

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XVII

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

Kraków 2022

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Szanowni Państwo,

oddajemy w Państwa ręce tom XVII *Notae Numismaticae – Zapisków Numizmatycznych*. Zgodnie z przyjętymi przez nas zasadami wszystkie teksty publikujemy w językach kongresowych, z angielskimi i polskimi abstraktami. Zawartość całego obecnego tomu oraz tomy archiwalne są zamieszczone w formie plików PDF na stronie internetowej Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). Na stronie dostępne są ponadto wszelkie informacje ogólne o czasopiśmie oraz instrukcje dla autorów i recenzentów.

Rok 2022 był wyjątkowy dla całego środowiska numizmatyków w Polsce. Pierwszy raz w historii naszego kraju, a ujmując rzecz szerzej – w krajach Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej – odbył się XVI Międzynarodowy Kongres Numizmatyczny, najważniejsze spotkanie numizmatyków z całego świata, organizowane co sześć lat pod auspicjami International Numismatic Council. Wybór Polski, jako miejsca organizacji Kongresu traktujemy jako wielkie wyróżnienie. Głównym organizatorem tego wydarzenia był Uniwersytet Warszawski, a w przygotowaniach uczestniczyły również Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, Zamek Królewski w Warszawie, Polskie Towarzystwo Numizmatyczne, Narodowy Bank Polski oraz Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie. W tym ostatnim przypadku szczególnie zaangażowani w prace nad XVI INC byli pracownicy Gabinetu Numizmatycznego. Całością działań kierował profesor Aleksander Bursche z Wydziału Archeologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pomysłodawca organizacji Kongresu w Polsce, którego wspierał Komitet Organizacyjny reprezentujący wszystkie najważniejsze polskie ośrodki numizmatyczne. Obrady kongresowe — które zgromadziły ponad 600 uczestników, czy to na miejscu w Warszawie, czy też w mniej licznych przypadkach, dzięki transmisji na żywo, w miejscach ich zamieszkania — uzupełniały liczne wydarzenia towarzyszące: wystawy, koncerty i spotkania.

Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie przygotowało z tej okazji specjalną wystawę: „Medal prywatnie. Medale w I Rzeczypospolitej (od XVI do XVIII wieku)”, której kuratorem była Agnieszka Smołucha-Sładkowska. Jednocześnie we współpracy z Uniwersytetem Jagiellońskim, krakowskim oddziałem Polskiego Towarzystwa Numizmatycznego, Królewską Biblioteką w Brukseli i Królewskim Towarzystwem Numizmatycznym w Belgii zorganizowano poprzedzającą właściwe obrady Kongresu międzynarodową sesję „Joachim Lelewel and Numismatics in the Nineteenth Century”. W ramach kongresu tradycyjnie opracowany został również Survey of Numismatic Research za lata 2014–2020, w prace nad którym aktywnie zaangażowani byli pracownicy Gabinetu Numizmatycznego: Jarosław Bodzek, Dorota Malarczyk i Barbara Zając. Co więcej, Gabinet Numizmatyczny Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie był silnie reprezentowany w obradach Kongresu, w czasie których wymienione powyżej osoby wygłosiły referaty. Kongres zakończył się wielkim sukcesem i stanowił znakomitą wizytówkę polskiej numizmatyki.

Redakcja

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present volume 17 of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne* to you. In accordance with the principles that we have adopted, our texts are published in the conference languages with English and Polish abstracts. The whole of the present volume can be found as PDF's on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>), as are previously published volumes of the journal. The website also contains general information about the journal as well as information for prospective authors and reviewers.

2022 was a special year for the entire numismatic community in Poland. It saw the XVI International Numismatic Congress being held in Warsaw, marking the first time that this most important meeting of numismatists from all over the world, organised every six years under the auspices of the International Numismatic Council, had been held in our country, or more generally in a country from Central and Eastern Europe. The choice of Poland as the venue for the Congress was a great honour. The main organiser of the event was the University of Warsaw, and also involved in its organisation were the National Museum in Warsaw, the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the Polish Numismatic Society, the National Bank of Poland, and the National Museum in Krakow. In this last case, the staff of the Museum's Numismatic Cabinet were particularly active in the work on the INC 2022. In charge of all activities was Professor Aleksander Bursche of the Faculty of Archaeology at the University of Warsaw, who was the driving force behind the organisation of the Congress in Poland, and who was supported in his role by the Organising Committee, representing all major Polish numismatic centres. The congress proceedings, which attracted more than 600 participants, either on-site in Warsaw or, in lesser numbers, thanks to live streaming, were complemented by a wide range of accompanying events, including exhibitions, concerts, and meetings.

The National Museum in Krakow organised a special exhibition for the occasion: "Private medal. Private medals in the 1st Republic of Poland (from the 16th to the 18th century)", curated by Agnieszka Smołucha-Sładkowska. At the same time, an international session on "Joachim Lelewel and Numismatics in the Nineteenth Century", preceding the Congress proper, was organised in cooperation with the Jagiellonian University, the Krakow Branch of the Polish Numismatic Society, the Royal Library of Brussels, and the Royal Numismatic Society of Belgium. As part of the Congress, the Survey of Numismatic Research for the years 2014–2020 was traditionally produced, with Jarosław Bodzek, Dorota Malarczyk and Barbara Zajac of the Numismatic Cabinet actively involved in its preparation. The Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum in Krakow was also strongly represented in the proceedings of the Congress, where the abovementioned staff delivered papers. The congress was a great success and a real showcase for Poland.

The Editors

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New Finds of Gold Coins of Magnentius from Ukraine: The Short Report

ABSTRACT: The four gold coins (three solidi and a semissis) of the usurper Magnus Magnentius (350–353) recently discovered accidentally in Ukraine, probably in the Cherkasy, Sumy, Volhynia regions and in one of the central or eastern parts of the country, are discussed in this article. All of the coins were minted in Trier. Before that, on the territory of Ukraine, the only gold coins of Magnentius were known from the hoard of aurei and solidi discovered in 1892, not far from the village of Brestiv, Zakarpattia region. Three of the new coins have loops for use as ornaments (the fourth coin is presumably also looped), which is indirect evidence of their authenticity as finds and may be further evidence that the elite of the Barbarian society used the solidi pendants as symbols of power. The lack of data on the archaeological context of the coins makes the question of the ways and reasons for their appearance in eastern Barbaricum very complex. Two equally valid hypotheses in this article are considered. The first could explain the influx of these coins as a result of payment for the participation of barbarians as mercenaries in an army serving Magnentius. The second hypothesis is that the coins could have come from the territory of southern Scandinavia (where such finds are also well known) due to tribal exchange, which was particularly active during the 4th century. A promising research prospect is the identification of die-links among the finds of the gold issues of Magnentius found in the Roman Empire and Barbaricum, that provide a more precise direction on when and how these coins came into the region.

KEY WORDS: Late Roman solidi, semissis, Magnentius, Barbaricum, Chernyakhiv Culture

ABSTRAKT: *Nowe znaleziska złotych monet Magnencjusza z Ukrainy. Krótkie doniesienie*

Artykuł jest poświęcony znaleziskom czterech złotych monet (trzy solidy i semissis), bitych za czasów panowania uzurpatora Magnusa Magnencjusza (350–353), odkrytych niedawno przypadkowo w Ukrainie, prawdopodobnie w obwodach czerkaskim, sumskim i wołyńskim oraz w jednym z jej centralnych lub wschodnich regionów. Wszystkie monety zostały wybite w mennicy w Trewirze. Wcześniej na terytorium Ukrainy złote monety Magnencjusza były znane jedynie ze skarbu aureusów i solidów odkrytego w 1892 roku w pobliżu wsi Brzestiv w obwodzie zakarpackim. Trzy spośród nowo odkrytych monet mają uszka do wykorzystania ich jako ozdoby (czwarta moneta prawdopodobnie także je miała), co, po pierwsze, jest pośrednim dowodem autentyczności tych znalezisk, a po drugie, może być kolejnym wskazaniem na to, że elita społeczności barbarzyńskich używała zawieszek z solidów jako symboli władzy. Brak danych o kontekście monet sprawia, że pytania o kierunek i przyczyny ich napływu do wschodniego Barbaricum są bardzo złożone. W niniejszym artykule są rozważane dwie jednakowo możliwe hipotezy. Pierwsza mogłaby tłumaczyć pojawienie się tych monet jako efekt opłaty za udział barbarzyńskich najemników w armii Magnencjusza. Druga zaś zakłada, że mogły one pochodzić z terytorium południowej Skandynawii (gdzie ich znaleziska także są dobrze znane), w wyniku wymiany międzyplemiennej, szczególnie intensywnej w IV wieku n.e. Obiecującą perspektywę badawczą stanowi rozpoznanie wśród znalezisk na terenie Cesarstwa Rzymskiego i Barbaricum złotych monet Magnencjusza bitych tymi samymi stemplami, co mogłoby dać bardziej klarowne wyobrażenie o kierunkach, czasie i przyczynach ich napływu do Barbaricum.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: solidy późnorzymskie, semissis, Magnencjusz, Barbaricum, kultura czerniachowska

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the Ukrainian Internet forum for treasure hunters, Violity, has published information on the discovery in Ukraine of four gold coins of the usurper Magnus Magnentius: three solidi and one semissis. Since the coins of this ruler are relatively rare in south-eastern Europe, this brief contribution will be devoted to the following findings: their description, the ways and reasons for their appearance in the Eastern Barbaricum.¹

¹ This article presents the results of research conducted at the University of Warsaw as part of the project “The neural network of solidi. Contacts between Romano-Byzantine and barbarian worlds in the light of die-linked gold coins found in Europe and Central Asia” funded by the Polish National Science Centre (NCN), awarded on the basis of decision no. 2020/39/B/HS3/01513. My heartfelt thanks for the advice and valuable comments of my

DESCRIPTION OF COIN FINDS AND THE ISSUE OF THEIR RELIABILITY

1. Cherkasy region, Ukraine (Fig. 1.1)

Information about the coin and its photo was published on Violity on 8 December 2017 by a user with the nickname “RAMZES77”.² At the end of December 2017, the coin was sold at a Violity auction for 45520 UAH (approx. 1600 USD at the end of December 2017). The region of the find is inferred from other finds that the treasure hunter has found here and posted on the Violity forum.

Description of the coin:

AV, solidus (5.1 g; 22 mm; 6 h), Trier, AD 350, RIC VIII Treveri 247; Bastien² 5; Depeyrot 8/1. Coin is looped on 12 h (obverse).

Obv.: IMCAEMAGN ENTIVSAVG: bust of Magnentius, bareheaded, draped, cuirassed, right

Rev.: VICTORIA•AVG•LIB•ROMANOR: Victory, winged, draped, standing right, holding palm over left shoulder; Libertas, draped, standing left, holding transverse sceptre in left hand; supporting between them a plain shaft carrying a trophy; Victory's right hand supports it above Libertas' right hand; TR in exergue

2. Sumy region, Ukraine (Fig. 1.2)

Information about the coin and its photo was published on Violity on 28 April 2017 by a user with the nickname “Visa”. The finder states that he found the coin in the Sumy region in a field quite popular with other treasure hunters, and the coin allegedly contains traces of agricultural machinery and shovels of other metal detector users.³ Photographs were published with and without the ground (photographs without the ground were taken at an angle and are of poor quality). The fate of the coin is unknown.

Description of the coin:

AV, solidus (4.2 g; 22 mm; 6 h), Trier, AD 350, RIC VIII Treveri 250; Bastien² 16; Depeyrot 9/1. Perhaps the coin was looped: loop traces can be seen on the obverse at 12 h.

Obv.: IMCAEMAGN ENTIVSAVG: bust of Magnentius, bareheaded, draped, cuirassed, right

colleagues during the preparation of this article: Prof. Aleksander Bursche, Dr hab. Arkadiusz Dymowski, Vital Sidarovich MA, Dr István Vida, Dr Anna Zapolska, as well as the anonymous reviewers for their very helpful advices. All remaining errors and shortcomings are mine.

² <https://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1820592> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

³ <https://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1718165> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

Rev.: VICTORIA•AVG•LIB•ROMANOR: Victory, winged, draped, standing right, holding palm over left shoulder; Libertas, draped, standing left, holding transverse sceptre in left hand; supporting between them a plain shaft carrying a trophy; Victory's right hand supports it above Libertas' right hand; TR in exergue

3. Volhynia region, Ukraine (Fig. 1.3)

Information about the coin and its photo was published on Violity on 11 January 2019 by a user with the nickname "Sasha...Z...".⁴ The coin was offered for sale at a Violity auction in mid-March 2019, but the results are unknown to the author.

Description of the coin:

AV, solidus (5.02 g; 22 mm; 6 h), Trier, AD 351–353, RIC VIII Treveri 277; Bastien² 46; Depeyrot 10/1. Coin is looped on 12 h (obverse). The obverse of the coin has numerous scratches.

Obv.: DN MAGNE[N T]IVSPFAVG: bust of Magnentius, bareheaded, draped, cuirassed, right

Rev.: VICTORIAAVGLIBROMANOR: Victory, winged, draped, standing right, holding palm over left shoulder; Libertas, draped, standing left, holding transverse sceptre in left hand; supporting between them a shaft with a horizontal bar carrying a trophy; Victory's right hand supports it above Libertas' right hand; TR in exergue

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4. Central or East (?) Ukraine (Fig. 1.4)

Information about the coin and a photo of it was published on Violity on 5 March 2018 by a user with the nickname "Stepka". According to the finder, the coin was found in the spring of 2017 in a field, at a depth of 15–20 cm, opposite a settlement (probably of the Chernyakhiv culture?), in an area that had not been actively cultivated.⁵ Photos of the coin with the remains of the earth shortly after discovery were also published. On 11 March 2018, the coin was sold at an auction by Violity for 152,500 UAH (approx. 5,865 dollars as of mid-March 2018). The region of the find has yet to be precisely known. However, on the forum, the finder has often posted artefacts of the Penkivka archaeological culture, whose sites are located in Central and Eastern Ukraine.

Description of the coin:

AV, semissis (2.97 g; 17 mm; 6 h), Trier, AD 351–353, RIC VIII Treveri 281; Bastien² 49. Coin is looped on 12 h (obverse); the loop has a triangle-shaped granular ornament.

⁴ <https://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1980618> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

⁵ <https://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1867421> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

Obv.: MAGNENT IVSAVG: bust of Magnentius, bareheaded, draped, cuirassed, right

Rev.: VICTORIA DDNNAVGG: Victory, winged, draped, walking left, holding wreath in right hand and palm in left hand; TR in exergue; dot in left field

Note: The dot in left field on the reverse never has been noted in catalogues but is known from different pieces from different dies (see below)

Before I move on to a further analysis of the finds described, it seems essential to address the question of their reliability. In other words, can we be sure that these coins were really found on the territory of Ukraine?

Indeed, the fact that all the found described were discovered by amateurs using metal detectors and published on a treasure-hunting website without any details of their exact location might be the cause of some apprehension. On the one hand, one can doubt the authenticity of the coins, and on the other hand, one might be sceptical that they were found in Ukraine rather than somewhere in Central or Western Europe. Of course, the truth could have been established conclusively by the discoverers themselves; however, for obvious reasons, they preferred not to provide the necessary information either personally or, all the more so, in the public domain. Nevertheless, several circumstantial facts suggest that it is highly probable that these coins were found in Ukraine. For example, at least three of the four coins (and possibly all four) have/had loops, which is quite typical for the finds of late Roman gold coins in Barbaricum, including the Eastern part.⁶ The state of preservation of at least two coins (nos. 2 and 3) is bad enough to consider that these coins might be modern forgeries. In addition, the prices of such specimens are much lower than in the EU or US coin markets, which, in my opinion, excludes their transfer to Ukraine. Finally, during the last decade, we can observe a considerable increase in information about new finds of Roman gold coins found in Ukraine, especially third century,⁷ but also fourth and fifth centuries.⁸ This makes the finding of four Magnentius solidi at least possible, if not expected.

MAGNENTIUS REIGN AND HIS COINAGE: AN OUTLINE

The history of the reign of Magnentius has been studied quite extensively,⁹ so there is no need to go into it in detail here. In brief, Magnentius was a high-ranking officer in the army of Emperor Constans, and on 18 January 350, as a result of

⁶ Cf. MYZGIN 2015.

⁷ BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2020: 212ff.

⁸ MYZGIN 2017: 38.

⁹ Cf. most recent: DRINKWATER 2000; OMISSI 2018: 153ff, and following bibliography.

a conspiracy, he was proclaimed emperor. Within a month, having won the loyalty of the provinces of Britain, Gaul and Spain, he subsequently took over virtually all of Constantius' former territory, including Germania and Africa, except Illiricum. During his short reign, he made repeated attempts to legitimize his power, allying with another usurper, Vetricianus (who was proclaimed emperor in Illiricum) and trying to get Constantius II to recognize him. In 351, he also made his brother Decentius his co-ruler and named him Caesar. However, Magnentius' attempts to gain a foothold on the Danube met with strong resistance from Constantius II (the dramatic Battle of Mursa, which occurred on 28 September 351, is connected to these events). In 353, having been defeated by Constantius II, Magnentius committed suicide.

Naturally, the Magnentius coinage was primarily aimed at confirming the usurper's rights to the throne. The main mint in Trier began to produce gold, silver, and bronze coins and later the mints in Lugdunum, Arelat, Aquileia, Rome and a new mint in Amiens.¹⁰ The gold coinage of Magnentius,¹¹ which was aimed primarily at members of the financial and political elite, was not abundant and was represented by only a few types of reverses (mostly with Victory and Libertas).¹² Magnentius is usually glorified on solidi as the liberator of the Roman world, the restorer of the state and of traditional Roman civil rights. The solidus fraction – semissis – was only produced by the Trier mint; there are only two types with Victory on the reverse.¹³ The Trier and Aquileia mints also produced gold *multiplae*¹⁴ and 9 siliquae fractions.¹⁵

OTHER FINDS OF THE GOLD COINS OF MAGNENTIUS FROM BARBARICUM

In Barbaricum, finds of Magnentius gold coins can be classified as quite rare (Map 1). In addition to the coins published in this article, ten other reliable finds of Magnentius solidi in "barbarian" contexts have been identified.

Previously, coins of Magnentius have already been found on the territory of Ukraine. I am referring to two solidi bearing the name of Magnentius which were part of a hoard of Roman gold coins (25 coins: aurei and solidi) discovered in 1892

¹⁰ KENT 1959: 105–108; BASTIEN 1983: 249ff; cf. ZIMMER 2020: 12ff.

¹¹ In more details see: BASTIEN 1983.

¹² In The Roman Imperial Coinage 55 types of Magnentius' solidi were catalogued (RIC VIII Treveri 247–254, 276–280, 285–297, RIC VIII Lugdunum 118, 119, RIC VIII Arelate 129–132, 158, 159, RIC VIII Rome 162–173, RIC VIII Aquileia 124–126, 132–137). However, in the G. Depeyrot's catalogue only 26 types were compiled: Trier (Depeyrot 7, 8/1–3, 12/1, 13/1–2), Lyon (Depeyrot 1/1–2), Arles (Depeyrot 2/1–4, 3, 4), Rome (Depeyrot 1/1–2, 2, 4/1–3), Aquileia (Depeyrot 6/1–2, 7/1–2, 8).

¹³ RIC VIII Treveri 281, 282.

¹⁴ RIC VIII Treveri 245, 246, 274, 275; RIC VIII Aquileia 122, 123, 127–131.

¹⁵ RIC VIII Treveri 283, 284; RIC VIII Aquileia 138.

near the village Brestiv (Ukrainian Брестів; former Ormód) in the Zakarpattya region, Western Ukraine.¹⁶

At least five of the coins come from southern Scandinavia, from the island of Funen in Denmark. Four coins were part of a small hoard of 4th century solidi (11 specimens) discovered in 1980 near Houses IV and V on Gudme I (Fig. 2.1–2.4).¹⁷ Another coin probably also belonged to a small hoard of 4th century solidi (3 specimens) from Gudme II (Bjørnebanke) (Fig. 2.5).¹⁸

There are two Magnentius solidi associated with the barbarian context from Germany. The first was discovered in 1979 or 1980 as part of a princely burial from the Early Merovingian period at Kirchberg in Hessen (grave 9) (Fig. 2.7).¹⁹ The second was part of a hoard of solidi from the mid-4th and early 5th centuries discovered in 1936 by Großbodungen in Thuringia (Fig. 2.6).²⁰

Finally, one Magnentius solidus was accidentally discovered no later than 2006 in Poland, near Inowrocław in Wielkopolska (Fig. 2.8).²¹

In addition, I would like to draw attention to other Magnentius gold coins that may have been found in the territory of Barbaricum. Such coins include, I believe, those with loops. For example, the Magnentius solidus from the collection of the Coin Cabinet of the Kunsthistorisches Museum does not have a provenance. However, it certainly belongs to the “barbarian” finds because of its loop with a granulated ornament which is very characteristic of finds from Barbaricum (Fig. 2.9).²² A solidus from the Fitzwilliam Museum collection, with no data on the provenance, was also looped (Fig. 2.10).²³

LOOPS ON LATE ROMAN SOLIDI

By far the most complete typology of loops on Roman gold coins is that of Aleksander Bursche.²⁴ Although this typology only takes into account loops on gold medallions, it can also be applied to loops on solidi.²⁵ All three surviving loops on

¹⁶ LEHÓCZKY 1892: 75–76; EREMIĆ 2014: 126, 128, Fig. 6 and following literature. Coins minted in Trier and Aquileia (looped). I am grateful to Dr István Vida for further information about this coin.

¹⁷ HORSNÆS 2010: 95, 96, Fig. 48. Three coins minted in Trier and one in Rome.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*: 95; see also: <https://chre.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/hoard/20010> (accessed on 25 January 2023). Minted in Rome.

¹⁹ GÖLDNER and SIPPEL 1981: 68–73, Taf. 25: 6, 7; SIPPEL 2002: 151–152; SCHUBERT 2003: 38–39, No. 3012. Coin was looped, but loop is lost; minted in Trier.

²⁰ STÄDTLER 2021: 67, 72, Abb. 2 and following literature. Minted in Trier. Framed and looped.

²¹ DYMOWSKI 2011: 99–100, 138, No. W15 (242). Minted in Trier.

²² The image of coin was mistakenly published by A. Bursche as “Barbarian imitation of Magnentius’ solidus from Vamód, Hungary” (BURSCHE 1999: 44, Abb. 13), although the imitation from Vamód is another coin from the collection of the same museum (cf. BURSCHE 1998: 294, 320, Tabl. X.a).

²³ <https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/184998> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

²⁴ BURSCHE 1998: 130–134.

²⁵ Although the development of a complete typology of loops, which would also take into account loops on solidi, especially given the new finds, seems a very promising task.

Magnentius solidi can be attributed to group III of the loops according to Bursche, i.e. to the suspension loop with flutes. The loop on a coin from the Cherkassy region (no. 1) can be attributed to type 1, variant 1d (simple suspension loop with four flutes).²⁶ Accordingly, the loop on the coin from Volhynia (no. 3) refers to type 1, variant 1b (simple suspension loop with two flutes).²⁷ The loop on Magnentius semissis from Central or Eastern Ukraine (no. 4) is closest to type 2 according to Bursche's typology (simple suspension loop with triangular granulation),²⁸ although a variant of this loop has never been seen on medallions. This loop differs in that it has four flutes (two on each edge of the loop), and between the triangular granulation and the sleeve there is a decoration in the form of a twisted wire in a spiral.

The presence of loops on Roman gold coins is a rather distinctive feature of finds from Barbaricum,²⁹ whereas this phenomenon was much rarer in the Empire.³⁰ Up to the end of the 3rd century, the predominant method of converting Roman gold coins into pendants was piercing, often above the emperor's head.³¹ In the late 3rd or early 4th century, there must have been a fashion change in the way gold coins were worn, and instead of holes, loops were attached to them.³² The process of this change is particularly well illustrated by gold coins that have both a hole (most often sealed) and a loop. Mostly such cases are known on coins issued between Aurelian and Diocletian, while later gold coins have only loops.³³ As with pierced coins, the loops were, in the vast majority of cases, placed above the emperor's head.³⁴

For finds of late Roman solidi, granulation ornamentation under the loop is quite rare. Bursche noted only one find of a solidus of Valentinian I from Komorní Lhotka in the Czechia.³⁵ Among the finds of solidi with such ornamentation can also be added an unpublished solidus of Valens with loop and granulation under it, discovered in the 1920s near Brynica in Silesia in Poland.³⁶ In addition, the remains of loop and granulation are also found on a solidus of Valens found near the village of Vyata in Belarus.³⁷ Finally, another solidus of Valens with a loop and granulation

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ *Ibidem*: 169–171; IDEM 2009: 167–168.

³⁰ IDEM 1998: 171–176.

³¹ CALLU 1991; BURSCHE 1998: 170; IDEM 2013: 162; BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2020: 215–219.

³² *Ibidem*: 215.

³³ MYZGIN 2015.

³⁴ BURSCHE 1998: 153.

³⁵ Cf. *ibidem*.

³⁶ Bruun Rasmussen Auction, 8 Nov 2016: Coins and Medals, lot 206; https://bruun-rasmussen.dk/m/lots/3BA92F9949EB?auction_day_id=1005054 (accessed on 25 January 2023).

³⁷ SIDOROVICH 2008: 10, Fig. 2: 4.

was discovered in 2016 by a treasure hunter in the Volhynia region.³⁸ Interestingly, granulation is much more common on Roman gold medallions than solidi.³⁹

Obviously, the wearing of the solidi was supposed to emphasize a special, elite status enjoyed by its owner. Judging from the Chernyakhiv culture funeral rites, they could be worn separately (e.g. burials 501, 507 of the Chernyakhiv culture burial ground near Bârlad-Valea Seacă in Romania),⁴⁰ but they were also part of necklaces, such as in the case of a necklace consisting of seven solidi from Bronnaja Hara in Belarus.⁴¹

LATE ROMAN SOLIDI FROM THE EASTERN BARBARICUM

The most recent data on the finds of Roman gold coins on the territory of Eastern Barbaricum show a significant decrease in the volume of their influx since the Constantinian era, especially in comparison with the middle and second half of the 3rd century.⁴² Apparently, this was connected with the stabilization of Roman-Barbarian relations at the early 4th century and, as a result, the change of the main sources of influx.⁴³ In the middle and second half of the 3rd century, the main source of coin supply was the military activity of the barbarians (contributions, ransoms, annual tributes, *stidendia*, *donativa*, etc.). However, from the 4th century, coins arrived as a result of barbarians serving in the Roman army (*annonae foederaticae*), as diplomatic gifts or as the result of commerce.⁴⁴ There is a shift of concentration of gold coin finds: if gold coin finds of the 3rd century are concentrated mainly in the central and western part of present Ukraine, the concentration of the 4th–5th centuries gold coin finds shifts to the southwest, i.e. to the west of the Dniester and the Carpathians, in the territory of present-day Moldova, Romania, and Hungary. It is probably worth agreeing with Igor Gavritukhin, who linked this fact to the shift of the centres of barbarian power to the west, especially in the Hunnish period.⁴⁵

POSSIBLE WAYS AND REASONS FOR THE INFLUX OF MAGNENTIUS GOLD COINS INTO EASTERN BARBARICUM

Because of the small number of finds of the gold coins of Magnentius from south-eastern Europe, the matter of the ways and reasons for their influx seems rather

³⁸ <https://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1592017> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

³⁹ BURSCHE 1998: 157.

⁴⁰ PALADE 2004: Figs. 265: 1, 269: 1.

⁴¹ SIDAROVICH 2019: 185–186; cf. BURSCHE 1998: 170.

⁴² MYZGIN 2017: 38; cf. BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2020: 212.

⁴³ Cf. MYZGIN 2013: 227, 229.

⁴⁴ Cf. BURSCHE 1996: 121–123; MYZGIN 2013: 227–230.

⁴⁵ GAVRITUKHIN 2005.

complicated. It is traditionally believed that the main directions of the influx of Late Roman solidi to the territory of south-eastern Europe were via the Lower and Middle Danube. Firstly, it is to these regions that the concentrations of their finds in the Eastern Barbaricum are closest (Map 2). Secondly, among the finds of Late Roman coins, including gold, silver and bronze ones, coins minted in Pannonia (Siscia, Sirmium), the Balkans and Asia Minor (Thessaloniki, Constantinople, Nicomedia, Heraclea, Cyzikos), and the Near East (Antioch, Alexandria) predominate.⁴⁶ It has also been suggested that it was in these regions that the Germans may have served as *foederati*.⁴⁷ Coins of different denominations that were issued by Western mints have only been found in a few places in south-eastern Europe.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, all of the coins published in this article were minted in Trier, which gives a reasonable possibility of assuming a western vector of their influx. Indirectly, this possibility is confirmed by the finds of smaller denominations of the coins of Magnentius in the territory of Ukraine, which were known both in the “pre-detector” era,⁴⁹ and are present among the latest information obtained mainly from amateurs.⁵⁰

If we accept the western direction of the influx of these coins, the question remains: under what circumstances did they make it so far into Barbaricum? In my opinion, there are two main possibilities.

The first is connected with the military activity of the barbarians. In his time assessing the possible circumstances of the appearance of the Magnentius solidus from Inowrocław on the territory of Poland, Arkadiusz Dymowski suggested that it could have fallen into the hands of barbarians as payment for military service in the army of Magnentius. It is well known that written sources attest to the fact that Magnentius engaged barbarians in the fight against Constantius II.⁵¹ On the one hand, it is rather difficult to imagine that the inhabitants of territories so distant from the arena of the main events were recruited extensively as mercenaries. The need for military support from the barbarians could well have been met by Magnentius at the expense of the tribes closest to Limes, for example, from the territory of north-western Germany.⁵² On the other hand, even in the second half of the 3rd century, there

⁴⁶ VORONCOV and MYZGIN 2019: 251.

⁴⁷ MAGOMEDOV 2008: 172ff.

⁴⁸ See also: DEGLER and MYZGIN 2017: 150–151.

⁴⁹ KARYSHKOVSKIJ 1971: 81, No. 6/B2; SICINS'KYJ 2000: 51.

⁵⁰ For example, <http://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1081882> (accessed on 25 January 2023); <http://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1147353> (accessed on 25 January 2023); <http://forum.violity.com/viewtopic.php?t=1271180> (accessed on 25 January 2023); and others. Incidentally, a similar situation in Poland can be observed: along with the Magnentius solidus, there are some known finds of its bronze coins: cf. DYMOWSKI 2011: 100; cf. KUNISZ 1985: 289.

⁵¹ Jul., *Or.*, I, 34D; II, 56A-C; cf. DYMOWSKI 2011: 100.

⁵² On the connection between the finds of Magnentius coins here and these events see: ZEDELIIUS 1987; BERGER 1992: 172–174.

was a tradition of involving eastern Germans in internal political struggles in different parts of the Empire. This is evidenced, for example, by the discovery of gold and bronze coins of the rulers of the Gallic Empire in south-eastern Europe.⁵³ It should be remembered that after the victory of a coalition of barbarian tribes led by the Goths at Abritus in 251, they came to be regarded as an effective military force. The presence of a significant number of 3rd-century Roman imports in the Chernyakhiv culture, many of which were of a military origin,⁵⁴ might testify to the use of the Gothic troops by Roman emperors and their enemies.⁵⁵ It cannot be ruled out that, despite the *foedus* of 332, there may have been separate cases of eastern Germans being recruited as mercenaries by usurpers.⁵⁶ In the case of Magnentius, every military unit that he could place at his disposal in his conflict with Constantius II was critical.⁵⁷

Another possibility is the arrival of Magnentius solidi in south-eastern Europe due to the secondary redistribution of solidi within Barbaricum. Regarding the find from Poland, this version was not excluded by Dymowski either.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, with whom could such an inter-tribal exchange have taken place? The most significant number of Magnentius solidi in Barbaricum, including those minted in Trier, can be seen in southern Scandinavia. During the 4th century, in the phases C3, C3/D1 of the relative Central European chronology, relatively active contacts between this region and the Chernyakhiv culture are recorded, illustrated by the spread of several identical categories of items in these regions, despite their distance from one another (the so-called Dančeny-Brangstrup horizon).⁵⁹ Moreover, in recent years there has been increasing evidence that several categories of items directly or indirectly associated with this horizon (such as gold foil pendants stamped with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic ornaments⁶⁰ or gold barbarian imitations⁶¹) were mass-produced on the territory of the Chernyakhiv culture and then imported into Scandinavia. Thus, the gold coins of Magnentius could reasonably have reached the territory of the Chernyakhiv culture from Scandinavia as a result of the exchange

⁵³ DEGLER 2017; MYZGIN and FILATOV 2018: 361–362.

⁵⁴ BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2020: 197–211.

⁵⁵ Cf. MYZGIN 2018: 42.

⁵⁶ In this respect, the hoard from Brestiv (Ormód), which included two Magnentius solidi, stands out. Nevertheless, the nature of this deposit is obviously connected with the Danubian vector of coins influx to the barbarian population of the Carpathian basin, and its hoarding was no earlier than the 370s. For more details see: PROHÁSZKA 2007: 36–37.

⁵⁷ Cf. HUNT 1998: 17–21. Less likely is the hypothesis of a group of Rhenish barbarians who, having fought on the side of Magnentius, migrated (or fled) to East Barbaricum.

⁵⁸ Cf. DYMOWSKI 2011: 100.

⁵⁹ WERNER 1988.

⁶⁰ MYZGIN 2019.

⁶¹ WIĘCEK and MYZGIN, forthcoming.

of goods. It should be remembered that all the Scandinavian finds of Magnentius solidi were found on the territory of one of the largest redistribution centres in the Northern Barbaricum – in Gudme on Funen, where, starting from stage C2, various goods from different parts of the Barbaricum were imported.⁶² Having reached Gudme from the territory of the Empire or north-western Germany, the Magnentius solidi could have been exchanged for some elite goods from Eastern Barbaricum or simply sent to south-eastern Europe as diplomatic gifts, where they were later reworked into pendants. Nevertheless, a weak point of this hypothesis is the presence of Magnentius copper coin finds on the territory of the Chernyakhiv culture, not only unknown from Gudme but also absent in the whole of southern Scandinavia.⁶³ The appearance of small denominations might indicate the physical presence of their owners in the circulation area of such coins.

Regarding the question of the ways and reasons for the influx of Late Roman solidi into Barbaricum, the discovery of coins minted with the same dies could be of great help. The prospect of this research direction was recently demonstrated by the study of 5th century solidi found in Sweden.⁶⁴ However, I have yet to detect die-links between the new Ukrainian finds of Magnentius solidi and finds in other parts of Barbaricum. However, such links can be detected with finds in the former Imperial territory. The neural network of solidi project, in the course of which this article has been prepared, will attempt to identify die-links between coins using the capabilities of Artificial Intelligence. For the time being, thanks to a database created in the framework of the project, it has been possible to identify coins with reverses minted with the same die as the reverse of the semisiss of Magnentius from Central Ukraine. This concerns two coins: one coin was sold a few years ago at the Künker Auction,⁶⁵ and another specimen is stored in the collection of the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.⁶⁶

BRIEF CONCLUSIONS

Despite the treasure-hunting (and therefore relatively unreliable) nature of the four Magnentius gold coins, they were probably found in Ukraine: in the Cherkasy, Sumy and Volyn regions and in one of the regions of Central or East Ukraine. All of the coins, three solidi and one semisiss, were minted in Trier between 350/351–353. On three of the coins, loops were preserved (presumably, the fourth coin was

⁶² HORSNÆS 2010: 186.

⁶³ EADEM 2002; ZACHRISSON 2010.

⁶⁴ FISCHER 2014; IDEM 2019.

⁶⁵ Fritz Rudolf Künker GmbH & Co. KG, Auction 304 (19 March 2018), Lot 1384; <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=1125571|2243|1384|9629dd7bde0feaf744497a9298de3bab> (accessed on 25 January 2023).

⁶⁶ DEPEYROT 1996: 110, Pl. 1: 10/4.

also looped), perhaps to confirm the high status of their holders, which was quite characteristic of Barbaricum in the Late Roman period. In the absence of data on the context of the coins, it is difficult to speak with any confidence about the ways and reasons for their appearance. Nevertheless, the fact that they were all minted in Trier makes it most likely that they came from the western direction. Two main versions can therefore be considered regarding the reasons and circumstances for their appearance: either as part of the payment for mercenary military service in the army of Magnentius, or as a result of an intertribal exchange, most probably with the population of southern Scandinavia. At this moment, both these hypotheses have their strong and weak points; nevertheless, it is expected that in the near future, more clarity will be brought by the identification of coins struck with same dies among the gold coins of Magnentius found in Barbaricum and in the Roman Empire.

ABBREVIATIONS

Depeyrot = G. DEPEYROT, *Les monnaies d'or de Constantin II à Zénon (337–491)*, Collection Moneta 5, Wetteren 1996.

RIC VIII = J.P.C. KENT, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vol. VIII: *The Family of Constantine I, AD 337–364*, London 1981.

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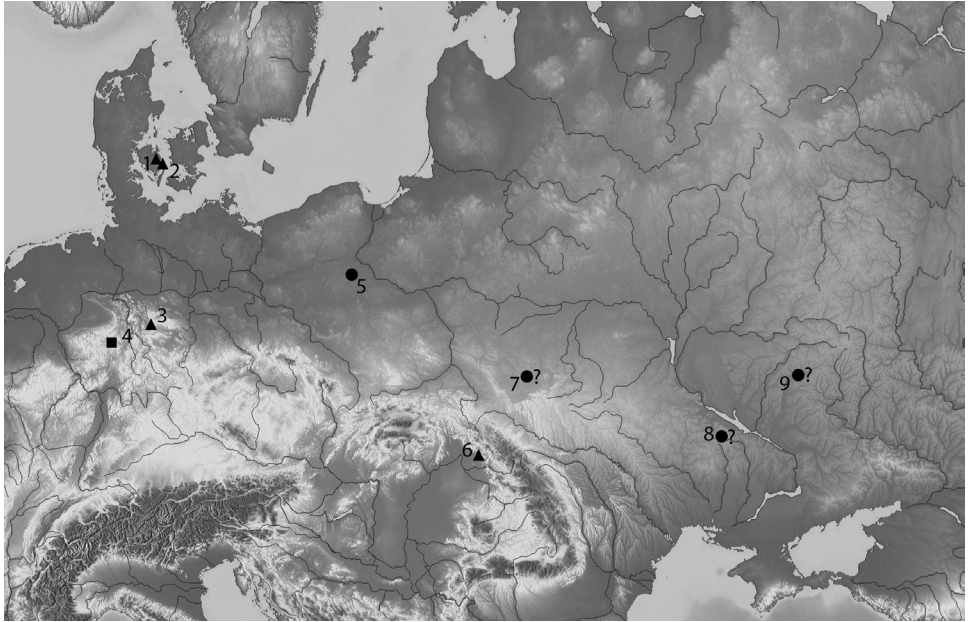
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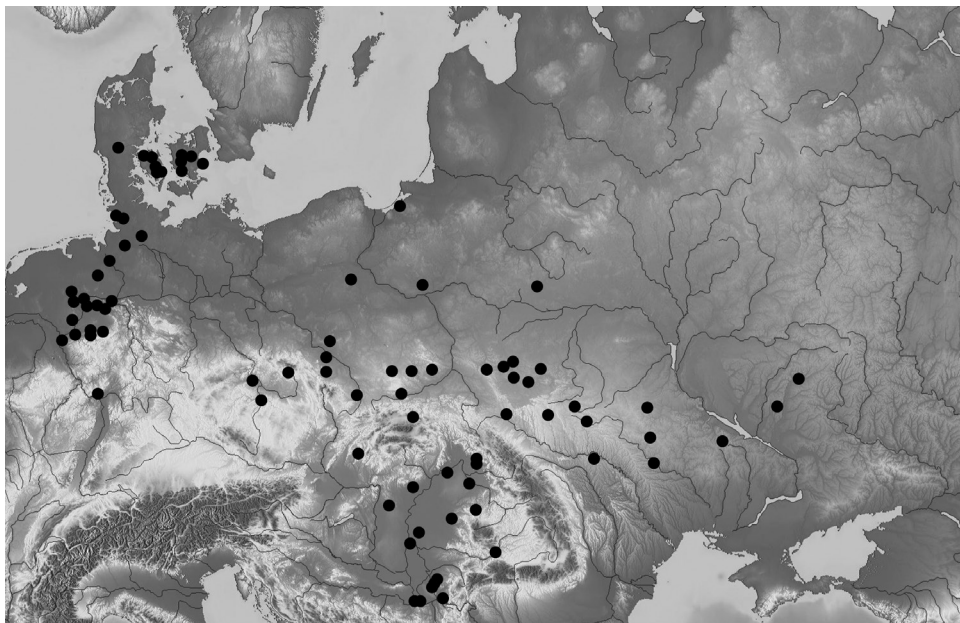
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- MAP 1 Finds of Magnentius solidi from the Barbaricum
- MAP 2 Finds of early Roman solidi from the Central, Northern and Eastern Barbaricum. AD 307–364 (data set: K. Myzgin)
- PLATE 1 Fig. 1. New gold coin finds of Magnentius from Ukraine (unscaled)
1 – Cherkasy region, Ukraine (5.1 g; 22 mm), 2 – Sumy region, Ukraine (4.2 g; 22 mm), 3 – Volhynia region, Ukraine (5.02 g; 22 mm), 4 – Central or East (?) Ukraine (2.97 g; 17 mm; 6 h). Images taken from <https://forum.violity.com>
- PLATE 2 Fig. 2. Finds of Magnentius solidi from the other parts of Barbaricum (unscaled)
1 – Gudme I, Denmark (4.35 g) (© Nationalmuseet); 2 – Gudme I, Denmark (4.6 g) (© Nationalmuseet); 3 – Gudme I, Denmark (4.6 g) (© Nationalmuseet); 4 – Gudme I, Denmark (4.53 g) (© Nationalmuseet); 5 – Gudme II, Denmark (4.4 g) (© Nationalmuseet); 6 – Großbodungen, Germany (5.91 g) (© Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte Halle); 7 – Kirchberg, Germany (5.2 g) (GÖLDNER and SIPPEL 1981: Taf. 25: 6, 7); 8 – Inowrocław, Poland (4.45 g) (photo: A. Dymowski); 9 – Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (after: BURSCHE 1999: Abb. 13); 10 – Fitzwilliam Museum (© Fitzwilliam Museum)



Map. 1. Finds of Magnentius solidi from the Barbaricum

1 – Gudme I, Denmark; 2 – Gudme II, Denmark; 3 – Großbodungen, Germany; 4 – Kirchberg, Germany; 5 – Inowrocław, Poland; 6 – Brestiv, Ukraine; 7 – Volhynia region, Ukraine; 8 – Cherkasy region, Ukraine; 9 – Sumy region, Ukraine; 10 – Central or East Ukraine (circles: single finds; triangles: coins from hoards; square: coin from grave)



Map 2. Finds of early Roman solidi from the Central, Northern and Eastern Barbaricum, AD 307–364 (data set: K. Myzgin)



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2



3



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