

NOTAE NUMISMATICAE

ZAPISKI NUMIZMATYCZNE



Tom XX

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

Kraków 2025

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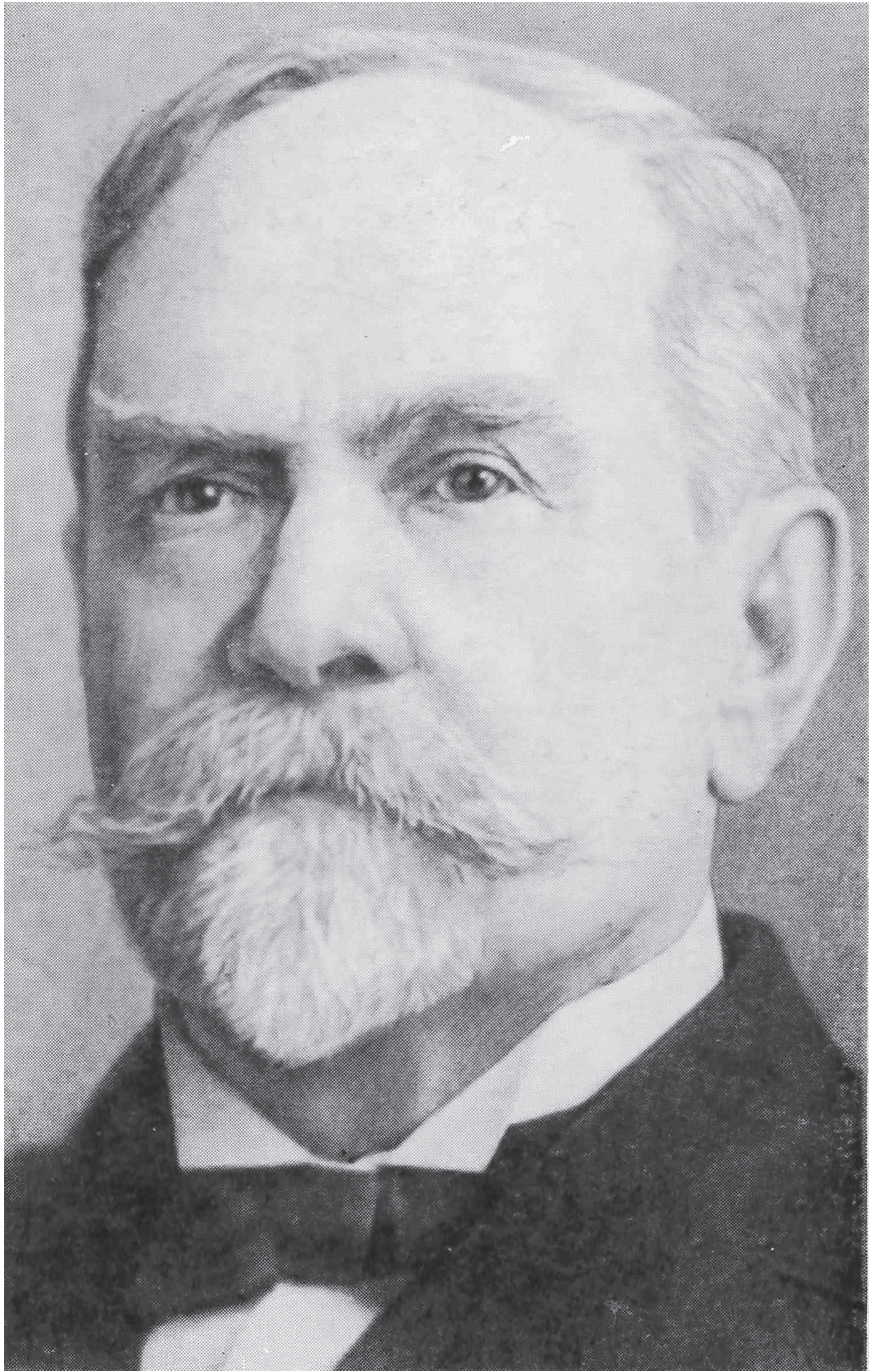
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Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925). Fot. Archiwum Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie
Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925). Photo: Archives of the National Museum in Krakow

Szanowni Państwo,

oddajemy w Państwa ręce tom XX *Notae Numismaticae – Zapisków Numizmatycznych*. Zgodnie z przyjętymi przez nas zasadami wszystkie teksty publikujemy w językach kongresowych, z angielskimi i polskimi abstraktami. Zawartość 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.

Sto lat temu 27 grudnia 1925 roku zmarł w Atenach Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925), człowiek o niezwykłym życiorysie, oddany Ojczyźnie patriota, weteran Powstania Styczniowego, emigrant, a jednocześnie filhellen i honorowy obywatel Grecji. Jego zasługi na polu walki z rosyjskim zaborcą, emigracyjna tułaczka i wkład w budowę Państwa Greckiego są dosyć dobrze znane, głównie dzięki spisany przez niego samego pamiętnikom przechowywanym w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej w Krakowie, w części wydanych drukiem w 1971 roku pod tytułem *Z Tajgi pod Akropol*. Dzięki publikacjom polskich i greckich archeologów znane są również dokonania Mineyki na polu archeologii, a w szczególności jego udział w badaniach na terenie położonego w Epirze słynnego sanktuarium Zeusa w Dodonie.

Zygmunt Mineyko interesował się również numizmatyką i nie były to zainteresowania powierzchowne. Spod jego pióra wyszło – niestety nigdy nieopublikowane – dzieło poświęcone jak sam pisał „objawom numizmatyki”. Rękopis tej pracy przechowywany obecnie we Lwowie, w dawnych zbiorach Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, pozwala uznać ją za bardzo nowoczesne i wyprzedzające swe czasy opracowanie. Zygmunt Mineyko jest również ściśle powiązany z historią zbiorów numizmatycznych Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie. W latach 1924 i 1926 do zbiorów krakowskiego Muzeum Narodowego trafiło w dwóch transzach prawie sto antycznych monet podarowanych przez Stanisława Mineykę (1875–1924), syna Zygmunta. Choć formalnie ofiarodawcą był Stanisław najprawdopodobniej inspiratorem daru był jego ojciec, który z powodzeniem realizował ideę wzbogacania polskich instytucji naukowych i muzeów zespołami starożytnych monet. Dary takie zostały lub miały zostać przekazane Muzeum Narodowemu w Warszawie, Uniwersytetowi Wileńskiemu, Uniwersytetowi Jagiellońskiemu oraz jak wspomniano Muzeum Narodowemu w Krakowie. Niniejszy tom naszego czasopisma pragniemy dedykować pamięci Zygmunta i Stanisława Mineyków.

Redakcja

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present you with volume 20 of *Notae Numismaticae – Zapiski Numizmatyczne*. As is our policy, we publish all texts in the congress languages, with English and Polish abstracts. The contents of current volume and archive numbers are available as PDF files on the website of the National Museum in Krakow (<https://mnk.pl/notae-numismaticae-zapiski-numizmatyczne-1>). The website also provides all general information about the journal, along with guidelines for authors and reviewers.

One hundred years ago, on 27 December 1925, Zygmunt Mineyko (1840–1925) died in Athens. He was a man with an extraordinary life story, a devoted patriot, a veteran of the January Uprising, an emigrant, and at the same time a philhellene and honorary citizen of Greece. His achievements in the fight against the Russian invader, his wanderings as an emigrant, and his contribution to the building of the Greek state are quite well known, mainly thanks to his memoirs, stored in the Jagiellonian Library in Krakow, some of which were published in 1971 under the title *Z Tajgi pod Akropol* (From the Taiga to the Acropolis). Thanks to publications by Polish and Greek archaeologists, Mineyko's achievements in the field of archaeology are also well known, in particular his participation in research at the famous sanctuary of Zeus in Dodona, located in Epirus.

Zygmunt Mineyko was also interested in numismatics, and this interest was far from superficial. He wrote a work devoted to what he called “the manifestations of numismatics”, which, unfortunately, was never published. The manuscript of this work, currently stored in Lviv, in the former collections of the Ossoliński National Institute, allows us to consider it a very modern and ahead-of-its-time study. Zygmunt Mineyko is also closely associated with the history of the numismatic collections of the National Museum in Krakow. In 1924 and 1926, almost a hundred ancient coins donated by Stanisław Mineyko (1875–1924), Zygmunt's son, were added in two tranches to the collection of the National Museum in Krakow. Although Stanisław was formally the donor, it was most likely his father who inspired the donation, as he had successfully implemented the idea of enriching Polish scientific institutions and museums with collections of ancient coins. Such donations were or were to be donated to the National Museum in Warsaw, Vilnius University, the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, and, as mentioned, the National Museum in Krakow. We would like to dedicate this volume to the memory of Zygmunt and Stanisław Mineyko.

The Editors

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A Gold-plated Barbarian Imitation of a Roman Coin Found in Karczyn-Wieś in Kuyavia

ABSTRACT: In 2022, a bronze gilded coin was discovered in Karczyn-Wieś. It is a barbarian imitation of a Roman coin of Maximian Herculus, originally minted in Cyzicus or Antioch between 290 and 293. The obverse closely follows the original Roman coin. The reverse, which has no direct parallel in ancient coinage, appears to be a composition inspired by various Roman coins. The coin was probably produced within the sphere of the Chernyakhiv culture and later brought to the Kuyavia region. It functioned as a pendant, intended to display the portrait of the Roman emperor. Hypothetically, it may have been part of the equipment of a grave – now destroyed – whose cultural attribution remains uncertain.

KEY WORDS: coin finds, imitations of coins, Barbaricum, Maximian Herculus, goldsmithing

ABSTRAKT: *Brązowe pozłacane barbarzyńskie naśladownictwo rzymskiej monety znalezione w Karczynie-Wsi na Kujawach*

W 2022 roku w Karczynie-Wsi znaleziono brązową pozłocaną monetę, będącą barbarzyńskim naśladownictwem rzymskiej monety Maksymiana Herkulusza, wybitej w Kyzikos lub Antiochii w latach 290–293. Jej awers bezpośrednio nawiązuje do oryginału. Rewers, który nie ma analogii w mennictwie antycznym, jest kompozycją inspirowaną różnymi monetami. Wykonano ją prawdopodobnie w kręgu kultury czerniachowskiej, skąd została przeniesiona na Kujawy. Moneta była zawieszka, na której eksponowano portret rzymskiego cesarza. Hipotetycznie była elementem wyposażenia grobu, obecnie zniszczonego, którego atrybucja kulturowa jest niepewna.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: znaleziska monet, naśladownictwa monet, Barbaricum, Maksymian Herkulusz, złotnictwo

At the Jan Kasprowicz Museum in Inowrocław, there is a gold-plated barbarian coin, discovered in the village of Karczyn-Wieś (Inowrocław commune, Fig. 1).¹ The coin was found by Mr Łukasz Wasik on 7 November 2022 using a metal detector, during a search conducted with the permission of the Provincial Office for Monument Protection in Toruń, Bydgoszcz Branch. The coin was discovered in an arable field which was not recognised as an archaeological site at the time but designated as plot 24. Following the discovery of the described coin and other artefacts, the location where the coin was found has been incorporated into archaeological site no. 5. In the vicinity of this location, there is a cemetery associated with the Przeworsk and Wielbark cultures.² This article presents a description and interpretation of the find.³

COIN DESCRIPTION

Obv.: laureate head of the emperor to the r.; SIIHHIIIS 7 O CIILIII+IIISIC, dotted border

Rev.: a female figure seated to the l., with her l. arm raised and her r. hand holding a child seated on her lap facing left, the child reaching out towards a male figure seated to the r. and holding a long object; SIIO III IICIO ISTI, in exergue III///SIO, dotted border

Gold-plated bronze, weight 2.638 g, diam 19.2–19.9 mm, die axis at 6 o'clock, pierced over the head of the emperor; Fig. 2

Elemental composition:⁴ Au 64.29%, Cu 29.146%, Ag 3.84%, Fe 1.084%, Os 0.89%, Pb 0.46%, Ir 0.257%, Mo 0.035%

The depictions featured on this coin clearly refer to the iconography of Roman coinage; however, they are not faithful reproductions but rather simplified imitations used to create original compositions. The coin in question has no direct analogies among Roman coins – whether imperial or provincial – known from the literature.

¹ The former name of this village is Huby Karczyńskie.

² BEDNARCZYK and ROMAŃSKA 2015.

³ I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all those who kindly supported my research on this coin. I am grateful to Mr Marcin Woźniak, Director of the Jan Kasprowicz Museum in Inowrocław, for granting access to the coin for research purposes and for allowing the publication of photographs taken by the Museum's staff member, Ms Magdalena Pindel. My thanks also go to Ms Elżbieta Dygaszewicz, Ms Elżbieta Jarzęcka, and Mr Łukasz Wasik for their consultations regarding the context of the coin's discovery. I am indebted to the staff of the Leon Wyczółkowski District Museum in Bydgoszcz for their valuable consultations and suggestions – Ms Jolanta Szałkowska-Łoś and Mr Józef Łoś – as well as to Mr Jan Marciniak for his insights into the coin's condition. I am also sincerely grateful to Dr Aleksandra Jankowska for her recommendations on relevant literature and assistance in obtaining it. To all these individuals, I offer my sincere thanks for the trust they have shown me and for the many kind words that motivated me throughout my work. My sincere thanks also go to the reviewers for their thoughtful suggestions, which have been reflected in the final version of this paper.

⁴ Spectroscopic examination using an X-ray fluorescence (voltage 40 kV, time 40 s). Examination carried out on the obverse's gilding layer (on the emperor's neck and nape) on which no visible defects were observed. I would like to thank the employees of NCP.art (current name: Cardas True Art Bydgoszcz) for conducting the research.

Its obverse, however, is identical to that of a silver-gilt barbarian coin reportedly found in Ukraine (exact location unknown, Kyiv Oblast, Pereiaslav-Khmelnytskyi Raion).⁵ The presence of a gold layer indicates that the maker intended it to resemble a Roman aureus, although this does not necessarily mean that its prototypes should be sought exclusively among such coins. Around the portrait runs a sequence of characters resembling Latin letters, arranged in a way that imitates a legend. These characters carry no semantic meaning and do not, in themselves, allow for the precise identification of the emperor whose likeness appeared on the prototype coin. However, the stylistic execution of the portrait reveals a number of similarities to the depictions of Diocletian (284–305), Maximian Herculus (286–305), or Galerius Maximianus (293–311), as found on aurei issued in the 280s and 290s. The careful rendering of the emperor's portrait suggests that the image was of greater importance for the person producing the imitation than the surrounding legend. The narrow chronology of the prototypes may be regarded as a *terminus ante quem* for the coin's production. The range of potential prototypes for the portrait on the coin from Karczyn-Wieś can be further narrowed by considering stylistic features such as the proportions, the depiction of the hair in short curls, the pronounced forehead wrinkles, and the shape of the ribbon ties on the laurel wreath. The depiction of the hair in short curls, however, differs from the way Diocletian's hair and beard were typically rendered – using short, incised strokes. It is therefore more likely that the portrait refers to representations of either Maximian Herculus or Galerius Maximianus. On coins, Maximian Herculus's hair and beard were often depicted using fine, short lines – a manner visible, for instance, on aurei from the Rome mint (293–294, *Hercules fighting with the Hydra*), Nicomedia (294, RIC 3), Augusta Treverorum (295, RIC 70b), and Siscia (286, RIC 286). His hair and beard could also be rendered with thick and very short strokes, as seen in examples from Cyzicus (ca. 291, RIC 609) and Antioch (ca. 293–295, RIC 4), or with dotted techniques, such as in Cyzicus (292, RIC 600). Galerius Maximianus' hair and beard were similarly shown using lines, for example on coins from Nicomedia (295, RIC 6) and Serdica (306/307, RIC 9b), or, like Maximian Herculus, with dots, as in the case of a coin from Cyzicus (293, *Jupiter smiting a fallen barbarian with a thunderbolt*). An analysis of the coins from this perspective reveals that different mints employed distinctive methods of depicting portraits, particularly evident in the rendering of hair and the ribbon ties of laurel wreaths. These features reflect the individual styles of the engravers who prepared the dies for those mints. In a sense, they functioned as a kind of signature, comparable to those observable on coins

⁵ ANOKHIN 2015: 49, no. 127.

struck at the mint in Rome.⁶ Taking into account the combination of specific stylistic features – namely, the depiction of the ribbon ties as falling parallel with upturned ends, the presence of pronounced forehead wrinkles, and the structure of the “legend”, which consists of two parts positioned in front of and behind the emperor’s head rather than forming an arc above it – the most likely prototype for the portrait on the coin from Karczyn-Wieś should be identified as the aurei of Maximian Herculus struck in Cyzicus, particularly those issued between 290 and 293 (featuring the emperor seated to the left, holding a Victory in his outstretched hand, with the legend CONSVL III PP PROCOS, type RIC 610). Also relevant are aurei attributed to the mint in Cyzicus or Antioch from around 293, depicting two seated Augusti on the reverse with the legend CONCORDIAE AVGG NN (type RIC 616). Of course, it is impossible to determine how faithfully the portrait on the coin from Karczyn reproduces its prototype. However, if we also take into account the fact that the sequence of characters imitating a legend is divided into two parts – with the shorter segment placed behind the emperor’s head, which is turned to the right, and the longer segment in front of his face – then a plausible prototype might hypothetically be a coin on which the emperor’s head was turned to the left, with the longer inscription MAXIMIANVS in front of his face and the shorter AVGVSTVS behind his head. The person who created the die, basing it on such an image, may have reproduced the portrait and the relative lengths of the words as they appeared to them. However, when the coin was later struck, this design would have appeared as a mirror image. A similar pattern has been observed in the case of a barbarian imitation of an aureus of Severus Alexander (222–235), held in the Ossolineum collections (OSS/A6273).⁷ An argument in favour of this interpretation may be the absence of circular signs – possibly intended to imitate the letter “O” (as in NOB) found on the prototype aureus – in the two sequences of characters imitating the legend on the obverse of the coin from Karczyn (excluding the sign above the emperor’s head, which lies on the line of the pseudo-legend but not within the “words” themselves). It is possible that, when viewed in mirror image, the obverse of the Karczyn coin reflects an attempt to reproduce the letter “S”, which appears at the end of both words in the hypothetical prototype inscription. An argument against such an interpretation, however, is the presence on the Karczyn coin of characters resembling the letters “S” and “C”, which are consistently rendered in a manner similar to that found on Roman aurei. Notably, in all three instances, the letter “S” appears reversed on the reverse of the coin, while the character resembling an “N”, located in the exergue, is presented correctly. It is therefore possible that any mirror-image effect was expressed in the

⁶ JARZEŃCKI 2018: 22.

⁷ DEGLER 2015: 53–55; IDEM 2016: 112.

overall composition of the obverse rather than in the individual characters imitating Latin letters. However, if the die for the obverse was indeed created with a mirror image in mind, then the prototypes for this depiction should be sought among the aurei of Galerius Maximianus, such as those struck in Antioch and dated to the years 293–295 (RIC 9), bearing the legend MAXIMIA NVSNOBCAES. In this case, however, it must be emphasised that there is a marked difference in the shape of the emperor's hairline and beard compared to what is depicted on the coin from Karczyn. The above considerations suggest that, although the most likely prototypes for the obverse appear to be the aurei obverses from around 290–295, particularly from the mints of Cyzicus or Antioch, it is difficult to identify a single principle that was consistently followed in the production of the die for the Karczyn coin. It is quite possible that no such consistency existed. Numerous examples of other barbarian imitations can be cited whose stylistic features lead to similar conclusions. When analysing the obverse of this coin, attention should be drawn to the presence of a small circle above the emperor's head. It was most likely intended to reflect a perforation present on the coin that served as the prototype.

The image depicted on the reverse of the Karczyn coin has no equivalent in either Roman imperial or provincial coinage, nor among the barbarian imitations of ancient coins described in the literature. However, from the latter category, there are known examples of gilded bronze coins that feature, on the obverse, the emperor's head facing left and, on the reverse, a seated figure also facing left, holding a figurine in the extended right hand and a spear in the left. These known specimens even bear a similar sequence of characters, suggesting that they may originate from the same production centre, which could have been located in the western part of present-day Ukraine, within the area associated with the Cherniakhiv culture.⁸ Most of these coins have their axes rotated by 180° and holes placed above the emperor's head.⁹ Some of these specimens even show gilding inside the holes, indicating that their presence was anticipated during the production process. The depiction on the reverse of the Karczyn coin is much more detailed. It includes an additional figure facing right, and the imitation of the legend contains more characters, extending to the exergue as well. Two hypotheses can be proposed regarding the creation of this composition. According to the first, it would be a depiction clearly later than the aforementioned Roman coins, as it is not a direct reference to the iconography of the originals but rather a creative development inspired by barbarian imitations. The second hypothesis suggests that the depiction is a creative adaptation of ancient coin iconography, but based not on other barbarian imitations, but on original

⁸ Cf. BURSCHE and NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2018: 263.

⁹ Cf. ANOKHIN 2015: nos. 121, 124, 135, 136 etc.

ancient coins. The level of detail in the representations seems to support this second hypothesis. In both cases, although the scene is less important for the person creating the medallion, on which the portrait is clearly emphasized,¹⁰ it represents more than just an attempt to replicate a coin – it may be a reference to local traditions, mythology, or beliefs. In both scenarios, the prototypes for these depictions could have been the iconography of ancient coins, but not necessarily the presumed issues of Maximian Herculus from Cyzicus or Antioch. The seated figure facing left may have been inspired by depictions of seated Roma, such as those on coins of Diocletian (RIC 301), Elagabalus (PONTIF MAX TR P II COS II PP, RIC 26d), Philip the Arab (RIC 44), Tacitus (RIC 333), or Maxentius (CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVE, RIC 144). This conclusion is supported by the hairstyle of the figure on the Karczyn coin, which is styled as a queue wrapped around the neck, potentially imitating the crest on Roma's helmet. The figure portrayed as a child with outstretched arms may, in this case, have been inspired by a depiction of Victoria holding a wreath in her extended hand, which, in the version reinterpreted by the barbarian artist, was rendered as a child. The seated male figure (?) holding a long object in his hand may have been inspired by depictions of Jupiter seated and holding a long scepter. Such representations, with Jupiter facing right, are known from coins of Diocletian (IOVI CONSERVATORI, RIC 142), Galerius Maximianus (IOVI CONSERVAT AVGG ET CAES NN, RIC 53), and Constantius Chlorus (IOVI CONSERVATORI, RIC VI 19). The prototype for this figure could also have been depictions of the seated Salus with her left arm bent at the elbow. It should be emphasized that the depiction on the reverse, which was executed with considerable creative effort and attention to detail, was not intended to be displayed in the same way as the emperor's portrait, as the hole is located at the bottom of this side of the coin. A similar situation is observed with Ulów type coins, where the depiction of a horseman on the reverse, judging by the placement of the hole, was not meant to be prominently presented.¹¹ In the case of Ulów type coins, the depiction was not present on the same coins from which the emperor's portrait was copied, but was likely taken from bronze coins of Moesia or Thrace.¹² The mechanism of composing Ulów type coins and the coin found in Karczyn was therefore similar. It should therefore be taken into consideration that the depiction on the reverse of this coin may have been inspired

¹⁰ Cf. BURSCHE 2009: 189.

¹¹ BURSCHE and NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2018: 263.

¹² BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2015: 249. Cf. BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2025: 56. A similar example is the barbarian imitation of an aureus find at Marozavichy in Belarus. The obverse imitates a coin of Probus (276–282) struck at the mint in Serdica (RIC 831 or 833). The reverse depicts a female figure seated left, which must have been inspired by another coin (SIDAROVICH 2017: 135–136, Pl. 3, Fig. 5).

by the iconography of provincial coinage, for instance those showing Athena seated left, holding Nike and resting on a shield.¹³

In terms of size, the Karczyn coin (19.2–19.9 mm in diameter) is similar to aurei from the second half of the 3rd century, but it differs significantly from them in weight. Its weight before conservation was 2.638 g. By comparison, a pierced aureus of type RIC 601, which is in the Münzkabinett in Berlin¹⁴ weighs 5.37 g and has a diameter of 20 mm. Similar data can be obtained by analysing the archives of auction houses. The weight of eight complete aurei of Maximian Herculus of type RIC 610, which at the time of writing this paper were available on the *acsearch.info* portal¹⁵ ranges from 5.17 to 6.39 g. Their arithmetic mean weight is 5.556 g. The weight of three aurei of type RIC 616 ranges from 5.25 to 5.43 g, with an average of 5.323 g. The weight of the Karczyn coin thus constitutes 47.48% of their average weight and around 50–51% of the lightest specimens. This difference is due both to the different densities of the metals used – bronze 7.5–9.3 g/cm³, gold 19.28 g/cm³ – as well as the loss of metal due to the piercing of the hole. This suggests that the intent was clearly not to replicate the weight of the coin. This observation not only applies to this particular specimen, but also to the gold imitations known from the literature, which, in turn, can be over 30% heavier than aurei from the mid-3rd century.¹⁶

Roman aurei, which the coin found in Karczyn-Wieś imitates, were generally minted from the purest gold available at the time. The gold content in these coins was close to 100%.¹⁷ The debasement of gold coins by issuers involved reducing their weight, not the purity of the metal.¹⁸ In the case of the coin from Karczyn, which imitates the external appearance of aurei, the obvious question concerns the source of the gold used to cover the coin. Hypothetically, the most obvious solution is the use of gold directly sourced from aurei. This would be the simplest solution, as it would not require the exploitation of gold deposits or the preparation of a suitable alloy. As XRF studies have shown, the gold content in the coating covering the described coin is 64.29%. This result may suggest that it is either recycled gold from coins or nugget gold from sulfide deposits.¹⁹ These conclusions seem to be confirmed by the results of studies on other barbarian imitations of Roman gold coins. For example, a barbarian imitation of an aureus of Severus Alexander with a runic inscription

¹³ E.g. RPC VII.2 1674.

¹⁴ Inv. no. 18227675.

¹⁵ Accessed on 24 May 2024.

¹⁶ BURSCHE and MYZGIN 2015: 249.

¹⁷ ABDY 2019: 2; WILSON 2007: 114. Cf. BURSCHE 2014: 324; BURSCHE and NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2018: 256.

¹⁸ WILSON 2007: 113.

¹⁹ Cf. JEŹCZYK and KRZEMIŃSKA 1996: 286.

from the Ossolineum collection has the following composition: Au 75.64%, Ag 22.75%, Cu 1.54%.²⁰ The gold content in barbarian coins of the Ulów type varies significantly across individual examples, but it is above 70%, with a notable presence of silver.²¹ The presence of platinum-group elements such as iridium, osmium, and ruthenium suggests that the metal used for their production may have originated from deposits in the Ural, Altai, or Salair Mountains.²² Metallurgical studies of the gold coating on the Karczyn-Wieś coin revealed a lower gold content (64.29%) and a significantly higher copper content (29.146%), which seems to suggest that it should be interpreted differently from the barbarian imitations mentioned earlier. However, the results of XRF analysis of the gold coating on the Karczyn coin need to be interpreted correctly. Can these results provide data comparable to those obtained for coins without a copper core? To resolve this issue, observations made during studies of gilded objects produced in Barbaricum in the first centuries AD can be helpful. An example would be objects created in the Nidajno style, dated to the period from the second half of the 3rd century to the early decades of the 4th century (phase C₂ of the Roman influence period).²³ The gilding technology of these objects involved applying a thin sheet of gold onto the substrate and then pressing the two parts together or joining them with solder.²⁴ Studies have shown that the gilded elements of those objects were made from an alloy with a gold content ranging from 94% to 98%.²⁵ Metallographic analyses of thin gold coatings on prehistoric objects may, however, yield results that are distorted by the metals underneath, as the depth of electron beam penetration can affect them.²⁶ Obtaining reliable results would be possible after separating the gold foil from the substrate. Considering this and comparing the obtained results with those from solid objects, it leads to the conclusion that high-quality material was used for gilding. To produce gold foil, high-purity gold is required, which must also be soft and malleable.²⁷ In the case of the Karczyn coin, the results of metallographic analyses are likely skewed by the copper core of the coin, and the actual gold content in the coating is significantly higher. Therefore, not only is the question of the origin of the metal used for the coating from Roman gold coins still unresolved, but in this case, it seems more probable than the origin of the gold from deposits located in Barbaricum.

²⁰ DEGLER 2015: 50; IDEM 2016: 112.

²¹ BURSCHE and NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2018: 262.

²² *Ibidem*: 262.

²³ RZESZOTARSKA-NOWAKIEWICZ 2021: 197.

²⁴ STROBIN 2015: 183; RZESZOTARSKA-NOWAKIEWICZ 2021: 38.

²⁵ RZESZOTARSKA-NOWAKIEWICZ 2021: 38.

²⁶ NATUNIEWICZ-SEKUŁA 2020: 42–43; NATUNIEWICZ-SEKUŁA and BACZEWSKI 2023: 210.

²⁷ NATUNIEWICZ-SEKUŁA 2020: 43, cf. 244–246.

The inference regarding the chronology of the Karczyn coin should begin by determining the *terminus post quem* based on its hypothetical prototypes. In this case, it would be after approximately 290–295. It is also necessary to consider that the time between the creation of the prototype and the imitation could have been significant, as suggested by a number of other finds. An example is a coin from the Ossolineum collection, which is an imitation of the aureus of Severus Alexander, and is dated between 271 and 332.²⁸ In the grave at Årslev on Funen, was found an imitation of a coin, perhaps of Geta (209–212), made around the year 300.²⁹ The awareness that several decades might have passed between the creation of the prototype and the imitation encourages the possibility that the Karczyn coin could have been made even in the second half of the 4th century. This implies that the hypothetical prototypes for both its obverse and reverse could also be chronologically distant. If the prototype for the obverse was a coin from around 290–295, the representation on the reverse might have been inspired by coins of Tacitus (275–276), for example, depicting a seated Roma holding a figure of Victoria (RIC 74 and others), or even older ones. A potential chronological clue is that the coin was suspended by a hole rather than a loop. As Aleksander Bursche noted, the first gold coins with added loops in Barbaricum appear in assemblages dated to the end of phase C₂ (dated around 260–310), with their overwhelming majority originating from the C₃ period (dated around 310–375).³⁰ The custom applied to both Roman gold coins and their imitations.³¹ However, it should be emphasized that this refers to the predominance, not the exclusivity, of such finds. Examples of perforated coins during the period of the spread of the practice of adding loops to coins can be pointed out. For instance, a solidus of Constantine I (306–337) from the year 316 is known, which was said to have been found in the vicinity of Inowrocław before March 2015.³² Gold coins from the late 4th and 5th centuries found in this part of Poland no longer have holes or loops.³³ When considering the chronology of the coin from Karczyn, the archaeological context of its discovery should also be taken into account. The earliest materials from the Karczyn/Witowy Przeworsk culture cemetery (site 21/22), where archaeological excavations were carried out, are dated to the B_{1b}-B_{1b}/B₂ period, and the latest to B_{2b},³⁴ i.e., the years 110/120–160. The analyzed coin was discovered using a metal detector in an area previously marked

²⁸ DEGLER 2015: 60.

²⁹ BURSCHE 2009: 188; MAĆZYŃSKA 2019: 46; EADEM 2020: 207.

³⁰ On the chronology of the Roman influences period in Polish lands: GODŁOWSKI 1985.

³¹ BURSCHE 1998: 156.

³² DYMOWSKI and WIĘCEK 2018: 171.

³³ Cf. KOKOWSKI et AL. 2023: 93, Tab. XX, g; JARZEŃCKI 2024.

³⁴ BEDNARCZYK and ROMAŃSKA 2015: 73.

as plot 24, where no archaeological site had been designated up to that point. It was located in a layer of arable soil and thus the possibilities for inferring the method and chronology of the use of this place in prehistory are limited. However, in the vicinity of the coin's discovery, although on different days, another 14 metal objects were also found using a metal detector. These were e.g. denarii of Trajan (98–117; RIC 356, 2.337 g, coin incomplete), Hadrian (117–138; subaeratus, RIC 100, 1.952 g), and Faustina the Younger (RIC 686, 2.457 g),³⁵ a fragment of a broken bronze scissors and four bronze fibulae: type A 103, A 162, A 193 and the so-called *Bügelknopffibel* (know bow fibula). The chronology of the coins and the A 103 fibula corresponds with the chronology of the cemetery as established through archaeological excavation. Similarly, the fragment of a scissor blade should be dated on the basis of an analogous object found among the grave goods of one of the inhumation burials at the site, described as a princely grave. A similar item, identified as “fragments of a bronze knife”, was discovered within. The grave is dated to the second phase of the cemetery's use³⁶, that is, phase B_{1b}/B_{2a}.³⁷ The *Bügelknopffibel* is significantly later than these materials, as it is dated to phase D₁–D₂, that is, approximately 360–450.³⁸ Only a dozen or so finds of such brooches have been recorded to date in the territory of present-day Poland, including one from Pruszcz Gdański, found in a inhumation burial of a child of indeterminate sex, aged 8–9 years.³⁹ On the aforementioned plot 24 in Karczyn, currently designated as site no. 5, no materials other than metal were recorded, which resulted from the nature of the investigations. Both the *Bügelknopffibel* and the imitation gold coin indicate that this is a location where an archaeological site should be formally established, and where the nature of the site and the chronology hypothesis ought to be verified through future excavations. It is possible that the area was used during a later phase of activity at the nearby site, a phase that has not yet been identified. The most probable date for the minting of the coin is the 4th century AD, particularly its first half, which corresponds, according to Kazimierz Godłowski's classification, to the end of phase C₂ and the first half of phase C₃. At the current stage of research, it can be stated that no new burials were conducted during this time at the nearby cemetery known as Karczyn/Witowy, site 21/22. However, it must also be taken into account that the coin may have reached Karczyn some time (possibly a considerable time)

³⁵ Weight before conservation. The coins are characterised by their low weight which is due to their state of preservation.

³⁶ BEDNARCZYK and ROMĄSKA 2015: 20, Tab. XX, 25.

³⁷ *Ibidem*: 73.

³⁸ CIEŚLIŃSKI and RAU 2019: 51.

³⁹ PIETRZAK, CYMEK and ROŻNOWSKI 2015: 26–27. A fibula of this type was also found in Gąski, Kuyavia (CIEŚLIŃSKI and RAU 2019: 56).

after its production. There is no basis for assuming that the coin was minted in the Kuyavia region. It is therefore possible that it arrived in Karczyn around the same time as the *Bügelknopffibel*.

In the region where the coin was discovered, there are known sites that can be dated to periods C₃ and D.⁴⁰ The closest to Karczyn-Wieś are Łakocin (B_{1a}–C₃)⁴¹ and Łojewo (B_{1a}–C₃, C_{1b}–D).⁴² Examples of sites located at greater distances are Gąski (C_{1b}–D),⁴³ Latkowo (C_{1b}–D),⁴⁴ Perkowo (A₁/A₂–C₃/D).⁴⁵ In this area, coin finds dating from the late 3rd and 4th centuries were also recorded. Earlier literature records coin finds of Maximian Herculus, Constantine II (337–340), and Honorius (393–423) discovered in Inowrocław.⁴⁶ The collections of the Leon Wyczółkowski District Museum in Bydgoszcz include a bronze coin of Diocletian, found in Inowrocław under unspecified circumstances prior to 8 January 1942.⁴⁷ A solidus of Magnentius (350–353) was found in an unspecified location north of Inowrocław.⁴⁸ A solidus of Constantine I and a siliqua of Constans (337–350) were found in an unspecified location in the vicinity of Inowrocław.⁴⁹ Three bronze coins from the first half of the 4th century were reportedly found in the village of Kicko (Kruszwica commune).⁵⁰ A find of a reduced follis from the mint of Constantinople, dating to 330–346, was recorded in the village of Morzyce (Bytoń commune).⁵¹ A follis of Constantius II (337–361) or Constans, dated to 341–346, was found in the vicinity of Gniewkowo.⁵² During surface archaeological surveys in Perkowo (Gniewkowo commune), an antoninianus was found, which is tentatively attributed to Diocletian.⁵³ A well-known find is a gold medallion of Constans, discovered in Opoczki (Aleksandrów Kujawski commune) before 1856.⁵⁴ Examples of finds originating from more distant locations include a group of coins, comprising numerous 4th-century issues, discovered in 1928 or

⁴⁰ COFTA-BRONIEWSKA 1979: 271–359.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*: no. 1051.

⁴² *Ibidem*: nos. 1053, 1055, 1057.

⁴³ *Ibidem*: nos. 278, 279.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*: nos. 936, 945.

⁴⁵ KURPIEWSKI and RAKOCZY 2015: 49.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*: 362. Cf. ZIELONKA 1970: 195.

⁴⁷ Inv. no. MOB Mo-4933. The coin was purchased at the “Phila” shop in Bydgoszcz on 8 January 1942, along with two coins of Probus. They were accompanied by information that they were found in Inowrocław (FRISCHKE and JARZĘCKI 2024: 14).

⁴⁸ DYMOWSKI 2008: 171.

⁴⁹ DYMOWSKI and WIĘCEK 2018: 171, 173.

⁵⁰ RUDNICKI and DYMOWSKI 2015: 250.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*: 253.

⁵² DYMOWSKI and RUDNICKI 2012: 245.

⁵³ KURPIEWSKI and RAKOCZY 2015: 28.

⁵⁴ BURSCHE 1998: 81, 115–116. Cf. ZAKRZEWSKI 1938: 67.

1929 in Rynkowo⁵⁵ (Bydgoszcz commune), a bronze coin of Constantine I found in Bydgoszcz on Polna Street (Freedom Hill),⁵⁶ three bronze coins of Constantine I from Łązyn (Nowa Wieś Wielka commune),⁵⁷ 10 bronze coins of Constantine I from Przyłubie (Solec Kujawski commune)⁵⁸ and a solidus of Honorius found in the vicinity of Pobiedziska (loco commune).⁵⁹ The above overview of finds demonstrates that, although the coin in question differs chronologically from other coins discovered in Karczyn, it does not constitute an “anomaly” from the perspective of the wider region.

Neither in the vicinity of Karczyn nor in Western Kuyavia have any finds of barbarian imitations of Roman gold coins been recorded. In contrast, imitations of 2nd-century silver coins have been recorded.⁶⁰ Their presence in the context of official Roman issues from the 2nd century suggests that they may be linked to different cultural phenomena than the gilt coin found in Karczyn-Wieś. Coins from the 1st and 2nd centuries could certainly have been used in later periods, and some of them, following later custom, were then perforated or fitted with suspension loops. Such well-documented finds are known from other regions. In Zawada (Połaniec commune), a heavily worn aureus of Nero (54–68) from 65–66 was discovered in the vicinity of a cremation grave accompanied by, among other items, a terra sigillata vessel dated to the first quarter of the 3rd century.⁶¹ In the Słoneczne Skały rock formation in the Krakow-Częstochowa Jura, alongside over 250 denarii from the 1st and 2nd centuries, an aureus of Claudius (41–54) issued under Nero, fitted with

⁵⁵ Purchased for the MOB collections in 1970, Inv. no. Mo-6156–6199, see: CIOŁEK 2007: 22–25 (not precisely as a find from Bydgoszcz); KOKOWSKI et AL. 2023: 67.

⁵⁶ MOB collections, Inv. no. Mo-4940; KOKOWSKI et AL. 2023: 64.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*: 73.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*: 86.

⁵⁹ ZAKRZEWSKI 2023: 87–88. Cf. IDEM 1938: 62–63; JARZĘCKI 2023: 81.

⁶⁰ Before 1879, several barbarian imitations of 2nd-century denarii were found in Łatkowo (GUMOWSKI 1958: 108). An imitation of a denarius of an unspecified emperor was reportedly discovered in 2014 or 2015 on the western outskirts of Inowrocław (RUDNICKI and DYMOWSKI 2015: 245–246), while others were found before February 2013 at an unknown location south of the city (RUDNICKI and DYMOWSKI 2015: 246). Two barbarian imitations were uncovered in 2014 or 2016 approximately 5–6 km southeast of the centre of Inowrocław (DYMOWSKI and WIĘCEK 2018: 171–173). One of these coins may represent a barbarian copy of a barbarian imitation (DYMOWSKI 2023). In the immediate vicinity of the aforementioned coins from the Inowrocław area, other coins identified as official issues of the Roman Empire were reportedly found. The co-occurrence of barbarian silver coin imitations alongside numerically dominant official issues has been observed in hoards discovered in other parts of Poland. In the hoard of denarii from Drzewicz Nowy in Mazovia, four denarius imitations (of Hadrian, Faustina the Elder, Faustina the Younger, and Marcus Aurelius) were found alongside 1,172 official issues (KRZYŻANOWSKA 1976: 74). The youngest coin in the hoard is a denarius of Macrinus from 217–218 (KRZYŻANOWSKA 1976: 13). In the hoard from Tokary in the Lublin region, among 432 denarii there was one imitation of a denarius of Commodus (KUNISZ 1993: 91–92). The latest coins in the hoard are denarii of Septimius Severus and Pertinax from 193 (KUNISZ 1993: 44). In the hoard discovered near the village of Cichobórz in the Lublin region, alongside 1,769 denarii, seven barbarian imitations were found. These may have been produced in the same workshop (STANNARD 2023). The youngest coin in the hoard is a denarius of Septimius Severus from 197–198 (MYZGİN 2023: 39).

⁶¹ BURSCHE and JAGODZIŃSKI 2019: 45; SKÓRA 2020: 207.

a suspension loop, a pierced aureus of Severus II, and a barbarian gold imitation of an aureus of Maximian Herculus were also found. The assemblage is dated to phase C₃–D, likely to the late 4th century. It is associated with migrants from the Chernyakhov culture region who arrived during the period of the Hunnic invasions.⁶²

In the vicinity of Karczyn, Roman perforated gold coins have been found. In 1894, Zygmunt Zakrzewski purchased for his private collection a pierced aureus of Severus Alexander from the year 223 (RIC 31). This was one of several gold coins accidentally discovered in Złotowo on the shore of Lake Gopło.⁶³ Zakrzewski's collection also included a double-pierced aureus of Marcus Aurelius (161–180), found in Inowrocław.⁶⁴ The plate with photographs included in his 1938 publication depicts such a coin, but without information about its findspot.⁶⁵ Judging by the rather unclear photograph, the reverse shows Felicitas⁶⁶ standing to the left with a legend beginning with P M TR P X (RIC 154?). According to Zakrzewski's research, at least some of the coins illustrated on this plate come from his own collection.⁶⁷ In this case, it seems highly probable that the depiction is of the aureus found in Inowrocław (specifically, its plaster cast). The plate also shows two pierced aurei of Lucius Verus (161–169). One of these, featuring Salus standing on the reverse, is a find from Żnin, made around 1937.⁶⁸ The other, with a depiction of winged Victoria, may be a find from Broniszewice (Pleszew County).⁶⁹ No later than 1888, a pierced aureus of Victorinus (269–271) was found in a field in the locality of Junczewo (currently Żnin County).⁷⁰ Noteworthy are the words of Zakrzewski, who wrote that "almost all aurei found in Greater Poland are pierced".⁷¹ It should be added that this observation concerns finds made infrequently. In light of the usually very general information provided in earlier literature, Zakrzewski's opinion, based on his own observations, seems plausible but difficult to verify. It is not known, for example, whether the lack of information about the aureus of Julia Domna found between Inowrocław and Strzelno⁷² means that it truly did not have a hole, or if it simply

⁶² BURSCHE and JAGODZIŃSKI 2019: 45.

⁶³ ZAKRZEWSKI 1938: 66–67; IDEM 2023: 87–88; JARZEŃCKI 2023: 81.

⁶⁴ FREDRICH 1909: 207.

⁶⁵ ZAKRZEWSKI 1938: Tab. I.

⁶⁶ According to C. Fredrich's description "Fortuna", FREDRICH 1909: 207.

⁶⁷ JARZEŃCKI 2023: 81.

⁶⁸ Cf. GAŁĘZOWSKA 2016: 239, Figs. 13, 42.

⁶⁹ Cf. FREDRICH 1909: 205.

⁷⁰ *Obv.*: head of Victorinus, IMP C VICTORINVS P F AVG. *Rev.*: bull and eagle holding wreath in its beak, LEG V MACIDONICA. Cf. ANONYM 1889: xx–xxi; FREDRICH 1909: 208; GUMOWSKI 1958: 111. In 1888, the coin entered the collections of the Historical Society in Bydgoszcz, where it was still held in 1912. It was probably exported to Germany in 1919, and its subsequent fate remains unknown (FRISCHKE and JARZEŃCKI 2024: 19).

⁷¹ ZAKRZEWSKI 1927: 39.

⁷² FREDRICH 1909: 207.

was not mentioned.⁷³ Similar uncertainties apply to the finds of Roman gold coins whose discoveries have been recorded in Inowrocław,⁷⁴ Jarosławiec,⁷⁵ Kotowiec,⁷⁶ Krobica,⁷⁷ and Otówko.⁷⁸ No later than March 2015, a pierced solidus of Constantine I was found in the vicinity of Inowrocław.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, the precise archaeological context of the discovery of the aforementioned pierced gold coins remains unknown. Answers to the question of when the holes were made in the aurei of Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus, and Severus Alexander can be provided through the analysis of finds from a large part of Central and Eastern Europe. It has been established that the custom of piercing holes in gold coins and medallions, which was not practiced within the territories of the Roman Empire, emerged in the Barbaricum in the 3rd century and became widespread in the second half of that century.⁸⁰ There is a convincing hypothesis according to which these coins came into barbarian hands (the Goths) after the Battle of Abritus in 251. The barbarians routed the Roman army, killed Emperor Trajan Decius (249–251), and seized the imperial treasury. After dividing the captured gold coins among themselves, they pierced holes in them to convert them into pendants, which were then disseminated throughout the Barbaricum regions.⁸¹ At a later time, other coins were pierced, which may already have been present in the Barbaricum regions, as well as those still arriving. Among this group would be the aureus of Victorinus from Junczewo and a solidus of Constantine I found in the vicinity of Inowrocław. Information on finds of barbarian gold imitations is very scarce. In Chludowo (Poznań County), such a coin was discovered before 1909. It was a barbarian imitation of a gold coin of Theodosius I (379–395) or Honorius, found during ploughing. The coin was part of the collection of the then Kaiser Friedrich Museum zu Posen.⁸²

The described coin, discovered in Karczyn-Wieś fits well into the prehistoric context of these areas. It can be assumed that it is an object produced within the cultural sphere of the Goths associated with the Chernyakhov culture in the first half of the 4th century, from where, possibly as a result of pressure from the Huns,

⁷³ In the description of the aureus found in Junczewo, C. Fredrich did not provide such information, but it is recorded in the inventory book of the Historical Society in Bydgoszcz (entry no. 707). This book is currently held in the archive of the Leon Wyczółkowski District Museum in Bydgoszcz, see: FRISCHKE and JARZĘCKI 2024: 19.

⁷⁴ FREDRICH 1909: 207.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*: 208.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*: 209.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*: 209.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*: 211.

⁷⁹ DYMOWSKI and WIĘCEK 2018: 171.

⁸⁰ BURSCHE and WIĘCEK 2010: 193–194, 197.

⁸¹ BURSCHE 2013: 162.

⁸² FREDRICH 1909: 205.

it was brought to Kuyavia.⁸³ In the 4th century, the Wielbark culture settlement still existed in Kuyavia. This culture is associated with the Goths, though it should be emphasized that both the concept of the Wielbark culture and the Goths encompass associations of various tribes with differing ethnic definitions.⁸⁴ The part of the site in Karczyn investigated thus far was in use until the B_{2b} phase (110/120–160).⁸⁵ In the area where the gilded coin was found, materials were discovered that chronologically correspond to the latest phase of the neighbouring site (denarii of Trajan, Hadrian, and Faustina the Younger, as well as a brooch of type A 103), as well as later items (fibulae of types A 162 and A 193), which can be dated to phases C₁–C₂. At the current stage of research, however, it is not possible to determine whether the gilded coin was found in a location used continuously from the B_{2b} phase or whether there was a hiatus in its occupation. Besides the described coin, this settlement phase at Karczyn is also associated with a *Bügelknopffibel*, dated to phases D₁–D₂, approximately 360–450. The presence of this fibula is a result of contacts with populations inhabiting the Lower Oder region or areas even further west. Inferring the nature of the coin's presence at the Karczyn site is greatly complicated by the fact that the coin, fibula, and other items found nearby were not recovered during systematic archaeological excavations, but as a result of surface searches in a topsoil layer several to a dozen centimetres thick. Not only was their association with specific features not established, such as beads that could have been part of a necklace including the described coin, were also not recorded. No iron objects were found, and this fact should be attributed solely to the methodology employed during the investigations. It is necessary to consider the possible displacement of these artefacts due to agricultural activities. Nevertheless, an attempt to understand the original context can be undertaken based on information about chronologically comparable finds from other sites investigated through excavation. The following examples illustrate such finds from the Wielbark culture area.

In Linowo (Grudziądz County), in grave 219 (an inhumation burial of an individual aged Infans I), a coin identified as a subaeratus denarius of Marcus Aurelius, type RIC 297, was found, featuring a hole in the left field behind the emperor's head. The burial is dated to phase C₂.⁸⁶ Until phase C₂, the Linowo necropolis exhibited a biritual character; subsequently, it shifted exclusively to the cremation rite.⁸⁷ An example of a burial from the later phase of the necropolis's use is grave 11. It is a pit cremation burial dated to phase D, in which the presence

⁸³ Cf. BURSCHE and CZARNECKA 2006: 218; BURSCHE and JAGODZIŃSKI 2019: 45.

⁸⁴ KOKOWSKI 2024: 345–345.

⁸⁵ BEDNARCZYK and ROMAŃSKA 2015: 72.

⁸⁶ KURZYŃSKA 2015: 62, 78, 286, 307.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*: 112.

of a bronze buckle and pottery fragments was recorded.⁸⁸ In Niedanowo (Nidzica county), in grave no. 609 (a cremation in a pit within a damaged stone circle, dated to phase D), an antoninianus of Galerius Maximianus, dated 295–299 (RIC 19b), pierced above emperor's head was found.⁸⁹ At the same necropolis, in grave 534 (a cremation burial in a pit, dated to phase C_{1b}–D), a denarius subaeratus of Trajan (RIC 118) and a denarius subaeratus of Lucilla (RIC 274) were discovered. Both coins were perforated in the right field before the portrait.⁹⁰ In Błędowo (Wąbrzeźno county), within an inhumation burial placed in a stone circle and dated to phases C₃–D, a bronze coin of Theodosius I, minted in Cyzicus between 383 and 388 was found.⁹¹ The use of coins as pendants became popular from the 3rd century onwards.⁹² Analysis of a number of similar finds from the Wielbark culture area also suggests that there was probably no single way of wearing pierced coins.⁹³ Characteristic burial forms of the Wielbark culture population in phases C₃–D include pit cremation graves, which occur more frequently, such as grave no. 359 in Cecele,⁹⁴ as well as inhumation graves, for example grave no. 551 from the Weklice necropolis.⁹⁵ An interesting object worth mentioning in this context is the burial from Pruszcz Gdański (Gdańsk county, site 5, grave 18), dated to phase D. It contained the remains of a child who died aged 8–9 years, and among the grave goods was a *Bügelknopffibel*.⁹⁶ This burial, like the aforementioned grave from Linowo and several others, demonstrates that no distinction is evident between the grave goods of children and adults.⁹⁷ Findings of pierced coins in the graves of the Wielbark culture population are rare,⁹⁸ although they are more frequently recorded in northern Poland.⁹⁹ Of course, they are also found at Wielbark sites outside of funerary contexts.¹⁰⁰ It is worth citing the words of Bursche, which can also be applied to many finds made through the use of metal detectors, including presumably the described coin from Karczyn: “It appears that a considerable number of other single finds may also originate from graves, and this concerns even those for which we have relatively precise information, for

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*: 22, 227.

⁸⁹ ZIEMIŃSKA-ODOJOWA 1999: 104–105, 367, 398.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*: 93, 344, 398.

⁹¹ WOŹNIAK 2012: 171–172.

⁹² CIEŚLIŃSKI 2016: 237.

⁹³ SIDAROVICH, BACZEWSKI and NATUNIEWICZ-SEKUŁA 2024: 140–141.

⁹⁴ JASKANIS 1996: 50, 161.

⁹⁵ NATUNIEWICZ-SEKUŁA and BACZEWSKI 2023: 48, 113.

⁹⁶ PIETRZAK, CYMEK and ROŻNOWSKI 2015: 26–27.

⁹⁷ GAŁĘZOWSKA 2007: 175.

⁹⁸ SKÓRA 2020: 206.

⁹⁹ *Ibidem*: 207, 307.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. ROMANOWSKI 2007.

example, that the coin was found during ploughing (a layperson might not have noticed fragments of vessels or scattered, cremated bones)”.¹⁰¹

The gilded barbarian coin could therefore have been part of the grave goods (likely from a cremation rather than an inhumation burial) of either an adult or a child. This burial would be associated with the phase of site use at Karczyn-Wieś that followed either a period of episodic occupation – one that left no artefacts characteristic of that time – or possibly even a hiatus in settlement activity, with the few known traces currently lacking a more precise context. This is a hypothesis that should be tested through future, more detailed research using other methods. At the same time, it is fully consistent with the conclusions drawn from the analysis of a series of Wielbark culture sites in Greater Poland.¹⁰² It should be emphasised, however, that such an unequivocal cultural attribution of the newcomers to the former Przeworsk Culture sites in the vicinity of Inowrocław may raise certain reservations.¹⁰³ The main reason is the fact that relatively few artefacts that can be associated with them are known, and those that are do exhibit features atypical of the Wielbark Culture. These are rather strong cultural influences from regions located at a considerable distance, affecting the population of the Wielbark Culture, and even the presence of people belonging to other cultural spheres. This situation is reflected by the coin under discussion, as well as by other artefacts from Karczyn-Wieś found in its vicinity, and, among others, by the finds from Gąski and Wierzbiczany already known from the literature.¹⁰⁴

ABBREVIATIONS

RIC = H. MATTINGLY et AL., *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, vols. I–X, London 1923–2025.
 RPC VII.2 = J. MAIRAT, M. SPOERRI BUTCHER et AL., *Roman Provincial Coinage*.
 Vol. VII.2: *From Gordian I to Gordian III (AD 238–244): All Provinces Except Asia*, London–Paris 2022.

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¹⁰¹ BURSCHE 1983: 50.

¹⁰² ŻYCHLIŃSKI 2014: 41.

¹⁰³ Cf. OŁĘDZKI, ZAWILSKI and BOROWSKA-STRUGIŃSKA 2018: 10.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. KONTNY and RUDNICKI 2020.

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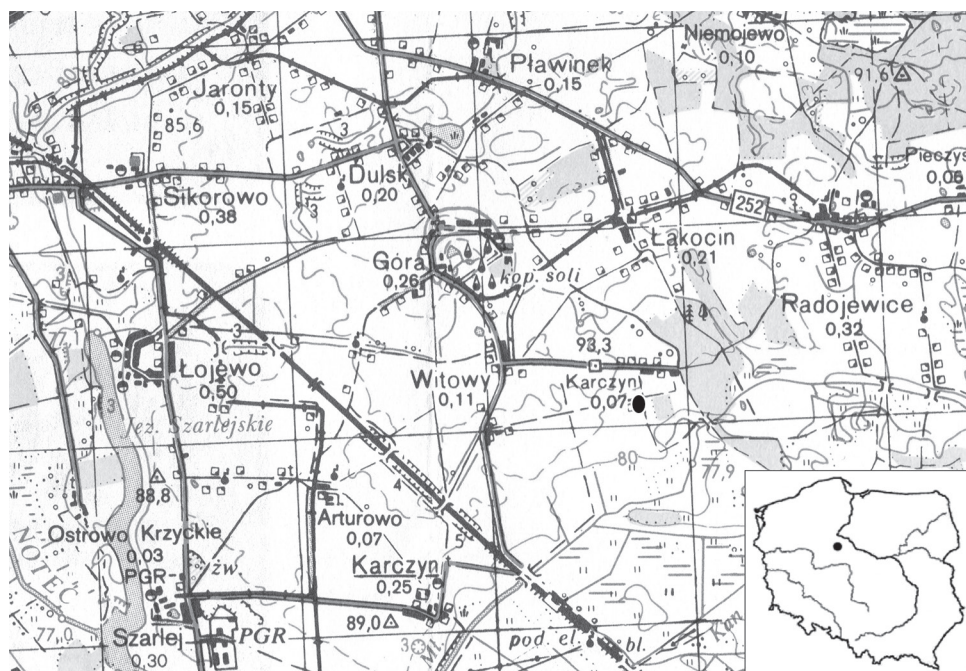
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Map 1. Karczyn-Wieś, site 5. The place of coin find (prepared by K. Jarzęcki)



Fig. 1. A coin found in Karczyn-Wieś, 2.638 g, diam 19.2–19.9 mm, Jan Kasprówicz Museum in Inowrocław collection (photo by K. Jarzęcki)