Polskie brakteaty guzickowe. 2. poł. XIII w. – 1. poł. XIV w. Próba interpretacji* (Polish hohlpfenigs of the 2nd half of the 13th century to the 1st half of the 14th century. An Attempt at Interpretation), Warszawa 1997, p. 44.

³⁶ B. Paszkiewicz, *Nowy Sącz...*, p. 142.

Cracow.³⁷ Despite the collapse of the seniorate as a principle determining the rules of succession to the Polish throne, the fact that, following the death of Kazimierz I of Kujawy in 1267, Władysław was the eldest Piast, or, perhaps, the second eldest (after Bolesław the Bald, who was hardly a serious contender).³⁸ Despite the opinion of Henryk Łowmiański that on the equestrian seal from 1262 Władysław appears in a helmet crown, there does not appear to be any grounding in facts,³⁹ so that it is difficult to avoid the observation of this researcher that Wincenty of Kielcza, the creator of the state ideology of Saint Stanislaus, was the prior of the Racibórz Blackfriars and appeared in the retinue of Duke Władysław, and undoubtedly influenced the views in force at the court. Łowmiański even suggests – with a certain degree of exaggeration – that Władysław was among the Piasts the transmitter of Wincenty's political thought.⁴⁰ The only coin which we are able to ascribe with any accuracy at all to that particular ruler propagates a lofty monarchist programme.

The *Uladizlaus* bracteate is then the latest distinguished example of the use of the eagle on a Polish coin as the pre-heraldic symbol of a duke's virtue,⁴¹ and at the same time it shows how the sign of the

³⁷ O. Halecki, op. cit., pp. 229–230; see also recently J. Rajman, *Mieszko Płatonogi, pierwszy książę raciborsko-opolski (1173–1211)*, Kwartalnik Historyczny, CIII, 1996, p. 40 'Mieszko's aspirations to rule over Cracow arose from not only his personal aspirations, but were conditioned by the lack of any settlement turning points whatsoever following 1202 dividing his duchy from the Cracow lands. In the policy of the successors of the first duke of Opole and Racibórz one can see clearly through a quarter of a century aspirations to expand at the cost of the Cracow lands.' Both authors seem, incorrectly, to identify the aspirations to rule over Cracow with the adding to Opole of additional parts of the Cracow lands. No less than three dukes of Opole attempted to occupy the Cracow throne, and two (Mieszek I and Bolesław I) – for better or for worse – managed to realise their intention.

³⁸ This has been pointed out by H. Łowmiański, *Początki Polski* (The Beginnings of Poland), vol. VI, part 2, Warszawa 1985, p. 810.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 810, 842; he quotes M. Gumowski, *Początki Orła Białego. Studium heraldyczne* (The Beginnings of the White Eagle. A Study in Heraldry), Poznań 1931, p. 18 – it deals with seal no. 88 in Z. Piech's catalogue, op. cit., compare also the readable photos in: *Historia Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów do roku 1400* (The History of Silesia from the Earliest Times to the Year 1400), III, Kraków 1936, plate LXXXVII, no. 8.

⁴⁰ H. Łowmiański, op. cit., p. 843. As an afflatus one may cite the opinion of this researcher that 'the bracteates [...] of Władysław of Opole' expressed 'designs on the Cracow throne', announced b e f o r e the ascription to that ruler of any bracteates at all (op. cit., p. 845).

⁴¹ See B. Paszkiewicz, *Od symbolu do herbu. Orły polskie na monetach średniowiecznych* (From Symbol to Coat of Arms. Polish Eagles on Medieval Coinage), [in:] *Orzeł Biały. Herb...*, pp. 15–32.

eagle – as it is transformed into a coat of arms – manifested a divine legitimisation for the Piast rulers. The coin of Manfred of Sicily turned out to be one of the elements of the tradition of the White Eagle as the arms of Poland.

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BORYS PASZKIEWICZ

Sycylijski wzorzec na opolskiej monecie a geneza Orła Białego

Brakteat z orłem, którego dolną partię korpusu zastępuje zwrócona heraldycznie w prawo ludzka głowa, zaopatrzony w legendę VLADIZLAVS (dzięki charakterystycznej grafii napisu zwany brakteatem *Uladizlaus*), w wyniku dyskusji między Wiesławem Kopickim a mną został przypisany księciu Władysławowi I z Raciborza i Opola (1246–1281/2). Książę ten był również władcą Rudy (1238–1249) i Kalisza (1238–1244), a w 1273 r. zbuntowani możnowładcy wysunęli go do tronu krakowskiego. Od 1255 r. był w obozie politycznym Przemysła Otokara II. Władysław początkowo nie używał na pieczęciach znaków heraldycznych, ale od 1257 r. występował z tarczą z orłem. Ma to zapewne związek z pojawieniem się orła w symbolice św. Stanisława, w którego procesie kanonizacyjnym i uroczystej translacji w 1254 r. książę opolski uczestniczył osobiście.

Umieszczony na monecie Władysława schemat ikonograficzny orła i głowy ludzkiej (lecz *en face* i w koronie) spotykamy w 2. ćwierci XIII w. na monetach Szwabii i Austrii w kontekście wskazującym na cesarza Fryderyka II. Na brakteacie *Uladizlaus* ludzka głowa jest odkryta i przedstawiona z profilu. Spotykamy ją tylko na złotych monetach króla Sycylii Manfreda (1258–1266). Zarówno sposób przedstawienia, jak i otoczenie go napisem z imieniem władcy +MAYNFRIDVS·R·, nie pozostawiają wątpliwości co do związku łączącego sycylijskie multiple tarì d'oro z opolskimi brakteatami. Można sądzić, że to sycylijska moneta była wzorem, a opolska – naśladownictwem. Wspomnijmy, że już jedna z pierwszych monet polskich – denar *Princes Polonie* – cytowała monety benewentyńskie. Motywów sycylijskich można się dopatrzyć także na późniejszych brakteatach polskich, nigdy jednak nie są one tak jednoznaczne.

Badaczka mennictwa Królestwa Sycylijskiego, Lucia Travaini, skłonna jest wiązać interesujący nas motyw stempla z pochodzeniem Manfreda, który przedstawia się w ten sposób jako „syn orła”. Istotnie, odwołuje się on do popularnej w średnio-wieczu legendy, że orzeł może patrzeć bez ruchu prosto w słońce, dlatego swe piskłeta kieruje ku słońcu i wyrzuca z gniazda jako bękarty te, które zmrużą oczy. Legenda

ta, oczywiście, nie opisuje istniejącego realnie ptaka, lecz orła herbów, symboli i przypowieści moralnych. W Ambrożyjańskiej interpretacji orzeł to sam Chrystus. Nieprzypadkowo moneta sycylijska jest złota, a więc słoneczna. Król królów potwierdza prawość króla. Manfred i orzeł patrzą na multypłu w tę samą, prawą stronę – ku słońcu. Już od czasów *augustales* Fryderyka II sycylijskie monety złote służą prezentacji wysublimowanej ideologii władzy.

Decyzja o doborze symbolu na monetę opolską, i to wyróżnioną imieniem księcia, musiała być motywowana politycznie. Wolno sądzić, że symbol z monety Manfreda był dla jej autora zrozumiały. Władysław opolski znakiem orła posługiwał się na swych pieczęciach z pewnością świadomie. Na monecie *Uladizlaus* chciał się pokazać jako władca z Bożej łaski (opolskich poddanych nie trzeba było zapewniać o dobrym pochodzeniu ich księcia), patrzący bez lęku w prawdę i dobro. Wymuszony okolicznościami srebrny kruszec monety nie powinien osłabić wymowy symbolu.

Moneta Władysława musiała powstać po 1258 r., kiedy najwcześniej mógł być wybity sycylijski jej pierwowzór. Spośród skarbów, w których wystąpiły brakteaty *Uladizlaus*, najstarszy jest depozyt z Brzegów (ok. 1270). Monetę wybito więc zapewne w latach sześćdziesiątych XIII w., a jej kontekstem historycznym mogło być przygotowanie roszczeń do tronu w Krakowie. Od 1267 r. Władysław był najstarszym Piastem, lub ewentualnie drugim co do starszeństwa (po Bolesławie Łysym, który chyba nie był poważnym konkurentem). Wincenty z Kielczy, twórca państwowej ideologii św. Stanisława, był przeorem dominikanów raciborskich i pojawiał się w otoczeniu księcia Władysława, niewątpliwie więc oddziaływał na poglądy panujące na tym dworze.

Brakteat *Uladizlaus* jest w takim razie najpóźniejszym rozpoznanym przypadkiem użycia orła na monecie polskiej jako przedheraldycznego symbolu cnoty księcia, a zarazem pokazuje, jak – u progu przekształcenia w herb – znak orła manifestował boską legitymację władzy Piastów. Moneta Manfreda sycylijskiego okazała się jednym z elementów tradycji herbu Orzeł Biały.



1



2



3

1. Racibórz–Opole, Duke Władysław I (1246–1281/2), the *Uladius* bracteate of Opole, 1258 – c. 1270; National Museum in Cracow (from the Brzegi hoard)
2. Germany, late Staufs (Frederick II? Conrad IV? Conradino?), royal bracteate of Ulm, the middle of the 13th century
3. Sicily, King Manfred (1258–1266), the multiple tari d'oro (8.81 g), enlarged c. 1,5:1