

Introduction to

Traditional Japanese martial systems

**(including a list with alphabetic entries and brief descriptions
of major traditional schools)**



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January 2016

About the list

Those involved in a specific “**Koryu**” (old tradition; old school) are very likely also interested in other arts. Not necessarily to study them, but at least to better help put in context their own system.

Despite the fact that several authors covered the topic, I remained somewhat frustrated by the lack of a single easy to use reference tool. Certainly a lot of information can be found after a simple search on the internet. Some of that information is excellent and even very detailed. Unfortunately not everything is reliable and there are a number of people that feel the urge to rewrite history in order to justify the legacy of their own system. The same is true with some books of course but somehow I find it easier to deal with them. The other problem we have is that even in Japanese, the history concerning the origin of traditional schools, is generally not well documented in history books. A lot of the information is based on legends and information passed from generation to generation in a particular school or branch. Several legends may exist in parallel and they should not be considered false unless of course they are made up recently.

Out of interest, we started to work on a list of traditional schools.

- We first limited to schools that were member of the “**Nihon Kobudo Kyokai**” (日本古武道協会) in 2009, the year we had the chance to participate in the 30th anniversary event in Tokyo. However, in the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai there are also schools originating from the Ryukyu islands (mainly Okinawa). These are beyond the scoop of this overview and are not included in the list.
- Later a few other schools were added.
- The list is made based on our own notes and should only be considered a start, fascillitating further exploration in more detailed resources. Also, if one has the desire to go beyond the facts and data, reading interviews with experts (including headmasters) can help to put things in context. Some can be found in the “Classical Warrior Traditions of Japan” series edited by Diane Skoss or on koryu.com, but there are other resources available (including of course the internet).

In the last few years there have been changes in Soke in several schools (Toda-ha Buko-ryu, Niten Ichi-Ryu, Shingyoto-ryu and others). I tried to adapt my notes but even the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai on its website takes a while before the changes are published, so for a few schools I might not have included the latest changes.

Special thanks to Sami and Frederic who took the pictures during our many trips to Japan.

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Note on Japanese language:

*All Japanese words have been written in Latin letters called “Romaji”. However, the Hepburn system for Romanization in which long vowels o and u are indicated by a **MACRON** (ō and ū respectively), e.g. Ittō Ryū (一刀流, has not been followed throughout the text. Nevertheless, in the alphabetic list, the names of the schools include macrons.*

Introduction



I. Highlights of Japanese history

A comprehensive overview of the history of Japan is beyond the scope of this document and several excellent books cover the topic. This small overview should however help to put the topic of traditional martial systems in its historical perspective.

The history of Japan can roughly be divided in the following periods (jidai):

- **The Jomon period (13,000–400 BC)**
 - *Remembered for oldest pottery in Japan*

*The mythical figure, **Jinmu Tenno** was the first Emperor of Japan to access the throne in 660 BC. According to Shinto Jimmu was a direct descendant of the sun goddess, Amaterasu.*

*The period before Jimmu's accession is called the Age of the Gods, starting with the creation of the Japanese islands by **Izanagi** and **Izanami**.*

The deepest roots of Japanese martial arts are also embedded in ancient history, in the need of man to defend himself against enemies and wild animals. The first pictures depicting unarmed combat are found starting at 5000 years before Christ, in the Neolithic graves of the Jomon area.

- **The Yayoi (300 BC to 300 AD)**
 - *Introduction of Iron from Korea*

*Early Chinese works described **Wo** (pronounced **Wa** in Japanese) as a land of many tribal communities. The use of "**Wa**" to refer to Japan would remain, although the original kanji (倭 meaning "bent down people") would later be replaced by the more positive kanji (和 meaning "harmony; peace") with the same pronunciation.*

- **Kofun period (300-538)**
 - *Rise of the **Yamato** clan*

***Wajin** (和人 or **Yamato** (大和) are the names of the ethnic groups that were living in today's Nara Prefecture*

- **Asuka period (538-710)**
 - *Marked by the introduction of **Buddhism** in Japan in 538*
 - *Promotion of Confucianism, Taoism and the Chinese writing system*
 - ***Taika reform***

The Taika Reform was based on Confucian ideas governmental structures and philosophies from China. Many Japanese were dispatched to China to learn the Chinese writing system, literature, architecture and religion. The name "Taika" or "Great Reform" was given by Emperor Kotoku, who desired a Chinese-style emperor status in Japan.

- **Nara period (710-794)**

- *The capital Heijo-kyo (present time Nara) was established by Empress **Gemmei***
- *The **Kojiki** or "Record of Ancient Matters", a collection of myths concerning the origin of Japan and the Kami (gods) was written in 712. This would be the basis for Shinto.*

Large Buddhist monasteries such as the Todai-ji and Kofuku-ji were built in Nara

- **Heian period (794-1185)**

- *The capital was moved to Heian-kyo (present-day Kyoto)*
- *The **Fujiwara** clan obtained almost complete control over the imperial family. Their dominance would last from 858 till 1068, when emperor Go-Sanjo decided to rule the country by himself..*
- *Kana was introduced in the 9th century and in the early 11th century, one of the world's oldest surviving novels, The Tale of Genji was written.*
- *Taira Kiyomori became the new leader in 1156*
- *In 1180, the **Taira** clan and **Minamoto** clan engaged in the famous **Genpei war**. The name "Genpei" comes from alternate readings of the kanji "Minamoto" and "Taira".*

*The colours red and white are symbolic in Japan and relate to the "**Genpei Kassen**" or "Genpei war" which was fought for several years between the Minamoto and Taira clans.*

*Red, in Japanese **AKAI** but alternatively pronounced "ko", was the colour of the banners of the Taira clan during the Genpei war. White, in Japanese **SHIROI** but alternatively pronounced "haku", was the colour of the Minamoto clan.*

*A "**Kohaku maku**" is a curtain, with vertical red and white stripes, which is still hung against walls on different occasions in Japan. It is also often used as a decorative element during "Enbu" (demonstrations of martial arts).*

Red and white would also be the colours used in budo competitions to distinguish opponents (later blue was introduced in judo, because the contrast was better suited for television). Red and white are also present in the current flag of Japan, better known as "Hi no maru" or "circle of the sun".

- **Kamakura period (1185-1333)**

- In 1185, Minamoto no Yoritomo and his younger brother, Yoshitsune defeated the Taira clan at the naval **battle of Dan-no-ura**.
- In 1192 Zen Buddhism was introduced and Yoritomo was appointed **Sei Tai-Shogun** by the emperor. He established his base of power (called the **Bakufu**) in Kamakura
- The central government was left intact but restricted to ceremonial functions
- Civil, military, and judicial matters were controlled by the bushi (samurai) class
- In 1333, the Kamakura shogunate was overthrown in a coup d'état known as the **Kemmu Restoration**, led by Emperor **Go-Daigo**

Massive **Mongol** forces with superior naval technology and weaponry attempted a full-scale invasion of the Japanese islands in both 1274 and in 1281. A typhoon, called **Kamikaze** (divine wind), saved Japan from those invasions.

- **Muromachi period (1338-1573)**

- Ashikaga Takauji captured Kyoto and the emperor had to flee to the South
- In 1392 the Southern and Northern courts were united

The first Portuguese traders ("Nanban traders") introduced firearms (matchlocks) in Tanegashima and Jesuit missionaries arrived in Japan

- **Azuchi Momoyama period (1573-1603)**

- **Oda Nobunaga** overthrew the Muromachi bakufu in 1573 and started a unification process
- Nobunaga destroyed the Enryakuji monastery in 1571 and continued his campaign, making use of modern warfare
- In 1582 Nobunaga was murdered but his general **Hideyoshi** finished his work and reunited Japan
- In 1588 Hideyoshi started his "Sword hunt" (confiscation of weapons of non-samurai, enhancing the distinction amongst social classes) and also built his castle in Osaka
- Hideyoshi also started the persecution of Christian missionaries and pursued his dream to invade Korea and conquer China
- Hideyoshi died in 1598 but his successor, Hideyori, was not recognised by **Tokugawa Ieyasu**, a powerful partner of Hideyoshi
- In 1600, in the **battle of Sekigahara**, Ieyasu defeated Hideyori and became the most powerful man in Japan

The period that lasted roughly from the middle of the 15th century to the beginning of the 17th century is also known as the **Warring States period** (Sengoku jidai), a time of political intrigue and nearly constant military conflict

- **Edo period (1603-1867), also known as Tokugawa period**

- *In 1603 Tokugawa Ieyasu was appointed **Shogun** by the emperor and established his government in Edo (Tokyo)*
- *In 1615 he destroyed the Toyotomi clan (capturing of Osaka castle) leaving no rivals for his successors*
- *The Tokugawa shoguns would rule for 250 years*
- *Trade with China and the Netherlands was restricted in the port of Nagasaki*
- *In 1854 the Tokugawa government was forced to open its ports for international trade by **Commodore Perry**, who intimidated the Japanese with his black steamships (kurofune) demonstrating threatening canon power*
- *Man like **Sakamoto Ryoma** started challenging the ruling Tokugawa Shogunate and started a campaign to restore the Emperor to power. Ryoma negotiated the secret alliance between Choshu and Satsuma provinces in favour of the restoration of the Emperor.*

*At the end of the Edo period, the major ideological thoughts were divided into the pro-imperialist Ishin Shishi (nationalist patriots) and the shogunate forces, including the elite **Shinsengumi** (newly selected corps) swordsmen, who operated in Kyoto.*

- **From the Meiji Restoration (1868) until now**

- *In 1867-68 the Tokugawa government fell and the power of **Emperor Meiji** was restored, although a civil war, called the "Boshin War", was still fought from 1868 to 1869 between forces of the Tokugawa Shogunate and supporters of the imperial court.*
- *The very rapid and massive changes to Japanese culture and society but also the anti samurai attitude, was not completely how man like **Saigo Takamori**, a famous Satsuma leader who was member of the early the Meiji government.*
- *Although the Satsuma had been key players in the Meiji Restoration, they would soon start a revolt against the new imperial government, known as the **Satsuma Rebellion** or the South-western War (Seinan Senso). In 1877 the rebellion came to an end and its leader, Saigo Takamori, ended his life. This may-be considered as the last significant samurai act in Japan.*

II. The rise and fall of classical bujutsu

The "**Budo**" of Japan are usually translated as the "martial arts" of Japan, although the more correct translation is "martial ways". The translation of "martial arts" would be "**Bujutsu**".

It is interesting to notice that the characters for BU (武 and JUTSU (術 have also been used in China. Indeed, the term "wushu" consists of the same two Chinese characters:

武(wǔ), meaning "War", martial or military, and 術(shù), which translates into art, skill, or method. Together they form the word "wǔshù" or "martial art".

The term "Budo", applies to all arts of a martial nature, whether or not they were developed by "Samurai", the classical hereditary warrior caste, or by commoners. However, "Budo", can also be used in a more limited and structured fashion to mean only what Japanese call "Gendai budo", or modern "Budo". In that case, martial arts systems that were developed prior to 1868 are called: "Bujutsu" (martial methods or arts), 'Kobuso" (old Budo), or "Koryu" (old tradition; old school). In a martial context and as a suffix, "-jutsu" is often used for the martial arts skills that are part of "Bujutsu", originating in the classical period of Japan's history (prior to 1868).

Although "術 (jutsu) and "道 (do) are often seen as technique versus philosophy, the two were obviously closely related.

The "Bushi" (warriors) who studied the techniques followed their encompassing (but unwritten) code of honour and social behaviour, the so-called "Bushido" (lit. Way of the warrior).

"Jutsu", translated as "the art", is written with the radical element for "road", along with a phonetic character to mean "twisting and adhering". Most traditional schools that still teach these "-jutsu", are doing this by following the path, "Michi" (note that the kanji "道 for "michi" also can be pronounced "do") towards self-perfection and are truly "Budo" in philosophy. They are concerned with both physical and spiritual training, through the study of their art.

Most of the techniques from the various schools of traditional "Bujutsu", as we know them to-day, found their origin at the end of the **Heian period** (794-1185).

In that time, transmission was not yet codified and not yet captured in hand scrolls (Makimono). The different methods were not simply individual styles of archery (Yumi: bow), spear (Yari: spear) or sword (Katana), but were an amalgamation of many weapon techniques for combat into a general system.

The warriors, or "Bushi" as well as their combat systems, became more and more organized as of 1185, when the Minamoto family took over the control over Japan after defeating the Taira clan in the **Genpei** war, especially when their leader, Minamoto Yoritomo, was appointed "Shogun" in the year 1192 and established a new government, the Kamakura Bakufu.

The different systems were only later divided into individual components of weapon styles and from the middle (circa 1450) of the **Muromachi period**, to the beginning (circa 1600) of the **Tokugawa period**, these systems were formalised.

In the beginning (c.o. 1338) of the Muromachi period when the provinces were established, each “Daimyo” (greater feudal lords) and “Komyo” (lesser feudal lords) employed martial experts to teach the samurai of their province. The lords forbade the spread of the teachings of their province outside their area, and various local styles took root.

*Two places were famous for the origin of traditional schools: **Kashima** and **Katori** (in present Ibaraki and Chiba prefectures, respectively). The martial arts flourished with the Kashima Shrine and Katori Shrine as their base. “The art of war comes from the east” runs the Japanese saying, referring to these two shrines. The Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto Ryu is one of Japan’s oldest historically proven formalized martial traditions, founded by Izasa Ienao Iizasa Chōi-sai Ienao 1386-1488).*

*In 1603, **Tokugawa Ieyasu** was appointed Shogun by the emperor and established his government in **Edo**, the former name of Tokyo. After the defeat of the Toyotomi clan in 1615 when Ieyasu captured Osaka Castle, he and his successors had practically no rivals anymore, and peace prevailed. The warriors (samurai) were educating themselves not only in the martial arts but also in literature, philosophy and arts like the tea ceremony.*

In the period where the Tokugawa ruled the country, also known as the Edo period or **Edo Jidai**, (1603-1867), several influential schools flourished and those of minor importance died and were forgotten because of their inefficient and unrealistic techniques. Eventually, the “Bujutsu” schools became classified according to the main focus point of their teaching.

*For example, Tenshin Katori Shinto-ryu, a comprehensive martial system, was classified as a Kenjutsu (sword art) school. Others like Take(no)uchi-ryu and Hontai Yoshin Takagi-ryu were classified as jujutsu schools. In spite of the classification, many schools included both armed and unarmed combat and should in fact be considered **sogo bujutsu**.*

*Nevertheless, by the end of the Tokugawa period, there were records of 52 schools of archery, 718 schools of sword, 148 schools of spear, and 179 schools of jujutsu. These figures take into consideration groups whose style were the same but with a different branch. Indeed a way of thinking, called “**ichi ryu ippa**”, explains part of the diversity: when a soke (headmaster) had two students, both menkyo kaiden (full licensed), then it happened that one of them became a precise follower and the other one left to establish a branch, “Ha” (group, party) or even a new style, “Ryu” (current, flow). Those who left and started their own schools were many.*

*It was also not uncommon for a student in a certain art to undertake a “**Musha shugyo**” (warrior pilgrimage) and to incorporate elements of other schools learned during this*

journey into one's own system, sometimes even to create a new system to even better combine these learnings.

Because the great wars were over, the duties of the bushi changed. Members of the samurai class were forced to do a lot of administrative work or were involved to maintain order in their master's domain.

"Tori Tsuke" or enemy capturing can be seen as part of the duties of Edo period samurai who helped to maintain order and authority in their master's domain. Several "jujutsu" schools include "Tori Tsuke" and "Hojojutsu" (rope binding, which can also be called "Tori Nawajutsu") in their curriculum.

In the capital, Edo (today Tokyo), maintaining order was under the responsibility of 2 "Machi bugyo" and their 25 assistants (the yoriki) each. Each of them had also some doshin. The doshin put out most of the physical effort and the yoriki would only be involved in very serious incidents. The doshin (although lower class samurai), wore only one sword and no hakama. Instead they wore a typical uniform and carried a jitte. They also employed townsfolk to help them (they also carried a jitte as symbol of authority).

Both in Edo (or other big cities like Osaka, Nagoya, Kyoto, where also a Machi bugyo was appointed) and in the country domains, bringing in a prisoner was important because a confession was a prerequisite for a punishment (this could be an execution but also banishment of various degrees).

In 1867/68, the Tokugawa era found an end with the **Meiji Restoration**.

*The emperor was moved from Kyoto to Tokyo which became the new capital. In 1871 the old feudal system and the privileges of the Japanese samurai class were officially abolished. The daimyo or landlords had to return the land to the emperor for which they received pensions by the Japanese state. In 1876, with the "**haitorei**" edict, the carrying of swords in public (the symbol of the bushi class) became prohibited. The practice of traditional Bujutsu was discouraged and many old schools or Koryu had a difficult time surviving.*

*After a few decades, traditional sword arts were taken up again, particularly in the military and the police circles. In 1886 the Japanese Police put together kata from a number of kenjutsu schools into **Keishicho-ryu** (abbreviated as Keishi-ryu). The purpose was to create a new standardised set of 10 "Kumidachi" (paired sword forms) and 5 "Iai" (sword drawing) forms for training purposes.*

Several schools throughout Japan reorganised themselves. Unfortunately the Great Kanto earthquake in 1923 destroyed some important dojo in Tokyo and several excellent systems would not succeed to rebuilt their school.

A number of important schools survived and succeeded their important cultural heritage. However the revival of "Kobudo" (and budo in general) was interrupted in the period 1945-1950 when organisations involved with martial arts were disbanded by the Allies of **World War II**.

In 1957, the **ZNKR** (Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei) was founded and in 1964 the prestigious "**Nippon budokan**" in Tokyo was inaugurated. Two classical martial arts organizations: the "**Nihon Kobudo Shinkokai**" and the "**Nihon Kobudo Kyokai**" were also established.

Most well-recognized old schools (koryu) are member of at least one (sometimes both) associations. Nevertheless a number of "Koryu" have chosen not to be member of either organization.

*The Nippon Budokan is an indoor arena in central Tokyo originally built for the judo competition in the 1964 Summer Olympics. It is owned by "The Nippon Budokan Foundation", member of the **Japanese Budo Association** (Nippon Budo Kyogikai). The Nihon Kobudo Kyokai is also member of that association, as well as the most gendai (modern) budo associations of Japan (including the ZNKR) and the Japan Sumo federation.*

Despite the partial revival of classical bujutsu in the second half of the 20th century, we cannot deny that most traditional schools face huge difficulties while trying to preserve their historical heritage but still maintain their martial spirit.

III. Bushido: the code of the samurai

Already early in Japanese history, philosophical elements and warfare techniques came hand in hand.

*The "**Kojiki**", known as the Records of Ancient Matters, is Japan's oldest historical written record and was written around 712. It already made reference to the admiration of the sword by Japanese warriors. Long before the introduction of Confucianism from China, it contained passages about the son of emperor Keiko, described as the ideal Japanese warrior, able to harmonize literature with martial matters.*

*Around 950, Japanese martial philosophers describe "**Kyuba no michi**", the "Way of Bow and Horse." This discussed the Japanese warrior's overriding concern for personal honour, and was the conceptual grandparent of the Tokugawa-era code.*

***Tao**, the way as described by Chinese Taoists, is called "**Do**" (or "Michi") in Japanese language. "Do - 道 is written with the strokes for "principal", and joined with the radical for "movement". Therefore "Do" can be seen as an "important road", the way one has*

to follow. The contemporary pronunciation of the two Chinese characters “ 武士, meaning "warrior" though, was "**Monofu**", and only later it became "**Bushil**".

Tametomo, a minor retainer associated with the Minamoto clan, becomes in 1170 the first Japanese samurai to become famous for slitting his belly open with his dagger rather than surrender. Before that, Japanese warriors had often changed sides if it seemed expedient, but the Minamoto stressed loyalty more than had their predecessors.

As of the 13th century, the thinking of Japanese warriors or "Bushi" has been influenced by **Zen Buddhism**.

*In 1229, a Chinese Ch'an master Wu-men Hui-hai wrote his book 'Wu-wen kuan or The Gateless Gate'. This famous Zen text, called "**Mumonkan**" in Japanese, was later studied by Japanese Zen monks, and contained important concepts, like "dead blade" or "Satsujinto" and "living sword" or "Katsujinto". These concepts clearly refer to the mental attitude of warriors: when one's mind is troubled by fear, one's blade is dead; when one is willing to sacrifice oneself and regards lightly the loss of one's own life, then one's sword comes alive.*

During the Sengoku period (Warring States Period) little time for philosophical thinking was left in a country that was marked by political intrigue, constant military conflict and social pressure, This would last until the unification of power under the Tokugawa shogunate

*In the Tokugawa period (1603-1868), elements from Chinese Confucian classic works like the "**Book of Changes**" ("I Ching") were incorporated into Japanese teaching.*

*Examples are the five virtues as taught by **Ansai** (1619-82), neo Confucianism: JIN (benevolence), GI (righteousness), REI (propriety), CHI (wisdom) and SHIN (good faith/trust).*

Another influence came from the great Zen master **Takuan** (1573-1645), who was closely linked with the swordsmen, that gathered at the Katori shrine in the seventeenth century.

Takuan's philosophical discourses had a great effect on the further development of several traditional schools, especially on the development of the "Kenjutsu" school "Shinkage Ryu" and even the great swordsman Miyamoto Musashi is said to be inspired by his teaching. Although Takuan was a Rinzaï-sect Zen priest, his teaching to swordsmen was essentially Taoist-based, with elements borrowed from Shingon Esoteric Buddhism. One of Takuan's famous sayings was: "Some think that striking [with the sword] is to strike. But striking is not to strike, nor is killing to kill".

*Takuan was at the origin of several principles that influenced many great samurai. One example is "**Mushin**": no mind; original mind), a state of mind that is not fixed upon*

anything and therefore open to everything (the opposite is called "Ushin"). When the mind is not fixed, it will not be troubled by appearances. Another example is "Fudoshin" (unmoving spirit/heart; immutable in heart), the state of mind that is not troubled by anything. To strive for "Fudoshin" means that one will have no fear when confronted with danger or unexpected events.

The search for the way ("Do") and Confucian oriented virtues were integrated in the ethical code of the samurai, in what was later called "Bushido"..

The "Koyo Gunkan", a record of the military exploits of the Takeda family, compiled largely by Kosaka Danjo Masanobu, and completed in 1616 by Obata Kagenori, provided detailed descriptions and statistics of warfare but also aspects of the warrior code in relation to the connection between lord and vassal.

In 1632, **Yagyu Munenori** completed the "**Heiho Kaden Sho**", a family transmitted book on strategy.

Yagyu Munenori, was a Shinkage-ryu swordsman and official swordmaster to the shogun.

His book, "Heiho Kaden Sho", a comprehensive treatise on swordsmanship, described both the physical and mental sides of the style. As already mentioned, Shinkage-ryu, was heavily influenced by the teaching of Takuan.

However, the components of "Bushido" or "the way of the warrior", as we perceive them now, were formally introduced by **Yamaga Soko**.

Yamaga was a "Ronin", a samurai not belonging to a any specific lord. Yamaga wrote on the role and character of the samurai, which he called "Shido", "the way of the samurai" and "Bukyo", "the warrior's doctrine". These two elements combined would later result in the term, "Bushido".

In medieval Japan, the samurai were a rough and illiterate class; their only purpose was to fight. However, Tokugawa Japan was a period of peace, so the samurai class were at risk to become redundant. Yamaga went about defining what the samurai in times of peace should be doing. The purpose of the samurai class according to Yamaga was to serve as a model for the rest of society. In other words, for a samurai, it is not enough to understand moral behaviour, he must put it into action. In addition, the Tokugawa regime, in an effort to guarantee peace, welcomed the raise of the samurai class as an important class. They gave the samurai certain privileges, especially when it came to the right to carry swords. Since non-warriors couldn't make it into that class, and they were limited in using weapons, it would become very difficult for individual lords to try and raise large territorial armies.

Although “Bushido” was dominantly present, few books solely dedicated on the topic were available and therefore it can be perceived as an unwritten code, be-it totally in betted in samurai culture.

*Even the “**Hagakure Kikigaki**” or “Hidden behind the Leaves”, by Tsunetomo Yamamoto (1659 - 1719). was probably not well known immediately when it was written. Although, by the beginning of the 20th century, it would become one of the most popular works on military thinking and “Bushido” inside Japan. Later the book has been heavily criticized because of its influence that had lead to Japan’s militarism and ruler-worship, and eventually defeat in World War II. Indeed many of its tales were in fact examples on how to die, therefore the book can be seen as the ultimate “Way of dying”, rather than a complete “Way of the warrior”. Another criticism is that the book was written by a samurai who never has been involved in a battle or duel and who, after his master died was forbidden to perform “Seppuku” by the Tokugawa Shogunate.*

*Another exception perhaps was the book “**Bushido Shoshinsu**” or “Bushido for beginners”, written for novice samurai by Taira Shigesuke (1639-1730), a Confucian teacher of military science. Both “Hagakure” and “Bushido Shoshinsu” have been translated in English and despite criticism on their content, they remain important source books, to be read with the necessary sense for relativism.*

The earliest written work in English on “Bushido”, is a book written by **Inazo Nitobe**, entitled “**Bushido: The Soul of the Samurai**”, first published in 1905.

It is amusing to know that Nitobe’s book has been written after the author had spend some days at the house of the Belgian law professor Laveleye. In a conversation with his host, the author had difficulties to explain how the Japanese could impact moral education despite the lack of religion. He realized that the moral precepts that he learned in his childhood were not given in schools. Aspects of “Bushiso”, until then were imbedded in the Japanese society and it was more then time for the author to try and capture them in a book.

Certainly the philosophical context is of outmost importance to understand Japanese martial arts in an historical context, nevertheless, we should not forget that the essence of the arts or “**Jutsu**” was to be very effective in a combat situation. Mastering all the necessary fighting skills required endless and rigorous training but also accumulation of real situation experience.

IV. Techniques (jutsu)

“**Jutsu**”, translated as “the arts” or “the techniques”, is written with the radical element for “road”, along with a phonetic character to mean “twisting and adhering”.

When students see their master perform some of the techniques, they might get the impression that some magic is involved. At least they believe that some “trick” is needed in order to succeed a technique in some difficult situations. May-be they are right when they see the “Jutsu” as a trick. Or is it the perfection of the art that makes the technique look magic? All these meanings are incorporated in the meaning of the word “Jutsu”.

“Jutsu” (術, technique, should not be confused with “Jitsu” (実, meaning truth, reality (as opposed to “Kyo”). Unfortunately in many Western parts, arts like jujutsu have been written “jiujitsu” for decades, hence the confusion.

The Japanese word “Bujutsu” can be translated as martial arts (or skills). Examples include:

- *Ba-jutsu (馬術: riding a horse while fighting*
- *Bo-jutsu (棒術: use of a staff*
- *Chikujo-jutsu (築城術: fortifying a position*
- *Hojo-jutsu (馬術術: binding up a captured opponent*
- *Ho-jutsu (砲術: gunnery*
- *Iai-jutsu (居合術: drawing a katana (also known as “batto jutsu)*
- *Jo-jutsu (杖術: use of a stick*
- *Ju-jutsu (柔術: art of “ju” also known as “yawara”*
- *Ken-jutsu (劍術: art of the sword*
- *Kusarigama-jutsu(鎖鎌術: use of a sickle with long weighted chain*
- *Kyu-jutsu (弓術: archery*
- *Naginata-jutsu (長刀術: art of the halberd*
- *Noroshi-jutsu (烽火術: use of bonfires as signals*
- *Senjo-jutsu (戰場術: deployment of troops*
- *Shuriken-jutsu (手裏劍術: art of throwing small bladed weapons*
- *So-jutsu (槍術: art of the spear*
- *Sui-jutsu (水術: swimming*
- *Tessen-jutsu (鉄扇術: use of iron truncheon-like fan*

V. On kenjutsu, battojutsu and iaijutsu

Despite this great wealth of techniques and arms used, the sword has always been seen as a weapon with divine power and largely symbolises the samurai martial culture.

*The significance in Japanese culture of the sword has been documented as far back as the “**Kojiki**” (“Record of Ancient Matters”), is the oldest chronicle of Japan, dating from the 8th century.*

*The introduction of swords in Japan, mainly further occurred during the Heian period (794 to 1185). The first swords were straight, much like in China, where the initial techniques of making swords came from. Later the art of making high quality blades would become one of the most distinguished activities in a Japan where the “**Bushi**” (warrior) culture would dominate the country for centuries.*

*During the middle-ages, warriors used “**Tachi**” (swords worn with the cutting-edge down) that had to be effective by cavalry, i.e. used while on horseback. Later in history, during the Muromachi period (1337 to 1573), the Japanese sword evolved into a “**Katana**”, with its distinct features and worn cutting-edge up.*

During the Muromachi period, the first formalised “**Kenjutsu**” (lit. sword techniques) schools arose.

Although in the course of history, many schools would arise (and many would cease to exist), a few schools can be considered as “parent” schools for other systems. Examples are:

- **Chujo-ryu**: founded in the 14th century by Chujo Nagahide and at the origin of **Itto-ryu**, **Ono-ha Itto-ryu** and its numerous branches. Chujo Nagahide is said to have been a student of Nenami Okuyama Jion (Nen-ryu), a school that was continued as **Maniwa Nen-ryu**. Chujo-ryu and Nen-ryu as such are not practiced anymore.
- **(Aisu) Kage-ryu**: founded by Aisu Ikosai and at the origin of schools like influence of later schools such as **Yagyū Shinkage-ryu** and **Kashima Shinden Jikishinkage-ryu**. (Aisu) Kage Ryu should not be confounded with the Kage-ryu of Yamamoto Hisaya Masakatsu (a school that was created much later and that is known for its battojutsu using very long swords. (Aisu) Kage-ryu as such is not practiced anymore.
- **Shinto-ryu**: founded by Izasa Choisai. The school is now better known as **Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu**. Important schools, including **Kashima Shinto-ryu (Bokuden-ryu)**, were directly or indirectly influenced by Shinto-ryu. Also **Jigen-ryu**, practiced in the Satsuma domain, had partially its roots in an art derived from Shinto Ryu.

*Although several important kenjutsu schools were formalised in the east (the Kanto area with the Kashima Shrine and Katori Shrine as important gatherings for important swordsmen, several other schools had their origin in the Kyoto area (at that time the capital). Indeed, several schools originated from the “**Kyo Ryu**” or the schools from the capital (also called **Kyo Hachi Ryu**, 8 schools of the capital). In fact these schools originated from a system with the Kuramadera (temple of kurama) as reference place and a legendary master called Ki Ichi Hogen as originator. **Kanshin-ryu** and **Kurama-ryu** are examples of schools that descent from this line.*

Another school, **Enmei(Nito)-ryu**, originated in the Osaka region and was the basis for Miyamoto Musashi's **Niten Ichi-ryu**.

Once formalised, practice of Kenjutsu would be for long time the major training method for the samurai.

A great number of schools remained "Otome Ryu", i.e. practiced in secret within a family, a Han or a select group of insiders. Examples are Kage-ryu of the Tachibana family (Yanagawa domain) and Jigen-ryu of the Shimazu family (Satsuma domain).

Kenjutsu still continues to be practiced and consists nowadays mainly of mastering paired "Kata" (formal sets), using wooden swords (bokuto) or real swords (shinken).

At the end of the Muromachi period, wearing of a "Daisho" (paired long and short sword) became popular and in 1588, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi became Imperial regent, the "Daisho" was restricted to the samurai class.

Although in the older days the "Bushi" would usually carry a "Tanto" (dagger) to accompany the "Tachi", with the introduction of the "Kodachi" (short sword), there was a need to develop techniques for its use. Several "Kenjutsu" schools therefore also include "Kodachi Kata" in their curriculum. The short sword was also practical indoors, not only because it was custom to leave the longer sword outside the room, but also because the limitations to swing the long blade. This is nicely illustrated in the movie "Twilight Samurai" (original name is "Tasogare Seibei") by Yoji Yamada...

Also, as of the 16th century, since the Japanese sword was now carried in a belt (obi) with the cutting-edge up, men gradually started holding their scabbards with their left hands, allowing the quickly drawing of their swords with their right hand. "Kata" designed to teach "Batto-jutsu", or quick-draw techniques were developed.

These techniques were in many occasions additions to the existing "Kenjutsu" patterns, although also they continued to be adapted to the newer situation, with not only emphasis on battlefield use but also including duel situations (or dealing with an ambush). Hayashizaki Shigenobu (1546-1621), who was at the origin of Eishin-ryu, popularized the term "Iaijutsu" (although the Katori Shinto-ryu has references where the term was used more than 100 years before).

The use of the short sword was already mentioned, but the use of two swords simultaneously (the short sword in the left hand and the long sword in the right hand) is also worth mentioning.

Mostly known because of the popularity of Miyamoto Musashi, founder of Niten Ichi-ryu and author of Go Rin No Sho ("The Book of Five Rings") and Dokkodo ("The Way of Self Reliance", usually translated as "Going My Way"). Nevertheless other schools than

Niten Ichi-ryu include techniques with two swords and Niten Ichi-ryu, on the other hand, has many techniques using only one sword.

During the last years of the **Tokugawa shogunate**, the study of bujutsu was not only restricted to a certain domain and especially schools of swordsmanship became very popular in cities like Kyoto, Osaka, and of course Edo (now Tokyo).

*Warriors of a particular domain would still practice at their domain dojo, where there was a tendency to conserve the older teachings. With the success of the **machi-dojo** (city dojo), kenjutsu exponents from all over Japan gathered in famous schools with the advantage of getting challenged more intensively. On the other hand, it was less obvious to completely adhere to the inner teachings of a school within these dojo. Another feature was that in these machi-dojo it would become possible to study swordsmanship even for those who didn't belong to the samurai class.*

Important machi-dojo in Edo were:

- *The Genbukan Dojo of Chiba Shusaku (**Hokushin itto-ryu**) in Shinagawa*
- *The Rembeikan Dojo of Saito Yakuro Yoshimichi (**Shindo munen-ryu**) in Okachimachi*
- *The Shigakukan Dojo of Momonoi Shunzo Naomasa (**Kyoshin meichi-ryu**) in Kyobashi;*
- *The dojo of Odani Shimosa-no-kami Nobutomo (**Jikishinkage-ryu**) in Azabu Mamiana.*

*Most of these schools survived, except Kyoshin meichi-ryu, a school founded by Momonoi Hachirozaemon Naoyoshi, a samurai from the Kofu Domain, (Koshu area), who moved to Edo in 1773. The techniques of Kyoshin (Mirror of the Mind) meichi-ryu are now lost, with only a few kata having been preserved within **Keishi-ryu** (police kenjutsu, created in 1886, based on several kenjutsu schools).*

*In Kyoto, the Shinsengumi, a group of "Ronin" (several recruited from the Aizu domain), who tried to resist the Meiji Restoration, started to train kenjutsu with their members. Their founding leaders had a background in kenjutsu schools like **Shindo Munen-ryu** (Serizawa Kamo, considered the founder of the group and Niimi Nishiki) and **Tennen Rishin-ryu** (Kondo Isami). Later others would join, like Hijikata Toshizo (who studied Tennen Rishin-ryu with Kondo Isami) and many others (some of them with a background in **Itto-ryu** or **Mugai-ryu**).*

Kenjutsu would flourish in the late Edo period, before to go into a temporary decline following the Meiji Restoration.

After the Meiji Restoration, Japan started with the development of modern, European-style armed forces, and soon kenjutsu was considered obsolete. It became unpopular

until, in 1879, the Tokyo Police Force and later the army initiated Kenjutsu practices again, realising that a synergy of new modern warfare with traditional skillsets and adapted values (loyalty now to the state and the emperor in stead of the daimyo) would allow the country's ambition of military expansion.

*Kenjutsu would have yet another difficult time, when at the end of World War II, the occupational authorities banned sword arts. However, immediately following the end of the Occupation period, in 1952, the **Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei** (All-Japan Kendo Federation) was established. By 1957 Kendo was part of the physical education in Japanese middle schools.*

With the focus on competition, using shinai (made of bamboo) and typical protective gear, interest in the traditional sword fighting techniques declined again. Despite all this, several old schools survived and continue to preserve their important Japanese heritage.

Nevertheless, after the Meiji Restoration (in 1868), modern disciplines were preferred over old traditions and parallel to the development of kendo, several **iaido** organizations emerged, following the general trend to replace the suffix "-jutsu" with "-do" in order to emphasize the spiritual/philosophical aspect.

*The quick-drawing techniques were turned into the martial art called "**iaido**" ("the Way of Harmonious being), probably by the influence of Nakayama Hakudo (1872-1958), founder of **Muso Shinden-ryu**.*

*In 1925, Nakamura Taisaburo established **Toyama-ryu**, named after the Toyama Army Academy, originally developed to quickly initiate officers in sword fighting. In fact the Japanese military had to admit that the straight swords carried by their officers after the Meiji restoration, were less suited for them. Toyama-ryu emphasized the most essential points of drawing and cutting practised from a standing position, with a strong emphasis on tameshigiri ("test-cutting).*

The development of "iaido" was shortly interrupted after WWII due to a banishment that lasted until 1950.

Some people have problems with the cultivation of historical incorrect martial aspects, over-emphasised in some current iaido practice.

For instance a duel, certainly starting from seiza (the seiza position is used in a room and the longer sword was not carried in the house) was not done in iai-style and also the act of "shiburi" (removal of the blood) is considered unpractical since only a cloth is considered efficacious for that purpose.

Despite this criticism, "iaido" evolved into one of the most popular sword arts of Japan.

The ZNKR (Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei or All Japan Kendo Federation) was instrumental in its recent development with the creation of Seitei Iai (a standard set of Iaido kata created in 1968).

Another large association, the ZNIR (Zen Nihon Iaido Renmei or All Japan Iaido Federation) started in the late fifties to regroup 5 important Iai schools; Muso Jikiden Eisin-ryu, Mugai-ryu, Shindo Munen-ryu, Suio-ryu and Hoki-ryu (each of the 5 schools contributed with one technique that was made part of a set called Toho). Later other schools would join the ZNIR.

Traditional Sword Schools discussed in part 2:

- Bokuden-ryu
- Enshin-ryu Iai Suemonogiri Kenpo
- Hayashizaki Muso ryu
- Hoki-ryu
- Hokushin Itto-ryu
- Hyoho Niten Ichi-ryu
- Jigen-ryu Hyoho
- Kanemaki-ryu
- Kanshin-ryu
- Kashima Shinden Jikishinkage-ryu
- Kashima Shinto-ryu
- Kogen Itto-ryu
- Kurama-ryu
- Maniwa Nen-ryu
- Mizoguchi-ha Itto-ryu
- Mugai-ryu
- Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu
- Nodachi Jigen-ryu
- Noda-ha Niten Ichi-ryu
- Ono-ha Itto-ryu
- Sekiguchi-ryu
- Shindo Munen-ryu
- Shingyoto-ryu
- Shojitsu Kenri Kataichi-ryu Katchu
- Suio-ryu Iai Kenpo
- Taisha-ryu
- Tamiya-ryu
- Tatsumi-ryu Heiho
- Tennen Rishin-ryu
- Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu
- Unko-ryu
- Yagyū Shinkage-ryu Heiho

Schools like Muso Shinden-ryu and Toyama-ryu are not considered “koryū”, hence not included in the list, despite their importance today.

VI. On sojutsu, naginatajutsu, bojutsu and jojutsu

Long bladed weapons like the “**Yari**” (spear) and “**Naginata**” (halberd) were commonly used by the Japanese warriors.

*The “**Naginata**” (halberd) and “Nagamaki” (similar but with longer blade) have been for long time important battlefield weapons. Their use however was apparently less evident when more and more poorly trained commoners had to be included in the first line attack troops.*

*Despite the decline in popularity on the battlefield, the “Naginata” remained the favoured weapon of the “**Sohei**” or warrior monks. In fact Buddhist monks have long time played an important role in Japanese history and even to such extent that in 1571 Oda Nobunaga, who tried to unify the country, decided to raze the Enryaku-ji (temple complex on Mt Hiei) because of the potential political thread of the Tendai (Japanese school of Buddhism) monks.*

In the meantime the “Naginata” also became the symbolic weapon of the woman of the samurai families. When man were at war, it was the responsibility of women to protect their homes (rather than go off to battle with their husbands)., For them, it was important to become skilled in a few weapons that offered the best range of techniques such as the bow (due to its effectiveness at long-range) and the naginata (used in such a way that men cannot bring in their greater weight and strength). This would lead to the development of schools with woman as headmaster.

*Throughout history the spear displaced the naginata from the battlefield, since it was better suited for ashigaru (foot troops). Note that the Japanese character for spear, usually pronounced “Yari”, is sometimes pronounced “So-“, like when referring to the art, “**Sojutsu**”.*

As the “Naginata”, the spear remained a weapon of interest for the “bushi” class (be-it to remain in control of the teaching aspects) but also for certain monks.

The “**Bo**” (staff) does share some characteristics with weapons like “Naginata” (halberd) and “Yari” (spear). Nevertheless because the staff is not bladed, it remains also quit distinctive.

*The origin and development of “**Bojutsu**” (stick fighting) is rather interesting. In most cultures man have used sticks to protect themselves. The equivalent of the Japanese long “Bo” (usually 6 shaku long which is 6 feet or 1.82 m) as such can be found in China and Okinawa, be-it used quit differently.*

A number of schools claim that their “Bojutsu” techniques originated from the need to fight with damaged spears of halberds. Several “Naginata” schools teach their students to deal with the situation that a naginata can be broken on the battlefield, so one must be able to continue to fight with the part that is left. For instance Toda-ha Buko-ryu

include what they call “Bo” techniques but Tendo-ryu call them “Jo” techniques and Yoshin-ryu, “Hanbo” (half Bo) techniques (even when their hanbo is about the length of a “Jo”).

School like Chikubujima-ryu and Kukishin-ryu (at least the part that is integrated in Hontai Yoshin-ryu or practiced together with Takagi-ryu) also used to have a strong “Naginata” influence at their origin.

Traditional schools discussed in part 2:

- Chikubujima-ryu (Bojutsu)
- Fuden-ryu (Sojutsu)
- Higo koryu Naginata (Naginatajutsu)
- Hozoin-ryu Takada-ha (Sojutsu)
- Jikishinkage-ryu (Naginatajutsu)
- Kukishin-ryu (Bojutsu)
- Muhi Muteki-ryu (Jojutsu)
- Owari Kan-ryu (Sojutsu)
- Saburi-ryu (Sojutsu)
- Shindo Muso-ryu (Jojutsu)
- Tendo-ryu (Naginatajutsu)
- Toda-ha Buko-ryu (Naginatajutsu)
- Yoshin-ryu (Naginatajutsu)

VII. On kyujutsu, Kyubajutsu and hojutsu

The bow, called “Yumi” in Japanese (or pronounced “Kyu-“ in compound words) played an important military and spiritual role in the history of Japan.

*Amaterasu (the goddess of the sun and the universe) from whom the Emperor of Japan is said to be a direct descendant, carried a bow and arrows. Bow and arrow were religious and military symbols to shoot away evil spirits or enemies. Its military influence was not only limited to the battlefield but also associated with value setting of the warriors. Already around 950, Japanese martial philosophers described the “**Kyuba no michi**” (the “Way of Bow and Horse), an unwritten code about the Japanese warrior’s overriding concern for personal honour. This would become the conceptual grandparent of the much later Tokugawa-era code.*

Throughout the history, the bow would have a significant religious role and archery would become an important element of many Shinto ceremonies. Often rituals are designed to capture the attention of the gods in the hopes of attaining luck and prosperity. The best known example is probably Yabusame, which was originally created not only as a form of practice for mounted archers, but as an offering of

entertainment to the gods. Much later, Japanese archery would get strong spiritual connotations with Zen Buddhism.

The bow remained also the major weapon of the Japanese military until the introduction of the "Tanegashima" (matchlock or musket). After that its use in the battlefield became less dominant. Heki Ryu still practices "**Koshiya Kumi-Yumi**" (battlefield archery in full armour) where the archers shoot in tight formations. Their use of organized formations and alternating volley shooting was instituted about 200 years ago and is based on European battlefield musket drill.

Nevertheless, things changed when firearms were introduced in Japan in 1543 by the Portuguese traders on Tanegashima Island.

The bushi class were really confronted with the superiority of firearms in the battle of Nagashino in 1575, where Oda Nobunaga introduced large scale use of firearms in the battlefield. Firearms were operated by common (non samurai) soldiers but the strategy, and the use of the weapons was codified in "**Hojutsu**" schools like Morishige-ryu and Seki-ryu. Initially, small arms (called Teppo) were in use, but starting around 1570, there was already the emergence of large-scale guns with cannons and hand cannons coming into use in the Genki (1570-1573) and Tensho (1573-1592) Eras.

Japanese matchlock or "**Hinawaju**" are still often called "**Tanegashima**", referring to Tanegashima Island. Traditional gunnery is called "**Hojutsu**".

Although the bow became more and more obsolete in the battlefield, its presence in Japanese society would be maintained.

The archery events held at the famous Sanjusangendo temple in Kyoto certainly played an important role in cultivating the importance of "**Kyujutsu**" but gradually the philosophical and spiritual components became more and more emphasized, which lead to the development of the modern art called "**Kyudo**". Also in daily live the across Japan arrows remain important symbols. For instance, Miko, in Shinto shrines, still prepare the hamaya or 'demon-breaking arrows' that are sold as lucky charms during the New Year's festival. Archery is still used in ceremonies across the country, especially those involving harvest, purification or coming-of-age.

Traditional kyujutsu and Hojutsu schools discussed in part 2:

- Heki Ryu (Kyujutsu)
- Morishige-ryu (Hojutsu)
- Ogasawara-ryu (Kyubajutsu)
- Seki-ryu (Hojutsu)
- Takeda-ryu (Kyubajutsu)
- Yo-ryu (Hojutsu)

VIII. On Jujutsu, yawara, taijutsu and aikijujutsu

Prior to Tokugawa times, the samurai were almost constantly embroiled in military campaigns and confrontations. Their training therefore, of necessity, emphasized skill in use of the weapons of the time as well as grappling armour.

*Especially schools that originated in the Sengoku Jidai (1467- 1603) would use techniques appropriate for men wearing armour. Apart from weapon techniques, these armoured techniques or “**Katchu Bujutsu**” also included grappling while wearing armour or “**Yoroi Kumi Uchi**”.*

Winning a battle and killing the enemy was at stake, hence the very offensive nature of the strategy of that period. Major schools that found their origin in armour grappling include “Take(no)uchi-ryu, Kito-ryu, Sekiguchi-ryu and Seigo-ryu.

The term “**Jujutsu**” became in use in Tokugawa times (1603-1867), and the style, although like many Japanese cultural developments may have had influences from the Asian mainland, is typically Japanese in character.

*In the Edo Jidai (1603- 1867), the big battles were over and the country knew a long period of relative peace. The “Bushi” didn’t use their armour and instead they had to prepare themselves to be effective in daily situations, wearing normal clothes. Techniques from that period are sometimes referred to as “**Suhada Bujutsu**” (translated as naked fighting techniques, meaning wearing no armour but dressed in the normal street clothing of the period). Although the big wars were over, the martial attitude flourished in this period.*

With the Tokugawa peace and the little use of armour, some martial schools after 1600 began systemizing methods of non-armoured grappling. Jujutsu was just one of many martial disciplines created and cultivated by the samurai class, warriors who were always concerned with mastering the most effective means of ensuring victory in battle. Nevertheless, traditional Jujutsu was in the Tokugawa period really an important part of the education and training of the Samurai. During that period, the most influential schools flourished and those of minor importance died and were forgotten because of their inefficient and unrealistic techniques.

Some schools had a profound influence on the development of other systems.

***Takenouchi-ryu** is such a school and the Hontai Yoshin-ryu and Takagi-ryu history for instance is marked by one of the early sokes to have studied that system profoundly before maturing their own school.*

*The **Yoshin-ryu** (not related to Hontai yoshin-ryu, despite the same reference to a willow heart, called “yoshin”) founded in 1632 by Akiyama Yoshitoki, was at the basis*

for later schools like for instance Shin Yoshin-ryu, Shin Shin-ryu, Shin no Shindo-ryu, Tenjin Shinyo-ryu, and Shindo Yoshin-ryu (but also more recent systems like Danzan-ryu and even Wado-ryu).

Apart from “Jujutsu”, other names are used to indicate weaponless techniques, these include: “yawara”, “taijutsu”, “aikijujutsu”.

Traditional schools discussed in part 2:

- Araki-ryu
- Asayama Ichiden-ryu
- Daito-ryu
- Hasegawa-ryu
- Hontai Yoshin-ryu
- Iga-ryu Ha Katsushin-ryu
- Kashima Shin-ryu
- Kiraku-ryu
- Kito-ryu
- Ryushin Katchu-ryu
- Sekiguchi Shin Shin-ryu
- Shibukawa Ichi-ryu
- Shindo Yoshin-ryu
- Shingetsu Muso Yanagi-ryu
- Shosho-ryu
- Takagi-ryu
- Takenouchi-ryu
- Tenjin Shinyo-ryu
- Yagyū Shingan-ryu

IX. Other arts

In the past, several schools included a large range of weapon systems, even if their focus would become more or less restricted to only a few or even one art.

*The best known example of a comprehensive system is of course **Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu**, here catalogued as a kenjutsu school (following the classification of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai), but able to preserve many other techniques.*

*A different example is **Shinto Muso-ryu**, one of the oldest traditions of “Jojutsu” but which also included other weapons, still practiced together with the “Jo” or separate in affiliated arts:*

- **Uchida-ryu tanjojutsu** (short stick art)
- **Shinto-ryu kenjutsu** (swordsmanship)
- **Isshin-ryu kusarigamajutsu** (chain-and-sickle art)
- **Ikkaku-ryu juttejutsu** (truncheon art)
- **Ittatsu-ryu hojojutsu** (tying art).

In contrast to Katori Shinto-ryu, Shinto Muso-ryu has adopted additional techniques in the course of time.

Some schools have different arts in their history that within the school became extinct, while the school focussed on the core of their techniques in a changing environment.

An example is naginatajutsu, sojutsu and shurikenjutsu (in this case in the form of little iron plates, called "Teppan"), in Takagi-ryu and Hontai Yoshin-ryu, that got lost in favour of the jujutsu and bojutsu emphasis.

There are still schools that focus on techniques that by some are considered as secondary .

*An example is the shurikenjutsu of **Negishi-ryu** that used to be a complete school with also Tachi-Uchi, Kodachi, Jo, Naginata, and Kumi-Uchi.*

Another example is Kobori-ryu tosuijutsu (a school of martial swimming)

X. Resources

A lot has been written on martial arts, but when it comes to individual traditional Japanese martial systems, it remained long time very difficult to obtain reliable and easily accessible information without a solid knowledge of the Japanese language. Nevertheless there are now some good books in English available. Among the authors who covered this topic in English, I want to mention the following:

- **Donn F Drager** "The martial arts and way of Japan" series by (3 volumes): probably the first series to give an overview of the traditional martial arts of Japan. Unfortunately somewhat outdated regarding existing examples of traditional arts and their masters and also centred along the schools the author practised (but this is a trap we can understand). Nevertheless still highly recommendable.
- **Diane Skoss** put together a series of essays in "Koryu Bujutsu" in fact it is part of a series of 3 excellent books on "Traditions of Japan".
- **Ellis Amdur** wrote an excellent book called "Old School" (he also wrote a number of other good books like "Hidden in Plain Sight").
- **David A. Hall** put together an "Encyclopedia of Japanese Martial arts", which is an excellent resource book but unfortunately lacks a few entries that according our perception should have been part of such an important reference tool.
- **Serge Mol** wrote a number of books (amongst others on jujutsu, swordsmanship, minor arms and esoteric dimensions). Although we are not always pleased with his interpretation of the history (certainly not when it concerns arts related to his teacher Fumon Tanaka), we have to admit that he gathered a lot of useful information, worth reading (be-it with some caution).

A number of authors/translators helped us to get access to traditional works dealing with the more philosophical aspects. Some examples:

- *“Book of Five Rings”, “Code of the Samurai”, “the demon’s Sermon on the Martial Arts”, “Hagakure”, “The live giving sword”, “The unfettered mind”.*
- **Sun Tzu’s** *“The art of war” would be the only non-Japanese in this list that I recommend, but then again, this Chinese work on military strategy which had such a significant impact on Japanese military when it was introduced in Japan in the 8th century, still remains a remarkable book to read.*

Only a few books deal with one particular system. Amongst them:

- **Otake Risuke:** *“Katori Shinto-ryu: Warrior Tradition”, excellent but too technical for what I need.*
- **Karl Friday:** *“Legacies of the Sword” (Kashima-Shinryu).*
- **Dan and Jackie DeProspero** wrote 2 good books on kyudo

Although not really resource books for individual schools, I do want to mention the following:

- **Stephen Turnbull** wrote a number of reference books on the Samurai class (e.g. *The Samurai sourcebook. Nice books for those who are new to the subject, although more experienced readers tend to find him inaccurate.*
- **Dave Lowry** wrote a number of excellent books that are very nice to read and help to put things in their context. His book *“In the dojo”* is recommended reading for our students (I wish I wrote it).

Of course there are also some excellent articles written and some can easily be found on the internet.

A good start is koryu.com which also has an overview of “The Good Stuff (Some Great Books You Really Oughta Read)” by Meik Skoss, which covers not only koryu but also books on judo, kendo, atarashii naginata and so on.

For those who are interested, and have some money to spend, the “Nihon Kobudo Kyokai” DVD series covers most schools that are member of their association.

The series is in Japanese but worth watching even if the Japanese language represents a barrier. There is also a book entitled “Budo, The martial ways of Japan” by the Nippon Budokan with a brief description of 30 traditional schools in English.

Nevertheless I would like to share a similar concern than Meik Skoss in his overview “The Good Stuff”. I also don’t look for too many detailed technical explanations (tutorial approach) in books. If you want to study the art, there is only one way: go and do it under the guidance of a Japanese headmaster.

Traditional schools



I. List of “Koryu”

KORYU (古流) can be translated as old school (or tradition). The term is usually reserved for Japanese martial art schools that are older than 1868, i.e. schools that were created before the Meiji Restoration.

This is also the definition that is used for the list below.

Most well-recognized old schools are member of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai and/or the Nihon Kobudo Shinkokai. Nevertheless a small number of “Koryu” have chosen not to be member of either organizations. This list originated from the member’s list of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai, later other schools were added.

In alphabetical order:

- **Araki Ryū [Kenpō /Gunyō Kogusoku] (荒木流 [拳法 / 軍用小具足])**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Araki Mujinsai (or Muninsai) Minamoto no Hidetsuna in the 16th century. Araki Mujinsai is sometimes believed to be a close relative of Araki Murashige, a famous warlord who fought with Nobunaga.</p> <p>Mori Kasuminosuke, the second generation headmaster, had a number of students, each of whom formed their own line of Araki-ryu. Among them, Yamamoto Kasuke Katsuyuki and his disciples Yamamoto Tabei Katsuhisa and Takeuchi Kuroemon Katsuyoshi were at the origin of several lineages of the school throughout Japan. The school flourished mainly in the Isezaki area, where many related but distinct lines developed.</p> <p>Currently there are still different lines active but 2 are member of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Araki-ryu Kenpo: the current headmaster is Kunimitsu Kikuchi (17th generation).• Araki-ryu Gunyo Kogusoku: The current headmaster is Tsukasa Hoshina Akira <p>Worth mentioning is the Araki-ryu torite-kogusoku lead by Ellis Ambdur</p>
Description	<p>In general, Araki-ryu can be best described as grappling with weapons. Araki-ryu Kenpo is an Isezaki line and consists of a set of grappling techniques, called torite kogusolu (unarmed or with minor weapons). Araki-ryu Gunyo Kogusoku has its primarily focus on iai, kenjutsu (including kodachi), yari and some other weapons.</p>

Location Araki-ryu Kenpo: Minamisengi-chou, Isesaki-shi, Gunma-ken
Araki-ryu Gunyo Kogusoku: Hatanaka, Niiza-shi, Saitama-ken
Araki-ryu torite-kogusoku: US with subsidiary schools

- **Asayama Ichiden Ryū heihō (浅山一伝流兵法)**

History Founded by Asayama Ichidensai Shigetatsu in the 17th century.
Current representative is Osaki Kiyoshi

Description Mainly known for its jujutsu (also called taijutsu) and kenjutsu, the school also uses bo and kama (typically for the school, the kama is big, with a long blade).
All sword techniques (including drawing techniques) are practiced in paired kata.
Since the school was practised by “Goshi” (farmer samurai), students still wear trouser-like hakama

Location Kanagawa

- **Bokuden Ryū Kenjutsu (卜傳流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Bokuden-ryu Kenjutsu (see also Kashima Shinto-ryu) was founded by Bokuden Tsukahara (1489-1571), a student of Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu.
Bokuden was a famous swordsman who served as an instructor of Shogun Yoshiteru Ashikaga. Bokuden used to call his system initially Mutekatsu-ryu ("the school of winning without hands"). There is a famous Japanese story of Bokuden who was not taken seriously for this style and got challenged. He agreed to have a fight but proposed to have it on a small island (on Lake Biwa) to avoid disturbance by others. When the challenger jumped from the boat, Bokuden pushed the boat back, leaving the other on the island. From a safe distance he shouted that this was a technique of his school of "winning without hands" This anecdote even served as model for a scene in a Kung-fu movie ("Enter the Dragon" with Bruce Lee).

Through Tanaka (who studied under Bokuden) and his student Nakamura, the school would move to the Hirosaki domain. Later it would go to the Koyama family until present.

The name Shinto-ryu Bokuden-ryu (later abbreviated as Bokuden-ryu) was introduced later. Bokuden-ryu shares the same founder with Kashima Shinto-ryu but the name Bokuden-ryu would be used by the line that continued the tradition in Hirosaki, while the line that stayed close to the Kashima shrine would be known as Kashima Shinto-ryu.

Current headmaster is Koyama Hidehiro

Description	Primarily a kenjutsu school, but the 13th generation headmaster was a master in Sekiguchi-ryu and incorporated some jujutsu in the curriculum.
Location	Kasuga-cho, Hirosaki-shi, Aomori-ken

- **Chikubujima Ryū Bōjutsu (竹生島流棒術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Heizi Akira Nanba in the 12th century. Nanba also created a naginata school called Nanba-ryu that predates his “Bojutsu” system but which was abandoned for the latter.</p> <p>Chikubujima-ryu is probably the oldest surviving bojutsu school in Japan, named after Chikubushima, a small island in the middle of Lake Biwa (near Kyoto), where the creator received a vision from “Chikubujima Benten”, deity of the Tsukubasuma-jinja.</p> <p>The current headmaster, Hirosumi Matsuura, lives and teaches in Nagasaki.</p>
Description	<p>Use of a “Bo” (wooden staff) against a swordsman. The school put emphasize on the use of powerful “Kiai”.</p> <p>During kata, the swordsman uses a bokuto with a large protective tsuba.</p>
Location	Miyadai-machi, Oomura-shi, Nagasaki-ken

- **Daito Ryū Aikijūjutsu (大東流合気術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History According to the current headmaster Kondo Katsuyuki, the name Daito-ryu can be traced back about 900 years, to Shinra Saburo Minamoto no Yoshimitsu (1045-1127), a warrior considered to have been the distant founder of the school. However, the detail of its development in the Edo period (and before) is not clear, since there are no ancient records about Daito-ryu. Interestingly, Daito-ryu takes its name from a mansion where Minamoto no Yoshimitsu lived in his childhood.

Minamoto no Yoshimitsu transmitted his art to his second son Yoshikiyo. Yoshikiyo's grandson, Nobuyoshi, adopted the family name Takeda (after a village in Kitakoma where he probably lived). From then on, the succession of Daito-ryu, will remain within the Takeda family until Takeda Sokaku was succeeded by his son Takeda Tokimune.

Apart from his son, Takeda Sokaku had several skilled students like Hisa Takuma (Menkyo Kaiden), and Nakatsu Heizaburo. However his best known student was Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of aikido.

Takeda Tokimune (1916-1993), the last soke, taught the sword techniques of the Ono-ha Itto-ryu along with Daito-ryu Aiki-jujutsu. However no official soke was appointed after his death in 1993.

There are 2 main lines (both member of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai):

- Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu represented by Kondo Katsuyuki, who continued the school from Takeda Tokimune Soke, the successor of Takeda Sokaku (1860-1943), who himself had been an uchideshi of Sakakibara Kenkichi (Kashima Shinden Jikishinkage-ryu).
- Students of Hisa Takuma and Nakatsu Heizaburo founded the Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu federation called Takumakai. Izawa Masamitsu and Kawabe Takeshi are head instructors of the Takumakai, but the acting director is Mori Haku.

Description It is said that the founder (Yoshimitsu) studied tegoi, an ancestor of sumo. Nowadays, Daito-ryu is mainly known by the larger public of budoka, as the jujutsu school that was the basis for modern aikido (Ueshiba Morihei practiced Daito-ryu for some twenty years).

Takeda Sokaku received teachings of his father, once an ozeki sumo wrestler, who had also evolved into a kenjutsu and sojutsu master. He also was an uchi deshi of Kenkichi Sakakibara, headmaster of the Jikishinkage-ryu. Takeda Sokaku combined Daito-ryu elements with jujutsu elements from the other schools he learned to create Daito-ryu Jujutsu, later to be called Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu.

Like other forms of jujutsu, Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu has throwing techniques and joint manipulations to effectively control (however there is much emphasis on the neutralization of an attack as early as possible and on the use of the force of the attacker's movement against himself. A characteristic of the art is its controlling of an opponent on the ground with the knee in order to leave hands free to deal with other opponents.

Location Dojo of Kondo Katsuyuki: Higashiyotsugi, Katsushika-ku, Tokyo-to

Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu Takumakai: Narihira-cho, Ashiya-shi, Hyogo-ken

- **Enshin Ryū lai Suemonogiri Kenpō (円心流居合据物斬剣法)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Based on the art of Hayamizu Nagato no Kami Enshin, who was a bodyguard of Emperor Ogimichi (1557-1586)
In 1827 Kobashi Shobei added swordtechniques of Shinden Munen Ryu to those of Enshin Ryu and started to call the school Enshin Ryu lai Suemonogiri Kenpo.
The school remained in the Kobashi family until Kobashi Nichiki, who passed it to the current headmaster, Masumoto Takamasa (15th Soke)

Description lai-jutsu school in which the art of cutting (objects) is called Suemonogiri,

Because of its origin (the founder being the emperor's bodyguard), the initial focus was defence against close distance threats. Later the art was complemented with techniques from other traditional schools.
The school puts emphasis on cutting techniques but the word "Tameshigiri" (test cutting to control the quality of a blade) is avoided and instead replaced by "Suemonogiri" (cutting of objects)

The word “Kenpo” should be translated as “sword method” and should not be mistaken with “Kenpo”, “fist method”, written with a different kanji.

Location Hannan-chou, Abeno-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka-fu

- **Fuden Ryū Sōjutsu (風伝流槍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Yoshinari Nakayama, himself a student in Take(no) uchi-ryu.

Also known as Takeuchi-ryu Sojutsu, the school was taught in many provinces. Current headmaster is Imanishi (12th generation)

Description Sojutsu (derived from Takeuchi-ryu).

The spear adopted in Fuden Ryu is straight (suyari), but very long and the cross section is a polygon with 16 sides. The hosaki (toe) has the shape of the fruit of the Ginkgo Biloba.

Presently students don't wear armour, but they do train techniques as if an armour was worn.

Location Hama, Toyonaka-shi, Osaka-fu

- **Hasegawa Ryū Yawarajutsu (長谷川流和術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Created by Hasegawa Chikaranosuke Hidenobu (another reading for Hidenobu is Eishin), better known for his Iaijutsu (he was the 7th headmaster of Shinmei Muso-ryu, which later would be called Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu).

Current headmaster is Kuwahara meguri, 17h generation

Description Jujutsu school with emphasis on torite (capturing an enemy with the hands).

Location Yumemino, Matsubushi-machi, Kitakatsushika-gun, Saitama-ken

• **Hayashizaki Musō Ryū iaijutsu (林崎夢想流居合術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Hayashizaki Jinsuke Minamoto no Shigenobu (1546 - 1621).
Hayashizaki established Shinmei Muso-ryu, which was at the origin of schools like Hayashizaki Muso ryu and Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iaijutsu.

There are two major lines:

- Line lead by Okuyama Mizen
- Line associated with Sasamori Takemi (soke of Ono-ha Itto-ryu).

Description Characterized by the use of very long swords (more than 3 shaku). Therefore they have a typical noto.

Most kata consist of applying the different techniques in front of an opponent (sitting) armed with a short sword and whose draw is aborted. Nevertheless there are also tatchi ai-batto techniques in which the opponent is armed with a normal sized sword.

Location Akamatsu, Ookura-mura, Mogami-gun, Yamagata-ken

• **Heki Ryū Kyūjutsu (日置流弓術)**

History Heki Ryu is an old archery school from the Muromachi period. It was probably founded by Heki Danjo Masatsugu

The school was carried on by the Yoshida family. Different branches of the school, such as Sekka-ha, Dosetsu-ha and Insai-ha have their origin in the art of the Yoshida family.

Heki Ryu Chikurin-ha, also a Heki Ryu, has probably another origin, supposedly founded by Chikurinbo Josei, a priest of the Shingon sect .

Description Traditional archery school, suited for the battlefield.

The Satsuma Heki Ryu (Kyushu), based on Insai-ha (founded by Yoshida Genpachiro Shigeuji, also known as Issuiken Insai) still actively practices what is called koshiya kumi-yumi, battlefield archery (as practiced by foot soldiers) where the archers, dressed in full armour, work together in formations.

Location Kyushu
In Okoyama there is Heki To-Ryu

- **Higo Koryū Naginata (肥後古流薙刀)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Kamei Terushige in the 17th century

Kino Shizue, besides headmaster in Higo koryu Naginata, was also a wellrespected teacher of atarashii naginata in the seventees and eigthees..

Current representative for the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai is Hirata Mayumi

Description Naginatajutsu, using a 2.4m naginata with a long blade of about 1.2m (which is half of the total length, making it look like a nagamaki). The long naginata looks quit impressive in the school's "shizentai no kamai". The school has both tachi-ai (naginata versus bokuto) and naginata-ai (naginata versus naginata) techniques, studied in different kata

Location Maebaru, Nagomi-machi, Tamana-gun, Kumamoto-ken

- **Hōki Ryū Iaijutsu (伯耆流 居合術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Katayama Hoki-no-kami Fujiwara Hisayasu (1575-1650), the half-brother of Takenouchi Hisamori (founder of Takenouchi-ryu).

The Katayama family continued transmitting the art until WW II, the last headmaster was, Katayama Busuke, 9th generation.

Hoki-ryu has several branches but has no headmaster or an umbrella organization for the different branches.

The Hyogo branch that participates in the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai enbu, is represented by Okubu Sensei.

Description	lai-jutsu school but originally a comprehensive school which included disciplines like kenjutsu, iaijutsu, jujutsu, bojutsu, jojutsu, naginatajutsu and sojutsu.
Location	Higashinaniwa-cho, Amagasaki-shi, Hyogo-ken

- **Hokushin Ittō Ryū Kenjutsu (北辰一刀流剣術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Chiba Shusaku Narimasa (1793-1856), probably the most famous swordsman in Japan in the late Edo period.</p> <p>The name of the school is derived from Hokushin Muso-ryu, the style of swordsmanship Shusaku learned from his father, and the Itto-ryu he later learned under Nakanishi (Nakahishi-ha Itto-ryu is a spin-off from Ono-ha Itto-ryu).</p> <p>The school remained within the Chiba family until Headmaster Chiba Shunosuke Koretane closed the Edo-Genbukan at the end of the Meiji period. However in 2013; the Chiba family head, Chiba Hiroshi Masatane, appointed Otsuka Yoichiro Masanori as 6th generation headmaster of the school (Chiba line).</p>
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There were many Hokushin Itto-ryu side lines, due to its popularity in the late Edo period, hence the amount of teaching licenses issued. Sakamoto Ryoma (famous revolutionary) was a student as well as several members of the Shinsengumi. The school also had a great influence on the development of modern kendo.

The Tobukan, established by Ozawa Torakichi is an important side line that remained in the Ozawa family until now. Ozawa Satoshi, the 7th generation of the Ozawa family is the representative at the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai.

Description	Mainly Kenjutsu but also some battojutsu and naginatajutsu, brought over from Hokushin Muso Ryu. In kumitachi style training, Hokushin Itto-ryu uses a bokuto of 2,5 shaku. This bokuto is considered the ancestor of the Shinai used in modern Kendo.
Location	Oo-machi, Mito-shi, Ibaraki-ken

- **Hontai Yōshin Ryū Jūjutsu (本體楊心流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>The school was founded in the 17th century by Takagi Oriemon Shigetoshi. He was succeeded by his son, Takagi Umanosuke Shigesada, who also studied Takeuchi-ryu (in which he received a license to teach) and who refined the art of his father (which he called Hontai Yoshin-ryu Takagi-ryu). He was succeeded by a son, Takagi Gennoshin Hideshige.</p> <p>The 4th master Okuni Kihei Shigenobu was originally a master of Tendo-ryu Naginatajutsu and the founder of Kukishin-ryu bojutsu. When Okuni Kihei met Takagi Gennoshin, they both realized that their skills were complementary and they exchanged knowledge. When Gennoshin got sick, he asked Kihei to become his successor. From then on, Hontai Yoshin-ryu Takagi-ryu and Kukishin-ryu bojutsu were taught together.</p> <p>Kakuno Hachiheita Masayoshi, the 16th master opened his dojo in Kobe. One of his students, Minaki Saburo Masanori became 17th soke of Hontai Yoshin-ryu.</p> <p>The current headmaster is Inoue Kyoichi, 19th generation.</p>
Description	<p>Jujutsu school with various weapons, such as chobo, hanbo, tanto, kodachi and sword.</p> <p>The techniques are based upon the principles of Jujutsu Roppo: the six kinds of techniques used in Jujutsu: gyaku (joint locks), nage (throwing), ate (hitting), shime (choking), toritsuke (capturing the enemy and rope binding) and katsu (resuscitation).</p>

Location Tsutogawa-cho, Nishinomiya-shi, Hyogo-ken

- **Hōzōin Ryū Takada-ha Sōjutsu (宝蔵院流高田派槍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Hozoin-ryu was founded by Hozoin Kakuzenbo Hoin In'ei (c1521–1607), a Buddhist monk, head of Kofuku-ji temple (famous Buddhist temple in Nara). Hozoin In'ei was also a skilled Shikage-ryu swordsman. The original Hozoin-ryu became distinct but the main techniques survived in the Takada branch.

Amongst his students was Nakamura Naomasa (who continued Nakamura ha), whose student Takada Matabei Yoshitsugu founded the current branch. This branch however has no remaining references to techniques of Shinkage-ryu.

Kagita Chubei, who also had been mayor of Nara, led the school as 20th headmaster until his unexpected sudden death. He was succeeded by Ichiya Junzo (21st soke) on January 2012 .

Description Sojutsu school. The spear of the Hozoin-ryu Sojutsu is characterized by its cross-shaped spearhead.

Location Kitamikado-cho, Nara-shi, Nara-ken

- **Hyōhō Niten Ichi Ryū Kenjutsu (兵法二天一流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by the famous Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645). Musashi was also the author of Go Rin No Sho (“The Book of Five Rings”) and Dokkodo (“The Way of Self Reliance”, usually translated as “Going My Way”). Imai Masayuki Nobukatsu, the 10th Headmaster of Heiho (Heiho can also be read as Hyoho, which is in fact the preferred reading in the school) Niten Ichi-ryu, made a text with explanations of Dokkodo.

The 11th generation headmaster, Iwami Toshio Gensho, handed the responsibility of the school over to Kajiya Takanori in 2013.

Yoshimochi Kiyoshi continues a line in Usa which follows the teachings of Kiyonaga Fumiya (9th headmaster) and Miyagawa Yasutaka, a student of Aoki Kikuo Hisakatsu (8th soke) established a line that continues to practice in the Kansai region (under Miyagawa Morito).

Description Kenjutsu school, mainly known for its two-sword (katana and wakizashi) techniques called Nito Ichi "two swords as one" (or Niten Ichi, two heavens as one. Nevertheless the school has kata using only one sword (i.e. forms with either long or short sword separately). .

Location The "Iwami line" is located in Yokoshiro, Kokuraminami-ku, Kitakyuushuu-shi, Fukuoka-ken. This is the line recognized by the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai. The "Yoshimochi Kiyoshi line" is located in Usa, Oita in Kyushu.

- **Iga Ryū Ha Katsu Shin Ryū Jūjutsu (為我流派勝新流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Iga-ryu Katchu Yawara was originally founded by Ebata Masaemon Mitsusane, who had studied different schools (Fujiyama-ryu and Yoshioka-ryu Jujutsu, as well as Bugyo-ryu Iai).

The school was renamed to Iga-ryu Ha Katsushin-ryu, in the 1800's, by the 8th grand master, Fujisakitominojo Yoshimichi, who incorporated his additional instruction from Tenjin Shinyo-ryu.

The 9th headmaster, Ouchi Fujijiro Tadanobu was also the 11th headmaster of Muhi Muteki-ryu Jojutsu, an art he also transmitted to his students, along with Iga-ryu Ha Katsushin-ryu.

Current headmaster is Nemoto Kenichi, 13th generation.

Description Jujutsu school (including nage, atemi, keri and gyakuwaza) with resemblance with Tenjin Shinyo-ryu.

There exists also an Iga-ryu ninjutsu but this is not related to Iga-ryu Ha Katsushin-ryu (The kanji for Iga are different).

Location Hiraishotohara-cho, Hitachinaka-shi, Ibaraki-ken

- **Jigen Ryū Hyōhō Kenjutsu (示現流兵法劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Togo Chui (1561-1643) in the late 16th century in Satsuma Province (now Kagoshima prefecture in Kyushu). Togo Chui was trained in Taisha-ryu (derived from Shinkage-ryu) but studied also Tenshinsho Jigen-ryu with a priest called Zenkitsu, who happened to be 3rd headmaster of Tenshinsho Jigen-ryu (a branch from Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu). Togo Chui made his own style and called it Jigen-ryu but changed the kanji for Jigen from “自源” into “示現”.</p> <p>The style soon became an official style (Otome waza) of the Satsuma han, ruled by the Shimazu family, therefore teaching the style to those who didn't belong to the clan was strictly prohibited.</p> <p>The style has been passed through members of the Togo family, who served for the Shimazu family.</p> <p>Current headmaster is Togo Shigenori (12th generation).</p>
Description	<p>Kenjutsu school known for its powerful kiai and emphasis on the first strike. During practice, a long wooden stick is used to cut against a vertical pole or tree, called tategi. New students used to practice striking the pole (tategi-uchi) 3,000 times in the morning, and 8,000 times in the afternoon for 3 years before being allowed to the next level of training.</p> <p>The school also has kodachi, nodachi, bo and yari.</p>
Location	Higashisengoku-cho, Kagoshima-shi, Kagoshima-ken

- **Jiki Shinkage Ryū Naginatajutsu (直心影流薙刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Masanori Matsumoto Bizen in the 16th century with roots in Jikishin Kage-ryu Kenjutsu.</p> <p>Some of the techniques would be modernized in the 19th century (mainly through 14th generation headmaster Satake Yoshinori and his wife Shigeo) and soon Jiki-shin Kage-ryu would make its name in matches against kendo practitioners. Together with Tendo-ryu it was at the origin of the sports version of naginata (called atarashii or “new” naginata). It was teachers like</p>
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Sonobe Hideo (15th generation headmaster) who introduced the naginata in girls' schools and popularized the art.

Although the previous headmaster (Akiko Toya) was a woman, the current headmaster, Masami Sonobe (18th generation), is a man.

Description The current naginata of Jiki-shin Kage-ryu is a light, relatively short weapon. It is held in a rather narrow grip at one end of the haft and whirled around a central axis. Cuts and thrusts are straight. When facing a sword, distance between opponents is maintained, such that it is unlikely that the sword would be able to strike effectively. The school also teaches how to continue to fight and use the tanto when the naginata has fallen to the ground.

Location Tedukayamaminami, Nara-shi, Nara-ken

- **Kanemaki Ryū Battōjutsu (鐘捲流抜刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Kanemaki Jisai (late 16th, early 17th century), himself a student from Toda Kagemasa (Toda-ryu), based on Chujo-ryu, which is the Kenjutsu school founded in the by Chujo Nagahide, himself a student of Nen-ryu.. Kanemaki Jisai was the teacher of Ito Ittosai before he went on a warrior pilgrimage and eventually creating Itto-ryu. Sasaki Kojiro ((founder of Gan-ryu and famous for his duel with Musashi) is said to have been a student of Kanemaki as well (although some say Kojiro was a student of Toda Kagemas)..

Narahara Masashi is 12th generation headmaster

Description Kanemaki-ryu used to be a combative system with main focus on Kenjutsu. Currently the Battōjutsu (quick drawing techniques) are still transmitted.

Location Setochoushionou, Okayama-shi, Okayama-ken

- **Kanshin Ryū Iaijutsu (貫心流居合術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Kanshin-ryu is a swordschool with old roots, originated from the teachings of Kiichi Hogen who passed his teaching to a number of monks.</p> <p>The first headmaster is said to have been Minamoto no Yoshitsune, a famous general of the Minamoto clan in the early Kamakura period.</p> <p>Current headmaster is Fukuhara Yoshitaka</p>
Description	<p>Kenjutsu school that gradually om focussed more and more on Iai-jutsu. Nevertheless the school also uses other weapons such as kusarigama but was also famous for its naginata.</p>
Location	Nanpeidai, Matsue-shi, Shimane-ken

- **Kashima Shinden Jiki Shinkage Ryū (鹿島神傳直心影流)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded in the early 16th century by Matsumoto Bizen-no-Kami Naokatsu (1467-1524). Originally called Kashima Shinden-ryu, which refers to the Kashima shrine.</p> <p>The Jikishin Kage-ryu Kenjutsu comes from Kage-ryu founded by Aizu Hyuga no Kami Iko (1452-1538).</p> <p>The school was popular in the late Edo period. Kenkichi Sakakibara (14th generation soke) was a famous swordsmen and teacher and issued many menkyo kaiden.</p> <p>Takeda Sokaku, the founder of Daito Ryu also trained in this school along with Ono-ha Itto Ryu.</p> <p>Current headmaster (shihan) of the Odani-ha is Iwasa Masaru (18th generation)</p>
Description	<p>Jikishinkage-ryu is a kenjutsu school with a lot of focus on breathing (kokyu) and kiai. One form of breathing is called "Aum". Also, unlike modern kendo, suri-ashi (gliding) is not the preferred way of moving, instead a firm walking based way of moving is used.</p>

The first kata (Hojo) consists of four themes, one for each season. The school has forms with bokuto but also fukuro shinai and habiki, Jikishinkage-ryu also has kodachi but in contrast to most other schools, the kodachi is used with two hands on the tsuka. The school is also known for its use of super heavy "Furibo" for suburi exercise.

Location Miyamoto, Funabashi-shi, Chiba-ken

- **Kashima Shin Ryū (鹿島神流)**

History Founded in the 16th century by Matsumoto Bizen-no-Kami Ki no Masamoto. Right from the start, the school had a soke line (head of the school) and shihanke (the actual headmaster) lineage in parallel.

Current 19th generation "Shihanke" is Seki Humitake, who established the Kashima-Shinryu Federation of Martial Arts and Sciences.

Description Jujutsu, kenjutsu, battojutsu, jojutsu and other arts

Location Kashima, Ibaraki Prefecture

- **Kashima Shintō Ryū Kenjutsu (鹿島新當流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Tsukahara Bokuden in the Muromachi period (c.1530), see also Bokuden-ryu. Although they share the same founder as Bokuden-ryu, Kashima Shinto-ryu has always been centered around the Kashima Shrine, while Bokuden-ryu is taught in Hirosaki. Bokuden learned Katori Shinto-ryu from his adopted father and later perfected his skills in a musha shugyo (warrior's pilgrimage), leading to the creation of his own system, which he called "Kashima Shinto-ryu".

The current headmaster of the school is Yoshikawa Tsuenetaka. A descendant of Bokuden (Bokuden was also named Tsukahara before he changed his name).

Description	Kenjutsu, with still a lot of focus in finding weaknesses in an opponent wearing an armour. Some techniques also include atemi (strikes). The school is also characterised by low solid stances. The school also has Bojutsu, Sojutsu, Naginatajutsu and Battojutsu.
Location	Kyuuchuu, Kashima-shi, Ibaraki-ken

- **Kiraku Ryū Jūjutsu (気楽流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Created in the mid 18th century Watanabe Mokuemon, with roots from Toda-ryu kenjutsu (founded by Toda Seigen in the 1500s and famous for kodachi). The 11th headmaster, Iizuka Garyusai, studied several other schools including Muteki-ryu (jujutsu and naginatajutsu) before becoming headmaster of Kiraku-ryu. After him, Muteki-ryu would become an integrated part of Kiraku-ryu. The 14th headmaster Saito Takehachiro (1794-1881) was a student of Jikishinkage-ryu before he became a student of Igarashi Kanaya (13th headmaster) Current 19th generation headmaster is Iijima Fumio
Description	Jujutsu school with also stick, kenjutsu and chigiriki (or kusaribo, a sort of staff with a weighted chain attached). The school has been influenced by Toda-ryu and Jikishinkage-ryu but probably also by Takenouchi-ryu.
Location	Arako-machi, Maebashi-shi, Gunma-ken

- **Kitō Ryū Jūjutsu (起倒流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Kito-ryu was founded in the 17th century by Fukuno and Terada.</p> <p>Jigoro Kano trained in Kito-ryu (under Ikkubo Tsunetoshi) and therefore some of the principles of modern judo come from this style (e.g. Koshiki-no-kata is based on Kito-ryu). It even seems that Kano got inspiration from an earlier soke, Terada Kan'emon (5th fifth headmaster of Kito-ryu and founder of Jikishin-ryu), when he introduced the name</p> <p>The current representative is Inoue Shoji</p>
Description	<p>Kito-ryu has atemi-waza (striking techniques), nage-waza (throwing techniques), kansetsu-waza (joint locking techniques) and shime-waza (choking techniques). Some techniques are to be performed while in full armour.</p>
Location	<p>Nishinosagicho-cho, Yamashina-ku, Kyoto-shi, Kyoto-fu</p>

- **Kobori Ryū Tosuijutsu (小堀流踏水術)**

History	<p>Founded around 1700 by Muraoka Idayu Masafumi based on existing swimming techniques.</p> <p>The current headmaster of the school is Koga Tadao (11th generation).</p>
Description	<p>Martial swimming art, specialized in methods of crossing rapid streams. Warriors are prepared to move freely in and on the water in order to still be able to engage in work or to fight (including forms when wearing armour)</p>
Location	<p>Kumamoto Prefecture, Kyushu</p>

- **Kōgen Ittō Ryū Kenjutsu (甲源一刀流剣術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded in the mid-Edo period (1783) by Henmi Tashiro Yoshitoshi (student of Sakurai Gosuke Nagamase, who in turn was an exponent of the Aizu branch of Mizoguchi-ha Itto-ryu).</p> <p>The school remained in the Henmi family and was never connected to a certain lord.</p> <p>The current headmaster of the school is Henmi Chifuji (9th generation).</p>
Description	<p>Kenjutsu school, that used to have some iaijutsu as well.</p> <p>Sober Itto-ryu line, both in the execution of its techniques as the number of techniques studied.</p> <p>Along with kenjutsu, some naginata techniques (from Toda-ha Buko-ryu) are studied.</p> <p>The reiho (etiquette) of the school consists of the laying out of the weapons before uchikata and shikata take their place (apparently a left over from duelling etiquette).</p>
Location	Ryokamisusuki, Ogano-machi, Chichibu-gun, Saitama-ken

- **Kukishin Ryū Bōjutsu (九鬼神流棒術)**

Practiced together with Hontai Yoshin-ryu or Takagi-ryu, members of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Developed by Okuni Kihei, originally a master of Tendo Ryu Naginata Jutsu.</p> <p>Later Okuni would study with Takagi Gennoshin Hideshige, the third soke of Hontai Yoshin Ryu Takagi Ryu, who at that time served the Himeji-han. When Gennoshin died at the age of 32, Okuni Kihei became the forth successor of Hontai Yoshin Ryu Takagi Ryu. From that time on the techniques of Kukishin Ryu Bojutsu were taught along with Hontai Yoshin Ryu Takagi Ryu.</p>
Description	<p>According the legend, Okuni Kihei went to pay respect to his ancestor's Uji-gami (local guardian god or spirit) and saw the vision of nine Oni (Japanese ogres or demons) attacking him and breaking the blade of his Naginata. He</p>

was able to attack back with the handle portion of his naginata until he chased off the nine oni. Hence the name "Kukishin" (nine demon souls)

Location See Hontai Yoshin-ryu and Takagi-ryu

- **Kurama Ryū Kenjutsu (鞍馬流 剣術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded in the Kyoto area by: Ono Shogen (or Shokan) in the late 16th century.
Descendant school of the systems that arose in the Kyoto area (sometimes referred to as Kyo hachi-ryu, the eight schools of the capital, i.e. Kyoto) in contrast to schools that arose in Kanto (mainly around the Kashima and Katori shrines).
After the Meiji restoration, the school became quickly popular again through Shibata Emori (15th generation soke) who was a student of Sukesaburo Kaneko. Through him, one of the techniques of the school would be incorporated in Keishi-ryu, a new system (based on several schools) developed for the police in 1886.

The school remained in the Shibata family until now. Present headmaster is Shibata Akio (18th soke)

Description Kenjutsu school, despite of consisting of only a few kata, the school concentrates on efficiency.
The Kurama-ryu Bokuto has almost no Sori (curvature) and has a strong wooden Tsuba.
The school's technique "Henka" was adopted as one of the 10 Kenjutsu kata of "Keishi-ryu". "Henka" is also commonly known as "Makiotoshi" by modern Kendoka.

Location Shinano-machi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo-to

- **Maniwa Nen Ryū Kenjutsu (馬庭念流)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded in the 15th century by Higuchi Matashichiro, a student of Nen-ryu, originally created by the famous Soma Shiro Yoshitomo (1351-1408), who also had a Buddhist priest name, Nen Ami Jion.</p> <p>The name Maniwa Nen-ryu, comes on the one hand from the village Maniwa (in Okayama), where the Higuchi family lived and from the other hand from Nen-ryu, the system Higuchi Matashichiro had learned.</p> <p>The school remained in Maniwa within the Higuchi family. Current 25th headmaster is Higuchi Sadahito</p>
Description	<p>Maniwa Nen-ryu is a kenjutsu school, but it also has naginata- and sojutsu. It is also one of the very few schools that still teach yadomejutsu (deflecting arrows with a sword), which was developed by the Higuchi family later on (i.e. not taken from the original Nen-ryu curriculum)</p> <p>Training is done with a bokuto but also with a fukuro shinai and protective wear. In fact, together with Yagyu Shinkage-ryu, Maniwa Nen-ryu was one of the first schools to have used shinai training for sword fighting, which they call kiriwara jiai.</p>
Location	Maniwa, Okayama

- **Mizoguchi-ha Ittō Ryū Kenjutsu (溝口派一刀流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Mizoguchi Shingoemon Masakatsu (student of the second headmaster of Ono-ha Itto-ryu, Ono Jiroemon Tadatsune).</p> <p>A student of Mizoguchi, Ito Masmori, passed some of the knowledge of the founder to Edamatsu Kimitada, a retainer of the Aizu han. His student and successor, Jozaemon Yasumichi, went to Edo to study different other kenjutsu schools and when he came back, he incorporated this knowledge in what he learned from Edamatsu, and this became the system of the Aizu han (In present Fukushima prefecture).</p> <p>Current representative is Naganuma</p>
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Description Mizoguchi-ha has evolved into a more distinct method, rather than just a branch of the Itto school (although some tactics are similar).

Location Sengoku-machi, Aiduwakamatsu-shi, Fukushima-ken

- **Morishige Ryū Hōjutsu (森重流砲術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded circa 1800 by Morishige Yukie Tsuyoshi an expert in Naval and Military strategy.

After the Meiji Restoration, Anzai Minoru restored the practice of the tradition under the guidance and with the permission of 7th Generation Soke Morishige Tamizo.

Since the passing of both Anzai Sensei and Morishige Tamizo Soke instruction and demonstration of this art has been shared between two groups that are presided by Shimazu Kenji Shihan and Onobi Masaharu Shihan respectively.

Description School of Gunnery

The Morishige ryu has been passed on in the same manner as other koryu traditions.

The first kata taught to the disciple is Ihanashi no kata, a kata of etiquette performed in front of distinguished guests. Other kata include basic firing positions and loading patterns..

The licences bestowed are Shoden, Kirigami, Mokuroku and Kaiden.

Location Oowadashinden, Yachiyo-shi, Chiba-ken

- **Mugai Ryū Iaijutsu (無外流居合術)**

History Created in 1693 by Tsuji Gettan Sukemochi (also called Mugai), a kenjutsu student of Yamaguchi Bokushinai (Yamaguchi-ryu). He also studied Zen Buddhism with Sekitan Zenshi. His art was primarily kenjutsu. Later he would study Jigyo-ryu with Taga Jikyosai Morimasa. The iai component from Mugai-ryu would come from there.

From the 6th generation headmaster, Hachisuke Mitsusuke Takahashi, the art remained in the Takahashi family for several generations. The Himeji castle near Kobe became the central point of the Himeji line. Other lines didn't survive into recent times.

The 10th soke of Mugai ryu, Kyutaro Takahashi was a skilled kendo teacher. He was invited to Tokyo to teach kendo, and with him the Mugai-ryu moved temporarily to the capital (later he was invited back to Kobe to teach kendo to the local police force). His student, Shriyo Shinichi Nakagawa, the 11th soke didn't appoint a successor and there are several menkyo kaiden lines that continued Mugai-ryu, amongst them Nakatani Takashi and Shirai Ryotaro, both together with the 11th soke, instrumental in forming the Mugai Kai in 1962. The current chairman of the Mugai Kai is Yoshitaro Nakatani.

Description	<p>Kenjutsu and iaijutsu school, that used to have a strong link with Zen Buddhism. The name "Mugai" comes from a poem: Ippo jitsu mugai... (there is nothing but one truth,...).</p> <p>The link with Zen Buddhism is visible in the fact that there is no hidden teaching in the school. Techniques are taught in the same way to beginners and more advanced students.</p> <p>Currently, Mugai-ryu begins with ten seated (2x5) and ten standing (2x5) "lai" kata. It contains also "Kumitachi" (formal standing partner sets), wakizashi (short sword) techniques, and "habiki no kata" (original Mugai Ryu Kenjutsu kata). There are also additional kata (3 Naiden waza) for the highest level practitioners.</p> <p>The ZNIR kata "Zengo giri" is based on Mugai-ryu (the kata "Ren" in Mugai-ryu, although the execution is somewhat different)</p>
Location	Several branches

- **Muhi Muteki Ryū Jōjutsu (無比無敵流杖術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Founded by Sasaki Tokuhisa (master in Sojutsu). In fact at the battle of Sekigahara, Sasaki's spear got broken and he was forced to continue to fight with the shaft alone.
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The name comes from a spiritual awakening “Mushi Mushu” (no beginning, no end), from which he finally developed his own school.

The 11th generation head Ouchi Fujijiro Tadanobu, was also the 9th generation head of the (Iga-ryu Ha) Katsushin-ryu (also called Kasshin-ryu). At some point in the history both schools moved to Ibaraki.

Current headmaster is Ken'ichi Tadayuki (15th generation)

Description	Jojutsu (and bojutsu) school coming from Sojutsu (from techniques with a broken spear), therefore including a lot of thrusts (tsuki waza). Members of the school also practice jujutsu coming from Katsushin-ryu (derived from the Iga-ryu developed by Ebata and not related with the ninjutsu school with a similar name but different kanji).
Location	Hiraisotoohara-chou, Hitachinaka-shi, Ibaraki-ken

- **Musō Jikiden Eishin Ryū Iaijutsu (無雙直傳英信流居合術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Originated from the art created by Hayashizaki , originally called Shinmei Muso-ryu. The school would later be known as Hasegawa Eishin-ryu. The name Eishin comes from an alternative reading of the name of the 7th headmaster, Hasegawa Hidenobu (can be pronounced Hidenobu but also Eishin), indicating his influence on the style. Until the 17 th soke, Oe Masamichi , who started to re-organise the art and called it Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu, the lineage remained rather undisputed.
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Several students of Oe Masamichi continued the lineage, for instance:

- Hokiyama Namio: lineage until current soke **Fukui Masato** (23rd generation)
- Yamauchi Toyotake, lineage until current soke **Sekiguchi Komei** (21st generation)
- Masaoka Katsutane, lineage followed by the Jikishin-kai (Shimabukuro and now Carl Long)

Description	Eishin-ryu (regardless the branch considered) is one of the most widely practiced schools of iai-jutsu in the world.
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The first series of kata (shoden level) that are taught, are derived from Omori-ryu (founded by Masamitsu Omori, a student of Hasegawa Hidenobu) and are performed in seiza (formal kneeling).

The second level (chuden) consists of techniques starting from tatehiza (half seated). They are considered original techniques created by Hasegawa Hidenobu (Eishin).

The school also has advanced levels (okuden) as well as a lot of paired techniques (kumitachi), although much less known except by advanced students.

Location The representative at the Nihon kobudo Kyokai is Sekiguchi Komei Nishikamata, Oota-ku, Tokyo-to

The all Japan Iaï-do Federation has Fukui Masato as their soke.

- **Negishi Ryū Shurikenjutsu (根岸流手裏劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Negishi Shorei, who received teachings of Ganritsu-ryu from Kaiho Hanpei.
Ganritsu-ryu (also called Gan-ryu) was created in 1644 by Matsubayashi Samanosuke Nagayoshi "Henyasai", and used to be a complete school with focus on Tachi-Uchi, Kodachi, Jo, Naginata, Kumi-Uchi and Shuriken. Negishi Shorei studied Araki-ryu with his father, He would later study with other masters, including Kaiho Hanpei, a bujutsu instructor (who besides Ganritsu-ryu, also had a background in Hokushin Itto-ryu). Negishi Shorei became very skilled at throwing Shuriken with both hands. He created new forms of Shuriken based on the Ganritsu-ryu Shuriken in the shape of large needle (Hari). He however improved the form, the weight and the thickness. Saito Satoshi (5th generation), who was also President of the Nihon Kobudo Shinkokai and Director of the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai, passed away in March 2014. Current headmaster is Hayasaka Yoshifumi.

Description The school has basic methods (Kihon Kata) and methods of combat launching. There are also methods of using Shuriken from the sitting position, lying down, with a sword, in darkness, methods of hiding it, methods of using it in close combat.

Location Takashimadaira, Itabashi-ku, Toukyou-to

- **Nitō Shinkage Ryū Kusarikamajutsu (二刀神影流鎖鎌術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History The current headmaster is Shimamura Osamu (6th generation)
The school has its inspiration from Miyamoto Musashi Genshin (famous swordsman and founder of Niten-ryu).
Matsumura, the third generation soke, who lived in Kumamoto, was also a master in kenjutsu and naginatajutsu.

Description Kusarikamajutsu which includes techniques with kama in both hands
There is a chain of four feet length (with weight) attached to the tip of the right sickle.

Location Harunochouheiwa, Kouchi-shi, Kouchi-ken

- **Nodachi Jigen Ryū Kenjutsu (野太刀自顕流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Yakumaru Kanenobu (student of Togo Chui), who made a very practical art, called Nodachi Jigen-ryu (or sometimes called Yakumaru Jigen-ryu), by integrating the martial art of his family (Nodachi-ryu) into Jingen-ryu.

The school remained in the Yakumaru family until the son of the grandmaster died in the battle of Okinawa (WWII). In 1957 the continuation of the school with a representative not belonging to the Yakumaru family was accepted with consent of the family.

The current head is Moriyama Kiyotaka

Description The school has kenjutsu and bojutsu. The aim is to defeat the enemy with a single blow.

Its kenjutsu is of course influenced by the Jigen-ryu from the Togo family but contains also elements of the original system that was practiced in the Yakumaru family.

Because of the emphasis of the nodachi (a longer field sword) the name of the school was adapted.

Part of the training (called yokogi uchi), is performed by hitting, with a wooden stick, a bundle of wooden branches, displayed horizontally.

Uchimawari no keiko consists of running around hitting vertical planted poles. Sword drawing (nuki) is also important as well as Yaridome (entering with a bokuto on a spear thrust), which also exists with kodachi.

Location Kagoshima, Kagoshima-ken

- **Noda-ha Niten Ichi Ryū Kenjutsu (野田派二天一流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Miyamoto Musashi (1584–1645).

Noda-ha Niten Ichi-ryu Kenjutsu has the first 2 headmasters in common with Heiho (or Hyoho) Niten Ichi-ryu but has a different lineage as of the 3rd headmaster.

Araki sensei is the current headmaster of Noda-ha Niten Ichi-ryu Kenjutsu

Description Niten Ichi-ryu Kenjutsu (see also Hyoho Niten Ichi-ryu)

Location Kasuga, Kumamoto-shi, Kumamoto-ken

- **Ono-ha Ittō Ryū Kenjutsu (小野派一刀流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Itto-ryu branch, founded by and named after Ono Jiroemon Tadaaki (1565–1628), student and successor of Ittosai Kagehisa, creator of Itto-ryu. Before starting his own style, Ittosai had studied the basis of Chujo-ryu with Kanemaki Jissai (founder of Kanemaki-ryu), a student of Toda Seigen (founder of Toda-ryu and famous for short sword).

Tadaaki would serve as an instructor to the shogun, along with Yagyū Munenori of the rival school Yagyū Shinkage-ryū.

The school remained in the Ono family but went later to the Yamaga and Tsugaru families who worked together to transmit the system.

The transmission of Ono Ha Itto-ryū continued after the Meiji restoration by former retainers of the Tsugaru clan and was eventually handed over to Sasamori Junzo (1886-1976), a well known and high ranking kendoka (author of the book "This is kendo"). His son Sasamori Takemi, is presently the 17th headmaster.

Description Ono-ha Itto-ryū is the oldest surviving Itto-ryū style (one-sword school) which originated from the original Itto-ryū from Ittosai Kagehisa (who had incorporated several elements of existing kenjutsu styles like: Ono-ha, Mizoguchi-ha, Nakanishi-ha, Kogen, Hokushin, and Itto Shoden). Ono-ha Itto-ryū can be translated as the Ono fraction of Itto Ryu, where Itto Ryu stands for "one sword (or one stroke) school". The reference to "one" is also philosophical and indicates that everything starts with one and ends with one. In the school, there is the saying "Itto soku banto", which means that one sword equals many (lit. 10.000) swords. "One" also refers to "Kiriotoshi" (cut to drop), which is the basic technique in the school. Most of the techniques of the school are studied in a traditional style of Kumidachi (sword against sword encounters) in which students make use of a bokuto and Uchikata (the one undergoing the techniques but yet guiding) wears thick protective gloves called "Onigote". Nevertheless in the school there is also the usage of a Habiki ("pulled edge" sword) and the "kodachi" (short sword). Together with Hokushin Itto-ryū Kenjutsu, Ono-ha Itto-ryū stood model for modern kendo kata.

Location Daizawa, Setagaya-ku, Tokyo-to

- **Ogasawara Ryū Kyūbajutsu (小笠原流弓馬術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History The Ogasawara-ryū has been established in 1187 and the succession of the archery school has passed from father to one son since the establishment of the Kamakura shogunate.

The 1st patriarch, Nagakiyo Ogasawara was born in Koshu (nowadays Yamanashi prefecture) in 1162, his father was Kagami-jiro-tomitsu. The surname "Ogasawara" was provided by the Emperor Takakura.

Ogasawara-nagakiyo was the personal equestrian archery and marital tutor of Minamoto-yoritomo, the prominent and powerful military general of the Kamakura shogunate

In 1880, the 28th patriarch, Ogasawara-kiyokane, opened the Ogasawara school of propriety and horsemanship to the public.

The 31st patriarch is Ogasawara-kiyotada.

- Description
- Although originally a school specialised in mounted archery, around the 14th century, the Ogasawara school became known for defining the etiquette for the samurai class. As of the 16th century, this would be the only occupation of the school.
- The Ogasawara style of mounted archery was revived in the 18th century.
- Kisha is the equestrian archery technique, which originally started from an archery training on horseback and afterwards has been performed as a ritual ceremony
 - Yabusame is the ceremony; in which the archers wear full formal hunting outfits of the Kamakura era (a-ge-Shozoku). On rapid horseback, they have to shoot 3 targets set up in a straight riding track (about 250m).
 - Hosya refers to Japanese archery techniques on the ground (not on horseback).

Location

Kugenumakaigan, Fujisawa-shi, Kanagawa-ken

- **Owari Kan Ryū Sōjutsu (尾張貫流槍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History

Founded by Tsuda Gonnojo Taira Nobuyuki (17th century). Originally known as Tsuda Kan-ryu. Nobuyuki studied different spearsystems, including Saburi-ryu under Saburi Enyueimon Tadamura, before creating his own system. The system became an otome-ryu (restricted school of a domain) for the Owari clan.

Current headmaster is Kato Isao (13th generation)

Description	<p>Sojutsu (spear techniques) but also some Kenjutsu (coming from Shinkage-ryu).</p> <p>Apart from the regular spear, the school mainly uses the Kuda Yari (a spear in a metal tube that can be pushed through). The kuda and shaft are manipulated in a manner that causes the spear point to enter the target while twirling in a circle. This essential skill of the school is also known as "Engetsu" ("Crescent Moon").</p> <p>The school also has bogu training but the spear armor used nowadays is the same as that used in jukendo (it used to be specific). After a considerable amount of such a shiai training, the students begin to learn the kata. Apart of the school's own kata with the kuda-yari, students also learn the use of standard forms of spear.</p> <p>A portion of the Shinkage Ryu kenjutsu syllabus is practiced as well. This to enhance the skills of the spearmen, since the school advocates that "The spear is not just thrusting, it's also striking; the sword is not just cutting, it's also thrusting".</p>
Location	Souen-cho, Nakagawa-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi-ken

- **Ryūshin Katchu Ryū Jūjutsu (柳心介冑流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Iso Mataemon, also the founder of Tenjin Shinyo-ryu, in the mid 19th century. As such the school is descended from Akiyama Yoshin-ryu jujutsu, founded by physician Akiyama Shirobei Yoshitoki in Nagasaki in the mid 17th century.</p> <p>The second headmaster Toyama Noburo, passed his teachings on to Ichimaru Ryunosuke, who also had studied Ono-ha Itto-ryu</p> <p>The current headmaster is Oguma Yoshiaka, 9th generation soke.</p>
Description	<p>Jujutsu, with kata very similar to Tenjin Shinyo-ryu</p> <p>The school has throwing techniques (nage-waza), joint-locations (kansetsu-waza), strangulations (shime-waza) and striking techniques (atemi-waza).</p>
Location	Suenaga-cho, Date-shi, Hokkaido

- **Saburi Ryū Sōjutsu (佐分利流槍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Saburi Inosuke Shigetaka (from Tomita-ryu). Saburi took part in the Battle of Sekigahara on the side of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Saburi's insight was that the yari should be used to cut rather than thrust.

Current headmaster is Kawase Ichido (12th generation)

Description Sojutsu school with also kata wearing armour. The spear of the Saburi-ryu is characterized by a hook at the end (about 70 cm from the tip). The blade at the end of the spear is very long..

Most kata are performed against an opponent with an other spear (these are jodan-no-kata, chudan-no-kata, gedan-no-kata, metsuke-no-kata, metsuke ura-no-kata and so on). At the very advanced level there is also tachi-ai, in which the yari is opposed to an opponent with a sword or a kodachi. There are 3 forms: jodan, chudan and gedan no kata.

Location Ukai-cho, Fuchuu-shi, Hiroshima-ken

- **Seki Ryū Hōjutsu (関流砲術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History The school was founded in 1617 by Seki Hachizaemon.
Current headmaster is Masanobu Seki.

Description School of Gunnery

Location Nishimanabe-machi, Tsuchiura-shi, Ibaraki-ken

- **Sekiguchi Ryū Battōjutsu (関口流抜刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Sekiguchi-ryu was founded by Sekiguchi Yarokuemon Ujimune (1598-1670), also called Jushin, who studied iaijutsu under the famous Hayashizaki Jinsuke. His son Ujinare further formalized the iaijutsu of the school, which became a distinct line of Sekiguchi-ryu. Ujihide, Ujinare's brother, formalized the jujutsu part. The latter is still continued in Sekiguchi Shin Shin-ryu. Shibukawa Bangoro, a student of Sekiguchi Ujinare would be at the origin of this battojutsu line, although the school puts Sekiguchi Ujinare as the first headmaster and Shibukawa Bangoro as the second.

Current headmaster is Komehara Kameo (15th generation)

Description Battojutsu school. The school has kata using sword against sword (tachi no kata) and kodachi against long sword (kodachi no kata). These kata can be performed with a partner in front, at a safe distance. This allows training of timing but still gives the possibility to do full cutting movements. Characteristic for the school is "Tobichigae", where one jumps and changes side, while doing kesa giri.

Location Okada-machi, Kumamoto-shi, Kumamoto-ken

- **Sekiguchi Shin Shin Ryū Jūjutsu (関口新心流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Sekiguchi Yarokuemon Ujimune (1598-1670), also called Jushin. Originated in Wakayama, the art became popular in Edo and it is said that even the 8th Tokugawa Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune, became a menkyo kaiden. Ujimune's oldest son, Sekiguchi Ujinare became second headmaster and his second son, Sekiguchi Manemon Ujihide, succeeded his brother. Both brothers completed the work of their father. Ujinare attracted many students and also further formalized the iaijutsu of the school (to become a separate Sekiguchi-ryu). Ujihide formalized further the teaching of the jujutsu part.

The present headmaster is Sekiguchi Yoshio, 13th generation.

Description	Sekiguchi Shin Shin-ryu, like many schools, used to be a more comprehensive system. Now it is a jujutsu school with still some kenjutsu and iaijutsu in its curriculum.
Location	Shimabashihigashino-cho, Wakayama-shi, Wakayama-ken

- **Shibukawa Ichi Ryū Jūjutsu (渋川一流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Created in the late 17th century, by Shibukawa Bangoro, himself a student of Sekiguchi Ujinari (2nd soke of Sekiguchi-ryu), who gave him menkyo kaiden.</p> <p>At one time, Shibukawa Bangoro left for Edo but gave the permission to Morishima Motome Katsutojo, to open an official Shibukawa-ryu branch in Hiroshima. Later, with Oyama Masakatsu, the school would move to Osaka.</p> <p>The current head is Mizuta Masuo, 11th generation.</p>
Description	Jujutsu school, also known for its Kusarigama and Bo. Influenced by Sekiguchi-ryu. However other weapons (like sword, naginata, yari, kodachi, tessen) are also part of the curriculum.
Location	Jusohon-machi, Yodogawa-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka-fu

- **Shindō Munen Ryū Kenjutsu (神道無念流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Fukui Hyoemon (student of Yoshihira Shin Shinkage Ichien-ryu under Nonaka Shinkura) in the early 18th century.</p> <p>Hyoemon opened a dojo in Yotsuya (currently part of Shinjuku, Tokyo), after he received a revelation at the Izuna Gongen shrine (located in present day Nagano)</p>
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The fourth generation headmaster, Saito Yakuro Yoshimichi, established the famous Rempeikan dojo in Edo (Tokyo), which would become very popular during the Bakumatsu period (pre-Meiji, end of the Edo period). Several leaders of the Shinsengumi were students of Shindo Munen-ryu. Several lines restarted after the Meiji sword ban was lifted, but not all continued the complete curriculum. Thanks to the effort of Negishi Shingoro (6th generation) who closed the Rempeikan but opened the Yushinkan dojo and so formally established the Kanto line at the end of the Edo period, and who taught swordsmanship to the Tokyo Police after the Meiji restoration, a vast majority of the curriculum of the school survived.

Current headmaster is Ogawa Takeshi (10th generation)

Description	<p>Kenjutsu and iaijutsu school.</p> <p>The school, especially through Negishi Shingoro took part in the development of Gekiken (Fencing), the pre-cursor to modern Kendo. Gekiken, unlike modern Kendo, still contained the use of several or multiple weapons, grappling and striking.</p> <p>The kata of the school were also part of the founding techniques of Keshi-ryu (kenjutsu and iaijutsu school established for the training of the Japanese police).</p>
Location	Shimokiyoto, Kiyose-shi, Tokyo-to

- **Shindō Musō Ryū Jōjutsu** (神道夢想流杖術)

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Muso Gonnosuke Katsuyoshi (who is known for his 2 duels with Miyamoto Musashi) in the early 17th century.</p> <p>Matsuzaki Kin'emon, the third headmaster also created Ittatsu-ryu (hojojutsu) and Ikkaku-ryu (juttejutsu). Initially these arts were transmitted separately (in parallel) but later integrated in Shindo Muso-ryu.</p> <p>The Kusarigamajutsu of Isshin-ryu was incorporated in Shindo Muso-ryu by Shiraishi Hanjiro (considered the 24th headmaster who also studied Isshin-ryu and obtained menkyo) in the late 19th century.</p> <p>Uchida Ryogoro, menkyo in Shindo Muso-ryu created Uchida-ryu (tanto), also in the late 19th century.</p>
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Takaji Shimizu, 1896–1978), considered the 25th headmaster opened the school to the larger public and was at the origin of the Seitei Jodo Kata, to be thought along kendo,

Current representative at the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai is Namitome Shigenori

Description	<p>Jojutsu created to be used against a sword (by using the superior length of the jo to keep an opponent armed with a sword at a disadvantage). Today also known for its auxiliary arts (e.g. kusarigamajutsu). In the recent past, the techniques of kenjutsu that were part of Shindo Muso-ryu, got also known as Kasumi Shindo-ryu.</p>
Location	Wakita, Miyawaka-shi, Fukuoka-ken

- **Shindō Yōshin Ryū Jūjutsu (新道楊心流柔術)**

History	<p>Founded late in the Edo period by Katsunosuke Matsuoka (1836–1898), a Yoshin-ryu student of Hikosuke Totsuka and a Tenjin Shinyo-ryu student of Mataemon Iso, but he trained also in Jikishinkage-ryu under Kenkichi Sakakibara and other arts.</p> <p>Hironori Otsuka, the founder of Wado-ryu (karate), studied Shindo Yoshin-ryu (obtaining menkyo kaiden) under Tatsusaburo Nakayama (licensed student of mainline second headmaster), before to become a student of Gichin Funakoshi (Shotokan). Elements of Nakayama-ha Shindo Yoshin-ryu, would be incorporated into Wado-ryu.</p>
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There are still 2 lines of Shindo Yoshin-ryu:

- Mainline headmastership ended with the third generation. Students, however the Domonkai (lead by Ryozo Fujiwara) was created and continue to practise the art.
- There is also a line originating from Shigeta Ohbata, a licensed student from Katsunoduke (but also a fellow student of the founder in Jikishinkage-ryu under Kenkichi Sakakibara). After WWII, Ohbata's grandson Yuki Yoshi (menkyo kaiden) moved to Sweden and later the US. He also took his mother's family name, Takamura. His line would become Takamura-ha, currently lead by Tobin E. Threadgill.

Description Primarily a “jūjutsu school based on Yoshin-ryū but the curriculum includes many influences from schools studied by the founder Hokushin Itto-ryū, Jikishinkage-ryū, Tenjin Shinyo-ryū jūjutsu, and Hozoin-ryū).

Location Takamura-ha is in Evergreen, CO, United States

- **Shingetsu Musō Yanagi Ryū Jūjutsu (心月無想柳流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Iwanaga Masamitsu, who studied Takagi-ryū Jūjutsu and Kukishin-ryū Bojutsu under Okuni Kihei Shigenobu.. Iwanaga Masamitsu also studied Yagyū-ryū Kenjutsu.

The current headmaster is Iwamizu Genzaburo, 12th generation.

Description Jūjutsu school with also bojutsu and kenjutsu.
Resemblance with Hontai Yoshin-ryū and Takagi-ryū.

Location Higashinaniwa-cho, Amagasaki-shi, Hyogo-ken

- **Shingyōtō Ryū Kenjutsu (心形刀流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Iba Josuiken Hideaki in the late 17th century (1682).
The name refers to the relationship of the heart or spirit (shin), the form (gyo) and the sword (to), indicating that swordmanship is a manifestation of the mind.

Kobayashi Tsutomu succeeded 5th generation headmaster Kobayashi Masao, who passed away recently.

Description Mainly kenjutsu and iaijutsu but the curriculum includes also some grappling techniques and a series called makuragatana (lit. pillow sword or bedside sword).
Also naginatajutsu, using a kagitsuki naginata (with an iron cross bar)

Location Higashi-machi, Kameyama-shi, Mie-ken

- **Shojitsu Ken Ri Kata Ichi Ryū Katchu Battōjutsu (初実剣理方一流甲冑拔刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded in the early Tokugawa period (ca. 1680) by Imaeda Sachu Ryodai, who started his own system based on his family art, Imaeda-ryu, and a number of other schools that he studied during his travels.

Present headmaster is: Uetsuki Motomu, 17th headmaster

Description Battojutsu school using sword while wearing armour. Unlike most other schools there is no shiburi (shaking off the blood) but instead the sword is cleaned between thumb and forefinger (which is a more realistic way of doing). There are also throwing techniques and some jujutsu (stick).

Location Oofuku, Okayama-shi, Okayama-ken

- **Shoshō Ryū Yawara (諸賞流和)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History The first roots of this school date back to the seventh century as Kanze-ryu, founded by a certain Tamura (758-811). It is said that Takeshi Hisa received an important award (shosho) during a wrestling contest in 1192, hence the name Shosho-ryu.

Takahashi Atsuyoshi is the present family headmaster of the 68th generation (counting from the start of as Kanze-ryu). Counting from the start of Shosho-ryu, this would be the 42nd generation.

Description Shosho-ryu Yawara(jutsu) is a jujutsu school, that also includes sword, staff and rope tying techniques and even shurikenjutsu.

Special emphasis is given on atemi (strikes to the body), especially by using metsubishi (attacks against the eyes), ashi ate (kicking techniques) and hiji-ate (elbow strikes). Therefore, in some kata, the opponent is wearing a protection (called nikura, made of bamboo and leather). There are both sitting (kogusoku) and standing techniques (tachi-ai) but the school also has katchu ho (wearing armour) in its curriculum.

Location Uchimarū, Morioka-shi, Iwate-ken

- **Suiō Ryū Iai Kenpō (水鷗流 居合 剣法)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Mima Yoichizaemon Kagenobu (early 17th century), himself a student of Bokuden-ryu but also Kongo Jo joho (jojutsu). He is said to also have studied the school of Hayashizaki.

Current headmaster is Katsuse Yoshimitsu Kagehiro (15th generation)

Description iai-jutsu but also jojutsu, naginatajutsu and kusarigamajutsu

Location Sodeshi-cho, Shimizu-ku, Shizuoka-shi, Shizuoka-ken

- **Taisha Ryū Kenjutsu (タイ捨流 剣術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Marume Kurando Nagayoshi (1540-1629), who was a student of Kamiizumi Nobutsuna (Shinkage-ryu).

13th headmaster Yamakita Takenori has been succeeded by Kino Takao (14th generation).

Description Kenjutsu school

Location Nishi, Nishiki-machi, Kuma-gun, Kumamoto-ken

- **Takeda Ryū Kyūbajutsu (武田流流弓馬術)**

History	<p>The Takeda line is based on the archery system of Minamoto Yoshiari (845 – 897). The line ran through seven generation of the Genji (Minamoto) clan. Later the line split into separate branches: the Takeda-Ryu and the Ogasawara-Ryu.</p> <p>The last direct Takeda descendant was Takeda Nobunao. He was succeeded by Hosokawa Fuji-taka, a close relative. Fujitaka was followed by Hosokawa Tadaoki and Tadatoshi. The latter became Lord of Higo (Kumamoto).</p> <p>The present Soke is Takehara Yojiro.</p>
Description	<p>Yabusame, or Japanese horse-back archery, in fact, is not martial in nature. It is looked upon as a warrior's form of prayer or religious ritual. The traditional yabusame of Takeda-Ryu continues to be performed regularly in Kumamoto.</p>
Location	Kumamoto

- **Takagi Ryū Jūjutsu (高木流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Takagi-ryu founded by the first headmaster, Takagi Oriemon Shigetoshi, and Kukishin-ryu bojutsu by the 4th master, Okuni Kihei Shigenobu (see Hontai Yoshin-ryu).</p> <p>Tsutsui Tomotaro, student of Kakuno Hachiheita Masayoshi (16th headmaster) continued Takagi-ryu Jujutsu as the 17th headmaster. The current headmaster is Kusahara Shigeyoshi, 18th generation.</p>
Description	<p>Mainly jujutsu and bojutsu.</p> <p>However, Takagi-ryu jujutsu and Kukishin-ryu bojutsu are mentioned as distinct parts (in contrast with Hontai Yoshin-ryu).</p>
Location	Asahigaoka, Tarumi-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo-ken

- **Take(no)uchi Ryū Jūjutsu (竹内流 柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Takenouchi-ryu is one of the oldest jujutsu schools in Japan, founded in 1532 by Takenouchi Nakatsukasadayu Hisamori.</p> <p>Takenouchi Hitachinosuke Hisakatsu, Hisamori's second son, was the second headmaster and became very famous.</p> <p>The oldest son of Hisakatsu, Takenouchi Kaganosuke Hisayoshi, became third headmasters and as such attracted many students. Among them also Takagi Umanosuke Shigesada, 2nd head of Hontai Yoshin-ryu Takagi-ryu. After the 8th headmaster, Takenouchi Toichiro Hisataka, the lineage was split into two branches. The split in 2 lines was done to ensure that the blood line and tradition would be preserved. Both families inherited the main tradition.</p> <p>The 2 lines are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sodenke lineage began with Takenouchi Tojuro Hisatane. The current 13th headmaster of the sodenke lineage is Takenouchi Tojuro Hisatake. • The soke line of Takenouchi-ryu started with Ikeuchi Gamonta (9th headmaster), whose name was changed to Takenouchi Gamonta Hisayori when he was adopted into the Takenouchi family. Current 14th headmaster of the soke line is Takenouchi Toichiro Hisamune.
Description	<p>Although famous for its jujutsu, Takenouchi Ryu is a complete system including amongst others: armed grappling (yoroi kumiuchi), staff (bojutsu), sword (kenjutsu), sword drawing (iaijutsu), glaive (naginatajutsu), iron fan (tessenjutsu), restraining rope (hojojutsu), and resuscitation techniques (sakkatsuho).</p> <p>Koshi-no-mawari Kogusoku are the techniques of defeating an opponent by grappling while using a short sword (dagger). It also includes techniques of binding in order to capture the opponent (torite).</p>
Location	<p>Sodenke lineage (Takenouchi-ryu Jujutsu Koshi-no-mawari Kogusoku): Takebechotsuishitani, Okayama-shi, Okayama-ken.</p> <p>Soke line (Takenouchi-ryu Jujutsu Hinoshita Toride Kaisan): Takebechotsuishitani, Okayama-shi, Okayama-ken</p>

- **Tamiya Ryū Iaijutsu (田宮流居合術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Tamiya Heibei Narimasa, himself a student of Hayashizaki (see Hayashizaki Muso ryu and Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu)
Tsumaki Seirin Genshin (13th generation) has been succeeded by Tsumaki Kazuo Genwa

There is another line of Tamiya-ryu practiced by the Shinbuken of Kuroda Tetsuzan, who is also a teacher of Komakawa Kaishin-ryu kenjutsu

Description Iai-jutsu

Location Horinouchi, Odawara-shi, Kanagawa-ken

- **Tatsumi Ryū Heihō (立身流兵法)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded in the early 16th century by Tatsumi Sankyo, who originated from Shikoku..

During the Edo period, the school was practiced in the Hotta domain (present day Sakura City in Chiba Prefecture), where it became an otome-ryu (official style) in 1670, and the Okudaira domain (Kyushu). Only the Sakura line survived.

Henmi Sosuke (1843-1895), the first head of the kenjutsu training unit of the post-feudal Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department was a member of Tatsumi-ryu. At that time also some techniques of the school (including Yawara techniques) were adopted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Office. The 19th soke, Hisashi Kato (grandfather of the current soke), is said to have obtained also menkyo kaiden in Takano's Nakanishi-ha Itto-ryu.

Current headmaster is Hiroshi Kato (22nd generation), who succeeded his father (Takashi Kato).

Description Tonjutsu school (sword techniques including both kenjutsu and iaijutsu) with a large curriculum of other techniques, including jujutsu (called yawara).

The sword is also used against yari, naginata, rokushaku-bo, and hanbo. The emphasis is on learning how to win against these weapons.

For a number of weapons there are no kata but they are part of the curriculum (at least mentioned in the makimono): jutte (truncheon), shuriken (throwing blades), tessen (iron fan) and manrikigusari (weighted chain).

As part of the progression to the senior level, students are invited for the practice of kazunuki: two principal techniques of the school's iaijutsu (muko and marui) are performed for a total of 3000 draws.

Location Chuo, Chuo-ku, Chiba-shi, Chiba-ken

- **Tendo Ryū Naginatajutsu (天道流薙刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Saito Hangan Denkibo Katsuhide in the 16th century (1582). Denkibo studied Kashima Shinto-ryu under Tsukahara Bokuden. He first called his own art Ten-ryu (tradition of heaven), later to become Tendo-ryu ((way of heaven tradition).

Current headmaster is Mitamura Takeko (16th generation).

Description Naginatajutsu, but also kenjutsu, jojutsu (broken naginata) and kusarigamajutsu. Kata are performed as if it were real combat confrontations.

Together with Jikishinkage-ryu, the school was at the origin of the sports version of naginata (called atarashi or "new" naginata).

Location Kidu, Kidugawa-shi, Kyoto-fu

- **Tenjin Shin Yō Ryū Jūjutsu (天神真楊流柔術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Iso Matauemon Minamoto Masatari (1787–1863) in the mid 19th century (around 1830); with roots in Yoshin-ryu and Shin no Shinto-ryu

(Iso Mataemon Masatari studied Yoshin-ryu under Hitotsuyanagi Oribe and Shin no Shinto-ryu under Homma Jouemon). Reference to these 2 schools is made by using the name “shinyo”.

From Iso Mataemon Minamoto Masatari (1787–1863) the Tenjin Shinyo-ryu line went on to Iso Mataichiro (2nd generation) to Iso Mataemon Masatomo (3rd generation).

The school remained in the Iso family until the 5th headmaster, Iso Mataemon Masayuki past away without designating a successor.

There are 2 lines:

- One is represented by Kubota Toshihiro, a student from Fusataro Sakamoto, on his turn student of Torajiro Yagi, who was one of the senior students of the 3th and 4th headmaster. Kano Jigoro (founder of Kodokan Judo), studied Tenjin Shinyo-ryu with Fukuda Hachinosuke, a fellow student of Torajiro Yagi.
- The other is represented by Shibata Koichi, student of Aimiya Kazusaburo, who was a student of Miyamoto Hanzo (Iso Mataemon Masatomo had amongst his students Inoue Keitaro and Tozawa Tokusaburo, who were the teachers of Miyamoto Hanzo). Morihei Ueshiba, founder of aikido, studied Tenjin Shinyo-ryu with Tozawa Tokusaburo.

Description	Jujutsu school, techniques include striking, resuscitation and bone-setting. The school also teaches the proper use of “ki” (vital energy), as well as the use of atemi (strikes) on pressure points.
Location	Ishigami, Niiza-shi, Saitama-ken (dojo of Kubota Toshihiro) Sunashinden, Kawagoe-shi, Saitama-ken (dojo of Shibata Koichi)

- **Tennen Rishin Ryū Kenjutsu (天然理心流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Founded by Kondo Kuranosuke in the late 18th century. The 4 th headmaster, Kondo Isami Masayoshi, was one of the commanders of the Shinsengumi (the group formed by the Tokugawa Shogunate to “guard” the city of Kyoto in the late Edo period).
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	Current headmaster is Hirai sensei, 10th generation
Description	Kenjutsu school with also a history of other techniques like bojutsu, and especially jujutsu.
Location	Iguchi, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo-to

- **Tenshinshōden Katori Shintō Ryū Kenjutsu (天真正伝香取神道流剣術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	One of the oldest documented koryu. Founded by Iizasa Ienao (a respected spear and swordsman, who lived near Katori Shrine) in 1447. The current (2008), 20th generation headmaster, is Iizasa Shuri-no-suke Yasusada, but the representative, and head instructor on behalf of the headmaster is Risuke Otake.
Description	Although categorized the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai as kenjutsu school, Katori Shinto-ryu has a large curriculum, which also includes Iaijutsu, Ryotojutsu (art of using both long and short sword at once), Bojutsu, Naginatajutsu, Sojutsu, Shurikenjutsu and even some Jujutsu.
Location	Katori, Katori-shi, Chiba-ken

- **Toda-ha Bukō Ryū Naginatajutsu (戸田派武甲流薙刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Derived from Toda-ryu, founded by Toda Seigen in the 16th century (the school was renamed as Toda-ha Buko-ryu by the 13th headmaster, referring to Mt. Buko). From the 14th headmaster, till the 19th headmaster, Suzuyo Nitta (although in official records referred as Suzuo, which uses a male name ending) the school had a tradition of female headmasters. The 19th Suzuo Nitta passed away in 2008 but is recognised to have formed some very high skilled non-Japanese students.
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In 2012, the 20th generation headmaster, Nakamura Yoiichi passed away at the age of 40,

Description	Naginata school but also other techniques like kenjutsu, sojutsu, bojutsu and kusarigamajutsu.
Location	Oshika, Suruga-ku, Shizuoka-shi, Shizuoka-ken

- **Unkō Ryū Kenjutsu (雲弘流劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	<p>Founded by Higuchi Fumotou (also known as Higuchi Shichiro-saemon) of the Okushu Itatsu Clan, who had studied Katori Shinto Ryu. The initial name was Ko Ryu. The second soke Suge-no-ikyogumo, however resigned from the clan</p> <p>The name Unko Ryu meaning " Cloud Shadow style", was given by the third soke, Goro-saemon, a ronin due to his father's decision. Later he would become a sword teacher of the within Higo Clan.</p> <p>The current headmaster is Inoue Hiromiti</p>
Description	Kenjutsu school of the Higo Clan. The concept of Shinken-Shobu (or life or death matches) is considered important and students should be prepared for this.
Location	Yokote, Kumamoto-shi, Kumamoto-ken

- **Yagyū Shingan Ryū Katchu Heihō (柳生心眼流甲冑兵法)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Founded by Takenaga Hayato in the early 17th century. Takenaga Hayato studied Shindo-ryu of Ushu Tatewaki. Later he went to Edo, where he was employed by the Yagyu family and where he studied Yagyu Shinkage-ryu with Yagyu Munenori. The tradition past to Yoshikawa Ichiroemon, Ito Kyuzaburo, and then to Koyama Samon (1718 - 1800), who moved to Edo
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(he is also recognised as a headmaster of the Edo line or Yagyu Shingan-ryu taijutsu) but later in his life returned to Sendai.

The current headmaster is Hoshi Kunio (Hiroaki Kunio, who changed his name in respect of his grandfather, the late Hoshi Kunio).

Description Katchu bujutsu (or yoroi kumiuchi) consists of grappling and fighting combat in full armour. Heiho refers to military strategy.

Location Chuo-cho, Ichinoseki-shi, Iwate-ken

- **Yagyū Shingan Ryū taijutsu (柳生心眼流體術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Based on the art of Araki Mataemon (1594–1634), who studied under Yagyu Munenori (1571-1646) of Yagyu Shinkage-ryu (together with Itto-ryu, one of the two official sword styles of the Tokugawa Shoguns). The headmaster Koyama Samon (1718 - 1800), played an important role because he brought the art from Sendai to Edo (Nevertheless, Koyama Samon is also recognised as a headmaster of Yagyu Shingan-ryu Katchu Heiho).

Ueshiba Morihei, the founder of Aikido, was a student of Yagyu Shingan-ryu (he trained with Nakai Masakatsu, a senior student of the 6th headmaster Goto Saburo), as well as Kano Jigoro, the founder of judo (who trained under the 7th headmaster, Ohshima Masateru).

The current headmaster (11th generation) is Kajitsuka Yasushi, who is also menkyo kaiden in Yagyu Shinkage-ryu (from Otsubo Shiho from the Owari line).

Description Comprehensive system, including taijutsu (jujutsu), bojutsu, naginatajutsu and kenjutsu.

In contrast to Yagyu Shingan-ryu Katchu Heiho (also referred to as the Sendai line), Yagyu Shingan-ryu taijutsu is practiced without armour. This is because headmaster Koyama Samon moved from Sendai to Edo (the capital), where life was very different. The practice of techniques wearing full armour were therefore abandoned during the course of the school's history (at least in the Edo line).

Location Kamiatsusaki, Nasushiobara-shi, Tochigi-ken

- **Yagyū Shinkage Ryū Heihō Kenjutsu (柳生新陰流兵法劍術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Kamiizumi Ise-no-Kami Nobutsuna (1508- 1578), who studied the schools of Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu and Kage-ryu (from its founder Aisu Ikkosai) before creating his own school, called Shinkage-ryu. The name was completed by the second headmaster, Yagyu Muneyoshi (1507–1606) and became Yagyu Shinkage-ryu. In 1606, the school split into two branches. Yagyu Toshiyoshi (grandson of Yagyu Muneyoshi) took command of the main line (Owari branch), while Yagyu Munenori (son of Yagyu Muneyoshi) became the head of a new Edo branch.

Current headmaster of the mainline (Owari line) is Yagyu Koichi Toshinobu (22nd soke)

Description One of the first schools of kenjutsu of the Edo period. Until the 16th century, basic kenjutsu postures were very distinct; very low, in protection of the body. Kamiizumi changed the basic postures by raising them slightly, he changed the manner of holding the sword, and he shortened the length of the blade of the sword. He also invented the hikihada, a fukuro-shinai (ancestor of the modern kendo shinai). Yagyu Munetoshi's son, Yagyu Munenori, served as kenjutsu teacher for the 3rd and 4th Tokugawa Shoguns, Hidetada and Iemitsu. Related arts are: "Yagyu Seigo-ryu battojutsu" (sword-drawing art) and "Jubei-no-jo", stick techniques.

Location Nakahira, Tenpaku-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi-ken

- **Yō Ryū Hōjutsu (陽流砲術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History Founded by Takano Yasunaga

Passed down to the Onoe family.

Description	School of Gunnery
Location	Chiyo, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi, Fukuoka-ken

- **Yōshin Ryū Naginatajutsu (楊心流薙刀術)**

Member of Nihon Kobudo Kyokai

History	Founded by Akiyama Shirobei Yoshitoki in the 17th century. Current headmaster is Koyama Takako (13th generation).
Description	Naginatajutsu, but also bojutsu (called hanbo, but in this case not half the length of a rokku shaku bo but longer, since it originates from a broken naginata) and some kusarigamajutsu. Although other schools of naginata might have evolved in a similar direction, Yoshin-ryu Naginatajutsu is typically a school that is specialized in the practise of women's defensive techniques by the use of a naginata. Students learn to execute the techniques while wearing a kimono, (although a hakama is still used by beginners).
Location	Agakita, Kure-shi, Hiroshima-ken

II. **Some additional schools**

A number of schools, although created later than those belonging to the previous list, are worth mentioning. These are:

- **Keishi Ryū (警視流)**
 - Keishi-ryu (also called Keishicho-ryu) was developed just after the Meiji restoration (in 1886) as an official set of kata to be practiced by the Japanese police.
 - The style's technical repertoire consists of kata/techniques selected from other Koryu schools (initially including 10 Kenjutsu kata, 5 standing Iaijutsu kata and 16 Jujutsu kata).

- The style is still practiced by Japanese metropolitan police members, along with kendo.

- **Musō Shinden Ryū (夢想神伝流)**
 - Founded in 1932 by Nakayama Hakudo (1872-1958) and to be considered a derivative branch of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu. Nakayama received 10th dan and hanshi (master instructor) rank in kendo, iaido, and jodo from the All Japan Kendo Federation.
 - Muso Shinden-ryu became popular after the death of Nakayama and is currently one of the most practiced iaido schools in Japan.

- **(Ittō Shōden) Mutō Ryū (一刀正伝無刀流)**
 - Itto Shoden Muto-ryu (or short Muto-ryu) was founded by the famous Yamaoka Tesshu (1836-1888), who had mastered both the Nakanishi-ha and Ono-ha Itto-ryu. Yamaoka Tesshu not only played an important role in the Meiji Restoration (he negotiated the surrender of Edo castle to imperial forces) but was also known for his calligraphy.
 - Yamaoka Tesshu wanted to pass on correctly Itto-ryu but insisted on a profound philosophical thought that he called “muto” (no sword). Some of his students were instrumental in the development of kendo.

- **Toyama Ryū (戸山流)**
 - Based on the effort of Nakayama Hakudo (himself a master of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu) who instructed the Japanese military (at the Toyama Military school). Later Nakamura Taisaburo would continue to develop the system (and call it Toyama-ryu), with also a lot of emphasis on tameshigiri.
 - Iai-do (battojutsu) school emphasizing on very practical sets to be practiced in groups (mostly standing techniques)

About the author



Guy Buyens

- Born in 1961, Guy began training in karate in 1971, at the age of 10: initially Shotokan but at the age of 17 he got interested in **Shito-ryu**, that he practiced till the rank of 6th dan.
- In his youth, he was active in kumite and kata competitions as a member of the Belgian National Team, and he was selected to compete at the European Championships in 1984.
- Guy met **Inoue Tsuyoshi Munetoshi**, 18th soke of **Hontai Yoshin-ryu**, and his son **Kyoichi** in Italy, in 1983, during a demonstration tour of martial arts in Italy, in which he participated (as part of a Shito-ryu Karate group with Ogasahara and Nakahashi sensei).
- He finished **medical school** in 1986 and worked for some time at the University of Brussels (doing exercise physiology and sports medicine).
- Guy took a one-year sabbatical in 1989 and went to **Japan** to continue his studies in Shito-ryu karate with Mabuni Sensei. Simultaneously, he started to study Hontai Yoshin-ryu at the So-honbu dojo in Nishinomiya, as well as Toyama-ryu Iaijutsu.
- Upon his return in Belgium he continued his passion for koryu and upon the request of Inoue Soke, he established a **Belgian Branch**. With a number of good friends he decided to yearly travel to Japan to study Hontai Yoshin-ryu in more detail.
- He participated in several **enbu** (demonstrations), including the #6 (2005) and 19th (2008) Itsukushima Kobudo enbu, the 30th (Kumamoto, 2007) and 32nd (Tokyo) Zen Nippon Kobudo Enbu (organized by the Nihon Kobudo Kyokai) as well as the enbu for the 400th Anniversary of Kakuzenbo Inei (organized by Hozoin-Ryu, Nara, Kofukuji, 2007).
- Guy has been mentioned in several **articles** published in Budo, the official magazine of the Nihon Budokan (in Japanese). For their April 2006 issue he wrote an article reflecting on his participation in the 16th Itsukushima Enbu Takai in Miyajima. He also wrote several articles for Koryu.com.
- A few years ago, Guy, together with a few friends and in parallel with his training in Hontai Yoshin-ryu, started to study **Ono Ha Itto-Ryu** under **Sasamori soke** and with his permission he joined a keiko-jo co-ordinated by Andre Otome.
- Guy became Okuden in Hontai Yoshin-ryu in 2015.

To contact Guy please go through the contact section of the website of the Belgian branch of Hontai Yoshin-ryu or the Belgian keiko-jo of Ono Ha Itto-ryu:

- <http://www.hontaiyoshinryu.be/>
- <http://www.onohaittoryu.be/>