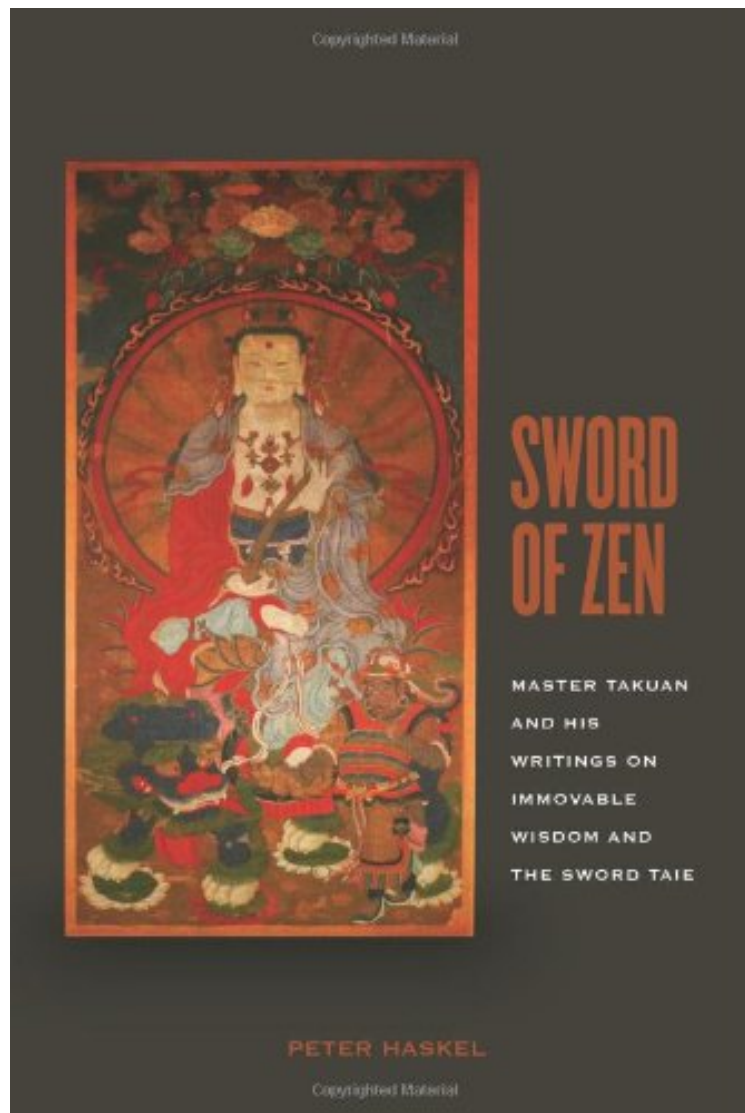


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Sword of Zen: Master Takuan and His Writings on Immovable Wisdom and the Sword Taie

Peter Haskel

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Peter Haskel : Sword of Zen: Master Takuan and His Writings on Immovable Wisdom and the Sword Taie before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sword of Zen: Master Takuan and His Writings on Immovable Wisdom and the Sword Taie:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Advanced Zen and some Zen Shogun history By Sai K. Reddy Master

Takuan is an extraordinary person in many ways. To be able to read his famous work on Zen and Swordsmanship and also his life story is a great privilege for any one. There is also a good overview of the Samurai and Shogun culture of Japan. All in all we learn about Zen and the politics surrounding it and its impact on an important Zen temple. The story of Master Takuan is fit for a Blockbuster Movie. On the other hand his Zen teachings are dense and I dare say very few would be able to attain the lofty heights of immovable Wisdom. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic By Tryggvi Sigurdsson Magnificent book, very well translated. A very important reading for all those interested in Zen and the traditional Japanese martial arts. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Another Zen Classic By HSB Freedom of the Mind The Sword of Zen is special for many reasons. Most importantly, its translator, Peter Haskell, brings out what we know of Takuan through thorough research and sparkling prose. We learn about Takuan's refusal to name an heir, believing, as other famed Daitokuji masters, that transmission can easily turn into a farce. Modern Zen students today should take heed. I loved the section where Haskell talks about how little the sword was used during battles. But that was just one of many precious gems that come out of the study of this Zen master's life during this important period in Japan's history. Haskell has brought us some of the most colorful Zen figures: Bankei, Ryokan, and the beggar Tosui, and he has done it again with The Sword of Zen. Arthur Braverman

Takuan Shos (1573-1645) two works on Zen and swordsmanship are among the most straightforward and lively presentations of Zen ever written and have enjoyed great popularity in both premodern and modern Japan. Although dealing ostensibly with the art of the sword, Record of Immovable Wisdom and On the Sword Taie are basic guides to Zen users' manuals for Zen mind that show one how to manifest it not only in sword play but from moment to moment in everyday life. Along with translations of Record of Immovable Wisdom and On the Sword Taie (the former, composed in all likelihood for the shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu and his fencing master, Yagy Munenori), this book includes an introduction to Takuan's distinctive approach to Zen, drawing on excerpts from the master's other writings. It also offers an accessible overview of the actual role of the sword in Takuan's day, a period that witnessed both a bloody age of civil warfare and Japan's final unification under the Tokugawa shoguns. Takuan was arguably the most famous Zen priest of his time, and as a pivotal figure, bridging the Zen of the late medieval and early modern periods, his story (presented in the book's biographical section) offers a rare picture of Japanese Zen in transition. For modern readers, whether practitioners of Zen or the martial arts, Takuan's emphasis on freedom of mind as the crux of his teaching resonates as powerfully as it did with the samurai and swordsmen of Tokugawa Japan. Scholars will welcome this new, annotated translation of Takuan's sword-related works as well as the host of detail it provides, illuminating an obscure period in Zen's history in Japan.

This book provides a rich and valuable resource for interpreting the historical background of two translated texts by Takuan Soho [1573-1645], one of the leading figures who stressed the underlying connection of the art of swordfighting with Zen Buddhist mental training at the dawn of the Tokugawa era. Steven Heine, Honda International University, The Historian (Vol 77:2) (July 2015) Sword of Zen will appeal to anyone with an interest in Zen, the martial arts, or Japanese history. I recommend it enthusiastically. - Jeremy A. Sather, Japan 27 (2014)-- "Japan " "This book provides a rich and valuable resource for interpreting the historical background of two translated texts by Takuan Soho [1573-1645], one of the leading figures who stressed the underlying connection of the art of swordfighting with Zen Buddhist mental training at the dawn of the Tokugawa era." Steven Heine, Honda International University, The Historian (Vol 77:2) (July 2015) "Sword of Zen will appeal to anyone with an interest in Zen, the martial arts, or Japanese history. I recommend it enthusiastically." - Jeremy A. Sather, Japan 27 (2014) (Japan) About the Author Peter Haskell received his doctorate in Japanese thought from Columbia University. He is, most recently, the author of Letting Go: The Story of Zen Master Tsui and the co-editor with Mary Farkas and Robert Lopez of Original Nature: Sokei-an's Translation and Commentary on the Sixth Patriarch Platform Sutra.