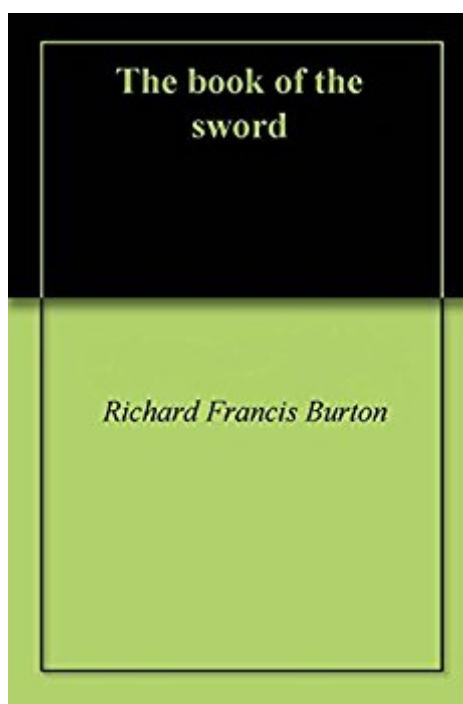


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The Book Of The Sword



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

I did my thesis for my second MA in English Lit. on Burton (over a decade ago), so, in many ways, I appreciate his writing--which is, well, very erudite, opinionated, and often pedantic in the extreme. This is not a straightforward narrative, a comprehensive text on swords or swordsmanship, or quite like anything you ever have read before if you are not used to Burton's truly unique style. It is claimed that Burton knew 29 languages, and this is probably true. He was an amazing linguist and real scholar, among his many other talents and adventures. It is hard to say you have fully read this book unless you have a working knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, Chinese, Sanskrit, Urdu, Arabic (I can claim this with Arabic at least), Farsi, and sundry other languages that he leaves in the original script and untranslated. I have read many of Burton's books, and had put off reading this for years because it looked very ponderous and convoluted as a text. And it is. I had a bit of hope that it would be interesting nonetheless once you unlock all of that a bit, as he was one of the greatest swordsmen of Europe and this is a topic close to his heart. As Rice writes in his

important biography on Burton, his mastery of the sword became legendary not only among the English but also among the French. If Burton's pedantry (or erudition--but it isn't easy reading either way) doesn't break you, there is a lot to learn in this book, though I am more concerned with the use of weapons than their historical metallurgical composition. Learned and pedantic in the extreme, Burton is most interesting when he actually talks about weapons and their usage, which is a relatively small portion of the book. He very much favors European swordmaking over Japanese, etc.

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