



The Art of Combat: A German Martial Arts Treatise of 1570

Joachim Meyer

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First published in 1570, Joachim Meyer's *The Art of Combat* is among the most important texts in the rich corpus of German martial arts treatises of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Meyer is unique in offering full recommendations on how to train for various weapons forms. He divides his book into five parts by weapon types: longsword; dusack (a practice weapon analogous to a sabre); rapier; dagger; and staff weapons. For each weapon, Meyer lays out the principles of its use and the vocabulary of techniques, and then describes a range of specific 'devices', attack combinations for use in combat. This rational approach, along with Meyer's famous and profuse woodcut illustrations, make this a crucial source for understanding the history and techniques of medieval and Renaissance martial arts. In the first ever English translation of this important work, Jeffrey Forgeng has sought to improve accessibility of the text. His Introduction is the first substantial account to be published in English of the German Fechtbuch corpus, and the Glossary likewise is the first of its kind to be published in English.

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