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Translating Body: An Annotated Translation of *Heihō Kadensho*

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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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Keywords: intersemiotic translation, embodied knowledge, martial art, *Heihō kadensho* 兵法家伝書, *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū* 柳生新陰流.

This thesis translates and annotates excerpts of the seventeenth-century Japanese martial art transmission text *Heihō kadensho* 兵法家伝書. With the consciousness of intersemiotic translation between bodily motion and written scripts, this thesis examines the transmission of martial art knowledge both in text and in motion. This thesis demonstrates how motion and scripts function together as two distinct modes of expression that can complement and amplify one another in the process of martial art transmission.

The thesis of Ziyang Guo is approved.

Michelle Liu Carriger

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PART I. Introduction

The human body speaks its own language; a language that cannot be conveyed by words and sentences. Conventional language can merely allude to the body. As such, while people can write about embodied knowledge, embodied knowledge can never be conveyed by words. Yet, martial artists in the Edō period of Japan nonetheless left us martial art treatises in abundance. Why bother writing about martial art if the only way of transmitting it is from one living body to the next? It could be that documenting martial art is part of the samurai class's effort in preserving their identity and legitimacy in times of peace. Alternatively, the increased amount of spiritual content, together with the decreased or non-existent battlefield application, may indicate a departure from practicality for martial arts in the Edō period. But martial artists read these treatises differently. They search for connections in the text, connections between one's own embodied knowledge and that of swordmasters generations ago. While reading those treatises, martial artists tap into their own experiences, speculating motions and sensations of people long gone. In this process, the text that connects the past body and the present body will be given new meanings. This thesis interprets *Heihō kadensho* 兵法家伝書 (*The in-house transmission text for warring methods*), one of the earliest and most prominent martial art treatises, from the perspective of a martial art practitioner. In reading the text with a consciousness of the underlying embodied knowledge, this thesis demonstrates that the introduction of spiritual contents in the Edō period martial art treatises does not signify a departure from the bodily and practical aspects of martial arts. It is instead a testimony to the gap between the referentiality of written texts and the somatic nature of embodied knowledge and an effort across generations for bridging it.

There is a dilemma surrounding interpreting martial art treatises. Martial art is fundamentally a form of embodied knowledge: it is sensor-based, grounded in bodily motions and experiences. Written records, on the other hand, can only refer to embodied knowledge, but not convey them. The propositional mode of expression via texts is what makes interpreting martial art treatises more of a personal conversation between the interpreter and the writer. In this case, the conversation is across almost four hundred years.

Contexts

When over a century of large-scale bloody conflicts in Japan came to an end in 1615 CE, carrying a pair of long and short swords become the exclusive right of the ruling warrior class. As such, swords (and the ability to wield them) become a status symbol that distinguishes warriors from other lower social classes (Minamoto 1989, 164). Written in 1632, *Heihō kadensho* was part of the trend of consolidating fighting experiences into a more comprehensive system that not only includes fighting techniques but also an overarching theory and mentality that connects them all. This process of consolidation resulted in an expansion of the genre of martial art texts in the early 1600s. As Imamura noted, in addition to catalogs (*mokuroku* 目録) and certificates (*inka* 印可) that usually only record names of the school's techniques, a new type of writing called transmission text (*densho* 伝書) emerged. Usually contains information from catalogs and certificates, transmission texts also include more systematically organized discussions on the school's techniques (*gihō* 技法) and mentality (*shinhō* 心法) (1995, 17).

As the title suggests, *Heihō kadensho* is one of those transmission texts (*densho*). Its author, Yagyū Munenori 柳生宗矩 (1571-1646), is the head of the swordsmanship school *Yagyū*

Shinkage Ryū 柳生新陰流, the swordsmanship instructor for the second and third generation Tokugawa shogun (Imamura 1982, 23), and the domain lord (*daimyō* 大名) for the *Yagyū* domain (*Yagyū han* 柳生藩).

The fame of *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū* has attracted admirers since the time of its founder, Munenori's father Yagyū Muneyoshi 柳生宗厳 (1529-1606). As the second generation headmaster, Munenori has maintained associations with people from a variety of backgrounds, including political, artistic, and religious figures. Among them, some of the most well-known are the seventh generation head of the *Konparu* 今春 school of Noh theatre, Konparu Shichirō 金春七郎 (unknown)¹; the renowned Zen monk Takuan Sōhō 沢庵宗彭 (1573-1645)²; and Nabeshima Motoshige 鍋島元茂 (1602-1654)³, leader of the powerful Nabeshima 鍋島 clan. Many of Munenori's associates, especially high-ranking samurai who practice *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*, also constitute the major audience for *Heihō kadensho*. Munenori's connections, along with his education received as a high-ranking samurai, have familiarized him with systems of thought from a wide array of disciplines including classical Japanese theatre, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism.

¹ Konparu Shichirō studied *Yagyū shinkage ryū* under Munenori's father, Yagyū Muneyoshi 柳生宗厳 (1529-1606) (Yuasa 2001, 37).

² Takuan wrote Munenori several letters, one of the most well-known, titled *Fudōchi shinmyōroku* 不動智神妙録 (*Recording the quintessence and marvel of the immovable wisdom*), concerns how to connect martial art knowledge with other interlectual disciplines and moralities, most notably the buddhist concept of "immovable wisdom".

³ Many of the Nabeshima family members learned *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*. The original texts Imamura used for his transcription of the *Heihō kadensho* was signed by Munenori in 1646 and addressed to Nabeshima Kii no Kami 鍋島紀伊守 (i.e., Nabeshima Motoshige) (Imamura 1982, 94). In the same volume edited by Imamura, The signature at end of Imamura's transcription of *Gyokuseishū* 玉成集 shows that Motoshige's son Nabeshima Naoyoshi 鍋島直能 (1623-1689) also learned *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū* directly from Munenori (1982, 151).

Challenges in Interpreting *Heihō Kadensho*

Munenori's familiarity with classical Japanese theatre, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism has granted him insights into his martial art practices and inspiration for expressions used in *Heihō kadensho*. He utilized existing concepts and thoughts from those disciplines where they fit the purpose of martial art practices. For example, in describing the ideal way of landing consecutive attacks, Munenori wrote:

The gap between the first and second strike should not have the space for one strand of hair. The intention is to strike more and more quickly and continuously. In Zen dialectics, as a kind of dharma combat, there is a gap in responding to a question, the gap for answering does not have the space to fit one strand of hair.

一の太刀と二の太刀との間へは、髪一すぢ入るべき間もなく、はしくくとつゞけてうつ心也。法戦場とて、禪の問答に、一句とふにこたゆる間へは、髪一すぢいるゝ程も間なく答ゆる也。(Katsuninken, *Heihō kadensho*, in Watanabe 1985, 85)

Packed with Buddhist allusions, this metaphor perhaps makes more sense for those who have observed or participated in an actual Zen debate. But even if the readers can picture this scene Munenori described, they are still left clueless as to how to achieve this seamless way of striking. This is a common problem in *Heihō kadensho*, descriptions of movement are usually sparse while writing about mentalities are more commonplace. This lack of practical knowledge is an intentional choice on Munenori's part, following a list of names for techniques, Munenori wrote:

Each of the previous entries is hard to master without learning by standing against the instructor and receiving oral transmissions. They are difficult to describe with a brush.

右はいづれも、師匠と立あひて習口伝せずば、成り難き条々也。筆にはよくのべがたし。(Setsunintō, *Heihō kadensho*, in Watanabe 1985, 47-48)

This passage lists two reasons for the lack of descriptions for techniques. One is for secrecy, compared to written records, oral transmission and in-person instruction allow more control over the dissemination of knowledge, protecting the headmaster's authority and keeping the effectiveness of techniques. The other reason, which is more relevant to the purpose of this thesis, is that movements and the accompanying sensations are difficult to describe with words.

This difficulty in writing about martial art techniques is not a result of the incompetence of Munenori's writing skills, but an incompatibility between expression by body and expression by words. This incompatibility between sensation and words effectively added a layer of "translation" (we will come back to this later) for anyone who is writing or reading about the body.

Perhaps for this reason, in his reading of *Heihō kadensho*, Yuasa, a scholar as well as a seventh-dan kendo practitioner⁴, has to draw a diagram to explain the structure of *Shinkage Ryū* teachings (see fig. 1). This diagram, while based on *Heihō Kadensho*, also includes Yuasa's own understanding of swordsmanship as well as information from later works. Most notably from

⁴ In kendo, the dan grading indicates the practitioner's proficiency. Starting with first-dan, which is awarded to practitioner who is at least 13 years old, it requires minimum 1 year of training between first-dan and second-dan, 2 years of training between second-dan and third-dan, 3 years between third-dan and forth-dan, etc. To reach seventh-dan, one needs to be at least 34 years old with 21 years of experience.

Himonshū 肅聞集 (signed by Yagyū Mitsuyoshi, son of Munenori, date unknown) and *Tsuki no shō* 月の抄 (also by Mitsuyoshi, written 1642)⁵.

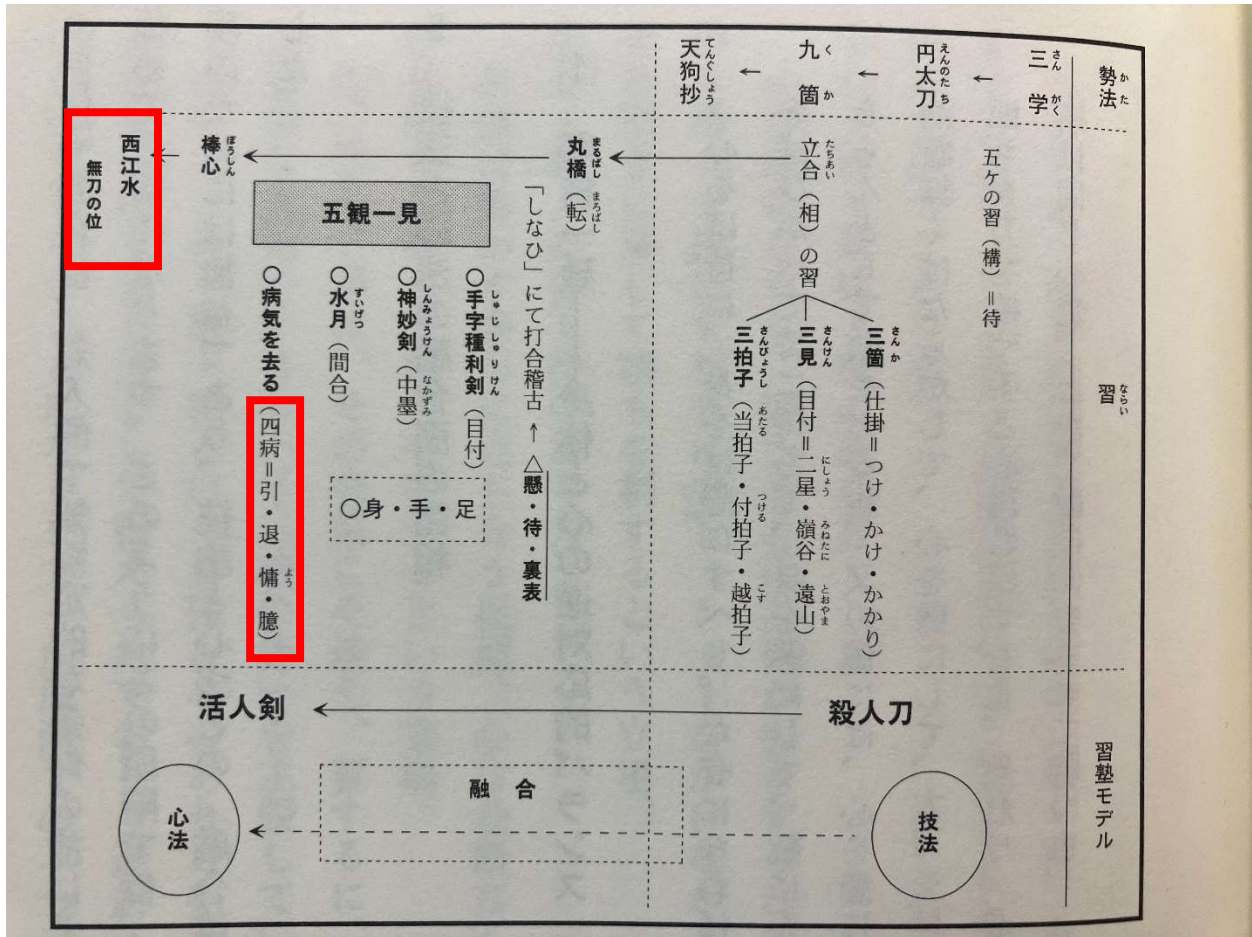


Fig 1. Yuasa's diagram

This approach raises questions: if one has to refer to later writings, to what extent is one's reading authentic to the original *Heihō kadensho*? Moreover, how would tapping into one's own experience in swordsmanship affect the faithfulness of one's interpretation? That is, how can we

⁵ For example, drawing from *Himonshū* and *Tsuki no shō* Yuasa explained respectively how *yamai* 病 (impairment) is referring to four specific states of mind (Yuasa 2001, 60) and how the mentality of being able to drink all the water of the western river (*seikōzui* 西江水) are necessary for achieving the position of no sword (*mutō no i* 無刀の位) (Yuasa 2001, 67-68). Both are information not in *Heihō kadensho* yet present in the diagram (highlighted in Fig. 1).

justify supplementing past written knowledge with our own embodied knowledge, an act that connects the present to the past, and the living to the dead?

Legitimizing Embodied Knowledge

Embodied Knowledge, due to its subjective nature, can only be referred to, but not carried, by writings. Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire* examines a wide range of genres of South and Central American performances with an emphasis on embodied memory. In the book, Taylor identified a rift between "the *archive* of supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral *repertoire* of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)" (2003, 19), which resulted in scholarly discourse overshadowing discourses by the often-illiterate indigenous American cultural performers in the colonial period. As Taylor noted, "it is difficult to think about embodied practice within the epistemic systems developed in Western thought, where writing has become the guarantor of existence itself" (2003, XIX). This archive-centric approach cannot take one very far in martial art training. Perhaps similar to performance training, classical Japanese martial art training also put considerable emphasis on the acquisition of the repertoire. Through imitation and mindful repetition of the training sequence, the practitioners become attuned to the movement, thus embodying the school's repertoire.

By coining the repertoire and its ability to transmit "live" to the audience here and now (Taylor 2003, 24), Taylor pointed out that performance studies allow us to "take seriously the repertoire of embodied practices as an important system of knowing and transmitting knowledge" (2003, 26). While Taylor's conceptualization is illuminating in that we should not

let the archive overshadow the fact that there also existed a repertoire in parallel, her method of bridging archive and repertoire with live scenarios may not be feasible for examining classical Japanese martial arts. While the martial art transmission in the Edo period can support a clear distinction between archive and repertoire, compared to the archive, the repertoire is more susceptible to change through time since it's carried only by the living. A combination of a stable archive and a fluid repertoire raises the question of historicity: Is it arbitrary to imagine a scenario by combining a premodern archive and a contemporary repertoire?

In her introduction to *Choreographing History*, the dance theorist and historian Susan Foster tackles the challenges and methods to study movements preserved in historical archives. She begins by stating that “a body, whether sitting writing or standing thinking or walking talking or running screaming, is a bodily writing” (Foster 1995, 3). Here we see two sets of actions: one being writing, thinking, talking, and screaming; the other sitting, standing, walking, and running. The former composes scripts or their verbal and mental counterparts (are we not mentally composing when thinking?); the latter composes motions that alter the physical arrangement both within and around the body. But such categorization is arbitrary, similar to scripts, motions also carry meanings. For example, it's not uncommon in a narrow hallway where two people bounce left and right trying not to walk into each other. This is motion and sensation delivering messages without necessarily relying on words.

This points to a distinction between two types of languages: one script-based and establishes meaning through conceptualization; the other, composed with/by physical motions and exert its meaning through established or hinted contact. I call the former symbolic language, the latter somatic language.

Translating between Body and Words

In a language-based conceptualization, the rift between written knowledge and embodied knowledge hinted by *Heihō kadensho* is not the result of the division between the archive and the repertoire, it is instead the result of unintelligibility between writings with scripts and writings with motions. In other words, to bridge this rift is to translate back and forth between symbolic language and somatic language. Roman Jakobson, in his essay “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation”, labeled three kinds of translation:

- 1) Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
- 2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
- 3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems. (Jakobson 1959, 233)

The translation between symbolic language and somatic language falls into the third category: intersemiotic translation. While by “nonverbal sign systems” Jakobson is probably referring more specifically to sign language for people with speech and/or hearing impairments, the feasibility of translating between symbolic language and somatic language is still sound. As Jakobson noted:

In its cognitive function, language is minimally dependent on the grammatical pattern because the definition of our experience stands in complementary relation to metalinguistic operations — the cognitive level of language not only admits but

directly requires recoding interpretation, i.e., translation. Any assumption of ineffable or untranslatable cognitive data would be a contradiction in terms.

(Jakobson 1959, 236)

At the cognitive level, all communication requires interpretation (i.e, translation). This means that as long as the communication carries cognitive data, it is translatable. Since the body and its motion are capable of conveying meanings (which is the result of cognitive processes), those cognitive data in somatic language should, in theory, be translatable to other forms of language.

The basic mechanics of translating somatic language into symbolic language is through allusion. As Foster noted, “the body is never only what we think it is... Illusive, always on the move, the body is at best *like* something, but it never *is* that something” (1995, 4). By naming, we encase a portion of the body or a range of its behavior into a stable and universal concept. The name becomes a metaphor that alludes to but never is, what it is describing. A collection of these metaphors become what “scrutinize, discipline, instruct, and cultivate the body” (Foster 1995, 4). Phillip Zarrilli, a theatre scholar and actor trainer, expressed a similar view on the referential property of symbolic languages using the words of Mark Johnson:

because of the limitations of our propositional modes of representation, we have a hard time trying to express the full meaning of our experiences... So while we must use propositional language to describe these dimensions of experience and understanding, we must not mistake our description for the thing described.

(Johnson 1987, 4, as cited in Zarrilli 2002, 9)

While somatic experience can be alluded to, those allusions themselves do not carry that experience. To translate symbolic language into somatic language, people will have to rely on their own cognitive experiences and imagination. Martial art treatises, like any other texts that intend to write down embodied knowledge, can never truly capture the entirety of the body in motion. They record embodied knowledge, but they are not embodied knowledge itself. Martial art practitioners interpret these treatises with their own embodied knowledge. Looking for consistency and pattern from the fragments, martial art practitioners reconstruct the past body with their present body, altering the meaning of both in the process. And when martial art practitioners write about their embodied knowledge, the body's motion and connection are tuned into allusions, waiting for the next living body to reconstruct its corporal meanings.

This cycle of representation and (re)interpretation between embodied knowledge and written words, is powered by translations (or *transmutation*, as Jakobson calls it) between somatic and symbolic language. For *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*, as the translation between somatic and symbolic language continues, early transmission texts such as *Heihō kadensho* obtain the status of classics: it becomes the source of the school's vocabulary. As instructors and practitioners talk and write about what they practice, the original transmission text provides a set of enduring allusions that can be (re)interpreted and expanded, but not easily erased. While the embodied knowledge is invisible and can only be carried by living bodies, the endurance of its textual reference testifies to the stability of such knowledge.

Qualifying First-person Experience

Here we reach the last piece of the puzzle: if the knowledge of a martial art school (both embodied and intellectual) is maintained by its practitioners, how can someone who does not have access to the school's repertoire approach the school's texts in a meaningful way? Residing within this question is an issue of qualifying first-person experience: somatic experiences are subjective, and their recreation requires enactment, not reference. Yet with no access to the practice or the shared experience of the school, it is questionable how much an outsider's reading can represent Yagyū Munenori's understanding of swordsmanship.

No, it cannot. I suspect not even the modern-day *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū* practitioners can say they understand the school exactly as Munenori did, not to mention outsiders. But interpretations of the texts left by Munenori can still be meaningful beyond connecting one living body (the reader) to an imagined dead body (Munenori).

Phillip Zarrilli, in his attempt of qualifying first-person experience, provided the following description of the change in his own sensing of a ceiling fan during a writing session:

While writing an early chapter of this book, several years ago I was in hot/humid Singapore sitting at a table in a standard Singapore highrise apartment working on my laptop when I experienced what was at first only a vague, indistinct feel of the air in movement along my neck and just over my right shoulder. I then sensed a soft, vague whirring noise above and to my right. I tilted my head slightly to the right, and attended to the soft whirring sound. Without having to look, I realized

the movement of the air and the sound, were from the spinning overhead fan as it circulated the air in the room... (Zarrilli 2020, 13)

While we readers were probably nowhere near that apartment at the time when Zarrilli sensed that ceiling fan on his back, that will not stop us from reasonably imagining what his experience might be like. The reason is that “the ceiling fan as an object and the potential experience of this encounter with the fan is accessible for others to experience or to imagine and understand” (Zarrilli 2020, 16). That is, although we do not know the specifications of the fan, nor heard the “whirring sound” that fan was making, we still *understand* that feeling as long as we have *experienced* a ceiling fan operating on our back. What is important during our reading of Zarrilli’s description is perhaps less on the accuracy of our imagined experience, for not even Zarrilli himself is guaranteed to have the same experience if put into the same situation again. What’s more, there is no way to compare and examine somatic experiences without first making them into disembodied references (into words) in the first place. As Zarrilli puts it:

What is important is not that my attempt to describe what this experience was like was *my* personal experience but rather that the description makes available for discussion, analysis, and understanding the structure and ‘what it is like’ quality and nature of this type of sensory/perceptual experience. (Zarrilli 2020, 16)

Since sensation itself is absent in any written discourse based on first-person somatic experience, the goal of critically examining these discourses is not to reveal, with more words, *what* are those sensations – such an act is paradoxical in that it attempts to reveal the referenced with more references.

This is not to say making references for embodied knowledge is a fruitless endeavor. Quite the opposite, the cycle of (re)representation and (re)interpretation is what constitutes such an impressive archive on the *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*. An archive of immense value for martial artists who wish to bring their own embodied knowledge into dialogue with past masters. But alas, these dialogues are personal and subjective, thus difficult to validate. For discourses aim for transparency and validity, an investigation can instead emphasize the *hows* of those references, that is: how is the body (their motions and sensations) conceptualized in those writings; how do those conceptualizations differ from each other; and finally, how, through reading about past bodies, can we understand our own conceptualization of the body.

To that end, *Heihō kadensho* sets itself apart from other martial art transmission texts in that it not only contains references and descriptions of the school's techniques – the *whats* of the embodied knowledge; considerable portions of the book have also been dedicated to explaining the school's conceptualizations – the *hows*: how to understand, in combat, the working of one's body and mind, of body and the weapon it wields, of my body against others', etc. Understanding these conceptualizations requires less specialized knowledge of *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*, a person trained with any kind of Japanese swordsmanship should be eligible to provide a reasonable interpretation (similar to how a person who knows and felt a ceiling fan before can reasonably interpret Zarrilli's first-person account above).

My Approach

Strictly speaking, all three kinds of translations labeled by Jakobson exist in this thesis: intersemiotic translation between embodied knowledge and written text, interlingual translation

from Japanese to English, and intralingual translation between the original text (including its translation) and my interpretation. In this thesis, I intend to read *Heihō kadensho* the way a martial art practitioner would: finding and understanding the embodied knowledge the text refers to. Focusing on intersemiotic translation means that my annotations will consist of understandings based on my personal experiences with classical Japanese swordsmanship⁶. To balance such subjectivity, I will provide a more literal translation of the original text. I hope that my annotation of the original text will demonstrate *how* the text can be understood, while the more literal translation will enable readers to come up with their own understanding of *what* the text is saying.

In the following chapter, drawing from later writings such as *Himonshū* 拙聞集 (signed by Yagyū Mitsuyoshi, son of Munenori, date unknown) and *Tsuki no shō* 月の抄 (also by Mitsuyoshi, written 1642), I will translate and annotate passages in *Heihō kadensho* that are related the following learnings: *ken* 懸 (attacking), *tai* 待 (waiting), *u* 有 (being), *shinmyōken* 神妙劍 (the sword of quintessence and marvel), and *suigetsu* 水月 (water moon). Focusing on the “translation” process between embodied knowledge and written records, I will demonstrate how a reciprocal relation between sensation and conceptualization can reveal and reinforce the practitioner’s grasp of the school’s embodied knowledge, completing the cycle of representation and (re)interpretation between body and texts in the school of *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*.

The version of *Heihō kadensho* I quote in this thesis is transcribed and edited by Watanabe based on the materials provided by the Yagyū family in Tokyo (Watanabe 1985, 5). In

⁶ While I have a few years of experience in classical Japanese swordsmanship, I am not a *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū* practitioner. As such, I am not qualified in explaining any of the school’s techniques and will not attempt to do so.

this version, many literary Sinitic phrases have been written in Japanese phonetics (*kana* 仮名) or supplied with auxiliary readings (*furigana* 振り仮名) (Watanabe 1985, 5). For comparison, I also use Imamura's transcription for *Heihō kadensho*, which is based on multiple sources of original documents (Imamura 1982, 93). When using later writings to explain *Heihō kadensho*, I use Imamura's transcriptions of *Himonshū* and *Tsuki no shō* from *Nihon budō taikei · daiikken* 日本武道大系 · 第一卷 (*Systems of Japanese Martial Art – Volume One*).

PART II. *Ken-Tai*: The Basics of Combat Dynamic

There are three chapters in *Heihō kadensho*, *Shinrikyō* 進履橋 (*The bridge of presenting a shoe*), *Setsunintō* 殺人刀 (*The killing sword*), and *Katsuninken* 活人劍 (*The invigorating sword*)⁷. The first chapter contains the catalog (*mokuroku*) of *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*, mostly names of techniques with occasional explanations, it serves as a reference for aiding the memorization and understanding of the school's techniques as well as an acknowledgment of the practitioner's proficiency in them. Since the catalog is meant to be intelligible only by practitioners of the school, I will refrain from discussing the contents of this chapter. Nevertheless, the title alone can still provide a glimpse into Munenori's vision of how the school's physical practices should help its practitioners. The title of the first chapter, *The bridge of presenting a shoe*, alludes to the story between Huangshi Gong 黃石公 (The Yellow Rock Old Man) and the statesman Zhang Liang 張良 (251 BCE-186 BCE), the latter was instrumental in the establishment of the Han dynasty in China. In the story, Huangshi Gong tested Zhang Liang's character by rudely asking Zhang Liang to fetch his shoe the first time they met at a bridge. In the end, Huangshi Gong awarded Zhang Liang for his patience and consistency with a scroll called *Taigong bingfa* 太公兵法 (*The Grand Duke's warring methods*)⁸. The scroll promised success in government positions and general fortunes, which supposedly assisted Zhang Liang's rise of status from a

⁷ 殺人刀 and 活人劍 are pronounced respectively as *satsujintō* and *katsujinken* in conventional Japanese, but as a set of Buddhist terminologies they are pronounced as *setsunintō* and *katsuninken* respectively. In Buddhism, *setsunintō* and *katsuninken* are analogies highlighting the practitioner's freedom of offering termination or salvation to lives (Nakamura 2002, 1017).

⁸ See appendix for Burton Watson's translation of relevant paragraphs from *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the grand historian*).

fugitive of the Qin empire to a key advisor to Liu Bang 劉邦 (a.k.a Emperor Gaozu of Han 漢高祖, 256 BCE-195 BCE).

Alluding to Zhang Liang's story shows that Munenori envisions practicing fighting techniques being the starting point at which practitioners need to show their patience and consistency (similar to how Huangshi Gong tested Zhang Liang). In the same vein, perhaps for Munenori, the later chapters will serve practitioners the same way as *Taigong bingfa* to Zhang Liang: helping their success in both their professional and personal life as samurai.

Our close reading starts with the second chapter, *Setsunintō*. At the beginning of this chapter, Munenori wrote:

Bows and arrows, swords, glaives, these are called weapons, they are said to be unlucky and inauspicious instruments. The reason is that the way of heaven is the way to preserve life, despite that, weapons take on the matter of killing, they are truly inauspicious instruments. As such, one can say that whatever goes against the way of heaven is despised. As it is, it is said that killing people using weapons when it is inevitable is also the way of heaven.

弓矢、太刀、長刀、此を兵と云ひ、此を不吉不祥の器なりといへり。其故は、天道は物をいかす道なるに、卻而ころす事をとるは、実に不祥の器也。しかれば、天道にたがふ所を即ちにくむといへる也。しかあれど止むことを得ずして兵を用ゐて人を殺すを、又天道也と云ふ。(Heihō kadensho, *Setsunintō*, in Watanabe 1985, 19-20)

Munenori pointed out a dilemma for employing weapons (*tsuwamono* 兵), or violent means in general: the way of heaven preserves lives; violent means take lives. Yet when its use is justified and not out of hatred, it can also align with the way of heaven. *Setsunintō*, in this sense, is such a violent means. This chapter contains knowledge that will help its readers excel in combat – excel in taking lives. One of the prominent themes that appear throughout the *Setsunintō* chapter is the idea of *ken-tai* 懸待 (attacking-waiting). While Munenori did not invent the idea of *ken-tai*, by looking into relevant passages written by Munenori, as well as his predecessor and his descendants, we will be able to see Munenori's effort in recording the school's embodied knowledge in writing.

The following paragraph from the *Shinkage ryū mokuroku* 新陰流目録 (*Catalog of the Shinkage Ryū school*, written 1566), contains the original principle of *ken-tai* written by the school's founder, Kamiizumi Nobutsuna 上泉信綱 (the early 1500s – late 1500s). Although this paragraph does not define *ken* and *tai*, it does hint at their relationship and their functions in combat:

Ken-tai (attacking-waiting) and *hyō-ri* (exhibiting-concealing)⁹ are to not fixate on one aspect. One adapts according to the enemy, and deploys a layer of tactics, just like using the sails when encountering wind, or releasing the eagle when seeing a rabbit. It is common to take *ken* (attacking) as merely *ken*, *tai* (waiting)

⁹ *Hyō-ri* 表裡 or 表裏, literally means exhibited and concealed, refers to employing strategy to deceive, lure, or mislead the enemy in combat. *Heihō kadensho* explain *hyō-ri* as follows: *hyō-ri* is to plot. It is to obtain true (results) via fake (movements). 表裏とは略也。偽りを以て真を得る也。 (*Heihō kadensho*, *Setsunintō*, in Watanabe 1985, 32).

as merely *tai*. But *ken* is not *ken*, *tai* is not *tai*, the meaning of *ken* lies in *tai*, the meaning of *tai* lies in *ken*.

懸待表裡者、不守一隅、隨敵轉變、施一重手段、恰如見風使帆、見兔放鷹。以懸為懸、以待為待者常事也。懸非懸、待非待、懸者意在待、待者意在懸。(Shinkage Ryū Mokuroku, as cited in Watanabe 1985, 35)

Ken 懸 (attacking), in its most basic, evokes senses of suspension, hanging, and anxiety. *Tai* 待 (waiting), on the other hand, evokes senses of waiting, expecting, and settling. *Ken-tai*, together with *hyō-ri* (to deceive, lure, or mislead), are supposed to be dynamic and adaptive. Its dynamic nature dictates that instead of taking *ken* and *tai* as two distinct states, a swordsman should consider them as interconnected. That is, the active aspects and passive aspects are to be considered inseparable in combat.

Nobutsuna's wording certainly left more questions than it answers: how is it that *ken* is not merely *ken*, *tai* is not merely *tai*? If the meaning of *ken* is in *tai* and vice versa, what is the point of establishing *Ken* and *Tai* as two separate concepts in the first place? It is possible that the wording has been left intentionally ambiguous so that the reader cannot fully understand the meaning without processing the school's embodied knowledge. It is also possible that the ambiguous wording is a result of Nobutsuna's less successful attempt to capture complex embodied knowledge with concise words — a daring undertaking given the seemingly unbridgeable gap between somatic language and symbolic language.

But there is more that can be done to bridge this gap. In *Heiho Kadensho*, Munenori takes a more comprehensive approach to recording the embodied knowledge of *ken-tai*, starting with clear definitions:

- *Ken* is that, as soon as standing against the enemy, the swordsman, with a singular thought, tensely cuts towards the opponent, and commits to making the first strike. This is called *ken*. Be it in the enemy's mind or in my mind, the mindset for *ken* is the same.

- *Tai* is that, not to suddenly cut towards the opponent, but to wait for the initiation. This is called *tai*. One should understand *tai* as being stationary while intensely mindful. *ken-tai* refers to these two states: attacking and waiting.

一 懸とは、立ちあふやいなや、一念にかけてきびしく切つてかゝり、先の太刀¹⁰をいれんとかゝるを懸と云ふ也。敵の心にありても我心にても、懸の心持は同じ事也。

一 待とは、卒尔にきつてかゝらずして、敵のしかくる先を待つを云ふ也。きびしく用心して居るを待と心得べし。懸待は、かゝると待つとの二也。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 35)

¹⁰ *Sen* 先 in its most basic means “prior”, “early”, “up front”. Here I translate it as initiation so that it reflects the combat situation in which both sides are actively seeking opening for attack. *Sen no tachi* 先の太刀, literally means the sword of initiation, is the first strike made in such combat situation. While *Sen* have become a more sophisticated concept in modern time for activities such as Kendo, its use in *Heihō kadensho* seems to be more literal. Having said that, intentional or not, the text already hints on the potential depth for *Sen* by introducing the concept of *hyō-ri*. After all, if the enemy is tricked into believing that he has the initiation and made the first strike, who then has the true initiation in the fight?

Munenori defines *ken* and *tai* by introducing a combat scenario: a scenario involving “I” and an enemy, both wielding a sword and trying to cut down each other. For a reader who does not already have a clear understanding of the terminology, explaining them in an imagined scenario can be helpful in that it invokes the reader’s intuition: even if a person has never stood on the battlefield, he may still be able to imagine the situation if the writer provides sufficient details.

In a combat scenario, *ken* refers to an aggressive state. To be in the state of *ken* is to execute offensive actions: to cut, to attack, to take the initiative. Whereas the state of *tai* is more passive, the swordsman is not in a hurry to take initiative, he instead mindfully waits for the opponent to make the first strike. At a glance, these two ways of engagement seem to be mutually exclusive: if a swordsman decides to take the initiative and make a strike, how can he also be waiting in a stationary position? This way of thinking is what Nobutsuna was referring to when he stated in *Shinkage ryū mokuroku* that “it is common to take *ken* as merely *ken*, *tai* as merely *tai*”. To demonstrate how this principle works for the physical body, Munenori encourages the readers to conceptualize the swordsman’s body into distinct sections, whereas some sections are in the state of *Ken*, other parts can simultaneously be in the state of *tai*:

- The matter concerning the principle of the *ken-tai* between torso and sword

For the torso, make it closely cover the enemy and become the state of *ken*. For the sword, become the state of *tai*, lure out the enemy’s initiation with the torso, legs, and hands, and win by letting the enemy have the initiation. With this, the

torso and legs are in *ken*, and the sword in *tai*. Setting the torso and legs to the *ken* state is because the swordsman intends to let the enemy have the initiation.

一 身と太刀との懸待の道理ある事

身をば敵にちかくふりかけて懸になし、太刀をば待になして身足手にて敵の先をおびき出して、敵に先をさせて勝つ也。こゝを以て、身足は懸に、太刀は待也。身足を懸にするは、敵に先をさせむ為也。 (*Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō*, in Watanabe 1985, 35-36)

Here a swordsman's body is conceptualized into three (or four) physical parts: the torso, the legs, and the sword (and the hands wielding it). The winning tactic is to use the body (torso, hands, legs) as bait, luring the enemy to attack the body, and use the sword to counter. This tactic also fits the aforementioned idea of *hyō-ri*: to deceive, lure, or mislead the enemy. In other words, the tactic here is to feint with the body and counter with the sword. One underlying assumption for this tactic to work is that people are naturally attracted by activities and aggressions, while prone to ignore the stationeries and passives. Such assumption on Munenori's part is logical considering the founder of the school, Nobutsuna, wrote that "It is common to take *ken* as merely *ken*, *tai* as merely *tai*". For *Shinkage ryū*, an uninitiated will be prone to take an active stance as a sign of attack, in anticipation, paying full attention to the active part of the body (taking *ken* as *ken*), while dismissing the stationary parts for they do not display threats (taking *tai* as *tai*). Accordingly, for a swordsman to successfully manipulate his enemy, he should understand that his outward displayed motion and its implications should not always align

with his true intention. Without falling into the trap of “taking *ken* as *ken*, *tai* as *tai*”, the swordsman should conceal his true intention with fake movements.

While this section only deals with the physical configuration of a swordsman, perception and intention are also crucial elements for the idea of *ken-tai*. The connection between the swordsman’s mentality and physicality becomes explicit as Munenori explains the *ken-tai* of mind and body:

- The matter of the *ken-tai* between mind and body

When the mind is in *tai*, the body should be in *ken*. The reason is that if the mind is in *ken*, the swordsman will move too hastily, which is undesirable. Keeping the mind under control and holding on to the idea of *tai*, while the body is in *ken*, the swordsman should win by letting the opponent have the initiation. When the mind is in *ken*, the swordsman will want to attack first and suffer defeat. There is also the approach of having the mind in *ken* while keeping the body in *tai*. The reason is that as the mind is cautious without negligence, the mind is in *ken*, and the sword is in *tai*, the intent is to let the opponent have the initiation. It is sufficient to understand the so-called body as the hands holding the sword. As such, the mind is in *ken* and the body is in *tai*. Although these are two interpretations, they are ultimately the same mindset. Regardless, to win by letting the opponent have the initiation.

一 心と身とに懸待ある事

心をば待に、身をば懸にすべし。なぜになれば、心が懸なれば、はしり過ぎて悪しき程に、心をばひかへて待に持ちて、身を懸にして、敵に先をさせて勝つべき也。心が懸なれば、人をまづきらんとして負けをとる也。又の儀には、心を懸に、身を待にとも心得る也。なぜになれば、心は油断無くはたらかして、心を懸にして、太刀をば待にして、人に先をさすの心也。身と云ふは、即ち太刀を持つ手と心得ればすむ也。然れば、心は懸に、身は待と云ふ也。両意なれども、極る所は同じ心也。とかく敵に先をさせて勝つ也。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 36-37)

Similar to the *ken-tai* between body and sword, *ken-tai* between mind and body also requires these two parts to constantly sit in opposite states. When the body is actively attacking the enemy, the mind needs to remain calm and settled. Conversely, when the body is stationary, waiting for incoming attacks, the mind should remain actively offensive. Like that for among body parts, *ken* and *tai* between mind and body are also mutually supplemental. The practical reason behind this, as Munenori pointed out, is that if the mind and body are both in *ken*, the swordsman will move before the right timing. Since the tactic here is to lure the opponents to make the first strike, not being able to control the timing of one's movement is undesirable. Losing control not only goes against the established tactic but also opens the swordsman for exploitation by the very same tactic he is trying to execute. Overly committing to *ken* is a risk both sides of the combat may suffer, as Munenori already made clear: "be it in the enemy's mind or in my mind, the mindset for *ken* is the same".

Munenori employed a strategy of "divide and conquer" to make the principle of *ken-tai* more accessible (at least compared to his teacher Nobutsuna's explanation). He first simplifies

the reciprocal *ken-tai* dynamic, making them two distinct concepts of aggressiveness and passiveness. Only after providing straightforward definitions does Munenori reveals the nuance of this *ken-tai* dynamic gradually: by explaining their application to the physical body, Munenori shows the reciprocal relation between *ken* and *tai*; by showing such reciprocal relation at both the physical and mental dimensions, he hints on the multiplicity of the potential application of this *ken-tai* dynamic. This approach of explaining by gradually providing more complex scenarios is helpful for the reader's comprehension. As the reader works through the text, chunks of information will eventually come together in the reader's mind, forming an understanding of the embodied knowledge hinted at by the text.

Aside from making complex concepts into digestible chunks, Munenori's approach of gradually priming the readers with scenarios also enables the reader's own reflection of the topic. As scenarios in the text are not exhaustive, readers with a basic understanding of *ken-tai* can begin to ask questions of "what if". For example, while Munenori clearly stated that a *ken-ken* configuration for mind and body is undesirable, how about *tai-tai*? Munenori said that when the body is waiting, the mind is active, "mindful without negligence". Following this claim, a *tai-tai* configuration means that the swordsman is not focusing on his enemy in a stand-off. The result of attention-slipping in combat is obvious: the opponent takes the initiation as planned, but due to the lack of attention the swordsman will not be able to react promptly, leading to defeat. It seems that for the tactic of giving up the initiation to work, maintaining a balanced *ken-tai* dynamic is crucial. In a balanced *ken-tai* configuration, the swordsman is constantly in a state of anticipation: when the body is pretending to be committed to attacking, the mind is calm in anticipation and preparation for the incoming enemy attack. When the body is stationary, the

mind is actively paying attention to the enemy, preparing for a swift counterstrike the moment the enemy falls for the lure.

While the theories are all well and good, in practice fights can get messy. Opponents will not play by the rules. While a swordsman can try to lure his enemy, the enemy can also use feinting or other unexpected moves. As such, there is no guarantee a sword fight can end in the first exchange of blows.

Ken-Tai in Motion

With the basics of *ken-tai* already conveyed to the readers, Munenori can discuss some advanced applications of *ken-tai* without losing his readers along the way. Later in the text, he provided a more detailed description of how swords fight between two adapted swordsmen may pan out:

- The matter of returning the mind

The previous mindset is that, when a swordsman made one sword strike and thinks “it’s a hit”, the mind thinking about “it’s a hit” will stay there as it is. Since the mind is yet to return from the strike, the swordsman is empty inside and will be hit by the second strike from the enemy. The fact of having the initiation is also of no use, the swordsman will be hit by the second strike and lose. Returning the mind means that, when already made one strike, the mind is not attracted by that strike. After the strike, the swordsman pulls back his mind and watches the enemy’s sign of action. After getting hit, the enemy becomes irritated. After getting hit, the enemy may think “ah, that is regretful”, thinking about being hit, and become angry. When angry, the enemy becomes dangerously intense. At this

point, if the swordsman is negligent, he will be hit by the enemy... Additionally, as the enemy quickly pays attention to the place that was hit, if I strike with the same mindset as before, it will miss. When strike and miss, the enemy will certainly go past and hit me... Additionally, after a committed strike, the swordsman should not allow the enemy to return his mind. He should follow up with the second and third strike without letting the enemy regain composure. Making the enemy busy and non-stop like that is the ultimate mindset. This is the so-called “a gap can’t fit a hair”. The gap between the first and second strike should not have the space for one strand of hair. The intention is to strike more and more quickly and continuously. In Zen dialectics, as a kind of dharma combat, there is a gap in responding to a question, the gap for answering does not have the space to fit one strand of hair.

一 心をかへす事

右の心持は、一太刀うつて、うつたよとおもへば、うちたよとおもふ心がそのまゝそこにとゞまる也。うつた所を心がかへらぬによりて、うつかと成りて二の太刀を敵にうたれて、先を入れたる事も無に成り、二の太刀をうたれて負け也。心をかへすと云ふは、一太刀うつたらば、うつた所に心ををかず、うつたから心をひつかへして敵の色¹¹を見よ。うたれて、敵

¹¹ In Watanabe’s note, he explain *iro* 色 as *keshiki* 気色 (mood, attitude, signs, intention) and *Kaairo* 顔色 (facial expression) (Watanabe 1985, 83). Additionally, when the sinograph 色 is pronounced as *shiki*, it come with a Buddhist connotation. In Buddhism, the term means the existence of those that with shape, which appear, disappear and changes constantly (Nakamura, et al. 2004). *Heihō kadensho* use *iro* in the section *Iro ni tsuki iro ni shitagau* 色に就き色に随ふ to describe how a swordsman can show various *iro* to incite the enemy; and how a swordsman can observe and take advantage of the *iro* his enemy manifests (*Heihō kadensho*, *Setsuninto*, in Watanabe 1985, 40). This mode of observing and luring again ties back to the idea of *hyō-ri*.

気をちがゆる物也。うたれて、やれ口惜しや、うたれたよとおもひて、いかりも出る物也。いかれば、敵きびしく成る物也。爰を油断して、敵にうたるゝ物也。...又うたれたる所を敵ははや用心するを、われは前の心にてうつて、うちはづす物也。うちはづせば、こして敵が我をうつべし。...又は、一むきに打つた所を、心をかへさずして、程をぬかさず二重三重たゝみかけてうつて、かほをも敵にふらせぬはたらきも、至極の心持也。間に髪を容れずとは、是を云ふ也。一の太刀と二の太刀との間へは、髪一すぢ入るべき間もなく、はしくくとつゞけてうつ心也。法戦場とて、禪の問答に、一句とふにこたゆる間へは、髪一すぢいるゝ程も間なく答ゆる也。延びたれば人にこまるゝ也。 (*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 83-85)

No able to return the mind in a fight put both mind and body in *ken*, which leads to over-commitment during a strike. The danger of over-committing is twofold: it costs the swordsman both his physical agility and mental sensitivity. As the attention is directed to and fixated on the target for striking, the swordsman loses awareness of his own body and the surroundings. On one hand, an over-committed strike without the mind to keep it in check could lead to awkward stances hindering the swordsman's ability to quickly move in and out of attack range. On the other hand, a lack of awareness of the enraged enemy means the swordsman can be easily cut down by an unexpected counterattack. To avoid this, the swordsman needs to have the habit of thinking ahead: instead of thinking about strikes already made, he should be prepared for the counterattack that may happen next. To be prepared and able to execute a spontaneous response, the swordsman needs to be able to swiftly and seamlessly switch between *ken* and *tai*. The pause

for switching has to become so brief to the point that the *ken* and *tai* can no longer be perceived as two discrete states.

“A gap too narrow to fit a hair” is how Munenori describes the pause between motions for a competent swordsman. The motion should be continuous, spontaneous, and well-composed like sentences in a Zen dialect – an analogy perhaps more relatable to warrior elites and aristocrats at Munenori’s time than to us now. But still, an analogy outside the realm of swordsmanship provides an additional anchor point from which readers may draw from a different aspect of their somatic experiences. In line with Munenori’s approach, in the next paragraph, I provide a story of my own making. A story that attempts to recreate the sensation of continuous movement based on the *ken-tai* dynamic. Hopefully, by tapping into our experience with a common household object, the sensation will be easier to imagine for readers in modern times:

A swordsman is mopping the floor in a hot summer, pushing and pulling the mop, covering one chunk of the floor before another. Trying to get over this torture as soon as possible, he pushes the mop with strength and speed, holding nothing back. Yet when he is trying to pull back the mop, there is a gap between the motion of pushing and pulling: a split second in which his body seems frozen, refusing to move despite him shouting in his head: “c’mon, I don’t have all day.” In the agony of losing control of his own body and temper, the swordsman recalled his training: “maybe I can use the mop like a sword.” After a deep breath, the swordsman begins to mop in a new way: instead of pushing the mop at full power, he now thinks of pulling back before the pushing motion is finished. In coordination with this thought, the swordsman also stopped following the mop. He now slightly leans back his body while the

mop is still moving forward and leans forward when the mop is moving back. The mopping swordsman looks completely different now: instead of following the mop's motion like a wobbly man, he now leads the mop. As the mop and swordsman's torso alternate position, their motion become continuous. The irritating freezing the swordsman experienced – the gap of motion, is no more.

Achieving this mind-body coordination of *ken-tai* is not an easy feat. Mopping the floor is one thing, fighting with deadly weapons is another. Doing it at one's own pace is one thing, maintaining it in the heat of the battlefield is another. Like any other acquired coordination, a dynamic *ken-tai* balance comes from rigorous training and countless repetitions. But once achieved, the swordsman will be at a higher level of competency, and ready to advance to deeper concepts for swordsmanship. Yagyū Mitsuyoshi 柳生三嚴 (1607-1650), elder son of Munenori, discusses the next level of *ken-tai*, namely *u* 有 (being) and *shinmyōken* 神妙劍 (the sword of quintessence and marvel), in the following manner:

The matter of *ken-tai-u*

This is the ultimate matter. When talking about attacking at a shallow level, it means attacking with *tai* when the enemy is in *ken*, and attacking with *ken* when the enemy is in *tai*. *U* (being) means to apply this principle non-hustling in a grand manner. As using tactics to lure enemy attack and dodging it is the best way, this is how to achieve victory. It is also said that in this situation, the best way is to stimulate the mind, keep it relaxed and rested above, and use it in a manner that is not driven by *ken*. Without the mindset of *ken-tai-u*, everything is

hard to achieve. This is the initial step towards *shinmyōken* (the sword of quintessence and marvel).

懸待有の事

是に極る事にて候。仕懸にて浅く云時は、敵懸ならば待に仕掛、敵待ならば懸に仕懸よと云事にて候。有と申候は、せはしくなき様にしなしを大きに遣こと也。かけ引、よけはづしを第一と申物御座候へば、勝つと申事にて候。又曰、そこの心をはづみ、うへをゆふにたいに、懸のうつらぬ様に遣心持第一と申事にて候。萬事に懸・待・有の心持無ては、成がたき事にて候。是神妙劔に行つた初也。(Himonshū, in Imamura 1982, 275)

Like his father, Mitsuyoshi also sees countering a lured or incited enemy as the best tactic. But as stated in “The matter of returning the mind”, if the swordsman cannot remain calm and maintain his ability to observe the enemy, the competition of tactics (*hyō-ri*) will be turned inside out: the hunter who set up traps becomes the pray; the incited pray instead become the predator that chews on the pray relentlessly. The key to staying advantageous in the *ken-tai* dynamic lies in the additional mindset of *u*.

U: Analogy of Wind and Water

Mitsuyoshi considers a simple polarized view of *ken-tai* to be “shallow”. The mindset of *u* should be applied on top of the *ken-tai* dynamic to ensure consistent victory. Finally, the mastery of *ken* (attacking), *tai* (waiting), and *u* (being) is the initial step towards the even more advanced *shinmyōken* (the sword of quintessence and marvel). Here we see a progression of three stages of learnings in an esoteric manner. In the beginning, the practitioner works on understanding and

internalizing the *ken-tai* dynamic. After the attained competency in *ken-tai*, the practitioners will work on incorporating *u* into their repertoire. Only after mastering *ken*, *tai*, and *u*, does the practitioner fit for exploring *shinmyōken*.

Similar to how embodied of the school is gradually revealed to the practitioner as they gain competency, its record in *Heihō kadensho* also unfolds layer by layer. Not far after introducing the *ken-tai* dynamic, towards the end of the *Setsunintō* chapter, Munenori explains the concept of *u* by alluding to wind and water:

- The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water

...Before standing against the enemy, the swordsman should not be negligent just because he already knows that the enemy is in *ken* state. Being ready in the first place is of most importance. Without thinking the enemy is in *ken* state, as soon as standing against the enemy, when suddenly receive an intense attack from others, I cannot deploy any techniques I learned in life... One should watch with *u* in mind. This is the learning of taking *u* with the hand. When unable to watch calmly regardless, it is hard to apply the learnings of the sword.

一 風水の音をきく事

...立ちあはぬさきは、敵は懸也と覚悟して油断すべからず。下作専要也。敵懸也ともおもはずして、立相ふといなや、ほかと急々にきびしく仕かけられてあらは、わが平生の習も何の手出でざる者也。...有をよく心にかけて見るべし。有を手にとれと云ふならひ是也。如何にもしづかに見ずば、

太刀の習も用に立つまじき也。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 48-49)

One crucial difference between training and actual combat is the swordsman's mental readiness. Training is more forgiving in that the trainee is allowed or even expected to be mentally preoccupied. In the early stages of training, the trainee may direct his attention to one specific aspect of training at a time. For example, the trainee could focus entirely on correcting his footwork without necessarily maintaining a heightened awareness of his surroundings. But the real-life situation is the opposite of the training: for Munenori, plotting (*hyō-ri*) is an integral part of combat, sword fighting is not about playing fair, it is about luring the opponent, letting them make mistakes, and take advantage of it. In this case, the prerequisite for being combat effective is not having high proficiency in techniques, but rather, having a stable yet sensitive mentality. To achieve this mentality, Munenori says, one needs to understand how wind and water make sounds:

The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water, is to be still on the above, and keep the *ki* (vital energy) in *ken* state on the below. The wind is an entity with no sound. The sound generates as the wind hits objects. As it is, the wind blows quietly on the above. As the wind touches woods, bamboo, and various things on the below, the sound becomes noisy and hasty. Water as well, there is no sound for it dropping from the above. As it touches objects, fell down, and stays, it makes the hasty sound below. Take these as analogies, the saying is to be still on the above, and keep the *ki* in *ken* state on the below. On the above, remain calm and quiet regardless, still without hast, this is the analogy for keeping the *ki* in

Ken state without negligence on the inside. It is bad to keep the body, hands, and feet hasty. *Ken-tai* is to be done attached to inside and outside. It is bad to stay firmly on one aspect.

風水の音をきくと云ふ事、上に静に、下は気懸に持つ也。風にこゑはなき物也。物にあたりてこゑを出す也。されば上を吹くはしづか也。下にて木竹よろづの物にさはりて、その声さはがしく、いそがはしき也。水も上より落つるには声なし。物にさはり、下へおちつきて、下にていそがはしく声がる也。是をたとへに引きて、上に静に、下は気懸に持つと云ふ也。うわつらには、如何にもしとりて、ふためかずして静に、内には気を懸に油断無くもつたとへ也。身手足いそがはしきはあしゝ。懸待を内外にかけてすべし。一方にかたまりたるはあしゝ。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 49)

Through the analogy of wind and water, Munenori breaks down how an observable activity occurs in combat. There is a source on the “above”, it is active like blowing wind or falling water, but it is not observable by itself. The activities on the “above” are made observable when interacting with objects on the “below”. In other words, a motion (observable activity) in combat originates from that on the “above”, and manifests through that on the “below”. As the text suggests, in this case, what is on the “below” is *ki* 気 (vital energy). But what does Munenori mean by *ki*, and what is the thing on the “above” that causes movements of *ki*? In an earlier section of the text, Munenori wrote about “The matter of *ki* (vital energy) and *kokorozashi* (determination) 気と志との事”:

Being ready on the inside, the mind that has a determined thought is called *kokorozashi*. Inside there is *kokorozashi*, what manifests outside is called *ki*. For example, *kokorozashi* is the master, *ki* is the servant.

内にかまへて、おもひつめたる心を志と云ふ也。内に志有りて、外にはするを氣と云ふ也。たとへば、志は主人也、氣はめしつかふ者也。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 31)

Munenori believes what directs *ki* is *kokorozashi* 志, and he is not the first person to come up with this relationship. As Katō pointed out in his interpretation of *Heihō kadensho*, Munenori's explanation of *kokorozashi* and *ki* is based on *Mencius* 2A2 (2003, 92-93), a paragraph on the relationship between *zhi* 志 (a Chinese term using the same sinograph as *kokorozashi*) and *qi* 氣 (the same sinograph used for the Japanese term *ki* in most premodern texts¹²). As pointed out by Alan K. L. Chan in his interpretation of *Mencius* 2A2, in addition to the relation between *zhi* and *qi*, this section has also clarified the relation between *qi* and the physical body: “*Zhi* is the commander of *qi*; and *qi* is that which fills the body” (2002, 46-47).

This relationship among *zhi*, *qi*, and body, described in *Mencius* 2A2, resonates strongly with Munenori's writings. In *Heihō kadensho*, *kokorozashi* is the source that causes the manifestation of *ki*. The wind and water work silently on the “above” allude to *kokorozashi*, and the observable sounds they generate on the “below” allude to *ki*. As for *ki* and body, Munenori says that the *ki* that stays “in *ken* state without negligence” is on the “inside”, while the physical body should not be hasty. According to the *ken-tai* balance, when the “inside” is *ken*, the

¹² The transcription of *Heihō kadensho* this translation uses has gone through a standardization process (Watanabe 1985, 5). The original sinograph for *ki* 氣 could have been modified to fit modern conventions.

“outside” should be *tai*. In this case, the physical body that is not hasty is in *tai*. Together with that of the relationship between *kokorozashi* and *ki*, the conceptualization of *ki* on the “inside” and body on the “outside” corresponds neatly with Mencius’s assertion that “*Zhi* is the commander of *qi*; and *qi* is that which fills the body”. The introduction of the Confucianist ideas of *zhi*, *qi*, and body added additional nuances to the binary conceptualization of mind and body used for explaining the basics of *ken* and *tai*. The use of existing terminologies (and the mind-body relationship they allude to) avoids the difficulty of having to describe a complex somatic experience from scratch.

As the *ken-tai* dynamic becomes more nuanced with the additional mindset of *u*, Munenori introduces the Daoist (also Neo-Confucianist) idea of *yin* 陰 (*in* in Japanese), the concealed, and *Yang* 陽 (*yō* in Japanese), the apparent, to explain the relativity between *ken* and *tai*:

One should consider carefully the mindset of reciprocal transformation between *in* and *yō*. Activities are *yō*, stillness is *in*. *In* and *yō* alternates for inside and outside. When the inside is *yō* and active, the outside is *in* and still. When the inside is *in*, it moves and manifests on the outside. Similar to this, in the methods of combat, the mind inside drives the *ki*, moves it, without negligence. On the outside, it is again with no hast and remains still. This is *yō* moving on the inside, *in* being still on the outside, completing the inherited natural principle. Also, when the outside is in an intense *ken* state, the mind inside is not to be overtaken. When the inside is still and the outside is in *ken* state, the outside will not be disturbed. When both inside and outside are active, one will be disturbed. *ken* and *tai*, activity and

stillness, inside and outside, must be reciprocal. Just like a waterfowl floating on the water, although the above is calm, it uses the webbing there. When the mind inside has no negligence, and the swordsman has been consciously practicing with this, the inside mind and outside will all melt together, and the inside and outside become one, without the slightest obstacle. Attainment of this level is the most ultimate.

陰陽たがひにかはる心持を思惟¹³すべし。動くは陽也、静なるは陰也。陰と陽とは、内外にかはりて、内に陽うごけば、外は陰で静也。内陰なれば、うごひて外にあらはる。此の如く兵法にも、内心に気をはたらかし、うごかし、油断無くして、外は又ふためかず、静にする。是陽内にうごき、陰外に静なる、天理にかなふ也。又外きびしく懸なれば、内心を外にとられぬやうに、内を静にして外懸なれば、外みだれざる也。内外ともうごけば、みだるゝ也。懸待、動静、内外をたがひにすべし。水鳥の水にうかびて、上はしづかなれども、そこには水かきをつかふごとくに、内心に油断なくして、此けいこつもりぬれば、内心外ともうちとけて、内外一つに成りて、少しもさはりなし。此位に至る、是至々極々也。(Heihō kadensho, Setsunintō, in Watanabe 1985, 49-50)

¹³ *Shii/shiyui* 思惟: When pronounced as *shii*, this term refers to a process of deep thinking (Shinmura 1998). When pronounced as *shiyui*, it is a Buddhist terminology, in addition to referring the general idea of thinking, it especially denotes the working of the mind as it processes and distinguishes things (Nakamura 2004). Based on the flow of Munenori's thoughts in this paragraph, that is, one needs to realize the duality of *ken-tai*, inside-outside, *in-yō* 陰陽 (more commonly known as *yin-yang* in mandarin) first, then proceed to merge these duels into one. The sinograph 思惟 in *Heihō kadensho* seems to contain the meaning of carefully considering, distinguishing, and reflecting, while hints on the Buddhist notion that one should ultimately set themselves free from such distinctions on any and all matters.

Munenori uses the term *in-yō* to explain the reciprocal relationship between *ken* and *tai*, activity and stillness, inside and outside. In *Laozi* 老子 (one of the foundational texts of Daoism, said to be written approximately in the Spring and Autumn period), *Yin-yang* (*in-yō* in Japanese) is derived from the Way (the principle of the universe, *dao* 道) and serves as the source of all things in the universe. The following passage is an annotated version of *Laozi* 42 from *Laozi heshanggong zhangju* 老子河上公章句 (written in the Western Han dynasty) which explains the function of *yin-yang* in the universe. In the source text, Characters in larger scripts are the original *Laozi*, while those in smaller scripts are the annotations. For ease of reading, in the translation, I put the annotations in brackets.

The Way generates the one, (It is caused and generated by the Way.) the one generates the two, (the one generates *yin* and *yang*.) the two generates the three, (*yin* and *yang* generate three types of *qi*, the harmonized, the hazy, the turbid. They become the heaven, the earth, the people.) the three generates all things. (Together, the heaven and the earth, generate all things. The heaven supplies and the earth transforms, the people develop and nourish them.) All things bear *yin* and embrace *yang*, (not one of all things not bearing *yin* and facing *yang*, circling at the center and reaching towards the sun.) they are harmonized by emptiness and *qi*. (All things contain the primordial *qi*. With the primordial *qi*, things are harmonized and gentle. Just like there are organs in the chest, marrow in the bone, empty voids and air channels inside grass and trees. For this reason, they can live long.)

道生一，道使所生者。一生二，一生陰與陽也。二生三，陰陽生和氣濁三氣，分為天地人也。三生萬物。天地共生萬物也，天施地化，人長養之也。萬物負陰而抱陽，萬物无不負陰而向陽，迴心而就日。沖氣以為和。萬物中皆有元氣，得以和柔，若骨中有髓，骨中有髓，草木中有空虛與氣通，故得久生也。(Laozi heshanggong zhangju, Daohua 1, in Sturgeon 2022)

In *Laozi*, *yin* and *yang* generate the three types of *qi* that are the bases of all things. As such, everything in the universe has both *yin* and *yang* aspects. Having both *yin* and *yang* works in harmony is what makes things sustainable. As the text says, for plants and animals (including humans) to live long, they need a hard chest and soft organs, as well as solid bones and fluid marrow. Similarly, plants need both void and air (being empty and filled simultaneously) in order to survive.

Munenori believes that the same principle applies to swordsmanship. For a swordsman to sustain himself in a fight, firstly, he cannot have only one aspect of *ken-tai* and forgo the other. Secondly, the *ken* aspect and the *tai* aspect of the swordsman cannot function discretely, they need to work together in harmony. The motion should always contain both activeness and stillness (recall the analogy of “wind and water”), the mentality should always have both aggressiveness and calmness (recall the example of “returning the mind”), and the mind and body should always be connected and harmonized by the *ki* (recall that *ki* is what on the “below” relative to the *kokorozashi*, but is also what on the “inside” relative to the physical body).

At the beginning of “The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water”, Munenori says that a swordsman should “watch with *u* in mind”. At its basic, *u* is the ability to calmly watch the

enemy. The swordsman needs to not only be able to observe the manifestations of the enemy's mentality and motions – the *yō*, but also be able to capture the invisible source of those manifestations, the *in*. To achieve this mindset of *u*, the swordsman needs to understand the reciprocal relationship between the source and manifestation of the phenomenon (e.g., thoughts and motion). While Munenori introduces *u* as a way to be ready for ambush or surprise attacks, the implication is that when the swordsman begins to see the world (specifically, the *ken-tai* dynamic inside and outside the swordsman) function according to the harmonized *in-yō*, his body and mind will be prepared for action regardless of occasions. This is perhaps what Mitsuyoshi means by saying that “without the mindset of *ken-tai-u*, everything is hard to achieve”.

In explaining this advanced level of *ken-tai* dynamic, Munenori supplied the reader with quite a few allusions: “a gap can't fit a hair” in a Zen debate, *qi* and *zhi* from Confucianist classics, and *yin-yang* balance from Daoist thoughts. While these allusions deepen the reader's understanding of the *ken-tai* dynamic from different angles, all of them are derived from practical challenges a swordsman faces in combat. As Munenori pointed out in “the matter of the *ken-tai* between mind and body”, being advantageous in combat is about optimizing the coordination of the swordsman's physical body and mentality. As the swordsman's control and understanding of his physical body deepen, so it needs to be for his mentality. Since for Munenori, effective swordsmanship is a result of a sophisticated and intertwined mentality and physicality, it is only logical for him to explain such nuance with concepts from his intellectual repertoire.

Our exploration of *ken-tai* started with two polarized definitions and has now reached the point that *ken-tai* is no longer separable: they exist simultaneously, work in harmony, and change

accordingly. While Munenori says that “attainment of this level is the most ultimate”, we are only about halfway in *Heihō kadensho*, reaching the end of the *Setsunintō* chapter. While this is perhaps the ultimate for “the people killing sword” (the literal meaning of *Setsunintō*), as Mitsuyoshi pointed out in “The matter of *ken-tai-u*”, attainment of *u* is only “the initial step towards *shinmyōken*”. In the second half of *Heihō kadensho*, the *Katsuninken* (the invigorating sword) chapter, Munenori will discuss the even higher level of swordsmanship including *shinmyōken*. As we will see, with the increased nuance of the concept, Munenori will adjust the delivery of content accordingly.

Shinmyōken: Quintessence and Marvel of the Human Body

The learning of *shinmyōken* is featured extensively in the *Katsuninken* chapter, the latter half of *Heihō kadensho*. Unlike the previous chapter, which focuses on the aspect of the way of heaven that takes lives — violent means and knowledge for killing, the *Katsuninken* (the invigorating sword) chapter focus on the aspect of the way of heaven that preserves lives. As the title *Katsuninken* suggests, this chapter contains knowledge of the lives of both oneself and the enemy: the inner functionings of the living body, ways to observe them, and connections of the living bodies on the battlefield. Through *shinmyōken*, Munenori explains how the mind and body function together to generate movements:

- The matter of *shinmyōken* (sword of quintessence and marvel) In addition:

The matter of carrying the mindset of the seat with the body and with the feet

As stated previously, the *shinmyōken*, it is the ultimate matter of importance.

There is a place in my body that *shinmyōken* refers to. When it is in my body, one

should know that the *ken* (sword) in *shinmyōken* is written as the sinograph for the sword. Be it assuming a stance on the right or assuming a stance on the left, without deviating the sword from the pedestal¹⁴ of *shinmyōken*, there is mindfulness for the sinograph for the sword. Alternatively, when it is in the enemy's body, one should understand the sinograph *ken* 剣 (sword) of *shinmyōken* as if it is written as the sinograph *ken* 見 (to observe; to perceive; to discern). For being able to clearly see this seat of *shinmyōken* and attack, the place to look at is essential. Accordingly, it denotes the significance of the sinograph *ken* 見 (to observe; to perceive; to discern).

一 神妙劍の事 付 座の心懸身に取り足にとる事

右、神妙劍、至極の大事也。我身に神妙劍とさす所あり。わが身にありては、神妙劍の劍の字を劍の字に書いてしるべし。右にかまへても左にかまへても、太刀神妙劍の座をはなれぬ程に、劍と云ふ字に心あり。又敵の身にありては、劍の字を見の字に書いて心得べし。此神妙劍の座をよく見てきりこむ程に、見る所が簡要也。然れば、見の字に心あり。(Heihō *kadensho*, *Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 69)

For the physical body, *shinmyōken* refers to a core region. When the swordsman assumes various stances and postures, he shall never deviate from that core region of the body. In *Himonshū*, Munenori's son Mitsuyoshi wrote down the approximate location of *shinmyōken*: a

¹⁴ The original word *za* 座 can be literally translated as “seat”, but usually denotes a more general meaning of “designated position”. When this word is paired with the term *shinmyōken*, it means the designated place within one's body where this metaphorical “sword” should be firmly placed on. In line with Munenori's metaphor of *shinmyōken* as “sword”, in this particular case where the *za* is designated for *shinmyōken*, I translate it as “pedestal”.

square of roughly six by six *sun* 寸 (1 *sun* ≈ 1.82 centimeters) around the navel (へそのまわり六寸四方なりを神妙剣と申候。 *Himonshū*, in Imamura 1982, 278). As this core region exists both in oneself and in the opponent the swordsman need not only know how not to deviate from his own *shinmyōken*, but also be able to see that in his opponent. To express such a two-folded connotation of *shinmyōken*, Munenori resorts to the use of a pun (*kakekotoba* 掛詞).

The term *shinmyōken* consists of three sinographs: *shin* 神 (quintessence), *myō* 妙 (marvel), and *ken* 剣 (sword). Munenori uses two ways to write the sinograph for *ken*: 剣 (sword) and 見 (discerning). When written as *ken* 剣 (sword), *shinmyōken* refers to a core region within the swordsman. *Shinmyōken* as a “sword” does not refer to an actual weapon, instead, its connotation aligns with the title of this last chapter: *Katsuninken* (the invigorating sword). As Munenori will explain in the upcoming passages, *shinmyōken* is the knowledge concerning the functioning of the essence, the mind, and the body of a living person. As such, while being a knowledge recorded by and for warriors, *shinmyōken* as a “sword” has transcended the scope of violent means. As Munenori will demonstrate in later sections, carrying the knowledge of the function of a living person, *shinmyōken* becomes a type of “invigorating sword” that has much wider applications.

When written as *ken* 見 (discerning), it refers to the swordsman’s ability to focus his physical body onto the opponent’s *shinmyōken*:

- The matter of discerning the *shinmyōken*, in terms of three levels of analysis

Discerning with the mind is to be regarded as the foundation. It is only because from the mind one discerns, that there come to be things the eyes can notice. As

such, discerning with the eyes is secondary to the mind. After discerning with the eyes, one should discern with the torso, hands, and legs. Discerning with the torso, hands, and legs means not letting the enemy's *shinmyōken* deviate from my torso, hands, and legs. This is called discerning with the torso, hands, and legs. Mental discernment enables visual discernment. Discerning with the eyes is a matter of intent to focus the hands and legs on the enemy's pedestal of *shinmyōken*.

一 神妙剣見る事、三段の分別

心にて見るを根本とす。心から見てこそ目もつくべき物なれ。然れば、目にて見るは心の次也。目にて見て、その次に身手足にて見るべし。身手足にて見るとは、敵の神妙剣にわが身手足のはづれぬ様にするを、身手足にて見ると云ふ也。心にて見るは、目にて見む為也。目にて見るは、足手を敵の神妙剣の座にあてんと云ふ事也。 (*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 79)

To be able to discern the enemy's *shinmyōken*, a swordsman needs to discern at three levels: discerning with the mind, discerning with the eyes, and discerning with the body. Here we see a method of observation that not only relies on merely seeing with the eyes but also on sensing with the mind and synchronizing with the body.

Methods of observation are pervasive topics that run through the entire *Heihō kadensho*. While observation techniques in the *Setsunintō* chapter (the previous chapter) generally consist of looking at specific locations (for example, fists, elbows, or behind the shoulder) depending on

the situation, observation techniques in the *Katsuninken* chapter (this chapter) are more obscure in written records. Named *shujishuriken* 手字種利劍 in *Heihō kadensho*, this advanced observation technique was written in at least seven different ways¹⁵ in other *Yagyū Shinkage Ryū*-related writings (Katō 2003, 194).

This advanced observation technique called *shujishuriken* may be what Munenori is talking about when he read *ken* as discerning. In Katō's interpretation of *Shujishuriken* in *Heihō kadensho*, he associates *shujishuriken* with the idea of *u* (being) (Katō 2003, 196-198). Similar to how *u* was discussed in “The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water”, Katō believes that *shujishuriken* is the learning of seeing what is usually hidden from or ignored by ordinary people (2003, 197). The same idea applies to *shinmyōken*. While it is said to be located around the navel, *shinmyōken* is not visible to untrained ordinary people. While the application of *shujishuriken* in discerning the enemy's *shinmyōken* should be explained and demonstrated in person by a qualified practitioner of the school, it is clear that the pun of *ken* is a testimony to the complex and intertwined nature of many advanced teachings in *Heihō kadensho*. In this case, by reading the sinograph *ken* in *shinmyōken* as both “sword” and “discerning”, the reader can then associate the terminology with multiple teachings such as *Katsuninken* or *shujishuriken* simultaneously.

Following the discussion on the multiplicity of *ken* in *shinmyōken*, Munenori goes on to explain the meaning of *shin* and *myō*, showing the functionings of *shinmyōken* within a living body:

¹⁵ Each part of the phrase *Shujishuriken*, that is, *shuji*, *shuri*, and *ken*, can be written in different ways. For *ken*, it can be written as 劍 (sword), 見 (decerning), or purely phonetically as けん.

- Explanation of the two sinographs of *shin* 神 (quintessence) and *myō* 妙 (marvel)

The *shin* (quintessence) that exists on the inside manifests on the outside as *myō* (marvel), this is termed *shinmyō* (quintessence and marvel).

I state the meaning of the two sinographs, *shin* (quintessence) and *myō* (marvel): the *shin* (quintessence) that exists on the inside manifests on the outside as *myō* (marvel), they are named *shinmyō* (quintessence and marvel). For example, for a tree, it is because there is a *shin* (quintessence) of the tree on the inside, that its flowers bloom fragrantly, its greens sprout, and its branches and leaves flourish. That is called *myō* (marvel). For the *shin* (quintessence) of a tree, even crushing a tree into pieces, nothing the eyes see is *shin* (quintessence). Still, without *shin* (quintessence) it is impossible for flowers and greens to manifest on the outside. Same for the *shin* (quintessence) of people, even tearing up the body, nothing the eyes see is *shin* (quintessence). Still, it is due to the *shin* (quintessence) that exists on the inside, that one can perform various techniques. It is because the *shin* (quintessence) resides on the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, that various *myō* (marvel) manifest through hands and legs as flowers bloom on the battlefield.

一 神・妙二字の釈

神内に有りて妙外に顕る、名づけて神妙と為す。¹⁶

¹⁶ This line is almost identical to the second sentence in the next paragraph. One reason for this repetition is that this line was probably originally written in literary sinitic, and warrants explanation from Munenori for readers not

神・妙の二字の心をのべたり。神内に有りて妙外に顕る、是を神妙と名付くる也。たとへば一本の木に、内に木の神ある故に、花さき匂ひ、みどり立ち、枝葉しげる也。是を妙と云ふ。木の神は、木をくだきても、是ぞ神とて目に見えねども、神なくば花緑も外にはあらはるまじき也。人の神も、身をさきても、是ぞ神とて目には見えねども、内に神あるによりて、様々のわざをなす也。神妙劍の座に神をすゆる故に、様々の妙が手足にあらはれて、軍に花をさかする也。 (*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 70)

There is a causative relationship between *shin* (quintessence) and *myō* (marvel). *Myō* (marvel) as an observable phenomenon (i.e. flowers of a tree or bodily movements of a warrior) can only manifest due to the existence of *shin* (quintessence) inside a living being. For Munenori, *shin* (quintessence) is the source of wondrous bodily movements that bloom like a flower on the battlefield. While residing in the seat of *shinmyōken*, *shin* (quintessence) is nowhere to be found even if the physical body is torn up. While the lack of physical form makes the idea of *shin* (quintessence) seem spiritual from a modern perspective, *shin* (quintessence) is not a concept detached from the physical body. As Munenori's son Mitsuyoshi wrote in *Himonshū*:

The matter of the application of *shinmyōken*

...*Shin*, to state using an analogy, is to select among many so that only a single one left is called *shin* (quintessence). Alternatively, pick out ten riders (*jūki* 十騎)

proficient in the language. In Imamura's transcription, this sentence is written completely in literary sinic: 神在内而妙顯於外、名為神妙。 (*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Imamura 1982, 114).]

among a hundred riders (*hyakki* 百騎) of brave soldiers (*yūshi* 勇士), and select among the ten riders for the ultimate only one rider. This to the human body is called *shin* (quintessence).

Sufficiently refine the mind and practice (swordsmanship) for years and months, ridding all the illness and leaving only *shin* (quintessence). Having *shin* (quintessence) stay in the six *sun* (Japanese inches) square should be the first and foremost understanding. *Shin* (quintessence) is the purity (*kissui* 生粋) derived from a well-refined mind.

神妙劍用様の事

...神は縦て申候て、何にても多中よりえらび出して、只一つ残りたるものを神と申候。或はゆうし百きのうちより十き選出して、十きの内よりえらびて只一きに究まりたるを、人の身に取ては神と申候。

心を能きたいて年月の稽古にて病氣ことぐく去去て神一つに残りて、六寸四方の内に留ると、先づ心得可有候。神は心を能きたいぬいたるきすい也。 (*Himonshū*, in Imamura 1982, 278)

For Mitsuyoshi, *shin* (quintessence) to the human body is like the single most valiant rider among the one hundred braves. Finding *shin* (quintessence) is thus a process of selection and elimination. By refining the mind (just as one refines steel) and practicing swordsmanship for years, the practitioner will be able to get rid of bad habits which Munenori call *yamai* 病

(impairments)¹⁷, leaving only the quintessence. While Mitsuyoshi states that *shin* (quintessence) is the purity of the mind, he also states that this *shin* (quintessence) should stay in the “six *sun* square”, an area around the navel that is the pedestal of *shinmyōken*. For Mitsuyoshi, while *shin* (quintessence) is intangible, it is nonetheless linked to the awareness of a specific region of the physical body. As Mitsuyoshi’s father and martial art instructor, Munenori holds a similar view on the concept of *shin* (quintessence), as we shall see in the following excerpt.

Continuing his explanation for *shin* (quintessence) and *myō* (marvel), Munenori touches on the function of *shin* (quintessence) using another pun. This time the pun is *shin* itself. While 神 is the default sinograph for *shin* in the phrase *shinmyōken*, *shin* can also be written as 心, the sinograph for “mind”. In the flowing passage, Munenori uses *shin* to refer to not only 神: the quintessence; but also 心: the mind.

Shin 神 (quintessence) is the master of *shin* 心 (mind). While *shin* (quintessence) resides within, it employs *shin* (mind) outside. This *shin* (mind) also employs the service of *ki*. It employs the service of *ki* (vital energy), and serves on the outside for *shin* (quintessence). When *shin* (mind) stays in one place, its function is obscured. Since this is the case, the crucial matter is to have *shin* (mind) not to stay in one place. For example, the master of people sits on the inside and has servants to do his biddings in other places. When servants stay at their destination and do not return, their functions are as if being obscured. When *shin* (mind) stays on an object and does not return to its original position, the techniques of warring

¹⁷ Munenori gave several examples for *yamai* 病 (impairments) in *Heihō kadensho*, includes only thinking about winning the fight, only thinking about applying techniques in a fight, and generally single-mindedly doing anything. (何事も心の一すぢにとゞまりたるを病とするなり。 *Heihō kadensho*, *Setsunintō*, in Watanabe 1985, 51).

methods become dull. Because of this, the matter of *shin* (mind) not staying in one place does not only exist for warring methods but also is a matter that concerns all things. There exist the two understandings of *shin* (quintessence) and *shin* (mind).

神は心の為には主人也。神が内にありて、心を外へつかふ也。此心又気をめしつかふ也。気をめしつかひ、神の為に外にかける、此心が一所に逗留すれば、用がかくる也。然るによりて、心を一所にとどめぬ様にするが簡要の事也。たとへば、人の主人、内に居て、下人をよそへ使にやるに、行くさきにとどまりてかへらねば、用がかくるごとく也。心が物にとどまりて、本位にかへらねば、兵法の手前がぬくる也。此故に、心を一所にとどめぬ事、兵法のみにあらず、万事にわたる事也。神と心との二つ心得あり。

(*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 70-71)

Reminiscent of his previous assertions in “The matter of *ki* (vital energy) and *kokorozashi* (determination)” and “The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water”, Munenori employs the analogy of “master and servant” as well as the notion of “inside and outside” to illustrate the function of *shin* (quintessence) and *shin* (mind). In those paragraphs, Munenori stated that the mind and the body function as a whole, the determined mind on the inside exerts its influence on the body on the outside through the medium of *ki*. Here, the determined mind on the inside has been further differentiated into two layers: *shin* (quintessence) as the master on the inside, and *shin* (mind) as the servant carrying out its master’s biddings on the outside. Same as in “The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water”, the notion of inside and outside is relative.

While *ki* is on the inside relative to the body, it is on the outside relative to the determined mind; while *shin* (mind) is on the inside relative to *ki*, it is on the outside relative to *shin* (quintessence).

Conceptualizing the human body with the relation of “inside-outside” and “master-servant” allows Munenori to establish the invisible *shin* (quintessence) as the source of all human functions. Through the *Setsunintō* chapter, Munenori has already described how a proper mind-body configuration (the *ken-tai* dynamic) can have a meaningful impact on combat, as well as how a deepened understanding of the invisible aspect of bodily functions (*u* and the sound of wind and water) can help the swordsman better observe his enemy. Here, the understanding of *shin* (quintessence) takes one step further: with years of swordsmanship practice and refinement of the mind, the swordsman can rid himself of all the bad habits and mentalities (the impairments). As a result, the swordsman will obtain an unobscured *shin* (quintessence), which enables him to perform wondrous movements (*myō*) in combat. But the benefit of attaining *shinmyōken* does not only limited to movements, with proper training the swordsman can also utilize the knowledge of *shinmyōken* to observe his enemy (*ken* written as “decerning”), and even assert influence on the battlefield itself. This learning of manipulating the battlefield is what Munenori calls *suigetsu* 水月 (water moon).

Suigetsu: Aligning the Moon and Water

Mitsuyoshi, in his discussion on *shinmyōken*, wrote about the relationship between *shujishuriken* (the advanced observation technique), *suigetsu*, and *shinmyōken* as follows:

The matter of *Shinmyōken*

...*Shujishuriken*, *suigetsu*, *shinmyōken*, these three constitute the measuring of overall human distances, and are the parents of warring methods. From these three, various mindsets come out. On a grand scale, these three are the ultimates. *Suigetsu* is also an approach derived from *shin* (quintessence). One designates the determined mind as the moon, and perceives *shinmyōken* as a mirror.

神妙劍の事

...手字手利見、水月、神妙劍、此三つは、人間の惣太体の積り、兵法の父母たり。此三つより、心持種々に出る也、大形此三つ極るなり、水月も是神よりの儀也。思ひつく心を月と定、神妙劍を鏡とす。(Tsuki no shō, in Imamura 1982, 176)

In Mitsuyoshi's view, *shujishuriken*, *suigetsu*, and *shinmyōken*, together these three learnings cover the overall distance measuring between human beings. Since *suigetsu* is derived from *shin* (quintessence), the learning of *suigetsu* naturally have overlap with *shinmyōken*. The term *suigetsu* consists of two sinographs: *sui* 水 (water) and *getsu* 月 (moon). Mitsuyoshi associates the moon in *suigetsu* with the determined mind, and the mirror (the still water that reflects) with *shinmyōken*. The implication of this association will be clear as we dive deeper into the subject. In *Heihō kadensho*, Munenori's discussion on *Suigetsu* starts in a relatively straightforward fashion:

- Suigetsu (water moon) In addition: The matter of its reflection

As stated previously, between the enemy and me, when there is roughly a few *shaku*¹⁸, at that distance, the sword of my enemy cannot hit my body. Across that distance, I employ warring methods. Stepping inside and covertly entering this distance, I get close to the enemy. Like the moon projecting the image onto the water, this is called *suigetsu*. With the scene of *suigetsu* in mind, one should already be thinking about it before standing against the enemy, then he will stand against the enemy. The distancing should be transmitted orally.

一 水月 付 其影の事

右、敵と我との間に、凡そ何尺あれば、敵の太刀我身にあたらぬと云ふつもりありて、その尺をへだてゝ兵法をつかふ。此尺のうちへ踏入り、ぬすみこみ、敵に近付くを、月の水に影をさすにたとへて、水月と云ふ也。心に水月の場を、立あはぬ以前におもひまふけて立あふべし。尺の事は口伝すべし。(Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken, in Watanabe 1985, 68-69)

There is a certain safe distance between two swordsmen in combat. Provided that the two swordsmen are not drastically different in height, stepping over the safe distance means both sides are now within the reach of each other's attack. The challenge here, as Munenori pointed out, is how to manipulate such distance in a way that the enemy is unable to perceive the change and/or react in time. The knowledge for achieving such a feat is called *suigetsu*. The term *suigetsu* (water moon) is coined by the scene which it is describing: the moon projecting itself to

¹⁸ *Shaku* 尺: A measurement unit, 1 *shaku* ≈ 30 centimeters.

water, and the water reflects the image of the moon. In the following passage, Munenori will explain in detail the meaning of this scene as well as how it is related to combat.

Before going into the passage itself, it is crucial to go over some translation and interpretation issues for *suigetsu*. As Katō pointed out, in *Heihō kadensho*, passages on the topic of *suigetsu* are fairly nuanced and open to interpretations (2003, 222). One focal point for the ambiguity is the verb used to describe the interaction between the water and the moon. This verb, *utsusu* うつす, when written entirely in *kana* 仮名 (Japanese phonetic symbols), has the connotation of moving toward (移す) and projecting/reflecting (映す). As such, “the image (which the moon) projects to the water” may also mean “the image the water reflects (from the moon)” or “the image (of the moon) moving to the water”. Munenori may intend to take advantage of such ambiguity as he consistently only uses *kana* to write the word *utsusu*. While for the sake of ease of reading I will translate *utsusu* according to the context, I would urge readers to keep in mind the ambiguity of the term and the resulting sense of: 1. a compound meaning of “projecting/reflecting”, evoking a sense of reciprocal connection between the moon and the water; 2. the traveling of the moonlight from the moon to the water as potentially an analogy for how a swordsman can manipulate the safe distance himself and the enemy.

- The mind is similar to the moon in the water, the physical form is like the image on the mirror.

The mindset of applying the previous sentence to warring methods, is that water is where the image of the moon resides. The mirror is where the image of the body resides. The mind of people moves to objects, just like the moon projects

to the water. The projection is indeed speedy. Water allure to the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, the moon allure to my mind, and the mind should project to the pedestal of *shinmyōken*. When the mind projects, the pedestal of *shinmyōken* reflects the body. When the mind moves, the body moves. It is to the mind the body subordinates. Alternatively, the mirror allure to the pedestal of *shinmyōken*. The application of this sentence is the meaning of this saying: “Let my body be reflected by the pedestal of *shinmyōken* as an image”. The meaning is to not deviate one’s hands and legs from the pedestal of *shinmyōken*.

一 心は水の中の月に似たり、形は鏡の上の影の如し。

右の句を兵法の取用ある心持は、水には月かげをやどす物也。鏡には身のかげをやどす物也。人の心の物にうつる事は、月の水にうつるごとく也。いかにもすみやかにうつる物也。神妙劍の座を水にたとへ、わが心を月にたとへ、心を神妙劍の座へうつすべし。心がうつれば、身が神妙劍の座へうつる也。心がゆけば、身がゆくなり。心に身はしたがふ物也。又、鏡をば神妙劍の座にたとへ、わが身をかげのごとくに神妙劍の座へうつせと云ふ心に、此句を用ある也。手足を神妙劍の座にはづすなど云ふ義也。

(*Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 80)

The scene of the water and the moon is an analogy to how Munenori believes the mind exerts its function onto the body. Like the moon projects its image to the water, the mind projects its intention to (move to) the pedestal of *shinmyōken*. Also, just like how a mirror reflects the object it faces, when the body does not deviate from the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, the pedestal of

shinmyōken will reflect the body. The relationship between the mind, the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, and the body are consistent with Munenori's previous assertions.

In the passages discussing *shinmyōken*, Muunenori has already stated that the mind carries out the directions from the *shin* (quintessence). To execute combat movements (*myō*) effectively, the mind needs to not linger on the object on which physical movements are performed, it needs to return to its original position: within the swordsman's body. On the other hand, Munenori stated that the body of the swordsman shall not deviate from the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, an area around the navel. In other words, before discussing *suigetsu*, Munenori has already established connections between the body and the mind as well as the body and the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, although the nature of these connections remains vague.

Suigetsu helps alleviate such ambiguity and clarifies the nature of the pedestal of *shinmyōken*. With analogies, Munenori clarified the mechanic in which the mind, the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, and the body interact. The mind projects its influence to the pedestal of *shinmyōken* similar to how the moon projects its image to the water. The pedestal of *shinmyōken* reflects the body just like how a mirror reflects images. In other words, the pedestal of *shinmyōken* is where an intangible thought translates to a tangible motion (see fig. 2).

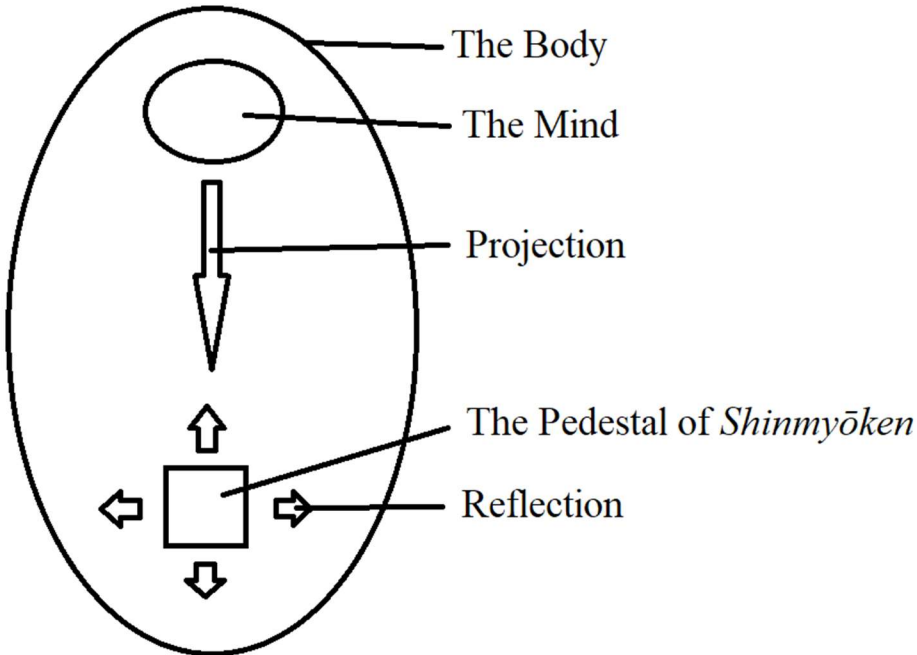


Fig. 2 Functioning of *shinmyōken*

With the pedestal of *shinmyōken* acting as a medium, translating the mind’s intention into bodily motions, Munenori states that “when the mind moves, the body moves”. While the body is subordinate to the mind, the result of proper projection and reflection should be spontaneous movements of both the mind and the body. In the following passages, Munenori will further explain how *Suigetsu* helps achieve the synergy between the mind and the body, as well as how this synergy can manifest not only within the swordsman himself but also between the swordsman and his opponent.

The moon’s projection of image to the water is indeed speedy. Although it is in the sky far and high, as soon as the cloud recedes, it quickly projects the image to the water. It is not something gradually and continuously falling down from the sky. It moves quickly within an instance of blinking. People’s minds moving to

objects is as speedy as the moon projecting to the water, this is the metaphor.

Also, the line in the sutra reads: the speediness of ideas is like the water and the moon, the mirror and the image. The moon projects to the water, although it is stable, the principle is not to seek under the water and says: there is no moon. The meaning is just that from the sky afar, it just projects without a gap. Same for the shapes reflected in the mirror. When the mirror faces any objects, it reflects. This is the metaphor saying that it is speedy. The mind of people moving to objects is like this. At an instance of blinking, the mind goes to the great Tang. When sleepy and thinking of taking a nap, the dream goes to the hometown a thousand *ri*¹⁹ away. For instances like this in which the mind projects and goes, the Buddha told with the metaphor of the water and the moon as well as the mirror and the image.

月の水にかげをうつすは、いかにもすみやかなる物也。はるく高き天にあれども、雲がのくといなや、はや水にかげがさす也。高天からそろくと連々にくだりてうつる物にあらず。目まぢ一つせぬうちに、はやうつるなり。人の心の物にうつる事、月の水にうつるがごとくすみやかと云ふたとへなり。意の速かなること水月鏡像の如しと云ふ経文も、月が水にうつりて、ただかにあれども、水のそこをさぐれば、月はなひと云ふ儀理にはあらず。たゞとをき天の上から、間もなくそのまゝうつると云ふ心也。鏡にうつるかたちも、何にても物がむかふとはやうつる也。すみやかなと云ふたとへなり。人の心の物にうつる事、此の如き也。目まぢする間に、大唐までも心はゆく也。とろくまどろみ入るよとおもへば、千里の外の古郷へ

¹⁹ *Ri* 里: A measurement unit, 1 *ri* ≈ 600 meters.

も夢は行く也。か様に心のうつりゆく事を、水月鏡像にたとへて仏は説き
給ふと也。 (*Heihō kadensho*, *Katsuninken*, in Watanabe 1985, 80-82)

In this part, Munenori explains the reasons for employing the analogy of *suigetsu* (water and moon) and *kyōzō* (mirror and image). Originally Buddhist terminologies²⁰, *suigetsu* and *kyōzō* are used in *Heihō kadensho* to show the mind's inherent ability to travel far in an instance. Similar to how the moon high in the sky can project its light to the water as soon as the sky clears, the mind can travel to places far away in the blink of an eye.

But there is a caveat to this near-instantaneous projection and reflection: the confusion between the source and the image. Although the reflection of an image is spontaneous to the projection from the source, one should not mistake the image for the source itself. As Munenori stated, the point of the analogy of *suigetsu* is not to prompt the reader to search for the moon inside the water. That is, instead of focusing solely on the two-dimensional surface containing reflections, the swordsman should conceptualize *suigetsu* as a three-dimensional scene. The moon and the water are two distinct entities, the reflection is only the manifestation of an unobstructed alignment between water and the moon. The same is true for the analogy of the mirror and the image, as Munenori said: the mirror reflects images as soon as when facing an object. Since projecting far and fast is the mind's natural ability (Munenori states that one can do it when falling into sleep), the ability to achieve unobstructed alignments between the mind, the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, and the body is what makes the difference. Munenori pointed out that

²⁰ *Suigetsu* 水月 and *kyōzō* 鏡像 are two of the eight metaphors of para-tantra (*eta no hachiyu* 依他八喻). While in Buddhism these eight metaphors are for showing the falsehood of the relativity of para-tantra (Nakamura 2002, 130).

this alignment, is conceptualized as *shinmyōken* when within the body, and is conceptualized as *suigetsu* when applied to the battlefield:

- The previous sentence, when alternatively applied to water and moon for warring methods, is also the same matter. My mind should move at the (combat) situation like that of the moon. To the degree that the mind goes and the body goes. When standing against the enemy, just like a mirror reflects images, the (combat) situation should drive the body. In mental preparation, when the mind is not sent out in the first place, the body will not go. For the (combat) situation it is *suigetsu*, for the body it is *shinmyōken*. Either way, the matter of reflecting the torso, hands, and legs are the same.

一 右の句を、又兵法の水月にあてゝも同じ事也。我心を月のごとく場へうつすべし。心がゆけば身がゆく程に、立あふてより、鏡にかげのうつるごとく、場へ身をうつすべし。下作に、かねて心をやらねば、身がゆかぬ也。場にては水月、身には神妙劍也。いづれも、身手足をうつす心持は同じ事也。(Heihō kadensho, Katsuninken, in Watanabe 1985, 82)

The application of unobstructed alignments between the mind, the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, and the body within oneself is straightforward: when properly trained, the swordsman's mind projects the directions from *shin* (quintessence) to the pedestal of *Shinmyōken* (recall "The matter of the application of *shinmyōken*"), provided that the swordsman's physical movement also does not deviate from the pedestal of *shinmyōken* (recall "The matter of

shinmyōken”), the three elements are then properly aligned, enabling spontaneous movement of the swordsman’s own body and mind.

While *shinmyōken* focuses on the alignment within the swordsman, *suigetsu* take account of the battlefield and the enemy as well. The application of *suigetsu* is to get within the attack distance without getting hit, achieving spontaneous movements between the swordsman’s body and the enemy’s intention. Recall that in “The matter of discerning the *shinmyōken*”, to see the enemy’s *shinmyōken*, the swordsman should not just rely on the eyes, but also sense with the mind and synchronize with the body. That is, with an awareness of *u* (recall “The matter of hearing the sound of wind and water”), using *shujishuriken* to see the movements within the enemy that is concealed from untrained eyes: the projection of the enemy’s intention to his pedestal of *shinmyōken*. By properly aligning the swordsman’s body to the enemy’s pedestal of *shinmyōken* (as stated in “The matter of discerning the *shinmyōken*”), the swordsman’s body becomes the “image” reflected by the enemy’s pedestal of *shinmyōken*. The result of this alignment between the swordsman and his enemy is the spontaneous movement between the enemy's intention and the swordsman’s body. This synchronization between the enemy’s intention and the swordsman’s movement is what makes the act of getting into the attack distance without retaliation possible (see fig. 3).

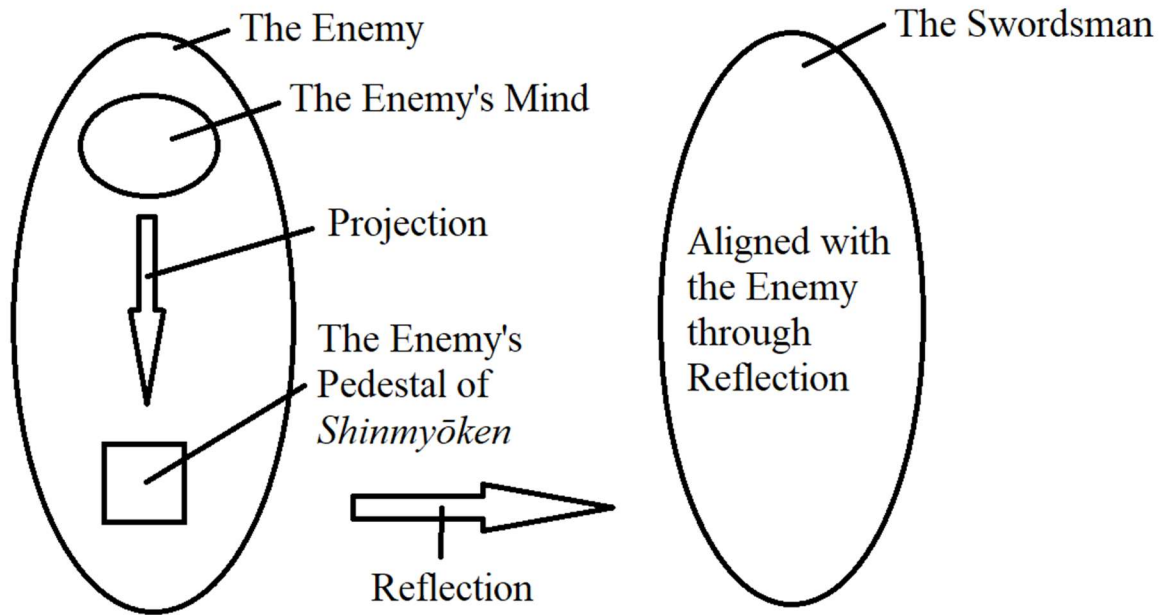


Fig. 3 Functioning of *suigetsu*

The successful execution of sneaking into attack distance unnoticed relies on the combined knowledge of *shinmyōken*, *shujishuriken*, and *suigetsu*. With *shujishuriken*, the swordsman can “intercept” the mind-body coordination within the enemy by discovering the enemy’s pedestal of *shinmyōken*. Then, by focusing his own body on the enemy’s pedestal of *shinmyōken*, the swordsman achieves coordination between the enemy’s mind and the swordsman’s body across the battlefield, a synergy Munenori calls *suigetsu*. While the results are different, the underlying principle for the mind-body synergy within one body and between two bodies across the battlefield is the same. As Munenori says: “For the scene it is *suigetsu*, for the body it is *shinmyōken*. Either way, the matter of reflecting the torso, hands, and legs are the same”.

As readers can no doubt sense, ideas in the *Katsuninken* chapter are much more interconnected and nuanced than in the previous chapter. Instead of being discrete pieces of knowledge, *shinmyōken*, *shujishuriken*, and *suigetsu* are different angles for explaining the same principle, they are mutually complementary in that the practitioner cannot only master one without mastering all three. Furthermore, as advanced knowledge, *shinmyōken*, *shujishuriken*, and *suigetsu* can also provide insights into the fundamentals such as the *ken-tai* dynamic. For example, “The matter of returning the mind”, a passage discussed in the “*Ken-Tai* in Motion” chapter, is situated right after the passages regarding *suigetsu* in *Heihō kadensho*. With the awareness of *shinmyōken*, *shujishuriken*, and *suigetsu*, returning the mind becomes more than simply not being attached to the target one attacks. The ability to switch between offense and defense accordingly without a gap is powered by the proper alignment between the mind, the pedestal of *shinmyōken*, and the body. This arrangement of contents enables the practitioner to progressively deepen his understanding of his daily martial art practice. The alignment between the advanced and fundamental knowledge, together with their roots in practical applications, also greatly increases the book’s re-readability, allowing the practitioner to solidify his embodied knowledge as his martial art training progresses.

Conclusion

The human body speaks its own language that script-based language can only allude to, and Munenori’s *Heihō kadensho* explored and exploited such differences. While martial art as a form of embodied knowledge is not meant to be taught in discrete pieces, its textual references in *Heihō kadensho* are often fragmented and arcane. Although Munenori’s omission of certain knowledge in *Heihō kadensho* is supplemented by writings of his descendants, the inherent

incompatibility between conceptional language and somatic languages dictates that interpretation of these treatises is always informed by the reader's personal experiences and is always up for debate. Despite the obscurity of its content, there are patterns in which knowledge is organized in *Heihō kadensho*, extracting these patterns allows the reader to understand Munenori's vision of what martial art is and how martial art should be transmitted.

As knowledge passed down by the survivors of the warring states (*sengoku* 戦国) period, martial arts in the early Edo period has to be grounded in practicality while detached from any particular applications in order to maintain their adaptability. This idea manifests itself at every step of our reading of *Heihō kadensho*. For example, the conceptional distinction between *ken* (attacking) and *tai* (waiting) is not to prompt practitioners to separate attacking and waiting in combat, but for the sake of gradually conditioning practitioners to embody both aggressiveness and passiveness in all of their movements. The awareness of practicality is also present as we get to more advanced learnings such as *shinmyōken* (the sword of quintessence and marvel) and *suigetsu* (water moon). Although the embodiment of advanced learning requires practitioners to have already mastered the school's basic teachings, the purpose is still practical: embodying *shinmyōken* allows one to act and react spontaneously, while mastering *suigetsu* enables one to get into the attack range without being hit. With practicality being both the origin and the validation for teachings in *Heihō kadensho*, it is clear that for Munenori, martial art fundamentally consists of ways of surviving and excelling on the battlefield. For him, there will be no martial art without practicality.

Although transmission of martial art requires in-person training and validation with an instructor, transmitting only through imitation and oral transmission makes the knowledge more

susceptible to corruption. By alluding to the school's embodied knowledge at different depths, from multiple angles, and with added nuances by introducing thoughts from other intellectual disciplines, Munenori was likely intended to make *Heihō kadensho* a reference point for practitioners regardless of their current proficiency: practitioners can use the book to track their progress and understand what their next goal should be. The fundamental promise of practicality and the increased nuance of the advanced teachings in *Heihō kadensho* also show Munenori's vision of the martial art training process: while the end goal is always to hit the opponent without being hit, achieving this goal regardless of circumstances requires extensive physical and mental conditioning. That is, martial art training is not just about embodying the fighting techniques, but also embodying the necessary characteristics of a warrior.

Appendix

Burton Watson's translation of the story between Huangshi Gong and Zhang Liang from *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the grand historian*). Pronunciations for Chinese terms have been modified to the *pinyin* 拼音 convention.

Zhang Liang was once strolling idly along an embankment in Xiapei when an old man wearing a coarse gown appeared. Reaching the place where Zhang Liang was, he deliberately dropped his shoe down the embankment and, turning to Zhang Liang, said, "Fetch me my shoe, young man!"

Zhang Liang, completely taken aback, was about to hit him, but because the man was old he swallowed his resentment and climbed down and got the shoe. "Put it on for me!" ordered the old man, and Zhang Liang, since he had already gone to the trouble of fetching it, knelt respectfully and prepared to put on the shoe. The old man held out his foot and, when the shoe was on, laughed and went on his way. Zhang Liang, more startled than ever, stood looking after him. When the old man had gone some distance, he turned and came back. "You could be taught, young man," he said. "Meet me here at dawn five days from now!" Zhang Liang, thinking this all very strange, knelt and replied, "I will do as you say."

At dawn five days later he went to the place, but found the man already there. "When you have an appointment with an old man, how is it that you come late?" he asked angrily. "Go away, and meet me at dawn five days from now, only come earlier!"

Five days later Zhang Liang got up at the crow of the cock and went to the place, but once more the old man had gotten there before him. "Why are you late again?" the old man asked in anger. "Go away, and five days from now come earlier!"

Five days later Zhang Liang went to the place before half the night was through. After a while the old man came along. "This is the way it should be!" he said. Then, producing a book, he said, "If you read this you may become the teacher of kings. Ten years from now your fortune will rise. Thirteen years from now you will see me again. A yellow stone at the foot of Mount Gucheng in northern Ji—that will be I." Without another word he left and Zhang Liang never saw him again.

When dawn came Zhang Liang examined the book which the old man had given him and found it to be *The Grand Duke's Art of War*. He set great store by it and was to be found constantly poring over it.

(Watson 1961, 135-136)

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