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BETWEEN CRIMEA AND SCANDINAVIA. A UNIQUE MIGRATION PERIOD BURIAL COMPLEX FROM THE SITE AT BRUDNICE, ŻUROMIN COUNTY, MASOVIAN VOIVODESHIP

Abstract: The cemetery at Brudnice, dated to the first–fifth centuries AD, yielded one of the richest grave assemblages from the Migration Period in Poland. The abundant grave goods accompanying the young woman buried in the grave suggest that she was a member of the then elite. In addition to pottery and casket elements, her grave contained two brooches of type A 172 and an impressive bead necklace, whose components included two unique specimens of types TM 367 and TM 370. The woman also wore a belt fitted with a buckle and a strap-end in a style which should be associated with the Untersiebenbrunn horizon. The belt set is reminiscent of the analogies found in the hoards from Zamość and Kačín, as well as in burials in the Middle Danube region. The rare beads, encountered both in Pontus and Scandinavia, indicate that, during the transition period between the fourth and fifth centuries AD, northern Masovia acted as an intermediary in contacts between these two European regions.

Keywords: Migration Period, Black Sea, Scandinavia, Masovia, belt set, Untersiebenbrunn style, face bead

Introduction

The cemetery, Site V, at Brudnice is located in the middle Wkra River region [Fig. 1]. It is situated in an area that, until recently, was considered by researchers of the Roman Period to have been a settlement void, which, during that period, separated two major archaeological cultures: the Przeworsk and the Wielbark. The site was discovered in 2003 and excavated from 2004 to 2019, resulting in the investigation of the entire cemetery and a significant portion of an associated settlement. One of the latest-dated graves unearthed at the site is Feature 282, attributed to the Migration Period. The feature is an exceptional discovery in Polish archaeology, as, despite the significant increase in artefacts dating to this period that has taken place over the last dozen or so years, such items are almost exclusively stray finds obtained through metal detecting. Migration Period artefacts recovered during systematic excavations are still rare, and features that can be dated to the same period are truly exceptional.

Description of the Grave

Grave 282 was located in the southern part of the cemetery. The burial pit, measuring 220 × 150 cm, was oval in shape and oriented along the N–S axis, with a slight deviation to the west [Figs. 2 and 3]. The light brown fill was barely distinguishable from the virgin sand. In profile the grave pit



Fig. 1. Location of Brudnice (compiled by A. Szela)

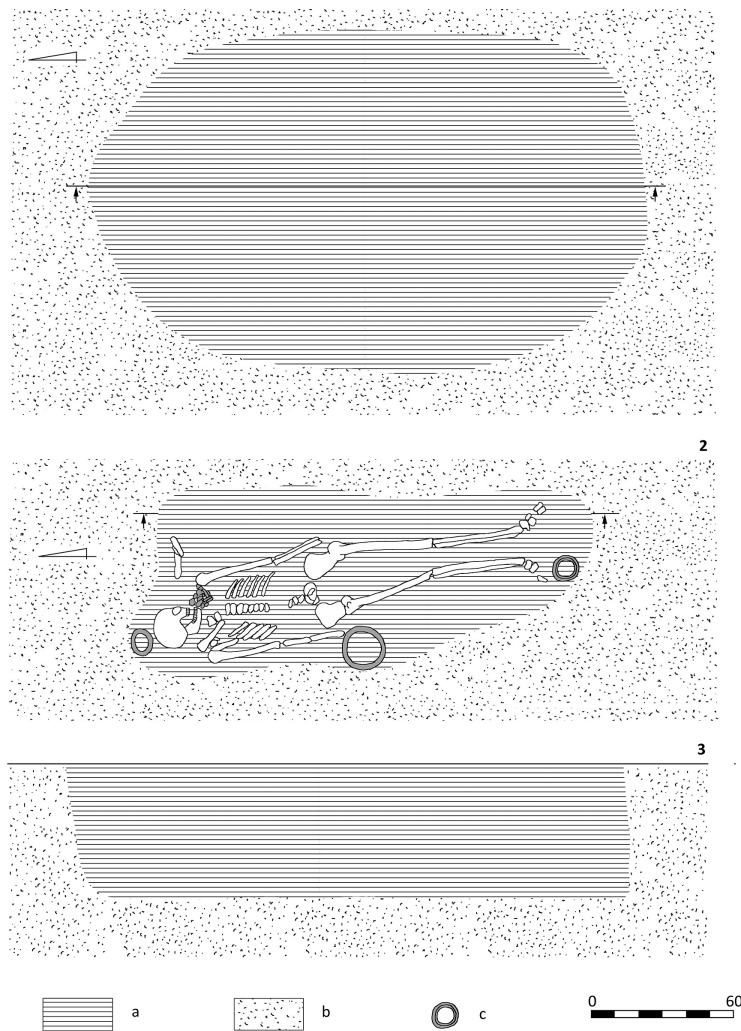


Fig. 2. Brudnice, plan and profile of Grave 282:
a – light brown sand; b – yellow sand; c – vessel (drawing by A. Szela)

was rectangular and had a uniformly light brown colour, with a depth of approximately 110 cm. The body was placed in a supine position, with the arms along the body and the head turned to the east. The jaw was open. Animal bones were deposited at the head level approximately 30 cm away from the body. Two bronze brooches rested on the collarbones. The brooch on the right side was positioned slightly lower, while the one on the left side was placed at the level of the shoulder and secured a necklace of glass beads, which was partially located under the shoulder [Fig. 3:2]. A solidcopper-alloy buckle was found on the pelvis, and an equally solidstrap-end was discovered underneath the same bone. Numerous small glass beads were scattered across the entire length of the skeleton; originally, they were probably part of the garment worn by the deceased or of the shroud that covered the body. Pressed deep inside the open jaw, there was a banded pendant with a preserved walnut.¹ A clay vessel imitating a glass receptacle was placed above the head. On the right side of the skeleton, there was a second, bowl-like, vessel, located slightly below the pelvis, approximately at the level of the hand. A third vessel, a miniature bowl, was placed under the right foot. Just above the bowl-like vessel, at the level of the radius bone, there was a small iron knife with its handle pointing downwards. The end of the blade was located approximately at the level of the elbow joint. On the other side of the skeleton, at the level of the face, there were bronze fittings with long, thin rivets, most likely remains of a casket.



Fig. 3. 1 – Plan of the grave at the skeleton level;
2 – Close-up of a necklace of beads lying on the left shoulder
(photo by A. Szela)

¹ To secure the find, the skull and mandible were removed together with the earth; as a result, the pendant

was not discovered until the anthropological analysis was conducted.

Contents [Figs. 4–8]:²

1) A poorly fired, biconical, bowl-like vessel with an everted rim. The lower part of the vessel is decorated with a crude ornament of engraved vertical lines. Similar to Wołagiewicz type VI B.³ Light brown in colour, with fine- and medium-grained temper; rim diameter 18.8 cm, base diameter 8 cm, height 11 cm. 2) A barrel-shaped vessel, imitating a glass receptacle. The surface is decorated with an engraved horizontal line above the widest body circumference and with double or triple vertical lines, separated in the lower part of the vessel by concave grooves made with the fingers. The vessel resembles specimens of Wołagiewicz type XVIII C. Brown, with fine-grained temper; rim diameter 8.3 cm, base diameter 4.6 cm, height 8 cm. 3) Miniature bowl with a slightly defined base and an everted rim, similar to Wołagiewicz type XVIII C. Light brown, with fine-grained temper; rim diameter 10.6 cm, base diameter 6 cm, height 5.7 cm. 4) Copper-alloy brooch of crossbow construction, with a returned foot. Both the bow and foot are very wide and flat. Type A 172⁴ and ZG 28 pattern.⁵ Length 4.6 cm, width 3.4 cm. 5) Copper-alloy brooch of crossbow construction, with a returned foot. The head, bow, and foot are decorated with transversely notched metopes. Profiled knobs have been preserved on the head and on one side of the spring. Type A 172 and ZG 28 pattern. Length 5.4 cm, width 3.6 cm. 6a–e) Copper-alloy belt buckle.

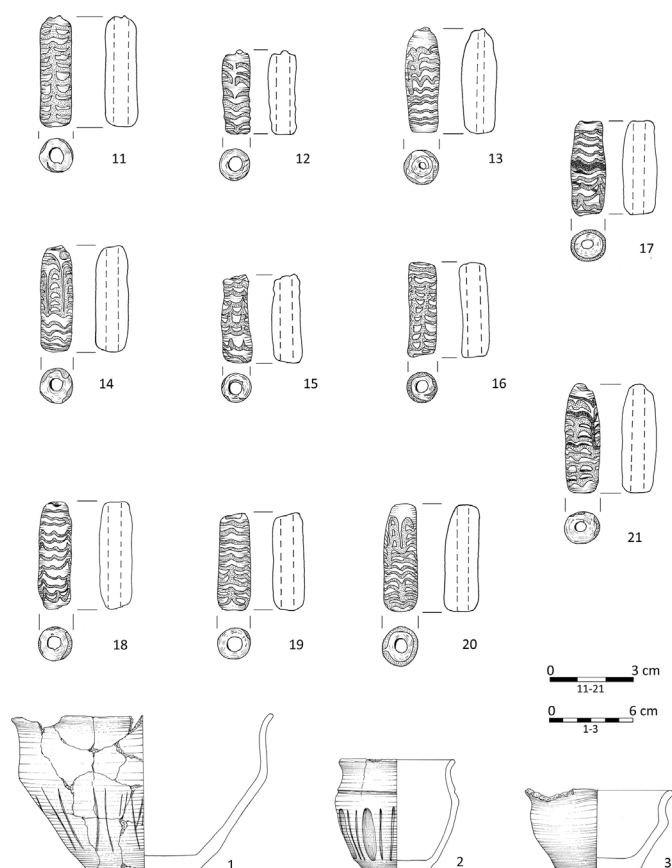


Fig. 4. Grave goods from Brudnice, Grave 282 (drawing by B. Karch)

² The numbering in the catalogue corresponds to the artefact numbers in the figures.

³ WOŁAGIEWICZ 1993.

⁴ ALMGREN 1923.

⁵ KOKOWSKI 1995.

Solid oval frame with a diamond-shaped cross-section, decorated with four groups of transverse incisions. The pin is decorated with a large metope, an engraved circle, and two engraved horizontal lines. The buckle plate is decorated with an elaborate incised ornament consisting of seven alternating horizontal rows of diagonal incisions interspersed with four rows of almond-shaped stamps and two rows of round rings. Type Strzegocice-Tiszaładány-Kerč and H 43–46.⁶ The frame of the buckle is strongly elongated, oval, with dimensions 5.7×2.8 cm, its cross-section, measuring 1.1×0.7 cm, resembles a parallelogram. The buckle plate, slightly damaged in the lower part, has a preserved width of 3.3 cm and length of 2.4 cm. **7a–c)** Belt-end fitting. Two solid rivets with semi-circular heads and remnants of a third, broken rivet have been preserved at one end. The surface is richly decorated with an engraved ornament of eleven vertical bands. In the centre, there is a band of wide diagonal incisions, bordered on both sides by alternating bands of fine diagonal notches and vertically positioned almond-shaped stamps. Madyda-Legutko type 13.⁷ Length 3.7 cm. **8a–c)** Glass face bead, with a depiction of four heads wearing diadems/helmets (?). The remaining fields are filled with motifs of light greenish ovals with a yellow border and flowers/rosettes. All motifs are willow-green and yellow-and-white in colour, and are separated by red bands. Type TM 370.⁸

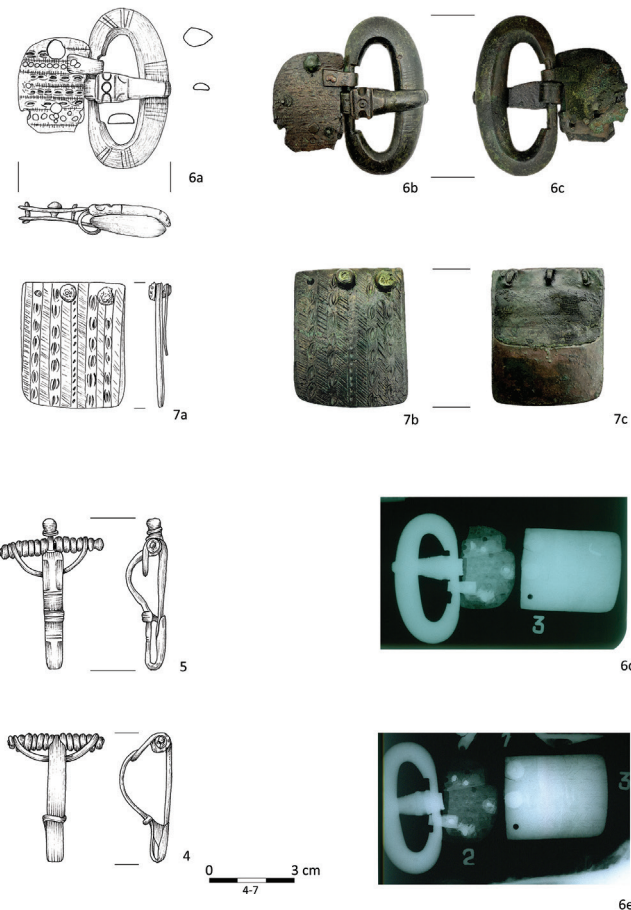


Fig. 5. Grave goods from Brudnice, Grave 282
(drawing by B. Karch; photo by A. Szela; X-ray image by W. Weker)

⁶ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978; 1987.

⁷ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2011.

⁸ TEMPELMANN-MACZYŃSKA 1985.

Diameter 2.4 cm. **9a–c)** Glass mosaic bead, damaged, round. The surface is decorated with three rows of alternating green-and-yellow or yellow-and-blue chequerboard fields, and blue fields with a white flower/rosette with a yellow centre enclosed by a red line. Type TM 367a. Diameter 2.2 cm. **10a–b)** Biconical glass bead, black. Decorated around its widest circumference with a white zig-zag thread, the remainder of the surface is decorated with numerous irregular patterns of yellow, white, red, and green wavy lines. Similar to type TM 280. Diameter approximately 2.7 cm. **11–21)** Eleven cylindrical glass beads, black, decorated with horizontal garlands in white, yellow, red, and blue. Type TM 348. Length 3.2–4.0 cm, diameter 1.0–1.4 cm. **22)** Twenty-five beads of semicircular

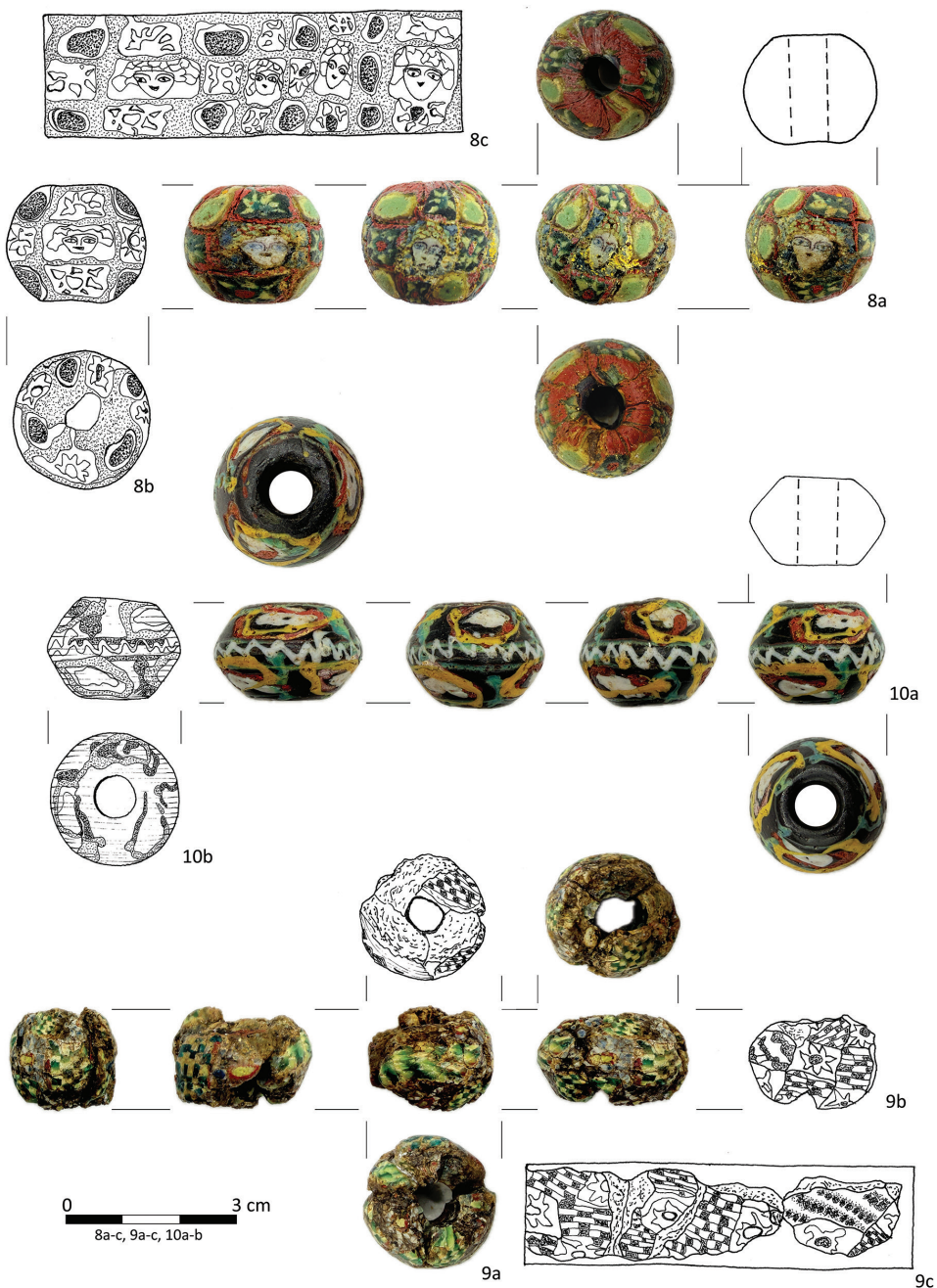


Fig. 6. Grave goods from Brudnice, Grave 282 (drawing by B. Karch, photo by A. Szela)

cross-section, made from yellow glass paste. Diameter 0.6–0.7 cm × 0.6–0.7 cm. **23)** Fourteen beads of semicircular cross-section, made from red glass paste. Diameter 0.6–0.7 cm. **24)** Thirteen beads of semicircular cross-section, made from green glass paste. Diameter 0.6–0.8 cm. **25)** Five beads of semicircular cross-section, made from blue glass paste. Diameter 0.6–0.7 cm. **26–27)** Two double beads made from yellow glass paste. Length 0.9 cm, diameter 0.7 cm, and length 1.0 cm, diameter 0.8 cm. **28)** Triple bead made from yellow glass paste. Length 1.3 cm, diameter 0.7 cm. **29)** Round amber bead. Type TM 400. Diameter 2 cm. **30)** Round amber bead. Type TM 429–430. Diameter 1.6 cm. **31–32)** Two copper-alloy bucket-shaped pendants decorated

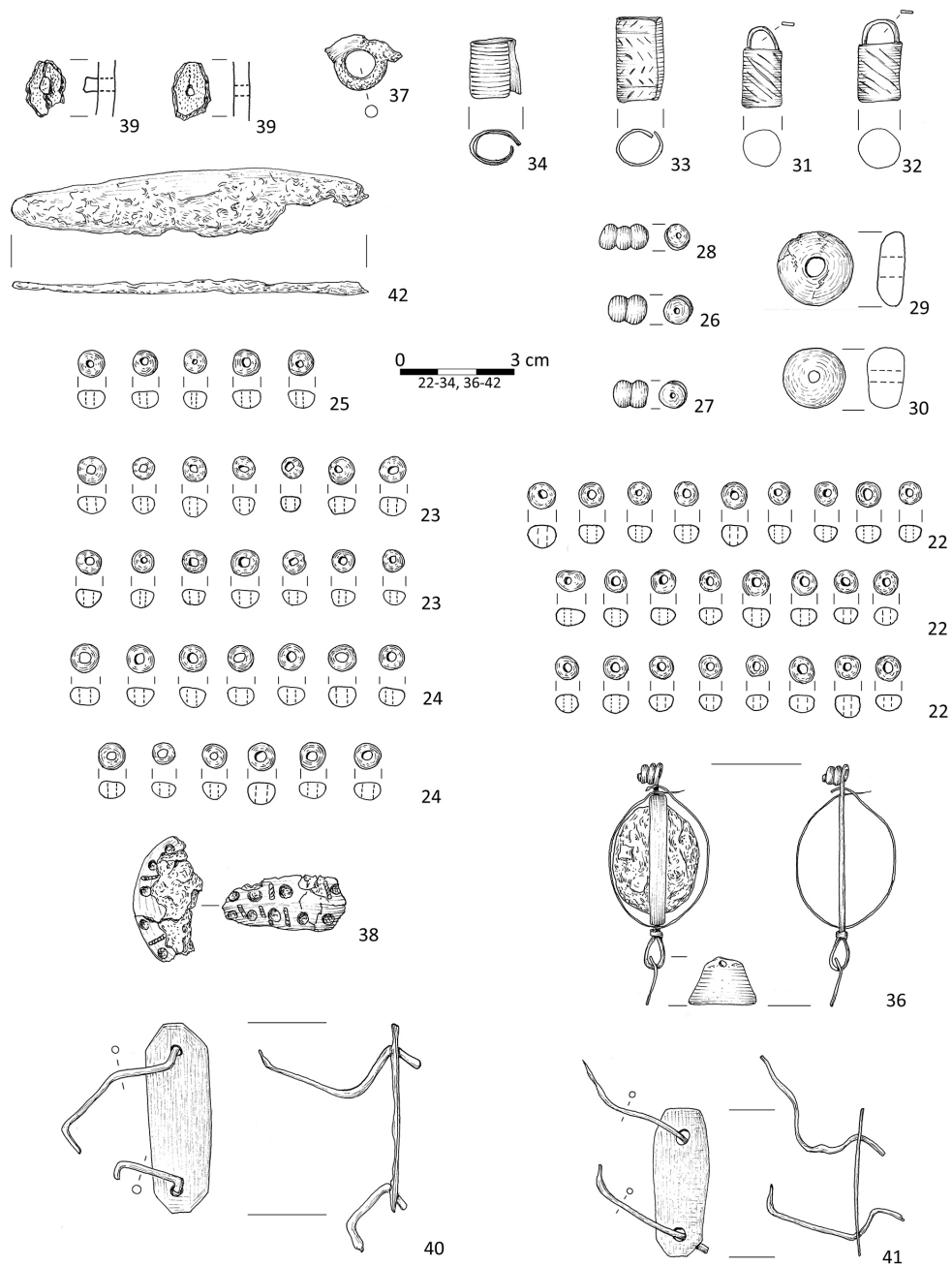


Fig. 7. Grave goods from Brudnice, Grave 282 (drawing by B. Karch)

with diagonal engraved lines. Height 2.2 cm, diameter 1.1 cm, and height 2.1 cm, diameter 1.0 cm. **33)** Coiled copper-alloy sheet (pendant?), decorated with a horizontal herringbone ornament. Height 2.2 cm, diameter 1.0–1.1 cm. **34)** Coiled copper-alloy sheet decorated with an engraved ornament of horizontal lines (pendant?). Height 1.6 cm, diameter 0.9–1.2 cm. **35)** 320 miniature glass beads, navy blue. Type TM 46. Diameter 0.30–0.35 cm. **36)** Banded copper-alloy pendant with a preserved walnut shell. Stanek type III.C.⁹ Length 6.4 cm, diameter 2.6 cm. **37)** Iron ring. Diameter approximately 1.5 cm. **38)** Fragment of a clay spindle whorl, the surface decorated with alternating small rings and cord impressions. **39)** Fragments of a bone comb. Thomas type I (?).¹⁰ **40–41)** Two rectangular casket fittings with cut corners, made from flat, copper-alloy sheet, fastened with long rivets with small heads. Length 3.9 cm, width 1.2–1.5 cm, and length 5 cm, width 1.4–1.6 cm. **42)** Iron knife with a defined handle, length 9.4 cm. **43)** Non-cremated human bones of adult female.¹¹ **44)** Animal bones (yet to be analysed).

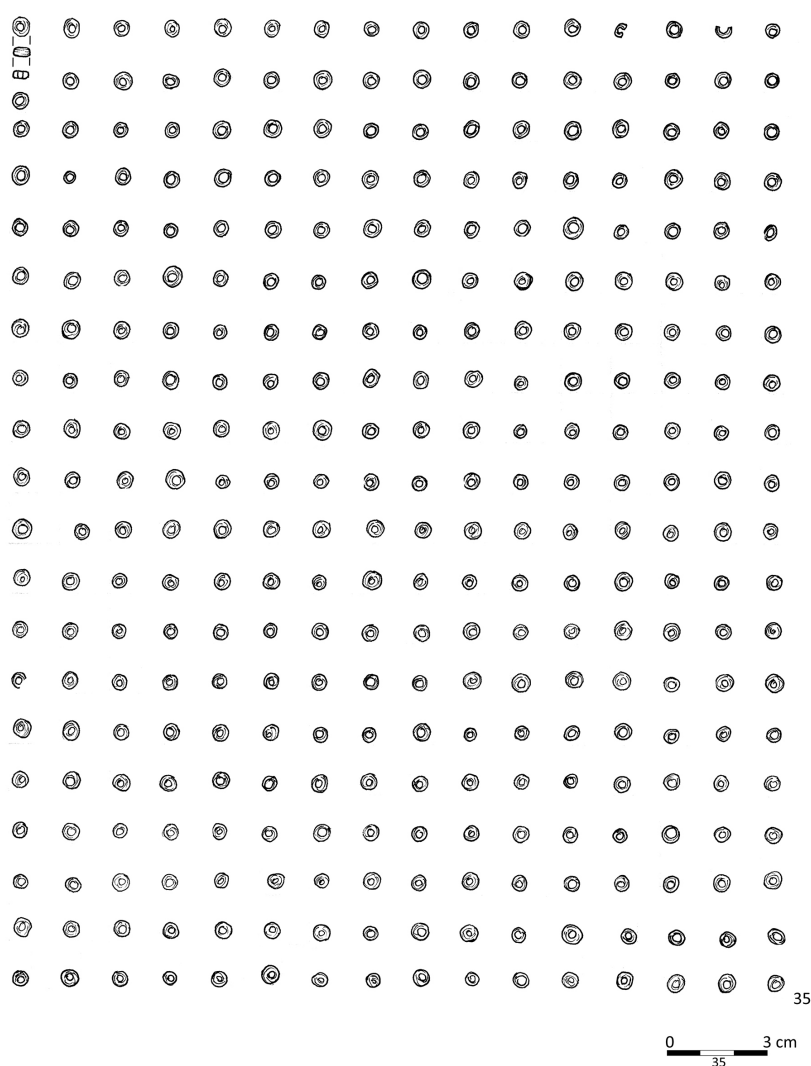


Fig. 8. Grave goods from Brudnice, Grave 282 (drawing by B. Karch)

⁹ STANEK 1999.

¹⁰ THOMAS 1960.

¹¹ For the detailed osteological analysis: see Annex 1 below.

Brooches

The brooches found in the grave represent Almgren type 172¹² and Kokowski pattern ZG 28.¹³ Such fibulae have solid wide, flat or slightly convex, richly decorated bows and hooked feet. The bow of the first of the brooches discussed was made from a flat and wide metal sheet devoid of decoration. It finds a close analogy in an artefact from Grave 407 at Cecele, Siematycze County, which contained a similar brooch accompanied by a Strzegocice-Tiszaladány-Kerč-type buckle.¹⁴ The second brooch is richly decorated with incisions on the bow, and has carefully made, profiled knobs ornamenting the head and spring terminals. Brooches of the same type are encountered in a strip of land stretching from Scandinavia, through the territory of the Wielbark Culture, the West Balt Circle, and the Masłomęcz Group, to the Černâhiv and Sântana de Mureş Culture areas; they are almost completely absent in the Przeworsk Culture and the Dębczyno Group.¹⁵ In the recently proposed typological division of A 172 brooches from the Wielbark Culture and the West Balt Circle,¹⁶ the fibulae from grave 282 correspond to type III B and type IV A.

Belt Buckle

Grave 282 contained a unique belt set, consisting of a buckle and a belt-end fitting. The two-piece buckle has a thickened oval frame and a solid decorated, beak-shaped pin. Based on these morphological features, it can be assigned to the buckle types H 43–46 as per Renata Madyda-Legutko.¹⁷ However, its more precise typological identification presents some difficulties. The frame of the buckle is strongly elongated, oval, and its cross-section resembles a parallelogram. The buckle plate's entire surface is decorated with a pattern of 13 horizontal ornamental bands, composed of: 1) seven bands of small, delicate, slightly diagonal, engraved lines; 2) two bands of engraved circles; 3) four bands of horizontally placed, almond-shaped stamps. The buckle plate was attached to the belt with three large rivets with domed heads. On the inside of the belt, there was a similar, albeit unornamented, plate to which the rivets were hammered. The gap between the plates, within which leather and fabric fragments have been preserved, makes it possible to estimate the thickness of the belt as approximately 3 mm. Originally, the buckle plate was connected to the frame of the buckle by two fasteners, extending from the former and wrapped around the latter. However, due to damage to these fasteners which were broken off, the buckle plate had to be repaired. The procedure involved attaching two new fasteners to the buckle plate, which were made of sheet metal thicker than the plate itself, and affixed to it on the outside and inside [Fig. 5:6a–e] with single rivets passing through both parts of the buckle plate. Finally, the rivet heads were hammered flat, albeit not very carefully.

The topic of solidbuckles has been discussed numerous times in the literature. Information about these artefacts was first collected by R. Madyda-Legutko in 1978,¹⁸ in subsequent years by Jaroslav Tejral,¹⁹ and more recently by M. Levada,²⁰ as well as Krzysztof Dyrda, Bartosz Kontny, and Magdalena Mączyńska.²¹

Due to its exceptionally dense decoration, the Brudnice buckle resembles the Untersiebenbrunn style and the richly ornamented buckles identified by R. Madyda-Legutko as the Strzegocice-Tiszaladány-Kerč type.²² Such items are found in central and eastern Poland, Volhynia

¹² ALMGREN 1923, p. 77, pl. VII:172.

¹³ KOKOWSKI 1995, pp. 48–49, 272–273, map 37.

¹⁴ JASKANIS 1996, pl. LI.407.1.

¹⁵ SCHUSTER 2004, pp. 88–89, figs. 3–4; SZTER, WIŚNIEWSKA, WOŹNIAK 2018, p. 156.

¹⁶ SZTER, WIŚNIEWSKA, WOŹNIAK 2018.

¹⁷ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1987, pp. 70–71, pl. 21:43–46

¹⁸ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978.

¹⁹ TEJRAL 1988, pp. 63–64; 1997, pp. 335–366; see also: BÓNA 1991, p. 261, fig. 66; KOCH 1999, pp. 170–184.

²⁰ LEVADA 2010; LEVADA 2011; LEVADA 2018.

²¹ DYRDA, KONTNY, MĄCZYŃSKA 2015, pp. 125–127.

²² MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978.

in Ukraine, the northern Black Sea coast, and the Middle Danube region. Only a few similar buckles are known from the Wielbark Culture. They were recovered in present-day Poland: Grave 407 at the cemetery at Cecele,²³ a grave discovered in the early 1920s at Lipowa Street in Lublin,²⁴ a hoard from Zamość,²⁵ Gródek on the Bug River, Site 6 (Hrubieszów County),²⁶ and possibly also Ulów (Tomaszów Lubelski County) in central Roztocze.²⁷

In the Przeworsk Culture, artefacts of this type are equally rare, and are known from the sites at Pyszków (Sieradz County)²⁸ and Strzegocice (Dębica County),²⁹ as well as from the settlements at Piwonice (Kalisz County) and Kraków-Kurdwanów, a refuge settlement at Podzamcze (Zawiercie County),³⁰ and from Mokra cemetery (Kłobuck County).³¹ Recently, a buckle of this type has been found in a grave of a Germanic warrior at Juszkowo, Gdańsk County.³²

Buckles similar to the Brudnice specimen are also found in the Černâhiv Culture area, where an analogous artefact was recovered from Grave 507 in the village of Bârlad-Valea Seacă³³ jud. Vaslui (RO). Other parallels are known from Kačín in Volhynia, Kerč in Crimea (both in UA), ancient Tanais in obl. Rostov (RU), and from the territory of present-day Hungary, for example, from kom. Vas, Tiszaladány in kom. Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, and from ancient Brigetio in kom. Komárom-Esztergom, and Intercisa in Dunaújváros (HU).³⁴

The pin of the Brudnice buckle most closely resembles the find from Grave 1993 at the Intercisa site in Hungary [Fig. 9:1],³⁵ whose pin, widened in the middle, is decorated with a stamped circle surrounded by a groove and with cut-outs on both sides. On the other hand, the ornamentation of the buckle plate from Brudnice differs completely from all the above-mentioned analogies, which are most often adorned with elaborate, circular ornamentation running along the semicircular edges while surrounding a rosette located in the centre of the plate. Such a motif is believed to be an early Christian symbol, and is commonly found on artefacts dating to the fifth century AD.³⁶ At the same time, it is worth noting that the same pattern is also present on the buckle plates from Cecele and Strzegowo [Fig. 9:2]. The Brudnice artefact lacks the rosette motif, and the ornament covering the plate is composed of engraved lines, alternating with rows of almond-shaped stamps, and two bands of engraved circles. Such a decorative arrangement is definitely more similar to the ornamentation of buckles with a quadrangular plate, which are mainly found in hoards. The only item with a quadrangular plate known from Poland is a buckle from Zamość [Fig. 9:7], decorated with bands of hatched triangles and engraved circles along the three outer edges and one more band running through the centre of the plate; as a result, the shape of the ornament resembles the letter 'E'. The decoration of the buckle plate from Kačín [Fig. 9:5] is both much more elaborate and more similar to that of the Brudnice find, as almond-shaped stamps and engraved diagonal lines fill the entire surface of the plate, which is additionally enclosed by an elaborate woven pattern made in the niello technique. Decorations very closely resembling the Brudnice artefact can also be found on the rectangular elements of a horse's harness recovered from a grave at Untersiebenbrunn, Bezirk Gänserndorf (AT), which are adorned with almond-shaped ornaments and engraved circles [Fig. 9:11].

²³ JASKANIS 1996, p. 57, pl. LI/407:2.

²⁴ NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2009, p. 199, fig. 11:1–3; also PETERSEN 1944; ANTONIEWICZ 1949; MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978.

²⁵ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978, fig. 4:b, g; NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2009, fig. 11:6–7.

²⁶ NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2009, fig. 15:11.

²⁷ NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2009, p. 201, fig. 18:1.

²⁸ ANTONIEWICZ 1949.

²⁹ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978.

³⁰ MAĆZYŃSKA 1998, fig. 11:5.

³¹ BIBORSKI 2010, p. 146, fig. 7:4, 6.

³² DYRDA, KONTNY, MAĆZYŃSKA 2015.

³³ GAVRITUHIN 2000, fig. 2:2.

³⁴ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1978, pp. 6–7, figs. 4e, 5a–d; TEJRAL 1997, fig. 6:5, 9.

³⁵ TEJRAL 1997, fig. 6:9.

³⁶ LEVADA 2010, p. 74.

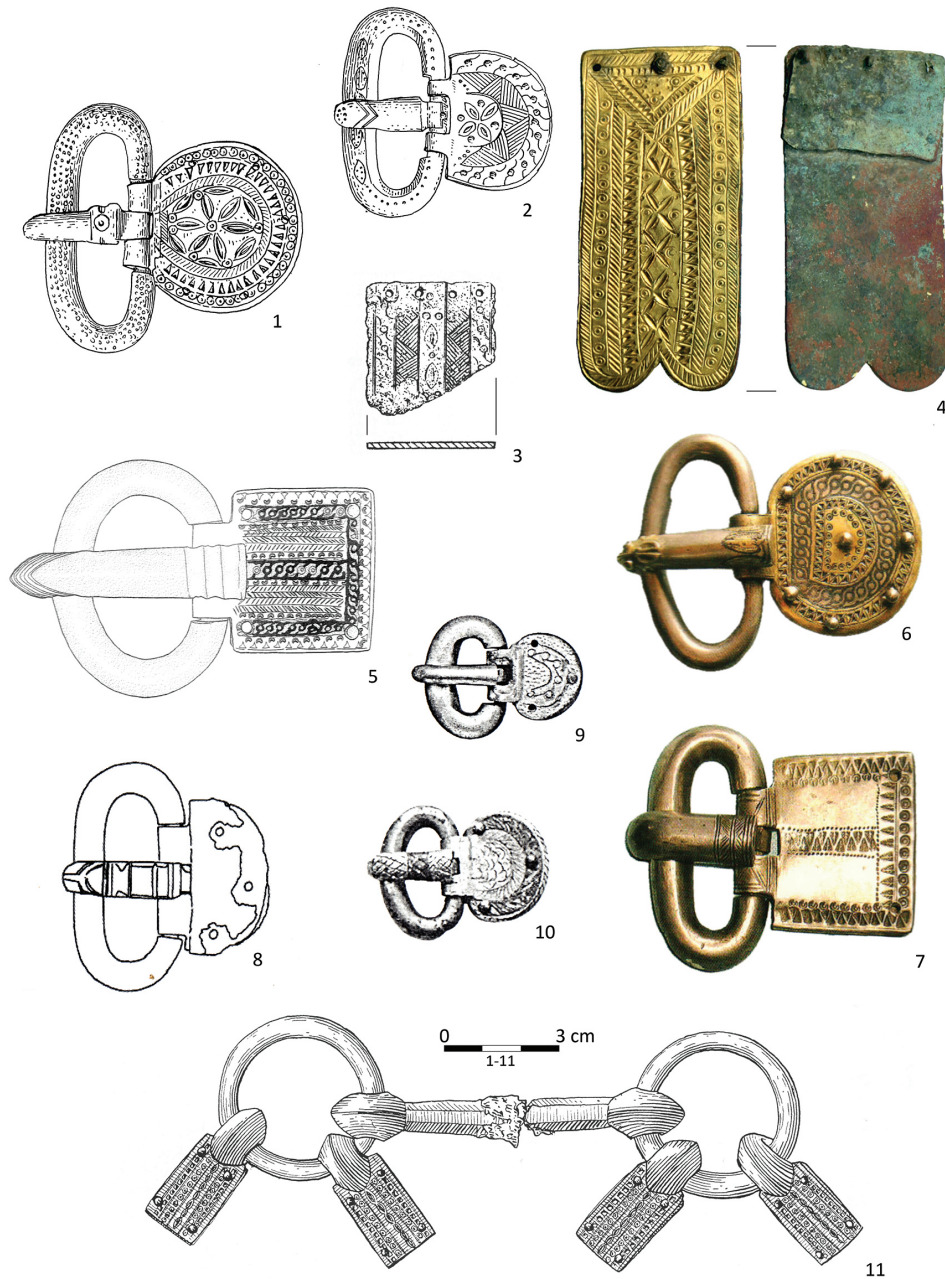


Fig. 9. The analogies to the belt set from Brudnice: 1 – Intercisa; 2, 3 – Cecele; 4 – Ciemna Cave; 5 – Kačín; 6, 7 – Zamość; 8 – Ulów, 9 – Międzybórz; 10 – Bârlad-Valea Seacă; 11 – Untersiebenbrunn (1 – after TEJRAL 1997; 2, 3 – after JASKANIS 1996; 4 – after MADYDA-LEGUTKO, WOJENKA 2020; 5 – after LEVADA 2011; 6, 7 – after MENGHIN 2007; 8 – after NIEZABITOWSKA-WIŚNIEWSKA 2009; 9 – after DYRDA, KONTNY, MACZYŃSKA 2015; 10 – after LEVADA 2018; 11 – after TEJRAL 1997)

The ornamentation of the Brudnice buckle plate and the way it was made suggest that, apart from having been repaired, it was also completely modified. It is highly probable that the current, oval buckle plate was cut from an originally square one. Such a modification is indicated by: 1) the horizontally oriented ornamentation, found only on buckles with rectangular plates; 2) the straight-ended sides of the plate, roughly rounded only at the corners; 3) the truncation of the ornamentation visible in several places; in the case of other buckles, the decoration is always carefully planned and finished, even if the workmanship of the items reflects varying standards. Other noteworthy elements of the Brudnice buckle are the massive rivets with domed heads. On other artefacts, rivets are completely concealed or incorporated into their rich ornamentation, as was the case with the second buckle from Zamość [Fig. 9:6]. On the other hand, an arrangement of rivets analogous to that from Brudnice is featured on the buckles from Ulów and Międzybórz in (Oleśnica County) (both in PL) and Bârlad-Valea Seacă [Fig. 9:8–10].

Belt-End Fitting

The strap-end was made from a thick and wide bronze sheet, with the dimensions 4.4×3.5 cm and a thickness ranging from 0.5 to 2 mm. A second, thinner and smaller, plate, measuring 3.3 cm in width and 2.4 cm in length, was placed on the inner side of the belt [Fig. 5:7c]. The fitting was affixed with three rivets with large, domed heads and bent points. The specimen is richly decorated with an engraved and stamped pattern consisting of eleven horizontal bands of almond-shaped stamps and diagonal grooves. The central section was ornamented with a single row of wider, oval stamps.

This artefact is likely the upper part of a damaged and subsequently repaired strap-end of type 13,³⁷ as indicated by both the size of the preserved fragment as well as its decoration, which fills the entire surface of the fitting. The ornamental band of almond-shaped stamps, repeated four times, is typical of the Untersiebenbrunn style, while simple, engraved lines are much more commonly found on artefacts decorated in the northern European Sösdala style.

Unfortunately, the artefact from Brudnice has been significantly modified. Of particular note is the end of its lower part, which seems to have been cut off and then asymmetrically and sloppily filed at the corners. The question as to whether this alteration was the result of a repair or deliberate interference with the shape and size of the artefact remains unresolved. The fact that the strap-end was found under the pelvis provides a hint, as, in such a case, the greater length of the item could have caused discomfort when worn. A similar, albeit significantly less successful, modification can also be observed in the case of a belt-end fitting from Cecele, Grave 407 [Fig. 9:3].³⁸ Its surface is decorated with five ornamental bands in the form of diagonal incisions, almond-shaped stamps, and a woven pattern. The strap-end was attached with four rivets, as evidenced by the remains of rivet holes. Another example of the same type comes from Grave 177 (65/81) at the nearby Modła cemetery (Mława County), which, like the Brudnice specimen, was affixed with three rivets.³⁹ A strap-end from Grave IV at Weklice (Elbląg County), which has not been preserved, was analogously attached with three rivets. This fitting was probably decorated with engraved lines and a pattern of wolf's teeth.⁴⁰ Two other strap-end fragments were found at Cichobórz, Site 46 (Hrubieszów County) and probably also at Czermno (Tomaszów County). Both these artefacts are decorated across their entire surfaces with stamp ornamentation.⁴¹ The Lublin

³⁷ Madyda-Legutko 2011, pp. 97–100, pls. XLIV–XLV.

³⁸ Jaskanis 1996, pl. LI/407:3.

³⁹ Andrzejowski 2009, pl. 3.85/177:1.

⁴⁰ Natuniewicz-Sekuła, Okulicz-Kozaryn 2011, p. 26, pl. I/IV:2.

⁴¹ Niezabitowska-Wisniewska, Hyrczała, Bardecki 2021, pp. 300–302, fig. 68.

region can also boast the find of a unique belt-end fitting, recovered as part of the Zamość hoard, which formed a matching set with one of the two belt buckles also included in the same hoard.⁴²

A few more examples of type-13 fittings are known from the Przeworsk Culture area, where they are concentrated mainly on the left bank of the Upper Vistula River.⁴³ Such strap-ends have been recovered at Ciemna Cave and Jerzmanowicka Cave (both in Kraków County), as well as the settlements at Sulejów, Site 4a (Piotrków Trybunalski County), Nowe Brzesko (Proszowice County), Nieprowice 5 (Pińczów County), and Jelce (Pleszów County). More analogies come from Kaplnka Cave, okr. Banská Bystrica, and the village of Lazisko, okr. Liptovský Mikuláš (both in SK); grave 50 at Plinkaigalis, rej. Kėdainiai (LT); the vicinity of Lviv (UA); Belgrade (RS); Perdöhl, Lkr. Ludwigslust in Mecklenburg, Graves 379 and 448, and Dobberzin, Lkr. Uckermark in Brandenburg (both in DE).⁴⁴

The fittings from Ciemna Cave and Jerzmanowice were attached to the belt in the same manner as the find from Brudnice, which involved placing an additional wide plate at the back of the strap and bending the rivets behind it [Fig. 9:4].⁴⁵ The identical method of affixing the strap-ends may indicate that these artefacts were products of one bronze-working workshop.

The belt set from Brudnice, after the Zamość hoard and Cecele fittings, is the third complete find of this kind, and the second one recovered from a grave in Poland. Its other analogies can be found among the artefacts from a warrior burial at Plinkaigalis (LT) and a rich female grave from Belgrade (RS), which contained a solidbelt buckle and type-13 strap-end, accompanied by two brooches—one with a triangular plate on the head with three protrusions, the other decorated with an incised ornament—and five damaged beads suspended on silver rings. J. Tejral dates this assemblage to the transitional stage between phases D₂ and D₃.⁴⁶ The grave from Brudnice yielded a more modest set of belt elements and brooches; at the same time, it contained a unique bead necklace, which indicates that it was the place of burial for a representative of the local elite.

Necklace

The bead necklace rested on the left arm of the woman buried in the grave; it was fastened to her robe with one of the brooches. The necklace consisted of fourteen glass beads, two amber beads, and four bucket-shaped pendants. With eleven pieces (one fragmentarily preserved), the largest group comprised beads of type TM 348. According to Magdalena Tempelmann-Maczyńska, such specimens are attributed to phases C_{1a} and C_{1b}, and should not be dated beyond that period.⁴⁷ Finds of this type come, for example, from the following cemeteries: Cecele, Grave 66; Nowy Łowicz (Drawsko County), Grave 10; Pruszcz Gdański (Gdańsk County), Site 10, Grave 257; and Warszawa-Kawęczyn⁴⁸ (Warszawa County). Analogous beads are also encountered in the Black Sea area, where they have been found in catacomb Grave 21 at Družnoe and niche Grave 29 at Nežzac in Crimea, among others.⁴⁹

The central part of the necklace consisted of two mosaic beads of type TM 367 and TM 370 [Fig. 6:8, 9] and a biconical, multicoloured bead of group TM XXII. The specimen of type TM 370 and Olldag type 2411⁵⁰ represents one of the rarest kinds of beads found in *Barbaricum*.⁵¹ It is decorated with a motif of human heads in between fields of flowers/rosettes and fields of

⁴² FETTICH 1928, p. 107, pl. XV:2; MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2011, p. 164, pl. XLV:1.

⁴³ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2020, p. 391.

⁴⁴ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2006; 2011, MADYDA-LEGUTKO pp. 163–164, pls. XLIV–XLV, map 34; MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2020, pp. 391–392, fig. 5.

⁴⁵ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2020, pp. 391–392, figs. 2:b and 5:1.

⁴⁶ TEJRAL 1997, pp. 347, 349, fig. 23:8, 16.

⁴⁷ TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, p. 58.

⁴⁸ JASKANIS 1996, pl. IX:14; HAHULA 1994, p. 148; PIETRZAK 1997, pl. LXXXVIII/257:2; JANKOWSKA 1972, pl. LXXVII:7.

⁴⁹ HRAPUNOV, MUL'D 2000, figs. 9:12, 18 and 14:40.

⁵⁰ OLLDAG 1992, pp. 207, 235, pl. 4.

⁵¹ TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, pp. 22, 58–62, pl. 12.

willow-green ovals with yellow bands. Beads with face depictions have a very long chronology. Simpler forms, corresponding to type TM 369, appeared for the first time as early as phases B₁ and B₂, and could also sporadically be found in phase C_{1b}. They have a relatively wide distribution and are known from more than a dozen sites in Poland.⁵² On the other hand, face beads ornamented with elaborate chequerboard or rosette patterns, corresponding to Selling type 2,⁵³ are significantly larger, less frequently encountered, and date to a later period.

Including the Brudnice bead, there are twenty-six known finds of artefacts of this type, four of which come from Poland. Besides Brudnice, they have been found at three sites in Pomerania: Włocibórz (Sępólno Krajeńskie County), Słupsk, and Dębczyno (Białogard County). Further examples are known from Baliči and Dudin, obl. Lviv (UA), Paškovo, Karachay-Cherkess Republic (RU), Bursuceni-Valea Viilor, raj. Sângerej (MD), Bârlad-Valea Seacă and Polocin, jud. Vaslui, and Fântânila, jud. Galați (RO), Epöl, kom. Komárom-Esztergom (HU), and Straubing-Bajuwarenstraße in Bavaria (DE). However, their greatest concentration, numbering as many as thirteen specimens, can be found in Scandinavia. In Denmark, such artefacts are known from Askeby (Vordingborg Mun., Reg. Zealand), Lyderslev (Stevns Mun., Reg. Zealand), Rabekkegård (Bornholm), Vejle (Reg. Southern Denmark), Rolsø (Vrindersmark), and Brøndum (Vestthimmerland Mun.), in Sweden from Stenåsa (Fröslunda), Fröjels and Lärbro (Gotland County), and in Norway from Rud (Nannestad Mun., Akershus County), Veiberg Fjord (Møre og Romsdal County), and Byrkje (Hjelmeland Mun., Rogaland County).⁵⁴

The second mosaic bead is partially damaged. The defect is the result of the manufacturing process, involving welding numerous small glass threads into larger pieces, which formed individual decorative motifs placed within squares, and then joining them together to create a single whole. Despite the damage, chequerboard and rosette patterns can still be clearly seen on the Brudnice specimen. It can be classified as type TM 367a or Olldag type 2408.⁵⁵ M. Tempelmann-Maczyńska provides only one analogy in the form of the find from Grave 221 at the cemetery in former Eisliethen, Kr. Fischhausen, now in the obl. Kaliningrad (RU).⁵⁶ These beads are very similar to type 370, just with flower/rosette motifs instead of a human face. It seems that beads of both types were manufactured by the same glassworks, as suggested by the finds featuring both face and rosette depictions, and exemplified by the beads from Brudnice as well as Rabekkegård on Bornholm.

In Poland, similar beads have been discovered at Kleszewo (Pułtusk County), Jartypory, and Stara Wieś (both in Węgrów County).⁵⁷ Several finds are known from the Black Sea region, where such artefacts have been recovered from Šapka-Apianča, Grave 24/37 (GE),⁵⁸ Šapka-Abgidzrahu, Grave 39 (GE),⁵⁹ and ancient Chersonesus in Crimea (UA),⁶⁰ as well as from Russia, where they have occurred at Bajtal-Čapkan, Grave 24,⁶¹ and Šectaâ Šahta (both in the

⁵² The beads come from Jakuszowice (Kazimierza Wielka County), dug-out no. 4; Leźnica Wielka (Zgierz County), Grave 2; Lubowidz (Lębork County), Graves 68 and 280; as well as from Malbork-Wielbark, Nowy Targ (Sztum County), Włocławek, Wolin-Młynówka (Kamień Pomorski County), Żukczyn (Gdańsk County), Site 2, Grave 54, and Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski-Częstocice, Site 14/8; see: RODZIŃSKA-NOWAK 1997, pp. 130–131, TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, p. 187, pl. 54; JEDYNAK, KAPTUR, JEDYNAK 2012, p. 1.

⁵³ SELLING 1942, pp. 32–48.

⁵⁴ SELLING 1942; ŻAK 1977; MĄCZYŃSKA 1977; GODŁOWSKI 1981; STOUT 1993; STAWIARSKA, ONYŠČUK 2000; PALADE 2004; POSTIČA 2004; RAU 2010.

⁵⁵ TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, pp. 22, 60–61, pl. 12; OLLDAG 1992, pp. 207, 235, pl. 4.

⁵⁶ TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985, pp. 60–61.

⁵⁷ DĄBROWSKA 1972, fig. 11:k; ANDRZEJOWSKI 2023, pls. CCCVII:32, CCCXXII:LZ 4/32; WOŹNIAK 2023, pp. 87–88, fig. 37.

⁵⁸ KAZANSKI 1994, 476, figs. 23, 34.

⁵⁹ TRAPŠ 1971, pl. 18:10.

⁶⁰ ALEKSEEVA 1982, 44, no. 517, pl. 49:35.

⁶¹ MINAEVA 1956, 245, fig. 7.

Karachay-Cherkess Republic),⁶² Paškovskij 1 (Krasnodar Krai),⁶³ and, slightly further north, at Košibeevo, obl. Râzan'.⁶⁴

Further beads are known from the Middle Danube region, where they have been found at the cemeteries at Bârlad-Valea Seacă, Grave 546 (RO),⁶⁵ and Tiszavalk, kom. Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén (HU).⁶⁶

Identical to the case of beads with face motifs, the largest concentration of rosette- and chequerboard-decorated beads is found in Scandinavia, where 25 archaeological sites yielded 28 such artefacts. In Norway, the finds in question come from: Falkum (Skien Mun., Vestfold og Telemark County), Ferkingstad (Karmøy Mun., Rogaland County); Nygård (Luster Mun., Vestland County), Sandvika (Tvedestrand Mun., Agder County), Skreeros (Birkenes Mun., Agder County), Sunde (Heim Mun., Trøndelag County), Terum (Aurland Mun., Vestland County), Klokhammer (Farsund Mun., Agder County), Åk (Rauma Mun., Møre og Romsdal County), Øvre Veien (Ringerike Mun., Buskerud County); in Sweden: Buttlegårda (Reg. Gotland, Gotland County), Sandbäck (Mörbylånga Mun., Kalmar County), Uppaka (Staffanströps Mun., Skåne County), and one from an unknown locality; and in Denmark: Birkende (Kertemindr Mun., Reg. Southern Denmark), Gudme Mark (Svendborg Mun., Reg. Southern Denmark), Ejsbøl (Haderslev Mun., Reg. Southern Denmark), Hestlund (Ikast-Brande Mun., Reg. Central Jutland), Kragehul (Assens Mun., Reg. Southern Denmark), Lille Bjerggård (Aalborg Mun., Reg. North Jutland), Nydam Bog (Sønderborg Mun., Reg. Southern Denmark), Sylten VI/Sorte Muld (Bornholms Mun., Reg. Hovedstaden), Svendsmark (Vordingborg Mun., Reg. Zealand), and Tjæreby (Ringsted Mun., Reg. Zealand). Several analogies are also known from Germany: Engen-Welschingen (Lkr. Konstanz, Baden-Württemberg), Eschborn (Kr. Main-Taunus, Hesse), Drochtersen-Ritsch (Lkr. Stade, Lower Saxony), Kahl a. Main (Lkr. Aschaffenburg, Bavaria), Straubing-Bajuwarenstraße (Bavaria), and Tötensen (Lkr. Harburg, Lower Saxony).⁶⁷

Mosaic beads of types TM 367 and 370 most often occur as necklace elements (singularly), possibly alongside smaller beads. The exceptions are the Birkende burial in Denmark, which contained two such pieces accompanied by 19 smaller beads and 45 amber specimens,⁶⁸ and the Tiszavalk burial in Hungary, which yielded a mosaic bead as well as numerous beads made of carnelian, limestone, coral, and chalcedony.⁶⁹ The bead from Eschborn in Germany was part of a necklace placed on the left side of the chest.⁷⁰

Interestingly, these beads are not restricted to women's graves but appear primarily in graves with weapons. As so-called sword beads, they were supposed to be part of a weapon set, which was first observed by Joachim Werner.⁷¹ The mosaic beads from Grave 75 at Košibeevo and a grave at the Šectaâ Šahta site,⁷² as well as a burial from Epöl, where the artefact in question was accompanied by a *spatha* and suspension loops of Nydam-Porskær-type scabbards,⁷³ were used in such a way. At least three similar cases have been recorded at the bog site at Nydam, where beads of type TM 367A were found in the immediate vicinity of swords. Six more beads were located at

⁶² ABRAMOVA 1997, 49, fig. 39:8.

⁶³ DEOPIK 1959, 58, fig. 3:18.

⁶⁴ SPICYN 1901, fig. 13:6.

⁶⁵ SCHULTZE, STROCEN 2008, pp. 306–307, fig. 52; PALADE 2004, fig. 294:8a–b.

⁶⁶ GARAM, VADAY 1990, pp. 176–182, fig. 6:10.

⁶⁷ SELIING 1942; ŽAK 1977; TEMPELMANN-MĄCZYŃSKA 1985; GODŁOWSKI 1981; STOUT 1993; STAWIARSKA, ONYŠČUK 2000; PALADE 2004; POSTIČA 2004; MAMALAUČA 2005; BEMANN 2006; RAU 2010.

⁶⁸ OLLDAG 1992, p. 235, pls. 4–5.

⁶⁹ GARAM, VADAY 1990, pp. 175–182, figs. 5–9.

⁷⁰ AMENT 1992, pp. 62, 63, fig. 19:1.

⁷¹ WERNER 1956, p. 35; cf. VON CARNAP-BORNHEIM 2003, pp. 373–375; DYRDA, KONTNY, MĄCZYŃSKA 2015, pp. 124–125.

⁷² MASTYKOVA 2009, p. 108.

⁷³ BEMANN 2006, p. 220, figs. 2:11, 14.

some distance from the weapons, making it impossible to assign them to specific swords.⁷⁴ Further examples of beads accompanied by sword scabbards include the finds from Kragehul (Funen) and a fragment from Ejsbøl. According to researchers, they may have served as amulets.⁷⁵ They might also have been a marker of social status.⁷⁶

Two locations have been suggested as the site of manufacture of mosaic beads, namely, northern Pontus or the Caucasus region⁷⁷ and the Roman Empire, Rome or Trier in particular.⁷⁸ The second location is especially popular among researchers, due to the idea that TM 370 beads depict the head of Emperor Constantine the Great or members of his family.⁷⁹ Such an interpretation is supposedly supported by the frontal depiction of the face found on beads as well as on Constantine's coins, the representation of a helmet, which is said to appear on both these categories of artefacts, and the shape of a cross in which the chequerboard squares are believed to be arranged. While the argument concerning the helmet motif can be considered sound, frontal face depictions can already be found on older types of TM 369 beads, dated to the Roman Period, and are likely a manifestation of either manufacturing capabilities or aesthetic preferences. The cross motif is more likely the result of alternating chequered squares with head or rosette motifs, rather than an intentional incorporation of elements of the new religion accepted by this emperor. Moreover, there is no evidence that such beads were made in either Rome or Trier, and these locations were proposed solely on the basis of connection to Emperor Constantine by the scholar who suggested this link.⁸⁰ Although extremely popular, this connection is not supported by the Eurasian distribution of these artefacts. Mapping the finds reveals several concentrations of these beads: the Black Sea coast, particularly its eastern shores, the area of present-day Georgia, as well as Abkhazia and the Karachay-Cherkess Republic (RU), Ukraine, eastern Poland and western Pomerania, and, of course, Scandinavia, where such artefacts are the most numerous. However, only isolated specimens can be found in the Middle Danube region.

Another very interesting theory suggests that these beads were a gift from Emperor Constantine to the members of his guard or barbarian commanders of his army.⁸¹ On the one hand, this theory would explain the presence of mosaic beads in graves with weapons; on the other hand, it is inconsistent with the dating of the graves in which such items were found. Therefore this theory could only make sense if the beads were placed in graves by succeeding generations.

The next bead from the central part of the necklace belongs to group XXII; however, it currently has no exact typological equivalent. It is made of black, non-transparent glass, and measures 2.6 cm in diameter and 1.9 cm in height. At its widest point, the bead is decorated with a white zigzag line. On both angled sides of the bead, there are additional, chaotically arranged zigzags of green, yellow, and red glass thread. In terms of its shape, the bead corresponds to specimens from group IV, which, however, consists of only monochromatic pieces. In terms of the zigzag ornament covering its surface, the bead resembles group-XXII specimens, which brings it closer to type TM 280.⁸² The only known analogy to the Brudnice find is an artefact from Cecele, dated to phases C₂-C₃.⁸³

⁷⁴ RAU 2010, p. 363.

⁷⁵ WERNER 1956, p. 35; OAKESHOTT 1960, p. 104.

⁷⁶ DYRDA, KONTNY, MAĆZYŃSKA 2015, p. 125; ANKE 1998, pp. 99–100.

⁷⁷ OLLDAG 1992, p. 237.

⁷⁸ KELLMER 1977, pp. 3–8; ŽAK 1977, p. 69; STOUT 1993, p. 108; STAWIARSKA, ONYŠČUK 2000, p. 330; BEMMANN 2006.

⁷⁹ STOUT 1993; POSTIČĀ 2004.

⁸⁰ STOUT 1993, p. 108.

⁸¹ STOUT 1993, p. 107.

⁸² Tempelmann-Maczyńska's typology includes only a nondescript, black-and-white artefact, assigned to feature 519 at the Cecele cemetery. In the monograph for the site, the artefact is assigned to feature 518.

⁸³ JASKANIS 1996, p. 70, pl. LXV/518:6.

The components of the necklace also included two amber beads: a hemispherical specimen of type TM 400 and a spherical piece of type TM 429–430. Furthermore, the bead necklace also contained four bucket-shaped pendants. Two have been preserved intact [Fig. 7:31, 32] and two in fragments [Fig. 7:33, 34]. The pendants were ornamented with diagonally engraved lines.

Lastly, 320 pieces of dark blue transparent glass beads, approximately 0.30–0.35 cm in diameter, corresponding to type TM 46, were found across various parts of the skeleton. The beads were likely originally sewn onto the burial garment worn by the deceased or the shroud in which she was wrapped. Beads of this type are found in graves dating from phase B₂ to the Migration Period.⁸⁴ Sixty other beads, which have no equivalents in M. Tempelmann-Maczyńska's typology, were probably also part of the garment. They were made of red (14 pcs.), green (13 pcs.), blue (5 pcs.), and yellow (28 pcs.) non-transparent glass. All are hemispherical, and three of the yellow specimens have been classified as segmented beads: two double and one triple. All these pieces are very similar in size, and can be differentiated by the shape of the perforation, which was either circular or quadrangular.

Banded Pendant

The banded pendant found in the grave consisted of two bronze plates fastened together by a large rivet passing through the centre of the fruit [Fig. 7:36]. These features allow the find to be classified as Kinga Stanek's type III C.⁸⁵ The upper part of the rivet was coiled three times, forming a loop, which was originally used to hang the pendant. An additional, trapezoidal, bronze plate was attached to the lower, likewise looped part of the rivet, and a walnut was placed inside the pendant. Interestingly, the artefact was only found inside the skull during the anthropological analysis. It is currently difficult to determine whether the item was intentionally placed in such an unusual location or had been dragged there by a rodent, which moved it to a 'secluded' spot to be consumed at a later time. This second possibility is suggested by the fact that the nutshell was gnawed, which would also indicate that the nut was relatively fresh when deposited. It is possible that the pendant was made specifically for the funeral ceremony, and was intended to have a magical meaning, such as rebirth.

Other Grave Goods

The grave also contained small fragments of a three-layer comb [Fig. 7:39], a fragmentarily preserved clay spindle whorl decorated with depressions and stamped ornamentation in the form of cord impressions [Fig. 7:38], two polygonal fittings with long, curved rivets, which were most likely parts of a casket [Fig. 7:40, 41], and an iron knife with a slightly curved blade [Fig. 7:42].

The deceased had also been equipped with three vessels. Although they do not find direct counterparts in the typology of Wielbark Culture pottery, an attempt to classify them was made for the purposes of this article. The largest vessel can be categorised as a sharply profiled, biconical bowl, similar to Wołagiewicz type VI B.⁸⁶ Its lower part is decorated with deeply engraved vertical lines. The two remaining vessels, resembling type XVIII C,⁸⁷ are bowls with a sharply profiled body: concave at the top and convex at the bottom. One of the bowls is decorated with engraved vertical lines and wide furrows, which imitate the ornamentation of glass vessels. In the chronology proposed by Ryszard Wołagiewicz, bowls of this type are found from phase B₂/C₁ to the Migration Period.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ TEMPELMANN-MACZYŃSKA 1985, pp. 18, 31, pl. 1:27.

⁸⁵ STANEK 1999, pp. 333–334 and 336–339.

⁸⁶ WOŁAGIEWICZ 1993, pp. 14–15, pl. 18.

⁸⁷ WOŁAGIEWICZ 1993, p. 19, pl. 35.

⁸⁸ WOŁAGIEWICZ 1993, fig. 3.

Dating

In older literature, brooches of Almgren type 172 were dated from phase C₂ to phase D.⁸⁹ Recently, their chronology has been narrowed down to phases C₃–D,⁹⁰ or even exclusively phase C₃.⁹¹ The dating of types III B and IV A is very similar and corresponds to phases C₃–D and developed phase D, although the latest-dated examples were found in only two Brudnice features, including Grave 282.⁹²

Solidbuckles of type H 43 are dated to the second half of the fourth century and the first quarter of the fifth century AD.⁹³ Buckles of the Strzegocice-Tiszaladány-Kerč-type are characteristic of the Untersiebenbrunn horizon, and dated to phase D₂, corresponding to AD 380/400–440/450.⁹⁴ Recently, it has been proposed to distinguish a separate group of buckles, denoted as the Pyszków-Gródek type,⁹⁵ which are considered to have originated in Poland as a result of the penetration of the Scandinavian style into the Black Sea region. They are supposed to be an earlier version of Strzegocice-Tiszaladány-Kerč buckles, and are dated to phase D₁.⁹⁶ It would then have to be assumed that this design originated in *Barbaricum* and was later expanded in a unique way by provincial Roman workshops, likely in the Black Sea region. The problem with this theory, however, is that the buckle from Strzegocice in southern Poland features a rosette decoration, which is attributed to late antiquity and perhaps even the Christian environment.⁹⁷ It should also be remembered that the ornamentation of the Brudnice assemblage clearly resembles the ornamentation typical of the Untersiebenbrunn style. The occurrence of artefacts decorated in the Untersiebenbrunn style should be dated to the end of the fourth/beginning of the fifth century, and correlated with phase D₂ of the early Migration Period.⁹⁸

A similarly late chronology can also be assigned to mosaic beads. Unfortunately, only a few such items co-occurred with other artefacts that would make it possible to determine the chronology of the assemblage. Those that can be dated are attributed to the second quarter of the fourth century and to the fifth century, while the latest known example, found at the Merovingian cemetery Straubing-Bajuwarenstraße, is dated to the sixth century.⁹⁹

Conclusions

The Brudnice grave is an exceptional archaeological discovery from the Migration Period in Poland. Its significance extends far beyond the local scale; as one of the few well-preserved and richly furnished graves dating to this period, it is of crucial importance for research into the cultural and social transformations occurring in Central Europe during that time. The grave goods, particularly the belt set and unique bead necklace, are key to reconstructing the complex contacts, migrations, and exchanges taking place during the Migration Period, a still insufficiently explored phase of protohistory.

The distribution of belt elements in *Barbaricum* paints a very interesting picture. On the one hand, such items are concentrated in eastern Poland—in Masovia, Podlachia, and the Lublin

⁸⁹ WOŁĄGIEWICZ 1993, p. 25; SCHUSTER 2004, pp. 88–89, note 12, see older literature there.

⁹⁰ CIEŚLIŃSKI 2010, p. 64; WOŹNIAK 2011, pp. 182–183; ANDRZEJOWSKI 2016, pp. 22–23.

⁹¹ KLEEMANN 2007, pp. 71–72; KOKOWSKI 1995, pp. 48–49; KOKOWSKI 1999, p. 313; NIEZABITOWSKA 2009, p. 196, n. 6.

⁹² SZTER, WIŚNIEWSKA, WOŹNIAK 2018.

⁹³ MADYDA-LEGUTKO 1987, p. 70.

⁹⁴ TEJRAL 1988, pp. 243, 268; 1997, pp. 335–338.

⁹⁵ LEVADA 2010, p. 75.

⁹⁶ LEVADA 2010, pp. 74, 78.

⁹⁷ LEVADA 2010, p. 74.

⁹⁸ TEJRAL 1997, pp. 339–340, 351; MAĆZYŃSKA 1999; MADYDA-LEGUTKO 2011, p. 99.

⁹⁹ ŽAK 1977, p. 67; STOUT 1993, p. 101; STAWIARSKA 2000, pp. 327–328; BEMMANN 2006, pp. 221–223.

region—on the other hand, they are found in the Kraków Upland and the Western Carpathians, especially in present-day Slovakia. Importantly, the contexts of discovery vary significantly between these two areas. In eastern Poland, belt components are recovered primarily from cemeteries or as parts of hoards, which suggests the existence of relatively stable settlement structures or long-lasting migration of human groups. In southern Poland, such artefacts are found at settlements situated in difficult-to-access locations, including previously unsettled caves. This contrast may be indicative of the different situations of people dwelling on the two sides of the Vistula River.

The Brudnice belt set and its individual elements find analogies also along the Black Sea coast and in the Middle Danube region, which clearly attests to the existence of mutual relations between Masovia and these areas.

An equally significant element found among the contents of the grave is the unique necklace of beads, whose individual geographical distribution by type allows the reconstruction of the main directions their dispersal. Their greatest concentrations are observed on the eastern shores of the Black Sea, as well as in eastern Poland and southern Scandinavia; isolated finds are also known from Romania and Hungary. Their range of distribution suggests that these artefacts spread along two main routes: a northeastern one, running through Ukraine, Volhynia, the Lublin region, and Masovia in Poland to Scandinavia, and a southern one, running along the Danube River valley to the west.

The distribution of belt elements and mosaic beads may be used to try and connect the Brudnice assemblage to the events that took place in the Black Sea area following the Hunnic raid of AD 375 and the suicide of Ermanaric. These incidents initiated a process of sweeping changes that gradually spread throughout Europe. As a result, some barbarian communities residing in the Black Sea basin faced a difficult choice: some likely decided to migrate north along the centuries-old route leading to Scandinavia, while others accompanied the Huns on their westward march into the territories of the Roman Empire. The present-day remnants of these peregrinations may be the burials that contain these belt elements as well as such inconspicuous artefacts as beads, which appeared at that time in both the graves of barbarian warriors and rich female burials. The map of the distribution of such finds perfectly reflects the route of the migrations taking place during this period.

In this context, the Brudnice burial, with its unique configuration of grave goods, constitutes a one-of-a-kind testament to the extremely complex processes of cultural transformation that shaped the face of Europe at the end of antiquity.

Annex 1. Osteological Analysis of Human Remains from Grave 282 at Brudnice (performed by Wiesław Więckowski, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

The skeleton is complete, with effectively all anatomical regions represented, but relatively poorly preserved. The bones are brittle, delaminating, and overgrown with plant roots. Some bones, particularly of the upper torso, show traces of contact with copper-containing metal. They can be found on the upper edges of the scapulae, on the shafts of both clavicles, and on the first rib. Green discolouration is also visible on the sacrum. Skull: fairly well preserved, small in size, of delicate morphology; high orbits with a sharp upper margin and large pyriform aperture. Mandible (without articular processes) with preserved teeth and erupted third molars (slightly oblique), minimal occlusal wear, most pronounced on both first molars; fairly sharp mental process, slightly everted mandibular angles. Postcranial skeleton: relatively well preserved to a large extent, albeit fragmented. Of the spine, six cervical vertebrae, eleven thoracic vertebrae, and five lumbar vertebrae have been preserved. On the left and right sides, preserved bones include the scapula,

clavicle, large fragments of the humerus, ulna and radius, over a dozen rib fragments, fragments of the pelvic bones (mainly the ilium), large fragments of the femur and lower leg bones, as well as tarsal bones (calcaneus, talus), and fragments of other bones. The age of the deceased was determined based on the overall state of ossification of the skeleton and by observing occlusal wear and obliteration of cranial sutures. It was determined that the individual died in adulthood, but at a relatively young age. The sex was determined as female, based on the morphology of the greater sciatic notch and morphological features of the skull. The deceased woman had signs of carious lesions on the right first molar and minor lesions on the third molar, as well as a depressed alveolar process of the mandible (with exposed cervices of the teeth and fragments of tooth roots).

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