MushaShugyo
The Way of the Warrior

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CHAPTER 1
THE HERO

After devoting your whole youth to your training, you have finally perfected your martial techniques to the point that your master has nothing else to teach you. The moment has come for you to begin your pilgrimage, the journey that will allow you to perfect your skills and to develop your personal techniques. You will have to find your fightin way by yourself and create your own unique fighting style...

This **Role-playing Game** has been developed so that it can be played by just one person, or by two or multiple players, according to the Mode of your choice. If played with many friends, *Musha Shugyō* can therefore be used as a sort of board game, structured like a fighting tournament.

Draw your inspiration from plots similar to those of *The King of Fighters, Street Fighter, Virtua Fighter,* or of movies such as *Bloodsports* or *Ip Man.* The main source of inspiration is the Web Series: *Street Fighter: Assassin's Fist;* therefore, we strongly suggest that you watch it in order to get into the right atmosphere.

Many role-playing games are devised for a group of Characters, where there isn't a real main character even if the group usually has a leader. In *Musha Shugyō*, in contrast, your Character is the only hero in the adventure. There are many plots, in any media and settings, in which you can find the same thing: just think of *Dragon Ball* where, in the end, it is Goku who saves the day, or *Conan the Barbarian*, and *Elric of Melniboné*; even *Fist of the North Star (Hokuto no Ken)* has a similarly structured plot. In these stories, we often see one or more secondary Characters who stand by the hero, even for a long time, but in the end he will have to reach the end of his journey by himself. *Musha Shugyō* is a perfect instrument to simulate this kind of stories.

Required material

- A copy-book or a diary (for Single Player Mode);
- The Character's bookmark (see specific section);
- An eraser and six-sided die; the die can be substituted by an hexagonal pencil, in which case you will have to write a number from 1 to 6 on each side, or mark each side with dots or carvings.

Contents

Inside *Musha Shugyō* box you will find the following playing material. Some of these parts will be used only in specific Play Modes.

- Handbook;
- 2 six-sided dice;
- 10 bookmarks/pre-filled character sheets for *Musha Shugyō* Playing Characters (PCs in short) + 2 Technical Charts;
- 55 illustrated cards with *Musha Shugyō* Characters special moves patterns;
- 24 yellow tokens for Combo Points and 60 red tokens for Life Points

Check

When a Check has to be made, throw a die to get a result between 1 and 6. If you're using an hexagonal pencil, hold it by its head, in order to hide the numbers and use the other hand to rotate it, then open the hand hiding the numbers and check which is the one facing you: that will be the Check result.

Playing Modes

Musha Shugyō has been developed so that it can be played in different modes: alone, in a group, with or without a game master. In other words, it is exactly like a fighting game.

Each different mode is explained in its specific chapter. Here is a list of them all:

Single Player Mode
- Diary Mode
- Tournament Mode
- Kumitè Mode
- Challenge Mode

Two Players Mode
- Random Encounter
- Guided Adventure

Multiplayer Mode
- Multiplayer Guided Mode
- Multiplayer Tournament Mode

Main Character's Identity

It is time to create your Main Character, which is to say the Playing Character each Player creates for himself. The first step to create a Main Character worthy of such a title is to create his identity.

Give some thought to who your Character is, where he comes from. In what age does he live and what country is he from? Which martial art has he trained in? And where? Who was his master? What is his aim in life and why did he chose to follow the way of the martial arts? What kind of future does he want for himself? Briefly describe the Character's idols, rivals and enemies, if there are any.

Develop an answer to all these questions, writing them down on a piece of paper: on this basis, you will develop the idea of your Character. You may add whatever you like: memories of his training, or of companions he cared for, loved ones he had to leave behind, sacrifices... He can practice any kind of martial art, not necessarily an oriental one: he could be a capoeira expert, or a nowadays judo Olympic champion who decided to follow the warrior's way, or even a medieval knight errant, specialized in swordplay. Imagination knows no limits.

He has nothing else to learn in the place where he has been living up to now. It is time to begin a journey. Does he already have an idea about where to head to, or perhaps plans to wander about aimlessly, looking for opponents to match himself against?

Incipit

Each pre-generated Character you find in Musha Shugyo has an already-made Incipit that can be used as starting point. It is a brief summary of all the data concerning his identity. If you decided to create your own unique Character, you can draw your inspiration from the Incipits included in this manual as you write down your own Character's specifics!

Do not hesitate to share your creations on our site: our purpose is to allow all players to download countless characters created by other players, so that everybody can have a hand in creating a wide range of fighters for *Musha Shugyō!*

THE BOOKMARKS–CHARACTER SHEETS

In this game, the Character Sheets are postcard format bookmarks. We call them bookmarks because in Single Player Mode the character sheet is also used to mark the last page you wrote on your diary!

In the box, you will find 10 ready to play sheets of pre-generated Characters: on the web site *www.mushashugyorpg.com* you will be able to download empty bookmarks, ready to be filled with original Characters data.

At the top of a sheet, you will find a space for the Character's name. On the right side you have an area where to draw him, which is always an amusing and desirable thing!

Bookmarks also have an area where to write down 5 Special Moves and 2 Super Moves (see the "Martial Techniques" section), the Action Points you need to use them, the Symbols and the Circumstance Bonus.

In the upper part of the character sheet you will write down the Character's Attributes: on the right you will have to write which method the Character uses to earn SP Points, and how many Experience Points he has accumulated. The Attributes are represented by dots: when an Attribute gets increased (through the expenditure of Experience Points) all you have to do is to blacken a dot.

On two special bookmarks you can find an outline of the Symbols, the actions, and of how to use Special Points during a fight.

ATTRIBUTES

Each Character has three Attributes, which can be seen on his bookmark:

• **Rapidity** (**RA**): It represents the PC's action/reaction movement, action, and reaction speed. It is used to calculate the Action Points (APs) available in one round. When he doesn't have any AP left, the Character can only defend himself, and he cannot even counterattack.

• **Attack** (**AT**): It represents the PC's ability to attack and hit, both in terms of skill and of mere physical strength. It is used to calculate the Attack score and the Damages.

• **Defense** (**DE**): It represents the ability to avoid Attacks and to absorb blows. It is used to defend oneself.

At the beginning, each PC has 7 points, to be distributed among AT, RA, and DE. There is one restriction only, which is that at least 1 point has to be assigned to Rapidity. A big and heavy sumo wrestler will have low Rapidity, while a skilled fencer will typically have a high Defense.

PERSONAL SP POINTS

In a fight, each Character can earn **Special Points** (**SP**), which can be used to perform Super Moves, launch a chain attack, use up less APs and do a lot of other things (see "SP Points", further on).

Each PC has a personal method to obtain SP Points, to be chosen among the following:

✖ **Combo:** 1 SP every 3 Combo Points: it is added to the SP Point the PG earns every 6 Combo Points (see Fighting Dynamics)

♠ **Damages:** 1 SP every 3 Damages inflicted in the same attack, rounded up to the lowest value before calculating Defense absorption.

⚡ **AP:** 1 SP every AP you sacrifice to this purpose. You have to use up your APs during the first or the last part of the Turn, and not while attacking;

♦ **Wounds:** 1 SP every 3 Damage suffered during the same attack. Damages absorbed through Defense count as well;

▽ **Defense:** 1SP every 3 Damages the PG manages to avoid through any kind of defense technique (counterattacks included). Damages absorbed through Defense do not count: it works only if you manage to avoid being hit.

MARTIAL TECHNIQUES

In this chapter we will see how to create new Martial techniques for your Character. Those will be unique Techniques, custom-made for him.

In this game you will find the Chi, the inner power the masters use to strengthen their attacks. Just as it happens in classic fighting games, the Characters can resort to the Chi to generate spectacular blows, including flames, lightning, and more, when they use Special or Super Moves. Games like Street Fighter, Toh Shin Den, Guilty Gear, Blaze Blue, etc. are an excellent source of inspiration.

As far as the game is concerned, it is irrelevant whether the Characters are armed or not. Musha Shugyo approach is similar to that of an arcade videogame: in a videogame such as Soul Calibur , all the Characters have weapons, and yet they fight against each other without taking in any consideration the real nature of the fight; in other games, the Characters are unarmed, and there are other titles, such as King of Fighters, in which some Characters have weapons and others don't. What matters to you is to know who will be the winner and to imagine a fantastic and amazing fight.

If you wish, a way to consider the real properties of weapons in-game is by translating them into Symbols: since a sword ignores the protection offered by one's muscles, you could apply the Smash Symbol (ignores Defense). A

gun or a crossbow will correspond to the Distance Symbol. A gatling gun will totalize a certain number of Combo points, and so on.

You must also imagine the description of your Techniques and the way they really work, not just their mechanics applied to the game: you will need this in order to describe or draw the fight and to memorize its dynamics. This is the real fun: to visualize the different scenes!

Special Moves

These are specific martial arts blows that make use of the Chi, the fighters inner power, in order to be more effective than common martial attacks. In fighting games, there are special moves that can be activated only through a specific combination of the arcade stick and the keys. These Moves can be freely used in any fight, without any specific limitation. They cost more Action Points than normal Attacks, but they also are more effective.

Super Moves

Super Moves are superhuman blows which require from the fighter the expenditure of a huge amount of Chi, and put to the test his

concentration and physique. As it happens in the fighting games, these Moves can be used only in specific circumstances, but they have a devastating effect.

SYMBOLS

All the Special Moves and Super Moves can make use of the Symbols. Those are specific effects that, in a game, express all the advantages using a Technique can give. Each Symbol allows one automatic effect, provided that the Technique hits the target.

✕ **2xCombo:** the attack inflicts 2 Combo Points. There is a cumulative effect in the case of Moves repeatedly carrying this Symbol.

Circumstance Bonus: it gives a +1 Bonus in a check against opponents who are in the air, or on the ground, or in contact / distance with the Character. You can also bind the Bonus to a counterattack you are carrying. The choice is yours. There is a cumulative effect.

↓ **Fall Down:** the opponent falls down and suffers one extra Damage.

⟫ **Distance:** this Attack hits the opponent even if he is at a distance from the Character. Facing this kind of attack, a distant defender can counterattack only with another attack, using the Distance or Dash Symbol.

⊕ **Powerful:** you must add 1 to Attack before computing the damage. This effect is very useful when resorting to Special Moves or Super Moves, because the Attack value gets always multiplied by two o by four. The effect is cumulative.

↺ **Reflects:** a technique carrying this symbol can only be used in Defense, and the Character won't have to pay any extra AP besides the cost of this Technique. If the defender is successful in his Defense, the attacker will suffer on himself the effects of the Technique he employed and of the one used by the defender, without being able to defend himself. This will stop his Turn as it would happen with a Counterattack. The Damage is calculated as usual. In the case of some Symbols, it will be necessary to take into consideration the attributes of the attacking PC (For example, Powerful will add 1 to the attacker's Attack in calculating the Damage).
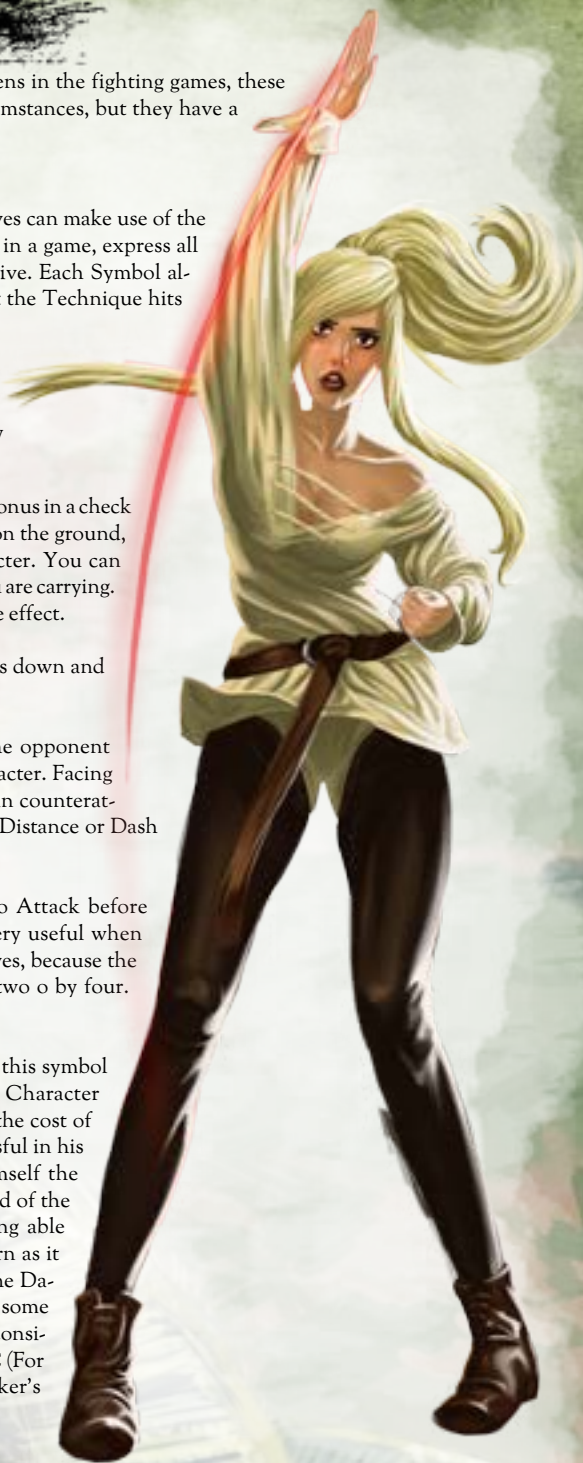
⋏ Jump OK: this Technique can be executed even while jumping, which will add the PC's Defense to his Attack before calculating the total Damage (very useful, because in Special Moves this total will be multiplied by 2 and in Super Moves by 4). This total can be used only to calculate the Damage and not in the Hit Check.

↑ Launch: the opponent gets thrown in the air. The following Attack must be different and will automatically hit the target (your opponent won't even roll the dice). Whatever the outcome of the following Attacks, the opponent will fall down receiving 1 non-absorbable Damage and will have to get up (expending 1 AP, as usual).

⌒ Smash: the opponent doesn't absorb the Damage through his DE.

→ Push: pushes back the opponent (distance), but doesn't make him fall down.

⌒⟩ Dash: the Attack hits from a distance, but the Character carrying it finds himself in contact with his opponent immediately after the blow. In the fiction, the attacker may have moved, or the opponent has been dragged towards him (as in Scorpion's famous move, in Mortal Kombat).

⌯ Ultra Agility: using this Technique, you expend one SP point to obtain +2 in the Check, but you must not consider it in calculating the Damage (only to hit or block). The effect is cumulative.

⟠ Ultra Hardness: using this technique, you expend one SP point to obtain a +2 Damage, but you must not consider it in calculating the Check. The effect is cumulative.

Techniques Creation

You can now create 3 Special Moves and 1 Super Move for your PC.

Special Moves have a standard cost of 3 APs, inflict **ATx2 + Check Damages** and have two Symbols of your choice.

Super Moves cost 3 APs, inflict **ATx4 + Check Damages** and can have three Symbols of your choice.

To customize a Technique, you can pay 1 extra AP and activate an extra Symbol. On the contrary, if you remove a Symbol, that Technique will cost 1 AP less. Any Technique, of whatever kind, can never cost less than 2 AP.

CHAPTER 2
FIGHTING

Fighting is inherent in the Warrior's Way. *Musha Shugyō* Main Characters will often have to fight against the most oddly assorted opponents. Will your Main Characters be able to overcome any obstacle?

OPPONENTS

When a situation develops into a fight, the first thing to do is to determine who the opponent is: is he an ordinary person or a real expert?

In the first case, you can simply distribute your opponent's Attributes Points: he cannot use any technique of any sort and has only 15 Life Points.

In the second case, you have to create a Character against whom you can measure yourself, going through the same procedure you followed in creating your PC, providing him with the necessary Moves. On our web site, you will find many such ready to use Characters that you can download and print. All the Main Characters in this game have 30 Life Points, and it is the same for the PCs.

FIGHTING TURNS

All the fights are single fights, one against one. At the beginning of the fight, each Character gets as many APs as his Rapidity value, then the Player makes a Check and adds its result to his PC's Rapidity. The Player who gets the higher value strikes first.

A Character's Turn is made up of three stages:

Preparation: at the beginning of each Turn, the Character gets as many APs as his Rapidity value, and they get added to those the Character hasn't expended in the previous Turns. Skip this phase on the first fighting Turn.

Attack: in this stage, the Character can either attack or move, choosing which action to perform, provided that he has enough APs at his disposal; he can also choose to stand still and to get on to the next stage.

Conclusion: the Character gives up his Turn, either by choice or because he lacks APs, and plays in defense. If he still has some APs set aside, he will keep them and will be able to add them to those he will get in the next Turn preparation stage. It is now his opponent's Turn.

During a fight it is possible to accumulate up to **20 APs and 6 SP Points.**

The Character who's not playing his Turn is in defense mode; as explained further on, however, he can still perform some actions.

Attack and Defense

In order to Attack, a Check has to be made: it's result will be added to the Attack score. The defender makes a Check, adding it to his Defense. If the attacker's result is higher than the defender's, the Attack is successful, otherwise it fails. After the attacker's Check, the defender may decide to Counterattack (see below), not necessarily to passively defend himself.

A normal, successful Attack inflicts a Damage of AT + the result of the Attack Check. The Character who gets hit absorbs DE Damages (without adding the Defense Check result). Each Character has at his disposal 30 Life Points (LP): when that value gets to zero, or below, the Character is defeated.

Critical Check: A value of 6 obtained in a Check is called Critical Check and it is equivalent to an 8. Such a result can turn the tide, in some desperate situations.

If a character has enough APs, he can also attack using Special or Super Moves.

Distance

The opponents can be in direct contact or at a distance. At the beginning of the fight, they are usually at a distance. It is allowed to strike only opponents who are in contact with the Character, unless he resorts to a Move carrying the Symbol: Distance.

The game features many situations in which you can change position or distance the opponent from yourself.
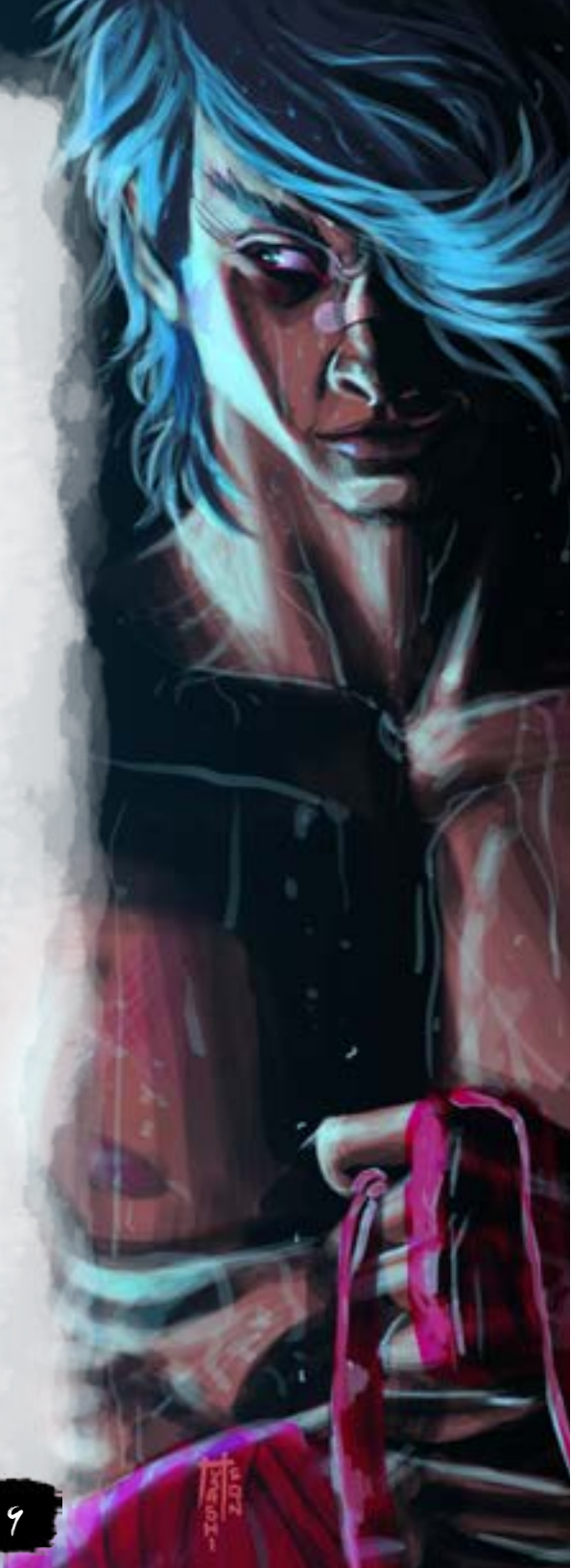
ACTIONS

In a fight, the opponents can perform some specific actions, but each of them will have a cost in terms of Action Points.

Attack: Only when resorting to normal attacks, it is possible to expend 2 extra APs in order to activate any Symbol but Distance: the effect is cumulative. Moreover, a +1 Bonus will be obtained every time 2 APs are used. A simple sweep, useful to throw down the opponent, will therefore cost 3 APs. It is not possible to carry more than 3 standard Attacks in a sequence: they must be alternated with Special or Super Moves. For example, a PC may carry 3 standard Attacks, then resort to a Special Move, then carry more standard Attacks, but he cannot carry 4 standard Attacks in a row. Cost: 1 AP + extra, or depending on the utilized Move.

Defense: Particular cases excepted, it is always possible to defend oneself from an imminent Attack. Cost: 0 AP.

Counterattack: It makes it possible to resort to an Attack instead of simply using Defense: in the hit Check, Defense (in this stage the PC is in defensive mode) is added anyhow, but Attack is added to Damage (the Check is always made only once). If it fails, it will be considered a standard, unsuccessful Defense and the PC will suffer standard Damage; if the Defense is successful, this puts a stop to the attacker's Turn and inflicts Damage. It is now the Turn of the Character who counterattacked. If the fight ends in a draw, the two Characters will strike each other at the same time, each inflicting the resulting Damage to the other! It has to be pointed out that a Character who gets interrupted by a Counterattack will not lose his remaining AP: as soon as it is his Turn again, new APs will be added to his remaining ones. Cost: 1 AP + the cost of the chosen Attack.

Throw: It inflicts the same Damage as a standard Attack. It must be executed in contact and is automatically endowed with the Symbols: Push, Fall Down. It is possible to choose to activate only Fall Down, not pushing the opponent away. Cost: 2 APs.

Getting up: A downed Character can defend himself but cannot Attack, unless he gets up again. Cost: 1AP (only in the first or last stage of one's Turn).

Jump: It allows to add the Character's DE to AT, but only to calculate the Damage (not in the hit Check). Unless endowed with the Jump OK Symbol, Special or Super Moves cannot be executed while jumping. A jump will also

allow the Character to come up to his opponent or to move away from him with the same cost in terms of APs. Beware: while jumping, the Character is vulnerable to some kinds of attacks. Cost: 1 AP.

Shift: It means to shift from distance to in contact fighting and vice versa. An Attack which is not endowed with Distance or Dash Symbols can only strike when in contact. Cost: 1 AP.

COMBO

There are various Moves which already get a standard Combo score. If you execute a series of consecutive successful Attacks, the total Combo score will grow with the addition of all the Combo points. As soon as the Attack ends, either because the opponent defended himself or because the attacker's Turn has ended, the Combo ends as well. Combo points are used to obtain new SP Points.

SPECIAL POINTS (SP)

Special Points are earned fighting, and can only be used in a fight. Opponents can benefit from Special Points as well, provided that they are as proficient as the Main Character in the martial arts. Besides earning SPs through his personal method, a Character will earn SPs in a fight if:

- Scores 6 in a fight Check;
- Scores 6 Combo Points.

SPs thus earned are added to those the PC obtained through his personal method for acquiring SPs. In a fight, they can be expended to obtain the following advantages:

- **Check Bonus:** The fighter can spend 1 SP right away, before making a Check to add +1 to it: the effect is cumulative, up to a maximum of 3 SP Points. This Bonus will also be added to the Damage.
- **Chain:** Immediately after a successful Attack, the fighter can spend 1 SP to automatically strike his opponent (who won't even roll the dice), chaining his next Attack, provided that it is different from the previous one. It is impossible to chain the same move using it twice, but it is possible to concatenate a standard Attack and a Special Move, and the latter to another, differ-

ent Special Move or to another standard Attack, and so on.

- **Facilitating Special Moves:** Before making a Check to activate a Special / Super Move, a fighter can spend 1 SP in order to pay it 1AP less. The effect is cumulative, but any kind of Attack can never cost less than 1 AP.
- **Super Move:** Using a Super Move costs 4 SPs.
- **Combo Breaker:** A defenseless (because he has been Launched or because he is under a Chain Attack) fighter can spend 2 SPs to have the possibility to recover and attempt a Defense Check. However, it is not possible to Counterattack.

Spending one SP to get +1 both in the Check and in Damage is not the same as spending SP Points when performing Ultra Agility or Ultra Hardness Moves. A SP must be used either to activate the effect of a Symbol or to get a +1 Bonus in the Check and in Damage. However, you can create various combinations of costs and benefits! For example, if your PC uses an Ultra Hardness Technique together with Attacks, you can spend 2 SPs to obtain +4 in Damage and another SP to obtain a +1 Check Bonus and +1 Damage. Using this combination, you will spend a total of 3 SPs and the Check will have a +1 Bonus, while the blow will inflict 5 more Damages.

KO: A Character who ends up having 0 or less Life Points is down: his fight is over and he has been defeated.

Double KO: In a fight, it may happen that when an Attack and a Counterattack are carried out with the same result, two Characters end up hitting each other, thus losing all their Life Points. This is a Double KO. There is no victor, and the fight is considered a draw.

Overwhelming: Just as it happens in some fighting games, if you're carrying an Attack and the opponent has already been defeated, it is possible to keep spending your APs in order to carry on your Attack, overwhelming him! Even if it requires the sacrifice of some Action Points, this can also be useful to accumulate – before the end of the fight – SP Points that you will be able

to spend during the next round. Of course, it is also possible to overwhelm your opponent even if there is no next round... just out of sheer viciousness.

Life Points: if you feel that your fights are too short and prefer something longer, so that you can enjoy scoring even more incredible Combos, all you have to do is modify the total amount of Life Points for each Character. This can be done in Arcade fighting games too! It's an option usually called Handicap. You can increase your opponent's Life Points, for example: this is very useful if you are facing a friend who's new to the game. Try experimenting with various combinations: the maximum suggested limit is 60 Life Points!

Cards and Tokens: in a fight, it is very useful (but not essential) to use cards and tokens, so that you won't lose count and you won't spend too much time writing down spent or earned Action Points, Special Points, Combo Points and Life Points. The reverse side of the cards included in this game is in two different colors: the lighter one represents APs, the darker one is for SPs. During a fight, you can keep score of your Character's points keeping the cards in front of you, with the correspondent color turned upward. These cards can be useful in any playing mode, most of all when playing with friends: each player will keep his Character's cards in front of him, discarding them every time he spends APs or SP Points. The same can be done with the tokens, to keep score of Combo and Life Points. You can also play without cards or tokens, simply using a copy-book and a pencil to write down both APs and SPs.

If you are playing with many friends, or if you don't have the included cards handy, you can also use a standard deck of playing cards, assigning them to APs and SPs according to the different color of their reverse side. You can write down Combo and Life Points on a sheet of paper.

ROUNDS

As it happens in fighting games, the number of rounds necessary to win the match has to be determined before starting a fight. In a typical "fighting game in rounds", whoever wins two rounds out of three is the winner, and the Double KO is not taken into account. On the other hand, however, it is more realistic to determine the winner through a single match.

In between rounds, the players won't lose their hoarded APs and SPs. At the end of the fight, both scores get reset to zero.

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

It may happen that the Main Character gets involved in a brawl, or in a fight against a group of ordinary people (not as proficient in the martial arts as he is). In this case, the group of enemies must be considered just like a single opponent: you must distribute 7 points among the Attributes, as usual, and then add 1 point to an Attribute of your choice every 2 opponents after the first, rounding the number off. The group has 15 Life Points, plus 5 more Life Points for each opponent apart from the first.

The group of opponents will thus have the same statistics as a single Character, making things easier. Face the fight and tell about its outcome. To help your imagination, just remember that one of your enemies will end up KO every time the group loses 5 Life Points.

Since the complexity of the rules might make it difficult to handle the fight, it is not recommended to have your Character face more than one expert in martial arts at a time. Should you decide you want to experience such a thrill, however, just remember that it will be necessary to establish a definite order of initiative based on the Rapidity of the characters involved in the fight, eventually making a Check (as detailed in the Fighting Rules).

AFTER THE FIGHT

At the end of the fight, you will be able to go on with your adventures, Main Character. Who got knocked down? Both victories and defeats will help you to improve yourself (see Experience). Draw your conclusions, and – if you play alone – write them down on your diary, then go on with your adventure. A crushing defeat could give rise to doubts about your skills: will you be strong enough to go on? Perhaps... or this defeat will just drive you to improve yourself!

ROCK VS HYON-SU

In this fighting example each Character has 30 Life Points. We'll see some of the typical fighting mechanics in *Musha Shugyō*: keep in mind that only in Diary Mode it is essential to draw a stickman version of the fight!

THE FIGHT BEGINS: Hyon-su gains 3 AP, Rock 2 AP. **Initiative Check:** RA+1d6 Hyon-su 3+4, Rock 2+2. **Hyon-su plays first**.

HYON-SU, TURN 1: gives up his Turn, keeping his APs.

ROCK, TURN 1: since it's the first Turn, Rock gains no new AP. Rock gives up his Turn, keeping his APs.

HYON-SU, TURN 2: gains 3APs, reaching a total of 6APs. Hyon-su **shifts next to Rock** (-1AP = 5APs), **normal kick** (-1AP = 4AP), Attack Check: AT+1d6 = 2+6 Hyon-su gains 1SP (he rolled 6). Rock goes for a Defence Check: DE+1d6 = 3+3. **Hyon-su hits**, a 6 roll is counted as 8, according to the rulesets. Hyon-su inflicts 10 Damages. Rock gets 10 - DE Damages = 7.

Hyon-su chains (-1SP) **Rising Darkness** (-3AP = 1AP). Check: 2+5, Rock can't defend (chained). Rising Darkness inflicts ATx2+1d6, 4+5=9 Damages. Rock gets 9-3 = 6 Damages (13 in total). Rock has just been **Launched** and cannot defend.

Hyon-su performs a **normal kick** (-1AP = 0AP) inflicting AT+1d6 = 2+3 Damages. Rock gets 5-3 = 2 Damages (15 in total). Hyon-su performed a **3X Combo**, therefore he gets 1SP. Hyon-su's attack is over. Rock gets 1 extra non-absorbable Damage since he now falls (16 in total).

ROCK, TURN 2: gains 2APs, reaching 4APs. Rock gets up (-1AP = 3APs) and gives up the Turn.

HYON-SU, TURN 3: gains 3APs. **Normal kick** (-1AP = 2APs), Check: 2+4. Rock goes for a normal defense (0AP), Check DE+1d6 = 3+6. **Rock manages to dodge** the attack and gets 1SP, since he rolled 6. Rock also avoided receiving 6 Damages from Hyon-su, therefore he also gets 2 more SPs (totale 3SPs). Hyon-su gives up his Turn.

ROCK, TURN 3: gains 2APs, reaching 6APs. Gives up his Turn.

HYON-SU, TURN 4: gains 3APs, reaching 5APs. **Rising Darkness**, -1SP in order to pay 1AP less (-2APs = 3APs). Attack Check: 2+4. **Rock counters with Radiant Reflection**: -1SP in order to pay 1AP less (-2APs = 4APs, -1SP = 2SPs), Check DE+1d6 +1counter = 4+6. Rock gains 1SP because he rolled 6 (3SPs). **Radiant Reflection hits**, Rock avoided receiving ATx2 + previous Check = 4+4 = 8 Damages, therefore he gains 2SPs (5SPs total). Hyon-su gets all the Damage he would have dealt with his attack: 8-2 = 6 Dagames. **His Turn has been interrupted**!

ROCK, TURN 4: gains 2APs, reaching 6APs. **Rock Chains Radiant Reflection with Radiant Kick** (-1SP = 4SPs; -2APs = 4APs), Check: AT+1d6 = 2+5, Hyon-su can't defend and gets: ATx2 + 5 = 9 -DE = 7 Damages (13 total). **Hyon-su has been Launched** and is now defenceless.

Rock attacks with **Flash Uppercut**, getting a +1 Bonus since his opponent is in the air. He also spends 1SP in order to pay 1AP less (-1SP = 3SPs; -2APs = 4APs). Attack Check: 2+1+4, Hyon-su gets 4+1+4-2 = 7 Damages (20 total).

Rock chains (-1SP = 2SPs) **Radiant Kick** (-2APs = 2APs). Hyon-su is defenceless. Attack: 2+2, Hyon-su gets 4+2-2 = 4 Damages (24 total): Hyon-su has been Launched again and cannot defend from the next attack.

Rock spends 1SP in order to pay **Flash Uppercut** 1AP less (-1SP = 1SP; -2APs = 0AP), then he also spends an extra SP to get a +1 Bonus to both Damage and Attack Check: 2+5+1. Hyon-su gets ATx2 +1 +5 = 10 Dagames, -2 Defence = 8 (32 total). **Hyon-su has already lost** but, falling, he also gets an extra non-assorbable damage, for a total of 33 Damages.

ROCK WINS!

CHAPTER 3
THE JOURNEY

You are now ready to start on your pilgrimage. Decide where you want to go: if you are in the right place and have the means to do so, it may be interesting to do some research about where your Character will be heading for. It is a good idea to collect information about local traditions, the food and what are the most practiced martial arts of the area. You should also try to plan an itinerary for your journey, and what means of transport to use. There are instruments, such as Street View in Google, which will allow you to have a detailed view of streets, local venues seen from the outside, parks and every other facet of a city.

What's in store for you along your journey? These are the questions you have to wonder about while playing. The answers will help bringing the game to real life.

- Do you have any money?
- How did you get it?
- Are you looking for somebody or something?
- What are your means of transportation, what do you carry with you?
- Where do you want to go?
- How do you usually find opponents to confront with?
- How do you provide yourself with food?
- Do you work from time to time?
- Do you have any enemies, or rivals, to defeat?
- Do you have a particular mission to accomplish?

All this will create the groundwork on which you can begin to develop the story, create the different situations, decide where your PC will next travel to and who his eventual travel companions will be. Ask yourself all these questions every time you go from one place to another: getting new answers could be a good starting point for new adventures.

PLOT

You (one or more Players) can easily start playing *Musha Shugyō* without having a precise idea about how to go on, but – most of all in those game modes which call for guided adventures – it is useful to have a rough plot outline of the story you want to develop. Any anime TV series, movie or story of any kind featuring fights as an important part of its plot could be an excellent source of inspiration.

Let's examine some of such typical martial arts cliché, looking at really existing works, and just giving an outline of their main plot structure. Any of these can be used as it is or just be a starting point for your adventure.

STREET FIGHTER: A terroristic organization headed by a man endowed with extraordinary powers, a tyrant, head of a foreign state, who is eager to expand his dominion. A lunatic, obsessed with martial arts: he's constantly looking for new champions for his army of fighters and you, or one of your friends/rivals, could be his next target.

VIRTUA FIGHTER: A mysterious and powerful criminal organization mercilessly pursues its goals, endangering both the freedom and the life of some supporting characters (NPC) the Main Character (or Characters) is (are) very fond of. Aside from the romantic side of the story, this organization has a quite different goal: to create the perfect fighter who, in the end, could also prove to be an android, or a cyborg.

MORTAL KOMBAT: The Main Characters are among the best fighters on Earth. At some point in their life, in an almost inexplicable way, they are transferred to a parallel dimension in order to entertain a cruel, extremely powerful king by fighting against each other, to the death. There will also be opponents endowed with unsettling, dark magic powers... and some abominable beings may also come into the picture.

BLOODSPORTS: One of more people the Main Character/Characters loved died during a secret martial arts tournament that takes part somewhere in the world. This tournament is as prestigious as it is lethal. Vengeance cannot wait, though, so the Main Character will move heaven and earth to get to take part to that tournament and defeat the most fearsome fighters in the world.

THE KING OF FIGHTERS: A really wealthy guy organized a martial arts tournament open only to Earth best fighters, sending a personal invitation directly to the interested parties. The Main Character/Characters is/are among those who get invited. During the tournament, in between matches, however, it will come to light that the organizer's purpose was not to just offer entertainment. Much more is hidden behind the scenes: it could even be a secret ritual to bring back to life an ancient god, draining to this purpose all their life energy from the strongest fighters who will meet in the final match.

ENTER THE DRAGON: The Main Character is a martial arts expert who will be contacted by some nation's secret services to investigate on a very powerful man's trafficking. Every three years, this man organizes on his island a martial arts mortal combat, and the Main Character will enroll in it, in order to investigate under cover on this man's trafficking in between fights. The Main Character also has a personal reason to fight: that man caused the death of somebody he held very dear, and he now has the opportunity to exact revenge. Of course, this plot can also have more than one Main Character.

SHAMO: The Main Character had a difficult childhood and he probably also committed some crime he cannot forgive himself for, something that's eating him up from within. Oppressed by guilt, by the darkness hidden in his heart, and by his life's troubles, he aimlessly wanders all over the world in search for true strength, giving free rein to his survival instincts and trying to forge a true armor made of muscle and invincible techniques, so that he will one day be able to redeem himself.

Once you put together an adventure plot outline and your Main Character (or Characters, if there are more players than just one), it is quite simple to build an interesting and entertaining plot that certainly will evolve in ways you cannot foresee.

The Oracle

It is not necessary to create everything from scratch, without any reference point. During your adventure, whenever you wish, you can "consult the Oracle", most of all if you are playing in Single Player Mode. It is a system which gives automatic suggestions and will help you to get new ideas, and to make your journey more unpredictable. Just see it as your narrative compass. You will interpret its answers your own way, embellishing them any way you want, and giving free rein to your imagination.

In any circumstances, in order to consult the Oracle you must ask yourself a question regarding one of the events the Main Character is living through, and then make a Check. The result of the Check will determine the answer:

1. Not good at all: absolutely negative result. You must not even think about it, it is simply impossible, wrong place, nobody knows anything, it's a total failure.

2. Negative. The thing won't work and there are problems. There is a rather big hurdle to ride over. Somebody you have to face, maybe?

3. Negative. But some things might go partially well, or – in order to succeed – you could have to look for something you are lacking, or somebody might help you. You just have to persuade him... by fair means or foul.

4. You can make it, making a huge effort, but it will require a commitment, a sacrifice, or more generally a cost on your part. Or somebody will ask you a favor...

5. It can be done, it works, affirmative. It won't bring immediate results, and perhaps you will have to turn to somebody, to find something first, but the solution is behind the corner.

6. Yes, sure, there is no problem. The situation will easily work itself out. You had a stroke of luck or somebody was very kind to you.

According to the situation you were in when you made the Check, you will then have to interpret the answer, describing the turn events will take. Your Character will then be able to decide how to behave in order to go on with his adventures. If the question requires a simple yes/no answer, then it is no from 1 to 3, and it is yes from 4 upward.

Bonus / Malus: If it is your intention to use force to assert your rights, to persuade somebody or to successfully carry out some action, then the Oracle's response can be manipulated! If you win a fight, and then try to persuade your opponents to do something, they might now be more helpful even if they previously refused to help you because of a negative Oracle's response. If you make a new Oracle Check, you will now have a +1 Bonus: add it directly to the Check result. Vice versa, if you lost a fight, showing your weakness, if you try once more to persuade your opponents you will suffer a -1 Malus.

Depicting the Scenes

Whether you play alone or with friends, if your game is not just a fight but it also has a background story, it is always better to split up the Main Characters' adventures into smaller Scenes. As it happens in a movie, a Scene will begin at a certain time, and in a specific place, and will end as soon as the Characters move elsewhere, or the situation changes radically. Whatever happens in between Scenes is only of marginal interest, and will just be summarized, not described in detail.

Depicting the different Scenes will also help making the game easier to play, because ideas to go on with the plot will offer themselves of their own accord.

As soon as a new Scene begins, the Player (or Players) must formulate a few questions before he/they begin to interpret their respective

Characters. Of course, if you play alone, you will write down on your diary the situation you are in, drawing some inspiration from the following questions:

• Where is the Character? You can choose to describe the place only vaguely or in detail. What strikes him the most about this place? Is there something suspicious, or interesting, in it?
• Whom is the Character with? The people surrounding him will be able to interact with him, either helping him or giving him a hard time. What is his opinion of them?
• Why is the Character in this place? What is he aiming at and, most of all, how does he plan to achieve it?

"Depicting a Scene" means to answer all these questions. Once you have done it, you can start playing and consult the Oracle, if necessary, to know the outcome of the Characters and Main Characters' actions.

When a Scene ends, of course, another will begin, which might be somehow linked to the previous one. Each following scene will be dealt with exactly like you did with the first one. Once past the hurdle of the very first Scene, you will see that the story will virtually go on by itself.

DEATH

Whatever the play Mode, the Main Characters never die, not even when they get defeated in a fight, unless the Player controlling them doesn't wish otherwise. If you are playing alone, and decide that the Main Character must die, of course this will put an end to the game. If you are playing with a friend, however, you may decide that one of the Main Characters will die, or will put an end to his pilgrimage and settle somewhere. The Player controlling that Character can then create a new one or bring back in the game another, already available Character.

Things are quite different in the case of extra Characters. They can live, die, start on a new journey and part from the Main Characters, as it is in those stories contemplating only one or two Main Characters. Extra Characters fate is therefore much more flexible, and it also depends on the Oracle.

CHAPTER 4
GAME MODES

Just like a fighting game, *Musha Shugyō* can be played in many different ways: alone or with other people, with or without a guide (in short, either in Arcade Mode or Story Mode). This chapter shows all the different play Modes and supplies the rules applying to each one.

SINGLE PLAYER MODE

We will now analyze a series of play Modes that will allow you to enjoy yourself alone, utilizing a diary as an instrument where to write down your progress and your Character's story. Basically, this is the ideal way to play when you are relaxing, or when you find yourself stuck somewhere (maybe attending to a boring lesson or lecture... but of course you never got such a hint from us, did you?).

DIARY MODE

Day after day, you will write down on your Diary about your martial arts master's journey. Some days will be hard, even difficult, others will be exciting, and you will fight for your life and glory. You will make your choices and write

everything down on your travel diary... until you get to the end of your *Musha Shugyō*!

You can write the date of the day you are going to write about, just like you would do on a real diary: this will help you get a feeling of the flow of time, and in the future, as you read the diary again, you will feel an even greater satisfaction.

You will consult the Oracle every time you need to, and you will interpret its answers, writing down on the diary what happened to you and how you rode over whatever difficulties you had to face. Let your thoughts flow freely and tell your Character's story without worrying too much about the future: you will get new ideas at the right moment, thanks to the Oracle's suggestions.

GAME EXAMPLE

December 16th, 2002

I got to this village early in the morning. Jim Willis, the Brasilian jiu-jitsu champion, disappeared two years ago and should now be somewhere in this area. I wanted to meet and confront him. I did not care

why he had disappeared, I just hoped he was still as strong as he used to be. I had to match myself against him. Therefore, I tried to ask a few questions in the first bar I found open...

The Player consults the Oracle, makes a Check and gets 1.

The barman looked at me askance, stopped cleaning the counter and asked me to follow him in the back. I immediately realized a couple of waiters were following me at a distance. The barman and those two other guys took me to the back alley behind the bar, asked me why I was looking for Willis, and told me to mind my own business. I insisted, and one of the waiters loosened his necktie, clearly ready to resort to tougher tactics, as he took a boxing stance.

The Character gets into a fight (see ruleset). The Character wins.

He did not know what he was heading into. The fight was short and violent. I swiftly knocked him out, then I asked the others if they now felt like helping me find Willis.

The Player consults the Oracle, makes a Check with a +1 Bonus and gets 2 + 1 = 3.

In the face of my fighting prowess, the barman decided to spill the beans. He did not know where Willis was, but at least he told me that the champion had recently left town. I would learn more if I went to the harbor, in the evening... that was where the illegal fighting Willis had frequently enrolled in took place. I had no money, so I had to fight to obtain the information I needed.

New fight for the Character!

There are many different ways to write a Diary. The previous example has been written as if the Character were writing his diary himself in the evening, telling about the events of the day just ended. The Diary can also be written about events long past, for example as if the Character were telling about an already finished pilgrimage. Or you can take note every time both of the date and the time, as if the Character were writing on his diary periodically, during the day. Choose the way the Character would like best.

Fighting: In this Game Mode, you use at the same time both the Main Character and his Turn opponent. The fun is to have them both fight at their absolute best, not in having your Main Character win the fight. If the opponent has the possibility to make favorable choices, he will take advantage of it; otherwise, he won't try any rash moves that could advantage you. Fairness always pays back in terms of fun.

To have a precise idea of how the fight is developing, draw stickmen executing each opponent's moves. It is not necessary to be good at drawing: simple stickmen will do. This fight example offers a practical way of taking notes: choose the method you like best.

TOURNAMENT MODE

Print the bookmarks for some Characters, either created by you or available on our web site. Randomly choose 8 of them and have your Character face them one after the other. Will he be able to win the tournament?

KUMITÈ MODE

You managed to enroll in the legendary Kumité: an ordeal few fighters in the world were able to overcome. Face all the Character in this game, one after the other. There will be just one Round for each opponent. In between fights, you will be allowed to keep all your remaining APs, and your SP Points as well, but the Main Character can recover only 8 Life Points, up to his limit of 25 Points. It is a terrible survival challenge! How many opponents will you be able to defeat before being knocked out yourself?

CHALLENGE MODE

It is useful to learn your favorite Characters' most Lethal Combo and secret game strategies, this Challenge Mode has you face some starting situations and gives you goals to reach! Not all Characters will manage to prevail in every challenge, but in this handbook you won't find all the solutions to every single challenge either. Arm yourself with paper and pen, and try to solve the situations you find yourself into, both at a standard and a more challenging professional level!

In order to be the winner in a challenge, you will have to remember all the game rules and use them to your advantage as much as possible. Most of all, keep in mind how to use SP and AP Points in a creative way!

SCORE AT LEAST COMBO X4

PRO Version: esegui almeno Combo x5
Starting conditions: 7 PA, 1SP;
Starting position: contatto;
PG1 Check 1= 5, PG2 Check 1= 3
PG1 from second Check onwards= 3, PG2 from second Check onwards= 5;
PG2 just defends.

ESEGUI ALMENO COMBO X5

PRO Version: esegui almeno Combo x6
Starting conditions: 7 PA, 2SP;

Starting position: contatto;
PG1 Check 1= 5, PG2 Check 1= 3
PG1 from second Check onwards= 3, PG2 from second Check onwards= 5;
PG2 just defends.

INFLIGGI ALMENO 20 DANNI

PRO Version: Infliggi almeno 30 Danni
Starting conditions: 6 PA, 1SP;
Starting position: distanza;
PG1 Check 1= 5, PG2 Check 1= 3
PG1 from second Check onwards= 3, PG2 from second Check onwards= 5;
PG2 just defends.

INFLIGGI ALMENO 30 DANNI

PRO Version: Infliggi almeno 40 Danni
Starting conditions: 7 PA, 2SP;
Starting position: contatto;
PG2 Check 1= 3, PG1 Check 1= 3;
PG2 from second Check onwards= 5, PG1 from second Check onwards= 3;
PG2 starts the fight attacking normally.

SUPER TECNICA KO!

PRO Version: Non esaurire i tuoi PA
Starting conditions: 7 PA, 3SP;
Starting position: contatto;
PG1 Check 1= 5, PG2 Check 1= 3
PG1 from second Check onwards= 3, PG2 from second Check onwards= 5;
PG2 just defends.

PERFECT KO!

PRO Version: Perfect e più di 30 Danni
Starting conditions: 5 PA, 1SP;
Starting position: contatto;
PG1 Check 1= 5, PG2 Check 1= 3
PG1 from second Check onwards= 3, PG2 from second Check onwards= 5;
PG2 counterattacks with a normal attack (don't consider his APs).

PLAYING WITH FRIENDS

Musha Shugyō doesn't presuppose that you always play alone: you can also play in pairs, or in a group. Further on we will give you a series of suggestions on how to manage games with many players. Before that, however, we have to introduce some concepts that apply to all the game Modes except Single Player Mode.

Note: In any Multiplayer Mode, all Checks are made in front of all the other players.

Interpretation and RPG

In a Role Play Game you interpret an imaginary Character, either created by you or pregenerated. To win is to have fun and to allow the other Players to have fun as well. Your Characters' adventures could know no end. In Multiplayer Mode, everybody identifies himself with his Main Character, speaking in first person as if he really were that Character, describing his appearance, his actions and his choices to the others. Consulting the Oracle and following all the fighting rules, every action will generate an unambiguous solution: since it is not necessary to draw the scenes, in a fight each player will describe his Character's moves, too, instead of merely adhering to the game mechanics.

The aim is simply to live exciting adventures like those in the TV series, Anime, or movies you love. Pretty much any movie could be converted into a Role Play Game in which the Main Characters are Characters managed by some Players, because one way or the other in any such work there is a Main Character who has some kind of adventure.

Free Interpretation

You must have noticed that *Musha Shugyō* character sheets only have values referring to fighting and experience. Social interactions between the Main Characters and the rest of the NPCs are handled through mere interpretation. In other words, just role play among friends, without thinking about any numeric value. It will be up to you to shape your Character's personality, his behavior, his aims.

Speak in first person, and if you have to persuade the NPC or the other Main Character of something, discuss the matter with them. Any problem can be solved simply through interpretation and role play, but if there are any doubts on what to do, or somebody wants to have his way in a given situation, you can always resort to the Oracle. Any Player has the right do to it, in any moment, in order to get an unambiguous result that can bring some variations to the plot. Game mechanics in *Musha Shugyō* mainly affect fighting. Dialogues, investigation scenes, and all interactions not involving fighting can be managed through simple free role play or resorting to the Oracle.

THE GUIDE

You don't need a Guide to play at *Musha Shugyō*, except in the Guided Adventure Mode. The Guide is a Player who doesn't use a specific Character, but takes it upon himself to narrate events, describe scenarios and situations, besides interpreting any Non Playing Character (NPC, ranging from extras to supporting characters) the other Players may meet. In many other RPGs, this kind of figure is simply called Game Master: at times it is a voice-over, in other cases it represent all the Main Character's world.

The Guide, however, doesn't hold absolute power when it comes to deciding events. In *Musha Shugyō* the Guide asks for the Oracle's help every time he has any doubt about how the adventure could go on or on how the NPCs might react to their interaction with the Main Character, unless the other Player's reasoning persuades him. In any situation, however, he can never automatically deny the success of an action or of an event: in simpler words, the Guide can automatically approve, but not deny. In that case, he has to consult the Oracle.

Example: A Main Character is trying to persuade somebody he's telling the truth (interpreting the Character in first person). The Guide can see to it that the NPC is automatically persuaded, or he may ask the Oracle what the outcome of the scene will be, but he cannot automatically decide that the PC won't succeed.

In the light of the role he must play, the Guide will often have to interpret many different kinds of people, and will need a good amount of imagination in order to transform the Oracle's answers and set up adventures, but the mechanics of the Oracle themselves, the management of the Scenes and the ideas given by the Accomplishments will provide him with valid tools.

MIXED FIGHTING

When there are many people playing, there may be fights in which the group of the Main Characters is opposed to an indefinite number of martial arts masters at the same time. This is a different circumstance from the one we saw in the Multiple Opponents chapter. Here, in some situations, two Main Characters may find themselves facing four masters.

It being understood that *Musha Shugyō* ideal stories call for one-to-one matches (when between masters) as it is in the Fist of the North Star series, fighting rules never change. You will just have to expand the following rules a little:

• Each player will make the usual Check, thus creating an unambiguous initiative order. There cannot be two Characters with the same initiative: if this happens, a tie-break is needed. The involved Players will simply roll the die again to establish a sequential order. From this point forward, each Player will take his Turn as usual, deciding who and how he is going to attack.

• It goes without saying that it is not necessary to use up all your Action Points on a single target in each Turn: in the same Turn, the same PC can alternatively attack first one opponent, then another. In other words, just as it happens in flowing fighting games...

• When successful, a Counterattack will automatically push the counterattacked opponent to the bottom of the initiative order, and whoever made the Counterattack will pass the Turn, whatever his initiative score. Each Character's Turn stages do not change.

This kind of approach to fighting, much more classic and typical than in other role play games, is optional, and the Guide cannot impose it on the Players as the standard situation the Characters will find themselves in: before you start playing, you should have a clear idea of the kind of adventures you would like to live. In a Street Fighter II Victory kind of setting, for example, it will be difficult to find "group against group" fighting situations, in favor of one against one duels! Unless in the end you face the classic, super strong boss, of course...

TWO PLAYERS MODE

When there are two Players, no diary is needed and it is not strictly necessary to draw the moves. The two Players interact through role play, talking to each other and telling a story.

In Two Players Mode it is advisable to use dice, in order to make Checks more quickly.

Random Encounter

Playing *Musha Shugyō* you will meet many opponents... and one of them might be another Player's Character! If you have a friend who plays *Musha Shugyō*, you can get together to experience together parts of adventures, or to have your Characters fight against each other.

The game mechanics are still the same even with two Players, but you don't have to write on a diary during the game: you can simply speak, as you would do in any RPG, but you will give free rein to your imagination, asking for an Oracle Check every time you doubt about a decision. In this Mode, you have no Guide: each of you is free to describe scenes and situations, and he is also free to add to the other Player's description, expanding it, specifying some details.

If a Player depicted a Scene, it will be up to the other Player to depict the next one, and then they will go on like this, alternating with each other, so that each of them will have his creative space. The Player who depicted the Scene must also fill in the sheet for the eventual NPC opponents you will have to face. As far as the Oracle's interpretation or the description of the events are concerned, the Player who depicted the Scene may suggest solutions and details, but it will be other Player's job to suggest the events

and to interpret – spiced with a little imagination – the Oracle's answers! The two Players can discuss about what may happen, but the Player who did not depict the Scene will always have the last word about it. NPC roles will be interpreted each time by one of the two Players, who will also have the right to decide about their behavior and the decisions they will make. In this Mode, whoever interprets a NPC can freely make decisions, both in favor of or against the Main Characters! Of course, if there is any doubt, or if you need a suggestion, you can always resort to the Oracle. Most of all, do it if you are in disagreement about something.

Your Characters will fight if it is necessary, either against each other, or against somebody else.

You can also use *Musha Shugyō* game mechanics to organize matches between two Players, either using Characters you created, or those included in the game, or even those you downloaded from our web site.

This Game Mode is ideal to simulate stories in the Fist of the North Star style: Two Characters will face their adventures together without knowing what the future has in store for them, and – if you so decide – they can also split up as the story develops.

Maybe the two Characters will meet again in the future! This is the reason way this play Mode is ideal to occasionally carry on a game with a friend. A Random Encounter can be played as an alternative to a Single Player Mode game: it is a distinctive and original style that will allow you and your friends to play together when you have some free time to spare, discovering some new surprise every time. What happened of your travel companion after you last parted ways? Where did his road take him?

If you occasionally play with the same friend, it may often happened that after your Characters parted ways, the story of one of your Characters developed much more than that of the other. In this case, when you play together again, and your Characters meet once more, the first thing you must do is to decide first and foremost how did their separate roads cross each other, and what happened to each of them in the meanwhile. At this point you will be able to start playing in real time.

Guided Adventure

In this Mode, a Player will only manage his own Character, and another person will act as the Guide. It will be this Player's task to create a plot outline for the adventure the Main Character will live through; in this Mode there isn't any need to write a diary. You will play in a way very similar to a classic RPG, which means that the Guide's purpose is to describe situations, depict Scenes, interpret NPCs and create the Opponents' sheets. In this Mode, the other Player can suggest the sequence of events as well as various interpretations of the Oracle's outcome, but the Guide will have the last word about it all.

The Players can appeal to the Oracle any time they want to: no preparation is needed in order to play, everything is narrated moment by moment, exploiting the Players' ideas and the Oracle's answers to any doubt about how events should unfold.

Every time the Main Character faces a fight, the Guide will handle his opponents. It is not necessary to create a great amount of NPCs to face. The best thing to do is to use the pre-generated Characters included in this manual, most of all when an unforeseen situation arises. Of course, the Guide is free to create as many NPCs as he wants.

In this Play Mode as well it is possible to live adventures in which one or more supporting characters associate with the Main Character, but they will be interpreted by the Guide. Whenever one of such supporting characters will have to face a fight without the Main Character's help, the other Player will be allowed to handle that NPC in the fight, while the Guide will handle his opponent. Both Players will thus be able to always take part in any event, and neither of them will find himself without anything to do.

If one of the supporting characters – for whatever reasons linked to the plot – should leave the Main Character to have missions or adventures on his own, his story would then be handled by the Guide, who will have to tell what's happening to the NPC without actually having to play the scenes (most of all because the other Player's Character would not be present in them) and turning to the Oracle instead.

Speaking of which, most of all if you are dealing with a NPC the main Player cares for, it is always good practice to give these NPCs a second chance, instead of removing them from the story in one shot. For example, a NPC who got severely wounded in a fight and ended up in a hospital in critical condition should be given a second chance to survive. You will appeal to the Oracle again to check the outcome of the therapy. As usual, your imagination is the only limit.

Ultiplayer Mode

We already hinted at the fact that *Musha Shugyō* can also accommodate many players without any problem. The best thing about *Musha Shugyō* is that you can enjoy yourself using it as a RPG or as a board game. Let's see how you can do this.

Multiplayer Guided Mode

There can be as many Players as you want, provided that one of the Players will act as a Guide. The rules are the same as in Two Players Guided Mode, and the same goes for what the Guide and the Players can or cannot do (their rights and duties). There are a few things you must remember: first and foremost, the Guide should always manage the adventure so that it flows smoothly, and no Player will find himself with nothing to do while the others fight or in-

terpret some different scene. To this end, the Players will play by turns, thus allowing each Player to have his space, and maintaining some order around the table.

The ideal fighting situation, however, is one in which all the Characters have to fight and the Guide handles all their opponents at the same time. In the section about Mixed Fighting, we already saw how to handle any classic game situation: the initiative order will be the critical factor. If each PC is facing a single opponent by himself, however, you will proceed by turns, with one Player carrying out his fighting Turn, then the next one and so on, always in the same order.

Should one Main Character in the group find himself without any other opponent to face, the Player controlling him will simply take charge of one of the NPCs handled by the Guide and fight against another Player's PC! The Guide will monitor the fairness of the fight and everybody will have their fun.

As he interprets the story and the Oracle's answers, the Guide will try to put the Players exactly in this situation as often as possible, so that no one gets bored or finds himself without anything to do.

Multiplayer Mode Tournament

In this Mode, *Musha Shugyō* becomes a typical board game. It is not necessary to describe any fighting scene: you can simply follow the mechanics of the game, using the cards, the tokens and the dice. There isn't a limit to the number of Players, but of course the higher the number of players, the longer the game.

Before starting, each Players will choose one of the pre-generated Characters. More expert Players may create their own ad hoc Character following the instructions in this manual. The PCs won't gain any experience in between fights.

The players' Characters will fight against each other, two by two. The fights will take place at the same time, so that no Player will just sit there twiddling his thumbs. For this reason, it is best that the number of players is even.

One Session will end when all the Players finish their fights: this is when you count the points, before starting a new Session.

- **Victory: 3 points;**
- **Draw: 1 point;**
- **Defeat: zero points.**

In between Sessions, the Characters will keep whatever APs and SPs they have left. At the beginning of each new Session, the order will change, so that each Player will always challenge a different opponent.

Typically, the game will end when each Player has played against each of the other Players. For example, in a game among 4 Players there will be 3 fighting Sessions.

Once all the Sessions get to an end, it is time to determine the placings, adding the points just like in a sports tournament. Who will be the champion in this game?

Experience

People learn more from defeat than from victory. Each time the Character is defeated, he gets 3 Experience points. Each time the PC wins, he gets 1 Experience Point. Once a day, while describing a scene where your Character is training, he gets 1 Experience Point.

Experience can be used in the following ways:

- To Raise of one level RA, AT or DE. Cost: 20 Experience Points.
- To obtain a new Special Move, up to a maximum of 5. Cost: 10 Experience Points.
- To obtain a new Super Move, up to a maximum of 2. Cost: 20 Experience Points.

You can learn new Moves through a description of your PC's training, his efforts to improve, the way he managed to create his personal fighting style.

End of the Pilgrimage: only the journeyer can decide when his journey gest to an end. It will be up to the Player to put an end to his Character's adventure.

Achievements

There are some key events which give new experience and new drive to your character, a sort of milestones in his journey toward perfection.

Let's see a list of these Achievements: beside each of them you will find an empty box. As you manage each Achievement, you must tick

off that box. In order to reach that Achievement again, you have to start a new story. You get one Experience Point for each Achievement obtained.

Achievements can also be used as landmarks on which to build your story, they can be your starting points. Therefore, they are useful in any play Mode. It is not necessary to achieve them all: on the contrary, some have been devised for good, righteous heroes, while others are for really evil guys!

In every Guided Adventure Mode, the Guide can create new custom Achievements, as long as they represent key events in the lives of Playing Characters. In fact, many Achievements can exist only in specific settings or adventures. For example, if you are playing an adventure against a scary terroristic organization, fighting its Mighty Boss would be a nice Achievement! We only recommend that the Guide doesn't give the PCs too many Experience Points while using this method. Too many Experience Points result in a fast Character growth.

☐ **A LONG JOURNEY**

You visited at least six different cities or towns.

☐ **A NEW FRIEND**

You have met somebody you think you can trust. He will help you in your pilgrimage.

☐ **AS EASY AS PIE**

You won your first challenge at a professional level, in the Challenge Game Mode.

☐ **ASCETIC**

For a while you trained in the wild, far away from civilization.

☐ **BEYOND THE LIMIT**

You won all the available professional level challenges, in the Challenge Game Mode.

☐ **BRAWL**

You got into a brawl, but you are still on your feet.

☐ **CAUSE OF RIVALRY**

You defeated a martial arts expert like you, but he did not take it well, or in any case he decided he will manage do beat you sooner or later. You will undoubtedly meet again.

☐ **CHAMPION**

You won an official martial arts tournament.

☐ **COMBO X8**

You managed to score an 8 blows Combo.

☐ **COSMOPOLITE**

You visited at least 6 different foreign nations.

☐ **CRIMINAL**

In order to survive, or to eke out some money, you had to commit a crime of some kind.

☐ **DOUBLE KO**

For the first time one of your fights ended with a Double KO.

☐ ENTERPRISE
They all thought it was impossible, nobody had ever managed it, but you did, and the local people will certainly remember you with enthusiasm.

☐ FIRST BLOOD
You finally fight against a master as skillful as you are.

☐ FIRST JOURNEY
Travelling around the world, you came to a new country.

☐ FIRST LOVE
For the first time you meet a person you can love. Will you "get your head together", or will you continue on your journey?

☐ FIRST VICTORY
You have won your first fight against a master as skillful as you are.

☐ HERO
Whatever the reason, you ended up saving somebody, or preventing a crime, maybe just through your athletic or martial skills.

☐ ILLEGAL FIGHT
For the first time, you enrolled in an illegal fight.

☐ INFERIOR ODDS
You got drawn into a fight against several opponents at the same time.

☐ KING OF THE CAGE
You managed to become an illegal fighting champion: you may also have earned a fair bit.

☐ KING OF THE KUMITÈ
You defeated all the standard Characters in this game, in the Kumitè Mode.

☐ LECTIO MAGISTRALIS
You could attend a renowned master's lessons.

☐ MATCHLESS
You won all the available normal level challenges in the Challenge Game Mode.

☐ MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION
In order to travel, you used at least four different means of transportation, one way or another.

☐ MERCYLESS
You had already defeated your opponent, but that was not enough for you. You had to destroy and humiliate him, maybe breaking a limb... or worse (narrative implications).

☐ MISSION ACCOMPLISHED
You faced a problem and managed to solve it.

☐ NEMESIS
You just met your nemesis, and managed to defeat him in a fight. He is your enemy, or this was a goal you wanted to fulfill. What will you do now?

☐ PART-TIME JOB
In order to bring home the bacon you had to slog! From town to town You visited at least three different towns or cities.

☐ PERFECT
You just won a fight without suffering any damage.

☐ PERSONAL TECHNIQUE
You managed to develop your first personal Special Move.

☐ RING FOOTLIGHTS
You fought in an official event, on a real ring.

☐ RIVAL
A martial arts expert of your own level defeated you, and you didn't take it well. He is now a rival you must beat.

☐ RUTHLESS
Even if you had already won the fight, you did not stop and kept spending AP Points in order to overwhelm your opponent.

☐ SPECIAL KO
You defeated an opponent using a Special Move.

☐ SUPER TECHNIQUE

You managed to develop your first personal Super Move.

☐ SUPER KO

You defeated an opponent using a Super Move.

☐ MASTER

You developed two Special Moves and a Super Move you made up yourself.

☐ SURVIVOR

You suffered a serious accident, but somehow managed to come out of it unharmed.

☐ THE FIRST CHALLENGE

You won your first challenge in the Challenge Game Mode.

☐ TRAINER

For some reason, you ended up teaching martial arts to somebody. It may be a bullied young boy, or a student of a master you know.

☐ URGENT MEDICAL CARE

You ended up in a hospital, or in any case somebody is nursing you back to health. You suffered rather serious wounds.

☐ VENGEANCE

You wanted to take your revenge on somebody who wronged you, and you finally managed to do it.

☐ WANDERER

You visited at least three different foreign nations.

☐ WANTED

You are a criminal, or at least this is what the local police thinks: therefore, you are a wanted person. You must also specify in which nation.

This is an empty bookmark / Character sheet, photocopy it and you'll be ready to create you unique Playing Character! You can alternatively download and print a PDF version of this sheet from *www.mushashugyorpg.com*

In the upper part of the character sheet you will write down the Character's Attributes: on the right you will have to write which method the Character uses to earn SP Points, and how many Experience Points he has accumulated. The Attributes are represented by dots: when an Attribute gets increased (through the expenditure of Experience Points) all you have to do is to blacken a dot.

RA ○○○○○○   SP:
AT ○○○○○○   EXP:
DE ○○○○○○

SPECIAL MOVES

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_____

_____

SUPER MOVES

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THE TABLETOP FIGHTING GAME!

MUSHA SHUGYŌ IS THE FIGHTING GAME THAT WILL KEEP YOU GLUED TO THE TABLE. WITHIN, YOU'LL FIND TEN READY TO FIGHT CHARACTERS, BUT YOU'LL ALSO FIND SIMPLE RULES TO CREATE YOUR OWN HEROES. FIGHT AGAINST YOUR FRIENDS IN ONE-ON-ONE MATCHES, TOURNAMENTS, OR LIVE FANTASTIC ADVENTURES WITH THEM. WITH MUSHA SHUGYŌ, YOU'LL HAVE ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES!

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