



The Book of Five Rings: A Graphic Novel

Sean Michael Wilson , Chie Kutsuwada (Illustrations) , William Scott Wilson (Translation) , Miyamoto Musashi

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This graphic novel version of *The Book of Five Rings*, the iconic book of confrontation and victory by the famed seventeenth-century duelist and undefeated samurai Miyamoto Musashi, illuminates this brilliant manifesto, which has long inspired martial artists and anyone interested in cultivating a strategic mind. With evocative drawings and a distilled but faithful text adapted by acclaimed manga writer Sean Michael Wilson, *The Book of Five Rings* comes alive both as a guide to swordsmanship and strategy, and as a view into Musashi's world.

The Book of Five Rings: A Graphic Novel Details

Date : Published November 13th 2012 by Shambhala

ISBN : 9781611800128

Author : Sean Michael Wilson , Chie Kutsuwada (Illustrations) , William Scott Wilson (Translation) , Miyamoto Musashi

Format : Paperback 160 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Philosophy, Comics, Nonfiction, Manga, Combat, Martial Arts, Cultural, Japan, History, Graphic Novels Comics, Self Help

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From Reader Review The Book of Five Rings: A Graphic Novel for online ebook

Dominic Fortin-Charland says

Une excellente introduction à l'illustre Musashi.

Stewart Tame says

Considering how un-adaptable the source material must have been, this is actually pretty impressive. That said, it just wasn't my thing. Reminds me a bit of some zen texts I've read, only not as interesting as some of those can be. Reminds me of the old story about the talking dog in that the fact of its existence is more interesting than the actual content.

Lionkhan-sama says

Absolutely loved this book. The concept of taking an ancient treatise and producing it in the style of a manga is just brilliant. The artwork is very captivating, and suits the message that was embodied in the original Book of Five Rings.

Although the amount of reading content is very small, it is definitely valuable.

Great work. Thoroughly enjoyed reading this.

Jason says

I really liked the artwork and the organization of the book. The 3 star review has more to do with the subject matter not really hitting home for me. Some of it, yes, but being a part of a Mennonite community as I am, using a warrior metaphor to talk about how one should approach life doesn't resonate. There are certainly principles one could draw from the warrior metaphor that don't involve seeing life as a kind of battle where you're trying to one-up your opponent, but you kinda have to work to get there.

Stacey Marie says

Really beautifully done graphic representation of Miyamoto's Book Of the Five Rings. I read the original many years ago when I was obsessed with old Japan and this is a great adaptation. The art is almost classic manga style --the non-flashy stuff, which distinguishes it from other historical graphic novels.

Aaron Maurer says

I love reading ancient texts of martial arts, warriors, and the like because I find in their articulately crafted words such great wisdom about life in general. When it all comes down to it life is about that balance and realizing that everything comes full circle. Reading this book I was reminded that we must not focus all efforts into only one thing and to clear the mind of anything that could cause confusion. The illustrations were excellent to help shape the story. Perhaps things can be said best by text from the latter part of the book.

In emptiness exists Good but no evil

Wisdom is existence

Principle is existence

The Way is existence

The mind is emptiness

Mihai says

Honestly was expecting a little bit more. The illustrations are nice and the excerpts from Musashi's book appropriate. Maybe it's meant to act as a hook for someone unfamiliar with the subject, otherwise it feels like under delivering on both the graphic side and on Musashi's writings.

Marsha says

Okay, I'll admit this is one of those foreign books that people think should read, like Machiavelli's "The Prince" or Sun Tzu's "The Art of Warfare". It's in graphic novel form too, which should make it easy to digest for contemporary readers.

But I found some of the language opaque and hard to apply to contemporary affairs. The references to the elements left me scratching my head. Also, reading about a warrior who'd never been bested in battle was a trifle...boring. Who wants to read about someone who wins all the time? It'd be like watching any chess or tennis champion never lose a match. No matter how great their skill, an unbeatable champion is as boring to observe as a computer.

The character of Miyamoto Musashi is as bland as a computer too. He rarely shows expression. He expresses loyalty towards his lord but never joy, excitement, anger, rage or satisfaction. He teaches how to fight but writes about his technique only at the behest of his lord.

I suppose such detachment is to be expected after many years of living and teaching. I wasn't upset at finding quiet wisdom in Yoda, after all. But, screw it, Yoda occasionally showed signs of temper! What do we get from Musashi but his trouncing his students time and again?

If you can get something out of this novel, fine. But I certainly won't be looking for the original any time soon.

Thomas says

Excellent adaptation of a timeless classic, to which I'll be returning before long, I hope. I hope to update this "review" with more thoughts after I've sat on this for a bit.

Nick says

It's hard to explain whether this is fiction or non-fiction, in graphic form. It's a graphic version of how a real person wrote a book of philosophy and martial arts, with the text itself illustrated by scenes which may or may not be fictional. Got that?

Musashi's Book of Five Rings was something that was a must-read for people a number of years ago, with fans from the worlds of history, martial arts and business all claiming it as a manual for their lives. It's that kind of book.

The explanatory material in this book, brief as it is, puts some of the work into an excellent context for understanding some of the things that Mushashi mentioned in passing, but fails in certain other ways. For instance, the text keeps saying that Buddhism is NOT within the Way of the Warrior, but the explanatory notes puts the whole book into a context involving esoteric Buddhism. So, which is it?

Still, ignoring such apparent conflicts will not reduce the value of this work. By illustrating the combat examples described by Musashi, those who are not skilled with a sword can still understand his points. Those who have never even picked up a sword can still learn from his basic principles, which have to do with ANY form of competition [which is why businessmen like to claim it as a book for them, too].

A very good adaptation, but the explanations could have used a little explaining, to clarify the apparent conceptual conflicts.

Thomas Mcmillen says

A quick, well-done version of Miyamoto Musashi's Book of 5 Rings. The graphic novel form illustrates the tenets, (especially Emptiness), that can seem too etherial. "You should investigate this thoroughly".

Subhadeep Bose says

a very nice book
Should read this book

Ryan Lindberg says

It reads like an instruction manual, pulling directly from Mushashi's The Book of Five Rings. Wilson stays pretty close to the book he's adapting and adds some interesting details about Mushashi's life, that I appreciated reading. His afterward thoughtfully breaks down each section of the book and includes more information about Mushashi and his influence posthumous. The art isn't bad but leaves a bit to be desired for

more swordplay. Kutsuwada could have chosen more dynamic angles and balanced panels to be more emotional and interesting. The characters are a bit stationary, usually listening to Mushashi preach or Mushashi standing in a pose. The art is closely accurate to how a lesson was given, but when adapted into a comic/manga, there should be more drama in the illustration. I appreciate the illustrations looking instructional at certain parts, because it helps to visualize the points Mushashi is trying to convey in his lectures. Overall, it's a good adaption and the visuals help detail Mushashi's lessons.

Nicolo Yu says

I was expecting a lot of samurai sword-fighting action but this is really more of a treatise on how Miyamoto Musashi became the legend that he is. My disappointment notwithstanding, this graphic novel adaptation gives a good insight on how Musashi developed his outlook on life and sword skills.

Emmaj says

Read my review at <http://noflyingnotights.com/2013/05/0...>
