

JAKUB WRZOSEK*

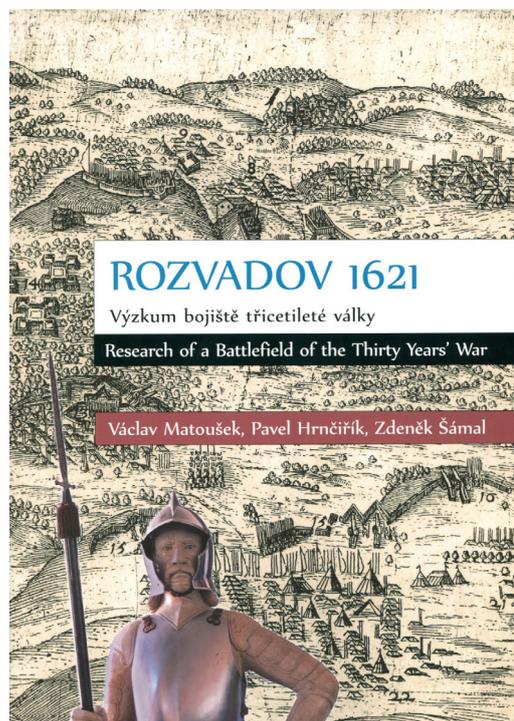
(REVIEW) VÁCLAV MATOUŠEK, PAVEL HRNČIŘIK, ZDENĚK ŠÁMAL,
ROZVADOV 1621. VÝZKUM BOJIŠTĚ TŘICETILETÉ VALKY.
ČESKÉ BUDĚJOVICE 2018, PP. 205

Received: 28.09.2020 Accepted: 07.10.2020

Citation: Wrzosek J. 2020. (Review) Václav Matoušek, Pavel Hrnčířik, Zdeněk Šámal, *Rozvadov 1621. Výzkum bojiště třicetileté války.* České Budějovice 2018, pp. 205. "Fasciculi Archaeologiae Historicae" 33, 227-229, DOI 10.23858/FAH33.2020.017

Battlefield archaeology is a relatively young sub-discipline, which only recently has developed its methodology fully and become popular among researchers.¹ Although not much of this type of research is conducted in Europe, especially in the form of multiannual projects, it should be emphasised that the Czech Republic has great achievements in this field, which results in numerous publications. They cover a wide chronological range, from the Middle Ages² through the Modern Period³ to the 19th century.⁴ Czech researchers have taken a special liking to three armed conflicts: the Hussite Wars (1419-1436), the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and the Austro-Prussian War (1866). The work discussed here concerns the second of the above-mentioned conflicts and fits into the mainstream of these research interests.

The Battle of Rozvadov was *de facto* a series of clashes that took place in the summer (July-September) of 1621 in the area between Rozvadov and Waidhaus. The Catholic League Army fought against Bohemian-Palatinate troops in an open field (including the so-called Battle on the Field of Blood), as well as building field fortifications and conducting artillery fire.



The clashes near Rozvadov are a little-known episode of the Bohemian-Palatinate phase of the Thirty Years' War,⁵ therefore the results of archaeological research conducted there seem to be even more interesting.

The publication under review is a collective work of three authors: two archaeologists, namely Václav

* National Institute of Cultural Heritage, Warsaw;  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2308-1109>; jwrzosek@nid.pl

¹ More regarding this topic: Carman 2013, 43-45; Wrzosek 2019.

² E.g. Koscelnik 2014; Biederman et al. 2017.

³ E.g. Matoušek 2006; Bureš and Rytíř 2017.

⁴ E.g. Holas 2019.

⁵ Biernacki 2008.

Matoušek and Zdeněk Šámal, and one historian, Pavel Hrnčířik. Before presenting the results of fieldwork, the authors devote a lot of space, as many as five chapters, to introductory issues. The book begins with a chapter by Václav Matoušek, *The History of Archaeological Research of Battlefields of the Thirty Years' War on the Territory of the Czech Republic* (pp. 7-17), in which the author briefly presents the results of archaeological research conducted on 11 battlefields of the Thirty Years' War. The history of research and its results, supplemented with illustrations, are presented regarding each of them. This part is a good example of a synthesis of Thirty-Years'-War archaeology in the Czech Republic. It provides comprehensible knowledge on the scope, methodology and results of such research. At the same time, a reader interested in individual clashes has the opportunity to find more detailed information by referring to the cited literature.

One of the most important stages of publishing the results of this type of research is historical and cartographic study.⁶ The authors present its results in three subsequent chapters. The first one, *Historical Contexts and the Course of the Battle of Rozvadov* by Pavel Hrnčířik (pp. 19-40), presents the historical background and the course of the series of clashes that took place near Rozvadov between July and September 1621. The illustrations included are a selection of iconography presenting various types of field fortifications, as well as the appearance and weaponry of soldiers at that time. At the end of the chapter, there are five figures that reconstruct the clashes in the form of a spatial projection depicting topography, forestation, the road network and water courses.

In the next part, *The Geographic Position of the Battlefield and its Period Depiction in Sadeler's Engraving* (pp. 41-48), Václav Matoušek presents an analysis of the geographical location of the battlefield. The author does this both from a modern-day and archival perspective; the latter is based on the 17th-century map by Rafael Sadeler, showing the course of military actions between Rozvadov and Waidhaus. This unique source has allowed him, on the one hand, to attempt the reconstruction of past landscape, and on the other, to locate and determine the nature of fortifications and military camps.

The above analysis is continued in the next chapter, *The Battlefield on Cartographic Sources from the 17th and 18th Centuries* by Václav Matoušek and Pavel Hrnčířik (pp. 51-63). The maps, prepared in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, provide the basis for further studies of the battlefield landscape and its changes over the course of 300 years. They are also an

invaluable resource in research on fortifications and their location.

This last issue is the topic of the next part of the book, *Summary of Identified Remnants of Fortifications and Results of Geodetic Measurement* by Václav Matoušek, Pavel Hrnčířik (pp. 65-83). On the basis of the cartographic analyses of archival materials, as well as contemporary geodetic measurements and a numerical terrain model, the authors locate 18 remnants of field fortifications in the modern landscape. The analysis of metric data combined with cross-sections of these objects allow for their identification and division into seven categories.

After the chapters presenting the results of archival study and non-intrusive research, the authors move on to discussing the results of archaeological research.

In the chapter entitled *Archaeological Research* (pp. 85-95) Václav Matoušek presents the results of excavations carried out at a selected fortification complex, including a redoubt built and used by the Catholic army. During this research, the ramparts, the moat and the immediate surroundings of these fortifications were recognised. Their exact dimensions were determined and their construction was identified. An anthracological analysis of the remains of wood was also performed to identify the species of trees used for construction.

In the next part of the work, *Metal Detector Survey - Methods, Technology, Discussion* (pp. 97-102), Zdeněk Šámal discusses the results of research carried out with the use of metal detectors. Initially, researchers focused on using these devices as part of excavations. In subsequent research seasons, they focused on other areas covering approximately 66 hectares and discovering over 700 metal objects. The site of the clash on the so-called Field of Blood from July 16, 1621 was given the most attention. The chapter is illustrated by planigraphy of the finds presented on a contemporary map background.

In the penultimate chapter, *Finds* (pp. 105-134), Pavel Hrnčířik presents an analysis of the finds. As on other battlefields in Europe, the most numerous category comprises metal projectiles for small arms and artillery weapons, of which 754 have been found. Of this number, the vast majority (over 90%) are lead projectiles for small arms. The author has tried to identify and assign them to various types of weapons: pistols, rifles, arquebuses and muskets. However, he has done so solely on the basis of diameter measurements, ignoring their most important parameter – weight. Lead balls found on battlefields hardly ever have a perfect spherical shape, therefore measuring their diameter will always be error-prone.⁷ In this type of analysis, the

⁶ Wrzosek 2017, 84.

⁷ Sivilich 2007, 86-87; Harding 2012, 23-24; Sivilich 2016, 25-27.

weight of a lead ball should be taken into account and the diameter should be calculated from it, preferably using the Sivilich formula.⁸

In this part of the work, apart from the above considerations, the author also presents and interprets the planigraphy of finds in various areas of military operations.

Artillery projectiles are another category of relics. These include iron cannonballs, shells and lead canister balls. Here, apart from the identification attempt, there is also an analysis of location of the objects, regarding also the range of artillery at that time.

At the end, other items obtained during the research are described. They include tools (axes, a shovel), individual pieces of a blade (cavalry sword?), firearms (trigger guard from a musket), iron pincers for casting lead bullets, an ornament and devotional items.

The book ends with a short summary followed by a list of the literature and other used sources, an index and an English translation.

Can this book be treated as a model example of the study of the results of archaeological research conducted on the battlefield from the Modern Period? The answer is a definite ‘yes’. Although the analysis of lead projectiles leaves a feeling of certain dissatisfaction, it should be emphasised that the authors have made every effort to present the reader with a full picture of the armed clashes of 1621. Especially the results of historical and cartographic analyses are fully recognised. Combined with non-intrusive research, they set an excellent example to be used in planning and carrying out excavations and research with the use of metal detectors.

One should only hope that Rozvadov will not be the last clash of the Thirty Years’ War, covered by historical and archaeological research, but will mark the beginning of an extensive programme of research into the battlefields of this armed conflict.

Bibliography

- Biederman J., Čornej P., Militká L., Šámál Z. 2017. *Archeologický výzkum bojiště u Lipan 1434 a jeho přínos k poznání významné dějinné události. První etapa výzkumu*. “Zprávy památkové péče” 77, příloha, 1-10.
- Biernacki W. 2008. *Wojna trzydziestoletnia 1: Powstanie czeskie i wojna o Palatynat 1618-1623*. Zabrze.
- Bureš M., Rytíř L. 2017. *Bílá Hora – bojiště třicetileté a studené války*. “Archaeologia historica” 42(1), 245-259.
- Carman J. 2013. *Archaeologies of Conflict*. Debates in Archaeology. London.
- Harding D. F. 2012. *Lead Shot of the English Civil War: a Radical Study*. London.
- Holas M. 2019. *Archeologie prusko-rakouské války z roku 1866*. Červený Kostelec.
- Koscelník P. 2014. *Lokalizace bojiště u Tachova z roku 1427, či náhodný soubor militarií?* „Archeologie západních Čech” 8, 113-124.
- Matoušek V. 2006. *Třebel. Obraz krajiny s bitvou*. Praha.
- Sivilich D. 2007. *What the Musket Ball Can Tell: Monmouth Battlefield State Park, New Jersey*. In: D. Scott, L. Babits, Ch. Haecker (eds.), *Fields of Conflict: Battlefield Archaeology from the Roman Empire to the Korean War 1. Searching for War in the Ancient and Early Modern World*. Westport, 84-101.
- Sivilich D. 2016. *Musket Ball and Small Shot Identification. A Guide*. Norman.
- Wrzosek J. 2017. *Historyczne pole bitwy jako stanowisko archeologiczne. Wybrane problemy*. “Ochrona Zabytków” 2(271), 79-98.
- Wrzosek J. 2019. *Od archeologii pól bitewnych do archeologii konfliktów*. In: H. Mik, W. Węglińska (eds.), *Materialne pozostałości konfliktów i zbrodni XX wieku w świetle najnowszych badań archeologicznych*. Gdańsk, 32-42.

⁸ Sivilich 2007, 87.