CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALIZING THE PERIOD RUSH

LUDIC DIMENSIONS OF IMMERSIVE HISTORY IN HISTORICAL REENACTMENT

Robbert-Jan Adriaansen

To the question of what motivates them, historical reenactors generally have two answers: one is related to memory and refers to keeping the past alive and educating others about the past; the other is related to the thrill of being immersed in the past while reenacting a historical event. Often referred to as the "period rush" or "history flash" (Hochbruck 1997, 99), "time warp" (Turner 1990, 126), or "magic moment" (Handler and Saxton 1988, 245), the immersive aspect of reenactment refers to the experience of the dissolution of temporal distance and the concurrence of past and present (Otto 2016, 179). Fearing the scorn of scholars who are skeptical of their hobby, the first argument is usually the standard answer reenactors give to researchers studying reenactment (Apel 2012, 51); after all, it highlights the educational element of historical reenactment. The second answer remains below the surface at the first instance, but constitutes an important dimension of historical reenactment for many participants.

In fact, the period rush is prevalent among historical reenactors. In her research on Civil War reenactment clothing, Kimberly Miller-Spillman (K.A. Miller-Spillman 2008) conducted surveys with historical reenactors who have experienced a period rush. A survey with male reenactors shows that 85 percent of the 111 respondents mentioned having had magic moments (K.A. Miller-Spillman 2008, 454). In another publication she and Min-Young Lee show that, among female Civil War reenactors, 54 percent of the 143 respondents indicated having had a period rush (K.A. Miller-Spillman and Lee 2014, 77).

Apart from reenactors, scholars participating in reenactments during their fieldwork also report having experienced the period rush. Taking part in a Civil War reenactment, the cultural anthropologist Matthew Amster (2008, 16) notes, "For just an

instant—as a haze rose around us from the gravel under our feet, the group moving along the trail in unison, only the sound of our gear clanging and a sea of blue uniforms with rifles pointed skyward—I momentarily grasped just a tiny bit of what it might have felt like to be one of these men in the 1860s, marching in the hot sun with a heavy rifle under someone else's orders. Even though I'd only been doing this for a very short time, something visceral occurred that gave me a taste of what makes reenacting appealing." Such testimonies fuel Vanessa Agnew's (Agnew 2004, 330) remark that reenactments emerge as a "body-based discourse in which the past is reanimated through physical and psychological experience."

Despite the broad recognition of the period rush in literature, scholars do little more with it than using it—like Amster does—as an explanation for the popular appeal of historical reenactment. Some treat the period rush with suspicion since it could pose a threat to proper historical understanding and representation due to its irrational nature. The irrationality of experience together with the often-ritual character of reenactments gives it a quasi-religious character, which can result in a mythification and decontextualization of the past as the linearity of history is replaced with a certain "timelessness" (McCarthy 2014, 112). Experience would reinforce an uncritical attitude toward the past that reiterates old mythologies. According to Dora Apel (2012, 47), reenactments "recapture an imagined nostalgic past that focuses on individual experience while affirming dominant historical assumptions." It must be said that such fears for immersive experiences make sense only if one takes the "the typical sort of discursive history produced by professional academic historians" as the measure for what Brian Fay (2002, 1) calls "unconventional histories," such as historical reenactment. These approaches teach us little about the dynamics of historical reenactment and the role of experience therein, apart from the fact that it does not meet academic standards of historical representation and understanding.

A reconceptualization of the period rush is therefore required in historical reenactment studies. In this chapter I will explore the contours of a different approach that treats historical reenactment and its immersive aspects not as a threat to historical understanding, but rather as a different, performative mode of understanding. First, I will discuss the conceptualization of historical experience in the philosophy of history and

sketch some implications for our understanding of the period rush. Second, since these conceptualizations of historical experience are mainly modeled on an individual experience of the past, they need to be expanded to be meaningful for the study of collective historical performances like historical reenactment. I will do so by approaching immersive experience as aspects of a ludic way of engaging with the past as theorized in Gadamerian hermeneutics. Finally, I will identify a number of ludic dimensions of immersive history in historical reenactment. This will elucidate the position of the period rush in historical understanding within the context of historical reenactments.

Historical Sensation and **Historical Experience**

The period rush is by no means a recent phenomenon, nor is it exclusively linked to historical reenactments. In literature, many examples can be found of similar experiences of a sudden presence of the past, ranging from Goethe's (2005) experience of Strasbourg Cathedral to the many experiences of immersion at historical sites that adolescent members of the German Wandervogel movement scribbled down in their notebooks and magazine in the early twentieth century (Adriaansen 2015), to the immersive archival encounters with the past many historians have reported about over the years (Robinson 2010).

The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga (2014) calls these experiences—which are so similar to the period rush—historical sensations. To Huizinga, the word "sensation" has little to do with its general contemporary meaning, but with the fact that the experience alluded to the human senses. He notes (54) that this "not completely reduceable contact with the past is an entry into an atmosphere, it is one of the many forms of reaching beyond oneself, of experiencing truth, which are given to man." What is experienced is not precisely defined: the objects of experience are not particular historical individuals, events, or thoughts, and are not even images—and if so, perhaps they are a vague and composite image. Historical sensation might be more accurately described as sensing the mood or atmosphere of a past, which presents itself in a single moment.

Huizinga warns that historical sensations have nothing to do with reexperiencing the past. Reexperiencing the past refers to the cognitive operation of historical understanding, somewhat similar to what Wilhelm Dilthey called Nacherleben (Makkreel

1992, 328) and what R.G. Collingwood (1946, 282) called "re-enactment." There are two reasons for this. First, historical sensations occur suddenly, last for a single moment, and do not represent a *process* of understanding. Frank Ankersmit (2007, 116) would later add that, during a historical sensation—which he calls historical experience—all spatial and temporal demarcations are temporarily suspended to the extent that it "unites past and present in a brief but ecstatic kiss." Second, historical sensations are multisensory and thereby are not exclusively tied to imagination—which favors vision. Using the German concept *Ahnung* (presentiment, similar in meaning to Huizinga's concept of sensation), Huizinga stresses that historical sensations can be evoked by lines of text from archival documents or chronicles, but also by—for example—a few notes of an old song. Ankersmit adds that this multisensory aspect defies modern (post-Cartesian) subjectivism. For, he argues, whereas vision easily enables the objectification of what is sensed, other sense impressions such as sounds, tastes, and smells do not. Sensation therefore indicates an intimate relation with the world; hence he talks about historical experience as an "embrace of subject and object" (Ankersmit 2007, 126). Ankersmit stresses that during the experience the boundaries between subject and object are temporarily suspended. For this reason, Huizinga (2014, 54) notes that a historical sensation is not something a writer of a historical document "infuses in his work by using certain words. It lies beyond the book of history, not in it. The reader brings it to the writer, it is his response to the writer's call."

The question how historical sensation relates to historical understanding is a relevant one—not only theoretically, but also in relationship to our case of historical reenactment. Huizinga argues quite strongly that the (irrational) historical sensation should not be conceived to oppose (rational) historical understanding, but is part of historical understanding in the sense that it may spark historical interests that carry on the labor of understanding cognitively. According to Ankersmit, historical distance and historical objectivity are effectuated by historical experiences post hoc. He even speaks of sublime historical experiences when the experience (which may also be a collective one in this instance) concerns not a remote past, but a part of history still assumed to be part of contemporary reality. In such instances the experience effectuates a realization of an epochal break, the (traumatic) realization that a part of the present unequivocally

belongs to the past (Ankersmit 2007, 410), which necessitates a reconfiguration of identity. This latter notion of sublime historical experience is generally not the type one encounters during historical reenactments, since a historical understanding of the event in question is generally already assumed when taking part in reenactments.

So far, we can draw several implications from Ankersmit and Huizinga for understanding the period rush in historical reenactment. (1) Disavowing the period rush as irrational and not relevant to historical understanding need not be the case. Following Huizinga, it is part of historical understanding, just not a necessary condition for understanding. (2) The period rush is not a "subjective step through a parafictional wormhole into the other age, time and period" (Hochbruck 1997, 99), because the subjectivity of the observer is temporally postponed. (3) The period rush is not itself nostalgic, but it can generate nostalgic feelings post hoc. When Rory Turner (1990, 133) discusses the role of the unit in Civil War reenactments and emphasizes that the units function as a "fleeting kind of *gemeinschaft* [community], a trace of a romanticized folk community," he is actually romanticizing the unit while reflecting on his experiences while writing. The nostalgia is not part of the experience, but rather is the result of post hoc reflection on experience. (4) The multisensory nature of the period rush is key to understanding its immersiveness (Daugbjerg 2014).

The downside to the Huizinga/Ankersmit approach lies in their explanation of the relationship between historical sensation and historical understanding; that explanation is not satisfactory because it maintains and even reinforces the hierarchical relation between experience and cognition that is so prevalent in historical theory (Ankersmit 2012, 189). Related to historical reenactment, Huizinga's and Ankersmit's accounts would mean that the only value of the period rush is that it could inspire one to dig deeper into the past cognitively only after the reenactment has been concluded. Furthermore, what remains a mystery in these approaches is what—given the absence of the past—these experiences are exactly experiences of. Are they mere aesthetic experiences? If so, how then is the past inferred from experience? Ankersmit (2007, 410) unproblematically assumes the objectivity of the past when he attributes historical experience to the "domain between subject and object," in which the object refers to the past.[1]

Past, Play, and Experience

In order to move beyond this conceptualization, I would like to explore another perspective—a perspective that relies on an often-unnoticed aspect of Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic theory of historical experience. Although Ankersmit relies heavily on Gadamer, he claims that the place they diverge is where Gadamer relates historical experience only to texts, whereas Ankersmit (1994, 211) follows Huizinga in his broader definition. This is only true if one focuses on the second part of Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (2004), which discusses textual interpretation as relevant to historical understanding. The first part, however, is equally relevant and applicable to historical interpretation, but serves as an investigation into aesthetic experience.

In his theory of aesthetic experience, Gadamer also relies on Huizinga, but on a different work, *Homo Ludens* (Huizinga 1949). Gadamer uses the concept of play as a means to conceptualize aesthetic understanding beyond Romantic hermeneutic theories of the affective understanding of the artist's intentions. Key to understanding Gadamer's project is the acknowledgment that he aims to theorize understanding in a way that avoids the epistemological pitfalls resulting from the Cartesian subject-object dichotomy. To a large part he accomplishes this by applying Heideggerian phenomenology to hermeneutics, but where it comes to performativity Gadamer applies *Spiel* (the concept of play).

Huizinga (1949, 13) understood play—in the broadest sense of the word—as a free activity that takes place outside the routines of daily life and that absorbs the player at the same time. He discerns five dimensions of play. First, he states that play is a free activity, meaning that play is conducted out of free enjoyment. Forced "play" is not play. Second, play must be discerned from ordinary life. Play is the domain of make-believe; it steps out of real life by establishing a distinct, less serious sphere of activity. That does not mean that players cannot be serious when playing—quite the opposite. It rather means that play creates an extra dimension to life, which is not governed by life's basic necessities. Third, play has its own spatiotemporal dimension: a secluded playing field and a repetitive structure. Regardless whether one talks about child's play or about formal games, the ability to play over and over again is a core characteristic. Fourth, the spatial

play-ground has an ordered structure, which establishes the magic circle of play, meaning the captivating sphere of play that immerses the players. Play relies on a rule system. Whether or not the rules of play have been explicitly stated, every player abides by themvoluntarily when deciding to play. Even the cheater acknowledges the rules by still pretending to play. It is only the spoilsport who breaks the magic circle of play by deliberately renouncing the rules. Fifth, there is no material gain connected to play, which emphasizes the element of play serving no purpose beyond itself, which emphasizes that play serves no purpose beyond itself.

It was the immersive quality of play that made the concept so useful for Gadamer to move beyond Cartesian dualism in his theory of understanding. He did diverge from Huizinga in one respect, which is that he did not and could not set play apart from real life. This would imply a theoretical inconsistency since it would contradict the claim that play is self-referential and is not by definition instrumental to anything outside of play. Having acknowledged this, Gadamer stresses that play may have its own reality, but the elements that constitute the playing field—fellow players, objects, or the playing field itself—are simultaneously part of the reality of play and the reality of everyday life.

Not separating play and life enabled Gadamer to theorize the hermeneutics of aesthetic experience in a similar way to his treatment of historiographic understanding in the second part of *Truth and Method* (Gadamer 2004). Here, he used the metaphor of the conversation to make clear that in real understanding the subject matter is not available as an object expressed in a text for the reader to comprehend, but that it is through an *engagement* with the subject matter that readers listen to the different ways in which texts challenge their initial expectations and horizons. Similarly, play dismisses the suggestion that aesthetic understanding might have anything to do with the subjectivity of the interpreter of art or of the player in a game. The most important characteristic of play, Gadamer contends with Huizinga, is the absorption of the individual player in the to-and-fro movement of play. Play can therefore not be understood as a subjective act. The fact that play is rule-based and limits the player's options is not in contradiction with that axiom, since these only come into play once one voluntarily submits to them by entering play (Gadamer and Linge 2008, xxiii).

No individual can fully control play, nor can they use play for purposes that lie beyond it. This does not imply a passive attitude, far from it—it merely denotes an active engagement, but only with play as such. Gadamer even goes so far as to state that the ultimate goal of play is not winning. Winning might be a reason to participate, but this intention dissolves when play commences. What is essential to play is its structural repetitiveness: play has no goal orientation, but seeks to be repetitive. Every form of play—whether child's play, a sacred ritual, or a football match—can be played over and over again.

The structure of play is thus self-renewing, but play is also self-presenting. This is where we can use Gadamer to solve Huizinga's problem of understanding play as being both representation and self-contained. Exactly because of the mediality of play, because it is self-contained and self-referential and absorbs the player, Gadamer does not speak of play being representation, but play as being *Selbstdarstellung* (self-presentation): "The self-presentation of human play depends on the player's conduct being tied to the make-believe goals of the game, but the "meaning" of these does not in fact depend on their being achieved. Rather, in spending oneself on the task of the game, one is in fact playing oneself out. The self-presentation of the game involves the player's achieving, as it were, his own self-presentation by playing—that is, presenting—something" (Gadamer 2004, 108).

The so-called meaning of play does not depend on the achievement of goals that have been set for the player, but rather depends on playing *something*. What is presented is set by the goals of play. How the players present themselves is not determined by anything prior to play, but by the need to advance play. Self-presentation according to the demands of play invites response by other players and sustains the continuation of play. Failing to present oneself to the other players challenges play's very continuation. In this way, play is "the self-presentation of play-movement" (Gadamer 2000, 31).

The significance of this conceptualization of play is that it solves Huizinga's problem of play as representation: any understanding of play holds a conversation with what is presented in play out of the demands of play, and not with what might precede it. This means that when analyzing forms of play in historical culture, the question of

meaning should focus on what is presented in play within the context of play, and not on the relationship between play and historical reality.

Now, one might say that, if not the performance of the players, then at least the rule system of play represents historical reality. But the rule system is only a derivate of reality, in the sense that it relies not on what actually happened, but on the *Wirkungsgeschichte* (historical effect) of what happened. A rule system is but a model of what is deemed to be historical reality, and the choices of which variables to include in the model are not at all historically given, but depend on the effect and impact of the history of interpretation of what happened.

Ludic Dimensions of Historical Reenactment

When applying the Gadamerian notion of play we can draw several implications about the generation of historical meaning in reenactments. In this case a historical reenactment is understood to be a form of play of and with the past, in an enclosed space with its own temporal dynamics. A reenactment is a simulation of the past, an enactment of actual or probable historical situations and events, based on a model of that past that highlights a (limited) number of variables and operationalizes them in an implicit or explicit rule system (Adriaansen 2019). These rule systems can be laid down explicitly in by-laws and scripts, and can be enforced implicitly through social control, trainings, and exercises. Once the reenactment commences, the rules are in effect and the participants voluntarily adhere to them. This is what Turner (1990, 130) has in mind when he notes that reenactment is a "pleasure structure, a voluntary creation shared by those who for whatever reason feel a resonance with any of the significances re-enacting might have."

This adherence may however contrast or even conflict with opinions and beliefs held in ordinary life, but this poses a problem only if the simulation is mistakenly confused with an objective representation of the past. Generally, the simulative nature of reenactment is recognized by reenactors, because they do not simply perform a character, but *are* (this is one of the ontological aspects of reenactment) the persona they embody during the reenactment. I say "embody" because reenactors also try to refrain from depicting themselves as actors who merely play a role (Clemons 2011, 10). These embodiments can be maintained only by preserving the magic circle. A striking example

is given by Charlie Schroeder (2012) when he recounts the story of two Jewish American reenactors taking part in a reenactment of the Battle of Hastings. The two are confronted with the need to genuflect before two reenactor priests as they bless the Norman troops upon the Anglo-Saxon advance. Knowing that kneeling is forbidden in the Jewish religion they faced the choice to break or maintain the magic circle.

> From the opposite side of the battlefield, they heard Anglo-Saxon reenactors pounding their shields and horse hooves thundering on the ground. The two men looked around them at all the kneeling Normans, then back at each other. They had no choice. To give over to the reenactment, to travel back in time, as it were, to experience that period rush, they had to temporarily suspend their disbelief—and, for that matter, their actual belief.
>
> "We took a knee," Ed remembered.
>
> As he knelt down and stared across the very field where, nearly a millennium ago, England and the English language forever changed, he got chills. "You're transported," he told me. "That's the only word I can use to describe it. You're transported." (Schroeder 2012, 229)

Here Ed indicates that the total dedication to play includes surrendering subjectivity, which he then identifies as a requirement for the period rush to set in. Let me briefly offer several other ludic dimensions of immersive history in historical reenactment related to the period rush.

First, as many scholars have noticed, reenactors seem to be preoccupied with authenticity. Contrary to what some believe, authenticity also has a more meaningful function than mere antiquarianism. As Allred (1996, 7) notes, authenticity "maintains the illusion and makes it so plausible that one feels transported in time. Something that does not fit may break the illusion." In the context of play, the quest for authenticity aims to establish and embellish the spatiotemporal dimension of the playing field. It is a means to simulation and not an end in its own right (which it might be in other contexts, such as collecting paraphernalia). In the performative context of reenactment, the presence of modern items would spoil the mood or atmosphere and would disturb the magic circle. Petra Kalshoven (2015) adds that, among the North American Indian reenactors she

studied, the term “authenticity” was always understood as an attribute of a reproduced object, not in reference to the emulated past. The reenactors did not take the reenactment itself to be authentic, but the authenticity—in other words, the historical accuracy—of the used objects was deemed to be an important requirement for a successful reenactment because it set up the playing field. Kalshoven adds, “The authentic replica allows the Indianist to become involved in the past world of emulation” (567).

Second, the comparison between reenactment and ritual has often been made (see also van Alphen and Bresco, this volume). It has been emphasized that historical reenactment originated from, or at least relies on ritual (Hochbruck 1997, 100; Lowenthal 2015, 477; McCarthy 2014; Strauss 2001). Rather than trying to establish an artificial historical continuity between ritual and reenactment it would be better to argue in line with Huizinga that historical reenactment, like the ritual, originated in and as play—also in rituals, the shaman *is* the goddess when he puts on her robes. In some cases, ritual and reenactment blend to the extent that they become indistinguishable as different genres of play. The Hauka ritual, famously depicted in Jean Rouch’s 1955 film *Les maîtres fous*, saw Ghanese men going into a trance and becoming possessed with the spirits of white colonial officials. This “literal, bodily crossing of the deadly gulf dividing the West and Africa” (Ferguson 2002, 555) combined a grotesque (re)enactment of events and scenes from local colonial history with rituals such as initiation rites and animal sacrifice. In other cases, secular reenactments of historical rituals can regain religious meaning, as was the case with the reenactment of a vanished Edo-era rite for women’s salvation near Mount Tate (Tateyama) in Japan. While the 1996 reenactment of this rite was staged in support of the local economy, it ended up “acting as a living, powerful ritual that endowed its participants with religious experience” (Averbuch 2011, 4). Many participating women, even those who expected it to be a mere masquerade, reported the ritual crossing of a bridge in terms of experience a different spatio-temporal dimension, feelings of atonement and elevation: “For a short flash I was separated from this regular world and felt that until now nothing was real. When I came to the end of the bridge I felt I met a new me” (25). Subsequently, later editions were no longer marketed as historical tourism spectacles, but rather as traditional ceremonies aimed at spiritual healing.

Third, some have argued that reenactment is a nostalgic reaction to an alleged postmodern loss of historical continuity and authenticity (Hall 1994; Handler and Saxton 1988). However, play itself *cannot* be nostalgic because its immersion covers by no means an immersion in the past (as if that were even ontologically or epistemologically possible), but, instead, means an immersion in play. The period rush has little to do with immersion in the past or being transplanted to the past, or even with the illusion of being transplanted. It is nothing more than immersion in the magic circle of play, and that is what it is, only after the experience that distancing takes place. Historical distance is thus not a precondition for, but rather is an effect of the period rush.

Fourth, reenactment is much more than just an inspiration for further learning; it is both the environment and the object of learning. To be able to successfully participate, the reenactor must already have appropriated and understood the basics of the simulation's rule system. These skills can be enhanced during play by means of mimicry, trial and error, or inquiring further instructions. Learning means understanding how the simulated model functions and how the relevant aspects are interrelated. The adage that "the re-enactor knows the price of everything in the past but understands the value and significance of nothing," cited by de Groot (2011, 588), makes little sense, since knowing a price already presupposes an understanding of a value system. Successfully playing the reenactment already means that one understands how the model functions, and therefore how the past is simulated.

Fifth, degrees of scriptedness in reenactments affect the possibilities for immersive history in reenactments. Mads Daugbjerg (2017), for example, describes the difference between scripted battles, performed in front of an audience, and the tacticals in which Civil War reenactors improvise. Whereas scripted battles *appear* to be more authentic in the sense that they aim at representing the historical course of events, the tacticals *feel* more genuine to the reenactors because the format offers a plethora of individual choices, simulates the chaos of the battle, and provides more instances of immersiveness. One could say that in the scripted reenactment, historical representation predominates; in the tacticals, the simulative and aleatory elements predominate. In the light of play, experiencing authenticity during tacticals can be explained—not as an

experience of the past as an object, but as the experience of immersion in historical simulation.

These dimensions only sketch the contours of a phenomenology of immersive history in historical reenactment, and I would like to stress that play can be troublesome and confusing to those who participate. Most troublesome are the questions regarding the establishment of the rule system and the justification of rules. Petra Kalshoven (2015, 562) provides many examples when she discusses the dilemmas that American Indian reenactors face: "What constitutes a dance step executed just right? Does its success reside in its faithfulness to a thoroughly researched 'original' model or script or in a feeling experienced by the dancer interpreting the model in a new context?" Kalshoven emphasizes that such problems arise from the transition of the unquestioned way in which the world presents itself ready-to-hand (on the ontological level of what Martin Heidegger calls *Dasein* [being-there]), to the more problematic state of present-to-hand in which the world appears as an object to consciousness (and when the Cartesian dualism is instated). Then moral breakdown can occur when the unreflective mode becomes problematic when, for example, things do not go as expected. Following Gadamer, who connected the ready-to-handedness of the world to the immersiveness of play, we can say that such moments can occur when the magic circle is broken, or when play is concluded and it becomes objectified in reflection and evaluation. Interestingly, Kalshoven (2015, 575) concludes that reenactors increasingly risk moral breakdown "as they insist on staying closer to a scholarly role model than might be in their own epistemological interest." This includes problematizing authenticity based on scholarly realist assumptions rather than on emphasizing that authenticity implies an authentic experience of the reenactment.

Conclusion

In their introduction to a special issue on reenactment of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Mads Daugbjerg, Rivka Syd Eisner, and Britta Timm Knudsen (2014) argue that the pertinence of reenactment in the contemporary field of heritage studies has four reasons. First, reenacting produces "ontologically intensive knowledge"; second, reenacting is "profoundly experiential"; third, it "transcends conventional Western mind-

matter dualisms"; and fourth, reenactment means "performing and producing in the present, stressing immediacy, liveness and participation" (681–82). I agree with their call to take these aspects seriously without losing a critical stance toward reenactment as an object of study. In this chapter I have sketched the contours of a theory that can enable us to do so without having to resort to philosophically unsound notions of empathy. From the perspective of play, a critical analysis of the mythologizing aspects of historical reenactments is still valid, but requires an analysis of the rule systems of the simulation—which need not compromise a phenomenology of the simulative dynamics of reenactment as play.

Concerning the period rush, the idea that the period rush provides an immersion in the past itself is a result of the make-believe quality of play. In reality, immersion and the dissolution of the Self do take place, but in the sphere and atmosphere (or mood) of play. It follows that reenactment is first and foremost an example of historical simulation to be valued as such, and not a "speculative historical representation" (Agnew 2007, 309) that should somehow be judged in comparison to the cognitive, objectifying, and methodological gaze on the past of modern academic historiography *as if* it has the same pretensions. Effectively, the simulation does not simulate the past itself, but rather simulates an interpretation of the past, as captured in the (explicit and implicit) rule systems reenactors adhere to.

Authors

Robbert-Jan Adriaansen is assistant professor in the theory of history and historical culture at Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR). His research focuses on the relationship between conceptions of time and historical understanding. Currently he is working on a research project on historical reenactment financed by EUR's Erasmus Initiative "Vital Cities and Citizens." Key publications include "Play," in *The Routledge Handbook of Reenactment Studies. Key Terms in the Field,* edited by V. Agnew, J. Lamb, and J. Tomann, 178–86 (New York: Routledge, 2019); and *The Rhythm of Eternity: The German Youth Movement and the Experience of the Past, 1900–1933* (London: Berghahn Books, 2015).

References

Adriaansen, R.J. 2015. *The Rhythm of Eternity: the German Youth Movement and the Experience of the Past 1900–1933*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Adriaansen, R.J. 2019. “Play.” In *The Routledge Handbook of Reenactment Studies: Key Terms in the Field,* edited by V. Agnew, J. Lamb, and J. Tomann, 178–86. Abingdon: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780429445637-38

Agnew, V. 2004. “Introduction: What Is Reenactment?” *Criticism* 46 (3): 327–39. doi:10.1353/crt.2005.0001

Agnew, V. 2007. “History’s Affective Turn: Historical Reenactment and Its Work in the Present.” *Rethinking History* 11 (3): 299–312. doi:10.1080/13642520701353108

Allred, R. 1996. “Catharsis, Revision, and Re-enactment: Negotiating the Meaning of the American Civil War.” *Journal of American Culture* 19 (4): 1–13. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1542-734X.1996.1904_1.x

Amster, M.H. 2008. “A Pilgrimage to the Past: Civil War Reenactors at Gettysburg.” In *Reflecting on America: Anthropological Views of U.S. Culture,* edited by C.L. Boulanger, 15–27. Boston: Pearson Education.

Ankersmit, F. 1994. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ankersmit, F. 2007. *De Sublieme Historische Ervaring*. Groningen: Historische Uitgeverij.

Ankersmit, F. 2012. *Meaning, Truth, and Reference in Historical Representation*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Apel, D. 2012. *War Culture and the Contest of Images*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Averbuch, I. 2011. “Discourses of the Reappearing: The Reenactment of the “Cloth-Bridge Consecration Rite’ at Mt. Tateyama.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 38 (1): 1–54.

Clemons, L. 2011. "Present Enacting Past: The Functions of Battle Reenacting in Historical Representation." In *Enacting History,* edited by S. Magelssen and R. Justice-Malloy, 10–21. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Collingwood, R.G. 1946. *The Idea of History*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Daugbjerg, M. 2014. "Patchworking the Past: Materiality, Touch and the Assembling of 'Experience' in American Civil War Re-enactment." *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (7–8): 724–41. doi:10.1080/13527258.2013.848820

Daugbjerg, M. 2017. "Being There: Time Travel, Experience and Experiment in Re-enactment and "Living History' Performances." In *Daugbjerg*, edited by B. Petersson and C. Holtorf, 159–76. Oxford: Archaeopress.

Daugbjerg, M., R.S. Eisner, and B.T. Knudsen. 2014. "Re-enacting the Past: Vivifying Heritage 'Again.'" *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 20 (7–8): 681–87. doi:10.1080/13527258.2014.939426

De Groot, J. 2011. "Affect and Empathy: Re-enactment and Performance as/in History." *Rethinking History* 15 (4): 587–99. doi:10.1080/13642529.2011.603926

Fay, B. 2002. "Unconventional History." *History and Theory* 41 (4): 1–6.

Ferguson, J.G. 2002. "Of Mimicry and Membership: Africans and the "New World Society.'" *Cultural Anthropology* 17 (4): 551–69.

Gadamer, H.G. 2000. *Die Aktualität des Schönen: Kunst als Spiel, Symbol und Fest*. Stuttgart: Reclam.

Gadamer, H.G. 2004. *Truth and Method* (2nd rev. edition). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Gadamer, H.G., and D.E. Linge. 2008. *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Goethe, J.W. von. 2005. "Von Deutscher Baukunst." In *Werke: Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden. Bd. 12: Schriften zur Kunst, Schriften zur Literatur, Maximen und Reflexionen,* edited by E. Trunz, 7–15. Hamburg: Wegner.

Hall, D. 1994. “Civil War Reenactors and the Postmodern Sense of History.” *Journal of American Culture* 17 (3): 7–11. doi:10.1111/j.1542-734X.1994.00007.x

Handler, R., and W. Saxton. 1988. “Dyssimulation: Reflexivity, Narrative, and the Quest for Authenticity in “Living History.’” *Cultural Anthropology* 3(3): 242–60.

Hochbruck, W. 1997. “Between “Living History’ and Pageantry: Historical Reenactments in American Culture.” In *Beyond the Mainstream: Papers Given on the Occasion of the Fourth Annual Conference of the German Society for Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English*, edited by P.P. Schnierer, 93–105. Trier: Wiss. Verl. Trier.

Huizinga, J. 1949. *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-element in Culture*. London: Routledge.

Huizinga, J. 2014. “The Task of Cultural History.” In *Men and Ideas, History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance,* 17–76. Princeton: Princeton University Press. doi:10.1515/9781400858088

Kalshoven, P.T. 2015. “Moving in Time, Out of Step: Mimesis as Moral Breakdown in European Re-enactments of the North American Indian Woodland.” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21 (3): 561–78. doi:10.1111/1467-9655.12251

Lowenthal, D. 2015. *The Past Is a Foreign Country—Revisited*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Makkreel, R.A. 1992. *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

McCarthy, P. 2014. ““Living History’ as the ‘Real Thing’: A Comparative Analysis of the Modern Mountain Man Rendezvous, Renaissance Fairs, and Civil War Reenactments.” *ETC.: A Review of General Semantics* 72 (2): 106–23.

Miller-Spillman, K.A. 2008. “Male Civil War Reenactors’ Dress and Magic Moments.” In *The Men’s Fashion Reader,* edited by A.H. Reilly and S. Cosbey, 445–64. New York: Fairchild Books.

Miller-Spillman, K.A., and M.-Y. Lee. 2014. "Female Civil War Reenactors' Dress and Magic Moments." In *Fashion, Design and Events,* edited by K.M. Williams, J. Laing, and W. Frost, 69–83. Abingdon: Routledge.

Otto, U. 2016. "Gesten des Anachronismus. Theatrale Medienpraktiken im Reenactment." In *Reenactments. Medienpraktiken zwischen Wiederholung und kreativer Aneignung,* edited by A. Dreschke, I. Huynh, R. Knipp, and D. Sittler (1. Aufl., Vol. 8). Berlin: transcript Verlag.

Robinson, E. 2010. "Touching the Void: Affective History and the Impossible." *Rethinking History* 14 (4): 503–20. doi:10.1080/13642529.2010.515806

Schroeder, C. 2012. *Man of War. My Adventures in the World of Historical Reenactment*. New York: Hudson Street Press.

Strauss, M.D. 2001. "A Framework for Assessing Military Dress. Authenticity in Civil War Reenacting." *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal* 19 (4): 145–57. doi:10.1177/0887302X0101900401

Turner, R. 1990. "Bloodless Battles: The Civil War Reenacted." *TDR (1988-)* 34 (4): 123–36. doi:10.2307/1146047

---

1. Here Ankersmit also misinterprets the ontological ramifications of Gadamer's notion of experience to which he refers.