



NOVEMBER 2021

# Bujinkan Gaman Dojo

BLOGS, VIDEOS, NEWS, & MORE



## Discussion points:

- KIAI: BUT HOW?  
(PART 3)
- SNIPPETS FROM  
「ノー・カントリー、アイ・アム・UFO」
- OMOTE GYAKU FROM  
KUKISHINDEN RYU TEWAZA
- NEWS&EVENTS

## Welcome to our November newsletter!

HAPPY THANKSGIVING EVERYONE!

This month's newsletter is more of the same....but more? I have my *final?* article in my series about *kiai* focusing on how to produce what I've talked so much about. Alex continues her translations from Hatsumi Sensei's book, touching on some difficult subjects. While our video tries to focus on some Kukishinden Ryu, it was difficult with all the party crashers!

-Rob



# This Month's Spotlight

## DISCUSSION ON KIAI PART 3: HOW?

This final installment of the *kiai* mini-series will address the ability to perform *kiai*. As we have discussed in past articles, this sentiment must be defined further to assign it purpose. Simply saying *kiai* does not properly define what we will be attempting to accomplish through our will and action. Let's start with some foundational practices rooted in something clear and attainable.

I firmly believe that controlling one's breath and assigning purpose to it is a good first step to being able to express *kiai*. As previously hinted at, "by manipulation of breath, an effort is made to control not only one's own psycho-spiritual and physical energy but also that of the opponent." (Ettig 2006:117) Much work goes into the simple discipline of breathing as a martial artist. Our actions and breath are meant to be in unison. I have learned versions of the *sanshin no kata* from Gyokko Ryu that focus on different types of breathing with each individual *kata*, and individual *mudra* (*kuji*) that pair with them.

Also, there are techniques in Kukishinden Ryu that go as far as to mask one's breathing in order to better hide one's attacks when using ranged weapons. All this being said, pairing one's breath with their action is fundamentally part of the actions of a martial artist, whether for power generation or mental focus (Hatsumi 1981:231). A simple way to start this practice without distraction is through meditation with a focus on breath control. There are several ways to implement this, but simple is the best way to start. Sit, stand, or lie in a comfortable position and feel free to perform the following under your own discretion: 1) Breathe from the diaphragm in through the nose for a duration of 4-10 seconds. 2) Hold the inhaled breath for a duration of 4-10 seconds. 3) Breathe out through the mouth for a duration of 4-10 seconds. 4) Hold the exhaled breath for a duration of 4-10 seconds. This work will help develop breathing power and meld the mind with the breath. (Hatsumi 1981:232).



## Kiai: How (cont.)

Before moving onto the topic of a projected *kiai* shout, I'd like to discuss projected intent. As said by Sokaku Takeda, "The secret of *aiki* is to overpower the opponent mentally at a glance and to win without fighting." (Draeger 1979:143) We've all seen the look a parent can shoot out of their eyes to completely halt their child in action. This is one type of projected intent. This type of energy could be considered along the lines of the *saki* that we discussed earlier, though it is subtly different in my opinion. In order to work on the ability to better project intent, I have students practice violent exercises that have caustic sounds attached to them. It might seem a little much, but it is effective. Hatsumi sensei has written that to better perform *kiai*, one should pair natural sounds of an action with the body, while bringing air into the lungs (Hatsumi 1981:231). We use *bokken* (wooden training sword) to start, deflecting the opponent's *bokken* with a loud clash followed by a decisive entrance. Combining this action and

sound with their focused strike really helps create a palpable energy, even when the initial contact doesn't take place. The next step is to use an *iato* (metal training sword). The feelings attached to the clanging of metal are much more visceral and unnerving. To be clear, I do not condone or promote anyone practicing these described actions for the sake of safety.

At this point it should be clear that performing *kiai* is beyond just shouting at an opponent (Hatsumi 1981:231). I am going to mainly refer to Ninja History and Tradition and the types of *kiai* that Hatsumi Sensei discusses within it going forward. We have discussed many aspects of *kiai* up until now, and I'd like to narrow the scope to help develop some specific skills when paired with the other practices I have entailed so far. "To create the most effective *kiai* shout, use a low, open throated vowel sound, and avoid high-pitched shrieks or squealing noises." (Hatsumi 1981:232)



## Kiai: How (cont.)

For those that remember, you may see some commonalities with the *kiai* of Kukishin Ryu in the following descriptions. In the ninja tradition passed down through the Bujinkan, there are four types of *kiai* based on emotional states; these are the attacking shout, reacting shout, victorious shout, and shadow shout (Hatsumi 1981:232). When used in attacking, it should be explosive in order to break the concentration of the opponent. The vocalization is rooted in the gut and is projected with the sound “ehy!” (Hatsumi 1981:232). If expressed while reacting, it should produce a sense of disappointment in the opponent as they realize their actions have faltered. Conducted with the tightening of the midsection, the sensation should rise through the body before being expelled as “toh!” (Hatsumi 1981:232). The urge to celebrate the overpowering of an enemy after a successful strike lands can be paired with a “yah!” or “yoh!” centered in the solar plexus with the feeling of an excited laugh (Hatsumi 1981:232).

In the case of the shadow shout, one may not vocalize anything more than an “uhmn” as it entails, “a total plunging of the body, mind, and feelings into the destiny of the fight.” (Hatsumi 1981:232).

This should provide a starting point in understanding and practicing *kiai*. Remember, *ki* corresponds to the mind and the body, and it allows for the appropriate response to danger (Draeger 1979:143). The goal is to channel your intentions into your body and to produce an external response, or to even remove your intentions to allow something greater to elicit an internal response. This miniseries was rather fun to write up, and honestly still fell short of what I was hoping to share. Talking about some things can help unwrap their subtlety, but not necessarily do them justice in the place of experiencing them in action.

我慢強い  
Gamanzuyoi

# Citations

## DISCUSSION ON KIAI: ALL PARTS

**Draeger, Donn F. Classical Budo. Boston, Mass: Weatherhill, 2007.**

**Draeger, Donn F. Modern Bujutsu and Budo. New York: Weatherhill, 1979.**

**Ettig, Wolfgang. Takamatsu Toshitsugu-- The Last Shinobi. Schmitten, Germany: Ettig, 2006.**

**Hatsumi, Masaaki. Essence of Ninjutsu. Chicago, Illinois: Mcgraw Hill Professional, 1988.**

**Hatsumi, Masaaki. Ninjutsu History and Tradition. Burbank, California: Unique Publications, 1981.**

**Hatsumi, Masaaki, Toshitsugu Takamatsu, Alex Esteve Calero, and Osami Takizawa. Ninpo Hibun: The Colected Writings of Masaaki Hatsumi and His Teacher Toshitsugu Takamatsu. Barcelona, Spain: Design & Editions CIFE, 2020.**

**Lung, Haha, and Christopher B. Prowant. Mind Manipulation: Ancient and Modern Techniques Ninja Techniques. New York, New York: Citadel Press, 2002.**

# Japanese Language

「ノー・カントリー、アイ・アム・UFO」 COUNTRYLESS, I AM A UFO

Our next few language articles will be excerpts from one of Soke's Japanese-only books in which he discusses martial arts, his experiences, and lessons we can apply to our lives. Some interesting vocabulary is highlighted in the text and listed below the translation. Enjoy!

第二章 対談 初見良昭×藤岡弘 144ページ

Chapter 2: A Dialogue Between Maasaki Hatsumi (Soke) and Hiroshi Fujioka pg. 144

初見

私の叔父も太平洋戦争のアッツ島の戦いで**玉砕しています**から。日本の工科出身で、軍属として**トーチカ**作りに行ったんでっすけどね。戦地に行くとき、上野駅まで見送りに行きましたが、伯父も「若狭守」（日本刀）を腰に差して行きましたから。だから車刀を見ると、何か日本人の潜在的な魂が何かの形で伝わってきて、闘志のようなものが湧いてくるので危ないんです（笑）。

Hatsumi

It is because one of my uncles **suffered an honorable defeat** at the Battle of Attu Island in the Pacific War [WWII]. Given his background in Japanese engineering, he went as a civilian employee to make **pillboxes**. When he left for the battlefield, his younger brother went to see him off at the Ueno train station and that younger uncle also wore a protective amulet (of a Japanese sword) on his waist. So, when I saw that car sword, it was dangerous because some kind of latent Japanese soul was somehow being transmitted and this fighting spirit bubbled up inside me (**laughs**).

## 玉砕 (ぎょくさい)

*gyokusai (Literally "breaking the (jewel/jade) ball". According to the [Aviation Military Glossary](#), this is a euphemism used in war to for those who "fight with all their might, protect their honor and loyalty, and die gracefully. ... In modern times, it is mainly used in sports games to mean that you will boldly challenge your superior opponent but unfortunately lose. It is a serious taboo in modern Japanese to express "break the jade" when a dead person actually occurs.)*

## トーチカ

*tōchika (pillbox; type of blockhouse, or concrete dug-in guard-post, normally equipped with loopholes)*

## 笑 (わら)

*wara, emi (smile or laugh; lol in text conversations or online forums)*

Many thanks to Bujinkan Shihan **Nate Metz** for lending me his [Japanese copy of Soke's book](#) so long ago and to [Mie University International Ninja Research Center](#)'s ever-patient **Yuta Sakai** for help verifying Japanese martial terms in context.



## This Month's Video

(ONCE AGAIN) OUR SPECIAL GUEST GIVES AN INSIDER'S TAKE

[This month's video](#) is part of a series meant to describe some of the training in the dojo as well as offer some footage of it taking place. These will be light-hearted, with the intention to offer a better context to some of the techniques, *kata*, and other methods of training that we perform. This month's video lightly touches on *omote gyaku* from the *tewaza* of the Kukishinden Ryu. Joe joins Rob and Alex in commentary on the training.



Bujinkan Gaman Dojo

**Kukishinden Ryu**  
Tewza: Omote Gyaku 10-6-21

GAMANDOJOINFO@GMAIL.COM



# News & Events

SOME THINGS WORTH SHARING



## Upcoming Events:

Group Classes For Active Members: M & Th 6-7 & 7-8

Private In-person and Digital Classes (please email [gamandojoinfo@gmail.com](mailto:gamandojoinfo@gmail.com) for availabilities)

[Noguchi Sensei in Las Vegas, NA: 2022](#)

## Media Corner

So, initially I thought I'd use this space to help introduce new avenues of learning and entertainment every month. As it happens, I'm going to highlight [Paul Masse's Podcast](#) once again! To be fair, I may have shared his Youtube channel in the past. Recently, he had friend of the Dojo Sean Askew on the air for a rather interesting interview. Sometimes I forget how lucky I am to have fellow *buyu* like them in my life! (Picture featuring Sean (far right) attending a presentation by International Ninja Research Institute staff member Yuta Sakai (immediately left of table), hosted by Gaman Dojo at CSU)