

Hoplologia

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Editor's Introduction: A new publication focusing on experimental archaeology and living history

There is, at the time of writing this, a serious gap in the resources available to experimental archaeologists and living historians. There are few easily accessible, peer-edited, citable publication where the careful research done by dedicated amateurs can be offered to the wider community. There are many excellent blogs by meticulous amateur researchers scattered across the internet, and occasionally a relevant article is published in an academic journal, but blogs can be difficult to cite (and are often disregarded as sources of serious research work), and academic journals may take years to peer-review and publish an article which is then hidden behind a pay-wall, where it remains inaccessible to the general public.

This new series hopes to provide a useful middle ground: Research which is properly sourced and edited in an easily-citable format, but which is not subject to the time-consuming and expensive processes of professional academic publications.

This obviously puts some limits on what we can do, but we believe those limits actually free us to do more than we might otherwise.

We are not a peer-reviewed journal in the formal sense. All articles are sent through our editorial team to ensure that sources are cited correctly, that the arguments follow the evidence, and that experiments can be recreated. We are not here to say that the author's conclusions are right or wrong, only that they are supported by the evidence provided. If another researcher wishes to challenge the correctness of an article's argument, we will publish that article too, with pleasure; a discussion is the best possible result of publication.

We are not limited to a particular historical era. An article about the economic effects of World War I on the clothing industry might well provide illumination to someone looking at the economies of the Crusader states in the twelfth century, and vice versa. Light can come from many sources, and we want to make those sources available to everyone.

Our mandate for this publication includes original research, contextual articles, and annotated bibliographies. See page 2 for more information on what we are looking for.

If you wish to submit an article for publication, please read our submission guidelines, which can be found on our website at www.boarstooth.net/hoplologia-publications. There is no minimum length for an article; if two pages is all you need to make your point, then two pages is as long as it should be.

Types of articles we are looking for:

Original research

Examinations and discoveries based on your own work with an artifact or a historical source, including reproduction of objects and testing of historical methods.

Have you recreated a particular artifact? Tell us what inspired you, what was involved in the production of it, and what worked (and what didn't) as you made it. Have you tried doing something the way it was done in a particular period? Tell us how you did it, and how it affected your understanding of the practice.

Contextual (background) research

Overview or in-depth examination of a relevant topic, that provides context for or illuminates some aspect of history or culture. In the sciences and social sciences this is called a literature review, and it is a valuable tool for people who need to know something but not everything about a particular topic.

Have you read fifty books and articles on textile production in early fifteenth-century Flanders? Tell us what you've learned. Have you read everything there is to read on the development of the dagger from the eighth to the sixteenth century? Give us a timeline. Do you know everything there is to know about the life of Charles the Bold? Write up a short biography. Can you trace the path of the porcelain trade along the Silk Road? Describe it for us. Do you know how a Trappist monastery worked? Show us what the monastic day looked like.

Annotated bibliography

A collection of sources in bibliographical form with descriptions of the content.

Often, when we are researching something, some sources will prove more useful than others. Sometimes a particular book will be exceptionally helpful, while another will be sloppily researched; sometimes you'll come across a book that is excellent in one specific area but full of nonsense in others. Sometimes an author will have a particular bias that the reader needs to be aware of when evaluating the text. Annotated bibliographies are valuable tools for your fellow researchers, because they reduce the amount of duplicate work that inevitably gets done. If you have a set of resources like this, please share!

Website: www.boarstooth.net/hoplologia-publications

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