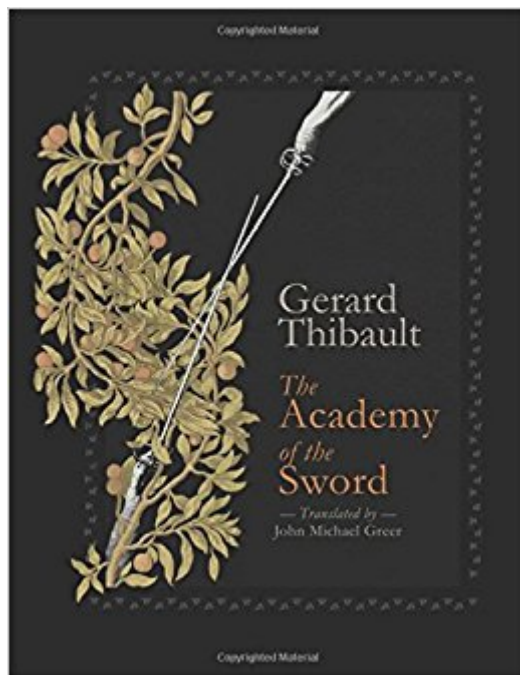


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The Academy Of The Sword



Synopsis

Four centuries ago, the famed swordsman Gerard Thibault d'Anvers wrote one of the forgotten classics of the Western esoteric tradition—a comprehensive manual of swordsmanship as a Western martial art based on Renaissance sacred geometry. Rescued from oblivion and translated into readable English by widely respected modern occultist John Michael Greer, *The Academy of the Sword* is an astonishingly detailed instructional guide on the way of the sword as it was practiced in the age of the Musketeers. It covers every aspect of sword training from stance and footwork and the development of sensitivity and timing to hundreds of detailed techniques for overcoming opponents armed with all of the standard weapons of the time. This new volume also lavishly reproduces the beautiful 17th-century etchings that accompany the instructions, and which provide a compelling glimpse into the ritualistic world of duelling. *The Academy of the Sword* will be invaluable to readers interested in historical Western martial arts, students of stage fight, and practitioners of sacred geometry alike.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gerard Thibault d'Anvers (ca. 1574–1627) was a Dutch fencing master and author of the 1628 rapier manual *Academie de l'Espée* (*The Academy of the Sword*). John Michael Greer is the author of more than 40 books on topics ranging from ceremonial magic and nature spirituality to peak oil and the future of industrial society, as well as the widely read weekly blog *The Archdruid Report*.

There are lots of ways to look at this book, so I'll take them one at a time. As a fencing instructional text - obscure... "Academy of the Sword" is so detailed, complete, and complex that it is very difficult to follow as a fencing instructional text. Thibault's system includes considering the blade of the sword as being divided into 12 parts rather than the more common 2 or 3 (forte, foible, and sometimes medium). Descriptions of each movement are incredibly detailed, and well illustrated, but the overall effect is overwhelming. The system itself is Spanish fencing, radically different from French and Italian styles that have evolved into modern sport fencing, but the obscurity of the system only adds to the obscurity of Thibault's text. The one of the elements differentiating Spanish fencing from others is the use of a complex geometric pattern based on a circle and its diameter and chords as a training tool, and the circle shows up dozens of times in every illustration. Another difference is the upright posture and manner of holding the sword arm straight out from the torso; very different from modern sport fencing, but there had to be something to it as Spanish fencers were well respected in the period (n.b. George Silver's observations on Spanish style fencing in "Paradoxes of Defence" circa 1599). Typical of the period, the discussion of the circle integrates mathematics, geometry, anatomy, and a hint of mysticism. There is much to be learned here, but it is not for someone with only a passing or casual interest in Spanish fencing. This is a reflection of the author and target audience, scholars and educated men of the 1600s pursuing the art of the sword, rather than ruffians or the soldiers of the period. As a scholarly translation of a renaissance text - Brilliant! This was clearly someone's passion for a long time, and the translation in to contemporary English flows well, and from the bits of the original shown in the illustrations that I could piece together, seems faithful to the letter and spirit. As a book of reproductions of renaissance illustrations - Brilliant! The illustrations are beautifully reproduced, and they are incredible in themselves. Line etchings, but so detailed and packed with ornamentation in the corners and between the illustrations of the fencers that they engage the reader as much as the text. As technical illustrations, they are busy and crowded, but well drawn, and absolutely consistent with the text. As an inspiration for a conspiracy theorist - Brilliant! This book could inspire conspiracy theorists for years to come ("What does the cherub looking at the mystic circle on the side of the pillar -REALLY- mean?"). It's a thing of beauty, but it would be easy to perceive hints of a complex secret in the rich subtleties of the illustrations and the fencing text. I enjoyed it tremendously, and my hat's off to the translator whose diligence has yielded such magnificent results, as well as to the original author and illustrators.

This is a good addition to the WMA practitioner's bookshelf. I like Thibault's attitude. He's

aggressive. Unfortunately, he's also convinced of the martial superiority of the long rapier, which is admittedly pretty deadly in his system, but I have strong reservations about whether any rapier system can function, as he implies, against other types of weapons.

This is both well written and fascinating. A lot of quality information in this book

This book is very thorough. Unfortunately with the Kindle version, it doesn't have all of the images that the author constantly refers to. I imagine the print version would.

I have a original version & french version, now i bought this english version I love this book but i must complaint pictures are not clearly in kindle version so I need frequently switch between this book and original ver pdf when i reading

this is a rare book, I been searching for a copy at a reasonable rate, and this is it. While the pictures are good, I prefer the colored original, but the b/w are excellent. This is one of the few text dealing with the Spanish sword fighting style which uses circles, in fact, many of the sword movements are similar to the Chinese bagua system (which also utilizes circles) it is magical. While many of the terms are obscure, you can figure it out from the pictures if the translation didn't make sense. The last section on sword versus a matchlock is very funny.

Greer's translation of Thibault is brilliantly executed. I've read a number of other books by Greer, and his understanding of the esoteric worldview of Thibault's time, along with his knowledge of period sword technique and his meticulous attention to detail make this one of the best translations I have ever read. Greer also does well to just stay out of the way, and let Thibault's words explain the techniques. Greer does very little editorializing, (only in the preface, and in the occasional footnote.) The illustration images do well to capture the painstaking detail that Thibault's engravers went to. All in all, I love what Chivalry Bookshelf has done here, and hope to pick up their publications of Guy Windsor's modern sword treatises very soon.

Essential work for Spanish Circle enthusiasts. Some of the plates appear a bit dim. I don't know if this is a (minor) defect in the printing or an artifact of dim originals but it is notable.

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