



## With Fire and Sword

*Patrick Lucanio*

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*With Fire and Sword* is a comprehensive study of the English-dubbed Italian spectacles produced in the 1960s which are often described as "beefcake" and "sword'n'sandal" epics. Termed respectably *peplum* by the many French critics who thought highly of the genre, such films as *Hercules* and *Goliath and the Barbarians* held a fascination for American movie and television audiences at a time of social and political turmoil. Using myth criticism to extract value in the films, the book first presents a descriptive study of the genre by defining its characteristics before analyzing its motifs, iconography, and narrative patterns; as a result, the book concludes that the films exerted a fairy tale appeal to their audiences which effectively reduced the vicissitudes of political confusion to manageable yet nonetheless sophisticated terms. The book then presents a comprehensive filmography of over 300 films with most titles annotated with synopses, casts, credits, production notes, critical responses, and historical associations. Complementing the text are numerous stills, advertising art, and frame enlargements from significant works. The book also contains appendices on early films, on related English-language films, and on related foreign films produced in countries other than Italy. Also included are a comprehensive bibliography and index.

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