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Treatise On The Subject Of Fencing: Marco Docciolini's 1601 Fencing Treatise



Synopsis

"In this book I have striven to summarize, as succinctly as I could and as clearly as I have been able, the rules and methods that seemed necessary to me for the practice of the sword, both alone and with companion weapons. Having to describe the many minutiae and particular details of any art is almost impossible in the clarity that maybe it deserves. Nevertheless I hope to have made myself sufficiently understood in this treatise, so any man with some basic knowledge can be capable of what I have described." Marco Docciolini (1601)

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Customer Reviews

Fantastic and important new work

Marco Docciolini's text is one of the most understudied in historical European martial arts (HEMA) because it lacks the pictures of later works like Capo Ferro or Fabris, which help facilitate understanding. This makes Piermarco Terminiello's translation all the more crucial, because without instructions in clear, readable prose, turning the text on the page into a practical art of fencing would be an immensely difficult task. Having now read Terminiello's translation, I am thrilled to say that Docciolini's instructions have been brought to life in clear, readable English. Anyone who has had a little bit of prior experience in the fencing arts should be able to pick up this book and bring to life a style of fencing that hasn't been seen in over four-hundred years. It will take time for the influence of Docciolini's text to really be felt in the HEMA community, and in rapier-fencing tournaments, but I suspect that we will be seeing more and more Docciolini-influenced fencers as a result of this clear, concise translation.

I'm just gushing over Piermarco and Steven's new translation of Docciolini. There's tons of overlap here with how I understand and teach Liechtenauer. As a 15thC guy, it's nice to see something so familiar coming out of the 17thC. What's also nice are the later chapters: Two Swords, Sword and Buckler, Sword and Targe, Sword and Rotella. I think the word sword here is appropriate. It doesn't really read like a rapier text. This treatise is a real gem. Early German practitioners, don't shrug it off because of the Italian name and the year 1601. You'll see nachreisen, ansetzen, durchwechsel, versetzen and absetzen to name a few Liechtenauer concepts off the top of my head along with a very simple and clear footwork.

Docciolini's approach is clean, straight forward, but still unique. Piermarco's translation makes this an awfully easy and pleasant read. A fantastic airplane read for anyone interested in fencing, both historical and modern.

A really interesting take on the rapier. Very different than the four guards system you see in other manuals from that time period.

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