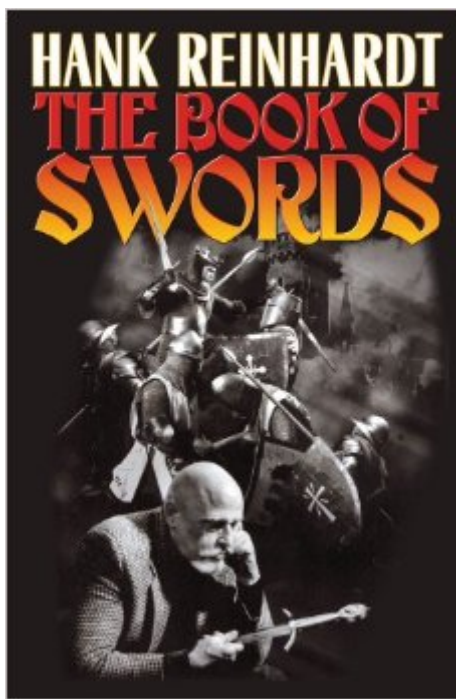


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The Book Of Swords



Synopsis

The sword is the most revered of all of man's weapons. Although the club is older, the knife more universal, and the firearm much more efficient, it is to the sword that most decoration, myth, mysticism and reverence has been given. The katana has been called "The Soul of the Samurai," the Vikings lavished love, care and attached wonderful names to their weapons. The sword has been the symbol of Justice, of Vengeance, and of Mercy. No one artifact has so captured the imagination as has the sword. As our society has grown more and more advanced, and more reliant on technology, there has been an increased interest in the weapons of the past. The romance of the sword is very much alive—but movies, books and fiction of all types have romanticized the past, and particularly the sword, beyond all recognition of the real thing. Drawing on information from grave excavations, illustrations of battle scenes, and many classical and medieval literary sources, this book discusses how contemporaries showed swords were used. Building on Oakeshott and other authoritative writers on the subject, this volume, representing ten years of writing and a lifetime of experience, will add to the body of knowledge of the history of swords by illustrating not only the beauty of the form of the sword, but also their beauty of function.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In a society fraught with habitual hype and melodrama, especially in the arena of martial arts, which includes Western martial practices of the sword, Hank Reinhardt has always been a beacon of empirical pragmatism, never taking himself too seriously, yet always applying his research methods

utilizing good science. This book reflects this realism, not merely as an ideal with which to aspire, but through solid documentation. Unfortunately, Hank died an untimely death before this book could actually be completed, but fortunately, Hank also had completed a rough draft, from which the editors of his estate were able to compile this work. Divided in fourteen chapters, the book is organized into something of a historical chronology of the sword's evolution through mankind's progression, ending with chapters addressing the basic techniques and mindset attributed to the sword's potential applications in battle, single duels and in friendly competitions. In the early chapters of this manuscript, Hank delves into the science of the sword's fundamental make up from bronze to iron to steel, giving the reader the facts of a sword's basic structure, which, in effect limits the sword's elemental function. In his usual matter-of-fact, yet humble way, the myths established about the sword are squished in a hurry. Various sword types are elaborated on in subsequent chapters, discussing the Eastern sword types, including the Japanese swords, as well as Near/Mid-Eastern swords, as well the those swords commonly found originating from Western Europe, from the time of pre-Bronze age through to the late Iron Age.

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