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English Summaries

Audrey Tuaillet-Demésy

Réflexions épistémologiques autour de la (re)création du geste technique de combats anciens à partir de sources historiques

HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) are well-ordered martial confrontations that take place in contemporary leisure time. The aim of this paper is to understand, from an ethnological point of view, how experimentation allows HEMA to be both an historical activity and also physical practice. The experimentation, in this specific case, is a tool which involves motor activity used to bring back to life past skills and techniques. Furthermore, it defines the process used for historical martial arts, from the reading of sources to the movement's re-creation. Today, despite a plurality of practices and different goals ("sportivisation", having tournaments, doing historical research, etc.), the HEMA community follows a guideline, accepted by the participants, from historical descriptions to "good moves". Experimentation is at the heart of this modern process of historical re-enactment.

Thore Wilkens

Untersuchungen zur Relevanz praktisch perspektivierter Analysen in der Fechtbuchforschung

This paper reviews methods and perspectives in secondary literature about 15th and 16th century combat books. It outlines that most of the studies in this field do not consider the practical nature of these books. In addition it demonstrates that not to consider their practical aspects leads to misconceptions and debatable results from the point of view of interpretation as well as analysis. Furthermore, the paper proposes a method of analyzing the practical contents of medieval combat manuals. The method is illustrated by an interpretation of a wrestling technique from the 15th century. The paper closes with the conclusion that practical analysis has to be part of the basic research in studying combat manuals.

Gilles Martinez

La méthode expérimentale appliquée à l'étude du geste guerrier: l'exemple des formations collectives d'infanterie du Moyen Age central (XI^e–XIII^e siècles)

The military manoeuvres of infantry formations during the Central Middle Ages (11th–13th c.) have so far been subject to little research. This article attempts to address this with a double objective.

This article focuses firstly on the specifics of the feudal period; the author conducts tests on group combat as part of his doctoral thesis. Previously, experiments have considered the individual within the formation, and not the formation in its own right, when the individual disappears in the collective. In recent tests, new information on manoeuvres has emerged (for example, which actions can be performed, which actions are effective and economical) as well as on the complementarity of the equipment. Recent tests have also addressed issues of group and command.

Secondly, this study proposes a basis for setting up experiments on historical militaria in such a way, as to encourage other researchers to publish their results and thereby, eventually, develop a genuine methodology for all periods.

Pierre-Henry Bas

Restitution des gestes martiaux: évolutions et révolutions au milieu du XVI^e siècle

Camillo Agrippa, the Roman architect and mathematician of the 16th century, is often considered the most revolutionary author of the Renaissance period, particularly in regard to fencing based on geometry and a didactic approach. The German Paul-Hector Mair, however, is not simply the author of a colossal but obscure encyclopedia on the art of fencing and wrestling. Reflection that seems close to Agrippa's is hidden in this work. Serious fencing, where the goal is as important as tactics and the techniques, is based on principles and biomechanics, Mair practically turns a page in the book of German medieval arts, while Agrippa opens the door to a new means to codify the art of fencing. This article proposes to compare the two authors and to show how the gestural experimentation and the studies of the context are very important in the approach of understanding fencing manuals.

Daniel Jaquet

Les apports de la cinésiologie dans l'approche expérimentale pluridisciplinaire de l'étude du geste historique: l'étude de cas de l'impact du port de l'armure sur le comportement moteur

The study of historical gesture can be based on textual source material (narrative description, technical discourse, information from normative literature) and/or from iconographic source material (representation of movement). All these documents are on different qualitative levels when it is a matter of investigating gesture. One of the main issues is the definition of the relation between representation and actual performance. Both definition and analysis of filters allow us to develop hypotheses on a gesture's performance and these may be tested with experimental protocols.

Medical and clinical research has developed powerful tools and methods to investigate human movements. Kinesiology, especially the cinematic approach, allow the measurement and the critical analysis of a series of complex movements as well as simulations. This paper sets out the benefits and limits of implementing these methods in the experimental analysis of historical gesture and presents a case study.

Olivier Gourdon

La pratique de la coupe: un apport à l'étude et à l'interprétation des arts martiaux historiques européens

This communication links test cuts (with sharp reproductions of archaeological swords corresponding to the illustrations and period of our source) to the practice of HEMA. Some questions, however, in determining historical techniques are unanswered, and this encourages us to juxtapose other disciplines in order to put together plausible hypotheses. Are cuts efficient? Are wards powerful enough to launch a lethal strike? What are the effects of a strike with the wrong edge? Are thrusts really deadly movements?

The paper will explain and demonstrate what kind of support test cuts with sharp swords can lend to the understanding and validation of gestures. My research is restricted to the field of one-handed sword techniques of the 14th century.

Loïs Forster

L'équitation militaire médiévale. Art de guerre ou art de grâce?

Studying medieval horsemanship is made quite difficult because the sources at our disposal are rare and often vague. This article presents a quick overview of the kind of horse and equipment used, then proposes a synthetic essay of the information on horsemanship towards the end of the Middle Ages, and finally analyses the interests and the limitations of equestrian experimentation.

Nicolas Baptiste

L'expérimentation et l'histoire: des collections aux universités. L'exemple des armures anciennes

The life of arms and armour, history of techniques, know-how, skills, inventions, down to gestures characterizing their collecting, are a shared adventure. The history of collecting constitutes a long series of technical manipulations, but also of ideological manipulations, above all in the history of arms and armour, of conservation, restoration and presentation of gestures. Even before objects are invented,

finalized and produced craftsmen and designers have accomplished a series of artistic and technical gestures, within the mechanism of their invention. These stories are still entirely unknown today. Who knows that the lifebuoy and the wetsuit are a military invention from antiquity, finalized in the Middle Ages, and we are still ignorant of the first experiments in this context?

Currently, there exists a strong emulation of the history of arms and armour, but also of collecting, in the context of the continuous collecting of originals, but also of by-products, including copies. Objects such as remakes, imitations, facsimiles, replicas, copies as well as gestures around them are still uncharted territory, even in a research framework.

Antoine Selosse

Un vêtement militaire particulier, la brigandine. Expérience de recherches, des gestes de reconstitution et d'expérimentation personnelle. Production, cycle de vie et constatations

Since the beginning of the new military re-enactment of the '80s, the brigandines have always been of interest. This was already the case in the collections of antique weapons, where these coats of plates had a special place. However, these objects are still relatively unknown, and the research subjects are scarce. Many issues include their production and daily maintenance. Only few re-enactment groups can testify to both the practice of making brigandines and to using them for a long time. It is also noteworthy that few armourers keep a record of numbers and production data, or note the time needed in their production, of modifications, ageing and the craftsmanship necessary in their production and in their life cycle. The 'Lys & Lion – 1462' re-enactment group has helped for over 15 years to fuel the debate on the subject and has participated in numerous publications; the systematic sampling is intended to transmit these personal experiences and specialized technical skills around this historic garment.

Simon Delachaux

Le «Projet Artillerie», la reconstitution des gestes autour d'un objet d'expérimentation: nécessité de la recherche et apport des initiatives croisées entre musées, universités et mécénat

Re-enactment groups, living history associations formed by history enthusiasts, are growing in number each year. Some groups are old and can already look back on some years of history, others are brand new, but few finally know where they are placed in the field of experimentation and which role they play with regard to

scientific research. The examples are very diverse, sometimes including the public and sometimes not. To a large extent the members of such associations have a special relationship with objects, and also with gestures. Collectors, historians, craftsmen, etc., the identities of these members are also very diverse, just as the nature of the gestures. Scientific research is needed to help these groups with their projects, but some of them totally ignore what they can personally contribute also to research. The canon project is a very fundamental experience for the Swiss «4 Lunes» association, that totally changes our notion of experimentation, but also the notion of history re-enactment proper.

