

ANALYSIS TEMPLATE  
GHFS DAGGER STUDY GROUP  
V 1.0  
2015

## HOW TO APPROACH THE MATERIAL

### *IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF*

- 1. What material have *other researchers* published on the topic?**
- 2. What *techniques* are used?**
- 3. What *principles* are those techniques based on?**
- 4. Can the various techniques be *grouped together* according to those principles, circumstances or contexts?**
- 5. Are they used differently in *different contexts* (weapons, social contexts, time periods, self-defense, war, for fun)**
- 6. How do you act *offensively* in close combat?**
- 7. How do you act *defensively* in close combat?**
- 8. How does the treatise you have chosen to examine relate to the teachings in *other treatises*?**
- 9. Do other treatises teach *other ways* of doing the above, working with *other principles and techniques*?**

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHILE READING

- **What is the personal history of the author?**
  - Born in Basel, 1537. Becomes a burgher of Straßburg in 1560, as a cutler, where he also becomes a Fechtmeister sometime in the 1560s, and arranges five fechtschulen. Possibly has military experience and likely served in the town militia at one point. Wrote three or four fencing treatises and received employment as master-at-arms at the Duke of Mecklinburg in Schwerin, but dies in 1571, on his way to the court and his last treatise is never completed.
- **Who is he teaching to?**
  - Experienced soldiers and young men.
- **Why is he teaching this and how will the knowledge be used?**
  - He has two goals: To teach soldiers for warfare use, as the weapons he teaches are still used alongside of firearms. Secondly, he seeks to preserve the fighting arts as they are losing popularity in lieu of the simpler firearms. The teachings are to be used both for submission, maiming and killing, but also include exercises for learning how to fight, training how to become more dynamic and adaptive.

*His text never mentions tournaments or the fechtschulen.*
- **In what contexts would this knowledge have been used?**
  - In training halls, for self-defense, for the battlefield and urban warfare.
- **What are the connections to other authors, before and after? Compare to other masters of the same group.**
  - Primarily we see connections and similarities to Codex Wallerstein, the Gladiatoria treatises, the Goliath Codex, Hans Talhoffer, Martein Syber, Hans Leküchner, Sigmund Ringeck, Jörg Wilhalm, Andres Paurnfeyndt, Achille Marozzo and Jakob Sutor.
- **What are the differences and similarities to other authors that are not directly connected?**
  - One of the distinct differences is that he clearly targets the burghers, and does so with an illustrated, printed fencing treatise meant for mass distribution. Many earlier sources aim to keep the Arts "secret" and reserved for the few. Meyer is different in this respect.

*He also seeks to combine many different inspirations, having travelled and learned from the Spanish, the Italians, the Napolitans, the French, the Germans and more.*

*Seemingly, he is recombining what may have been a more common style of fencing, with that of the Gesellschaft Lichtenawers together with foreign influences, like Bolognese fencing. In this he has a strong focus on drawing out the opponent of his advantage by baiting and teasing him so he opens himself up. He also puts a strong focus on always being able to withdraw safely, even after successfully having landed one or more attacks.*

## METHOD

- Read the full material on the weapon several times.
- Read the full material of the author more than once.
- Analyze the images carefully, not least the ones that aren't mentioned in text. Note in particular stances, grips and how shadows and light fall on the combatants, their weapons and the ground. If the images are deemed reliable, compare the different lengths of weapons to judge their relative angles and note also the angles of the blades. Note also the relative angles and distances between the combatants and their weapons, but keep in mind that the image might illustrate the end of a complicated action, but they may also reflect several actions in time in a single image or sometimes only part of the image shows the specific action and occasionally not perfectly so, even according to the author.
- Build an image of the body and weapon mechanics of the system with a focus on movement.
- Build an image of the range of techniques.
- Create categories under which all exemplified techniques can be sorted, *e.g. principle, distance, target, where the bind is etc.*
- Study the weapons and clothes worn and analyze how they affect the fighting.
- Pay close attention to what the possible multiple interpretations are for each example.
- Pay close attention to how the opponent acts and responds, particularly when the descriptions are vague.
- Compare to reports of actual contemporary and modern real-life incidents.
- Get weapons that are similar to those used in the source of study. Also make sure to handle sharp versions for deeper understanding.
- Test the interpretations in aggressive and uncooperative "random" settings.
- Test the interpretations in sparring.
- Document with video for analysis, in order to gain a better appreciation for your own movements and mechanics.
- Reread the text and analyze possible issues while taking into account influence from the friendly training context and possible side effects from protective gear and non-sharp weapons.
- Test again, reread and test again in an iterative process.
- Continue forwards in the material with new techniques.
- After some time return to the material with "fresh eyes" and reconsider your interpretations.

## ANALYSIS OF JOACHIM MEYER'S DAGGER TEACHINGS

### *CHARACTERISTICS*

What is typical of the system, what characterizes it?

### *PARAMETERS*

What is the context and goal in the fight?

What parameters affect the techniques and tactics used?

What tools are used to achieve a goal?

### *PURPOSE*

What is the ultimate purpose or purposes of the fight and the specific technique?

### *STANCES*

What stances are named, described and shown?

What stances are named, described but not shown?

What stances are shown but not named or described?

What stances are not shown or described but used?

### *GRIPS*

What are the grip variations shown?

What are the grip variations described?

## *TOOLS*

What tools are used in the fight and specific technique? Divide into the following categories:

*Attacks*

*Parries*

*Locks*

*Throws*

*Disarming*

*Counters*

*Feints*

## *PRIMARY TARGETS*

What are the targets that are attacked and manipulated?

## *SECONDARY TARGETS*

What are the secondary targets that are attacked and manipulated?

## *CLOSE COMBAT PRESSURE POINTS*

What points do you apply pressure to?

## *CLOSE COMBAT LEVERAGE AREAS ON YOUR OWN BODY*

What parts of your body and weapon do you use to apply pressure?