

*Historical reflection on the
cognitive processes and methods
used in conflicts
1854 - 1880*

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Why a historical perspective?

- No lessons from history or history matters but:
 - Assessment as a cognitive process has a history
 - The history of contemporary humanitarianism ‘fixes’ a number of its central features early on
 - Cold calculation (Henry Dunant) is part of that process
 - Any calculation reveals a number of key choices

War as case study

- Origins of modern humanitarian aid are in wars
- Which wars? Wars of the 1850s (Crimea – Nightingale, Chenu)
- War of Italian Unification (Dunant – Red Cross)
- Franco-Prussian war (Geneva Convention war)
- What is new?
 - The media – photographic and newspaper coverage
 - The use of statistical data in political discourse
 - The greater mortality of modern weaponry
 - The greater awareness of military morbidity
 - Greater awareness of impact of peoples (Quakers in 1870)

Assessment practices

- A new dialectic Assessment and evaluation.
- Experience to build on: reports and full analysis post 1854 (C. Fredj)
- Assessment debates are political: Moral universe of F. Nightingale; autonomy of French medical forces (Chenu), analysis of defeat post 1870
- Assessment narratives
- Accountability narratives
 - Related but different purposes
 - Charity status forms
 - Impact of accountability on evaluation and assessment strategies and forms.
- New categories of needs
 - Civilian victims
 - Disabled post 1870 (Riencourt) a population increasing 10 times from original evaluations

Example: The Great Statistician Chenu

- 1854 Crimea expedition: ‘Some said 50 to 60 000 men had died of their wounds or diseases, others could not agree to less than 150,000 men. They were all wrong. The truth is that Sevastopol and peace cost us 95,615 men, but it is in the breakdown that you discover what this means. 10240 men were killed, another 10,000 died of their wounds!..
- Statistics as ‘arithmetic of facts’
- Let us set aside the humanitarian considerations, easily deduced from the situation in order to consider the situation from an economic point of view
- War as cost and as loss of income (1.8M soldiers killed 1853-1870)
- *De la Mortalité aux armées et des moyens d'économiser la vie humaine*, 1870.

The Chenu method

- Crimean armies: 18 statisticians for 10 months, 1,150 million files, 5 years of work.
- Statistics not central to the administration – why?
- Politics – accountability in predemocratic system
- The collapse of the method
 - Humanitarian free for all of 1870
 - Mass dis-organisation of armies
 - Statistical nightmare:
 - 94,000 Refugees/internees in Switzerland
 - What assessment of what?



- Let's not give credence to the validity of medical statistics, their value is all relative; whatever conclusions you may reach from them may not be truthful.... (1874)
- German variability 33%
- Incident by incident day by day each with a ? attached
- Assessment of voluntary organisations: self narratives, narratives of suffering,
- 'varied forms of reports which are more often than not more administrative than medical'

How were lessons from previous assessments used in 1870?

- The Listerian Age?
 - Ambiguities
 - Amputation debates
- Field hospitals
 - The lessons of the American civil war
 - Ideals of Mobility
 - Dispersion and loss



LA GUERRE ILLUSTRÉE.



L'AMBULANCE AMÉRICAINNE DANS L'AVENUE UHRICIL.

Le hôpital des Prussiens à été - ment quelle confiance inspirerait l'arrivée de - tur du grand philosophe remplacera celle d'U
ouvert pour secourir les troupes - quelques braves charretiers ou hommes de - ront de l'...

Preliminary tracks?

- Statistical methods reveal conflicts between accounts, accountability, assessments and evaluation of needs (Quaker exception in reconstruction post 1870)
- The politics of figures plays both ways: exaggerations, neglect of entire categories
- Key methods of humanitarianism: pain and anecdotal narratives as microcosm

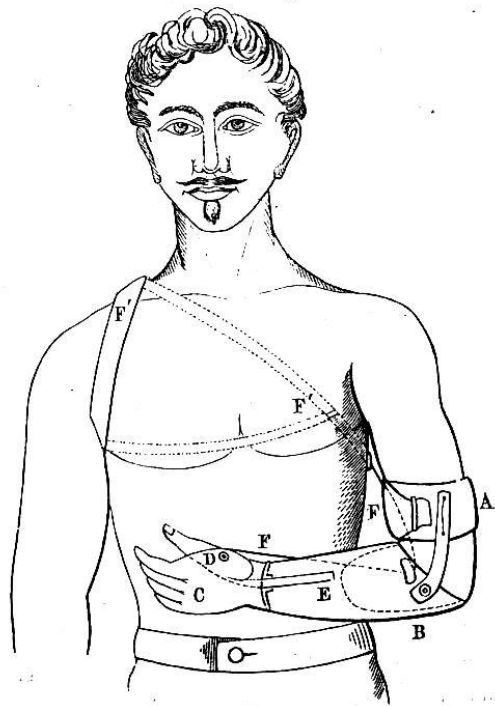


Figure 6.

AB brassard et gaine ordinaires.

C main en bois de tilleul.

D articulation du pouce.

E ressort en caoutchouc.

Fig. 16.



Bras de travailleur. — Côté gauche.