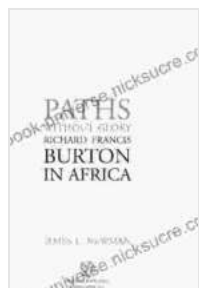


Paths Without Glory: Richard Francis Burton's Explorations in Africa



Paths Without Glory: Richard Francis Burton in Africa

by James L. Newman

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1901 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 316 pages



Richard Francis Burton was a British explorer, translator, writer, and diplomat. He is best known for his travels in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, as well as his translations of the Kama Sutra and The Book of One Thousand and One Nights. Burton was a complex and controversial figure, but he was also one of the most important explorers of the Victorian era.

Burton was born in Torquay, England, in 1821. He was the son of a British Army officer and an Irish mother. Burton's father died when he was young, and his mother remarried a wealthy landowner. Burton was educated at Oxford University, but he left without a degree in 1842. He then joined the British Army and served in India. Burton resigned from the army in 1851 and began his career as an explorer.

Burton's first major expedition was to Mecca and Medina, the holy cities of Islam. He disguised himself as an Afghan pilgrim and made the difficult journey to Mecca. Burton's account of his journey, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah*, was published in 1855 and was a huge success. Burton became a celebrity overnight.

Burton's next major expedition was to East Africa. He was commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to explore the interior of the continent. Burton and his companion, John Hanning Speke, set out from Zanzibar in 1857. They reached Lake Tanganyika in 1858, but they were unable to proceed further due to the hostility of the local people. Burton and Speke returned to England in 1859.

Burton's expedition to East Africa was a disappointment, but he did not give up on his dream of exploring the interior of the continent. In 1864, he set out on a new expedition to the Somali Coast. Burton and his companion, Charles Guillain, explored the coast of Somaliland and made contact with the local people. Burton's account of his journey, *First Footsteps in East Africa*, was published in 1866.

Burton's explorations in Africa were important for a number of reasons. He was the first European to reach Lake Tanganyika, and he was the first to explore the Somali Coast. Burton's writings about his travels helped to increase European knowledge of Africa and to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that had existed about the continent. Burton was also a strong advocate for the abolition of slavery in Africa.

Burton died in Trieste, Italy, in 1890. He was 69 years old. Burton was a complex and controversial figure, but he was also one of the most

important explorers of the Victorian era. His explorations in Africa helped to increase European knowledge of the continent and to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that had existed about it. Burton was also a strong advocate for the abolition of slavery in Africa.

Legacy

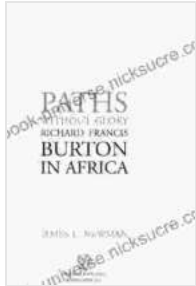
Burton's legacy is complex and controversial. He was a brilliant explorer and writer, but he was also a racist and a misogynist. Burton's writings are full of racist and sexist language, and he often expressed contempt for the people he encountered on his travels. However, Burton was also a complex and contradictory figure. He was a strong advocate for the abolition of slavery in Africa, and he was one of the first Europeans to recognize the importance of African culture and history.

Burton's legacy is still debated today. Some people argue that his racism and sexism should not overshadow his achievements as an explorer and writer. Others argue that his racist and sexist views are an important part of his legacy and should not be ignored. Ultimately, it is up to each individual to decide how they view Richard Francis Burton.

Further Reading

- Burton, Richard Francis. *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah*. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1855.
- Burton, Richard Francis. *First Footsteps in East Africa*. London: Tinsley Brothers, 1866.
- Rice, Edward. *Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton: A Biography*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896.

- Moorehead, Alan. *The White Nile*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1960.
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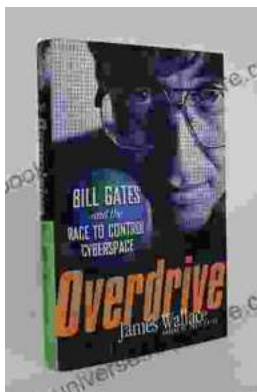


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