

The nio protectors, Agyo (right) and Ungyo (left) are named after particular sounds; Agyo who sounds "*ah*", meaning birth or beginning, and Ungyo who sounds "*un*", meaning death or ending. They also represent overt strength and latent strength respectively. These concepts are prevalent throughout Kendo but especially so in the Nihon Kendo no Kata.

Nihon Kendo no Kata & Kihon Bokuto Waza

KINGSTON KENDO CLUB • MARCH 17, 2013

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The Concept & Purpose of Kendo

Concept. To discipline the human character through the application of the principles of the sword.

Purpose. To mold the mind and body, to cultivate a vigorous spirit and through correct and rigid training, to strive for improvement in the art of Kendo, to hold in esteem human courtesy and honour, to associate with others with sincerity and forever pursue the cultivation of oneself. This will make one be able to love his/her country and society, to contribute to the development of culture and to promote peace and prosperity among all peoples.

The Mindset of Kendo Instruction

Significance of the Shinai. For the correct transmission and development of Kendo, efforts should be made to teach the correct way of handling the shinai in accordance with the principles of the sword.

Kendo is a way where the individual cultivates ones mind (the self) by aiming for shin-ki-ryoku-ichi¹ utilizing the shinai. The *"shinai-sword"* should be not only directed at ones opponent but also at the self. Thus, the primary aim of instruction is to encourage the unification of mind, body and shinai through training in this discipline.

Reiho - Etiquette. Emphasis should be placed on etiquette to encourage respect for partners, and nurture people with a dignified and humane character. Even in competitive matches, importance is placed on upholding etiquette in Kendo. The primary emphasis should thus be placed on instruction in the spirit and forms of reiho (etiquette) so that the practitioner can develop a modest attitude to life, and realize the ideal of koken-chiai².

Lifelong Kendo. Students should be encouraged to apply the full measure of care to issues of safety and health, and to devote themselves to the development of their character throughout their lives.

Kendo is a "*way of life*" that successive generations can learn together. The prime objective of instructing Kendo is to encourage the practitioner to discover and define their way in life through training in the techniques of Kendo. Thus, the practitioner will be able to develop a rich outlook on life and be able to put the culture of Kendo into use, thereby benefitting from its value in their daily lives through increased social vigour.



Figure 1: The AJKFs *concept and purpose* and the *mindset of instruction* embodies "do".

The *Concept and Purpose of Kendo* and the *Mindset of Kendo Instruction* were established by the All Japan Kendo Federation in 1975 and 2007 respectively.

¹ Unification of mind, spirit and technique.

² The desire to achieve mutual understanding and betterment of humanity through Kendo.

Nihon Kendo no Kata: "The Forms of Japanese Kendo"

Chapter Preview

THIS CHAPTER WILL SERVE as an introduction to the benefits of practicing and the formalities of the **nihon kendo no kata**³ (日本剣道の形, hereafter **kata**). There are ten **kata** in total, and these ten forms serve as the foundation for modern **kendo** (剣道) itself. Thus, grading requirements aside, diligent practice of the **kata** are essential to learning correct **kendo** form, technique, and meaning.

A Short History of the Kendo no Kata

The following excerpt⁴ discusses the history of the kata:

"Modern Kendo developed from actual armed combat into a Kendo involving Kata (Kumi-dachi), and ultimately into the kind of Kendo practiced today, in which the Shinai has replaced the sword. In other words, from serious dueling in which the opponents protected themselves with armor and fought with swords, Kendo developed sets of Kata, which are performed without the protection of armor but which make use of the experience gained in true combat.

These Kata⁵ were the object of repeated, diligent practice. As peace came to prevail in the world and as combat techniques altered entirely from those used in the past, actual-combat Kendo became impossible. Still Kendoka found that they could not be satisfied with nothing more than Kata in which no contact is made. Consequently, they evolved a Kendo in which actual strikes are possible because the weapon is the harmless Shinai instead of a sword.

Kata Kendo and Shinai Kendo, starting from the same point in the tradition of the martial arts, grew to perfection as they complimented and reinforced each other.

They have, however, come to be considered two entirely separate branches: Kata Kendo is called Koryu, the older style, Shinai Kendo is called Kendo proper. Each has its own distinct characteristics.

But perhaps a complete separation of the two is not so entirely desirable. At least they ought to interact on the technical level for the sake of improving and enriching the nature of Kendo as a part of physical training culture."

Correct and proper form is essential to learning kendo. This is why regular and diligent practice of the kata is of the utmost importance.

³ Terms within this text which appear in **bold font** are entries within the glossary which begins on p. 69.

⁴ All Japan Kendo Federation. *Nippon Kendo Kata Manual*. All Japan Kendo Federation, 2002 [2].

5 According to John Donohue. The Overlook Martial Arts Reader, vol 2. The Overlook Press, Peter Mayer Publishers, Inc., 2004 [5], "Kata were the embodiment of a given schools hyoho/heiho, te-no-uchi, and waza. Hyoho is the strategy behind or the methodology of a given school. Te-no-uchi is the skills necessary for the application of the hyoho, and waza are the situation specific application of the hyoho and te-no-uchi. These three components are inseparable from one another; hyoho is manifested in and by waza through te-nouchi." This is still true of the kendo no kata; they are the collection of waza through which we learn the hyoho and te-no-uchi of modern day kendo.

Benefits & Purpose of Practicing Kata

The following excerpt⁶ discusses the benefits of kata:

Correct directions for the datotsu. The Kata, which are executed with a wooden sword with an oval section hilt and a linear part called the Hasuji, demand strict attention to the directions of the Datotsu (Strikes or Thrusts). If these directions are wrong, the movements of the Datotsu will be retarded, and stability will be lost. Because they require careful attention to this point, Kata help develop harmonious action among the muscles. They also enable one to perceive correct Datotsu directions and to execute thrusts with stability.

Correct attack intervals. In competitive Kendo, so much attention is placed on striking quickly and to avoid being struck that the proper interval (Maai) between the contestants is often lost. Kata, however, are always performed with correct Datotsu no Maai, or intervals; and since all practice is executed in accordance with this interval, proper distances between the partners is clearly observed.

Correct body movements. In contrast with other Kendo, Kata are performed without protective coverings of any kind. They are, therefore, accompanied with a special kind of psychological tension. This mood helps ensure that the body movements are logical and effective because they are natural, accurate, and agile.

Sincerity inherent in martial techniques. Of course, in competitive Kendo, too, sincerity and concentration are important, but often the desire to win overrides other considerations. In Kata, on the other hand, the object of the Datotsu movements is to execute a cut (of course, no physical harm results). Furthermore, since no protective coverings are used on the body, in their uneasiness and desire to prevent themselves from being scored against, participants become more basically involved and intensely concentrated on their actions.

Developing kigurai. Kata are related to more than physical activity: they are in addition a pursuit of spiritual beauty. What is the spiritual beauty of Kendo? It derives from what is called Ki in Japanese. Ki is generally translated to spirit or heart, and its workings nurture a sense of dignity and strength in the mind and body. The physical movements of a man in whom the spirit of Ki is active reflect loftiness in agility and grace. For this reason the Kata require a kind of pride, or Kigurai. True progress in Kendo, too, leads to the same kind of pride that is nurtured by devoted training in the Kata. ⁶ All Japan Kendo Federation [2].

The Uchidachi-Shidachi Relationship

The relationship⁷ between **uchidachi** and **shidachi** may appear to be nothing more than "winner" and "loser". The following sections are dedicated to giving some insight into the true relationship.

Interpretation of "Uchidachi" and "Shidachi"

Uchidachi. The kanji for **uchidachi**, 打太刀, is made up of two components. The first is *uchi* (打) and the second *tachi* (太刀). *Uchi* translates to "*striking*" or "*to strike*", but it also translates to "*present*" (verb), i.e. to present something to someone. *Tachi* translates into "*sword*" or, more specifically, "*long sword*". **Uchidachi** can be interpreted as "*the striking sword*" or "*the presenting sword*", hence the role of the teacher.

Shidachi. The kanji for shidachi, 仕太刀, also has two parts. The first shi (仕) and the second tachi (太刀). Shi translates as "to serve" or "to do" (in a polite context). Again tachi translates to "long sword". Shidachi can be interpreted as "the serving" or "the doing sword", hence the role of the student.

Practicing the Kata

Uchidachi leads shidachi through each kata and presents them with opportunities and situations in which they must react with a certain waza (技). Uchidachi verifies each of shidachi's steps, helps correct for proper maai (間合), and ensures that shidachi maintains a strong spiritual focus (zanshin, 残心) throughout. As it is uchidachi's intent to teach shidachi these characteristics, the uchidachi is the one who is always "defeated" in the kata.

Shidachi directly follows the uchidachi's lead in each kata. As such, shidachi is a reactionary role. The student knows intellectually how to react to the threats and situations uchidachi presents through waza. The kata serve as a means to put this knowledge to use both physically, by performing the waza, and spiritually by exercising sen, seme, and zanshin. The shidachi is the role who always "wins" in the kata.

The **kata** can only be learned through regular practice, but in order for the **kata** to be of value a **connection** must be developed between the **uchidachi** and the **shidachi**. Initially, the **kata** are merely "a sort of dance" with one person winning and one person losing. The **connection** between **uchidachi** and **shidachi** is, and must become, much more than this.

For beginners, this **connection** will simply be learning the steps of the **kata**, and proper **maai**. Then, with practice, learning the timing of the **waza** used, learning to develop a spiritual presence in your posture and in your **waza**, until finally mastering the **kata**. It is at this point the **kata** can no

⁷ The relationship between the uchidachi and shidachi is difficult to fully understand, especially in modern times as the type of respect and devotion usually associated with it is rarely seen.

The uchidachi, with the intent of guiding the shidachi, strikes properly, accurately, at the correct time, and with full spirit in order to present the shidachi with an opportunity to practice their waza. By doing so, he fulfills his duty as teacher.

The shidachi is doing each of the waza in the kata, but by respectfully accepting the opportunities given to him by the uchidachi, he is also serving his commitment and obligation as student to his teacher.

There are different explanations as to the reason behind the steps in the kata. One is uchidachi gives opportunities to shidachi on purpose. The other is uchidachi is *forced* to move due to shidachi's pressure. Uchidachi leads shidachi through kata, but how does this correspond to shidachi forcing uchidachi to move? The key is that uchidachi must *verify* the shidachi's response before continuing. By verifying their response the uchidachi teaches shidachi how an opponent outside of the kata will react to this pressure. Uchidachi reacts in the sense of a teacher verifying a students progress and continuing with the lesson.

longer be viewed as "a dance" and the **connection** between the two roles simply as "winner and loser", but as an actual battle between two opponents. This is the ultimate goal of the **kata**; to teach us how to perform **waza** correctly and efficiently against our opponent in a calm and accurate fashion, but with the spirit and presence of two people who are striking and reacting as if their lives depended on it.

The following excerpt⁸ elaborates on the **connection** between **uchidachi** and **shidachi**.

"The heart of bujutsu is rei. The responsibility of a teacher is to communicate this to students. If this communication fails, students can develop incorrect attitudes and the true meaning of training is lost. Unfortunately, there is a great deal of abuse of power in Japanese budo⁹ today. In my opinion few teachers are teaching the principles of budo correctly. Rei in budo has become very artificial, resembling the old-style Japanese military hierarchy. The true meaning of rei is no longer expressed. We seem to be preserving only the worst parts of Japanese traditions and culture, and we need to consider ways to change this situation.

Bujutsu leads to rei. The instructor ideally behaves as an exemplar to lead students toward something higher. Rei is an expression of humility toward that higher existence. But some people, as they develop their skills and achieve higher rank, dismiss what they ought to have learned about rei. Those who fail to work as diligently to improve the spirit as they do to improve their techniques are likely to forget the proper humility of true rei. They are apt to become overconfident, proud, and patronizing. Spiritual development and technical development are entirely different things and there is not necessarily any relationship between them. Training in jojutsu, for example, has a wonderful quality because it can result in both sorts of development; spiritual growth leads to technical growth and vice versa. Development is not merely a matter of technique. However, if physical techniques are taught improperly or superficially, students will become confused. There will be even greater misunderstanding if the focus is only on the process of polishing techniques. We must never lose sight of the intent to 'correct and improve the spirit.' The only way to ensure this is to study under a master teacher.

In general, people misunderstand what a master teacher is. They can become confused, equating the idea of a master with that of an instructor or a senior. Unfortunately, as ones skill level increases, so, often, does the size of ones ego. Too frequently, younger people who are of high rank or who have received a license or scroll assume that they are qualified to be a teacher just because they have instructor certification, own a dojo, or have students. It is a grave error to believe that a person is a master teacher just because of a high rank or license. ⁸ Tsuneo Nishioka. Uchidachi and Shidachi. From the book 'Sword and Spirit'. Koryu Books, 1999 [11].

⁹ Budo and bujutsu both translate to "military arts", however budo refers to the spiritual side (improving oneself and spirit) while bujutsu refers to the technical side (mastering combat techniques). The author of this article considers the two as different aspects of a single, greater whole. Once, my teacher, Shimizu Takaji Sensei (1896-1978), told me not to copy the jo practiced by his junior fellow student Otofuji Ichizo Sensei. Unless one carefully reflects on what Shimizu Sensei really meant, this statement can be easily misunderstood. He knew that there were some differences between his way of using jo and tachi, and the way in which Otofuji Sensei used these weapons. Even in kata bujutsu, it is very natural for there to be differences in the form. That's because different people have different levels of technical understanding and different mindsets. This leads them to make movements in slightly different ways and they pass on these individual characteristics in their teaching. Shimizu Sensei was afraid that young students would notice these differences, get confused or suspicious, and think that one way or the other was wrong. He seemed to have been concerned about the inevitable errors that result when a student is unable or unwilling to follow just one teacher. He urged me to follow a single teacher, to the greatest extent possible, and to avoid confusing myself unnecessarily by looking around at other teachers.

Having more than one teacher can create serious problems in your training. On the other hand, insisting that students blindly 'follow one and only one teacher' can result in separatist cliques and prevent students of different teachers from being able to practice together. This distasteful situation still occurs in the Japanese martial arts world. The only solution is to wait for the spiritual growth of both the teacher and the disciple; then students can train under a single teacher and still benefit from interacting with students from other groups.

This is why an understanding of rei is so essential to the process of spiritual growth in bujutsu. One of the most profound expressions of rei lies in the interaction between uchidachi, the one who receives the technique, and shidachi, the one who does the technique. Unfortunately, even teachers often misunderstand the subtleties of uchidachi and shidachi in kata training. They fail to pass on to their students the difference in intent inherent in these two roles. Particularly in the classical traditions, the roles of uchidachi and shidachi are quite distinctive. Each has its own unique psychological viewpoint. It is essential that this distinct quality always be maintained. I believe that the difference in these two roles is the defining characteristic of kata training. Recently, I've come to the realization that it is not even worth training unless both partners properly understand this.

When an outsider watches kata, it appears that uchidachi loses and shidachi wins. This is intentional. But there's much more to it than that. Uchidachi must have the spirit of a nurturing parent. Uchidachi leads shidachi by providing a true attack; this allows shidachi to learn correct body displacement, combative distancing, proper spirit, and the perception of opportunity. A humble spirit is as necessary as correct technique for uchidachi. Deceit, arrogance, and a patronizing attitude must never be allowed in practice. Uchidachi's mission is vital. In the past, this role was only performed by senior practitioners who were capable of performing accurate technique and who possessed the right spirit and understanding of the role. Uchidachi must provide an example of clean, precise cutting lines and correct targeting, and must also convey focused intensity and an air of authority.

If uchidachi is the parent or teacher, then shidachi is the child or disciple. The goal is to acquire the skills presented by uchidachi's technique. Unfortunately, students often act as though they want to test their skills against those of the higher-ranked uchidachi. They consider this competition to be their practice. In fact, this leads to neither better technique, nor greater spiritual development, because the correct relationship between uchidachi and shidachi has been obscured. It is the repetition of the techniques in this parent/child or senior/junior relationship that allows for the growth of the spirit through the practice of technique.

The roles of uchidachi as senior and shidachi as junior are preserved regardless of the actual respective experience levels of the pair. Kata must be practiced so that trainees learn both to give and to receive. This is what makes technical improvement and spiritual development possible. Unfortunately, in jo practice, people sometimes think that they practice both roles merely to memorize the sequential movements of the two different weapons, tachi and jo. There are even some instructors who teach that the aim of Shinto Muso-ryu jojutsu is to learn how to defeat a sword with a stick. This is an error. If it continues, kata bujutsu may die out, because both the technique and the spirit of uchidachi will not improve.

These days there are fewer people who can perform the role of uchidachi correctly. I believe that bujutsu evolved into budo only by maintaining the idea of uchidachi and shidachi. This idea is a fundamental characteristic of the classical bujutsu. Although the Japanese arts, such as kenjutsu, iaijutsu, and jojutsu, have been transformed from 'jutsu' into 'do', if the proper roles in training are not preserved, the 'do' arts will veer off in the wrong direction. Obviously, there is a difference between attempting to preserve the proper distinction between uchidachi and shidachi yet not achieving perfection, and a complete lack of effort or understanding about the distinction. The existence of the intent or the quality of the intent is manifested in daily practice and actions. Those who have the eyes and experience to see can tell the difference.

However, my concern is that these days fewer people understand this concept. In the future there will be fewer still. People seem no longer to recognize that the existence of uchidachi and shidachi is the essence of budo training.

All things considered, I am convinced that the most important things I have learned from Shinto Muso-ryu and Shimizu Takaji Sensei are the roles of uchidachi and shidachi in kata. There is no way to transmit the kata of the Japanese classical traditions without a proper understanding of this spirit of giving and receiving. It is not right for seniors in the uchidachi role to mistreat, bully, or torment their juniors. On the contrary, their job is to guide and educate. In the same sense, it is also terrible to see shidachi assume an attitude that is essentially patricidal, and attempt to destroy the uchidachi. I can only say that such a spirit should never exist. Shimizu Sensei always said, 'You must train with me' [i.e. directly with your own teacher]. He constantly took the role of uchidachi. Even with beginners, he never relaxed his attention. He was always serious with everyone. He was never arrogant and never lorded it over another person. I believe that this attitude is the most important teaching of kata bujutsu, and Shimizu Senseis training was a wonderful example. This spirit is difficult to nurture, not only in jojutsu but in other situations as well. It is entirely different from a senior student or teacher showing off his skills to his juniors by treating them with arrogance and condescension. It is so easy to become trapped in a cycle of interaction that causes shidachi to react by attempting to compete with uchidachi. The guidance of a master teacher is absolutely essential to avoid this situation.

Uchidachi teaches shidachi by sacrificing himself, training as if he were going to be killed at any moment; this self-sacrifice embodies the spirit of teachers and parents. Kata training is of no use without understanding this. It is this spirit that allows shidachi to grow and polish his or her own spirit. Kata bujutsu teaches neither victory nor defeat, but rather how to nurture others and pull them to a higher level. That is budo."

Performing as Uchidachi

When performing as **uchidachi** it is your goal to present **shidachi** an opportunity to practice **waza**. **Uchidachi** teaches **shidachi** techniques by controlling pace, correcting distance, attacking with strong spirit, and verifying **shidachi**'s spirit and form before proceeding with the **kata**.

Performing as Shidachi

The **shidachi** uses the opportunities presented by the **uchidachi** to practice **waza**. The **uchidachi** is the teacher and you must *follow* him; wait for them to verify the steps you have done before continuing. If the **uchidachi** does not lead, the **shidachi** cannot follow.

Key Ideas for Uchidachi & Shidachi

Breathing. Uchidachi and shidachi should inhale as they assume their kamae and exhale until hodoku, breathing in unison.¹⁰

Pace. Uchidachi sets the pace of the kata and is the one who moves first.

Maai. Uchidachi corrects for distance if needed, never shidachi.

Verify. Uchidachi must verify shidachi's zanshin, kamae, maai, posture, spirit, etc... at *each step* of the kata *before* continuing.

Patience. Shidachi must be patient and let the uchidachi lead.

¹⁰ All Japan Kendo Federation [2].

Spirit. Shidachi must entice uchidachi to act or continue.

Beginning. Tachi (太刀) kata begin when uchidachi finds a chance to strike, kodachi (小太刀) kata begin when shidachi threatens with the kodachi.

Kata Conventions & Formalities

Kata Conventions

Footwork. All footwork in the kata is to be suri-ashi (摺り足).

Kiai. Uchidachi's kiai (気合い) is "Yah!", shidachi's is "Toh!".

Issoku Itto no Maai & Yokote-Kosa

There are two different maai used in the kata: issoku itto no maai (一足一刀の間合) and what is referred to as yokote-kosa (横手交差).

Issoku itto no maai. This is used when **uchidachi** and **shidachi** meet to *perform* a **kata**'s **waza**. For **kata** this is usually when the **bokuto** (木刀) cross at the **monouchi** (物打) just behind the **kensen** (剣先). It must be noted that **issoku itto no maai** is different for everybody and thus must be learned by the individual through practice. The position given here is a generalized approximation to be used as a starting point.

Yokote-kosa. Yokote-kosa is used when uchidachi and shidachi meet and will be performing *formality based actions*. This formal maai is when the bokuto meet with the yokote (横手) crossing.

Specifications of the Bokuto

	Total Length of Bokuto	Length of Tsuka
Tachi	Approx. 102cm	Approx. 24cm
–Monouchi	Approx. 20cm from the tip downward	
Kodachi	Approx. 55cm	Approx. 14cm
–Monouchi	N/A	

Bokuto Components

The components of the **bokuto** are shown in figure 4.

This short paragraph on when the kata "begins" encodes a lot of information relating to both the uchidachi-shidachi relation and to the riai (p. 59) of the kata.

According to Paul Budden. Looking at a Far Mountain: A Study of Kendo Kata. Tuttle Publishing, 2000 [3], "as recorded in the minutes of the 1932 Dai Nihon Kendo no Kata committee of inquiry, the kiai decided on were "yah" and "toh" as they correspond to the breathing of 'a' and 'un'; positive and negative. Traditionally 'yah' shows that one is mentally prepared and 'toh' is made at the moment of counter attack."



Figure 2: Issoku itto no maai.

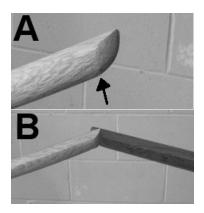


Figure 3: (A): Yokote. (B): yokote-kosa.

Table 1: Bokuto specifications.

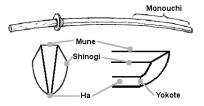


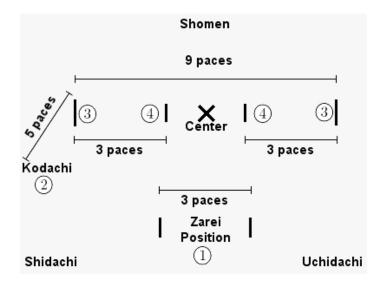
Figure 4: Components of the bokuto.

Kata Formalities

The following refer to numbered positions in figure 5 on p. 13.

Formalities Prior to the Kata

Kata initiation. Hold the **bokuto** (shidachi holds both tachi and kodachi) in your right hand. Assume seiza (正座), bokuto on your right, tsuba (鍔) level with your knee, and za rei (座礼) to your partner at ①. Stand up, bokuto in your right, and advance to the starting positions at ③. Before reaching ③, shidachi sets the kodachi down at ②. Turn toward the shomen (正面) and perform a 30° ritsu rei (立礼).



The za rei at ① and movement to the starting positions at ③ portion of kata formality are often not done regularly in order to allow for the space and time restrictions of dojo (道場) practices. Usually kendoka (剣道家) will simply start kata practice at ③ and do the formalities indicated on p.14.

If the **kendoka** carry a **kodachi** with them, however, it is set down at (2) before meeting their partner at (3).

Full kata formalities are sometimes cut short during practice in the dojo simply for time constraints. One should not assume that the full formalities are not practiced or that they are only important during demonstrations or gradings.

When shidachi is in seiza with both the tachi and kodachi, the kodachi is placed on the ground closest to the thigh. The blades of both tachi and kodachi must face toward the shidachi.

Figure 5: Formal layout and positions for the kata.



Figure 6: Holding the tachi and kodachi. The kodachi is held by the thumb and index finger and the tachi is held by the middle, ring, and little fingers.

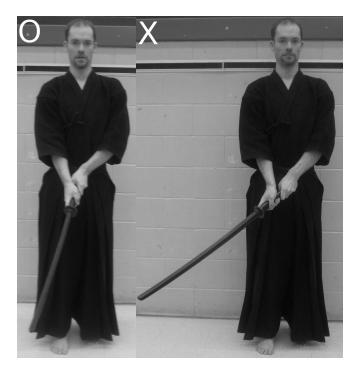
Beginning the Kata

These formalities are done at the start of the tachi and kodachi kata.

Formal beginning. From the starting positions¹¹, perform a 15° ritsu rei to your partner. Bring both hands to the front center of your body, tsuka-gashira (柄頭) at approximately chest level, and switch the bokuto to your left hand. Assume tai-to (帯刀). Take three steps forward using sliding ayumi-ashi (歩み足) to ④. On the third step, draw your bokuto and assume sonkyo (蹲踞). Stand up into ai-chudan (相中段). Simultaneously break (figure 7 p. 14) your kamae (構え) and take five steps back, using sliding ayumi-ashi, to ③. Assume ai-chudan.

Key Points:

- Breaking kamae, or hodoku¹² (解 <), refers to the uchidachi and shidachi lowering their kensen to knee level and turning the blade slightly to the left. The kensen must remain in a position between the width of ones shoulders.
- 2. You must always use sliding **ayumi-ashi** throughout the **kata**; never step, or worse, "stomp" with your feet.
- 3. Draw the **bokuto** simultaneously with your partner as you assume **sonkyo**.



Even though the movements and outcome are known in advance, the kata still represent a battle between opponents. Keeping this in mind, hodoku is not a signal of ones defeat, but a mutual agreement between opponents to end the current practice and move on to the next. Moving the kensen far outside the width of your shoulders degrades the connection between you and your opponent, breaking the feeling of tension that naturally comes from a sense of mutual fighting spirit. While practicing the kata, during rei, sonkyo, and even hodoku, maintain your spirit throughout. This is the essence of proper execution of the kata. See All Japan Kendo Federation [2].

¹¹ The kata begin at these positions (9 paces apart) as this is the distance at which one begins to feel threatened by a real blade. Information courtesy of Sensei M. Raymond.

Figure 7: (Left) Correct and (Right) incorrect hodoku positions.

¹² Hodoku is the verb meaning "to loosen". In all of the kata descriptions, the term hodoku is used exclusively to reference this breaking of kamae. Also referred to as kamae otoku.

The bokuto (and katana) have an oval shaped handle instead of the round handle of most shinai. If one holds the oval handle properly and does not adjust, or open, or loosen their grip in some manner when taking hodoku, the natural range of motion of the wrists makes it difficult not to assume the proper hodoku position.

Kamae

This section briefly describes the kamae used in the kata.

Chudan no Kamae (中段の構え)



Figure 8: Chudan no kamae. All kata begin and end with chudan no kamae. In chudan the left hand is one fists width in front of the navel and the kensen is directed toward the eyes or throat of the opponent. When changing from chudan to a kamae which requires ones feet to be altered, the feet ought to begin moving before the kensen.

Jodan no Kamae (上段の構え)



Figure 9: (Left to Right) Migi (右) and hidari (左) jodan no kamae both from the front and side respectively. When assuming migi jodan, raise your weapon straight over your head at a 30-45 degree angle. When assuming hidari jodan, step forward with your left foot and then bring your weapon overhead at a 30-45 degree angle. In hidari jodan, the weapon is also angled to your right 30-45 degrees.

Gedan no Kamae (下段の構え)



Hasso no Kamae (八相の構え)



Figure 10: Gedan no kamae. When assuming gedan lower your kensen such that it points toward your opponents knees.

Figure 11: Hasso no kamae. When assuming hasso step forward with your left foot and bring your weapon up and over to the right shoulder. The weapon has the same angle as hidari jodan.

Wakigamae (脇構え)



Figure 12: Wakigamae. When assuming wakigamae step backward with your right foot and bring your right hand up and over your right hip. Be sure your weapon is hidden behind your body.

Seigan no Kamae (正眼の構え)



Figure 13: Seigan no kamae. This form of chudan is used against a jodan player. The left hand is one fist width above and two fists in front of the navel with the kensen directed toward the opponents left kote. Compare this to chudan which has the left hand in line with and only one fist in front of the navel with the kensen directed toward the eyes or throat of the opponent. Hanmi Kamae (半身構え)



Figure 14: (Left) Chudan hanmi v.s. jodan, (Centre) chudan hanmi v.s. gedan, and (Right) gedan hanmi no kamae. Against jodan the kensen is level with the opponents face, against gedan it is level with the chest. In gedan hanmi the kensen is at knee level and angled slightly to the right representing mugamae (無構 λ).

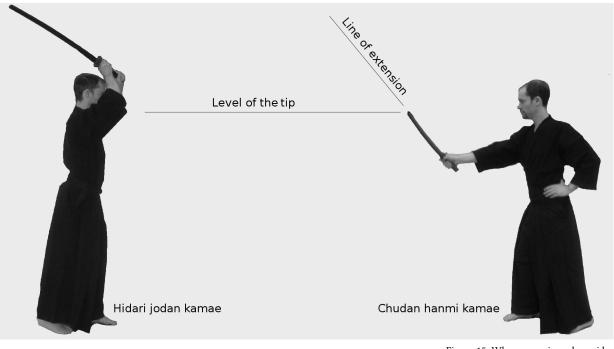


Figure 15: When assuming a hanmi kamae the kensen of the kodachi is level with the target area instead of its line of extension being aimed toward it. As shown here for kodachi kata #1, the kensen is level with the face of uchidachi instead of its line of extension being aimed toward it.



Demonstration of the precursor to the Nihon Kendo no Kata, the Dai Nihon Teikoku Kendo Kata (Great Imperial Japan Kendo Kata), by kendo masters (left) Hakudo Nakayama, Hanshi, 10th dan and (right) Takano Sasaburo, Hanshi, 10th dan before the emperor of Japan in 1929. Both men contributed to the creation of the standardized Nihon Kendo no Kata in 1917 with the official, finalized versions being published in 1933.



Kodachi Kata: Ipponme. (Left) Takano Sasaburo, Hanshi, 10th dan (uchidachi) and (Right) Hakudo Nakayama, Hanshi, 10th dan (shidachi).

Tachi Kata: "Long Sword Forms"

Chapter Preview

THE LONG SWORD FORMS, or **tachi kata**, refer to the first seven forms from the **nihon kendo no kata** in which both the **uchidachi** and **shidachi** use the **tachi**. This chapter will outline the steps for each of these **kata**. The details are by no means complete, but should be more than enough to serve as a reference. Following each **kata** is a list of key points which indicate common errors **kendoka** are likely to make, or important points on which one should focus.

The **tachi kata** can be subdivided into two groups.¹³ The first, containing **kata** 1-3, were designed specifically for use in schools to teach the notion of **shu-ha-ri** (守破離). The second group, containing **kata** 4-7, embodied the concept of **in-yo** (陰陽) as well as more complex ideas from Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

After the final (seventh) **tachi kata**, the finishing formalities are outlined for where only the **tachi kata** are being performed, or where the **kodachi kata**, p.39, are to follow immediately.



¹³ Yoshihiko Inoue. Kendo Kata: Essence and Application. Translated by Alex Bennett. Kendo World Productions, 2003 [8].

In the tachi kata, both opponents face off using the long sword. The uchidachi presents shidachi with various opportunities or reacts in particular ways to allow the shidachi to practice a number of different waza.

Figure 16: Dual tachi: kendo no kata 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Ipponme: "The First" (Shu)

Uchidachi	Shidachi
1. From chudan assume hidari	1. From chudan assume migi jodan.
jodan.	2. Starting with your right foot,
2. Starting with your left foot take	take three steps forward.
three steps forward such that you end up at issoku itto no maai .	 Dodge uchidachi's strike by tak- ing a small step back raising your
With strong kiai step forward with your right foot and strike	hands up and back. Maintain the jodan angle.
shomen with a feeling of sutemi (捨て身); try to cut through the shidachi entirely.	 Immediately step forward and strike the uchidachi's shomen with strong kiai.
 Your strike has missed and your bokuto is now below the gedan level, your torso leaning forward slightly. 	 Show alertness and exert control over the uchidachi, hindering their escape, by lowering your bokuto to the bridge of their
5. Verify shidachi 's strike then try	nose.
to escape, taking a small step back. Maintain the bend in your	6. Prevent the uchidachi 's escape

- by stepping forward on your left foot and assuming hidari jodan; 6. Try to escape again taking one more small step back.
- 7. Verify shidachi's zanshin, straighten your torso, and assume chudan.

hips.

- 8. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.
- exert zanshin. 7. As uchidachi returns to chudan, step back on your left foot and
- 8. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.

assume ai-chudan.

According to Jinichi Tokeshi. Kendo: Elements, Rules, and Philosophy. University of Hawai'i Press, 2003 [14]: "The first tachi kata teaches 'gi' and 'sen'. Gi translates to 'honesty, virtue, conviction, faith, justice, truth, and power". Sen is an abbreviation for sente which means "initiative" (of attack). Inoue [8] translates gi as righteousness and indicates that this kata represents 'shu' in shu-ha-ri.

Righteousness v.s. Justice

Other interpretations this kata are that uchidachi represents gi as "righteousness" and shidachi represents gi as "justice", giving us the scenario of "righteousness v.s. justice". This extends the meaning of the kata to a much larger scale, i.e., the ethics of an entire society. What constitutes as righteous can be interpreted on a personal level, differing from individual to individual depending on their singular points of view, motivations, and morals. "Justice" however must serve the society as a whole and is driven by the societys ethical beliefs. Hence shidachi must overcome uchidachi.

Key Points:

- After step 2 uchidachi and shidachi should be at issoku itto no maai, i.e., if the shidachi does not dodge the uchidachi's strike in step 3 they will be hit by the bokuto. *This is critical.*
- In steps 3 and 4 the **uchidachi**'s eye contact with **shidachi** is never broken.
- In step 3 for **shidachi** it is critical that you perform **nuki** (抜き) **waza** correctly; don't just step back, move your hands as well.
- Shidachi's nuki waza and counter attack should be one motion.
- In step 6 for **shidachi** assume **jodan** with a strong presence. This is what stops **uchidachi** from continuing their escape attempts.



Figure 17: Ipponme: first kata.

Nihonme: "The Second" (Ha)

Uchidachi	Shidachi
1. Assume chudan.	1. Assume chudan .
 Starting with your right foot, take three steps to issoku itto no maai. On your right foot, step for 	 Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward. Dodge the uchidachi's kote
3. On your right foot, step for- ward and strike shidachi 's kote (小手) with strong kiai .	strike by lowering your bokuto to gedan and, starting with your left foot, step to your rear left.
 Shidachi, after dodging your strike, counter attacks. 	 Step forward immediately with your right foot, and with strong kiai strike the uchi- dachi's kote.
5. Shidachi shows zanshin .	5. After the counter strike, exert zanshin . Your kensen should be on the centerline of the uchidachi while still maintaining the position of your kote strike.
 Verify shidachi's zanshin, step back one step, assume chudan. 	
7. Hodoku , and take five steps back to the starting position.	 Hodoku, and take five steps back the starting position.

Key Points:

- Uchidachi must complete the cut made toward the kote. The blade of the bokuto should be stopped at a position below where the kote of the shidachi *was* and parallel to the floor.
- The dodging/counter attacking motion of the **shidachi** is two steps, but it should be smooth and quick.
- In step 4 the shidachi should assume migi jodan as he raises up to strike.
- In step 5 the **shidachi**'s **kensen** should be angled toward the centerline of the **uchidachi** after the **kote** strike.

According to Tokeshi [14]: "Nihonme teaches us 'jin'. Jin is translated as 'benevolence', 'endurance', or 'patience'. Thus although the shidachi is capable of fatally striking the uchidachi, he strikes the kote instead and spares his life." Inoue [8] indicates that this kata represents 'ha' in shu-ha-ri.



• In step 6 as **shidachi** steps back into **chudan** be sure to control the **uchidachi** by directing your **kensen** toward their eyes.

Figure 18: Nihonme: second kata.

Sanbonme: "The Third" (Ri)

Uchidachi

- 1. From **chudan no kamae** assume **gedan no kamae**.
- 2. Starting with your right foot take three steps forward to **issoku itto no maai**.
- 3. Raise your **kensen** up from **gedan** to **chudan**.
- Before reaching ai-chudan, turn your bokuto slightly to the left, step forward with your right foot, and with strong kiai thrust to the shidachi's solar plexus¹⁴.
- Shidachi, after parrying, immediately counter attacks. Parry the shidachi's thrust.
 - Step back, starting on your right foot, and, in a small circular motion, bring your **bokuto** under and to the left of the **shidachi**'s **bokuto**.
 - Deflect the shidachi's thrust with the right shinogi (鎬) of your bokuto, making sure your kensen finishes centered at shidachi's throat.

Shidachi

- 1. From chudan no kamae assume gedan no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot take three steps forward.
- 3. Responding to **uchidachi**, raise your **kensen** from **gedan** to **ai-chudan**.
- 4. Nayashi ire-zuki (萎し入れ突き): parry uchidachi's thrust.
 - Step back, starting with your left foot, and turn your bokuto slightly to the left. Pull your hands back and use the left shinogi to parry the uchidachi's thrust by pushing their bokuto slightly down and left, making sure uchidachi's kensen is outside of your body. The uchidachi's blade is now dead allowing a counter attack.
- 5. Immediately counter thrust.
 - Straighten your blade, step forward with your right foot, and thrust to uchidachi's chest.

According to Tokeshi [14]: "Sanbonme teaches 'yu' or 'courage'. It also shows us 'kuraizume' which means 'to seize with superior poise'." All Japan Kendo Federation [2] defines kuraizume as "The feeling of walking forward, intent on an unstoppable thrust." Inoue [8] indicates that this kata represents 'ri' in shu-ha-ri.



Figure 19: From Noboru Shigeoka. Detailed Explanation of Japanese Kendo Kata (詳解日本剣道形). 1st Edition. Ski Journal Limited, 1977 [13], (Left) correct and (Right) incorrect parry of the uchidachi's thrust. Shidachi (Top) must be sure to actually move uchidachi's kensen such that its line of extension is *outside* of the shidachi's body. This renders the uchidachi's weapon "dead", putting uchidachi on the defensive, allowing the shidachi to press forward with a counter attack.

¹⁴ "Solar plexus" refers to the soft, depressed area just below the sternum.

Uchidachi

Shidachi

- The shidachi threatens your maai with his kensen by advancing forward again. Parry the second thrust of the shidachi.
 - Step back, starting with your left foot, and, in a small circular motion, bring 7. Uchidachi creates an open-your bokuto under and to the right of the shidachi's bokuto.
 Step back, starting with (kuraizume, 位詰め).
 Uchidachi creates an open-ing. Step forward confident three more steps, pressing into uchidachi's maai. With
 - Deflect the shidachi's thrust using the left shinogi. Again, be sure your kensen finishes centered on shidachi's throat.
- Lower your bokuto down and toward the right. Shidachi takes advantage of the opening; take three steps back attempting to escape.
- 8. Shidachi exerts zanshin.
- 9. Verify **shidachi's zanshin** then raise your **bokuto** back up to **chudan**.
- 10. You're in **ai-chudan** with the **shidachi**. Take three steps forward.
- 11. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 3, the **uchidachi** and **shidachi** must raise their **kensen** maintaining a sense of "tension".
- Shidachi's steps 4 and 5 should be one smooth motion.

- 6. Pressure the **uchidachi** with a thrust by stepping forward with your left foot. Thrust by returning to **chudan** and stepping forward powerfully, not by extending the arms (**kuraizume**, 位詰め).
 - Uchidachi creates an opening. Step forward confidently three more steps, pressing into uchidachi's maai. With each step, raise the kensen slightly until on the third step it is between uchidachi's eyes. When pressuring uchidachi in this manner (kuraizume) the kensen is angled upward while holding chudan, not by extending the arms.
- 8. Show zanshin.
- 9. As uchidachi begins to raise his bokuto, lower yours and take five steps back. By the end of the second step you should be in ai-chudan with uchidachi.
- 10. In **ai-chudan** continue moving back.
- 11. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.



Figure 20: Movement of the uchidachi's feet during their retreat, steps 5 through 7. Foot movement 1 corresponds to the uchidachi's step 5 and the assumption of a hidari shizentai and foot movement 2 corresponds to the uchidachi's step 6 and the assumption of a migi shizentai. Foot movements 3, 4, & 5 correspond to the uchidachi's step 7.

- In steps 5 and 6 the **uchidachi** should turn his body slightly but naturally, bringing the shoulder corresponding to his rear foot back slightly more than the other (**migi** and **hidari** shizentai (自然体)).
- In step 6, the **shidachi**'s thrust is not done by extending the arms but by moving forward from the hips.
- In step 7, **shidachi** raises the **kensen** from chest level to eye level *as they move forward*,¹⁵ not at the end of the movement or after they have stopped moving.

¹⁵ Inoue [8].



Figure 21: Sanbonme: third kata.

Yonhonme: "The Fourth" (In-Yo)

Uchidachi

- 1. From chudan assume hasso no kamae.
- three steps forward.
- 3. Raise your bokuto to hidari jodan and stepping forward with your right foot strike men.
- 4. Upon ai-uchi your kensen should be at eye level, and crossing the **shidachi**'s at the monouchi.
- 5. Lower your bokuto to chudan with the feeling of **shinogi o** kezuru; "shaving" the shinogi (鎬を削る) against the shidachi's. Adjust the maai if too close to the shidachi.
- 6. After verifying ai-chudan with the shidachi, turn your bokuto slightly to the left, step forward on your right foot and with strong kiai thrust at the shidachi's right lung. Uchidachi should lean forward slightly upon thrusting and maintain his gaze on the shidachi throughout.
- 7. Shidachi shows zanshin.
- 8. Verify shidachi's zanshin, then step back and assume chudan.

Shidachi

- 1. From chudan assume wakigamae.
- 2. Starting with your left foot, take 2. Starting with your left foot, take three steps forward.
 - 3. In response to uchidachi's jodan and cut, assume hidari jodan, step forward with your right foot and strike men ending in ai-uchi (相打ち) with uchidachi.
 - 4. Upon ai-uchi your kensen should be at eye level, and crossing the uchidachi's at the monouchi.
 - 5. Lower your bokuto to chudan with the feeling of shinogi o kezuru.
 - 6. Parry uchidachi's thrust and counter attack:
 - Push your left hand straight up tipping your kensen down to the right, and parry the uchidachi's thrust with the left shinogi.
 - While parrying, hiraki-ashi (開き足) to the front left.
 - Complete your step, bring the **bokuto** above your head and with kiai strike the uchidachi's men.
 - 7. Exert zanshin.
 - 8. Step back and to the right and assume ai-chudan.

According to Tokeshi [14]: "This kata teaches the concept of tsubazeriai." This refers to the idea of "shinogi o kezuru", or "shaving the shinogi" as one fights for center to both fight for and guard against an opening for attack. Inoue [8] indicates that these two kamae correspond to 'in' and 'yo' or 'yin' and 'yang'. Kata 4 through 7 all incorporate the concepts of 'in' and 'yo'.



Figure 22: Movement of the feet for uchidachi (Top) and shidachi (Bottom) during the thrust, parry, and counter attack, step 6.

Uchidachi

Shidachi

9. Hodoku, and take five steps
back using sliding ayumi-ashi to the starting position.
9. Hodoku, and take five steps back using sliding ayumi-ashi to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 3 uchidachi and shidachi should cut straight at men, not angled trying to hit into the opponents bokuto. The two bokuto should connect at the monouchi at about eye level.
- In step 5 **uchidachi** and **shidachi** should both be fighting for center. The sense of "combative tension" must not be relaxed while lowering the to **chudan**.
- In step 6 uchidachi should keep eye contact with shidachi.
- In step 6 shidachi's bokuto should cover the do while parrying. Also, the shidachi's left hand should be well *above* his head as he parries the uchidachi's thrust.
- During the parry in step 6 the **bokuto** should be in contact until **shidachi** begins the overhead cut.

Ai-Uchi and "Locking Swords"

The ai-uchi is often done incorrectly with uchidachi and shidachi striking at a rightto-left angle from jodan, cutting into the opponents bokuto in order to "stop it", when the strikes ought to come from overhead along the centerline as with any other men cut in kendo. This is from a misconception as to why/how the "locked swords" occur. The strike(s) are stopped by properly timed te-no-uchi, not by hitting into the oncoming sword. This relates to the use of kiri-otoshi (切り落とし) waza. In a potential ai-uchi, one can perform kiri-otoshi against their opponent by using te-no-uchi mid-strike while the other "waits" to do te-no-uchi at the usual time (upon striking). This causes a kiri-otoshi deflection allowing the user to strike men while simultaneously deflecting the opponents strike with their cut. If both do te-no-uchi early, as in this kata, the ai-uchi occurs with the bokuto naturally "locking" to each other stopping the incoming strike and any attempt at kiri-otoshi. Information courtesy of sensei K. Taylor. This also coincides with shidachi applying go sen no sen in this kata, see table 5, p. 59.



Figure 23: Yonhonme: fourth kata.

Gohonme: "The Fifth" (In-Yo)

Uchidachi	Shidachi
 From chudan no kamae assume hidari jodan. 	1. From chudan assume seigan no kamae .
2. Starting with your left foot, take three steps forward.	 Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward.
3. With strong kiai , strike the shidachi 's shomen with the intent of cutting him all the way through to his chin.	3. Step back and with the left shinogi use suriage (すり上げ) waza to parry the uchidachi's strike.
 Due to the shidachi's parry, the uchidachi's sword becomes dead and is smoothly lowered to gedan level, the kensen outside of the shidachi's body. Shidachi counter attacks. 	4. Immediately after parrying the uchidachi 's strike, step forward and with strong kiai strike the uchidachi 's shomen .
	5. Lower your kensen to the bridge of the nose of the uchi -
5. Shidachi exerts zanshin.	dachi while beginning to step
 Verify shidachi's zanshin and begin raising your kensen up to chudan. 	back your right foot. Once at the bridge of the nose, finish your step back and assume hidari jodan .
7. Assume chudan no kamae.	6. Step back lowering your
8. Verify ai-chudan and take three steps backwards starting on	kensen to chudan.
	 Assume ai-chudan with the uchidachi.
9. Hodoku , and take five steps back to the starting position.	8. Take three steps forward start- ing on your right foot.
	9. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 3, **shidachi**'s **suriage waza** must be done when **uchidachi**'s strike is *just* at the "point of no return", i.e., their strike is fully commited and unalterable. This is approximately when their **kensen** moves forward past their hands.
- Shidachi must perform steps 3 and 4 as one continuous motion.

Modern Kata: Chudan & Seigan

This is the only kata which retains the specificly named "seigan no kamae" after the 1981 revision to the kata descriptions by the AJKF. Previously chudan and seigan were interchangeable and it was to be understood which one was appropriate given the specific situation or kata. Specifically, kata 5, 6, and 7 all originally indicated the use of seigan no kamae.

- In step 4 the **uchidachi**'s sword becomes **dead**, due to **shidachi**'s parry, and is lowered to **gedan**. This is *not* part of the strike.
- In step 5 the shidachi should not bend their arms when lowering the kensen. Keep them straight as you lower and then transition into jo-dan¹⁶.

¹⁶ Information courtesy of H. Chiba Sensei, 8th Dan.



Figure 24: Gohonme: fifth kata.

Ropponme: "The Sixth" (In–Yo)

Uchidachi

- 1. Assume chudan no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot take three steps forward.
- 3. Shidachi begins to raise his kensen up into chudan.
- 4. In an attempt to control shidachi press your kensen down before shidachi assumes chudan.
- 5. Unable to stop shidachi, step back on your right foot and assume hidari jodan attempting to regain control.
- 6. In response to the shidachi's pressure step back on your left foot foregoing jodan and assume chudan.
- 7. After verifying ai-chudan step forward on your right foot and with strong kiai attack shidachi 7. Parry uchidachi's kote strike. with small kote.
- 8. After **shidachi**'s parry they counter with small kote. Keep your bokuto at kote level.
- 9. Drop your kensen to gedan, take a step to the diagonal back left. Shidachi exerts zanshin. Turn your hands to the left slightly to angle your blade toward shidachi.

Shidachi

- 1. From chudan assume gedan no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot take three steps forward.
- 3. Raise your kensen to chudan.
- 4. Uchidachi attempts to assert control by pressing his kensen down. Continue to pressure him by ignoring his attempt and assume chudan.
- 5. Uchidachi attempts to assert control with hidari jodan. With your right foot immediately step forward powerfully aiming your kensen at his left kote (seigan).
- 6. Due to the threat of your kensen uchidachi forgoes jodan and retreats into chudan. Assume ai-chudan.

- Step diagonally back/left.
- Use the right shinogi to perform suriage waza.
- 8. Immediately after the suriage waza with strong kiai step forward and strike small kote.
- 9. Inhibit the uchidachi from escaping with zanshin. Direct your kensen toward uchidachi's eyes and step forward on your left foot. As you finish your step assume a strong hidari jodan.

Advancing Against Jodan

In this kata shidachi stepping forward powerfully (with seigan) against uchidachi's jodan implies both a physically and spiritually powerful advance. It is the shidachi's seme toward uchidachi's left kote, one of the primary targets against a jodan opponent, which forces uchidachi to forgo the kamae. From S.D. Quinlan. Defeating Jodan. Article published at http: //www.kingstonkendo.org/kendo_info.html. 2011 [12], jodan is the aggressive "kamae of fire" with a modus operandi of initiating the attack and never retreating. If uchidachi doesn't feel threatened by your kensen, why would they retreat into chudan instead of initiating an attack as their kamae dictates? Shidachi must press toward the uchidachi powerfully upon the uchidachi assuming jodan, overwhelming them spiritually. Otherwise the movement is meaningless. This is crucial!

Uchidachi

Shidachi

- sume ai-chudan and then take three small steps¹⁷ to the back to the starting position.
- 11. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.
- 10. Verify shidachi's zanshin. As- 10. In response to the uchidachi step back on your left foot and assume ai-chudan. Take three small steps to the right back to the starting position.
 - 11. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.

17 Shidachi moved to the diagonal left during the kata and hence the return to ai-chudan is at a slightly off-center angle. After assuming ai-chudan both take three small steps to their right to return to their original starting positions.

According to H. Chiba Sensei there is no directly specified number of steps one must take to return to the starting position. The number of steps indicated here is specific to a particular group of senseis method of performing the kata.

Key Points:

- In step 5, the shidachi does not thrust as in tsuki, but invades the uchidachi's maai with his kensen by stepping forward powerfully.
- In step 6, at ai-chudan, shidachi must pressure uchidachi again, enticing his desperate kote attempt in step 7.
- In steps 7 and 8, the uchidachi's blade becomes dead due to shidachi's suriage waza but it remains at kote level.
- Steps 5, 6, 7, and 8 should be done smoothly and continuously.



Nanahonme: "The Seventh" (In-Yo)

Uchidachi

Shidachi

- From chudan take three steps forward starting with your right foot.
- Stepping forward on your right foot, turn your hands slightly to the left and make a thrust¹⁸ toward the shidachi's chest. The shidachi parries the thrust.
- 3. Return to chudan.
- 4. Verify **ai-chudan**, then attack the **shidachi**.
 - Take two steps forward starting with your left foot.
 - On the first step, raise the bokuto up to the migi jodan position and prepare to strike the shomen of the shidachi.
 - On the second step, and with strong kiai, strike the shidachi's shomen with a feeling of sutemi; strike with the intent to cut all the way through.
 - Your gaze will momentarily leave the **shidachi** as you finish your cut.

- 1. From **chudan** take three steps forward starting with your right foot.
- 2. Parry the **uchidachi**'s thrust.
 - Turn the **bokuto** slightly to the right, take a step back on your left foot, and extend your arms forward in a thrust. Receive the **uchidachi**'s thrust with the left **shinogi** pressing it upward.
- 3. Assume ai-chudan.
- 4. Respond to the **uchidachi**'s attack with **nuki waza**.
 - Maintain your gaze on uchidachi throughout the nuki waza.
 - Take a small step to the right with your right foot, bringing the **bokuto** to your left shoulder.
 - With strong kiai, step forward on your left foot cutting the uchidachi's do at the normal 45° angle.
 - Step forward with your right and, using your left as a pivot, turn toward the **uchidachi** as you drop down on your right knee, completing the cut to the **do**.

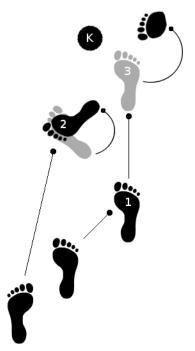


Figure 26: Shidachi's foot movements performing the nuki do, step 4.

¹⁸ According to Inoue [8], uchidachi is said to thrust with the feeling of *ki-atari*; a physical and spiritual attack but then waiting to see the resultant reaction.

Uchidachi

Shidachi

- 5. After **shidachi** completes his counterattack, turn your gaze to the left to look directly at him.
- 6. Verify **shidachi**'s **zanshin** and pivot to face the **shidachi**, returning to **chudan**.
 - Straighten your torso.
 - In a large swing bring the **bokuto** up to the **migi jodan** position.
 - Leaving your feet in their current positions, pivot to the left to face the **shidachi**. Your left foot is now forward.
 - Step back with your left foot, and lower the **bokuto** to **chudan**.
- 7. Take another step back with your left foot.
- 8. Verify **ai-chudan**, then take seven circular steps to the left in order to return to center.

- As the uchidachi returns his gaze to you, assume wakigamae while in the crouching position; exert zanshin.
- 6. As the **uchidachi** pivots to face you assume a crouched **chudan**.
 - As the uchidachi swings his bokuto up, the shidachi in a large swing raises his bokuto above his head.
 - Using the right knee as a pivot, straighten your legs to face the **uchidachi**.
 - Assume a crouched aichudan with uchidachi.
- 7. As the **uchidachi** steps back, step forward with your right foot to assume a standing **aichudan**.
- 8. Take seven circular steps to the left in order to return to center.

Key Points:

- In step 2, **shidachi** parries with the **shinogi** at the **monouchi**. The point of contact between the two **monouchi** should be shoulder height upon parrying.
- In step 4, **uchidachi** must strike with **sutemi** similar to **ipponme**; the torso bends slightly, **kensen** finishing at knee level.
- In step 4 as **shidachi**'s drops to his right knee, it should stay in line with the path along which he was stepping. **Shidachi** must maintain his gaze on **uchidachi** during the **do** cut.
- Shidachi's kiai ought to occur *during* uchidachi's, i.e., *ya-toh!-h!* v.s. *yah!-toh!*.
- Step 6 must be done quickly and smoothly.

• During step 6, it is a common error for the **uchidachi** to first assume **wakigamae** as he returns his gaze toward the **shidachi**, and then return the **bokuto** to **chudan**. This is incorrect.¹⁹ The motion to return the **bokuto** to **chudan** appears to pass through **wakigamae**, but the **kamae** itself is not taken.

¹⁹ All Japan Kendo Federation [2].



Figure 27: Nanahonme: seventh kata.

The numbers (1)-(4) refer to those found in figure 5 on p.13, duplicated here as figure 28.

Ending the Tachi Kata

Tachi kata end. The **uchidachi** and **shidachi** assume **sonkyo** at (4) and osame-to. Uchidachi and shidachi stand and take five steps back to (3). Bokuto are changed to the right hands and both partners perform a 15° ritsu rei.

If Kata Practice Ends After Tachi Kata

Kata practice finished. Uchidachi and shidachi turn to the shomen and perform a 30° ritsu rei. Uchidachi and shidachi return to (1) to again perform za rei to one another. Before reaching ①, the shidachi stops at ②, kneels, and retrieves his second bokuto.

If Kodachi Kata Follows Tachi Kata

Kodachi kata follow. The uchidachi assumes sonkyo at (3). Shidachi steps back then moves to (2), kneels, sets the tachi down, and then picks up the kodachi. As shidachi returns to (3), the uchidachi rises from sonkyo to meet him. The formalities for the **tachi kata** are then repeated: three steps to ④, draw and sonkyo, stand, hodoku, and finally five steps back to ③.

Tachi Kata Kamae & Waza Summary

	Shomen			
	9 paces			
50 13 p	(4) paces	X Center	④ ⊢3 pa	3 Ices
Řodachi ②	F	3 paces		
	I	Zarei Position	L	
Shidachi		1		Uchida

Figure 28: Formal layout and positions for the kata.

Shidachi

Kata	Uchidachi	Shidachi	Waza	Table 2: Tachi kendo no kata: kamae and waza.
Ipponme	Jodan	Jodan	Nuki	
Nihonme	Chudan	Chudan	Nuki	
Sanbonme	Gedan	Gedan		
-transition ²⁰	Chudan	Chudan	Nayashi ire-zuki	
Yonhonme	Hasso	Waki	Ai-uchi	
-transition	Chudan	Chudan	Kaeshi	
Gohonme	Jodan	Seigan	Suriage	
Ropponme	Chudan	Gedan		
-transition	Jodan	Seigan		
-transition	Chudan	Chudan	Suriage	
Nanahonme	Chudan	Chudan	Ai-tsuki	
-transition	Jodan	Chudan	Nuki	
				20 The term "transition" refers to a kernes

²⁰ The term "-transition" refers to a kamae change from the current kamae to another mid-kata.

Kodachi Kata: "Short Sword Forms"

Chapter Preview

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OUTLINE the **kodachi**, or short sword, forms from the **nihon kendo no kata** (hereafter **kata**). The details are by no means complete, but should be more than enough to serve as a reference. Following each **kata** is a list of key points which indicate common errors **kendoka** are likely to make, or important points on which one should focus.

The **kodachi kata** are fundamentally different from the **tachi kata** due to the weapon used. Specifically, it is said the **kodachi kata** begin when the **shidachi** threatens **uchidachi** with **iri-mi** (入り身, "*entering blade/body*") which is a threat unique to the **kodachi**. Whereas in the **tachi kata**, it is said the **kata** begin when **uchidachi** perceives an opportunity to strike. Both situations are dependent on the **shidachi**, however the implementation is different. See the chapter on "principles", p.59, for more information.

After the final (third) **kodachi kata**, the finishing formalities are briefly outlined.

Uchidachi Shidachi

During the kodachi kata the shidachi must defend himself against the uchidachi using only a kodachi. The mentality of the kodachi kata, and the traits shidachi must learn and show in order to succeed against the uchidachi, is that of a strong and continuous spirit. If the shidachi stops, or allows uchidachi to move unchecked, he will lose. The shidachi must understand the spirit of "iri-mi" in order to succeed.

Figure 29: The tachi and kodachi: kendo no kata 8, 9, and 10.

Ipponme: "The First" (Shin)

Uchidachi	Shidachi
 From chudan no kamae assume hidari jodan. 	1. From chudan, assume a chudan hanmi no kamae.
2. Starting with your left foot, take three steps forward.	 Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward keeping the mentality of "never stopping once you start".
3. Shidachi exerts pressure.	3. Pressure the uchidachi by "spiri- tually" assuming iri-mi .
 Verify the shidachi's spiritual iri-mi and, stepping forward on your right foot, strike the shi- dachi's shomen with the intent of cutting all the way through to the chin. 	 4. Parry the uchidachi's strike: Using shallow hiraki-ashi, take a step to the forward right, and raise your right hand straight above your head. As you lift up, turn your bokuto so the kensen points left, the blade toward you, and use the left shinogi to

- Due to the shidachi's parry, uchidachi's sword becomes dead and is smoothly lowered to gedan level. Shidachi counter attacks.
- 6. Shidachi exerts zanshin.
- 5. Upon deflecting the **uchidachi**'s strike, complete your step, and with **kiai** strike the **uchidachi**'s **shomen**.

parry the uchidachi's strike (uke-nagashi, 受け流し).

6. Step back on your left foot assuming katate (片手) migi jodan and exert zanshin. This kata teaches the confident spirit required for the kodachi to win over the tachi; the feeling of 'shin' or 'truth'. Inoue [8] indicates that this kata also represents 'shu' in shu-ha-ri.



Figure 30: Movement of the feet for uchidachi (Top) and shidachi (Bottom) during the parry and counter attack, steps 4 and 5.

Uchidachi	Shidachi
 Verify shidachi's zanshin and, turning to face shidachi, raise your bokuto to chudan. 	 Lower your bokuto to assume ai-chudan.
 Stepping diagonally back on your left, return to your original position. 	 Stepping left, return to your original position.
9. Hodoku, and take five steps back to the starting position.	9. Hodoku , and take five steps back to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 1, shidachi's kensen is at the level of uchidachi's face.
- In step 3, **shidachi**'s **iri-mi** is not physical but spiritual; you are applying seme (攻め).
- The timing for steps 1–4 is crucial. Even though there is a "physical" pause in this **kata** at step 3 the spirit of both must continue to press forward, especially for the **shidachi**.

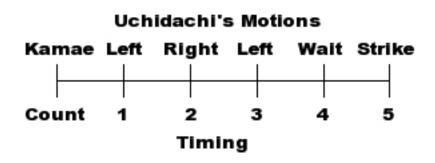


Figure 31: Timing for the uchidachi's movements in steps one through four of kodachi ipponme.

²¹ Information courtesy of H. Chiba Sensei.

- The goal²¹ of the **kodachi kata** is to teach **shidachi** to maintain a forward moving spirit, i.e., if **shidachi** "stops" they will die.
- In step 5, shallow **hiraki-ashi** refers to the fact that **shidachi** should step forward more than they do to the right. About 90% forward 10% to the right would be accurate.
- Shidachi must perform steps 4 and 5 as one smooth motion.
- Uchidachi's blade becomes dead after the shidachi's deflection in step 4, and it is lowered to knee level. This is not part of the strike.

The term "stop" refers to stopping both the physical and spiritual motion of shidachi toward uchidachi. If shidachi can maintain these forward motions then the kodachi can succeed v.s. the tachi. This is the key to correct and meaningful kodachi kata.



Figure 32: Kodachi ipponme: first kodachi kata.

Nihonme: "The Second" (Gyo)

Uchidachi

- 1. From chudan no kamae assume 1. From chudan assume a chudan gedan no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward.
- 3. Raise your bokuto to chudan.
- 4. Verify the shidachi's control over your bokuto and, in an attempt to regain control, draw back your right foot and assume wakigamae.
- 5. Shidachi maintains control threatening your maai with irimi. Shift from wakigamae to hidari jodan and with strong kiai strike shidachi's men with the intent to cut through to the chin.
- 6. Due to shidachi's parry uchidachi's sword becomes dead and is lowered to gedan level. Shidachi counter attacks.
- 7. Shidachi exerts zanshin.

Shidachi

- hanmi no kamae.
- 2. Starting on your right foot take three steps forward.
- 3. Control uchidachi's bokuto by pressing yours downward, blade to the right.
- 4. Straighten your blade (iri-mi, kensen toward the throat) and step forward (seme-komu, 攻め込む) threatening uchidachi.
- 5. Parry uchidachi's strike:
 - Using shallow hiraki-ashi take a step to the front left, and raise your right hand above your head.
 - As you lift, turn the **bokuto** so the kensen points right, the blade faces you. Receive uchidachi's strike using the right shinogi (uke-nagashi).
- 6. Having parried uchidachi's strike complete your step and with kiai strike shomen.
- 7. Exert zanshin:
 - Grab uchidachi's right forearm with your left hand; pull slightly to restrict movement. At the same time shift your right hand to your right hip.
 - Point your kensen at uchidachi's throat, blade angled slightly to the right.

This kata embodies the feeling of 'gyo' from 'shin-gyo-so'; a transition from the absolute. Also according to Inoue [8] this corresponds to 'ha' in 'shu-ha-ri'.

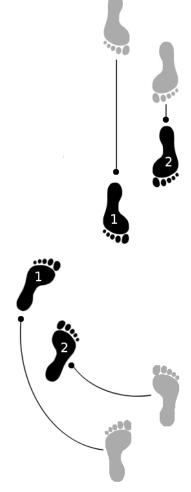


Figure 33: Movement of the feet for uchidachi (Top) and shidachi (Bottom) during the parry and counter attack, step 5.

Uchidachi

Shidachi

- 8. Verify **shidachi**'s **zanshin** and return to your original position, assuming **chudan**.
- Return to your original position, controlling uchidachi's blade. Assume ai-chudan.
- 9. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.
- 9. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 1 shidachi's kensen is at the level of uchidachi's chest.
- In step 4 as **uchidachi** takes **wakigamae** be sure the **bokuto** does not come above the level of **shidachi**'s **kensen**.
- In step 5 shallow hiraki-ashi is the same as kodachi ipponme.
- In step 7 shidachi's bokuto moves to his hip as he restrains uchidachi.



Figure 34: Kodachi nihonme: second kodachi kata.

Sanbonme: "The Third" (So)

Uchidachi

- 1. Assume chudan no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward.
 - As you begin the second step, swing your bokuto up into the migi jodan position. On the third step, and with strong kiai, strike the shidachi's men with the intent of cutting through to the chin.
- 3. Shidachi parries your strike.
- 4. After the shidachi has parried your attack, maintain your spirit and strike again. Quickly swing your bokuto up above your head, step forward on your left foot, and strike the shidachi's right do (no kiai).

Shidachi

- 1. From chudan assume a gedan hanmi no kamae.
- 2. Starting with your right foot, take three steps forward.
 - As you begin the second step, bring the kodachi to hanmi chudan, kensen at approximately chest level, and attempt iri-mi. Parry their strike on your third step.
- 3. Parry the uchidachi's strike.
 - On your third step, raise your **bokuto** up from **iri-mi**, receive the strike on the left **shinogi** (**suriage**).
 - Using the momentum of their strike, push their bokuto down and to the left (suriotoshi, すり落とし).
- 4. Parry the uchidachi's strike.
 - Use shallow **hiraki-ashi** to the forward left.
 - Swing your bokuto and torso to your right as if cutting. Your kodachi should be angled at about 30°-45° to match the angle of the incoming do strike.
 - Parry the uchidachi's do strike with your left shinogi (suri-nagashi, すり流し).

According to Tokeshi [14]: "This kata teaches the value of life. The ultimate goal of kendo is harmonious existence, not annihilation. No one is harmed in this kata." Also, the shidachi's assuming of the gedan hanmi no kamae is said to express or relate to the notion of mugamae. This kata embodies the feeling of 'so' from 'shin-gyoso'; the essence of a form but independent from it. Also according to Inoue [8] this corresponds to 'ri' in 'shu-ha-ri'.



Figure 35: Movement of the feet for uchidachi (Top) and shidachi (Bottom) during the suri-nagashi and suri-komi, steps 4 and 5.

Shidachi

- 5. Shidachi performs suri-komi (すり込み).
- 5. Advance on the **uchidachi** with **suri-komi**.
 - With strong kiai, slide your bokuto up to uchidachi's tsuba as you step toward them.
- 6. Restrict the uchidachi.
 - Grab underneath **uchidachi**'s right arm above the elbow; push up to lock it.
- 7. Maintain control over **uchidachi** and exert **zanshin**.
 - Follow **uchidachi** as he takes three steps.
 - At the end of the third step bring your right hand to your hip, blade angled slightly to the right, **kensen** toward the **uchidachi**'s throat. Exert **zanshin**.
- 8. Release **uchidachi** and return to your original position, in **ai-chudan**.
- 9. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.

Key Points:

- In step 3, the **shidachi**'s **kensen** ought to still be toward the **uchidachi** after the **suri-otoshi**; don't bring it outside of their body while sweeping their **bokuto** aside²².
- In step 4, **shidachi** should not raise their arm up, exposing their **do**, as they pivot to the right to perform **suri-nagashi**; move the **kodachi** across your body from the **suri-otoshi** position while covering the **do** with the arm/elbow.
- In step 5 when the shidachi performs suri-komi, at the moment the kodachi meets the tsuba of the uchidachi's tachi, the shidachi's blade should be pointing downward.

²² Information courtesy of H. Chiba Sensei.

- Shidachi attempts to restrict your mobility. The shidachi's hold on you will cause you to have dead hands.
- 7. Try to escape the **shidachi** by taking three diagonal steps to your left rear. **Shidachi** follows and exerts **zanshin**.
- 8. Verify **shidachi**'s **zanshin**, return to your original position, and assume **chudan**.
- 9. **Hodoku**, and take five steps back to the starting position.

- When the **shidachi** restrains the **uchidachi**, the upward push from the **shidachi** on **uchidachi**'s arm along with the **kodachi** acting as a sort of pivot, causes **uchidachi** to be in a position where he has **dead hands**.
- In step 7, **uchidachi** steps right-left-right and **shidachi** steps left-right-left.



Figure 36: Kodachi sanbonme: third kodachi kata.

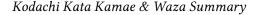
The numbers ①-④ refer to those found in figure 5 on p.13, duplicated here as figure 37.

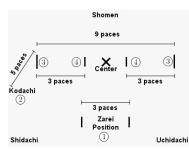
Ending the Kodachi Kata

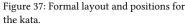
Kodachi kata end. The **uchidachi** and **shidachi** assume **sonkyo** at ④ and **osame-to**. Both opponent stand and take five steps back to ③. **Bokuto** are changed to the right hand and both opponent perform a 15° **ritsu rei**.

Ending Kata Practice

Kata practice finished. Both opponent turn to the **shomen** and perform a 30° **ritsu rei**. **Uchidachi** and **shidachi** return to ① to again perform **za rei** to one another. Before reaching ①, the **shidachi** stops at ②, kneels, and retrieves his second **bokuto**.







Kata	Uchidachi	Shidachi	Waza	Table 3: Kodachi kendo no kata: kamae and waza.
Ipponme	Jodan	Chudan hanmi		
-transition ²³	Jodan	Iri-mi (S)	Uke-nagashi	
Nihonme	Gedan	Chudan hanmi		
-transition	Chudan	Iri-mi (S)		
-transition	Waki	Iri-mi (P)		
-transition	Jodan	Chudan hanmi	Uke-nagashi	
Sanbonme	Chudan	Gedan hanmi		
-transition	Chudan	Iri-mi (P)	Suriage,	
			Suri-otoshi,	
			Suri-nagashi,	
			Suri-komi	²³ The term " <i>-transition</i> " refers to a kamae
				²³ The term <i>-transition</i> refers to a kamae

²³ The term "*-transition*" refers to a kamae change from the current kamae to another mid-kata. Also note that "Iri-mi (S)" and "Iri-mi (P)" refer to spiritual and physical iri-mi respectively.

Kihon Bokuto Waza: "Fundamental Techniques Using Bokuto"

Chapter Preview

THIS CHAPTER GIVES A brief summary on the purpose and practice of the bokuto ni yoru kendo kihon waza keiko ho (木刀による剣道基本稽古法) or "basic kendo practice method by using bokuto".

	Shikake Waza: Attack Initiation Techniques			
1.	Ippon Uchi no Waza	(Single strike techniques)		
2.	Ni/Sandan no Waza	(Two/three step techniques)		
3.	Harai Waza	("Sweeping aside" opponents weapon)		
4.	Hiki Waza	(Techniques while withdrawing)		
	Oji Waza: Techniques	Oji Waza: Techniques for Responding to Attack		
5.	Nuki Waza	(Dodge and counter attack techniques)		
6.	Suriage Waza	(Parrying opponents incoming strike)		
7.	Debana Waza	(Attacking at the initiation of a strike)		
8.	Kaeshi Waza	(Receive and counter attack techniques)		
9.	Uchi-otoshi Waza	("Redirection" techniques)		

Table 4: The Bokuto Waza.

Purpose of the Bokuto Waza

Purpose. A means through which **shikake** (しかけ) and **oji** (応じ) **waza** can be introduced, an introductory exercise in **zanshin**, a stepping stone for more difficult **waza**, and a way in which to remind **kendoka** of the connection between the **shinai** (竹刀) and **bokuto** to the **katana** (刀).

Bokuto Waza or "Bokuto Kata"?

Bokuto waza have much in common with the **nihon kendo no kata**, however they are also fundamentally different.

Bokuto waza are performed in pairs as are the kata, however the formal roles of uchidachi and shidachi do not exist. Instead, motodachi (元立ち) and kakari-te (掛手) are both *equal* participants.

The formalities for the **bokuto waza** are the same as those for the **kata**, however the initial and final **za rei** done in the **kata** are not present. See p.14.

The **bokuto waza** are a stepping stone to teach other **waza** as seen fit by the instructor. The intent is to serve as *adaptable* teaching aids, hence **bokuto** *waza* v.s. **bokuto** $kata^{24}$.

The **bokuto waza** can be directly translated into **shinai kendo**. Because of this direct link, use of the **bokuto** during practice will help illustrate the connection between a **shinai** and the **katana**.

Formalities of the Bokuto Waza

Formalities for the opening, practice, and closing of the **bokuto waza** are the same as that of the **nihon kendo no kata** save for the **za rei**. These formalities can be shortened, in a predefined manner²⁵, in order to speed up the process during repeated practice.

Shortened Bokuto Waza Formalities

Initial formality. Motodachi and kakari-te perform rei, tai-to, three steps into sonkyo, stand, hodoku, and five steps back. Motodachi and kakari-te come to chudan no kamae and take three steps toward one another coming to issoku itto no maai. This is the same standard formality done in the nihon kendo no kata. However when using the shortened formalities for the bokuto waza this is done only once at the start of practice. At the very end of practice sonkyo is again done followed by the standard five steps back and rei.

During the remainder of practice a shortened version of **hodoku**, withdraw, **kamae**, advance can be used.

Shortened formality. Motodachi and kakari-te hodoku and kakari-te takes one step back while the motodachi stays in place. Both return to chudan together. Kakari-te steps forward to issoku itto no maai and performs the required waza.

²⁴ Kata have a more static connotation to them; they are unchanging over many years. The bokuto waza are meant to introduce basics, but to also be freely adaptable by the instructor as an aid in teaching various waza.

²⁵ This shortening of formality was defined by the AJKF. Information courtesy of M. Kawabe Sensei.

Kihon Bokuto Shikake Waza

Chapter Preview

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH of the **bokuto waza** begin with the **motodachi** and **kakari-te** in **chudan no kamae** *after* the **kakari-te** has stepped into **is-soku itto no maai**, i.e., the, long or short version, intro formalities for the exercise have already been completed.

The final step in each description is that of both sides returning to **chudan no kamae** at **yokote-kosa**, p.12, where the appropriate formalities can be performed.

Important Points for the Kihon Bokuto Shikake Waza

Strikes. It is important to note that all of the attacks in the **bokuto** (**shikake**) **waza** are to be "big" (overhead) strikes, **tsuki** being an obvious exception.

Motodachi & Opening Targets. Also important to note is that when **motodachi** opens a target for **kakari-te**, **motodachi** should *not* move their **kensen** outside of the width of **kakari-te**'s shoulders as well as keeping it near shoulder height²⁶. More specifically, when opening **men** and **kote** the **motodachi**'s **kensen** ought to point to **kakari-te**'s shoulder, whereas for **tsuki** it ought to point toward their collarbone.

The kihon bokuto shikake waza are:

- 1. Ippon uchi no waza: men (面), kote (小手), do (胴), tsuki (突き), p.52
- 2. kote→men, p.53
- 3. harai men (払面), p.53
- 4. hiki-do (ひき胴), p.54

Note that in the bokuto waza one through four, the kakari-te must enter issoku itto no maai before striking each target.

²⁶ Do is the exception to this as motodachi should raise the bokuto fully overhead into migi jodan.

Ipponme: Men, Kote, Do, Tsuki

Motodachi

- Kakari-te
- (1) Open men by moving the kensen to the right.
- (2) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (3) Move the kensen back to ai-chudan b
- (4) Open kote by moving the kensen up and to the left.
- (5) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (6) Move the **kensen** back to **ai-chudan**.
- (7) Open do by raising the bokuto overhead at 45°.
- (8) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin. (8) Take a small step back and
- (9) Move the kensen down to ai-chudan.
- (10) Open tsuki by moving the kensen slightly to the right.Step backward one step when kakari-te thrusts.
- (11) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (12) Return to **chudan** and step forward.

- (1) Step forward and strike **men**.
- (2) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat²⁷.
- (3) Step back into proper maai.
- (4) Step forward and strike kote.
- (5) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
- (6) Step back into proper maai.
- (7) Step forward and strike migi do.
- (8) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
- (9) Step back into proper maai.
- (10) Step forward and thrust tsuki.
- (11) Pull your thrust back, then take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
- (12) Step back into ai-chudan at yokote-kosa.

While each person has their own issoku itto no maai, it is an obvious extension that it is also different for *each target* which is why the descriptions state "*step back into proper maai*" instead of "*…into ai-chudan*" in steps 3, 6, and 9. As a general approximation for men, the monouchi should cross at the midpoint, while for kote the tips should just cross. Do is slightly closer than men, and tsuki is between both men and kote. The desired depth of the "cut" in the bokuto waza is deeper than in shinai kendo which is why, to some, these distances seem a bit close.

It is important to note that your bokuto must be pulled back from the tsuki *before* you step back for zanshin in step 11.

²⁷ The step back is relatively small as the kakari-te needs to maintain control over the motodachi and be ready for a potential counter. Also, one does not simply step back and leave their hands and bokuto extended in the same position of their strike. As one steps back to exert zanshin, the hands are pulled back into a slightly "extended chudan" position; a transition between their strike and chudan kamae.

Nihonme: Kote \rightarrow *Men*

Motodachi

- (1) Open kote by moving the kensen up and to the left.
- (2) Step back and move your kensen to the right. Move the **kensen** to the right by going underneath the kakari-te's bokuto.
- (3) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (4) Return to ai-chudan.
- (5) Step forward while in aichudan.

Sanbonme: Harai Men

Motodachi

Kakari-te

Kakari-te

throat.

yokote-kosa.

(1) Step forward and strike kote.

(2) Step forward and strike men.

point toward the motodachi's

(3) Take a small step back and

(4) Step back into ai-chudan at

(5) Step back while in ai-chudan.

- (1) From issoku itto no maai the (1) From issoku itto no maai and kakari-te breaks your kamae by using harai waza.
- (2) The kakari-te continues forward and strikes shomen.
- (3) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (4) Return to ai-chudan.
- using the omote (表) shinogi, begin²⁸ your step forward and as you move break the motodachi's kamae by sweeping their kensen to the left.
 - (2) After breaking their kamae finish your step forward and strike the motodachi's men.
 - (3) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
 - (4) Step back into ai-chudan at yokote-kosa.

The kote and men strikes ought to both be large swings.

Do not "wind up" for the harai motion by moving the kensen in the opposoite direction first. The kensen ought to move from center to the left, not right-then-left. The harai motion should also originate equally as much from the hips as the hands.

²⁸ The difficult part of this waza is that the harai motion and the men strike are not two distince steps. The harai motion should be done as you are stepping in and the men strike coming out on the same step.

Yonhonme: Hiki-Do

Motodachi

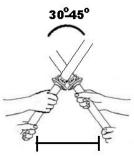
- Receive the kakari-te's men strike with the omote shinogi of the bokuto.
- (2) Step forward and enter tsubazeriai²⁹ (鍔迫り合い) with the kakari-te.
- (3) The kakari-te presses your hands down as if to create a shomen suki (隙).
- (4) Press your hands upward in response to the kakari-te.
- (5) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (6) Step back and assume aichudan.

Kakari-te

- (1) Step forward and strike **shomen**.
- (2) Your strike having been received, step forward and into tsubazeriai with the motodachi.
- (3) Press the hands of the motodachi downward³⁰.
- (4) As the motodachi begins to bring his bokuto up, bring your bokuto up overhead, step back and strike migi do.
- (5) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
- (6) Step back into ai-chudan at yokote-kosa.

²⁹ It is important that the motodachi and kakari-te are in the proper tsubazeriai position for this waza to work correctly and smoothly. Figure 38 shows proper tsubazeriai with shinai. Note the separation of the left hands, the angle of the weapons, and especially where the weapons connect with one another; these points are crucial.

³⁰ Pressing the motodachis hands downward is done by using your left hand as a pivot and moving your right hand in a small forward/down semi-circle, see figure 39. Don't jerk your hands downward trying to pull their hands down. This waza will work well only if in proper tsubazeriai.



Left hands are separated and are at the same position for that of Chudan no Kamae.

Figure 38: Side view of the proper tsubazeriai position.

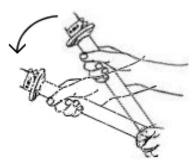


Figure 39: Use the left hand as a pivot to move the right hand forward and down to push the motodachis hands downward in step #3.

Kihon Bokuto Oji Waza

Chapter Preview

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF EACH of the **bokuto waza** begin with the **motodachi** and **kakari-te** in **chudan no kamae** *after* the **motodachi** has stepped into **issoku itto no maai**. It is assumed that the, long or short version of, intro formalities for the exercise have already been completed.

The final step in each description is that of both sides returning to **chudan no kamae** at **yokote-kosa**, where the appropriate formalities can be performed.

Important Points for the Kihon Bokuto Oji Waza

Strikes. It is important to note that all of the attacks in the **bokuto** (**oji**) **waza** by both **motodachi** and **kakari-te** are to be "big" (overhead) strikes, save for **waza** #7 where **kakari-te** performs a "small" **debana kote**.

Zanshin. In the **bokuto** (oji) waza, save for waza #7, there is no explicit movement used to represent **zanshin** as there were in the (**shikake**) **bokuto** waza, i.e. pointing to the throat of the motodachi. Instead, the **zanshin** is understood to occur during the motions after the **kakari-te** strikes.

The kihon bokuto oji waza are:

- 5. Nuki waza: men, nuki do, p.56
- 6. Suriage waza: kote, suriage men, p.56
- 7. Debana waza: debana (出ばな) men, p.57
- 8. Kaeshi waza: men, kaeshi (返し) do, p.57
- 9. Uchi-otoshi waza: do, uchi-otoshi (打ち落とし) men, p.58

Note that it is the *motodachi* who enters issoku itto no maai during these waza and *not* the kakari-te. This is because the motodachi initiates all strikes in waza five through nine, not the kakari-te.

Gohonme: Men, Nuki Do

Motodachi

Kakari-te

- (1) Step forward and strike **shomen**.
- (2) While turning slightly to the left to align yourself to face the kakari-te, take a step back and assume chudan.
- (3) While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions.
- (1) Dodge the motodachi's strike by taking a step to the forward, diagonal right while simultaneously striking migi do; your body is facing forward however your gaze should be toward the motodachi.
- (2) The motodachi turns to to face you. As he does, turn to face him and take a step back along the off-center angle and assume chudan.
- (3) While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions and into yokote-kosa.

Ropponme: Kote, Suriage Men

Motodachi

- Step forward and strike the kakari-te's kote.
- (2) Step back and assume aichudan.

Kakari-te

- As the motodachi strikes, step back and perform suriage waza with the ura shinogi. Then immediately, i.e., in a continuous motion, step forward and strike men.
- (2) Step back and assume aichudan at yokote-kosa.

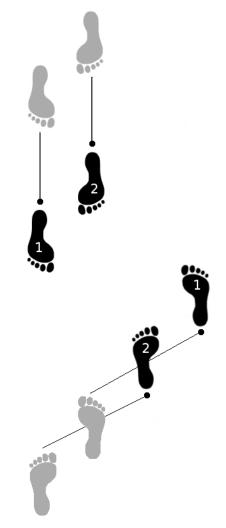


Figure 40: Kakari-te completes the do strike facing the motodachi.

As with bokuto waza #3, do not "wind up" and hit the opponents bokuto. The deflection comes from the wrists and originates in the hips. The kensen should remain primarily centered throughout the motion.

Nanahonme: Debana Kote

Motodachi

- (1) Begin the motion of a small strike: take a half step³¹ forward with the right foot and press the kensen slightly upward from chudan as if initiating a strike.
- (2) Wait for kakari-te's zanshin.
- (3) Take a half step back and return to **chudan**.

Happonme: Men, Kaeshi Do

Motodachi

- (1) Step forward and strike men. (1) As motodachi begins his
- (2) While turning slightly to the left to align yourself to face the kakari-te, take a step back and assume chudan no kamae.
- (3) While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions.

Kakari-te

- At the moment the motodachi begins to move, step forward and strike a "small" kote.
- (2) Take a small step back and point toward the motodachi's throat.
- (3) Take a step back into aichudan at yokote-kosa.

Kakari-te

As motodachi begins his strike, begin a step to the forward diagonal right similar to nuki do. During your step receive³² the motodachi's strike with the omote shinogi of the bokuto. Immediately upon receiving the strike, complete your step to the forward diagonal right and strike migi do.

- (2) The motodachi turns to face you. As he does, turn to face him and take a step back along the off-center angle and assume chudan.
- (3) While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions and into yokote-kosa.

³¹ The half step refers to moving with only one foot, in this case the right, as compared to the standard complimentary stepping in Kendo in which you always move both, i.e., right-left.

This waza is primarily to help kendoka practice establishing sen and a connection between themselves and their opponent.



Figure 41: Kakari-te completes the do strike facing the motodachi.

³² It is a common error to turn the bokuto horizontal while receiving strikes for kaeshi waza. Your bokuto is not to become a rigid "*shield*" that brings the opponents bokuto to a dead stop, but instead think of it as serving to disrupt the strike and move it off of the centerline.

Kyuhonme: Do, Uchi-otoshi Men

Motodachi	Kakari-te
 Step forward and strike migido. While turning slightly to the left to align yourself with the kakari-te, take a step back and assume chudan no kamae. While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions. 	 As the motodachi strikes, step to the diagonal back left and, in a large overhead swing, redirect the incoming strike by striking their weapon downward. Then in an imme- diate, continuous motion, step forward and strike men. The motodachi turns to align himself with you. As he does, take a step back along your current off-center angle and assume chudan no kamae. While in ai-chudan take a circular step to the left back to the starting positions and into yokote-kosa.

This ends the **kihon bokuto waza**. At this point the appropriate closing formalities are performed.

Kendo no Kata Riai: "Principles of the Kendo Forms"

Chapter Preview

THIS CHAPTER ADDS SOME advanced details to the information regarding **kata** already given on pp.5, 21, and 39. First, details are given regarding the theory behind the technique used by the **shidachi** to defeat the **uchi-dachi**. *"Technique"* does not refer to the **waza** itself, but to the underlying "why", or **riai**, (from riau (*verb*), 理, *"logic, reason, principle"*, and 合う, *"to fit, match, agree with, to be correct"*)³³ behind them, i.e., the **mitsu no sen**: sen no sen, go sen no sen, and sen sen no sen³⁴.

The **kodachi kata** are different than the **tachi kata** due to the different weapon used. Hence it is said that **shidachi** conducts these **kata** with a certain "feeling" referred to as **shin**, **gyo**, and **so** (真行草) or *truth*, *stream*, *and grass*³⁵ combined with the application of **iri-mi** (入り, "*entering*" and 身, "*body*, *person*, *blade*"), and hence **seme** unique to the **kodachi kata**. Both **tachi** and **kodachi kata**, however, are performed with a sense of **sen**, i.e., taking the initiative (of attack).

Finally, a *brief* look at concepts from Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism as present in the **kata**.

The following excerpts³⁶ discusses kata riai:

Tachi Kata Riai

"Sen: Stop your opponents attack by first movement, forestall, attitude of taking the initiative. This does not mean speed, more subconsciously seeing the origin of every real action, or the practiced ability to read a changing situation instantly.

Sen sen no sen: Anticipating your opponents intention and capitalizing on this knowledge to have victory.

Go sen no sen: Responding to your opponents attacking movements by countering them, without knowing your opponents intention. ³³ Translation from Jim Breen's Online Japanese Dictionary. http://www.csse. monash.edu.au/~jwb/cgi-bin/wwwjdic. cgi?1C [9]. According to All Japan Kendo Federation [2], riai is "the condition in which the waza and movements between ones self and ones opponent are rational and purposeful and techniques make sense technically."

³⁴ Some list the mitsu no sen in shorter form as "sen", "go no sen", and "sen sen no sen".

³⁵ This is only one of many translations for shin-gyo-so. Inoue [8] offers the translation of shin being a 'true' shape/form, so is the essence of a shape/form, and gyo is a transition point between the two. Both translations are explaining the same concept albeit differently.

36 Budden [3].

Kata	Uchidachi	Shidachi	
1	Sen no sen	Sen sen no sen	
2	Sen no sen	Sen sen no sen	
3	Sen no sen	Sen sen no sen	
4	Sen no sen	Go sen no sen	
5	Sen no sen	Sen sen no sen	
6	Sen no sen	Go sen no sen	
7	Sen no sen	Go sen no sen	

Table 5: The mitsu no sen are exemplified in the nihon kendo kata. Uchidachi attempts sen no sen throughout while shidachi performs sen sen no sen in kata 1, 2, 3, and 5 and go sen no sen in kata 4, 6, and 7. Reaction in sen sen no sen and go sen no sen must be faster than the actions of the attacker. Having a sincere and pure attitude of the single mind, unwavering and of a high and delicately refined quality. This is kigurai and should be combined with sen attitude."

Kodachi Kata Riai

"Shin: 'Truth'. Strike directly and attack strongly, rush in with the feeling of truth without fear and into ten no kamae showing true strength.

Gyo: 'Stream'. Using your opponents force, flowing like a stream with his attack, ensuring that you flow from the men cut into the final thrust. Movement is in a general direction.

So: 'Grass' or 'weeds'. Again blend with your opponent like blades of grass in the wind and move to make him work hard, tiring him by your multitude of movement like a field of grass. A million blades swaying in the wind; controlling but never retaliating. As grasses and weeds are among plants that come above ground in early spring, so your movement should also be before that of your opponent. 'So' is also known as 'kusa'."

Seme in the Kendo Kata

"Not always obviously visible when watching a performance of kata, particularly at the highest level, there exists a series of triggers that are of paramount importance in learning the cause and effect of the kata.

Although it is stated that the controlling influence of the kata is made by the uchidachi, shidachi has to get a reaction from uchidachi in order to perform the correct movements.

It cannot be stressed enough that these signals in no way alter the timing of the kata, as they are subtle movements that become less and less apparent as the practitioner becomes more fluent. In the final event they become part of the very feeling of the kata; invisible but integral. When first learning the kata movements, they should not be made unless they are made apparent as this establishes at a very early level this true cause and effect." It is essential to note that the concept of shin-gyo-so directly relates to that of shu-ha-ri as indicated in Inoue [8] and that the kodachi kata are, in this viewpoint, directly related to the first three tachi kata. In each, the shidachi's actions are sequentially altered away from the initial form of an 'absolute' killing strike and aggressive zanshin (shin = shu), to an adapted strike still with a strong zanshin but a less absolute 'finality' (gyo = ha), and finally to where no overt strike is used to defeat the opponent at all but strong zanshin still remains (so = ri).

Kata	Shidachi Has
Kodachi Ipponme Kodachi Nihonme	Feeling of shin Feeling of gyo
Kodachi Sanbonme	Feeling of so

Table 6: Shidachi's method of victory in the kodachi kata.

Kata	Cause & Effect Through the Application of Seme		
Tachi: ipponme	From the right jodan position at the center point, shidachi makes a slight downward movement		
	as if about to cut, hence drawing out the uchidachi's men strike. Shidachi uses nuki waza and		
	sen sen no sen.		
Tachi: nihonme	In the center position, shidachi slightly raises his point or presses the uchidachi's sword		
	to the left almost as an invitation to uchidachi to cut kote. Shidachi uses nuki waza and		
	sen sen no sen.		
Tachi: sanbonme	Shidachi comes up to chudan (from gedan) slightly later than uchidachi, inviting uchidachi's		
	thrust. Shidachi uses ire-zuki ni nagashi/sen sen no sen.		
Tachi: yonhonme	After the aiuchi and return to chudan, shidachi relaxes his kamae slightly inviting uchidachi's		
	thrust. Shidachi uses maki-kaeshi/go sen no sen.		
Tachi: gohonme	From seigan shidachi presses forward at uchidachi's kote inviting the men strike. Shidachi		
	uses suriage/sen sen no sen.		
Tachi: ropponme	Shidachi pressures three times: (1) gedan to chudan causing uchidachi to take jodan, (2)		
	forcing a retreat to chudan, (3) forcing a hasty kote. Shidachi uses suriage/go sen no sen.		
Tachi: nanahonme	Shidachi invites a cut by slightly raising his point. Shidachi uses nuki waza/go sen no sen.		
Kodachi: ipponme	Shidachi makes uchidachi react by pressure (seme) toward his kote by the feeling of		
	iri-mi. Shidachi uses uke-nagashi and embodies the feeling of shin.		
Kodachi: nihonme	Shidachi, by controlling the spirit (will) of uchidachi, forces him to back into wakigamae.		
	Then, through the seme of iri-mi, shidachi forces uchidachi to react with a men cut. Shidachi uses		
	uke-nagashi and embodies the feeling of gyo.		
Kodachi: sanbonme	Shidachi by assuming the gedan kamae invites the uchidachi to attack his men. Shidachi uses		
	suriage, suri-otoshi, suri-nagashi, and suri-komi, while embodying the feeling of so (kusa).		

Table 7: Cause and effect in kata.

Conceptual Aspects of the Kata

The **kata** embody a substantial amount of information from the belief system of their creators; Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

In-yo. The most accessible idea is **in-yo** which is the Japanese reading of the Chinese words **yin-yang**. **Kata** 4-7 embody the five phase theory of **yin-yang** where the five phases, fire, water, earth, wood, and metal, are in direct opposition to one another in a specified manner. This particular variant³⁷ is known as the *mutual overcoming theory* and is attributed to Chinese philosopher Tsou Yen (305-240 BCE).

This theory is visible directly in the **kamae** used in **kata** 4-7 (in effect 8-10 as well), as each has a specific element associated with it. These elements each can defeat, and are defeated by, other elements as depicted in figure 43. The arrow points from one element toward the one which it defeats. That is water defeats fire, fire defeats metal, metal defeats wood, wood defeats earth, and earth defeats water.

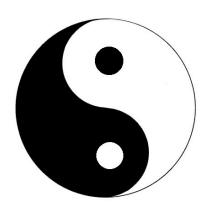


Figure 42: In-yo.

³⁷ Inoue [8].

In each kata shidachi responds to the uchidachi according to the in-yo concept.

Tachi	Uchidachi	Shidachi	Waza	Elements
Ipponme	Jodan	Jodan	Nuki	Fire/fire
Nihonme	Chudan	Chudan	Nuki	Water/water
Sanbonme	Gedan	Gedan		Earth/earth
-transition ³⁸	Chudan	Chudan	Nayashi ire-zuki	Water/water
Yonhonme	Hasso	Waki	Ai-uchi	Wood/metal
-transition	Chudan	Chudan	Kaeshi	Water/water
Gohonme	Jodan	Seigan	Suriage	Fire/water
Ropponme	Chudan	Gedan		Water/earth
-transition	Jodan	Seigan		Fire/water
-transition	Chudan	Chudan	Suriage	Water/water
Nanahonme	Chudan	Chudan	Ai-tsuki	Water/water
-transition	Jodan	Chudan	Nuki	Fire/water

Table 8: Tachi kendo no kata: kamae, waza, and elemental pairings Hasso

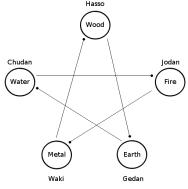


Figure 43: Mutual overcoming theory.

³⁸ The term "*-transition*" refers to a kamae change from the current kamae to another mid-kata.

Table 9: Kodachi kendo no kata: kamae, waza, and elemental pairings

During the kata iri-mi (S) and iri-mi (P) are essentially chudan hanmi no kamae and hence given the element of water.

³⁹ Iri-mi (S) and (P) refer to spiritual and physical iri-mi respectively.

⁴⁰ Inoue [8].

⁴¹ Physical eye, heavenly eye, wisdom eye, dharma eye, and Buddha eye.

Kata	Kamae (Uchi./Shi.)	
5 th	Hidari jodan/seigan	
6 th	Seigan/gedan	
7 th	Seigan/seigan	

Table 10: Original indications for kamae in the tachi kata.

Kodachi	Uchidachi	Shidachi	Waza	Elements
Ipponme	Jodan	Chudan hanmi		Fire/water
-transition	Jodan	Iri-mi (S) ³⁹	Uke-nagashi	Fire/water
Nihonme	Gedan	Chudan hanmi		Earth/water
-transition	Chudan	Iri-mi (S)		Water/water
-transition	Waki	Iri-mi (P)		Metal/water
-transition	Jodan	Chudan hanmi	Uke-nagashi	Fire/water
Sanbonme	Chudan	Gedan hanmi		Water/earth
-transition	Chudan	Iri-mi (P)	Suriage,	Water/water
			Suri-otoshi,	
			Suri-nagashi,	
			Suri-komi	

Seigan no kamae. At this point there must be a brief discussion of **seigan no kamae** as it has immense conceptual implications.⁴⁰

The kanji for **seigan** is composed of *sei* (正, "*correct, justice, righteous*") and *gan* (眼, "*eyeball*"). Gan can also be pronounced gen (same kanji) which relates to the gyo-gen (五眼), "*five eyes*"⁴¹, or "*the five ways of seeing*" in Buddhism.

This is why, originally, in **kata** 5-7 all **chudan kamae** were actually termed **seigan kamae** alluding to the practitioners coming to know and understand some of the loftier ideals in **kendo**.

Hasso no kamae. The term hasso (八相, "eight phases") has links to Buddhism as well as swordplay.⁴² With respect to the sword, hasso refers to the eight cutting directions: vertical, horizontal, and diagonal. With respect to Buddhism, hasso refers to the eight events in the life of a Buddha: coming down from heaven, entering his mothers body, being born, leaving home, subjugating demons, attaining enlightenment, rolling the wheel of the law, and entering parinirvana.

Meaning behind the kata. Finally expanded details⁴³ on the encoded meanings of the three groups of **kendo no kata**: **tachi kata** 1–3, **tachi kata** 4–7 and **kodachi kata** 1–3.

Ipponme. This **kata** is said to represent *gi* (義, *"righteousness/justice"*). Each person is fighting believing their individual reason for combat is a righteous one. Thus both the **uchidachi** and **shidachi** take similar **kamae** and face each other as equals. The winner of the combat is dependent on the technical expertise of the fighters; the more skilled combatant will win (live) and the other will lose (be killed). The **shidachi** wins through superior technique alone and annihilates the **uchidachi**. This corresponds to *shu* in **shu-ha-ri** as the **shidachi** strictly follows and uses the techniques he has been taught without question in order to survive.

This **kata**⁴⁴ is "a manifestation of the technical skill and conviction to kill or be killed for what one believes is right."

However, killing is the highest wrong that one can commit in Buddhist belief as all life is considered as sacred. Because of this the **shidachi** ought to feel the need for some type of penance⁴⁵. This need for penance leads to the second **kata**.

Nihonme. This is said to represent jin (\sub , "patience, compassion, benevolence"). Uchidachi and shidachi assume the same kamae, essentially putting them in the same position as the first kata. This time shidachi decides to show compassion, stemming from the need for penance from the first kata, and chooses to strike kote. Uchidachi is defeated but his life is spared. This corresponds to *ha* in shu-ha-ri as the shidachi modifies his learned combat techniques according to his own ideas and needs. In this case his desire to not kill the uchidachi.

This is explained⁴⁶ as: "Nihonme still has the same conviction (as ipponme), but is more advanced in that the goal is accomplished with more restraint, using just enough of your technical skill without overkill."

Also explained⁴⁷ as: "The second kata demands the virtue that emanates benevolence to all the surrounding people. According to Inazo Nitobe, the benevolence of a samurai (warrior) is not a blind impulse, for it recognizes due regard of justice, and his benevolence does not remain merely a certain state of mind, but it is backed with power to save or kill (Nitobe, 1998). The lesson 42 Inoue [8].

⁴³ John Howell. Kendo Kata and it's Relationship with Humanity and Buddhism. British Kendo Association. http://kendo.org. uk. 2010 [7], Inoue [8].

⁴⁴ Inoue [8].

⁴⁵ Kensei Hiwaki. A Breakthrough in the Dilemma of War or Peace, The Teachings of Kendo. B.K.A. News, #24. Issue archived at http://kendo.org.uk. 2000 [6] indicates this is a part of shidachi's zanshin, "…entails repentance as well as mental and physical alertness."

Technical & Personal Shu-Ha-Ri

Shu-ha-ri applies to shidachi's personal growth as well as technical. Techniques begin as an absolute mimic of the instructor. Then the student learns to apply these techniques, altering them through their own understanding. Finally, the dependency on specific technique is unneeded as the student is able to apply their essence in all actions. The progression in personal growth is indicated by moving through stages of using techniques to annihilate, winning without killing, and ending conflict without harming the opponent.

⁴⁶ Inoue [8]. ⁴⁷ Hiwaki [6]. of the second kata, therefore, refers to a much higher achievement than in the case of the first kata..."

Sanbonme. This kata represents yu (勇, "courage"). Again, both uchidachi and shidachi assume the same kamae and face each other as equals. However, this kata builds on the ideas in the second kata in that the shidachi defeats uchidachi without actually striking him. This corresponds to *ri* in shu-ha-ri as the shidachi is able to use his learned skills without being overtly dependent on them; he is free from their previously absolute structure (killing).

This kata is explained⁴⁸ as: "The technique used in sanbonme is tsuki, but nobody is tsuki-ed to death. Neither uchidachi nor shidachi are touched or injured in any way, and if this were a kendo shiai, the referees would have no other choice than to declare a draw.

However, shidachi is the one who ends up in control and makes uchidachi literally stare death in the face as the kensen is placed right between their eyes. One false move would result in instant death. This situation goes beyond a simple win/loss situation. In fact, this is the ultimate truth in kendo. An old Confucian saying states 'nothing is more heartbreaking than a birds final song. Nothing is more truthful than a humans last words.' In sanbonme, the uchidachi is faced with death, and this moment is one of supreme reckoning. Shidachi has the power to simply dispose of uchidachi, but shows unequaled valour by not even touching the flesh. Shidachi's kensen gives uchidachi the chance to reflect on the meaning of life, a transcendent appreciation of all living things on the verge of perishing, whilst all pretentiousness is struck from this fickle existence, and uchidachi is reduced to the most humble and honest of life forms. After the instantaneous and inspirational period of reflection, both resume chudan and go back to the start. Both have been enlightened by this experience and as they move back an unspoken oath is made to respect life and live it to the fullest, helping others to do the same. Such valour is revered by all races of people, and has the power to both pacify and encourage. This is the true objective of the kendo way."

Yonhonme – ropponme. These **kata** embody the concepts of **in-yo** (陰陽) through the **kamae** used, see tables 8 and 9, p.62, and corresponds to the interplay of these ideas throughout nature.

Each kamaes associated element, wood, metal, water, fire, and earth, is also associated⁴⁹ with the five cardinal virtues of Confucianism (五常, *gojo*). These are⁵⁰: (仁義禮智信) *jin, gi, rei, chi, shin* or benevolence, justice, courtesy, wisdom, and integrity respectively.

48 Inoue [8].

Kamae	Element	Virtue
Hasso	Wood	Jin
Waki	Metal	Gi
Chudan	Water	Rei
Jodan	Fire	Chi
Gedan	Earth	Shin

Table 11: Kendo kamae, their associated elements, & associated Confucian virtues.

49 Howell [7].

⁵⁰ There are many similar English translations for these terms. *Nanahonme.* This **kata**, the last in the set of **"in-yo kata"**, is meant to represent the harmony of **in-yo** but harmony at all levels, i.e., personal and societal.

This is explained⁵¹ as: "Kendo conducted in accordance with the principles of the sword is meant as a means for character development, on both a personal and societal level. Ultimately the goal is harmony at all levels. This very ideal was first expressed in writing in Japan by Shotoku Taishi (574-622)."

Shotoku instituted the Seventeen Article Constitution in 604, a set of moral commands for government officials, based on Confucianism and Buddhism, urging them to work together in harmony for the good of the central government. The first article states⁵² "Harmony is to be cherished, and opposition for oppositions sake is to be avoided as a matter of principle."

The notion of harmony, with respect to **in-yo** as in the previous **kata** but also with respect to society and the notion of "*no conflict for conflicts sake*", is expressed in this **kata**⁵³.

The goal of **kendo** as a means of character building, i.e., a "**do**" are, in modern days, encoded in the "Concept and Purpose of Kendo" by the All Japan Kendo Federation, p.4.

Kodachi ipponme – nihonme. These two **kata** have two sets of ideas at their core which give the essence of their meaning. As previously discussed on p.60, the **kodachi kata** are carried out with the feeling of **shin-gyo-so** which corresponds⁵⁴ to the notion of **shu-ha-ri**⁵⁵, as already explained in the first three **tachi kata**, so will not be discussed here.

The second is the notion of *chotan-ichi-mi* (長短一身), or (lit.) "*strong point/length, weak point/short, one body*". This essentially says that every-thing has both advantages and disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses. Both of these aspects are part of the same package whether it be in using a long sword or a short sword, and to one who understands this there is no difference between the two.

This is explained⁵⁶ as: "Average men mistakenly think that a long weapon is advantageous when compared to a short one, but great men understand the concept of chotan-ichi-mi, where long and short are realized as one and the same. In other words, the length of the sword is decided by the strengths and weaknesses of the heart. As we strive to sharpen our spirit under the testing blade of self reflection, we come to realize that within our hearts reside strengths and weaknesses, virtues and shortcomings. These coexist as part of our being. These are the cho and tan of our heart. They are inevitable and coexist in harmony. Thus in this sense it is futile to ponder the merits of the length of ones weapon. [...] do not deliberate over the issues of length, but just throw your whole being selflessly into the attack and you will achieve your purpose. [...] In doing this the length of your sword will be in accord with the strength or the weakness of your heart, and long will become short if need be, ⁵¹ Inoue [8].

⁵² Inoue [8].

⁵³ The physical in-yo is seen in the actions of shidachi v.s. the overt kamae pairings of the previous kata. The societal harmony, as explained here, is demonstrated by shidachi's choice of kamae and in the initial thrust/parry.

⁵⁴ Howell [7], Inoue [8].

⁵⁵ The notion of shu-ha-ri or shin-gyo-so also can be applied to the progression of chotan-ichi-mi towards muto no kokoro in the kodachi kata.

⁵⁶ Inoue [8].

and short will become long. An enlightened understanding will be attained that long and short, strong and weak are part of the same, and inextricably tied together."

Kodachi sanbonme. The final kodachi kata continues the notion of shu-hari as in the previous two kata, but also extends upon the idea of *chotan-ichi*mi to its "definitive aspiration";⁵⁷ muto no kokoro (無刀の心) or the heart of no sword. Muto no kokoro implies that one realizes that the strength of their sword, whether long or short, is controlled by the strength of their heart. The ultimate realization being that one needs no sword at all, it is the spirit that determines victory or defeat.

This is explained⁵⁸ as: "The sword is controlled by the heart and the heart is not swayed in any way whether the sword is short or long. The heart controls the short or the long with no distinction. If the enemy holds a long sword and you hold a short sword, the spirit should not dwell on this fact, but assume a mindset that you have no sword at all. When the foe approaches and you are both consumed in the imminent smell of death, without hesitating seize the opportunity to throw your body and soul at your enemy, and without taking so much as a half step in retreat go right up to them, and clutch their very essence and quash it. This is how you defeat a longer sword with ease. [...] In essence, short is the starting point of long, and shortness taken to its ultimate extreme is nothing at all or "mu". Forgetting that short is the source of long while engaging in combat with a foe using a longer weapon is foolish, but taking advantage of the fact that short is in fact the source, and having the ability to use short to quell long demonstrates supreme wisdom. The heart of no sword is the ultimate aspiration of chotan-ichi-mi." ⁵⁷ Inoue [8].

⁵⁸ Inoue [8].

Kendo no Kata & Their Effects on Kendo

The following article was prepared by Sensei Morito Tsumura, Kendo 8th Dan, Kyoshi for a nihon kendo no kata & kihon bokuto waza seminar on June 10th & 11th, 2011 hosted by the Ottawa and Shoshin Kendo Clubs. The format of the article, notes & definitions have been altered from the original style to coincide with that of this text. The use of bold font is copied from the original article.

ALTHOUGH it is a common tendency to set our goal in winning kendo matches, developing mental control is much more important. The best way, and absolutely essential, to accomplish this is to practice **kendo no kata** which in turn will produce **kihaku**⁵⁹,気迫. Afterall, however skillful, **kendo no kata** without **kihaku** is nothing more than a dance with a sword.

Therefore practicing **kendo no kata** with **kihaku** will produce improvement in the following aspects related to kendo:

- 1. Calmness and good conduct
- 2. Fine posture
- 3. Sensing opponents movements and intentions
- 4. Agility in movements
- 5. Eliminating bad habits
- 6. Reading of right maai⁶⁰.
- 7. Increasing kiai and kihaku
- 8. Deeper understanding of kendo and its meaning
- 9. Fine character with dignity and elegance

⁵⁹ Kihaku: ones mental/spiritual strength.

⁶⁰ Maai: distance from the opponent.

Basic Kendo Practice with Bokuto (木刀による剣道基本稽古法)

Through the basic kendo practice with **bokuto**⁶¹, one must always regard the **bokuto** as if it is a real sword⁶². With such understanding of a sword, we learn the basic technique of **shinai** kendo through practice with **bokuto**.

Using **bokuto** will also enable us to understand and learn how the sword is used in such **waza**⁶³ as **harai**, **nuki**, **suriage**, **kaeshi**, and **kiriotoshi**, which in turn will utilize improvement of **kendo no kata**.

Points to Observe in Practicing Kendo no Kata

While we observe certain set form and order when practicing **kendo no kata**, it is important to be always serious and apply **kihaku**.

Uchidachi⁶⁴, who makes the move at the most opportune moment of full kihaku, always initiates the attack upon which shidachi must counterattack in response.

Despite the defensive appearance of his attack, **shidachi** must attack with the vigor and active spirit of an offensive attacker.

While **uchidachi** teaches from the position of a master, **shidachi** must learn the skill for victory.

Excellent form (kata) result only when perfect balance between practical skills, masterly techniques, and flexible movements is achieved.

When Practicing, Observe the Following Basic Rules

- 1. Always keep your eyes on the opponents eyes.
- 2. Use **suriashi**⁶⁵ both in moving forward from the front foot and backward from the back foot.
- 3. Use large movements of the sword when attacking, drawing an arc with the point of the sword.
- 4. In attack, draw your back foot close to the front foot, relax your shoulders, gather force in your lower abdomen, and step forward from your waist.
- Kakegoe⁶⁶ should come from the tanden⁶⁷ forcibly: "Yaaah!" for uchidachi, "Toooh!" for shidachi.
- 6. Hold your breath when moving forward or backward in order to maximize inner power. Breathe abdominally when entering a **maai** so that the opponent will not detect your move.
- In kata forms with the long sword (no. 1 to no. 7) "ki wo mite"⁶⁸ while in kata forms with the short sword (no. 8 to no. 10) "irimi ni narouto suru"⁶⁹ are the emphasis.

61 Bokuto: wooden sword.

⁶² Understanding that the Japanese sword has a particular shape each part of which having a distinct function.

63 Waza: technique.

⁶⁴ Uchidachi: initiating attacker.

 $^{\rm 65}$ Suriashi: footwork where feet brush the floor.

⁶⁶ Kakegoe: shouting.⁶⁷ Tanden: lower abdomen.

68 Ki wo mite: seizing the moment.

⁶⁹ Irimi ni narouto suru: taking overpowering approach.

Glossary

Counting

Counting			Enumerations		
English	Japanese	Korean	English	Japanese	
One	Ichi	Hana	First	Ipponme	
Two	Ni	Dul	Second	Nihonme	
Three	San	Set	Third	Sanbonme	
Four	Shi	Net	Fourth	Yonhonme	
Five	Go	Dasok	Fifth	Gohonme	
Six	Roku	Yu-Set	Sixth	Ropponme	
Seven	Shichi	Eel-Gop	Seventh	Nanahonme	
Eight	Hachi	Yu-Dul	Eighth	Happonme	
Nine	Kyu	A-Hop	Ninth	Kyuhonme	
Ten	Ju	Yul	Tenth	Juponme	

Courtesies

- Arigato Gozaimashita: (有賀とご座いました) "Thank you" (for practicing with me).
- Domo Arigato Gozaimashita: (どうも有賀とご座いました) "Thank you" (very polite context).
- Onegaishimasu:(御願いします) "If you please" (practice with/teach me).
- Otagai ni Rei: (お互いに礼) "Bow to your peers".
- Sensei ni Rei : (先生に礼) "Bow to the Sensei".
- Shomen ni Rei : (正面に礼) "Bow to the Shomen".

Dojo Commands

• Hajime : (始め) "Begin/start".

- Kamae-To:(構え刀) "Assume your stance".
- Men (wo) Tore : (面を取れ) "Take off your Men".
- Men (wo) Tsuke : (面を付け) "Put on your Men".
- Mokuso:(默想) "Meditation".
- Osame-To: (納め刀) "Put away your weapon".
- Seiza : (正座) Assume Seiza, the formal sitting position.
- Seiretsu:(整列) "Line up".
- Sonkyo : (蹲踞) Assume Sonkyo, the formal crouching position.
- Tai-To:(带刀) Bring your Shinai to the ready position at your hip.
- Yame : (止め) "Stop".
- Yasume : (休め) "Break/rest period".

Table 12: Counting and Enumerations.

Shiai Terms & Commands

- Chuken : (中堅) Third player on a team match.
- Encho:(延長) Overtime period. Encho is "sudden death", i.e. the first point wins. There is usually no time limit during Encho.
- Fukusho: (副将) Fourth player on a team match.
- Fukushin : (副審) Sub-referee during Shiai
- Fusen-Gachi: (不戦勝ち) Win through default/disqualification.
- Gogi : (合議) Judges conference. Players Osame-To, step back to the outer edge of the court and assume Sonkyo until the Gogi is over.
- Hajime : (始め) Begin a match.
- Hansoku: (反則) Penalty. Match stops, and players return to their starting positions. Judges will announce the offense.
- Hansoku Ikkai : (反則一回) 1st penalty.
- Hansoku Nikai: (反則二回) 2nd penalty. A second penalty results in one point being awarded to the opponent.
- Hantei:(判定) Judges decision.
- Hikiwake : (引き分け) Match is a tie. (applicable to team matches)
- Jiho:(次鋒) Second player on a team match.
- Jikan Desu: (時間です) Time keepers call to indicate "Time-up". Players return to starting positions.
- Mejirushi : (目印) Coloured flag worn on backs of the players. Also termed a "Tasuki".
- Nihonme : (二本目) Begin round two.
- Senpo : (先鋒) First player on a team match.
- Shinpan:(審判) Judge.
- Shinpan-Cho:(審判長) The referee director (head referee)
- Shinpan-Shunin : (審判主任) The court specific referee director.
- Shobu : (勝負) Begin final round (of a match).
- Shobu-Ari : (勝負あり) Match point. Players assume Sonkyo, Osame-To, and exit the court area.
- Shushin : (主審) The head judge during Shiai.

- Taisho: (大将) Fifth player on a team match.
- Tasuki : Another name for the Mejirushi.
- Wakare:(分かれ) Command to separate players back to Issoku Itto no Maai, but maintaining relative positions in the court.
- Yame : (止め) Stop the match. Players return to starting positions.

Common Terms

- Age-To:(上げ刀) A Katate variant of Jodan no Kamae.
- Ai: (1) (prefix) (相) "Mutual, balanced". (2) (suffix) (合) "Union, integration".
- Aite : (相手) "Opponent".
- Ai-Kakari Geiko : (相掛稽古) "Mutual attack practice". Two Kendoka do Kakari Geiko together.
- Ai-Uchi: (相打ち) "Mutual strike". Commonly interpreted as a "simultaneous strike(s)".
- Ashi:(足) "Foot" or "leg".
- Ashi-Kamae : (足構え) "Foot Position". This term is used to refer to the position of ones feet.
- Ashi-Sabaki: (足捌き) (lit.) "Foot/leg handle/deal with". A term used to refer to "footwork" of any type.
- Ayumi-Ashi : (步み足) "Walking foot". This style of footwork refers to the normal walking motion where the right and left feet pass each other in an obvious "right-left-right" succession.
- Bogu : (防具) Kendo Armor. See also Men, Kote, Do, and Tare.
- Bokuto:(木刀) "Wooden sword". In Kendo the Bokuto is used exclusively to practice Kata. Also sometimes referred to as a bokken (木剣).
- Bokuto Waza : (木刀技) A series of forms created to practice Kendo fundamentals with the Bokuto. They are also a means through which the Kendoka can understand the link between Shinai Kendo and a Katana.

- Bushi : (武士) "War/military gentleman". A samurai or, more commonly translated as, warrior.
- Bushido : (武士道) "The way of the samurai". A code of ethics, morals, and conduct designed for the samurai.
- Chi no Kamae : (地の構え) The *"kamae of earth"*. See Gedan no Kamae.
- Chika-ma : (近間) A distance (from your opponent) that is shorter than Issoku Itto no Maai.
- Chisai : (小さい) "Small".
- Chisai Waza: (小さい技) "Small techniques". A term used to refer to small strikes.
- Chudan no Kamae : (中段の構え) "Mid level" Kamae. Chudan is known as the "kamae of water" due to its adaptability for offensive and defensive Waza. Chudan is the fundamental Kamae in Kendo.
- Chudan Hanmi no Kamae : (中段半 身の構え) A variant of Chudan no Kamae while using the Kodachi in the Nihon Kendo no Kata. See also Hanmi no Kamae.
- Connection : A mental and physical connection with the opponent. The mental connection implies one must have a perception as to how the opponent will act to a given situation, their intents, as well as perception of their level of focus, Ki Ken Tai no Ichi, and Zanshin. The physical connection allows one to react to physical movements, maintain distance, adjust Kamae, etc... A Connection allows you to mirror the opponent mentally and physically, keeping a balance until a Suki is found or created by oneself or ones opponent.
- Daito : (大刀) The long Shinai used in Nito no Kamae.
- Dan : (段) "Step" or "level". Often used to refer to ones rank in Kendo.

- Dan-I:(段位) This refers specifically to the set of Dan ranks in Kendo, commonly interpreted as "black belt". Dan ranks range from 1st to 8th.
- Datotsu : (打突) A "strike" or "thrust".
- Datotsu Bu : (打突部) The portion of the Shinai strikes are made with; the Monouchi.
- Datotsu Bui: (打突部位) Portion of the Bogu where one may strike.
- De : (出) "Coming out", i.e., something is being initiated or started.
- Dead : A term used to describe ones weapon when its ability for offensive and defensive techniques has been eliminated. Usually the result of improper grip or striking technique, or if one has had their strike effectively parried via some type of defensive Waza. Ones weapon also becomes Dead if they do not have proper Zanshin.
- Dead Hands : Similar to your weapon becoming Dead, however in this case it is caused by your hands/ forearms being too close together during or after striking. Specifically the spacing required between your forearm and the Tsuka for proper Kamae is lost and the wrists are fully arced forward. When one has Dead Hands the left hand will be level with, or above, the right wrist during a strike.
- Debana Waza : (出ばな技) Techniques used to strike as an attack is being initiated or "just coming out".
- Do: (1) (道) "Do", as in Kendo: "the way", i.e. a "way" of enlightenment, or of bettering oneself. (2) (胴) "Do", as in Bogu: the abdomen target/ protector.
- Do-Chikawa : (胴乳皮) Leather loops on the Do-Kawa used to attach the Do-Himo.
- Do-Himo : (胴紐) The cords used to tie the Do.

- Do-Mune : (胴胸) The upper chest portion of the Do.
- Do-Kawa : (胴皮) The lower portion of the Do; the striking area.
- Dojo:(道場) "Practice hall". The place where one practices Kendo.
- Enzan no Metsuke : (遠山の目付け) "Fixing your eyes on a distant mountain". See Metsuke.
- Four Sicknesses : The four sicknesses (Shikai), or admonitions, in Kendo are ku (恐怖) fear, gi (疑) doubt, kyu (驚) surprise, and waku (惑) confusion.
- Fumi Komi : (踏み込み) The shortened, and almost exclusively used, term for *Fumi Komi Ashi* meaning *"lunging footwork"*. With Fumi Komi one uses a large, lunging Okuri-Ashi style footwork. This type of footwork is one of the exceptions where a Kendoka will partially forgo using Suri-Ashi as the leading foot will momentarily leave the ground near the end of the Fumi Komi step. This type of footwork is well known in Kendo as the the one that makes "the stomping noise".
- Gedan no Kamae : (下段の構え) The *"low level"* Kamae. Gedan is known as the *"kamae of earth"*. Gedan is considered a physically defensive Kamae however a strong and aggressive spirit is required for it to be successful.
- Gedan Hanmi no Kamae : (下段半 身の構え) A variation of Gedan no Kamae when using the Kodachi in the Kendo no Kata. See also Hanmi no Kamae.
- Geiko:(稽古) See Keiko.
- Gi : (着) The traditional practice top worn in Kendo. Also known as a *kendo-gi* or *do-gi*.
- Gyaku:(逆) "Reversed" or "opposite".
- Ha : (刃) The edged portion (blade) of a Japanese sword.

- Hakama : (袴) The traditional practice pants in Kendo.
- Hanmi : (半身) "Half body".
- Hanmi Kamae : (半身構え) "Half body stance". Referring to ones torso when assuming a Hanmi Kamae as it is turned or twisted such that only half of it is exposed to the opponent. A Hanmi Kamae is a defensive position used to minimize exposure, i.e., targets, to the opponent.
- Hara : (腹) The "intestines" or "gut". Located three fingers width below the navel.
- Harai : (払) From the verb Harau: to *"sweep away"* or *"brush off"*.
- Harai Waza : (払技) "Sweeping aside" Waza. A Waza where one strikes the opponents Shinai, breaking their Kamae, to create a Suki.
- Hasaki: (刃先) A swords "cutting edge".
- Hasso no Kamae : (八相の構え) Hasso is known as "the kamae of wood" or the "eight position stance" and is a variant of Jodan no Kamae.
- Haya Suburi: (速素振り) "Quick" or "swift" Suburi. Commonly referred to as jumping Suburi, this exercise is a standard warm up and endurance drill in all Dojos.
- Heijoshin:(平常心) "Common/ everyday mind". In Kendo a basic definition of this is keeping one's mind in a normal state, unaffected by things around you; your mindset during regular or common situations.
- Hi no Kamae : (火の構え) The *"kamae of fire*". See Jodan no Kamae.
- Hidari:(左) "Left" (direction).
- Hidari-Te:(左手) "Left-handed".
- Hiki-Waza : (ひき技) Techniques where one strikes while moving backward. Also termed "Hikibana Waza".
- Hikibana Waza : (ひきばな技) See Hiki-Waza.
- Himo: (紐) "String" or "cord".

- Hiraki : (開き) From the verb hiraku meaning *"to open"* or *"unfold"*.
- Hiraki-Ashi: (開き足) "Opening Foot". This type of footwork is a circular side step to the left or right.
- Hirauchi : (平打ち) To strike with the flat of the Shinai.
- Hodoku : (解 <) A Japanese verb meaning "to loosen". This term is used throughout the text to refer to the breaking of Kamae at the end of each Kata.
- Ichidan Suburi : (一段素振り) "One step" Suburi.
- In-Yo:(陰陽) The Japanese reading of the Chinese concept of Yin-Yang.
- Ire-Zuki : Nayashi ire-zuki (萎し入れ 突き) is the full name for Shidachi's parry and counter attack in the third Tachi Kata. Specifically, Nayashi, "wither, droop; to be lame", ire, "to let in", and Tsuki (zuki) "thrust", is when one draws back the opponents thrust, deflecting it, and then immediately counter thrusts.
- Iri-Mi: (入り身) (lit.) "Entering body/person/blade", usually translated as "Entering directly". In Kendo this is the fundamental intent, mindset, and motion of one using the Kodachi. The action of spiritually threatening and physically moving into your opponents Maai (to attack).
- Issoku Itto no Maai: (一足一刀 の間合) "The one-step-one-sword distance". The distance at which one can launch an attack (or evade one) by taking just one step. This is the fundamental Maai of Kendo. While there are approximations to what this Maai is, usually described as the distance where you and your opponents sword tips cross, each individual person will have their own unique Issoku Itto no Maai simply due to the fact that each person will have a different "one-step" distance. This distance is found through regular practice and continuously focusing

on attacking ones opponent from as far away from them as possible. The maximum distance you can be away from the opponent, while still being able to take one step in and hit effectively, is your **Issoku Itto no Maai**.

- Ji-Geiko : (自稽古) Free sparring practice. See also Keiko.
- Jin-Bu : (刃部) The "blade edge" of the Shinai.
- Jishu-Geiko : (自主稽古) "Self-study". Perhaps more appropriately "self motivated study". To actively learn by watching, reading, contemplating what was taught, etc.
- Jodan no Kamae : (上段の構え) The *"high level"* Kamae, Jodan is known as the *"kamae of fire"*. As Jodan is very spiritually aggressive, the terms Ten no Kamae and Hi no Kamae are its other names specifically used to describe the spirit required. It is said the spiritual component of this Kamae determines its success much more so than ones physical prowess.
- Joge Buri: (上下振り) "Up-down swing". A very basic form of swing practice used to teach the beginner how to swing in large motions along their centerline. Often used as a warm up to a Kendo practice.
- Kaeshi Waza : (返し技) "*Return*" Waza. These are techniques such that one receives the Aites Shinai with their own with a temporary block and then *immediately* counter attack.
- Kakari Geiko : (掛稽古) "Attack practice", i.e., an "all out" sparring practice. This drill is very common in Kendo Dojos as it builds endurance and spirit. Kendoka attempt to attack as quickly and as continuously as possible while still maintaining proper form and Zanshin. With Kakari Geiko the Zanshin is to be more spiritual than physical.
- Kakari-te : (掛手) "Attacking hand". In Kendo, the Kakari-te is the one

who attacks or who is striking during drill practice.

- Kamae : (構え) "Stance" or "position". In the context of Kendo, when one assumes a Kamae the term has an obvious physical meaning, but it also has mental or spiritual implications. Meaning, assuming a Kamae doesn't mean to just hold your Shinai in a certain position but that you must also assume a certain spiritual attitude. Proper physical and spiritual "position" is what makes effective Kamae.
- Kane : (金) "Metal".
- Kakegoe : (掛け声) "Yell" (used to encourage activity). Although having very different meanings, in Kendo this is often interchanged with Kiai.
- Kane no Kamae : (金の構え) The *"kamae of metal*". See Wakigamae.
- Kata : (形) See Nihon Kendo no Kata.
- Katana : (刀) *"Sword"*. Also pronounced as To, as in Bokuto.
- Katate:(片手) "One-handed".
- Katate Waza:(片手技) "One hand" techniques.
- Katsugi Waza : (担ぎ技) "Shouldering the sword" technique. The purpose of the shouldering motion is to create a Suki in your opponent while still being in an effective position to attack.
- Katsu : (喝) The equivalent of a Kiai shout used to awaken oneself spiritually (in a zen sense). Also often referred to as a *"kwatz"*.
- Keiko : (稽古) "Practice", "training", or "study". Replaced with Geiko depending on (grammatical) context, this term is most often used by Kendoka to imply sparring practice in Bogu.
- Kendo: (剣道) "The way of the sword".
- Kendoka : (剣道家) A Kendo student.

- Kensen : (剣先) The tip of the Shinai.
- Kera : (*U i*) The padded area on the back of the palm of the Kote.
- Ki:(気) "Mind", "spirit", or "energy".
- Ki Ken Tai no Ichi : (気剣体の一致) "Energy/spirit", "sword", "body" "(done) as one". Simultaneous action of the spirit, sword, and body of a Kendoka. A fundamental principle in Kendo related to striking properly and effectively.
- Kiai : (気合い) "Energy integration". Expression of ones spirit and intent through the voice.
- Kiarasoi: (気争い) "Spirit of mutual combat". Overcoming an opponent through a vigorous spirit, pushing forward (physically) to break his guard.
- Kigurai : (気位) "Noble presence, bearing, pride, dignity".
- Kihaku : (気迫) "Spiritual force".
- Kihon: (基本) "Basic", "fundamental".
- Kihon Bokuto Waza : (基本木刀技) See Bokuto Waza.
- Kikai: (気海) "The sea of energy".
- Kiri Kaeshi : (切り返し) "Returning cuts". A coordinated practice of Men, Taiatari, and Sayu-Men with an opponent. This is one of the most important drills in Kendo. Often done as both the initial and final drill of a Kendoka's Bogu practice.
- Kiri-Otoshi: (切り落とし) "Cut"
 "dropping" or "losing". A Waza for when two strikes occur in a potential Ai-Uchi, one strike pushes the other aside, by the act of cutting alone, and lands on the opponent.
- Ko-Dare : (小 垂) The small inner flaps on the Tare.
- Kobushi : (拳) *"Fist"*.
- Kodachi : (小太刀) The short sword used in the Nihon Kendo no Kata.
- Kohai : (後輩) A *"junior*". This is a relative term relating to experience in Kendo and not necessarily ones age.
- Kokoro:(心) "Spirit" or "mind".

- Kokoro no Kamae : (心の構え) A *"spiritual"* or *"mental stance"*. This refers to a mindset, or attitude.
- Koshiita : (腰板) "Back/waist plate". The firm, trapezoid shaped plate on the back of the Hakama.
- Kote : (小手) The *"forearm"* target. Also the protective glove worn in practice.
- Kote-Gashira : (小手頭) The finger portion of the Kote.
- Kuraizume:(位詰め) To seize with superior poise and spirit. In the Kata this refers to the act of invading your opponents Maai with the feeling of walking forward in an unstoppable thrust.
- Kyu:(級) "rank", "class". In Kendo this is used as a second ranking system for beginners, i.e., those who are below the Dan ranks. Kyu ranks usually begin at 6th and range to 1st, however younger Kendoka may begin at 10th.
- Ma:(間) *"Space"*. Used in terms referring to distance or spacing.
- Maai : (間合) "Spacial integration". Usually interpreted as "distance" in Kendo, proper Maai takes into account a number of different factors than simply physical distancing. Speed (your own), opponent speed, reaction time, power, distance to opponent, and Kamae are all factors of Maai.
- Mae:(前) "Front" or "forward" (direction).
- Men : (面) Helmet, head target.
- Men-Buton : (面ぶとん) The cloth portion of the Men covering the head.
- Men-Chikawa : (面乳皮) The small leather pieces the Men-Himo are (usually) attached to when fixing them onto the Men. There are two different types of Men-Chikawa used depending on the method used for wearing the Men, i.e., kanto or kansai style.

- Men-Dare : (面垂) The large flaps of the Men-Buton which come out over the shoulders.
- Men-Gane : (面 金) The metal grill that covers the face in the Men.
- Men-Himo : (面紐) The strings used to tie the Men.
- Men-Tate-Gane : (面縦金) The large vertical bar of the Men-Gane.
- Men-Yoko-Gane : (面横金) The horizontal bars of the Men-Gane.
- Metsuke : (目付け) "Point of observation". The full term is "enzan no metsuke" or "fixing your eyes on a distant mountain". This term, in Kendo, refers to "where you should look" while engaging an opponent. In essence you liken looking at your opponent to looking at a mountain with the opponents eyes being the peak. If you simply focus on just the peak, you'll not be able to see an entire mountain. Instead, if you look toward the peak the rest of the mountain easily comes into view.
- Migi:(右) "Right" (direction).
- Migi-Te:(右手) "Right-handed".
- Mitsu no Sen : (三つの先) "The • three sens." This refers to the three initiatives in which to react to your opponent. The first, sen sen no sen, refers to having prior knowledge of your opponents intentions and, using this knowledge, draw out their attack capitalizing on it. The second, sen no sen, refers to attacking at the very moment your opponent is about to attack. Third is go sen no sen. This refers to counter-striking your opponent after they have made their attack. The opponent is countered as in sen sen no sen, but knowledge of the opponents intentions are not known beforehand.
- Mizu no Kamae : (水の構え) The *"kamae of water"*. See Chudan no Kamae.

- Moku no Kamae : (木の構え) The "kamae of wood". See Hasso no Kamae.
- Monouchi : "Hitting part". The upper ¼ length of a Shinai measured from the Kensen down. See also Datotsu Bu. From All Japan Kendo Federation [2], "the part of the blade of a sword which cuts the best, said to be about 10cm from the tip".
- Morote : (諸手) "Two handed".
- Motodachi:(元立ち) Moto, "origin/cause", tachi, "standing". The Motodachi is the one who creates or offers an opening for the Kakari-te to practice some type of Waza.
- Motodachi Geiko : (元立ち稽古) Also termed Uchi Komi Geiko, this is when a Kendoka strikes targets offered by an opponent.
- Mu : (無) A prefix indicating a negation in the Japanese Language.
- Mudra : The Mudra (Sanskrit: मुद्र, "gesture") are hand positions used to symbolize various Buddhist concepts and meanings. There are a number of such hand positions, however in Kendo we use but one: the Zenjo-In, the mudra of meditation during the brief period of Mokuso before and after practice.
- Mugamae : (無構之) "No kamae" or the "void kamae". This stance expresses a sense of spiritual superiority where an overtly physical Kamae is unnecessary; one is able to stand ready with their spirit or presence alone.
- Mune: (1) (楝) The top (blunt) side of a Japanese sword, also referred to as "mine". (2) (胸) "*Chest*". The upper chest portion of the "Do"; Do-Mune.
- Mune-Chikawa : (胸乳皮) Leather loops on the Do-Mune used to attach the Himo.
- Mushin : (無心) "No mind". In very basic terms, Mushin is acting on natural reflex alone, i.e., not thinking

about what to do or the effects of an action.

- Nakayui : (中結) The leather tie on the Shinai ¼ the length of the Shinai from the top.
- Naname Buri: (斜め振り) "Diagonal swing". Similar to Joge Buri but with the strikes angled at about 30° to 45°. Also used as a warm up to a practice.
- Nayashi : (萎し) From the verb na(eru): *wither, droop; to be lame..*
- Nidan Suburi : (二段素振り) "Two step" Suburi.
- Nidan Waza : (二段技) "Two step" Waza.
- Nihon Kendo no Kata: (日本剣道の形) "The Japanese kendo forms". A set of formal movements and techniques which form the basis of modern Kendo. Usually referred to as simply Kata.
- Nito : (二刀) The common abbreviation when referring to Nito Kamae.
- Nito Kamae: (二刀構え) "Two sword" Kamae. In Kendo one uses two Shinai; the Daito (long sword), and the Shoto (short sword).
- Nuki : (抜き) From the verb nukeru: to *"escape"*.
- Nuki Waza : (抜き技) Waza where you simultaneously dodge a strike and execute a counter-attack.
- O-Dare : (大垂) The large outer flaps on the Tare.
- Obi : (带) "Belt". The Obi is a belt that is worn (optionally) with the Hakama and Gi. Traditionally the Obi is the belt that held the samurais sword at their waist.
- Oji Waza : (応じ技) Counterattacking Waza, i.e., techniques used in response to your opponents actions.
- Okuri-Ashi:(送り足) From the verb okuru meaning "to send out" or "see off". The standard footwork in Kendo where one steps "right-left" in succession using Suri-Ashi.

- Omote : (表) *"Front"* or *"visible side"*. In Kendo this refers to the holders left side of the Shinai.
- Orishiki Do: (折り敷き胴) "Kneeling Do". This is a Do strike executed by kneeling v.s. the usual Fumi Komi step. It is (seemingly) an unused Waza in modern Kendo save for the Nihon Kendo no Kata.
- Rei : (^{*}L) (1) "Bow", or the act of bowing. (2) A term referring to etiquette in general, i.e., Reigi and Reiho.
- Reigi : (礼儀) *"Bow/thanks rule/ ceremony"*. Reigi refers to the reasons behind Rei, i.e., "why", "who", and "when" we are to perform the actions of Reiho.
- Reiho : (礼法) *"Bow/thanks law/ principle"*. The systemization of etiquette and formality.
- Renzoku : (連続) "Continuous, repeating".
- Riai: (理合い) "Principles of/behind". The condition under which an action or actions are rational, purposeful.
- Ritsu Rei : (立礼) "Standing" Rei.
- Sage-To: (下げ刀) "Hanging sword". The relaxed standing position with the Shinai held at ones side.
- Sakigawa : (先革) Leather cup on the end of the Shinai.
- Sakigomu : (先ゴム) Rubber insert inside the tip of the Shinai.
- Samurai : (侍) See Bushi.
- Sandan Suburi : (三段素振り) "Three step" Suburi.
- San Satsu Ho: (三冊法) Three laws for defeating an opponent; kill their sword, kill their spirit, and kill their techniques.
- Sayu-Men : (左右面) An angled strike to the upper left or right Men.
- Seigan no Kamae : (正眼の構え) (lit.)
 "Correct eye" Kamae, often translated as "aiming at the eyes". A variant of Chudan no Kamae, Seigan is normally used in response to Jodan no

Kamae as it offers better Kote protection and facilitates the use of certain Oji Waza against strikes made from Jodan.

- Seiza : (正座) "Correct sitting" (position). The Japanese formal seated position.
- Seme : (攻め) (n) An "attack" or "offense". From the verb semeru meaning "to attack", "to assault". Seme is often interpreted as "pressure". This refers to a spiritual or mental pressure, not an actual physical force. If a Kendoka can pressure their opponent spiritually, they will be able produce Suki in their opponent creating an opportunity to strike. Effective Seme stems from ones spirit, form, posture, Kamae, and is the product of many years of diligent practice.
- Seme-Komu : (攻め込む) "Pressuring step". The forward step taken by Shidachi during the second kodachi kata which forces Uchidachi to step back into Wakigamae.
- Senpai : (先輩) "Senior/older graduate". This is a relative term relating to experience in Kendo and not necessarily to ones age.
- Sen : (先) An abbreviation of the term "sente", "first move, forestalling, initiative".
- Sensei: (先生) "Teacher".
- Shiai : (試合) A Kendo match where points are scored.
- Shidachi : (仕太刀) "The doing sword" or "the serving sword". The Shidachi assumes the role of the "student" in the Kata.
- Shi Kai : (四戒) *"Four admonitions"*. See Four Sicknesses.
- Shikake Waza : (しかけ技) Techniques to initiate a strike.
- Shikai : (四戒) See Four Sicknesses.
- Shin : (心) "Mind", "heart", or "spirit".
- Shin-Gyo-So: (真行草) The three feelings which the Shidachi embodies in the Kodachi Kata. 'Shin', lit. "truth", 'Gyo', lit. "stream", and

'So', lit. "grass". These also correspond to the ideas of three phases or transitions, for example *formal, semiformal, informal.* Another example, according to Inoue [8], is referring to shapes or forms where 'Shin' is the true shape, 'So' is the essence of the shape, and 'Gyo' is the transition between the two. These feelings also correspond to Shu-Ha-Ri.

- Shinai:(竹刀) Bamboo practice sword.
- Shinogi: (鎬) The ridge on the side of a blade and running along its length, usually closer to the Mune than the blades edge.
- Shinogi o Kezuru : (鎬を削る) "Shaving the shinogi". This is done in the fourth Tachi Kata after the Uchidachi and Shidachi launch a strike and end up in Ai-Uchi. While maintaining a sense of combative tension, each one must fight for center in order to prevent a Suki on which their opponent can capitalize. This is the essence of Tsubazeriai.
- Shisei: (姿勢) "Position" or "stance". This term, while having a similar translation with Kamae, has a completely different connotation. Shisei refers to a physical position only whereas Kamae has an associated spiritual element. For example, tai-to shisei or sage-to shisei are common position terms which are shortened to simply Tai-To and Sage-To in Kendo.
- Shishin: (止心) "Stopped mind". This refers to your mind becomng focused or stopped on something making you unable to act freely. Focusing on the opponent's weapon, on making plans to find an opening, the need to protect yourself, not wanting to get hit or counter attacked, etc... are just a small number of common examples. Shishin is often limked to the Shikai.
- Shizentai : (自然体) The "Natural body". This posture is one where the Kendoka stands with natural (proper) posture, i.e., standing straight and

extending the spine, shoulders back, arms hanging naturally at ones side, feet shoulder width, and the abs engaged via a pelvic tilt. **Migi** and **Hidari Shizentai** is when the right or left foot is forward respectively and the opposite shoulder is pulled backward somewhat.

- Shomen : (正面) (1) The center or front of the Men. (2) The symbolic head of the Dojo.
- Shoshin: (初心) "Beginners Mind". In Kendo one is often reminded to "keep your beginners mind". This refers to the idea that, like a beginner, one should always be open and ready to learn, be ready to find faults in their own technique, and most importantly to practice with all of their energy in everything they do. It is a common fault after practicing for some time to believe that one is able to do something without the potential for improvement or correction. It is also common for one to lose the initial vigor that is present for something that is new. Always maintain your Shoshin and practice accordingly.
- Shoto : (小刀) The short Shinai used in Nito Kamae.
- Shu-Ha-Ri:(守破離)'Shu', lit. "protect", "obey", 'Ha', lit. "detach", "digress", and 'Ri', lit. "leave", "separate". In brief, Shu-Ha-Ri is a term used to describe the various stages of learning or progress in many arts. The first stage, 'Shu', has the practitioner obeying the teachers method and ideals in every detail. The second, 'Ha', is when the student has learned enough that they are able to incorporate their own ideas. The third, 'Ri', is when the student is able to leave their teachings behind them as the "specific machinery" is no longer overtly needed; all is natural. The Nihon Kendo no Kata embody Shu-Ha-Ri in Tachi Kata 1, 2, 3, and in Kodachi Kata 1, 2, 3. See Jeffrey

Lewis Dann. "Kendo in Japanese Martial Culture: Swordsmanship as Self-Cultivation". PhD thesis. University of Washington, 1978 [4] and Inoue [8] for more.

- Suburi : (素振り) "Elementary swing". This is the fundamental drill of a Kendo practice. Over the years Kendoka will *easily* perform tens or even hundreds of thousands practice strikes in their training, perfecting technique through repetition.
- Suki:(隙) "Interval", "gap", "opportunity". This term is used to refer to an opening in ones defense, either in your own or in your opponents. It also refers to an opening or gap in ones thoughts or actions, e.g., due to hesitancy or distraction.
- Suriage Waza: (すり上げ技) A "Rising slide" Waza. These techniques are used to deflect an opponents attack by sliding your own weapon along the opponents making a small, "half-circle" motion as you lift your weapon into the path of the coming strike. This "rising-slide" motion is not to be confused with hitting or knocking your opponents weapon out-of-the-way, as with Uchiotoshi Waza, as it is a controlled deflection.
- Suri-Ashi: (摺り足) (lit.) "Sliding foot/leg". Kendoka, regardless of the type of footwork being used, will most often be sliding their feet as they step. There are exceptions but the fundamentals of Kendo always use sliding footwork. This term is often used to refer to Okuri-Ashi itself, however this text maintains the distinction.
- Suri-Komi : (すり込み) (lit.) *"Sliding step"*. This Waza is used during the third Kodachi Kata. The Shidachi slides his blade along the Uchi-dachi's, controlling it, as he steps into the Uchidachi's Maai.
- Suri-Nagashi:(すり流し)(lit.) "Slide and sluice/pour off/set adrift". The nagashi motion is often explained

as pouring water. This Waza is used during the third Kodachi Kata. The Shidachi receives the Uchidachi's incoming Do strike using the left Shinogi and redirects/controls it by sliding the Kodachi down their Tachi at the same time.

- Suri-Otoshi : (すり落とし) (lit.) "Dropping slide". This Waza is used during the third Kodachi Kata. Shidachi slides his blade down and left along Uchidachi's, sweeping it away.
- Sutemi : (捨て身) (lit.) "Sacrifice/ abandon person/body/self", often translated as "body abandoning". Usually interpreted as "all or nothing", this term is referring to the samurais "final strike". Meaning they will be attacking their opponent with the feeling of "all or nothing"; they will either kill the opponent with this strike, or be killed in the attempt.
- Tachi : (太刀) The long sword used in the Nihon Kendo no Kata.
- Tai:(体) "Body".
- Taiatari: (体当り) "Body blow", "ramming attack", or "suicide attack". A technique used by Kendoka to create a Suki in their opponent by closing in on them and upsetting their balance via a push. It is crucial to understand the difference between Taiatari and simple pushing or shoving. Definition from Andrew N. Nelson. The Nelson Compact Japanese-English Character Dictionary. Abridged by John H. Haig. Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1999 [10] and Jim Breen's Online Japanese Dictionary [9].
- Tai-To:(带刀) "Sword at belt", i.e., the position where one would wear the sword. In Kendo, Tai-To is the position where the Shinai is held at a 45° angle at the hip in preparation to "draw" it.
- Taiso:(体操) "Gymnastics" or "calisthenics", i.e., a warm up.
- Tare : (垂) Waist protector.
- Tare-Himo : (垂紐) The small belts of the Tare.

- Tare-Obi : (垂帯) The waist portion of the Tare.
- Te-no-Uchikawa : (手の内皮) The palms of the Kote.
- Ten : (天) "Sky", "heaven" or "point".
- Ten no Kamae : (天の構え) The *"kamae of heaven"*. See Jodan no Kamae.
- Tenugui : (手拭い) *"Hand towel"*. The cloth towel worn by Kendoka underneath their Men.
- Te-no-uchi: (手の内) "Palm, skill". Te-no-uchi, often explained as "wringing out a wet towel", is how a Kendoka holds their Shinai at the moment of impact. Proper Te-nouchi allows a Kendoka to execute strong and balanced strikes while maintaining control over the Shinai during the moment it impacts the target. Te-no-uchi allows one to, properly and with control, stop their Shinai. Without Te-no-uchi, the force of the strikers Shinai will (1) upon impact cause the striker to lose control of the Shinai ending in a poor and ineffective strike, or (2) the Shinai will fully connect with the target but the force of the Shinai will be improperly directed to the opponent on impact. Aside from being ineffective, this strike will most likely hurt your opponent and must be avoided.
- To : (刀) *"Sword"*. A Japanese sword, Katana.
- Tobi Komi Waza : (飛び込み技) "Burst into" or "jump into" Waza. These Waza are where one launches an attack at the opponent with strong spirit the moment the opponents spirit falters.
- To-ma:(遠間) A distance (from your opponent) that is longer than Issoku Itto no Maai.
- Tsuba : (鍔) Shinai thumb guard.
- Tsuba-Dome : (鍔止め) Rubber stopper that holds Tsuba in place.

- Tsubazeriai: (鍔迫り合い) "Locked swords" (from Nelson [10]). The position when two Kendoka are in proximity, Tsuba against Tsuba.
- Tsugi-Ashi: (突ぎ足) "Thrusting foot". This style of footwork is a variation of Okuri-Ashi, where the Kendoka brings both feet side-byside before taking the Okuri-Ashi step. This motion helps to build momentum and is often used to cover very large distances.
- Tsuka : (柄) The Shinai handle.
- Tsuka-Gashira : (柄頭) Tsuka's end.
- Tsuka-Gawa : (柄革) Leather covering the Tsuka of the Shinai.
- Tsuka-Himo : (柄紐) A leather string or set of loops at the top end of the Tsuka used to anchor the Tsuru.
- Tsuki:(突き) "Thrust".
- Tsuki-Dare : (突き垂) Throat protector.
- Tsuru : (弦) The string on the top side of the Shinai.
- Tsutsu-Bu : (筒部) The forearm area of the Kote; the striking area.
- Uchidachi : (打太刀) "The striking sword" or "the presenting sword".
 Uchidachi assumes the role of the "teacher" in the Kata.
- Uchi Komi : (打ち込み) Striking practice using Fumi Komi.
- Uchi-Otoshi Waza:(打ち落とし 技)(lit.) "Dropping" or "losing strike". Techniques for striking the opponents Shinai down and to the left or right, mid-way through their attack.
- Uke-Nagashi : (受け流し) (lit.)
 "Receive and sluice/pour off/set adrift". The nagashi motion is often explained as pouring water. This Waza is used during the first and second Kodachi Kata. The Uchidachi's attack is received using the Kodachi while at the same time redirecting it by making it slide off the Kodachi via the Shinogi and Hiraki-Ashi.

- Ura : (裏) "Back" or "non-visible side". In Kendo this refers to the holders right side of the Shinai.
- Ushiro : (後) "Backward" (direction).
- Wakigamae : (脇構え) "Side stance". This is known as the "kamae of metal" and is a variant of Gedan no Kamae.
- Waza:(技) "Technique(s)".
- Yin-Yang : An idea from Chinese Taoism dealing with opposites and/or duality; duality where one can't exist without the other. See In-Yo.
- Yoko-Men:(横面) "Sideways/ horizontal" Men. Sideways Katate strike to the right or left side of the Men.
- Yokote : (横手) The area on a Japanese sword where the curved tip ends and the blade proper begins.

- Yokote-Kosa:(横手交差) "Intersection of the yokote". This is the "distance" at which two Kendoka are to be separated when doing formality based motions in the Kendo no Kata.
- Yuko Datotsu : (有効打突) "Effective strike".
- Za Rei : (座礼) *"Seated"* Rei from the Seiza position.
- Zanshin : (残心) "Remaining mind". In the context of Kendo this is, simply put, interpreted as sustaining both mental and physical alertness with every action.
- Zazen : (座禅) "Sitting zen". The practice of seated zen meditation.
- Zekken : (ぜッケソ) Name tag worn on the Tare. Also termed a "nafuda".
- Zenjo-In:(禅定印) "Zen meditation hand position". See Mudra.

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