

Martijn A. Wijnhoven

European Mail Armour

Ringed Battle Shirts from the Iron Age, Roman Period and Early Middle Ages

Mail armour (commonly mislabelled 'chainmail') was used for more than two millennia on the battlefield. After its invention in the Iron Age, mail rapidly spread all over Europe and beyond. The Roman army, keen on new military technology, soon adopted mail armour and used it successfully for centuries. Its history did not stop there and mail played a vital role in warfare during the Middle Ages up to the Early Modern Period.

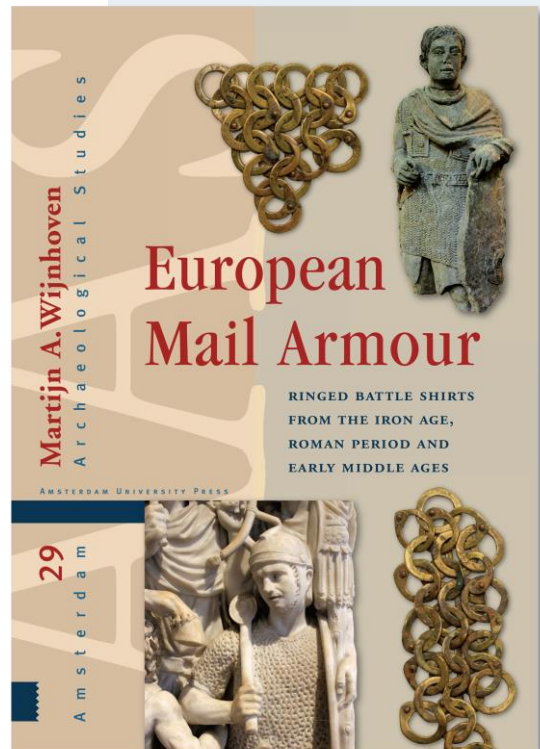
Given its long history, one would think mail is a well-documented material, but that is not the case. For the first time, this book lays a solid foundation for the understanding of mail armour and its context through time. It applies a long-term multi-dimensional approach to extract a wealth of as yet untapped information from archaeological, iconographic and written sources. This is complemented with technical insights on the mail maker's *chaîne opératoire*.

BIOGRAPHY

Martijn A. Wijnhoven holds a PhD in archaeology from Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He specializes in ancient military studies and has published extensively on the analysis and reconstruction of ancient armour spanning from the Iron Age to the Middle Ages. His research combines methods from history, anthropology, and archaeology, rendering a holistic approach to material studies.

"Mail has been something of a Cinderella in the field of early martial equipment. Now, in this meticulous study, Wijnhoven has demonstrated and explored the extensive potential of the archaeological, iconographic and textual evidence. It makes a fundamental contribution to the study of ancient martial material culture, and has broader implications for the development and structuring of early European ironworking traditions."

- Prof. Simon James, University of Leicester



Amsterdam Archaeological Studies
December 2021

520 pages, 300 colour illustrations
Hardback

210 x 297 mm

€161.00 / £146.00 / \$186.00

€160.99 / £145.99 / \$185.99

ISBN 9789463721264

e-ISBN 9789048554294

BISAC SOC003000 / ANT024000 / DES013000

BIC HDDK / HDDM / TBX / TTM

KEYWORDS

multi-dimensional approach to material culture, development and transition of technology, military equipment
long-term: Iron Age - Roman period - Middle Ages

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Acknowledgements

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Previous research
- 1.2 Research question and aims
- 1.3 Chaîne opératoire
- 1.4 A multi-dimensional approach to material studies
- 1.5 Scope
- 1.6 Mail or chain-mail?

2 The Origins of Mail Armour

- 2.1 Suggested precursors
- 2.2 Contested origins
- 2.3 Earliest evidence
- 2.4 Tracing the earliest contexts
- 2.5 Further dispersal
- 2.6 When, where and by whom

3 Distribution and Archaeological Contexts

- 3.1 Battlefields and accidental loss
- 3.2 Iron Age mail
- 3.3 The Roman Republic
- 3.4 The Roman Principate
- 3.5 Hybrid feathered armour
- 3.6 Hybrid armour beyond the roman empire
- 3.7 Late Antiquity
- 3.8 The Barbaricum and beyond
- 3.9 Mail for men, women and children
- 3.10 Social access to mail outside the Roman Empire
- 3.11 Centuries of archaeological evidence

4 The Iconography of Early Mail Armour

- 4.1 the iconographic evidence
- 4.2 the 3rd century bc to the end of the roman republic

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- 4.3 early empire until the end of the 1st century ad
- 4.4 the 2nd century ad
- 4.5 the 3rd to 5th century ad
- 4.6 development of mail armour design in iconography

5 The Naming of Mail Armour

- 5.1 Classical literature on armour
- 5.2 Lorica hamata
- 5.3 Other designations
- 5.4 Simply lorica

6 Decoration in Mail Garments

- 6.1 Gold on silver
- 6.2 Copper alloy elements
- 6.3 Decorative origin
- 6.4 Development and distribution
- 6.5 Decorative trimmings
- 6.6 Inserted patterns
- 6.7 Contrasting rivets
- 6.8 Decoration of hybrid armour
- 6.9 Decoration of 'miniature mail'
- 6.10 Decorative hems
- 6.11 Colourful Roman army

7 Padded Garments

- 7.1 the advantages and disadvantages of flexible armour
- 7.2 himation, thoracomachus, subarmalis and cimberian tunic
- 7.3 textile and leather remains
- 7.4 medieval analogy, gladiators and pteruges
- 7.5 concealed by metal armour

8 The Craft of Making Mail Rings

- 8.1 The mail maker's process
- 8.2 The manufacture of metal wire
- 8.3 The manufacture of solid rings
- 8.4 Unravelling the use of butted rings

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8.5 Loose rings

8.6 The mail making workshop

9 Weaving Patterns

9.1 Four-in-one pattern

9.2 Six-in-one pattern from tiefenau

9.3 Pinched loop-in-loop pattern from Bertoldsheim

9.4 Four-in-one pattern in hybrid armour

9.5 Favourable characteristics

10 The Construction of Mail Garments

10.1 Current knowledge based on late mail from Europe

10.2 Presence of constructional techniques in early mail

10.3 Construction of early mail by working in the flat

10.4 Construction of textile clothing and mail

10.5 Construction of the coat with shoulder guards

10.6 Mail with shoulder guards and textile clothing

10.7 The development of mail armour through the ages

10.8 Construction in cultural context

11 Ring Characteristics

11.1 The relevance of the seemingly irrelevant

11.2 Ring size

11.3 Direction of the overlap and ring types

11.4 Cross-section of riveted rings

11.5 Rivet characteristics

11.6 Shape of the overlap in riveted rings

11.7 Cross-section of solid rings

11.8 Ring characteristics typology

12 Final Considerations

12.1 Insights

12.2 Prospects

12.3 Methodological potential

Bibliography

Database

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