



# Hagakure: The Secret Wisdom of the Samurai

By Yamamoto Tsunetomo, Alexander Bennett

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**The comprehensive and accurate edition of the *Hagakure* is a must-have for serious martial artists or fans of samurai and the bushido code.**

The *Hagakure* is one of the most influential of all Japanese texts—written nearly 300 years ago by Yamamoto Tsunetomo to summarize the very essence of the Japanese Samurai *bushido* ("warrior") spirit. Its influence has been felt throughout the world and yet its existence is scarcely known to many Westerners. This is the first translation to include the complete first two books of the *Hagakure* and the most reliable and authentic passages contained within the third book; all other English translations published previously have been extremely fragmentary and incomplete.

Alex Bennett's completely new and highly readable translation of this essential work includes extensive footnotes that serve to fill in many cultural and historical gaps in the previous translations. This unique combination of readability and scholarship gives *Hagakure: The Secret Wisdom of the Samurai* a distinct advantage over all previous English editions.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Alex Bennett has produced the first truly authoritative translation and analysis of *Hagakure*—perhaps the most famous text ever written about samurai honor—to appear in any Western language. Simultaneously erudite and accessible, this volume belongs on the bookshelves of anyone—scholar or hobbyist alike—interested in samurai culture, or modern perceptions thereof." —**Dr. Karl F. Friday, author of *Samurai, Warfare and the State in Early Medieval Japan* and *Japan Emerging: Premodern History to 1850***

"Dr. Bennett possesses a profound knowledge of, and deep insight into, the world of Japanese *bushido*. This expertise has been enhanced by his extensive practical experience of the traditional martial arts of Japan, and his proficiency in this domain is highly acclaimed." —**Tetsuo Yamaori, former Director of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies**

"[Alex Bennett] is the very best writer on martial arts alive today and [his] work needs to be showcased to the general public." —**Don Warrener, President, Budo International**

"[A] strong point is a scholarly and succinct introduction that grounds the work in historical and social context, equipping the reader with a cultural map of Yamamoto's world. Footnotes provide valuable background and add resonance throughout, keeping names and familial relations straight, highlighting pertinent cross-references and generally rendering the work accessible to contemporary readers." —**The Japan Times**

"...the most impressive part of the book for us was Bennett's introductory chapter...It puts the *Hagakure* into its proper historical and social setting as well as examining 'bushido' [...] with a critical eye and a look at how Jocho's life experiences and psychology is reflected in the work—and does so elegantly and brilliantly. This translation is well worth picking up just on the strength of this chapter." —**TheShogunHouse.com blog**

#### About the Author

**Alexander Bennett** holds doctorates from the University of Canterbury and Kyoto University. He has worked for the International Research Center for Japanese Studies and is currently Associate Professor at Kansai University's Department of International Affairs. He lectures frequently on Japanese martial culture and is Vice President of the International Naginata Federation and a committee member of the All Japan Kendo Federation, as well as director of the Japanese Academy of Budo. He is also head coach of New Zealand Kendo. His recent publications include *Naginata: the Definitive Guide*, *Budo Perspectives*, *The History and Spirit of Budo* and *The Bushido That Japanese Don't Know* (in Japanese).

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