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NICHI GETSU SHIN

Essay on KYUDO
(English version)

Kaori SATO
Kyoshi, rokudan
1986 - 1990

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION (2014-2016)

After the publication of the French version of this book, on which I worked several months to build the final document from the original photocopies, I decided to prepare an English translation, at least of the technical part, so that it could be readable by non-French speaking practitioners. Then I finally translated the whole essay, to be independent from the French version. Some times I used Google Translate to help, but very often I had to come back as I was not very happy by the result. Anyway, for English people, my native language is French, so you will probably find some errors and bad structures in the translation, sorry for this. In addition, the original text was written in French by a Japanese, then translated to English by a French, so I hope the result will still be understandable. The 2014 version has been given to very few people including **SATO sensei**, and in 2016 I went back through the whole text to improve again the translation.

Pierre Guillot

PREFACE (2013)

This book has been written in the years 1986-1990 by **SATO Kaori sensei**, KYOSHI 6th DAN, who was living in France at this time, and was teaching KYUDO in Lyon, at **Michel Chavret's** dojo, and also in Geneva, at **Charles Stampfli's** dojo. **SATO Kaori** learned KYUDO with **ONUMA Hideharu hanshi**, and **UOZUMI Bunue hanshi**.

As there was no book in French at this time, he wrote this essay to propose to French practitioners the main points of various Japanese books (KYOHON) from the Japanese federation, as well as technical books of various sensei.

This book has been dedicated by **SATO Kaori** to his masters and his European friends, and was printed in a very limited number.

Charles Stampfli proposed in 2011 to build a version in a modern text editor, so that it could be given to practitioners desiring to expand their knowledge, and to discover advices existing only in Japanese.

Pierre Guillot did the transcription for the basis of the new version.

Charles Stampfli validated the transcription with **Kaori Sato sensei**.

Michel Chavret and **Christine Ondel** finalized the version.

The drawings on both French and English versions are from **SATO Kaori Sensei** and the front calligraphy from **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** for the dojo in Lyon.

The final document in French was validated in 2012 by **SATO sensei** in Toride, Japan, together with **Charles Stampfli** and **Michel Chavret**.

By the end of 2012, **SATO sensei** added the final chapter, based on some teaching from **KARASAWA Kotaro sensei**.

The text is close to the Japanese thought, to lead the reflection and open the dialog between teachers and students.

FOREWORDS (2011)

To **Michel Chavret**, **Charles Stampfli** and **Pierre Guillot**

Thanks to you, my book is back after being forgotten for about 20 years. Thanks a lot, I am very happy with what has been done, the text is more readable. Now, I remember the old days when I wrote this essay in Lyon. I worked with passion on this subject, and I still want to thank **Mr. Lavergne** and all the friends with whom I worked.

This text is still not perfect, but when I was in Lyon, I was not having some key documents, especially concerning the history of KYUDO. This part of the text has to be seen as a personal view of **KAORI Sato**. At 85, I do not have enough power to change this text.

If we may find here a source of teaching, we must also search in the diversity of sources. There is a diversity of body conditions, equipment; we should find what best fits to us.

NICHI GETSU SHIN, I like this poem and would like this book to have this title.

DEDICATION (1986)

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Je dédie cet essai à
SAITO Tomoji sensei,
ONUMA Hideharu sensei,
UOZUMI Bunë sensei,
Michel CHAVRET et
ses amis Européens
et,
pour Charles STAMPFLI,
avec ma profonde amitié

Kaori Saito

佐藤 香

NICHI GETSU SHIN

For my friends practicing KYUDO

from SATO Kaori

PREFACE (1986)

I am living in Europe since 1986. Today, as I am writing this preface, after ending the text of my essay, about four years are gone. The initial goal for coming in France was to study the labor law and social economy, linked to my former professional activity in the Labor Ministry, and in a University. For such domains, very few Japanese people have done deep studies, even if it evolves now. This is mainly because Japan does not have historically strong links in these domains with France. These domains look to be approached very differently than in Japan and articles in newspapers, TV information as well as feedback from my French friends on these subjects always interested me.

Of course, these studies have been painful, especially because when arriving in France, I was not speaking French at all. With such conditions, why did I still choose France? Well, because looking at the Japanese context, France was really different, so attractive for me. In addition, this was a personal work, after retiring, a sort a challenge that I chose. By chance, I have been able to meet with **Mr. Jean Lavergne**, which is now a good friend, and which spent more than three years to teach me French. I started to learn some French characteristics, and wrote several essays in Japanese, synthesizing the basis of my knowledge. Of course, my experience is still limited, and I do not have time for more description in this specific document.

Another reason for me to come in France was to practice KYUDO with foreigner friends. My teacher was **ONUMA Hideharu sensei** that contributed several times to the diffusion of KYUDO in Europe. So from him, I learnt there were serious practitioners in Europe. Personally, I was practicing KYUDO since I was thirteen, working on this art in great details. What a chance it could be for me to practice with “blue eyes” people! This dream became reality, and I built wonderful friendship with **Mr. Michel Chavret** and his friends in Lyon, as well as in many other European places as Montpellier, Paris, Valence, Geneva, Basel, Zürich, London, Munich, Hamburg, Rome, etc. I can remember a lot of things with pleasure and a bit of nostalgia.

At the same time, I also had to suffer with some specifically French troubles, when at this time the French federation was close to a scission. One person involved within the conflict was also an **ONUMA sensei** student who put me in the middle of some internal debates. The French federation wrote a letter against me to the Japanese federation, to reject my participation to some international seminars, and I received a letter from **ONUMA sensei** disapproving some of my actions in Europe. It was a first, bad, humiliating experience to receive this feedback, and I decided to tell to the Japanese federation I was giving back my KYOSHI and my 6th DAN title, even if it costs me lots of effort to get them.

I suffered, but in fact, what did I do? Is it not the role of the Japanese federation to “protect” his members? Was it not the role of the federation to check my activities? The federation always insisted on the WA, harmony, and cooperation. What is KYUDO? Not to be friend with people revealed by KYUDO was meaning for me to doubt on KYUDO...

I also remember that at this time I was also suffering with my KYUDO. When I got my KYOSHI title, at the same time I was lost in my practice. I was not hitting the target anymore, but more than this, I had lost the feeling on how to do it. I was in very poor conditions, even at the MAKIWARA. Now, I feel the reason was I had forgotten the most important things, be back to the basis. In those poor conditions I was just feeling poor feedback from any direction.

However, under these circumstances, good friends, specifically **Mr. Chavret**, helped me. Thanks to them, I found there were still a lot of things to learn from life. This European spirit influenced me. At the end, we fought for the French federation unity, and finally got it.

I will never forget **SAITO Tomoji sensei**, president of the Japanese federation. Without his support, the French federation unity would never have happened, and for me he gave deep support, through various letters and talks.

Changing the point of view, from the researcher position, this experience was useful to understand the French society. I did understand, the hard way, what French sensibility is. I got this through the KYUDO practice, which is good benefit. I was sent deeply into the French federation maelstrom. Nobody likes hostilities, neither me. But after darkness, comes enlighten, "POST TENEBRAS, LUX". I had the chance to develop deep friendship, which was a good result seen from now, and I got the chance to better understand the French way of life.

Also, with support of my friends, my KYUDO practice went better, at least in my own experimentations in Clermont-Ferrand where my daughter family in law was residing. I was able to hit the target again, and also to work and understand the Kyudo deep concepts. This has been with help of the friends I had, **Mr. Lavergne**, **Mr. Chavret**, and **Mr. John Bush** from the London group.

In 1990, on May 27th, about 130 people met in the dojo of Villeurbanne, near Lyon, to express pain with the death of **ONUMA sensei**. **SAITO Tomoji sensei** was there, with a large Japanese delegation. There were also many European practitioners, from France, Germany, England, Switzerland, Italy, Iceland and Spain. As tribute to **ONUMA sensei**, it was an historical meeting in Lyon, to have so many country representatives.

In the morning, a shooting ceremony in memory of **ONUMA sensei** was organized. **SAITO sensei** and **Philippe REYMOND**, former president of the European federation pronounced few words, then **OSAWA sensei**, 8th DAN HANSHI, president of the TOSHIMA dojo thanked the participants in name of ONUMA family. TOSHIMA dojo was the dojo where **ONUMA sensei** mainly practiced and taught. Several member of the dojo were in the delegation.

INTRODUCTION

EUROPEANS AND KYUDO

What can be the interest, for a European, to practice KYUDO? The differences with western archery? The dynamism of BUDO? A link with oriental culture?

Here is a small story: when I came in Europe, I started to have a look to BUDO papers. What strange perception I was having, especially concerning NINJA. Then I saw our KYUDO in these papers ... I never felt in the past I was practicing a so exotic activity.

Now, after four years in France, I can more understand. Probably it relates to imagination of few French people. Probably the same exists with some Japanese people concerning French culture. I do not want to dig more here, for some people it is important to have this sort of dream.

For most of European practitioners however, they know that there is the same understanding between them and the Japanese. This was a surprise for me, but probably due to the fact that I was not knowing anything on French culture before coming. JUDO, KENDO or AIKIDO are getting their sports too. It will be the same for KYUDO. The Japanese BUDO are becoming International.

TO KNOW KYUDO MORE DEEPLY

On KYUDO, there are few books written in western languages. For example, the book from **Eugen Herrigel**, who was German philosopher, "Zen in the Art of Archery", is well known and very good. It is based on his experience with **AWA kenzo sensei**, one of the most famous KYUDO master in Japan. We can find there some differences between Japanese mind and European mind. "Never aim at the target", "Shoot without artifice", "Wait the right moment". For the philosopher, with scientific reasoning, it was a difficult subject. Japanese like this, and learn the spirit of KYUDO with this. I can only recommend to read this book.

Recently, the Japanese federation published in English the KYUDO KYOHON for western practitioners. I hope the French federation will soon translate this book in French. This is a very important manual to understand the fundamental basis of KYUDO. The KYUDO KYOHON is in four volumes, but only the first one has been translated. My essay will help to understand what is missing there.

Mr. Jacques NORMAND and **Mr. Michel MARTIN**, French federations directors have also published their books. Those will also be very useful.

ABOUT THIS ESSAY

In this essay, I mainly focused on the KYUDO technical details. I think it is very difficult to find such details in Europe. This essay will be more useful for KYUDO practitioner than for normal reader, even if I also added some part about KYUDO spirit. These technical details are scientifically difficult, but at least this book can be a key to explain some problems.

KYUDO CHARM

Do you already know the KABUKI, or the NO? Do you already know the IKEBANA or the CHA NO YU (tea ceremony)? The KYUDO is a BUDO. However, you can have the same feeling than for these other arts. Of course, in KYUDO, hitting the target is important, but the style and also the inside are important, as well as the artistic value.

HISTORY OF KYUDO

For all people, the origin of bow and arrows goes back in the past, also in Japan. It is believed that it appeared about twenty thousand years ago. However, archaeologically, by the excavation of ruins, we can confirm that the ancient Japanese used stone arrowheads during the JOMON period, then metal heads such as copper then iron during the YAYOI period. The JOMON period, which name means "rope trace", corresponding to rope patterns on potteries, extends from 12000BC to about 300BC. Then succeeds the YAYOI period, from 300BC to about 250AD (Gakken dictionary). The word YAYOI corresponds to the name of the place where the traces of this period have been found.

If the Japanese have been using for centuries a long bow, they used originally a short bow as in most Asian countries and also the rest of the world. Gradually, Japanese have developed and used a long bow. This change took place about 2000 years ago [C0_1]. The metal age and rice age in depth modified the everyday social life. The rice culture was also linked to climate change on the Japan islands, in fact the arrival of a monsoon climate throughout the Southeast Asia. From this time, the Japan landscape was transformed from an area of grassland where people were using the short bow to a forest area where they started to use the longbow [C0_1, 2].

Thereafter, Japan increased cultural exchange with the continental countries, particularly with Korea and China. Our Japanese ancestors learned from these countries new shooting technics, especially the KAKEGUCHI method for notching the arrow to the bowstring. Before, they were pulling the string by pinching the notch of the arrow with the tips of the thumb and forefinger. With the new method, also called "Mongolian shooting method", they started to use the base of the thumb instead. Mongolia was a Nordic country, with culture linked to horse and equestrian traditions, using very powerful bows where the string could not be pulled with just fingertips [C0_3].

Thus, the characteristics of Japanese archery bow were formed gradually, influenced by many civilizations.

ARCHERY PROGRESS

Japan was unified in the year 645 during a political renovation completed by TAIKA NO KAISHIN, who gave his name to the era of TAIKA. From this moment, and for some time, Japan was organized as an aristocratic society centred on TENNO (the emperor). This period is divided into different periods as ASUKA (until 707), NARA (708-781), and HEIAN (782-1189). All these names have their origin in the names of imperial main cities.

With many documents, we know that the era of HEIAN was the longest. It was a period with many conflicts such as ZEN-KUNEN no EKI, GOSAN-NEN no EKI, HOUGEN no RAN, HEJI no RAN, etc.

During these periods, the aristocracy declined and let place to the BUSHI caste (SAMURAI), especially during the confrontation between HEIKE and GENJI families. The GENJI family finally won and set a BAKUFU (government) in KAMAKURA. Japan then entered in the KAMAKURA era.

During the HEIAN era, there was a huge development of the archery techniques, which then culminated during the KAMAKURA era. Wars and battles of this period were of course the main reasons for these developments [C0_4].

Equipment also evolved a lot during the KAMAKURA era, as well as in the next MUROMACHI era (1336-1570). New elements were invented as FUSEDAKE-YUMI, wooden bow reinforced with a piece of bamboo (Koza 4, P110-115), SAN-MAI-UCHI, wooden bow reinforced with two pieces of

bamboo (Koza 4, P117-118), HIGO YUMI, a bow with several pieces of bamboo (Koza 4, P163-164), and YUGAKE, leather glove for the right hand (Koza 4, P145-146).

INFLUENCE OF THE CHINESE CULTURE

From a philosophical point of view, Japan has learned a lot from China. On the fifth century BC, Confucius was the source of Confucianism. In this doctrine, shooting with a bow is considered as a way to acquire wisdom. In other words, KYUDO is the path of JIN (to raise humanity). It is only when we have "the truth" in our heart that we can draw the bow. If the arrow does not reach the target, KUNSHI (the good man) never complain on whoever beats him. In contrast, he always searches the truth in himself. Confucius has contributed a lot to the development of this doctrine, written in the RAIKI-SHAGI (Confucianism book on REI, protocol rules). We also find these principles in the book KYUDO KYOHON from the ZEN NIHON KYUDO RENMEI (Japanese Federation of KYUDO) and in the SHAHOU KUN (teaching on the shooting method) by JUNSEI YOSHIMI.

In China, archery was considered as a way to gain the truth. As for Japan, China also went through many wars. Nevertheless, the Confucianism continued to be a basic principle for archery, which was respected throughout the dynasties, including through the recruitment system for civil employees. In Japan, BUSHI, the warriors, have been leading the country for nearly 700 years. China has been considered as the country of the "pen", while Japan was the one of the "sword". But Chinese doctrine also gradually influenced Japan, first through the rituals of the imperial court. The Confucianism became part in these rituals, deeply mixed with SHINTO. During the same period, Buddhism also made its way through Japan, while absorbing Confucianism.

At the end of the MUROMACHI period, the fifteenth century, Portuguese introduced firearms in Japan. Therefore, the usage of the bow faded gradually in the fighting fields. Then during the EDO period (1596 - 1867), war gradually ceased and SHUSHI GAKU (Neo-Confucianism) made its way as the new philosophy to govern the people.

At this time, from China, a technical book on archery was introduced to Japan, the SHA GAKU SEISHU (method for those who want to study archery). This book had a great success because it was a method that could be followed by many people, while the traditional rules of Japanese KYUDO schools were too strict to access the in-depth knowledge.

THE SCHOOLS

The periods of KAMAKURA, YOSHINO (after 1336) and MUROMACHI (from 1392 to 1568), were eras when BUSHI (SAMURAI) leaders and TENNO family fought for power.

The archery, and especially the horse archery, increased significantly at this time. Until the end of the KAMAKURA period, it was mainly a development on battlefields, but during the MUROMACHI period, the Japanese archery also developed as schools, RYUHA, way to setup systematic shooting methods. A RYUHA was founded by a group of experts that aim to harmonize the doctrine of archery. The head (master) of each school was giving a license to apprentices according to the progress made in the discipline, and was teaching to the best students the deep secrets of the school [C0_5]. The status of head (master) was usually transmitted by heredity.

The OGASAWARA family, descending from SEIWA TENNO, as well as TAKEDA and HAYAMI families, were famous during the KAMAKURA period. However they did not create any RYUHA,

not transmitting a special education or possible secrets. They distinguished themselves as a family of warriors, representing only a military commandment [C0_5].

During the MUROMACHI period, the ASHIKAGA Shogun appointed the family OGASAWARA as master for archery [C0_6]. Thus, it became the authority for bow shooting on the ground and on horseback, and was responsible for regulating all ceremonies, in particular horse shooting YABUSAME, KASAKAKE, and the dog hunting competition İNUOMONO.

During the same period, HEKI RYU schools were born. One of their founder, HEKI Danjo Masatsugu (1442-1500) was the best KYUDOKA of his time, and completed creation of "secrets" of his school, perpetuated then in the YOSHIDA family (YOSHIDA Shigekata, YOSHIDA Shigemasu). But the specialty of HEKI-RYU was to quickly disseminate many schools. The number of schools increased as many students also became founders of new branches [C0_7] as IZUMO-HA, SEKKA-HA, DOSETSU-HA, INSAI-HA, JYUTOKU-HA, SAKONEMON-HA, DAISHIN-HA, OKURA-HA, YAMASHINA-HA, etc. Also HEKI Yazaemon Noritsugu (1394-1427) founded the CHIKURIN RYU school, another HEKI mainstream in parallel to the HEKI Danjo initiated schools above.

Later, in the Edo period (1615-1867), the DOSHA competition, shooting at 120m in the SANJU-SANGENDO temple corridor in KYOTO was practiced a lot. For this competition, CHIKURIN-RYU showed a significant activity with by example, HOSHINO Kanzaemon and WASA Daihachiro. HOSHINO Kanzaemon, shot 8,000 arrows in 18 hours, in the middle of the target at 120 meters, while WASA Daihachiro shot 8033 arrows in one day.

MODERN KYUDO

After the MEIJI ISHIN revolution (1867), as Japan tried to assimilate Western civilization, the Japanese cultural traditions, including KYUDO, declined rapidly, and unfortunately KYUDO was practiced just for fun.

Although OGASAWARA-RYU and HEKI-RYU had survived, they had almost lost their past vivacity. But in such a situation, HONDA Toshizane (1835-1917) maintained and developed the tradition of CHIKURIN RYU while changing the position from SHAMEN UCHIOKOSHI to SHOMEN UCHIOKOSHI. On the other hand, he taught many excellent KYUDOKA as TAKAGI Tasuku, AWA Kenzo, KAMINAGA Masakichi, etc. Then came the students of AWA sensei: KAMINAGA Masakichi, YOSHIDA Noan, HASEBE Keisuke, ANZAWA Heijiro, and Eugen HERRIGEL.

In the HEKI-RYU tradition, URAGAMI Sakae tried to grow back his INSAI-HA school, obtaining excellent results with his students, MURAKAMI Hisashi, URAGAMI Hiroko, and INAGAKI Genshiro.

On the other hand, in the prefecture of AICHI, TOMITA Tsunemasa maintained the tradition of BISHU CHIKURIN RYU with his student UOZUMI Bunue and in the WAKAYAMA prefecture, UNO Yozaburo tried to maintain the KISHU CHIKURIN RYU.

OGASAWARA RYU was also revived by OGASAWARA Seimei (Kyoâki) and OGASAWARA Seiko, and they taught many KYUDOKA as CHIBA Tanetsugu, SUZUKI Ihei, KUBOTA Shintaro.

Thus, the schools have gradually regained some strength and established the foundations of modern KYUDO. The national organization, DAİNIHON BUTOKUKAI was founded in 1895, but was dissolved in 1945, and after the war, the ZEN NIPPON KYUDO RENMEI was created in 1947. Both organizations have achieved good results for the unification of the shooting methods and international diffusion.

Since 1980, in Europe, the European KYUDO Federation was founded. Other federations have been created in the USA and Australia, and the KYUDO started its internationalization.

REFERENCES

CO_1 HIGUCHI Kiyoyuki sensei, Gendai Kyudo Koza 6, P9,10

CO_2 ANAN Koretaka sensei, Koza 6, P72, 73

CO_3 HASIMOTO Genjiro sensei, Koza 6, P44, 45

CO_4 SAITO Naoyoshi sensei, Koza 4, P79, 82

CO_5 SAITO Naoyoshi sensei, Koza 1, P99

CO_6 SAITO sensei, Koza 1, P122

CO_7 SAITO sensei, Koza 1, P131-133

PHOTOS



ONUMA Hideharu Sensei



UOZUMI Bunue Sensei



Inauguration of Lyon's dojo

Michel RANDOM

SAITO Tomoji Sensei

OZAWA Kuwa Sensei

ONUMA Hideharu Sensei

SATO Kaori Sensei



In memory, Lyon Dojo

SAITO Tomoji Sensei

OZAWA Kuwa Sensei

SATO Kaori Sensei



Seminar in Lyon

SATO Kaori Sensei

Michel MARTIN

Philippe REYMOND

Alain BERTRAND

Tryggvi SIGURDSSON

Charles STAMPFLI

Michel CHAVRET





LYON Meishin Kyudojo Team at TOSHIMA Dojo in TOKYO, 1992



Training in MATSUMOTO dojo, 1992

SATO Kaori Sensei
Charles STAMPFLI
Michel CHAVRET





UOZUMI Bunue Sensei

NAGOYA Dojo, 1990



LYON, 2012



Geneva, 2012

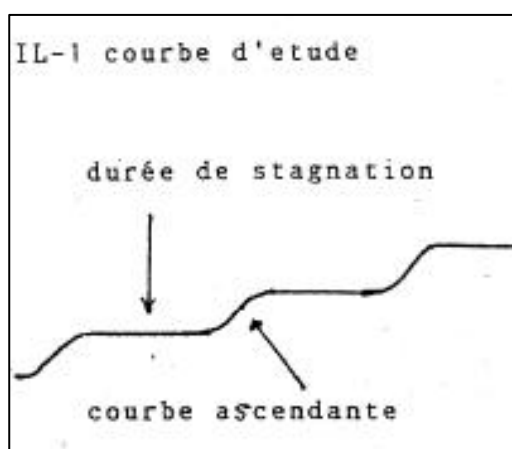


Pierre GUILLOT
Michel CHAVRET
Charles STAMPFLI

CHAPTER 1 – FORM AND HEART

FUNDAMENTAL POSTURE

After a few years practicing KYUDO, you can feel the progress. It is not difficult to reach the target, and you can often be admired by sensei and other practitioners. You can even sometimes participate to tournaments and win prizes. However often at this time there is a risk of stagnation. Such a trend exists in many sports, but is particularly evident in KYUDO. Why? In KYUDO, some issues are coming from the equipment. The bow handle is placed below the middle of the bow while the arrow is placed on the right side of the bow. We must use specific techniques to overcome these inconsistencies. Therefore, in KYUDO, we can say that the spiritual influences mainly the success or the failure. When we do not progress anymore, we may be desperate and even consider not being able to properly practice KYUDO. All practitioners are living such an experience.



In this regard, **HAMA Yosuke sensei** says [C 1-3]: in psychology, we have "learning curves" (IL1) with degrees of progress. One curve is of type "S". Progress in KYUDO is following this type of curve. Soon after starting, progress is important, but stagnation time comes generally after. However, with perseverance, we may pass the step and push a wall. This can be seen not only by the improvement of the technic, but also in the heart. Progress comes because SHASHIN (shooting heart) and SHAKEI (shooting posture) are unified. Stagnation duration depends on the time heart and technic are separated.

While the heart and the form are separated, the stagnation continues, and when the heart and the form are unified, we can be on a rapid upward trend. However during any phase of stagnation, we must make deep efforts with patience. The man who gained fame is the one who climbed infinitely higher, like a wave.

Why heart and form do separate? At the beginner level, anybody appreciates any small improvement. It is a pleasure to have heart and form unified at the elementary level. Then, by developing technics, you improve hitting accuracy, but you also easily fall into dead ends, where any step ahead requires to abandon some previous learning, habits, and to also regress in the hitting accuracy. If you stay there because you think: "I can hit this way", then heart and form do separate.

URAGAMI Hiroko sensei says [C1_13] you cannot understand what is wrong for yourself, so the best is to take a good shortcut and seek for advices of a sensei you can trust to fix your fundamental defects. It is just a question of willingness, of accepting the proposed changes and not anymore repeats the previous shot.

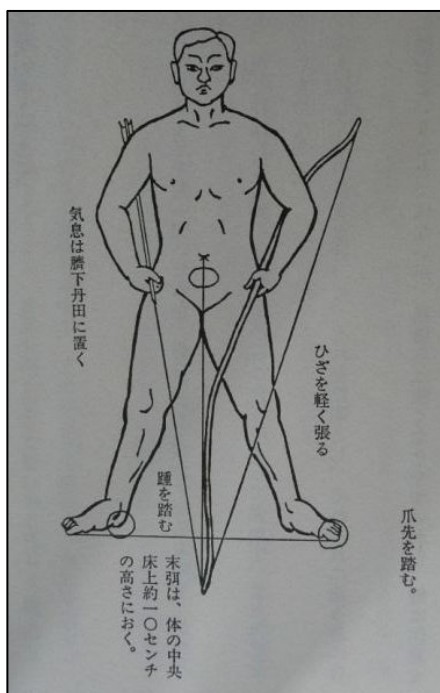
A small change may have big effects. What is most important is to accept the corrections, apply them until they come natural in our way of shooting, the sooner the better.

Someone said that in KYUDO, the mood is most important. This is surely correct, but we must understand that the mood is supported by the fundamental posture of the shooting. To find and acquire the correct posture requires an unwavering mood, as shown in the rest of this chapter.

BISHU CHIKURIN RYU tells us that a teacher who cannot adapt himself to the physical condition (KOPPO) of his student looks like a monkey, which cannot heal his injury because he misunderstands the healing when the injury is later closed. This is a teaching from **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C1_12].

A PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE (SUMMARY OF THE KYUDO KYOHON)

Here is the summary of the content of articles in the first volume of the KYUDO KYOHON (text by the ZEN NIPPON KYUDO RENMEI). I tried to fully translate, because it is a mandatory knowledge, but in some places, I had to change some words to be understood by European readers, due to the specificity of some Japanese expressions. That's why I called this passage "Summary". I limited this chapter to ASHIBUMI and DOZUKURI as main subject.



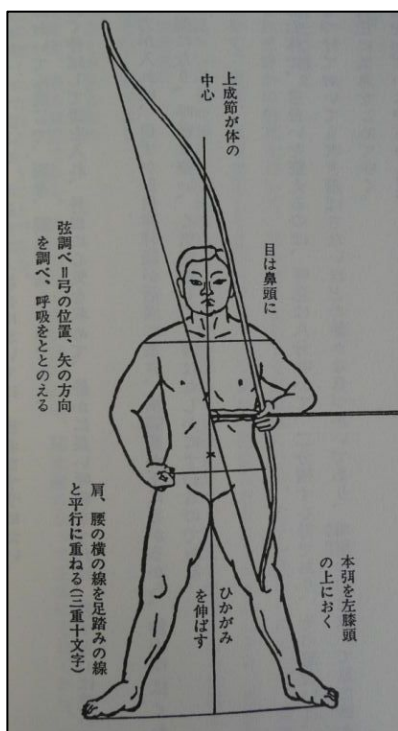
A correct ASHIBUMI is an essential condition for hitting the target correctly. This is the basis of the shooting posture. In ASHIBUMI, we are standing on SHAI (the shooting line) facing the target, and we are placing the feet on the imaginary line that comes straight from the target, with a fan-shaped opening (SOTOHACHIMONJI). The angle of the right and left foot with respect to the line, which is drawn from the target, is approximately 60 degrees, and the ASHIBUMI opening is the YAZUKA (draw length in KAI, the "BAND").

For ASHIBUMI, there are two methods:

(1) Looking at the target, open half a step with the left foot toward the target, and then open the right foot just after touching the left foot with it. At same time, continue to look at the target.

(2) Looking at the target, open half a step with the left foot, then direct gaze toward the feet, open the right foot without touching the left foot. You can choose one of the two methods.

ASHIBUMI done, set your feet firmly on the ground, naturally tender knee joints, locate massively hips over feet. A proper ASHIBUMI ensures the stability of the lower body part.



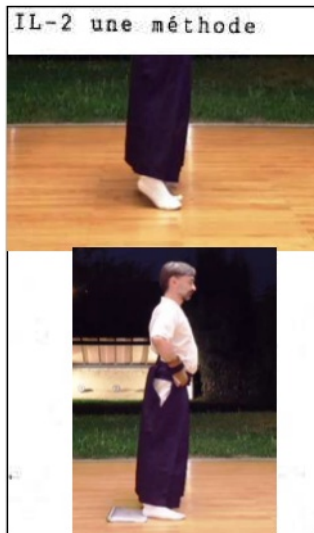
For DOZUKURI, after ASHIBUMI, lower the shoulders and extend the spine and neck upwards. The center of the body is located on the hips (lumbar); SHINKI (mind power) is concentrated in the TANDEN. Then the MOTOHAZU (low point of the bow) is placed on the left knee and the right hand is placed on the hipbone. When completing DOZUKURI posture, pay attention to all the things that build the vertical line, and try to express a flexible attitude with proper breathing. A feeling of calm is the basis for dynamic movements that follow, and also determines ultimately a very good shot.

DOZUKURI movement looks very simple, but it includes a lot of very important details to stabilize the shooting posture. This is why, during YUGAMAE, UCHIOKOSHI, HIKIWAKE and KAI, the key points of ASHIBUMI and DOZUKURI should be effective in all actions.

EXERCISE METHOD

1) Always keep in mind that in all the movements of the shooting, the TATEYOKO-JUMONJI (vertical and horizontal cross) must be kept. On one hand, the vertical line (TATESEN) is formed by three correct crosses: feet, hips and shoulders in

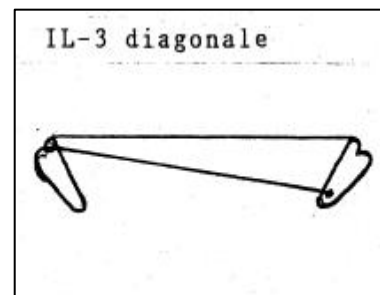
relation to the centerline of the body (the SANJU-JUMONJI), and is performed by the extension of the spine and neck. On the other hand, the horizontal line is formed by the following key points: shoulders, elbows, wrists and fingers. It is very important to understand that the vertical line (TATESEN) dominates the horizontal line (YOKOSEN) in all movements. However, we easily tend to give importance to YOKOSEN because the bow is opened with both hands. But to perform the right action, the YOKOSEN function must be supported by the correct TATESEN function. We must always be aware to extend the centerline of the body upwards. SHAHIN (distinction expressed in the shot) and SHAKAKU (gradation expressed in the shot) are developed as a result of these efforts as taught by **KUBOTA Shintaro sensei** [C 1-6].



2) Method by **KARASAWA Kotaro Sensei** [C1_5] to find the body center of gravity for shooting: stand naturally as much as possible and open ASHIBUMI. Then stand on the toes and move your heels down smoothly to the ground (IL2).

There is another teaching from **FUSE Sosuke sensei** [C1_2]: perform ASHIBUMI as if a paper is put underneath the heels and as if the big toes support the center of gravity.

3) **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C1_15] teaches that there is an INSAI-HA method to bring the toe left and the right heel on a diagonal (IL3). In the above methods, you may find three important



points: the inclination of the body, the tension in HIKAGAMI (behind the knees) and the tension of the femoral joints.

- 4) When building the DOZUKURI posture, we must put the KI (energy of the mind) in the center of the body. At the same time, we must fix the femoral joints and also give a tension in the muscles of the buttocks. What matters is to firmly stabilize the central part of the body, while the strength decreases as it spreads to the extremities. It is the principle of DOZUKURI.

In this regard, **UNO Yozaburo sensei** [C1_9] teaches that in DOZUKURI, we must put KISOKU (breathing down during shooting) and the center point of the force on the top of the hip (part where the column and basin are linked together). He also reminds a word from **YOSHIMI Junsei**, KYUDOKA of former KISHU CHIKURIN RYU: *put your heart in the center of the body*. TANDEN and the center of the basin are one. Read also some teachings on DOZUKURI by **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C1_14].

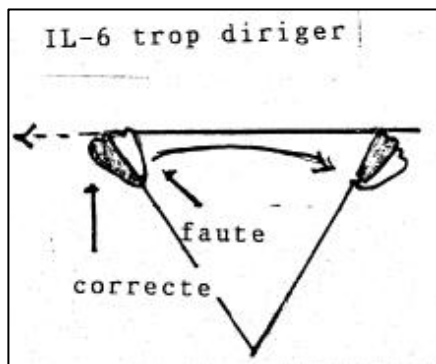
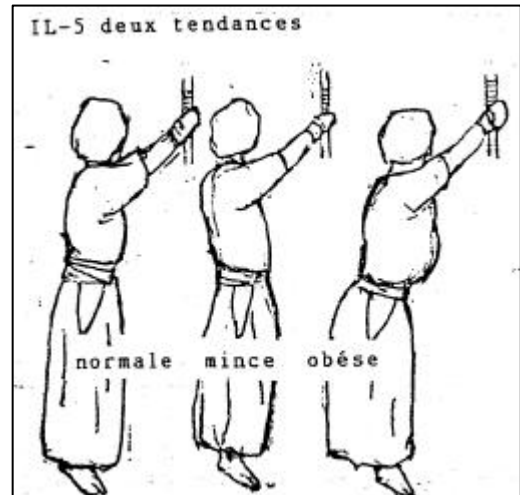


5) To correctly perform DOZUKURI, a teacher made this interesting comment: insert air from the lungs down to the basin as a singer does in his vocals. This sensei said that, for her, it is HAKAMA GOSHI NO KANE, where the KOSHI ITA is strongly supporting the lumbers (IL4).

This is another teaching from **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C1-16], where the HAKAMA GOSHI NO KANE is a method to draw a little on the hips. Certainly, in this case, we feel strongly the KOSHI-ITA on the lumbar, but if done

excessively, the chest is pushed forward, resulting in suffocation. See about this, the paragraph "Explanation and Analysis".

- 6) Two trends may be derived from physical conformation: an obese puts his torso forward, while a thin person bomb chest. It is better to change incorrect posture, but according to the physical conditions of the person. Either change or maintain the posture and adjust the angle of the bow in HIKIWAKE and KAI (IL5).
- 7) **UNO Yozaburo sensei** [C1_8] teaches how to position the knees: tender joints and also tighten the outer sides of the legs, turning on heel inside.

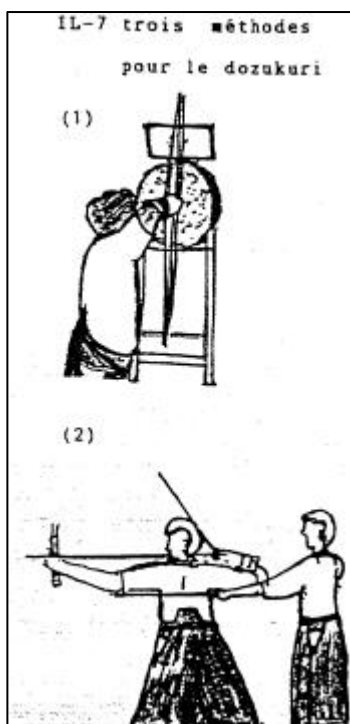


- 8) During ASHIBUMI, the left toe is too often directed inwardly relative to its position, "on one side of an equilateral triangle". As a result, the second step is not only directed outside the triangle, but is also deviated from the centerline of the target (IL6).

- 9) During the movement of the hands from the end of UCHIOKOSHI to KAI, the TATESEN line may be easily deformed to the right or left, forward or backward. The body may be deviated, twisted, to the right or the left of the target line. In this case, when

having recurrent difficulties to hit the target, keep eyes closed after YUGAMAE, and do UCHIOKOSHI and HIKIWAKE. Then open your eyes. If you find the arrow not pointing correctly to the target, it reveals that HIKIWAKE is not properly done.

METHOD TO CORRECT SUCH BAD TRENDS

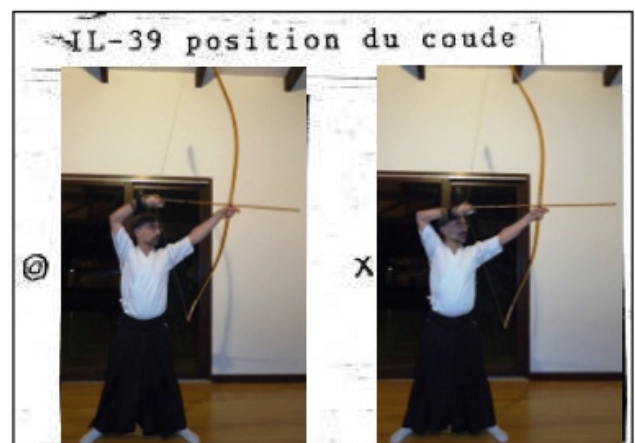


- 1) Install a mirror on the MAKIWARA, and check for yourself the relationship between the two shoulders in HIKIWAKE.

- 2) Ask someone to place an arrow on your blades after UCHIOKOSHI. During HIKIWAKE, you can then confirm by yourself if the shoulder position is normal or not.

- 3) When drawing the bow with the back against a wall, you can check the correct position of the shoulders.

For these methods, see the teaching of **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C1_11].

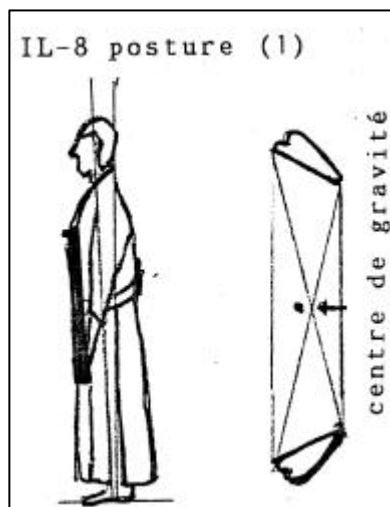


EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VERTICAL LINE

The vertical line is a precondition for any archery shooting, and is a main goal for any archer. Usually, we do not see the importance of this line anymore because it is no more difficult to open the bow after several years of practice. However, when practicing in front of people during demonstrations or tournaments we may feel the instability of the body. This is an effect of stress, but also a lack of exercise to be fully concentrated on the construction of the vertical line.

Why is it so difficult? Because the construction of the horizontal line, the shooting line, takes the priority in the mind while the vertical line should stay strong. The vertical line must stay engraved in the body.



In DOZUKURI, here are three teachings:

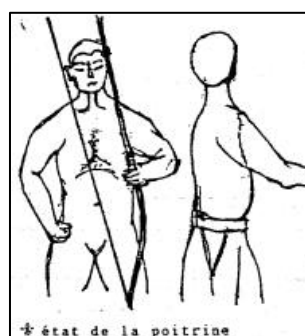
(1) Expand properly the centerline of the body. To do this, do not bend the body at the femoral joints (keep the posture seen at exercise 2). Lower the chest by rounding the back. This will form a crease between the breast and belly. This is useful to free the chest. On this subject, see the teaching from **HOIRIBE Shizen sensei** [C 1-4] and also the teaching from **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C1_7] to relax the chest. In other words, to feel the lower part of the epigastrium, it is better to have as back rounded.

the spine is curved like an S. This method is not ideal because it often leads to suffocation. « HATOMUNE DECHIRI » is useful for horse shooting, or when shooting in an unstable situation as on a boat.

(3) Finally there is a teaching from **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C1_17], to draw a little the hips for stabilization. This is called « HAKAMA GOSHI NO KANE ».



I prefer the first method because I think it is useful for shooting KINTEKI. If one can stand, vertically in DOZUKURI, it helps not only the expression of the beauty of Japanese archery, but also the correct flow of KI. Many sensei are teaching this first method.



TO STRENGTHEN THE VERTICAL LINE

At the DOZUKURI step, do we need a solid vertical line?

I think it is enough to prepare for this step only the mandatory elements to DOZUKURI because in DOZUKURI, ease of mind is more important than anything. BISHU CHIKURIN RYU teaches that in DOZUKURI, you must remove from the heart the seven emotions: joy, anger, worry, thought, sadness, fear and surprise. The man has nothing originally. If he is awake, he can become DAINICHI NYORAI, a Buddha. This gradation in the DOZUKURI is called NICHU GETSU SHIN (sun, moon and God, or body). By achieving this, we can shoot with no fear, even in front of the emperor and nobles, according to a teaching of **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C1_10]. We should gradually strengthen the vertical line while opening the bow.

BREATHING

The construction of the vertical line closely involves IKIAI, breathing. I will give some explanation on breathing in another chapter. Here I would only talk about two things:

(1) The breathing deepness should be balanced with the power of the bow.

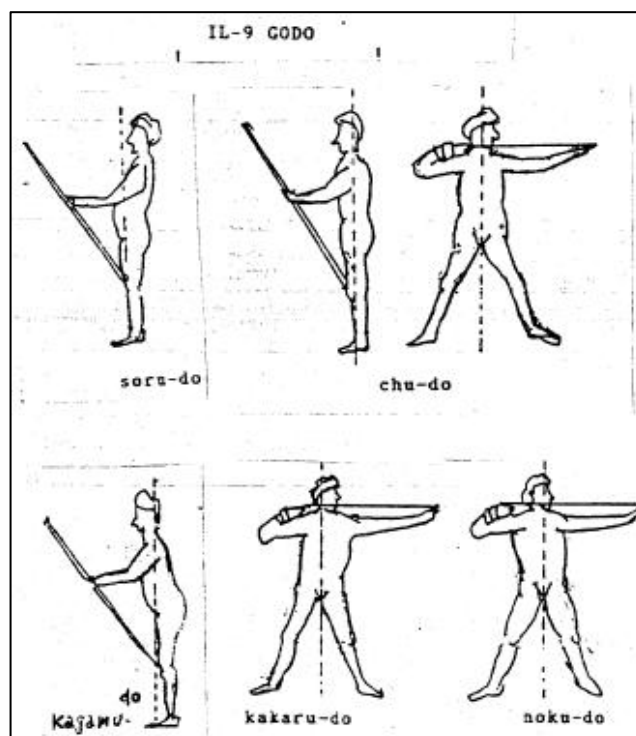
(2) From the position of SANBUN NO NI, the air left in the chest should be lowered in the TANDEN.

If these two conditions are not sufficiently met, breathing may become suffocating.

FIVE METHODS FOR DOZUKURI

- SORUDO, bend the torso backward
- KAGAMU DO, bend the torso forward
- CHU DO, stand vertically
- KAKARU DO, move the torso towards the target
- NOKU DO, move the torso back from the target.

These methods are depending on the type of shooting. For example, use CHU DO for KINTEKI, and NOKU DO for ENTEKI, long distance shooting.



CONCLUSION

Finally, here's a thought from **CHIBA Tanetsugu sensei**, former president of the ZNKR and 10th DAN HANSHI [C1_1]: when doing ASHIBUMI, it would be good to have the feeling of installing the body on the ground rather than just standing on the ground.

As a result, you can feel the body as part of everything in the universe (micro-cosmos). This is ideal. Place the feet on the ground as people practicing JUDO are doing.

Install massively the hips on the ASHIBUMI then setup the DOZUKURI in a natural way. Place vertically the spine and neck, the chin backward, and look vaguely the tip of nose with the eyes half open. The head extends infinitely upward on one hand, and on the other hand the lower part of the body becomes heavier as it penetrates the ground.

Keep the body flexible as a good fishing rod. Focus the spirit on the area of the TANDEN, but never harden voluntarily this part. Lower the shoulders, extend the neck, and have flexible arms as well as the feet. All the muscles are in their natural state.

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- C1_2 FUSE Sosuke sensei, Kyudo Gijyutsu Sanpo 6-11
- C1_3 HAMA sensei, Kyuri o Sagutte 8-P10,11
- C1_4 HOURIBE Shizen sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 3, P71,72
- C1_5 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, TATESEN to NOBI, 1 –P2
- C1_6 KUBOTA Shintaro sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 4-P255
- C1_7 MORIKAWA Masaru sensei, comment vaincre le HAYAKE, P42
- C1_8 UNO Yozaburo sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P63,64
- C1_9 UNO Yozaburo sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P79
- C1_10 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 1, P 22, 148
- C1_11 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 1, P136, 138
- C1_12 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 2, P290, 292.
- C1_13 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 12, P25,28
- C1_14 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 2, P16,19
- C1_15 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 2, P19
- C1_16 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 3, P30
- C1_17 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P76

CHAPTER 2 - THE LEFT HAND TENOUCHI

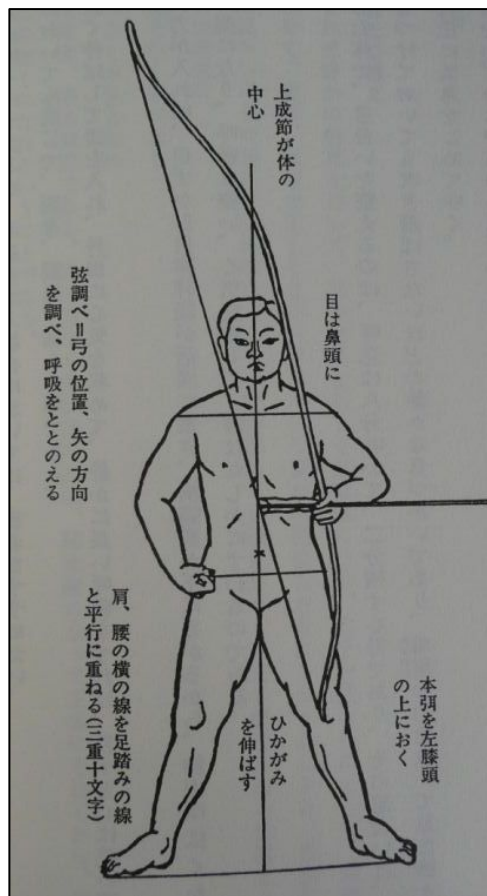
This chapter and the next one are describing the TENOUCHI of both hands. The Japanese word TENOUCHI generally concerns the left hand. It means a « method to grab the bow ». On the other side, hanging the string into the groove, TSURUMAKURA of the YUGAKE (glove) is called KAKEGUCHI NO HATARAKI: the function of the groove (**MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C2_13]). However, recently many sensei are also using the word TENOUCHI for the right hand. This, probably because the functions of the both hands are linked, as for example the base of the thumb and fingers of one hand being balanced against those of the other hand (according to **FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei** [C2_2] and **KARASAWA Kotaro Sensei** [C2_9]). In this book, I chose the same word TENOUCHI for both hands, TENOUCHI of the left hand and right hand.

A PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE (KYUDO KYOHON SUMMARY)

YUGAMAE

YUGAMAE is an action that precedes the beginning of the shooting movement. Therefore, it must be done while maintaining the correct posture formed by ASHIBUMI and DOZUKURI. In addition, care must be taken in strengthening the power of the mind and also in regulating breathing. For YUGAMAE, there are two forms « SHOMEN no KAMAE » and « SHAMEN no KAMAE ».

Each YUGAMAE includes three actions: TORIKAKE, TENOUCHI and MONOMI. For TORIKAKE, we hang the string with the thumb of YUGAKE in front of the body (face in front, between the bow and the string).



When using a YOTSUGAKE (four fingers glove), press the ring finger with the thumb joining the middle and first fingers on the ring finger.

When using a MITSUGAKE (three fingers glove), press the middle finger with the thumb and join the index finger. The right thumb has a spring function (as the left thumb). The thumb quickly snaps from the other fingers at HANARE (string release).

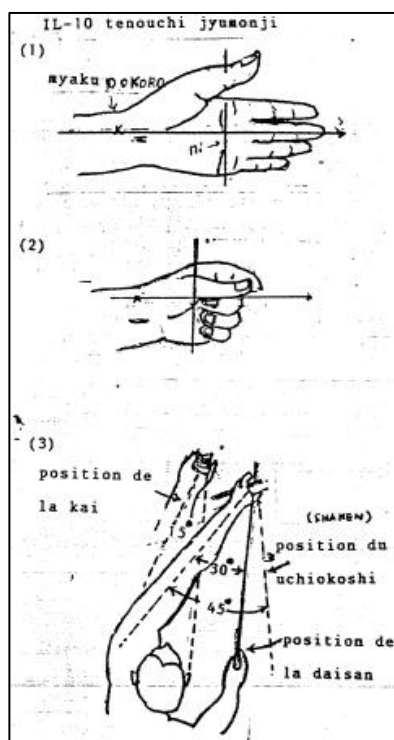
This action of the right hand to form the hook is called « TORIKAKE ». In contrast, in the left hand, we must correctly grab the handle of the bow, this is the left TENOUCHI. In the position SHOMEN both hands are in front of the body, but in SHAMEN, after TORIKAKE in front of the body, YUGAMAE is done by moving the bow in left oblique. In TORIKAKE, it should be noted that the angle between the right forearm and the string is nearly 90 degrees and the wrist is not bent. This is called KAKEGUCHI JUMONJI.

The left TENOUCHI is a very important technique to fully use the power of the bow efficiently. It impacts directly the arrow flight speed, the penetration power, the flight distance and also the arrow impact on the target. For a long time, several expressions have been used for the form and function of the TENOUCHI such as « UNOKUBI », the cormorant's neck, « MOMIJI-GASANE », the shape of a maple leaf, « RANCHU » the feeling of grabbing an egg, « AKURAN » (like RANCHU).

I think this expresses the feeling to never grab the bow too much, grabbing it like an egg. It is difficult, so you have to train a lot with a teacher. After this preparation, hold the bow as if it was hold with the arm, keeping the wrist and elbow flexible. Then turn your head and look at the target. This is called « MONOMI o SADAMERU ».

GENERAL EXPLANATION FOR THE LEFT TENOUCHI

In Japanese archery, to properly train the left TENOUCHI is fundamental. The Japanese bow characteristic position of the handle is asymmetric (it almost coincides with the golden section, 1/1.618 ([URAGAMI Sakae Sensei \[C2_31\]](#))). Moreover, the arrow is placed on the right side of the bow, so when released without artifice, the arrow goes to the right and above the target. The



left TENOUCHI is a technique to correctly place the arrow on its path, directly toward the target. The bow is subject to twisting while the lower part of the handle is pulled with the TENOUCHI.

So how is the bow twisted? Is it with the power of the hand ? No! If you do this, there is a risk of breaking the bow because the Japanese bows, made of bamboo and wood, are fragile. What matters most is that the twist of the bow is given passively, without using the hand strength. The TENOUCHI does this function while at the same time, it has the other function to naturally pull the lower part of the handle.

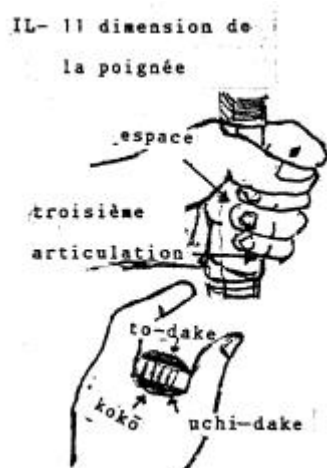
The TENOUCHI must grab the bow at right angle between the thumb and the middle finger. Three fingers, middle, ring and little fingers are aligned on their extremities. The thumb is placed on the middle finger (see [IL10](#)). In this case, an imaginary cross is formed between the fold and the TENOUCHI horizontal line drawn from MYAKU-DOKORO (the position of the pulse) to the end of middle finger. This is called the TENOUCHI JUMONJI. We must keep this cross in all the movements. The bow angle gradually increasing while opening has the effect of pulling the bottom of the bow, and the pressure increases on the basis of the thumb. At the same time, the reduction of the angle between the forearm and the arrow

generates some hand friction, which in turn induces the rotational movement, a twist of the bow ([IL10, 2](#)). Here are the functions of the TENOUCHI.

NOTE: On the TENOUCHI JYUMONJI, you will find different opinions according to schools. In this essay I present various versions. Also I must add that people may have physical conformation that makes difficult to apply the rules explained. In this case, the teacher has to find a suitable solution for each one.

METHOD OF EXERCISE

HANDLE SIZE



Measure the size of the handle relative to the size of the hand, and adjust it properly. Set properly the left side of TODAKE (outside bamboo) into the hand, and to check the size, look at the followings:

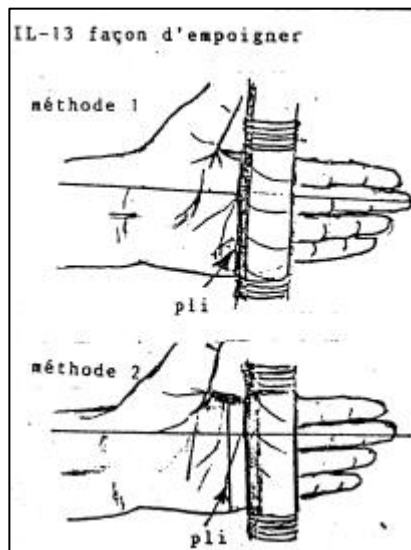
(1) The contact between the third joint of the little finger and the right side of the TODAKE.

(2) the existence of a gap between the base of the thumb and the tip of the middle finger.

For some European practitioners with bigger hand, it may be required to adjust the handle size.



TENOUCHI FOR SHOMEN FORM

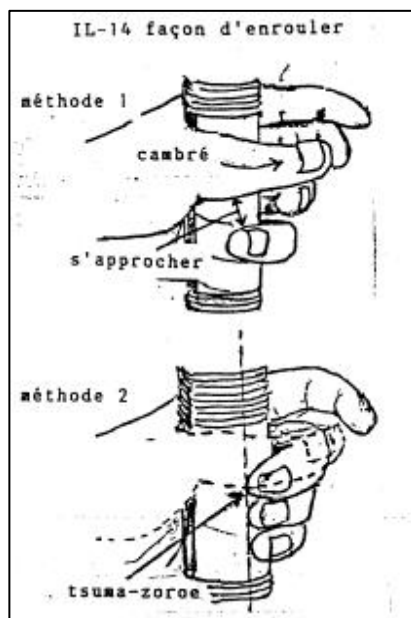


(1) When doing YUGAMAE, place the middle of KOKO (the part between the thumb and the index finger) on the left side of TODAKE (**ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C2-6] teaching).

(2) Methods to set the bow in the hand.

Method 1 - Set the left side of TODAKE on the fold of the palm. In general, this is the basic method (see illustration « YUGAMAE » of KYUDO Hassetsu at the end of KYUDO KYOHON).

Method 2 - place the TODAKE parallel to the fold, either inward or outward. To have the right placement, you should check that in DAISAN, you have the third joint of the little finger on the right side of the TODAKE. The size of the handle in relation to the size of the palm is important.



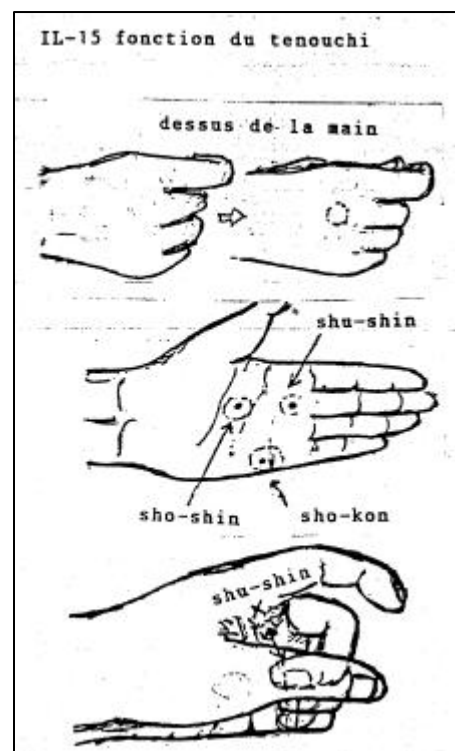
(3) Method to wrap the three fingers on the handle, once again two methods:

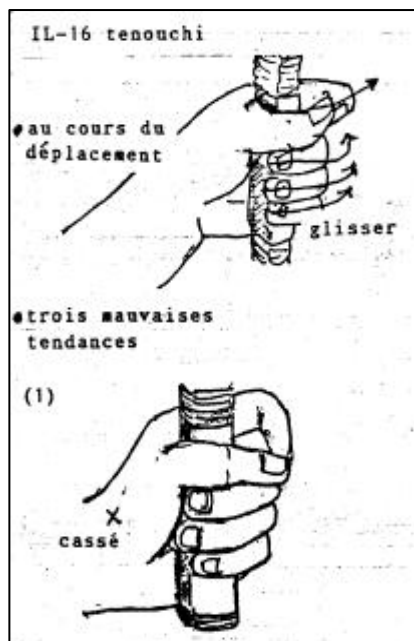
Method 1 - wrap the little finger on the grip, squeezing the distance between little finger and the base of the thumb. Then align the ring and middle fingers on the little finger, fingertips set as a straight line. This is called TSUMAZOROE (**KARAZAWA Kotaro Sensei** [C2_11] and **MURAKAMI Hisashi sensei** [C2_15]).

Method 2 - first, join the three fingers « as a board » with tips in TSUMAZOROE, and then wrap the handle (**FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei** [C2-4] and **ANZAWA Heijiro sensei** [C2_1]).

In each case, the thumb is bent outside and is placed on the middle finger covering half the nail. The index finger is a little raised and bent or extended it naturally.

(4) When grabbing the bow, extend the external part of the hand, to the first joint as much as possible. In this case if the bow is hold lightly between the thumb and the middle finger, we may feel the SHUSHIN position. The SHUSHIN coincides with the first articulation of the hand. But the bow must not be held too tight. This first action will give to the bow a suitable rotation while keeping the flexibility of the TENOUCHI. The SHOKON, the lower part of the palm, must always be in contact with the bow side. It is also important to center the bow in the palm to harness the power of the bow. This is SHOSHIN. The function of the SHUSHIN and the SHOKON is the balance of the TENOUCHI. **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C2_28] teaches that the place to push the bow is not only the KOKO but also more the SHOSHIN.





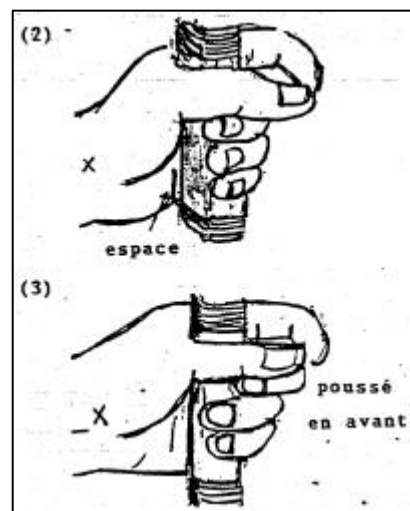
(5) After the YUGAMAE phase, do not change the shape of TENOUCHI. Especially, be careful to not change it during the DAISAN transition. During UCHIOKOSHI, raise the TENOUCHI with the bow perpendicular to the ground. In the bow movement keep both hands flexible and soft. During the rotation, avoid using the fingertips, let them slide as if these fingertips open outside. In this case, a friction arises near the third joints. At the same time, slide the thumb on the middle finger.

When moving both hands, some wrong things may happen:

- 1) The TENOUCHI is broken
- 2) A space between the SHOKON and the handle.

3) Middle finger pushed forward by the thumb.

All this may impact the target hitting accuracy.



(6) When moving the bow, it must be treated as a precious object. **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C2_21] says that in BISHU CHIKURIN RYU, this is called « KAKAERU », means hold something precious. Until DAISAN, the left elbow is opened gradually, while at the same time, the angle of the right elbow is decreased gradually, late to the movement of the left elbow. **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei** [C2_7] teaches that even if the left arm has come to the DAISAN position, we should leave a minimum of flexibility in the elbow.

(7) At the DAISAN position, the TENOUCHI is definitely in place. It does not bend to any side and we should feel, according to the teachings of **TAKAGI Tasuki sensei** [C2_18] and **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C2_26], the right balance between four points: the base of the thumb, the forefinger, the SHOKON, and the little finger around the bow.



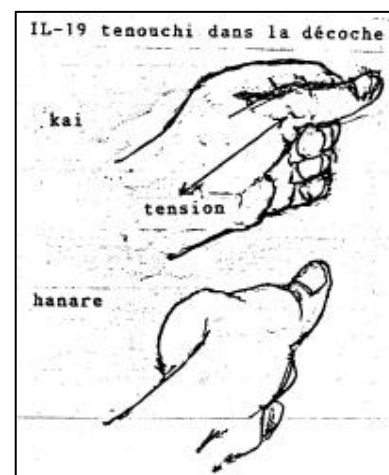
(8) For the release, there is a choice between one of the two TENOUCHI functions:

- UWAOSHI, push down and sideways (on the right side of the bow with the TSUNOMI in 45 degrees the direction. This method comes from HEKIRYU INSAIHA.

- NAKAOSHI, push straight forward to the MATO with the

TSUNOMI, also using the middle finger function, soft tightening between the middle finger and the SHUSHIN. See « NAKAOSHI no TENOUCHI » in the section « Explanation and Analysis ».

When using the first method, at ZANSHIN, the URAHAZU (upper bow extremity) leans forward, toward the target. In the second method, the bow does not lean.



(9) Despite the fact that the TENOUCHI must be flexible, the muscle of the thumb base must be firm. This is ensured by clamping the middle finger and by the function of lifting up the forefinger. At the release time, the thumb moves quickly toward the target, right to it. **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C2_27] teaches that the tension, HARI, of the thumb base muscle on the centerline of the left arm prepares this movement.

TENOUCHI FOR SHAMEN FORM



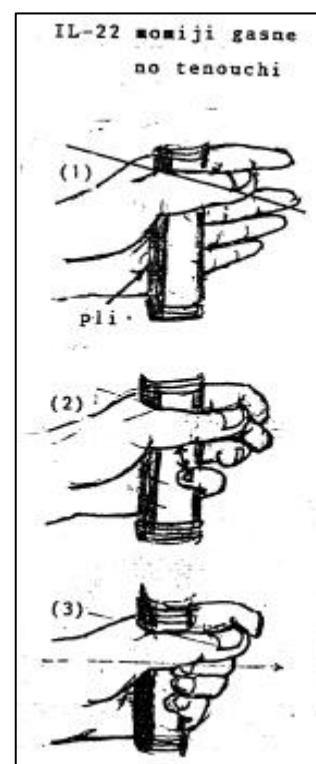
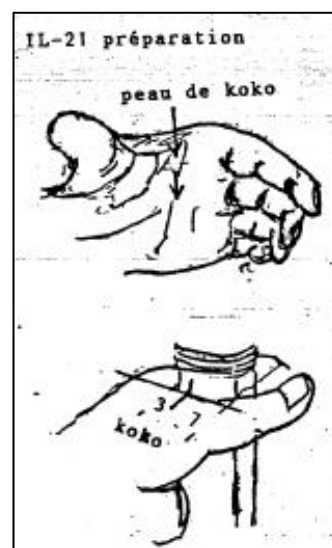
be read by SHOMEN practitioners as I think for them, it is important to understand the school origin of these techniques, their TENOUCHI and the technical efficiencies of each method. For SHAMEN practitioners, this section might be a bit light, so they may complete their knowledge with other books or teachings specific to each school.

(1) HEKIRYU INSAI HA

ASHIBUMI and DOZUKURI in INSAI HA are specific as illustrated above. In this school, after DOZUKURI, move the bow a little obliquely forward from the body. The left arm is extended naturally to do the TORIKAKE. Then bring back the bow in DOZUKURI position. Then build the TENOUCHI: place the center of KOKO to the position of three-tenths of the UCHIDAKE width (bow inside bamboo), from the left side of the bow; The KOKO is placed 1.5cm below the upper part of the handle. While pushing the bow, it opens about 3cm, rubbing to the inside of the palm and KOKO skin (IL22). Then open all fingers of the left hand, and at the same time, place the left side of the TODAKE on the TENMON-SUJI (the fold of the palm). Wrap the little finger on the grip, squeezing the thumb base. Place the ring and middle fingers on the little finger by aligning the tips of three fingers. The ring finger and the middle finger are inserted in a very short space between the thumb and the little finger. A space is created between the TODAKE and the ring and middle fingers. Give some strength to the three fingers, and open the bow by about 15 cm keeping the form of the TENOUCHI. Then raise the fists with the bow obliquely up, without changing both TENOUCHI.

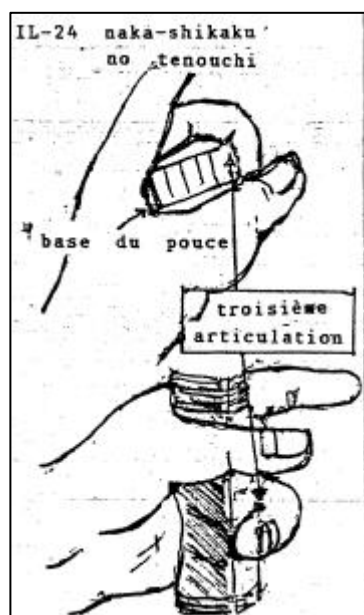
URAGAMI Sakae sensei [C2_29] and **INAGAKI Genshiro sensei** [C2_5] are teaching that this TENOUCHI is called MOMIJI GASANE NO TENOUCHI because its shape looks as a red maple leaf (MOMIJI), and that it shows the gradation of a shooter reaching the upper KYUDO level.

In SHAMEN, there are many schools, but I will mainly focus in this essay on the methods from two schools: HEKIRYU INSAIHA and BISHU CHIKURIN RYU. By the way this can also



(2) BISHU CHIKURIN RYU

ASHIBUMI and DOZUKURI of this school are presented in the figures below. DOZUKURI is a bit specific as shown in these illustrations, and this action is also named YUGAMAE. The position of



the bow in YUGAMAE is obtained by aligning the METSUKEBUSHI (the first UCHIDAKE node from the upper part of the handle) with the line of sight to the target. Then TORIKAKE is prepared after moving the bow until the nock point is placed in front of the body. To form the TENOUCHI, put the KOKO on the right angle, the left side of UCHIDAKE (inside bamboo). Then put the third joint of the little finger on the right side of the TODAKE (outside bamboo). The other fingers (middle and ring) are aligned on the little finger by bringing the tips of the fingers in a straight line. The inside of the thumb is placed on the side of the nail of the middle finger.

After TORIKAKE, move the bow on the left side obliquely from the body without opening it. This is called « KYUKAI » (the posture where one has the feeling of holding a trunk with arms).

In the BISHU CHIKURIN RYU, for UCHIOKOSHI, rise the bow to the DAISAN position, gradually pushing the bow with the left hand to open it. The thumb is moved slowly to the left side of

UCHIDAKE. Here, there is a difference between the two schools because for INSAIHA, the bow is already slightly opened before rising it.

The TENOUCHI is called « NAKASHIKAKU CHU-O no TENOUCHI ». The Japanese word « NAKA » means « inside » or « moderate », « SHIKAKU », « square » and « stability », and « CHU-O », « center ». **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** teaches it means a TENOUCHI stabilized because it does not bend to any side (**TOMITA Tsunemasa sensei** [C2_20] and **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C2_25]).



EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

SHOMEN TENOUCHI, SHAMEN TENOUCHI

For the TENOUCHI, there are different flavors depending on each school. But, in general, it can be understood as follows:

HEKIRYU, including both INSAI-HA and CHIKURIN-HA, have been developed as « HOSHA » (or « BUSHHA »), means a war school, ground level. The battle was the ultimate goal. They have adopted the SHAMEN form, as natural facing enemies.

Instead, the OGASAWARA-RYU school played a large role in the horse shooting form. The OGASAWARA masters have adopted the SHOMEN form, natural for this practice. This school was organizing OGASAWARA ceremonial shootings, such as YABUSAME, KUSAJISHI, KASAKAKE and

INU-O-MONO. It was competitions on square board targets, stag figures, traditional hats, or dogs. Therefore, it is understandable that those who belonged to this OGASAWARA tradition have represented the noble class or high BUSHI class. In parallel, each DAIMYO (feudal lord) promoted HEKI-RYU to form or maintain vassals fighters in the spirit of SAMURAI.

Naturally, this created differences between the shooting methods, as TENOUCHI technics to hit the target with power and accuracy in HEKIRYU. However, for a long time, there have been lots of technical exchanges between the schools. Many teachings on TENOUCHI are including metaphors that have common points between the traditions.

At the same time, we can see that OGASAWARA preferred a natural TENOUCHI, without artifice, may be to quickly grip the bow during horse shooting demonstrations ([SAITO Naoyoshi sensei \[C2_17\]](#) teaches that it is ideal to grip the bow by remaining « moderate » and to also not be obsessed by the TENOUCHI).

INSAI-HA AND BISHU CHIKURIN-RYU

Those who have experienced both schools TENOUCHI know from practice there are differences in form and effectiveness. This gives a very interesting topic to understand not only the concepts of TENOUCHI relative to each school, but even more the technique and efficiency of what we may do now.

Basically, the two schools have their origins in the HEKI-RYU style, which they do not have the same founder. **HEKI Danjo Masatsugu** founded the HEKI-RYU, and INSAI-HA recognizes itself as its successor. Instead, CHIKURIN-RYU says it was founded by **HEKI Yazaemon Noritsugu**, contemporary of **HEKI Danjo** Kyudoka.

It is assumed that they both lived in the 15th century, however, some are considering that **HEKI Danjo** might be a legend. We cannot prove this fact anymore nevertheless the two schools have survived until now. It is also clear that for INSAI-HA, **YOSHIDA Issuiken sensei** on one hand, and for CHIKURIN-RYU, **CHIKURIN-BON yosei**, a Buddhist monk on the other hand, have developed a lot their school.

Both schools were part of the BUSHU training, shooting for SAMURAI, but CHIKURIN-RYU fully adopted, the precepts of Buddhism in its teachings. You can find the Japanese word « KYUDO », the way of archery in its documents, as opposed to « KYUJUTSU », art of archery shooting, in those of other schools including INSAI-HA. ([UOZUMI Bunue sensei \[C2_22\]](#)). This influenced the concepts on TENOUCHI, which is very interesting to study.

Back to our subject, in INSAI-HA when forming the TENOUCHI, place the left side of the TODAKE on the TENMON SUJI (fold of the palm). In CHIKURIN-RYU, grip the little finger, putting its third joint on the right side of TODAKE. By practicing, I noticed that the left side of TODAKE does not coincide with the crease of my palm, but outside the fold. Of course, it depends on the size of my hand or the size of the handle of my bow, but on the other hand, it indicates that the CHIKURIN-RYU is not related to the method of putting the left side of the TODAKE on the crease. From this, we can deduce that there is a difference between the two schools TENOUCHI.

MATOMAE AND DOSHA

MATOMAE is the shooting at 28m distance while DOSHA is the shooting for SHI-TO-YA, through the SANJU-SANGENDO corridor (Buddhist building in Kyoto), at 120m distance. This long-range shooting demonstrations were organized during the 17th century. WASA Daihachiro, vassal of the KISHU fief (Wakayama prefecture now) shot through the corridor 8133 arrows in two days, and HOSHINO Kanzaemon vassal of the BISHU fief (Aichi prefecture), 8000 arrows. Both were from the CHIKURIN-RYU tradition.

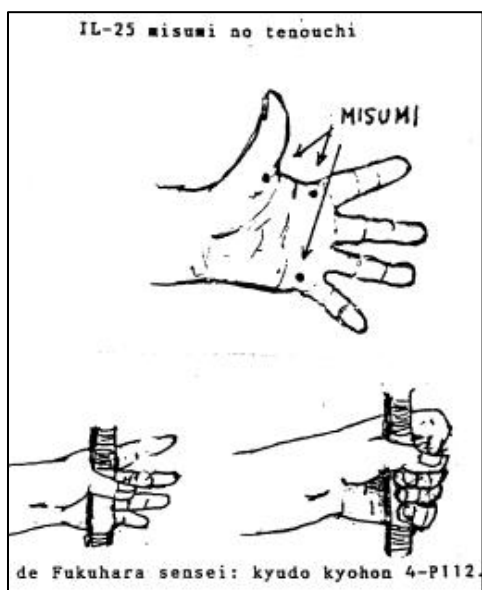
The method for DOSHA shooting was very specific. The practitioner was using a YOTSUGAKE (four-finger glove) to pull a lot of arrows. In this case, as the groove of the YOTSUGAKE is crafted obliquely, he was lowering excessively the position of his right elbow to keep the rule of

KAKEGUCHI JYUMONJI of the right hand. The shooter was also making the TENOUCHI using mostly finger and thumb, so that the arrows were flying farther and lighter than in the KINTEKI. Here it may be noted that when applying the method of the DOSHA TENOUCHI, using mostly middle finger and thumb to grip the bow, it makes the arrows to fly lighter and farther. This is due to the characteristic of the Japanese bow where the lower part of the strung bow goes back faster than the upper part. The power of the arrow is not very strong, but the arrow flies faster. Is this technique also usable and effective for KINTEKI shooting?

MORIKAWA Masaru sensei [C2_13] teaches that the differences between NAKAOSHI and UWAOSHI TENOUCHI are not noticeable, but NAKAOSHI method is to grab the bow especially with the finger and thumb, and used for DOSHA (SASHIYA) shooting.

UWAOSHI AND NAKAOSHI

Concerning the TENOUCHI JYUMONJI (TENOUCHI cross), I already gave some explanations above. What pushes the bow is called NAKAOSHI. This rule is respected regardless of the school. On the other hand, there are some non-obvious differences. In this regard, **MURAKAMI Hisahi sensei** explains [C2_16] what follows: during HIKIWAKE to KAI, maintain the shape of NAKAOSHI. Then, for UWAOSHI method, during the release, do specific work with the TSUNOMI (the thumb base) and the little finger. In contrast, for NAKAOSHI method, work with the middle finger, not the little finger. After YUGAERI (the bow rotation after arrow release) the UWAOSHI function pushes the top of the bow toward the target while the NAKAOSHI function keeps the bow more vertical.



MISUMI NO TENOUCHI

"MISUMI no TENOUCHI" is based on the NAKAOSHI form. The TENOUCHI of **TOMITA Tsunemasa sensei**, BISHU-CHIKURIN-RYU teacher looks like this. In this TENOUCHI, he put the left side of the bow on the basis of the index and little finger. He places the thumb root on the right corner of UCHIDAKE. Thus, his TENOUCHI is built based on the "three corners" (MISUMI), therefore called "MISUMI no TENOUCHI". **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei** [C2_8] and **FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei** [C2_3] are recommending this method.

IROKOGATA NO TENOUCHI

Place the left side of the TODAKE on the base of the little finger. It looks close to "MISUMI no TENOUCHI". **HARUHARA Heihachiro sensei** teaches this in his book "GENDAI KYUDO SHO

JITEN", "IROKO GATA no TENOUCHI" adjusted in NAKAOSHI. On the other hand, **KARASAWA Kotaro Sensei** [C2_10] from INSAI-HA, teaches that it is a way for beginners who do not yet fully master the "JYUMONJI no TENOUCHI", however the form of the "JYUMONJI no TENOUCHI" is not the same for each practitioner, with different hand and handle size. So "IROKOGATA no TEKOUCHI" can be in JYUMONJI (cross) if the morphology of the practitioner's hand allows.

Similarly, TSUMAZOROE (alignment of three fingers tips) is only an ideal. We must first comply with the rule of TENOUCHI JYUMONJI, more important than the TSUMAZOROE. For example, a practitioner who has the short little finger cannot apply TSUMAZOROE.

HOW DO WE WORK WITH THE TENOUCHI?

Those who practice SHOMEN may also adopt one of the two methods, from INSAIHA or CHIKURIN-RYU. However it should be noted that the UWAOSHI method means to do UWAOSHI with determination, while NAKAOSHI method also implies some UWAOSHI trend, but more naturally. It is only a matter of degree.

In this regard, following are thoughts of two sensei, teachers of INSAI-HA and CHIKURIN-RYU, which allow application to the SHOMEN form.

* **URAGAMI Sakae sensei** teaches [C2-32] as follows: there is enough friction in the hand until KAI. This is the base of the TENOUCHI function. So for the release, use this friction and the UWAOSHI function. It means in KAI, push on the right corner of the bow with the TSUNOMI, with a slight UWAOSHI form, and at the release, push the TSUNOMI to the target. As a result, the left hand goes 45 degrees to the bottom left. It has to be noted that in INSAI-HA, the KUCHIWARI (arrow height in KAI) is maintained at the level of the lower part of the nose.

* **TOMITA Tsunemasa sensei**, CHIKURIN-RYU, teaches [C2_19]: in KAI, push the bow by working strongly on the line from "MYAKUDOKORO" (pulse point) to the base of the thumb. The thumb must be bent outside, and perform the same thumb function, but with the feeling that the tip is driven gradually to the left toward the target. The other fingers, little finger, ring finger and middle finger, with their tips aligned, help the thumb action by giving to the bow a rotational movement. In addition, by adding the left elbow extension, the release happens. What is very important, but difficult, is to tighten the bow with the thumb and middle finger. We can find this only by experience. In BISHU CHIKURIN RYU, this technique is called "HIKIME no DEN". About HIKIME, **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** also teaches [C2_24] that the KUCHIWARI in CHIKURIN-RYU is at the mouth level, lower than in INSAIHA.

These two teachers are providing many useful suggestions for the SHOMEN form. The UWAOSHI method is helpful to hit the target, and the NAKAOSHI method is better for an aesthetic expression of the shooting.

Finally, I add here the opinion of **KUBOTA Shintaro sensei** [C2_12], OGASAWARA style teacher: "Place first the left side of TODAKE on the base of three fingers". I think the effect is similar to the INSAI-HA method but he also teaches to hold the bow mainly with the middle finger and thumb, and to apply NAKAOSHI.

OTHER QUESTIONS

(1) About tightening the TENOUCHI

While opening the bow, tightening the grip is occurring naturally. However, for beginners, it is better to tighten the third fingers joints or nearby. The advanced practitioner just grabs the bow softly and with flexibility.

For comments on using the third joint, refer to **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C2_28] and **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C2_14].

(2) Depending on whether you choose one of the two methods, NAKAOSHI or UWAOSHI, the release in the right hand is different. When applying UWAOSHI, the release works by the rotation of the forearm according to **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C2_30]. When using NAKAOSHI, there is less rotation than with UWAOSHI. In this regard, refer to the chapter "TENOUCI of the right hand" of this essay.

(3) Four bad tendencies:

(a) Too much UWAOSHI - the arrow flies to the bottom of the target, and the left fist goes too much low and/or moves vertically up and down.

(b) Too much SHITAOSHI - the release lift up the left fist, the arrow flies above the target, and the bottom extremity of the bow leans toward the target.

(c) If the left wrist is too bent inside, the arrow flies to the right if there is no other action. If by reaction, the wrist goes to the left, then the arrow flies to the left of the target.

(d) If the left wrist is too bent outside, the arrow flies to the left if there is no other action. Sometimes it may cause some shaking of the left hand, and also the string to hit the forearm or the wrist.

EVOLUTION OF THE TENOUCI ALONG THE KYUDO LIFE

Maybe I am giving too many details concerning the TENOUCI. When concentrating too much on the technical aspect, we cannot perceive the highest beauty of the KYUDO, but some sensei are also saying that TENOUCI practice is not only technical but also a main goal in KYUDO.

URAGAMI Hiroko sensei wrote [C2_28]: when I started to understand the TENOUCI in which I do not use any power, I felt a big change. But, after a while, comparing with an old photograph, I could not find any visible change in its outside shape. However, I now appreciate its smooth form in my current practice. This comes probably to understand how to exclude unnecessary power. I now believe that "MOMIJI GASANE no TENOUCI" (like the shape of a red maple leaf, a TENOUCI metaphor) gradually changes to reflect an accomplishment in several steps of TENOUCI studies: how to use power, how to get rid of it.

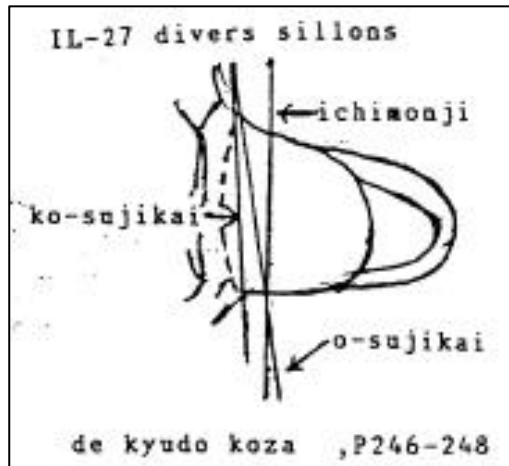
The evolution of the TENOUCI is like a maple leaf where color evolves with the season. In the TENOUCI, we can find the same gradation, as well as in the shooting. There is spring, followed by summer, by fall and by winter.

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- C2_3 FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 4, P112
- C2_4 FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei, Kyudo Kyohon P116, 117
- C2_5 INAGAKI Genshiro sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P98, 99, 107,108
- C2_6 ISHIOKA Hisao sensei, Kyudo Koza 3, P295
- C2_7 KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P115, 116
- C2_8 KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P97
- C2_9 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, METE no TENOUCHI 1-5
- C2_10 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, TENOUCHI 3 P7, 8
- C2_11 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, TENOUCHI 5, P25 et 6, P10, 11
- C2_12 KUBOTA sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 4, P248
- C2_13 MORIKAWA Masaru sensei, Shaho to Jissen 8, P35
- C2_14 MORIKAWA Masaru sensei, Shaho to Jissen 7, P37
- C2_15 MURAKAMI Hisashi sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 4, P211, 214
- C2_16 MURAKAMI Hisashi sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 4, P214
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- C2_18 TAKAGI Tasuku sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P98-100
- C2_19 TOMITA Tsunemasa sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 3, P169
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- C2_21 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 1, P155-160
- C2_22 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 2, P374
- C2_23 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku, 1, P73-84, et
- C2_24 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku, P270-272
- C2_25 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P153-156 et 170-173
- C2_26 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, TENOUCHI, Kogiroku 1, P74, 75
- C2_27 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 5, P17
- C2_28 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 5, P18,19
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- C2_30 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane P22, 23, 110, 111
- C2_31 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane P61, 64
- C2_32 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane P5-8

CHAPTER 3 - THE RIGHT HAND TENOUCHI

For the right hand TENOUCHI, as for the left hand, there are many comments and explanations, which are even sometimes contradictory, as coming from different school traditions. In addition, I had some difficulties to find books comparing the school details, which means that my personal comments might be wrong, however I still accept this risk and the challenge to write this chapter.



The first thing to explain is that between the three fingers glove, MITSUGAKE, and the four fingers glove, YOTSUGAKE, there are some differences in the conception and efficiency.

One is that the thumb of MITSUGAKE is built to be oriented toward the middle finger, while for the YOTSUGAKE, it is toward the ring finger. This means that the TSURU MAKURA (the string groove) is made to have the string at 90° with the thumb for the MITSUGAKE, while there is a slight additional angle for the YOTSUGAKE (O-SUJIKAI or KO-SUJIKAI).

What is important first is that we must use the YUGAKE the right way, understanding the correct usage for its form, otherwise it may lead to bad

habits, like short YAZUKA (bow opening) or unbalanced ZANSHIN.

Then, especially for beginners when purchasing a new glove, there may be a more difficult problem linked to the HIKAE, the hard part of the GAKE along the wrist. If the beginner is bending too much the wrist, to compensate some difficulties to correctly use the GAKE, then the groove (TSURU MAKURA) angle is gradually modified to match the position of the elbow too high or too low. The teacher must quickly identify and correct such default otherwise the glove structure may be affected. Then the glove would have to be repaired which may be difficult, especially outside Japan.

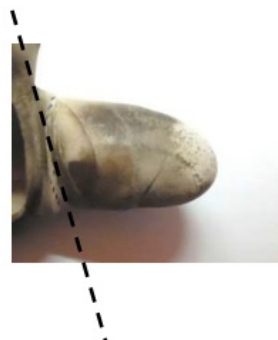
Another difficulty is that glove makers have their own view on how to build the GAKE and especially choose the groove angle; this subject is complex even in Japan. In this essay, I am just giving some clues and feedbacks of my teacher experience with beginners.

Finally, it is important to understand that the right TENOUCHI has close relationship with the left TENOUCHI. Again, I give some clues, but practice is very important to find the right balance considering physical conditions and equipment. Correct balance between the TENOUCHI is a subject for all the shooting steps, HASSETSU.



Ichimonji

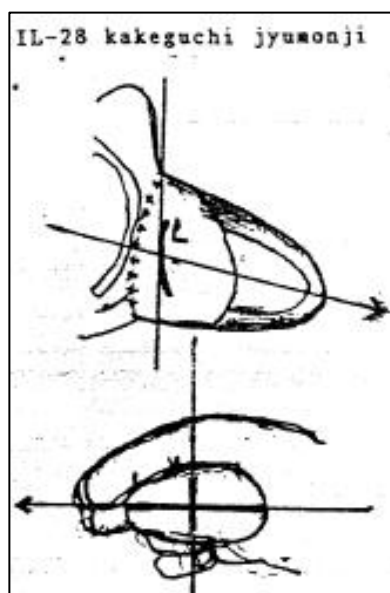
Mitsugake



O Sujikai

Yotsugake

EXERCISE METHODS



(1) KAKEGUCHI JYUMONJI, cross for the groove:

When using a MITSUGAKE, three fingers glove, the rule KAKEGUCHI-JYUMONJI must apply. The string must be at 90° angle to the thumb axis. This is called GAKE JYUMONJI or ICHIMONJI. YUGAKE are made so that their groove is slightly oblique compared to the string, but this cross must be respected. Of course, while opening the bow, the string has another angle to the GAKE, but the virtual cross of the straight string to the thumb axis must be kept until KAI as taught by **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C3_13].

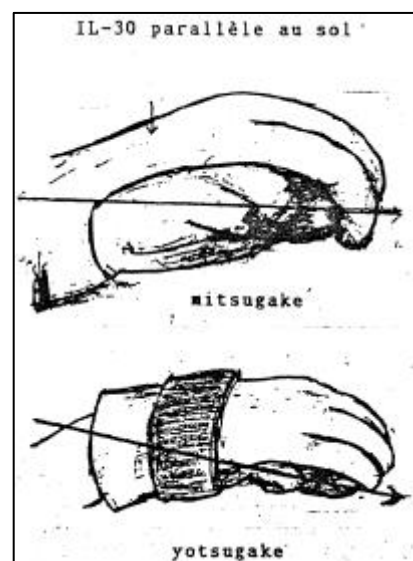
Several sensei are showing how to build this KAKEGUCHI JYUMONJI, either in the SHAMEN or in the SHOMEN form. See **INAGAKI sensei** [C3_3], **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C3_14] and **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C3_11].

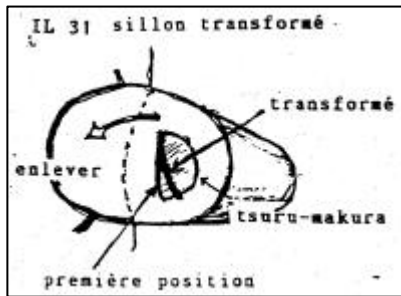
(2) While following the KAKEGUCHI JYUMONJI, using a MITSUGAKE, the thumb of the YUGAKE in KAI is held almost parallel to the ground. Try to not have the tip of the thumb pointing either too low or too high.

However, there are some YUGAKE with the groove or some other parts made in a way to not respect this JYUMONJI rule. Then the thumb position might not be parallel to ground. The same may also happen if the glove has been used the wrong way and the shape of the groove no more allows keeping the JYUMONJI. This must be clearly understood.

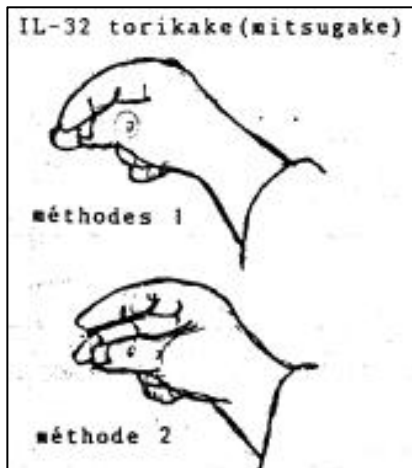
When purchasing a MITSUGAKE, the YUGAKE characteristics must be checked, as for example that its above part is directed slightly upwards while rotating the forearm, or, as **INAGAKI sensei** suggests [C3_4], that the YUGAKE has enough space between the thumb and first finger, and also that the length of the thumb is short.

(3) If the groove has been excessively changed, it is better of course to ask the glove maker to repair it. If you have to repair yourself, remove the skin glued to the inside of the thumb, and change the position of TSURU MAKURA. This part is usually made with a small hard skin piece. Place the skin as it was originally, and if it is too difficult to sew it around the edge you can try to glue it.





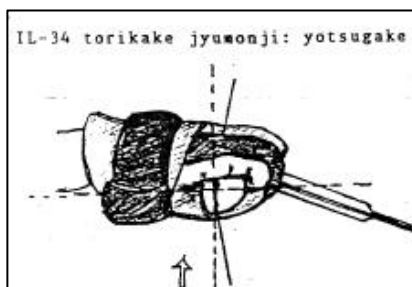
(4) There are two methods to join the two fingers to the thumb to realize the TORIKAKE with a MITSUGAKE. The first one is to place the middle finger on top of the thumb, and the first finger on top of the middle finger. The second one is to bring together the middle finger and first finger on top of the thumb. One after the other or both together, you can choose one of it. The second method, if properly done, is better to distribute the pressure of the thumb, as taught by **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C3_17].



(4) When doing TORIKAKE, the thumb in the YUGAKE should be bent outward, which means it should push the middle finger. This is also valid when using a YOTSUGAKE.

If bending the thumb inward, it put pressure on the middle and index finger, and prevents the right thumb spring function at release.

NOTE: In case of YUGAKE thumb is too big compared to the thumb inside, it might be better to stick a few pieces of suitable thickness skin inside. Instead, if it is too small, there is no other way than to bend a little the second joint of the thumb inside.



(6) The rule of KAKEGUCHI JUMONJI for a YOTSUGAKE

Even if the groove of the YOTSUGAKE is SUJIKAI, means with a slight angle, you can still call KAKEGUCHI JUMONJI the way to hang the string along the correct path. Of course, in this case, between the thumb and the string, there is not a right angle, however there is a right angle to the groove. The YOTSUGAKE has been manufactured in a way to respect this JYUMONJI rule, even if the wrist is not bent excessively.

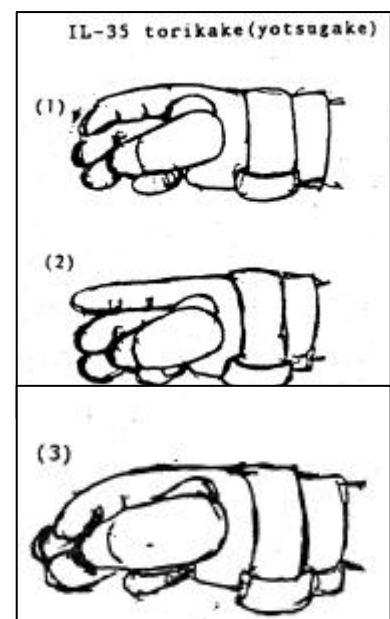
YOTSUGAKE are no more made as in the past,

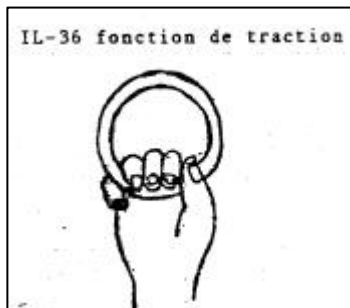
especially for DOSHA [C3_5], with an excessive groove angle, KOSUJIKAI.

(7) To join the three fingers to the thumb of the YOTSUGAKE, there are three methods:

- 1) Put the thumb near the third joint of the ring finger, joining the middle and index fingers on the ring finger (see illustration IL35/1) as explained by **FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei** [C3_1]
- 2) Almost same as 1), but the index finger is extended by making him follow the arrow (see illustration IL35/2), as explained by **UNO Yozaburo sensei** [C3_12].
- 3) Place on the thumb the ring finger and the index finger, then the middle finger on top of the others (see illustration IL35/3) as explained by **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C3_19].

(8) The function of the three fingers and the little finger:

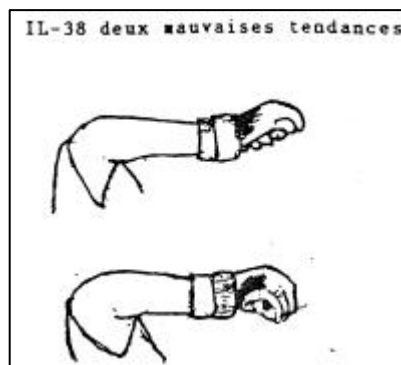




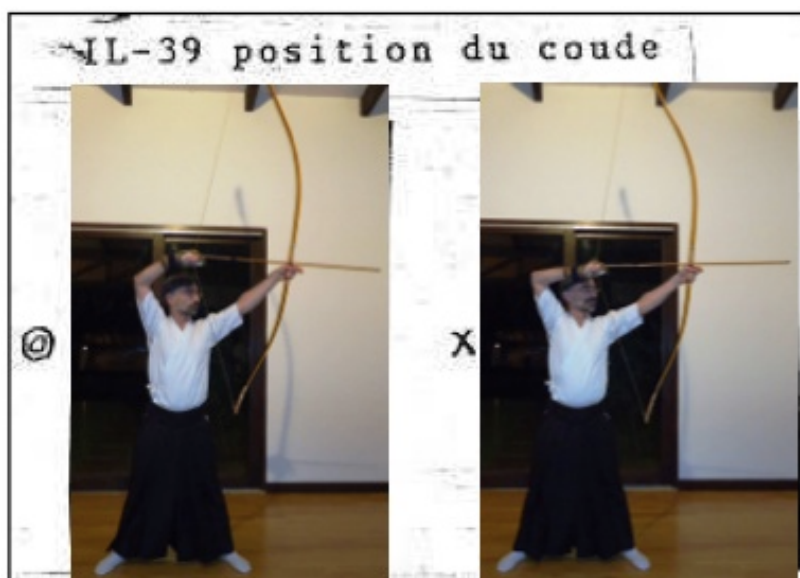
* In the method 1) above, the three fingers are bent as a part of a circle to help the thumb in his function of pulling on the string. At the same time, these three fingers are balanced with the three fingers of the left hand.

* The little finger is kept bent. This is useful to strengthen the line from the KAKEGUCHI to the elbow through the forearm.

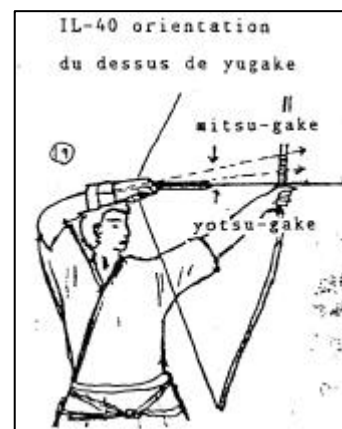
(9) In the TORIKAKE, the right wrist should not be curved upward or downward, nor outside, according to **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei** [C3-8]. But in fact, the wrist is slightly bent by the TORIKAKE, but excessive bending must be avoided. The shape of the wrist and the forearm is maintained during all the movements. If not properly done, there is a risk of excessive inside curvature or a V shape.



It might be a consequence of the hard part of the bottom side of the glove (HIKAE), in this case, it is better to release a bit the glove strap and soften a bit the HIKAE.



(10) From the end of UCHIOKOSHI to the DAISAN position, do not move the right elbow to the left or to the right. The right elbow is bent gradually during the move of the two TENOUCHI. Soften the wrist, as if the YUGAKE itself follows the elbow. The elbow is raised up at the same time and the right forearm is rotated slightly inward. NOTE: to feel this, do not wrap too tightly the strap of the YUGAKE. However, when using a MITSUGAKE, removing too much power in the wrist may result in losing the rotation of the forearm according to **URAGAMI Iroko sensei** [C3_18].



* **URAGAMI Iroko sensei** [C3_18] teaches that when using a MITSUGAKE, you must rotate more the upper part of the glove compared to the YOTSUGAKE, this to maintain the KAKEGUCHI JYUMONJI.

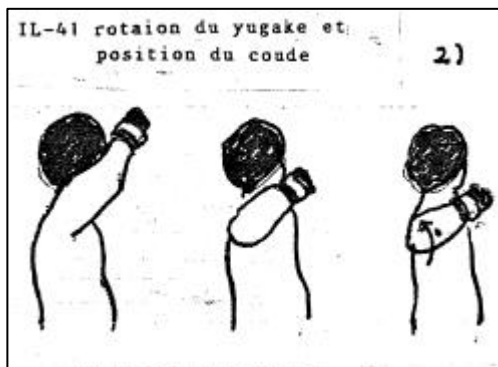
I think this teaching is important, related the MITSUGAKE characteristic, especially the way the groove is built. I learned this when teaching to somebody using a glove not allowing to follow the cross rule. He was having a lot of difficulties with his HIKIWAKE. The only solution was that the string was following the groove, means a JUMONJI to the groove, not to the thumb.

(11) Rule for the right hand during HIKIWAKE.

When using a MITSUGAKE, do HIKIWAKE turning the forearm a little inside (left) for an efficient release. This efficiency is called "HI" (faster), "KAN" (stronger) "CHU" (more accurate) or CHU, KAN KYU (sustainability). For the shooting method, read **URAGAMI Sakae sensei** [C3_21] and **INAGAKI Genshiro sensei** [C3-2].

When using a YUGAKE with HIRAZUKE characteristics, other solutions may be needed as explained in the "analysis" part of this chapter.

About the magnitude of the rotation, I found three teachings while using a MITSUGAKE:

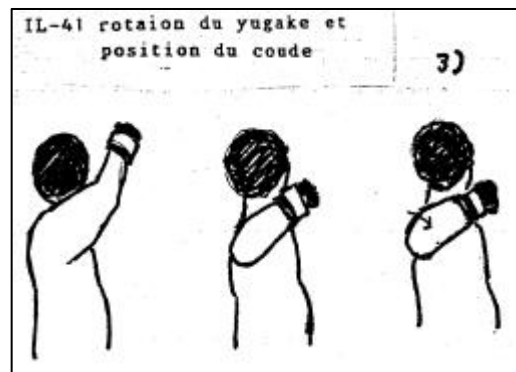


1) It is enough to have rotated the forearm during TORIKAKE and just keep this rotation. A difficulty is that it may change during the DAISAN movement. It is important to keep this rotation until KAI as explained by **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C3-11]

2) From the end of UCHIOKOSHI to SANBUN-NO-NI (two third of the YAZUKA less the feather), do HIKIWAKE by rotating the left arm and right forearm, add strength on the right elbow, then for TSUMEAI (KAI) add more power to the rotation as taught by **INAGAKI Genshiro sensei** [C3_2]

3) Down to SAMBU NO NI, have the feeling to rotate a bit inward the right forearm, and then until the top of the arm is parallel to the ground, soften a bit this rotation. In KAI, quite remove it. See **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C3_16] with his teaching HANNEN HAN JYAKU, rotates half then soften half.

In this regards, it is linked to each school shooting method. Please refer to the part Explanation and Analysis of this chapter.



* When using a YOTSUGAKE, the HIKIWAKE methods are almost the same than when using the MITSUGAKE, knowing that the YOTSUGAKE has a more oblique groove and also a longer thumb. The GAKE form must be respected and the rotation is more soft.

EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

IN THE USE OF YUGAKE

In general, many practitioners adopt a MITSUGAKE in SHAMEN form, while those using the SHOMEN form use more a YOTSUGAKE. However, there is no absolute rule on this subject, it depends more on the choice of each school, especially in the past. What is more important is to be able to identify the proper method to use for each GAKE, in particular to be able to understand the level of inward rotation of the right arm to be given during HIKIWAKE, KAI and the resulting HANARE. Students in each school have to refer to the teaching of their sensei.

MITUSGAKE AND YOTSUGAKE

According to **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C3_20] explanations, in ancient times all schools were using MITSUGAKE as official equipment for shooting KINTEKI (to 28m). On the other hand YOTSUGAKE was invented for DOSHA (shooting in the long corridor (120m) of the SANJU-SANGENDO temple in Kyoto, where the number of arrows going through the corridor in two days was the objective.

However, in Japan now, many shooters prefer to use YOTSUGAKE for KINTEKI. I think it comes from the HONDA school (**HONDA Toshizane sensei**, **AWA Kenzo sensei** teacher, his school was created by adopting the SHOMEN form, but his school also came from CHIKURIN RYU therefore SHAMEN). The HONDA-RYU school adopted the YOTSUGAKE as official YUGAKE as explained by **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C3_23]. The origin is probably because BISHU CHIKURIN-RYU was the school participating to the DOSHA.

Of course, MITSUGAKE is still used a lot for KINTEKI, especially by women and by people using light bows, less than 18 kg of power. You can see excellent shooters using MITSUGAKE, like **KAMOGAWA Nobuyuki sensei** (in SHOMEN), **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** (in SHOMEN), **YOSHIMOTO Kiyonobu**, 7th DAN KYOSHI (in SHOMEN), winner of the 1988 Japan Championship, etc. On the other hand, the YOTSUGAKE is used a lot when drawing stronger bow with less force than with MITSUGAKE. It should be noted that when using the YOTSUGAKE, it may be more difficult to properly hang the string as taught by **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C3-6], however the glove construction has also been improved now.

MITSUGAKE

A good point of the MITSUGAKE is to facilitate the right forearm rotation function during HIKIWAKE. This ensures a good balance between left and right as well as the correct position of the right elbow. I think this rotation depends on the following three conditions:

- (1) For the release, the choice between UWAOSHI or NAKAOSHI form
- (2) The level of the arrow in KAI, close to the mouth or to the base of the nose
- (3) The position of the right elbow, more or less downward.

What matters most is to achieve a good balance between right and left. For example, when deeply grasping the bow handle with the TENOUCHI and using the UWAOSHI function at release, then there should be a greater rotation of the right forearm. This is the technique of HEKI-RYU INSAI-HA. Their YAZUKA is shorter, then it is easier to balance the right and left rotations by working with both hands. On the other hand, it is interesting to see that BISHU-CHIKURIN-RYU chose another method: HANEN HANJAKU, "turn half and weaken half". This means that after SANBUN NO NI, they add no more rotation (just maintain the existing one as a natural movement). **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** taught me that it means forgetting the necessity of rotation given by the forearm from SANBUN-NO-NI. If we do differently, it may give too much twisting to the string in the hand.

For this latter method, it is important to follow the NAKAOSHI form and to maintain in KAI the arrow at the mouth level. It also requires a longer YAZUKA than for INSAI-HA, and of course the position of the right elbow is below the back of the shoulder.

It should be noted that all techniques must be understood from their origins and in the frame of each school method. On the other hand you can experiment these different techniques if you are lost.

YOTSUGAKE

With a YOTSUGAKE, we can give less forearm rotation than with a MITSUGAKE. Of course, the amplitude also depends on the way this YUGAKE is built. In this regard, some sensei still

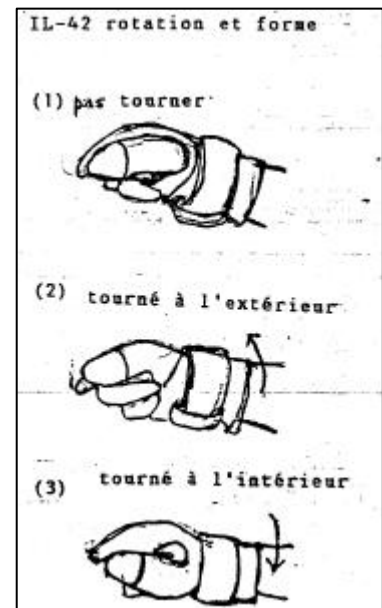
recommends to turn slightly the forearm even though the arrow is close to KUCHIWARI. **KARASAWA Kotaro Sensei** said [C3_9] it contributes to move the position of the elbow backward more than in the old style. On the other hand, here too, the rule HANNEN HANJYAKU can be applied, and at the same time, it should be noted that the rotation of the right forearm is balanced by the TENOUCHI of the left hand.

Then another question comes: at HANARE, how to work on the rotation given to the YUGAKE? There are different opinions:

- * **KARASAWA Sensei**, using a YOTSUGAKE, recommends that, at the release moment, we must turn outside the YUGAKE, means a reverse rotation [C3_10].

- * **URAGAMI Sakae sensei**, using a YOTSUGAKE has the same opinion, but when using a MITSUGAKE, he teaches to continue the rotation until HANARE.

- * However **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** disagrees with these opinions [C3-7] and recommends to release naturally when using MITSUGAKE or YOTSUGAKE. As the release is instantaneous, it is difficult to follow what happens. The best is to look at the final ZANSHIN form of the practitioner and imagine the position of their YUGAKE. Finally, my personal opinion is it is first a problem of balance between right and left, and we must find the best method for ourselves.



SPECIAL YUGAKE

Finally, some words for people using specific YUGAKE, built in a way it is difficult to follow the ICHIMONJI rule (JYUMONJI), like HIRAZUKE. The friction between the string and the YUGAKE thumb is increased, leading the arrow to fly to the right of the target.

Some sorts of compensation can be given like:

- (1) Change the angle of the bow, URAHAZU toward the left, or

- (2) Lower a bit the elbow position compared to its normal position.

These are solutions used in the DOSHA shooting (about DOSHA: **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C3_22] and **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C3_15]). This is not nice, but it allows overcoming the difficulty caused by this special form of the YUGAKE.

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- C3_2 INAGAKI Genshiro sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P100
- C3_3 INAGAKI Genshiro sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P105,106
- C3_4 INAGAKI Genshiro sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P137
- C3_5 ISHIOKA Hisao sensei, Kyudo Koza 4, P243, 248
- C3_6 ISHIOKA Hisao sensei, Kyudo Koza 4, P249
- C3_7 ISHIOKA Hisao sensei, Kyudo Koza 4, P250, 251
- C3_8 KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 2, P21
- C3_9 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, METE no TENOUCHI 4, P17
- C3_10 KARASAWA Kotaro sensei, METE no TENOUCHI 5, P12, 13
- C3_11 MORIKAWA Masaru sensei, Shaho to Jissen 7, P33, 34
- C3_12 UNO Yozaburo sensei, Kyohon 2, P88
- C3_13 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 1, P59
- C3_14 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 2, P 310-312
- C3_15 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 2, P362, 363
- C3_16 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P169
- C3_17 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 4, P15
- C3_18 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 4, P17
- C3_19 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, Kyudo Kyohon 3, P89,90
- C3_20 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane, P107-112
- C3_21 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane, P110
- C3_22 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, TENOUCHI momiji-gasane, P16
- C3_23 ISHIOKA Hisao sensei, Kyudo Koza 4, P250, 251

CHAPTER 4 - THE HEART AND THE TARGET

USHIOKOSHI AND HIKIWAKE

After YUGAMAE, we look at the target, a phase called MONOMI. This is a moment where we start to be bound to the target with the heart.

For the target, you may have two kinds of thought:

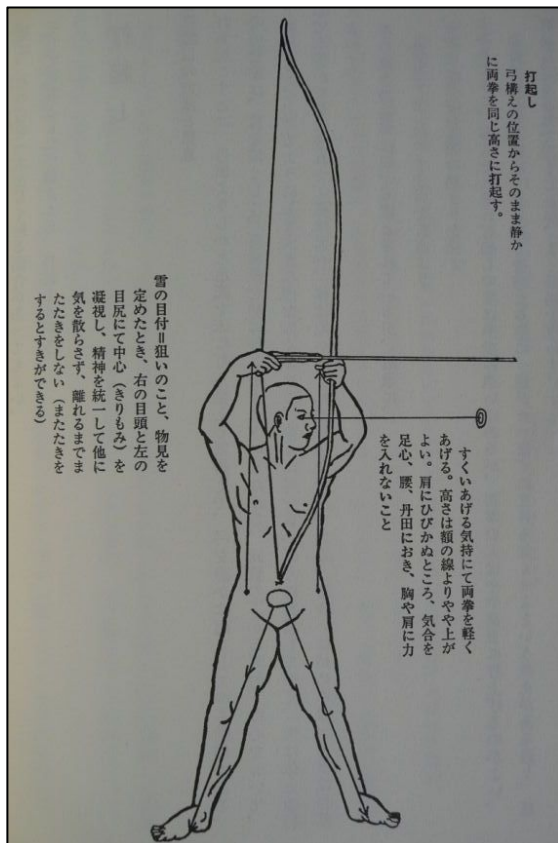
- The first one, the target is an enemy aiming at me with bow and arrows and murderous intentions. Of course, in a dojo, we are not in such battlefield situation, but it is a perception where the KYUDO is not a game neither a sport. It has to be seen as fortifying the heart in desperate situations. Of course, we do not have such feeling in modern KYUDO, but some persons with more fighting spirit may develop this perception.

INAGAKI Genshiro sensei teaches [C4_23] that in HEKI RYU, he gives value to meet the target with such spirit, to overcome the barrier between life and death.

- The second one, the target is a mirror that reflects myself. In the eastern civilizations, from the old age, archery was used both for fighting and to measure human virtues. **Confucius**, the great Chinese teacher, was using archery in his teachings to built the essential of human being. In China, archery was also a mean to appoint people to state service, as illustrated by this note from **ANZAWA Heijiro sensei** [C4_2]:

A practitioner was able to hit a small leaf at hundred paces, but his shooting was quite different from the one of **Confucius**. He was just an excellent archer, but Confucius was able to hit the target with his virtues, and his shooting was inspiring a deep respect.

During MONOMI, UCHIOKOSHI and HIKIWAKE, the practitioner shows the Beauty by mastering the imbalances of the KYUDO as for example, the difference in the hand movements during DAISAN and HIKIWAKE. Winning by the technique and by the spiritual power is the most difficult of the KYUDO HASSETSU. It prepares to KAI as culminating point of the shooting.



A PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE (SUMMARY OF THE KYUDO KYOHON)

UCHIOKOSHI

This is the action to raise both left and right hands with the bow and arrow before opening the bow. There are two forms, SHOMEN UCHIOKOSHI and SHAMEN UCHIOKOSHI

(1) For SHOMEN UCHIOKOSHI, raise the bow quietly directly from the YUGAMAE position, hands at the same level.

(2) For SHAMEN UCHIOKOSHI, take the bow in an oblique position on the left and then, raise the bow up on the left oblique.

The height level of UCHIOKOSHI is about arms at 45 degrees, but a difference, more or less, is allowed depending on age and physical constitution.

When doing UCHIOKOSHI, pay attention to be comfortable in mind and body, to adjust breathing properly, to always keep the DOZUKURI, to make wrists flexible, to always

keep the arrow almost horizontal and parallel to the body, and to lower the shoulders. Make UCHIOKOSHI breathing calmly, as the sun slowly rises in the morning, or as the smoke rises quietly through a windless day.

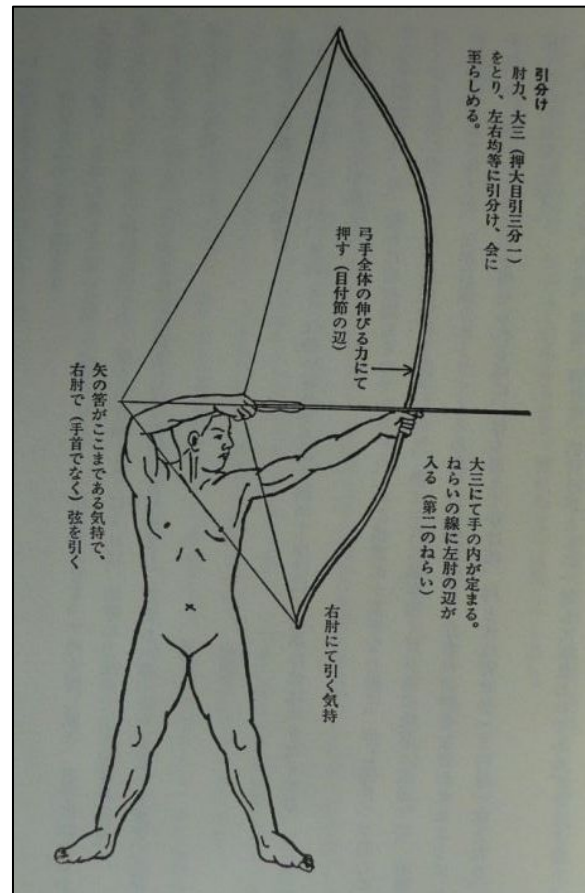
HIKIWAKE

HIKIWAKE is the movement to open the bow by equalizing right and left. It is the central process in the shooting. Performing the right HIKIWAKE affects a lot the next steps of KAI and HANARE.

For HIKIWAKE, three styles are possible:

- (1) Do UCHIOKOSHI in front of the body, and then move both hand to DAISAN where you do not stop, and then start HIKIWAKE opening.
- (2) Do UCHIOKOSHI in front of the body, and then move both hand to DAISAN, then stop briefly, and start HIKIWAKE opening.
- (3) Do UCHIOKOSHI towards the left, and oblique to the DAISAN position. Do not stop there and open to the SANBUN NO NI position (two third of the length of arrow regardless of the feather) and pause there.

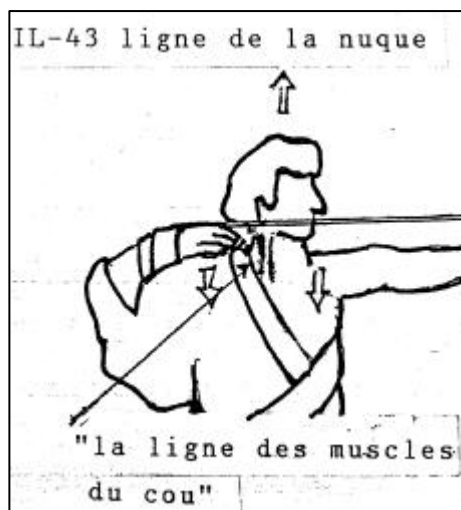
During HIKIWAKE, the level of both hands is parallel to the ground and the tip of the arrow is pointing slightly down, to the target. The arrow stays parallel to the body, its tip never raised up (a tendency for beginners). Then open the bow in SAYU KINTO, which means equalize the left and right. The position of the right hand is a little higher and oblique to the forehead. Leave space between the forehead and the right fist of approximately a distance of a fist or two. During HIKIWAKE, push the left fist to the target, and at the same time, pull the right fist up to the end of the right shoulder. Finally, the arrow comes to the mouth, but should never be below the level of the mouth. This level is called KUCHIWARI. When the bow is fully opened, the string touches the chest. This is called MUNAZURU. During HIKIWAKE, there might be a stop at the DAISAN position or at SANBUN NO NI position, but this is done thinking about the balance of the whole body. During HIKIWAKE, we must draw the bow following the traditional method, that is to equalize the left and right, centered on the hips, to harmonize all movements with the breath, to open slowly and keep calm, not too slowly or too quickly, as the water flows, to have the feeling of entering the body inside the strung bow while opening the breast right and left using muscles and bones of the chest and the back. Opening the bow with the body is an essential point of the practice. If done correctly, TATEYOKO JYUMONJI (cross vertical and horizontal) is formed with the body, the bow and the arrow.



NOTES:

- (1) All the movements are activated from the lap belt.
- (2) Do not do HIKIWAKE with hands; muscles and bones of the chest and the back are the center of the movement. Use the power of the upper arm to draw the right hand, let the right wrist given to the strength of the string, and draw with the right elbow.
- (3) Do HIKIWAKE being always aware of the vertical line (TATESEN).
- (4) The Japanese words MIGITE, KATTE or METE are relating to the right side while their left counterpart, in same order are HIDARITE, OSHIDE or YUNDE.
- (5) Draw the bow with the bones.

METHODS OF EXERCISE



(1) MONOMI: Keep the line of the neck perpendicular to the ground when you turn your head. The amplitude of head rotation is not large or small; it is best to keep the natural position. **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** [C4_22] teaches that when someone calls you, and you turn the head, this is the amplitude of the MONOMI rotation.

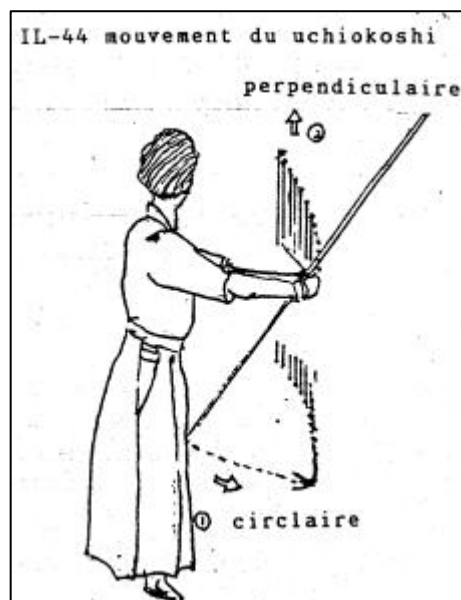
For BISHU CHIKURIN RYU, **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** teaches [C4_13] a rule to maintain perpendicular to the ground the line of the neck muscles, which are apparent when turning the head. However **HOURIBE Shizen sensei** said [C4_4] that it would be better to understand the cervical vertebrae instead of the line of the muscles.

(2) UCHIOKOSHI: raise fists with bow making a circular motion, then hold it perpendicular to ground. The URAHAZU position (the low extremity of the bow) is always maintained on the center line of the body, or a little to the right.

There is a teaching, for UCHIOKOSHI, where we must raise the bow primarily with the right hand (NOTE: **IZAWA Senju sensei** [C4_6]). This is to correct the beginners tendency to raise the tip of the arrow higher than ideal position. With advanced people, we may see the opposite trend, with the arrow pointing too low.

After experience, it is desirable to raise the fists keeping balance. It is possible to sometime verify this by a quick look in front.

(3) From UCHIOKOSHI to HIKIWAKE, extend the line of the back and neck, and push down the shoulders, torso and hips (See TEN TSUKU, CHI TSUKU, in "explanation and analysis", this chapter). HIKAGAMI (back of knees) is tensioned properly, and at the same time, KI (spirit energy) is maintained in the TANDEN.



(4) During the movement of the hand at DAISAN, and during HIKIWAKE, the shoulders (together with the blades) have the role of movement axis. However, while moving to the position of DAISAN, the left shoulder is fixed (main axis), and the right shoulder can be a bit higher, depending the bow power (NOTE: **TOMITA Tsunemasa sensei** [C4_11] and **IZAWA Senju sensei** [C4_6]). This is useful to draw the bow with the entire body, and also to ensure that the right shoulder does not move backwards).

When moving the bow in DAISAN, movements of both hands should be done slowly, but the movement of the left fist is a bit quicker to guide his partner. The right fist should always follow the left fist. In addition, there is a rhythm, slowly at first, then a little faster, and finally even slowly. The line of the arrow is always kept almost parallel to the shoulders.

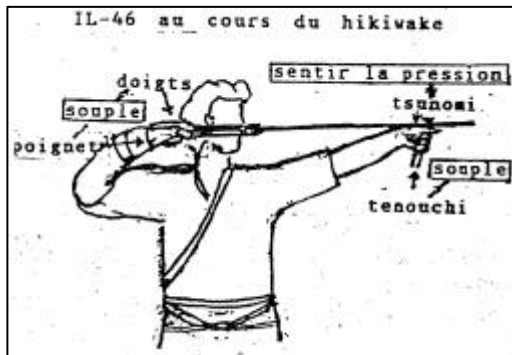
TAKAGI Tasuku sensei teaches [C4_10] that at this step, the three fingers of the left TENOUCHI should be flexible as a rubber, while maintaining the TENOUCHI form.

(5) During the DAISAN transition, the right elbow stays almost at the same position, gradually raised a little higher, with at the same time an inside rotation of the right forearm.

DAISAN position is determined by

- 1) The angle of the arm at the end of UCHIOKOSHI (about 45 degrees),
- 2) The position of the right elbow at DAISAN and
- 3) YAZUKA, the length of the "band" of the arrow. At DAISAN, the arrow is drawn to about half the length of YAZUKA.

It is difficult to self-analyze his movement. It is better to look for somebody else checking and giving some feedback.



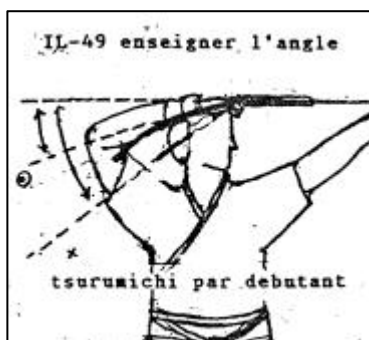
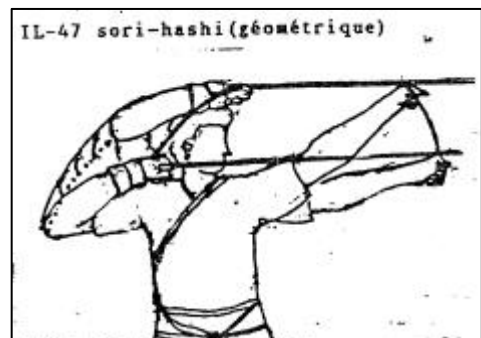
(6) In HIKIWAKE, move down the left fist to the target, but do not oppose the left TENOUCHI to the power of the bow. Do not push the bow with the TENOUCHI, but as opening the bow, just resist to the bow power with the whole body. On the right side, make the wrist flexible, soft, drawn by the elbow (NOTE: [TAKAGI Tasuku sensei](#) [C4_9]). However, when using a MITSUGAKE, never soften too much, it would prevent correct rotation of the forearm (NOTE: [URAGAMI Hiroko sensei](#) [C4_20]).

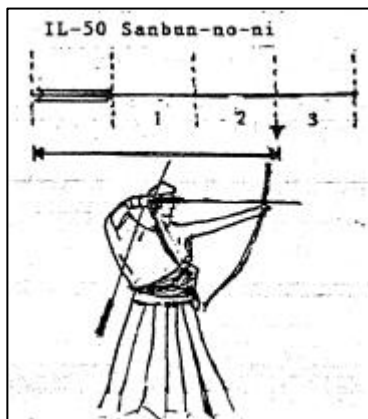
(7) As the left hand goes down, do the same with right fist. HIKIWAKE is performed by opening the bow as if the body was introduced between the strung bow and the string. What matters most is to constantly maintain the feeling of KYUKAI during HIKIWAKE (NOTE: [UOZUMI Bunue sensei](#) [C4_17]). This means to give importance to the space formed by the chest, arms, TENOUCHI, and the arrow (the "KYUKAI"), and it also looks like to a balloon that will burst with pressure. For this, always maintain fluency in the elbows. When extended, this is time for HANARE, release.

(8) The movement of the hands (and elbows) during HIKIWAKE naturally draws the bow (NOTE: [IZAWA Senju sensei](#) [C4_6]). The form of the path is called SORHASHI, the "bow bridge"

a) For beginners, it is very difficult to draw the correct path in HIKIWAKE because they move the shoulders forward and backward. As a solution, I teach to follow the path almost straight with the right fist to the position of SANBUN NO NI (two-thirds of the length of the arrow without feathers), and from the position of SANBUN NO NI, to have all movements from the elbow (upper arm and the shoulder blades).

In this case, it is often better to teach the path, taking with the beginner the bow and string as illustrated (IL48).



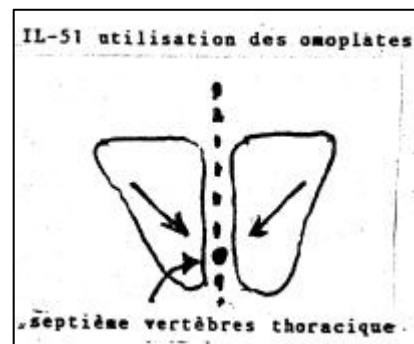


b) During this phase, a beginner may often have a YAZUKA too short. In this case, the teacher should tell him to reduce the angle. As he progresses, train him to the right SORIHASHI.

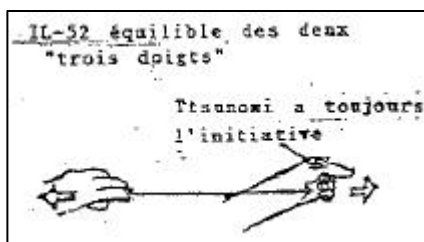
(9) On the importance of SANBUN NO NI position: In SHOMEN, there is no concept of SANBUN NO NI, but it is still very important for the SHOMEN practitioner, because this position is a change point in the function of opening the bow (NOTE: **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C4_21] and **NAKANO Keikichi sensei**, former president of ZNKR "SHOMEN is also aware of SANBUN NO NI"). At this point, you can adjust the balance of the two TENOUCHI and also the IKIAI (breathing). In addition, we start to use for the first time in the blades while opening the

chest (**IZAWA Senju sensei** [C4_6]).

(10) While using the blades, it is not correct to think they join laterally to the middle. Only the lower parts of blades tend to join. It is enough to adjust them while keeping the right balance, according to **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C4-19]. Be aware of this, BISHU CHIKURIN RYU calls it "INEN no KOTO", which was a secret of this school. "INEN" means "having consciousness" and "KOTO", "thing", said **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C4-18].



(11) In this step, the left TENOUCHI must be maintained in a state without pointing to any side.



This is for a better work of TSUNOMI and SHOKON. Then, as opening the bow, the left TENOUCHI resist to the power of the bow, with the third joint (or their neighborhoods) of three fingers not over tightening the bow.

In particular, we must soften the fingers. After some time, make sure that the three right fingers work well. When this is done properly during HIKIWAKE, we always feel an harmony between the "three fingers of the right and those of the left."

EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

TEN TSUKU CHI TSUKU

We have already seen the importance of TATESEN (the vertical line). A teaching, TEN TSUKU CHI TSUKU, emphasizes this importance. The Japanese words "TEN" mean "sky", "CHI", "earth" and "Tsuku" is, in this case, "extend upward" or "plunge downward". To do this, draw vertically the cervical vertebrae, the neck, turning the head correctly, extending the back up, lowering the shoulders, the torso and anchoring the feet firmly. Then you can feel the TATESEN function, and also the TANDEN is naturally enriched.

However, when opening the bow, the work on the YOKOSEN line may prevent the correct feeling of the TATESEN line. More specially, when attached to hit the target, we may completely lose the essential function of TATESEN. The unification of the spirit and the target can only occur with the complete feeling of the vertical line. Of course, the work on this line must be particularly effective during UCHIOKOSHI and HIKIWAKE. It is why sensei from the past let us this aphorism, TEN TSUKU CHI TSUKU.

NOTE: **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C4_16] and also **ANZAWA sensei** [C4_1] taught that in UCHIOKOSHI we extends infinitely upwards from the TANDEN, breathing out, then when

moving to the DAISAN position, we change the respiration as if we inspire all "cosmic air" in the TANDEN. Then, in HIKIWAKE, we exhale again really slowly and quietly, enriching the TANDEN. This teaching explains the meaning of TEN TSUKU CHI TSUKU as a way to assist breathing.

KYUKAI

I already explained this concept in the paragraph 7) of "Exercise". It is the posture formed by arms, chest, bow and arrow, already from YUGAMAE and, on the other hand the spring for the explosion of HANARE. In this regard, there is a teaching from BISHU CHIKURIN RYU called "ENPI no SHA". The source is in a fable in which a monkey (EN) draws a bow (SHA) made of a piece of glycine and tree branch. However, the monkey has significantly curved arms (elbows - PI), while drawing. When he releases, he extends his left arm and as a result he is able to shoot very strongly.

The teaching suggests that until the position of KAI, never extend (push) too much the left arm, because it is detrimental to a good NOBIAI. However it is also a mistake to understand this as to bend the left arm (elbow) in KAI.

NOTE: On this subject, **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C4_16] and **UNO Yozaburo sensei** [C4_12] are teaching that in HIKIWAKE, it is necessary to give some ease to the left elbow and never push too much. Pushing the bow must be done with the power of the centerline of the left arm from the elbow as a base. Avoid doing this operation with the wrist only. **UNO sensei** said that this is "ENPI no SHA".

SAYU-KINTO (EQUALIZE RIGHT AND LEFT)

To fully draw the bow, we say that we need to do HIKIWAKE with a sense of SAYU-KINTO. However, if the paths of right and left in HIKIWAKE were the same, we could keep this rule without difficulty. But in the Japanese KYUDO, it is clear that, for HIKIWAKE, distances are different (the right is longer than the left). In this case, how can we keep the rule of SAYU KINTO? We must remember that there is a position called DAISAN. To tell the truth, the name of this position comes from a teaching of SAYU KINTO rules. DAISAN is an abbreviation of "OSHI DAIMOKU HIKE SANBUN NO ICHI".

"OSHI" means "push", "HIKE", "band the bow", "DAIMOKU" means "more", "SANBUN NO ICHI" means "third". But the character "SAN" is abbreviated for writing the word "SANBUN NO ICHI". So, "DAISAN" is an acronym for "OSHIDAIMOKU-HIKE-SANBUN-NO-ICHI". It is also symbolized as an important position of balance in HIKIWAKE. Translating literally, this means that we must use two-thirds of the power to move left and one third right (but there are other opinions telling 70% left, 30% for right). In any case, this metaphor tells us to use the left hand as a base for conducting the movement, and on the other hand, the right hand should always follow the left hand. Releasing the right wrist in HIKIWAKE is just a preparation for it.

In other words, taking into account the difference in left and right distances, we must move more slowly left hand on a shorter path, and the right hand smoothly follows the movement of the left hand, in the other direction.

It is very difficult to learn this correct balance. We have to train a lot, for example with a mirror in front. In this case, until the arrow approaches KUCHIWARI, we must keep the following conditions:

- (1) The arrow always approaches the body under the same angle,
- (2) The level of the arrow is almost constant,
- (3) Do not over bend the right wrist
- (4) Always maintain the correct position of the right elbow,
- (5) Be careful that the line of the shoulders and torso do not move forward or backward

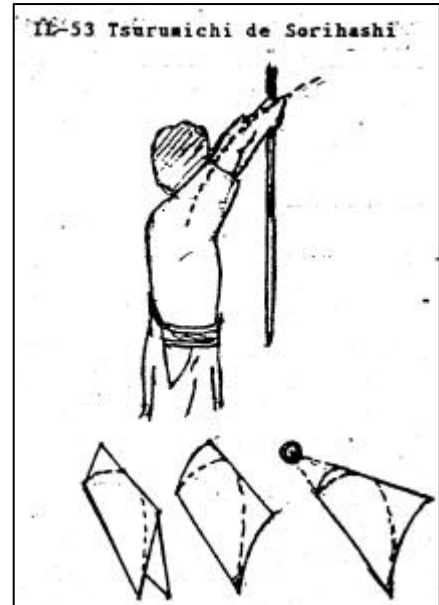
NOTE: **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** teaches [C4_14] that in human psychology, when moving any part of the body, we are focused to this part. If two area are mobilized at the same time, of course, we focus on the one that has the largest range of motion. In shooting, the amount of

movement on the right is almost two-thirds, while on the left a third only. SAYU KINTO therefore means that the left must complement two-thirds of the strength, and the right one third. However, it is only a psychological teaching, it does not mean the real distribution of the forces.

SORIHASHI (CIRCLE ARCH BRIDGE)

(1) MIZU NO NAGARE: HIKIWAKE is a movement. Arms are opened right and left. In this case, the right arm is bent, and also during movement to the position of DAISAN, the right elbow is a little higher. Naturally, the level of the arrow is slightly inclined. The tip is a little lower. Water may flow over the arrow slope. The ancients called this slope "MIZU-NO-NAGARE".

(2) NIJI NO KAKEHASHI: In the position of UCHIOKOSHI, elbows are kept balanced, but in HIKIWAKE, they are not at the same height. However we must do HIKIWAKE with SAYU-KINTO. How can this be achieved? This is the subject of the SORI-HASHI. The Japanese word "SORI-HASHI" means "circle arch bridge". This is also called "NIJI NO KAKEHASHI (rainbow bridge)". It means in HIKIWAKE, we must draw the bow with both hands (and elbows) following paths forming arches. In other words, fists and elbows are following circular movements, natural movements as said by **HOIRIBE Sizen sensei** [C4_3].



If we think to the movement of the fists, we can see an interesting problem:

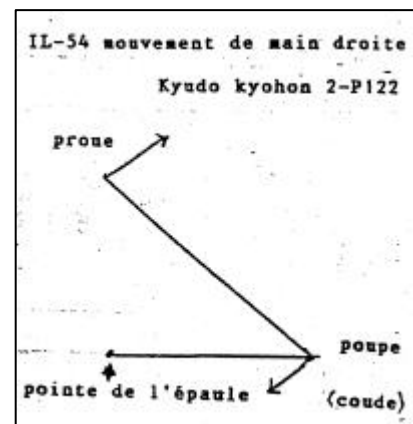
During HIKIWAKE, if the arrow is drawn parallel to the body, it describes a surface, which can be either a plan or a cylinder. However, if the arrow always points to the target, then is it conic? **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** recommends [C4_15], but only with the left hand, to draw a curved line as shown on (IL53). Probably, this is a thought where, in HIKIWAKE, we must bring the body into the opened bow. On this subject, **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei** teaches [C4-7], that according to physical condition, there will be several SORIHASHI lines (TSURUMICHI).

(3) SORIHASHI amplitude: For SORIHASHI, which curve is the best? **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** teaches [C4_15] that this is not the shape of a high dome nor close to a straight line. What is desirable is halfway between. Probably, we can take the constant orientation and inclination of the arrow relative to the body as an order of idea.

(4) About the movement of the right hand and the elbow:

Finally, we can have a look to the movement of the right hand. During HIKIWAKE, you should feel as pushing the string with the KAKEGUCHI (YUGAKE groove), especially after SANBUN NO NI. This feeling is useful to move the elbow deeper. **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei** teaches [C4_7] that if you move the right fist outward, the right elbow naturally moves inward behind the shoulder. It looks like the movement of the front and rear of a boat.

We can understand that this movement is totally part of SORIHASHI, but at the same time, it should be noted that this action should not be done excessively.



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- C4_4 HOURIBE Shizen sensei, KYUDO Kyohon 3, P98
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- C4_18 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 2, P346, 347
- C4_19 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kyudo Koza 2, P372, 373
- C4_20 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 4, P17
- C4_21 URAGAMI Hiroko sensei, Watashi no Kyudo Riron 6, P32
- C4_22 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, KYUDO Kyohon 2, P101
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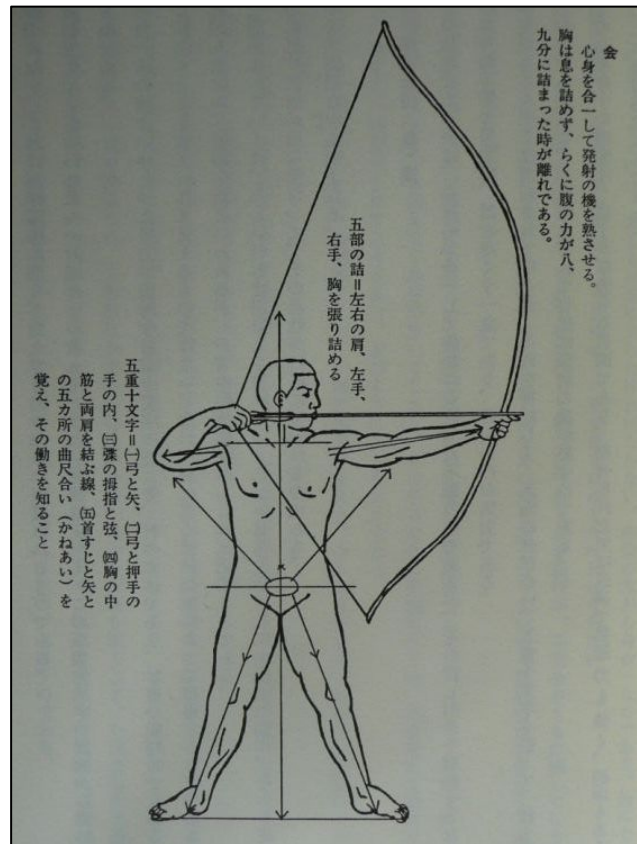
CHAPTER 5 – WAIT THE RIGHT MOMENT

KAI, TSUMEAI AND NOBIAI

KAI is a process for preparing HANARE, but is also a culminating point of efforts. This is on one hand a fight against the power of the bow, and on the other hand it is a culmination of what has been prepared with sincerity from ASHIBUMI. It is said that in KAI, we should feel a state of mind where outside is immobility, while inside mobility is like a bamboo which is bent by the weight of snow and will retrieve its shape ([ISHIOKA Hisao sensei](#) [C5_4]).

There are other Japanese words describing KAI: "KANYA NI SHIMO O KIKU". It is a metaphor: KAI is a limpid state as if we hear "the sound of freezing" by a cold night. KANYA means "cold night", SHIMO "frozen" and KIKU "to hear".

[ANZAWA Heiji sensei](#) teaches [C5_1] that KAI is the external posture that conforms to internal bones structure of the archer, and it succeeds to HIKIWAKE. In other words, we must continue infinitely the effort to maintain a triangle in body and spirit, triangle formed from DAISAN between right, left and TANDEN. It is not only NOBIAI, but also a state of mind where after mastering the whole body by filling the TANDEN, there is nothing to add or remove anymore. Confronted with ourselves, with the target in the heart, the arrow has already hit the target as result of the unification.



A PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE (SUMMARY OF THE KYUDO KYOHON)

KAI is the state where HIKIWAKE is completed, but in the spirit of the archer, KAI is an infinite HIKIWAKE. Everything we have done up to now is to achieve this KAI. Here, mind, body, bow and arrow are one. This is done without releasing the spirit. The energy is deployed. The body is extended to the sky and anchored deeply to the ground. The right time for the release can come. This is the culminating time for the shooting efforts. What matters most in KAI are TSUMEAI and NOBIAI. A condition to correctly achieve KAI is to respect the rule of TATEYOKO JYUMONJI and draw a correct HIKIWAKE. To comply with this TATEYOKO JYUMONJI rule, we must also have the GOJYU-JYUMONJI (the five cross), where we must set the key points in the body. This is TSUMEAI. Therefore, TSUMEAI and NOBIAI are absolute requirements for a good shooting.

TSUMEAI

To achieve TATEYOKO JYUMONJI in KAI, we must build important points in TSUMEAI:

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE VERTICAL LINE

Seen from above the archer, feet, hips and shoulders must overlap properly, by stretching up the spine and the neck and by stabilizing the bottom. This is called SANJYU JYUMONJI (triple cross) with the vertical line. It is a fundamental condition to form a good TATESEN (vertical line). In

SANJYU JYUMONJI, the function HIKAGAMI (behind the knees) is also important to stabilize the feet. HIKAGAMI must be stretched.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE HORIZONTAL LINE

We must open the bow equally right and left with the imaginary centerline formed by the arms; never use fists or hands end only. We must care to the relationship between the TSUNOMI (the thumb base) and the right elbow, and also we must try to open the centerline of the chest. These actions have long been called TSUMEAI, GOBU NO TSUME or SHIBE NO HANARE.

NOTE: see more details in Chapter 6.

NOBIAI

NOBIAI is an absolute prerequisite for a good HANARE. When shooting without NOBIAI, the release occurs just with the fingers. NOBIAI is not only a body extension along the arrow line, but also a growth of the spiritual energy. In respect of the TATEYOKO JYUMONJI, with a feeling of body stability and with the growth of the mind energy, we must shoot like a balloon bursts. This is NOBIAI. Some schools are teaching YAGORO, reach the maturity of the release. It is a culminating point before releasing. There, the energy of the archer goes to the sky and to the ground, his technique is efficient, but what matters most is to perform the technique with the backing of the mind energy. Then, KAI is a continuation of the state of mind without any concern, dedication, desire or distraction to the target. This is the state of mind to train for: self-control, peace, patience and good decision, and to overcome weaknesses of mind: anxiety, weakness, fear and humility. This training has an underlying goal: shooting is life.

NOTE: there are three ways for releasing

* HIKU YAZUKA: release with the technique, without conscience.

* HIKANU YAZUKA: release after a mature state of mind, at the right time for stabilization of the heart and the reinforcement of the spiritual energy.

* TADA YAZUKA: release because YAZUKA is either weak or stretched.

We train for HIKANU YAZUKA to avoid HAYAKE (release too fast, without maturity) or MOTARE (wait too long before the release).

An old Japanese poem says: HIKU YAZUKA, HIKANU YAZUKA NI, TADA YAZUKA, HANATSU HANARE or HANASARURU KANA. This is a teaching where we must choose between the three above HIKANU YAZUKA.

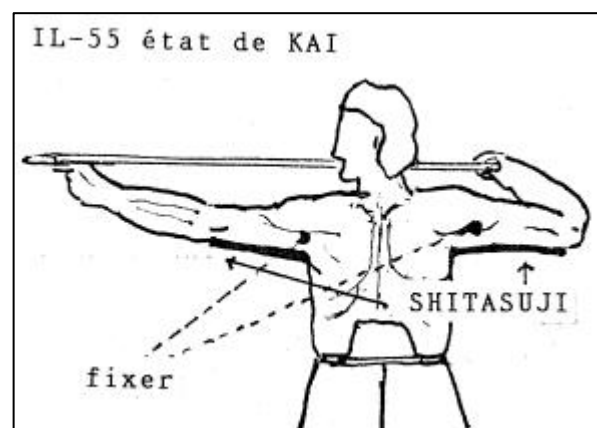
NERAI

In KAI, the arrow should point directly to the target. In NERAI, with both eyes opened, we aim primarily using left eye external corner and right eye inner corner with the left side of the bow, and the center of the target as reference. In KINTEKI (28m) shooting, the direction of the arrow is usually horizontal, but the vertical position of the left fist to the target also depends on the distance, the bow strength and the arrow weight.

METHODS OF EXERCISE

ENTER INTO THE BOW

To be able to hold the bow easily, we must enter the body into the opened bow, by fixing the shoulders articulations. To fix means to stretch laterally the shoulders and at the same time reinforce the line below the arms, called SHITA SUJI. It is also required to correctly set shoulders, arms, elbows, and the body to resist efficiently to the bow power.

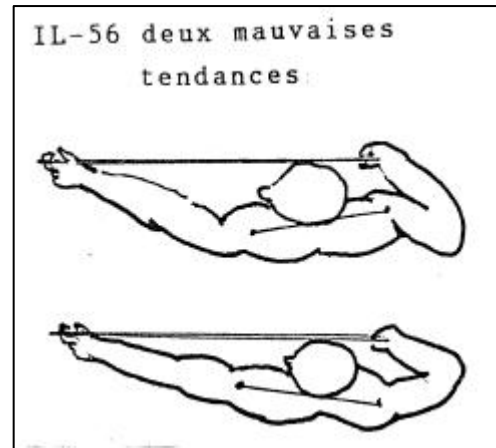


URAGAMI Hiroko sensei teaches [C5_13] this is TSUMEAI. However, if we only try to hold the bow statically, the YAZUKA will certainly reduce. We must always continue to compensate muscle weakness with the shoulders extension and the spiritual energy.

THE POSITION OF THE SHOULDERS

We always have to maintain the correct position of the shoulders. Previously, we have seen that practitioners often have a tendency to move back left shoulder, but nowadays we can also see a backward movement of the right shoulder. I think it comes from the old days when it was important to move forward the right shoulder to tighten the elbow. However now, an archer prefers to easily open the bow, by pushing too much the left arm, thus moving forward the shoulder. These two trends are bad habits. On the last point, **HOURIBE Sizen sensei** teaches [C5_3] that, for those who have such a tendency, it is necessary to teach to move the right shoulder inward during HIKIWAKE, but not too much.

See on the same subject comments from **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** [C5_14].



KUCHIWARI POSITION

KUCHIWARI means the angle of the lips. In SHOMEN, we usually place the arrow at KUCHIWARI in KAI. However, it is assumed that the line of the arrow can be positioned between KUCHIWARI and the base of the nose. This is well known to archer belonging to HEKI RYU INSAI HA placing the arrow near the base of the nose. What's important is to always use the same place. Furthermore, the arrow must touch the cheek. These two conditions, touching the cheek and arrow positioning are very important to regularly reach the target (reference point).

See on this subject comments from **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C5_4].

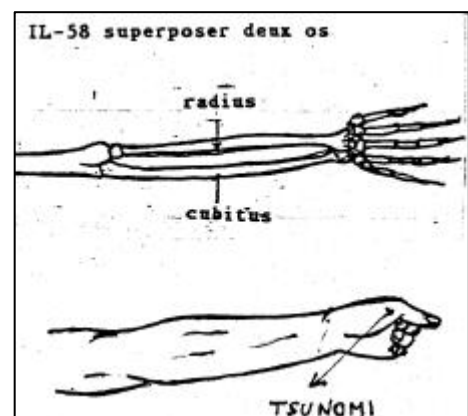
ANGLE OF THE BOW

In shooting KINTEKI (28m), it is often taught to have a slight angle of the bow with respect to the vertical. On the other hand, many sensei teach it is better to hold the bow vertically (e.g **CHIBA Tanetsugu sensei** [C5_2] and **UNO Yozaburo sensei** [C5_7]). It may come from some differences between shooting methods (on the teaching from BISHU CHIKURIN, see "Analysis"). On the other hand, in the modern KYUDO, we can understand that it is only a matter of degree. **URAGAMI Sakae Sensei** described [C5_14] that in KAI, as we lean slightly forward, it is natural to hold the bow parallel to the angle of the body.

THE FUNCTION OF THE LEFT HAND

What matters most is that the TSUNOMI (the thumb base) works enough to overcome the power of the bow. For this, we must give a torsion to the bow by pushing its right side with the first joint of the thumb. This action should not be made prematurely but considering all the posture balance, right and left, pushing straight through the arm. It is better to superpose bones of the forearm.

I think this is just an ideal as it depends on the bones structure of the arm for each people. This action is not only

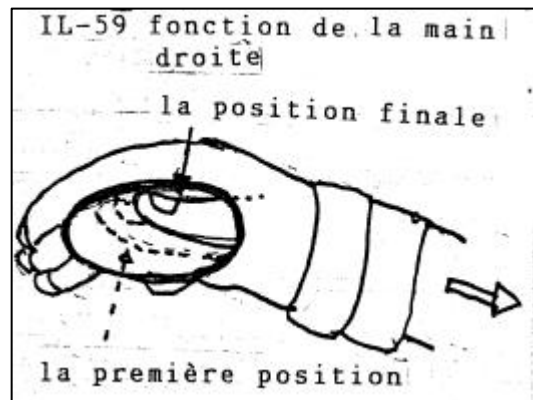


useful for NOBIAI, but also to hit the target as explained by **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C5_4].

THE FUNCTION OF THE RIGHT HAND

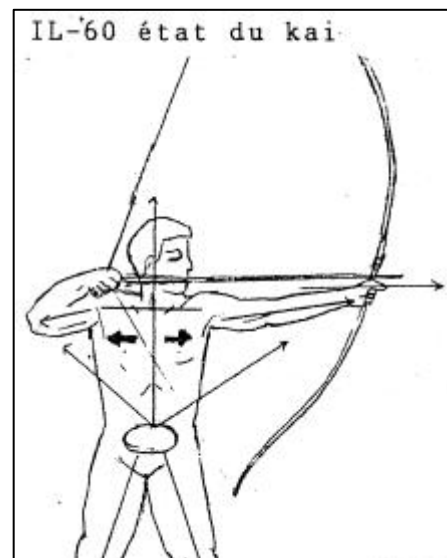
In KAI, the thumb is stretched out of the YUGAKE (glove) by pulling the elbow, and sufficiently stretched out inside the glove. This is a preparation for the release. When the TSUNOMI works well, the right thumb is pushed quickly as a spring, and the arrow is released. This must be a natural action as explained by **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C5_4].

In KAI, the right elbow function is to resist to the power of the bow. It is also supported by the tension of the bottom line of the upper part of the arm.



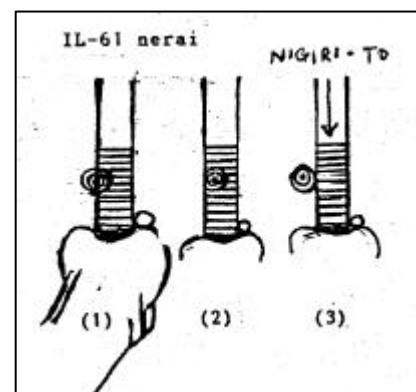
NOBIAI (EXTENSION)

During the release, we may loosen. **URAGAMI Hiroko sensei** teaches [C5_13] she does NOBIAI after adjustment of the shoulder blades in the lower position and also by maintaining natural and correct position of the shoulders and arms, extending laterally the elbows from the centerline of the body. At the same time, she feels like extending to the left and the right the shoulder blades. But when only extending along the arrow line, we cannot split the center of the body right and left at HANARE. We need to work with chest muscles by fixing the back part of the shoulder. She also teaches to not use any power with the hands. We must avoid stiffness of the joints to have the efficiency of the spring. Finally, what matters is to extend the body in all the directions, being conscious of the ZANSHIN position to be achieved.



NERAI (AIMING)

We must aim at the target in order to use the right eye to see the bow (NIGIRI-TO) and the left eye to see the target (**KOYAMA Takashige sensei** [C5_6]). We may note here a difference between this and the KYOHON explanations (see "Preliminary knowledge"), but this is only a difference of expression. We do not look at the target center, but we divide the target with the left side of the bow. However, to be sure of the NERAI, the correct position must be checked by a rear observer, as taught by **ISHIOKA Hisao sensei** [C5_4]. There are three methods for aiming (see illustrations). The first method is most taught, but it is only an ideal. It is called HANGETSU (half-moon), the second YAMI (dark moon) and the third ARIAKE (pale moon, still visible at dawn).



BREATHING IN KAI

Until HIKIWAKE, we may use various methods of breathing. In KAI we should use only the water breathing, SUICHU NO IKI. It may lead to suffocating when not done properly. What is important is when lowering the breathing into the TANDEN while doing HIKIWAKE we must find the right

position for an efficient NOBIAI. It will be not efficient if too low or too high in the TANDEN. When feeling comfortable, we can feel the true SUICHU NO IKI. See later chapter on IKIAI.

EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

The Japanese word KAI comes from the Buddhist word "E SHA JYO RI". I will further explain in the chapter on HANARE. Here it is enough to know that KAI means "meeting" which is also a requirement for the "separation" (the arrow release). The preparation for HANARE is called TSUMEAI. We have already understood this meaning above. Below, I would like to add some more elements to the concept of TSUMEAI, apart from GOBU NO TSUME explained in Chapter 6, which are of course conditions for NOBIAI.

GOJU JYUMONJI

For SANJU JYUMONJI (crosses of shoulders, hips and feet to the center line of the body), we have already seen it is a very important rule in the whole process of shooting. Here we learn another rule, GOJU JYUMONJI. These are the vertical and horizontal lines that intersect at five points in the shooting position.

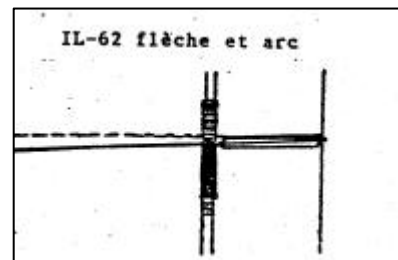
- (1) Bow and arrow
- (2) The thumb of the glove and string
- (3) The bow and left TENOUCHI
- (4) The centerline of the chest (this also means the spine) and shoulders
- (5) The backbone of the neck (cervical vertebrae) and the arrow

NOTE: **KYUDO KYOHON 1, P100, 101**. We must adjust properly these five crosses.

* The bow and arrow

The arrow crosses the string in JYUMONJI. However the point of the arrow nock is slightly higher than the right angle formed by the arrow on the string. This is because when we open the bow, the point where the arrow rests on the thumb rises a little bit.

Teaching from **UOZUMI Bunue sensei [C5-8]**



* The thumb of the YUGAKE (glove) and the string

As I explained in the passage "TENOUCHI of the right hand," we must put the thumb at right angle to the string (when using a MITSUGAKE). This is of course a rule in the TORIKAKE, but also during any phase after.

Teaching from **UOZUMI Bunue sensei [C5-8]**

* The bow and left TENOUCHI

It was already discussed: when preparing the TENOUCHI, we must grab the bow in JYUMONJI (cross, right angle) with the hand. After opening the bow, this TENOUCHI shape is distorted in UWAOSHI because the bow gradually bends while opened, but we keep the cross of the hand to the bow. In other words, we continue NAKAOSHI to KAI.

Teaching from **UOZUMI Bunue sensei [C5-8]**

* The spine and shoulders

This is one of the most important points to properly form the TATESEN line. We must stretch the spine to the sky and at the same time keep the correct position of the shoulders.

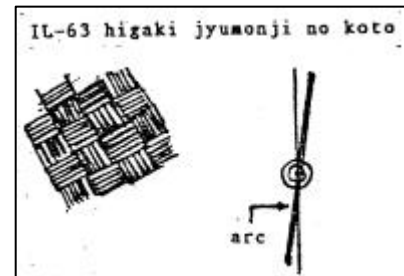
* "The bones of the neck" and the arrow

It is also one of the most important points for the TATESEN line. **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** teaches **[C5-8]** that if there is a tendency to tilt the neck to the left (towards the target) this is due to the

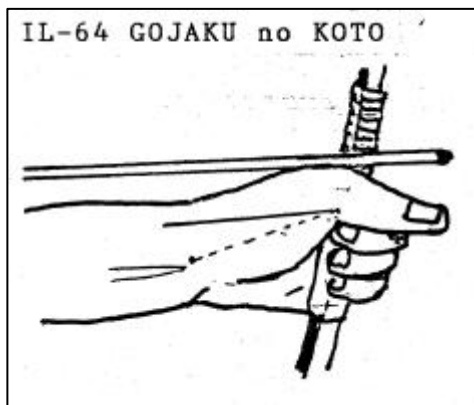
fact that all the left power pushing the bow is weak. When the neck moves to the right, this is due to the fact that the right side is weak. This cross is easily deformable during HIKIWAKE. To avoid this, we must approach the arrow to the face with the proper distance while doing HIKIWAKE.

HIKAGI JYUMONJI NO KOTO (The angle of the bow in KAI)

Formerly, it was recommended to tilt a little the bow. On this subject, BISHU CHIKURIN RYU explained by giving HIKAGI example: the Japanese traditional fence is braided and mounted obliquely on the bamboo frame (HIKAGI JYUMONJI NO KOTO, [UOZUMI Bunue sensei](#) [C5-11]). If shooting in HIKAGI, the arrow is reaching the MATO on the AZUCHI (traditional sand wall to protect arrows) and is not deviating laterally to the right or to the left of the target. We may say this is better when aiming with a long and vertical object, however we have already seen that in modern KYUDO, many sensei are teaching that we must hold the bow perpendicular (to ground), not tilted.



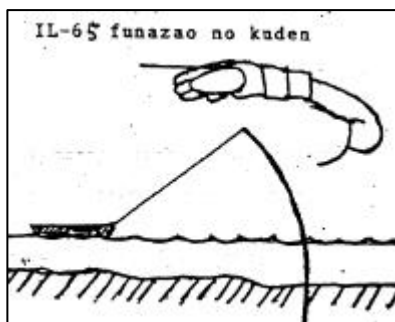
GOJAKU NO KOTO



In KAI, we must continue to push straight (but avoiding any stiffness) the left arm to the target, by working with SHITA SUJI. As a result, we feel as if the shoulder and left wrist are naturally fixed, and on the other hand we are able to maintain the TENOUCHI flexibility. This action is not only useful for NOBIAI, but also to hit the target. For a long time, the importance of GOJAKU NO KOTO has been taught. It means strengthening the tension between the thumb and the pulse position also called GOJAKU DOKORO. GOJAKU DOKORO means the weak position that needs to be reinforced. (GO = strong, JAKU = weak, DOKORO = position). (NOTE: On this subject, [UOZUMI Bunue sensei](#) [C5-12]). If we must fix the

wrist, we should not forget the role of this place as a spring for HANARE.

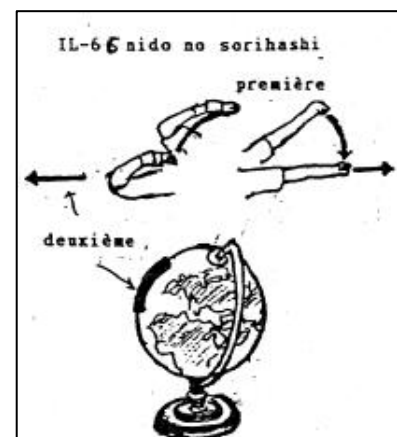
FUNAZAO NO NEIRI NO KUDEN



In KAI, we must maintain the right forearm with flexibility. But it needs some power, some tension, to keep the correct form (without bending the wrist). In this regard, BISHU CHIKURIN RYU gives a rule of "FUNAZAO NO NEIRI NO KUDEN" (the forearm given to the elbow in KAI, which looks like a bamboo stick in the river, to hold a boat. (See [UOZUMI Bunue sensei](#) [C5-10])).

SECOND SORIHASHI (NIDO NO SORIHASHI)

We have already understood the need to open the bow in SORIHASHI during HIKIWAKE but how it looks like in KAI? BISHU CHIKURIN RYU teaches that in KAI, this movement is changed to a linear motion (NOTE: [UOZUMI Bunue sensei](#) [C5-9]). However, this straight line is also a part of an infinite circle,



in the archer's heart. There we prepare IBIRAKI (open the arms, as soon as the spring of both thumbs works) for the release.

SPIRITUAL STATE IN KAI

Finally following is a comment from **KAMINAGA Masakichi sensei**: KAI must have the limpidity of the crystal [C5_5]. We draw and expand, but without force. It is a state without thinking, the heart gradually calms down and we are one with the technique. We are conscious of our lower abdomen (TANDEN), and we extend (NOBIAI) with "water breathing" (SUICHU NO IKI). The spiritual energy is in line with the posture. One breath for each movement (ICHI RIKI ISSOKU) is also suitable for NOBIAI, while more may cause instability. If the strength of the bow is ten, we must work with twelve in mind, and then an instantaneous KIAI cause the release like a flash.

Shooting without working with the mind (heart) is shooting in the darkness. The desired KAI is to be able to stretch to overcome the bow power otherwise with a weak KAI and the bow is winning. To win against the bow, we must work with KAI of always same length, same form, same function, where the release comes from the whole body, not only from the right and left hands.

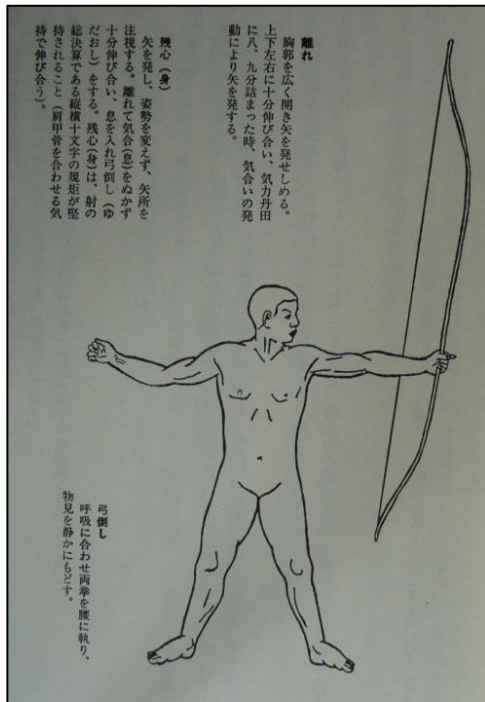
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CHAPTER 6 – SHARI KENSHO

HANARE AND ZANSHIN

Finally comes the moment where I must speak about HANARE (the arrow release). However I do not feel I have the right qualities for this. I think I am not mature enough, and I do not have enough experience on HANARE as a result of looking for the absolute limit of the human spirit. I must seek advices from others.



There is a Japanese word "SHARI KENSHO". The word "KENSHO" comes from a ZEN doctrine: We originally have the same sincerity than Buddha has in his heart. Then, we often lack of purity. In this sense, "find the original heart" is "KENSHO". The word "KEN" means "find" and "SHO" means "original character". Now we can find the heart of Buddha "RI" in a shoot "SHA".

The greatest master **AWA Kenzo sensei** chose the word "SHARI KENSHO". In this regard, it was an experience. He had the technique, a hundred arrows, all hitting the target, but what was the meaning of this? Anyone can do the same with a good training. He was deeply suffering when late one night, his whole family sleeping, the calm around, and the moon illuminating moderately, **AWA Kenzo** entered alone in the DOJO and walked to the shooting line. He took a resolution: he had to find a truth to the limit of the body. He began to shoot with unwavering resolution. He was losing consciousness but at one moment, a beautiful sound occurred, as if it was coming from the heaven. It was "THE" TSURUNE (the sound of the string hitting the top

of the bow). He had never heard this before, very clear and strong. He was ecstatic. Here he was in a perfect non-ego. Of course, the arrow reached the center of the target (**SAKURAI Yasunosuke sensei** [C6_6]), but it was more than this.

One might think that this story is at a very high spiritual level but I think we also need to look for human dignity in the training KYUDO. If this is correct, HANARE and ZANSHIN are the result of what we are looking in KYUDO.

A PRELIMINARY KNOWLEDGE (KYUDO KYOHON SUMMARY)

When the KAI is achieved, HANARE follows. HANARE means the string leaves the GAKE and the arrow leaves the string. During NOBIAI, the chest opening to the right and to the left from the center of the body has reached its limit, then the arrow flies off with KIAI (spiritual power culminating at this time).

The words "KAI" and "HANARE" are coming from a Buddhist doctrine: E-SHA-JYO-RI. "E" and "KAI" are synonymous, "RI" and "HANARE" too. Meet (E) is (SHA) always (JYO) separation (RI). In KYUDO, KAI is for HANARE, they are one. In KAI, all forces are unified and concentrated. This power is transferred to the arrow in HANARE. Therefore, HANARE happens naturally. This is not the result of a deliberate release, but as if a drop of dew falls naturally on earth, HANARE arrives at the proper time. This is an ideal.

ZANSHIN is the archer's position after the release. After HANARE, there is something that remains, ZANSHIN. ZANSHIN is caused by the release, but succeeds to KAI. We must maintain

the posture with KIAI after HANARE, extending the body to the right and to the left, horizontally and vertically. The eyes are looking to the YADOKORO (the point where the arrow hit).

During a successful completion of the shooting, ZANSHIN is admirable, and YUDAOSHI (the action to put back the bow at the DOZUKURI position) is full of life. We can there see the effectiveness of this shot and the dignity of the shooter proves it too.

After YUDAOSHI, calmly put back the MONOMI in front, and then join the feet. During these actions, we must also take care to have ZANSHIN everywhere.

METHOD OF EXERCISE AND REVIEW

HANARE

To realize the beauty in HANARE, is the idea that all practitioners should have. But God treats us unequally. Seeing beginners, some may realize it easier, others will never. However, those who think they have succeeded, after lot of training, may feel a difficulty arise. This proves that HANARE is basically the acquisition of the whole KYUDO practice.

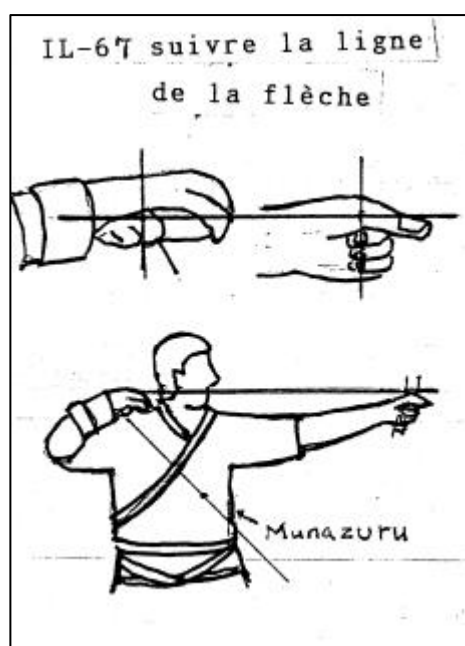
HANARE consists of different elements, spiritual, physical, psychological and technical, felt individually. Therefore, we cannot indicate an absolute method for HANARE to someone else. Each one of us must overcome difficulties with patience.

(1) It is often understood that HANARE is mainly caused by the function of the right hand. However the release at the right hand is related to the function of the left hand, especially linked to the TSUNOMI. **KUBOTA Shintaro sensei** teaches [C6_2] that if we do not practice for a long time, the left hand will lose sharpness because it relies on many techniques: TENOUCHI, the amplitude of tension in the left arm, etc.

On the opposite, when the function of the right hand is learned, with the role of the YUGAKE, of the thumb, we generally do not forget and it becomes a natural movement.

We must therefore concentrate in KAI to obtain HANARE in ICHIMONJI (release all along the line of the arrow) with an awareness of the functions of the TENOUCHI, of TSUMEAI, of NOBIAI and secondly trying to find the right time of the release with KIAI.

OKAZAKI Hiroshi sensei teaches [C6_4] that even if we tighten too much the hand (fingers) in the YUGAKE, HANARE is not difficult when a teacher has given a method to open wide the arms and the chest. This is a very important teaching, but of course, for beginners, we also need to teach to give some rotation to the YUGAKE for the release.



(2) The ideal of HANARE is to achieve a full balance, which means that when we consciously try to release along the line of the arrow, we feel an imaginary line stretched between the bases of the thumbs, right and left. Then we continue to mentally extend laterally the chest and the release happens. It has to be noted there is a technic for maintaining the very delicate function of TSUNOMI:

As opening the bow, it tilt gradually down to the target at the same time. The position of the left wrist changes gradually and we can eventually lose the correct TSUNOMI. It is important to remember to maintain the TENOUCHI not tilted to any side. If you have such ease in KAI, you can find the right TSUNOMI position.

(3) For the right hand, we have seen that it is a natural action. But we cannot say that everyone learn the correct method. If it is the wrong way, especially for the amplitude of rotation of the right forearm, we cannot expect a good HANARE. It is also very difficult, because the rotation depends on the physical condition, of the equipment (particularly the YUGAKE) and left hand TENOUCHI. However, if we can shoot along the line of the arrow, there is no problem. We must continue, for a good HANARE, to always check the good balance right and left. For example, if we have adopted the NAKAOSHI method and if an excessive rotation of the right forearm is given, we cannot feel the imaginary line between the bases of the thumbs. Even if we wiggle this line, the arrow flies outside the target.

(4) A nice HANARE is acquired through a good training. The habit producing a well-balanced HANARE depends on both the amount of exercises and their frequency. The ancients KYUDOKA, "professional", were shooting many arrows. For example, [URAGAMI Sakae Sensei](#) described his experiences in his book, with a two hundred arrows practice every day. This was possible because he had his own Dojo. For us, we may need chance to practice with a lot of arrows and to develop the proper technique. Therefore, if we practice in a public DOJO, it is desirable that the local teacher gives each student this chance.

(5) Middle and good practitioners need some direction for HANARE. But they already know the pleasure of hitting the target. In such case, they may believe that their success comes only with their technique, and bad habits are coming quickly. The result can be a messy HANARE. To avoid this tendency, we should always come back to KYUDO fundamentals. When facing the MATO, it is very important to understand the purpose of the practice. Always check ASHIBUMI, DOZUKURI, TENOUCHI, the state of the right hand, IKIAI, the balance between right and left, the existence of the imaginary line stretched between the bases of the thumbs, the TANDEN, etc. and of course TSUMEAI and NOBIAI. For each shoot, we can find something. To do this, it will be necessary to hold the bow at least five seconds in KAI. [KUBOTA Shintaro sensei](#) said [[C6_2](#)] that for a correct HANARE, there must be "NAIKAN NO KOKORO", the faculty of observing consciously what happens in a quiet attitude.

ZANSHIN

ZANSHIN expresses the substantial value of the shooting. After the release, the shooting leaves form and mood for each practitioner. This is ZANSHIN. There are two ways to write the Japanese word "ZANSHIN": "leave the body" and "let the heart". The first is the ZANSHIN external posture, the second, ZANSHIN inside, something spiritual. ZANSHIN as an action means staring at the



YADOKORO without changing the posture after the release. But we also keep the full attention to the posture, the KIAI (spiritual energy) stays, the TANDEN is full and rich, the cross TATE YOKO JYUMONJI is rigorously set. In ZANSHIN we see the shooting gradation, that is to say, SHAHIN and SHAKAKU, the posture of dignity and clear state of mind, according [FUKUHARA Ikuo sensei](#) [[C6_1](#)].

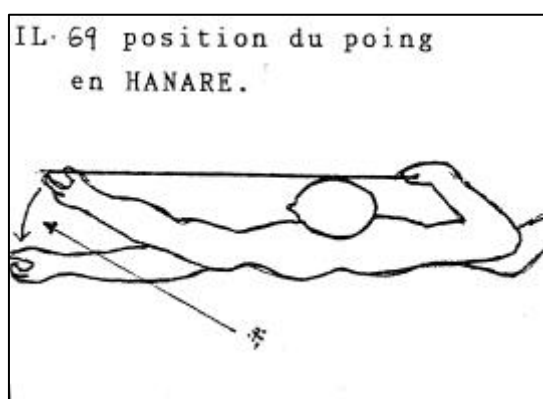
(1) ZANSHIN is full of resonances. Never do YUDAOSHI too quickly

(2) Do not let the low point of the bow to go toward the target. This is caused by the little finger too weak. Do not tilt the tip of the bow to the right or to the left (if you turn excessively the left arm in KAI, the tip of the bow too often goes to right at HANARE).

(3) After the release, continue to breath for a few moments, and then calmly set back the bow in the DOZUKURI position. Then turn the head back and regain natural breathing. All movements are done slowly because they are the expression of the satisfaction of having done your best.

(4) The distance between the position of the left fist in KAI and its position after the release should not be too long. A great teacher says that it is less than 9 cm to the left. But you must understand that in the modern KYUDO, it can become bigger because YAZUKA is longer. However, it goes without saying that it is very important to never shoot with force.

(5) For YUDAOSHI, the line drawn by the bow tip from the front is a straight line to a point on the ground at the center of the body. Never draw a circle. Make the action of YUDAOSHI with suitable IKIAI (expiring breath).



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (FOR CORRECTION OF BAD HABITS)

WEAK HANARE

(1) Case where the left shoulder joint is not set enough

* Strengthen the base of the left shoulder. BISHU CHIKURIN RYU teaches a method based on lowering left shoulder below the level of the right shoulder in KAI. The left shoulder is almost in the middle of the imaginary line between the two bases of the thumbs, and the power of the bow works stronger on this articulation.

(Teaching by **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C6_8])

* Strengthen SHITA SUJI, the line under the arms, but leave a bit of ease in the elbows.

* Extend the shoulders (and chest) right and left: this is to say, do "NOBIAI".

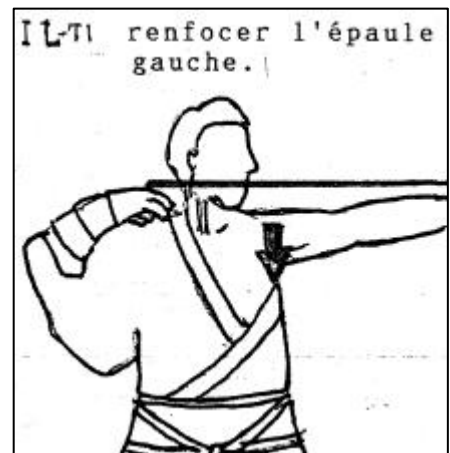
* Do not persist in KAI too long. Do not miss YAGORO, the right moment of the release.

* Check the need to rotate the YUGAKE during the release. Choose one of the following methods

1) Do not turn the YUGAKE (forearm)

2) Release by turning outside

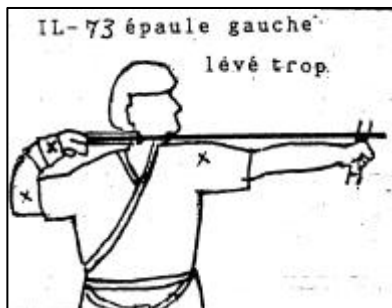
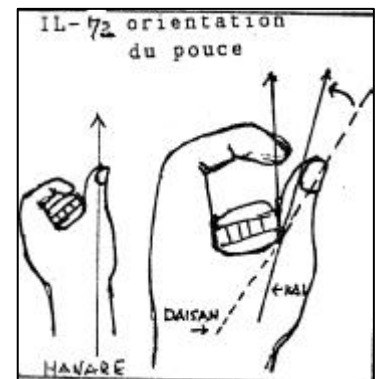
3) Release by working on the rotation of the forearm



(2) Case where the function of the left thumb is abnormal.

* Correct the orientation of the thumb in KAI: point the tip of the thumb to the target as possible, but do not bend the thumb inward

* Be conscious to do IBIRAKI, the thumb moving to the left at the release time.



(3) Case where YAZUKA YAJYAKU (length of the "band" of the arrow) is too long.

* Do not bend excessively the right wrist in KAI.

* Do not lift the left shoulder.

* Do not set too low right elbow.



HANARE WHERE THE RIGHT FIST IS UP

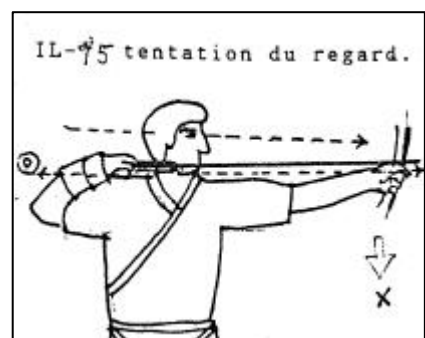
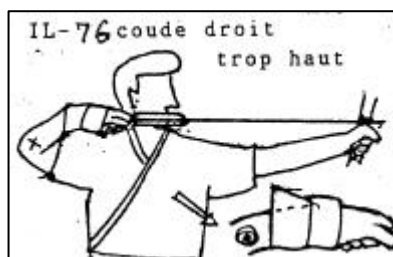
(1) Case where the left fist goes down too low at HANARE

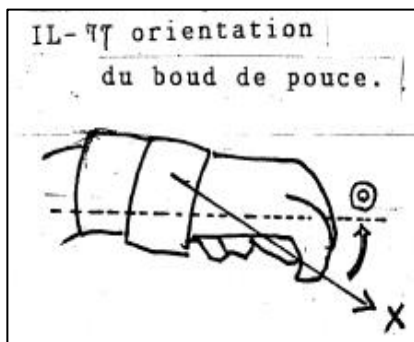
* Learn the NAKAOSHI method for left TENOUCHI. Do less UWAOSHI.

* In KAI, work on strengthening the SHITA SUJI line, under arms, especially the left arm.

* Be aware, before the release, to open horizontally fists and arms.

* Do not focus solely on the target. Do not be misled by the eyes. The angle down to the target sometimes hides the sense of the horizontal line in KAI.





(2) Case where the right fists is too high.

* Open more YAZUKA and then set in the correct position the right elbow.

* Do not lower the left shoulder too much

* If you use a new YUGAKE, release the strap.

(3) Case where the tip of the thumb is moving too low in KAI

* Always respect the rule of ICHIMONJI

* Correctly place the right elbow

* Do not bend too much right wrist.

* Raise the tip of the right thumb horizontally

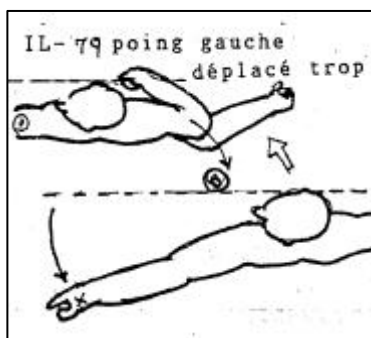
OTHER CASES

(1) Case where the right fist stops in front at release

* Draw enough YAZUKA.

* Practice how to open arms from the center of the chest.

* Strengthen the tightening of shoulder joints



(2) Case where the left fist moves excessively back at release.

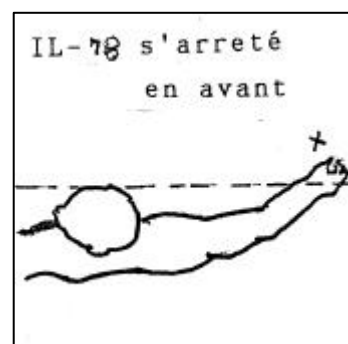
* Compensate the lack of YAZUKA.

* Strengthen the power of SHITA SUJI of the arms (upper part).

* In the release, move more the right elbow behind the shoulder.

* When in NOBIAI, care to the balance left / right.

* Push almost straight the left arm in KAI, then release along the line of the arrow at HANARE.

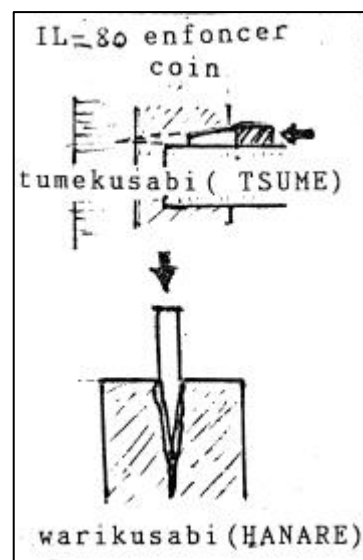


There may be other bad habits than the ones listed above. The best is to always return to the fundamentals of KYUDO. It is not easy, it is a long way to go, but we can reach our goal. **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** said: if you notice an abnormal habit, try to fix it right away, but you do not have to rely on someone to find the solution. You can investigate yourself the reasons that prevent from obtaining the correct movements. Whatever these problems are unique to yourself or not, it depends only on your own to correct. However, what also matters is the flexibility to accept feedback from others.

EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

MUSHIN NO HANARE, WITHOUT ARTIFICE

Up to now, we said that HANARE happens naturally as a result of NOBIAI rather than by a desire to shoot the arrow. Abandon the desire to hit the target, and wait only the right time, this is "MUSHIN NO HANARE", release with "no ego", without any artifice. It is also called URORI NO HANARE (a release like a drop of dew falling from a leaf on the ground), OHMU NO HANARE (a release on equal right and left like a parrot imitating the human voice), NASHI WARI NO HANARE (a release as if a pear was cut in the middle), etc.



For such HANARE, the ancients taught that in TSUMEAI we adjust five locations (GOBU) of the body: left TENOUCHI, right shoulder, left shoulder, chest and right elbow, like wood splitters pushed inside. TSUME of these five places are called "GOBU NO TSUME".

When these TSUME are set, we release as if the four TSUME (except the chest) are split with sparks, and as if we threw a stone to the chest TSUME. This is SHIBE NO HANARE, according to **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C6_9].

This explanation is very attractive and very interesting. But how can we achieve this?

YAGORO, AT THE RIGHT TIME

URAGAMI Sakae sensei, Great Master of HEKI RYU INSAI HA, wrote in his book [C6_10, C6_11] about technique for good HANARE, named "YAGORO principle". YAGORO means the right time for the release. In this regard, there is a difference between INSAI HA and other schools. In INSAI HA, "TSUMEAI" is the end of HIKIWAKE and the beginning of KAI while KAI is NOBIAI. In NOBIAI, the bow is pushed by twisting the TENOUCHI, and by tilting it slightly to the right towards the target. At the same time, the right arm is pulled while turning the forearm inwards. As a result there is a time where we can no longer do NOBIAI. This is YAGORO. This process is similar to a glass filled with water (TSUMEAI), where a few drops are added (NOBIAI), and finally, at the limit of NOBIAI the arrow flies off the string as water overflows from the glass (YAGORO).

In this explanation, we can find an interesting suggestion. However, this technique is INSAI HA, so when belonging to other schools, you may learn other techniques. In any case the rule of YAGORO should be kept. For example, when applying the NAKAOSHI principle to HANARE, YAGORO is when shooting along the arrow line while keeping NAKAOSHI form, after enough extension of the shoulders and the chest.

JIMAM, UNTIL MATURATION

There is a Japanese word "JIMAN", which means to continue to keep the bow until NOBIAI reaches its limit. "JI" means "to hold the bow" and "MAN", "maturity". In this concept, there is another word with the same pronunciation "JIMAN", which is used for a superior state in KAI. With the sign "naturally", the word "JIMAN" means the "natural release" after reaching maturity in KAI. The first contains a caveat: an artifice. In our step of progression, we start by the first explanation.

OTHER COMMENTS

(1) **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** wrote [C6_3]: use no force to release. Make enough NOBIAI with a challenge to reach its limit. In this process, if we decrease the tension in the fingers pressing the right thumb, HANARE comes as if we are not using any artifice. It is a natural HANARE.

(2) **OKAZAKI Hiroshi Sensei**, 8th Dan KYOSHI and Japanese KYUDO champion for three consecutive years, wrote [C6_5]: as done in general, facilitating TSUNOMI function as a spring for HANARE is often accompanied by the risk of asking too many artifices. To avoid this, for the left TENOUCHI in KAI, I try to keep the same form at release: left thumb tip already nearly to the target. At the same time, I still draw the middle finger to the target. Strength is low, but sufficient, because the bow is already twisted enough by the TENOUCHI. With this I do NOBIAI in



order to extend the shoulders to the left and to the right, removing the tension in both hands. For me, KAI is a struggle to challenge the limits of the physical force with the energy of the mind. I always look for "MUHATSU NO HANARE" to release "without wanting to release". He uses his 26 kg bow, and his KAI duration often exceeds 15 seconds. He says: during the first 10 seconds of KAI, I'm losing my physical strength, so I cannot do anything. For the 5 seconds after, I lose all physical sense. In this step, I began the battle between my mind and myself. Once, while I held the bow for about 40 seconds, I found something wonderful in my HANARE.

(3) Finally, I want to talk about the experience of **SUZUKI Hiroyuki sensei**, Hanshi 10th Dan. He wrote in [C6_7]: we must find the right moment for HANARE, while opening the bow without excess, and making TSUMEAI and NOBIAI with sincerity. In KAI, I have the image of wave at sea. HANARE is the moment where the wave explodes on the shore. Then the wave extend on the shore, showing greatness of KI, and the wave goes back during ZANSHIN. I always have such image in my KAI.

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CHAPTER 7 - IKIAI (BREATHING)

At all times, if we take pleasure to only hit the target while neglecting the training work, it causes bad habits, including HAYAKE, too fast release without reaching a proper maturation.

This tendency is a concern for me, but I also observed it with many European practitioners.

What causes HAYAKE?

When a person has a good practice, the target hitting rate increases, because hitting is not that difficult if we have the correct balance left and right. When we have learned this, the tendency is to reduce the KAI duration. Many other reasons can be added, such as the archer himself, his bow too strong, the excitement, etc. However, the fundamental reason for this resides in weak body conditions and unregulated breathing, more specifically during HIKIWAKE and KAI.

I have already given my views concerning the body form and condition, so now I would like to give some clues concerning breathing.

IKIAI means the right method to breathe for KYUDO. It is not that easy to learn it efficiently, and I am not sure to master it for myself. One reason for HAYAKE may be the suffocation. By suffocating in KAI, the tendency is to push the air into the TANDEN to increase the stability of the lower part of the body. This is both correct and incorrect. Pushing too much the air into the belly stabilizes but increases suffocation. Correctly moving the breathing into the TANDEN is creating harmony between the spiritual energy and the bow power. This is a NOBIAI condition. We must continue to expire during KAI, but if doing this too much then comes the suffocation, because the air in the TANDEN comes back to the chest. This destabilizes both spirit and body, and leads to HAYAKE. For a really nice shooting it is important to master the breathing. This is the subject of this chapter, IKIAI.

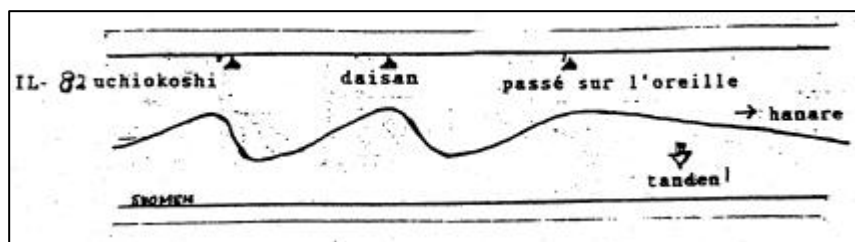
METHODS OF EXERCISE

VARIOUS METHODS

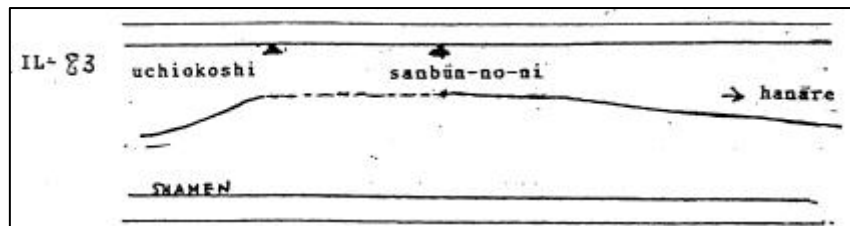
After choosing a method for IKIAI, we must practice it until it comes a habit. For this it is better to start experimenting without the equipment, bow and arrows.

There are various possible methods for IKIAI:

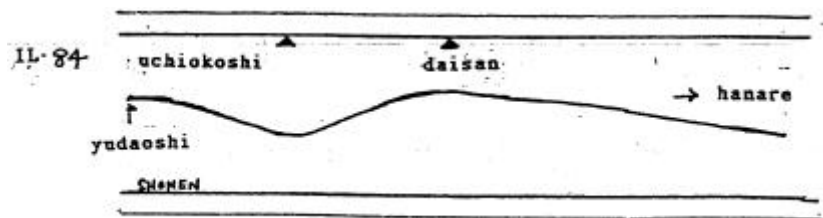
(1) At the beginning of UCHIOKOSHI, inspire then expire just before the end; then, the same for moving to DAISAN. Then, for HIKIWAKE, inspire, and when the right hand passes over the ear, start to gently exhale half of the air, and move the rest to the TANDEN as taught **MORIKAWA Masaru sensei** [C7_2]



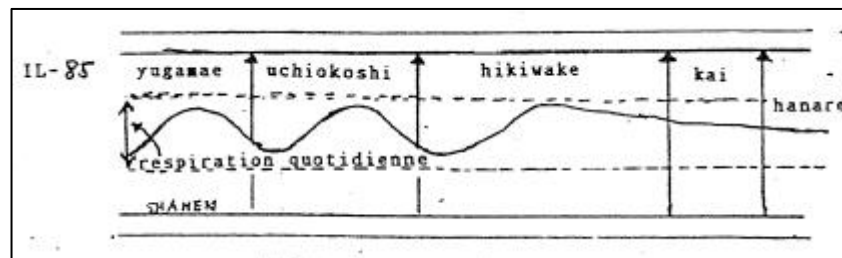
(2) During YUGAMAE, expire, then slightly inspire during UCHIOKOSHI, and suspend the breathing. Then stay like this while opening the bow until SANBU NO NI. Fill the TANDEN and expire gently until YUDAOSHI completion. Then, come back to the normal breathing, as taught by **URAGAMI Sakae sensei** [C7_6]



(3) During YUGAMAE, expire, then inspire during UCHIOKOSHI, inspire as if you were inspiring the cosmos into the TANDEN, then expire slightly while adding tension to the TANDEN until KAI, without hardening intentionally the TANDEN, as taught by **ANZAWA Heijiro sensei** [C7_1] and **URAGAMI Sakae sensei** [C7_7]



(4) During YUGAMAE, take a breath, inhale and exhale as daily breathing. During UCHIOKOSHI, inspire again, and when starting HIKIWAKE inspire then change to expire to the end of YUDAOSHI as taught by **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** [C7_5]



Of course, there are other methods, and everyone has to find the one it fits the best for himself. As an exercise, we can start with large inspirations, to be reduced after.

INSTRUCTION TO AVOID HAYAKE

A method is to work at the MAKIWARA, go to KAI, and never release. Try to maintain the KAI at least 10 seconds, then close the bow. Once used to this exercise, do the same in front of the MATO, what is important is to not release. After two weeks like this, there is a chance that our HAYAKE is defeated, as taught by **OKAZAKI Hiroshi sensei** [C7_3]

For me, it is not anymore difficult to maintain my KAI for 10 seconds. If you do it like this, you will see that the abdomen gradually becomes like a balloon because of the air in the TANDEN, but without suffocation. There is no more air in the upper chest and just what is required in the lower chest. If starting to suffocate, breathe just a bit, naturally. Of course, we must slightly

expire during KAI. Inspiring during KAI is abnormal, but if we can concentrate on NOBIAI, it is possible to consider that this inspiration is natural.

NOTE: there is a known story in Japan, when **ANZAWA sensei** was practicing KYUDO with students in a winter morning. It was very cold, and during the shooting it was possible to see the respiration through his nose. Students were having a doubt that the master was practicing the correct respiration, and were asking questions. **ANZAWA sensei**, could not see this, because he was fully concentrated on his NOBIAI. It was a difficult subject, but also a way to learn about the limits of breathing rules in KAI.

Despite the fact that such exercise is very useful, it may also be difficult to achieve during official demonstrations, where the circumstances are also influencing. We can only reach a correct IKIAI with a long and perseverant training.

EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS

HEIJO NO IKI

BISHU CHIKURIN RYU teaches that when practicing, the breathing must not be done with artifice. Breathing has to be HEIJO NO IKI, natural, non-conscious. I think it is really nice to be able to do this, but for years I never understood. On this subject, **UOZUMI Bunue sensei** wrote in his essay [C7_5] on BISHU CHIKURIN RYU that it is a mistake to think it is breathing as in normal life. In example, in KAI, we should practice the SUICHU NO IKI, the breathing under water, where we can only expire slightly, as if telling “i-i-i”, corresponding to the sound with quasi-closed mouth. To get the natural breathing is a very long and difficult training. In this teaching, it is possible to find some ideas:

(1) If we lift up a heavy stone, do we think to the quantity and position of breathing for this? No, in fact the breathing comes with the movement, with the action, by instinct.

HEIJO NO IKI means the breathing naturally adapted for the shooting action. Breathing without any artifice, natural breathing for the action, adapted to the shooting effort.

(2) As the shooting process is complicated, we cannot acquire easily the natural breathing without training. We must practice it until it comes a habit, until this breathing is really natural to the circumstances.

(3) In KAI, it is better to never think to tune breathing, and just do NOBIAI. If we hold breathing, suffocation may come and the shooting be perturbed.

(4) In KAI, never push too much the air down. The quantity of air in the TANDEN is what we need until the end of HANARE. In addition, to fight against the bow pressure we need a new energy which comes from the “i-i-i” breathing, “i-i-i no IKI”. It opens the throat to avoid suffocation.

(5) In general, expiration has a strong energy. When we want to cut something, as for example with a KATANA (Japanese sword), we must expire at this moment. In KYUDO, to fight against the bow power, we must draw a part of the air into the TANDEN, and exhale the rest. The energy accumulated into the TANDEN initiates the release.

NE IKI

We must understand NE IKI: it means the breathing maintained into the TANDEN. In the normal days, do we use all the air stored in the lungs? No, there is still some remaining. During ZAZEN, we train for long expiration and move a part to the TANDEN. It means in ZAZEN, there is always an air accumulation in the TANDEN. This is ZAZEN NE IKI. In KYUDO we do the same, accumulate air in the TANDEN. If losing the NE IKI, there will be suffocation while shooting. However, doing this consciously, may also lead to suffocation while shooting. NE IKI built from long training ensures the stability of the body center.

KYOSHIN

Finally, I want to express here what **AWA Kenzo** said [C7_4]: for the beginner, when in KAI, teach to shoot while moving the respiration down and stop it. For an experienced practitioner, tell to expire during HIKIWAKE while moving air down in TANDEN, then suspend a bit. A high-level practitioner has a high vision on everything. This is KYOSHIN, un-attached heart. To look for KYOSHIN is essential. The arrow released with KYOSHIN flies naturally. We can shoot without thinking to the bow power, without thinking to KIAI, which depends of the will. We are unified with the arrow to the infinite path to the universe. There is no result, no bow, just an arrow flying naturally and strongly. Even if it is difficult, satisfaction comes from this.

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- C7_2 MORIKAWA Masaru sensei, SHOMEN, Syaho to Jissen 12, P21-23
- C7_3 OKAZAKI Hiroshi sensei, Kyudo Syugyo 5, P19-21
- C7_4 SAKURAI Yasunosuke sensei, « AWA kenzo », P252, 253
- C7_5 UOZUMI Bunë sensei, Kogiroku 1, P172-185
- C7_6 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, SHAMEN, KYUDO Kyohon 2, P106, 107
- C7_7 URAGAMI Sakae sensei, SHAMEN, KYUDO Kyohon 2, P79, 80

POSTSCRIPT

A few days ago, I received the KYUDO magazine. There was here a word from **SAITO Tomoji sensei** about a seminar for HANSHI that I read with emotion.

Here are the ages of the participants: a person of more than 90 years, thirteen persons over 80 years, forty-two persons over 70 years and thirteen more over 60 years. But six persons who participated last year have now disappeared. Although death is a part of life, this bad news hurt him. He is now 85 years old, but he still continues in KYUDO the unity between mind and body.

He is still lucky to have peers. He certainly wished to not have more people disappearing around himself. Today, we can live long time, but life is difficult with great age. After 80 years, it is like climbing a too steep slope. We fill we cannot have a rest anymore. Climb, climb, and climb again every day. Pleasures and pains that KYUDO archers feel at this age can only be understood by people of the same age. **SAITO sensei** feels what is life. It is "to reach the goal we set", but what is this goal? Be in harmony with peers and friends? KYUDO is a bright world, which allows this.

This is the summary of the **Saito sensei** article. All this may exist in other sports and other BUDO. However, in KYUDO, people over 80 can be as active as any practitioner to find something in life. Because if we lose our good technique of the past, we can still express dignity in our shooting. Here, of course, it is no longer necessary to consider the grades: TITLE and DAN.

I like the word "**NICHI GETSU SHIN**". This is a poem. One morning at dawn, in the middle of a large field, we are standing under the golden sun rising and the silver moon fading, and we shoot the arrow with the bow. But it is internalized. We can do the same in a DOJO, with the same feeling. This is what I was taught by **UOZUMI Bunue sensei**, which is a master of the highest level in Japan, 80 years old. Previously, he wrote beautiful books, which were distributed, to students without expecting any reward. I would now like to continue his work by this essay.

Goodbye my friends!

SATO Kaori

Lyon, 1990

FINAL CHAPTER

INTENTION OF THIS NEW CHAPTER

This new chapter is written for the people, which have participated to this essay, specifically, **Christine ONDEL** and **Michel CHAVRET**, **Charles STAMPFLI** and **Pierre GUILLOT**.

The goal is to give more details on **KARASAWA Kotaro sensei** book.

The special signification to mention the names above is that they helped to revive this essay that I wrote about 20 years ago. As a special thank I want to give them something. As I am already pretty old, I cannot progress anymore in KYUDO practice and teach them. However, I can read Japanese, I have the experience of the practice, and I speak a bit French, so I can use my competencies for such remote teaching.

I also have to explain my choice of this **KARASAWA Kotaro sensei** book. The KYUDO DOKUHON written by this sensei is very attractive. This sensei reaches a highest level in the DAI NIHON BUTOKUKAI, ZEN NIHON KYUDO RENMEI, HEKI RYU INSAI HA, OGASAWARA RYU, etc.

He got excellent results on scientific analysis of the KYUDO, and his comments are very detailed to satisfy people. His thought is opening eyes.

If I was like in the past, and I was trying to pass the 7th DAN exam today, what would be the conditions to succeed? This is the subject I would like to dig. For this, I can get some answers in **KARASAWA sensei** book, and I think the people to whom this chapter is written for are also advanced enough to accept the challenge for themselves. This chapter may also give some other details to correct the previous ones written a long time ago.

MY KYUDO STORY

I have a very long practice of KYUDO, as I started when I was 13. At this moment, I was at the college. I practiced for 5 years at school, then at university. Then I stopped for about 10 years when starting to work in the labor administration. I resumed the practice at about 40. It has been my golden age during 10 years, up to the RENSHI 6th DAN level. I was also participating to various competitions and winning often, including by KAI CHU (4 arrows over 4). Success with the last arrow is always difficult. I was selected by the TOKYO federation for championship and won some prices at the KANTO competitions.

I think my physical form was driving these performances, as I was able to place my right elbow enough in the back. This aptitude was coming from an old school, IKKAN RYU that I practiced at school. It states in lowering the bottom of the left shoulder and strengthening the right elbow by rising a bit the right shoulder.

However, in modern KYUDO, there must be an equal balance between right and left, so I started to modify my form. As the right hand position was staying, I started to modify my left shoulder position, and as it was not strong enough, I also modified my left TENOUCHI. My shooting form was looking ideal externally, but in fact it was leading to disastrous consequences. My bow was complaining and I broke several times the external bamboo TODAKE, after 3 to 6 months of practice. I needed to purchase another bow each time, which was very expensive at the end.

I noticed gradually this was coming from my shooting form, so I started to change my TENOUCHI to be closer to NAKAOSHI form, and I reduced my right hand rotation. The right shoulder position changed, but my hitting rate gradually deteriorated. My confidence in my KYUDO was fading away.

For the KYOSHI exam, organized in various place once a year, I needed to travel, which was expensive too, and as the exam was difficult, it took time to succeed. When I got it, at the same time I completely lost confidence in my KYUDO.

A CHALLENGE FOR THE 7TH DAN

After my 60, I came in France and develop deep friendship with practitioner in Europe, Lyon, Geneva, Montpellier, etc. These words are bringing back images of these good old days. However, I regret that I this time my KYUDO was so poor. I wanted to show good form abroad, but as my form was deteriorating before coming, and with the new environment and challenge, it was a big problem I was unable to resolve.

Before leaving Japan, **ONUMA sensei** asked me to present the 7th DAN exam, at SHINJUKU dojo. For this first attempt, I did a KAI CHU, with two arrows, but I did not succeed. Of course, it is very difficult to get it the first time, but also I should have understood, that my own form was fading away, and this was the real problem. Without coming in France I would have corrected my tendencies at the TOSHIMA dojo and probably got it.

ONUMA Sensei had said the 7th DAN was a summit difficult to reach, but if getting it, it would have reinforced my leading position while in Europe. I wanted to study the social and economic life in France, but this exam was also useful to recover some confidence.

In this exam, we must express elegance in the shooting. ZANSHIN must reveal a majesties extension feeling. It must show an expression of the mental power and not a superficial technique.

MAINTAIN A ZANSHIN FULL OF DIGNITY

I can only recommend having a ZANSHIN expressing beauty. Beauty is the result of the effort, but should not be wishfully built. Just think to the ZANSHIN form while doing NOBIAI is an “authorized artifice”.

NOTE: I suggest working with a video camera to be able to see and analyze his own HANARE.

KARASAWA SENSEI FEEDBACK

1) YOKO ICHI MONJI during the last NOBIAI step

YOKO ICHI MONJI is the line between hands, arms, chest, resulting from good shooting.

KARASAWA sensei says that if we can extend the forearms by working with SHITA SUJI on right and left, the right forearm is positioned opened enough. YUNDE, the left side is extended toward the target, and the left hand drop just a little (about half the hand size, 3cm).

KARASAWA sensei indicates that to have a nice shooting, the elbows must be in the same situation in KAI, with for both a rotation (watch direction). From the practitioner, his right arm in HIKIWAKE looks rotating in the opposite direction.

For this, the arrow is at KUCHIWARI (mouth line), we raise a bit the right elbow, moving it to the back, en extending both side from shoulder basis.

Note that in other schools, sensei may have different opinions. I accept the one from **KARASAWA sensei**, but also recommend studying HANNEN HANJAKU in BISHU CHIKURIN RYU.

2) BAD HABITS AT HANARE

At HANARE, at least two bad habits may easily occur. The first one is to let the left fist drop too much. This comes from a too strong desire to achieve YUGAERI, and also because the TENOUCHI is weak. In fact, the YUGAERI is a function of the TENOUCHI, but the beginner wants to do it as result of opening the hand palm. This impacts ZANSHIN. It is a lot of work to correct this.

The second bad habit is, during the release, to move the left fist either to the left or to the right. In fact, at HANARE, we should not change the TENOUCHI form, push toward the target while doing SHI ME MODOSHI (squeeze and replace immediately).

KARASAWA sensei explains that at HANARE we should squeeze the left TENOUCHI. At this moment, the fingertips are just a bit relaxed, and they should squeeze the bow at release. When done quickly, the bow does not drop nor move right and left. The TSURUNE is clear and the bow stays vertical.

When squeezing, does it open the three fingers tips? Also due to the bow rotation the hand balance is broken, does it stay relaxed? Do we relax the TENOUCHI for better rotation?

KARASAWA sensei explains that if we have a good TENOUCHI, we can do HANARE without the SHI ME MODOSHI, only by squeezing. This is ideal. In general, we have to learn SHI ME MODOSHI.

URAGAMI Hiroko sensei says she does not see a visible change in his TENOUCHI form, however she did change it gradually.

3) SHI ME MODOSHI training

This is important to overcome bad habits and maintain the shooting beauty.

- Practice it without a bow, create a circle with thumb and index finger and solidify the fingertips.
- Reduce the circle diameter between thumb and middle finger, by slipping the bottom part of the thumb against the upper part of the middle finger. Do not move thumb and index.
- Attach a 3kg weight to the palm and try same movement

KARASAWA sensei thinks that by practicing this, we should obtain good results.

4) TSURUNE

This is the sound of the string hitting the upper part of the bow, SEKI ITA. This may be a clue on the quality of the HANARE, but also depends of the bow maker.

If the SHI ME MODOSHI is good, the TSURUNE may be really nice.

Here is a short story: at a TAIKO concert (Japanese drum), the presenter explained the technique to, just before hitting, relax a bit the grip and squeeze again. There might be some differences, but roughly it looks like SHI ME MODOSHI.

5) NOBIAI

In KAI, NOBIAI is very important. During HIKIWAKE, the bow power is distributed left and right, but in oblique (45 degree). Then, when the arrow touches the mouth, we change the YOKO ICHIMONJI function. Then we do NOBIAI until HANARE. However, NOBIAI does not only mean reach the YAJAKU (arrow length). We must maintain a tension in opposition to the bow compression effort.

When we extend the forearms and muscles below, the right forearm gets naturally closer to the arm, and the right elbow is extended as far as possible. With this, we can hit the target.

When the elbows are firmed and stabilized, we can balance right and left with extension of YUNDE and the forearm. NOBIAI is done in conjunction with TSUMEAI. TSUMEAI means build the solidity, strength muscles under the shoulders.

During HIKIWAKE, the right wrist does not have a main role. The movement is conducted by the line from the fingers to the elbow. By opening the chest muscles, we lower the shoulder basis and expand the back muscles.

6) THE HANARE EVENT

Do not choose the HANARE moment by opening the hand. Pinch the thumb and at the same time turn the wrist. After the release, immediately close the hand.

Do not curve the thumb inside, into the YUGAKE. Extend the thumb; it should touch the opposite side.

7) BOW POSITION IN ZANSHIN

There are different positions according to schools. HEKI RYU maintains the bow oblique; it was a form for the battlefields.

IKIAI

After many years of practice, IKIAI reaches the intimate level. IKIAI for KAI is using the diaphragm. We first inspire in the lungs, then after gently expire to the diaphragm. At the same time, reinforce the TANDEN. At this time, we can still breath, even talk.

1) About HAYAKE

Personally, I have a tendency to HAYAKE. During my KYOSHI exam, I just maintained the KAI about 3 seconds, not more. However, I succeeded, because it is requested to do a KAICHU (2 arrows hitting) and to perform the SAN NIN HITOTSU MATO SHAREI and express unity between candidates and style beauty. For the 7th DAN exam, the level is higher, and IKIAI is important there.

How many seconds should take the KAI? In fact, the question is nonsense.

KARASAWA sensei wrote: this question is not meaningful. The real question is about the content of TSUMEAI and NOBIAI. KAI should be at least 5 to 6 seconds, but KAI deepness is more important.

2) **OKAZAKI sensei** opinion

According to **OKAZAKI Hiroshi sensei**, we must be able to stay in KAI, in front of the MATO, for about 10 seconds, without releasing. When the desire to hit the target comes, HAYAKE may also come. **OKAZAKI sensei** is known to have very long KAI, so his opinion should be taken with care.

3) **KARASAWA sensei** opinion

KARASAWA sensei says he was also having the HAYAKE problem. His experience is different to overcome this issue: he was checking different phase before shooting, as NERAI, NOBIAI, etc. He was checking shoulders, left elbow, TENOUCHI, right shoulder, etc.

However, one day an examiner told to **KARASAWA sensei** to stop to think to this checklist, it was cutting his KAI in several parts. It took him about 7 years to retrieve his KYUDO quality, without cutting the KAI.

What is KAI? It is not a process.

What is MUSHIN? A Chinese character says without heart ... but I cannot answer there, I do not have quality for this.

But, everything anyway starts from the basis.

4) Sensei roadmap

From DAISAN to the end of HIKIWAKE, inspire enough, then after expire softly. You must repeat this ... we do not take conscience that the target is present. Inspire, then expire softly, even the singers are applying this rule.

TO CLOSE THE FINAL CHAPTER

I am now 87, and of course I will never try my 7th DAN, or any other grade. But I have also decided to go for the publication of this essay. I do not speak well French, but I accepted the challenge of this translation. By chance, I got some help and I very much appreciated this excellent work. I really enjoyed.

Life is like this. After the earthquake in the TOHOKU district, many people are helping others. Japanese are using the word **KIZUNA**, link, for this.

This book is a **KIZUNA** between Japanese and French KYUDO practitioners.

KYUDO is deep and vast. I am now at the final exam step and I am eager of the result.

Goodbye my friends,

SATO Kaori

TORIDE, March 2013

TO CLOSE THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

At the end of the POSTSCRIPT, **SATO sensei** said that the essay was only there to help people, without any reward in mind. Just above, he is also explaining that it is a **KIZUNA**, a link between Japanese and French practitioners. I completed the translation in this spirit, no reward, and if possible extend the link to non-French practitioners.

Pierre Guillot

Geneva, February 2014

2nd revision, February 2016