

Roman Ae Coinage on the South Baltic Coast

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Abstract

Bronze coins - particularly sestertii of the 2nd and first half of the 3rd c. A.D. found in graves and hoards of the Westbalt territory and surrounding cultures were analyzed. The focus of the article is the coinage's origin, time and purpose of its flow.

At the present stage of research it appears that Ae coinage flowing into the south Baltic coastal region was largely formed over the Rhine limes, while the latest part may have come directly from Italy. Their export from the Empire could be dated to the period between the Marcomanic Wars and mid-third century and connected with the exchange of amber.

Introduction

It was already recognized, early in this century, that Roman coinage found between the Pasłęka (Passarge) river and lower and central Neman differed from that representing the rest of the Barbaricum (Bezenberger 1904; Hollack 1908). The difference was due to the essential dominance of sestertii minted in the second and first half of the third century A.D., mostly represented in graves (1). This phenomenon can be particularly associated with a single cultural area i.e. "the Westbalt circle" (Nowakowski 1983; 1989; 1990; 1991; 1992).

Relevant publications so far mainly attempted to explain this dominance of "bronze" coinage (2) and its function in the local societies (e.g. Bezenberger 1904; Michelbertas 1972: 49 ff.). But this paper focuses primarily on the provenance of coinage from the Westbalt circle finds and on the time of its flow from the Roman Empire to the south Baltic coast.

Territory and chronology

The area under discussion covers sites of the Bogaczewo, Sudovian and Sambian cultures, as well as those of the Lower Neman and West-Lithuanian groups (Engel 1933: 262 f., Fig.1-2; Šturms 1950; Okulicz 1973: 408 ff.; Kaczyński 1976; Michelbertas 1986: 193 ff., Fig. 85-87, 238-240, Fig. 89; especially Nowakowski 1983: 64, Fig. 1; 1989; 1990; 1991; 1992). In addition to distinct connections in archaeological material, they share in common the occurrence of bronze coinage in graves (least so in Sudovian culture).

The ranges of a circle have been assumed for the period when bronze coinage occurred "en masse" in graves and hoards, that is, for the Late Roman Period, ca between the end of the 2nd and late 4th centuries A.D. (Godłowski 1974: 43 ff.). The territory under discussion, therefore, covered the Sambian Peninsula, Mazurian Lake District, Suwałki region and lower Neman river-basin. South and west, the Westbalt circle was almost entirely separated from the Germanic tribes (the Wielbark culture) by a broad strip of no man's land. This zone shrunk perceptibly only in the Olsztyn Lake District and, more importantly, at the mouth of the Pasłęka river. In the Migration Period the Westbalt circle gradually shifted west of the Pasłęka river (Godłowski 1980; Godłowski 1981; Nowakowski 1989).

Representativeness

It is not simply the occurrence of coins in graves which distinguishes the Westbalt circle from other Barbaricum cultural groups. Coins are found in graves in other areas as well, especially in Sarmatian cultures (Köhegyi 1972).

Another major point of difference is that they were mostly sestertii from 2nd and the first half of the 3rd century A.D. Similarly, the few hoards recorded in the discussed area in fact include also only this group of coins. This is in marked contrast to other territories, which most often produce denarii from the 2nd century as dominating in coin finds, as in the case of the Przeworsk, Wielbark and Cherniakhov cultures (Kropotkin 1961; Konik 1965; Kunisz 1973; Kunisz 1985; Kubiak 1979) or Denmark and south Scandinavia (Lind 1981; Lind 1988; Kromann 1989).

It should constantly be kept in mind, however, that the majority of coins were found in the Westbalt circle territory in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century (3) and were more precisely described in a single publication issued in 1926 (Bolin 1926a). Various misinterpretations are very likely, requiring detailed source criticism. Moreover, the proportions of denominations may have resulted from selection due to burial customs. All this calls for an analysis of the representativeness of coinage finds in terms of the classic division by H. J. Eggers (1951: 23 f.) into "live culture" (*die lebende Kultur*), "dead culture" (*die tote Kultur*) and "re-discovered culture" (*die wiederentdeckte Kultur*). It was just the custom of placing Ae coins in graves east of the Pasłęka river, as distinguished from bronze vessels associated with burials west of the river that H. J. Eggers selected as an example illustrating his source criticism studies.

The first level of representativeness is here the relationship of "re-discovered culture" to "dead culture" i.e. the attempt to determine to what an extent the image developed corresponds to the content found in the earth. Considering the way in which the data on coinage finds were coming until 1920's and aware of competence in source criticism and practice in coinage identification of Sture Bolin, it may be thought that the image he presented is close to reality at the first level of representativeness (Bursche 1992).

Moreover, it is primarily the hoards which testify to the essential difference in the structure of coinage attributable to "live culture" of the Westbalt circle. Seven unquestionable hoards of sestertii with approximately known composition have been reported on this territory. Those are: Algimantai (35 sestertii - Michelbertas 1972: 110), Kudrinka (from 368 coins 299 were identified - Bolin 1926a: 210), Zhukovskoe (out of 138 coins 106 were identified - Bolin 1926a: 215), 2 hoards of Pavyzdziui (one featuring 350 coins 323 of which were identified, the other containing 759 coins 718 of which were identified - Bolin 1926a: 217), Saulažoliai (out of 60-70 coins 50 were identified - Michelbertas 1972: 120) and former Schakumehlen (out of 32 coins, 16 were identified - Bolin 1926a: 209). There is more information on fairly certain hoards of bronze coins, though lacking detailed data as to their composition like former Deyguhnen (Bolin 1926a: 206). At Vilkyciai, for instance, a hoard of 90 coins from Hadrian to Maximianus (rather Maximinus I) was recovered its denominations undefined (Bolin 1926a: 232).

The only certain hoard featuring non-bronze coins is the deposit of Skandawa in which 21 denarii were found in addition to 11 sestertii (Bolin 1926a: 221, deposit disregarded by A. Kunisz, 1973). In the light of information provided by J. Liegle (1930) the alleged complex from Sztynort should not be treated as a hoard. The remaining finds (e.g. Szczytno - Bolin 1926a: 233) come from the cultural borderland or from the Central Lithuanian group which we excluded from Westbalt circle. On the territory under discussion only one later hoard from Smalninkai was reported probably as dated to 4th century and including 208 Ae coins of which three pieces of Constantine I were identified (Sajauskas 1972: 57).

The distinct disproportion in hoard structure as compared to other cultures is essential in terms of the evaluation of find representativeness.

The dominance of Ae coinage in finds from Westbalt territories should not therefore be at-

tributed to the state of research nor to ritual custom according to which sestertii appeared preferable for placing in graves. Much would indicate that the image of "re-discovered" is not substantially divergent in this respect from "live culture". Within the coinage available on the Westbalt territories bronze coins were predominant, almost entirely limited to sestertii.

Minting

The production of bronze coins, their distribution and circulation in the Empire may dealt with only to a limited extent.

The sestertius was introduced along with other Ae coins (including dupondii and asses) to stable circulation in Imperium Romanum already by the time of Augustus (Grant 1969: 43 f.; Kunisz 1976: 59 f.). It was a privilege of the Senate to emit this Ae coinage to its considerable profit, especially in the earlier period, since bronze coins were credit money (Kunisz 1976: 44; Kunisz 1979: 14 f.). Sestertii weighing from 27 g to 20 g and subsequently slightly less, were the largest and heaviest coins regularly struck in Rome, bearing beautiful images of e.g. impressive buildings or statues. Like dupondii, they differed from other - smaller coins, as well as from majority of coins struck in the eastern provinces, by their golden tint, being made of special alloy, *orichalcum*, originally prepared exclusively for this purpose. In addition to copper it included zinc (ca 20%). Zinc if added in a quantity exceeding 5%, resulting in such a brassy golden-colored appearance (Caley 1964: 69).

Since the time of Nero, a gradual decrease in the weight of sestertii (down to about 18 g - Callu 1969: 131) and reduction of zinc content in the alloy (Caley 1964: 56, 72, 81 ff., 110; Riederer 1974: 76 ff.; Étienne & Rachet 1984: 377 ff.) was observed aggravating in the 3rd century. As a result, since Gordian III, those emissions largely lacked their original golden tint. Depreciation of sestertii is explained by the efforts to protect the profitability of Ae coinage production while Ar coinage was sub-

ject to galloping devaluation. This caused the proportions to change of the values of denominations to metals (gold, silver and copper) and consequently to the alloys as well. The production of a high quality and costly alloy like *orichalcum* for minting credit money was of diminishing profitability (Caley 1964: 103; Callu 1969: 115).

Since Commodus, deterioration in the quality of alloy used for sestertii is accompanied by an abrupt reduction in the number of their emissions, which could be observed as a considerable dwindling in number in the largest collections (see e.g. BMCRE), and as increase in prices of these coins in auction catalogues testifying to their rarity. A possible reason is that the Senate having a privilege of striking Ae coins was drawing hardly any profits. Consequently, it only minted the number of coins indispensable on the Italian market, merely to observe tradition, if not for reason of prestige. Disturbances occurred in the distribution of centrally-struck "bronze" coinage which resulted in their sudden shortages in the majority of provinces. Because of such shortages of these centrally struck coinage in the Eastern provinces (including Thracia and Moesia Inferior) autonomous mints took up the production of small change for local needs, under the supervision of municipal administration (so-called Greek imperials). These emissions became especially intense in the first half of the 3rd century starting from the rule of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, when 365 provincial mints functioned in the same time (Jones 1963; Callu 1969: 11 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 65 ff.; Bursche 1984: 235 ff.).

In Moesia Superior, in mid-3rd century, a period of intensified military activity on the Danube, the Viminacium mint was operating between 239 and 256 A.D. Having an exceptional status, it was to meet the needs of the entire province (Elmer 1935; Dušanic 1961; Fitz 1978: 611 ff.). A mint similar in character was functioning between 246-255 A.D. in Dacia (Callu 1969: 18; Winkler 1971).

On the territories of Pannonia an insufficient

amount of small change struck centrally at that time, was resulted in the production of the "substitute" ("supplementary") coinage manufactured by casting - the so-called *limesfalsa*. If not in a state mint, they were produced with tacit approval of the authorities, according to W. Kubitschek (1921) and E. Lacom (1929) in the reign of Gordian III in Carnuntum. A. Kunisz (1971: 115 ff.; 1978: 135 ff.) dates the beginning of Danubian *limesfalsa* production to the times of Severus Alexander (at the latest to 239).

Under the rule of Gallienus (early 260's) the last Rome-controlled sestertii were struck in a rather limited number, while the production of the remaining centrally-struck "bronze" coinage ceased altogether (Callu 1969: 135 ff.). Bronze emissions were simultaneously struck by the rulers of Imperium Galliarum, of which only Postumus' double sestertii proved regular between 260-263 A.D. (Elmer 1941; Bastien 1967; Callu 1969: 137 f.; Lafaurie 1975). The former sestertii were overstruck then into the double denomination using countermark.

Similarly, in the reign of Gallienus the autonomous mints largely ceased to operate. Very few towns struck coins under Claudius II and Aurelian and only Alexandria emitted tetradrachms up to 296/297 (Milne & Kraay 1971; Metcalf 1987: 159 ff.). A large number of coins from this town circulated widely especially in the last quarter of the 3rd century, throughout the Empire, with particular intensity close to the *limes* (Callu 1969: 179; Kunisz 1971: 126; Mielczarek 1989: 107 ff.).

Ae coin finds - Roman Empire

Of prime concern are those finds which, beyond doubt, may be attributed to circulation in respective areas of the Empire after Commodus. During this period essential differences may be observed in the distribution and circulation of respective "bronze" coinage groups, making for the identification of the territories most likely to have formed a batch of coins flowing onto the south Baltic coast; additional

conclusions of a chronological nature indicating the exact time of this flow will follow.

In the East provinces including Thracia and Moesia Inferior, the autonomous (Greek imperial) emissions dominated in all find categories: hoards, graves, settlement finds (Callu 1969: 35 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 119 ff.; Fitz 1978: 58 ff., 102 ff.). A very few sestertii are encountered sporadically in addition to autonomous coinage hoards. Similarly, in Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior the emissions of Viminacium are predominant in the mid-third century with a relatively low participation of sestertii from that period (Pekáry 1953; Alföldi 1954; Nubar 1963; Callu 1969: 35 ff., 113 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 112 ff.; Fitz 1978: 48 ff., 72 ff., 98 ff.). In Dacia, on the other hand, where sestertii occur more frequently, their number is lower than the total amount of autonomous emissions (Winkler 1965; Callu 1969: 35 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 117 ff.; Winkler & Hopârtean 1973; Fitz 1978: 58 ff., 102 ff.). A relative abundance of 3rd century sestertii occurs in finds from Pannonia Superior, while Viminacium coinage prevailed on the *limes* (e.g. twice in Carnuntum, see Elmer 1933; FMRÖ; also Callu 1969: 36 f.; Kunisz 1971: 108, 112 ff.; Fitz 1978: 32 ff., 72 ff., 166 ff.) while deeper in the province *limesfalsa* appear as a common phenomenon (e.g. in Sopron); the latter frequently occur over the *limes* (e.g. in Carnuntum - Elmer 1933: 67; Kunisz 1971: 115; Kunisz 1978: 135 ff.; FMRÖ III.1: Carnuntum). Likewise these "supplementary" emissions appear in large quantities in Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior. Proportions of Ae coinage similar to those in Pannonia Superior are observed in the territories of Noricum. Only slightly lower is the share of Viminacium emissions and of *limesfalsa*. The proportions of the post-Commodan bronze coinage (up to Trebonianus Gallus) over the whole province of Noricum is the following: 28.0% sestertii (including a high percentage of subferrati), 19.8% remaining central Ae (with asses as predominant), 19.4% *limesfalsa* (including copies of asses), 18.2% Viminacium emissions, 14.7% Greek imperials (with those

of Bithynian Nicea prevailing) (4).

According to J. P. Callu (1969: 116) 3rd century sestertii were only used in the Latin part, to the west of Carnuntum. However, finds recovered from Gaul and Britain feature no sestertii of the first half of the 3rd century (Callu 1969: 119 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 105 ff.; Buttrely 1972: 33 ff., 56; Depeyrot & Cairou & Lassure 1985: 144 f.). These observations are based predominantly on numerous reported hoards. In deposits of sestertii with the latest coins of Commodus and Septimius Severus, the latter are considerably worn indicating that they must have circulated for at least several dozen years (Buttrely 1972: 44 f.; Depeyrot & Cairou & Lassure 1985: 142 ff.). On the other hand, hoards including scarce double sestertii of Postumus combine large amounts of coins from 2nd century, revealing hardly any 3rd century coinage. Post-Commodan coins account for average of 4% (Callu 1969: 124 ff.; Buttrely 1972: 45 f., 56). Cessation in sestertii influx into the West provinces in the times after Commodus is a phenomenon comparable in its scale to the hiatus in the denarii influx to Barbaricum in A.D. 194. Therefore, bronze coinage centrally struck after Commodus practically failed to enter circulation in Gaul and Britain. In those provinces autonomous emissions are fairly sporadic finds (Callu 1969: 111 ff.; Kunisz 1971: 110 ff.).

The situation is quite different in Italy. Unique and, at the same time, well-studied material is at hand which consists of 35 hoards of sestertii of which 26 are available for use: 19 from Sardinia, 2 from Sicily, 8 from Po Valley, 5 from the western and 1 from the Adriatic coast (Callu 1969: 117 ff.; Buttrely 1972: 50 f., 57; Riederer 1974).

All the above-mentioned hoards were hidden in mid-third century A.D. (from Philip to Gallienus). Hoards from Po Valley area comprise nearly 50% post-Commodan coins, while they make up more than 80% of hoard finds from Sardinia, Sicily and Africa. Lack of earlier coinage, according to J. P. Callu (1969: 117 ff.) should be attributed to intensified

thesaurization in Italy. It seems more likely, however, that this was due to common melting of old coinage by Rome's mint.

Very few autonomous emissions have as yet been recorded from Italian territory (i.e. Scheers & Heesch 1988; Sagui & Paroli 1989: 51; Siberstein Trevisani 1989: 128) and although this may result from the level of research they can hardly be expected to occur south of Alps (5).

Most interesting is the case of the Rhineland *limes*. This area has produced a considerable number of sestertii struck after Commodus with those dated to 240's prevailing (Callu 1969: 120; FMRD). Large amounts of autonomous coins were also recorded here (Callu 1969: 112 f.) usually linked to movements of troops and the collecting of coins as peculiar souvenirs, which surprisingly often were placed in graves (Kunisz 1971: 110; Bursche 1983a: 58; 1983b). Accordingly, for the Rheinhessen district (FMRD IV:1), for instance, sestertii struck after Commodus are associated with 10% autonomous coins (Bursche 1992), 2.5% coins of Viminacium and 2.5% of dupondii. On the other hand, hoards of sestertii usually terminate with emissions of Commodus. All these elements combine to form a pattern which almost entirely corresponds to the one registered in the south Baltic coast.

Ae coin finds - Barbaricum

The ratio of different groups of bronze coinage minted after Commodus to the bulk of coins flowing into the territories of respective Barbaricum cultures may be analyzed.

In the area east of the Vistula (beyond the reach of the Westbalt circle) settled by the Wielbark culture as well as in the Ukraine covered by the Cherniakhov culture autonomous coins outnumber other bronze coins after Commodus (Bursche 1992).

In the Przeworsk culture these emissions make up over 25% which proportion given the state of recording of coin finds, may be underestimated (Bursche 1992). Similar proportions

(with respect to sestertii) are revealed on Bohemian and Slovakian territories, in Austria beyond Danube and in Sarmatian areas.

In Scandinavia Ae emissions of the period under discussion are almost entirely absent (Bolin 1926b; Westermarck & Wiséhn 1983; 1984; Lund Hansen 1987: 229 ff.; Kromann 1990a) and on Jutland they are not very numerous as well (Kroman 1990a), however, it is worth to mention Landwehr find of Decius Ae coin from Samos (Balling 1962: 54 f.).

In this context it is interesting to note what happens west of the Oder up to the Elbe river-basin in the areas covered by the Elbian circle and Luboszyce culture. Here, autonomous emissions make up 6.3% of all Ae coinage minted after Commodus (including 2 Viminacium, 1 Deultum and 1 Perinthos emissions) with sestertii prevailing (Bursche 1992). These proportions should be seen as close to those existing in "live culture" in view of the high level of finds registration (Laser 1980) and they origin from stray finds. An exception is the Anklam grave containing 3 sestertii: Hadrian, Severus Alexander and Trebonianus Gallus (Laser 1980: 67 f.). Moreover, a hoard of sestertii was found of which 36 pieces were identified with the last coin of Julia Domna (Laser 1980: 102).

Numerous post-Commodan sestertii were found on the Eastbalt territory - in the Central-Lithuanian (Kaunas) group and in the Lithuanian-Lettland Cemeteries culture (Michelbertas 1972; 1984; 1986). These finds could be treated however as a result of intensive contacts with the Westbalt circle reflected in other sources (Michelbertas 1986: 84 ff.; Nowakowski 1990: 89).

It is very important that all known sestertii hoards in Barbaricum come from northern part of central Europe. These are: Söhlenpump, Kr. Helmstedt (32 sestertii were identified with the latest of Philip II; 70% are post-Commodan emissions - Bolin 1926b: 58); Neumünster, Schleswig-Holstein (probably secondary in character, with the latest coin of Trebonianus Gallus - Bolin 1926b: 60); Winnefeld, Kr. Us-

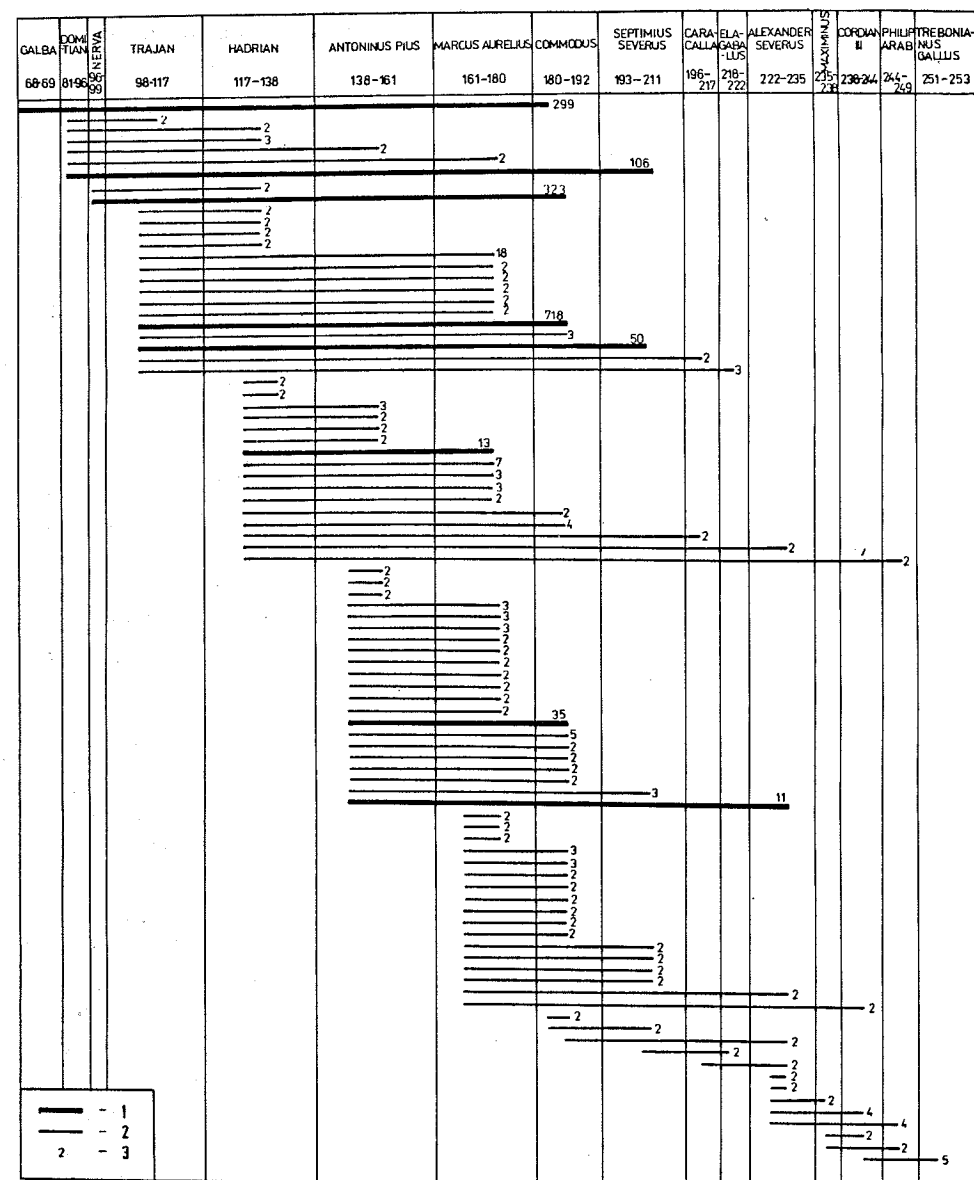
lar (116 sestertii, 4 AE II, including the latest 6 coins of Postumus - Bolin 1926b: 34) and Eastbalt finds (Michelbertas 1972; 1986). Three of them belong to East Pommerania settled by Goths i.e. Pruszcz (83 sestertii were identified up to Commodus - Bolin 1926b: 97), Gdańsk-Krakowiec (2 denarii and 13 sestertii up to Commodus - Lissauer 1887: 152), Gdańsk - port basin (doubtful complex, 10 were identified up to Lucilla - Krzyżanowska 1965).

Ae coin finds - Westbalt circle

Among 107 sestertii struck after Commodus which were collected within the Westbalt circle 2 (1.9%) dupondii and 1 (0.9%) as were identified.

For 130 Ae post-Commodan coins 1 Viminacium and 9 (7.1%) autonomous emissions were identified (7.7% in total) including: 2 of Marcianopolis (Elagabalus and Philip II), 1 of Nicopolis (ad Istrum? - Caracalla), 1 of Macedonia (Beroea? - Severus Alexander), 1 of Prusa (not Prusias) in Bithynia (Severus Alexander), 1 of Antiochia in Pisidia (Gallienus), 1 "medallion" from Tarsus in Cilicia (Getā) and 1 of Laodicea (ad Mare? - Caracalla). Not a single *limesfalsa* was recorded and if those emissions manufactured as castings had been regular this fact would have been noted by S. Bolin probably familiar with the article by W. Kubitschek (1921). They are not mentioned by M. Michelbertas (1972) either.

Within the group of the identified bronze coinage, emissions struck after Commodus constitute 14% of the total. The latest sestertii are: 5 pieces from the time of Decius (Aukstkiemiai - Bolin 1926a: 230, Sovetsk, former Bendiglauken - Bolin 1926a: 238, Kosewo - Bolin 1926a: 236, Spychowo - Hollack & Peiser 1904: 21 and Sztynort - Liegle 1930) and one piece from that of Trebonianus Gallus (Šernai - Rühl 1876). The only unquestionable finds of later coins from 3rd century AD are: 1 autonomous emission of Gallienus (Kuty - Antoniewicz 1955: 358 ff.), 1 antoninianus of Probus (Rodniki - Bolin 1926a: 238) and 2



Tab. I. Co-occurrence of sestertii in complex finds from Westbalt circle. Line depicts time-span of coins in a find. 1: hoard; 2: grave; 3: number of coins in find (draw. by M. Różycka).

Alexandrian tetradrachms (from "East Prussia" - Bolin 1926a: 240).

Ae coinage flow

Irregularities in distribution of the bronze coinage in the first half of the 3rd century in the

Empire, as discussed above, call for the definition of time and place of the coinage outflow from the Roman Empire into the south Baltic coast.

Hoards of sestertii hidden there (with the latest coinage of Commodus and Septimius Severus) are of a primary deposit character, for

they are identical to numerous hoards discovered within the Empire (especially in the West).

The diagram (Table I) shows the co-occurrence of coinage in complex finds from the Westbalt circle. Hoards and graves producing at least two identified coins have been considered. Very few groups including two coins at the most are dated (a later specimen) to the period before the Marcomanic Wars and these finds may have originated from primary deposits formed much later. There is no reason therefore for shifting the terminus *post quem* for the outflow of sestertii from the Empire to the times before the Marcomanic Wars. What may have a vital bearing on the conclusions is the earliest registered hoard from Kudrinka of which, among 299 coins identified, the latest are two sestertii of Commodus dated to A.D. 181 (Bolin 1926a: 210). As already mentioned the earliest but not very numerous grave complexes with sestertii originate from phase B2/C1, while they are most commonly encountered in phases C1 - C2 (Godłowski 1974: 88 ff.). Archaeological data, then, confirm conclusions drawn from the analysis of numismatic material. What is especially interesting here is the relatively high percentage of coins from mid-third century. They have a vital bearing on the conclusions that follow. The most interesting is a complex from grave 67 of Šernai in which 5 coins from Gordian III to Trebonianus Gallus were found; the whole complex falling within a 10-year period: 243/244 to 251/253. This composition suggests as the coins had been deposited almost straight from the Rome mint.

Negligible participation of autonomous coinage among Ae coin finds from the Westbalt territories and lack of *limesfalsa* there indicate that the masses of coins under consideration may have only been formed in the west provinces or in Italy. This is true even assuming that sestertii had been selected, for there would hardly have been any choice in the 3rd century in the eastern provinces while *limesfalsa* should have flowed from central provinces.

The fairly low participation (7%) of autonomous emissions is nevertheless too high to jus-

tify a claim that the bronze coinage came from Gaul or Italy. Gaul is additionally excluded by 14%-participation of coins struck after Commodus among sestertii and, especially, complexes from mid-third century. As for Italy, it could be accepted that this is the area that most of the coinage came from, while autonomous emissions appeared as an addition on the easterly route of this flow - through Dacia, for instance, as assumed by T.V. Buttrey (1972: 51, ref. 30). Such an involved hypothesis is not necessary. Much more likely, is that the majority of the bronze coinage in the Westbalt territories originates from the Rhineland, especially from parts close to the *limes* where they could easily have absorbed autonomous emissions.

In the Rhineland a number of hoards have been found analogous to those from Westbalt circle. It is interesting that both areas offer very similar proportions of respective Ae coinage groups with regard to sestertii - lack of *limesfalsa*, slight share (2%) of dupondii and similar proportions of autonomous emissions e.g. 10% in Rhineland, 7.5% in the Westbalt circle. The only substantial difference in this respect is a slightly greater number of asses reported in the Rhineland territories. Provided that there was no deformation of any kind at the first level of representativeness, the disproportion might be explained by exports of higher denomination only so as to eliminate asses.

Not a single hoard has yet been found in the Rhineland of which Westbalt mid-third century coinage groups of Šernai type could have formed. Despite the presence of mid-third century sestertii in finds, it seems more reasonable to assume that those latest complexes were part of deposits formed in Italy.

The Rhineland source of prevailing Ae masses on the territories under discussion is reflected by analogous proportions of the respective bronze coinage groups from the Elbe territory. The Elbe circle lies in the vicinity of the Rhineland and mutual contacts are confirmed by numerous imports.

This origin is also confirmed by the distribution of well-known sestertii hoards of which

the deposits of Söhlenpump, Pruszcz and Gdańsk with a some other stray finds of this denomination in the Vistula mouth area. The hoards of Pruszcz and Gdańsk-Nowy Port are exact equivalents of Westbalt deposits and the hoard of Gdańsk-Krakowiec (sestertii with denarii) - of Skandawa deposit. The find from the Motława river (Gdańsk-Olszynka, Bursche 1980: 88) which includes two sestertii of Ota-cylla Severa and Hostilian corresponds to a group of the latest Ae complexes of Šernai type. All these examples, including fairly numerous finds of 2nd century sestertii from the areas of the Vistula mouth and Caracalla "medallion" struck at Perinthos (Bursche 1983b), are in striking relationship to the fact that it was namely Gdańsk Bay area which, apart from Sambia and West Lithuania, offered rich amber resources (Wielowiejski 1980: 23 ff.; Kolendo 1981: 59 ff.; Kolendo 1985). Lack of so numerous finds of single sestertii here, so common in the Westbalt circle, may probably result from the different burial customs observed in the Wielbark culture (Goths) areas. Other categories of Roman imports such as bronze and glass vessels rather than coins found their way into graves. The difference therefore is to be seen on the "dead culture" level.

Relations of Westbalts with the west provinces of the Empire (Gaul and Rhineland) are confirmed by non-coinage finds of imports like enamelled shield-shaped brooches, glass drinking horn from Nikutovo or scoop E. 160 from Povarovka (Nowakowski 1983: 98 ff.).

If the Rhineland origin of the Westbalt Ae coins is accepted, their export from the Empire has to be dated to the period between the Marcomanic wars and mid-third century. The lack of double sestertii of Postumus (or sestertii with countermarks) on the one hand and of Gallienus's sestertii on the other would indicate such a *terminus ante quem*.

Conclusions

At the present stage of research it appears that Ae coinage flowing into Westbalt circle territo-

ries as largely formed over the Rhine *limes*, while the latest part may have come directly from Italy.

It is not unlikely that the influx of this coinage was caused by an urgent need to change the direction of exchange. As a result of political events and migrations which had taken place in the third quarter of the second century (Godłowski 1985a: 81 ff., 146 f.), the traditional links between the Empire and European Barbaricum must have been badly disturbed. Hostilities in Pannonia and Slovakia during the Marcomanic Wars could not but have reduced the regular exchange along the amber road and route (Wołagiewicz 1970: 233 f.) According to K. Godłowski (1985b: 346) the peak in the import influx coincides with phases B2/C1 and C1 (i.e. second half of 2nd and first half of 3rd centuries) and there is no time interval reflected in the material. That is why, he claims, the thesis on the inhibiting role of the Marcomanic Wars in the exchange between Danubian provinces and the North, should be put among "scholarly legends". It should be stressed, however, that the lack of clear traces of such weakening may be the result of limitation of our dating capacity (Wielowiejski 1982: 32). Moreover, a number of objects might have left the Empire not by way of exchange but as the result of wars (plunder, ransom, tribute etc.) - especially armor and coins. Granting the continued development in exchange on the amber route following a peace treaty of Commodus (Tejral 1970; Wielowiejski 1982) it seems that deep, though brief crisis over the Danube under Marcus Aurelius, might have contributed to the activation of the Baltic sea route. Establishing of connections along a much longer route than the traditional one for easily transportable goods (such as coinage) must have resulted from the desire to assure continued delivery of an extremely sought and costly commodity - amber. This is confirmed by a considerable number of finds of amber products in Rhineland territories from the time after mid-second century, like a well-known ship model (Kolendo 1985: 8, Fig. 1). The direct character of this

exchange manifests itself in an almost complete lack of these emissions in Denmark and on Baltic islands comparing to other groups of imports (Nowakowski 1983: 101; Lund Hansen 1987).

A group of finds from the Westbalt area (Šernai type) dated to mid-third century makes for a conclusion that the initiative to obtain "Northern gold" came directly from Italy.

Soon after, even this roundabout way through the Baltic was abandoned, probably because the risk involved started to exceed profits deep into the 3rd century. The risk continued to increase due to intensifies activity of the Germans on the Rhine in the 250's. The immediate reason for abandoning contacts might have been the Alamanni attacks (e.g. in 254) ranging as far as Gaul and particularly the invading Franks (Alföldi 1967: 365; Demougeot 1969: 484 ff.; Johne 1978: 81 f.). Following the disastrous year of 259 in which the increasing internal disintegration of the Empire led to the creation of Imperium Galliarum (Alföldi 1967: 366 ff.; Demougeot 1969: 492 ff.; Johne 1978: 81 f.), any activities to restore contacts could hardly be expected. After the mid-third century more distant Barbaricum areas lost their meaning in the economy and policy of the Roman Empire, deeply involved in defending its borders and internal conflicts.

New enlivening of the contacts, though not so intense as before, coincides with the times of the Constantines. Coinage reaches Westbalt territories only sporadically, and only by the eastern route. This direction is clearly suggested by one hoard and some isolated finds of Ae coinage of Constantinian dynasty in addition to 3 silliqua of Constantius II recovered from cemeteries in the Suwałki region i.e. from Boćwinka - 1 piece minted in Cyzicus (Tischler 1878: 215; Bolin 1926a: 221 - erroneously Constantine II) and Grunajki - 2 pieces minted in Sirmium and Constantinople (*Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 3: 1871, 8 f. {R. Virchow}; Tischler 1878: 215). One more piece was probably found within present Kaliningrad (formely Charlottenberg - Bolin 1926a: 224). The latter

finds are especially interesting for they indicate close relationship between the areas of the Cherniakhov culture and Sintana de Mures (Moldavia, Transilvania and Walachia - Kromann 1988: 242, 257 ff.; Bursche 1991: 150) via the Wielbark culture (Zamość, Młoteczno or Borochitse hoards - Tikhanova 1956; Kropotkin 1970; Bott 1982; Bursche 1983a: 67 ff; Bursche 1988: 214) and Westbalt circle up to the Danish islands (Gudme, Lundeberg on Fyn - Breitenstein 1943: 12 ff.; Kromann 1988; 1989; 1990b or Torstorp Vesterby on Zealand - Fønnesbech-Sandberg 1990a: 58; 1990b) in the third quarter of the fourth century. However, that is quite different problem connected with so-call Dancheny-Brangstrup horizon (Werner 1988).

Notes

(1) This distinction connected with the necessity to use a sophisticated system of sources description led Sture Bolin to set apart the Ostpreussen area (corresponding largely to the territory under discussion) into individual catalogue of Roman coins - Bolin 1926a.

(2) By the "bronze coinage" I mean emissions made of copper and its alloys, identified in numismatic literature with "Ae" symbol.

(3) Single coin finds on this territory are recorded since the beginning of 18th century, i.a. by pastors: J. A. Helwing (1717) and P. Drygalski (1726), also see Bayer 1722. The most complete data on coinage finds from the Mazurian region including detailed description was provided by E. Hollack and F. Peiser (1904) in the publication of cemetery at Mojtyny.

(4) Author's own calculations primarily based on finds from Lauriacum (Enns, Lorch) using excavations reports and successive volumes of find catalogues published mainly by Günther Dembski in *Fundberichte aus Österreich*.

(5) The unpublished data from Rome author owed to Dr. H. Schubert.

Abbreviations

BMCRE Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum (ed. H. Mattingly, R.A.G. Carson), 1-6,

London 1923-1962.

FMRD Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Deutschland (eds. H. Gebhart, K. Kraft, M. R. Alföldi), Berlin 1960.

FMRÖ Die Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Österreich (ed. R. Göbl), Wien-Eisenstadt-Klagenfurt 1970.

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Skandinavische Kulturelemente in West-Pommern in der Zeit vom IV. bis zum VI. Jahrhundert u. Z.

Henryk Machajewski

Zusammenfassung

Die Problematik der skandinavischen Elemente in der Kultur West-Pommerns in der Völkerwanderungszeit gehört zu den Themen, die oft in der archäologischen Literatur berührt werden. Man formulierte zwei Richtlinien ihrer Deutung: Handels- und Ansiedlungsergebnis. In Bezug auf den Forschungsfortschritt, besonders nach der Dębczyno-Gruppe und der Wielbark-Kultur, sowie in Bezug auf die Entdeckung der neuen skandinavischen Fundstätten in Pommern, wurde jenes Problem erneut analysiert. Man stellte die These auf, die skandinavischen Elemente traten in West-Pommern in der Völkerwanderungszeit in verschiedenen Dimensionen auf und hatten einen unterschiedlichen Charakter. Es war höchstwahrscheinlich eine Folge der politischen Ereignisse und vielleicht auch der gewissen Kulturtradition.

Das Problem der skandinavischen Elemente in der westpommerschen Kultur am Ausgang des Altertums wurde in der bisherigen archäologischen Literatur relativ oft aufgegriffen. L. Ledebur (1840: 131) war der erste, der die Aufmerksamkeit auf diese Funde gelenkt hat, und zwar im Zusammenhang mit der Veröffentlichung des Schatzes aus Karlino. Infolge der Bereicherung der Quellenbasis wurde die Charakterfestlegung von diesen Elementen zum Hauptanliegen der Forschung. Zwei Hauptströmungen der Interpretation liessen sich in diesem Zusammenhang aussondern: als Ergebnis der betriebenen Handelsaktivitäten (u.a. Montelius 1897; Zeiss 1934; Mews 1937; Kostrzewski 1946-1947; Jankuhn 1953; Eggers 1959; Żak 1962; Leciejewicz 1979), als Ergebnis der Siedlung der Bevölkerung aus Skandinavien (u.a. La Baume 1925; Schulz 1933; Petersen 1936; Petersen 1939; Engel 1942; Jazdzewski 1959). Der erstgenannten Interpretation neigt sich auch K. Godłowski (1981) zu,

der gleichzeitig auf die Bedeutung des politischen Aspekts hinweist. Weitere Probleme, seltener jedoch aufgegriffen, haben gleichzeitig nicht zu einer solchen Polarisierung der Auffassungen geführt. In der letzten Zeit, da in Skandinavien und West-Pommern ähnliche Kultbestände entdeckt wurden, wurde die Aufmerksamkeit auf eventuelle Berührungspunkte in der geistigen Kultur gelenkt (Geisslinger 1968: 202 f.; Godłowski 1981: 95). Zugleich soll auf unterschiedliche Interpretationen verwiesen werden und zwar im Hinblick auf die Interpretation der Schmuckdetails auf Metallzeugnissen (Petersen 1939; Żak 1962), die ursprüngliche Funktion und Zusammensetzung der Funde (Żak 1962; Godłowski 1981). Auf die in jüngster Zeit durchgeführte Verifizierung der Chronologie der Völkerwanderungszeit in Europa bezugnehmend, wurden jedoch im Einvernehmen Änderungen akzeptiert, die dazu geführt haben, dass die in Pommern auftretenden skandinavischen Funde früher datiert wurden, und zwar durchschnittlich um zirka 20-40 Jahre (Żak 1976: 193 f.).

Im Zusammenhang mit der Erweiterung der Quellenbasis, insbesondere jedoch mit der Entdeckung von neuen skandinavischen Elementen auf dem Gräberfeld in Głuszyno, Woj. Ślupsk, müssen diese Probleme aufs neue aufgegriffen werden.

West-Pommern wurde in der Zeit vom Ausgang des II. Jh.s bis zum Anfang des VI. Jh.s von der Dębczyno-Gruppe besiedelt, die im Osten bis zum Flussgebiet der Leba, im Süden bis zur Myślubórz - und Wałcz - Seenplatte und im Westen bis zur unteren Oder reichte. In der Entwicklung dieser Gruppe werden zwei Phasen unterschieden: die frühere Phase (C1 - C2) und die spätere Phase (D- E), beide mit Gliederung in Unterphasen. Weitere Etappen ihrer