

The Birth of Shinkage-ryū

FIGURE 1 A statue of Kamiizumi, the founder of Shinkage-ryū, in Maebashi city (前橋市), Gunma prefecture (群馬県).

Aizu Koshichirō died at the age of 72, but, as his son had passed away before his father, he was succeeded by his nephew. After the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, the Satake clan (佐竹氏) had to move to Akita province and the Kage-ryū lineage of the Aizu family was lost over the course of the following several decades.

Nevertheless, one of the most important schools in the history of Japanese swordsmanship was born from the Aizu lineage of Kage-ryū and that school is the Shinkage-ryū, founded by the famous Kamiizumi Ise-no Kami Nobutsuna (上泉伊勢守信綱; ca. 1508–1577).

Kamiizumi's birth and death dates as well as where and when he learned Kage-ryū are unknown. Some sources speculate that he studied under the direct guidance of Aizu Ikōsai, while others instead say under the guidance of Aizu Koshichirō. A third theory speculates that he learned from his father who was one of Aizu Ikōsai's disciples. In the scroll entitled *Prohibitions of the Worthy Deva* (*Sonten-no Kinsei*; 尊天之禁制), which Kamiizumi gave to his disciple Marume Kurando (丸目藏人)—the founder of Taisha-ryū—he wrote that he had studied Shintō-ryū and Kage-ryū, that he had developed innovations on the basis of Kage-ryū and so he called his school Shinkage-ryū (新陰流) meaning a branch of that school with new additions, but nowhere does he indicate who his teachers were.

In the mid-16th century, the Kamiizumi family controlled the castle of Ōgo (大胡) in Kōzuke (上野) province (nowadays Maebashi, Gunma prefecture). In 1555 Hōjō Ujiyasu (北条氏康), head of the Hōjō clan, attacked the fortification compelling Kamiizumi to surrender without fighting. He was then forced into the service of the Hōjō clan, but that lasted less than a year. Then, he became one of the generals of *daimyō* Uesugi Kenshin (上杉謙信), the lord of Echigo (越後). The Uesugi commissioned their retainers—the Nagano family (長野氏)—to govern Minowa castle (箕輪城; nowadays Takasaki city, Gunma prefecture) and Kamiizumi then joined the service of the Nagano clan. Within a short time he gained fame thanks to his skills on the battlefield. In 1563, Minowa castle fell in an attack by the armed forces of the famous warlord Takeda Shingen (武田信玄), *daimyō* of Kai province (甲斐). In turn, Shingen was particularly impressed by the skills of Kamiizumi and offered him to enter into his service. Some sources suggest that Kamiizumi politely declined the offer while others say he indeed served Takeda as his vassal.

The spread of Shinkage-ryū began with the frequent journeys to Kyoto on which Kamiizumi accompanied his then lord Nagano. In 1558, on one such trip, he

met a young man from Kyushu⁴ by the name of Marume Kurando (丸目藏人) who would challenge him, be defeated by him and go on to become one of his foremost pupils.

A few years later, Kamiizumi and Marume demonstrated Shinkage-ryū swordsmanship in front of the then *shōgun* — Ashikaga Yoshiteru (足利義輝). Yoshiteru was greatly impressed by Kamiizumi and the young man's performance and awarded them the honour of a certificate of admiration. Subsequently Kamiizumi would move to Kyoto in 1570, where he would teach Shinkage-ryū until the end of his days.

Kamiizumi Nobutsuna is considered to be a particularly important figure in the development of Japanese swordsmanship. He is popularly credited as the inventor of the *fukuro-shinai* (袋竹刀) — a bamboo training sword with a lacquered leather case — allowing practitioners to train and strike each other without incurring any risks of serious injury, which would have otherwise been the case with real and even with wooden swords. Some sources say that Kamiizumi had between 80 and 100 students, with many branches deriving from his Shinkage-ryū in later years — schools, which historically see Kamiizumi as their founder, co-founder or progenitor. Among his famous disciples were Yagyū Munetoshi (柳生宗厳), whose Yagyū Shinkage-ryū line still exists today, Hikita Bungorō (疋田文五郎), nephew of Kamiizumi and founder of the Hikita Kage-ryū school, Hōzōin In'ei (宝蔵院胤栄) — a monk who founded the Hōzōin-ryū school of spearmanship (*sōjutsu*; 総術), Komagawa Kuniyoshi (駒川国吉), the founder of Komagawa Kaishin-ryū (駒川改心流), and, last but not least, Marume Kurando — the founder of Taisha-ryū. Kurando had engaged in many military operations during his life and was well-known for his expertise in swordsmanship as well many other arts, such as calligraphy, tea ceremony and Nō theatre dance.

⁴ Kyūshū is the third largest of the four islands that make up the Japanese archipelago and is located directly south-west of the main island (Honshū). Its alternative names include; Kyūkoku (九国), Chinzei (鎮西), Tsukushi-no-shima (筑紫島) and Saikaidō (西海道).

*Marume Kurando*⁵

FIGURE 2 Marume Kurando receiving written and oral transmission from Kamiizumi. Woodblock print illustration from the 1897 light novel *The Heroic Tales of Marume Kurando* (*Marume Kurando Giyūden*; 丸目蔵人義勇傳).

Marume Kurando was born in 1540, in the domain of the Sagara clan in Kyushu. He grew up in a samurai family and underwent the standard military and scholarly education which at the time included Confucian classics and martial arts. He gained victory in combat at the age of sixteen and, at nineteen, he was recognized as a potential future sword master. He was then allowed to travel to Kyoto to challenge the most famous swordsman in Japan at the time — Kamiizumi Ise-no Kami Nobutsuna, the creator of Shinkage-ryū, who would become the inspiration for his own future style. Upon his arrival in Kyoto, Marume — who was twenty years old at the time — sought out Kamiizumi and challenged him to a duel. After being soundly beaten, he followed the custom at the time by asking Kamiizumi if he could become his disciple and enter Shinkage-ryū.

⁵ The history of Marume Kurando and of the Taku line of Taisha-ryū in Hizen province in particular is treated in more detail in the historical section of this volume. This section aims to only give the briefest introduction.

Kamiizumi agreed and after seven years of study, Marume became one of his most recognized disciples. In 1567, his master decided that Marume—who was now twenty-seven—had fully acquired the teachings of Shinkage-ryū and awarded him a complete transmission certificate (*menkyo-kaiden*; 免許皆伝). The original scroll still exists today and is a treasure of the Marume family who still maintain their close ties to Taisha-ryū.

Afterwards, Marume helped spread Shinkage-ryū, while in the service of the lord and the clan of his hometown. He was also appointed the sword master for Hitoyoshi city. After the death of Kamiizumi around 1577 (the exact date is unknown), Marume decided to establish his own style that would incorporate what he had learned from his master, but also the knowledge acquired through experience in battle and the philosophical and spiritual beliefs he had adopted.



FIGURE 4 The original wooden sword (*bokken*; 木剣) used by Marume Kurando, kept in the collection of the Marume family, Hitoyoshi city.



FIGURE 3 The grave of Marume Kurando in Kiriharano, near Hitoyoshi-Kuma.

As one of Kamiizumi's four best students, Marume Kurando too created his own school, initially naming it Shinkage Taisha-no Ryū (新陰タイ捨之流), which was later shortened to Taisha-ryū (タイ捨流). Even though Kurando himself had multiple disciples and thus Taisha-ryū had over a dozen lines of transmission, only the one in his home province still survives today. Marume Kurando continued to lend his services and teach until he retired to the rural outskirts of Nishiki-machi near Hitoyoshi, where he continued practising strategy and military methods for the rest of his life. He passed away at the age of ninety in 1629 and was buried near his home town where his grave is still a pilgrimage site.

Today Taisha-ryū's traditions live on and are still being taught at the Ryūsenkan dōjō (龍泉館道場) in Yatsushiro, Kumamoto under the 15th head — Uehara Eriko (上原エリ子) — the first woman to be the head of a Japanese traditional sword school (*sōke*; 宗家), and the only two other master-instructors (*shihan*; 師範) licensed by the late 13th head Yamakita Takenori — Tazoe Shin-ichirō (田添信一郎) and Yamamoto Takahiro (山本隆博) without whose direct involvement, this volume would not have been possible.

Tai-sha

FIGURE 5 Calligraphy 'Hyōhō Taisha-ryū' (兵法タイ捨流)
by *shihan* Yamamoto Takahiro.

The name of the school — ‘Tai-sha’ is composed of two parts. It is highly unusual in that Marume Kurando chose to write *tai* using *katakata* (the phonetic, syllabic characters タイ) and *sha* using *kanji* (the logograph 捨). Since the pronunciation /*tai*/ is shared between many different logographic characters in Japanese, anyone seeing the term ‘Taisha’ (タイ捨) written down would be unable to understand its meaning with certainty.

The character 捨 (*sha/sute.ru*) means ‘to throw away,’ ‘to discard,’ ‘to forget’ and so on, while タイ (*tai*) can refer to *kanji* with vastly different meanings such as: ‘great’ (大) — in this case, in honour of the great master Kamiizumi, but also ‘body’ (体/體), ‘to wait’ (待) and many others.

Taisha-ryū spread to and flourished in several provinces other than Sagara where Kurando taught and left licenced students. The most prominent among these were Hizen (肥前; spanning parts of modern-day Saga and Nagasaki prefectures), Satsuma (薩摩; modern-day Kagoshima prefecture) and Yanagawa (柳河;

part of modern-day Fukuoka prefecture). In some, side branches of Taisha-ryū continued to be taught up until the end of the 19th century.⁶

Taisha-ryū also became the official style of the Sagara clan (相良氏) of Hitoyoshi (人吉; in modern-day Kumamoto prefecture) and remained so until the end of the Edo period. The Oda (小田) family still continue the original lineage of Taisha-ryū in Yatsushiro—the birthplace of Marume Kurando. In 1962, Taisha-ryū was recognized as an intangible cultural heritage of Kumamoto.



FIGURE 6 *Shihan* Yamamoto Takahiro (Fujiwara-no Sadataka) receiving Full Licence Transmission (*menkyo kaiden*) from the 13th headmaster of Taisha-ryū, Yamakita Takenori (Fujiwara-no Sadamune).

⁶See *Maps* in *Appendix A* for more details on the geography and clans of Kyushu.

FORMATIVE DOCUMENTS OF TAISHA-RYŪ

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS AIM TO provide an abridged overview of the swordsmanship system, philosophy, strategy and other aspects of Taisha-ryū through the lens of two original documents written between 1573 and 1710 (the end of the Warring States and the first century of the Tokugawa period). The translations are accompanied by short explanations formulated with the assistance of *shihan* Yamamoto Takahiro of the Hyōhō Taisha-ryū Dōjō Ryūsenkan, in order to avoid erroneous interpretations of some of the vocabulary, as many terms and concepts are especially challenging to translate into English.

The first text is the *Shinkage-ryū ‘Prohibitions of the Worthy Deva’* (*Shinkage-ryū Sonten-no Kinsei*) — a ‘transmission document’ (*densho*; 伝書) written by the founder of Taisha-ryū Marume Kurando Nagayoshi in 1573, but whose text was originally composed by Kamiizumi Ise-no Kami. It outlines the semi-mythological history and the philosophy of, as well as the spiritual inspiration for his Shinkage-ryū and its continuity from older traditions of military strategy. Thus it sets down in writing both the dos and don’ts for those who aspire to become accomplished in *hyōhō*. The *Prohibitions of the Worthy Deva* has been formative for the philosophy and the sentiment of Taisha-ryū and echoes of it can be found in the school’s teachings to the present day.

The second, longer document and the natural centrepiece of this volume, is the *Taisha-ryū ‘Unravelling the Cords’* (*Taisha-ryū Kaichū*; 夕イ捨流解紐) by Nabeshima clan retainer Nakano Jinuemon Shūmei — a work which can safely be said to stand on par with Miyamoto Musashi’s *Book of Five Rings* and Yagyū Munenori’s

⁷ Sanskrit: *deva* — ‘divinity’; lit. ‘luminous one’ (Ch: *tiān*; Jp: *ten*; 天).

Heihō Kadensho in both its profundity of martial understanding and its cultural sophistication. The *Kaichū* had not been made available to a western public until the publication of this volume, and is still little known even in Japan. Having been completed in 1710, it is chronologically situated between Mysashi's *Book of Five Rings* and Yamamoto Jōchō's *Hagakure*. The *Kaichū* — a document unique to the Takeo-Saga-Taku line of the Hizen province branch — provides an indispensable in-detail glimpse into the inner philosophy of late 17th and early 18th century Taisha-ryū.

The translations are followed by an extensive section on the history of Taku Taisha-ryū in an effort to give a general overview of the socio-political situation of Hizen, the Nabeshima, Nakano, Yamamoto and Yamaryō families and their shared history of training and transmitting Taisha-ryū as reported by many original and secondary sources.

The translations of the original works are extensively referenced and annotated to aid in the dense texts' understanding and hopefully future study. It is, however, impossible to directly accompany the text with all the background information necessary for that understanding. Therefore, a chapter dedicated to unravelling some of the *Kaichū*'s historico-philosophical background can be found after the historical section.

Note on the Contents

The current volume contains all publicly disclosable information except those contents that are inner oral transmission of Hyōhō Taisha-ryū. Therefore, details on particular techniques and the explanations of certain terms and concepts have understandably been omitted.

We have to note that providing an exhaustive background for all aspects of Nakano Shūmei's work is practically impossible without the current publication becoming a cumbersome multi-volume edition, attempting to manifest a lifetime's worth of study, experience and wisdom. That is why we have chosen to concentrate on what are some core influences that may, at the very least, give

the reader a feeling of its profundity and stimulate further interest and study. We also hope to improve and expand upon this current work in the future.

Any and all mistakes are our own.

The Authors

THE
SHINKAGE-RYŪ
'PROHIBITIONS
OF THE WORTHY DEVA'
(*Shinkage-ryū Sonten-no Kinsei*; 新陰流尊天之禁制)

Handwritten by Marume Kurando in 1573, this document most probably copies an original composed by his master Kamiizumi Ise-no Kami Nobutsuna. Since sections of the text are written in the first person, but the style, vocabulary and subject matter differ from the documents which are known to have been authored by Marume Kurando himself, it is not unreasonable to presume these to be Kamiizumi's own words.

The text is dense and makes many references to Chinese classics of military strategy, tantric and Zen Buddhist and Daoist literature, as well as Indian, Chinese and Japanese history and myths. As the title suggests, the *Prohibitions of the Worthy Deva* also provides five key guidelines consisting in behaviours to be avoided by the dedicated scholar-warrior. For the original text, see *Appendix B*.

THE
TAISHA-RYŪ ‘UNRAVELLING THE CORDS’
(*Taisha-ryū Kaichū*; タイ捨流解紐)

*The Blue Cliff Record*⁴⁸ states:

*One can pass beyond the ordinary with a single stroke of the gavel. A single word can break things up, untying what is bound and releasing what is stuck. Like walking on thin ice or running over sword blades—though one resides within the conglomerations of sound and form, one passes over sound and form. Leaving aside all wondrous activity, how is it that one becomes realised in an instant?*⁴⁹

COMPOSED IN 1710 BY NAKANO JINUEMON SHŪMEI—a high-ranking retainer to the Nabeshima clan of Saga in the province of Hizen—the *Kaichū*, or literally ‘*Unravelling the Cords*’ is a document unique to the Taisha-ryū school of swordsmanship. ‘Unravelling the Cords’ refers to the explanation of techniques, philosophical concepts and spiritual guidance related to the tradition which, as Nakano Shūmei himself writes, were threatened by extinction even during his own lifetime, a mere hundred years after the end of the Warring States period. That is why he set out to commit to writing the knowledge he had inherited from his predecessors so that it would be available to and built upon by future generations. Recently, the *Kaichū* was rediscovered and it has been faithfully presented in this book to the best of the authors’ ability with the

⁴⁸ An influential Zen Buddhist text. See *The ‘Blue Cliff Record’ in Chán (Zen) and the Symbolism of the Sword*.

⁴⁹ The POINTER to Case 46 of the *Blue Cliff Record*, Jing Qīng’s “*Sound of Raindrops*,” translated partly relying on Cleary & Cleary 2013: 307; (「垂示云。一槌便成超凡越聖。片言可折。去縛解粘。如水凌上行。劍刃上走。聲色堆裏坐。聲色頭上行。縱橫妙用則且置。剎那便去時如何。試舉看。」T2003 佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄卷/篇章/五/【四六】). See *Chán (Zen) and the Symbolism of the Sword*.

hope that Nakano Shūmei's mandate does indeed continue to be fulfilled and the wisdom of Taisha-ryū continues to be handed down to future generations.

Even though the *Kaichū* handles many purely practical military matters (such as the use of the terrain and the employment of different weapons) and technical topics relating to the practice of swordsmanship (such as grip, posture and the length of a sword), in-between are peppered many philosophical teachings, allusions to Buddhist, Confucian and Daoist ideas and instructions on the cultivation and perpetuation of a proper attitude and mode of being, which go far beyond the merely martial and enter into the realm of the dissolution of one's self into one's actions. It consists of seven parts:

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| – <i>Preface</i> | (Jo) |
| – <i>Book of the Rat</i> | (Ne-no Kan) |
| – <i>Book of the Ox</i> | (Ushi-no Kan) |
| – <i>Book of the Tiger</i> | (Tora-no Kan) |
| – <i>Fifty Secret Poems</i> | (Hika Gojusshu) |
| – <i>Five Subjects of Study</i> | (Goka-no Narai) |
| – <i>Eighteen Articles on the Manner of Transmission</i> | (Denjutsu Jūhakkajō) |

The articles in the three main books all start with a phrase meaning 'it has been passed down to me' (*watakushi ni notama.waku*; 私 = 日), repeatedly stressing that the contents have actually been passed down to the author and that they reflect a tradition—a sign of the continuity of the lineage. Furthermore, additional explanations which may not relate to a particular expression in the running text directly, but are nonetheless essential background information have been provided by the authors wherever thought necessary, set in text boxes (in grey) throughout the texts. Since the *Kaichū* is structured in such a way that every subsequent section builds upon the subjects taught in the previous, a later section would be hard, if not impossible to understand if one has not read the preceding material. Therefore, the reader is encouraged to approach the text in the proper sequence. To aid in this process, however, some degree of the internal references has been indicated to the reader in footnotes in both the earlier and the later sections.

THE TAKU TAISHA-RYŪ
AND ITS EARLY SHIHANKE

Of the many areas where Marume Kurando taught and licensed students, Hizen Province was one place where Taisha-ryū thrived. There were several different lines of transmission within the province and it was one of these that Nakano Shūmei (中野 就明; 1659–1730) would eventually come from. This was the so-called Takeo-Saga-Taku Taisha-ryū line, known nowadays by the name of its last *shihanke*,⁵¹⁸ who was the Lord of Taku (多久).

Beginnings

It was during the time of Nakano Shūmei's ancestor—Nakano Kiyooki(ra) (中野 清明; 1556–1621)—that Marume Kurando had visited and taught Taisha-ryū in Hizen province. Among others, Kurando certified one member of the Kijima (木島) family—Gyōuemon (形(刑)右衛門), a.k.a. Kijima Yasuke I.,⁵¹⁹ who in turn taught his son (also called Gyōuemon), a.k.a. Kijima Yasuke II. (d. 1638).⁵²⁰ They were both *samurai* of the Takeo (武雄) area of Hizen.

According to the *Arima War Memorial for the Dead* (有馬の戦役) at the family temple of the Takeo Nabeshima clan (武雄鍋島氏)—Ennōji (円心寺), today in Tomioka, Takeo City—more than 2,300 people from Takeo had gone to war to suppress the Shimabara Rebellion (島原の乱) which had broken out in 1637,⁵²¹

⁵¹⁸ From the point of view of the main transmission line of a school, its head is called a *sōke* ('school head; 宗家) while the heads of any lines that are considered subsidiary, but maintain their own transmission tradition without changing the name of the style, are referred to as *shihanke* ('instructor family head; 師範家).

⁵¹⁹ *Uji-na*: Minamoto-no Kiyoshi (源清). Given that the name Kiyoshi had been used by the Matsuura clan for a long time, it is likely that Kijima Gyōuemon's ancestors came from the Imari area and served the Takeo Nabeshima family.

⁵²⁰ *Uji-na*: Minamoto-no Kiyoshi (源淨); note the different spelling.

⁵²¹ The Shimabara Rebellion was a rebellion of over 30,000 Christians from the Karatsu clan of the Shimabara and Amakusa domains, led by one Amakusa Shirō Tokisada (天草四郎時貞; 1621?–1638), and 124,000 Shogunate troops were involved in suppressing the rebellion. It is said that more than 2,000 Shogunate troops were killed in the battle, while the rebels were annihilated.

and fifty-six of them had fallen on the battlefield.⁵²² The monument is inscribed with the history of the temple's construction and the names of fifty-three of those who perished in battle, including Kijima Yasuke II., who is listed as having been a platoon commander (*mono-gashira*; 物頭)⁵²³ and one Okabe Mouemon (岡部茂右衛門)⁵²⁴. It was the two Kijima from whom the most numerous line of Taisha-ryū in Hizen would derive, referred to as the Kijima line. Both that and the other three smaller Hizen lines are, however, beyond the scope of the current overview, which is dedicated to the Taku line.

One of Kijima Yasuke II.'s main licensed students was Chiji-iwa Rokuzaemon (⁵²⁵)—who would himself later become the swordsmanship master of Nakano Shūmei⁵²⁶. In order to get a more comprehensive overview of the history of the Taku line, we need to first go back in time to the early 17th century history of Hizen and Nakano Shūmei's famous ancestor—Nakano Kiyokira.

⁵²² By irony of fate, the Takeo domain would later become known for the study of Dutch studies and the introduction of modern weapons (Southwest Regional History Research Association 1977: 193).

⁵²³ Kuroki 1976: 85.

⁵²⁴ Kuroki 1976: 96.

⁵²⁵ An ancestor/relative of Rokuzaemon was one Chiji-iwa Miguel (千々石ミゲル) (1569–1633) who was a member of the Japanese delegation to Europe in 1582–1590, also known as the Tenshō embassy. Until recently it was thought that Miguel, unlike his three companions, had abandoned Christianity after it was banned by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, but a recent discovery of glass beads and the possible glass lid of a reliquary in his grave have cast doubt on that assumption. (*The Asahi Shinbun*, 10 September 2017).

⁵²⁶ For more details on the identity of the holders of the name Jinuemon in the Nakano and Yamamoto clans throughout the generations, its various spellings and historical relevance, see the section on the Taisha-ryū *kishōmon* of Yamamoto Jōchō below.

THE ROOTS OF JAPANESE MARTIAL MYSTICISM

WHILE THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF martial arts are a natural key to their effectiveness and therefore their popularity and spread, there has always been an integral philosophical, and sometimes even mystical background to systems of combat. This background was often integrally intertwined with the spiritual and religious influences found in the geography of their origin, as well as the systems of ideas that arose around the topics of the nature of humanity, civil organisation, government, statecraft and law. In East Asia, from the earliest times, strategy and martial arts were both founded upon and gave rise to many legends, teachings and traditions, which were fundamentally inseparable from martial arts' physical aspects. Even though it was certainly not the case for every practitioner that they would be interested in these aspects, it was definitely true of those erudite, gentlemanly scholar-warriors who held and strove to pass on their own experience and insights and/or the main teachings of the particular tradition or school they belonged to. So much so, that, in the course of centuries, the very meaning of the word designating the "Art of War" (*bīngfǎ/hyōhō*; 兵法) gradually shifted. From its originally Chinese inception as the management of armies and military and state strategy to its Japanese incarnation (and especially the type handed down in the Minamoto family), under the influences of Daoism and Buddhism,⁶⁸⁸ as a semi-mystical, multi-faceted and partially esoteric martial discipline to be practised by individuals, but also became synonymous with "martial prowess." Thus, this chapter makes an attempt at providing the interested reader with a somewhat more scholarly introduction to some of the most noteworthy sources of post-Warring-States-period Japanese

⁶⁸⁸ Hall 1990: 251.

hyōhō as well as to traditions relevant to the study and understanding of the *Kaichū* and other texts of its kind.

Despite the fact that the literary, cultural and philosophical background necessary to understand texts like the *Kaichū* essentially amounts to an East Asian classical education, in this chapter we give at least a rough overview of some of the main influences that are discernible within its text.

Starting from ancient China and India, the first part provides an overview of the most relevant works of Chinese literature on *hyōhō*. The chapter further briefly introduces the reader to Confucianism and Daoism in relation to *hyōhō*. Then, one of its perhaps most formative influences — Chàn (Zen) Buddhism, and especially the metaphorical vocabulary borrowed from it in Japan, is explored with regard to *hyōhō* and underpinned with examples from the primary literature.

The second part of this chapter discusses, among others, the Japanese influences in the *Kaichū* (and especially key ideas related to the historical development of martial philosophy). Starting with a discussion of Japanese historical narratives and codes of law and conduct, it continues with a comparison of some of the ideas as found in treatises written by *samurai* of the Edo period, particularly Yamamoto Jōchō's *Hagakure*. However, we also try to trace the history of crucial concepts such as *bushidō* and “righteousness” (義), including the important, but largely unknown writings of both Nakano Shūmei's and Yamamoto Jōchō's mentor — the Saga scholar Ishida Ittei. Tracing the concepts' development and appropriation through textual examples of their employment throughout Chinese and Japanese history, as well as their treatment in the context of *hyōhō*, we aim to initiate a conversation about moving towards a more accurate history of martial philosophy in Japan, hopefully more nuanced than the romantic, but deeply flawed image of the honour-bound *samurai* who single-mindedly seeks to find the fulfilment of his duty in dying.