



Medieval Combat: A Fifteenth-Century Manual of Sword-fighting and Close-Quater Combat

Hans Fahoffer

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Talhoffer's professional fencing manual of 1467 illustrates the intricacies of the medieval art of fighting, covering both the 'judicial duel' (an officially sanctioned fight to resolve a legal dispute) and personal combat. Combatants in the Middle Ages used footwork, avoidance, and the ability to judge and manipulate timing and distance to exploit and enhance the sword's inherent cutting and thrusting capabilities. These skills were supplemented with techniques for grappling, wrestling, kicking and throwing the opponent, as well as disarming him by seizing his weapon. Every attack contained a defence and every defence a counter-attack. Talhoffer reveals the techniques for wrestling, unarmoured fighting with the long sword, pole-axe, dagger, sword and buckler, and mounted combat. This unparalleled guide to medieval combat, illustrated with 268 contemporary images, provides a glimpse of real people fighting with skill, sophistication and ruthlessness. This is one of the most popular and influential manuals of its kind.



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