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The Book Of Five Rings (with Linked TOC)



Synopsis

This ebook is complete with linked Table of Content making navigation quicker and easier. Miyamoto Musashi's Go Rin no Sho or the book of five rings, is considered a classic treatise on military strategy, much like Sun Tzu's The Art of War and Chanakya's Arthashastra. The five "books" refer to the idea that there are different elements of battle, just as there are different physical elements in life, as described by Buddhism, Shinto, and other Eastern religions. Through the book Musashi defends his thesis: a man who conquers himself is ready to take it on the world, should need arise.

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Customer Reviews

As others have already written very complete reviews, I just had a few miscellaneous comments, mostly on how to understand Musashi's seemingly paradoxical ideas about technique. This has become a legendary book. Written by the famous swordsman, sometimes referred to in the west as "The Lone Ranger of Japan," Musashi claimed to have been in over 60 sword battles, triumphing each time, so it's no wonder Musashi's name has become legendary in both Japan and the west. The book sets out Musashi's philosophy and correct Way of the Sword. But the principles

Musashi espouses are bound to sound perplexing to many people. Musashi says that the best stance is no stance, that too much strength is bad (your sword may shatter when clashing swords), and that even too much speed is bad (it may upset your balance), and that none of these are the true Way of the Sword. The best technique is, in fact, no technique. This sort of philosophy is bound to be more than a little confusing, so I'll see if I can clarify it a little. I'm not sure I understand Musashi either, although I've studied martial arts for many years and have read my share of eastern philosophy, but I'll give you my ideas on how I relate to them just in case you find them useful. Basically what Musashi is saying is that once you've learned a technique and committed it to memory and especially "muscle memory," it becomes fixed and is no longer adaptive. Your body becomes channalized into this form or technique, which then becomes limiting, preventing you from achieving true mastery, which is the ability to adapt and flow with any of the infinite number of situations you may encounter. Fixity is therefore dysfunctional and is not the true Way of the Sword.

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