

THE QUARTERLY AIKIDO

THE AIKIBUDO NEWSLETTER NO. 4 WINTER 2020

THE MESSAGE TO READERS

As I, Shizuo Imaizumi, promised you in No. 3 fall issue, the following is an introduction to “ikkajo — The Basics and the Essence of Aikido” which was a feature article of a Japanese magazine, “The Hiden—Budo & Bujutsu” (December 2019 issue), published by BAB Japan, Ltd. I hope you enjoy the following passage I summarized, including my own research.

The waza of “ikkajo” is one of “kihon waza” or “basic techniques,” and the importance of training “ikkajo” is a well-known fact among people in aiki-related circles. Sokaku Takeda (1859-1943), the restorer of Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu, had transmitted many techniques to his son, Tokimune Takeda (1916-1993) as well as Morihei Uyeshiba (1883-1969) and Yuki-yoshi Sagawa (1902-1998). Tokimune Takeda systematized basic 118 techniques in Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu and, at that time, he renamed “ikkajo” “ippondori” because he used the term “ikkajo” as the name of the first category of basic techniques in Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu. Yuki-yoshi Sagawa also renamed “ikkajo” “ichigen” in his own group, that is, Sagawa faction of Daito Ryu Aikibudo. Morihei Uyeshiba had continued to use the name of “ikkajo” until he passed away in April 1969. His student, Gozo Shioda (1915-1994) also continued to use the name of “ikkajo” even after he founded Yoshinkan Aikido in 1955. In Aikikai honbu dojo, meanwhile, Kisshomaru Uyeshiba (1921-1999) systematized Aikido techniques and, at that time, he changed the name of “ikkajo” into “ikkyo” or “ude-osae.” Now the name of “ikkyo” is common in modern Aikido circles around the world. [Note: In order to respect the purpose of article of “The Hiden,” I further continue to use the word of “ikkajo” instead of alternate terms such as “ippondori,” “ichigen,” or “ikkyo.” Although those technical names are different, the technique itself in each organization derives from the one source, that is, Sokaku Takeda.]

Sokaku Takeda left the following saying in Japanese: “Daito Ryu wa toshu no kenpo dearu.” Literally translating, “Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu is equivalent to a sword-handling method (kenpo) using bare hands (toshu).” In other words, “Daito Ryu is Jujutsu (techniques with bare hands) on the basis of techniques and principles of Kenjutsu (swordsmanship).” As Sokaku Takeda was born in the end of Edo shogunate (ended in 1868) and trained Kenjutsu harder than Jujutsu, he was so preoccupied with the attack by a sword rather than the encounter with the attack by bare hands. Therefore, it went without saying that his mentality would be the same as one which the most samurai warriors in those days had possessed inherently.

In conclusion, it is only natural that “ikkajo” is the technique based on the techniques and principles of Kenjutsu. Sokaku Takeda developed “ikkajo” as a result of his training in crossing swords with other trainees. You try to imagine that when an opponent drawing his sword from its scabbard slashes at you standing with bare hands, you must instinctively take an action of thrusting your hands out its attack. How have you reacted? Are you visualizing this kind of worst case scenario and practicing “ikkajo” accordingly? If not, then you may be interested in reading the follow-up article on the technical aspect of “ikkajo” described in “The Hiden.” You can find it next to “An Introduction to Descriptive Aikido (4) — Ikkyo Waza by Koichi Tohei (2).”

AN INTRODUCTION TO DESCRIPTIVE AIKIDO (4)

By Shizuo Imaizumi

IKKYO WAZA BY KOICHI TOHEI (2)

KATA-TORI IKKYO (IKKAJO)

The following is the summarized article of “kata-tori ikkyo (ikkajo)” from the book by Koichi Tohei. [AKDNM-KT (1967), pp. 125-131]

IRIMI (OMOTE) – HOLD TIGHT

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on tori and grasps tori’s left shoulder (the area of shoulder covered with “gi”) with his right hand thrusting out.

TORI: Tori stands with the left foot forward (hidari-hanmi) facing on uke, shows him the left shoulder and waits until uke grabs his left shoulder firmly. After that, without moving his left shoulder, tori takes the left foot backward and stands on his tiptoes. Furthermore, tori moves his left “koshi” (a lower back or a waist) the moment his left tiptoes touch on the mat, and puts his weight on his left foot drawing his right foot toward his left one with the back straight.

UKE: uke loses his balance led by tori’s action (kuzushi) and almost falls forward.

TORI: After tori makes uke off balance, tori puts his right little finger (pinkie) over uke’s right pinkie while his right hand pushes uke’s right hand toward his left shoulder from the top. After that, tori moves both his koshi and left shoulder together toward the direction of uke’s face. Meanwhile, tori grabs uke’s right wrist with his right hand and grabs uke’s right elbow with his left hand from the underneath. At the same time, tori strikes down uke’s right arm keeping his koshi stable without taking the left foot forward. At that time, tori should not push back uke’s right hand, but push it back using the power of his koshi movement. On the contrary, if tori takes the left foot forward while moving his koshi clockwise, the power of his koshi movement weakens. Taking the left foot forward like that causes some interference with tori’s next movement.

Uke: Uke moves his upper body backward twisting it counterclockwise and starts to lower his body facing down.

Tori: After tori straightens his arms downward by striking down uke’s right arm, he takes his left foot forward without trying to push down uke. Or, alternately, tori takes his right foot slightly forward and, after that, takes his left foot forward. If uke remains on his way without losing his balance completely and the position of his head also remains high, uke may walk forward without leaning forward. However, if uke loses his balance and lowers his head and back, he easily faces down on the mat when tori takes his left foot forward.

Tori: Tori guides uke until his right hand reaches on the mat. Finally, tori pins down uke on the mat with seiza posture and stretches uke’s right arm in front of his knees.

Uke: Uke faces down on the mat with his right arm held with tori’s hands.

Koichi Tohei suggests the following about kata-tori ikkyo (irimi) — hold tight.

(1) When uke grabs the area of tori's left shoulder with his right hand, tori should not try to move his shoulder immediately. If tori tries to do so, he eventually conflicts with strong resistance from uke. As a result, when the power of uke is stronger than tori, the opposite result may happen like uke pulls him back with his counter attack. Tori must realize that he can move his left foot backward without moving his left shoulder. When tori shifts the weight from his koshi to his left foot as if he were absorbing the physical power of uke and draws his right foot, he can keep his initial posture and make uke off balance. On the contrary, when tori does not draw his right foot together, the power of tori is separated into two legs and weakens accordingly.

(2) When tori makes uke's right arm straighten completely, he further pushes uke's right hand toward his left shoulder. Then tori pushes back uke's right wrist in accordance with the movements of both koshi and shoulder. If tori does not push uke's right hand toward his left shoulder, tori is forced to push back uke's hand only by his gripping hand. Therefore, tori must practice to reconcile the movement with a hand, a shoulder and koshi simultaneously.

After tori obtains this process of practice, tori should practice the following methods of counting. Uke stands with the right foot forward and grabs tori's left shoulder with the right hand. Tori stands with the left foot forward and lets uke grab his left shoulder.

Count 1: Taking the left foot backward, tori guides uke's right hand and changes his posture to mi-gi-hanmi.

Count 2: Without changing the posture, tori pushes back uke's right hand and elbow and strikes down uke's right arm.

Count 3: Taking the left foot forward, tori starts to pin down uke.

After repeatedly practicing the above counting method of 1, 2 and 3, tori reduces the number of counts into 1 and 2 by putting the above counts 1 and 2 together.

Count 1: Taking the left foot backward, tori guides, pushes back and strikes down uke's right hand and elbow without stopping like the previous counts of 1 and 2.

Count 2: Taking the left foot forward, tori starts to pin down uke.

(3) The most important part is how to handle uke's right hand and elbow from the posture with the left shoulder held by uke. Therefore, tori should repeatedly practice the process of pushing uke's right hand toward tori's left shoulder, and, as a reaction to that, pushing back his right wrist toward his face. The repetitious practice of such a part is helpful to make progress in this technique.

IRIMI (OMOTE) — COME TO HOLD

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (mi-gi-hanmi) facing on tori and comes to hold tori's left shoulder with his right hand.

TORI: Tori stands with the left foot forward (hi-dari-hanmi) facing on uke. When uke comes at him to hold his left shoulder, tori gently touches his own left shoulder with his right hand as if he were brushing off the dust and continues to lead uke's right hand, and grabs uke's right wrist downward. At the same time, tori takes the left foot backward and draws his right foot toward the left foot.

UKE: Uke loses his balance by being led his right hand downward.

TORI: Tori gently grabs uke's right fingertips with his right hand, raises his right hand over uke's head and swings it down as if he were drawing a semicircle. At that moment, tori's left hand reaches uke's right elbow and swings it down along with the movement of his right hand.

UKE: Uke moves his upper body backward twisting it counterclockwise and lowers his body facing down.

TORI: Tori guides uke until his right hand reaches near the mat. Finally, tori pins down uke on the mat with seiza posture and stretches uke's right arm in front of his knees.

UKE: Uke faces down on the mat with his right arm held with tori's hands.

Koichi Tohei suggests the following about kata-tori ikkyo (irimi) — come to hold.

(1) Tori should not stop uke's right hand trying to grab it with his right hand. That causes a delay of his next movement of swinging his right hand over uke's head because of competition of which one of them reaches to grab first.

(2) Although it is difficult to stop uke's power coming at him, it is easy to change its direction the moment when uke is about to reach tori's left shoulder with his right hand. Tori leads uke's right hand downward while taking the left foot backward, and changes his body's direction so that all the uke's power coming at him also goes down accordingly. Furthermore, as uke loses his balance, he cannot quickly react backward. Therefore, tori can control uke's right hand without holding it firmly.

(3) If tori swings uke's right hand upward with a small circular motion, that causes another trouble of clashing with the power of uke. Therefore, tori should swing his right hand with a large circular motion as if he were positioning his right shoulder as the center of a circular motion.

(4) When tori takes the left foot backward in order to lead uke's right hand coming to grab his left shoulder, he should not pull his ki backward. If tori does so, uke's ki coming at him also follows in accordance with tori's action. As a result, tori loses his own balance. Therefore, tori turns his face toward uke extending ki first before he moves his body backward. As a result, tori can keep his posture secure and does not need to receive uke's ki.

TENKAN (URA) — COME TO HOLD

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on tori and moves his right foot forward to grab tori's left shoulder.

TORI: The moment when uke comes to hold tori's left shoulder with his right hand, tori moves his left foot backward like he did in the irimi technique, and grabs uke's right hand with his right hand.

UKE: Uke is led his right hand like the irimi technique and loses his balance forward.

TORI: Tori grabs uke's right fingertips with his right hand and raises his right hand over uke's head. At that moment, tori takes his left foot forward behind uke's right side and grabs uke's right elbow with his left hand. From there, tori turns his koshi clockwise and swings down uke's right arm with his centrifugal force until tori kneels down on the mat. Finally, tori pins down uke on the mat with seiza posture and stretches uke's right arm in front of his knees.

UKE: Uke faces down on the mat with his right arm held with tori's hands.

Koichi Tohei suggests the following about kata-tori ikkyo (tenkan) — come to hold

(1) Just before tori jumps in behind uke, he stands with the migi-hanmi posture and thrusts his right hand upward over uke's head. Therefore, tori's left hand does not yet reach uke's right elbow. If tori tries to grab uke's right elbow before he jumps in behind uke, he is forced to twist his koshi to grab uke's right elbow. That causes a trouble of disturbing tori's next movement for stepping in behind uke. As tori has enough time to reach uke's right elbow when turning to the right after standing behind uke, tori should only think of standing behind uke without holding uke's right elbow. All tori has to do is jump into the back of uke completely and turn to the right from that position. Therefore, tori can pin down uke on the mat only using his centrifugal force.

(2) After tori stands behind uke, he should not pull uke's right arm sideward. As I [Koichi Tohei] explained in ikkyo undo of aiki taiso (refer to No.1 Spring 2019), tori should practice the up and down movement of ikkyo undo repeatedly. Tori should swing down uke's right arm around the height of tori's knees and continue to turn to the right until uke faces down on the mat.

SHOMEN-UCHI IKKYO (IKKAJO)

The following is the summarized article of "shomen-uchi ikkyo (ikkajo)" from the book by Koichi Tohei. [AKDNM-KT (1967), pp. 166-170]

IRIMI (OMOTE)

In kata-tori techniques, the force of uke comes at tori's shoulder almost horizontally. But in shomen-uchi techniques, the force of uke comes at tori's head almost vertically. Therefore, tori is prone to collide with uke's striking force from the top to the bottom. When tori executes shomen-uchi ikkyo (irimi), he must lead uke without colliding with his striking force and lead back all the uke's power toward him completely.

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on tori, raises his right hand and starts to strike tori's head from the top to forehead.

TORI: Tori stands with the migi-hanmi posture facing on uke. Extending ki from both hands, tori swings up his hands from the position of koshi and moves up uke's right hand coming at tori's head. At the same time, tori leads uke's right elbow with his left hand. At that moment, tori pushes back uke's right arm toward his face and, without stopping that action, pushes down his hands while remaining in his migi-hanmi posture.

UKE: Uke receives tori's pushing-down power and loses his balance facing down.

TORI: Tori takes the left foot forward in front of uke and kneels down. Finally, tori pins down uke on the mat with the seiza posture and stretches uke's right arm in front of his knees.

UKE: Uke faces down on the mat and his right arm is held by tori's hands.

Koichi Tohei suggest the following about shomen-uchi ikkyo (irimi).

(1) Tori should extend ki even before uke starts to strike tori's head with his right hand. From there, tori can control the immediate striking power by uke.

(2) Tori should swing up both hands with the proper timing. In other words, tori should not move too soon to grab uke's right hand. On the contrary, if tori takes an action like that, the power of both persons collide with each other in the middle of frontal attack by uke. When the power of uke is stronger than tori, tori cannot easily push back uke's striking power.

(3) Tori should practice ikkyo undo of aikido taiso (refer to No. 1 Spring 2019) repeatedly so that he can obtain the correct timing of when to move his hands. Count 1 of ikkyo undo is the time when tori starts to move up his hands positioned on the sides of koshi. In other words, tori should move his hands right after finishing count 1. Count 2 is the time when he starts to move down his raising hands. In other words, he should move his hands while uttering count 2.

(4) Summing up, when uke starts to strike tori's head, that action of uke corresponds to the time when uttering count 1 of ikkyo undo. [From the viewpoint of uke, that timing of striking action corresponds to the action of count 2 of tori.] At that time, tori's hands remains still but are ready for moving upward. Furthermore, when uke's right hand is about to reach tori's forehead (shomen), this is the time for tori to slide up uke's right hand from underneath. [That timing of the action of moving up his hands corresponds to the action of count 1 by tori of ikkyo undo.] Tori should push up uke's right hand after waiting for it to come near the forehead. Therefore, uke's striking power changes into the upper direction. After that, tori starts to move his hands downward by leading uke's right arm. This corresponds to count 2 by tori of ikkyo undo. Thus uke's body turns to the left (counterclockwise) and forces to lower his body facing down.

(5) Test 1: When uke tries to strike tori's head, tori intentionally stops uke's striking hand in the middle of shomen-uchi. From this posture, tori tries to push back uke's striking arm with his hands, but it is difficult to move uke's arm anywhere.

(6) Test 2: Tori leads uke's striking hand reaching near his forehead with his right hand attached on the forehead and receives the power of uke's right hand. From that posture, tori gently touches uke's right hand and elbow with both hands and bows facing down. Uke moves his body by losing his balance. In other words, tori should not push back uke's right hand, but just bow (ojigi).

(7) Test 3: Tori grabs uke's right fingertips with his right hand from the posture in which both uke and tori cross with their hands around the level of face. From that posture, when tori leads uke's right fingertips toward uke's face, uke moves his upper body because of losing his balance.

(8) The bottom line is that tori should not push back the power of uke's right hand, but change its direction upward. And the moment when the power of both uke and tori collide with each other, tori leads the power of uke downward. By doing the above three tests repeatedly, tori understands that the more closer to the forehead uke's hand approaches, the more advantageous tori gets.

TENKAN (URA)

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on tori, raises his right hand and starts to strike tori's head.

TORI: Tori stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on uke. Extending ki, tori thrusts his arms in accordance with the timing like the irimi technique without staying in the same position. At that moment, tori steps in the left foot behind uke and grabs uke's right elbow with his left hand. Meanwhile, tori slides down his right hand toward uke's right hand and grabs it gently. After that, tori draws a semicircle with both hands turning his body to the right (clockwise) until tori pins down uke on the mat.

UKE: Uke stretches his legs facing down and his right arm is held by tori's hands like the irimi technique.

Koichi Tohei suggests the following about shomen-uchi ikkyo (tenkan).

(1) Tori should practice tenkan (turning) movement from jumping in behind uke to lead him on the mat without cutting ki like flowing stream of water.

(2) Tori should pay attention to the direction of his face and mind. When tori jumps in behind uke, he should keep his face and mind together to the right (clockwise) completely. In other words, tori should pay attention to the direction where he is about to move ahead of one step (not the front of uke but behind him, for example).

In conclusion of ikkyo waza by Koichi Tohei, you must pay attention to the importance of practicing ikkyo undo of aiki taiso (refer to No. 1 spring 2019) that Koichi Tohei developed when he was a chief instructor of Aikikai honmbu dojo. Also, I would like you to refer to the follow-up article of the technical aspect of "ikkajo" I summarized (see in detail on pp. 8-12).

[To be continued.]

THE FOLLOW-UP ARTICLE OF THE TECHNICAL ASPECT OF “IKKAJO”

As I promised you in “The Message to Readers” in the front page, the following is the follow-up article of “Ikkajo — the Basics and the Essence of Aikido” described in “The Hiden — Budo & Bujutsu” (refer to the front page). Below is my summarized article about the technical aspect of “ikkajo” which I believe is helpful to your further understanding Aikido waza. Before I begin to state it, I would like to inform you that an editor of this Japanese magazine arranged his article with four organizations written separately after visiting and interviewing them. Therefore, I respect and follow his choice of order. Although I mention the names of four organizations as a subtitle respectively, I omit each instructor’s name who answered questions by an interviewer of “The Hiden” in my summarized article below. As I am not a professional translator but an informant for you, the information below is my own choice of a summary from lots of materials on “ikkajo” described in “The Hiden,”

DAITO RYU AIKIBUDO — A STYLE OF TOKIMUNE TAKEDA

Tokimune Takeda systematized the basic “waza” (techniques) of Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu and, at that time, he used the word “ikkajo” as the general term for the techniques which a student of beginning level should learn. Therefore, he renamed the so-called “ikkajo” “ippondori” as the first technique of Article One, that is, “ikkajo.”

In Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu, “ippondori” is a technique based on the techniques and principles of “Kenjutsu” or “swordsmanship.” The definition of “Ippondori” is to control one arm of an opponent (uke) with tori’s hands by grabbing, twisting, pushing down or pinning down. In “ippondori” practice, when uke starts to strike tori’s head substituting his hand for a sword, tori receives uke’s arm with his hands extended just before uke manifests its striking power or before uke is about to start striking tori. After that, tori enters his body with his hands sliding upward along uke’s arm, controls uke’s hand and elbow, and makes uke off balance (kuzushi). Finally, tori pins down uke on the mat. That is a fundamental movement in practicing “ippondori” or so-called “ikkajo.”

[In an article of “The Hiden,” the process of “shomen-uchi ippondori” in detail was made by several frame photos. Therefore, below is my own summary of depiction from those photos.]

UKE: Uke stands with the left foot forward (hidari-hanmi).

TORI: Tori stands in a natural posture (shizentai).

UKE: Uke takes the right foot forward raising his right hand and starts to strike tori’s head.

TORI: Tori takes the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) receiving uke’s striking arm with his hands. At that moment, tori grabs uke’s right wrist with his right hand and grabs uke’s right elbow (the area of vital point) with his left hand. After that, tori pushes uke’s right arm toward his face and blocks his view of tori’s next action.

TORI: After that, tori takes the left foot forward for kicking the vital area of “kinteki” located at lower than a naval. At that moment, tori pushes down uke’s right arm and stands with hidari-hanmi posture.

UKE: Uke loses his balance and starts to twist his body counterclockwise.

TORI: Tori further pushes uke’s right elbow with his left hand and leads uke’s right wrist on his right thigh with his right hand. [The final posture of tori in a photo is not a seiza posture, but is a hidari-hanmi-standing posture with both hands pushing down uke’s right arm.]

UKE: Uke kneels down on the mat facing down and his right arm is joint-locked like above.

There are three important points of fighting [practicing] in Daito Ryu Aikijujutsu.

- (1) The moment when you touch an opponent is the time of your match in the matter of winning or losing.
- (2) At that moment, your technique should be already applied to an opponent or an opponent has been already made off balance (kuzushi).
- (3) The same technique should be limited only one chance. In other words, if you cannot control an opponent with your initial action at a certain technique, all you have to do next is change it into the second technique [strategy] without any hesitation.

Summing up, the moment when you confront with an opponent, the match is already under way. Therefore, “maai” or “a space” between you and an opponent becomes one of main factors whether you will win or lose. In other words, when you confront with an opponent, it is important for you to always keep advantageous conditions without being grabbed or struck by an opponent when you move your body (taisabaki) using proper footwork (ashisabaki). To do so, you must train your body so that you can swiftly move your body anywhere, such as “zengo” (front and back), “sayu” or “yoko” (left and right) or [four] “naname” (four diagonal directions) without losing your balance. Tokimune Takeda often said, “Swiftness is the essence of a technique.” That means that not only your movement itself is swift, but also the number of actions should be fast [reduced]. In other words, you must reduce the number of actions, for example, from the number of actions of 1, 2, 3, 4 to the ones of 1, 2, etc so that the actual performing time of each technique quickens accordingly.

SAGAWA HA DAITORYU AIKIBUDO – A STYLE OF YUKIYOSHI SAGAWA

In Sagawa ha (faction) Daito Ryu Aikibudo, “ikkajo” was renamed “ichigen” by Yuki Yoshi Sagawa. But its origin is the same as “ikkajo,” “ippondori,” or “ikkyo.” Yuki Yoshi Sagawa emphasized to practice “ichigen” because that included all the elements of training in it, such as “taisabaki” (body movement), “tesabaki” (handwork), “ashisabaki” (footwork), or “kuzushi” (making an opponent off balance). When you master “ichigen” completely, it goes without saying that remaining techniques you learn are much easier to obtain.

There are two features in a style of Yuki Yoshi Sagawa. The first is to omit “atemi” action from each technique. The other is to perform each technique after executing “kuzushi” (making an opponent off balance). “Atemi” is usually used for disturbing an opponent physically and/or psychologically. In other words, “atemi” is used as a substitute for “kuzushi” or “aiki” (using the power of ki). But you don’t actually hit an opponent (a partner) with the full power of “atemi” when you practice a technical form (kata) at a dojo. Therefore, “atemi” doesn’t mean much in this case because that fake “atemi” doesn’t function as a substitute for “kuzushi” or “aiki” eventually. An instructor teaches you when to do “atemi” in a certain technique. That is OK because he himself has a skill of how to do “kuzushi” or “aiki” after his action of that fake “atemi” against his uke. But that is another story to a student of a beginning level.

If you are prohibited to use “atemi” against uke at a dojo, all you have to do is concentrate on the execution of “kuzushi” that is a substitute for “atemi.” Most students of martial arts know that they cannot use the real “atemi” against uke who is not a stranger but a friend or a student at a dojo. Therefore, when you practice “ichigen” at a dojo, you should perform a certain form (kata) and movement (sabaki) correctly, and also perform each action in accordance with its principle you learn. In other words, you should not consider the practical way of fighting, such as punching or kicking an opponent while you are practicing this basic process of “ichigen.” Of course, in the later stage after learning the basic category, you may apply “atemi” or different type of “kuzushi” to a real fighting if you want to do.

[In an article of “The Hiden,” the process of “shomen-uchi ichigen” in detail was made by several frame photos. Therefore, below is my own summary of depiction from those photos.]

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi).

TORI: Tori stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi).

UKE: Uke raises his right hand over his head, takes the right foot forward and starts to strike tori’s head from the top to the forehead (shomen-uchi).

TORI: Tori takes the right foot forward, extends his right hand over the forehead and softly receives uke’s striking with his right hand as if he were coming to meet him. In other words, tori should not receive uke’s power like suddenly stopping with the overexerted power of himself. After that, tori grabs uke’s right wrist with his right hand using the minimum-holding power (hanzukami) and slightly pushes down uke’s right wrist. Meanwhile, tori pushes up uke’s right elbow after grabbing it with his left hand in a style of “hanzukami” and executes “kuzushi” toward uke’s right shoulder.

UKE: Uke receives tori’s action of “kuzushi” (making uke off balance) of being pushed up his right arm toward his shoulder and loses his balance.

TORI: The moment when making uke off balance (kuzushi), tori takes the left foot forward in front of uke while leading down uke’s right arm with a circular motion.

UKE: Uke starts to fall forward twisting his body counterclockwise.

TORI: Tori further takes the right foot forward thrusting uke’s body downward.

UKE: Uke kneels down and stretches his legs on the mat facing down.

TORI: Tori sits with seiza posture, pushes up uke’s right shoulder toward his head and bends his right wrist inward.

UKE: Uke follows tori’s guide with his right arm held with tori’s hands on the mat and is bent his right wrist inward.

AIKIKAI AIKIDO – A STYLE OF MORIHEI UYESHIBA

In Aikikai Aikido, “ikkajo” is called “ikkyo.” The word “ikkyo” literally means “the first teaching.” In other words, when a beginner starts with Aikikai Aikido in a dojo, “ikkyo” is the first technique he learns as a beginning technique. In 1950’s Kisshomaru Uyeshiba wrote Aikido books to spread Aikido and he used the word “ikkyo” or “ude-osae” along with “ikkajo” in his books. “Ikkyo” is the first step of learning Aikido. You can develop your “taisabaki” (body movement) or “kuzushi” (making uke off balance) through “ikkyo” training.

Morihei Uyeshiba O-Sensei was used to teach suwari waza shomen-uchi ikkyo when he started his class in his early stage [before he stopped holding his own class]. Therefore, “ikkyo” (ikkajo) is the most important waza among many Aikido techniques. Especially, suwari waza shomen-uchi ikkyo is the most useful tool for developing the foundation of your body.

One of the best ways to develop “ikkyo” waza is that you practice “ikkyo” movement by yourself repeatedly. This is called “ikkyo undo” of “aiki taiso” which was developed by an instructor who went to Hawaii and America to spread Aikido in early stage [after the World War II]. [Note: Although a personal name was not mentioned in “The Hiden,” it is clear to me that this unnamed instructor meant Koichi Tohei Sensei who went to Hawaii for the first time in 1953. I don’t rewrite “ikkyo undo” here because you already read the article of “ikkyo undo” developed by him (refer to No.1 spring 2019).]

[In an article of “The Hiden,” the process of “suwari-waza shomen-uchi ikkyo (omote)” in detail was made by several frame photos. Therefore, below is my own summary of depiction from those photos. Although photos in “The Hiden” were shown with the left-hand attack of shomen-uchi by uke for convenience’ sake of appearance of photography in “The Hiden.” Therefore, I personally reversed the actions of those photos for your convenience of future practice at a dojo.]

UKE: Uke sits with seiza posture.

TORI: Tori sits with seiza posture.

UKE: Uke raises his right knee, moves his right hand over his head and starts to strike tori’s head with his right hand from the top to the forehead (shomen-uchi).

TORI: Tori raises his right knee and thrusts his hands like “ikkyo undo” in accordance with uke’s action of uke’s “shomen-uchi.” In other words, tori receives uke’s right hand with his “migi-tegatana” (right hand substituting for a sword) and lightly grabs uke’s right elbow with his left hand.

TORI: Tori cuts down uke’s right arm and makes uke off balance (kuzushi). Furthermore, tori takes the left foot forward and pushes down uke’s right arm between his left knee and his left hand.

UKE: Uke loses his balance and twists his upper body counterclockwise.

TORI: Tori starts knee-walking (shikko) from his right foot for pinning down uke on the mat and stretches uke’s right arm in front of his knees.

UKE: Uke follows tori’s movement and faces down on the mat with his right arm held with tori’s hands.

The important point of Aikido is to make uke off balance (kuzushi) by dealing with uke with “sabaki” (movement), such as “taisabaki” (body movement), “ashisabaki” (footwork) or “tesabaki” (handwork). To do so, you must develop three actions, such as 1) “irimi” (entering a body or stepping forward), 2) tenkan” (turning a body backward for changing a direction of a body) or 3) “kaiten” or “tenshin” (moving a body swiftly and smoothly anywhere). Therefore, you should practice “ikkyo” repeatedly in order to develop such actions.

[In an article of “The Hiden,” the process of “shomen-uchi ikkyo (ura)” in detail was made by several frame photos. Therefore, below is my own summary of depiction from those photos.]

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi).

TORI: Tori stands with the right foot forward. (migi-hanmi).

UKE: Uke takes the right foot forward, raises his right hand over his head and starts to strike tori’s head with a style of “shomen-uchi.”

TORI: Tori takes the right foot forward, receives uke’s right hand with his “migi-tegatana” and slightly grabs uke’s right elbow with his left hand.

TORI: At that moment, tori takes the left foot forward behind uke (irimi), turns his body (tenkan) and further continue turning (kaiten or tenshin) until tori makes uke off balance (kuzushi).

UKE: Uke loses his balance and follows tori’s movement.

TORI: Tori kneels down on the mat and pins down uke like ikkyo (omote).

UKE: Uke faces down on the mat with his right arm held with tori’s hands.

YOSHINKAN AIKIDO — A STYLE OF GOZO SHIODA

The original form of “ikkajo” of Yoshinkan Aikido derives from the technique of “daiippoo” (the first method) described in the book “Budo” by Morihei Uyeshiba printed in 1938 [The book “Budo” was not for sale]. The technical order of “daiipoo” in “Budo” is as follows:

“First, shite (tori) initiates a strike toward uke's head (shomen) with his migi-tegatana (right hand), tempts to lead uke's migi-tegatana and meets with both migi-tegatana in front of them. At that time, shite thrusts at uke's ribs (atemi) with his left fist. Next, shite grabs uke's right elbow with his left hand after an action of atemi. At the same time, shite grabs uke's right wrist with his right hand twisting his koshi and makes uke off balance (kuzushi). Furthermore, shite steps forward his left foot which remained behind and pins down uke on the mat. Finally, shite strikes uke's head (atemi) with his migi-tegatana from behind.”

In “ikkajo” of Yoshinkan Aikido, both actions of the beginning “atemi” and the final “atemi” were omitted by Gozo Shioda.

[In an article of “The Hiden,” the process of “shomen-uchi ikkajo (osae)” in detail was made by several frame photos. Therefore, below is my own summary of depiction from those photos.]

UKE: Uke stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on tori.

TORI: Tori stands with the right foot forward (migi-hanmi) facing on uke.

TORI: Tori takes the right foot forward raising his right hand over the head and starts to strike uke's head from the top to the forehead (shomen-uchi).

UKE: Uke receives tori's right hand with his right hand.

TORI: Tori takes the right foot a half step forward lowering his weight, grabs uke's right elbow with his left hand and pushes down uke's right arm. At that time, tori should not straighten his upper body for pushing up uke's elbow or twist his koshi clockwise for controlling uke's right elbow downward. In other words, tori keeps his weight down without twisting his koshi and, at that time, his left foot remains still.

UKE: Uke loses his balance and twists his body counterclockwise facing down.

TORI: Tori takes the left foot forward pushing down uke's right arm completely, kneels down on the mat and holds uke's right arm in front of his knees keeping right angle (90 degrees).

UKE: Uke faces down on the mat with his right hand held with tori's hands (90 degrees).

[End]