The Archaeology of War

Studies on Weapons of Barbarian Europe in the Roman and Migration Period

BARTOSZ KONTNY

Table of Contents

List of illustrations	/
Introduction	11
Chapter 1	
Sacrificial Lake Deposits as Sources for Learning about Military Affairs and	
War Rituals in Barbarian Europe during the Roman and Migration Periods	13
Chapter 2	
Przeworsk Culture Warriors in the Roman and Early Migration Periods	35
Chapter 3	
Weaponry in the Wielbark Culture	75
Polearms	78
Swords and Scabbards	86
Shields	96
Axes	100
Arrows	105
Riding Gear	110
Helmet	111
Armour	112
Chapter 4	
Balt Weaponry from the Roman and Migration Periods in the Territory of Poland	119
State and Nature of Research	119
The Origins The Roman Period	122
The Migration Period	123
Participation in Military Actions of a Supralocal Range	171
Participation in Wintary Actions of a Supraiocal Range	185
Chapter 5	
The Germanic Shield and its Origin	189
Works Cited	219
Index	259

List of Illustrations

Sacrificial Lake Deposits as Sources for Learning about Military Affairs and War Rituals in Barbarian Europe during the Roman and Migration Periods

-	Excavations at the bog site of Illerup.	14
•	Markers of the highest position in the warrior hierarchy on the basis of finds from Illerup.	22
•	Hierarchy of warriors based on the finds from Illerup.	23
-	Battle order based on the finds from Illerup.	23
	Raven motif on the basis of Scandinavian and Elbe Germanic finds.	25
	Other zoomorphic motifs on weapons from Scandinavian bog sites.	26
	Depictions of Germanic warriors-wolves.	28
	Example of the use of the solar motif on weaponry from a bog site: silver-inlaid spearhead from Illerup.	29
-	Underwater sacrificial site in Lubanowo.	31
Figure 1.10.	Location of the Lake Lubanowo, distribution of the Roman Period and medieval artefacts position	
	of the finds mentioned in the paper.	32
Figure 1.11.	Selection of finds acquired in the course of archaeological reconnaissance in the lake in Lubanowo.	33
2. Przev	worsk Culture Warriors in the Roman and Early Migration Periods	
Figure 2.1.	Distribution maps of the proto-historical riverine (A) and lake/bog sites and wetland depots (B)	
	from the territory of Poland.	34
Figure 2.2.	Reconstruction of the weapons offering in a river.	36
Figure 2.3.	Riverine finds of proto-historic weapons from the territory of Poland.	37
Figure 2.4.	Ritually destroyed weapons from Przeworsk Culture burial grounds.	38
Figure 2.5.	Traces of repair of shield boss spikes from the territory of the Przeworsk Culture.	39
Figure 2.6.	Possible trace of combat (spike deformation) on the shield boss from Nasławice, Wrocław District.	40
Figure 2.7.	Groups 1-3 of graves with weaponry in the Przeworsk Culture according to K. Godłowski together	
	with the main forms of artefacts.	41
Figure 2.8.	Groups 4–5 of graves with weaponry in the Przeworsk Culture according to K. Godłowski together	
	with the main forms of artefacts.	42
Figure 2.9.	Groups 6–8 of graves with weaponry in the Przeworsk Culture according to K. Godłowski together	
	with the main forms of artefacts.	43
Figure 2.10.	Examples of ornamented shafted weapon heads.	44
Figure 2.11.	Examples of shafted weapon heads ornamented with the eye motif on their sockets.	45
Figure 2.12.	Examples of inlaid shafted weapon heads.	47
Figure 2.13.	Inlaid shafted weapon head from Prusiek, Sanok District, Grave 21.	48
Figure 2.14.	Examples of shafted weapon heads with openings in the weld line of the socket.	49
Figure 2.15.	Shafted weapon heads with blades riveted to their sockets.	50
Figure 2.16.	Barbarian conical shafted weapon heads from the Roman Period.	52
Figure 2.17.	Shield miniatures from the territories of the Przeworsk Culture and the Wielbark Culture.	54
Figure 2.18.	Re-enactors painted black, modelled on the description of the Harii by Tacitus; Dymarki	
	Świętokrzyskie (Holy Cross Bloomeries Festival) archaeological festival in Nowa Slupia.	56
Figure 2.19.	Amulets from the Przeworsk Culture necropolis in Opatów, Kłobuck District.	57

Figure 2.20. Examples of inlays on swords in the Przeworsk Culture.	58
Figure 2.21. Horse mouthpiece from Malkowice, Proszowice District.	59
Figure 2.22. Furnishings and the section of the human and horse grave from the locality of Ługi, Góra District.	60
Figure 2.23. Variants of spur shapes in the Przeworsk Culture.	61
Figure 2.24. Distribution of Sambian Type (1-6, 8-18) and Leuna Type Variety D spurs (21-26, 29-30) in the	
central Europe (7, 19, 20 — forms of uncertainly attributed).	61
Figure 2.25. Barbarian arrowheads from the Roman Period.	62
Figure 2.26. Arrowheads representing foreign traditions from the territory of Poland.	63
Figure 2.27. Roman swords and Barbarian dolphin-like scabbard slides from the territory of the Przeworsk Culture.	66
Figure 2.28. Reconstruction of the Przeworsk Culture lower rank warrior from the Early Roman Period.	67
Figure 2.29. Weaponry kits in Przeworsk Culture graves from the Roman Period and the beginning of the	0,
Migration Period.	69
Figure 2.30. Examples of weaponry reconstructions — presentations in the course of the 'Żelazne korzenie'	0,9
(Iron roots) archaeological festival in 2003.	70
3. Weaponry in the Wielbark Culture	
Figure 3.1. Major cultural units distinguished in Polish lands in phases B2 and B2/C1–C1a.	76
Figure 3.2. Find from Zarnowiec.	78
Figure 3.3. Shafted weapon heads from the territory of the Wielbark Culture.	79
Figure 3.4. Shafted weapon head from Chludowo.	80
Figure 3.5. Scandinavian forms of shafted weapon heads from the territory of the Wielbark Culture.	81
Figure 3.6. Card from Jahn's archive, concerning the finds from Pila.	82
Figure 3.7. Card from Jahn's archive, concerning the finds from Podanin.	83
Figure 3.8. Distribution map of shafted weapon heads decorated with negative ornament and their derivates.	85
Figure 3.9. Bone or antler shafted weapon heads from the settlement in Lipianki.	86
Figure 3.10. Swords from the territory of the Wielbark Culture.	87
Figure 3.11. Boat-like sword pommel from Krosno, Grave 27.	89
Figure 3.12. 1 — reconstruction of a hilt with a boat-like pommel, 2 — boat-like pommels from the bog site of Ejsbøl.	90
Figure 3.13. Early Migration Period grave from Juszkowo.	92
Figure 3.14. Scabbard elements and swords.	93
Figure 3.15. Kamienica Szlachecka, Grave 5, with shoulder belt fittings for suspending the sword scabbard.	95
Figure 3.16. Shield fittings and a shield image from the territory of the Wielbark Culture.	97
Figure 3.17. Oksywie Culture and Wielbark Culture axes.	101
Figure 3.18. Selected items from the deposit found at Stare Dłusko.	104
Figure 3.19. Inhumation grave from Kitki with bronze arrowheads.	106
Figure 3.20. Trilobate arrowhead of a nomadic type from Cecele, Siemiatycze District.	107
Figure 3.21. Burial of a Hunnic archer from Ust'-Al'ma, Grave 635 in Crimea.	108
Figure 3.22. Spurs from the territory of the Wielbark Culture in Weklice (A–C) and Myślęcin (D).	109
Figure 3.23. A chair-shaped spur from the necropolis of the Wielbark Culture in Czarnówko.	110
Figure 3.24. Horse mouthpiece with chain reins hauled up from the Bug River near Kamieńczyk.	111
Figure 3.25. Card from Jahn's archive, concerning the finds from Zabin.	112
Figure 3.26. Fasteners of mail armour.	113
Figure 3.27. Reconstructions of male belts in the Wielbark Culture from Phases B2–C1a.	114
Figure 3.28. Reconstructions of male belts in the Wielbark Culture from Phases C1b-C2.	115
Figure 3.29. Reconstruction of the Younger Roman Period Wielbark Culture warriors.	116
Figure 3.30. Examples of buckles ornamented with a zoomorphic motif on the spike.	117
4. Balt Weaponry from the Roman and Migration Periods in the Territory of Pol	and
Figure 4.1. West Balt milieu in the Younger Roman Period.	121
Figure 4.2. Reconstruction of the West Balt Barrows Culture warrior.	123

Figure 4.3. Plans of inhumation graves with shafted weapons in the Sudovian Culture burial ground in Szwajcaria.

125

Figure 4.4.	Ornamented shafted weapon heads from the West Balt milieu, and an analogous form from Wesółki.	129
Figure 4.5.	Shafted weapon heads from the Bogaczewo Culture.	130
Figure 4.6.	Scandinavian type shafted weapon head from Czaszkowo. CT image.	13
Figure 4.7.	Local forms of shafted weapon heads from the Bogaczewo Culture.	13
Figure 4.8.	Shafted weapon heads from the Sudovian Culture.	132
Figure 4.9.	Imported shafted weapon heads of Scandinavian types from the West Balt milieu as well as an	
	imitation of a north European form.	133
Figure 4.10.	Pear-like club heads from the West Balt Barrow Culture (1–5) and sticks from the sanctuaries in	
	Oberdorla (6–8).	135
Figure 4.11.	Swords from the West Balt milieu.	137
Figure 4.12.	Golden sword cross-guard and scabbard mouth from Czaszkowo.	138
Figure 4.13.	West Balt parts of sword hilts and scabbards with analogies.	139
Figure 4.14	. Example of a Bogaczewo Culture weapon grave furnishing with two buckles, including double	
	tongue one — Dłużec, Site I, Grave 140.	140
Figure 4.15.	Furnishing of Grave 1 in Barrow 2 in Szwajcaria.	14.
Figure 4.16	. Furnishing of Grave 1 in Barrow 2 in Szwajcaria.	142
Figure 4.17.	Furnishing of Grave 1 in Barrow 2 in Szwajcaria.	143
Figure 4.18.	Furnishing of Grave 1 in Barrow 2 in Szwajcaria.	144
Figure 4.19	Long knife in the furnishing of Grave 61 in the Bogaczewo Culture necropolis at Wyszembork, Site IVa.	145
Figure 4.20	Roman pugio dagger with its sheath, found in former Ilischken in the Dollkeim-Kovrovo Culture.	145
Figure 4.21	. Scheme of typology of Balt axes known from the current Polish lands dated to the Roman Period.	146
Figure 4.22	. Adzes from the sites of Bogaczewo (1-3) and Sudovian (4-6) Cultures.	148
Figure 4.23	. Socketed axes of the Bogaczewo Culture.	149
Figure 4.24	. Socketed axes of the Sudovian Culture.	150
Figure 4.25	. Position of socketed axes in Balt inhumation graves.	151
Figure 4.26	5. Shield bosses in the Bogaczewo Culture.	153
Figure 4.27	Scheme of typology of West Balt shield bosses of Type Jahn 7a.	154
Figure 4.28	S. Shield bosses in the Bogaczewo Culture in the Younger Roman Period.	155
Figure 4.29	Archaic parts of Balt shield bosses (1, 2 — nails/rivets with large heads, 3 — a high number of nails/	
	rivets, 4-5 — examples of Type Jahn 4a artefacts from the Roman Period).	157
Figure 4.30	o. Shield bosses in the Sudovian Culture.	158
Figure 4.31	. Shield grips in the Bogaczewo Culture (1–7, 9) and analogies in the Dollkeim-Kovrovo Culture (8, 10).	160
Figure 4.32	. Shield plate fittings from northern Europe (1–3), the Przeworsk Culture (5–7), the Dollkeim-	
-	Kovrovo Culture (8), and the Bogaczewo Culture (4, 9, 10).	16
Figure 4.33	. Shield edge fittings.	162
Figure 4.34	. Plans of inhumation graves with shield elements from the cemetery of the Sudovian Culture at Szwajcaria.	163
Figure 4.35	. Sudovian Culture warrior.	164
Figure 4.36	5. Ring-mails from Czaszkowo.	165
Figure 4.37	Arrowheads in the Bogaczewo Culture (1–10) and in the Sudovian Culture (11–13), and a bit with	
	chain reins from the Bogaczewo Culture (14).	166
Figure 4.38	Balt spurs from the current Polish lands.	169
Figure 4.39	. Sambian Type spurs from the West Balt Circle: the Dollkeim-Kovrovo Culture (1–5), Central	
	Lithuanian Group (6–7, 10–12), Elbląg Group (8), and East Lithuanian Barrow Culture (9).	170
Figure 4.40	o.Spur discovered in the locality of Janówek.	17
Figure 4.41	a. West Balt milieu in the Late Migration Period (1) and sites of the Elbląg Group (2).	172
Figure 4.42	2. Furnishings of Grave 40 from Podgórze.	173
Figure 4.43	3. Characteristic cultural traits of the Elbląg Group in the necropolis in Nowinka.	174
Figure 4.44	4. Reconstruction of horse headgear from Graves 78 (1) and 118 (2) from the Elblag Group cemetery	
	in Nowinka.	17
Figure 4.45	5. Balt saxes from Graves 105 (1), 60 (2), 21 (3), 84 (4), 85 (5), and 17 (6) from the Elbląg Group	
	necropolis in Nowinka.	176
	6. Migration Period shield bosses from the East Lithuanian Barrow Culture, decorated with bead ornament.	177
	7. Shafted weapon heads from the territory of the Olsztyn Group (1) and the Sudovian Culture (2).	180
•	8. Helmet from Bretzenheim.	18
Figure 4.49	9. U-shaped scabbard chapes from the Olsztyn Group.	18

Figure 4.50. Distribution of Balt saxes in the Migration Period.		182	
Figure 4.51. Axe head from Łazdoje.			
Figure 4.52	Figure 4.52. Sudovian Culture weaponry from the Migration Period.		
Figure 4.53	Examples of weapons with Przeworsk Culture and Balt traits from the Vimose bog site in Funen		
•	(1-6, 8-12) and a putative saddle pommel (7).	186	
Figure 4.54	Distribution of shafted weapon heads of Type III according to Kazakevičius.	187	
5. The C	Germanic Shield and its Origin		
Figure 5.1.	Proto-shields. 1 — maduvu from India; 2 — Australian artefact; 3 — ubhoko of the Zulu; 4 —		
	postcard from 2009, depicting a Zulu stick duel in the PheZulu Safari Park in the Valley of a		
	Thousand Hills.	190	
Figure 5.2.	Salawaku shields from the Maluku Islands. 1 — cakalele dance with salawaku shields in 1900s; 2 —		
	salawaku shield, from the collection of Tropenmuseum, dated between 1850 and 1900.	191	
Figure 5.3.	Bronze Age shields.	192	
Figure 5.4.	Greek and Sardinian shields.	194	
Figure 5.5.	Iron Age shields.	196	
Figure 5.6.	Shields from the La Tène Period and the Pre-Roman Period and their depictions.	198	
Figure 5.7.	Shield images on the urns from the Pomeranian Culture.	200	
Figure 5.8.	Barbarian shields from the Roman Period, their depictions and decorations.	203	
Figure 5.9.	Examples of defensive shields from the territory of Scandinavia.	206	
Figure 5.10.	Ornaments of shields from the Roman Period and the Migration Period.	209	
Figure 5.11.	Roman shields from the Imperial Period.	210	
Figure 5.12.	Depictions of shields provided with two shield grips and probably with no shield bosses.	213	
Figure 5.13.	Shield parts from the Roman Period and the Migration Period and their reconstructions.	214	

217

Figure 5.14. Shields from the Migration Period and their fittings.

Eigure 4 CC	o. Distribution of Balt saxes in the Migration Period.	182
Figure 4.51. Axe head from Łazdoje.		
Figure 4.52. Sudovian Culture weaponry from the Migration Period.		
•	. Examples of weapons with Przeworsk Culture and Balt traits from the Vimose bog site in Funen	184
riguie 4.53	(1–6, 8–12) and a putative saddle pommel (7).	-04
F:		186
Figure 4.54	Distribution of shafted weapon heads of Type III according to Kazakevičius.	187
5. The (Germanic Shield and its Origin	
Figure 5.1.	Proto-shields. 1 — maduvu from India; 2 — Australian artefact; 3 — ubhoko of the Zulu; 4 —	
-	postcard from 2009, depicting a Zulu stick duel in the PheZulu Safari Park in the Valley of a	
	Thousand Hills.	190
Figure 5.2.	Salawaku shields from the Maluku Islands. 1 — cakalele dance with salawaku shields in 1900s; 2 —	
	salawaku shield, from the collection of Tropenmuseum, dated between 1850 and 1900.	191
Figure 5.3.	Bronze Age shields.	192
Figure 5.4.	Greek and Sardinian shields.	194
Figure 5.5.	Iron Age shields.	196
Figure 5.6.	Shields from the La Tène Period and the Pre-Roman Period and their depictions.	198
Figure 5.7.	Shield images on the urns from the Pomeranian Culture.	200
Figure 5.8.	Barbarian shields from the Roman Period, their depictions and decorations.	203
Figure 5.9.	Examples of defensive shields from the territory of Scandinavia.	206
Figure 5.10.	Ornaments of shields from the Roman Period and the Migration Period.	209
Figure 5.11.	Roman shields from the Imperial Period.	210
Figure 5.12.	Depictions of shields provided with two shield grips and probably with no shield bosses.	213
Figure 5.13.	Shield parts from the Roman Period and the Migration Period and their reconstructions.	214

217

Figure 5.14. Shields from the Migration Period and their fittings.