

# Ceremonial Arrowheads from Bohemia

HELMUT NICKEL

*Curator of Arms and Armor, The Metropolitan Museum of Art*

AT A LONDON auction in November 1966, the Metropolitan Museum bought a richly decorated head of a shafted weapon which had come from an English private collection (Figures 1, 2).<sup>1</sup> Though its considerable size—its length is 12  $\frac{3}{8}$  inches or 30.6 centimeters—would be adequate for a spearhead, its form, however, clearly indicates that it is meant to be an oversize head of a crossbow bolt far too large for any bow. Spears, javelins, and other polearms have their greatest width at about the last third of the blade, while crossbow bolts have their greatest width, for ballistic reasons, in the first third of their heads, which gives them their characteristic blunt-nosed appearance (Figure 3).

Our bolt head is of steel, covered with deeply cut engraving, and partially inlaid with brass. The brass inlay is on one flange of the blade—emphasizing the most important part of the decoration, and thus giving the blade an obverse and reverse side—and on the socket, where it consists of four encircling bands of ever-increasing width, and four strips set obliquely between the lower two bands to give a spiraling effect.

The first flange of the blade bears a large monogram somewhat like a Gothic *w*, but actually composed of

the two letters *a* and *r*, surmounted by a crown, from which a tall ostrich feather emerges. The monogram and the inner half of the feather are brass, as well as the separate field beneath it, which bears a flowing scroll with the inscription *mamyla* in Gothic letters. The second flange is engraved on its top with a crown; beneath it is a field with a scroll inscribed *warvy/woka*, followed by another, smaller field with an *a* intertwined crosswise with an *e*, and finally a large letter *t* (?) set in an irregular space. On the reverse side the flange to the left bears a large field charged with a letter *x* accompanied by two small *fleurs de lys*, and surmounted by a crown *fleur-de-lysee*; farther down, in a separate field, is a scroll inscribed *Zdar Z/bvo[h]*.<sup>2</sup> The flange to the right shows a field with an *s* formed out of fluttering ribbons under a crown; the lower part of the space is filled with floral scrollwork.

The most conspicuous decoration on the socket is a pattern of rounded scales that appears on the upper part, engraved into the iron, and on the lowest, widest brass ring. The uppermost and narrowest brass ring bears a scale pattern made of rectangular scales, identical to that on two of the narrow iron spaces showing

1. Sale, Sotheby's, London, November 7, 1966, lot 127: A. A. Lyster. "A rare and important Late Gothic arrow head . . . Central European, perhaps Bohemian, late 15th century." A note mentions that seven more of these arrowheads are known in Budapest, Vienna, and Munich. It further mentions the various theories as to the original purposes of these giant arrowheads, as discussed in articles by Johann von Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen als Würdezeichen,"

*Zeitschrift für Historische Waffenkunde* NF 6 (1937–1939) pp. 218–221, and Charles Buttin, "La Flèche des Juges de Camp," *Armes Anciennes* 1 (1954) Part 3, pp. 57–64.

2. The description in the Sotheby sales catalogue erroneously quotes *Zdar Zdao*, but nevertheless it is the first source that suggests the possibility of a Bohemian origin for these arrowheads.



FIGURES 1, 2

Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century. Steel inlaid with brass, engraved. L.  $12\frac{1}{4}$  in. (30.6 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 66.199



FIGURE 3


Spearhead of the bodyguard of Emperor Frederick III, South German or Austrian, about 1460. Steel with applied openwork decoration in brass. Waffensammlung des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna, Inv. no. A 10



FIGURE 4 (OPPOSITE)


Side view of the Metropolitan Museum arrow-head

between the spiraling brass strips on the wider part of the socket. After a space filled with floral scrollwork, the second brass ring—twice as wide as the first—sits at the beginning of the flare of the socket. It is engraved twice *mamyla*, the space between the words filled with foliate scrolls. Beneath the part with the scale pattern the third brass ring—again approximately of double width—is filled with floral scrolls repeating those on the blade. The four spiraling brass strips farther down are alternately engraved with a similar foliate design, and the inscriptions *marya/pano* terminated by heraldic roses (Figure 4). The same roses alternating with letters *m* are to be found on two of the spaces between the strips, the other two showing the already mentioned pattern of rectangular scales. A very wide brass ring with scale pattern forms the foot of the socket. The rim of the socket is pierced by a small hole on one side and an oblong slot on the opposite; these openings were for nails or rivets to secure the head to a shaft. The slot seems to be a later alteration. Another later addition is

3. The description in the Sotheby catalogue calls it the “Mamluke arsenal mark.” According to Ünsal Yücel, Assistant Curator at the Topkapı Sarayı Museum, Istanbul, this mark is derived from the cattle brand  of the Kayı, one of the twenty-four

Oghuz (Turkish) tribes of the twelfth century. It was used as a tribal symbol on tents, flags, and Ottoman coins, the earliest example known minted by Sultan Orkhan, 1326–1327. It was used with increasing frequency during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but is not found after the seventeenth century. It is used on all sorts of weapons and armor, but not on firearms, the only exception being a cannon dated 1522. The Ottomans claimed descent from the Kayı tribe. In Mr. Yücel’s opinion these ancient tribal marks might have been revived by some statesmen of Kayı origin during periods when national feelings were particularly strong, as for instance after the defeat of the Mongols (1402), and in the time of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566).

Eduard von Lenz, “Arsenalzeichen oder Beschau?” *ZHWK* 6 (1912–1914) pp. 299–303, suggests that the “arsenal mark” might be a proof mark. He points out that it looks like a simplified version

of the proof mark  *imtichan* = “fit,” stamped on barrels of Turkish firearms of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, Lenz mentions that most of the objects stamped with



have old repairs. Therefore the proof mark theory could

FIGURE 5

Mark engraved on the socket



a small circular mark carved into the upper part of the socket; this emblem is known as the “Turkish arsenal mark” (Figure 5).<sup>3</sup> The only damage on the otherwise excellently preserved piece is a large crescent-shaped notch in one of the edges at the greatest width of the blade.

The inscriptions have been identified as pious invocations of God and the Virgin in medieval Czech: *Ždarz buoh* = “All hail, oh God”; *marya pano* = “Virgin Mary”; *mamyla* = “my dear one”; *warvy/woka* = *varuj voka* = “protect your eye.”<sup>4</sup> The letters *m* between the roses are certainly the initials of the name Maria.

The interpretation of the monograms and the cyphers is more difficult, and we must look at comparable objects before we attempt an explanation.

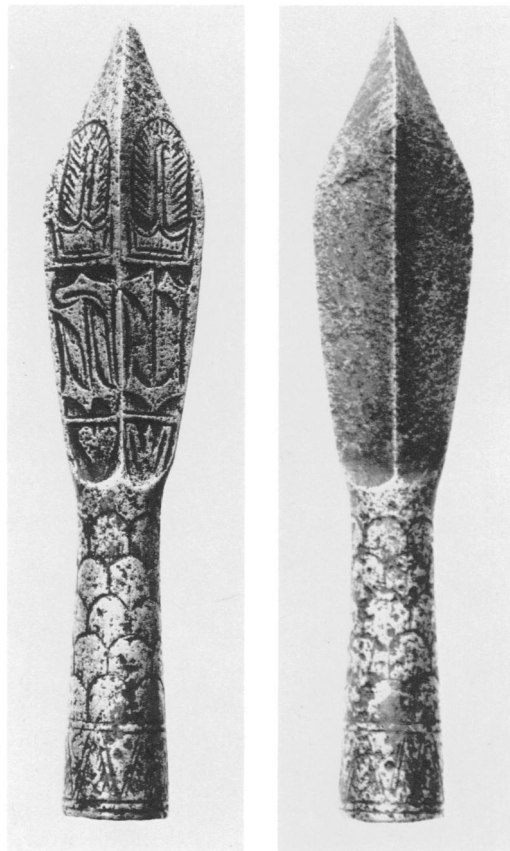
There are eleven more of these decorated arrowheads known, scattered among various museums. Ours, though, is by far the largest and the most extravagantly ornamented one of the whole group. The

be applied to our specific case very well; here a weapon picked up on a battlefield would be considered still usable, in spite of a damaged edge. In any case, it has been established that this mark was not only the mark of the Arsenal of St. Irene in Constantinople, and Lenz mentions fifteenth-century coins marked with this symbol and the inscription “minted in Adrianople.”

4. For the interpretations of the Czech inscriptions I am greatly indebted to Dr. Marica Vilcek, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Dr. Vladimír Denkstein, Director of the National Museum in Prague; Dr. Ivan Hlaváček, Docent for Art History and Archive Studies at the University Karlovy, Prague; Professor Dr. Jaromír Neumann, Director of the Institute for Fine Arts, Academy of Sciences, Prague. Professor Neumann suggested “Schütze dein Auge” as translation for *warvy/woka* in our correspondence conducted in German; according to Dr. Marica Vilcek it has a certain double meaning that could be expressed in English as either “Protect your eye, or Bless your eye” or “Beware of the eye [of God].” Dr. Denkstein suggested the possibility that *woka* might be a form of the ancient Bohemian personal name Vok or Wok, particularly popular during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. If this was the case, perhaps the two inscriptions on the obverse side were thought to be connected: *mamyla-warvy/woka* = “my dear [Virgin Mary]—protect Wok.” This would lead to the conclusion that someone named Wok was the original owner of the arrowhead. Dr. Hlaváček suggested the reading *swamy wogak*—“beloved soldier,” which again could be connected with *mamyla*.



FIGURES 6, 7  
Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century.  
Steel, engraved. L. 115 mm. Bayerisches National-Museum, Munich, no. w 309



FIGURES 8, 9  
Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century.  
Steel, engraved, reverse side blank. L. 107 mm.  
Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest

others have been published in two articles by Dr. János Kalmár, former curator of the Hungarian National-Museum—Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum—in Budapest,<sup>5</sup> but our piece had escaped the attention of scholars until its appearance in the auction catalogue.

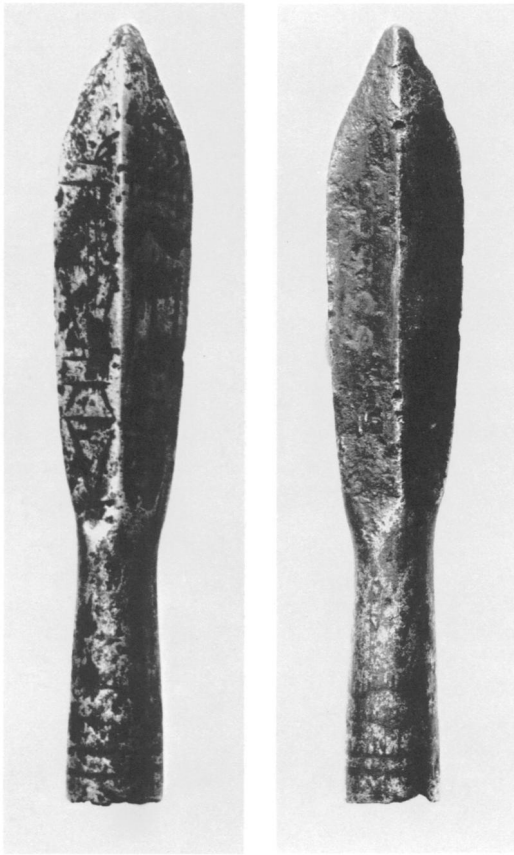
The National-Museum in Budapest has in its collections no less than three of them; three more are in local Hungarian museums—the Bakony Museum in Veszprém, the Balaton Museum in Keszthely, and the Municipal Museum in Pécs (Fünfkirchen). One is in

5. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," pp. 218–221; János Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen als Rangabzeichen" *Folia Archaeologica* 9 (1957) pp. 153–166. Since publication in the Sotheby sales catalogue our arrowhead has been illustrated in *Connoisseur* 164, no. 659 (January 1967) p. 56, fig. 9; *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 26 (1967) no. 2, p. 53; and *Art at Auction, The Year at Sotheby's & Parke-Bernet, 1966–1967* (New York, 1967) p. 404.

each of three different Austrian collections—the Waffensammlung in Vienna, the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck, and the collection of Count Wilczek in Castle Kreuzenstein. Furthermore there is one in the Bayerische National-Museum in Munich, and the last one was published in 1896 as being in a private collection in Budapest, but since then it has vanished without a trace.

The one with the most elaborate decoration, next to ours, is the arrowhead in Munich (Figures 6, 7). Its blade is covered on either side with floral scrollwork carved into sharply defined sunken fields; the sinister flanges bear scrolls, inscribed *mamyla pan* and *mamyla panny* = "my dear Virgin" and "my dear Lady." The reading is made difficult by the artist's use of contractions of letters, such as in *my* and *ny*. The slightly





FIGURES 10, 11

Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century. Steel, engraved, reverse side blank. L. 104 mm. Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest

conical socket is engraved with spiraling bands similar to those on our piece; they are decorated alternately with scale pattern and the inscription *mmmm*.<sup>6</sup> With its length of 115 mm. and width of 20 mm., it is just a little more than one third the size of the Metropolitan Museum's specimen.

The first Budapest arrowhead (Figures 8, 9) is of about the same size, length 107 mm., width 22 mm. Its blade is engraved on one side only; the dexter flange with a letter *a* in a rectangular field under a stylized crown and surmounted by a stiff ostrich feather; at the bottom of the flange is carved a small object shaped like a heart or a linden-leaf. The sinister flange has a let-

6. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 6 a, b; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 25, figs. 6, 7; the inscriptions of the Munich arrowhead are interpreted as "manilia p[ro] amo[re]."

ter *v* under an identical crown, and a tiny broad-arrow head at its foot. Its socket is covered with a carefully drawn scale pattern; the base of the socket is encircled by a wide band filled with a zigzag pattern.<sup>7</sup>

The second Budapest piece (Figures 10, 11) is much simpler in appearance, but its size—length 104 mm., width 18 mm.—is nearly identical with the first one. Again the blade is decorated on one side only; its dexter flange bears a large symbol, unfortunately too much worn for definite identification, though a very stylized plumed crown seems to be part of the design. The sinister flange bears a large letter *d* surmounted by the plumed crown; at its foot is something that might be an *s*. The socket is encircled by a crudely cut double ring at its base, and two rows of scales higher up.<sup>8</sup>

The third Budapest specimen is of totally different form (Figures 12, 13). Its triangular outline and sharp barbs are those of a broad-arrow. On one sinister

7. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 5; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 25, fig. 2.

8. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 3; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 25, fig. 1.

FIGURES 12, 13

Ceremonial barbed arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century. Steel, engraved, reverse side blank. Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest

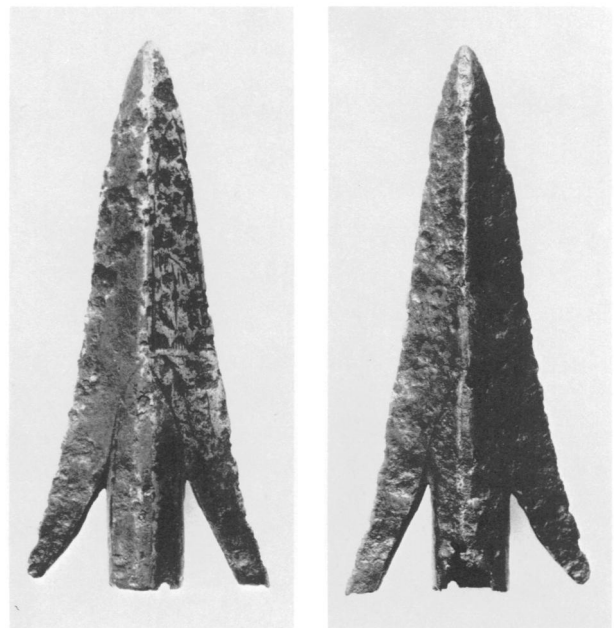




FIGURE 14  
Ceremonial arrowhead,  
Bohemian, xv century. Steel,  
engraved, reverse side blank.  
L. 110 mm. Waffensamm-  
lung, Vienna, Inv. no. A 50

flange it has a large letter *a* surmounted by a plumed crown; further down a few incised lines continue the decoration, half obliterated by corrosion. The octagonal socket and the reverse side of the blade are blank without any decoration.<sup>9</sup>

The arrowhead in Vienna (Figure 14) bears on its decorated side a *t* surmounted by a single stiff ostrich feather on the dexter flange, and on the sinister a *d* surmounted by a crown, above a small *s* in a separate field; at the foot of either flange are triangular figures that might be representations of arrowheads too. Its conical socket is covered with rather a carelessly executed scale pattern. It is 110 mm. in length, and in width 20 mm.<sup>10</sup>

Nearly identical are the two specimens from the Balaton Museum in Keszthely, and the Bakony Museum in Veszprém (Figures 15, 16). The latter is 114 mm. in length, while the former measures 115 mm. and 18 mm. Each is without any decoration except a large

letter *l* or *i* surmounted by a very stylized ostrich feather, composed of a double row of punchmarks, on its sinister flanges. The arrowhead in Keszthely was found near the village of Csabrendek, four kilometers from the Castle Sümeg, and it is very likely to be the one illustrated in Szendrei's *Ungarische Kriegsgeschichtliche Denkmäler*<sup>11</sup> as a so-called *Hussiten-Pfeil* (Hussite arrow), and mentioned as being "inscribed with the numeral I" and found near Castle "Sümegh" (Figure 17).

Of rather similar appearance is the arrowhead from Castle Kreuzenstein (Figure 18). Its length is 117 mm.; its width 17 mm. Its only decoration is a letter *s* surmounted by an elegantly drawn crown and triangular punchmarks arranged in two rows in the lower part of the blade.<sup>12</sup>

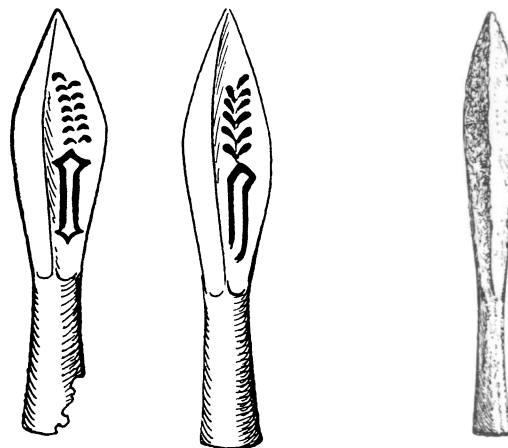
11. Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," figs. 31 a, b; 32 b, c; Johann Szendrei, *Ungarische Kriegsgeschichtliche Denkmäler in der Millenniums-Landes-Ausstellung* (Budapest, 1896) ill. p. 291.

12. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 2, shows eight punchmarks; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," fig. 31 d, shows seven marks.

FIGURE 15  
Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century.  
Steel, engraved, reverse side blank. L. 114 mm.  
Bakony Museum, Veszprém. After Kalmár

FIGURE 16  
Ceremonial arrowhead. Bohemian, xv century.  
Steel, engraved, reverse side blank. L. 115 mm.  
Balaton Museum, Keszthely. After Kalmár

FIGURE 17  
*Hussiten-Pfeil* found near Castle Sümeg. After  
Szendrei



9. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 1; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 25, fig. 3.

10. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 4; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 25, fig. 5.

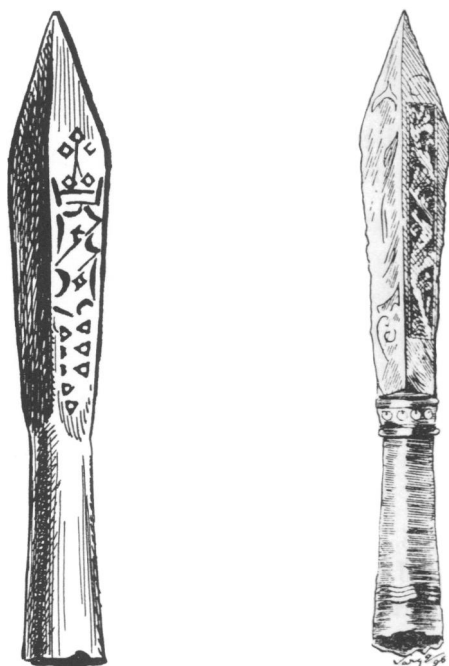


FIGURE 18

Ceremonial arrowhead, Bohemian, xv century. Steel, with engraved and punched decoration, reverse side blank. L. 117 mm. Collection of Count Wilczek, Burg Kreuzenstein. After Kalmár

FIGURE 19

Ceremonial arrowhead, probably Bohemian, xv century. Steel inlaid with brass, engraved. Formerly in the collection of Paul Jedlicska, Budapest, present whereabouts unknown. After Szendrei

Known only from the above-mentioned *Ungarische Kriegsgeschichtliche Denkmäler*<sup>13</sup> is an arrowhead that, though it is there listed as “Oriental,” without doubt must have belonged to this group (Figure 19). Its blade seems to have been engraved all over, apparently in a fashion similar to the Munich specimen, and on its sinister flange it had a large inlay of brass. Two bands of brass were at the neck of the socket.

The arrowhead from Pécs (Fünfkirchen) is technically different (Figure 20). It has a tang for insertion into the shaft instead of a socket—a way of mounting that



FIGURE 20

Ceremonial arrowhead, probably Bohemian, xiv–xv century. Steel, partially plated with brass, engraved, the steel parts heavily corroded. Municipal Museum, Pécs (Fünfkirchen). After Kalmár

FIGURE 21

Ceremonial arrowhead, possibly Bohemian, xv century. Steel, with punched decoration, partially gilded. L. 73 mm., with shaft 39 cm. Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck, Inv. no. ES 36

was less common, but far from unusual—and the octagonal neck is coated with brass, engraved with alternating bands of angular scales and patterns of oblique stripes. Its blade is unfortunately too corroded for the identification of any decoration, though its general shape is still recognizable.<sup>14</sup>

The specimen in Innsbruck, finally (Figure 21), is

13. Szendrei, *Denkmäler*, pp. 137, 138, fig. 353; the arrowhead is mentioned as “Bolzeneisen, orientalisches,” and as being in the collection of Paul Jedlicska, Budapest.

14. Kalmár, “Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen,” pl. 25, fig. 4.



FIGURE 22

Pavise, Bohemian (Chomutov), 1441. Pinewood, covered with leather and canvas, painted black and red on a silvered background; central motive of a letter *y* in a sunburst, surmounted by a plume of ostrich feathers in a crown, the arms of Zwickau added later. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bashford Dean Memorial Collection, funds from various donors, 29.158.595

considerably smaller than the others just mentioned; its length is only 73 mm., not more than an ordinary crossbow bolt. It is practically without any socket, and its blade is lozenge-shaped in section, coming to a sharp point abruptly at the last quarter of its length. With the exception of the first third, at the point, the head is gilded, and decorated with letters *b* surrounded by scrollwork on all four flanges. The decoration is not engraved like that on the other arrowheads, but is stamped by means of rows of closely set punchmarks. The head is still fitted to its shaft, bearing remnants of its fletching with white feathers; the total length of the bolt is 39 cm.<sup>15</sup>

It is evident from this list that there is a strong family likeness between these arrowheads, with the possible exception of the Innsbruck specimen. It is even likely that some of them have common workshops: the first Budapest piece and the Vienna piece; the second and the third Budapest pieces; and again the specimens from the Bakony Museum and Balaton Museum. Seven of them display a letter or a monogram surmounted by an ostrich feather or a crown as the main feature of their decoration, one—the Innsbruck piece—has a letter without plume or crown, another one has inscriptions in medieval Czech, and the two remaining ones have their iron parts too badly corroded for possible identification of cyphers, but their surviving decoration of scale patterns or floral scrollwork of a distinctive type on their brass inlays is shared by at least four others in the group.

An examination of the cyphers represented on these arrowheads reveals a re-occurrence of certain letters. Two of the Budapest specimens bear an *a*, one of them in addition to a *v*, the third one has a *d*, with an ad-

15. Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," fig. 31 c.

ditional small *s*. The Vienna piece has a *d* above an *s* too, though its main cypher is a *t* under an ostrich feather. Letters *l* or *i* under stylized feathers are on the two arrowheads in Keszthely and Veszprém; the one in Kreuzenstein has an *s*, the one in Innsbruck *b*, and the Munich specimen *mmmm* besides invocations of the Virgin Mary in Czech. On our own piece we find *ar*, *ae* intertwined, *t*, *X*, *S*, and *m*, in addition to religious invocations (see drawings on the following pages).

The country of origin thus being established by the reading of the Czech inscriptions, it seems obvious that one should look out for possible equivalents of the device of the ostrich feather surmounting a monogrammatic letter in the decorative arts, and preferably on arms, of Bohemia. In the Metropolitan Museum's collection we have a pavise painted with a *y* in a sunburst surmounted by a crown and ostrich plume (Figure 22). It is one of a group of shields from the armory of the town of Zwickau in Saxony, which bought it from the North Bohemian town of Chomutov (Komotau), famous for its shieldmakers' shops, in 1441.<sup>16</sup> Out of the twelve surviving pieces of this sale there are no less than seven painted with a feather-and-letter device; five more have single letters as important parts of their decoration. There are more than sixty pavises of Bohemian origin known, and twenty-two of them are charged with monograms; it might be worth mentioning here that this use of monograms on shields was

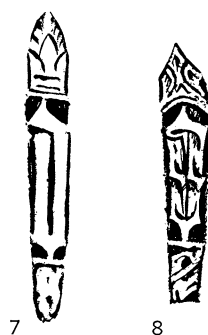
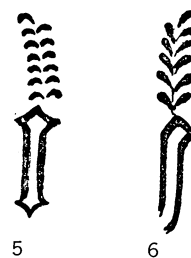
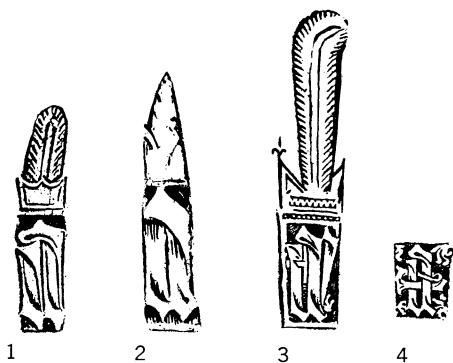
16. Alfons Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder der Stadt Zwickau aus der Werkstatt eines Schildmachers von Komotau 1441," *ZHWK NF* 8 (1944) pp. 45-56; Vladimír Denkstein, "Die Zwickauer Pavesen böhmischen Ursprungs," *Sächsische Heimatblätter* (1958) no. 9; Vladimír Denkstein, "Pavézy českého typu" ("Pavises of the Bohemian Type"), *Sborník Národního muzea v Praze—Acta Musei Nationalis Pragae* series A, Historia, 16 (1962) nos. 4-5; 18 (1964) nos. 3-4; 19 (1965) nos. 1-5, with full translation in English. Within Denkstein's "Pavézy," the most comprehensive and authoritative work about pavises, the Zwickau group is treated in: 16, nos. 21, 24-26, 34, 35, 37-41, 43; 19, pp. 140-141, 170-177, no. 51.

In 1923 the teacher and local historian Kurt Vogel found two entries in the town accounts of Zwickau, dated 1441, concerning the commission of 40 pavises from Chomutov (Komotau) for the price of 14 groschen each: "Item wir habin vordingit czu machin eyn von Komethaw payssin XL und sullin öm ye vor ayne gebin XIII gli . . . dedimus sibi XX gl . . . etiam dedimus sibi II sso gl by nickel jocoß." Stadtrechnung 1437-1446, fol. 108 a. An additional payment was made to have the town's arms added: "Item dedimus VIII sso gl vor XL payfossin, dy man hat lossin czu komethaw machin, mit der stad czeichin geczeichint." Stadtrechnung, fol. 110 b.



FIGURE 23

Pavise, Bohemian (Chomutov), 1441. Wood, covered with leather and canvas, painted black and red on a silvered background; central motive of a monogram *ar* in a sunburst, surmounted by a plume of ostrich feathers in a crown, the arms of Zwickau added later. Armouries, H. M. Tower of London, Inv. no. V/2. British Crown Copyright



#### MONOGRAMS ON ARROWHEADS

1, 2. Letter **a**, Budapest I and III. Probably for **Albrecht**

3. Combined letters **a** and **r**, Metropolitan Museum. Probably for **Albertus Rex**

4. Intertwined letters **a** and **e**, Metropolitan Museum. Possibly for **Albrecht** and **Elisabeth**

5, 6. Letters **l**, Veszprém and Keszthely. Probably for **Ladislav**

7, 8. Letters **d** above **s**, Budapest II and Vienna

9, 10. Letters **m**, Metropolitan Museum and Munich. For **Maria**

11. Letter **S**, Kreuzenstein. Probably for **Sigismund**

12. Letter **S**, Metropolitan Museum

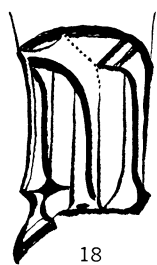
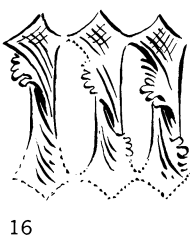
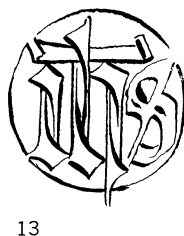
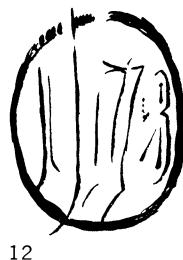
13, 14. Letters **t**, Vienna and Metropolitan Museum

15. Letter **v**, Budapest I

16. Letter **X**, Metropolitan Museum. Probably for **Christus**

17. Letter **b**, Innsbruck





# MONOGRAMS ON PAVISES AND OTHER OBJECTS

1. Letter **a**, Turin. Probably for **Albrecht**
2. Combined letters **a** and **r**, London. Probably for **Albertus Rex**
- 3, 4. Letters **W**, Prague and Warsaw. For **Wladislaw Jagiello**
5. Letter **k**, spurs in Vienna. For **Kasimir**
6. Letter **k**, Prague. Possibly for **Kasimir**
- 7, 8, 9. Letters **S**, Berlin, New York, Warsaw. Probably for **Sigismund**
10. Letter **b**, Vienna. Possibly for **Boleslav**
- 11, 12, 13. Monogram Christi **ihs**, Warsaw, New York, Brno
14. Letter **y**, Metropolitan Museum and Zwickau. For **Yhesus**—Jesus
15. Letter **g**, Veste Coburg. For **Girzy**—George
- 16, 17, 18. Letters **m**, Paris and Dresden. For **Maria**
19. Letter **v**, Paris. Possibly for **Václav**—Wenceslas

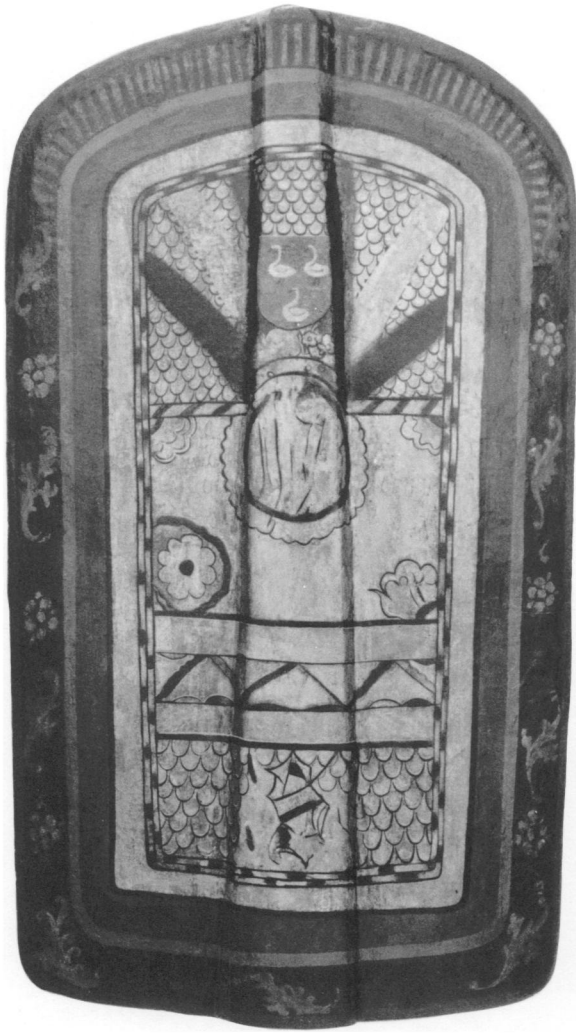


FIGURE 24  
Pavise, Bohemian (Chomutov), 1441. Wood, covered with leather, painted black and red on a silvered background; central motive of a monogram of Christ, *ihs*, surmounted by a crown and six ostrich feathers, the arms of Zwickau added later. The original inscription on the upper border obliterated in an earlier restoration. Collection of Carl Otto Kretschmar von Kienbusch, New York

FIGURE 25

Pavise, Bohemian (Chomutov), 1441. Wood, covered with leather and canvas, painted with an armored standard bearer in the upper field, and a letter *a* in the lower. On border, inscriptions in archaic Czech. The arms of Zwickau added later. Armeria Reale, Turin, Inv. no. F 1





FIGURE 26

Design on pavis no. 1379, Museum of the Polish Army, Warsaw. The escutcheons with the cross and the *W* added later. Around the border, a German inscription



FIGURE 27

Design on pavis no. 1380, Museum of the Polish Army, Warsaw. The escutcheon with the cross and the *W* added later. Around the border, a German inscription

practically unknown in the rest of Europe during the fifteenth century.<sup>17</sup>

Virtually identical in design with our pavis is one of the four still kept by the City Museum of Zwickau, its letter *y* in a sunburst topped by a plume springing from a jeweled clasp.<sup>18</sup> Two of the Zwickau group—one still in Zwickau, the other one in the Musée de Cluny in Paris—bear the letter *m* under a feathered crown; another one in the Musée de Cluny has a *v* under feathers.<sup>19</sup> One in the Armouries of the Tower of London (Figure 23) bears the same monogram *ar* that is found on the Metropolitan Museum arrowhead;<sup>20</sup> the pavis of the Kienbusch collection in New York (Figure 24) has a similar design, but with a badly worn monogram of Christ, *ihs*, in its central medallion.<sup>21</sup>

Three pavises—one in the former Zeughaus in Berlin,<sup>22</sup> the one in the Tower, and the one of the Kienbusch collection—have a letter *s* in a separate field at the foot of the shield; another one—in the Armeria Reale in Turin, Italy (Figure 25)—has there a letter *a*.<sup>23</sup> All of them have scale-patterned backgrounds.

Two similar pavises that do not belong to the Chomutov-Zwickau group are now in the Army Museum—Muzeum Wojska polskiego—in Warsaw; one of them bears the feathered crown, and in a separate field below, a letter *s* between two arms in long-flowing sleeves reaching down out of stylized clouds (Figure 26). The other one has the monogram of Christ, *ihs*, in a sunburst surmounted by the feathered crown, which is this time issuing two wings erect (Figure 27). Both

17. To my knowledge there is only one example of a non-Bohemian shield of the fifteenth century emblazoned with a monogrammatic letter. This is a small pavis in the collection of Mr. Carl Otto Kretschmar von Kienbusch, New York; the piece is painted red overall; in its upper part appear, between small sunbursts, the three white swans of the city arms of Zwickau; in the lower part is a large Gothic *h* in black. The meaning of the letter is unknown, perhaps an abbreviation of *Hilfgott* = "Help, O God," a favorite invocation. The Bohemian influence is obvious. *The Kretschmar von Kienbusch Collection of Armor and Arms* (Princeton, 1963) no. 281, pl. 87.

18. Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder," pl. 1, fig. 3; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 26.

19. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 25, 40, 41.

20. Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder," p. 54, not illustrated; quotes description by Sir Guy Francis Laking, *A Record of European Armour and Arms* (London, 1920) II, p. 241; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 35.

21. Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder," pl. 3, fig. 14; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 38; *von Kienbusch Collection*, no. 282, pl. 87.

22. Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder," pl. 4, fig. 12; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 21. This pavis is now in the collections of the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

23. Diener von Schönberg, "Setzschilder," pl. 2, fig. 7; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 43.



FIGURE 28

Pavise, Bohemian, thought to be from the army of King Wenceslas IV, about 1390. Wood, covered with leather and canvas, painted red and black with a crowned letter in gold. Historisches Museum, Dresden, N 33/Ehrt. A 56

shields have small escutcheons with a cross of St. George and the letter *W* painted on later, in the same way as the Zwickau shields had their city arms added.<sup>24</sup>

Still another pavise, in the Historisches Museum in Dresden (Figure 28), has a letter *m* surmounted by a crown, flanked by two wings erect. The shield is party red and black, the wings counterchanged. Though no ostrich feathers are present, the wings it shares with the Warsaw pavise (Figure 27) indicate that it is part of the same iconographical group.<sup>25</sup>

In attempting to interpret the cyphers and monograms found on ceremonial arrowheads it seems to be advisable to examine them in connection with those on pavises, especially since some of them appear on both types of objects.

*ih̄s* The most easily recognizable symbol is the monogram of Christ, *ih̄s*, which appears on at least half a dozen Bohemian pavises (Figures 24, 27).<sup>26</sup>

*y* Sometimes this monogram was spelled *yhs*,<sup>27</sup> and therefore it seems to be safe to assume that the letter *y*

24. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 44, 45. The *W* is in the form used by Wladislaw Jagiello, King of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary (1471–1516), as his monogram; compare the escutcheon on the balcony in the cathedral of St. Vitus, Prague. For Wladislaw Jagiello and all other kings of Bohemia during the fifteenth century, see Wilhelm Karl Prinz von Isenburg, *Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der europäischen Staaten*, 2nd rev. ed. (Marburg, 1953) I, pl. 25. The cross, red on a white field, is nearly identical in shape with those on the banners of the crusaders fighting the Hussites illustrated in the Jena Codex, Sign. iv B 24, an early sixteenth-century manuscript. See Vladimír Denkstein, *Die revolutionäre Hussitenbewegung*, Exhibition of the National Museum, Prague, in the Museum für deutsche Geschichte, Berlin, 1958, no. 442. These pavises have German inscriptions around their borders, though they follow the Bohemian pattern in their decoration; from this it seems to be possible that they were used in one of the German-speaking towns of Bohemia, which were opposed to the nationalistic Czech Hussites. The emblem on pavise Figure 26 could be related to an armorial shield: Gules, a crown or issuant two arms with clasped hands proper, sculptured on the façade of the City Hall of Prague. According to kind information by Dr. Denkstein these armorial shields (19) are presumably the arms of the members of the city council of the period, when the City Hall was built, about 1470, but no documentary proof of any kind is available.

25. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 28, 45.

26. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 38, 45; 19 (1965) nos. 47, 60, 63, 65.

27. A roughly contemporaneous example is on the crozier of St. Wolfgang in the St. Wolfgang altarpiece by Michael Pacher, 1471–1481. See Bruno Grimschitz, *Ars Austriae* (Vienna, 1960) fig. 83. Another one is in the print St. Bernhardin of Siena by the Master E.S.; see Max Geisberg, *Die Kupferstiche des Meisters E.S.* (Berlin, 1924) pl. 98.

on the Metropolitan Museum's pavise (Figure 22) and its twin in Zwickau is supposed to be the initial of *Thesus* = Jesus.

*m* The letters *m* on our arrowhead and the one in Munich (Figures 1, 2, 4, 6, 7) are certain to stand for Maria, as it is confirmed by the invocations of Mary engraved on them. The letter *m* emblazoned on three pavises<sup>28</sup> probably had the same meaning. It has been suggested that these letters *m* were the monogram of Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary and titular King of Bohemia (1470–1490), but since two out of these three shields bear the Zwickau arms, they would have been made around 1440, long before Matthias' time.

*W* Definitely royal monograms are the letters *W* on a pavise in the National Museum in Prague<sup>29</sup> and the two pavises in Warsaw; this particular form of *W* was used by Wladislaw Jagiello, King of Poland and Bohemia (1471–1516).<sup>24</sup>

*s* The possibility of its being a royal monogram instead of that of a protective saint is especially strong with the letters *s* that appear on the arrowhead in Castle Kreuzenstein (Figure 18), and on one of the Warsaw pavises (Figure 26). Here it might well be that this *s* stands for Emperor Sigismund, who was King of Bohemia from 1419 to 1437. The alternative would be the initial of St. Sebastian, patron saint of archers, but he seems to have played an important role only in the archers' guilds of Western Europe—in Bohemia he was apparently far less popular. On the other hand, these monogrammatic letters must not necessarily have had the same meaning in all cases. In particular, the letter *s* is sometimes used in quite inconspicuous places, such as on the second Budapest arrowhead (Figure 10) or on the Vienna piece (Figure 14), that make an explanation difficult.

*X* This letter engraved as a dominant feature of the reverse side of our arrowhead might be the abbreviation of *Christus*, commonly spelled *xpus* during the fifteenth century (Figure 2).

*d* Letters *d* appear on the Vienna arrowhead (Figure 14) and one of the Budapest pieces (Figure 10), each one with a small *s* at its foot. Perhaps the letters *s* could have something to do with the Czech words for crossbow or archer, *samostril* or *střelec*. If this was the case, could they possibly be Gothic versions of the Roman numeral *D* = "500," thus indicating a captain over five hundred archers? The small symbols in the

shape of arrowheads that are engraved on the same pieces are at least strong hints in this direction.

*t* Appears under a single ostrich feather on the Vienna arrowhead (Figure 14). If the fact that it is preserved in Vienna can be considered to be more than a coincidence, it is interesting that the Historical Museum of the City of Vienna has a number of pavises with Hungarian, Bohemian, and Moravian arms in its collection, which were apparently left behind by the troops of Matthias Corvinus on their withdrawal from Vienna in 1490. Three of these pavises bear the arms of the bishopric of Olomouc (Olmütz), and one the arms of the Boskovic family. Taso of Boskovic, Bishop of Olomouc, was a staunch supporter of Matthias Corvinus, and a military leader in his campaigns against Austria. The *t* on the Vienna arrowhead (Figure 14) could be the monogram of Bishop Taso, though it should be pointed out that none of the surviving Moravian pavises is emblazoned with an ostrich plume, though Moravia was part of the kingdom of Bohemia.<sup>30</sup> If this explanation for the *t* on the Vienna arrowhead were accepted, it would not shed any light on the meaning of the *t* on the front side of our arrowhead (Figure 1).

*b* One of the Moravian pavises in Vienna bears the letter *b* surmounted by a crown in its main field. This *b* has been thought to be the monogram of Taso of Boskovic's predecessor, Bohuslav of Zvole (1454–1457), if not the initial of Taso's family name.<sup>31</sup> Whether there is any connection between this *b* surmounted by a crown on this Moravian pavise, and the *b* on the Innsbruck arrowhead (Figure 21) with its atypical decoration, remains an open question.

*a* The letter *a* is one of the most frequently encountered on decorated arrowheads, either alone or in combinations with other letters. Singly we find it on the barbed arrowhead in Budapest (Figure 12); side by side with a *v* on the first Budapest piece (Figure 8); and combined with an *r* and intertwined with an *e* on our arrowhead (Figure 1). The monogram *ar* on our arrowhead is paralleled by a practically identical one on the pavise V/2 in the Tower of London (Figure 23). This pavise is one of the lot sold to Zwickau by the

28. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 25, 28, 41.

29. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) nos. 2, 44, 45.

30. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 19 (1965) pp. 184–189.

31. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 19 (1965) pp. 187–188, no. 57.

shieldmakers of Chomutov in 1441, and the similarity of the emblems suggests that our arrowhead must be of about the same date. This cypher cannot be explained as the monogram of a saint, but if it is assumed to be a royal emblem, the only king of Bohemia during the fifteenth century with the initial *a* was Albrecht of Austria (1437–1439), who came to the title after the death of his father-in-law, Emperor Sigismund, though he had been actually regent since 1423. Our monogram *ar* might well be an abbreviation of Albertus Rex, and the letters *a* on the Budapest arrowheads, and on one of the Zwickau pavises, now in the Armeria Reale in Turin (Figure 25),<sup>32</sup> could be the initial of his name. The remaining cypher on our arrowhead—an *a* and *e* intertwined—is temptingly similar to the combined initials of married couples of the period, and it is even more so because the name of Albrecht's wife was Elisabeth. Albrecht spent most of his life fighting enemies from outside, such as the Turks, or from inside, such as the revolutionary Hussites, and this extraordinary military activity seems to be reflected in the fact that the letter *a* is so frequent a monogram on Bohemian arms. The monogram *ar* on the Tower shield indicates that it was apparently made shortly before Albrecht's sudden death, and presumably the shieldmaker was glad to have the opportunity to throw this unsold piece with the outdated royal cypher in with the sale to Zwickau in 1441.

*v* The *v* side-by-side with an *a*—both under plumed crowns—on the first Budapest arrowhead (Figure 8) is very difficult to explain. Perhaps it was supposed to be a title—*vojvod* = “prince”—or the initial of the patron saint of Bohemia, St. Wenceslas, in its Czech form as *Václav*. The latter explanation might apply to the *v* under a plume of five feathers on a pavise in the Musée de Cluny, Paris.<sup>33</sup>

*i* or *l* The son of King Albrecht and Queen Elisabeth was Ladislav, surnamed Posthumus, for he was born after his father's death. He was king of Bohemia from 1453 until 1457. On two arrowheads—in Kesz-

32. Szendrei, *Denkmäler*, no. 561; reads letter as *w*. Walter Rose “Die deutschen und italienischen schwarzen (grossen) Garden im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert,” *ZHWK* 6 (1912–1914) pp. 73–97; mentions the Turin pavise on p. 77, but interprets the letter as monogram of King Wenceslas IV. Denkstein, “Pavézy,” *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 43; describes it as “Gothic letter (minuscule *a*?).”

33. Denkstein, “Pavézy,” *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 40; 19 (1965) p. 173.



FIGURE 29  
Silver collar, insignia of rank for the *Schützenkönig*, German, xv century. Museum des Kunsthandwerks, Leipzig, Inv. no. 408

thely and Veszprém—appear letters under a very stylized plume (Figures 15, 16) that could be read either *l* for Ladislav, or *i* possibly for *Jiří*—the Czech form of George. This could be the knightly saint who was very popular in Bohemia,<sup>34</sup> but perhaps even George of Podiebrad, who was regent for Ladislav, and in 1458 became elected king himself.

34. Out of twenty-five pavises with figural decoration illustrated in Denkstein's “Pavézy,” sixteen have representations of St. George. It might be held against the interpretation of this letter as an *i* = *Jiří*, however, that the two pavises that bear invocations of St. George are using the spelling *girzy* (nos. 3, 27), and the pavise in Veste Coburg (no. 27) has a large monogrammatic *g* surmounting its representation of the dragon-slayer. An added escutcheon with the arms of Coburg indicates that this pavise has been used in



Most of the cyphers surmounted by ostrich feathers that are found on shields can be interpreted as symbols of religious significance, but those on the arrowheads seem to be royal monograms, or initials of a commander or warlord. This must be the result of these arrowheads' being personal insignia whereas the shields were made by private workshops to be sold whenever and wherever needed. Therefore, it was only practical to paint the shields with a generally acceptable badge, the individual charges to be added later, while the arrowheads as symbols of authority naturally had to display distinctly authoritative emblems.

It has been thought that the decorated giant arrowheads were insignia of rank for the commanders of local archers' guilds (*Schützenhauptmann*), or the winners of the annual archers' contests (*Schützenkönig*), which took place in practically every town of some importance.<sup>35</sup> However, it is difficult to establish if these commanders had ceremonial arrows as batons or scepters; and on the other hand, the distinctive badge of the *Schützenkönig* was an elaborate silver collar, though it sometimes had an arrow among its pendants, as was the case with the still surviving *Schützenkette* of the city of Leipzig (Figure 29).<sup>36</sup> The conclusion seems to be that the same motives of decoration were used both on ceremonial arrowheads and on such unquestionably military equipment as pavises (the pavise in our own department has several holes from arrows

and sword slashes), a type of shield principally designed for the protection of crossbowmen;<sup>37</sup> for this reason it should be safe to conclude that these decorated arrowheads were badges of command for captains of crossbowmen.

To be sure, the archers' guilds of the fifteenth century were not only sports clubs, but also military units as part of the town's militia; however, it seems that the decorated arrowheads we are concerned with here were used by armies in the field rather than by burghers in defense of their hometown or even in celebration of a sports event. Not one of them is preserved among treasures of archers' guilds, which have been handed down to our day in considerable number; not a single known one is left in Bohemia, or even in what is now Czechoslovakia. Instead, the majority of surviving examples have turned up or still are in Hungary. The kings of Hungary, who were sometimes kings of Bohemia at the same time,<sup>38</sup> employed large numbers of Bohemian mercenaries—who were famous as crossbowmen—in their campaigns against the Turks. Irrefutable proof of these Turkish campaigns is the "Turkish arsenal mark" on the Metropolitan Museum's arrowhead.

Pictorial representations of the use of ceremonial arrows are rather scarce. The best-known examples are Rogier van der Weyden's portrait *Le Chevalier à la*

the armory of this town. Though Denkstein suggests a seventeenth-century origin of this escutcheon, its shape is the same as those on the Zwickau shields.

35. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," p. 220; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pp. 158–166. About these archers' contests in general, see August Edelmann, *Schützenwesen und Schützenfeste der deutschen Städte vom XIII. bis zum XVIII. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1890).

36. Ad. M. Hildebrandt, *Heraldische Meisterwerke von der internationalen Ausstellung für Heraldik* (Berlin, 1882) pl. 17; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," p. 166, pl. 17, fig. 6. A silver arrow is one of the pendants on the collar of the archers' guild of Schmalkalden, Thuringia. See Hildebrandt, *Meisterwerke*, pl. 18, and Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 17, fig. 5.

37. Discussed at length in Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 18 (1964) pp. 149–194; 19 (1965) pp. 123–130. The close connection of crossbowmen and pavise-bearers in Bohemian tactics is reflected in the German ballad of the Battle of Regensburg, 1504, quoted from R. v. Liliencron, *Die historischen Volkslieder der Deutschen vom 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1866) II, no. 242, p. 544: "die Behem hinder iren bafösen/mit schiessen triben solich wesen,/also kum ein man gesehen hat."

The best-known example for the interrelation between cross-

bowmen and pavises was the dismal failure of the Genoese crossbowmen in the Battle of Crécy, 1346, who were forced to attack without the protection of their pavises.

38. About Bohemian mercenaries, see Rose, "Schwarze Garden," pp. 73–97, particularly p. 74: "Nachdem Kaiser Sigismund wieder in den Besitz von Böhmen gelangt war, suchte er (i.J. 1429) diese 'Kriegsbrüderschaften' . . . dadurch unschädlich zu machen, dass er sie in seinen Sold nahm und sich ihrer in Ungarn gegen die Türken bediente. Sein Nachfolger, Kaiser Albrecht II, ahmte dieses Beispiel nach. . . . Als Söldner dienten sie vorzugsweise dem Deutschen Orden in Preussen, den Polen und Ungarn, und trieben sich als gesuchte Mietsoldaten noch länger als ein halbes Jahrhundert auf allen Schlachtfeldern Europas umher. . . . (Palacki, *Geschichte von Böhmen*, IV, 1, pp. 495–504; 2, p. 399)."

Kings of Bohemia who were simultaneously kings of Hungary during the fifteenth century: Sigismund (1368–1437), King of Hungary 1387, of Bohemia 1419, Emperor 1433; Albrecht (1397–1439), King of Hungary 1437, of Bohemia 1438, Emperor 1438; Ladislav Posthumus (1440–1457), King of Bohemia and Hungary 1453; Matthias Corvinus (1443–1490), King of Hungary 1458, titular King of Bohemia 1470, acknowledged 1478; Wladislaw Jagiello (1456–1516), King of Bohemia 1471, of Hungary 1490.

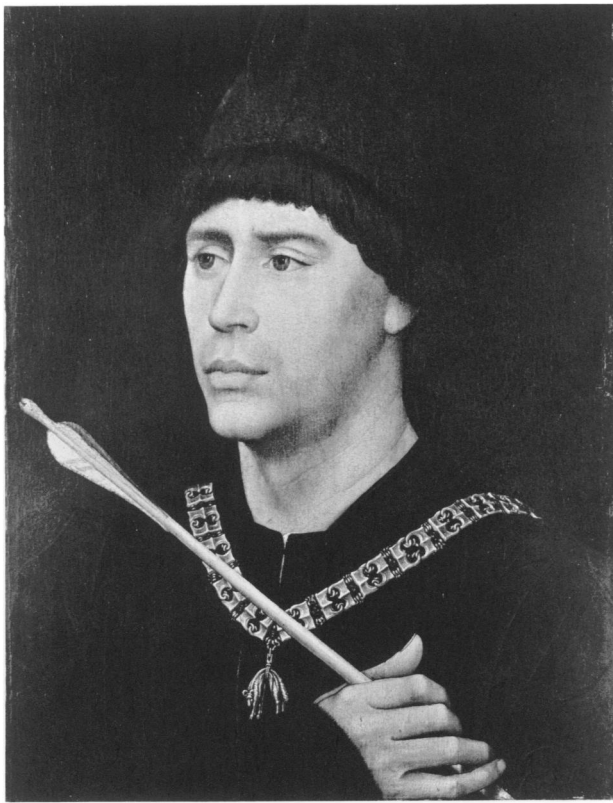


FIGURE 30

Portrait called *Le Chevalier à la Flèche*, possibly of Charles the Bold or Antoine of Burgundy, by Rogier van der Weyden, about 1460. Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Musée d'Art Ancien, Brussels

Flèche in Brussels (Figure 30),<sup>39</sup> and a Memling portrait in the National Gallery in Washington (Figure 31).<sup>40</sup> Here and in the portrait of the Burgundian herald of arms by Rogier van der Weyden in Antwerp (Figure 32),<sup>41</sup> as well as in the portrait of a bearded man with an arrow in his hand by Bernhard Strigel (Figure 33),<sup>42</sup> the arrows are of normal size and without conspicuous decoration. A large crossbow bolt with a decorated head is held by Heinrich der Fromme, Duke of Saxony, in a portrait now in Schloss Moritzburg near Dresden (Figure 34).<sup>43</sup> In this portrait painted in 1526 the duke is shown in the puffed and slashed costume of a German footsoldier (*Landsknecht*), carrying the typical battle sword, the so-called *Katzbalger*. Oversized arrows can be found in three woodcuts portraying Emperor Maximilian (one in the *Ehrenpförte*, and two in the *Weisskunig*), in which he holds one like a scepter in a council of war, or acts as supreme warlord among representatives of the different ethnic groups of his army (Figures 35–37).<sup>44</sup>

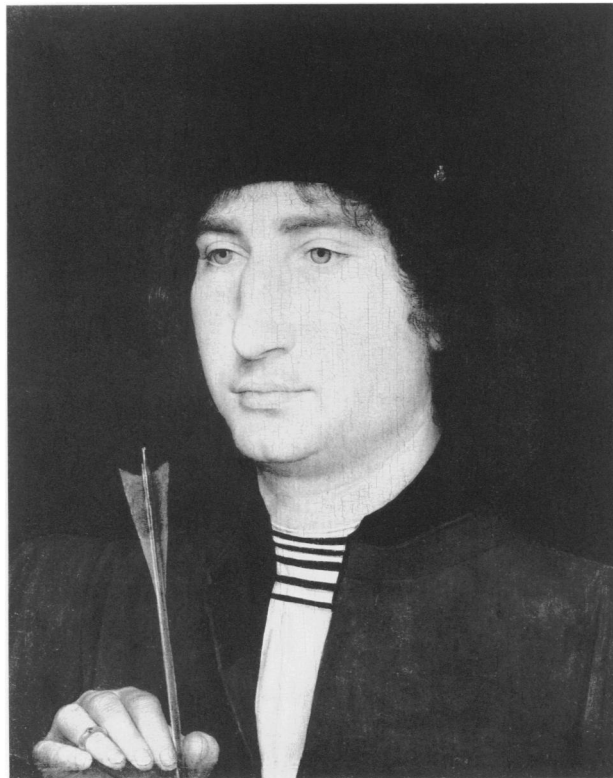


FIGURE 31

Portrait of a Man with an Arrow, by Hans Memling, about 1470. National Gallery of Art, Washington, Andrew Mellon Collection, 1937

39. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 9; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 26, fig. 1; Buttin, "La Flèche des Juges," pl. 20.

40. *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 17 (1922) p. 100.

41. Buttin, "La Flèche des Juges," pl. 20.

42. Wilhelm Hausenstein, *Tafelmalerei der deutschen Gotik* (Munich, 1922) p. 76; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 26, fig. 3; according to information from the Hearst Corporation, New York, the present whereabouts of the painting is not known.

43. Otto Mörtzsch, "Das wehrhafte Freiberg im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Stadt Freiberg* 7 (1915–1917) pp. 216–224, fig. 2.

44. *Ehrenpförte des Kaisers Maximilian*, by Albrecht Dürer, woodcut, German, 1515. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 28.82.22. *Der Weisskunig* (Vienna edition, reprinting the original blocks, 1775), woodcuts by Hans Burgkmair and Leonhard Beck, German, 1514–1516.



FIGURE 32  
Portrait of Jean Lefèvre de St. Remy, Herald of Arms and Chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece, by Rogier van der Weyden, about 1460. Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, cat. no. 539

FIGURE 33  
Detail from Portrait of a Bearded Man with an Arrow in his Hand, by Bernhard Strigel, about 1510–1520. Formerly in the Hearst collection

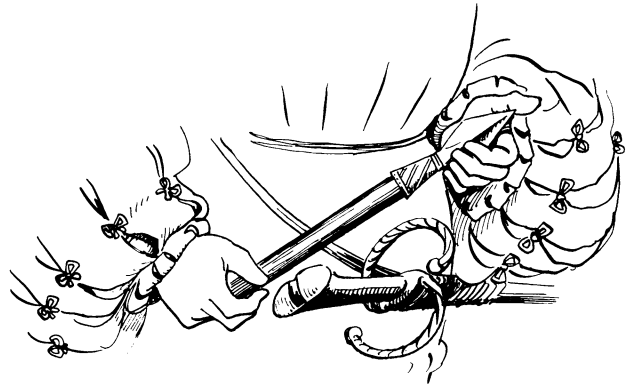
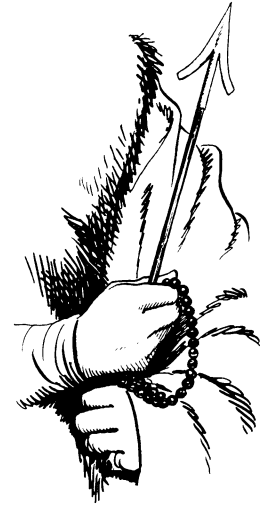


FIGURE 34 (RIGHT, ABOVE)  
Detail from Portrait of Heinrich der Fromme, Duke of Saxony, school of Lucas Cranach, 1526 (?). Schloss Moritzburg. After Mörtzsch

FIGURE 35  
Emperor Maximilian among Representatives of the Different Nationalities in His Army. Woodcut from the *Ehrenpforte*, by Albrecht Dürer, 1515. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 28.82.22





FIGURE 36  
Emperor Maximilian in a Council of War. Woodcut from the *Weisskunig*, by Hans Burgkmair, 1514–1516. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Library



FIGURE 37  
Emperor Maximilian Giving Orders to His Troops. Woodcut from the *Weisskunig*, by Leonhard Beck (?), 1514–1516. The Metropolitan Museum of Art Library

FIGURE 38  
King Ludwig of Hungary Fighting the Turks. Votive panel from the altarpiece of St. Lambrecht, by Hans von Tübingen, about 1430. Alte Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Inv. no. L 12







FIGURE 39  
Three Landsknechts. Drawing by Albrecht Dürer, 1489. Kupferstichkabinett, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin

FIGURE 40  
Christ before Caiaphas the High Priest. Woodcut by Urs Graf, from *Leben Jesu Christi*, published by Johann Knoblauch, Strasbourg, 1508. After Muther

In the *Ehrenpforte* woodcut, incidentally, there is among the seven foreign captains, whose languages Maximilian knew how to speak, a Czech characterized by his typical Bohemian pavise painted with a sunburst. In Albrecht Dürer's drawing of the three landsknechts, dated 1489, the bearded man who seems to be the leader among the three holds a huge arrow (Figure 39).<sup>45</sup> It is interesting that the soldier in the middle has in his belt a throwing hatchet, a weapon considered to be typically Bohemian,<sup>46</sup> and the third one holds a *gläse*, a shafted weapon for stabbing and hewing that

was very popular in Eastern Europe. Similar polearms and a big arrow are wielded in the Battle against the Turks on the altarpiece of St. Lambrecht by Master Hans von Tübingen, about 1430, now in the Landesmuseum Joanneum in Graz, Austria (Figure 38).<sup>47</sup> In a woodcut by Urs Graf, an illustration of *Leben Jesu Christi*, published in Strasbourg by Johann Knoblauch, 1508, we see among the soldiers dragging the captive Christ before Caiaphas a man with a giant arrow (Figure 40).<sup>48</sup> Examples from an amusingly different field

45. Most recent publication: Fedja Anzelewsky, *Dürer and his Time*, an exhibition from the collection of the Print Room, State Museum, Berlin, Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, circulated by the Smithsonian Institution, 1965–1966; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Pierpont Morgan Library, New York; Art Institute, Chicago; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; cat. no. 18.

46. Walther Rose, "Das mittelalterliche Wurfbeil und verwandte Wurf-Waffen," *ZHfWK NF 1* (1923–1925) pp. 151–168; Hans Stöcklein, "Die Wurfbeile des Bayerischen National-Museums," *ZHfWK NF 2* (1926–1928) pp. 17–23; E. A. Gessler, "Vom Wurfbeil des 15. Jahrhunderts," *ZHfWK NF 2* (1926–1928) pp. 249–252.

47. Grimschitz, *Ars Austriae*, pl. 68.

48. Richard Muther, *Die deutsche Bücherillustration der Gothik und Frührenaissance* (Munich and Leipzig, 1884) pl. 216.





FIGURE 41 King of Spades, French, xv century. After D'Allemagne



FIGURE 42 Honor cards, king, queen, knave, by Master Jaques, French (Lyon), 1472-1475. After D'Allemagne

FIGURE 43  
Knives, uncut sheet of  
playing cards, by Jehan  
de Dale, French (Lyon),  
1485-1515. After  
D'Allemagne



FIGURE 44  
Detail from The Siege of  
Castle Mortagne, Jean  
de Wavrin's *Chronique  
d'Angleterre*, Flemish, xv  
century. British Museum,  
ms Roy. 14 E.IV, fol. 23 r.  
By permission of the  
Trustees





are the representations on honor cards in French fifteenth-century playing cards, where a king might hold an arrow of normal size (Figure 41),<sup>49</sup> but valets carry either batons, halberds, or overlarge arrows (Figures 42, 43).<sup>50</sup> It is open to question whether Dürer's landsknecht and the fighter in Master Hans' battle scene hold a javelin<sup>51</sup> rather than an arrow, but there is no doubt about the weapons of the card valets, because in some cases the artist took pains to indicate clearly the notch at the end of the shaft, which proves it to be a true arrow—though one of a size that could not possibly be fitted on a usable bow (Figure 43). A late example is to be found in the portrait of a man in armor, about 1580, in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, holding a large crossbow bolt in his right hand (Figure 45).<sup>52</sup> The most revealing evidence is to be found in a miniature in the British Museum (Figure 44), where a captain of foot soldiers holds an arrow as a staff of command.

From this it is clear that these representations fall into two groups. In one group oversize arrows appear in connection with armed men in a way that would indicate symbols of military rank; in the other group arrows of normal size in the hands of high-ranking personalities in courtly dress suggest a different *raison d'être*.

Charles Buttin in his "La Flèche des Juges de Camp" mentions that the lord presiding over a tournament—at least in French-speaking countries—held an arrow which he threw into the *champ clos* between the combatants when they were in danger of getting carried away by their fighting fury. Upon this signal the attendants in charge jumped in and separated the fighters before one of them was killed.<sup>53</sup> It is interesting that among

49. Henri René d'Allemagne, *Les Cartes à Jouer du Quatorzième au Vingtième Siècle* (Paris, 1906) I, p. 71.

50. D'Allemagne, *Cartes à Jouer*, I, p. 74; plate between pp. 68 and 69, p. 99. The overlarge arrows held by knaves appear until the eighteenth century in French playing cards, often misunderstood as staves topped with hearts, *fleurs de lys*, etc. They were copied in Netherlandish cards of the sixteenth century, English cards of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and early American cards of around 1800; see Catherine Perry Hargrave, *A History of Playing Cards* (New York, 1966) pp. 40, 43–45, 47, 161, 176, 181, 289, 291.

51. Giant arrows used as javelins are in engravings by the Master of the Playing Cards, see D'Allemagne, *Cartes à Jouer*, I, p. 41; and Master E.S., see Geisberg, *Kupferstiche des Meisters E.S.*, pls. 176, 177, 222. Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 19 (1965) p. 109, illustrates a detail of Hubert and Jan van Eyck's painting *The Three Marys* (Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam) where among the arms of the guardians of the grave is a Bohemian pavise lying on top of a large arrow with a rather elongated head.

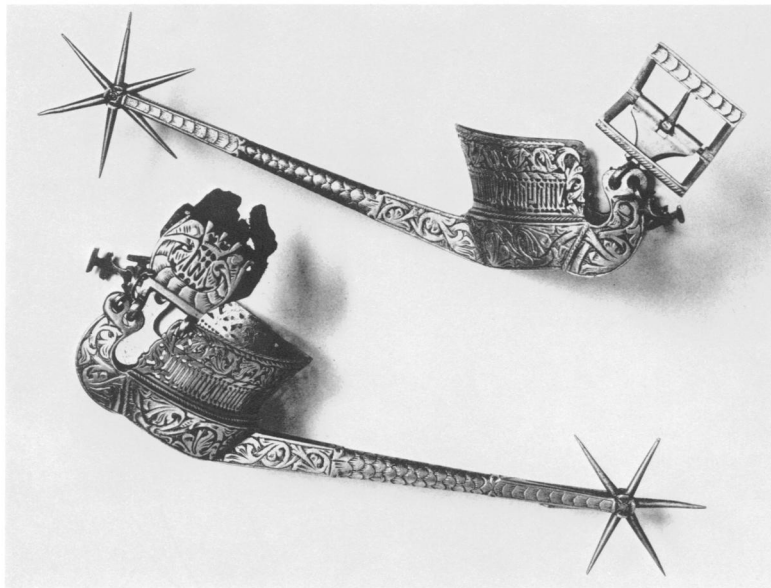


FIGURE 45  
Portrait of a Man in Armor, Netherlandish,  
about 1580. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna,  
Inv. no. GG 2747

Since the sleeping soldier next to them cradles an only partly visible spear with an identical head in his arms, it is possible that the painter intended them to be a pair of javelins. A non-military example is in the Franco-Flemish tapestry *The Stag Hunt*, in The Metropolitan Museum of Art (acc. no. 45.128.22) but the figure holding this javelin seems to be modeled—in a mirror image—after the soldier in Urs Graf's woodcut of 1508.

52. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 11; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 26, fig. 4, p. 165. Though the head of this weapon has the leaf shape of a lance head, the position of the man in relation to the wall and the table, on which his helmet is resting, makes it unlikely for the weapon to have a pike-length shaft.

53. Buttin, "La Flèche des Juges," p. 63, quotes the following examples from Jean Lefèvre, Seigneur de St. Remy, *Chronique* (Paris, 1881) II, pp. 318–319: "1435. Le duc [Philippe le Bon of Burgundy] tenoit une flesche en sa main; sy demanda aux gardes, c'est à entendre aux preneurs, s'ils congnoissoient bien le signe; et ils dirent, que oil. . . Quant ils se furent, une espasse, combatans de leurs haches, et fait l'un l'autre tourner et despasser, et monstré les tours d'armes qu'ils savoient, comme vaillans et hardis chevaliers, le duc gecta sa flesche en bas et dist 'Hola, hola.' Adont, les preneurs les prindrent subz en ce point"; and from Antoine de la Sale, *L'Hystoire et plaisante chronique du Petit Jehan de Saintré et de la*



**FIGURE 46**  
Pair of spurs, Bohemian, third  
quarter of the xv century. Steel,  
engraved and perforated. Waffensammlung, Vienna, Inv. no. A 27



**FIGURE 47**  
Pair of stirrups, Bohemian, xv century. Steel, engraved and perforated. Waffensammlung, Vienna, Inv. no. A 28

**FIGURE 48**  
Pendant, Transylvanian, 1451. Silver and enamel. Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest





FIGURE 49  
Pair of spurs, probably  
Bohemian, late xv century.  
Thought to be the spurs of  
King Laszlo II, who was killed  
at Mohács, 1526. Hungarian  
National-Museum, Budapest

the great lords displaying this badge of office (Figures 30–33) is Jean Lefèvre de St. Remy, the herald of the dukes of Burgundy, whose professional duty was the arrangement and supervision of tournaments, and who gave us in his *Chronique* an example of the use of the arrow by the judge of the tournament.

Strangely enough, there are no representations of persons with ceremonial arrows known from Bohemia itself.

Motives used on ceremonial arrowheads and Bohemian pavises can be found on contemporary works of decorative art, such as the pair of spurs in the Waffensammlung in Vienna (Figure 46), which are thought to be made for King Kasimir IV of Poland (1427–1492) on the occasion of his marriage with Elisabeth (1437–1505)—the daughter of King Albrecht of Bohemia—in 1454. Here we find again the scale patterns, monogram,<sup>54</sup> and an inscription: *pomny na mye ma myla*

*wyerna pany* = “Remember me, my dear and faithful lady!” In fact, style and workmanship are so closely related to those in our arrowhead that both could well have been made by the same master. A pair of stirrups in the Waffensammlung (Figure 47) seems to belong to the same workshop. Besides scale patterns and flowing vines, their main decoration consists of four rows of the letter *a*, eighteen times in each row. Stylistically there are strong similarities between the floral scrollwork with its pointed leaves in the Metropolitan Museum’s arrowhead and the foliation on a pendant, dated 1451, in the Hungarian National-Museum (Figure 48),<sup>55</sup> or with the ornamental scrolls on the backgrounds of Bohemian miniatures, such as the complex of manuscripts made for King Wenceslas IV around 1400.<sup>56</sup> The ornamentation on the Munich arrowhead (Figures 6, 7), on the other hand, is very close in style to that on a pair of spurs in Budapest (Figure 49) traditionally at-

*jeune Dame des Belles Cousines* (Edition Guichard) chap. 56, p. 173: “1459. Saintré le poursuivoit très fièrement; quant le roy, pour garder l’honneur de l’ung et de l’autre, gecta sa fleiche, et furent prins. . . .”

54. During the troubled times of the Hussite Wars, Prince Kasimir had been elected king of Bohemia by the Taborites, the radical wing of the Hussites, after the death of Emperor Sigismund in 1437; see Veit Valentin, *Deutsche Geschichte* (Munich and Zürich, 1960) I, p. 159.

A very fine pavise, now in the National Museum in Prague, with the representation of David fighting Goliath—a favorite Hussite theme—and Hussite inscriptions, is emblazoned with a *k*. This shield came from Kutná Hora (Kuttenberg), one of the centers of

the revolutionary Hussite movement. Perhaps this *k* is meant to be Kasimir. Denkstein (“Pavézy,” *Sborník* 16 [1962] no. 1) does not offer an explanation, but strictly rejects the idea that this *k* might be the initial of Kutná Hora or Kuttenberg, because no example of an initial of a town’s name used as a shield decoration is known. Another pavise, now in Berlin, bears the letter *K* repeated six times within its Moravian-style decoration; see Denkstein, “Pavézy,” *Sborník* 18 (1964) fig. 24.

55. Erich Steingraber, *Antique Jewelry* (New York, 1957) p. 78, fig. 114.

56. Julius von Schlosser, “Die Bilderhandschriften Königs Wenzel I,” *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen* 14 (Vienna, 1893) pp. 214–317.

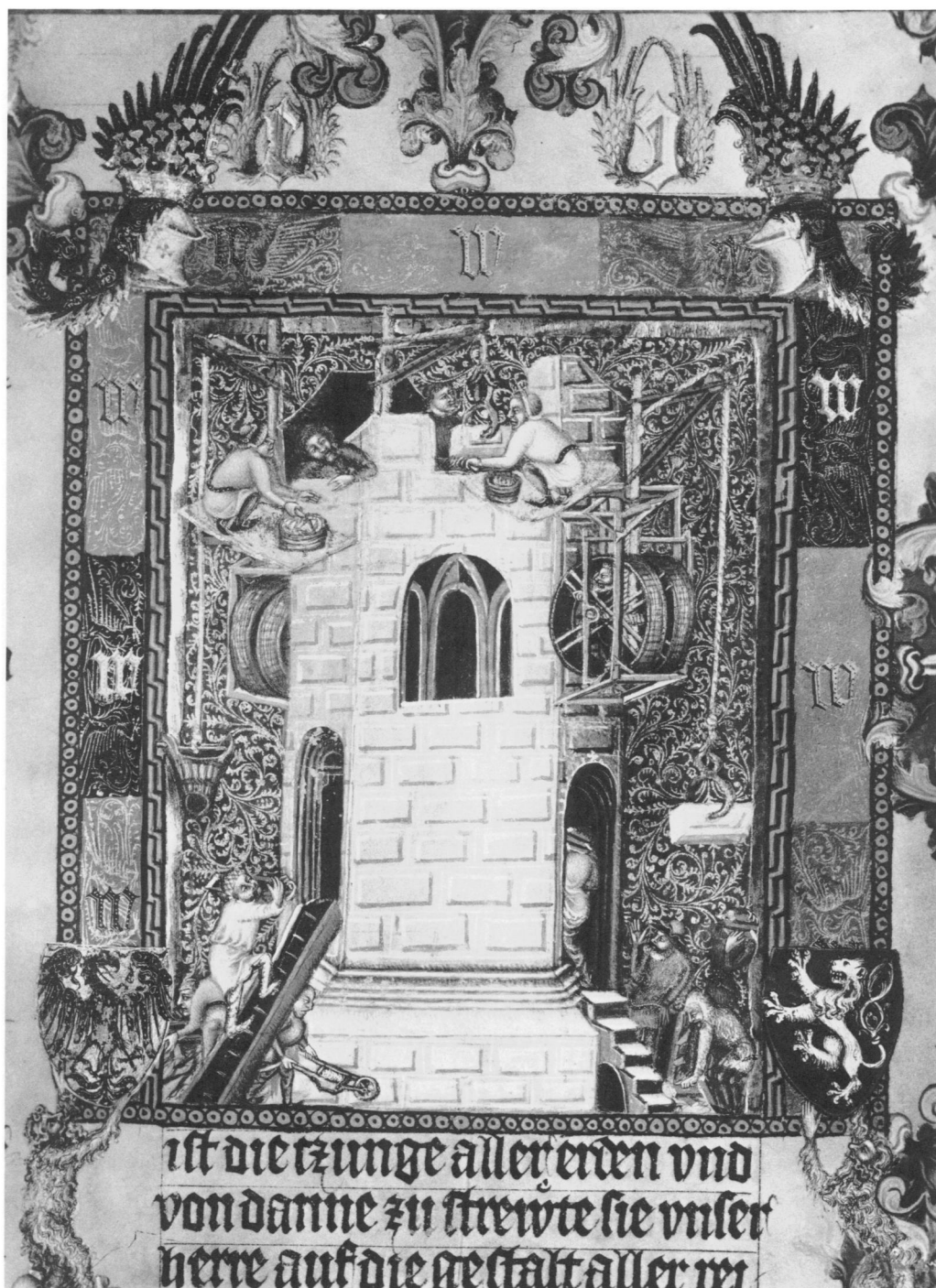


FIGURE 50

The Tower of Babel, illumination from the German Bible of King Wenceslas IV, Bohemian, about 1390. In the framework, the arms of the Empire (eagle) and of Bohemia (double-tailed lion), the monograms *w* (*wr?*) and *e* between wings erect. Bildarchiv der Österreichischen National-Bibliothek, Vienna, cod. 2.759, fol. 10

FIGURE 51

Title page of the *Bulla Aurea*, Bohemian, about 1390. Wenceslas sitting fettered in letter *w*, his doublet embroidered with the monograms *w* and *e* flanked by wings erect. The bathmaid to the left has her kirtle patterned with winged letters *e*. Bildarchiv der Österreichischen National-Bibliothek, Vienna, cod. 338, fol. 1

FIGURE 52 (FAR RIGHT)

First page of the *Willehalm*, Bohemian, 1387. Wenceslas and the bathmaid in the monogram *we* surmounted by a crowned *e* between kingfishers. At bottom, *e* between wings erect on a scale-patterned background. Bildarchiv der Österreichischen National-Bibliothek, Vienna, cod. ser. nov. 2.643, fol. 66

FIGURE 53

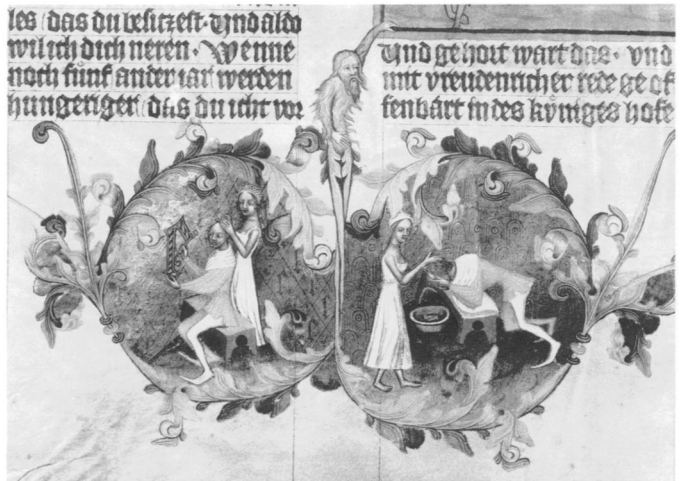
Marginal illumination from the German Bible of King Wenceslas IV, Bohemian, about 1390. Wenceslas having his hair washed by the bathmaid, monograms *e*, and scale pattern. Bildarchiv der Österreichischen National-Bibliothek, Vienna, cod. 2.759, fol. 347

FIGURE 54

Initial *A* with the monogram of King Wenceslas IV and his queen, Sophia, surnamed Euphemia (Offney), Bohemian, 1390–1400. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, cod. lat. 826, fol. 27 r

FIGURE 55 (BELOW, RIGHT)

Marginal illumination from the *Willehalm*, Bohemian, 1387. King Wenceslas's arms (quartered of the Empire and Bohemia) with wildmen as supporters, the monograms *w* and *e* crowned, and his badge of the kingfisher sitting on a knotted towel. Bildarchiv der Österreichischen National-Bibliothek, Vienna, cod. ser. nov. 2.643, fol. 200



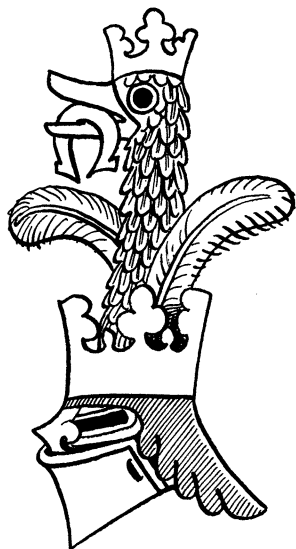


FIGURE 56  
Crest of the kings of Hungary from the *Roll of Arms* of the herald Gelre, 1370–1395. After Adam-Even

tributed to King Laszlo II of Hungary (1506–1526), who was killed in the disastrous battle of Mohács. János Kalmár suggests that these spurs might date from the end of the fifteenth century. On the arrowhead as well as on the spurs appear the letters *mmm*.<sup>57</sup>

The stylistic relations between the spurs of King Kasimir and the Metropolitan Museum's arrowhead might even indicate that this arrowhead was a personal insigne of King Albrecht himself, but in any case they point to the source of these emblems and the peculiar style of decoration: the royal court of Bohemia. All the characteristic motives mentioned can be found in the illuminations of the above-mentioned manuscripts commissioned by King Wenceslas IV (1376–1419), the only major group of surviving pieces of this court art. The monogram *w* of Wenceslas, and *e* for Euphemia, the poetic surname of Wenceslas' second wife, Sophia of Bavaria, appear singly and combined as *we* (Figures 50–55); the scale pattern in the background of the miniatures is in a peculiar dotted form (Figures 52, 53)

57. Kalmár, "Pfeilspitzen," fig. 8; Kalmár, "Armbrust-Pfeilspitzen," pl. 28, fig. 1. The shanks of the spurs bear inscriptions *mdrinoamm* and *mmaornidum* in addition to monogrammatic letters *n* or *u*. Though *mudri* can be interpreted as the Czech word for "wise," these inscriptions are more likely compositions of initials of mottoes or invocations.

58. The intricacies of this courtly iconography are discussed and explained at great length in Schlosser, "Bilderhandschriften," pp. 214–217. Queen Sophia used her poetic surname "Euphemia" or

related to that on the Munich arrowhead—this might be derived from the plumage of the kingfisher, the personal device of Wenceslas.<sup>58</sup> The monograms appear surmounted by crowns or flanked by wings erect (Figures 50–52, 54, 55), a combination to be found on the Dresden shield (Figure 28) and, supplemented by ostrich feathers, on the Warsaw pavise with the monogram of Christ (Figure 27). These elements are certainly derived from the royal crest of Bohemia: two sable eagle's wings erect, spangled with golden linden leaves, issuant from a crown (Figures 50, 55)—here we have a probable source too for the leaf-like figure on one of the Budapest arrowheads (Figure 8). The omnipresent ostrich feathers are worn as headdresses not only by marginal figures, such as wildmen acting as armorial supporters (Figure 55), but also by Wenceslas himself and his "steady companion," the bathmaid (Figure 52). On the other hand, an ostrich's head flanked by two ostrich feathers issuant from a crown was the crest of the kings of Hungary (Figure 56).<sup>59</sup> Perhaps one of the kings of Bohemia who was king of Hungary at the same time, either Sigismund, the half brother of Wenceslas IV, or his son-in-law Albrecht, adopted the ostrich feather as a personal badge. Apparently these motives of royal iconography became *abgesunkenes Kulturgut*, and were then considered to be national emblems to be used as common badges.

In this context it is necessary to mention once more the often repeated legend of the origin of the famous badge of the Prince of Wales, the three ostrich feathers (Figures 57, 58). As the legend goes, Edward, the Black Prince, took these feathers from the helmet of John the Blind, King of Bohemia, who was killed in the Battle of Crécy. For many years King John had been regarded as the flower of chivalry, and in adopting his device—including the German motto *ich diene*—the Black Prince supposedly wanted to become his successor. This legend has been treated by historians at best with condescension; more often it has been rejected

its vernacular form "Offney," even for signing documents. The kingfisher was regarded as a symbol of marital love and fidelity. The scale pattern is often drawn to represent fur; parallels and prototypes can be found in Bohemian miniatures and sculpture, such as the statue of Emperor Charles IV at the Bridge Tower, Prague.

59. P. Adam-Even, "L'armorial universel du Heraut Gelre (1370–1395)," *Archives Héraldiques Suisses* 75 (1961) pp. 48, no. 500, pl. 3.



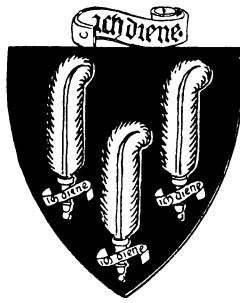


FIGURE 57

Shield for Peace of Edward, the Black Prince, 1330–1376. After Ströhl

outright,<sup>60</sup> but it has not been pointed out before in this connection that the ostrich feather was indeed a badge of Bohemia.

60. Walther Rose, "König Johann der Blinde von Böhmen und die Schlacht bei Crécy (1346)," *ZHWK* 7 (1915–1917) pp. 37–60. The legend of the Black Prince's badge is told on p. 57, note 106, with its rejection quoted from Pauli, *Geschichte von England*, IV, p. 404, note 3. Martin Schweisthal, "Questions d'Héraldique, III. Le badge anglais et la devise du Prince de Galles," *Annales de la Société Royale d'Archéologie de Bruxelles* 20 (1921) pp. 99–105, claims that the Black Prince used the ostrich feather badge even before Crécy, but gives no proof of this; the mottoes *ich dien* and *hou mout* are claimed to be Flemish. H. G. Ströhl, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Badges," *Jahrbuch der k.k. Heraldischen Gesellschaft "Adler,"* NF 12 (1902) pp. 75–113, figs. 52–56, 62, 69, 73, 88–91. Another theory about the possible origin of the badge of the Black Prince points out that his mother, Philippa of Hainault, used the ostrich feather as a badge in 1369. Here it is thought to be connected as a canting device to the lordship of Ostrevant, a title of the eldest sons of the counts of Hainault. However, the crowned ostrich feather and the sunburst both were used by King Edward III, father of the Black Prince. In the confusing play of dynastic marriages it came to pass that Wenceslas of Bohemia, Duke of Luxembourg, half brother of Charles IV, King of Bohemia and Emperor, was married to Johanna of Brabant, who had been married in her first marriage to William IV of Holland, the brother of Philippa of Hainault and the holder of the title of Ostrevant. Later the daughter of Emperor Charles IV, Anna of Bohemia, half sister of King Wenceslas IV and sister of Emperor Sigismund, was married to Richard II, King of England, son of the Black Prince. As a possible explanation for the ostrich feather as a Bohemian badge, Denkstein ("Pavézy," *Sborník* 19 [1965] p. 200) mentions that St. George is frequently shown in fifteenth-century representations with a headband holding an ostrich plume in a jeweled clasp (Figure 59); see Max Lehrs, *The Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet*, International Chalcographical Society, 1893/1894, pl. 34. The best-known example is probably the life-size sculpture in the Church of St. Nicolai (Storkyrka) in Stockholm, by Bernt Notke, finished 1489; see Walter Paatz, *Bernt Notke und sein Kreis* (Berlin, 1939) I, pp. 68–96; II, pls. 74–78. One of the pavises with Bohemian decoration from the town armory in Enns, Austria, shows a St. George with this type of headdress; see Gustav Stockhammer, "Ennser Tartschen," *ZHWK* 7 (1915–1917) pp. 130–135; Denkstein, "Pavézy," *Sborník* 16 (1962) no. 31. It seems possible that this plume was to represent —*pars pro toto*— the popular knightly saint. The badge of the Black Prince might be a parallel to this, considering the fact that St. George was the patron saint of England.

FIGURE 58

Badges of Arthur, Prince of Wales, 1486–1502, in Peterborough Cathedral. After Ströhl

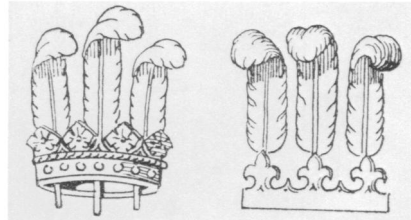
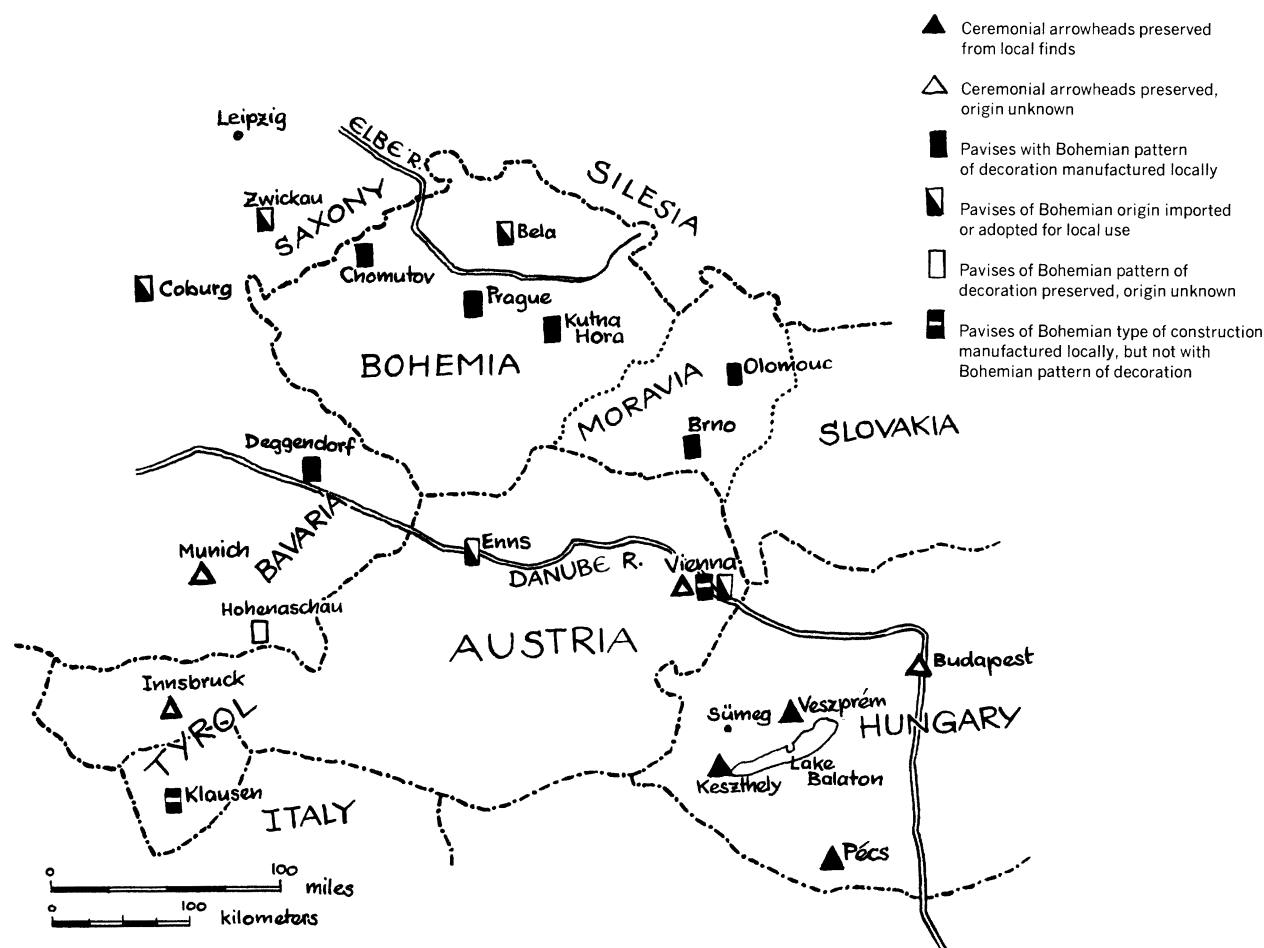


FIGURE 59

St. George. Detail of a pavise, Bohemian, last quarter of the xv century. Museum, Enns, Austria





*Map indicating locations of ceremonial arrowheads and paves of Bohemian type*

I wish to express my warmest thanks for invaluable help and advice in interpreting the Czech inscriptions to Dr. Marica Vilcek, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Dr. Vladimír Denkstejn, Director of the National-Museum, Prague; Dr. Ivan Hlaváček, Docent at the University Karlovy, Prague; Professor Dr. Jaromír Neumann, C. Sc., Director of the Institute for Art History, Academy of Sciences, Prague.

For important information about the subject I am especially obliged to Dr. János Kalmár, formerly of the Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest; and for great help in providing information and photographs for this publication I am deeply grateful to Dr. Fedja Anzelewsky, Kustos, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin; Dr. Erwin Auer, Director of the Reproduktions-Abteilung des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna; J. P. Brooke-Little, Esq., Richmond Herald of Arms, College of Arms, London; Dr. Erich Egg, Director of the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck; Dr. Anneliese Hanisch, Kustos, Museum für das Kunsthandwerk,

Leipzig; Dr. Wolfgang Hörmann, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich; Major Francis Jones, T.D., M.A., Wales Herald Extraordinary, Carmarthen Castle; Dr. Peter Krenn, Alte Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz; Mr. Carl Otto Kretzschmar von Kienbusch, New York; Dr. Sándor Mihálik, Vice-Director emeritus of the Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest; Dr. Raffaele Natta-Soleri, Inspector of the Armeria Reale, Turin; Hofrat Dr. Hans Pauer, Director of the Österreichische National-Bibliothek, Vienna; William Reid, F.S.A. SCOT., Assistant Keeper of the Armouries, H. M. Tower of London; Dr. Alexander Freiherr von Reitzenstein, Director of the Bayerisches Armee-Museum, Munich; Dipl. phil. Johannes Schöbel, Director of the Historisches Museum, Dresden; Dr. F. Temesvary, Department Head of the Hungarian National-Museum, Budapest; Dr. Bruno Thomas, Director of the Waffensammlung des Kunsthistorischen Museums, Vienna; Ünsal Yücel, Assistant Curator at the Topkapi Sarayi Museum, Istanbul.

## Böhmische Prunkpfeilspitzen

Im November 1966 erwarb das Metropolitan Museum auf einer Auktion bei Sotheby's, London, eine reichverzierte Pfeilspitze — genauer gesagt, die Spitze eines Armbrustbolzens — von ungewöhnlicher Grösse. Bei einer Gesamtlänge von 30 cm ist sie viel zu gross, um von einer noch so mächtigen Armbrust verschossen zu werden, dabei ist sie über und über im Eisenschnitt ornamentiert und teilweise mit Messing eingelegt. Hauptmotiv der Verzierung ist ein von einer mit einer grossen Straussenfeder besteckten Krone überragtes Monogramm "ar" in gotischen Lettern, begleitet von Anrufungen Gottes und Mariä in mittelalterlichem Tschechisch: "Zdarz bvo[h] = Wohlauf mit Gott, bzw. Hilfgott," "marya pano = Jungfrau Maria," "mamyla = meine Liebe [Jungfrau Maria]," "warvy woka = Behüt dein Auge, bzw. Hüt dich vor dem Auge [Gottes]," sowie verschiedenen, z.T. gekrönten, Einzelbuchstaben: "S," "X," "t," "m," und "a" und "e" über Kreuz gelegt. Auf der streifenartig mit Ranken- und Schuppenmustern verzierten Tülle befindet sich ein nachträglich eingeschlagenes Zeichen, die sogenannte Marke des türkischen Arsenal (Abb. 1, 2, 4, 5).

Es sind bisher elf verwandte Pfeilspitzen bekannt und von János Kalmár veröffentlicht worden (Anm. 5); die meisten von ihnen befinden oder befanden sich in Ungarn: drei im Ungarischen National-Museum zu Budapest, je eine im Bakony Museum in Veszprém, dem Balaton Museum in Keszthely, und dem Museum der Stadt Fünfkirchen (Pécs). Ferner ist je eine in der Waffensammlung des Kunsthistorischen Museums zu Wien, dem Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck, der Sammlung Graf Wilczek auf Burg Kreuzenstein und dem Bayerischen National-Museum in München, während die letzte sich in der Sammlung Jedlicska in Budapest befand, wo sie in Szendrei-Katalog der Millenniums-Ausstellung 1896 veröffentlicht

wurde, aber seitdem verschollen ist. Von diesen trägt die Münchner Spitze beidseitig altschechische Anrufungen Mariä: "mamyla pan[o] = meine liebe Jungfrau" und "mamyla panny = meine liebe Herrin", sowie auf der Tülle ihr Monogramm gereiht "MMMM" (Abb. 6, 7). Alle übrigen Stücke — bis auf das Innsbrucker Exemplar — sind nur einseitig verziert. Die erste der Budapester Spitzen (Abb. 8, 9) trägt ein "a" und ein "v," je unter einer von einer Straussenfeder überragten Krone. Darunter sind kleine Beizeichen zu sehen, die einem Lindenblatte und einer mit Widerhaken versehenen Pfeilspitze ähneln. Die zweite (Abb. 10, 11) führt auf ihrer linken Klingenhälfte ein "d" über einem kleineren "s," das Ganze von einer sehr stilisierten befiederten Krone überragt; das Zeichen auf der rechten Klingenhälfte ist zu verwischt, als dass ausser einer gleichen Krone etwas Genaueres herausgelesen werden könnte. Die dritte Spitze in Budapest (Abb. 12, 13) ist insofern verschieden von allen anderen, als es sich bei ihr um eine sogenannte bärtige Pfeilspitze handelt. Die Wiener Spitze in der Waffensammlung (Abb. 14) hat ein "t" unter einer einzelnen, steif aufrechtstehenden Straussenfeder auf der einen Klingenhälfte, und auf der anderen ein "d" über einem kleinen "s", das Ganze unter einer einfachen Laubkrone. Dazu kommen noch zwei kleine Beizeichen, die bärtige Pfeilspitzen darstellen könnten. Die beiden Stücke aus Keszthely und Veszprém (Abb. 15, 16) sind nahezu identisch; beide haben einen Buchstaben "l" oder vielleicht "i" unter einer grob eingeschlagenen stilisierten Straussenfeder als einzige Verzierung. Ähnlich einfach ist die Spitze von Burg Kreuzenstein (Abb. 18), die ein "S" unter einer spitzgezackten Krone trägt. Die verschollene Spitze der Sammlung Jedlicska (Abb. 19) hatte mit Rankenwerk verzierte Messingeinlagen, die stilistisch dem Dekor der Münchener Spitze verwandt zu sein

scheinen. Das Exemplar in Fünfkirchen (Pécs) dagegen hat eine so völlig verrostete Klinge (Abb. 20), dass keinerlei Einzelheiten mehr erkennbar sind. Die messingplattierten Halsteile zeigen Schuppenmuster, die denen auf der Münchner, Wiener, auf zweien der Budapester und schliesslich auch unserer Spitze verwandt sind; völlig abweichend dagegen ist der Umstand, dass sie keine Tülle besitzt, sondern "im Dorn eingelassen" war. Von allen anderen verschieden ist das Innsbrucker Exemplar (Abb. 21); nicht nur ist es mit 73 mm wesentlich kleiner als die anderen Stücke, die 105 bis 115 mm messen, sondern es ist auch praktisch tüllenlos, dabei auf allen vier Seiten mit eingepunzten Buchstaben "b" in einfachem Rankenwerk geschmückt und darüberhinaus bis auf die Spitze vergoldet. Als einziges Stück besitzt es noch einen mit Resten von Befiederung versehenen Schaft.

Es fällt auf, dass unter diesen Pfeilspitzen sieben ein von einer Straussenfeder oder Krone überragtes Monogramm aufweisen, andere wieder verwandten Ranken- oder Schuppendekor.

Das Ursprungsland dieser Prunkpfeilspitzen ist durch die Deutung der Inschriften einwandfrei bestimmt; es ist nun angebracht, nach etwaigen Entsprechungen der Motive, insbesondere der charakteristischen Monogramme unter Straussenfedern, in der Kunst und dem Kunstgewerbe — und darin wieder besonders Waffen — Böhmens zu suchen. Es gibt eine Anzahl Schilde, sogenannte Pavesen, böhmischer Herkunft mit eben diesen Motiven bemalt und unter ihnen eine Gruppe, die genau datiert werden kann. Die letzteren sind zwölf Überlebende einer im Jahre 1441 erfolgten Bestellung von vierzig Pavesen seitens der Stadt Zwickau in Sachsen bei den rühmlich bekannten Schildmachern von Komotau (Chomutov). Unter ihnen sind nicht weniger als sieben mit dem Feder-und-Monogramm-Motiv (Abb. 22, 23, 24), doch ist dieses auch ausserhalb dieser Gruppe zu finden (Abb. 26, 27). Verhältnismässig leicht zu identifizieren sind die sog. Monogramme Christi "ihs" (Abb. 24, 27) und ihre Abart "y" (Abb. 22), sowie "X" für "xpus = Christus" (Abb. 2). Ähnlich liegt der Fall mit "m" für "Maria" (Abb. 4, 6, 7, 28). Das auf mehreren Pavesen (Abb. 26, 27) vorkommende "W" ist das Monogramm Königs Wladislaw Jagiello, 1470–1516. Einer der Zwickauer Schilde (Abb. 23) trägt ein Monogramm "ar," das mit dem auf unserer Prunkpfeilspitze

identisch ist. Das für die Zwickauer Schilde gesicherte Datum "vor 1441" kommt der Regierungszeit Königs Albrecht, 1438–1439, so nahe, dass man dieses Monogramm als "Albertus Rex" auflösen kann. Diese Deutung ist wegen des weiteren Monogrammes "a und e über Kreuz gelegt" besonders verlockend, da Albrecht mit Kaiser Sigismunds Tochter Elisabeth von Böhmen verheiratet war. Vielleicht sind die anderen "a" auf zwei der Budapester Pfeilspitzen (Abb. 8, 12) und einer Pavese (Abb. 25) ebenfalls auf Albrecht zu beziehen. Besonders häufig findet man den Buchstaben "S," sowohl auf Pfeilspitzen, als auch auf Pavesen. Mindestens bei der Kreuzensteiner Spitze könnte es sich dabei um den Anfangsbuchstaben Sigismunds handeln (Abb. 18). Wahrscheinlich haben die "s" aber nicht alle dieselbe Bedeutung; zum Beispiel wäre eine weitere Möglichkeit "Sebastian" als der Patron der Schützen. Allerdings scheint Sebastian gerade in Böhmen eine sehr untergeordnete Rolle zu spielen, während er im Westen — vor allem im Rheinlande — von grösster Wichtigkeit ist. Auf zwei Spitzen (Abb. 10, 14) befindet sich ein kleines "s" unterhalb eines grösseren "d." Falls hier ein Zusammenhang mit den tschechischen Worten für Armbrust oder Schütze — "samo-střil" und "střelec" — vorläge, so könnte das "d" vielleicht für die römische Ziffer D = 500 stehen? Das auf der Wiener Spitze (Abb. 14) vorkommende "t" könnte das Monogramm des Olmützer Bischofs Taso von Boskowitz sein, der als Parteigänger Königs Matthias Corvinus in dessen Feldzügen gegen Österreich eine Rolle spielte. Im Historischen Museum der Stadt Wien sind mehrere Pavesen erhalten, die das Wappen von Olmütz und der Boskowitz tragen; sie stammen wahrscheinlich von der Besetzung Wiens durch Matthias Corvinus, 1485–1490. Allerdings steht das "t" unter einer Straussenfeder, während keine der mährischen Pavesen eine solche trägt, ausserdem würde diese Erklärung nicht für das "t" auf unserer Pfeilspitze in Frage kommen. Der Buchstabe "v" auf einer der Budapester Pfeilspitzen (Abb. 8) und einer Zwickauer Pavese soll vielleicht den Namen des Schutzpatrons von Böhmen, des heiligen Wenzel, in seiner tschechischen Form "Václav" andeuten. Die beiden Pfeilspitzen von Keszthely und Veszprém (Abb. 15, 16) tragen einen Buchstaben, der entweder "l" oder "i" bedeuten kann; "l" könnte für Ladislas Posthumus, 1453–1457, den Sohn Albrechts, stehen, "i" für "Jiří" = Georg,

entweder den ritterlichen Heiligen oder Georg von Podiebrad, den "Hussitenkönig," 1457–1469. Allerdings ist auf einer Pavese mit tschechischer Inschrift auf Veste Coburg der Buchstabe "g" als Beizeichen zu einem St. Georg zu finden.

Diese Prunkfeilspitzen werden für Rangabzeichen von Schützenhauptleuten oder Schützenkönigen gehalten, die spärlichen Bildquellen jedoch zerfallen in zwei deutlich unterschiedene Gruppen: in der einen treten Personen in Hofkleidung auf repräsentativen Porträts mit einem Pfeil in der Hand auf (Abb. 30, 31, 32, 34, 41), in der anderen werden übergrosse Bolzen oder Pfeile von Gerüsteten oder als Krieger Gekennzeichneten getragen (Abb. 35–40, 42–45).

Charles Buttin hat festgestellt, dass — wenigstens in französisch sprechenden Landen — der Turnierherr einen Pfeil in der Hand trug, um ihn zwischen die Kämpen beim Fusturnier zu werfen, falls aus dem Spiele Ernst zu werden drohte, worauf dann die Grieswärtel einschritten und die Kämpfer mit Gewalt trennten. Die erste Gruppe, darunter der Herold von Burgund, sind solche Turnierrichter. Die zweite Gruppe lässt keinen Zweifel, dass der übergrosse Pfeil ein militärisches Rangabzeichen ist, was durch die engen ikonographischen Beziehungen seiner Schmuckmotive zu den ebenfalls eindeutig militärischen Pavesen — Schilden für Armbrustschützen — noch bekräftigt wird. Es ist auch bezeichnend, dass keine dieser Prunkfeilspitzen im Besitze einer Schützengilde erhalten blieb, sondern dass sie meist in Ungarn auftauchen, wo böhmische Söldner — die ja besonders als Armbrustschützen gesucht waren — gegen die Türken eingesetzt waren; die "türkische Arsenalmarke" ist ja ein direkter Beweis, dass unsere Spitze einmal Kriegsbeute war. Seltsam ist und bleibt allerdings, dass aus Böhmen selbst keine Darstellung eines solchen Pfeiles als Würdezeichen bekannt ist.

Den Prunkfeilspitzen nahverwandt sind ein Paar Sporen (Abb. 46) und ein Paar Steigbügel (Abb. 47) in der Wiener Waffensammlung; die Sporen tragen das Monogramm Königs Kasimir IV von Polen, der 1454 Elisabeth, die Tochter Albrechts, geheiratet hat, sowie eine tschechische Anrufung Mariä: "pomny na mye

mamyla wyerna pany = Gedenke mein, meine liebe und getreue Herrin!." Die Sporen scheinen von demselben Meister zu sein wie die Pfeilspitze des Metropolitan Museums, auch die Steigbügel stehen ihnen so nahe, dass sie vielleicht alle aus einer gemeinsamen Werkstatt stammen. Die Münchner Spitze wiederum (Abb. 6, 7) ist in ihrer Dekoration einem Paar Sporen (Abb. 49) im National-Museum Budapest verwandt; diese werden als die Sporen Königs Laszlo II, 1506–1526, angesprochen. Nach Kalmár dürften diese Sporen noch vom Ende des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts sein.

Der Formenschatz der Verzierungsmotive an Pavesen und Prunkfeilspitzen gleichermassen kann eindeutig aus der Prager Hofkunst hergeleitet werden. In den Illuminationen der für Wenzel IV angefertigten Handschriften finden sich gekrönte und geflügelte Monogramme, die Flügel sicher von der Helmzier der Könige von Böhmen abgeleitet, dazu Schuppenmuster als Hintergründe und Straussenfedern als Kopfschmuck in Darstellungen Wenzels selbst und seiner Wappenhalter (Abb. 50–54). Ein Strauszenkopf und Straussenfedern sind allerdings auch die Helmzier der Könige von Ungarn (Abb. 56). Vielleicht hat Sigismund oder Albrecht, die ja gleichzeitig Könige von Ungarn waren, die Straussenfeder von dort als persönliches Abzeichen entliehen? Anscheinend sind diese ursprünglich königlichen Symbole sehr bald schon als abgesunkenes Kulturgut für nationale böhmische Abzeichen in Anspruch genommen worden, wobei die Königsmonogramme gelegentlich in Monogramme Christi und Mariä umgewandelt wurden.

Zum Schlusse sei hier auf die Sage von der Entstehung des "badge" des Prinzen von Wales hingewiesen. Angeblich soll Edward, der Schwarze Prinz, sein "badge," die drei Straussenfedern mit dem Motto "ich dien," nach der Schlacht von Crécy, 1346, zu Ehren des dort gefallenen Böhmenkönigs Johann des Blinden, der drei goldene Straussenfedern als Helmzier geführt haben soll, angenommen haben. Diese Sage ist oft wiederholt und öfter widerlegt worden, doch ist bisher noch nicht in diesem Zusammenhang darauf hingewiesen worden, dass die Straussenfeder tatsächlich ein königlich böhmisches Abzeichen war.