

# JAPANESE SWORD FIGHTING

A samurai warrior in full traditional armor, including a helmet with a red circular emblem featuring the character '神' (Shin), stands against a dark background. He has a sword (katana) fixed to his back with a scabbard (saya). The armor is intricately detailed with various textures and colors, including gold, black, and blue. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the armor and the blade of the sword.

## Secrets of the Samurai

**MASAAKI HATSUMI**

THE AUTHOR OF  
*THE WAY OF THE NINJA*  
AND *STICK FIGHTING*

**J A P A N E S E  
S W O R D F I G H T I N G**

**Secrets of the Samurai**

**MASAAKI HATSUMI**

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Secrets of the Samurai

MASAAKI HATSUMI

PHOTOS BY Minoru Hirata and Kyuzo Akashi

TRANSLATED BY Bruce Appleby and Doug Wilson

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The names of modern and contemporary Japanese appear in the Western order, while those of historical figures (pre-1868) are written in the traditional order: surname preceding given name.

For reference, the following chart shows those periods of Japanese history which will be most relevant to the discussion.

PERIOD NAME	APPROXIMATE DATES (A.D.)
Nara	710-784
Heian	794-1192
Kamakura	1192-1333
Muromachi	1336-1573
Nanbokucho	1336-1392
Sengoku	1467-1568
Azuchi-Momoyama	1573-1600
Edo	1600-1868
Meiji	1868-1912
Taisho	1912-1926
Showa	1926-1989
Heisei	1989-

(Historians do not agree on exactly when the various periods started and ended, so the dates listed are approximate. Japanese writing often refers as well to *nengo*, or shorter periods named after each reigning emperor. Some of these will be introduced where relevant.)

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端範神の秘伝

神術諸振三巻神明諸記之一巻諸霊二巻三巻  
 設心通力三巻神術約要の一巻神力若心三巻  
 神術虎豹の巻神術獅豹の巻真勢龍力を巻  
 曰く妙術と爲る者死の前には其の微塵を初  
 世の覚悟を著う事唯一の秘なり  
 之れと神術と云ふ 之れを行ふ者 常に  
 心構を水の澄める如く 静水に映る月の  
 如く 萬象之れを無我 行雲流水の如  
 神の妙玉の啓示なり 常に不動体の  
 構え 無心なれ 無事なり 自然に有を生じ  
 技となる 水の万圓に從う如く 對する  
 應じ 變化し 其體身 神術 玄妙 不思 儀  
 の術 拖神 也と云ふ  
 天壽  
 初見官記  
 白龍翁筆

Regarding the secret of Budo.

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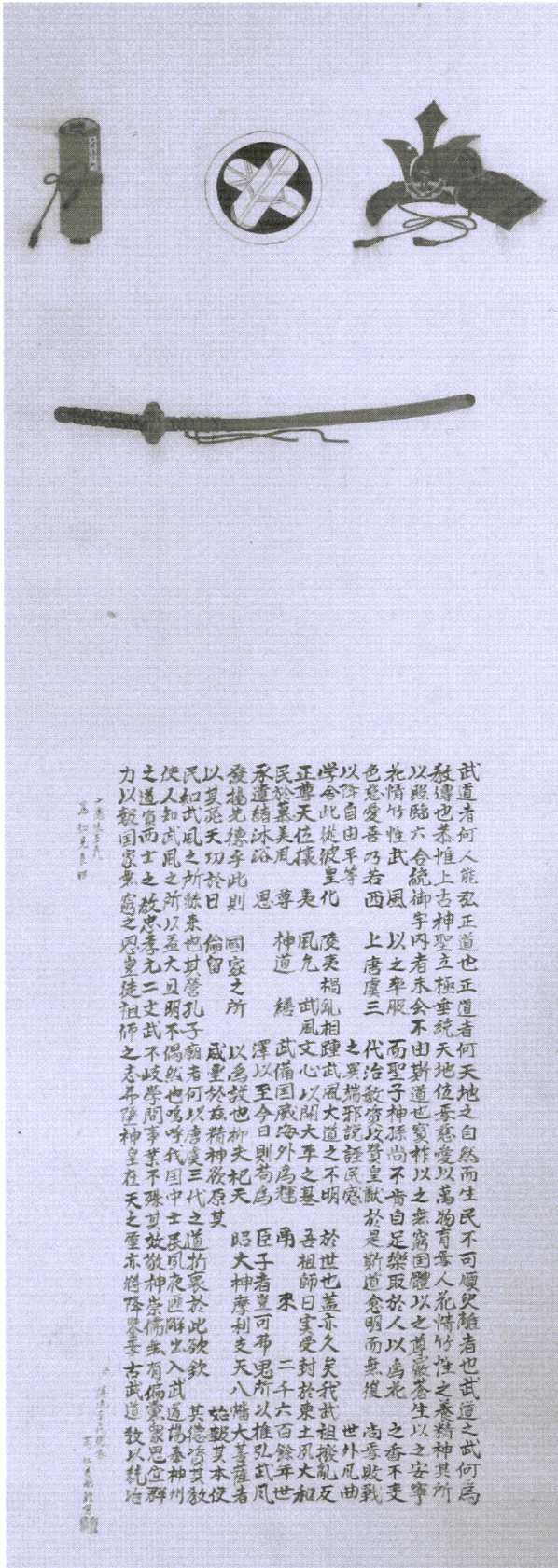








Takamatsu Sensei's writing of "Bufu" shown by spacing in the poem.



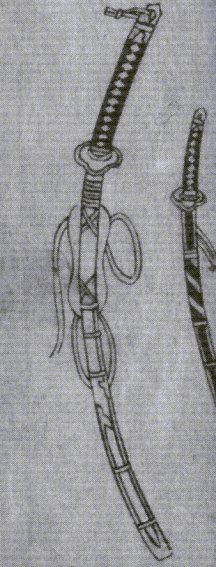
Bishamonten and Kabutowari (also called Hachiwari) worn by the military commander Kusunoki Masashige. It says "Kusunoki Tamon Hyoue Masashige" in the signature.





尾乃將忠時女相刻感時神速之  
 源義朝公 一一位大納言 義部錦衛子  
 源義持公 一一位内大臣 義部平子  
 從五位上 源義家

# 神靈雷火心神力



拔切	京流
伯耆流	源流
克己流	拔刀 宮流
三和流	拔刀 傳流
	拔刀中興祖

念流 天獨也流 小野流 一 念流 天獨也流 小野流 一

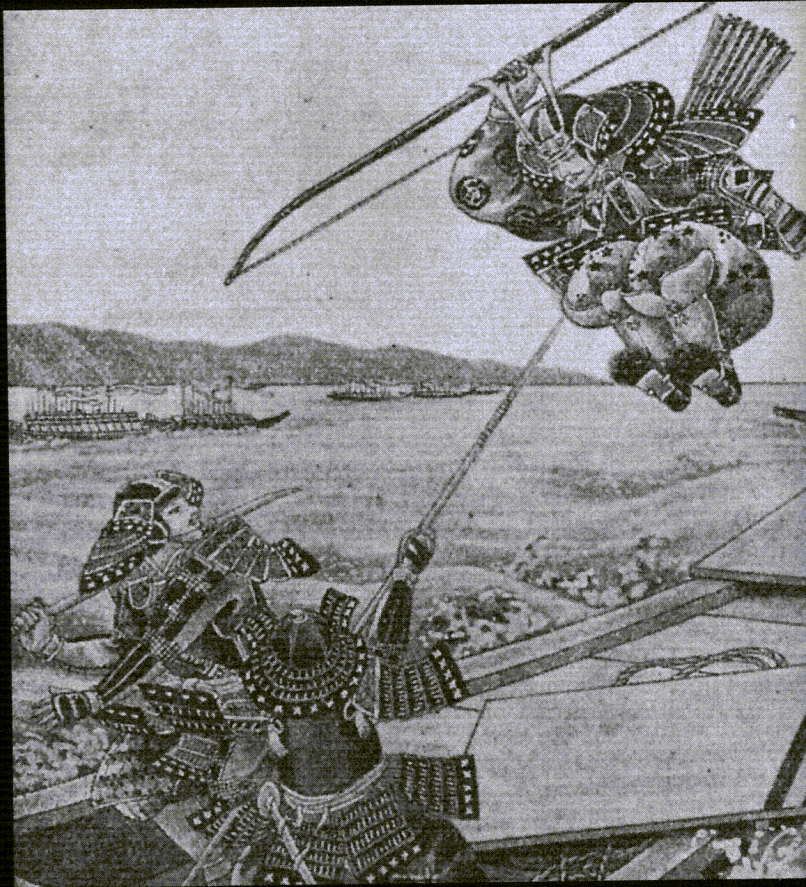


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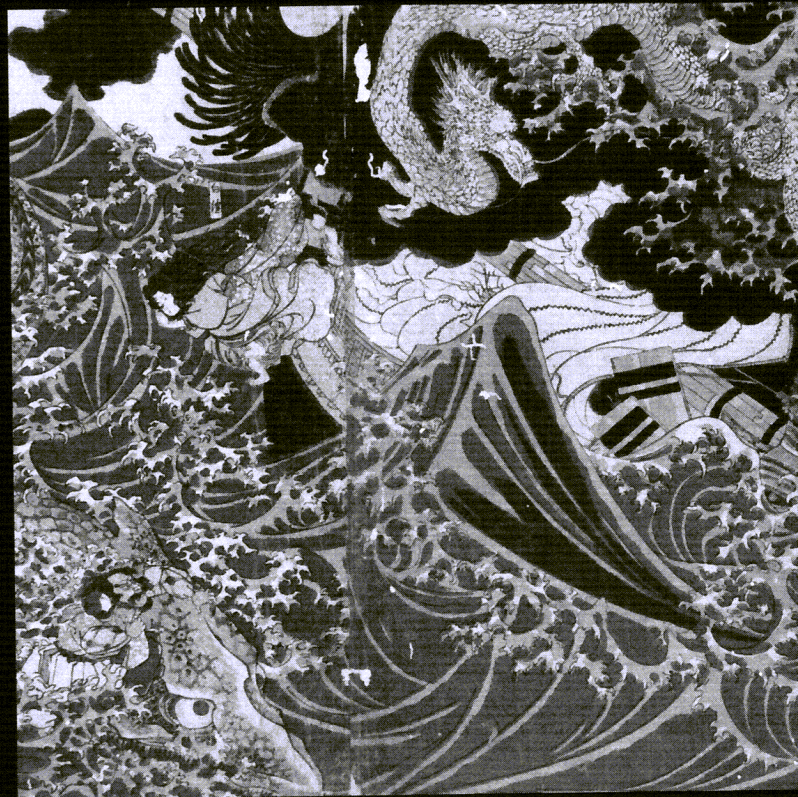
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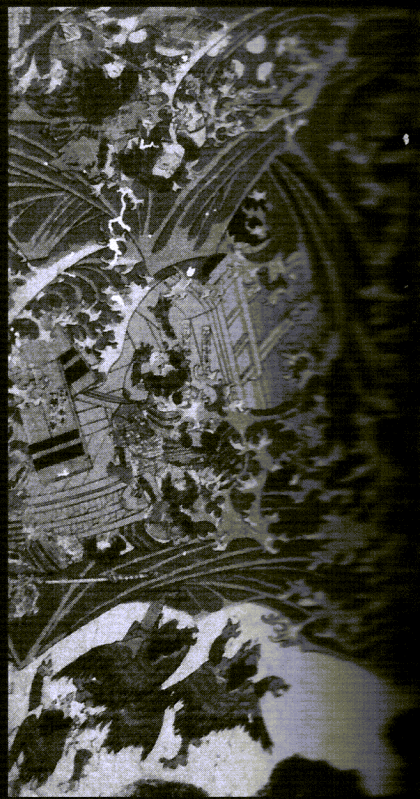
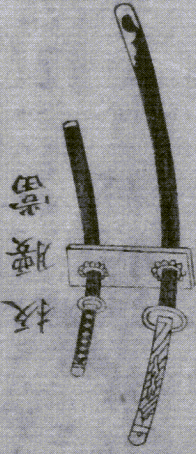
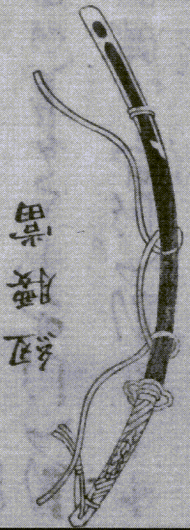
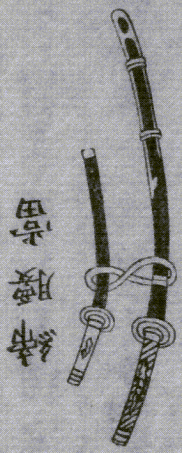
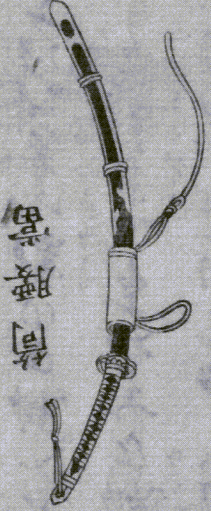
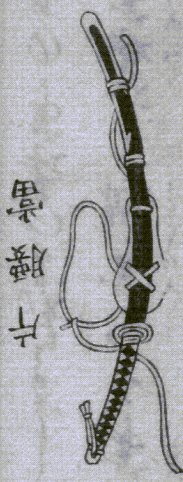
樽念意力大木雲所力



Eight-boat leaping by Minamoto-no Yoshitsune.



A selection of koshiate (sword-attaching to the waist.)



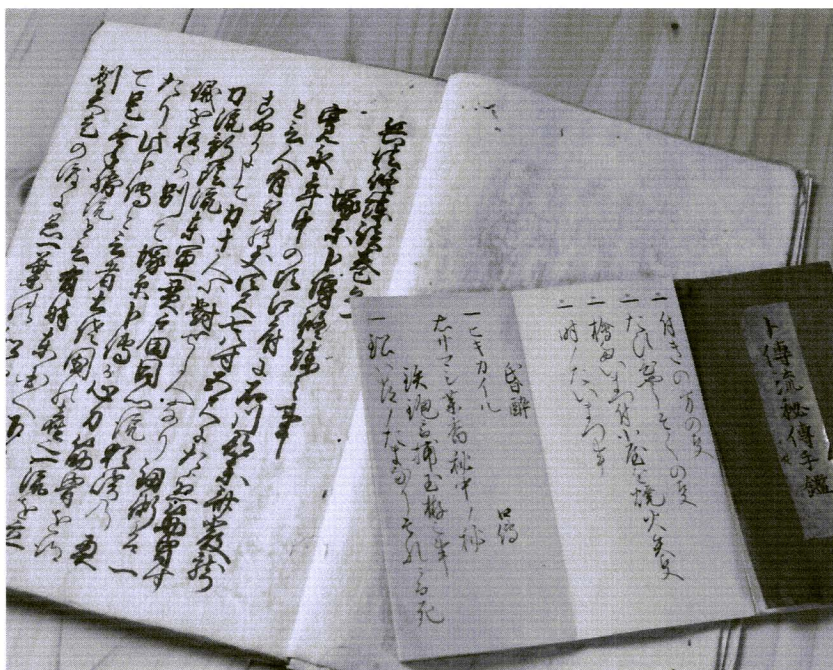
# PREFACE

## In Honor of True Warriors

There is a word in Japanese, 'kensei 劍聖,' meaning 'sword saint.' Sword saints are different from sword experts or sword masters. Sword masters were individuals such as Iizasa Choisai, Aisu Ikosai, Koizumi Isenokami, Tsukahara Bokuden, Yagyu Sekishusai, Miyamoto Musashi, and Ito Ittosai. Historical records are replete with tales of these undefeated sword masters; their sword skills were said to be divine, and their fame still echos to the present day. Tomita Shigemasa distinguished himself in service while serving three generations of the lord Maeda and rose in rank to receive 13,000 koku of rice, while Yagyu Munenori, the master of Shinkage-ryu, only received 12,500 koku (koku was a measure of rice paid as currency). The Chinese character for 'koku' (石) is written with the character for 'stone' (石). In relation to this, the great leader of the Warring States period (1467-1568), Takeda Shingen, once famously said "people are stone." Koku, or 'stones,' however, were a measure of rice, a salary to the samurai, but beyond this were a symbol of authority and a measure of economic status and military power. Munenori taught Shinkage-ryu to the shogun Tokugawa Hidetada for six years and became the head of the Shogun's intelligence service. Munenori was also renowned as a strategist and predicted the death in battle of Itakura Shigemasa, who was sent to suppress the Shimabara rebellion by the Shogunate. He had the 'consistent character' (kankaku, 貫格), rather than 'feeling' (kankaku, 感覺), of a martial artist (Budoka), excelling in the ability of foresight.

So, who were the sword saints? They were people who did not only excel in the way of fighting with the sword but had also reached a position that transcended the sword masters. Sword saints were also far superior to those who practiced the way of the sword in the dojo. Such lesser swordsmen had forgotten the sense of being able to respond in a life and death situation, and lacked experience that was useful in real combat. When we consider it, most sword masters were born in the period between the end of the Warring States period and the time





Tsukahara Bokuden and his denso.



when guns began to appear on the battlefield. The sword saints, on the other hand, began to appear in times of war (toso, 闘争) that were the time of sword and spear (toso, 刀槍); a much earlier period.

Yet it is only those that by good fortune survived and won fame and status as sword masters who are now remembered. Accepting, however, that only these people should be remembered as sword masters, we lose sight of the sword saints. Although the names of some sword saints have disappeared, they were great individuals who had real power, comparable to those who managed to make a name for themselves. For that reason, I am writing this book to honor the memory of these forgotten sword saints.

Takamatsu Toshitsugu Sensei once said, "Even if some are called masters, how many other masters were there?" To evaluate a soldier by whether they were strong or whether they won a fight is a mundane and practical pursuit; the demeanor of the warriors known as sword saints has a beauty that resembles nature itself: snow, the moon, and flowers.

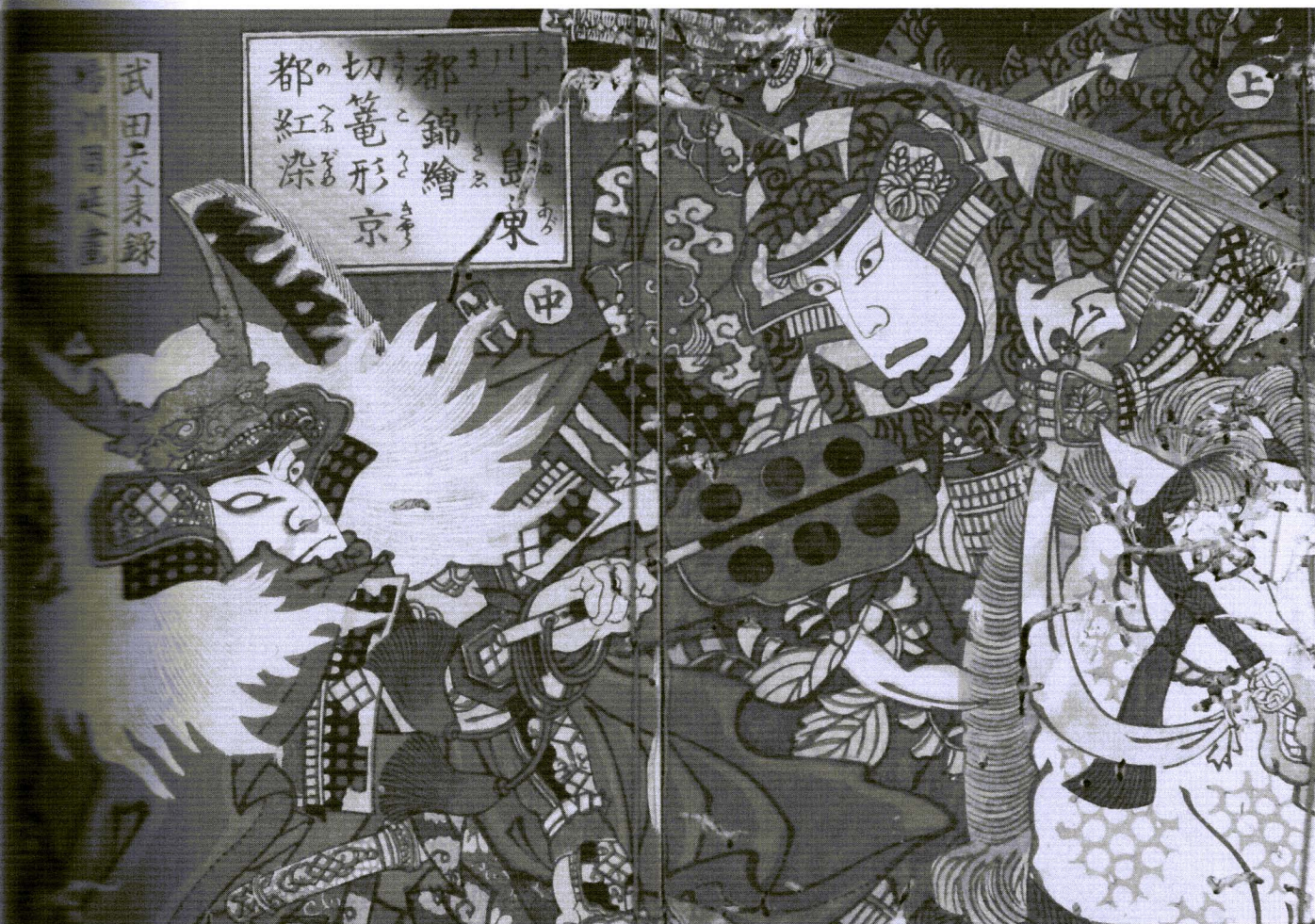
Memories of the time I was taught the Budo of the nine schools by Takamatsu Sensei are like flashes of a dream that appear as profound images of transmission (kaden, 家伝) or mist (kaden, 霞伝).

This is the transmission of old soke (head of a school) to new soke; the transition of teacher to student. That path could also be called the path of truth in nature. Masters and experts appear to shine like glittering stars. However, the path of the sword saints, like the passing of days from sun to moon, shows its color to both master and student. That color appears in five shades, which correspond to the five guiding principles of the essence of Budo and Ninjutsu:

1. Learn first that whatever hardship you may have to endure is but temporary.
2. Always behave correctly.
3. Do not fall prey to avarice, indulgence, or egoism.
4. Sorrow and hate are both part of life; understand that they too are gifts from the gods.
5. Never stray from the path of faith nor from that of martial arts. Aspire in the ways of both pen and sword.





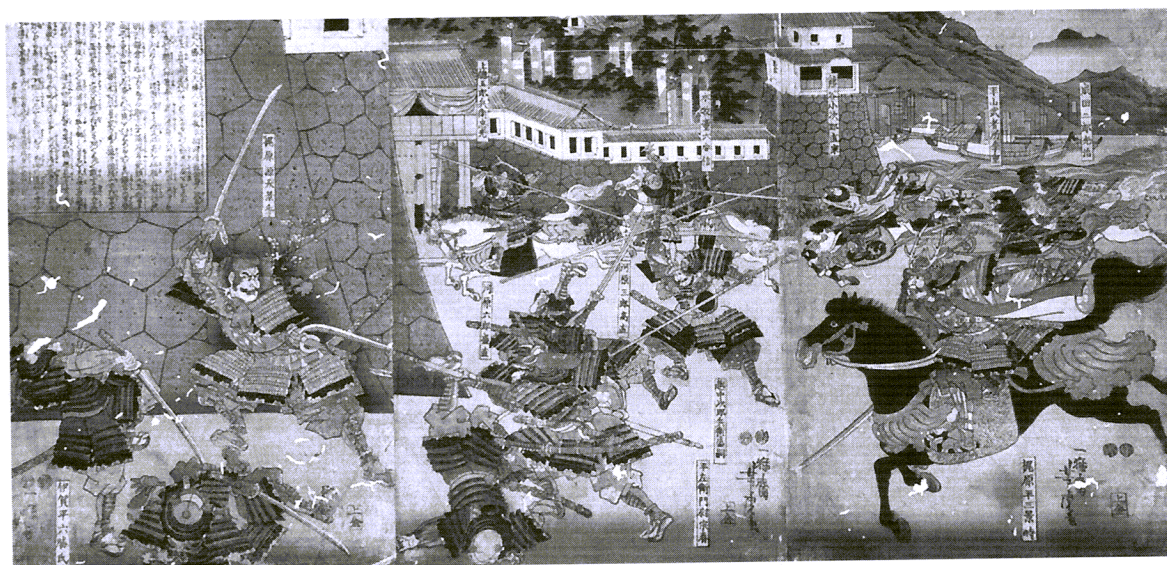


Picture of the battle of Kawanakajima.



If you have the eyes to see the character 'to aspire' (志) is comprised of the characters for 'warrior' (士) and 'heart' (心), then you can interpret the benevolent heart of the warrior who presents a gift of condolence at a funeral ceremony with the feeling of reverence for the Buddha, and the verse: "The way of Bushi is found in death." Furthermore, you will understand the mercy of the suicide assistant at a seppuku ceremony. If you wish to walk the path of the sword saint, I urge you to preserve this motto in your mind, and walk the path steadily with *bufu ichigei* (mastery of one talent in the martial ways).

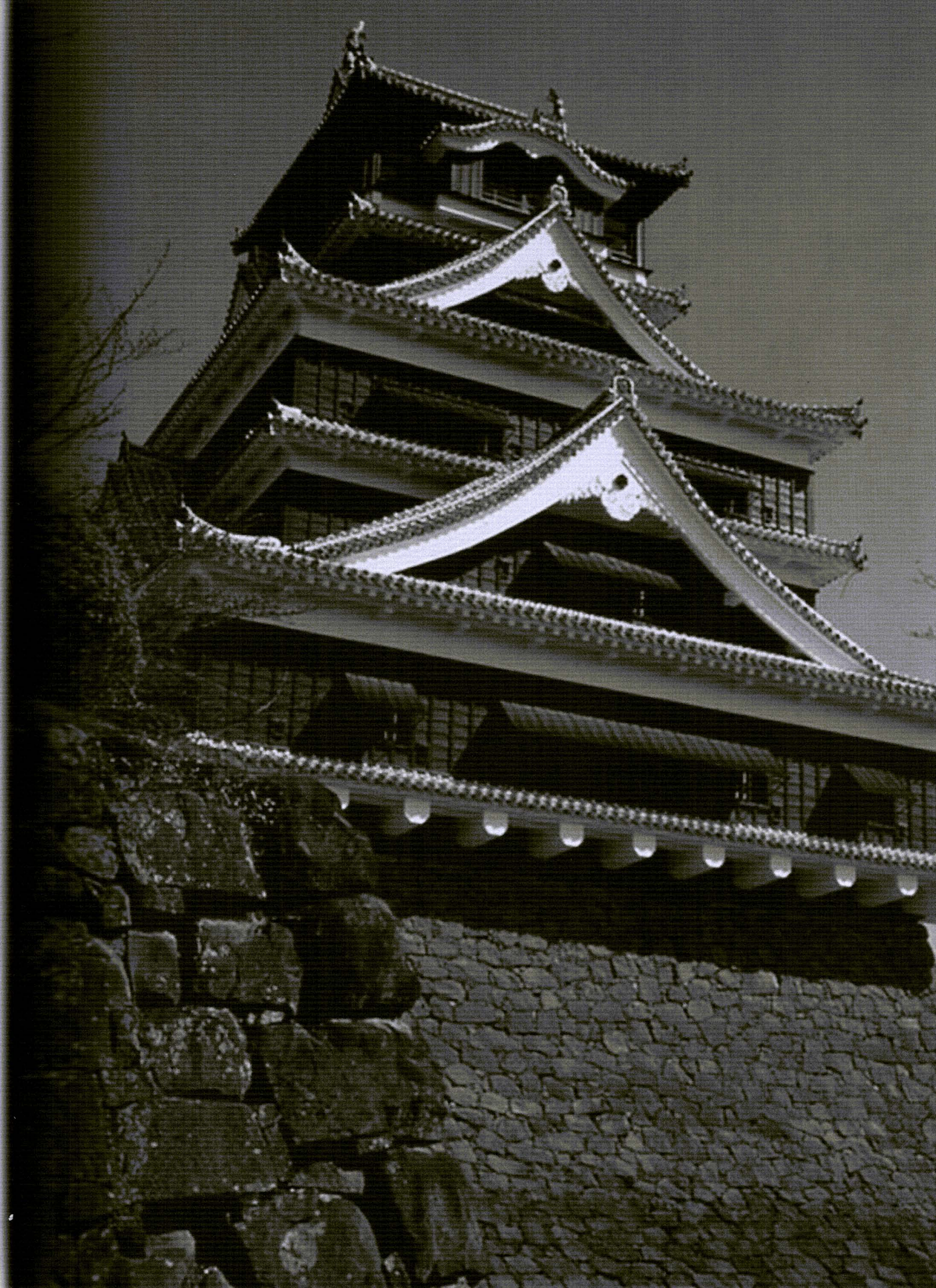
# Kenpo in Budo



## True understanding of real Budoka

It is taken for granted that swords cut well. However, there are cases when the opponent is wearing armor that the sword will not cut as expected. Around the end of the Warring States period, it was decreed by the emperor that non-samurai would be disarmed and their swords taken away in programs of weapons confiscation known as 'katanagari.' As encapsulated in the expression "The pen is mightier than the sword," culture superseded fighting, and an age of enlightenment ensued. Swords survived as beautiful works of art, but swordsmen continued to diminish. It is difficult to appreciate the profound impact of this decree without having lived in a time when swords were actually used and formed an integral part of society. Indeed, our true understanding of real Budoka

Kumamoto Castle. ▶



is also limited in our modern age. So, in order to understand real Budo, let us take a trip back to the Muromachi period (1336–1573), the peak of swordsmanship that started with Koizumi Isenokami and Tsukahara Bokuden, sword masters who emerged in this period.

Warriors who lived at this time discovered the relative merits of the tachi and the associated techniques of cutting, thrusting, and striking while engaging in combat (Kumiuchi). Firstly, it is important for us to understand that Kenpo was born from this era, and furthermore understand that martial arts came from combat that did not rely upon the sword.

From the time of the Northern and Southern Dynasties (1336–92) to the Muromachi period up to the Warring States period, in an era characterized by the trend for retainers to supplant their lords, the flower of Bushido was pollinated and blossomed, it scattered in the wind and then bloomed again in the month of the warrior (shigatsu, 士月)—April (shigatsu, 四月).

This process can be likened to the life of a salmon. Salmon face a strong current and climb up river to fertilize. They lay their eggs and, while continuing to fight, die. From this the fate of the next generation can be seen. This corresponds with the form of the warriors who died, fighting to maintain the honor of their family and descendants year after year. This destiny, born in the Muromachi period, most beautifully expresses the world of the Bushi. The Muromachi period was the true starting point of the natural benevolence of the warrior. The period can be seen metaphorically as a flower. It was the era of the origin of Zen culture, Gozan literature, and the oneness of the sword and Zen—it was a period that moved away from the subtle and profound culture of Medieval times to a blossoming and flowering culture of arts and learning.

During the Muromachi period, the flower of Gozan literature was opened by the famous Zen



昭々哉 昭々哉  
昭々哉 昭々哉

御子上典膳  
傳流  
一乃流  
忠明  
兩傳合法  
北辰乃流開祖  
千葉周作

Writing by Yamaoka Tesshu.

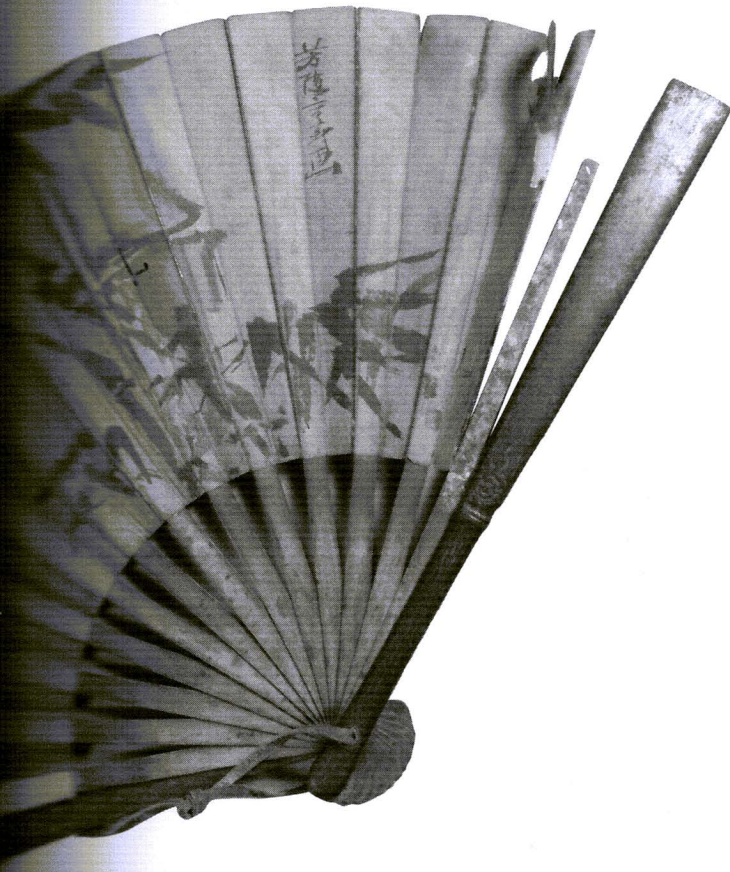
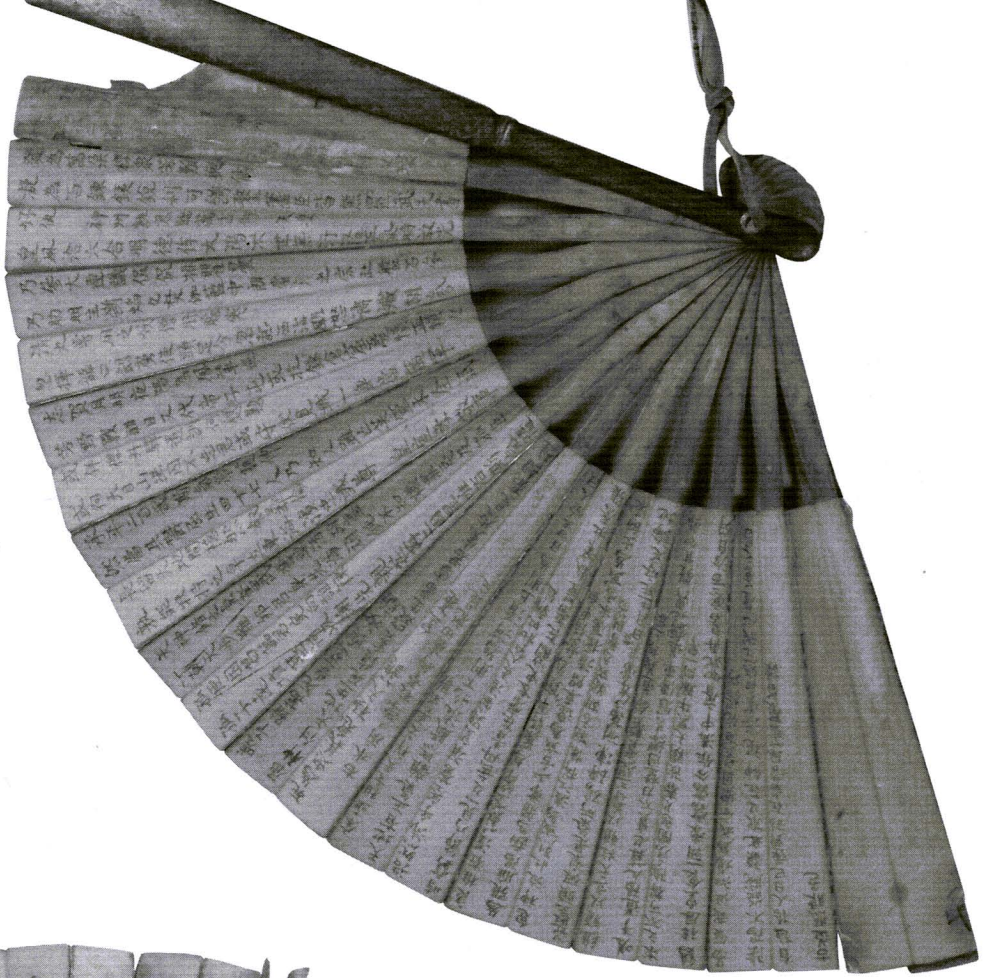
夫情眼トイウハ心氣臍ノ下ニ治テ其内ニ臨氣應変ノ  
 氣ソナハリミチテ敵ニ向フ處ノ場ナリ其所ニ太刀ヲ敵ニノ  
 マレテフウハト出スハカリニテ太刀筋ケ情眼ニテハナシ太刀ヲ  
 十分ニハサススコシタルミタル處自然トスナタナルニ安ナリ情眼  
 ノカマエトイウハ相違也サレトモ名目ニ付アレハナリ當流ハ其  
 機敵ニ見エヌヲ本意トス上段ニカマエ或ハトク打コントノ氣  
 色アラハレテハ敵其ノナエヲスルナリ實機ハカリカヌキヲ  
 釵法ノ極意トス兵法ハ業ヲ專トストイヘトモ全ノ勝事難  
 ニ遅ニシテ勝ニアラス速ニシテ勝ニ非ス剛ニシテ勝ニアラス柔  
 ニシテ勝ニ非ス敵ノ機ヲ察ル事肝要也兵法西ツノ病アリ  
 驚懼疑惑トイウ事此病一ツモアレハ勝ヲタハス此病ヲ除キ  
 心廣體胖ニシテ湛寂恬思慮ヲ絶シ無分別地ニ到リ全  
 勝ヲ得ルナリスノ極一カトモ也

二代目 淺利義明書



Writing by Asari Matashichiro Yoshiaki, teacher of Yamaoka Tesshu.

priests led by Ikkyu Sojun. At the same time Noh drama, the tea ceremony, and flower arrangement were born. These arts were able to develop under the patronage of the shogun and other powerful people. Nevertheless, at this time, artistic expression that opposed the power of the shogun was destroyed. For example, the famous Noh playwright Zeami was forced to live in exile on an island after falling out of favor with the shogun. I am often left wondering why Zeami did not perform the subtle and profound world he explained in his work *Fushikaden*, in which he famously said: "If it is hidden, it is the flower." The shogun would surely have admired it. It would seem that the soul of art and performance transcend the world of the living; there is a power in art that derives from the world of the dead. This kind of demonic spirit drives creativity and energetic, outstanding performances in the theater. It is a world untouched by those who are not artists, and feared by those who have power. This is why the revered tea ceremony master Sen no Rikyu, who possessed this demonic spirit, was killed by the powerful leader Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who feared him. Powerful people certainly feared the martial artists as well. However, a martial artist who protected the five rules and achieved enlightenment was truly a unique person. It is a matter of course, therefore, that the idea of the oneness of the sword



Tessen (iron fan) with a painting by Kano Hozui.

備 稿

天文以括之年

中者從大

義禮文相

之依為他

故以非

右卷者先

小原卷

天文廿三年

地 術



and Zen was born. Another meaning for 'Oni' (鬼, devil) in the realm of the dead is 'kami' (神, god). That is to say that the realm of the dead is irrevocably connected by a spiritual force to the world of the gods, and represents the divine world.

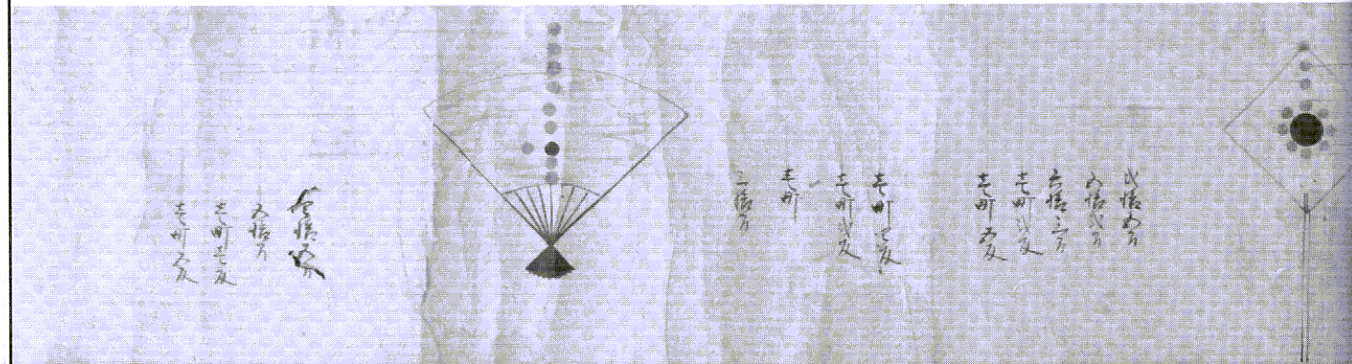
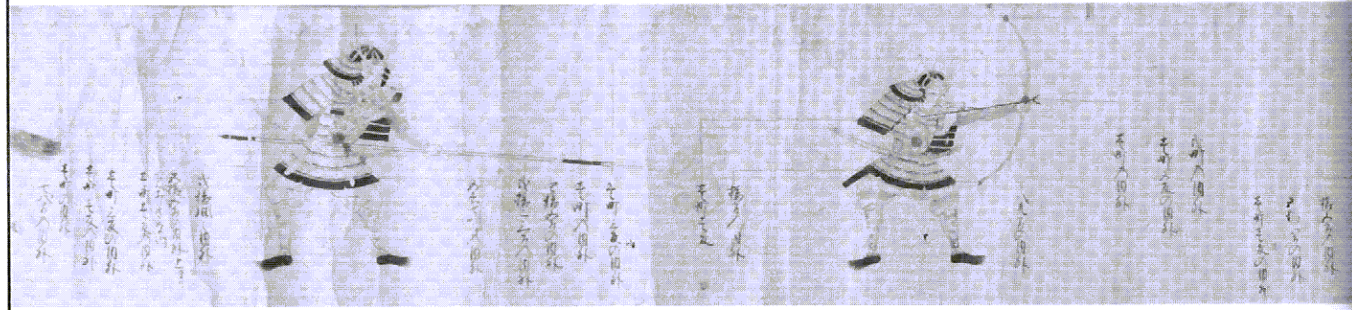
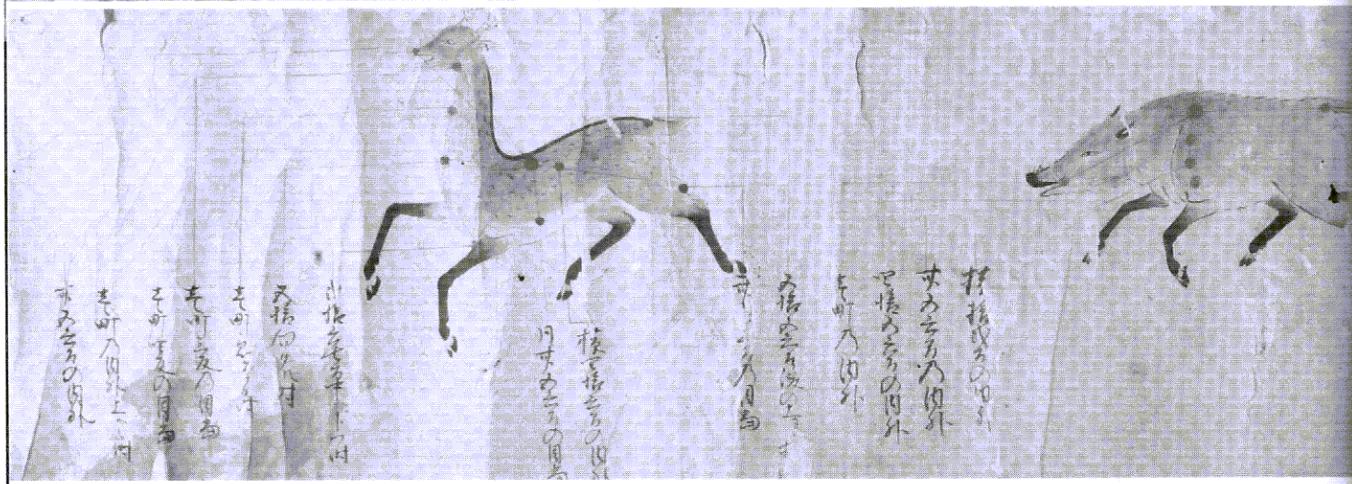
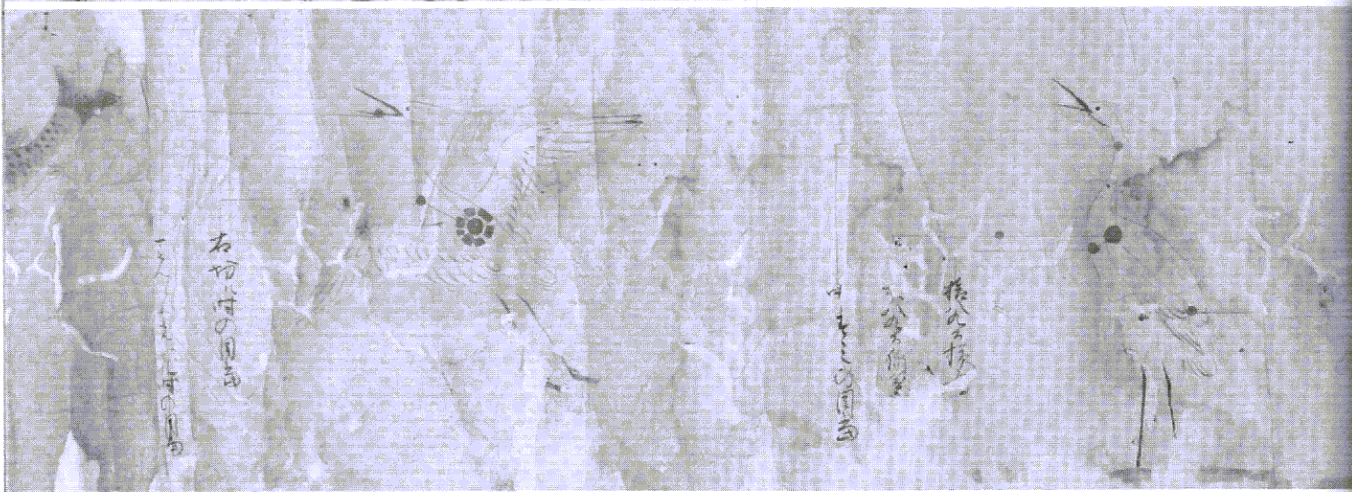
## **Divine Merit through the Peaceful Way of the Sword**

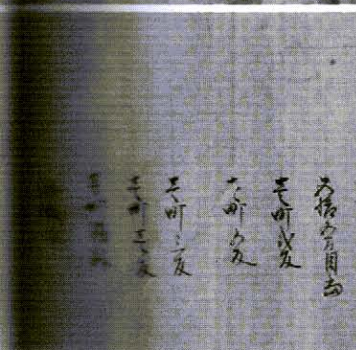
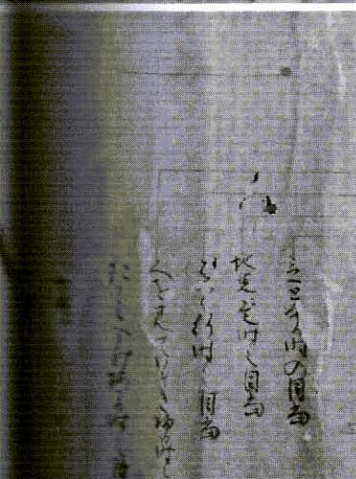
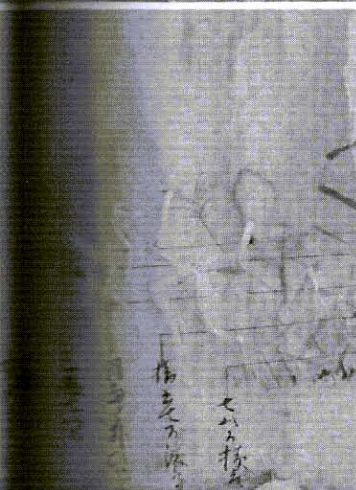
Sakakibara Kenkichi was an active master swordsman from the end of the Edo period into the Meiji period (the mid to late 19th century). It is said that he was a master of Jikishinkage-ryu and was known for his technique of splitting the helmet. Though he was skilled at cutting a helmet in some small way, it is nevertheless strange to praise this as something significant. If you truly want to split a helmet, it is best that you smash it into many pieces using a large axe or halberd. A large axe, one of the seven elemental tools, will easily split a helmet—this is war strategy.

The five accompaniments of a sword are the deity within a Shinto shrine, respect, prayer, prosperity, and kiai (projection of the fighting spirit into a voice). These are all bound together, to make kami-musubi (binding with the gods). This also means that when you wield a sword, you should never cut a deity, but rather pray and pay your respects to the deity through the sword.

A well known master swordsman, and magnificent calligrapher who expressed the philosophy of the oneness of sword and Zen, was Yamaoka Tesshu (1836–88). Tesshu served for ten years in charge of the education of the Meiji Emperor. It is said that after he experienced rigorous training in the dojo, he eventually reached enlightenment, and was able to separate himself from his match with his teacher Asari Yoshiaki. Whereas Yoshiaki always used to win, Tesshu finally found enlightenment and beat him; finding the true meaning of victory and defeat and the way of the sword.

It should be understood that he realized enlightenment by hearing the poetic song of the gods in his heart. There is a song of the gokui (essence) that says: "In the world of martial arts, one should not stick to strength or weakness, softness or hardness; rather one should transcend physicality and understand the void, 'ku,' regarding the body also as empty." He was able to hear this song in a neutral, detached, Zen-like way. As a great ship in the vast ocean cuts through the waves, his eyes were opened to the gokui of the Itto-ryu, and he heard its rhyme. In war, prepare your body and show courage, the true gokui is the mind. Win without drawing your sword. If you draw, do not cut down; bear patiently, and know that taking a life is a grave thing.





In the winter of 2004, several students and I were giving a demonstration of kami-mu cutting known as kami-musubi at the Kotohira Jinja grand festival in Noda City. Using the method of shihogiri (cutting all directions), two wara (sheaved straw) were cut completely through. However, the fifth wara for the kami-musubi was not allowed to be cut. When presenting to the gods, if all the wara are completely cut then it becomes an act of severing divine connection with the gods. Those watching who do not understand this may think the cutter was unable to sever the last wara. This is not the case. To revere the image of a Buddha in Zen (or kami in Shinto) to the point of idol-worship is wrong, and it is true that by destroying this very idol, one can achieve enlightenment. True Budoka, however, will never fall prey to idol-worship, and so it is forbidden for them to cut the image of a Buddha even in a performance.

## The Essence of Victory and Defeat

Within Budo, the ability to foresee certain victory is critical. Hesitation will not arise from a mind prepared for absolute victory. It is generally accepted that all people desire life. This aspect of fighting is expressed in old documents as "Koteki Ryoda Juppo Sessho no Jutsu," and in nature as the tiger fighting the dragon. The flash of lightning brings forth a thundercloud and a thunderstorm, the echo of wind grows louder, the aesthetic effect of fear rises. Stepping into this scene, your six senses are absorbed. Even if you yield victory to your opponent, in true Budo this should not be regarded as a bad thing. The ability to recognize defeat is important and essential to training in the martial arts. This is nothing more than a rule of nature, but those who indulge in lust or desire will never realize this. Let us just say that this is true to the style of author Nakazato Kaizan's endless cycles of rebirth, or give and take. However, what is critical here is that in real combat, victory or defeat is a matter of life or death. If you have the capacity to recognize defeat as also important, then your life force will be stronger, and this in turn cultivates courage with calmness.

Fights yield a winner and a loser. From the smallest thing, invincible people can be led to defeat. This becomes all the more apparent in a fight with real swords and not in the Dojo. Needless to say, strikes or thrusts with a shinai (bamboo sword), are not so serious, but if it is a real sword, they could be fatal. True warriors, however, will cultivate readiness without fear, regardless of whether they are in a duel with real swords or not. This is because they are standing on the lifeline of enlightenment; they are detached from victory or defeat, and have the insight and knowledge

to separate themselves. This is part of the reverberation of life; of the essential five elements from *the Book of Five Rings*, which can be likened to the five lines on a musical score; the five ('go,' 五) of enlightenment ('go,' 悟). The musical score is written 'go sen fu' 五線符, as music on a page. In the same way, we can connect it to the five elements of enlightenment, 'go sen fu' 悟閃賦.

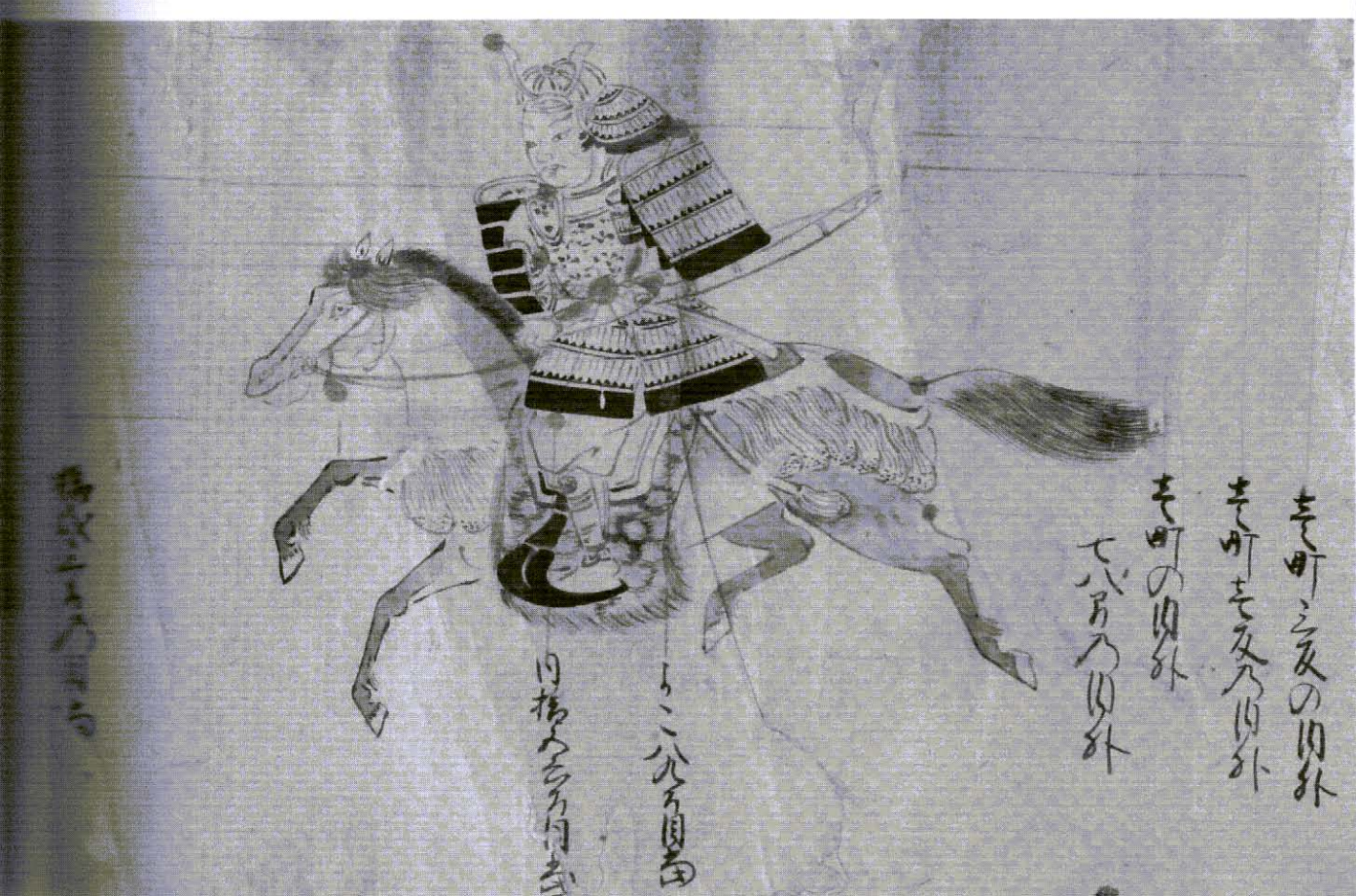
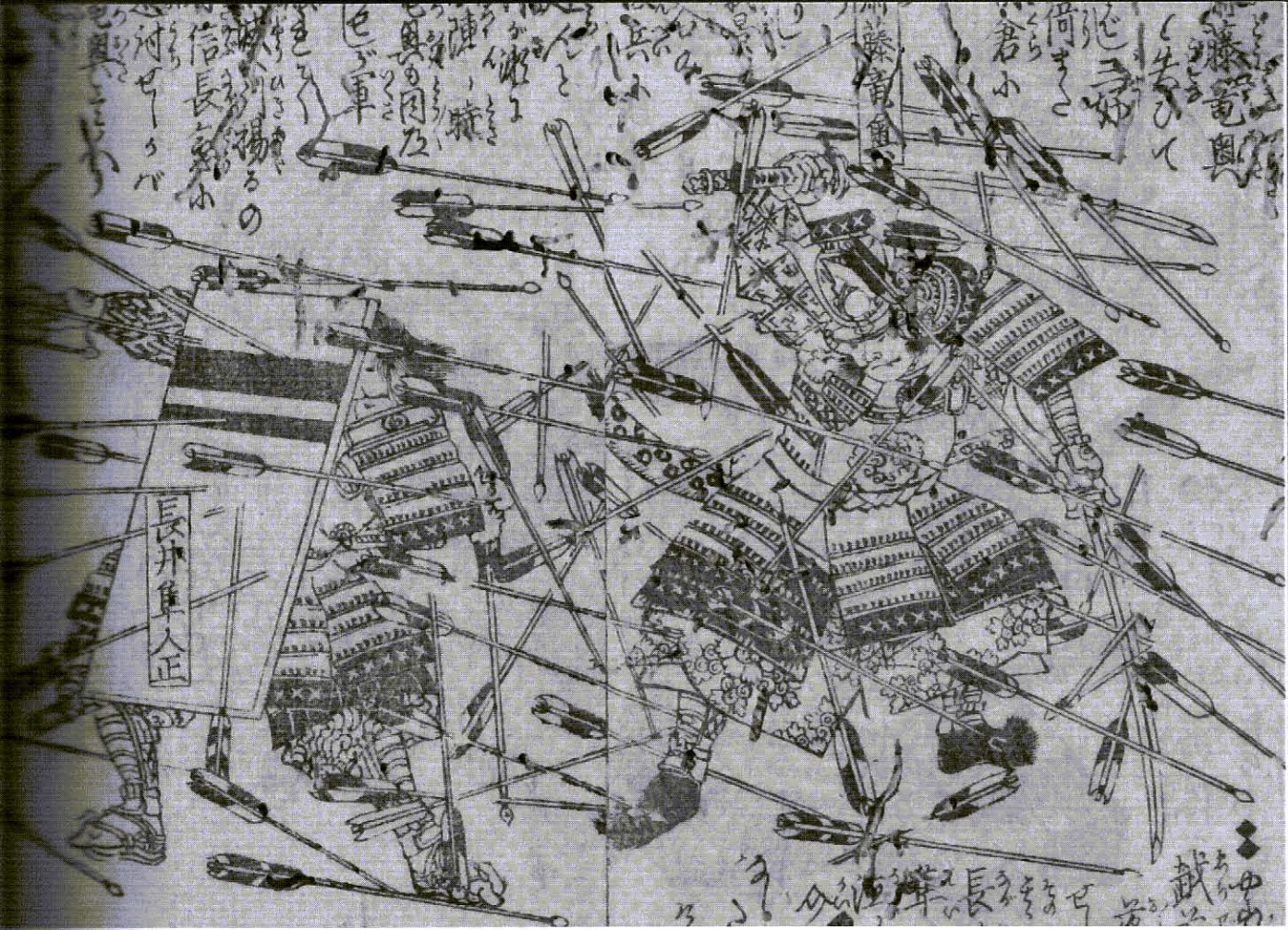
An acquaintance of mine who has trained with me for twenty years, and who was originally in the military of his country, recently wrote me a letter touching on the subject of the bloodshed of terrorism in the world around us: "As a person who has experienced actual combat, I'm certain that no matter what kind of war, no person is victorious, and I feel that in reality all are losers; even those who are victorious will suffer from the blood of the defeated enemy on their hands sooner or later." Those who yearn too much for victory suffer forever from their victory.

Is it possible that war between mankind will never end? The Ninja, fully understanding this possibility, devoted themselves to the gods, and in their shadow, the principle of 'shinmyoken' (mysterious sword) was born. Why is there conflict in life? If you were to change the four characters that make up the words 'natural selection' (shizen tota, 自然淘汰) to those of the phonetically identical 'nature's many battles' (shizen tota 自然鬪多), you might think you were watching a dramatization of the mystery of the struggle for life.

## Religion and Budo

There were approximately twenty types of primitive man, and of those, the hunter Cro-Magnon (*Homo Sapiens*), was the only one to survive. It is interesting, then, that the Cro-Magnon was the most frightened of the spirits of the dead. This deep natural mental state was probably a primitive version of the present day religious defensive reaction to death. If we accept the explanation that the only human to survive was Cro-Magnon because of their migration patterns, communication with words, fighting animals in groups, and superior hunting skills, then it can be said that modern man developed language competence, physical ability, society, and fighting instinct from his ancestors. Furthermore, it is because the Cro-Magnon were indeed a hunting people that they used weapons and traps. Natural selection is therefore an outcome of 'nature's many battles.'

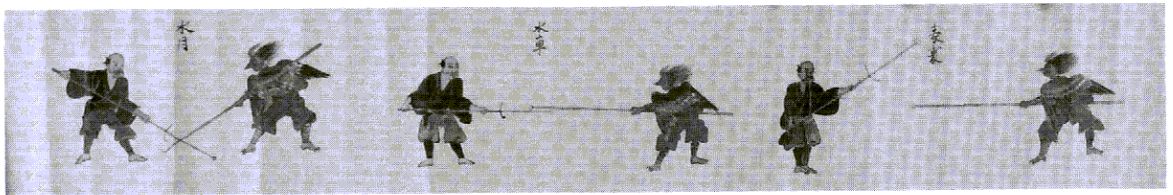
The importance of Budo is seen here. Budo is to live. If your feelings are violent and brutal, then the way will be lost, but if the feeling is too humane, then you cannot hunt effectively. Already there is an excess of people on the globe. The world's current population of 6.4 billion



will increase to approximately 9.1 billion by the year 2050. We will also begin to see a transformation in the meaning of 'nature's many battles' to meteorological and geological phenomenon; a change in the phenomenon of natural battles.

My teacher Takamatsu Toshitsugu warned me that the occurrence of natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and floods are a revelation of the gods. The reason for these phenomena is the destruction of the earth's environment by man, and his lack of insight, perseverance, and understanding of the substance of nature. Therefore, to resent nature for its disasters, which we have helped create, would be pure hypocrisy.

Nature created the world in this way, and mankind is reaping the effects of his violation, so therefore such evils of mankind should be set right. This is the simple principle of give and take—if humankind does something good for nature, then nature will look after humankind and good things will come in return.



Currently, much is being said about global warming, but relying on a thermometer alone does not reveal the true extent of the crises of life. The thermometer (*kandankei*, 寒暖計) or intuition (*kandankei*, 寒断計) held by creatures of nature should be treated with more significance. Nature's creations continue to live bound by the ties of nature. The *Shizen no Kamae* (natural posture) in Budo is equal to this natural embodiment.

Thus, in Budo, as in nature, natural posture is important. From the old times it has been said that "the warrior heart is a reflection of harmony and respect." To say this in another way, Budoka are professors of the scientific ability to create the chemistry of change, having the feeling and ultra-consciousness of practitioners of religion, philosophers, and intellectuals. From the character for change (*ka*, 化) many other phonetic cousins are born—such as flower (*ka*, 花), shoe (*ka*, 靴), profit (*ka*, 貨), and to lean (*ka*, 傾). *Ka* is a puzzle in disguise. Sword saints strive to connect the expertise (*ka*, 家) of religion, philosophy, politics, and ideas.

War is often caused by conflict in religion, philosophy, and thought. Budo, however, must protect the 'Three spheres (*ka*, 家)' of religion, philosophy, and thought. Failure to do so would have severe consequences. Someday, this martial arts view will be regarded as very natural, just as

Densho of Saburi-ryu sojutsu. ▶

水月



水車



表裏



children's tales are. Nevertheless, even children's fairy tales, such as the Brothers Grimm collection, can be extremely frightening, and often hide something cruel. Mothers read them to their children often unaware of this. If we interpret these stories, however, with a protective instinct, we can notice the stories' cruel points.

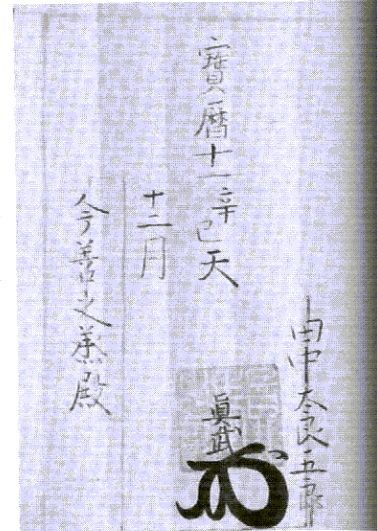
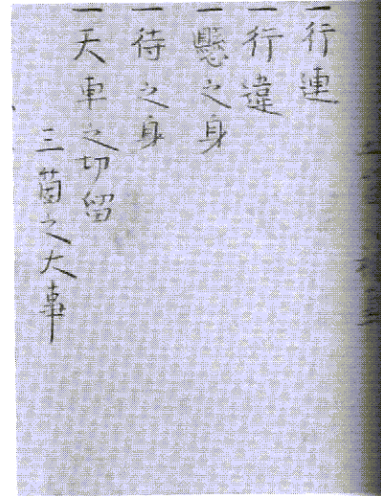
The word 'cruelty' can be looked at in the flow of nature. With the right eyes you can see a rainbow in cruelty. There is a saying: "life is rosy," but there is also a blooming rose in the four natural stages of human life—birth, aging, sickness, and death; the rose blooms in all aspects of life. Regarding cruelty, the teachings of god are also very harsh in truth. And this is why in each age holy men appear. It is very interesting that Jesus Christ, Mohammed, and the Buddha appeared around the same period. Furthermore, Plato, Lao Tsu, and Confucius also lived in the period around that time. Times of reformation require great men.

What can we do in order to evade natural selection (many battles)? As in the song of the gokui, the art of not being an opponent to those that attack is probably the same principle of pacifism advocated by Mahatma Gandhi.

After writing the book *The Way of the Ninja*, I received comments that it had assisted people in knowing the law of the way of the three powers—heaven, earth, and man—can be interpreted as culture, garden, and Ninja. Dry landscape gardens are one aspect of the perfection of culture in Japan. White sand creates mountains, rivers, oceans, and ponds expressing the beauty of nature in dry landscapes. However, unfortunately in present day Japan there are fewer and fewer homes with Japanese gardens. It requires more money than is generally realized to create and maintain a garden, which the average Japanese cannot afford. However, I must stress that it is only natural that developing, maintaining, and passing on culture is expensive. It is the Budoka that truly devote themselves to knowledge of the arts of culture. Thereby, one can take a philosophical view of life and death, victory and defeat. That is to say, to be a warrior who can reach wisdom (shiki, 識). Shiki has multiple meanings at the same time: to respect the manner of dying (shiki, 死悸), emphasize the importance of determination (shiki, 士氣), as well as to revere the arts, and to have the aesthetic sense to protect tradition for eternity.

## Oneness is infinite

Within Mikkyo (esoteric Buddhism), 'shiki' (wisdom) exists alongside the elements earth (chi, 地), water (sui, 水), fire (ka, 火), wind (fu, 風),





當日流居合目録  
初段之切

一 夢明劍

一 金剛劍

一 請留

一 十字字

一 瀧落

一 霞流

一 頭打

二段之切

一 押拔

一 開拔

一 暮腰

一 逆手

一 胸刀

一 夢想劍

一 頂上劍

三段之切

一 過姿

一 現在

一 未來

一 殺人刀

一 髭取之時心得之事

一 雪中切合心得

一 兩中心得

一 陽之楯

一 陰之楯

一 燈火隱形

一 鯉口之事

一 當十二之事

一 菱折之事

一 右之拔ト云事

一 見ト云事

一 髮狹詰之事

一 破軍星之事

一 介錯之事

右之秘密猥不可許火

有天恐云云

一 天真正

Densho by Hayashizaki Jinsuke.

and emptiness (ku, 空). Shiki can also be read as the character for color (shiki, 色). Within Ninpo (the ways of the Ninja) it is said one must endure with consciousness (shiki) but you can also see the color of the mandala (portraits of mystic Buddhist symbols of the universe). The age of ink paintings has passed on to the age of color, and many mandala are now depicted in color. However, is it not said that in sumie (black ink painting) the sumi (black ink) has five subtle colors within it? Adding those five colors to the seven colors of the rainbow, we see twelve colors, corresponding to the months of the year. Thus we begin to see how years pass. The Noh song "Sotoba Komachi" equates the five rings (chi, sui, ka, fu, ku) to the human body. It is important to see the illusion of the five rings of Buddhism. It is said the Dutch painter Hulce managed to express no fewer than twenty-seven different colors with black, surely a mark of true genius.

Martial artists (strategists of war) look at things on a broad scale and carefully think about them. While all things in the universe have an *ura* (inside) and *omote* (outside), there is also the *godai* (the five elements) and *rokudai* (the six worlds, six virtues a Buddha elect practices to attain supreme enlightenment, and the six tools of the Ninja). Furthermore, there are the *shichidai* (the seven elements) and *hachidai* (the eight elements, within Budo known as the *kihon happo*). All these numbers have special importance. The world is thus complex and mysterious. In Buddhism there are six worlds of reincarnation. Beyond these there is the way of the rainbow—the seventh way—and because of this, the rainbow comes to symbolize the number seven. However, if you are imbued with that rainbow, then it becomes dangerous. This is because the number seven (*shichi*) in Japan is considered bad luck (it relates to the traditional 'seven hardships' of ancient Buddhism).

Oneness extends to the infinite—this is an endless principle of Budo, but is not limited only to Budo. It also applies to religion and study. I do not subscribe to the belief that Budo is the ultimate phenomenon in the world at all. I feel that it is just one of many things that exist on this earth. There is a saying: "all things united as one." This is expressed in the symbol  $\ominus$ . In Zen this symbol represents hospitality. The great Buddhist monk Daruma was originally depicted in paintings realistically, but his image was progressively reduced to a symbol  $\bigcirc$ . Thus complex things come to be represented simply and symbolically. Daruma's symbol also means oneness and emptiness.



Picture of the warrior Imai Shiro Kanehira, a chief retainer of Kiso Yoshinaka.

Densho of Kashima ►  
Shinden Kage-ryu.

Handwritten text on a scroll, including a circled character '明鏡' (Mingjing) and various vertical columns of characters.

明鏡

鏡練如何得理乎

今足下教之

自今以後

免狀如相傳

札木簡可元祖

上林

神

上田

札木簡

札木簡

札木簡

札木簡

札木簡

## The real meaning of the eighteen fields of martial arts

Recently, I have been concerned about consistency (*ikken*, 一貫), which is important in all the arts. My teacher Takamatsu Sensei told me forty-eight years ago, although it seems like only yesterday, that even an insect can go far if he grabs onto the tail of a horse. I replied, "There is a proverb that says a horse can go far; yet a Mongolian tiger travels far to hunt, but returns from 1,000 miles." *Moko no Tora* (Mongolian Tiger) was Takamatsu Sensei's martial nickname; indeed he was talented like the tiger.

Currently, I keep a horse called Cookie. I began painting a picture of a horse about ten years ago, and would often return to it to add some retouches, but I could never seem to appreciate it. However, after living with Cookie, I was able to complete the painting in a way with which I was satisfied.

There are two words: the *kabuki juhachiban*, and *bugei juhachiban*. These mean the 18 representative works of *kabuki* and the 18 basic fields of martial arts respectively. Speaking of the 18 fields of martial arts, the following disciplines come to mind: *taijutsu*, *kenjutsu*, *bojutsu*, *sojutsu*, *iaijutsu*, *bajutsu*, *shurikenjutsu*, and *hobakujutsu* (art of arresting). Here I would like to discuss the 18 works of *kabuki* through the eyes of a martial artist. In *kabuki*'s heyday, Ichikawa Danjuro, Onoe Kikugoro, and Ichikawa Sadanji were renowned performers, and they dominated *kabuki* for a generation. 18 in this instance is when 3 people step in 6 directions; the number 18 harmonizes and the play becomes a charming martial performance. The number 18, which also means 'one's strength' in Japanese, relates to the idea of performing a great deed, including in battle.

## The restoration of Budo

Life is an instant. Valuing life in the moment, as 'one encounter, one chance,' being grateful to divine providence that allows us to live in nature, loving the existence of everything in life, finding eternity in an instant—these are the profound and essential qualities of an artist. Luckily, we can find this kind of profound knowledge in the work of people who were able to enjoy fulfillment accumulated from the experience of life.

In the famous secret scrolls of Noh-drama *Fushikaden* by Zeami, it is written: "If it is hidden, it is the flower. If it is not hidden, it is not the flower." By suppressing and concealing the intention, one can stimulate the imagination. It is very interesting that this idea is connected to the phrase 'Ichigu o terasu,' from Japanese Buddhism, meaning to 'light up a corner' or 'to be a light that brightens the surroundings.' You can sense true affection more profoundly in the smile of roughly carved Buddhist

"Dragon-Tiger picture" by Takamatsu Toshitsugu.

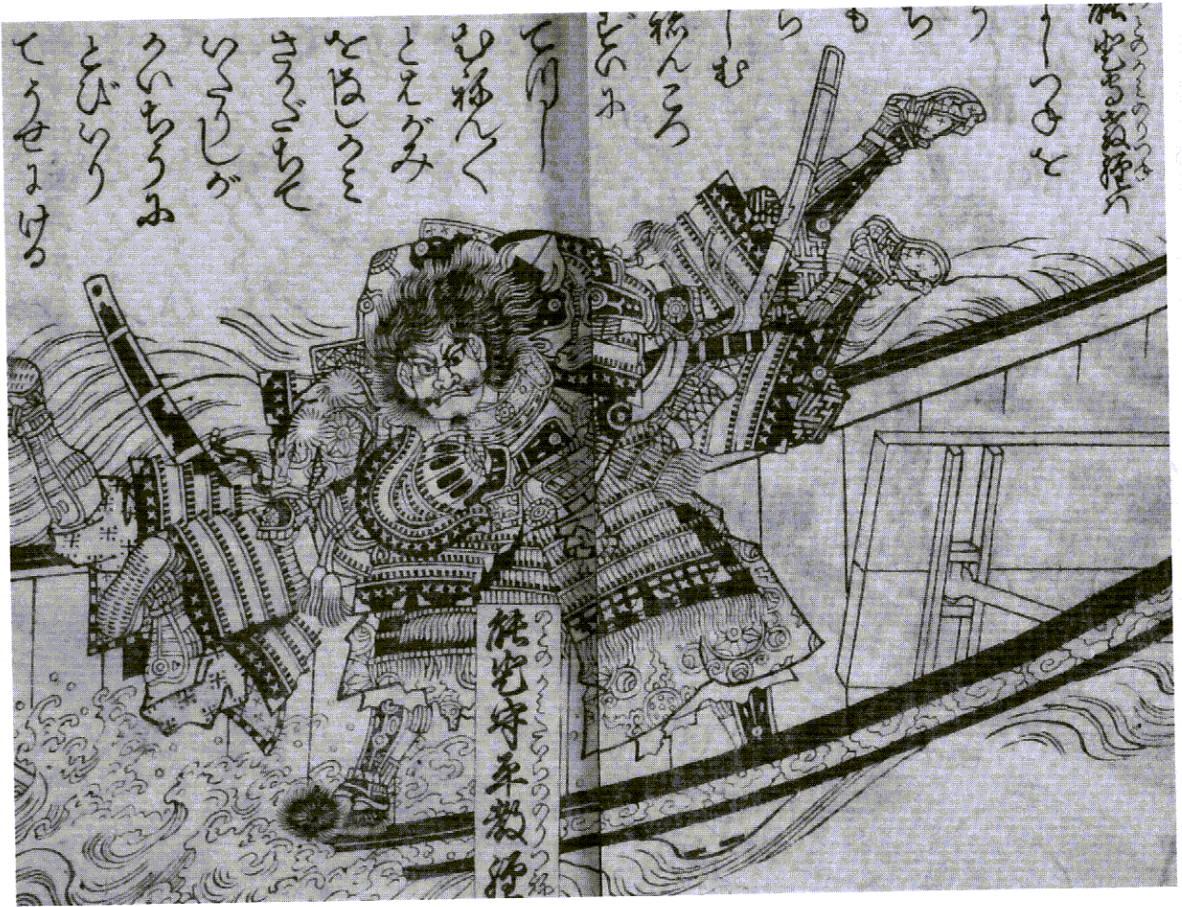
猛虎一聲震天地



巴北護花

雲白  
來



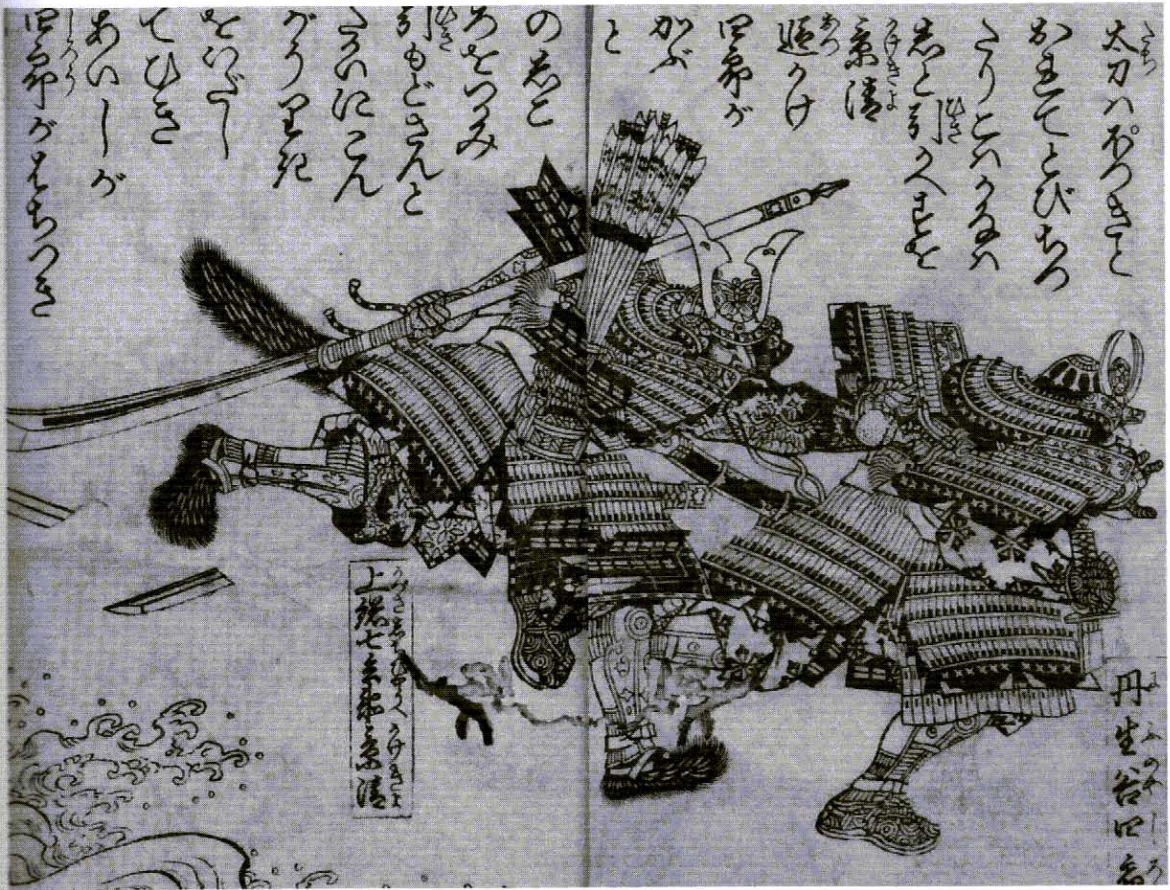


statues made by priests such as Enku and the monk Mokujiki than in imposing Buddhist statues made of gold.

If you explain history with only a shallow understanding of Budo, Budo loses its charm and appeal. When this happens, it is important to listen to the drumbeats and marches that accompanied the Meiji Restoration—listen to the rhythm of change, which we can liken to the revival of Budo. I urge you to listen to the hidden *bufu* while following the path of ‘learning from the past.’ In Budo, if you are always chasing after the new you will lose sight of its important secrets. This revival of Budo, or restoration of imperial rule (*ouseifukko*, 王政復古) can be equated with the concept of ‘to die and come back to life’ (*ouseifukko*, 往生復呼). What I am trying to say is we should always immerse ourselves in sunlight, and in Budo training, never forget to smile, and never be surprised regardless of what happens.

## Budo and the arts

The vitality of the Bushi is demonstrated in the craftsmanship of their armor and weapons, and it is said that the tearooms of the *Kinkakuji*

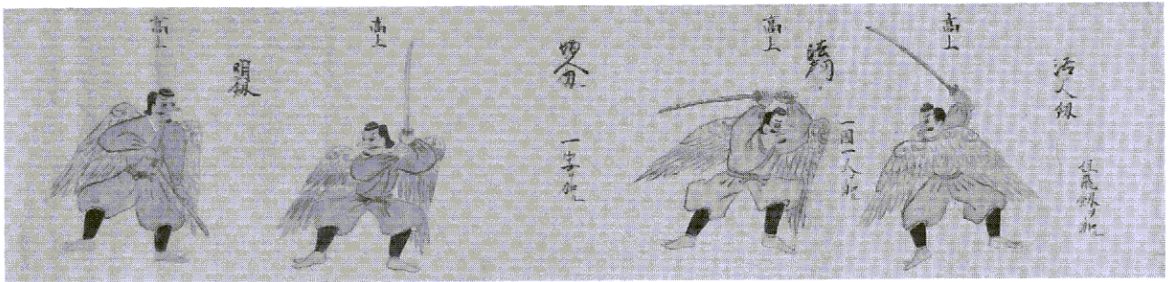


and Ginkakuji were made in order to display their power. It is possible, however, they might have been created solely to display the aesthetic sense of powerful people.

With the advent of the gun, the utility of the sword diminished, and this was damaging for followers of Bushido. The flame of Bushido burned out in the Warring States period. At that time, if the samurai had already known the common value of things globally, like diamonds, their fate might have been considerably different. The diamond or ruby inlaid into the brow of a statue of Buddha, the so-called third eye, may indicate the consciousness of that Buddha statue. Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi awarded their military leaders with the swords of well-known makers, or the works of fine potters, in place of thousands and tens of thousands of koku of rice. In the tea ceremony, the teacup was considered highly precious, and Nobunaga and Hideyoshi would also give these as gifts. I hear the Dutch painter Helene Muller said that art is the human form made into the soul. If this is the case, how should we see the soul of the warrior and the spirit of Japan? Perhaps by looking at the form of a martial artist well trained in the martial traditions we

can perceive the meaning. By so doing, we may come to see the existence of the martial artist in both ourselves and others.

The illusionist Japanese painter Hayami Gyoshu said, "In my lifetime I will continue to destroy the form," and he devoted his life to the expression of destruction; that was the essence of his art. Although the expression of destruction may change, as in the painting style of Mondrian, or in Zen style paintings, all art is naturally changing, and when time passes, the works gain importance. Like coexisting with a simple, melancholic and rustic feeling (the Japanese concept of *wabi* and *sabi*), so the ability to change naturally is a power also shared by the sword saint, and it helps protect them from enemies.



## What is the *gokui*?

My belief is that the *gokui*, or essence, is living with change (*henka*). If people change then things change and the times change. It would be strange, therefore, if each respective era didn't have *gokui*. Ironically, *gokui* is about change; people and times must change, but the fundamental aspect of *gokui* does not change. Budo has existed for thousands of years and the fact that my Budo is understood around the world shows that it exists within something that is like the *gokui*.

Therefore, even if you don't understand the *gokui*, it is best to tie yourself to a good friend and teacher and persevere with *bufu ikkan*. 'Gokui' can be read as the numbers 5-9-5 (*go-ku-i*, 五九五) in Japanese. If we contemplate this, we find that five is the supreme number for the age of the gods and nine means the present, it gives rise to experiences. You can see the *gokui* in the *henka* (change) of these numbers.

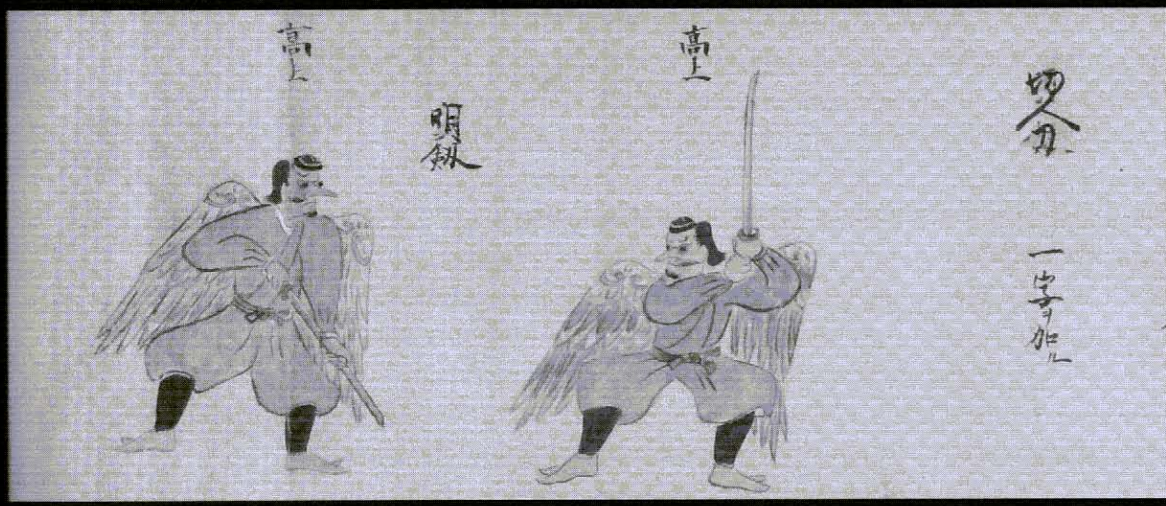
In a somewhat paradoxical sense, when you think the *gokui* exists, it does not, but if you think it doesn't, it appears in the scrolls of the dead like a miracle. The existence of the *gokui* is truly mysterious. It is a fact that people possess caliber. Didn't the Rakugo master Yanagiya Kosan (1915–2002) say it as well? It is important to learn, but some people cannot progress even if they try hard at learning—they don't have the capacity. This is why some kabuki actors don't teach to their successors or students. Nevertheless, there are very talented people that come forth



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藝術二葉



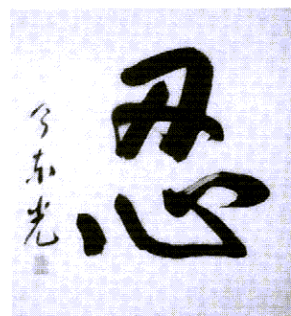
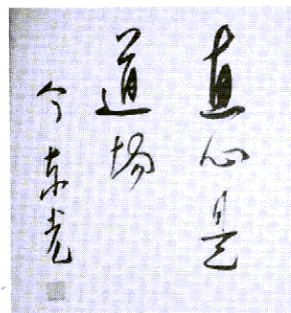
to inherit the traditional arts. There is luck in great achievement in Budo. This is why so many people jump to the conclusion that someone who says "the way of the samurai is not found in death," actually fears death. However, the law of the warrior is to be patient until the end. It is important to understand that dying in anger is a waste. If you look at the death of many talented artists such as Van Gogh and Mozart, it is natural to feel pity for them. It is my wish that you to listen to the divine tune of the didactic poem—"Water is sure to fall to the ground, but the time it falls is that of the beginning of its ascent." In that way, the spirit of the Bushi that transcends the natural stages of birth, aging, sickness, and death is passed on to future generations.

I was instructed in the *bufu* by a master teacher and because of this saw the heaven of countless pleasures within transcendence. Rushing to one's death because you are not recognized by the world is to fault the will of the gods. This is truly a sad moment for those that possess great talent. Life force can be nurtured and cultivated; however, there is something that transcends even this. When I was once making an offering to the *kamidana* (household altar), somehow the nearby candles reflected light in the form of a cross (*jumonji*, 十文字) on to the *kamidana*. I thought this was strange, and when I told this to my teacher, he said, "Ah, you are bound to something in the universe." I urge you to feel the importance of these insights from nature. For me, each word my teacher uttered helped me to progress. This is a natural thing, but I think it is good if you can do these things yourself. Furthermore, motivation is important. And in this you can see the magnetic power of the *gokui* that attracts master and student. I have recently been feeling strongly that to make someone do something beyond their capacity is going against the will of the gods. In order to be connected to the gods, one must live within the same flow as one's teacher and the gods.

### Transcending common sense

As when looking at fine swords, it is unwise to make hasty judgements when viewing literature. Just like there are times when sudden light can damage the eyes, reacting to things in an instant can be dangerous. Fortune telling has recently enjoyed some popularity, however, to draw conclusions is the beginning of failure.

To leave things ambiguous and not judge the truth of matters that are uncertain, aesthetically speaking, is connected to the world of the subtle and profound (*yugen no sekai*). Even if you envelop things in smoke,



Calligraphy by Kon Toko.

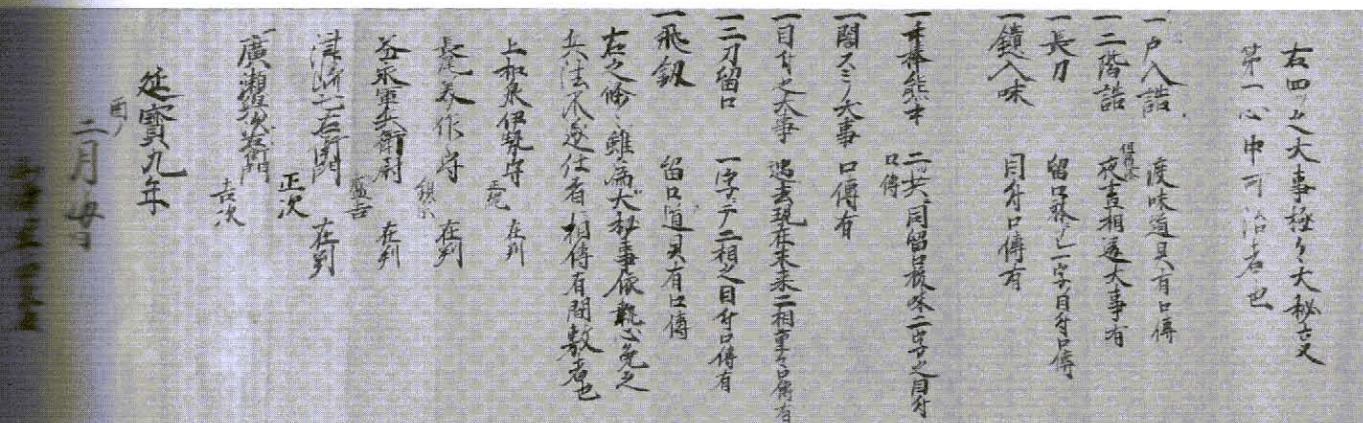
there are many types of smoke. There is the smoke of pollution, the smoke of the benevolent Emperor, and the smoke of the Ninja.

A Budo researcher once said to me, "I researched many different schools of martial arts and published books, but it never amounted to anything." I replied, "Isn't it fine to know that it didn't amount to anything? It is because of the expression 'all things are one.'" Actually, the same thing can be said about bugei (martial arts). It is crucial to know that to research something will amount to nothing. Speaking of the oneness of things, the number one has a plus one (+1) and minus one (-1), with the zero as the balance point. If you understand the principle of one very deeply then the cosmic dual forces of In and Yo philosophy will become clear.

Budo is the direction to live and the readiness to know consciousness (shiki, 識). Consciousness also takes the form of the four seasons (shiki, 四季), commands (shiki, 指揮), palpitations of death (shiki, 死悸), morale of the troops (shiki, 士氣), rhythm of poetry (shiki, 詩悸) and the capacity of man (shiki, 士器). If you try to rely on the common opinion of history and books, then you will not be able to see the reality of history.

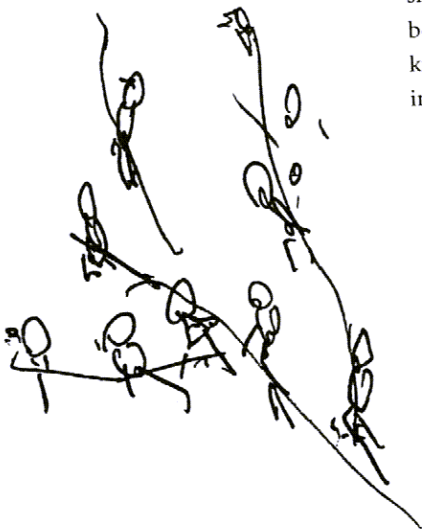
Furthermore, in history, many varying opinions and eccentric views are mixed together, and new theories frequently emerge. Therefore, it becomes very difficult to distinguish truth from falsehood. In this book I seek to express the importance of abandoning this kind of general common sense and opinion for a moment, and instead looking at the true form of things. Nonetheless, if one does not have real training, then doing this will amount to nothing.

Kon Toko (1898-1977), the charismatic author, chief abbot of the Hiraizumi Chuson temple, and a one-time member of the National Diet of Japan, wrote the words: "pure heart is the training hall" (magokoro kore dojo). These words are indeed true; it is magokoro that enables transcendence from good and evil, life and death, victory and defeat, good fortune and bad fortune. This wise saying relates to the gokui of Budo.



## The Direction of Bushi

It is said that the martial ways are shown through one's daily life and behavior. Namely, through the manners of humanity. Needless to say, the Budoka who avoids thoughtless or inappropriate behavior is not consumed by rashness; he maintains a calm attitude, does not hesitate, but is modest, full of kindness, and is highly respected. The true path of the martial ways is to not let one's eagerness take control. Although it is said to be honorable is to protect the weak and fight the strong, it is not permitted to fight unnecessarily or without reason. When the circumstances necessitate, however, those who do not fear the strong and protect the weak should be called true warriors. When someone insults or disrespects you, the courage to laugh and not make them an opponent is true courage. Taking up the sword unnecessarily should be avoided at all costs. Maintaining a graceful heart together with the virtue of affection that is genial and pleasant, while also retaining the stern temperament to be decisive and bold; valuing both the literary and military arts without being carried away by learning; possessing a well balanced heart of kindness and valor: this is the divine warrior. We should persevere in this eternal direction of the warrior.





武士の心身と一に起居動作 剛と禮儀  
 を損せ人道を違はざるを 武成(と云ふ)  
 粗思尾籠の振る舞をやうに 又輕率に  
 流す心場迫らざる 嚴然臆せず 慎み  
 深く慈愛に富み 最も武勇を 尊重  
 するは中より道も無し 然りと雖も 血氣に  
 赤せし 乱暴狼藉にならぬ様 要武風  
 の深く戒めし所也  
 弱者を扶け 強者を挫くと雖も 猥りに  
 に争う事は 許さず 止むを得ぬ場合  
 強をも恐れず 弱者を扶けしこと  
 眞の武人と云ふ可き也 恥辱と興  
 える者 あよども 樂う相争せざる可かり  
 かに鼻の筋也 同時に 猥りに 刀に手を  
 かりる事 絶対に 悔む可し  
 則ち 秋霜烈日の如き 勇気果斷の

気象に伴ふに 春風煦萬物 慈愛  
 の徳と共に 優雅なる心を保持し  
 文武を貴む 文弱に爲る事無く  
 一方的に片あふる 武勇と共に優しき  
 心を知ると 眞の武神と人が云ふ  
 此れ 成人の常の心得と 尊ぶべし  
 武徳八編 神万変不驚 日々常に  
 花情初と以る 莞爾として 微笑む  
 こよ 八法秘劍の 武徳を全得する  
 ための心構なり

平成十七年三月十日

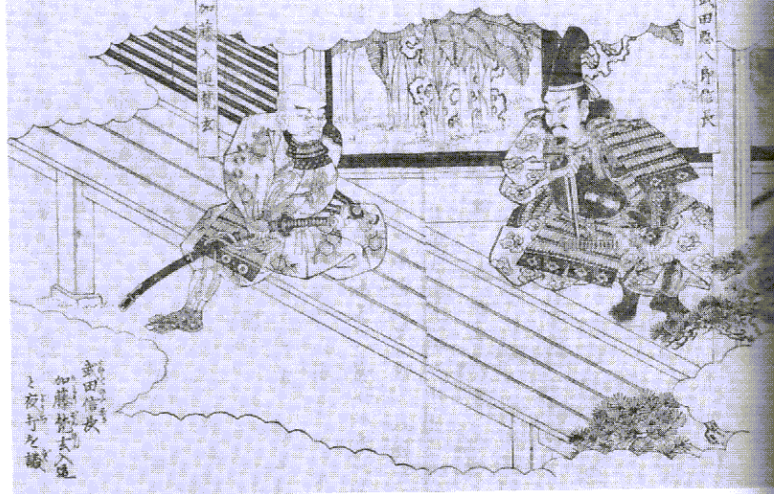
初見良昭

白龍公羽



## Rei 礼

In the daily practice of Budo, etiquette begins with a bow. The etiquette of Budo is contained within the five Confucian virtues of benevolence, justice, etiquette, wisdom, and sincerity. Etiquette is the cornerstone of these values, and it is important to realize this balance. Fully understanding this means you will never stray from the natural path of bushido.

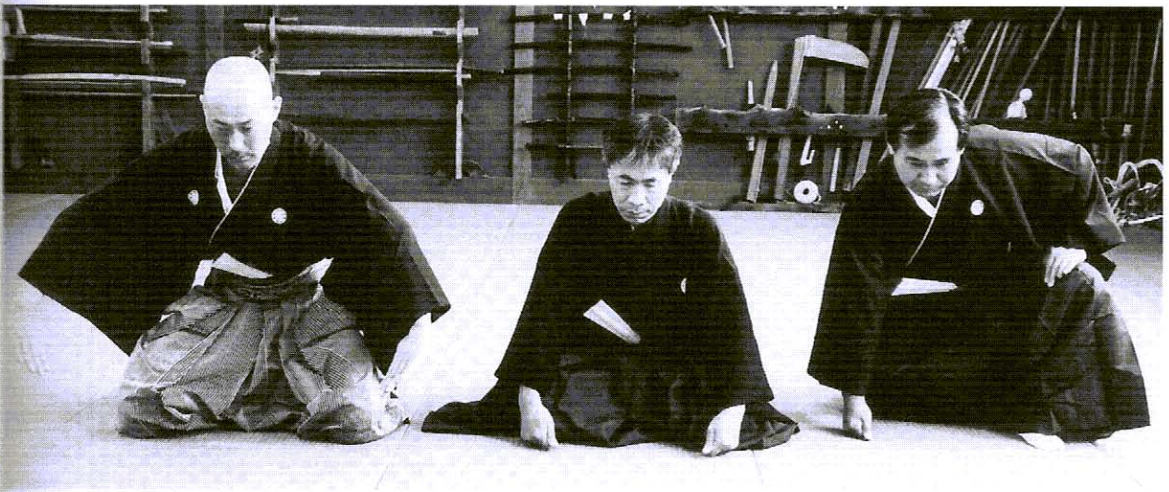


Snow, Moon, and Flower 雪月花





Snow, Moon, and Flower 雪月花



## Kumidachi 組太刀

Kumidachi is cultivating the unification of unarmed fighting, and fighting with weapons such as the tachi and long weapons. This means always having the driving force of taijutsu present; thus miraculous taijutsu and tachi become the life force and reveal the true form of 'hiken.'

In speaking of kuraidori (positioning), there is positioning in kamae as well. Depending on the warrior's position, their humanity, in other words, the splendor and terror will naturally reveal itself. This is not something that comes from form.







Seigan no Kamae 正眼の構



Chudan no Kamae 中段の構



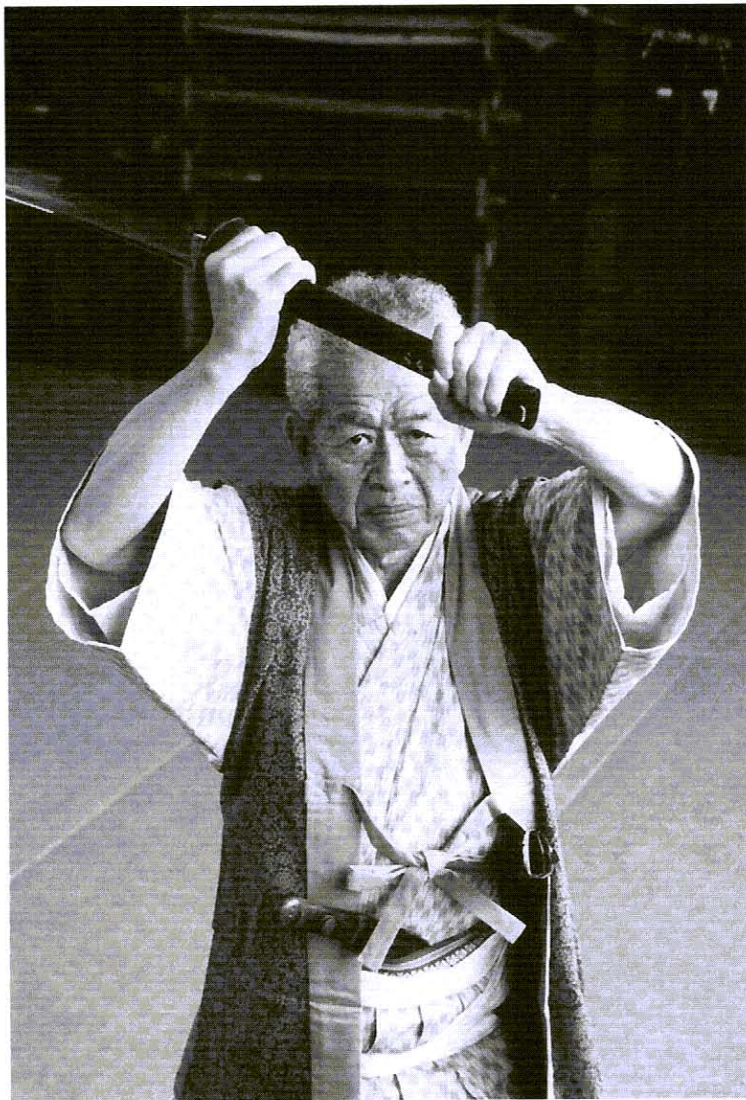
Seigan no Kamae 正願の構



Seigan no Kamae 青眼の構



Tenchi Hasso no Kamae 天地八相の構



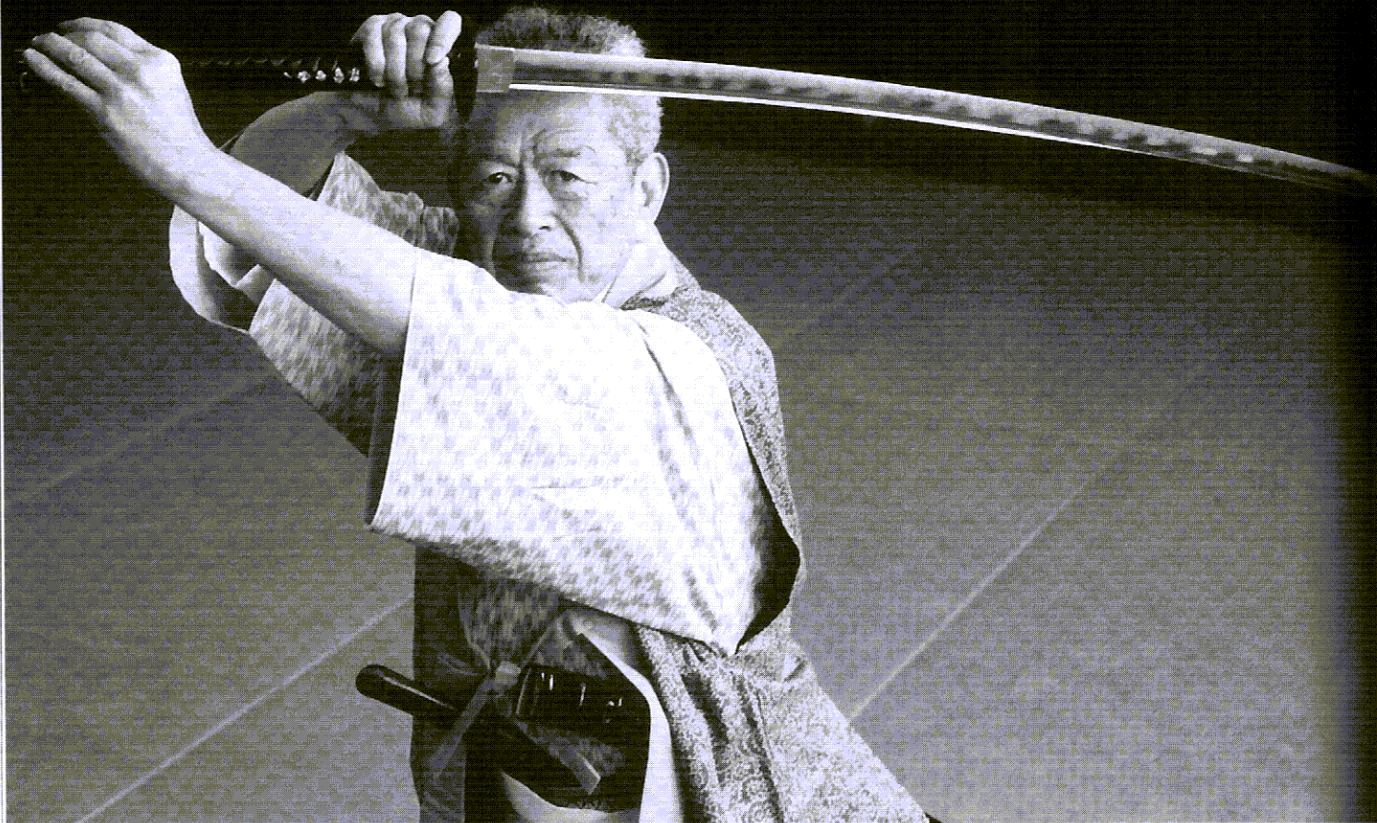
Fudo no Kamae 不動の構



Hiryu no Kamae 飛龍の構



Chosui no Kamae 澄水の構



Kasumigakure no Kamae 霞隠の構



Muso no Kamae 夢想の構

Uranami no Kamae  
浦波の構

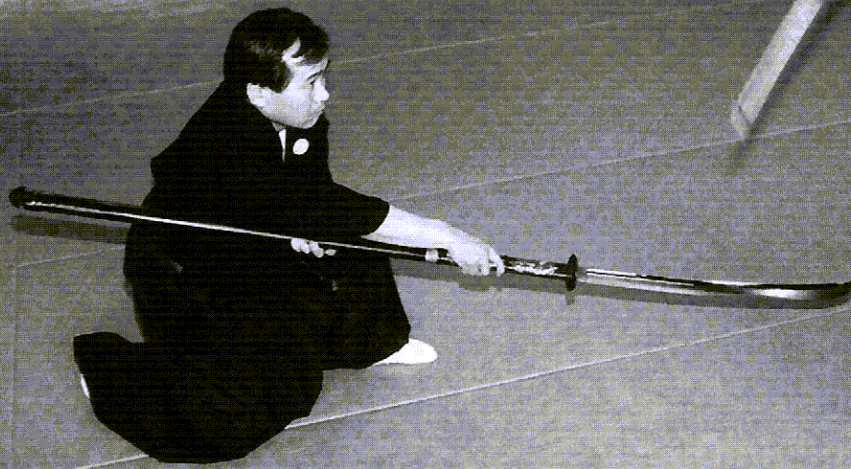


Roppo Kuji no Kamae  
六方九字の構



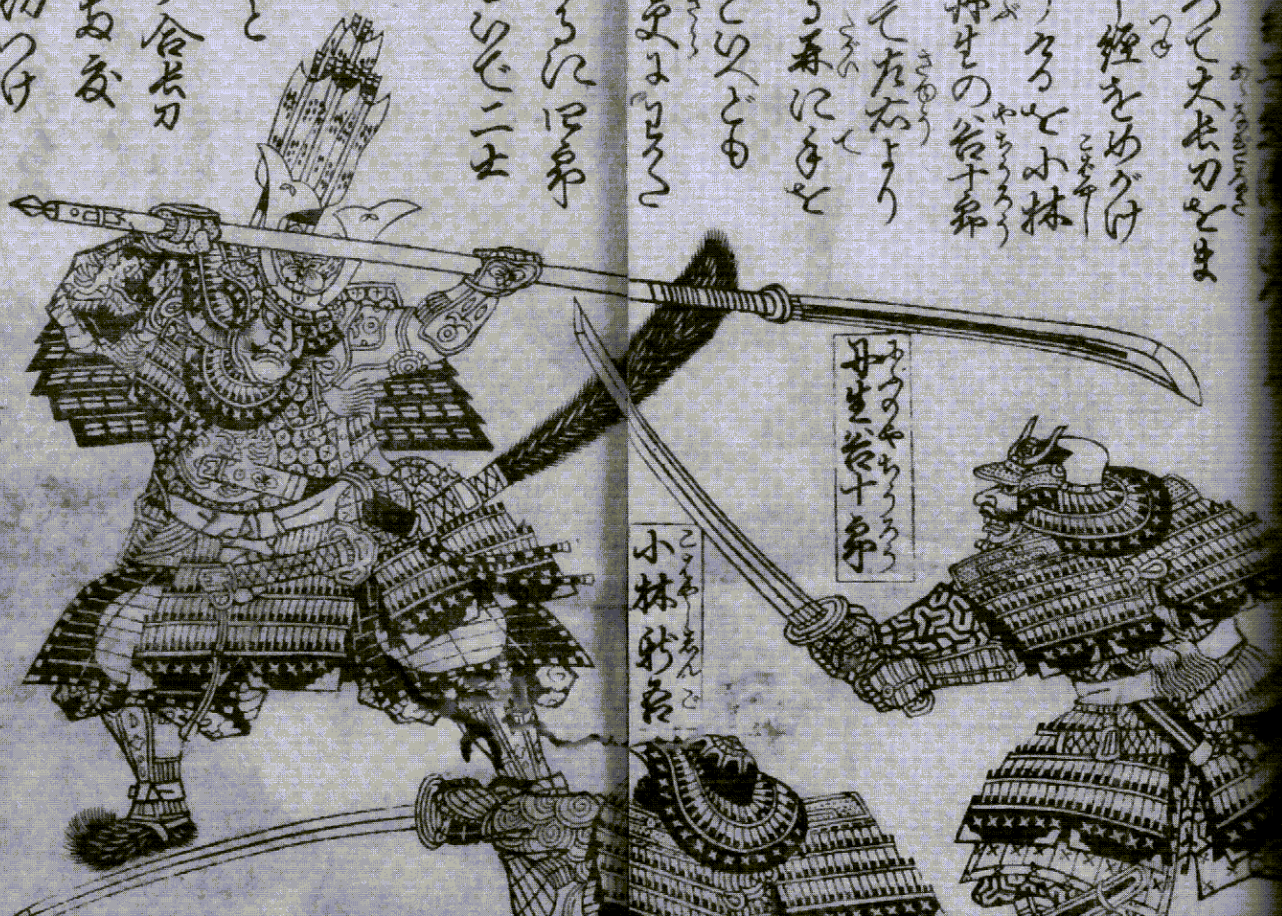
Dato no Kamae  
打和の構





# 力神素神元神天

あつて大長刀をま  
 う子  
 う煙をめぐけ  
 うんろろと小林  
 丹生の後十郎  
 ろて方おより  
 うる再にもと  
 とこといども  
 が更よりとこ  
 ろろに兄弟  
 重しと二士  
 り合長刀  
 とあ交  
 一切つけ  
 とうるまはすれらる



丹生後十郎

小林新左衛門

上七長刀系流





天靈神元神楽神道力



天靈神元神楽神道力

## Muto Dori Hiden 無刀(武闘)捕り秘伝

Many people think that Muto dori is about the opponent wielding a sword while you have none, but this is not the case. Even if you have a sword, muto dori starts with the development of the courage to face an opponent with the preparedness of not having a sword. This means if you don't thoroughly train in taijutsu you will not obtain the knowledge of the refined skill of Muto dori. Therefore, you must first know the purpose of the path of training. If you are unaware of this and proceed down the path of thinking that sword training is only about cutting and thrusting, then there is a danger that you will go down the path of the evil sword. The sword harnesses a pure essence that is life-giving—one who cannot live the way of the sword saint will foolishly think that the sword is only a tool for cutting. Those who do this can never achieve enlightenment.

The warrior's heart is ruled by preparedness, and nature's heart, or god's heart, is fundamental. The heart also governs the warrior's physical kamae. Therefore, if there is no unity in spirit and body, you will never understand the reason for being a martial artist. You will leave no vulnerability or opening (suki) if you remain consistently prepared. When the opponent assumes a kamae to try and cut they will be unable to touch you. To show



博念神念の構  
反應汎海合掌



the determination (kihaku) that you will immediately knock over an opponent with your fighting spirit (kiai)—this is the form of calm courage and the quiet heart of a divine posture. The enemy's attack is stayed by your determination and they are temporarily paralyzed (fudo kanashibari) as they are knocked down from a distance by your thundering cry (to-ate no jutsu). You should know that unless you have this determination in your training then the gokui of muto dori cannot be obtained.

Here I would like to mention muto dori training as well as shinken gata (real fighting). Many people do not fully understand muto dori, and believe it is simply the knowledge of defending against a sword attack, but I would urge you to understand that it is the mind and skill of disarming the opponent, whether they wield a yari, naginata, bow, shuriken, or gun. You must understand the mind of "ten thousand changes, no surprises," and attain the knowledge of muto dori in response to infinite variations. Attaining knowledge of real muto dori means you will earn the protection of the gods. In Futen Goshin no Kamae, when the tiger and dragon fight, drawing ferocious storms, the wind gods will protect you, and you will see the light. On the other hand, Hanno Banetsu no Juji no Kamae resembles the power of a flood that washes away the fighting power of the opponent in an instant.

滝地之と落ちる習いの水なれど  
 やがては金るはしめ白りけり

# 武技行雲流水

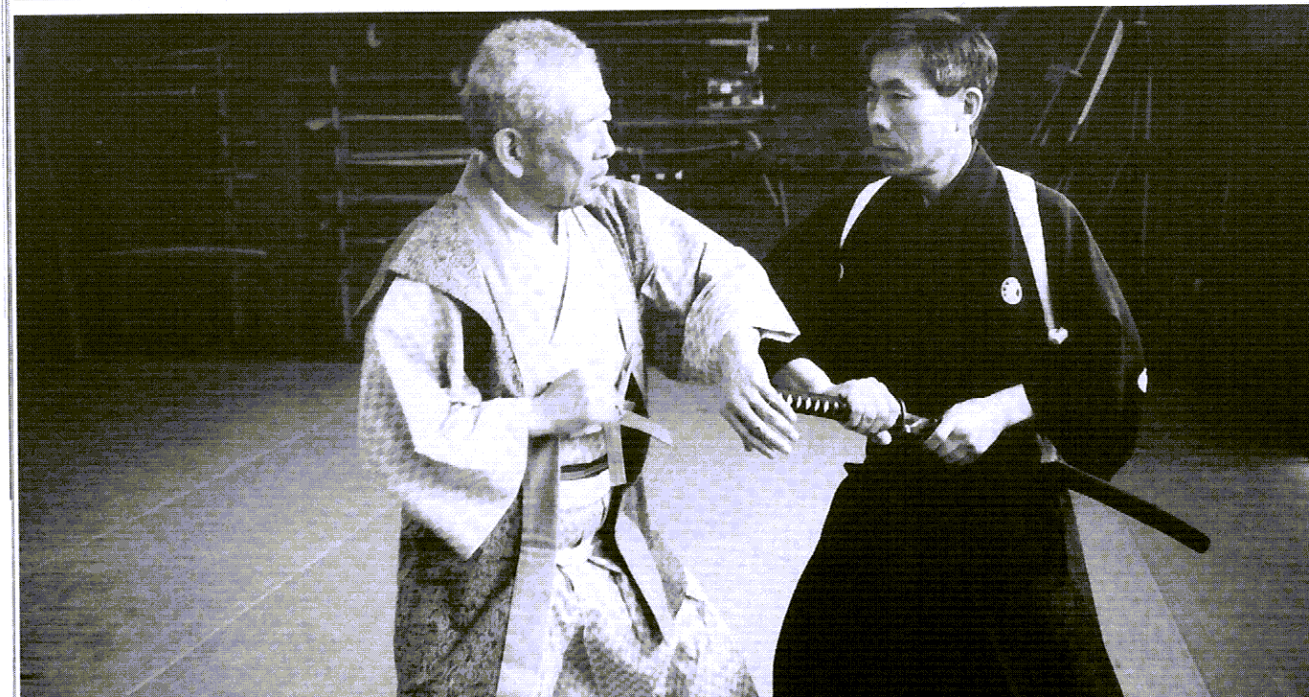


The water always runs down the natural slope of in the land, but that is just the beginning of the voyage.

## Shunu 隼雄

---

The opponent moves to draw their daito. Like a falcon, hold the opponent's sword pommel with the left hand. The opponent takes one step back to draw his sword. Immediately thrust under the opponent's nose with the right thumb. The opponent is startled by this and moves back. Immediately grab the pommel of the opponent's sword with your right hand and step back drawing the opponent's sword, holding the sword blade with your left hand. Stand ready to thrust. Maintain zanshin.



Hayato uchi. The thrust is not just with the tip of the sword, but the entire length of the sword, pommel, and the guard.



## Shunsoku 隼足

The opponent moves to draw his daito. As before, control the pommel of the sword. The opponent strikes your left wrist with his right hand. Immediately rotate to the opponent's left side; with the right hand take the opponent's scabbard at the end and with the left hand take the opponent's left wrist. Lifting the right hand, control the opponent's left hand with the scabbard. The sword pommel surrounds the opponent's left leg. The opponent falls face down, and controlled by the sword. Immediately kick in with the right foot to the opponent and hold him down.



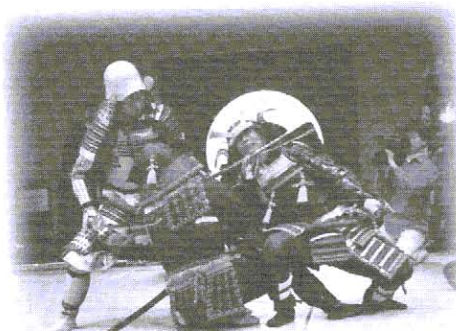


## Ichigeki 一撃

The opponent is in Daijodan no Kamae (stalking position with sword raised above the head). Immediately step in and, while controlling the opponent's left elbow, strike into the chest area of the opponent with the thumb. Kicking up with the right leg, knock the opponent onto their back. Immediately kick the side of the opponent's right leg with your right leg. The chest area (kyobu, 胸部) of an armored soldier is called the martial area (kyobu, 境武).

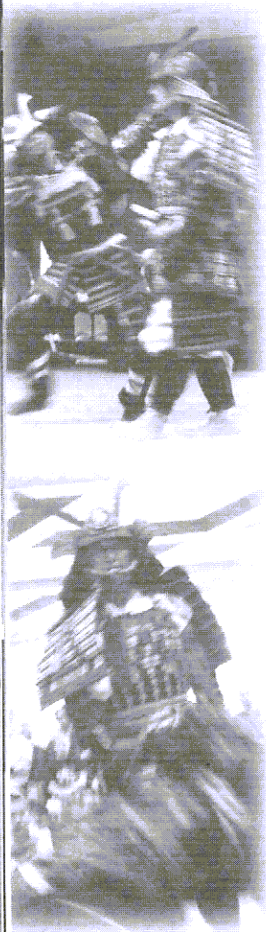






## Kaisoku 魁足

The opponent cuts down from Daijodan. Shift your body to the left, avoiding the opponent's cut, which comes down along the right side of the body, and the sword flies out of the opponent's hand. Immediately kick up with your right leg to the opponent's right hand. The opponent puts his hand on the kodachi. Strike the opponent's kasumi with shuto. The opponent falls forward. Immediately take the opponent's elbow joint of the right arm with your left hand. Flip the opponent up with right osoto-gari (drawing the opponent's right foot out). Maintain zanshin.





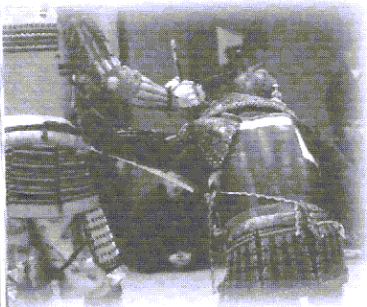




## Koryaku 拘掠

The opponent cuts in from Daijodan. Shifting onto the right foot, avoid the cut that goes past on the left side. Immediately catch the opponent's right wrist with the left hand. At the same time grab the opponent's right elbow with the right hand, and together with both legs let the opponent flow past the right side as they fall forward. This becomes a sutemi; immediately rise and maintain zanshin.

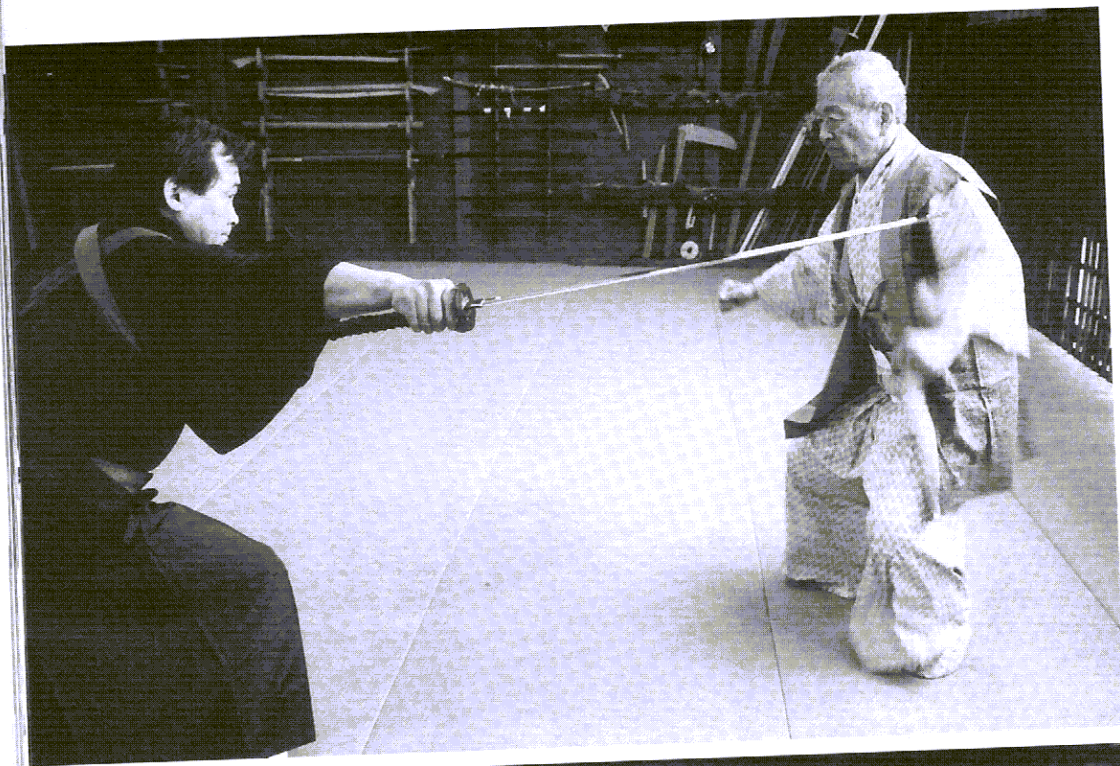
This movement is the same with our without a sword.





## Iaifuji 意合封

The opponent cuts in horizontally from the right side. Jump back one step. The opponent moves into Daijodan. Immediately jump in with the left arm up to receive the arms of the opponent and strike the opponent's left chest with the thumb of the right hand. Immediately kick the opponent over with the right leg, then retreat and maintain zanshin. The right thumb can be replaced by a dagger or a spear, etc.

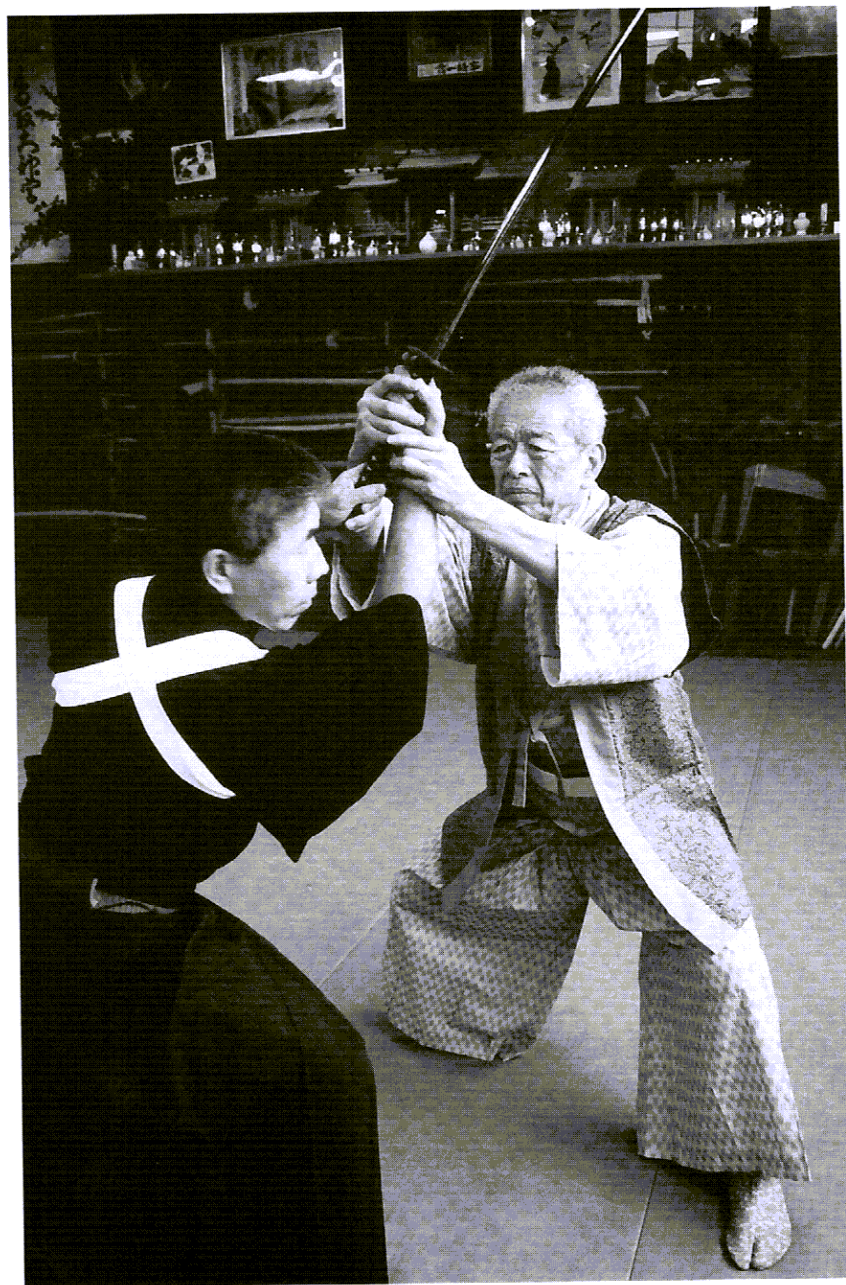






## Chingan 沈雁

The opponent stands in Seigan. You are in Banetsu no Kamae. The opponent immediately thrusts in. Immediately sink the body and turn to the left; the opponent's cut flows by the right side. With the left hand, strike and take the opponent's right wrist. Immediately placing the right hand, sink the body. With the hand holding the opponent's sword, turn the sword to the left overhead, pulling the left leg back, and sit. Kicking with the right leg, the opponent falls forward. Maintain zanshin. This kick is both a physical attack and a strike to the spirit.





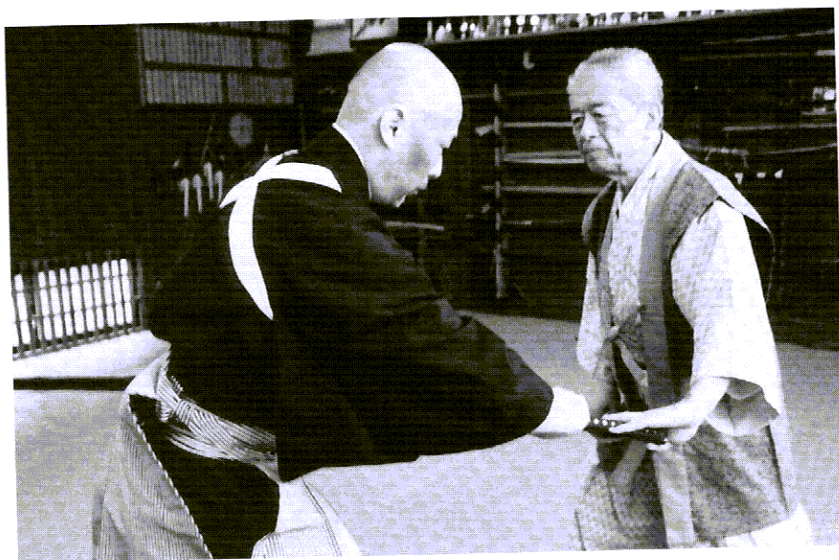
## Fuu 風盃

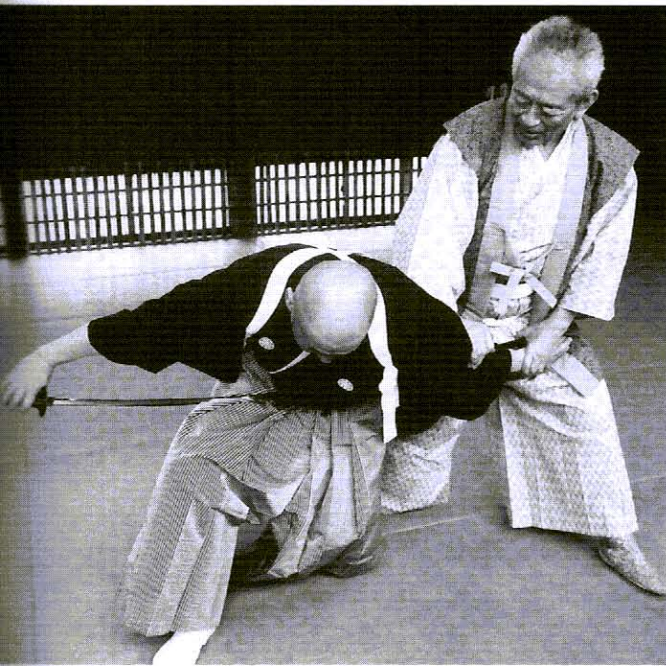
The opponent cuts in from Daijodan. Turn the body to the left and control the opponent's sword blade in front of the tsuba with the right hand by laying the fingers over the top of the tsuba. Immediately strike with a left shuto (hand sword) directly into the face of the opponent and pull the sword from the opponent's grip. This is also called "taking the real sword" (shinken tori). Holding the sword with the left hand, cut to the side of the opponent, knocking him over.





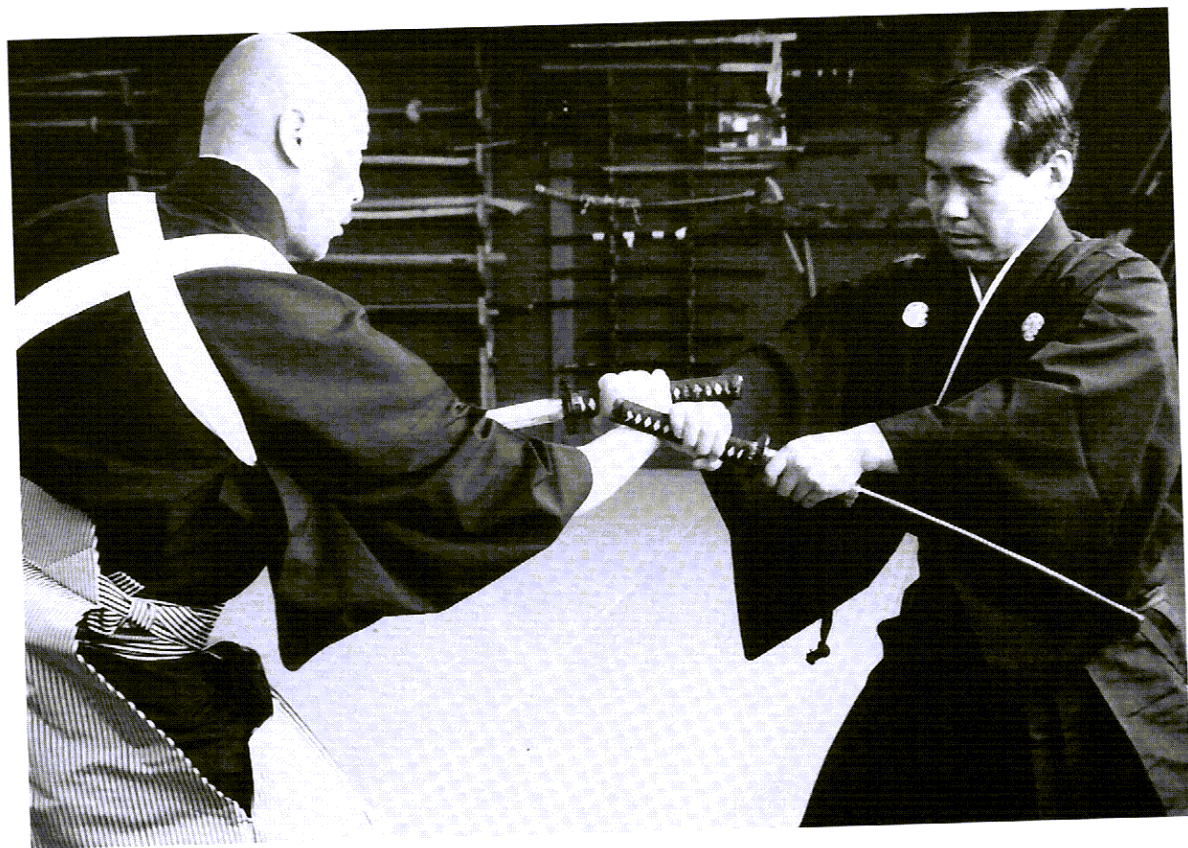
Mutodori; Iai dori do-gaeshi 無刀捕り・意合捕り胴返し



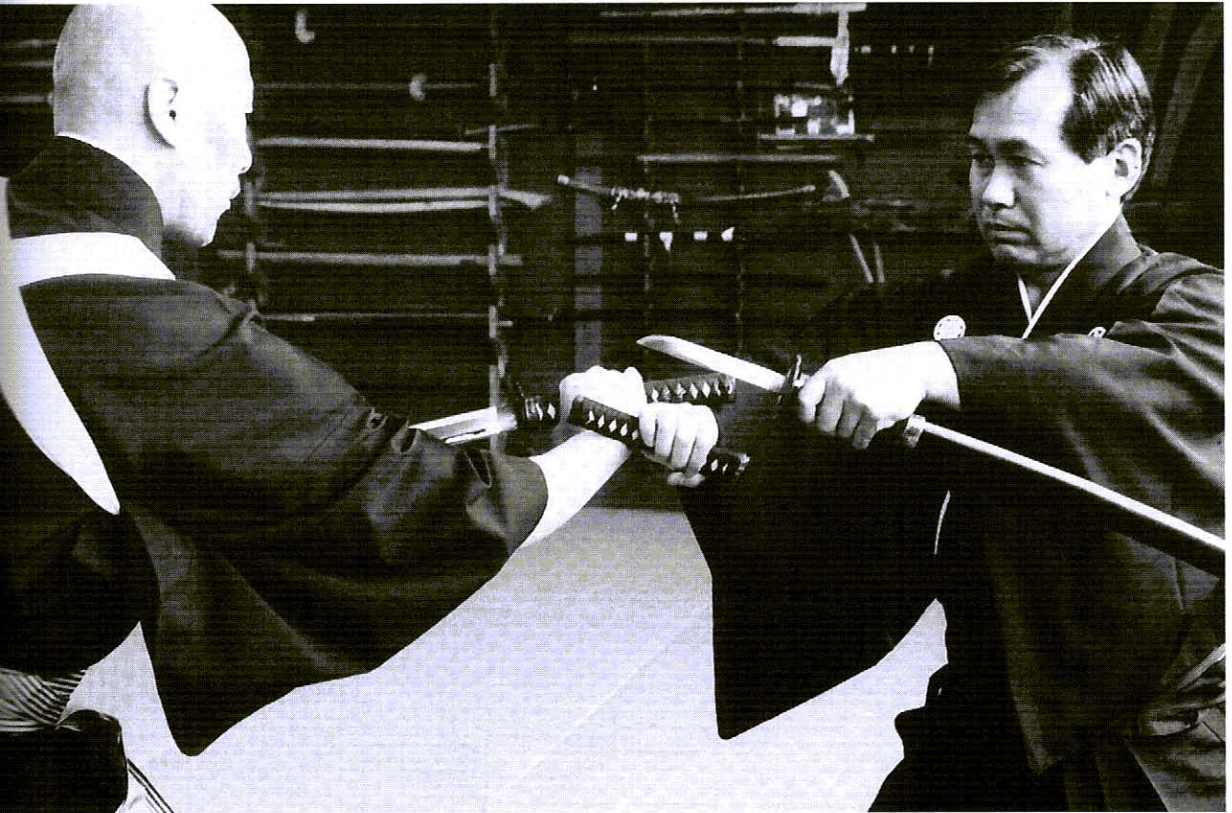


## Knife hidden in a sword handle つか 隠れの一刀

There is a small knife (tanto) hidden in the handle of the sword. This can be thrown or used to thrust. This quickly changes into the juppo sessho of taijutsu. A finger can also be used to thrust.







# The Essence of Japanese Swordsmanship

## The Principle of 'Pushing and Cutting' with the Sword

In ancient times there were no weapons. Although the sword and bow have existed since long ago, it appears that only chieftains and other tribal leaders bore such items. Old books record that around 500 BC, when invaders from overseas landed in Japan, attacks were repelled using primitive warfare techniques, like hand-to-hand fighting, sticks, stones, digging of defensive trenches, and to some extent the bow. Later, weapons similar to those brought from other countries were made and developed. Over time the use of weapons progressed and it is said that in the Tokugawa period (from 1603 onward) there were 120 techniques for using weapons, and from the Kan'ei period (1624) to the end of the Tokugawa military government (1867) over 3,000 martial schools emerged. The sword was born from the stick-sword of ancient times. It developed into the tachi (heavily curved sword), and later evolved into the katana (single-edged sword). In the Warring States period the musket was introduced to Tanegashima island from Portugal and quickly spread across Japan. Although the power of these new weapons was widely recognized to exceed that of the sword, bow, and spear, the musket never replaced the sword in rank and importance. This was because the purpose of the sword went far beyond its function as a weapon.

The sword harnessed the authority of the ruling class and was a



Picture of Yamamoto Kansuke, swordsman and military commander.

Iga-Ueno Castle. ▶





symbol for the protection of spiritual peace and enlightenment. Although it was primarily a weapon, its associations were never barbaric or violent. This two-sided, or double life, of the sword is its most important feature.

Conventional wisdom holds that in education it is proper to classify swords and explain their development in the context of the history of early bamboo and wooden swords, and early tachi and katana. However, martial artists do not think like this. It is taught that the foundation of Budo is to first understand taijutsu, through which you can fight even if you have no weapons. This means to persevere in the martial ways (bufu-ikkan), and to train consistently and with utmost effort. Then you will grasp the secrets of muto dori (no-sword technique). Succeeding in this, the mysteries of the secret sword (hiken) will be revealed, and no matter what weapon you hold, your heart and your taijutsu will dance skillfully in the void (koku). Then you will be able to explain the meaning of wooden swords and bamboo swords (shinai).

At this point let us consider a tale of bamboo swords. There was once a left-handed expert called Oishi Susumu who used a 5-shaku shinai. He visited many famous dojos in Edo (now Tokyo), and fought matches with many opponents from other schools that used shorter swords. His skills would allow him to defeat one after another. After this, it is said that at the Kobuso (school for teaching vassals/retainers to the shogun), the length of shinai was fixed at 3 shaku 8 sun. Later in the Meiji period, when school kendo tournaments were still fought without fixed length shinai, those with longer shinai had a higher chance of winning, so the length of the shinai was standardized. In olden times other accounts relate that in spear fighting contests, the longer weapon was stronger.



These kinds of simple stories of fencing matches, which are encounters with the unknown, also become a means (kuden) to understand the balance between real fighting and competition.

Kendo, a sport that uses shinai or bokken following the prohibition of swords in 1912, is different from a real fight, which is decided with a 'sudden thrust or cut to the body.' In a real sword fight the technique of 'pushing and cutting' (oshikiri) is used. The world of real fighting surpasses that of form (kata). When the opponent cuts in with his sword, you pull your own sword back, his body and sword enter in, and you knock him down by pushing. In combat you can see some people continue to cut in reflexively without realizing that they have been cut by the sword of the opponent. Knowing the technique of oshikiri reduces the degree of danger.



"Summer grass  
All that remains  
Of the warrior's dreams."

As the great master of Buddhism and calligraphy Kobo Daishi showed by not selecting a particular brush, the reason warriors do not choose between the shinai, bokken, or katana is because they understand *mutō dōri*. Facing an opponent, armed with a sword, adapting to change (*henka*), hiding in the void (*koku*), accepting change, and acquiescing to the void—this is never about killing the opponent or benefiting from the aggression of your allies. The true meaning of *Myōfūken* (miraculous sword) and *Shinken shiraha tori* (seizing a real, drawn sword) are revealed in the light and shadow as if flash frames in a movie.

## The Aesthetics of Arms and Armor, or the Beautification of the Soul

On the battlefield, samurai wore armor and helmets that in total had a weight of around 40kg. The taijutsu employed when wearing this armor was therefore different from the way of moving the body in modern Judo. The skill is to move in a way that you do not feel the weight. Of course, the equipment of modern soldiers is also very heavy, much more than 40kg, so the taijutsu and taihenjutsu employed by the old samurai while wearing armor is still needed today.

In a situation in which one has to fight a soldier who is protected by armor, inflicting damage with a single stroke of the sword is a very difficult technique that requires exceptional ability. This gives rise to the need for taijutsu using grappling and striking with the sword, from the first cut with the sword to thrusting and cutting into a weak area or an opening in the armor with the second cut to finishing with the third cut. It is also important to thrust and strike with the first cut. Move into kumi-uchi, strike and cut with the tachi, knock the opponent over, and take the head. The principle is the same whether you use a yari or naginata.

The outcome of a fight between warriors was decided by the severity of their wounds. Someone who had been wounded seriously would be encouraged by saying "it's only a light wound," and someone who had been wounded lightly would be encouraged by saying "it's only a scratch." One must look beyond the wound to win the fight.

Military commanders wore body armor and helmets that were designed also to be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional. Throughout history humans have been decorating their faces and bodies to improve or enhance their natural appearance. Humans do not just apply makeup to their faces, however, but also to their hearts. The clothes they wear and the weapons they carry are also a form of makeup. In other words, the world of beauty is a world of illusion or false beauty. These days, the word 'lie' (uso or kyo) is popular, and within makeup is hidden a strategy for interchanging beauty and ugliness.

Truth and lies, while opposite, are also dependent on one another. There are times when the practice of lying is used in order to sustain life. In music and in drama, although you might start with facts, in order to make a better performance, you might 'improve' the story by including untruthful things. Or you may produce something that avoids the dangers of the times and, although not completely truthful, still speaks to people's hearts. This is because the truth that is hidden in a lie can reach the heart that is hidden deep within a person. This is one example of heart-to-heart communion without words. Observing a scene from



Statue of Miyamoto Musashi.

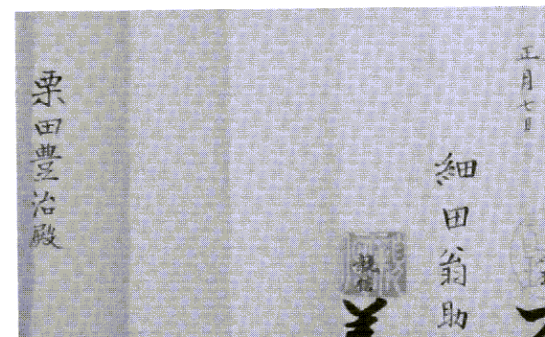
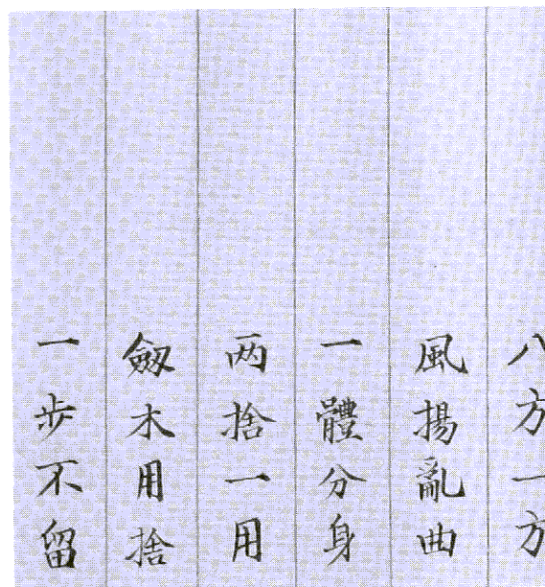
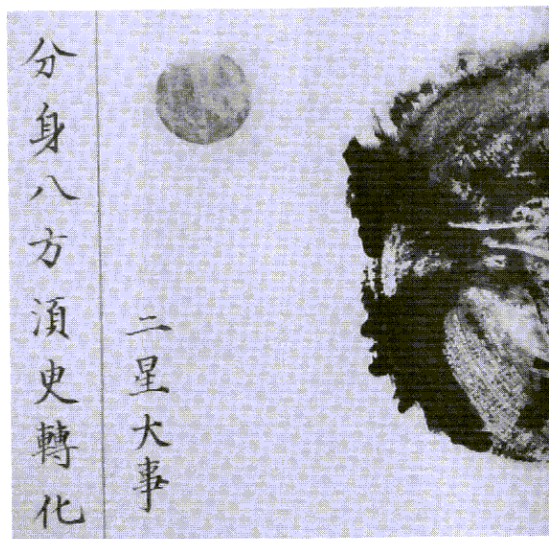
the drama *The Kanjincho Scroll of Kanadehon Chushingura: The Treasury of Loyal Retainers* would illustrate this point effectively. It is said that the body of Miyamoto Musashi, based on his wishes, is buried standing in full armor. This has added to the poetic notion that he wanted to live on as a warrior beyond his death.

小野次郎古衛門尉忠明伊  
 藤典膳正忠也古谷次郎左  
 衛門尉信知生田惠兵衛尉  
 止映志賀藤兵衛尉佐宜水  
 治三七局珍壽水治大助局  
 珍於志賀中觀齋佐順加志  
 賀伸佐才以上十代也而貴  
 殿自流之兵法年未御執心  
 之間家傳之秘術具以令傳

## The Connection Between the Sword and Spear

It is said that techniques of the spear (sojutsu) were created in the Warring States period. During these times, the spear was advantageous in order to thrust into an opening, knock down, or cut down a warrior protected by armor. Having understood this, when one sees the image of a warrior fighting with the “eight secret swords as one” (happo biken ichinyo; referring to the interchangeability of weapons), the way of the sword is revealed for the first time. Let us continue down the path of the sword and spear a little further.

Mankind first discovered digging earth and hunting animals by attaching a pointed object to the end of a long stick and spearing them. We could indeed call early humans “primitive spearmen.” There are many theories on the development and history of the spear, but it is said that it was really in the Warring States period that the spear was most used, and techniques of the spear developed. The schools whose techniques I inherited taught spear techniques as secret techniques in olden times. The following record provides an example. Around 550BC, followers of Buddhism and Vedism began living in Isoshiki, and by the time of Soga no Iruka (a Buddhist ruler around 640 A.D.), the number of Vedists had increased to more than 20,000. Though Iruka ruled the area, the Vedists’ power was considerable, a fact that made unification of Japan difficult, and consequently the gods became anxious. In order to address the divided nation, the gods gathered together to prepare nine laws of weaponry to protect



Densho of Muso Itto-ryu.



拂捨刀 同四切  
右手運

劍段

真其劍 代々  
工夫

口傳

真本覺

同

真左足

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有無相

同虛實  
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一萬理一刀

口傳

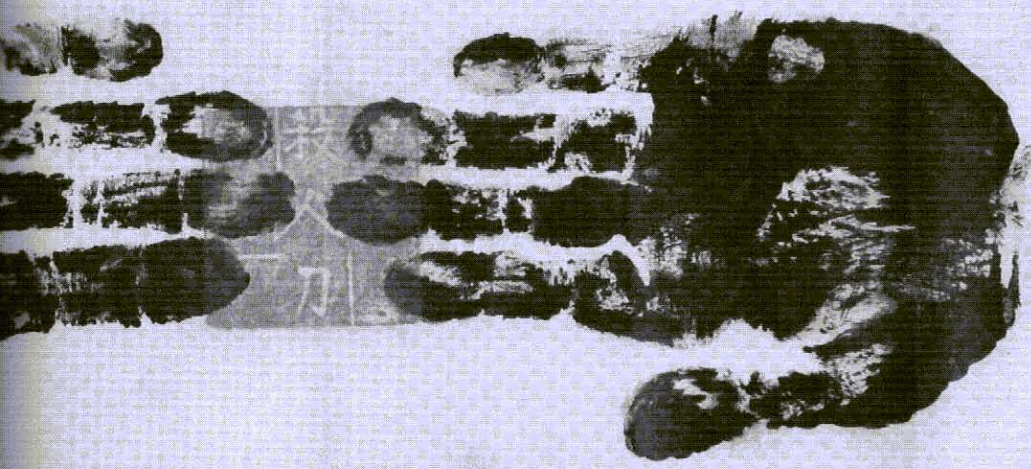
天正道無雙劍

狹子及高無雙劍

向上極意

真妙劍

左右轉化



二星大事

分身八方須史轉化

有前忽焉有後

八方散亂

人 人 人

人

人

人 人

藤典膳正忠也古谷次郎

衛門尉信知生田惠兵衛

正映志賀藤兵衛尉佐宣

治三七尉珍善水治大尉

珍於志賀中觀齋佐順加

賀仲佐才以上十代也

殿自流之兵去年來御

之間家傳之秘術具以

授畢仍一刀流目錄如

流社

伊藤藤一刀齋

景久

小野次郎右衛門尉

忠明

伊藤典膳正

忠也

古谷次郎左衛門尉

信知

生田惠兵衛尉

正映

志賀藤兵衛尉

佐宣

水治三七尉

珍善

水治大尉

珍善

志賀中觀齋

佐順

家元

志賀 仲



Japan from the Vedists and Buddhists. The methods they outlined were known as 'kyuho,' which means the way of the nine weapons:

1. Castle construction—stone walls and stone houses.
2. Stone cross—stone of six corners in a cross.
3. Bow—eagle-feather arrows made of peach tree wood. A bow of three shaku.
4. Sword—attaching a stone sword to the end of Shogun Tree wood (mukunoki).
5. Spear—attaching a stone tip to the end of six shaku of Shogun Tree wood.
6. Bo staff—eight shaku of Shogun Tree wood.
7. Halberd arrow—attaching a spear-like object that cuts on both edges to three shaku of Shogun Tree wood.
8. Halberd—a spear that cuts on both edges.
9. Tenmon, Chimon—horse-back tactics, etc.

Later, during the first year of the period of Engen (1336–40), and from this time, the sword, spear, and other weapons took on their modern forms. There are many writings that are extremely useful to discover the principles of using the spear. The reason that the spear became so important in the Warring States period was that it was far easier to strike into the gaps in the armor of an opponent by stabbing in and knocking them down, than to try and cut an opponent with a tachi. The swordsmen who have been revered as masters by later generations used the most practical and effective weapons on the battlefield. Iizasa Ienao was a master of the naginata, Iizasa Morinobu was an expert in Shinto-ryu spear techniques, and Tsukahara Bokuden was a master of the bow and spear. Bokuden later initiated Honma Kageyuzaemon in spear fighting. Koizumi Isenokami, praised as the best spearman of Kozuke country, was both a master swordsman and master of the spear.

Let us introduce a section of the densho I received that has a record regarding spear techniques. A look at this gives us an idea of the process by which a master spearmen is born, starting with a basis in taijutsu and subsequently developing spear skills. Looking at the densho of Shinden Fudo-ryu Daken-taijutsu, the school was founded by Izumo Yoshiteru in the Eikyu period (1113–18), and Shinmon Yoshikane developed it in taijutsu, sword technique, and spear technique in the Shocho period (1428–29). Mizuhara Yoshinari, the lord who, according to legend, was the illegitimate child of Minamoto no Yoshitsune, was said to be not only a master of taijutsu, horsemanship, sword technique, and spear technique but also the master of iai in the seventh year of the Kencho period (1256).

Picture of Minamoto no Yoshiie, military commander. ▶

八幡太郎  
源義家



八幡太郎  
源義家ハ  
六條王經基乃  
未葉也  
頼義の  
長子也  
源氏正統也  
奥州後三年の  
戦ひの高名也  
あつた

國彦画  
癸



三保谷

四郎

國

後



一  
聲  
齊  
呼

or nine varieties. The characters *kyusho* (窮所), meaning 'places of suffering or perplexity,' can also be used.

In real combat, the moment you think *kyusho* exist, they cease to; when you think they do not exist, they do. You must know the *kyojitsu* of the *kyusho*. The knowledge of points used in moxibustion and acupuncture and the knowledge of *kyusho* as used in Budo are completely different. To "show a *kyusho*" (reveal an opening) can provoke an attack which can reveal the opponent's *kyusho*, and from which you can plan a counter. In this sense, it is a type of strategy (*heiho*).

As in the martial verse of the *bo-jutsu* *gokui*: "Thrusting the end of the *bo* into the void, if you feel a response; that is the *gokui*," there is a teaching to attain the secret of *kyusho* 急所 which reads "thrust the *kyusho* in the void." It is said that the singer *Misora Hibari*, when immersed in recording (which would be the equivalent of actual combat for a *Budoka*) always sang perfectly, which prompted one songwriter to comment, "However many times she sings she really sings perfectly in the void, like a skylark singing in the sky." To hit a *kyusho*, first know the truth of *hicho no jutsu* and *tengu tobikiri no jutsu*, (leaping methods), then throw your heart to the sky and hit the mark with the feeling of "all or nothing."

## The Tachi and the Way of the Warrior

Since the *Tensho* period (1573–92) of the Warring States period, the length of the *tachi* was from 2 *shaku* 2 *sun* to 2 *shaku* 3 or 4 *sun* at its longest. Incidentally, although it varied depending on the time and region, the average height of a Japanese male until the early part of the *Meiji* period was less than 160 cm (5 *shaku* 3 *sun*). According to the *Tai-heiki*, the *tachi* of *Nawa Nagatoshi* in the *Genko* period (1331–33) was 4 *shaku* 3 *sun*. *Saji Magozaburo* of *Tanba* carried a *tachi* of 5 *shaku* 3 *sun*. In the time of Emperor *Gomurakami*, *Wada Masatomo*'s *tachi* was 4 *shaku* 5 *sun*, and it is said that *Fujiwara no Yasunaga* drew a *tachi* of 4 *shaku* 8 *sun*. *Tsumaga Nagamune* carried a *tachi* of 5 *shaku* 3 *sun*. In the time of the battle of the *Fuefuki Pass*, *Yazu Kojiro* had a *tachi* of 6 *shaku* 3 *sun*. *Akamatsu Ujinori* carried a *tachi* of 5 *shaku* 7 *sun*. The sword of *Togashi Masachika* appears in the tales of storytellers as 9 *shaku* 3 *sun*.

The *Ninja* sword had a blade length of 1 *shaku* 6 to 7 *sun*. In the *Tokugawa* period, a blade longer than 2 *shaku* was called a *katana*. Up to 1 *shaku* 9 *sun* was called an *o-wakizashi*, up to 1 *shaku* 7 *sun* was called a *chu-wakizashi*, and up to 9 *sun* 9 *bu* was called a *sho-wakizashi*. The *uchi-gatana* that began to appear from the *Muromachi* period were initially 1 *shaku* 4 *sun*, but towards the end of the period went from 1 *shaku* 7 or 8 *sun* to 2 *shaku* in length.

Picture of *Miyamoto no Yoshiie* ▶

小海字木後成於

萬和見書



With the daito and shoto (a pair of long and short swords), the long sword is sometimes made into a naginata or yari, and the long and short swords are used together as a pair. The short sword was also effective when used in confined spaces against multiple enemies. There is a proverb: "The short sword can be used as a long sword and the long sword as a short sword."

Real common sense means, when in a fight, look with 'extraordinary eyes' (kime, 奇眼). Kime are also an example of "the eyes of god" (shingan, 神眼); when in combat, this becomes kaname (神眼) (another reading of shingan), also meaning the 'key' or 'main point,' said to be a very important insight. The 'key' to the incident in which Nasu no Yoichi played a crucial role for the Genji clan in defeating the Heike clan is contained in this idea. Yoichi was a famous archer who hit the ceremonial war fan of the invading Heike fleet at sea with an impossible shot, providing a symbolic prelude to the defeat that awaited them.

When you think of using a weapon you are at once enslaved by it. It is important to consider not carrying a sword, not wielding a stick, but using what is available at the time as a weapon. Anything can become a weapon. Look at a thing's advantages and disadvantages as a weapon or at armor, shields, and horses—anything natural or manmade can be used as a weapon.

"The way of the samurai is found in death." Time passes, seasons continue to change—the four seasons, shiki 四季, phonetically share the same sounds as the timing of death, shiki 死季; reminding us of the cyclic properties of life and death.

If you unravel the phrase "ni no tachi" (usually referring to the idea of two strikes, where the first is a setup for the second) into a first and second sword, you find the small and large swords of the daisho and the use of two swords in combination. You can also see that nito (二刀, two swords used together) can mean nito (二鬪, two fights). The ni no tachi of fighting in armor is the kukan (空間) through which one enters the world of fighting; it is a method of thrusting through and entering the defences of an opponent. In the case that you and the opponent are not wearing armor, ni no tachi naturally changes. Two swords then become 'with sword' and 'without sword,' also 'serious' (shinken, 真剣) or 'real sword' (shinken, 真劍).

The sword, naginata, and yari change according to the times. In the secret scrolls of the Shinkage-ryu, *Tengusho Hiden no Maki* are the names of illustrations of techniques—Ransho, Kokyoku, Unsetsu, and Denko—and pictures of samurai using long and short swords. Someone lacking knowledge in bufu would undoubtedly recall the image of the long and short swords being used in Miyamoto Musashi's Nito-ryu. Masters like Koizumi



Isenokami would probably have derided a Bugeisha with such a limited sense: they'd have explained that in such a picture, it is essential that the figure have a tachi in one hand, and a yari, naginata, or nagamaki in the other; explaining that it was a secret meaning. Thus, the picture *Tengusho Hiden no Maki* has a secret meaning, and people who are not familiar with the period of fighting with a tachi can never truly understand. The point is that the kodachi is not just a kodachi—a yoroidoshi (dagger), a spearhead, the blade of a naginata, and unarmed combat all have the same role; they are all used for the same purpose and are interchangeable. I urge you to see this as a fight scene depicting koteki ryoda of juppo sessho.



Picture of a dragon.

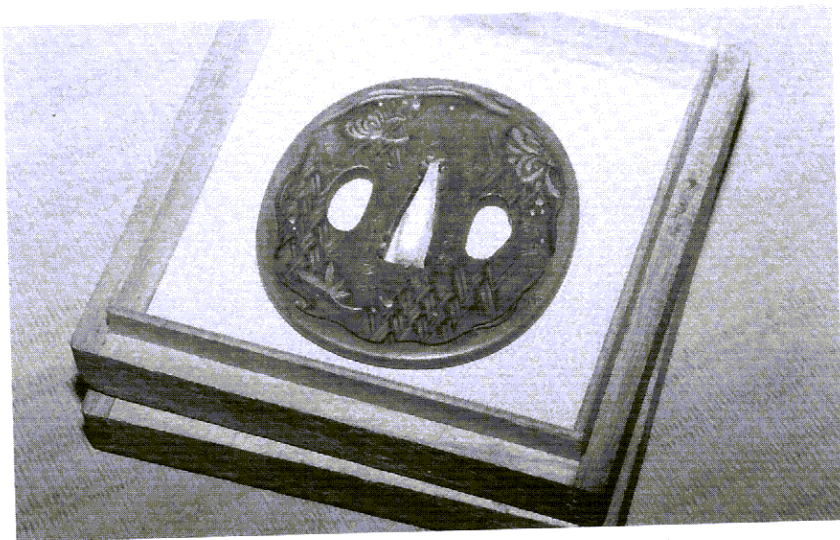


Picture of the priest Dharma.

## Nuku 瓊軀一抜く

When drawing the sword, initiating the movement by placing the thumb on the tsuba is generally called koiguchi o kiru. However, the 'In,' or hidden, version of this technique uses the index finger and ring finger to push from below.

The forearm, elbow, and body are used to draw the sword with the left or right hand. This expression for the method of initiating the draw, koiguchi o kiru, meaning literally "cutting the carp's mouth," resembles the phrase "carp climbing a waterfall," or "ascending carp," (shori, 昇鯉) which has the same sound as the word 'shori' (勝利), meaning 'victory.' Therefore, to know the way of drawing the sword that leads to victory, it is essential to know the phenomenon of In and Yo. People who understand this phenomenon can understand the real form of Kage-ryu and can see the way of drawing the sword. This tsuba is a commemorative work made by Sanjugo Naoki, and the name of the work was carved into the tsuba.





## Tenchijin no Kamae 天地人の構

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The master swordsman from Akita district, Ono-oka Takatoshi, was famous for his use of Tenchijin no Kamae. The sword is held diagonally in a position close to the right ear with 9 sun (1 sun = approximately 3.03 cm) between the sword and the body. If the left leg is pulled back, then a cut can enter the opponent's left side with considerable force. For example, if the opponent's sword cuts in first, Ono-oka would immediately parry this cut and return a cut. Then, if the right leg is pulled back, a powerful cut can be initiated to the face.





## Tsuki 突

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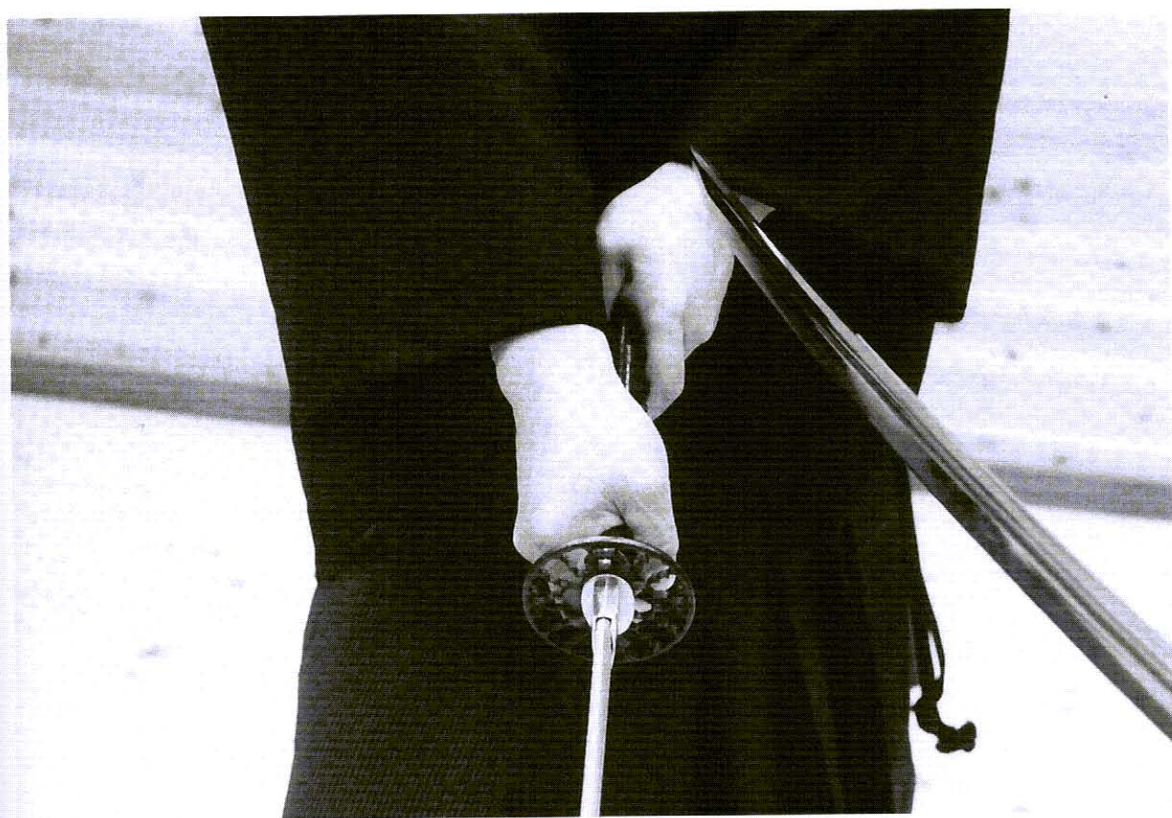
Control with the tip of the sword (kissaki, 切先). This is also the tip of the spirit (kissaki, 気先). As you can see from the photograph, the opponent's kote (forearm) is covered as well as the entire body.



## Kote 小手

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If this is seen in a flash of inspiration; the rhyme of the thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy of the Sanjusangendo can be heard.





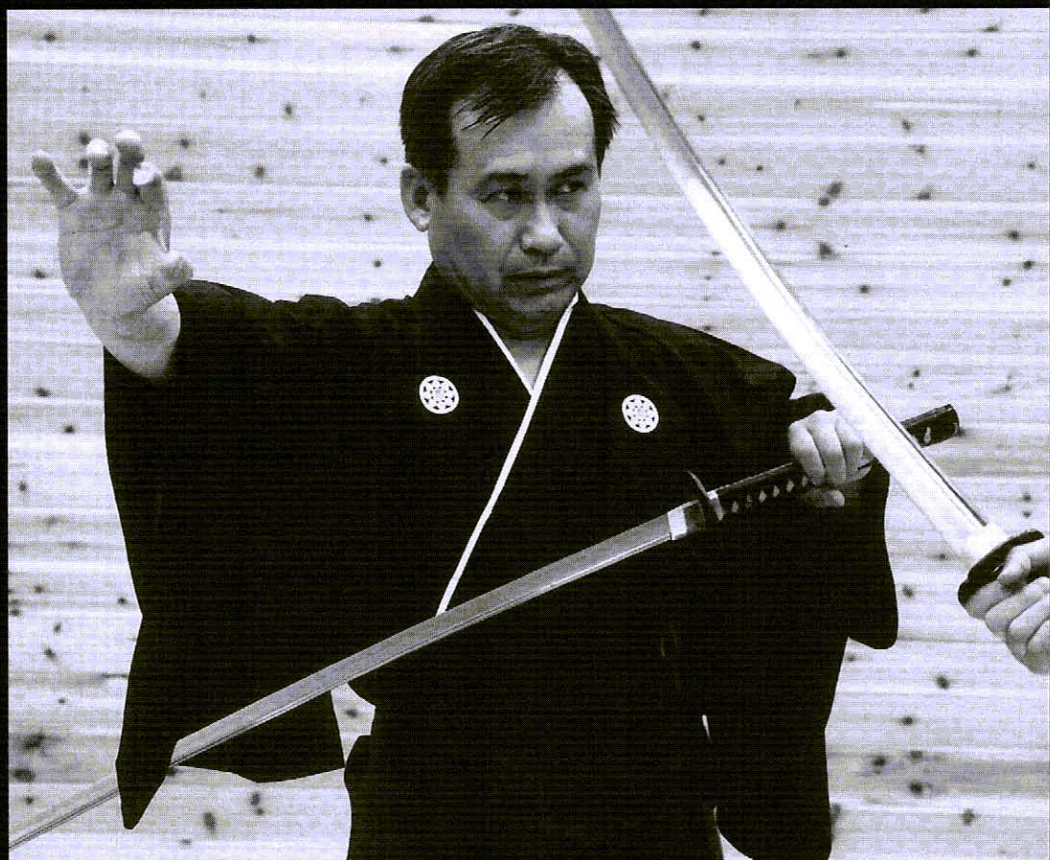
不動

先鋒

不動心



八面六臂



八面玲瓏



臨兵衛者皆  
陳列未了

陳列在前  
臨兵闘者皆

切下  
ケ  
カ  
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無心無念

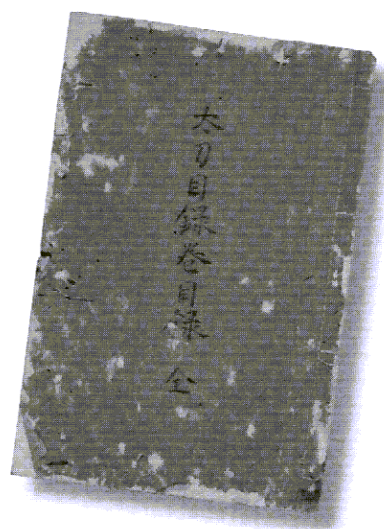
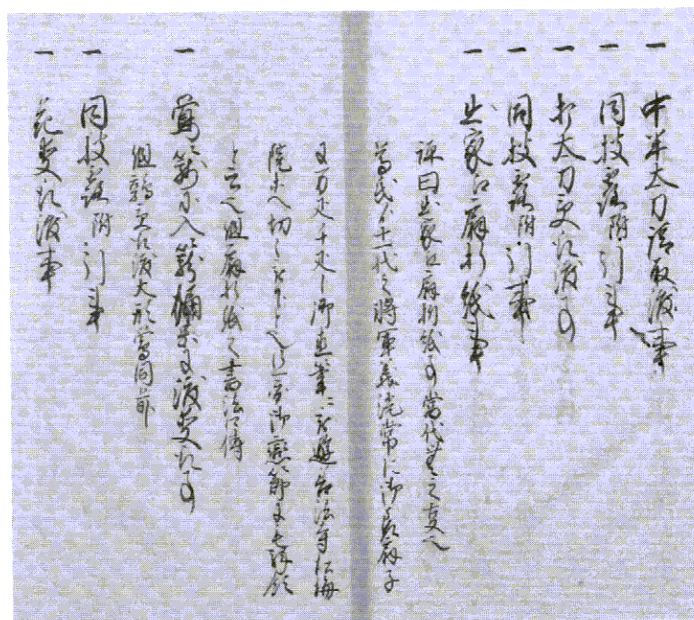


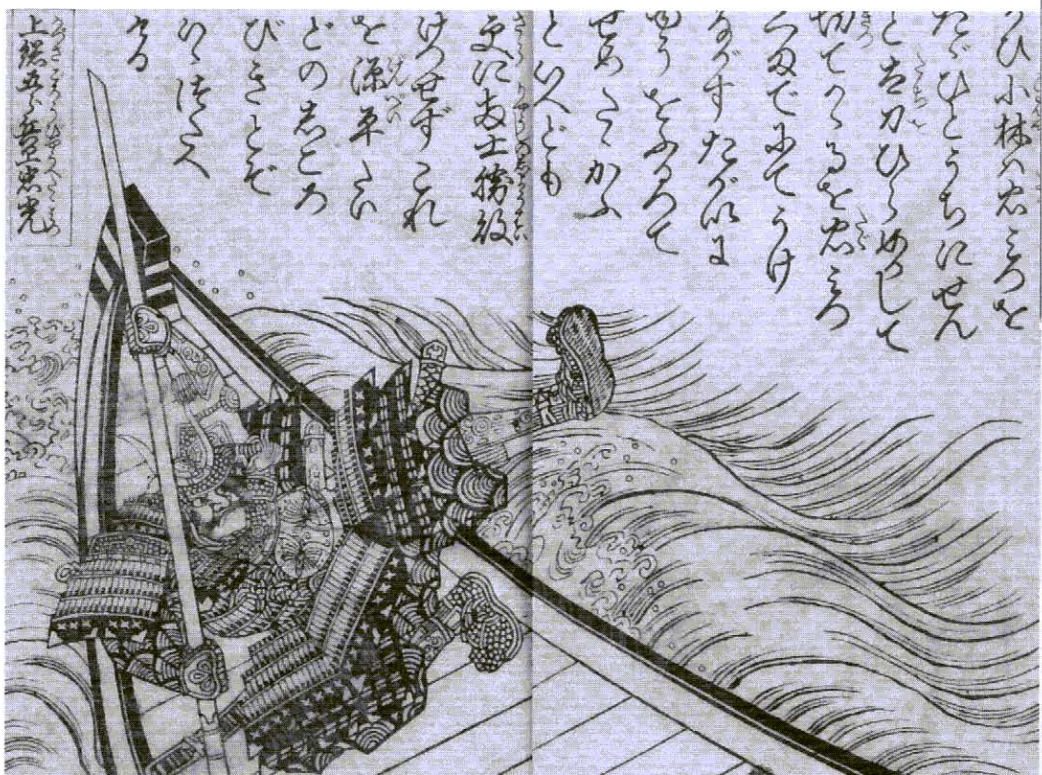
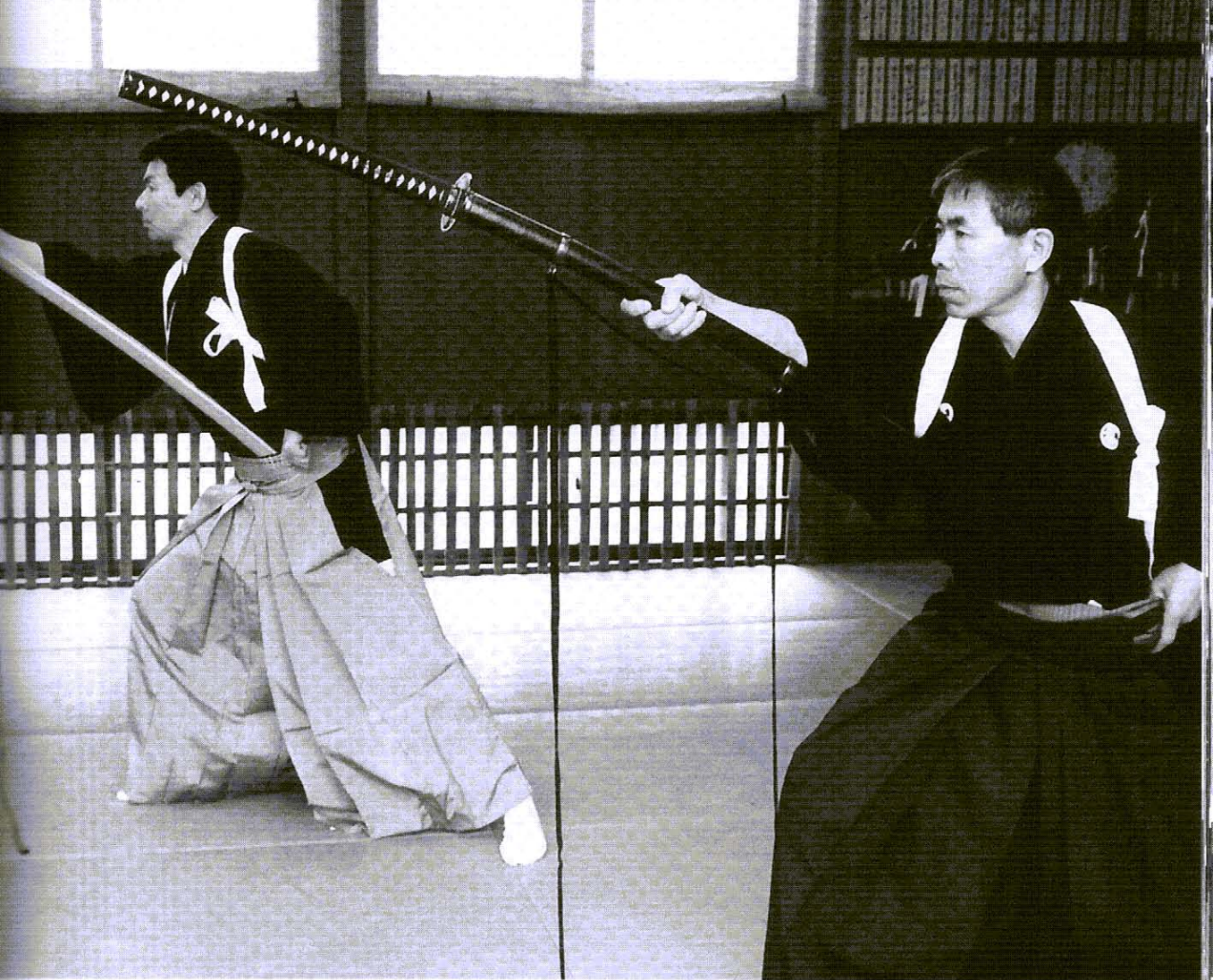
天元精氣證心  
神通力



## Goshintai; body in self defence 護身体

It is important to wear the daito and the shoto in the same manner; just as it is the same when either sword is thrust at you.





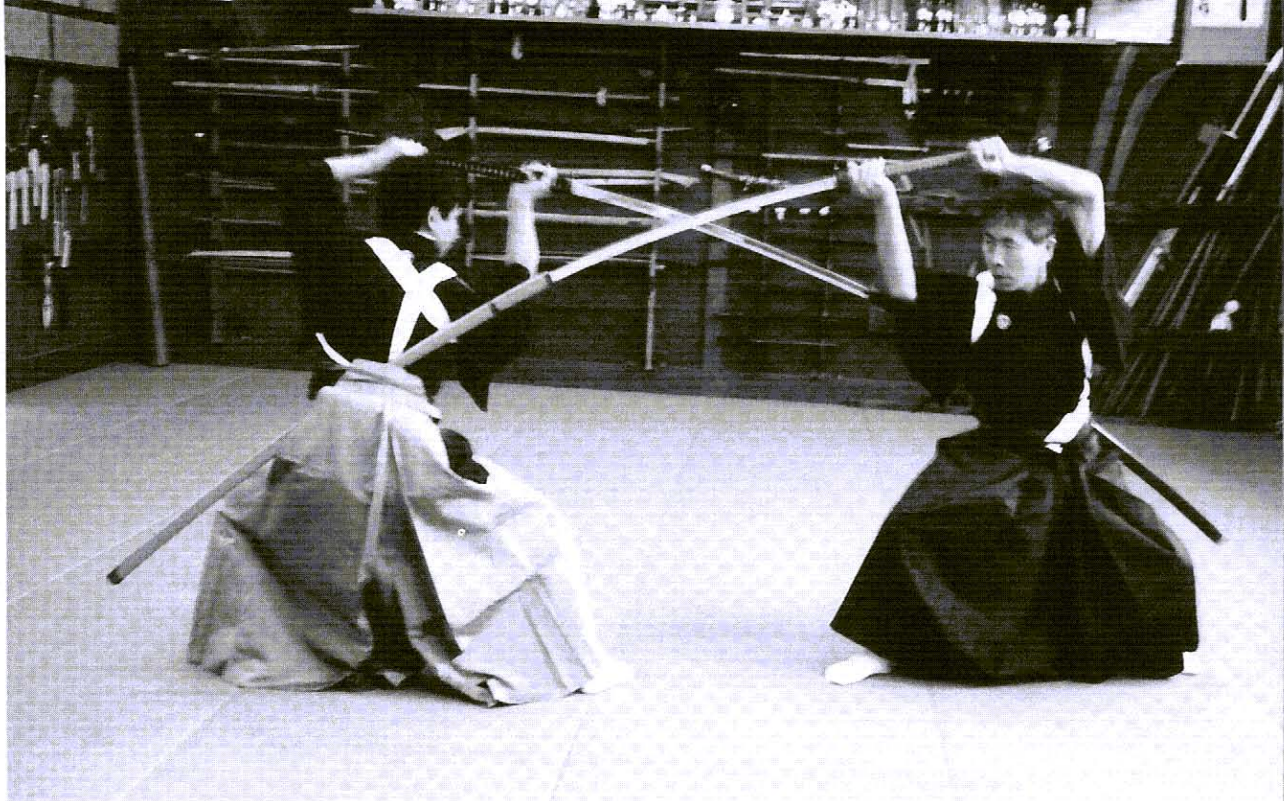


Placing the tachi in the belt, rotate behind and tie back the sleeves with the sageo.

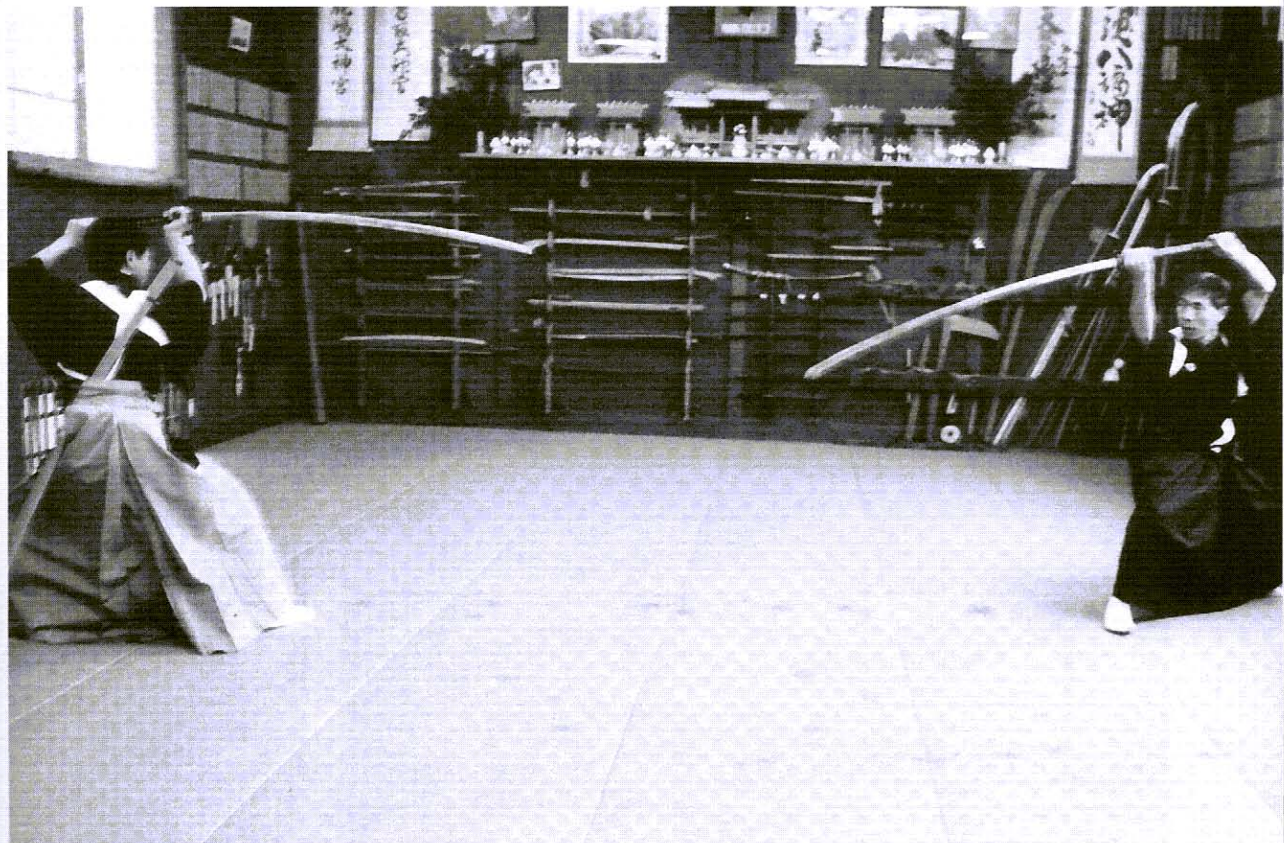


The sword is drawn. Do not rush the draw.





Receive the handle of the opponent's sword while maintaining the character eight 八.

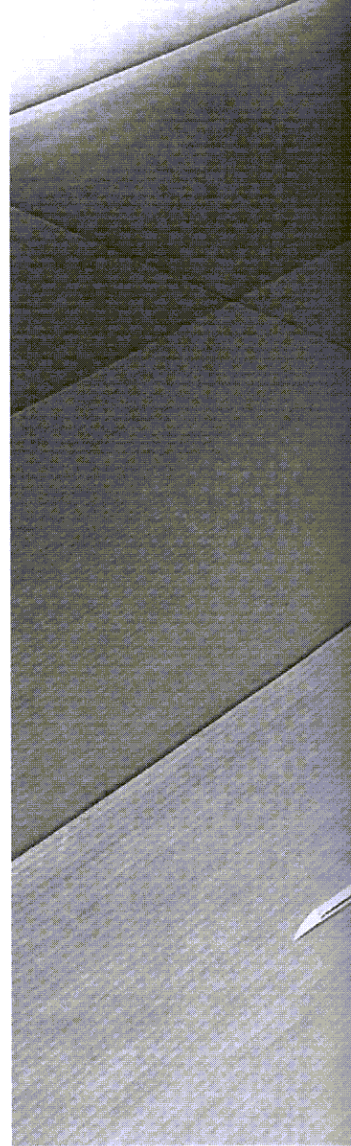


This becomes eight swords, while drawing changes to eight directions. Then pray and emanate ki energy.

## Happo Biken 八法秘剣

- Gunryaku (war strategy) and tenmon chimon (astrology and physiography)
- Jojutsu and hanbojutsu
- Rokushaku bo and tai no kuraidori (body positioning)
- Naginata and bisento jutsu
- Kodachi and jutte jutsu
- Kisha (horseback riding) and suiujutsu (swimming)
- Shuriken and senban-nage
- Sojutsu
- Biken

Bikenjutsu refers to taijutsu kenpo; adding bikenjutsu to the happo (eight principles) makes kyūho (nine principles), the generic term for the skills of the Bushi. The names kosshi-jutsu, koppo-jutsu, jutai-jutsu, daken-taijutsu, and ninpo-taijutsu were created to describe taijutsu, the "art of certain victory," and then the name biken jutsu was developed. In happo biken jutsu we call this position shachiteki seigan (diagonal posture). This is a kamae in which you can immediately cut the opponent if they attack. Pull your right foot behind by the width of your shoulders. For example, if the opponent thrusts or cuts to your abdomen, immediately turn the wrists and knock his sword away. Sasaki Kōjiro's swallow cut (tsubame kiri) demonstrates this rhythm and use of kyojutsu.





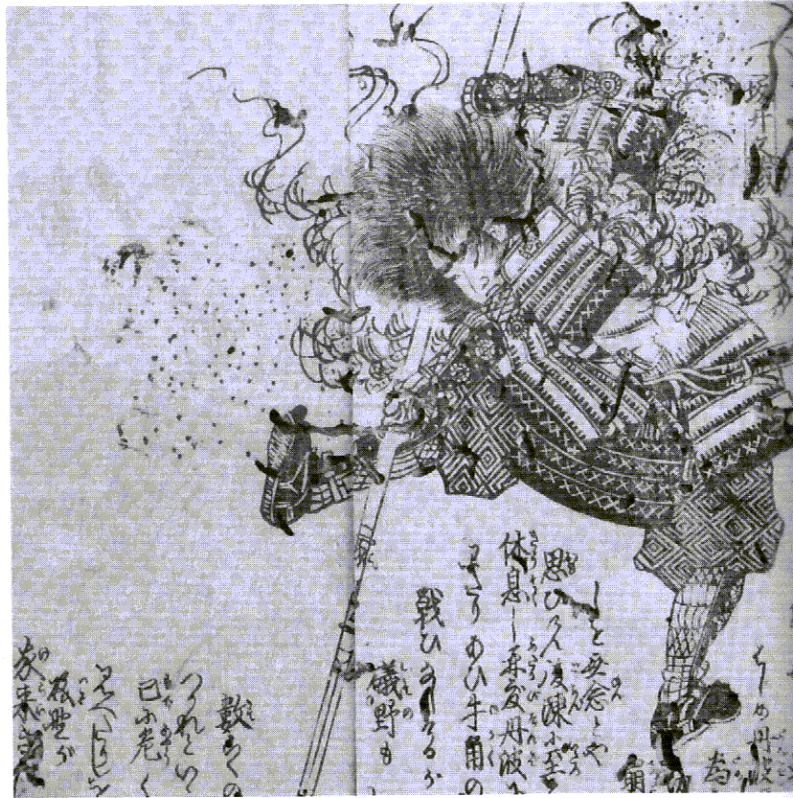
There were eight young, brave soldiers whose family names began with 犬 (dog), and they appear in a famous story entitled *Nanso Satomi Hakken-den* by Takizawa Bakin.



## Tsukikomi 附込

Seigan no Kamae. The opponent is in Daijodan. Stand in Seigan pointing the sword with your whole heart (mind) at the opponent's chest; your eyes stare into the opponent's eyes. Without allowing the opponent's Daijodan to enter your thoughts, at the moment the opponent steps in to cut, let out a kiai. Just as the opponent falters, drop the left knee to the floor and thrust in.

The technique of Tsukikomi changes completely when you are wearing armor, or in the case that the opponent has a weapon or something that can be used as a shield. The place to thrust has traditionally been taught through oral transmission (kuden), since the *denso* is not specific of where to do so; it simply says "thrust." When thrusting in there is always variation (*henka*) in the thrust. At the place that you thrust, there is a lifeline (*seimeisen*, 生命線), or life evasion (*seimeisen*, 生命閃), and a death line (*shisen*, 死線), or death point (*shisen*, 死尖). Being made to remember this momentary point (*sen*, 尖) in combat (*sen*, 戦) means that by this technique, *taijutsu* has the power to penetrate with a dagger or thrust with a sword. Thrusting with the left foot, written with the character 'to sit,' (*坐*) refers to the seated posture *Fudoza*, the "immovable heart" (*kokoro no fudo*), a calm heart, a state of mind.





**Sayugyaku (opposite position) 左右逆**

Three variations. This kamae is Ichi no Kamae. Namely, the sword points straight, perpendicular to the face. If the opponent cuts in from Daijodan it is easy to flip (knock) their sword back on either the left or right. If it is flipped (knocked back) on the right, execute kote gaeshi and attack the right side of the opponent's neck. If you deflect the attack to the left, and the opponent's body turns left, perform kote gaeshi and cut the opponent completely in two.

Ichi no Kamae. First, know the principle of one (ichi) that is unity. This is the way of enlightenment of Zen. Sayugyaku is not simply the opposite of left and right in a technique; the meaning is more profound and encompasses the eternal opposites of truth and falsehood, yin and yang. It is easy to think of Ichi no Kamae as a starting technique, but in fact it demands an advanced level of skill. With regard to kote, some people think that this is the area around the back of the wrists or lower arm that can be cut, but this is not the case. I would like you to think of it as small, almost imperceptible variations and techniques using the wrists as pivots. Cutting someone completely in two means within the movement, the moment you see the opening, that is the moment of opportunity—this is the secret.





## Tsukigake 突掛

Seigan no Kamae. The opponent is in Daijodan. If you were to make a thrust, the opponent would cut down and both parties would be cut. Therefore, the thrust is made by stepping with the right foot then stabbing with the left foot. When doing this, if the opponent were to avoid the thrust, immediately turn the wrists and cut in to the opponent's right side.

The cultivation of taihenjutsu that tricks the opponent into thinking they have cut you makes a profound and awe-inspiring impression. Make the opponent sever the connection between cloud and water to render the opponent unable to cut you. Shine light in that space (kukan) and in that instant, turn the wrists and cut the left abdomen. If you are wearing armor, your thrust is like a shield. Turning your body, cut in (kiri-kakaru) to the opponent's right side. I would like you to think deeply about the character here—kakarū (掛). Cutting into the right side, the next move is a secret transmission. You must try to imagine the chaos of war with this idea of kiri-kakaru in mind.

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. In Gedan no Kamae, lifting the sword above the opponent's head once will confuse them. Following this deception, immediately turn the wrists and execute a right abdomen cut, or turn the hands over and execute a left abdomen cut or thrust.

In this move you strike the opponent's helmet or above their face without cutting in. However, at this time, you possess the "unmovable heart" (fudoshin), thus confusing the opponent. You make this tachi strike with your heart and the technique as one. Even though you do not cut the helmet, the force of your spirit casts down the opponent's heart—this is the spirit of kumiuchi. The small, subtle and almost imperceptible techniques of the tachi (tachi no kote) become kumiuchi; you therefore do not use dynamic techniques. Together with the body of the tachi, the handle, and the armor, cutting and thrusting into the right side and left side, you knock the opponent down and kill them.







## Kiriage 斬上

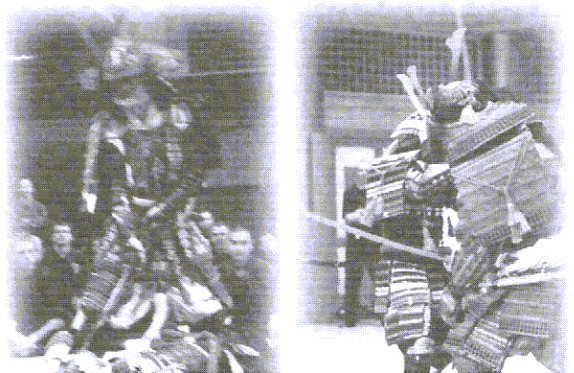
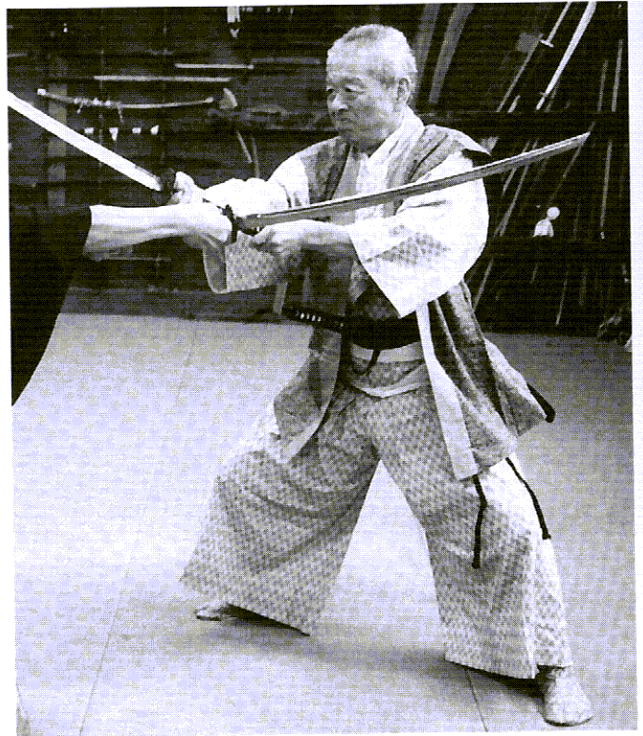
Chudan no Kamae. The opponent is in Daijodan. Exactly at the instant the opponent cuts down, you turn the wrists first, and cut up from the right side to the left shoulder. At this time, if the opponent has cut down, their sword is flipped up, immediately turn the wrists and thrust in. This is called Chudan kiriage gaeshi.

There are many possible variations of your opponent's attack—he could be using no sword (*mutō*), a *kodachi*, an *odachi*; or a sword, *tachi*, or *katana*. When your opponent cuts in, you should assume that this could be not just a single sword cut, but one with a long weapon or *naginata*, or a strong cut with centrifugal force. You must create the moment naturally in which you avoid or deflect the blow. This could be called the force of wind or wind power. Therefore, it is important to persevere in the martial ways (*bufu ikkan*; the first two characters of which are 'martial,' 武, and 'wind,' 風). In this moment, using your *taijutsu* technique and the power of your heart, you flip up the cut that arises from the opponent's heart, technique, and body (*shingitai*). At the same time, make a covering thrust at the opponent's right side, turn the wrists, and change the body and thrust up into the opponent's right side. When fighting an opponent in armor, it is advantageous to cut up.

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. *Tenchijin no Kamae*. Facing straight on, the sword points straight up from around the area of the right ear. The upper half of the body faces a diagonal angle to the right. The opponent cuts in from *Daijodan*. Pull the right foot back one step. Immediately cut up from the opponent's left side. Pull the left foot back to avoid, and cut up diagonally from the lower right.

Facing the opponent's desperate attack, this technique is executed with a kind of 'pulling through' energy (*kiryoku*). If you use the right foot as a pivot, cut up and chop into the opponent's left side, and if you use the left foot as a pivot, cut up into the opponent's right side. When you cut up, see in your mind your attack harmonizing with the wind power in a mountain storm blowing up from the lower side of the opponent. This then changes to 'secret sword' (*biken*).





## Kirisage 斬下

Tenchi no Kamae. The opponent is head on. The sword is held up in front. The opponent cuts down from Daijodan. Receive the cut by drawing the left foot back; if the opponent advances, the handles of the swords meet. Push firmly, dropping the tip of the sword down to the left while turning the body to the right side, and cut down from the opponent's left shoulder. In this space (kukan) you use the fulcrum of the elbows and forearms to change and cut down with the sword.

Avoid the opponent's downward cut as though catching a ball; do not receive it head on, but adapt to its direction, alter the body position, then cut down. Giving the blade precedence (yusen, 優先), or gently avoiding the blade (yusen, 優閃), you push and cut (oshikiri), and then by changing your body position you can inflict damage on the opponent.

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. Tenchijin no Kamae. Turn the body to the left and cut up from the right side. The handles of the swords meet. Kick up and thrust in.

Kick up, according to how the opponent moves, and according to the power of the kick as it travels down. Move to attack into the opening. One technique (itte, 一手) yields endless possible variations.





# Kasugaidome

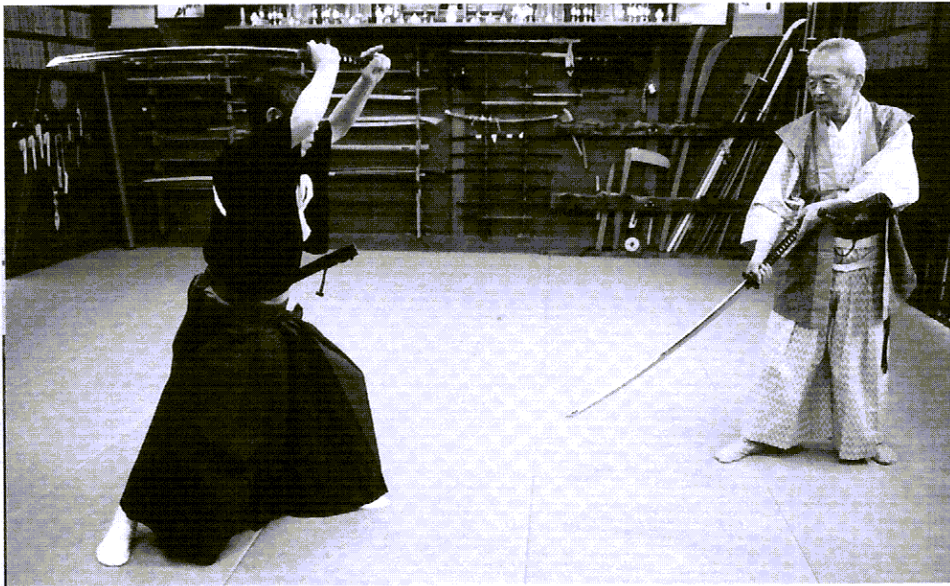
かすがいどめ  
鎧止

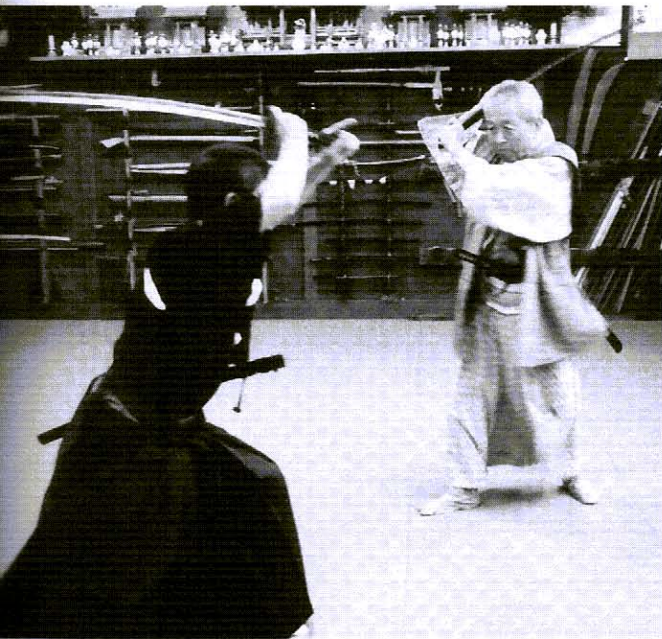
Gedan no Kamae. The opponent is in Daijodan. From Gedan no kamae, move to the right and the right again (in a circle). The opponent naturally turns (corresponding to your movement). Immediately pull the left foot back, and with a kiai, raise the sword up through Chudan, Jodan no Kamae. Just after you cut down with the sword, turn right and cut the wrist over the left side of the opponent.

Rather than looking at the opponent, in kasugaidome, correct yourself by referring to the understanding of the kuden up to this point. This will bring about the destruction of the opponent's technique. The important thing here is to make your natural posture and natural heart the secret. As my master said, nature lies in a sincere spirit.

## Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. As before, cut up into the opponent's kote and thrust as you turn. To repeat: kote is cutting down from a close distance with a small technique.





## Kochogaeshi 小蝶返

From Daijodan no Kamae. The opponent is in Seigan. Drawing your left foot back diagonally, turn swiftly to the right. Remaining in Daijodan, make a light turn to the right with the movement of a small butterfly, and at the same time cut in to the opponent's kote. This technique is also called "small butterfly cut." This is the method of the "mist butterfly" that preserves its moving strength while playing with the opponent's greater strength.

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. Turn to the right and cut at the opponent's right shoulder. Also, variations involve changing to a thrust, etc (kuden).





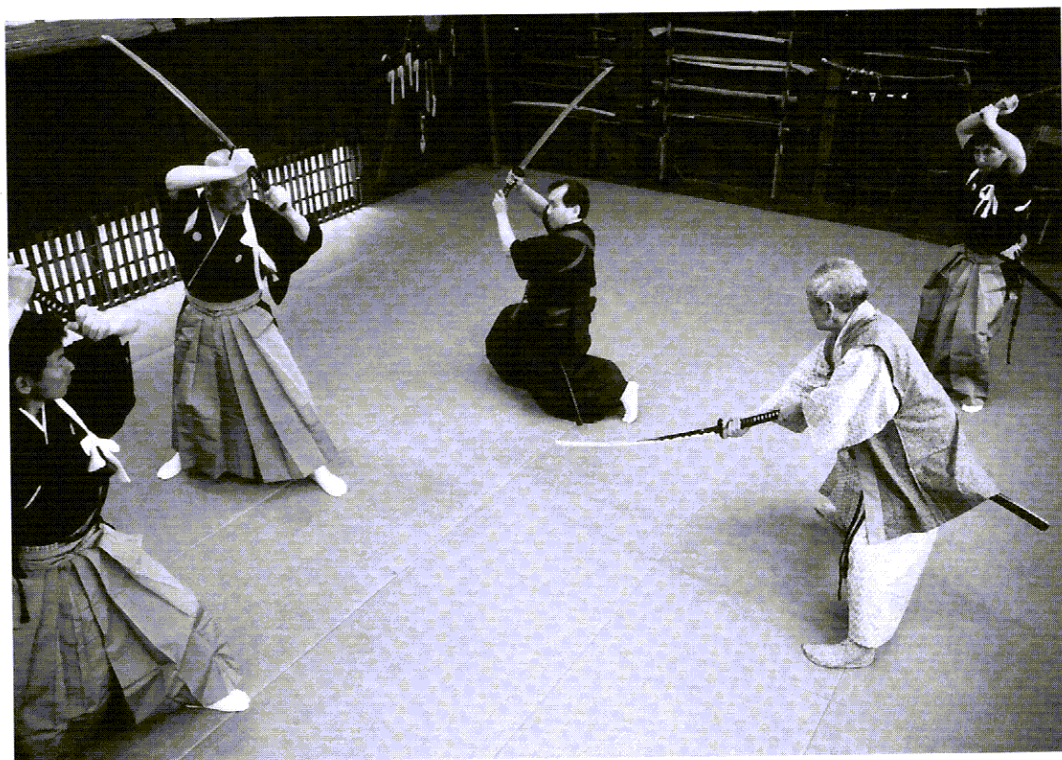


## Shiho giri 四方斬

Tenchi Hasso no Kamae in a right diagonal posture. Reverse cut to the opponent's left side then turn the wrists. Reverse cut to the right side, then immediately enter thrusting (kuden).

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. After the last thrust, quickly cut down onto the next opponent's head. Alternatively, execute a gyaku-suso-barai.



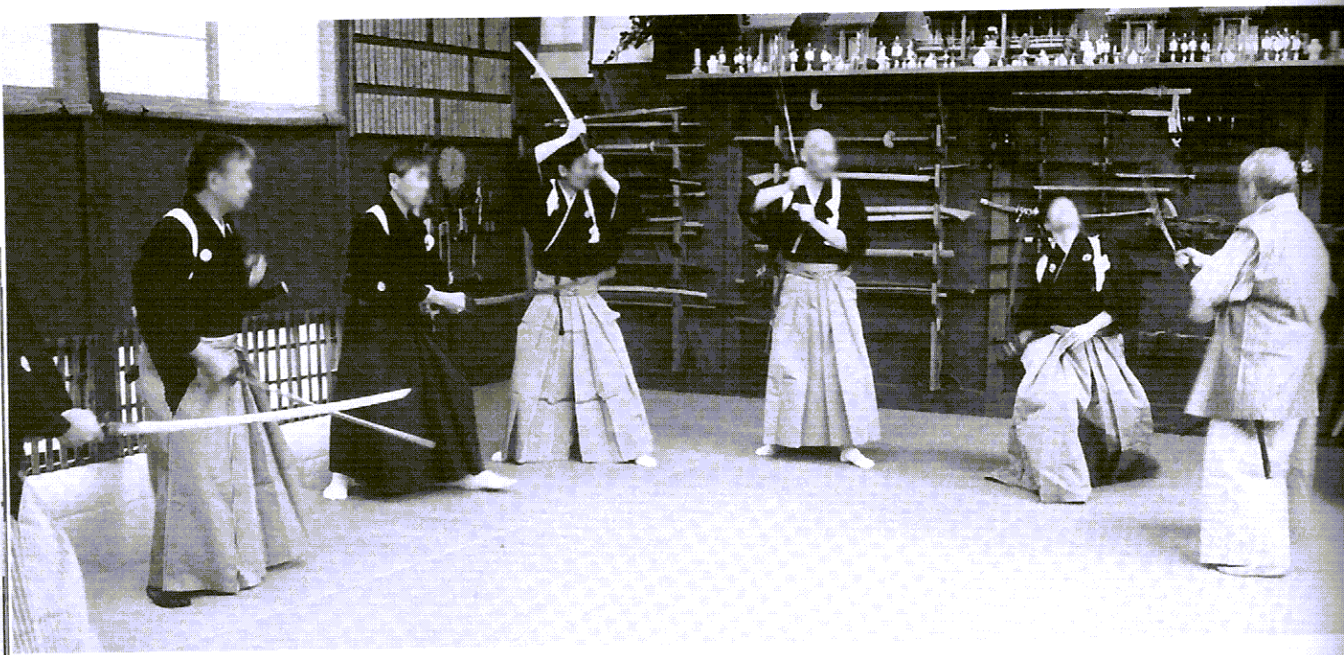


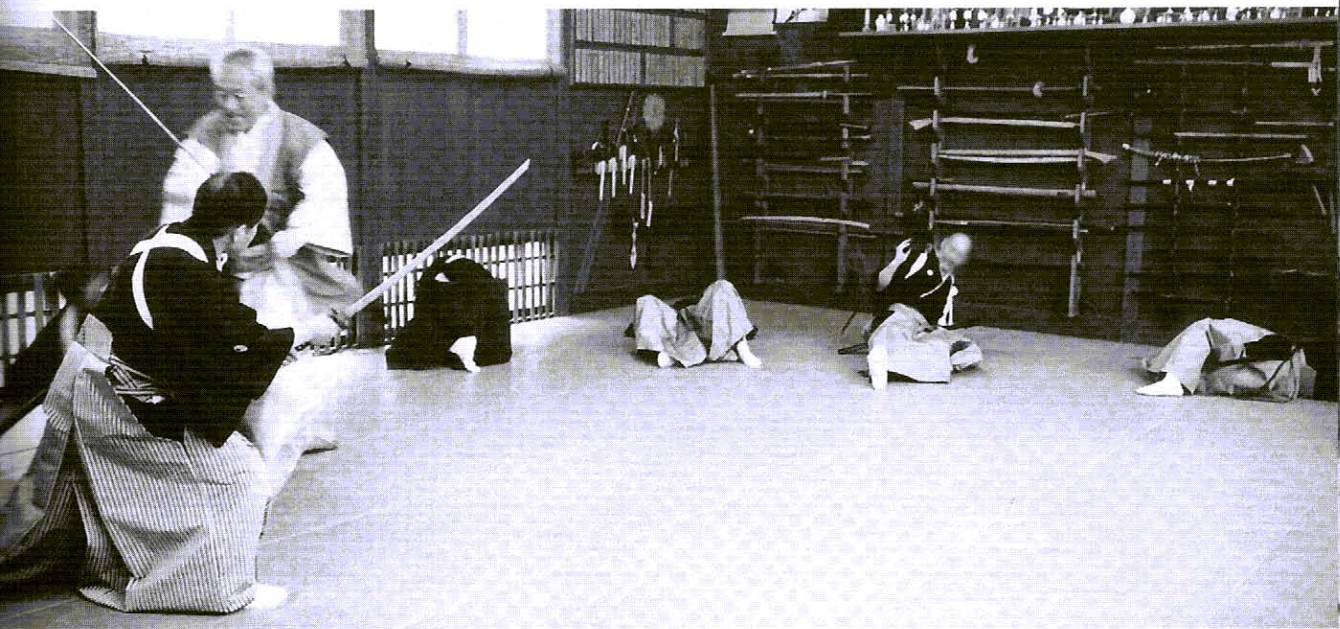
## Happo giri 八方斬

Tenchi Hasso no Kamae. This is also called a sacrifice technique (sutemi). From Hasso, cut down to the opponent's left side. Turning to the right with the body, cut down to the opponent's left side; next immediately turn to the right and cut down again in the same way.

### Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. This is a technique on the left, cutting the opponent in two (kuden).



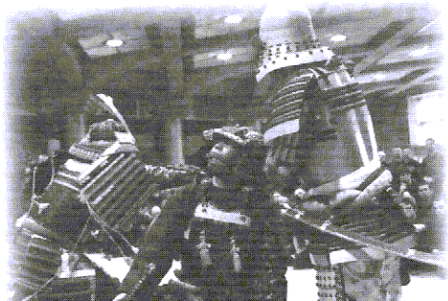


## Tsuki no Wa (Full Moon) 月之輪

Seigan no Kamae. From this kamae you can stab the opponent's neck by moving into Shin Ichimonji no Kamae. Also called "secret turn thrust." The character for neck (shu, 首) can also mean poem—I urge you to savor the true meaning of the Hundred Poems by the Hundred Poets.

Sayugyaku 左右逆

Three variations. Thrust into the opponent's side. Also, the technique of thrusting into the abdomen.





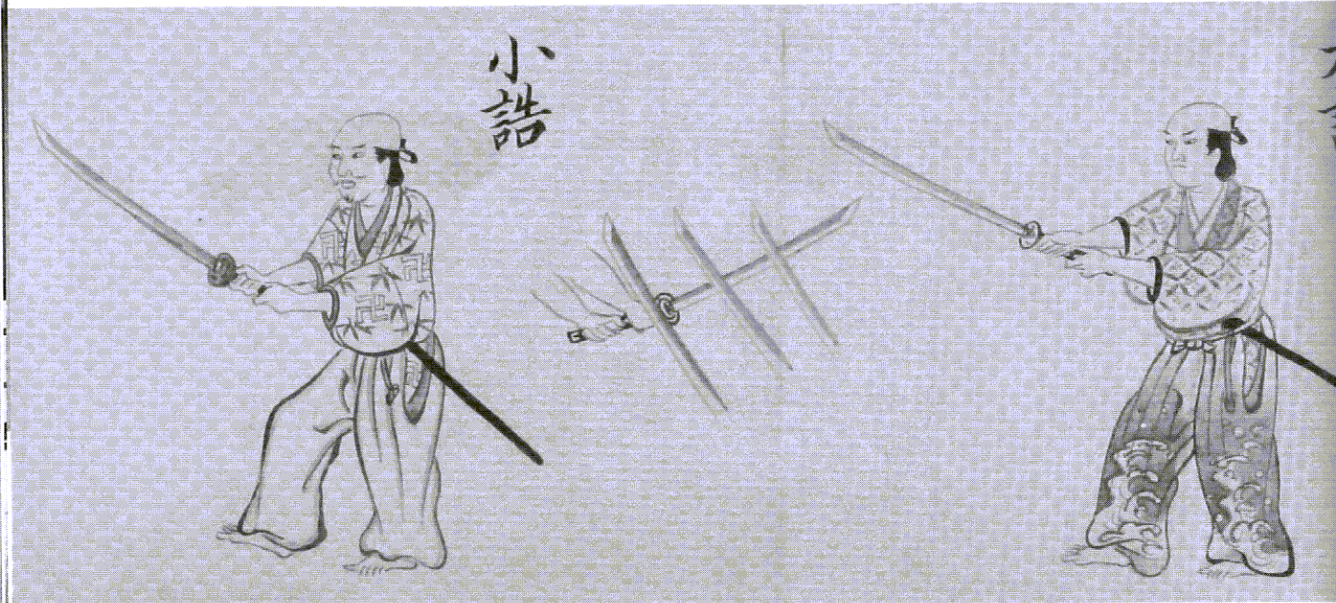
## Kenpo of the eternal cycle of birth, death, and re-birth 生々流転その剣法

It should be taken for granted that the mental attitude of a Bushi was a secret in each school.

### Yagyū-ryū Seigan no Kamae 柳生流青眼の構

The vertical Seigan no Kamae of the famous Yagyū-ryū is a special characteristic of the school. Opening to the width of the shoulders, the tip of the sword is pointed at the opponent's eyes. Standing in Seigan is a natural posture. There are three advantages:

1. The tip of the sword is an obstacle for the opponent, making it difficult for them to cut in.
2. If the opponent cuts in, it is possible to parry the sword behind to the left or right.
3. At the same time, it is easy to cut into the opponent's opening.

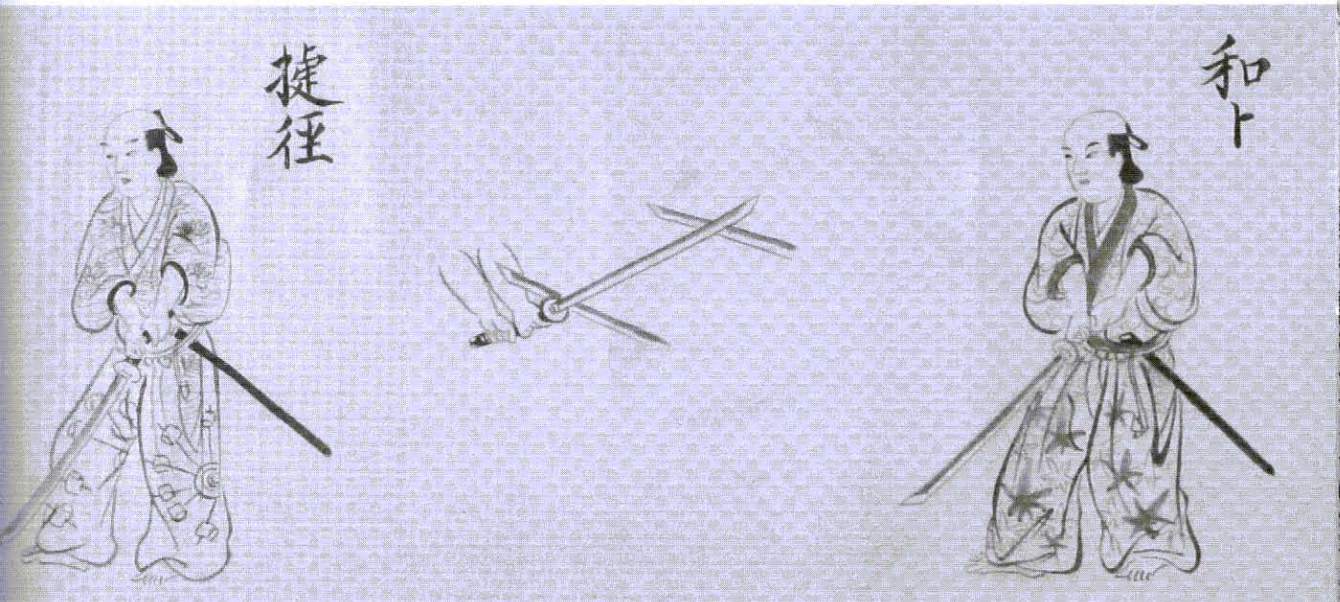


Densho of Yagyū Shinkage-ryū.

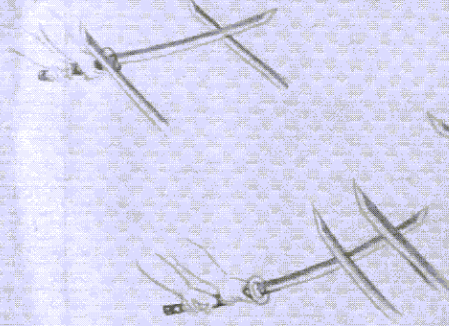




Jukuryo danko (action after contemplation.)



村雲劍



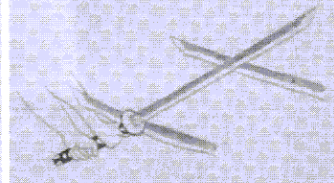
石此一春移小柳渡  
若丁は合し肝要作  
あふふふふの見い

半開半合



右旋左轉

口傳



十大刀



藤原勝春

田中五物

藤原一之

小野彦兵衛

藤原色和

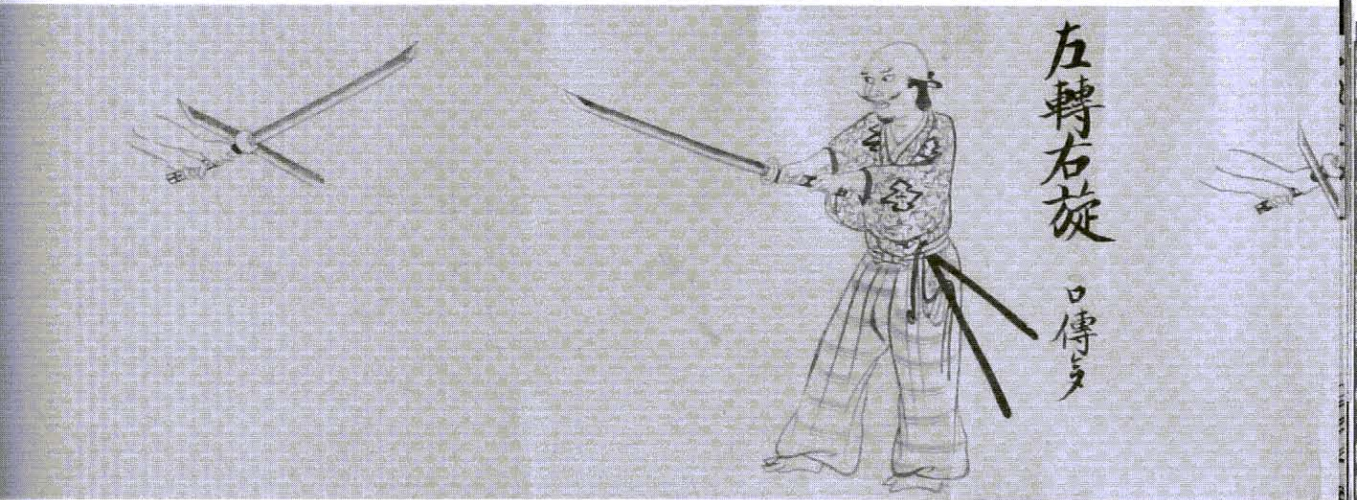
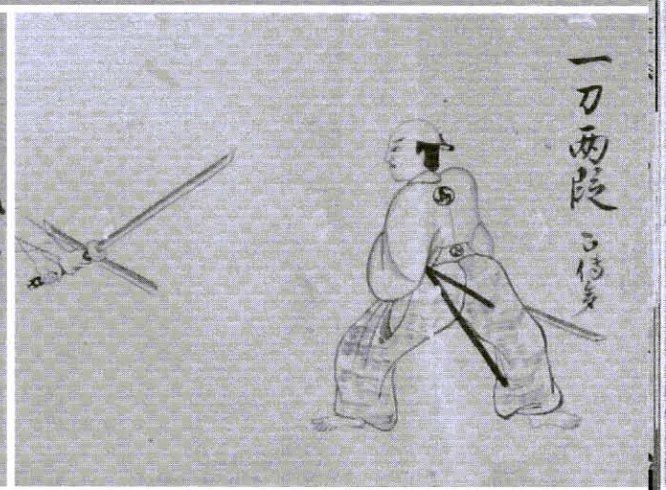
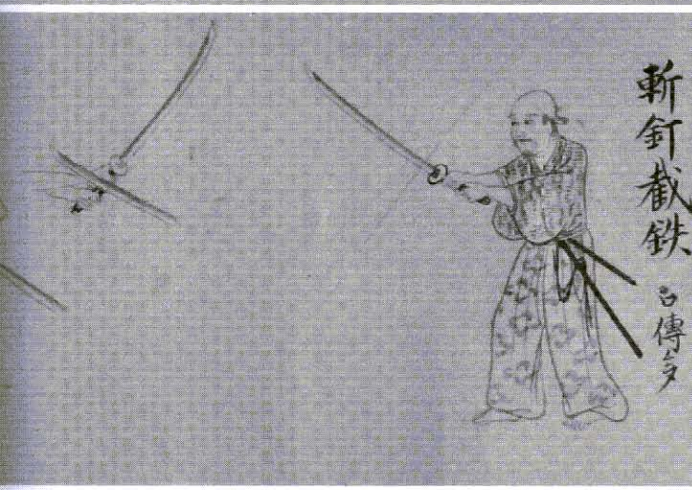
小野左衛門尉

寶曆七丁 藤原和清

小澤半兵衛尉

五月吉日 藤原清和

小澤國重及



日輪摩利支天

上泉武藏守

藤原信綱

柳生但馬守

菅原宗嚴

柳生松右衛門

菅原宗信

有地常掌

前藏

藤原元勝

有地五兵衛尉

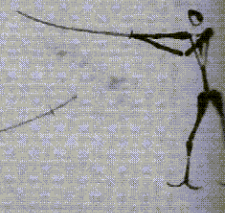




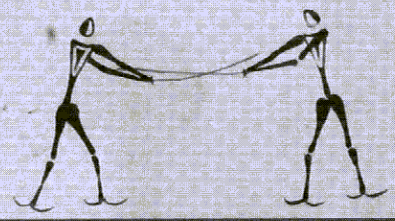
附奇身



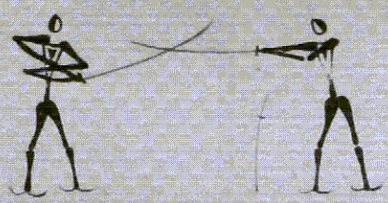
切落



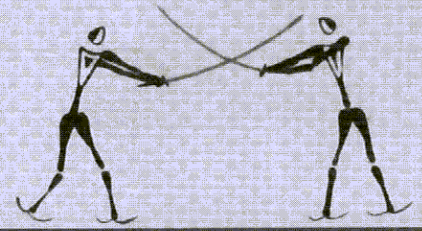
風揚



捲返



後身



元禄十七年

三月吉日 秀重



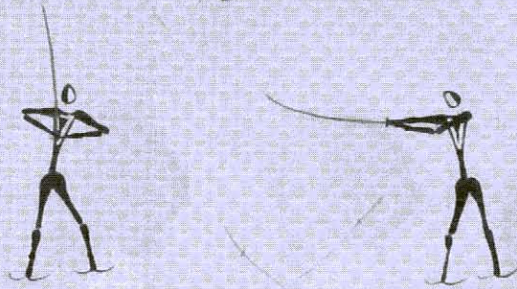
小野長五郎發

伊藤一刀齋  
小野次郎齋  
伊藤孫兵衛尉直  
服部如幻齋  
芝原市高齋

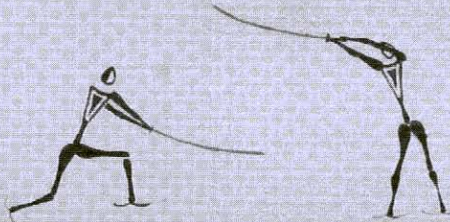
夢想一刀流劔術  
秘密之大事目録

夢想一刀流劔  
秘密之大事目録

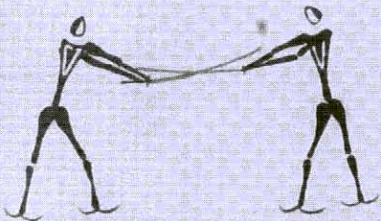
覺



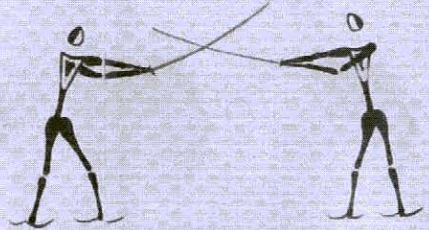
真劔



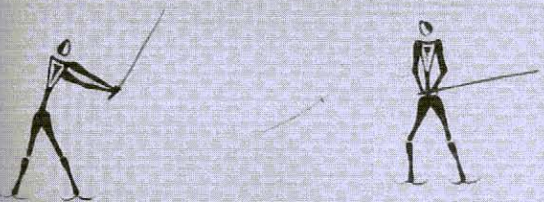
頭留



切留

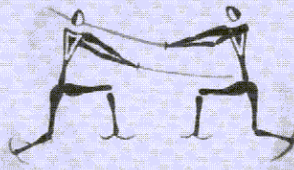


獨劔

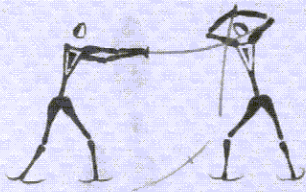


夢想一刀流劍術秘  
密之大事目録

本覺



金甲



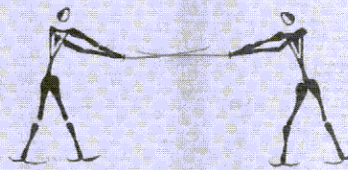
居身



合意



左右留



伊藤一刀齋 正勝

小野次郎春門則忠明

伊藤孫兵衛尉 直好

服部如幻齋 時政

芝原市島衛尉尉

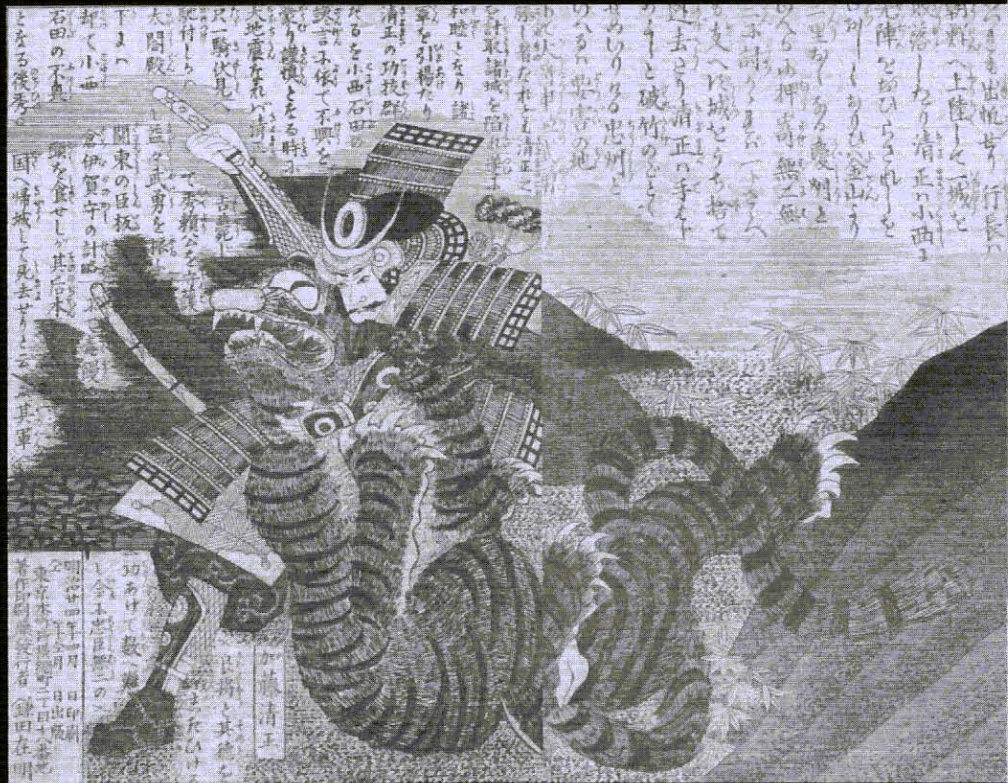
元禄十七年

三月吉日

庚子







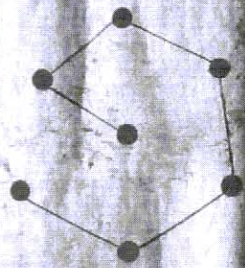
Picture of the warrior Kato Kiyomasa killing a tiger.

## Gedan no Kamae 下段の構

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There was a sword master called Itori Tamenobu from the Rikuzen region. He founded the Ko-ryu and his characteristic was to stand in Gedan no Kamae. This is a posture in which he would wait for the opponent to cut in whether the opponent cuts to the side or face, hurl his sword up, and thrust into the opening.





星眼傳授

七曜劍

我躰

ラハクシノ星ノカタキ

箇條目錄

有之家流始之書此

一卷差進之候猶不

疑師傳以切磋琢磨

必勝之實可有相叶

候何如件

千葉之从

Densho of Hokushin  
Itto-ryu by Chiba  
Shusaku.

伊藤一刀齋

景久

御子上典膳

忠明

兩傳合法

此辰一刀流開祖

千葉周作

成政

海保帆平

安政五戊午歲

八月九日

芳郷

樽見徳兵衛殿

目心之事

一色付之事

一横豎上下之事

一遠延之事

一切落之事

一二之目付之事

北辰一刀流兵法

一卷差進之候猶不

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濟其上勝利之劍依

古執心不淺組數相

北辰一刀流兵法執

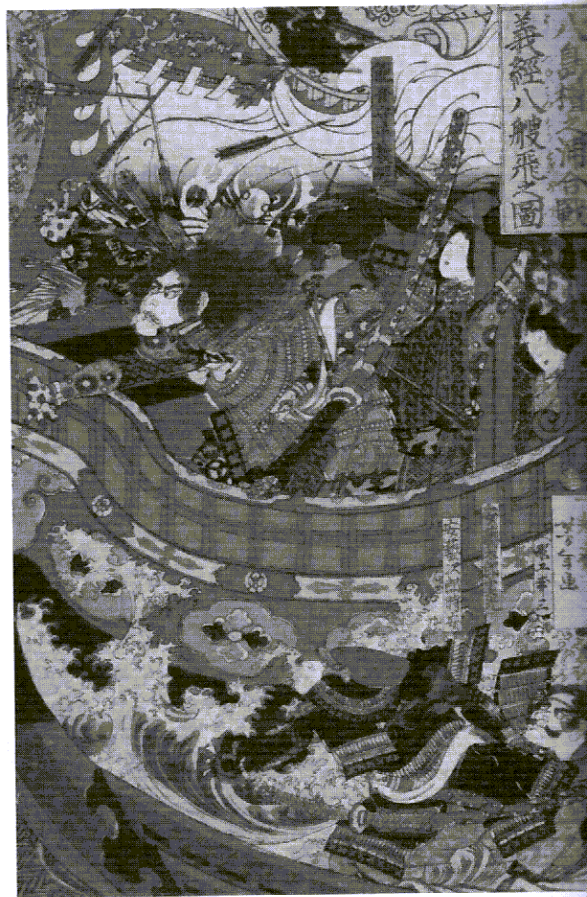
三ノ敵スル方イマス劍先

# The Practice of Budo

## Toward the True Gokui

There is a tendency to think that the gokui is the ultimate, but this changes according to the subjectivity (shukan, 主観) of the person or the main intuition/sixth sense (shukan, 主勘) of the moment. It is essential to realize this. If you stick to your favorite technique in combat, the opponent will quickly ascertain this, with potentially fatal results. It is therefore important to know that gokui starts from the phenomenon of In and Yo, the balance of opposing forces in the universe. Knowing this phenomenon, the power of In, the advantage of the natural phenomenon of gravity, and being enlightened to this real form, you will begin to understand what the gokui means.

The pursuit of only 'favorite' techniques was admonished as egotistical and self-serving, and these techniques became known as 'tengu waza,' which can be translated into something like 'braggart techniques' (a tengu is a mythical, human-like beast with a long, protruding nose that lives in the mountains. They are often associated with egotism and pride). This is one example of the *Tengu-geijutsuron* (*Discourse on the art of the Tengu*). This book from the Edo period was written by Issai Chozanshi, a retainer of the Sekiyado clan in which tengu speak on the gokui of Budo. Takamatsu Sensei used to say: "People have a tendency to be tengu (highly proud of themselves) in general, but being a tengu is important—from amongst these people are born masters.



Picture of Miyamoto-no-Yoshitsune leaping the eight boats continuously by Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

Himeji Castle. ▶



It is sometimes acceptable in life to be a tengu; that kind of vehemence might be necessary." This is because fighting means maximizing the free use of a man's weapons and a woman's weapons in all forms. Encapsulated in this is an interest in both sexes (ryosei, 両性) and 'good military strength' (ryosei, 良勢). However, as your boastfulness (tengu, 天狗) increases, do not become a fool (tengu, 転愚). If you drown in lust, you lose your fighting ability.

What I am trying to say is that when you read books like *Tengu-geijutsuron* and *Neko no Myojutsu (The Cat's Mysterious Skill)*—books regarding Budo—do not get obsessed by them. It is important to clear your head and think simply, just as the word tengu can "change to a fool" (tengu, 転愚). We must not forget that books have the power to brainwash people. It is important not to read with an uncritical eye, and not to believe everything you read. Do not hang everything simply on the contents of a book—just as the tengu can "change to a fool," the cat can lose to a mouse; don't take anything for granted. There are endless kinds of possibilities. Taking the famous book *Hagakure* by Yamamoto Tsunetomo, said to be a book from which you can understand Bushido, you must start by understanding the importance of the questions such as "was the author a Bushi and how much did he understand Bushido?"

There are often two stone guardian lion dogs (koma-inu, 狛犬) placed outside the main building of a Shinto shrine, and these dogs are often called the 'returning lion' and 'facing lion.' One day, one of these guardian lion dogs was stolen from a famous shrine's treasure house. The following day, the remaining koma-inu began to cry at night, causing trouble in the neighborhood. However, after the stolen koma-inu was returned, the crying stopped. The local priest, upon hearing this, began to worship the two koma-inu by praying to them, so their reuniting became a symbol of prayer. I heard that Takamatsu Sensei also made a pair of koma-inu while praying.

I find that the inspiration humans gain from books and the innate connection we share with music have a powerful harmony. When I read Musashi's *The Book of Five Rings*, written about the five elements earth, water, fire, wind, and emptiness, if I put on the jazz CD "Take Five," I can read it in one sitting. Listen to the martial rhyme from the heavenly musical score of chi, sui, ka, fu, and ku. After this, face a piece of paper and paint a picture of Budo or kenpo. Walk the path from martial fighting to martial art and to Bushido, and that path is reflected as the three paths of land, sea, and sky.

By doing this, the popular image of the samurai as depicted in films will disappear. This is not a true image of samurai. If we wish to express zanshin (残心), with a formal understanding it means the state of mental

Densho of Oishi Shinkage-ryu. ▶

大石神影流

刀術截目錄



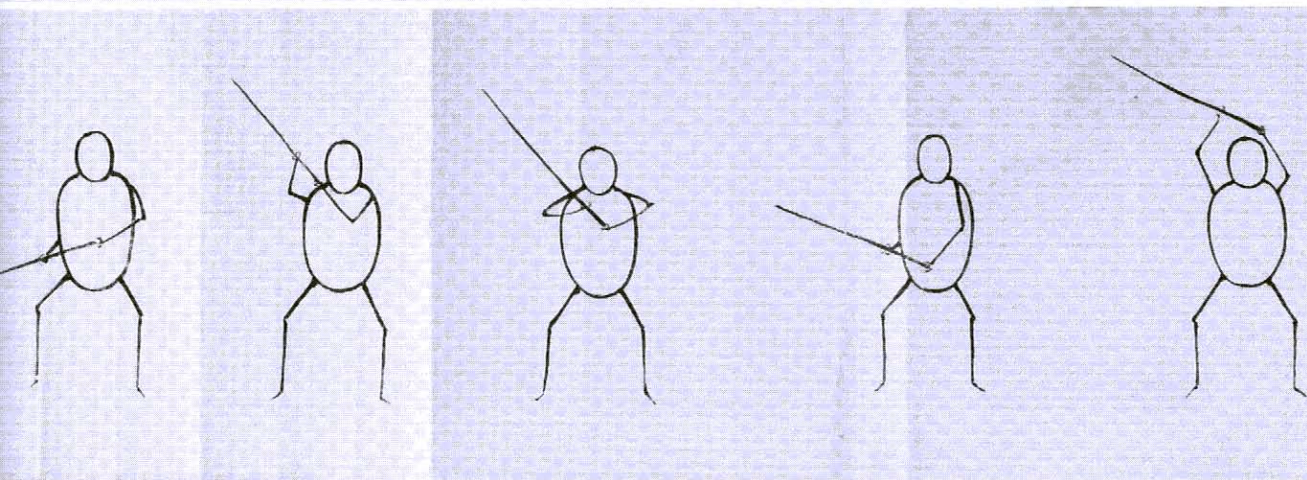
一一心

一無明一刀

一水月

一一味

一順劔



陰陽乃行の事利也

此は成る哉

尋ね死に人申

之れ記

風を子川水動く

之れは志は成る

之れは月動

動之れ

娯楽の事大刀以下

地獄なり多し

心より先

極楽

右者大石神影流

刀術截之位在哉

秘事依清之精合

清相傳畢尚事

修月之上次了百



申法也仍而如件

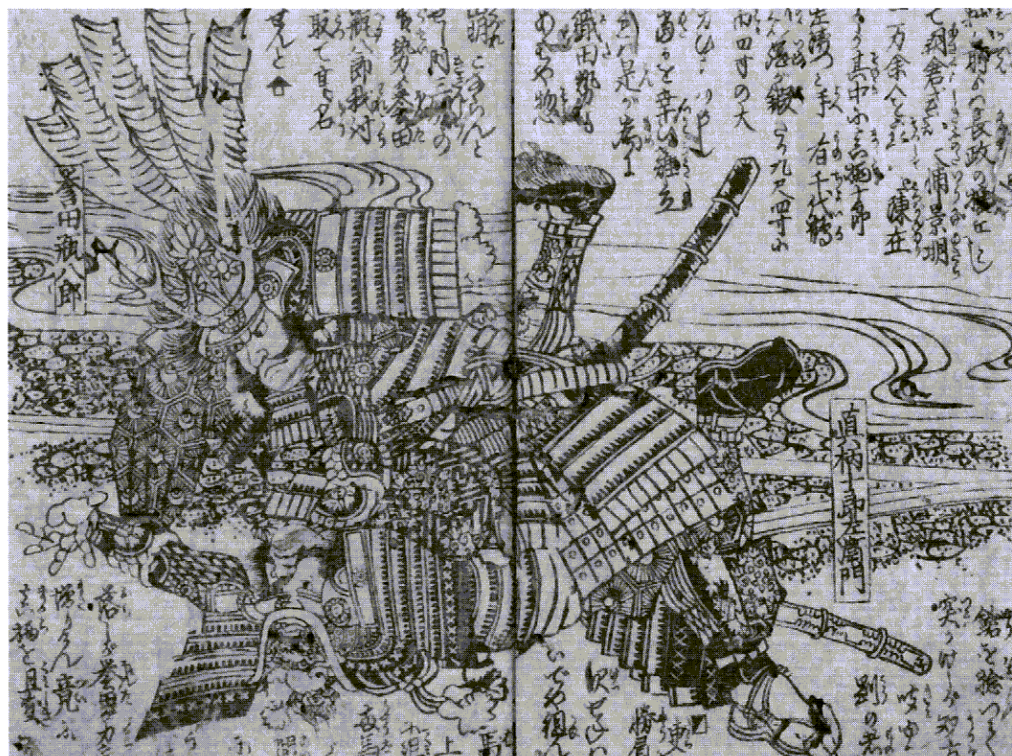
大正六年

二月二日

元福山藩士

河内勉





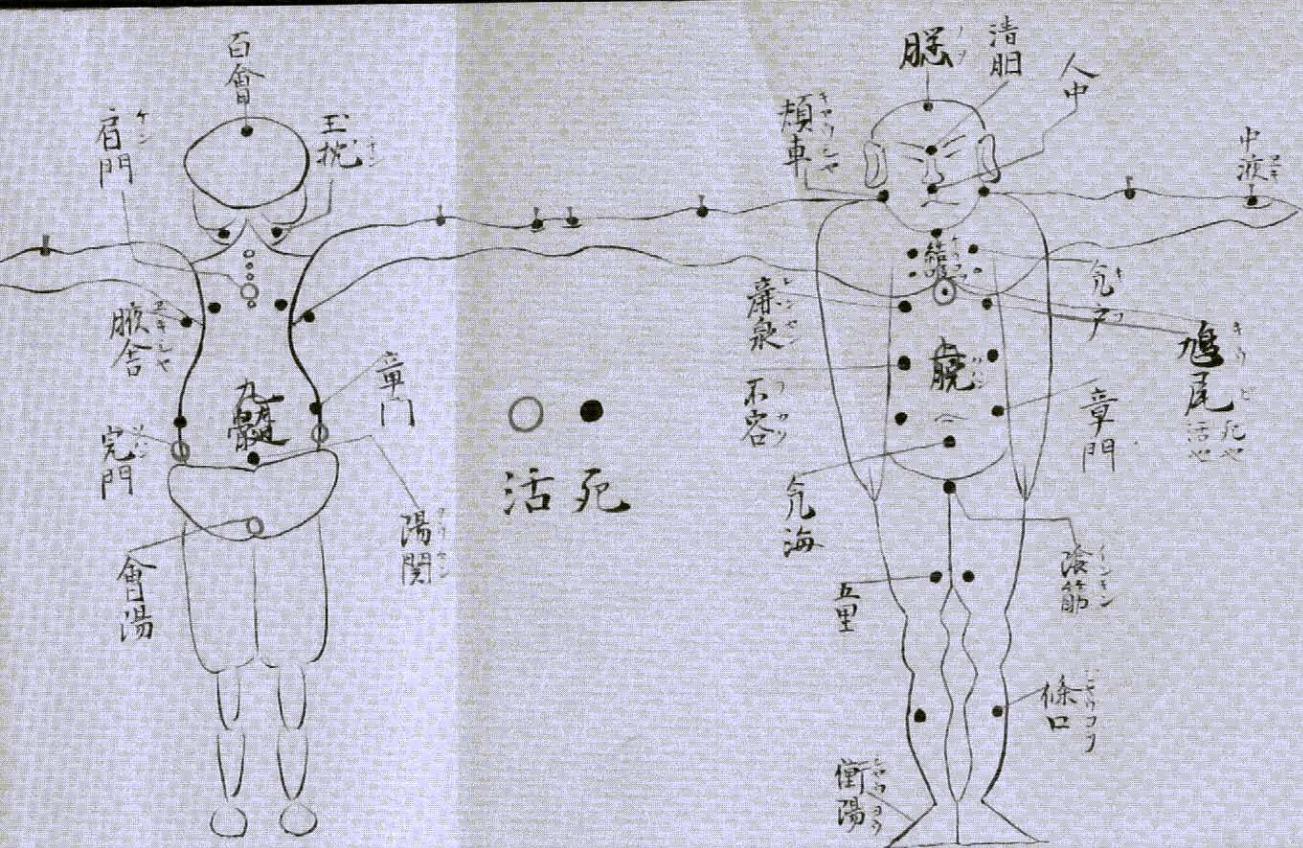
awareness after an attack. However, in the informal understanding it comes to mean ‘bold and original’ (zanshin, 斬新). If you cannot distinguish the formal from the informal meaning you will not achieve the correct form of zanshin. Practical zanshin of Budo lies somewhere between the previous posture and the subsequent one, in an ethereal, constant state of change.

The ‘Niten’ of Musashi’s *Niten Ichi Ryu* means all things being in flux through the endless circle of birth, death, and rebirth; change again and again (niten 二転, santen 三転); showing the flow that changes in this way. Nature changes because it is beautiful. It is beautiful so it changes. Needless to say, this change must be natural, otherwise a great disaster awaits. The world changes again and again—fertile land is left behind by floods, seeds survive in the earth of an area devastated by fire, allowing flowers to bloom, changing continually.

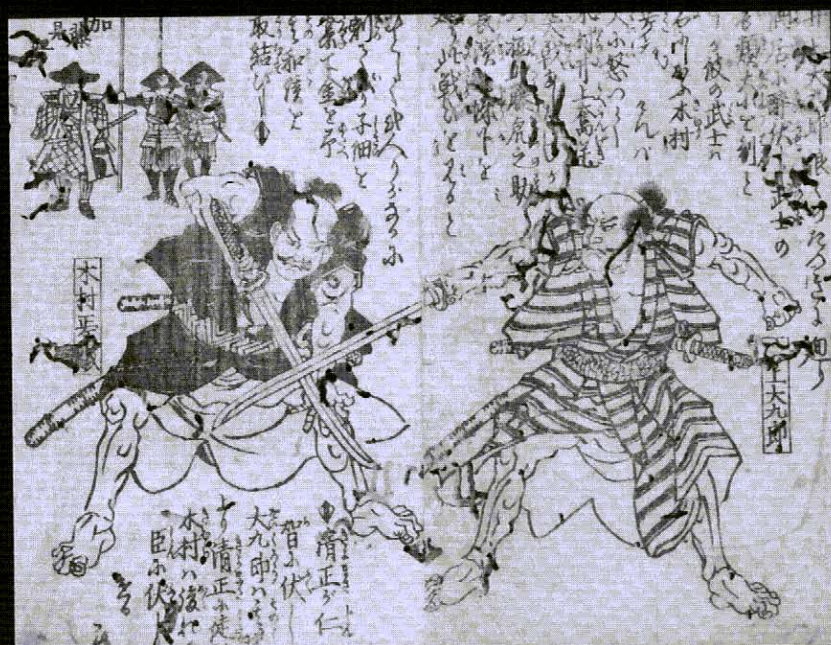
## Large, Small, the Heart, Technique, and Body

There is a famous legend of Issun boshi (the inch-high samurai, a character similar to Tom Thumb in the West). Several years after his birth, Issun Boshi only grew to the size of an adult’s little finger, despite being





Densho of Shinkyo-ryu.



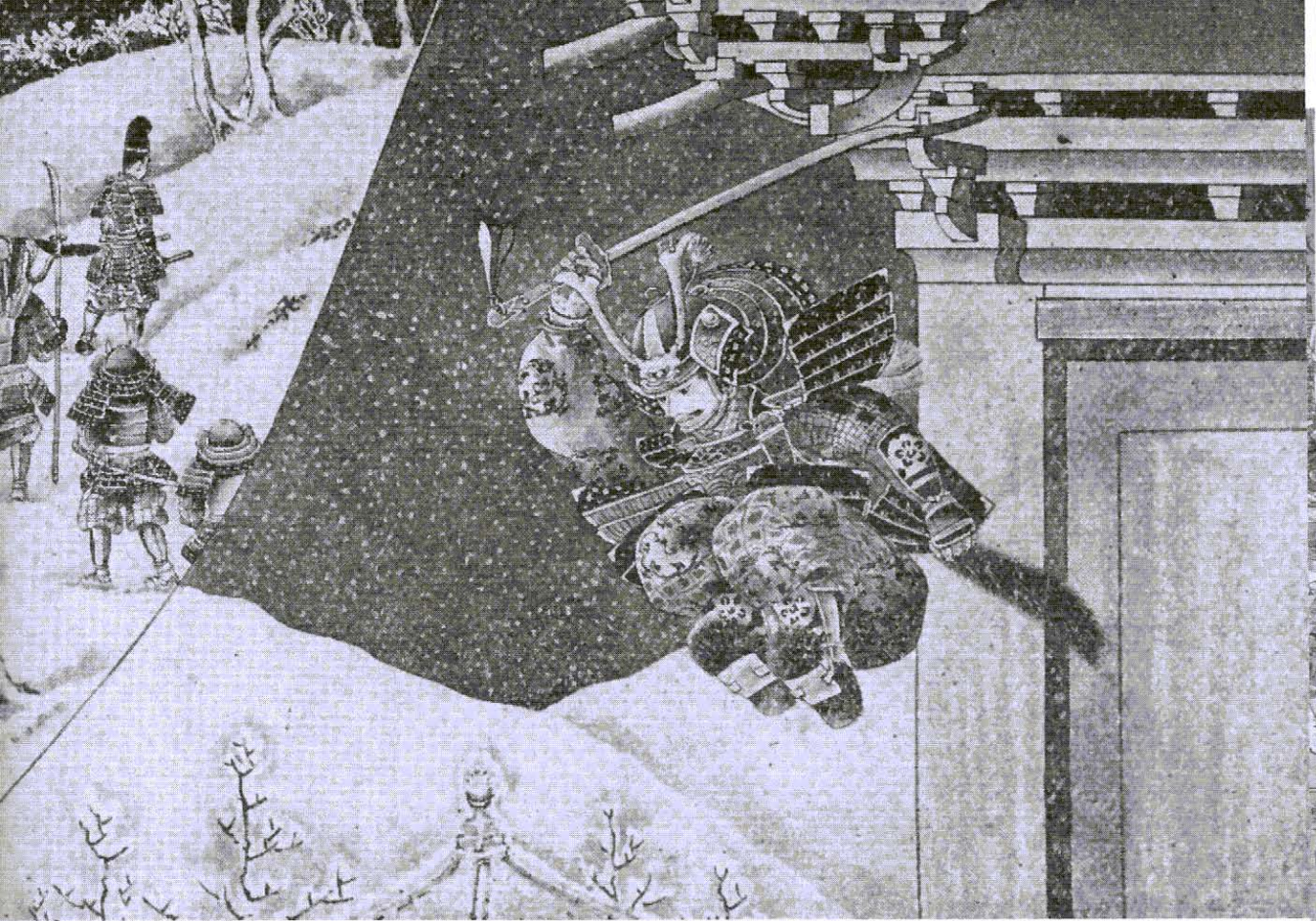
healthy. He had a dream of going to the city and becoming a samurai, so, using a rice bowl as a boat, he went down the river to the capital. There he was allowed to serve under a well known warrior family. One day, when the princess went to pray at the famous Kiyomizu temple, she was attacked by a large demon. Issun Boshi killed the demon singlehandedly, saving the princess. When the priest of the temple waved the magic hammer left behind by the demon, the diminutive warrior turned into a handsome young man.

When talking about Budoka, the following people come to mind: Judo's Kyuzo Mifune Sensei, Aikido's Morihei Ueshiba Sensei, and Karate's Gichin Funakoshi Sensei. These three men are not very tall, and because they had smaller frames it is said that they had good balance. They also devoted their lives to training, increasing their skills and abilities, and therefore grew to become famous martial artists. Most people who stood in front of these teachers had the impression that they were much larger than themselves. In the same way that there is a long and short sword, there are large and small people. However, through the development of heart, technique, and body (*shingitai*), both large and small can acquire ability. The greater also serves for the lesser. This means that the Budo of people who know their own values cannot be measured.

## Master and Student

At one time Takamatsu Sensei's martial name was 'Chosui' (clear water) and he took great care that his heart and mind were like clear water. This martial name overlaps with the idea in the Japanese proverb "Mizu kiyokereba uo sumazu," meaning, "fish will not live in a stream if the water is too clean." My master took very good care of the divine spring of nature, that is, the flow of clear water. Fish that oppose living in this divine spring, or you might say people who have lost the awareness as Budoka, lose the way of Budo. There is another proverb in Japanese: "San jyaku sagatte shi no kage wo fumazu," meaning "walk three feet behind and do not step on the shadow of your teacher." It would seem that the average person would only accept that this relates to the attitude of the student within the student/teacher relationship. However, how many people realize that it is the master that stands three feet in front of the student protecting the student from an attack from the enemy by using his own shadow as a shield? Furthermore, a teacher is someone that defends tradition. They stand in front, and also look into the future.

I continued training with a mind not to step on the shadow of my master, but after raising students for forty or fifty years there is some-

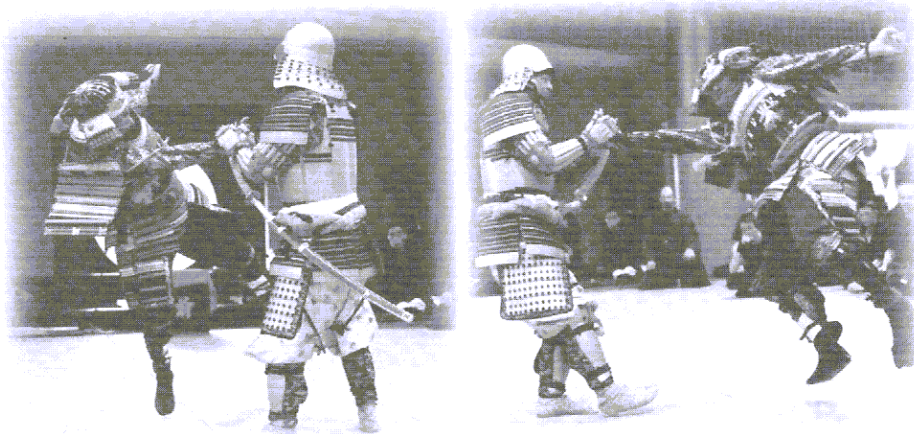


thing I realized—the real form of the shadow is the very figure of the master. While taking care not to step on the shadow of your master, you may never understand your master’s heart. Now I have passed the same age as my master, and I realized that in order to protect my students I must guide them to look ahead. All students need to be protected, not just the good ones. Let us write the character for master (shisho, 師匠) as one who shows justice (shisho, 示正). Among the many kind words that Takamatsu Sensei said, I can recollect a postcard he wrote with the words: “I will make Hatsumi-san a loving pupil.” Life is a mysterious thing, and if there is a good teacher and a good student, then life can be continued. If a student that has comparable ability to the teacher is chosen and they succeed the master, they must be careful not to lose the ability that they receive. I received a work of calligraphy from Takamatsu Sensei with the words “ware nashi,” which, directly translated, mean “no self.” However, it is important to realize that ‘ware’ (self) can refer also to another person. Failure to understand this means you will not be able to understand your master’s words. That is to say, ‘ware nashi’ can also be heard as, ‘no opponent,’ or ‘no enemy.’ Nonetheless, there are times between the student and master when the retainers supplant their lords. However, only the pure relationships survive—it is only a pure and small stream that is alive in the clear vital water.

Speaking of the student-teacher relationship, none had more famous students than Koizumi Isenoka I. His lineup of famous names included: Hikita Bungoro, Jingo Izunokami, Okuyama Kyugasai, Marume Kurando, Yagyū Mitsuyoshi, Matsuda Oribenosuke, Naka Yazaemon, Ashikaga Yoshiteru, and Toyotomi Hodetsugu. Yagyū Mitsuyoshi was later called Yagyū Tajima Nyūdō Sekishusa Sogoni after he entered the priesthood. Yagyū Munenori was his fifth son.



Picture of the female warrior Tomoe gozen.





There is a traditional Japanese card game in which one hundred famous poems written by one hundred famous writers are used. The selection of poems is different for every game, and is like a collection of songs of the *gokui* in relation to Budo and life. Reading this can make you calm and content. This is because songs carry tradition, and within that you can see through to the 'secret' (hiden). The character used for counting poems is written 'shu' (首), which shares the same sound as the word 'neck' (shu, 首). It may be said that in the hundred poems (shu, 首), one may see the hundred heads (necks, shu, 首) of the enemy. Another reading for neck (首) is 'kubi,' which is phonetically the same as 'nine secrets' (kubi, 九秘), or 'eternal secret' (久秘). Incidentally, the character for 'lord' (主) is also pronounced as 'shu.' Yagyu Mitsuyoshi also wrote *100 Songs of the Shinkage*. I possess the book of *100 Songs of Bokuden*, written by Tsukuhara Bokuden. In addition, there is the *Yoshimori Book of 100 Songs*, *Hozoin Book of 100 Songs*, and the *Monster Book of 100 Songs*. The *Book of One Hundred Stories of Demons Traveling at Night* resembles the prayer of *One Hundred Goings* (O-hyakudo Mairi).

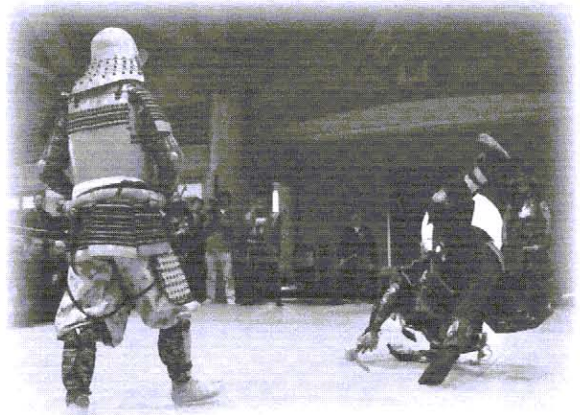
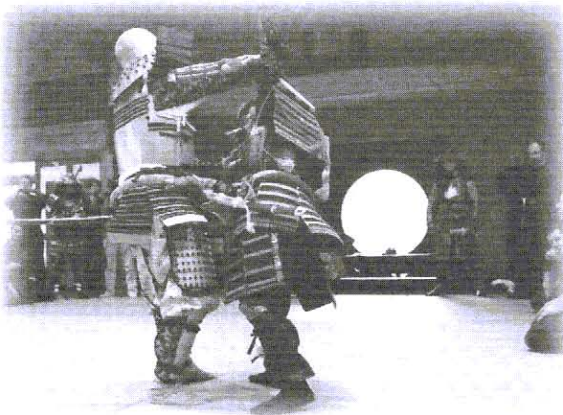
## Between Densho and Kyojitsu

Densho and Kyojitsu—this means the transmission (densho) and the truth (jitsu) that exists today (kyo) is important. These days, I've come to think that the meaning of densho is connected to the life of the universe. For example, heredity can be defined as not only something between a parent and child but also something between like minded people who are connected to the universe and connected by some bond or destiny, making a transmission that lives on. Without this kind of heredity, would there be transmission (densho) for long? A good example can be found in the scrolls of Budo. Often, between the names of successors of the lineage is recorded "generation omitted." This is because the masters recorded had such a strong bond other names in the lineage were omitted. The kyo of the transmission is not falsehood (kyo, 虚), which is the normal reading of kyo, but rather it is real. People thought these masters were legends, but even though they were called 'false,' they passed on genuine techniques to the student, and hence they were in fact real. After being married for a few years but unable to father children, Takamatsu Sensei said to us, "You can still love children even if they are not your own." In Densho and Kyojitsu, nothing more is needed than love.

There is also a form of densho in kabuki. In the region of Edo, correct form was considered a virtue, but in the Kyoto and Osaka regions there was more virtue in the interior expressiveness of the practitioner rather



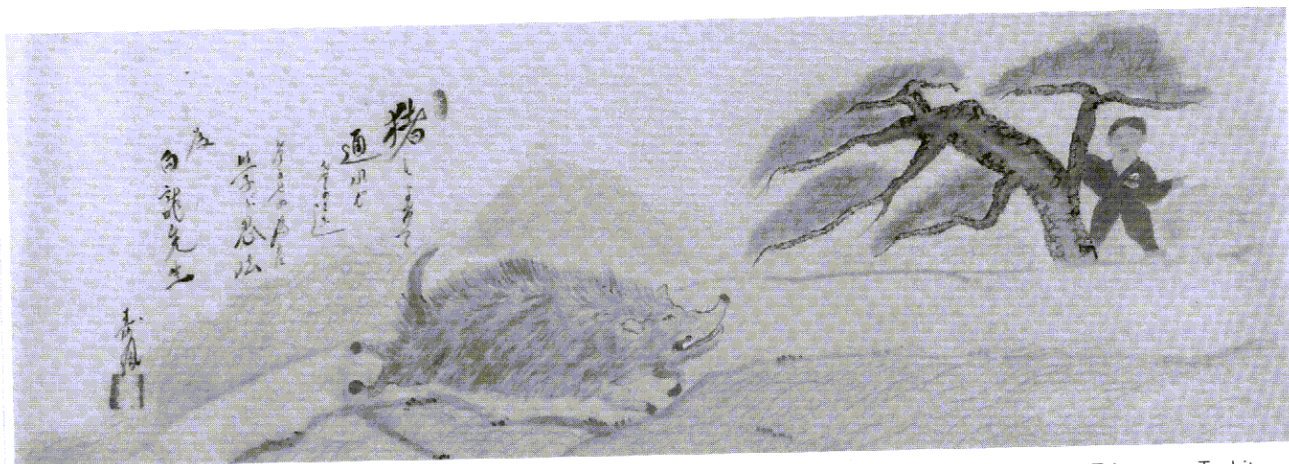
Picture of kumiuchi.



than the form. In this the kyojitsu that transmits the forms lives. Let me introduce you to two stories of the performances of the kabuki actor Ichikawa Danjuro. The first: in every play there was a scene where Ichikawa Danjuro would sit on a cushion, and the stage hand was appointed to position the cushion wherever he would sit. However, everyday, after the performance was completed, he would complain that the positioning of the cushion was bad, and strike the stage hand. This would continue until one day the stage hand was not struck by Danjuro, so, believing he had found the correct place to position the cushion, he made a mark where he had placed it. He decided if it appeared Danjuro was about to strike him the next day for not putting the cushion in the right place, he would kill him, so he hid a knife in his pouch waiting for the end of the play. However, that day he was not struck by Danjuro. At that point the stage hand suddenly realized and went down on his knees begging for forgiveness. "Master, I'm so sorry," he cried, "I didn't have the ability to see the movement of your performance, I'm only a novice and I'm greatly ashamed to say that I had a thought of killing you master, therefore please punish me in any way you deem necessary!" To this Danjuro responded, "I see . . . well, as you told me I am putting your life on the line in this performance, so don't worry about it."



The second: in a scene where Danjuro was doing a turn, a person skilled with the sword thought if he saw an opening (suki) he would cut him. But there was no opening and his efforts were confounded. From then on he respected Danjuro as a master of the way of the sword. These two episodes are told as parables for building flawless form.



Picture of a wild boar by Takamatsu Toshitugu.





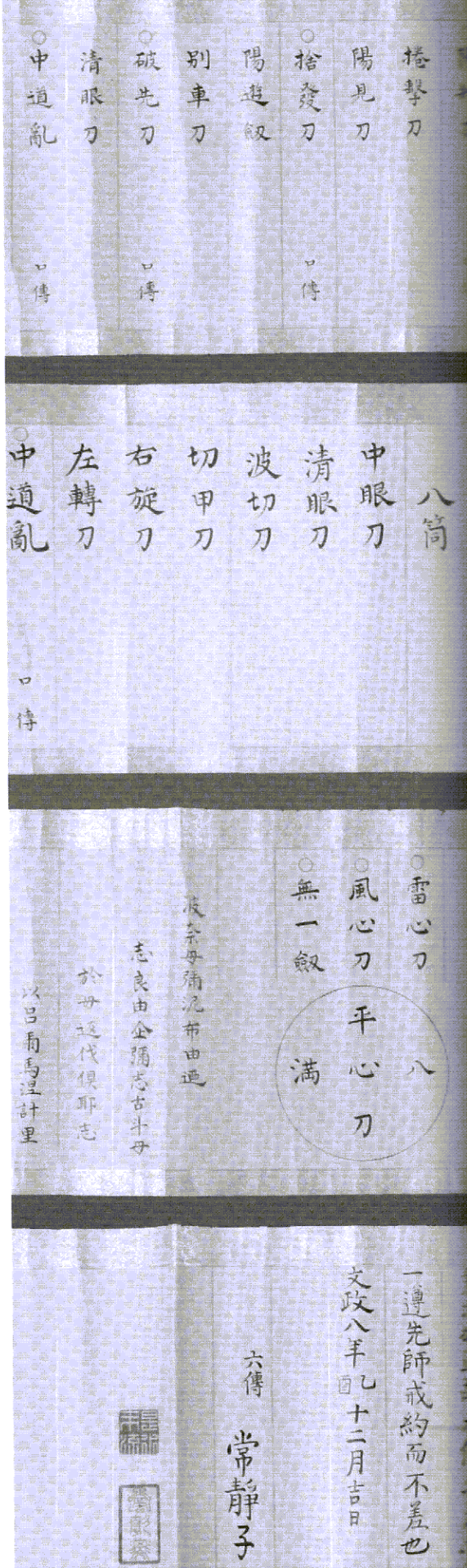
## Budo of Tomorrow

I was once asked: "how do you express in one word practice in the dojo?" I answered, "The dojo is like a pool." You start by getting the people who cannot swim to swim. In this way life can be compared to a pool.

Earlier, I mentioned the work of Fushikaden (*Transmission on the Appearance of a Flower*). My master Takamatsu Sensei sometimes praised "the nature of a flower, the nature of bamboo" (kasei chikusei) and loved flowers deeply. The character for flower is composed of the characters for 'grass in transformation' (花). Perhaps he was comparing a strong life force to flowers or grass. Even if you cut a flower, it will bloom again. Even if it is dried and has lost its shape, if the roots remain, there are many flowers that will bloom again the following year—that is life. As a martial artist, I teach the essence of Budo to people who have the resolution for Budo; I am returning to the spirit of the past. Until now there have been many occasions when I might have lost my life; the fact that I am still alive today must mean that I have a mission in life. Now, having reached the 33rd anniversary of the passing of my master, I have decided to make the soul of Budo known to the world. What is most important is the soul of your fellow man and a mutual feeling toward one another. I think that if the seed of Japan's Budo is planted anywhere in the world, it will continue to grow and flourish.

I never used to think consciously about teaching or

Densho of Shingyo-to-ryu by Matsuura Joseishi. He ruled Hirado as a daimyo and, after retiring, he wrote the famous essay "Kasshi yawa."



心形刀流目錄序

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中道劍

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捨輪刀

直和刀

獅子亂刀

心形刀流諸目錄

大亂刀

虎亂刀

飛龍劍

九橋刀

同裏刀

清眼刀

胎內刀

陽重劍

三角切留

發車刀

右劍足

左劍足

陽勇劍

中道志破記

膝車刀

清眼刀

中道亂

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水月刀

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常機子

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spreading Budo around the world. I was just amazed that the world's view of Budo was completely different from my view. At that time I was spurred by the vitality of my youth, and allowed the urge I had to ensure Budo was understood by the rest of the world to drive me. I finally ended this journey and decided not to travel anymore in 2004.

It has been forty-eight years since I met Takamatsu Sensei, during which time I have persevered in the martial ways. There are forty-eight special techniques of Sumo, and I have come to view the number '48' as a martial artist. During my time as a martial artist, with regard to physical techniques, I have no recollection of doing one thing in the same way twice. This represents the 'numerous changes' (*banka*), of the *Gyokko-ryu Tenryaku no Maki*. The universe is always changing, and this means that I am also participating in the training (*keiko*) of the universe. Everything in the universe is attracted to everything else by universal gravitation. Time and space; past, present, and future are intimately connected to one another. I feel as though I am now in a time warp. I am walking the narrow path of the world of Gozan literature and haiku, such as recited by the great haiku master Basho:

Summer grass  
All that remains  
Of the warrior's dreams

The top rank for the Budo Taijutsu of Bujinkan Dojo is 15th dan. There are people who think this is the summit, but a tall mountain is beautiful because it stands in empty space (*koku*). In the scrolls (*densho*) of the Gyokko-ryu, the techniques are divided into three sections: *joryaku*, *churyaku*, and *geryaku*. In the scrolls the first method is 'koku,' and is the start of the secret techniques. Now the Bujinkan dojo has spread internationally and Budoka are growing in number. They are understanding the heart of the Budoka bound to the path of the 15th dan. Those who have attained 15th dan often say, "In Japan, there is a ceremony by which a samurai becomes a man at the age of fifteen. I believe we have also reached this coming of age." As for this book, I would like you to read it as a work that can assist you in gaining the knowledge necessary to become an attendee of that coming of age ceremony of the Budoka. It is with this in mind that I have penned my thoughts on these pages.

萬事馬九行



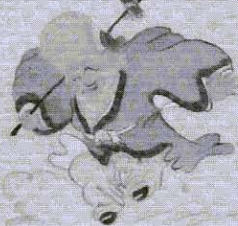
All the things go well.

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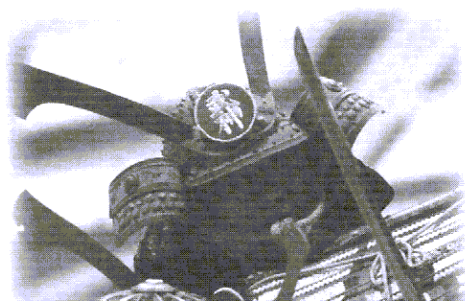
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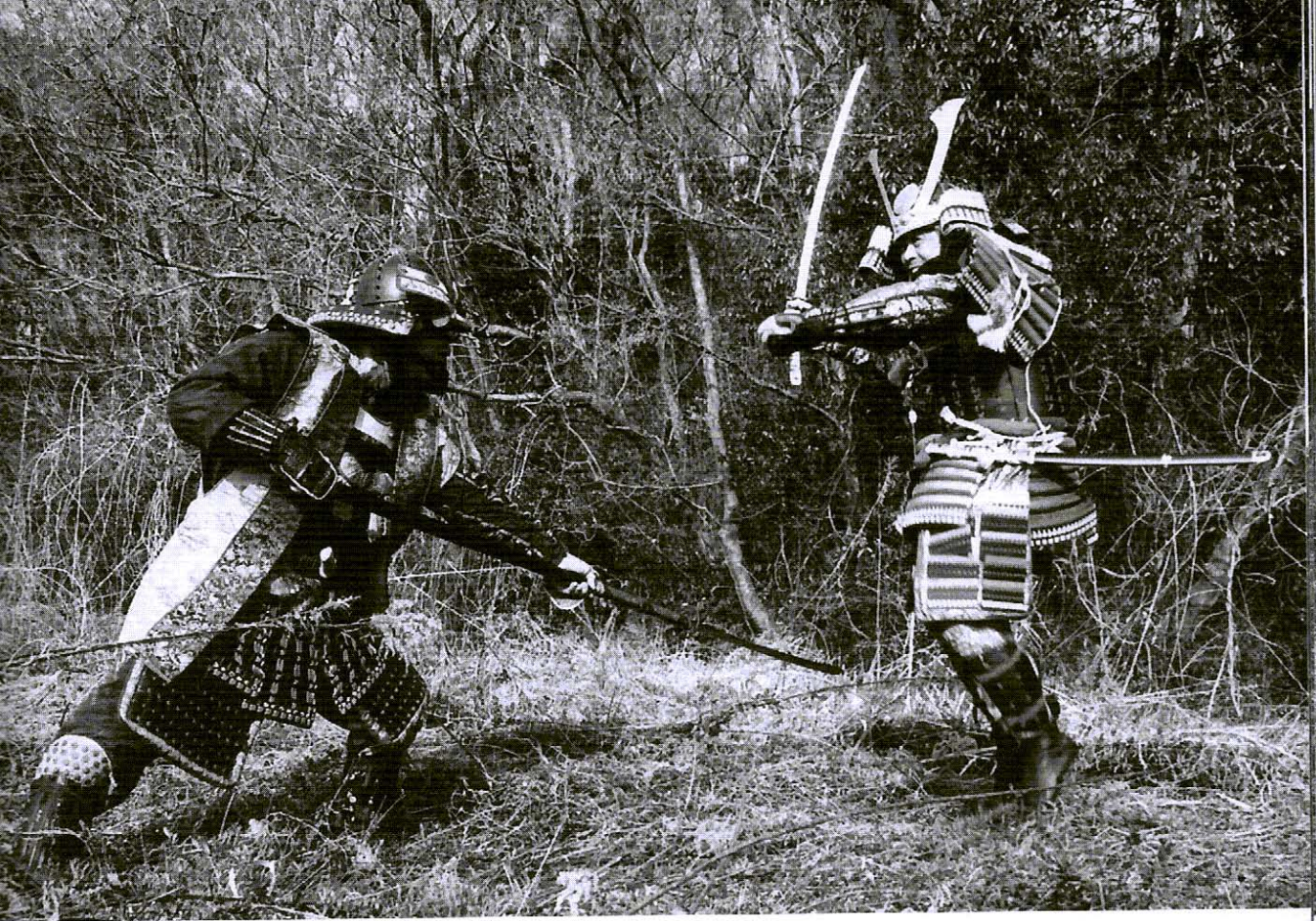


The passing of the mind into the inner world reveals life's secrets.

Katchu Tachi 甲冑太刀

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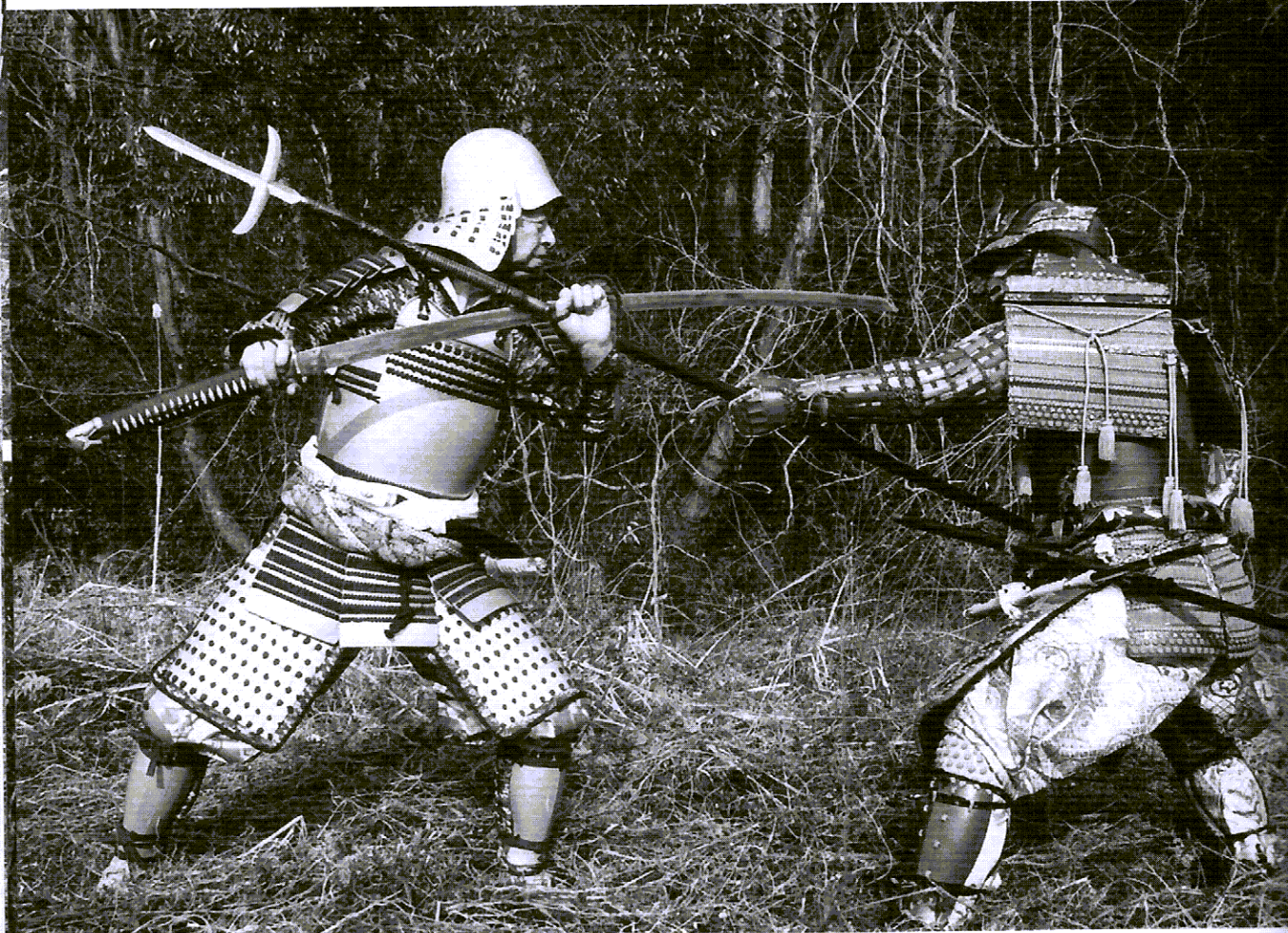


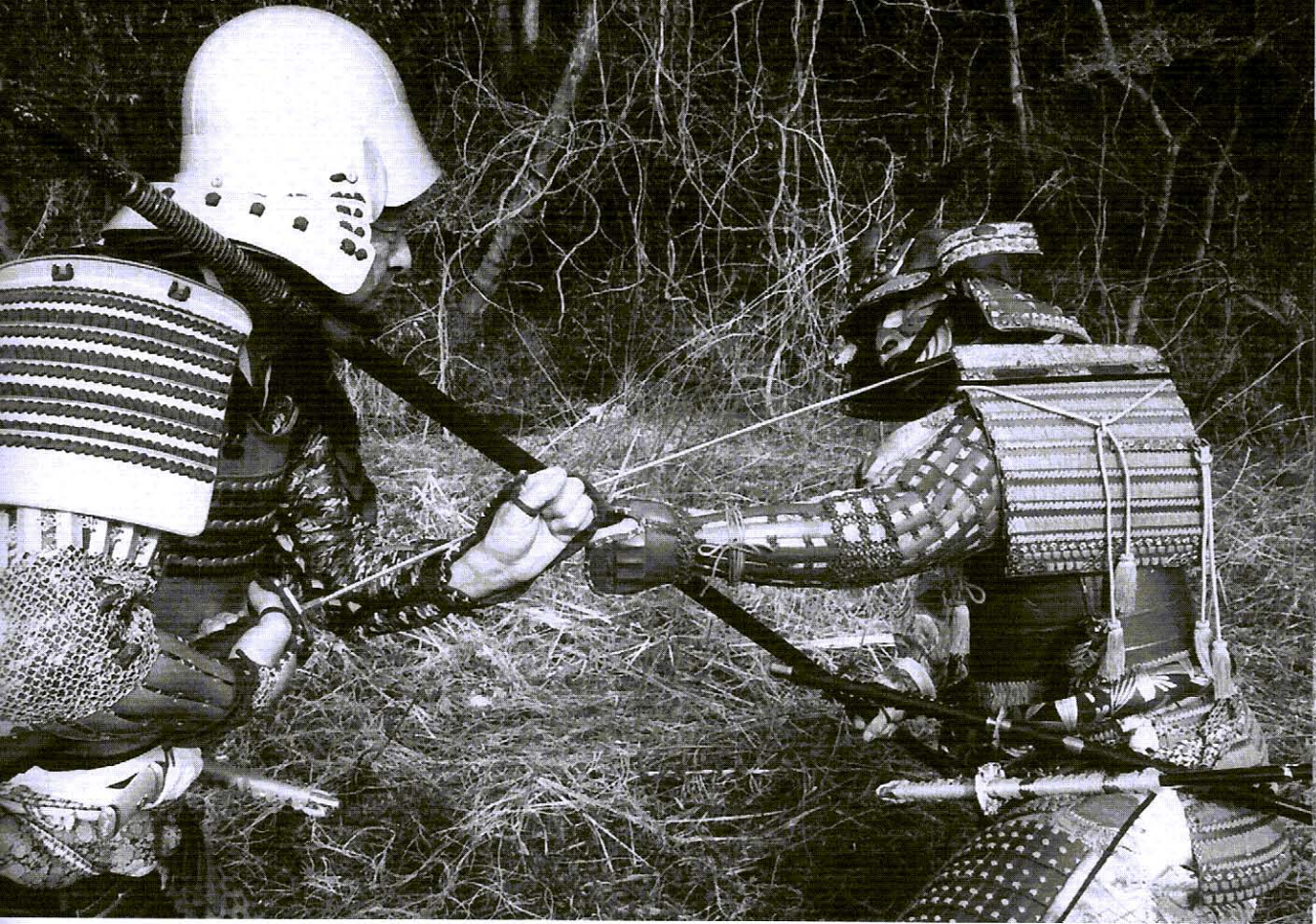




## Katchu Kenpo 甲冑剣法

Catch the opponent's tachi on the shoulder as they cut in from Daijodan. Take the first cut with the sword on the shoulder. Thrust in with the first cut. With the second, cut the throat.









Jinchu no Hira no Kamae (the posture with the sword lowered to the waist level in the battlefield). Against a spear thrust, throw up the thrust and enter with the body. Lift up the spear hand and, catching kote with the tachi, enter in with the body. The important point is to enter with the tachi and body as one.





Kumiuchi Tachi with a whole heart. Take the key point (kaname, 要, and enter into the key point with 'god eyes' (kaname, 神眼). The kaname defeat the opponent.





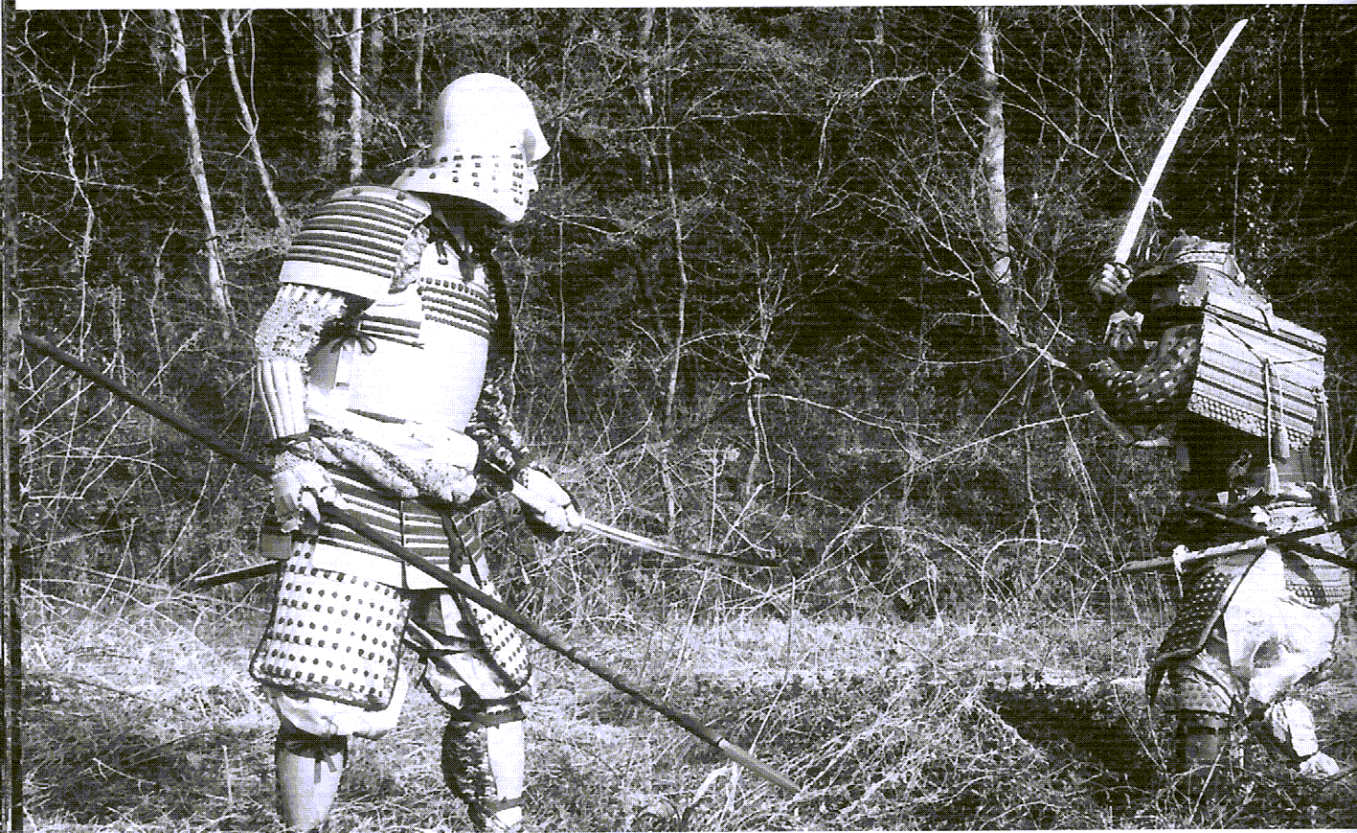


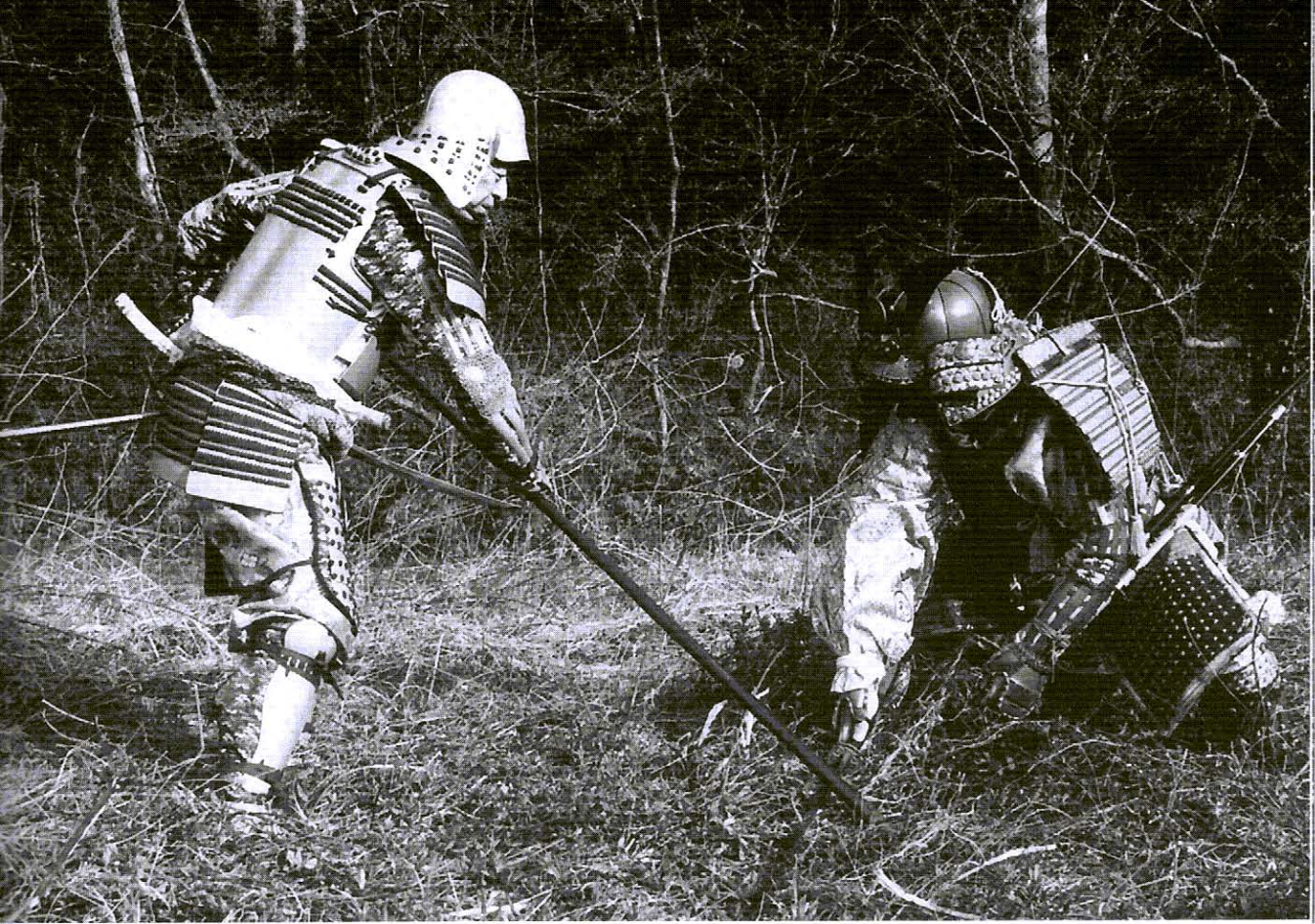
Practicing the yama arashi (mountain storm) throw, lift your opponent onto your shoulders. Carrying the warrior is like "carrying one hundred koku (stones)." Crash down the warrior, destroy the opponents as though they are crushed by stones, or smashed by an avalanche.



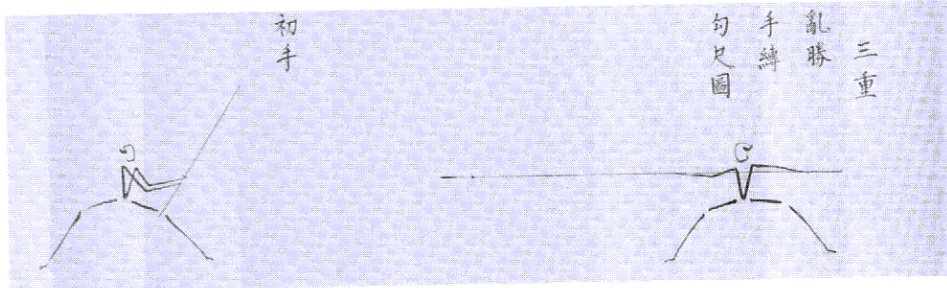
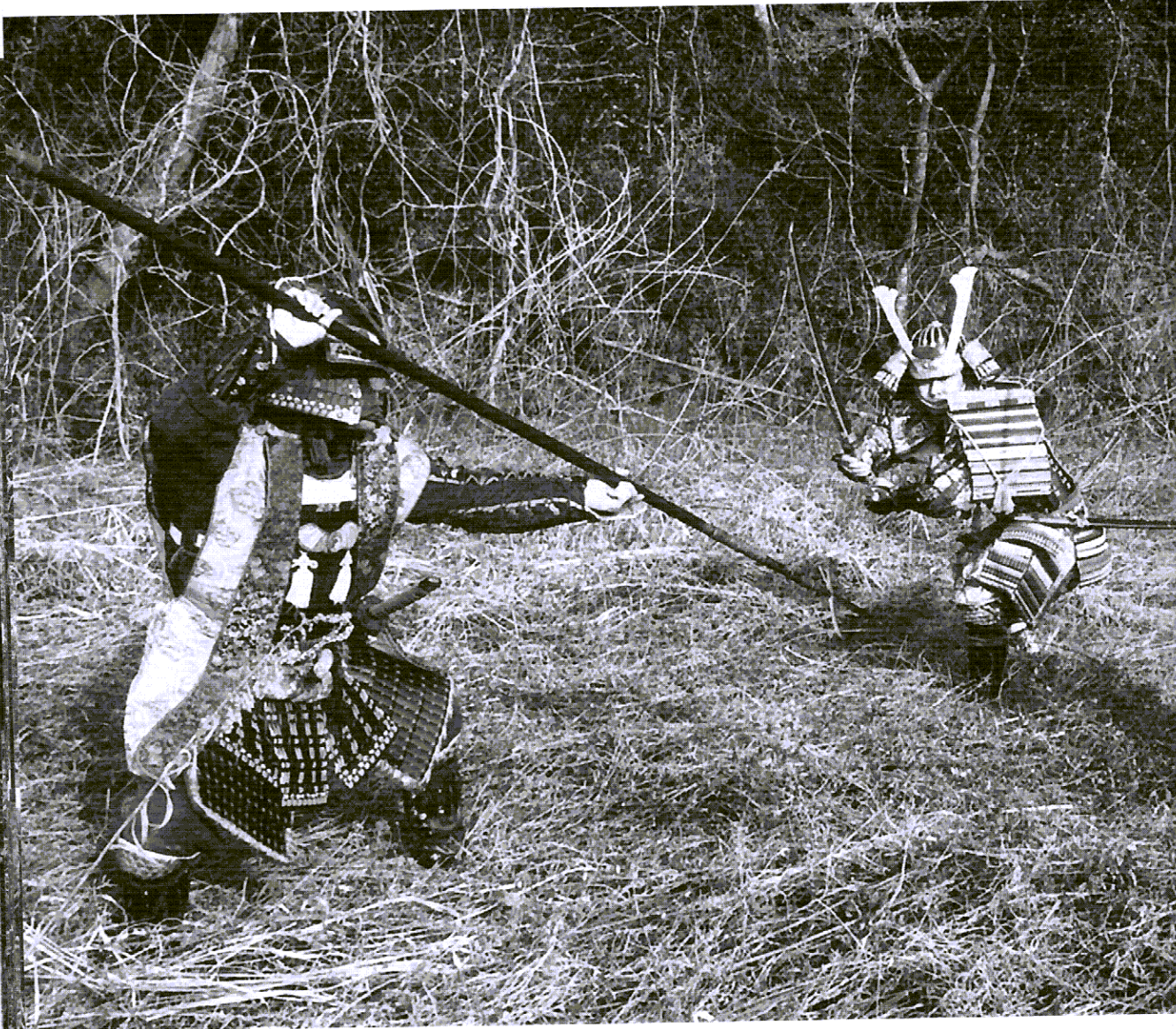


From *Senjin Niten no Kamae*. Two heaven strikes (*Niten uchi*). Cut the opponent's attacking hand with the first strike. Thrusting in with the spear, bring down the opponent's tachi and step on the spear with your right foot. While taking the tachi, kick in and cut into the opponent's vital points.

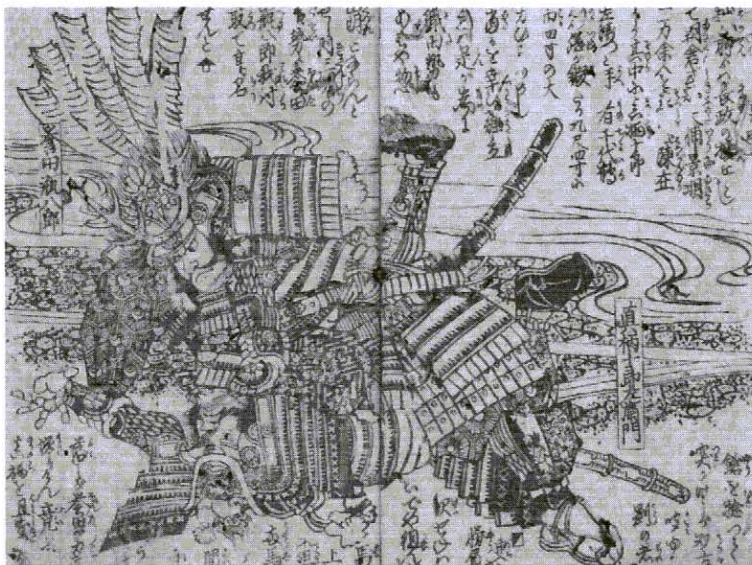




It is easy to stab an opponent in armor using a spear. The spear's superiority in this area meant there was a time it was one of the most common weapons used in combat on the battlefield.

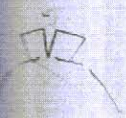


Densho of Muhen-ryu Sojutsu.



Picture of kumiuchi. Yamanaka Shikanosuke, a military commander in the late Muromachi period.

手裏劍



筋達



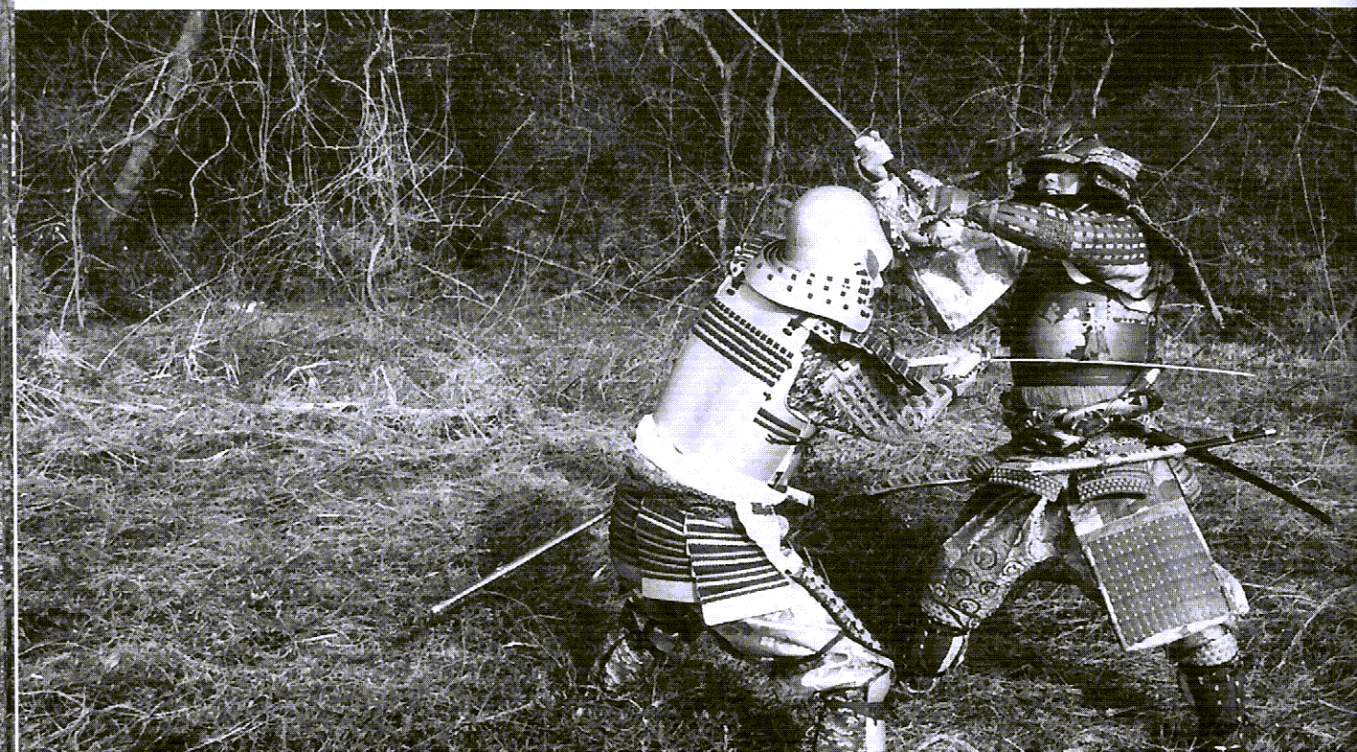
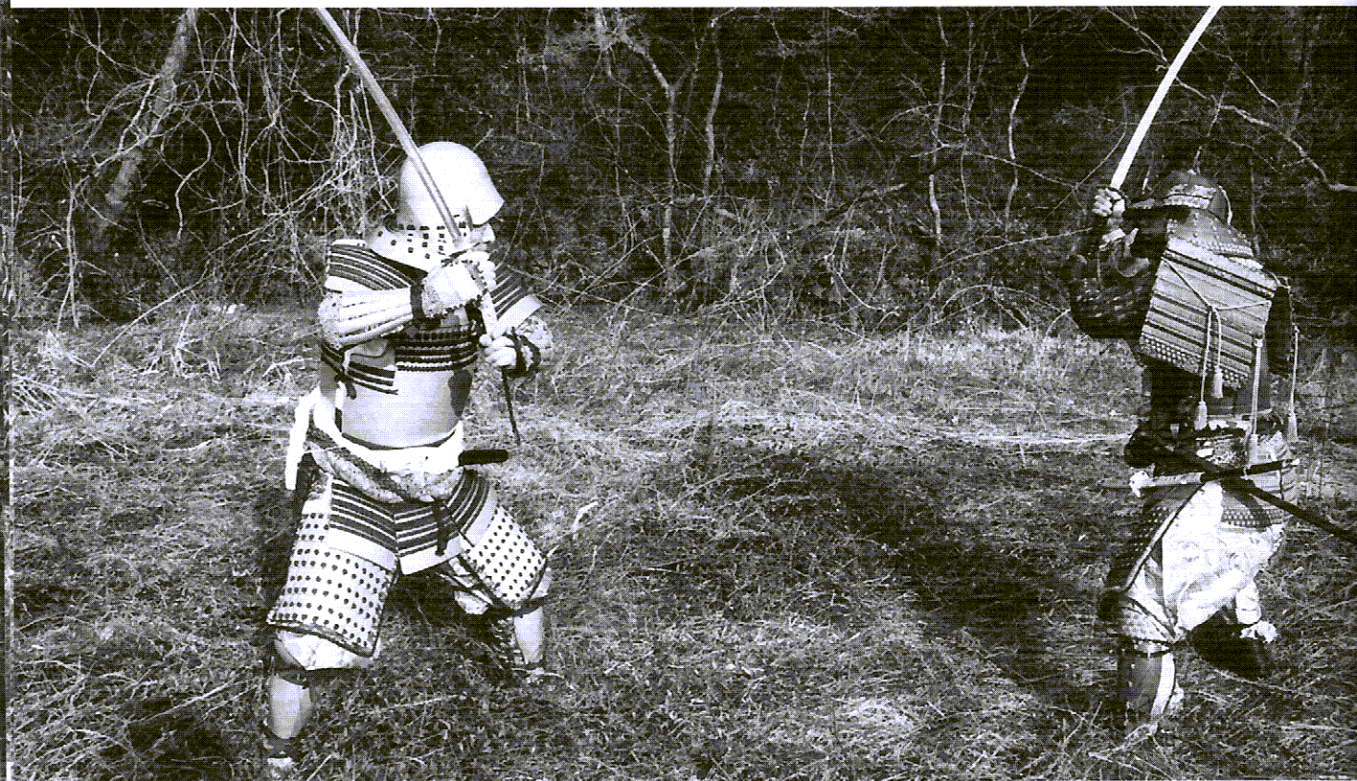
切向



## Tachi uchi 太刀討

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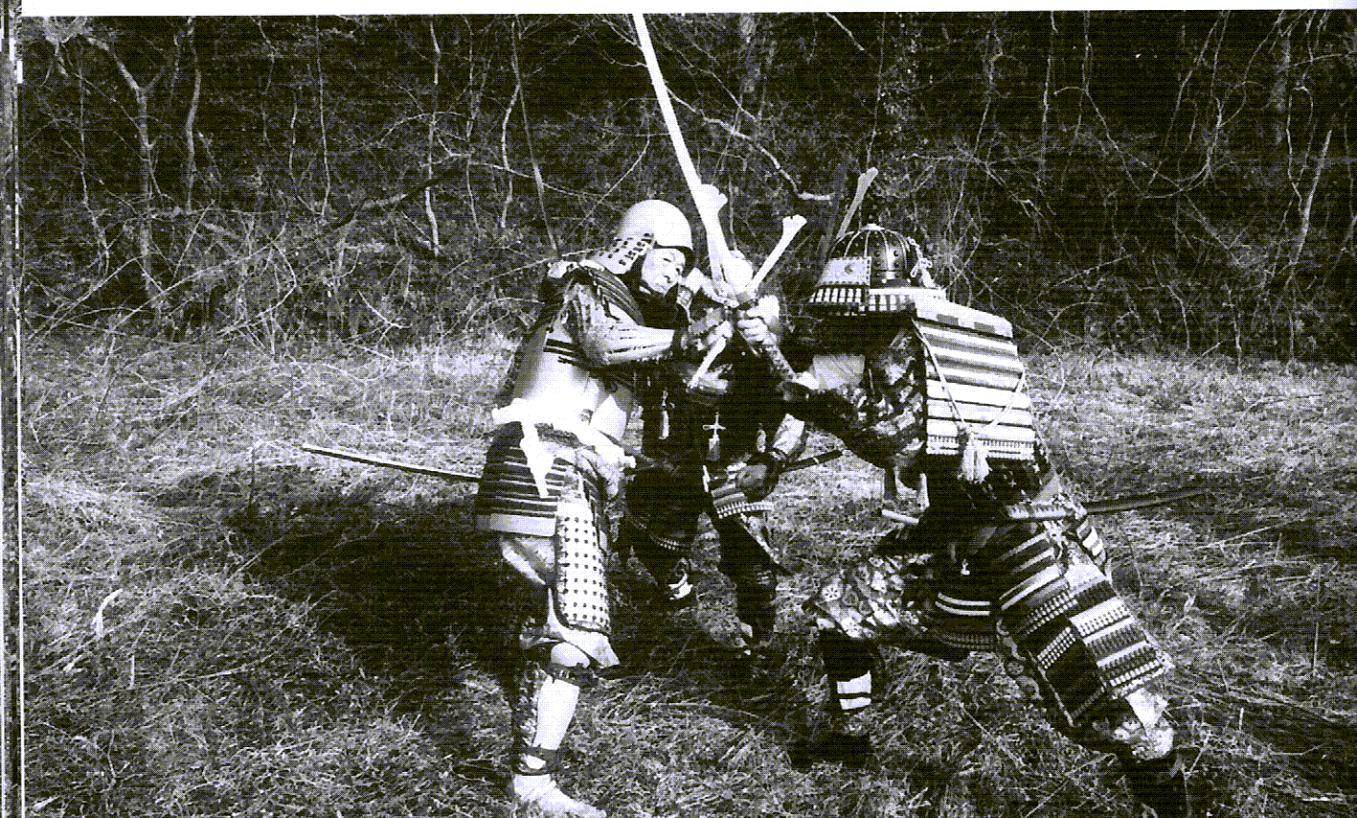
Receive the attack from Hasso no Kamae with the right hand. Strike to the opponent's left side to knock them down. There are many variations after entering with the body. Take the opponent's cut to the left side of the head with the upper arm and shoulder. Lifting in and up with the body, right thrust in with the tachi. Changing the tachi to the left hand, stab in and cut down on the neck.

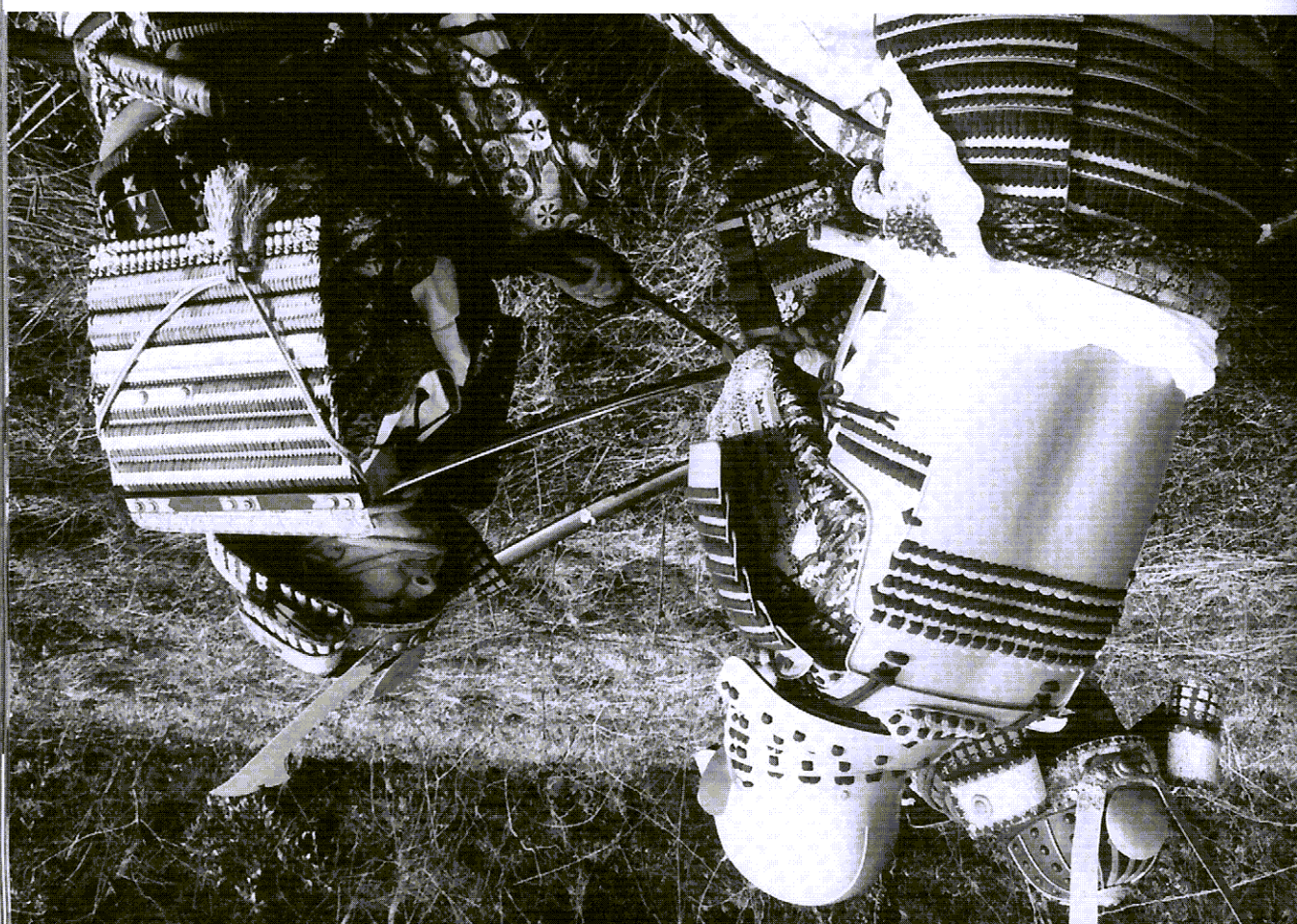




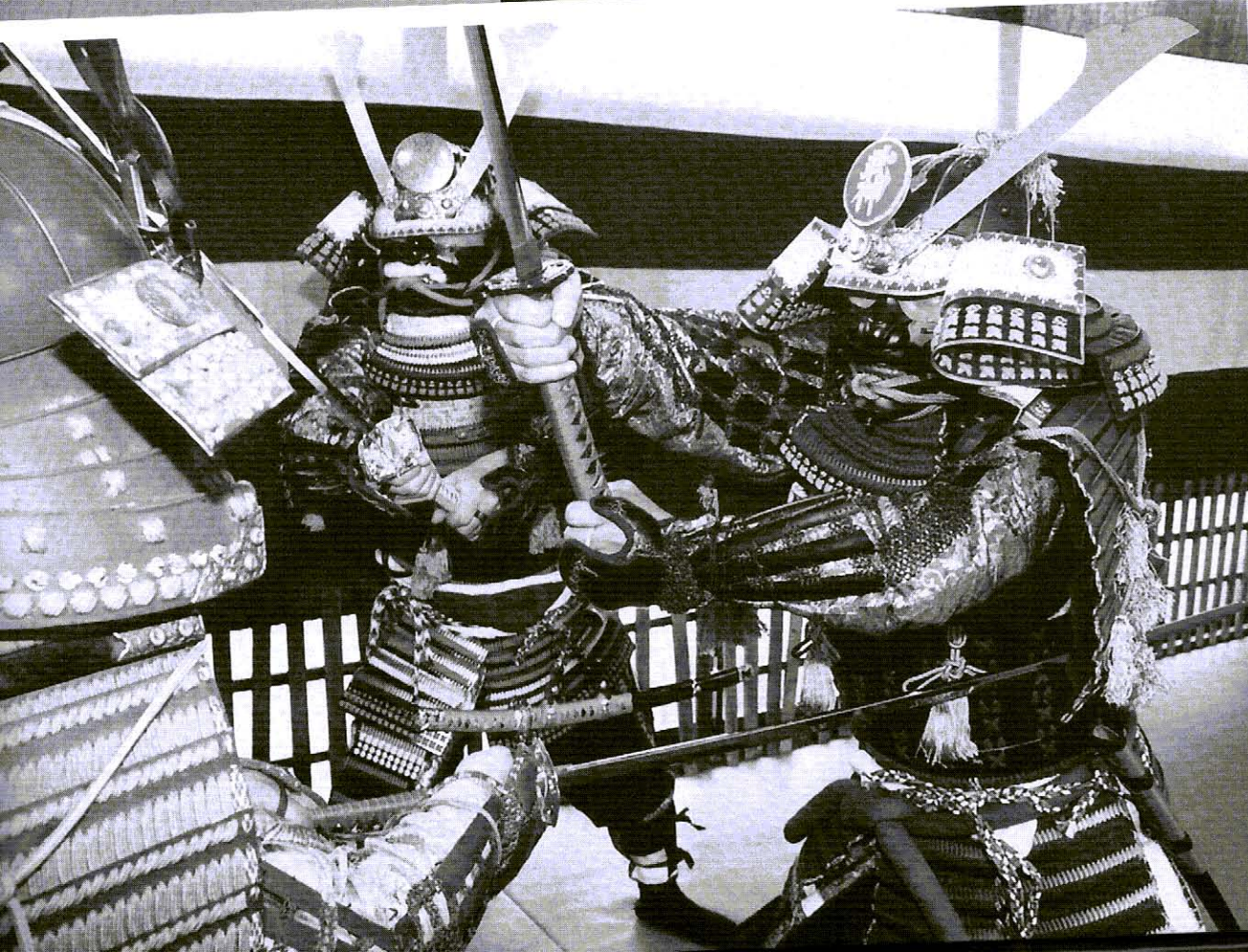
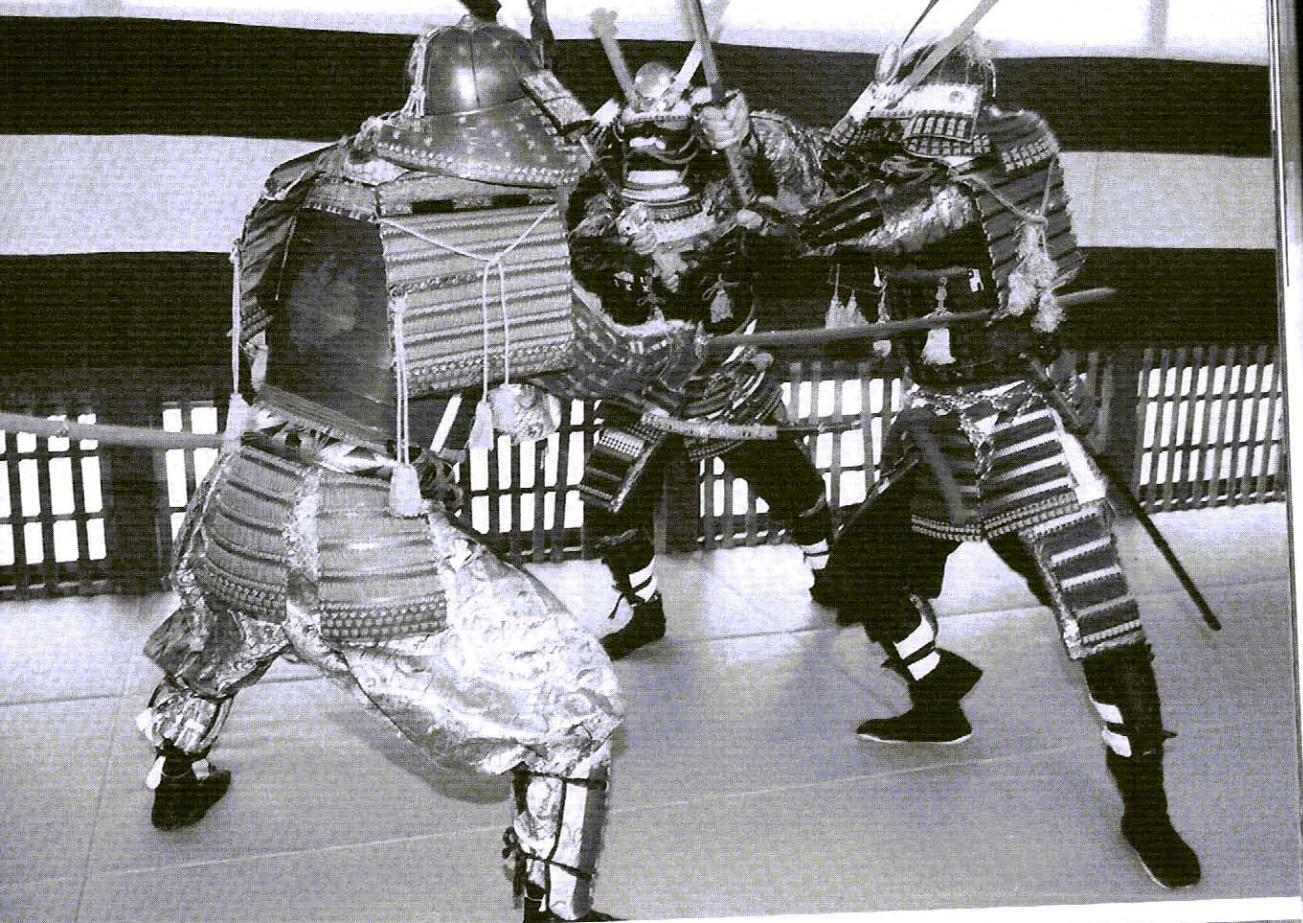


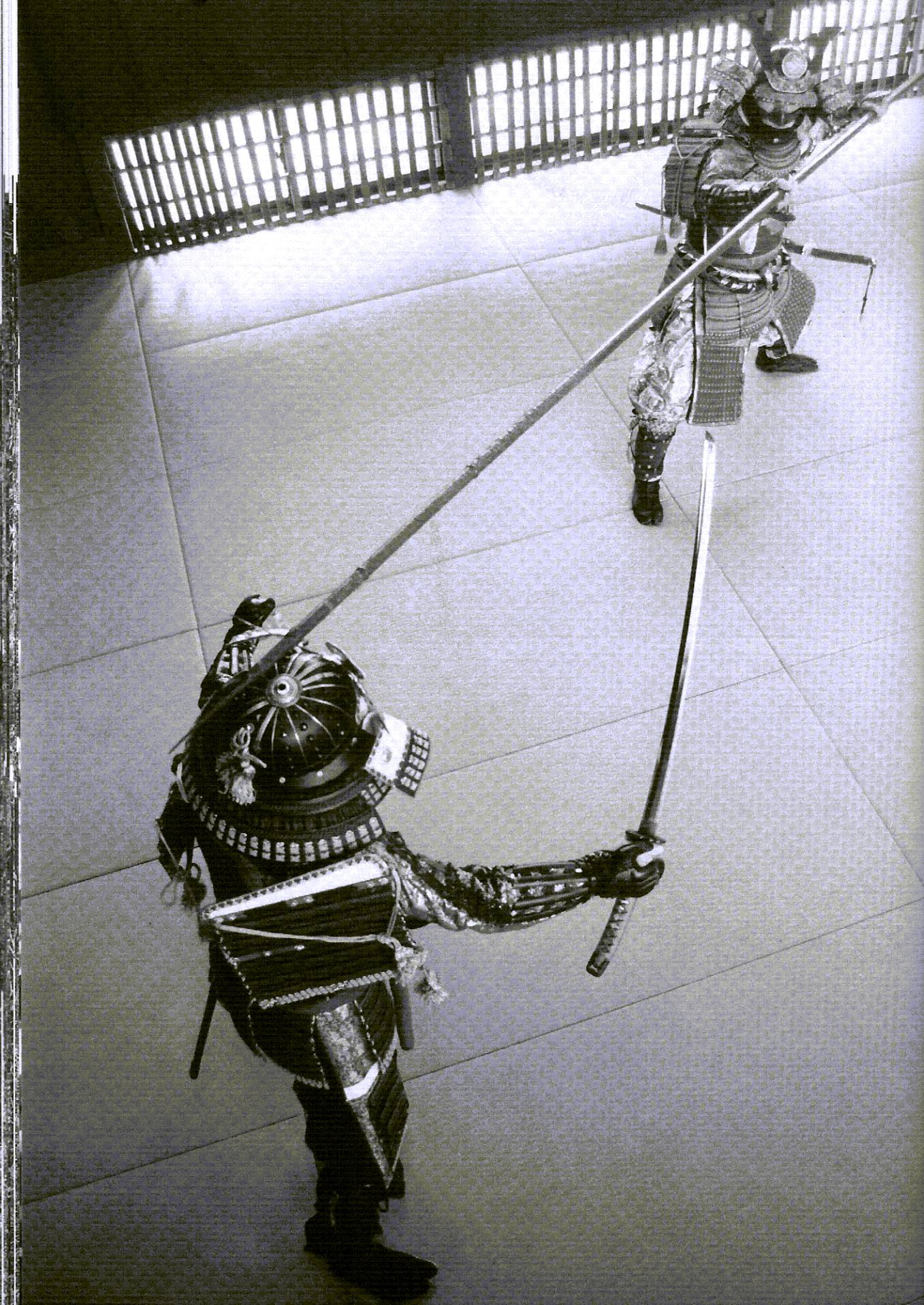
**Multiple opponents. The tachi and thrust are one.** I repel the opponents' attacks solidly by changing the motion. Six blades: 3 daggers, 3 tachi become all mine. Despite the many opponents, the firm and stable body posture, combined with flexibility, will bring natural victory.

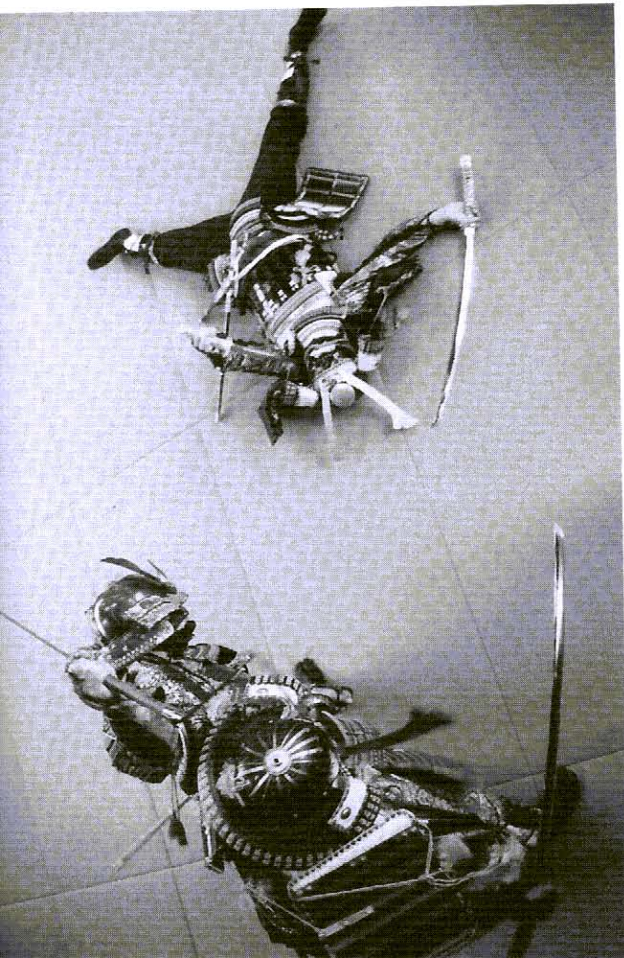
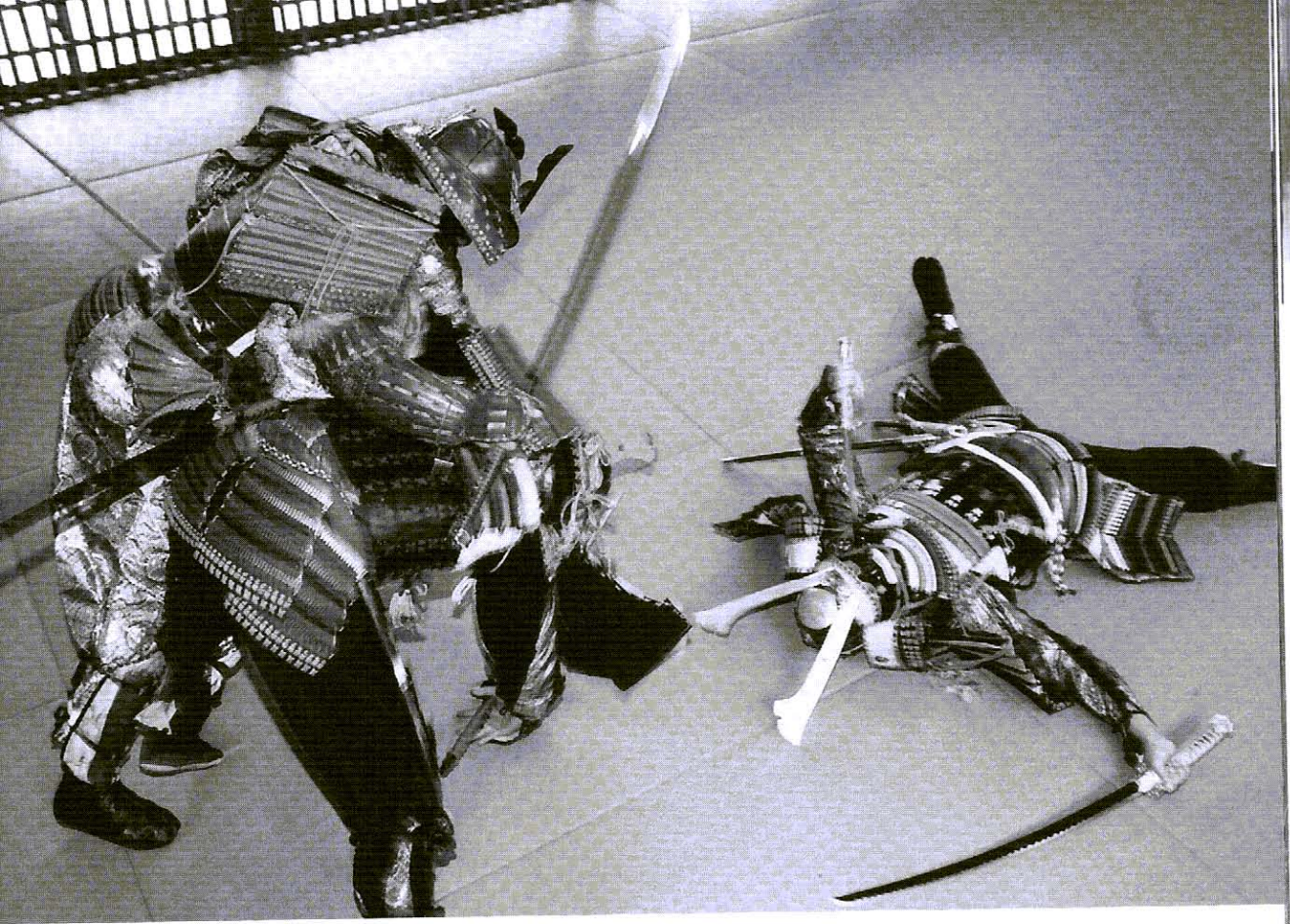






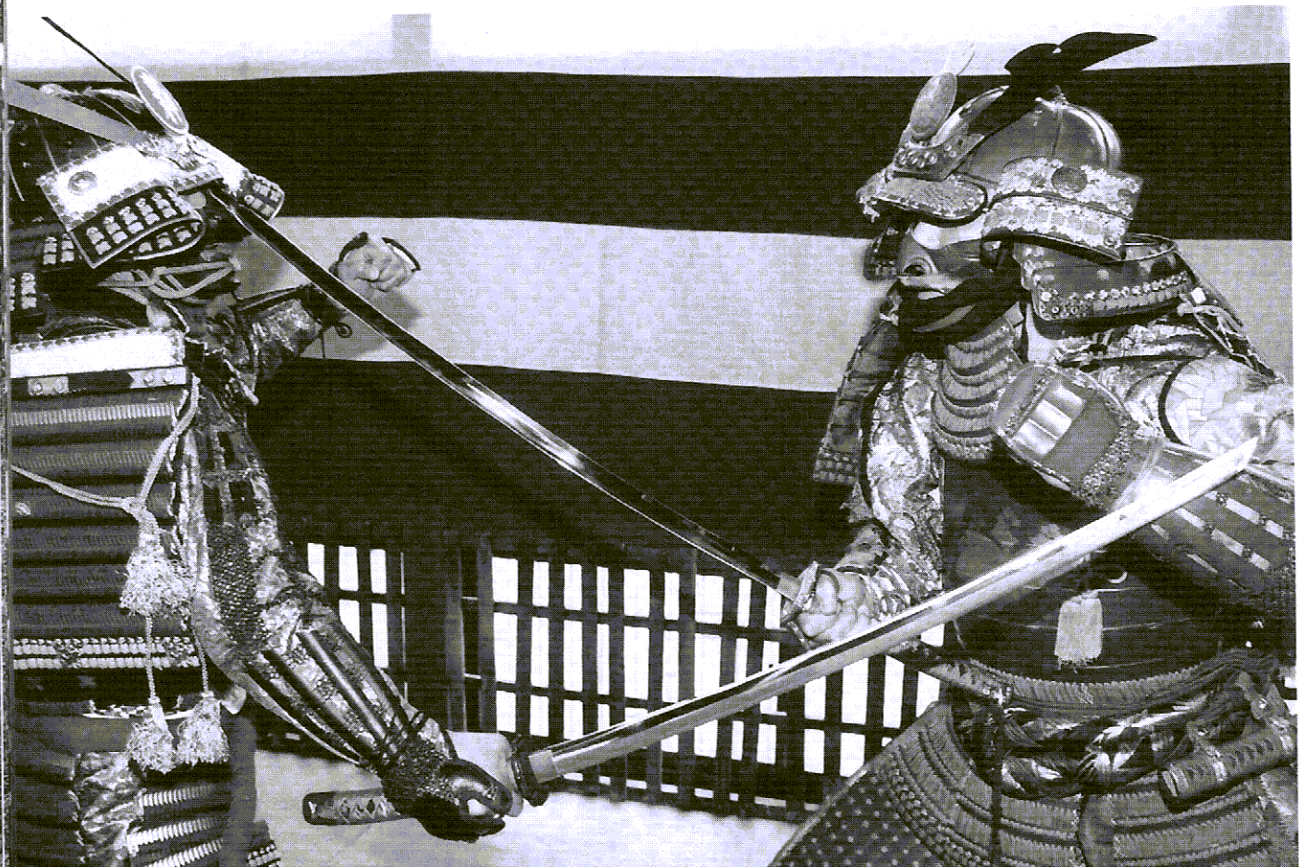






Picture of the warrior Yamanaka Shikanosuke.

Tachi uchi





Yoroi taijutsu







「浮舟のごとし」を無刀の心得とする。

波静かなればよく高からばよし。

飛鳥の剣来たるを自然とす忍。

二天一刀二天一流とする。

生位に浮舟にのり敵飛騰を止める。

浮舟の動要に敵動くあたわず。



Understanding muto as "Like a boat floating on water." Whether the waves are gentle or rough, it is good. Hicho no ken (the sword of the flying bird). Regard the opponent's attack as natural. This is Niten Itto, Niten Ichi-ryu. Board the floating boat, and stop the attack. The boat's motion prevents the opponent from moving freely.



## Shishiuchi 獅子撃

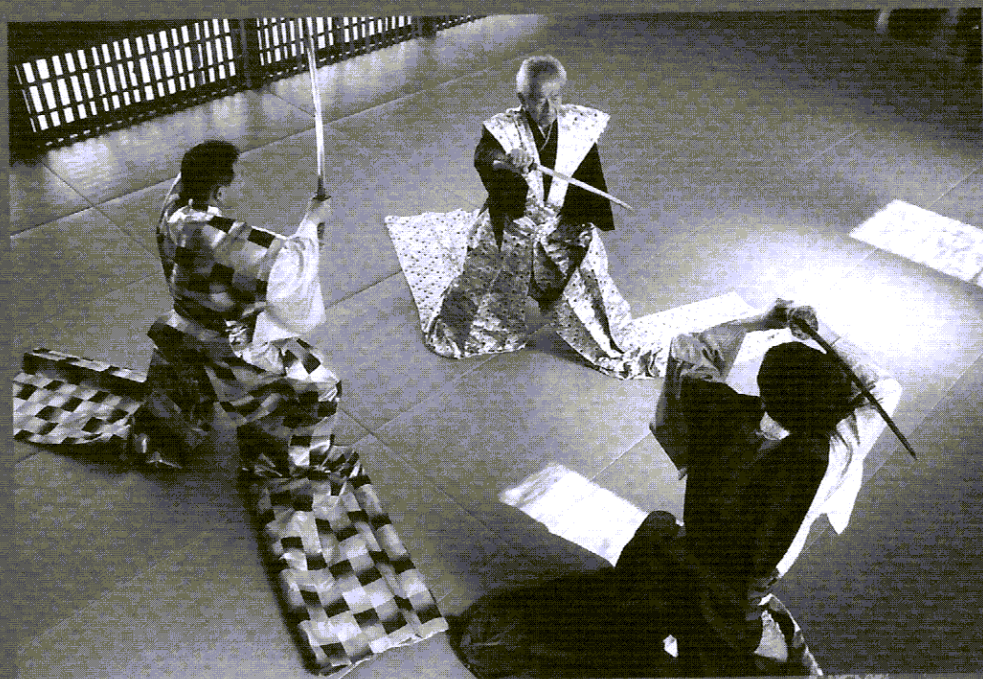
Stand in Chuseigan with a kodachi. Clad in a long hakama, my attack echoes that of the fierce lion. As the opponent cuts in, step in with a lion's cry. The opponent loses the will to fight as you corner him like a ferocious lion.





## Juji Ken (crossed sword) 十字剣

You stand silently in Otonashi no Kamae (the silent posture) with both hands lowered. Even against a strong opponent you maintain this form. The cross-style of this form has a secret meaning that includes both desperation and sacrifice.

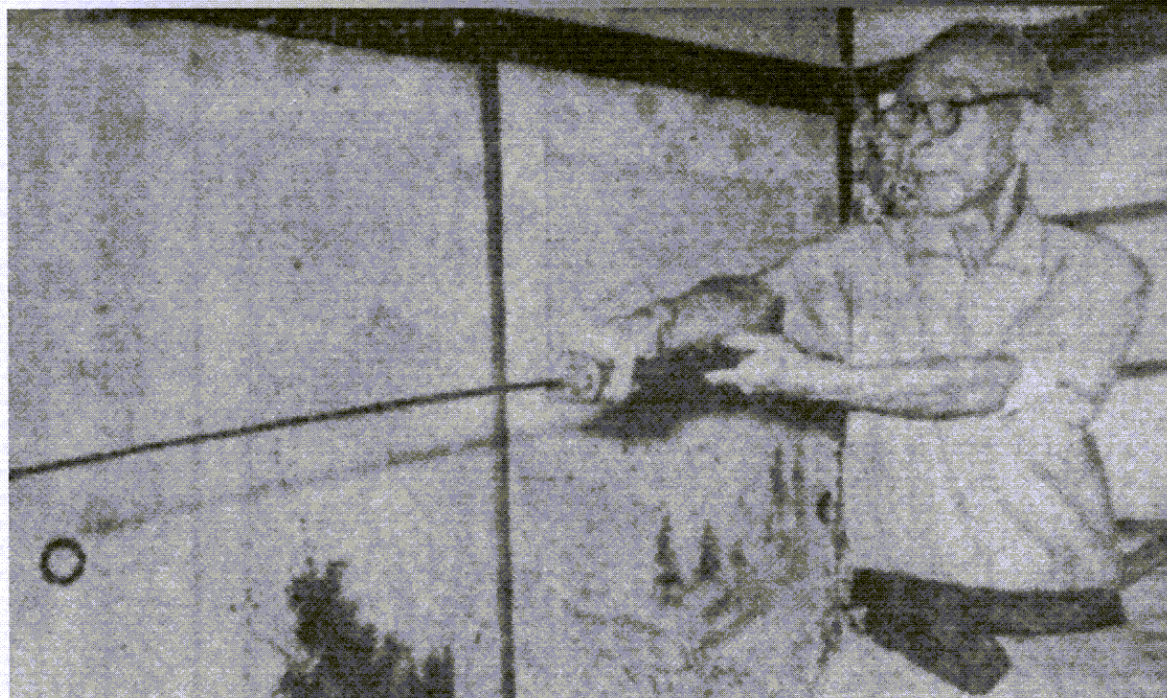






Master Takamatsu Toshitsugu Sensei, Happo Biken

高松寿嗣先生、その八方秘剣



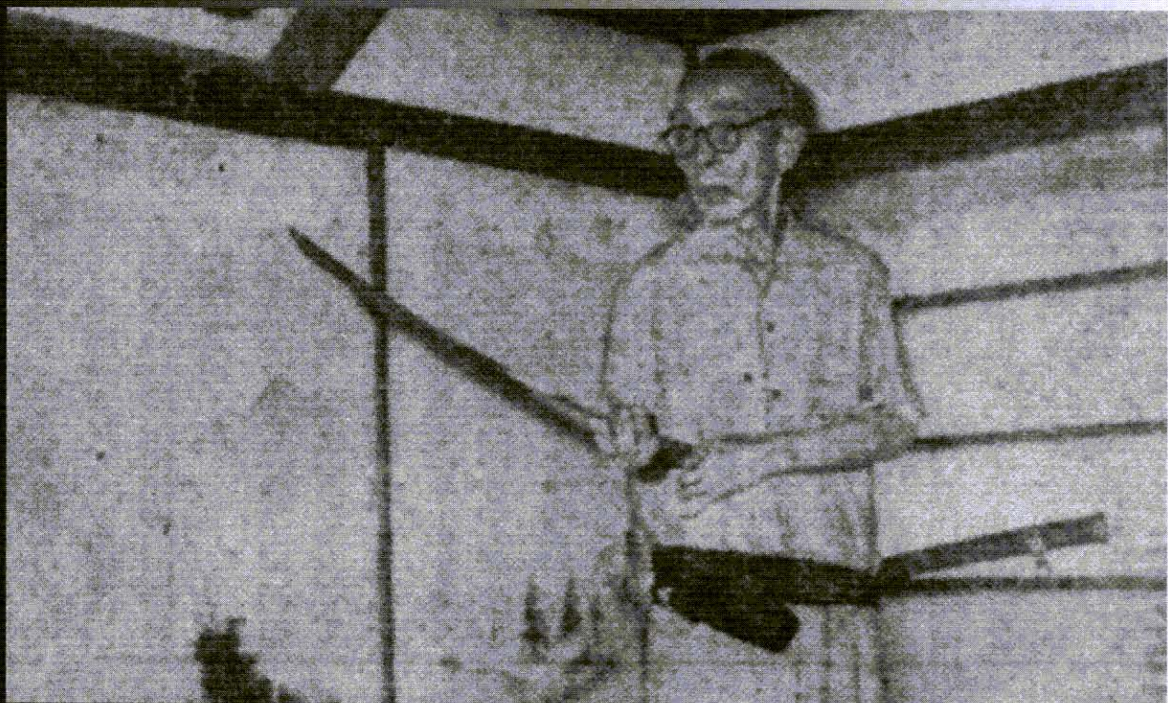
Shinmyoken.



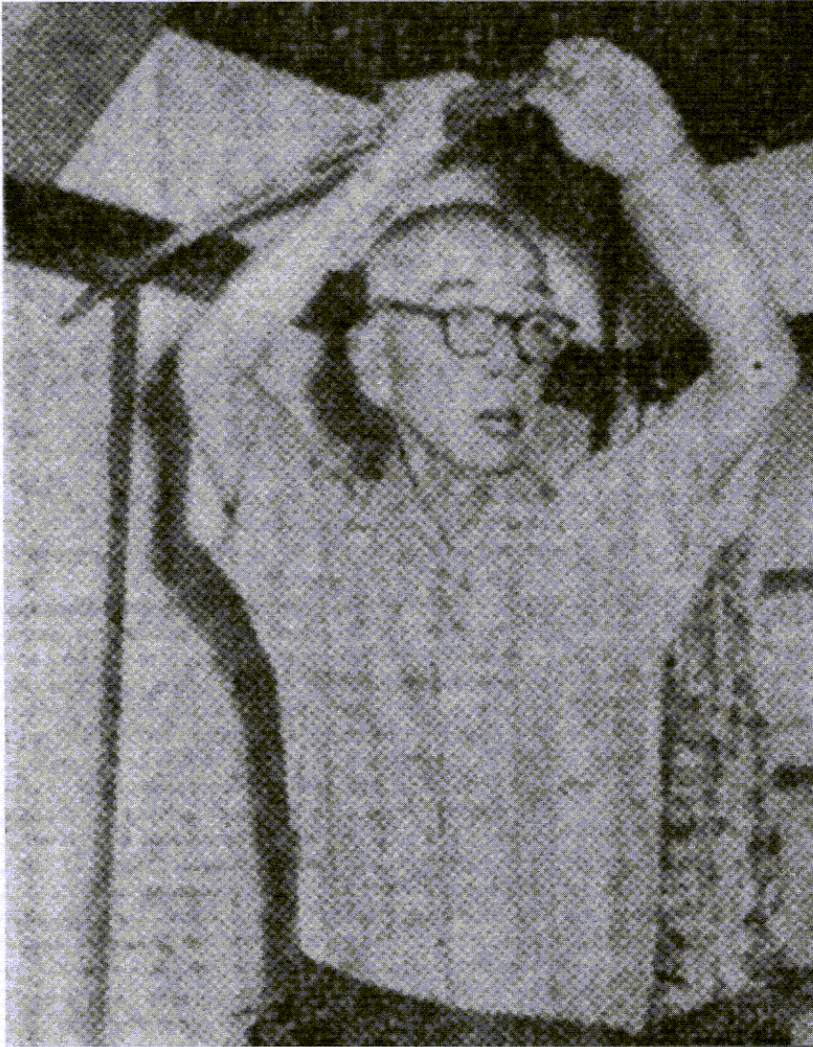
Engekien. San'in no Ote.



Engekien. Komabiki. Hito Takewari. Tsubame gaeshi.

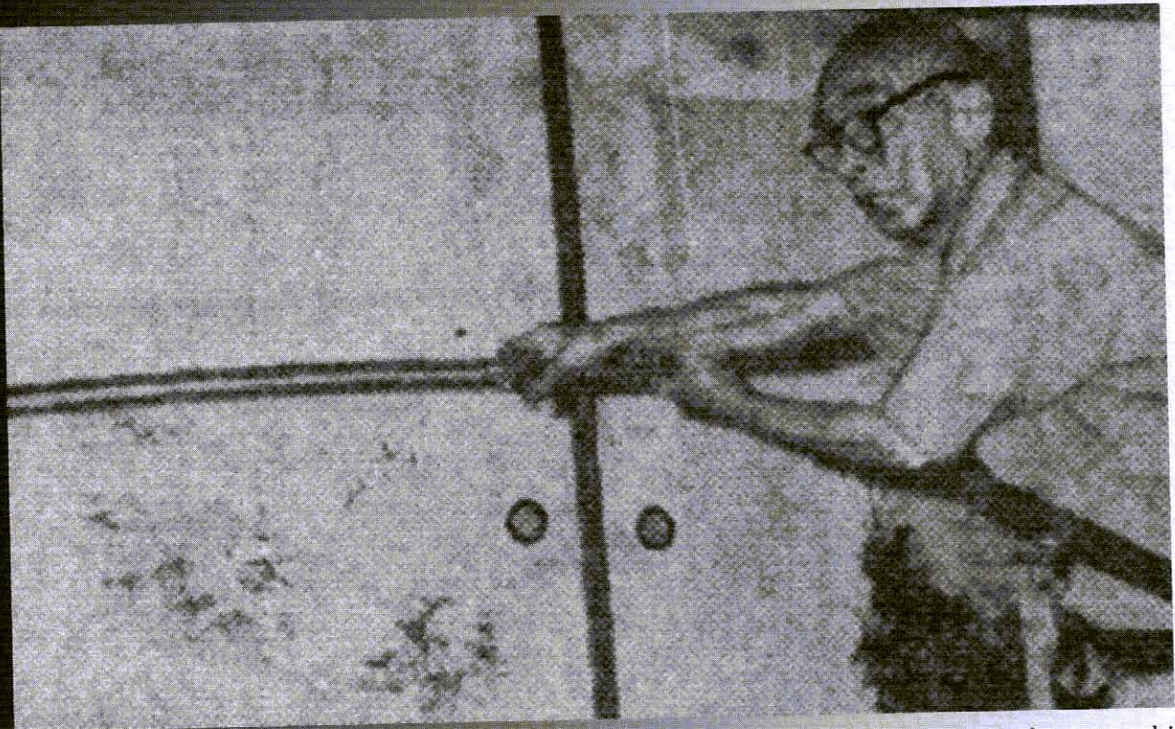


Shinmyo Fudo no ken.





The variation of Gyokute giri Shinmyoken  
The sword power that cuts heaven, earth, and man.



Hisho Shinmyoken. Juniten-ho Tsubame gaeshi



By painter Chojin Ookubo (aged ninety-seven).

