



# The Samurai Swordsman: Master of War

*Stephen Turnbull*

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**Filled with dozens of woodblock prints and photographs, this Samurai history is an authoritative text on Japan's most fearsome warriors.**

Samurai—the word alone evokes intense images of expert swordsmen fighting against overwhelming odds and emerging victorious. But the popular image of the samurai only scratches the surface of these complex warriors. *The Samurai Swordsman: Master of War* brings the reality to life.

Through fascinating stories and full-color historical images that show the samurai in mesmerizing detail, military historian Stephen Turnbull provides an invaluable guide to an enduring legacy.

Most readers may imagine the samurai as a lone wanderer, owing allegiance to none but himself, only relying for his survival on his skill with the sword. As *The Samurai Swordsman* reveals, however, that image masks the diversity of the samurai's long history.

The earliest samurai warriors were actually aristocratic mounted archers, not swordsmen. Only as the archer gave way to the mounted spearman did swordsmanship come into play. Turnbull details how the history and the legacy of the samurai developed over centuries into a multifaceted, richly elaborate tapestry of martial and societal traditions.

From the first recorded use of the word samurai in the eighth century to the final wars waged in resistance to the Meiji government in the late nineteenth century, *The Samurai Swordsman* recounts the complex history of these warriors and demonstrates why the samurai continue to fascinate the world today.

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