

DAWID MACIEJCZUK

**A POSSIBLE *KWARTNIK* OF JOHANN VON KITTLITZ  
(TYPE FBG 1109) FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WROCLAW**

**ABSTRACT:** In the collection of Silesian *kwartniks* of the National Museum in Wrocław there is a unique, unidentified example of type Fbg 1109. Previous attempts to attribute this coin to the Duchies of Wrocław or Świdnica were based on unclear premises. Re-analysis of the coin dies allows for the presentation of a new attribution proposal.

**ABSTRAKT:** W zbiorze kwartników śląskich Muzeum Narodowego we Wrocławiu znajduje się unikatowy, dotąd nieokreślony typ Fbg 1109. Dotychczasowe próby ustalenia atrybucji dla tej monety oparte były na niejasnych przesłankach. Badacze umieszczali emisję tego kwartnika w księstwie wrocławskim lub świdnickim. Ponowna analiza stempli monety pozwoliła na przedstawienie nowej propozycji atrybucji.

**KEYWORDS:** Silesia, Silesian *kwartniks*, knight seals, Kittlitz family

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** Śląsk, kwartniki śląskie, pieczęcie rycerskie, rodzina von Kittlitz

The numismatic collection of the National Museum in Wrocław contains 56 Silesian *kwartniks*.<sup>1</sup> During preliminary research relating to the preparation of a doctoral dissertation, I managed to obtain very high quality photographs of these coins.<sup>2</sup> During the analysis of this collected material, I paid particular attention to a *kwartnik* of an as-yet unspecified type. Analysis of the coin dies confirmed that

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<sup>1</sup> Coins and their metric data were published by K. Kamocka (1993).

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this Fbg 1109 type *kwartnik* in the collection of the Wrocław museum is identical to one known to Ferdinand Friedensburg, which was in the collection of the Schlesi-sches Museum für Kunstgewerbe und Altertümer in Wrocław before World War II, and was first published posthumously by Friedensburg in 1931.<sup>3</sup> However, this is not the only registered specimen. A *kwartnik* of the same type was also known to Marian Gumowski.<sup>4</sup> However, Gumowski misinterpreted the jewel on the reverse of the coin (this part of the coin was probably obliterated or incompletely minted) and assigned it to the Duchy of Wrocław.<sup>5</sup> For reasons unknown today, Marian Haisig linked the same coin to the Duchy of Świdnica in an 1968 edition of Friedensburg's work.<sup>6</sup> In turn, Ryszard Kiersnowski, in his register, assigned our *kwartnik* to the Duchy of Wrocław, just like Gumowski.<sup>7</sup> Despite these doubts, it should be noted that we are dealing with a unique coin, known so far only from two specimens.



Fig. 1. Unspecified Silesian *kwartnik* of Fbg 1109 type, photo by Wojciech Rogowicz

Av.: In an ogival shield, an eagle without claws and a band, with three feathers in each wing, six-pointed stars in the rim, pearl ring on the coin.

Rv.: Great helm in portrait to left, two flowers embedded above the helm at opposite ends, crosses in the rim, pearl ring.

Silver; 18.2 mm; 1.71 g

The basis for assigning the coin was the depiction on the reverse. The helm is a heraldic element, which often occurs with a jewel, and should be sought

<sup>3</sup> Friedensburg 1931, table 15, type 1109.

<sup>4</sup> Gumowski 1936, table CLXII: 513.

<sup>5</sup> Gumowski 1936, p. 679.

<sup>6</sup> Friedensburg 1968, p. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Kiersnowski 1969, p. 218, item 208.

among the knightly emblems and coats of arms that often appear on Silesian *kwartniks*. The closest, and probably also the only, analogy for the image placed on our *kwartnik* is the helm appearing on the coat of arms seals of the von Kittlitz (Kietlicz) family members, also mentioned in Silesia as *de Kitlicz* or *Ketlicz*.<sup>8</sup> We know that the Kittlitz came to Silesia from Upper Lusatia, where they used a common coat of arms with the Baruths and Wiesenburgs (aurochs with long horns on the heraldic shield).<sup>9</sup> The depiction of an aurochs on the heraldic shield is observed on the seals of the Kittlitz family, who probably settled permanently in Silesia in the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Heraldic motifs analogous to our *kwartnik* can already be seen in the document sealed by Henryk the Elder von Kittlitz (died before 1310) on 28 October 1290.<sup>10</sup> In the center of the seal there is a heraldic shield inclined to the left (heraldically to the right) bearing an image of an aurochs with long horns; above it, there is a knight's helm inclined to the right, which is crowned with jewels in the form of two flowers embedded above the helm.<sup>11</sup> The rim of the seal bears the inscription: [S] HENRICI•DE•KITHEL[IZ]. Henryk the Elder, along with his brother and namesake – Henryk the Younger (lived until 1312) – were in the circle of the Duke of Żagań and owned numerous properties near Żagań and Szprotawa.<sup>12</sup> Both brothers are mentioned in the documents regarding the sale of the manor house located on the Bóbr River near Żagań in 1290. The buyer of this property was a burgher from Żagań, Jakub *de Wichowie*, who bought them for 100 *grzywnas* of pure silver of the Żagań measure.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, this Jacob, coming from Wichów (*Weichau*), a village near Koźuchów, could mint *kwartniks* with his name in Wleń (German: *Lähn*) near Lwówek Śląski (German: *Löwenberg*).<sup>14</sup> Stanisław Suchodolski rightly drew attention to the common workshop features of the *kwartnik* with the name of Jakub (IACOBI) on the rim legend and the CLIPEVS BAWWARIE *kwartniks*. It is possible that the same engraver was employed to produce the dies of these coins, especially since Wleń is only 12 km in a straight line from Lwówek Śląski (a short distance may have favored the mobility of minters). However, the *kwartnik* described here does not show any stylistic features that could indicate the same workshop or mint. It is also doubtful that it was minted by one of the two Henryk brothers, as they were active in the Duchy of Żagań in the 1290s and at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and our coin shows stylistic features characteristic of late issues of Silesian *kwartniks*. There is also no information to show that any

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<sup>8</sup> Jurek 1988, p. 241.

<sup>9</sup> Jurek 1988, pp. 241–242.

<sup>10</sup> Wójcik 2018, p. 378.

<sup>11</sup> Wójcik 2018, p. 378, no. 328.

<sup>12</sup> Jurek 1988, p. 241.

<sup>13</sup> Cetwiński 1982, p. 118.

<sup>14</sup> Suchodolski 1993–1994, pp. 53–58.

of the brothers had any high function in the duke's circle that would authorize the minting of their own coin (even if it were an occasional issue). Both brothers were also not city councillors, unlike Jakub of Wichów, who was the duke's trusted person for certifying documents.<sup>15</sup> It should also be excluded that the issuer of our *kwartnik* was the third of the brothers – Wittego (1289–1307), who owned three villages near Bolesławiec (German: *Bunzlau*) and was present with Bolko I the Strict (1278–1301).<sup>16</sup> Wittego died too early to be associated with our *kwartnik* and he was unlikely to have held any offices. It is also doubtful that the issuers were the sons of Wittego present with the dukes of the Świdnica line: Bolko (1307–1350) and Otto (1314–1325). We do not know anything about the minting activity and high offices held by the first of the brothers, but if he were to have minted coins, it would certainly have been no earlier than the end of the 1320s, and then we observe the collapse of *kwartnik* minting in Silesia. Such an eventuality must therefore be ruled out. In addition, if such coins were to be minted, it would certainly be in the territory of the Duchy of Świdnica-Jawor (Fürstenberg). In such a situation, one would have to look for stylistic similarities among the coins of this duchy, and as we can see, our *kwartnik* does not show such similarities. We can therefore return to the brothers Henryks von Kittlitz. The sons of one of these brothers were Jan (died in 1351) and Henryk (died in 1358), who had been with the dukes of Głogów since 1324.<sup>17</sup> Both brothers inherited extensive properties near Żagań from their father.<sup>18</sup> Henryk's connection with our *kwartnik* is unlikely, because the years of his activity fall on a period in which *kwartniks* were no longer in circulation in Silesia. The second of the brothers, Jan von Kittlitz, put his seal, among others, on the document regarding a transaction of February 11, 1324.<sup>19</sup> The fragment of the image from the field of John's seal is directly analogous to the image on the reverse of our *kwartnik* (unlike the previous Kittlitz).

This seal (Fig. 2) depicts a heraldic shield inclined to the left (heraldically to the right), on which there is a horned aurochs. Above the shield there is a great helm with two flowers, circumscribed with an inscription in Gothic majuscule: + S IOHANNIS•DE•KETHELICZ.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Suchodolski 1993–1994, pp. 53–58.

<sup>16</sup> Jurek 1988, p. 241.

<sup>17</sup> Bartkowiak 2017, p. 166.

<sup>18</sup> Jurek 1988, p. 241.

<sup>19</sup> Babij 2021, pp. 100–101.

<sup>20</sup> Wójcik 2018, p. 380.



Fig. 2. The seal of Jan von Kittlitz, preserved on a document of 11 February 1324 in the collection of the State Archives in Wrocław; 40 mm, photo from the Paweł Babij's catalogue

The great helm on the reverse of the aforementioned *kwartnik* (Fig. 1) is an exact copy of that on the seal of Jan von Kittlitz. Above the helm, two flowers were placed at opposite ends of the helm (front and back). The stylistic features of this coin, i.e. heraldic motifs with a knightly theme, six-pointed stars and crosses placed in the rims, speak in favor of the late issue of the Silesian *kwartniks* in 1320–1327/9. If we assume that the issuer of this *kwartnik* was Jan von Kittlitz, then the time of its minting could fall in the period after 1324, and no later than 1327–1329, when we observe the collapse of the *kwartnik* minting.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know whether Jan performed any important functions in the duke's circle and whether he could have been his steward in one of the *Weichbilds*. Nevertheless, he appears in documents. He witnessed a document issued in Żagań on 2 September 1348 by Henryk V of Iron (1342–1369), regarding the giving of six butcher's stands to the townspeople of Żagań for six *grzywnas* (nominal unit) of

<sup>21</sup> Kiersnowski 2008, p. 225.

the annual rent paid to the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Żagań.<sup>22</sup> Although this document was issued long after the end of the issue of the *kwartniks*, it testifies to the considerable position of Jan von Kittlitz, who most likely started his career with the dukes much earlier.

The nature of this issue requires further consideration. The *kwartnik* discussed here is now known from a unique specimen in the collection of the National Museum in Wrocław. As I mentioned, this specimen was also known to Friedensburg. The reverse of the coin features the helm of Jan von Kittlitz. On the obverse we see the ducal coat of arms – an eagle in a shield. The eagle in the shield appears on many types of Silesian *kwartniks*, often with a sash and a cross on the chest, which occurs only on the *kwartniks* of the dukes of Głogów, Żagań and Oleśnica.<sup>23</sup> In this case, however, the eagle does not have these elements. However, the possibility of minting this coin on the territory of these duchies cannot be ruled out, as the lack of a sash and a cross on the chest could also result from the low skills of a die engraver. There is no doubt that the von Kittlitz family, long rooted in Silesia, was considered a noble family.<sup>24</sup> As we have already established, Jan von Kittlitz appeared in numerous documents. Although we do not have direct evidence, Jan may have been associated with the political scene of the Duchy of Żagań. If this were the case, the obverse of the coin would signal the duke, to whom the official was subordinate, and the reverse would signal the official himself. The shield with an eagle placed on the obverse shows that the coin was also minted with the consent and under the control of the duke's authority. Instances of knightly emblems on Silesian *kwartniks* are not uncommon. The circumstances of their placement on the coins may have been different. Most often, this phenomenon is explained by the lease or management (supervision?) of the mint by the governor, as well as the duke's generosity towards the knight.<sup>25</sup> Zbigniew Bartkowiak drew attention to the problem of the occurrence of ducal and knightly emblems on *kwartniks*, who noted that these are often signs of representatives of lower social classes who advanced and left few traces behind.<sup>26</sup> Following Bartkowiak, I believe that our specimen represents a group of *kwartniks*, in which one side of the coin presents a ducal emblem and the other an emblem of a high official.<sup>27</sup> The *kwartnik* described here, so far known from just two copies, may suggest that it was a very limited issue – both copies registered so far were stamped with the same pair of dies – perhaps of a commemorative nature. Do we have any reason to believe that the coin discussed

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<sup>22</sup> State Archives in Wrocław, Rep. 116, no. 86; <http://www.dokumentyslaska.pl/korta/01/788.html> [accessed 10.06.2023]

<sup>23</sup> Paszkiewicz 2010, p. 230.

<sup>24</sup> Jurek 1988, p. 196.

<sup>25</sup> Paszkiewicz 2010, p. 228.

<sup>26</sup> Bartkowiak 2017, p. 161.

<sup>27</sup> Bartkowiak 2017, pp. 161–162.

here may have been minted in the territory of the Duchy of Żagań? It is highly probable. Medieval minting in Żagań has been examined by Borys Paszkiewicz, who indicated the *kwartniks* minted in this duchy.<sup>28</sup> The issues of Żagań and Szprotawa include, among others, *kwartniks* attributed to the nobles – Henryk and Heinrich von Biberstein. Their coins were probably minted in the years 1312–1317.<sup>29</sup> The von Kittlitz family belonged to the social elite, as did the members of the Biberstein family. The relation of our *kwartnik* with Jan von Kittlitz seems to be fully justified. Therefore, it is likely that the coin with his family's coat of arms was created in the duchy of Żagań in the 1320s. We can consider the years 1323–1324 as the earliest likely date, because the first documents sealed by John come from that time. The latest possible minting date for this coin is the period 1327–1329, which marks the end of *kwartnik* production in Silesia. There is no information in the documents about the administrative functions performed by Jan. However, it is possible that he held functions or otherwise deserved recognition, which resulted in the production of a coin with his helm at one of the mints of the Duchy of Żagań. It is not entirely clear what motivations the previous researchers were guided by when determining the attribution of our *kwartnik*. Nevertheless, the jewel of the Kietlicz coat of arms is very obvious in this case and is currently the only analogy that can be used to assign a reliable attribution for this coin.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Fbg – Friedensburg 1931.

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<sup>28</sup> Paszkiewicz 2006.

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KWARTNIK JANA VON KITTLITZ? CZYLI TYP FBG 1109 ZE ZBIORU  
MUZEUM NARODOWEGO WE WROCŁAWIU

(Streszczenie)

Podczas analizy stempla kwartnika typu Fbg 1109 okazało się, że egzemplarz pozostający w zbiorze Muzeum Narodowego we Wrocławiu jest tożsamy ze znanym Ferdynandowi Friedensburgowi. Kwartnik ten przed II wojną światową znajdował się w zbiorach Museum für Kunstgewerbe Und Altertümer we Wrocławiu. Nie jest to jednak jedyny zarejestrowany egzemplarz. Kwartnik tego samego typu znany był również Marianowi Gumowskiemu. Z niewiadomych nam przyczyn, badacze wiązali tę monetę z księstwem wrocławskim oraz świdnickim. Ponowna analiza stempli pozwoliła na przedstawienie nowej propozycji atrybucji. Podstawą przypisania monety domniemanemu emitentowi było przedstawienie widniejące na rewersie. Najbliższą analogią do wyobrażenia hełmu umieszczonego na naszym kwartniku jest hełm widniejący na pieczęciach herbowych członków rodziny von Kittlitz. Hełm garnczkowy na rewersie kwartnika typu Fbg 1109 stanowi bezpośrednie zapożyczenie z pieczęci Jana von Kittlitz (zm. w 1351 r.). Cechy stylistyczne tej monety, tzn. motywy heraldyczne o tematyce rycerskiej, przemawiają za późną emisją kwartników śląskich; 1320–1327/9. Jeśli przyjąć, że emitentem omawianego kwartnika był Jan von Kittlitz, to czas jego wybicia mógłby przypadać na okres po 1324 r., maksymalnie do lat 1327–1329, kiedy obserwujemy załamanie mennictwa kwartnikowego.

Adres autora/The author's address:

Dawid Maciejczuk  
Institute of Archaeology  
University of Wrocław  
Szewska 48, PL 50-139 Wrocław  
dave44@o2.pl  
ORCID: 0000-0002-3044-0467