

SUMMARY

The arms and armours of the Feudal Elite of the Pomerania of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century in the light of iconographic sources.

Introduction

The subject of my thesis is the arms and armours, excluding firearms, used by the Feudal Elite of the Duchy of Pomerania. In my paper I mostly focus on plate armours because they appear most often. The source of information about the subject are the historical art work, coins and seals. My main focus are the images of the noblemen. During Renaissance and Baroque the noblemen and dukes were portrayed fully armed in order to emphasise their high social status as well as their political and financial position. The aim of my paper is to review these images and document the state of the arms and armours. Moreover, I am going to characterise relevant innovations and backwardness in this matter (field). The scope of my thesis ranges from the beginning of the 16th century to the mid 17th century. The paper consists of three parts: the text, the catalogue and the pictures. The first part consists of five chapters. The catalogue includes fifty-nine positions. Each position presents a different historical figure. The catalogue includes an analysis of the arms and armours. The last part of my work contains analyzed pictures.

1 Chapter

The first chapter is about the history of the wars and their influence on the arms and armours. Since the Wars of Scottish Independence in the late 13th century and the 14th century, the infantry was becoming more and more important in Europe. Staff-weapons, bows and crossbows pierced the chain armour of a knight. The reinforcement of the knight's protection was a full plate armour which was developed in the first half of the 15th century. The armours were used in battles, tournaments and ceremonies. Along with the development of the fire arms, the plate armour was gradually losing its importance and, as a result, disappeared. The key to the armour classification is to recognise the type of the breastplate. There were four types of breastplates used in Renaissance and Baroque:

- a deep-bellied, rounded plate,
- a tapul,
- a peascod plate,
- a late, less rounded and more four-sided plate.

The plate armour forced further changes in the arms. The weapons were supposed to pierce rather than to slash the opponent. During the discussed period the noblemen used the following cold steel: a sword, a cavalry horsemen sword, a rapier, a tuck (estoc) a dagger (misericorde), a left-hand dagger (a fencing dagger), a mace, a war hammer and a lance. The noblemen used different variations of the weapons.

2 Chapter

The second chapter is an analysis of the armours and horse tack presented in the sources. In my paper I proved backwardness in terms of using given types of armour breastplates.

The deep-bellied rounded plate was used in Europe until 1540s (the half of 16th century).

In the studied sources this breastplate appears from 1543 to 1591.

The tapul was used in Europe until 1570s.

In the studied sources this breastplate appears from 1577 to 1605.

The peascod plate was used in Europe until the end 16th century.

In the studied sources this breastplate appears from 1595 to 1625.

The late, less rounded and more four-sided plate was used in Europe until the end 16th century and in 17th century.

In the studied sources this breastplate appears from 1580 to 1635.

These discrepancies result from the model armours that artists had access to and the functionality of the arms. The artists who created the images probably used outdated models of armours. It has to be taken into account that the appearance of new armours didn't result in rejecting previous ones. The last conclusion is about less wealthy knights. The innovation was the Baroque armour of Ernst Ludwig, Duke of Pomerania, presented on a low relief from about 1580. Its characteristic features are the faulds attached to the breastplate which replaced the taset.

There are 3 types of helmets used in the light of my sources:

- a closed helmet,
- an armet,
- a storm helmet (casquetto).

The shield appears only in the case of the Bogusław X. This shield is a tournament one.

3 Chapter

The third chapter is an analysis of the arms presented in the sources. In the light of my sources, the noblemen used such weapons as a sword, cavalry horsemen sword, rapier, tuck (estoc) dagger (misericorde), left-hand dagger (e fencing dagger), e mace, e war hammer and e lance.

I noticed a few types of hilts among the sword, rapiers and tucks: Basic Hilt, Quarter Hilt, Half Hilt, Three-Quarter Hilt, Full Hilt. The daggers and the left-hand daggers were elegant types of weapons.

The phenomena I have come across in my research are the war hammers of the Duke Ernest Ludwik and the marshal Jacob von Kussow. These war hammers double rounded pics. According to my research, this weapon was not meant for battle but it was a symbol of power as a mace in Poland.

A lance appears only in two cases: the knight Reimer von Wolde and duke Bogusław X. Their points indicate they are tournament lances.

4 Chapter

The fourth chapter is an analysis of the arms and armours ornaments and their accompanying clothing.

In the light of the studied sources the weapon was decorated by the following ornaments: decorative themes, geometric patterns, figurative designs and symbols. Grooves and ridges appear among the motifs which imitate the contemporary outfit. Floral and coiled patterns were also used. Geometric patterns included spheres, hemispheres, ovals, hemiovals, cones and bumps. Figurative designs included mascarons, a horseman and a standing figure. The cross symbolising the Holy Land and Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and a half wheel with a sword, the symbol of st. Catharine's martyrdom, were the religious symbols found among other symbols. The coats of arms of Dukes of Pomerania and the Saxon Electors were also identified.

Civilian clothes or its parts like hats, ruffs, necklaces, gloves, sashes and boots were worn along with the weapons.

In my paper I'm proving the meaning of iconography in identifying the original armour. One of examples is the epitaph of the Duke Bogusław X from the mid 16th century. Ornaments presented on his armour correspond with the ones from Deutsche Historisches Museum. Friedrich Wilhelm I, king of Prussia, took the armours of the dukes of Pomerania from Szczecin to Berlin in 18th century. My research proved that the aforementioned armour was one of them.

5 Chapter

In the fifth chapter I wander where the weapons of the Pomeranian noblemen could have come from. Craftsmen producing arms and armours like armourers, sword-smiths, arms and armour smiths and blade smiths worked in guilds of craftsmen in Duchy of Pomerania. There were also freelance craftsmen who were granted a special permission to operate by the Dukes. Both groups of craftsmen supplied arms and armours to the dukes and knights. More sophisticated orders were probably executed in the workshops on the territory of the Imperial Germany.