



Waraku

和良久

*The Divine Dragon:
rediscovering the lost
treasure of the energy*

Introduction of Aldo Shinnosukè Ricciotti

I came to Waraku through the former disciple of Masunaga, Akinobu Kishi, who created and developed Seiki-Soho and recently died. I will always be grateful to him for my encounter with Maeda Sensei. I had met Kishi through Andreana Spinola and Giuseppe Montanini, who so many times had invited him to teach in Italy. I express my thanks to them too.

When I met Kishi I had already been practising Shiatsu, as well as Zen, for twenty years. I had already gone to Japan in order to study Shiatsu lokai, thanks to Maria Silvia Parolin, who in 1998 had organized a seminar with a small group of Italians at Ueno, the now historical center of study. I had also developed my own Shiatsu style, called Ryu Zo, that I am still teaching and practising.

However, I still felt doubts and had questions. Shortly, these: in lokai Shiatsu there was a lot of talking about energy, but where were those practices that could help the Shiatsu-ka to develop his own energy? The meridians come from a taoist Chinese background. Which were the correspondent practices in Japan? If they did exist, why couldn't we study them? I felt that neither Masunaga's "Makko-Ho", nor "Do-In" answered these questions.

Through Zen I had found a partial answer that I had not encountered in Shiatsu, anyway. And I was not keen on "helping-myself" in India (Yoga) or in China (Chi Kung), facing the problems of transplanting these methods into a different ground, anyway.

So, when I met Kishi and I saw how he worked with energy (in his method one works with very light contact, only occasionally with deep



pressure, and sometimes the contact is kept only through breathing and concentration, disconnecting the physical contact), I became very curious. He told me that he had a Shinto background and that it was the basis of his method. I knew almost nothing about Shinto. I had read a translation of *Ko Ji Ki* (the Book of Ancient Things), a mythological text about the origin of the world. I also knew that, while Zen and other Buddhist schools were quite well known also in the West, Shinto was not easy to approach for Western people. The mystery of the “Lost Energy”, was it hidden there? So I started asking Kishi questions. And he – like a good Japanese – would smile and change the subject: “Mmmm.... clever question.... But Kishi is not so clever...” “mmm....I don’t know but perhaps if you come to Japan...” In the end, after the third “mmm.... I don’t know, perhaps if you come to Japan” I said: “ok, when do we leave?” That’s how in 2005 I took part in this “Hara Training”, as he called, with a colourful group of people coming from everywhere, Shiatsu experts and Seiki practitioners. On the program, a few days by the mountains near a Shinto Shrine for purifying practices, then we would go to Oomoto, in Ayabe and Kameoka. Oomoto is a Shinto school, it is famous because Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido, was there. Amongst its particular aspects there is the important “rôle” of Arts (“Art is the mother of religion”, said Onisaburo Deguchi, one of its two Founders), and its special acceptance of foreigners. Actually, Oomoto thinks that Japanese Traditional Arts must be kept alive and practised so that they can be handed down to the whole world. That’s why during our stay, besides Seiki and Shiatsu, we could practice Tea Ceremony, Ceramics, Rohei Singing, Norito and Chinkon meditation, Aikido and Waraku.

That is how I was love-struck by Waraku. Accompanying them with sounds, Maeda Sensei showed us his round and spiralled movements, harmonious, powerful and elegant, both with his bare hands and with a wooden sword. Besides, he showed us a table with symbols partly incomprehensible, but also partly very clear. I realized that I had just witnessed something that had nothing to do with Chi Kung, with Yoga, or with any other discipline or martial Arts, but that was as complete and as strong (as they were).

Incredible. Where had it been hidden until then? Had I found, at last, those practices that I always felt present in Japan, but that I had never actually found?

After nine years of intensive study of Waraku, I can now give an answer. Yes, Waraku comes from Kotodama. It is a code from which stems

a powerful energetic approach, that can be applied for meditation, as well as for therapy, protection or self-defence.

Maeda Sensei explains also that in the heart of Shinto there are some roots that – through precise practices – allow access to awareness and knowledge of the energy he calls “Shinryu” (The Divine Dragon): it is the same energy that flows through meridians and “tsubo”.

So at last I have found the answer to my questions.

I ignore why – until now – nothing on this subject had reached the West. But Maeda Sensei somehow answered this question when he said that they had been allowed to disclose Waraku in the year 2000. I do not know who gave such authorization. My impression is that these exercises had been their own practices and that they had not been divulged until now, but that present reality now requires such opening.

I will end reminding that we owe our present possibility of studying these practices also to Flavio Papadia and Jean Luc Bertschy, who were with me in Japan during Kishi Sensei’s workshop, and decided that, after all, it could be interesting and meaningful.

Besides, we must think about Nicola Colao, who since 2006 went to Japan at least ten times in order to learn Waraku. And I end thanking Daniele Haronobu Giorcelli, who has developed Gengo Shiatsu besides teaching Yoga, as well as Luigi Avirbhav Gargiulo, founder of Mizai Shiatsu besides being an Aikido teacher. Through all this, our contacts and mutual knowledge have become deeper, this is why I asked their help in order to translate and re-organize this interview. They are also going to explain afterwards How important Waraku has been for them and its relationship with the Shiatsu styles they practise.

And now at last I give the floor to Maeda Sensei.





At side, the group with Maeda Sensei; Kameoka 2012. Below, a closeup view of Maeda Sensei. On the opposite page, group with Kishi Sensei in Japan 2005.

MAEDA SENSEI INTERVIEWED BY ALDO SHINNOSUKÉ RICCIOTTI

Translation by Jeffrey Silver and Elena Palumbo Mosca

Foreword

Every time something is translated, something is lost. Our apologies to our readers and of course to Maeda Sensei. Inevitably a choice has to be made between possible meanings, especially on topics such as these, which could be interpreted in several ways. As you well know, Japanese is very different from Western languages and reflects a different way of thinking.

However, every time a translation is made, something is also gained. Indeed, in our field of study, we often encounter different versions of the same classical text, and each one manages to capture and express different nuances. We hope that we have managed to enrich the translation too, making it as lively and close to the original spirit as possible, thanks also to our experience in the practice of Waraku and especially thanks to our direct contact with Maeda Sensei.

Interview

In an interview you once stated: “Whoever uses the energy of light is able to cure others. Learning the techniques of Waraku also means learning to develop the capacity to heal wounded hearts and bodies”. You also said: “I think it is everybody’s duty to maintain his or her body and spirit in good health. With Waraku I am teaching people to do that.” (quoted from Maeda’s

contribution to “Torino Spirituality”, 2009). Based on the idea that people in the West now have about martial arts, we do not expect to hear this kind of statement from a Budo master. For a Shiat-su practitioner, however, this statement seems much more familiar and natural. Could you please elaborate on the links between Waraku and the healing arts?

According to the ancient Japanese book, Kojiko, as far back as 1300 years ago, “**Kami**, the Creator of our Universe, created this world using “Amenunohoko”, which is the Divine Sword - the Tsurugi”. The Japanese ideogram BU (武) shows that the true meaning of the practice of Budo is to gain and therefore retain the power of Amenunohoko within our bodies. In brief, the true aim of Budo is to become one with the “divine” energy which creates everything in the Universe. Budo wasn’t originally created in order to kill or destroy, but rather to develop the divine energy which reveals and helps cause everything that happens in our world. Thus we can identify two forces, or powers: **the power of Kami**, which generates, creates and develops everything and is called The Power of Light or The Power of the Spiral, and conversely, the energy of the Devil, which destroys everything and is known as **the Power of Darkness** or the Power of Evil. Acquiring the power of Light means carrying out the design of Kami in this world. The divine plan is to bring



about peace and harmony, stopping all human beings on Earth from fighting.

Waraku is therefore true Budo, in accordance with the most ancient Japanese Rule, the **Kotodama**, revealed by the Creator of the Universe. The basic rule of Waraku is: "Do no harm to yourself or others, do good to yourself and others". The skill acquired through Waraku is therefore not to harm people but to heal them physically and mentally. Therefore, it is perfectly natural that, during the process of learning how to use the Power of Light, a sort of "miraculous" skill could emerge.

I have always thought that Shiatsu is a discipline in which the practitioners stake their own psychological and physical balance during a treatment. Many practitioners therefore feel the need to study disciplines such as Yoga, Tai-Chi, Chi Qong and meditation. Can Waraku help Shiatsu practitioners to find their "centre"(hara)?

Waraku is the practice (Keiko) for learning the principle and skills revealed by Kami. The principle of Kami is the fundamental law of the Universe, according to which every living being takes the form of a **spiral**.

Living is breathing. Breathing in and breathing out are interconnected – not in a linear way, but in a spiral pattern. The idea of breath forming a spiral pattern influences the way we move and think.

All the systems of the human body, such as muscles, nerves and cells have a spiral structure.

Not only the human body, but also everything in Nature has a spiral structure. Our Universe itself moves within a spiral vortex.

The true meaning of the statement "to live naturally" can therefore be seen as "to follow the rhythm of the spiral".

Spiral energy is characterized by the creation of connections between things that are at opposing poles, like sky and earth, light and shade, mind and body, you and I.

In this reality I feel Kami's divine love.

Wherever the spiral might be, it must have its centre. The galaxy has its center. The Earth has its center. All human beings also have their centre.

Nothing exists in this world without a centre. Unless we follow the rhythm of the Universe or, more precisely, the power and the strength of the spiral, we cannot know what the centre is or where it is.

To be alive is to be a spiral. When the spiral stops we die. In other words, to be alive means to be sta-



Waraku Seitai.

ble on your own axis. When the axis is no longer there, it is time to die.

The power of the centre is essential in order to impart vital force to a person. To heal someone requires a fallen column to be rebuilt. To kill somebody it is like to knock down an upright column. Watering flowers which are about to wilt will help them stand straight again and bloom gracefully. Plants naturally possess the strength to survive and bloom. The art of healing is rather like watering a plant so that it stands up straight.

In Waraku, it is important for the centres of the human being to be in balance. There are three in particular: Jouden (in the head), Chuden (in the thorax), Kaden (in the abdomen). Sensei, can you please say something about their respective importance for health and go into more detail about their harmonisation and alignment ?

In Japan "Tanden" is the name for the place where the energy in the human being is concentrated.

Tanden comprises three parts: Jouden (in the forehead), Chuden (in the solar plexus), Kaden (in the lower abdomen).

Jouden represents energy which moves from one side to the other (right/left).

Chuden represents energy that moves forwards and backwards (depth).

Kaden represents energy that moves up and down (high/low).

These three energy points which together form the **Tanden** are linked on the same central axis.

The most powerful one is Kaden, also known as **Hara**. Kaden is like a power station generating energy; in our body, power is generated by moving the Koshi (the pelvis, not the hips), while Hara is the place where this energy is stored, like a bat-

tery, to stay with the metaphor. Each of these three centres is extremely important, but if you ask me, even though it is not easy to rank them, I am inclined to say the most important one is Kaden. In fact, when Kaden is the person's basis, then Chuden and Jouden are also activated.

Energy generated by Kaden rises through Chuden until it reaches Jouden, thus activating the axis that begins to revolve like a spinning top, and in turn moves the limbs and the whole body. The powerful "magnetic energy" generated by the Tanden is called "Ki".

When the whole body is full of Ki, it is healthy; conversely, when Ki stagnates the body will cease to be healthy. The "magnetic energy" of Ki is a healing force which acts on people who are near us in a very effective way.

Besides these centres, in Waraku the directions in space which are considered important are those that form a cross and are connected with Sky, Earth, Water and Fire. Can Sensei tell us how important each one of them is and can he also tell us something about how to harmonize them and align them to improve human health?

There are exactly five "elements": "Ten" (Sky), "Chi" (Earth), "Ketu" (Centre), "Sui" (water) and "Ka" (Fire).

The sound of "Ten" is A.

The sound of "Chi" is O.

The sound of "Ketu" is U.

The sound of "Sui" is E.

The sound of "Ka" is I.

(The sound of these letters corresponds to their pronunciation in Italian, except for U, which is pronounced as in French).

In the human body "Ten" corresponds to "Jouden",

"Chi" to "Kaden", "Ketu" to Chuden, "Sui" to the right side and "Ka" to the left. When these five points are linked by two straight lines, they form a cross. The cross is the energy field created by two intersecting energies: one moving vertically and the other horizontally, thus triggering the spiral movement. This energy field is called Kami. The centre of these five points is called "Ketu".

"Ketu" integrates, concentrates and stimulates. Therefore "Ketu" connects "Ten", "Chi", "Sui" and "Ka".

As reflected in the question, aligning and harmonizing these four elements is important. However, they are connected at the centre "Kaku" through the nucleus, which is also called (核) nucleus/Kaku/centre/heart/soul.

These four elements are all independent of each other and are harmoniously aligned, thanks to "Kaku", just as the action of the sun within our galaxy drives the solar system.

TEN - Sky (A) <i>Jouden</i>		
KA - Fire (I) <i>left</i>	KAKU - Centre (U) <i>Chuden</i>	SUI - Water (E) <i>right</i>
CHI - Earth (O) <i>Kaden</i>		

Note: The terms "left and right" refer to the viewpoint of the practitioner.

My experience in various disciplines has always led me to think that meditation, the art of healing and the art of defensive combat had a common origin. I always felt there was something missing when I saw these disciplines being taught separately. With Waraku, these arts are once again reunited.

Sensei, would you please tell us more about the common origin of healing, protecting and meditation and what special role Waraku can play in spreading its practice?

I can only refer you to my reply to one of your previous questions (the third one). This world of ours follows a universal law. According to this law each and every thing has its own centre where energy concentrates in order to spread completely into the surrounding area from the centre to the periphery.

The circle, or circumference symbol ○ refers to the periphery while the centre • refers to the centre. I dare say that this rule can be applied to all phenomena. We can see that in the human being, the circumference is the body, while the spirit (the energy) is the centre. The body starts to move only



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when the spirit is present in the centre. The spirit is the actual vital force, i.e., it is the actual energy.

The spirit is present in the centre of the body. The centre of the body is "San" (three) Den, consisting of Jouden, Chuden and Kaden, which form Tanden. Tanden works together with Koshi (the pelvis), in unison. The energy generated by Tanden manifests itself externally in the form of spirals. Merely through the energy of Tanden, we can have a healthy mind and a perfectly-functioning body. The power of the spiral is therefore not power of destruction but power of creation. Every time one meditates, practices the art of healing or that of self-defence, the power of the spiral should be allowed to act. The spiral has the rhythm of the universe, and this gives peace to the soul, giving it also silence and harmony.

The rhythm of the spiral is the power of light, which removes darkness and eliminates the power of destruction. The power of the spiral unifies mind and body.

In Waraku, Kotodama and its sounds are considered extremely important: can they be applied for health and can they be used to heal? If so, how?

More accurately, Kototama can also be called "Amatsu-Myakoto".

Amatsu means "Universe", while Myakoto means "Divine Words".

Amatsu-Miyakoto consists of three parts or ways of proceeding:

- Amatsu-Kanagi (all the forms which exist in the universe);
- Amatsu-Sugaso (all the energies which exist in the universe);
- Amatsu-Norito (all the sounds which exist in the universe).

All three apply to our body and mind. Kanagi is the body, Sugaso is the dynamic energy and Norito is the voice. In other words, Kototama not only shows us the realm of sound, but also guides us as to how to live in truth and justice. To follow the law of Kototama is to follow the law of the universe. The rhythm of the universe is a spiral one: therefore, to modulate, and to use energy and sound while following the spiral movement means following the law of the universe. As you well know, our body's structure is based on the spiral. Our muscles spiral around our bones just as our nerves, cells and DNA are based on the spiral structure. In fact this means that the body is naturally built according to the rhythm and the form of the universe. Therefore for the body to move naturally, its structure has to be respected



Hachiriki.

and therefore, based on this statement, the body must move according to the spiral. Moreover, it is natural to feel the need to use the voice to produce a mellow, soft and all-embracing spiral sound.

The sound of the spiral wave affects our body as well as that of others and fills the space around us, just as the Power of Creation and the Power of Healing.

It is said that Kototama is Kami. Nothing in the world created by Kami would exist anywhere unless it is within Kototama. This means Kototama represents the whole creation.

In Waraku a body treatment is taught (Seitai). Part of the treatment involves contact with the recipient whereas part does not. There are also manipulations for mobilising and stretching. What is the purpose of this treatment? What is the relative importance of the various parts of the treatment (with contact, without contact, with mobilisation)?

My answer is consistent with the others.

What I mean is that you will find the answer on your own, once you manage to understand fully the meaning of ○ (the circumference) and of • (the centre).

What is meant by circumference and centre?

Opposites confronting one another exist everywhere in our world. This can be seen in the theory of energy which demonstrates the existence of positive and negative energy. These two energies are opposites. Neither on its own can create a force, but the force is only created when they are interconnected. Once two opposites are connected, the vital energy is able to appear.

In fact the idea that in reality opposites are a unity will help you develop these concepts:

- to move is to stop,
- to be born is to die,
- to ascend is to descend,





Searching for center.

right and left,
in front of and behind,
breathe in and breathe out.

To think in this way means to live at the centre of opposites. When it will be completely natural for you to think that in reality two opposites can be connected to the point of forming one, then you will enter upon the way of enlightenment. In general our conception of the world starts at the lowest level, materialism, that is only perceiving material and visible objects, excluding ESP (extrasensorial perception). Human beings, however, can improve themselves in order to reach a higher level of awareness once they understand the reality of ESP and find truth in it. For example, love cannot be seen, but nevertheless it exists. People develop very strong ties because of the power of love, whereas in a relationship without love, there are no such ties, just as though no one else were beside you.

There are various stages of learning. At the start, humans learn the essence of material objects as to their form, and ultimately achieve truth, which is that the essence of objects is invisible.

As to methods of healing, the first stage is to learn how to heal using contact with the body, and step by step, the ability to heal without touching is acquired.

Qualified physicians (master healers) are in most

cases able to cure without use of medicines. You can kill or cure your clients depending on what words you use with them.

It is natural for humans to begin their road based on material needs and subsequently to resolve to search for the spiritual. This world is a material world. However, I urge you to remember to seek out the ESP world of the heart within the material. Truth is to be found in the world of the heart-mind (Kokoro).

Shiatsu makes abundant use of the concepts of "points" and "meridians".

Even though they have undergone an original evolution in Japan thanks to the research of Masunaga Sensei (Teacher of Kishi Sensei now deceased, whom we always remember with affection because it was through him that we met you) their origin can be traced back to Chinese medicine. In certain martial arts special points are used to strike or resuscitate and also to study the meridians. How is the body's energy circulation described in Waraku? Are points and meridians used or are there other categories to assess these flows?

I will give the same answer as to the previous question. There is always a central axis and the circumference. If the axis is stable, then everything on the circumference is stable. If the axis is unstable, then the circumference is unstable. The same can be said about politics.

When a country's leadership is stable, then the nation's economy is stable and people prosper, but when leaders govern selfishly, the economy collapses. One is for all, and all are for one, which means • (the centre) is for ○ (the circumference) and ○ (the circumference) is for • (the centre).

When the body's axis is at its exact centre, the spiral energy emerges and spreads evenly throughout the body.

Mind and body will then be in harmony and balance. This is the same structure which in a tree adds a ring annually around its centre. Keiraku and Tsubo are paths and passes through which spiral energy flows.

The spiral energy passes through the Tsubo/acupuncture points and strengthens the healing effect. Shiatsu and acupuncture make the energy flow harmoniously through paths and passes so that the body feels in balance.

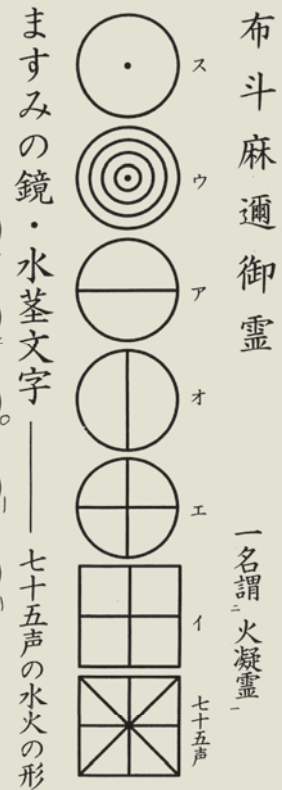
Energy from the centre is called (神龍) Shinryu (Shenron in Chinese).

Shinryu means "Divine Dragon" and is Kami's messenger. Shinryu is the energy which moves the earth and makes us healthy as it flows through all our body. The spiral energy produced in the

WARAKU TABLE

		智	勇	直	親	愛											
		牙之音	舌之音	齒之音	唇之音	喉之音											
		イ牙	エ舌	ウ齒	オ唇	ア喉											
		輕中重	輕中重	輕中重	輕中重	輕中重											
A 内	カ	ガ	ダ	タ	ラ	ナ	ハ	サ	ザ	バ	バ	マ	ヤ	ワ	ア	喉	初
	ㄈ	ㄎ	ㄨ	ㄒ	ㄌ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄸ	ㄹ	ㄱ	ㄲ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄸ	ㄹ	唇	内
	コ	ゴ	ド	ト	ロ	ノ	ホ	ソ	ゾ	ポ	ボ	モ	ヨ	ヲ	オ	唇	オ
天 中 道	ク	グ	ヅ	ツ	ル	ヌ	フ	ス	ズ	プ	ブ	ム	ユ	ウ	ウ	齒	中
	ㄏ	ㄍ	ㄨ	ㄨ	ㄹ	ㄴ	ㄈ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	ㄱ	齒	ウ
	ケ	ゲ	デ	テ	レ	ネ	ヘ	セ	ゼ	ペ	ベ	メ	エ	エ	エ	舌	外
外	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	舌	エ
	キ	ギ	ヂ	チ	リ	ニ	ヒ	シ	ジ	ピ	ビ	ミ	イ	キ	イ	牙	留
	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	ㄏ	牙	イ
		高天 之 棚	天 之 棚	中 津 棚	地 之 棚	根 之 棚			韻	柱							

Kotodama table shown by Maeda Sensei during the demonstration in Ayabe in 2005.
It reads from right to left and from top to bottom.
It contains all the principles of Waraku.



centre will become active throughout the whole of our body and will reveal itself as a great strength and as a great power.

The Waraku movement is the pouring forth of spiral energy. Waraku is the Budo which faithfully makes manifest the release of spiral energy from the centre.

The true Budo possesses this type of spiral wave. The true Budo is called "Shimbu" (神武) or the Budo which sheds Kami's light and it is the opposite of "Kyobu" (凶武) the Budo of the Devil's energy.

Shinbu is also called Budo of Light, whereas Kyobu is called Budo of Darkness.

Those who practice Shinbu are on their way to Heaven/Tengkou whereas those who practice Kyobu are travelling towards Hell/Jikoku.

In Sensei's experience, can Tsurugi also be used to cure?

The reply is the same. The meaning of Tsurugi is to make symmetrical what is before and what is after, what is up and what is down, what is right and what is left, that is to say, to unite two opposites, in other words, it means to integrate.

On the contrary, the meaning of Katana is the de-

struction of one side of the pair formed by what is in front and what is behind, by what is above is below, by what is on the right and what is on the left. This means annihilation of whatever opposes something else. Thus, Katana is used to kill, whereas Tsurugi is used to help people and bring out the best in them. Tsurugi moves harmoniously in a spiral, whereas Katana moves swiftly and sharply.

This means that using the energy of Tsurugi is to give others vital force, whereas the energy of Katana inevitably results in killing or being killed.

How important is it to care for space, places, and objects?

Same answer again but in a different form. Everything in the world which has a body ○ (circumference) possesses a spirit • (centre). Quite simply, this is because it is the spirit which enables the material to retain its own appearance (its own "manifestation") This becomes clear if the word "energy" is used instead of "spirit".

When we show our respect to the material, we express our respect to the spirit behind the material. I respect your spirit when I bow to you. This is how the Rei/bow is understood in Japan. The word Rei

means spirit, which is energy that although invisible definitely exists. One Spirit bowing to another is the real "Rei". Rei is just like prayer. Prayer generates an energy resonance. If you are capable of expressing your respect to everything, you then become capable of gaining access to the hidden energy behind all things.

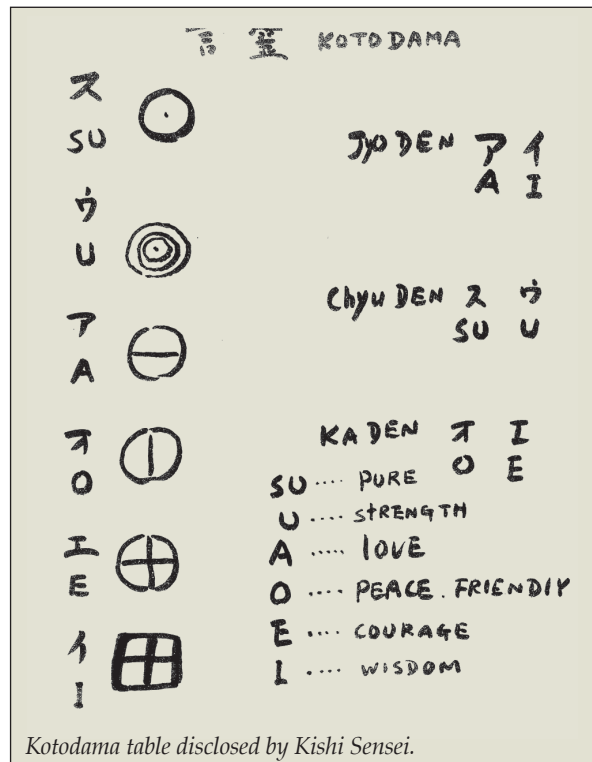
Objects, space and places are described using the circumference symbol of the law of Kototama. Energy within the circumference ○ is symbolised by the centre •.

There is energy in everything, and it is because of energy that everything exists, as I said previously. We live together and in resonance with all the energy present within the existences of this world.

To love others as yourself is the most important law in the world. When Rei/respect is forgotten, this leads us straight to debasement and we become lower than animals. We can be worthy of being humans only if we respect everything around us.

Increasingly frequent intercultural exchanges, confrontations, and clashes are nowadays everyday reality. Do you think a Westerner can fully apprehend the spirit of traditional Japanese culture and fully absorb the study of the arts which follow from it?

I understand that there are cultural and linguistic differences in the world, but as humans we share the same laws. For example the style of popular music varies depending on the country, but the sensitivity when listening is the same. The style of the church or the words of the prayers are different but the feeling of worship is the same. Each country has a specific frequency according to its territory's characteristics. Differences of language and behaviour are affected by subtle differences in the earth's frequency. A country characterised by a warm climate has its own language, whereas a country in which it is cold for several months of the year has a language appropriate for low temperatures. Of course clothing and diet depend on the environment and the earth's frequency. How we live depends on that frequency. In spite of these differences in frequency and emotions we remain basically the same. In fact humans are fundamentally similar. We all know it is wrong to kill and harm one another. Everyone knows how fine it is to love and take care of one another. As humans, norms of joy and sorrow are the same. We cannot live without breathing. People grow weak unless they move their body. People die unless they eat. We must find a way to be able to love without borders and look for the common law which everyone can share in the same way. What then is this rule, this common law?



Neither language nor culture are able to create a connection with the law shared by everyone. The law obeyed by everyone is directly connected to the way life works and expresses itself.

There are no borders in breathing, and this does not solely concern humans, but it also includes everything on earth. Sharing the rhythm of breathing, means finding connection and then being able to become one. The rhythm of breathing connects breathing out and breathing in, which continues throughout life. The rhythm of breathing without end or rest is a spiral.

The rhythm of breathing can go where language cannot.

The rhythm of breathing is the rhythm of the heart, which is the dynamism of actual life produced continuously by the whole body.

Moving with the same rhythm of breathing means having good mutual (間) "Ma" (distance/timing). We humans are able to become one with someone thanks to the spiral which is the rhythm of breathing.

"Michi" (道) means the way towards Kami and the way back from Kami.

This means that Michi is the way to become one with Kami. Every human being hopes to be reunited with the Divinity/Kami. Only once human beings are one with Kami will infinite power appear. In order to successfully follow the way to reuniting humans and the Divinity/Kami, it is important to move and breathe correctly. All human

beings are brothers and sisters, moving and living according to this same will to live, which means that our lives are governed by the same rules. Michi (the Way to the Divinity/Kami) also applies to all men and women. We started to learn Michi (Do/the Way) the very day we were born into this world. We are therefore not walking along this way for the first time Michi (Do/the Way). We have already walked along this path in our past lives, over and over again through reincarnation. We call the practice of Waraku: "Keiko wo suru" (doing Keiko), which means remembering the past. Keiko is returning to the distant past of mankind when humans lived with the Divinities/Kami. When you do Keiko, you go back to those times. Keiko reminds us of who we are, why we were born in this world.

I was born in Japan and I live this life. However, perhaps in a past life I was born in Italy, Switzerland or England.

My spirit has been all over the world and has had many experiences before coming here. Since we shared our karmic destiny in a previous life, it is our fate that brings us together along this journey. Only through mutual respect will the gateway to our path stay open.

Is there any particular advice or suggestion you would like to give to all the readers of Shiatsu News?

There is a saying which is the fundamental principle of Waraku: "Do no harm to yourself or others, do good to yourself and others". This is the fundamental idea of both Shiatsu and Waraku: to hope, work and act for the happiness of others. We need to live our life hoping for peace and happiness for everyone in this world. The very fact of hoping strongly for this will bring peace and happiness. All of us rejoice if everyone has a happy and healthy life. Shiatsu and Waraku share the same vision, have the same purpose, which is to be healing arts. While developing skills in these arts, we will naturally become aware of the source of this power and meet Kami at last. When we meet Kami, we all share the same idea and the same action at the same time. That is the point at which resonance begins and consequently we are granted access to the same "network". We humans live closely connected subject to the same will. If we are successful in patiently fulfilling our search for the power of the centre, we will find ourselves in the same place, and thereby become united and strong.

What do you expect to see and what do you think you will experience at the end of this journey?

What kind of world will we find at the end of this road? I think we will find the world of purity,

such powerful purity as to be capable of dissolving each of our words.

What do you think, shall we walk together towards this world?

It is there that we may be called Kami.

I sincerely wish you good health and happiness, and may love and peace always be with you.

GLOSSARY

Waraku 和良久 Waraku is written:

和 - Wa stands for Heiwa (peace)

良 - Ra stands for Yoku (good)

久 - Ku stands for Hisashiku (lasting)

"Briefly, it is to be practised while seeking peace in the world. In Japan we have Kototama, and this "law" has been passed down since antiquity. It is neither witchcraft nor philosophy: it manifests itself in a physical form which is the source of energy affecting everything. Waraku's purpose is to achieve lasting peace through the law of Kototama." (Maeda Sensei)

Kototama and Kotodama are equivalent, but the spoken language prefers Kotodama.

Kami 神 Japanese has no articles and often makes no distinction between the singular and the plural. Moreover translating the word Kami by God, Gods, or Divinity is controversial and some specialists suggest not translating it at all, which is the approach we follow here. (*Shinto. The Kami Way, S. Ono, pag. 6*)

In the Shinto School "Oomoto" (The Primordial Origin), to which Maeda Shihan belongs, it is considered that there is a single creator of the Universe (which is why the article here is used in the singular). *N.o.t.: this applies to the Italian language.*

Bokken/Tsurugi 木剣ツルギ wooden sword typical of Waraku.

"When the word Tsurugi is used, many people immediately think of a katana or of a wooden sword, but the



*Kishi Sensei
at Naigu with
a Shinto Priest.*

Tsurugi is not an instrument intended to hurt or strike anyone. The Tsurugi is energy: while it rotates, it draws a spiral which envelopes in harmony and peace everyone and everything. I teach in the hope that students will manage to have a soul as full of harmony and peace as the Tsurugi. (Maeda Sensei)

Keiko 稽古 Remembering/Returning to the origins through exercise and meditation.

Amatsu-Miyakoto 天津宮言 the breath of Kami, Kototama.

Amatsu-Kanagi 天津金木 the 75 shapes of Kami/the 75 positions of the hands.

Amatsu-Sugaso 天津菅曾 the 75 movements of Kami/the 75 swords.

Amatsu-Norito 天津祝詞 the 75 sounds of Kami.

Hara 腹 the lower abdomen.

Koshi 腰 the pelvis.

Tan-den 丹田 chakra/ the human energy centre (the place in which energy is catalysed in humans).

Jyou-den 上田 upper energy centre/third eye.

Tyuu-den/Chuden 中田 middle energy centre/chakra of the heart.

Ka-den 下田 lower energy centre/Hara (Ka-den synthesises and manages energy moving from there to the other centres).

Budo 武道 There are many different interpretations of "Bu": the elements making up the kanji are "Hoku" and "Tomeru" which mean respectively "Halbard" and "Halt". In other words the standard interpretation is: "halt the use of weapons".

This is reminiscent of the "katsujin-ken" concept (the life-giving sword) expounded by the Shinkage-ryu Fencing school. According to this idea, the sword is used to remove evil from one human so that ten thousand may live in peace. In fact, there is also another theory where Bu = martial, derives from Bu = dance. This is closely correlated with the religions of antiquity where ritual dances were used to please the gods. In this sense "Bu" may refer to religious rituals or demonstrations of martial arts and sword dances (kenbu) which were performed in temples up to the present day. It is difficult to say which of these three interpretations may be correct, but each is representative of various characteristics of the martial arts at different times (*History of Kendo*, p 2, Toshino-bu p 1/3).

Taisen Deshimaru Roshi reports in "Zen and the



*Furo-no-Katã
at La Verna in 2006.*

Martial Arts" a similar interpretation of "Budo", which is "The Way to halt the Lance". In all these interpretations two aspects should be noted. The first is that ideograms, which are basically stylised pictograms, are also open to numerous different interpretations.

The second is that explaining "Budo" as "The Way to halt the Lance/Sword" seems to be an interpretation produced with the intention of giving a noble definition to fighting. In actual fact they are contexts with a religious background, Shinto or per-

haps Buddhist.

Kenko 稽古 To understand better what Maeda Sensei had to say about the importance of aligning the spinal column and standing upright, it might be useful to read what S. Masunaga wrote on p. 25 in "Illustrated Zen Exercises" about the Japanese word for health "kenko":

"In Chinese and Japanese, the word health is made up of two characters. The first, KEN describes the human-being and also something standing upright; the second, KO, means to be at ease or relaxed after elimination of everything extraneous. At the beginning of the I-Ching, the classical Chinese text on soothsaying says "The road to Paradise is righteousness". A traditional oriental concept talks about "standing up straight with a calm mind". Thus, the second character also refers to posture and peace of mind. These two characters, when placed together, express the concept of standing up straight, while being simultaneously relaxed and at ease."

Shin 神 is the Japanese pronunciation of the ideogram which in Chinese reads "Shen". It can also be read as Kami (Divinity)

When the ideogram 神 Shin is joined to 道 this gives Shinto (Shentao) in Chinese.

These ideograms are therefore used in Taoist, Buddhist, Shintoist and Confucianist contexts. In Shinto it is said that the term KaMi is made up of Ka which stands for Fire and Mi which stands for Water. Therefore the deity is seen as the meeting of, and the connection between, the opposites.

Kyo 凶 could be translated as "diabolical". The ideogram consists of two parts: a sort of container with an x inside, which indicates a closed off space, a route which cannot be followed, a force which does not develop, above and beyond any moral significance which might be added subsequently. ●

