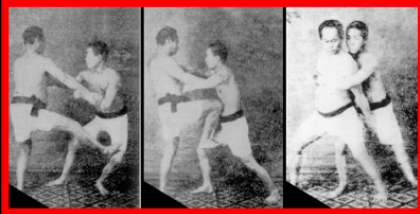


Here, in this small but provocative publication, lies yet another milestone in the legacy of Karate. *Watashi no Karate-jutsu* ("My Art of Karate"), introduces comprehensive insights into a fighting tradition as known and taught by one of its early Okinawan innovators, *Motobu Choki* (1870-1944). One of only two books he ever published on the art it is not widely known in modern karate circles or outside the spectrum of those who research its history. Straightforward in its approach, this modest work outlines those unique methods that made Motobu Choki, pound for pound, possibly the greatest technician and karate fighter of his generation.

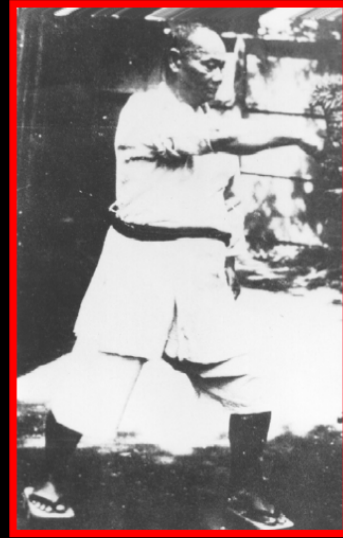
One mistake the modern karateka often makes, when trying to grasp the technical ambiguities surrounding the application of early karate practices, is to depend on contemporary assumptions. This small but powerful book provides a window through which the reader is better able to perceive the cultural landscape and mind-set of those people who shaped its practice.

What could possibly improve a reader's overall understanding of the art more than walking in the footsteps of those people most responsible for pioneering it? Great people should never be forgotten, if only to remind us of the potential latent in ourselves. By studying the anthropology of this tradition it becomes evident that many of the early pioneers established a symbiosis with karate so that their lives became as much a product of the art as was the art a product of their lives.

Researched and translated by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy, ("*Bubishi*," "*Classical Kata of Okinawan Karate*," "*Ancient Okinawan Martial Arts*" (vols #1 & #2), "*Tales of Okinawa's Great Masters*," and Funakoshi's "*Tanpenshu*") "*Karate-jutsu, My Art*" is another timeless classic to be treasured for generations to come.



Motobu Choki Karate



Noted karate researcher Patrick McCarthy is back, this time with his long awaited translation of Motobu Choki's 1932 "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*."

This little book is packed with additional related research and translations, making it well worth the price. After the Translator's Introduction on pp. 8-9, we move into an essay by Kinjo Hiroshi Hanshi, arguably one of the senior-most authorities on old-style Okinawan karate in the world today.

This article, entitled "*Revival of Motobu Choki*," gives us some personal insight into the great master by someone who knew him personally. The Kinjo article appears on pp. 10-11.

Next is a translation of an article on Motobu that first appeared in the local Okinawan magazine "*Aoi Umi*," in 1978. The author of this article, Shabana (Jahana) Kiyoshi, interviewed the late Shorinryu master Nakama Chozo for the article, and there are several interesting stories regarding Motobu and his teachers. "*Recollections: The Shabana/Nakama Interview*" appears on pp. 12-16 of the McCarthy book.

Page 17 is a calligraphic piece masterfully brushed by Gisho.

Page 18-26 is an article by Patrick McCarthy, entitled "More on Motobu." Thoroughly researched and brilliantly written, this article serves well to better the reader's understanding of Motobu Sensei.

Page 27 is a calligraphic piece powerfully brushed by the late Shiroryu master Sakagami Ryusho.

Page 28-30 is a translation of the article entitled "Talking about my Teacher" by Marukawa Kenji, who was a direct student of Motobu. This article also contains some interesting stories surrounding the visit of some foreign "boxers" to the Motobu dojo while the master was away. This event warrants more research, as the foreigners were apparently taken to the dojo by a representative from the Japan Times, Japan's most prominent English-language newspaper.

Page 30-33 is a collection of Motobu's Favourite Sayings as compiled by Nakata Mizuhiko. This chapter is important because it lets the reader glimpse into what Motobu himself had said, thus helping to gain a better understanding of his views on karate.

Page 34-35 is a collection of stories gleaned from an interview with Shorinryu master Miyahira Katsuya, who had studied directly under Motobu in Okinawa.

Page 36-42 is the complete translation of the 1925 King Magazine Article describing Motobu's bout with the foreign boxer. Although rather imaginative in its narrative, this article is nonetheless a very important document in the history of karate do. One added bonus is the positive identification of "John Kentel."

Page 43-46 is excerpts from the chapter on Motobu from Nagamine Shoshin's precious book entitled "Tales of the Okinawan Masters." The late Matsubayashi-ryu founder was also a direct student of Motobu Sensei.

Page 47-51 is an English translation of the very rare "Karate Training" by Kyan Chotoku. This article, which originally appeared in the second edition of Takada (Mutsu) Mizuho & Miki Nisaburo's 1930 "Kenpo Gaisetsu," contains important advice for handling physical encounters.

Page 52-61 includes English explanations and original photographs of Motobu Choki's 1926 Kumite Drills. These two-person drills are an important part of the Motobu legacy.

Page 62-73 is 12 pages of Vintage Photographs, many of which are exceedingly rare, and some of which have never been published in an English language source before.

Page 74-110 is the meat of the text, the complete English translation of "Watashi no Karate-jutsu." Disclosing not only history and theory, this book focusses upon the Naifuanchi Shodan kata and several kumite drills that can be seen as applications of this kata. This is important, because it is well known that Motobu favoured the Naifuanchi exercise for fundamental development of karate technique, and the publication includes Motobu himself demonstrating this kata.

Noted British karate historian Graham Noble offers his insights into the master, especially his infamous bout with the foreign boxer, in "Motobu Choki in Retrospect," which appears on pp. 111-117.

A Motobu Choki Teacher/Student Lineage Chart, Bibliography and Photo Credit & Written Sources

close out this little gem of a book.

All in all, the reader will not be disappointed, and I can heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in the history, philosophy and application of the old-style Ryukyu self-defense traditions.

[Joe Swift](#)

Mushinkan Dojo
Tokyo, Japan.

Also recommended by Joseph R. Svinth...

The early twentieth century karate teacher Choki Motobu is in the process of being rediscovered. For example, in 1986, Fighting Arts International published an article by Graham Noble that was updated and republished by EJMAS in 2000. Even more recently, Tom Ross published a two-part article about Motobu at [Fightingarts.com](http://fightingarts.com), and Charles Goodin established an archive at <http://www.seinenkai.com/> that includes articles written or translated by Goodin, Kenji Maruyama, Joe Swift, and others.

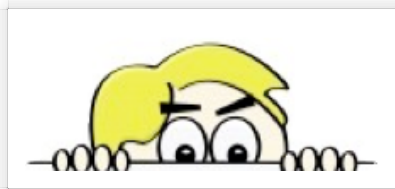
This book brings together much of this disparate material, and crowns it with a translation of Motobu's 1932 text, *Watashi no Karate-jutsu* (My Art of Karate). Also included are many vintage photos, to include a series from Motobu's 1926 text, *Okinawa Kenpo Karate Jutsu*.

術手唐の私

琉球唐手術国際研究會



若基朝部本



Look inside this book....

My Art of Karate-jutsu



Karate/Toudi

brushed by Han Jiang
Private collection of P. McCarthy

Dedication

I dedicate this work to the memory of Motobu Choki, one of the most insightful pioneers of karate-jutsu. I sincerely hope that this English presentation might reflect favorably on his efforts and help to rekindle interest in the important, but previously overshadowed, contributions of this genius.

Watashi no Karate-jutsu

Contents

Translator's Foreword	8
The Revival of Motobu Choki by Kinjo Hiroshi	10
Recollections "The Shabana/Nakama Interview"	12
More on Motobu	18
Talking about my Teacher by Marukawa Kenji	28
Sayings by Motobu Choki	30
Recollections of Motobu by Miyahira Katsuya	34
The 1925 King Magazine Article	36
Tale of a Great Bujin by Nagamine Shoshin	43
Karate Training by Kyan Chotoku	47
Motobu Choki's 1926 Kumite Drills	52
Vintage Photographs	62
<i>Watashi no Karate-jutsu</i>	74
A Medical Perspective by Dr. Toguchi	77
Prologue by Prof. Sugiyama Kenji	78
Author's Preface	79
Origins & Significance of Karate	80
Ryukyu Karate Genealogy	81
Kata & Change in Karate	82
Summarizing the Rules of Kenpo	82
How to Make a Clenched Fist	83
Mefutode	83
How to Make the One-knuckled Fist	83
Fundamental Posturing & Using the Hips	84
How to Make & Use a Makiwara	84
Renshu Kigu	87
Things to Know about Training	87
Naihanchi Kata	89
What to Know about Posturing	96
"Karate ni Sente Nashi"	96
Kumite	96
Ryukyu Martial Artists & their Special Techniques	101
Genealogy Diagram	105
Anecdotes of Modern Martial Artist	107
A Brief History of Motobu	109
Original 1932 Publication Details	110
Motobu Choki in Retrospect	111
Motobu Choki Teacher/Students Lineage	118
Photo Credit & Written Sources	119
Bibliography	120

Translator's Foreword



Here, in this small but provocative publication, lies yet another milestone in the legacy of Karate. "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*" ("*My Art of Karate*"), introduces comprehensive insights into a fighting tradition as known and taught by one of its early Okinawan innovators, Motobu Choki (1870-1944). One of only two books he ever published on the art it is not widely known in modern karate circles or outside the spectrum of those who research its history. Straightforward in its approach, this modest work outlines those unique methods that made Motobu Choki, pound for pound, possibly the greatest technician and karate fighter of his generation.

However, in spite of his popularity and functionally pragmatic fighting style the heritage of this innovative genius and karate pioneer was never proliferated, particularly when compared to that of his contemporaries; Funakoshi Gichin, Miyagi Chojun and Mabuni Kenwa. In fact, the style remains relatively unknown with less than a handful of master-level instructors presently qualified to teach it.

Studying his history, training practices, what modest literary contributions he made, and the oral testimony that survives him, I was at a loss to understand why the brilliant contributions of this creative innovator did not have a more profound impact on the development of modern karatedo. However, after delving deeper into his past it gradually became painfully evident that, despite his diligent efforts to introduce and cultivate a truly effective fighting discipline, Motobu Choki had been the victim of rivalry and political animosity. Unable to penetrate the highly inflexible and most influential circles of Japanese budo during his twenty years on the mainland his courageous efforts to establish a sizable following were stifled, kept alive only by a handful of personal students.

Much of that which has been written about Motobu Choki leaves the reader with less than a favourable impression. However, having read the controversial testimony recently given by his son, Motobu Chosei, in the "*Setting the Record Straight*" article (issues #19 & #20 of *Dragon Times*) written by my colleague Charles Goodin, I'm convinced that this mind-set is about to change and it is my most sincere hope that this publication might help to expedite this transformation.

During the memorable years of residing in Japan, I was fortunate to accumulate a plethora of primary source material including a myriad of rare photographs from the many senior authorities that my efforts brought me into personal contact with. This publication itself represents more than just a Japanese to English translation of Motobu Choki's 1932 publication entitled, "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*."

Watashi no Karate-jutsu

It brings together a collection of related articles and old photos from a wide variety of sources including newspaper, magazine and commentary from personal students along with excerpts from his 1926 publication entitled, "*Okinawan Karate-jutsu Kumite Hen.*"

Thanks to my personal contact, over the years, with people who were either directly or indirectly connected to Motobu Choki, I learned much more about him. Those contacts included the late Kuniba Shiyogo (whose father, Kokuba Kosei, studied directly under Motobu), the late Nagamine Shoshin (who studied directly under Motobu Choki), Miyahira Katsuya (who met and practiced with Motobu Choki during his visits to Chibana Choshin's dojo), Uehara Seiki-chi (who knew Choki sensei well, and studied under his older brother, Motobu Choyu), Matsushita Kyocho (whose teacher, Ueshima Sannosuke, studied directly under Motobu Choki), Konishi Takehiro (whose father, Konishi Yasuhiro, was not only one of Motobu's first students on the mainland, as well as his principal supporter there), Kinjo Hiroshi (one of Japan's leading historians), and Iwai Tsukuo (a master-level instructor of Motobu-ryu accredited directly under Motobu's own son, Chosei).

During the translation this project, my wife and I encountered some terms, a couple of historical facts, and a few family names and local places that were either published incorrectly, simply wrong or known differently by today's karate standards. In such cases we took the liberty of making the necessary corrections being extremely careful not to lose the intended meaning. In the past where I had mispronounced a few of Okinawan surnames (an easy thing to do) I was very pleased that Kinjo Hiroshi was available to assist us on this undertaking. However, any and all mistakes that do appear in this presentation are mine and mine alone.

I believe that Motobu's personal descriptions of other local martial artists in this book will also help the reader better understand the mind-set and martial arts landscape during Okinawa's old Ryukyu Kingdom. Although not a large text, I believe that "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*" achieves an impact of more sizable proportions largely because of the important message it delivers. Perhaps then we modern learners, so bent upon "styles," might recognize hidden between the lines of this publication a message compelling us to look beyond the labels and focus what they represent, as the art was originally intended. I am sure that is what Master Motobu wanted.

Finally, I'd like to say what an honour it has been to have been a part of this project. It is really a collective effort and without the support of many people it would have never been brought to fruition. Readers seeking more information about Motobu Chosei or the art he teaches, must visit Charles Goodin's highly informative web site located at <http://www.tanega.com/seinenkai>

Patrick McCarthy
Brisbane

The Revival of Motobu Choki

By Kinjo Hiroshi



Being more than eighty years old now, I notice that as time passes my memory of things, which happened long ago, is not as sharp as it once was. However, I don't think it's really that unusual for a person's recollection, of things, people or events to linger on forever in one's memory. That's the wonderful value of books; they're like windows through which one can see back into the past. Thanks to the Japanese to English translation of Motobu Choki's 1932 publication entitled, "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*," by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy, the writings of this great martial artist are now being introduced to the Western World. Actually, it's a great pleasure for me to write the preface of this English translation, as Motobu Choki had been a role model of mine since childhood. I am pleased that the late master's skills, technique, philosophy and teaching system are finally being introduced to the English-speaking world of karate through his written work.

His books were published during the time he gained notoriety on the mainland of Japan after the news of him defeating a foreign fighter was published in a popular 1925 periodical, "King Magazine." "*Okinawan Kenpo Karate-jutsu Kumite Hen*," was published in 1926 followed by "*Watashi no Karate-jutsu*", six years later, in 1932. Because of illiteracy, Motobu orally dictated his ideas and training methods to those closest to him so that his work could be edited before the final publication was released. As I understand it, this was especially true in the case of "*Okinawan Kenpo Karate-jutsu Kumite Hen*," which was heavily supported by Ueshima Sannosuke (1893-1986). I visited Ueshima Sannosuke more than twenty years ago, while researching the "*Nihon Budo Dendou Meikan Karatedo*" when he recounted his memory of Motobu and the making of that publication. Following that meeting, it became apparent to me that one should not speak about Motobu Choki's publication without mentioning the effort that Ueshima Sannosuke put forth. Sadly, however, this little known fact has long since vanished into oblivion.

Two prominent individuals I greatly admired during my childhood in Okinawa were Kin Ryojin, a famous Shamisen artist (1873-1936), and the great Karate master, Motobu Choki (1870-1944.) The fact they were both completely illiterate captivated the attention of everyone and served to make me even more fascinated in their accomplishments. From a family of aristocrats, local gossip held that Kin Ryojin had far too much passion for music as a youth to ever go to school.

Watashi no Karate-jutsu

Yet, in the world of Shamisen music this artist was unprecedented. In fact, so great was his music that the Japanese National Institute recorded his outstanding performance at the 1936 Ryukyu Classical Festival held at the Nihon Seinen Kaikan. Like Kin, so too was Motobu Choki also from a family of aristocrats. Motobu never went to school either. Not because he couldn't but because he was too infatuated with the study of the martial arts. Having never been officially schooled, the both of these great men, Kin & Motobu, remained illiterate their entire lives.

Even though I cannot truly say that I was ever a student of Motobu Choki, nor even learned directly under him for that matter, I did, nonetheless, have the opportunity to meet him. I first met Motobu Choki in 1937, when I was eighteen years old, at a local shrine during a demonstration I participated in for the annual festival dedicated to God. Having originally heard that Motobu gained his reputation for being tricky and sucker-punching his opponents, I approached him after the demonstration while he was relaxing and quietly asked him about these allegations. Looking intently into my eyes, Motobu quoted a passage from the *Bubishi*, "Deception is one of kenpo's best techniques!" Even though I was unable to fathom the depth of his witty response at that age, his character made me feel very comfortable and I thought long and hard about the nature of his comments.

Judging by what I came to know about Motobu's character, I must say how impressed I was with his concentration and focus. Irrespective of everything else going on in his life, Motobu Choki maintained a singleness of purpose unlike anyone else I ever met. He was both insightful and diligent. The November 1922 "Boxing vs Judo" contest he entered into is a perfect example of what kind of man he was. There, at more than fifty years old, he openly agreed to take on a foreigner fighter without, what is today commonly referred to as, obligatory pre-fight training preparation. Having studied the principles of western boxing, and knowing his own skills, he was confident he could enter the contest and defeat his opponent, and he did. He always had one eye on the future and he always had a plan.

Passing away fifty-eight years ago, it's been more than seven decades since the publication of Motobu Choki's books. Much has happened since Motobu's time and karate has grown in popularity and unexpectedly flourished throughout the entire world. Presently, we are witnessing a truly global era in karate where technique and athleticism have grown to incredible proportions. While the art of karate has grown significantly since his day, there can be no question that his books remain classics, and Motobu Choki's application principles remain as useful today as they were seventy-five years ago. To make those kinds of pragmatic deductions from kata and systematize them into a functional teaching curriculum required more than just fighting experience, it necessitated foresight and creativity that must be regarded as true genius.

I am certain that this publication will help revive the important contributions of Motobu Choki, a forgotten pioneer of modern karate. I sincerely hope that all karateka who read it will be able to further develop their skills using his concepts. I am certain that is what the Master wanted.

Motobu Choki

Recollections

The Shabana/Nakama Interview

It was in 1978 that I went to Okinawa to visit Mr. Hokama Chozo, to speak to him about his recollection of Motobu Choki. The sky was turning very gray so I had to hurry to find his home before it started to rain. Finally, I was lucky to arrive at his residence before the downpour. In his 80s, Nakama's home was surrounded by a high wooden gate, which concealed practice equipment getting wet and what must have been his training area stamped flat.

Mr. Nakama, an accredited Hanshi 9th dan, trained directly under Motobu Choki. At the time of this interview he taught karate 3 times a week on Monday, Wednesday & Friday at Sakiyama city hall in Shuri. It was around 1940 that Motobu finally returned to Okinawa from Osaka and began teaching several students. Having dedicated his entire life to karate, Motobu Sensei was 73 when he passed away while at the residence of his beloved mistress during the escalation of WW2.

Born the 3rd son of the governor (Udun) of Shuri's Akahira Village named Motobu Chomo, Choki was often referred to as the younger brother Choyu (1865-1929.) Extremely active during his childhood, Motobu Choki took it upon himself early to learn what he could about karate. He used to come to my house for a chat and to train with my grandfather, who was also an old bujin in the "old-school" martial arts and the former local chief of police.

Motobu possessed incredible coordination as a youth and trained diligently, growing into a physically endowed adult with great strength and enviable martial arts skills. In his youth Motobu also spent considerable time in Naha's Tsuji village where he often tested and improved his fighting skills. Such indiscrete activities left Motobu with a less than commendable reputation among local karate teachers who, upon learning of his behavior, refused to take him on as a protégée.

His confrontational attitude did little to encourage meaningful relationships with many. However, despite his penchant for fighting Motobu was unsurpassed in physical prowess by anyone his age regardless of size. His diligence and efforts to push his own limits ultimately led him to pioneer his own method.

When compared to other teachers of his day, Motobu never had many students. One reason for this was that he trained very hard and was quite secretive about how he taught. Although he was self-taught, Motobu also gained valuable insights from others, like his older brother Choyu and Itosu Ankoh. However, his tutelage under Itosu was short lived because the master would not stand for his street *kake-damashi* (lit. test of spirit: i.e. a fight.)

My Art of Karate-jutsu



1932 Hawaiian Newspaper Articles



On pages 64-65 of Bruce Haines' Master's thesis entitled, "Karate & its Development in Hawaii to 1959," I found the following testimony from an interview with Thomas Miyashiro, the only person to ever train directly under Motobu Choki during his brief stay in Hawaii in 1932: "In the late twenties and early thirties in Hawaii it was common for boxing promoters, etc., to match judo men against boxers. Seeing that these matches proved interesting and profitable, a group of Okinawan men headed by Mr. Chosho Tamanaha decided to pit a karate man against a boxer. This group selected Choki Motobu, the great Okinawan master who had defeated a 'Russian heavyweight boxer' in a bare-handed bout in 1922.

Choki Motobu arrived in Honolulu in 1932, but due to his "past record" the immigration Office would not permit him to stay. A footnote in the passage indicated that the Immigration Office could not release information concerning immigrants since it was classified data: however, Miyashiro did indicate that it was Motobu's record as a strongman & fighter that kept him from being admitted on a temporary visa!

At that time Miyashiro was a youth attending trade school but received permission to visit Motobu at the Immigration office located at Ala Moana Blvd. where he was being quarantined while going through the red-tape associated with getting permission to stay. There, Motobu instructed Miyashiro in karate for about a month prior to returning to Okinawa.

Undaunted by this initial failure, Mr. Tamanaha and his associates decided to bring in other performers, namely Mutsu (Mizuho) and Higaonna (Kamesuke).

The Motobu & Funakoshi Rivalry

Standing only 5' 5" (165 cm) and weighing approximately 190 pounds (86 kg) Motobu must have been as solid as a rock and quite a sight, especially for an Okinawan. Testifying to his penchant for makiwara training, he had incredibly calloused knuckles, even as an old man. This can be considered nothing short of amazing — while many teachers of his generation emphasized just kata, without application or two-person contact-based training, his training syllabus revolved around basic techniques, supplementary exercising with weights, makiwara training, a plethora of contact-based two-person kumite drills and kata, which culminated the application lessons.

Yet, in spite of his remarkable accomplishments and diligent effort, the Okinawan karate pioneer never met with the success, as did his fellow country mates, Funakoshi Gichin, Miyagi Chojun and Mabuni Kenwa. One sensitive and often volatile issue concerning Motobu Choki, that is rarely discussed, was the rivalry that existed



and one or two kata. Although this is rather unusual by modern trends, it would certainly coincide with what I have discovered about most old-school practices where the kata culminated the defensive lessons rather than actually teach it. Although Motobu Chosei, his son, believes that his father may have also known Bassai and Seisan and even developed a form, named "Shiro Kuma" (White Bear) they do not appear to have been handed down.

In his interview with Ikeda Hoshu, Konishi Yasuhiro said, "... he had also learned Passai and Gojushiho from Matsumora sensei in Tomari (ibid 21). Actually, I support the insightful comments of Charles Goodin who wrote, "With fewer kata, more time and effort can be devoted to bunkai. I do not think that Motobu-Ryu emphasizes bunkai because it has fewer kata — I suspect that it has fewer kata in order to em-

phasize bunkai." ("Setting the Record Straight," 4th Quarter issue journal 2001, page 7)

As is so often the case with people who are innovative, excel in their chosen field and not afraid to speak their mind, Motobu Choki became the subject of both intense curiosity and controversy. Quoting Charles Goodin's take on the issue, "Motobu stepped out of a crowd in Kyoto to defeat a much larger European boxer, thus igniting Japan's interest in the Okinawan art of Karate. From that moment on, he literally became a larger than life figure. And so too, does it seem, that a movement began to discredit him and his no nonsense brand of kumite based Karate." ("Setting the Record Straight," 3rd Quarter issue journal 2001, page 10)

In my opinion, Master Motobu Choki represented the last of a warrior-like breed, a stalwart not intimidated by political pressure, or afraid to stand up for what he believed in. He walked the talk. Always the perpetual student, never a clone of mass production or mundane training, Motobu Choki demanded all or nothing. It's too bad we don't have more men like him today.

Talking about my Teacher

by Marukawa Kenji

Translation by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy

In 1932 my former middle school friend Mr. Ono introduced me to Motobu Sensei. At the time the master was residing in a small six-straw-mat room in the back of an Awamori-ya (liquor shop) in Tokyo's Nippori district. I was 19 years old and in the second year of my university studies.

When I began my training, the master was already 63 years old. When he was 65, in 1934, he established the Daidokan (Great Way Place) in Tokyo's Hongo District. It then cost 10 yen to rent the space and new students were required to pay two yen for registration fees and three yen for monthly training. Annual tuition at university in those days was 120 yen.

I took the train everyday from my home in Gotokuji to school in Iidabashi. However, the Daidokan was so close to my university, I literally found myself there everyday. How I ever graduated in 1937 is beyond me, as I spent so much time training at the dojo and so little time in school studying. It would probably be more appropriate to say I graduated from the Daidokan University with a degree in Motobu's Kenpo!

Although it's been nearly forty years since the master passed away, I still have many fond memories of my experiences with the master. I remember sensei had between 60 and 70 active students training at the Daidokan at that time. Most of them, like me of course, were young men from university. I remember that we never had days off from training even before and after the new year. The dojo was always opened from around 9:00 am to 10:00 pm.

The master used to oversee the classes in his kimono. Even in the cold of the winter he'd only put on a *dotera* (a lightly padded kimono-type jacket) to oversee our training. When ever there was a question or something to be demonstrated, sensei stood up and taught or lectured. During that era, sensei also taught at the Ministry of Transportation in the Mitsubishi Building in Tokyo's Yurakucho District. There he always wore his karate gi, lectured and taught Naihanchi & Bassai.

He used to say, irrespective of training by yourself or with a partner, you should always have a positive mental attitude. If your opponent has quick hands it's best to attack his arms in an effort to paralyze motor function. Alternatively, one can use the length of your legs but must be cautious of well-trained opponents.

I remember Ms. Morgan from the Japan Times brought a group of American boxers to the Daidokan in 1937. Having come to Japan to learn more about Karate, the interpreter at the Imperial Hotel had seen our sign advertising the Kenpo of Motobu Choki and the Daidokan. As the kanji for Motobu can also be read honbu (headquarters) the interpreter misunderstood and believed that it was our main dojo. Sadly, however, the master was away in Okinawa on business and could not train the foreign visitors.

Watashi no Karate-jutsu

37. When I came to Tokyo, there was another Okinawan who was teaching karate there quite actively. When in Okinawa I hadn't even heard his name. Upon the guidance of another Okinawan, I went to the place he was teaching youngsters, where he was running his mouth, bragging. Upon seeing this, I grabbed his hand, took up the position of *kake-kumite*⁸ and said, "What will you do?" He was hesitant, and I thought to punch him would be too much, so I threw him with *kote-gaeshi* at which he fell to the ground with a thud. He got up, his face red, and said "once more" so we took up the position of *kake-kumite* again. And again I threw him with *kote-gaeshi*.⁹ He did not relent and asked for another bout, so he was thrown the same way for a third time.
38. Once then this author (Nakata) visited Motobu Sensei at Hongo Esa-machi, he said "Hey Nakata, you came just in time. If you can break this board from one inch away, I'll give you all the *awamori*¹⁰ you can shake a stick at." He indicated the board hanging from the eaves of the veranda of the restaurant (which doubled as his dojo). Upon close inspection I determined that the rectangular pine board was 2 feet wide, 3 feet long and about 2 inches thick. A hole was drilled in it about two inches from the top, right in the center, through which a sturdy string was passed, in order to hang it from the rafters. I thought it to be impossible, but did as I was told and stood on the veranda, bringing my right fist to about an inch away from the board, my left fist also next to my right fist. Uttering a little prayer, I thrust at the board. Far from breaking, it merely bounced away with a loud sound, and all I got from the experience was a sore fist.

I fail to recall exactly who it was, but another student was also present, and he tried after I did. However, no matter how many times he tried, the board merely bounced off his fist with a resounding noise. Motobu Sensei stood up in front of the board and said "watch closely." He brought his fist to a distance of not even one inch from the board, and in the next instant, uttered a *kiai* that sounded like "fit" and thrust at the board, which broke vertically through the center, falling to the ground in two neat pieces.

Translator's Notes

1. I have opted not to place translations of Mr. Nakata's own notes and interpretations of these sayings, preferring instead to let Motobu's words speak for themselves.
2. Literally "husband and wife hands" this term refers to the proper use of both hands in both *kamae* and technique.
3. Here, *sente* means the initiative, or the first move. c.f. *Karate ni Sente Nashi* — there is no first move in karate.
4. In other words, block not the attacking hand, but deeper on the arm.
5. Motobu apparently said this when he was over 60 years old.
6. According to Nakata, this statement is based on Motobu's experience in felling the leader of a Fujian pirate band who had come ashore in Okinawa, with one blow. This man was purported to be a "master" of Chinese boxing.
7. Specifically, the vital point below the eye.
8. *Kake-kumite* is a kind of pushing hands sparring that is perhaps best exemplified in the practice of *Kakie* in Okinawan *Gojuryu*. According to oral tradition in Okinawa, this was also one method of *kake-dameshi* (a kind of challenge match) in old Ryukyu.
9. *Kote-gaeshi* is an outer wrist-twisting throw. This statement by Motobu himself should set to rest the argument about him knowing and using grappling techniques once and for all.
10. *Awamori* is a potent Okinawan liqueur.

Recollections of Motobu by Miyahira Katsuya



McCarthy with Miyahira Katsuya

According to Shorin Ryu master, Miyahira Katsuya, Motobu was about 5'5" but weighed more than 200 pounds in his youth. By all accounts he was as strong as an ox and liked to talk, drink and fight. Yet, in his later life, after he settled down, he matured, into a highly acclaimed teacher of karate.

Often, when Motobu returned to Okinawa, he visited Chibana Choshin, my teacher. Chibana Sensei had gained significant recognition during the early years after he established his dojo at the prominent residence of

Baron Nakajin.

During his many visits over the years to our dojo, I enjoyed the honor of being one of the few young men that he regularly used to demonstrate on. Master Chibana said that it was around 1910 that locals started referring to Choki as "Motobu Saru," meaning "Motobu the Monkey." The nickname seems to have come about not only because of his continual chatter about how he could defeat everyone but also because he was agile, quick and so powerful he could virtually swing on tree branches, shimmy up & down poles, leap over fences and even climb houses just like a monkey.

In 1914 he petitioned Matsumora Kosaku, the great Bujin from Tomari, to teach him but was turned down. However, his persistency finally caught his attention and Matsumora offered Choki a position as a servant in his residence. Despite his efforts to intimidate Motobu, he humbled himself to learn karate from the great master.

Matsumora explained to Choki that before he would ever teach anyone the ego had to be controlled. A familiar story in old-school martial arts, Motobu worked diligently in the Matsumora residence expecting nothing until he gained the confidence of the great master. Despite not receiving a single lesson for nearly six months, Motobu was able to secretly observe others being taught by Matsumora.

Once, when Motobu was actually caught observing a private lesson, Matsumora admonished him and asked why he should not be physically punished and thrown out for breaking his bond of confidence. Without even blinking an eye, Choki humbly responded by saying, "I will happily accept the physical punishment but please do not expel me." With that, Kosaku sensei finally realized Motobu was ready to begin his lessons.

King Magazine

Published 1925

Karate Kento Oojiai

"A Heated Bout Between Two Powerhouses"

(Karate vs. Boxing Main Event)

© Japanese to English Translation by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy

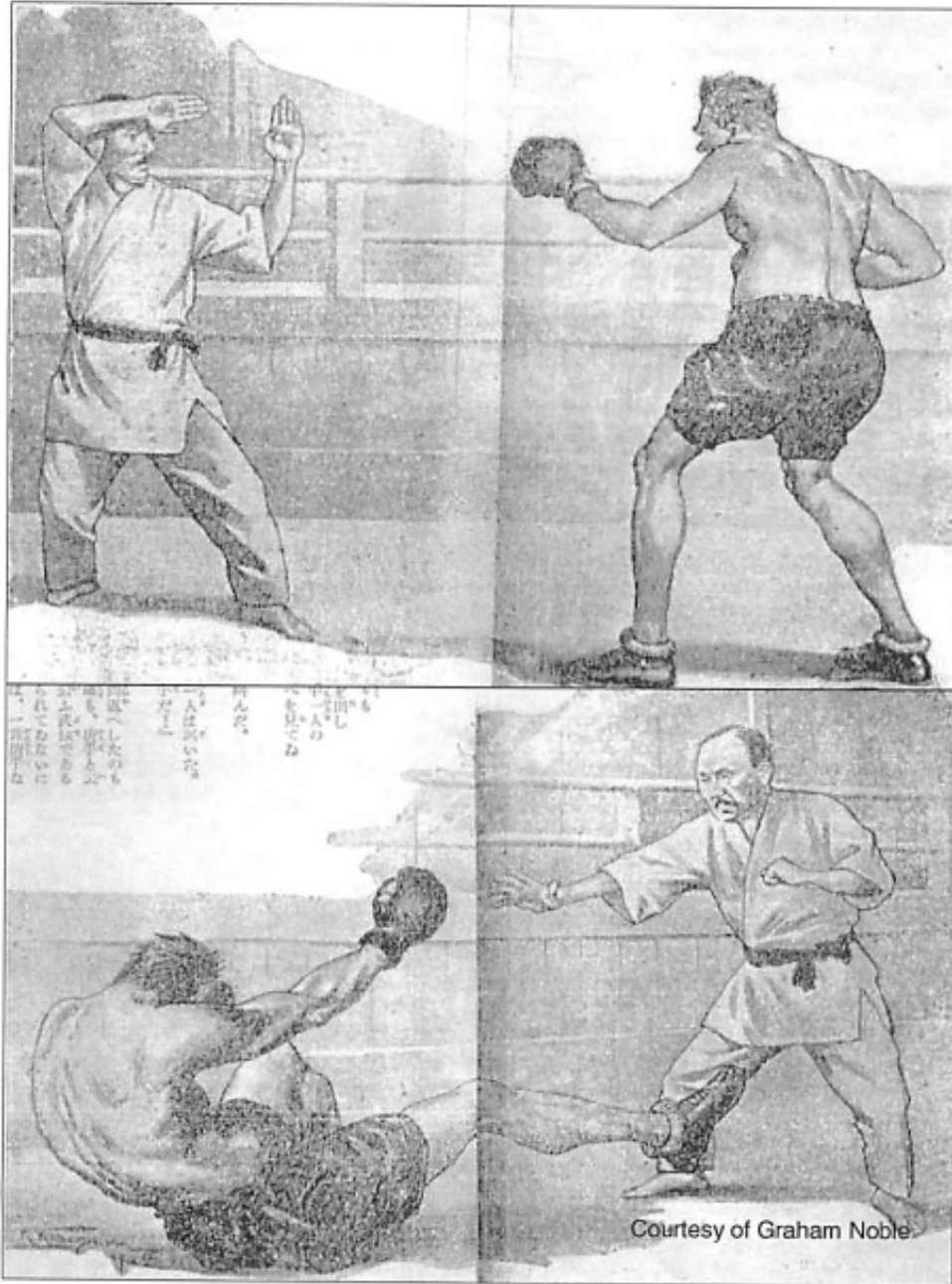
The Mysterious Countryman

It was November of 1922 that I witnessed a Martial Arts exhibition, which pitted boxing against judo. The subject of intense curiosity and mixed conversation this event attracted widespread attention throughout the entire martial arts community. Although I had watched many exhibitions at the *Butokuden* in the past, this event was without question the best I'd ever seen: "It was totally exhilarating, to say the very least." A muffled roar raced through an excited throng reverberating in the crisp morning air before heated exchanges soon ignited into a blazing atmosphere. However, the highlight of the day did not come until one man decided to enter the match on the spur of the moment!

It happened like this. The organizer of the event thought he heard a fellow say he wanted to enter the contest. However, he could hardly believe his ears because the man looked like an old timer in terrible physical condition! "What?" the organizer replied. "Please let me fight," the man said. The organizer just starred at him in disbelief. "Are you sure it's you who wants to fight?" said the organizer again. "Yes," the man replied again, "me." Compelled to reconfirm the man's request because he seemed to be just a little bit too old to be a competitive fighter, the organizer asked him, "Are you a Judo man?" "No, I'm not," responded the man. "Well, are you a boxer then?" "No, I'm neither," the man replied. With enormous conviction, the man simply said, "I'm nothing special, but I heard about the exhibition and I am of the opinion that I can handle it."

A few men associated with the event standing behind the conversation overheard the man and, in the spirit of "fight-night-frenzy," persuaded the organizer to "let him have a go." Let him fight, they said, after all it's *tobiiri* (on the spur-or-the-moment jump-in, kind of a like a free for all, meaning anyone can partake without prior arrangement) and the crowd will love it too. But he is neither judoka nor a boxer, yelled another. A sarcastic remark thrown out was, "Perhaps, he's one of those country sumo bumpkins ha, ha." Reluctantly, the organizer conferred with his colleagues and uttered "God, the guy must be crazy or have some martial arts experience if he wants to enter this contest, if not, he's going to cop a pretty good beating." "Common, let him do it, let him have a go," everyone said. Ultimately, the organizer gave his mysterious countryman the green light. Until now, we didn't know that the tiny island of Okinawa possessed such an awesome martial art as karate. With karate one does not need other weapons, as the fists are both flexible and awesome tools of impact. Possessing such skill, human beings can always defend themselves if and when the need ever arises.

Watashi no Karate-jutsu



"King Magazine"
These illustrations clearly depicts Funakoshi Gichin confronting
the huge foreigner, and, dispatching him. Not Motobu!

Tale of a Great Bujin

by Nagamine Shoshin



Pioneer of Matsubayashi-Ryu, Nagamine Shoshin was one of the most astute researchers of his time. The penetrating depth of his lifelong study is evident to all those who have studied his brilliant publications. I personally enjoyed listening to the master talk about Motobu Choki on many occasions but no where is his account more vibrant than in "*Okinawa Karate Sumo Meijin Den*" ("*The Tales of Okinawa's Greatest Masters*," by Charles E. Tuttle Publication). The following comments represent extracts from that publication translated into English by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy.

Itarashiki

Motobu often cruised the Tsuji (red-light) district of Naha at night after the theatres finished. In spite of not actually initiating a fight himself, one could say that Motobu Saru never walked away from one either; in fact, he took pride in frequently challenging any one on the busy street who caused trouble. In Tsuji, late at night, there never seemed to be a shortage of men with attitudes. Hence, Motobu Choki often tested his skill and spirit through the ever so popular kakedamashi.

One night in 1913 a challenge brought Choki into contact with Itarashiki, a stalwart who helped changed the course of his life. Older than Motobu by 5 or 6 years, Itarashiki was also quite well known for his kakedamashi, and easily defeated the cocky Motobu. Motobu couldn't sleep the night he was defeated, reassessing his opponent's technique and strategy over and over in the privacy of his own thoughts. From that time forth Motobu devoted himself to improving his Uchinadi with an intensity he had not previously known.

It was Motobu's acquaintance, the popular Okinawan musician named Kin Ryojin (1873-1936), who acted as the intermediary, which resulted in Motobu Saru first meeting Master Matsumora. During his intense study of Ryukyuan music Mr. Kin, like other people of wealth and position, often enjoyed lessons in Uchinadi from Master Matsumora in an effort to maintain good health and keep himself occupied with activities other than just music. Not living too far from Tomari, Kin always traveled from Shuri up to see the great master by horse and took Motobu with him. Choki often asked if Matsumora would practice *hindei* (similar to modern *kumite*) with him. However, Matsumora always refused because he knew that Choki would use his newfound technique in Tsuji. Rather, Master Matsumora told Motobu, "don't be so concerned about sparring with me, or others for that matter, you will find what works best for you, but only after you have discovered the real adversary; the enemy within." Despite his advice, Motobu Saru secretly observed Matsumora's *hindei* lessons with other disciples from behind the courtyard wall during special training in the evenings.

Karate Training & What to Know About Fighting ^[1]

by Kyan Chotoku

Okinawa-Prefectural School of Agriculture & Forestry

Japanese to English Translation by Patrick & Yuriko McCarthy Copyright 2001/2002

Translators Note: Kyan Chotoku was, according to Motobu Chosei, originally from the Motobu clan. Based on this and that he was never defeated in kakedamashi, I thought it worthwhile to include his important comments in this presentation. The original article (in Japanese) can be found on pp 236-241 of the second edition of Mutsu Mizuho & Miki Nisaburo's 1930 publication entitled, "Kenpo Gaisetsu." I believe it represents the information collected from him during their 1929 visit with him in Okinawa.



"At sixty-one years old this year, Mr. Kyan's face, when compared to anyone else his age, is still full of spirit and drive. Presently an instructor at the karate dojo, hosted by the School of Agriculture & Forestry, this instructor is very committed to the welfare and education of our youth." Editor

A History & Outline of Karate^[2]

In an unarmed altercation, one can take advantage of the situation any moment that the opponent is off guard by striking with the clenched fist, smashing with the elbow and or kicking with the feet. The hands and the feet can also be used to parry strikes. Moreover, one can also avoid being attacked by learning to shift the body properly. A martial art unique to Okinawa, Karate dates back about 400 years ago, to the Oei or Eikyō periods.^[3] Introduced to Okinawa from China by an unidentified person who had studied it there, the practice gradually improved over time and ultimately became regarded as Okinawan. Since that early time these skills have been further cultivated and continually improved.

It's important to understand the difference between Chinese method and Okinawan preference. The Chinese commonly use the tips of their fingers against an opponent while the clenched fist is chiefly used in Okinawa. It should be noted that the clenched fist is one of the fundamental differences that makes karate a unique fighting method.

Nowadays, there are two principal styles of karate, Shorei-ryu and Shorin-ryu. In total there are dozens of kata between them, which primarily encompass physical conditioning and defensive application. While, both have their good and bad points, it can be said that the Shorei-style focuses largely on conditioning the body while the Shorin-style addresses application principles. However, hasty judgments on which is the right or wrong style should be avoided, as training methods are based on the learners' character and physical condition.

The application principles of karate are truly kaleidoscopic, however, in the case of fighting actually only two points really count: "se'i" & "ki".^[4] The three ways to support the practical application of these points are a.) Observation [*Go no sen*] b.) Imperceptibility [*Sen no sen*] and c.) Transcendence [*Sen*]. Which of the three combative initiatives best resolves any physical confrontation depends entirely upon the individual and the circumstances.

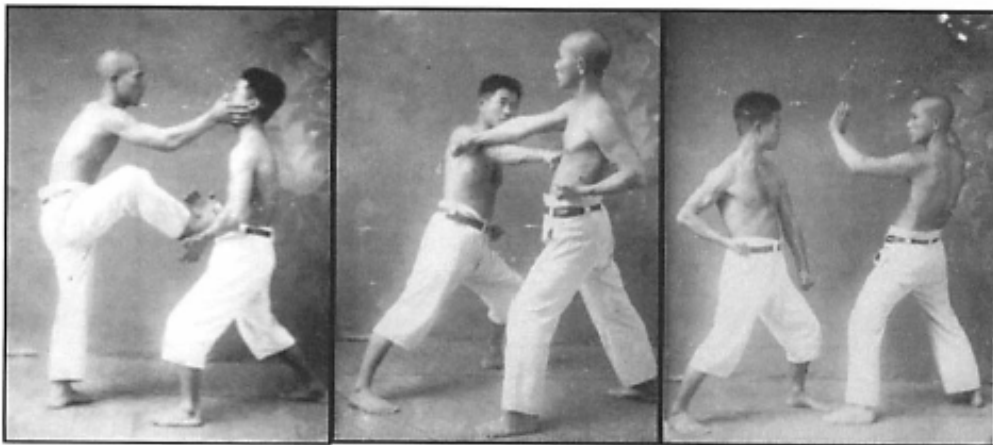
Watashi no Karate-jutsu

11. If confronted by several opponents at once be careful not to grapple with them. You must keep your distance in order to maintain the advantage. If someone attacks from the right, shift to the left. If you have to defend yourself from the front be careful not to overlook the opponent behind you. This is the only good way to deal with multiple opponents.

These are essential issues at the forefront of fighting, however, please remember they're just one example. In other words, the differences in martial arts are truly endless and mysterious. Therefore, don't solely rely on written materials. The best way master the art is to train diligently and enthusiastically. Perhaps after lengthy study, you may achieve enlightenment.

Translator's Notes

- [1] Pp 236-241 of the second edition of Mutsu Mizuho & Miki Nisaburo's 1930 publication, entitled "*Kenpo Gaisetsu*."
- [2] It should be noted that the ideogram being used for karate throughout this work is written as China & hand: A term once commonly used in old Okinawa to describe Chinese quanfa/kenpo.
- [3] In Japanese history the Oei Period was 1394-1428 & the Eikyo Period was 1429-1441
- [4] "*Sei*" means right, correct, fair and or pure; *Ki*" means unusual, strange, unexpected and or not true. Confusing at it may seem, Kinjo Hiroshi helps us better understand them by comparing the terms to budo-related Omote (outside) & Ura (inside): The surface of things and the unseen or unexpected.

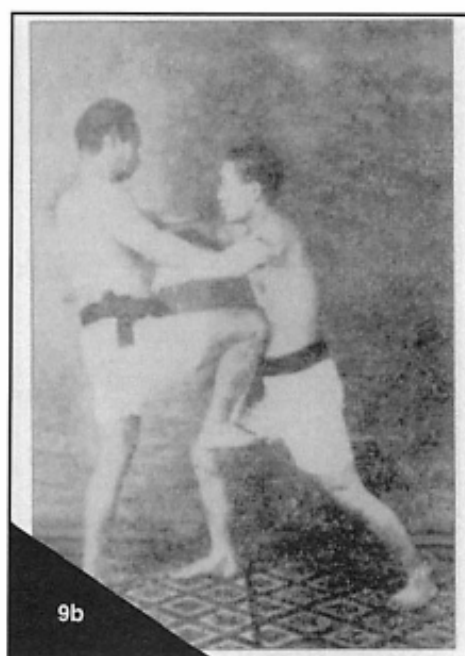
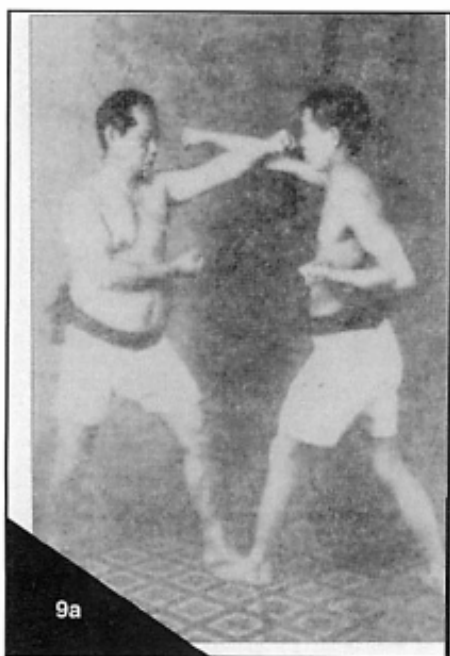
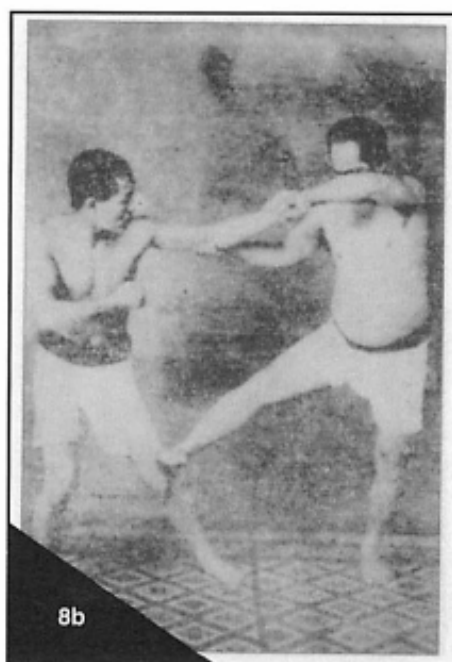


Kyan-style application as performed by Nakazato Joen & Okihira Bunei. Photos courtesy of Nakazato Joen © and must not be reproduced without his permission. Any negatives derived there from, may not be copyrighted.

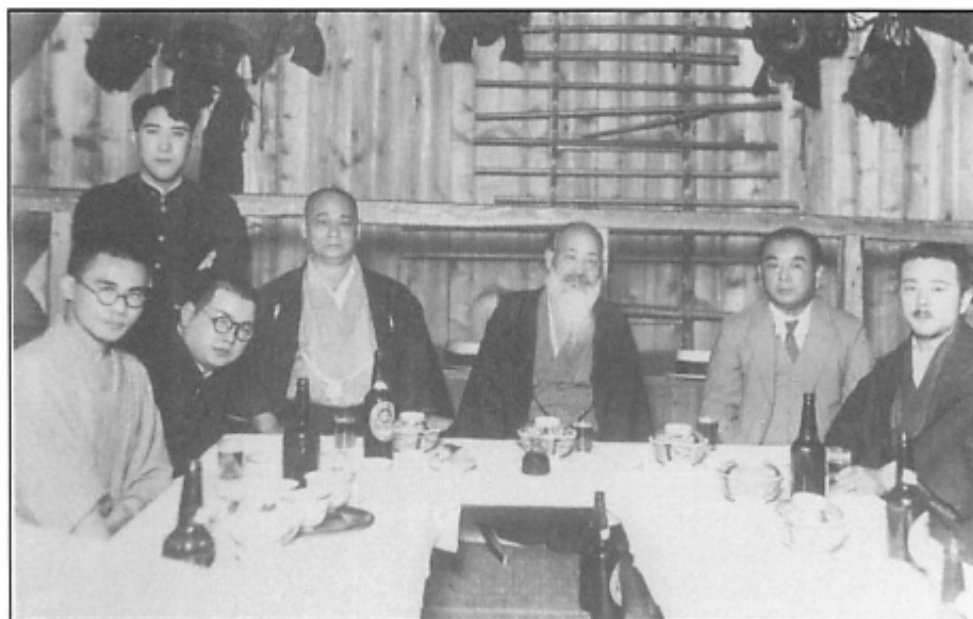


Motobu Choki's
Two-person Drills

1926 Twelve Kumite Drills



My Art of Karate-jutsu



Motobu Choki (4th from left) Yamaguchi Obosan (seated in the centre), Yabiku Moden & Konishi Yasuhiro (seated far right) at the Ryobukai dojo in Tokyo commemorating the naming of the style, "*Shindo Jinen Ryu*."



Watashi no Karate-jutsu

Author's Preface

In an effort to help introduce and promote Karate, I published "*Okinawa Kenpo Karate-jutsu Kumite Hen*," in the spring of 1926. Since that time, Karate has found its way into virtually every corner of Japanese society. I believe this has happened largely because of the recognition the art has received in the tertiary environment. However, in spite of the growing popularity of Karate, when I look around today, amidst our chaotic society, I can't help but feel somewhat disheartened by the growing number of young people and students ignoring their obligation to physical discipline and moral education. When the spirit or self-esteem is not cultivated, people easily lose direction, avoid academic pursuit and even wander into the darkness of desperate extremes. With this in mind, it is all the more important that we foster an environment conducive to discipline and moral education. Perhaps that is why Bushido is once again becoming so fashionable, as it focuses upon developing a warrior-like spirit.

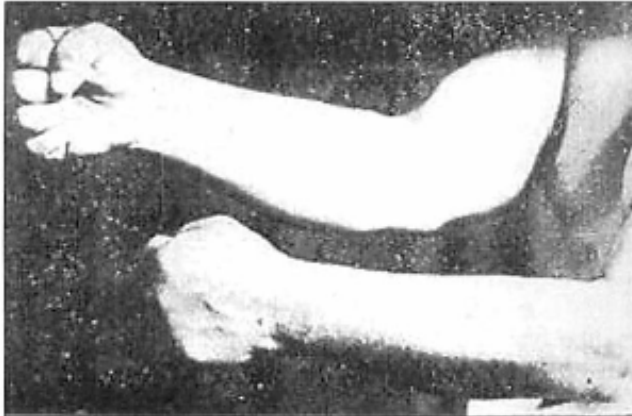
In spite of my lack of knowledge and ability, I nonetheless found it necessary to record my experiences in an effort to pass on the true essence of Karate. The present social circumstances are ideal in which to encourage the development of Karate, and, I am anticipating that others will agree with my fundamental observations.

I deeply appreciate the guidance and support of several key people, without whose assistance this project could have never come to fruition. I thank Mr. Kanna Chojo, Baron Oi Seigen, Dr. Toguchi Seiko and Prof. Sugiyama Kenji.

Motobu Choki
Koishikawa, Tokyo
March 1932

How to Make a Clenched Fist (*Tejinkun*)

In the same way that postures, like "*hachimonji dachi*" (eight shaped stance) are standardized in Karate-jutsu, so too is there a fixed way in which to properly clench one's fists in order to make them effective tools of impact. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the way with which to properly clench the fists. First stretch out all four fingers and tightly fold them up under the palm of the hand. Then wrap your thumb around the index and middle metacarpal and squeeze the fist tightly (as illustrated below).



Mefutode

In the case of an actual fight both hands should always be used together, as illustrated in the in the corresponding photo. This is commonly referred to as "*Mefutode*". Let's now discuss how using both hands actually work. When facing an opponent in a combative engagement posture it is important to know that the lead hand can be used to deal with both defensive and

offensive issues. In other words, the lead hand can be used for both protecting and attacking concurrently. The rear hand is used as a reserve if and when the front hand cannot accomplish the intended outcome. Therefore, *Mefutode* can be used for both defense and offense.

Generally speaking, the use of the *Mefutode* is not well known as it is more common for one hand to be held out while the other remains chambered on one's hip in preparation for usage. Some theories believe that the lead hand is used for defense and the opposite hand reserved for attacking. I believe this theory to be incorrect, as it greatly impedes the lead hand from its collective potential. I refer to the use of the lead hand in this case as "*shite*" or "dead-hand," and the rear hand as "*ikite*" or "live-hand." Moreover, this inadequate positioning can slow down one's advantage. It simply makes far more sense to have one's hands as close to the opponent as possible for immediate deployment. If you study how this is applied in fighting, you will understand its effectiveness.

How to Make the One-knuckled Fist (*Kosa*)

Learning how to use the *Kosa*, or one knuckled fist, is something that has been handed down in the Ryukyus from long ago. As the corresponding photo on page 84 illustrates, there is a standard way that most everyone has used since childhood. First, fold your last three fingers from the pinky up to the middle one tightly up against your palm together. Then extend the index knuckle forward and fortify it with the thumb by tightly pressing it against the side of the index finger. It's a matter of personal preference whether you use the index finger or the middle finger.

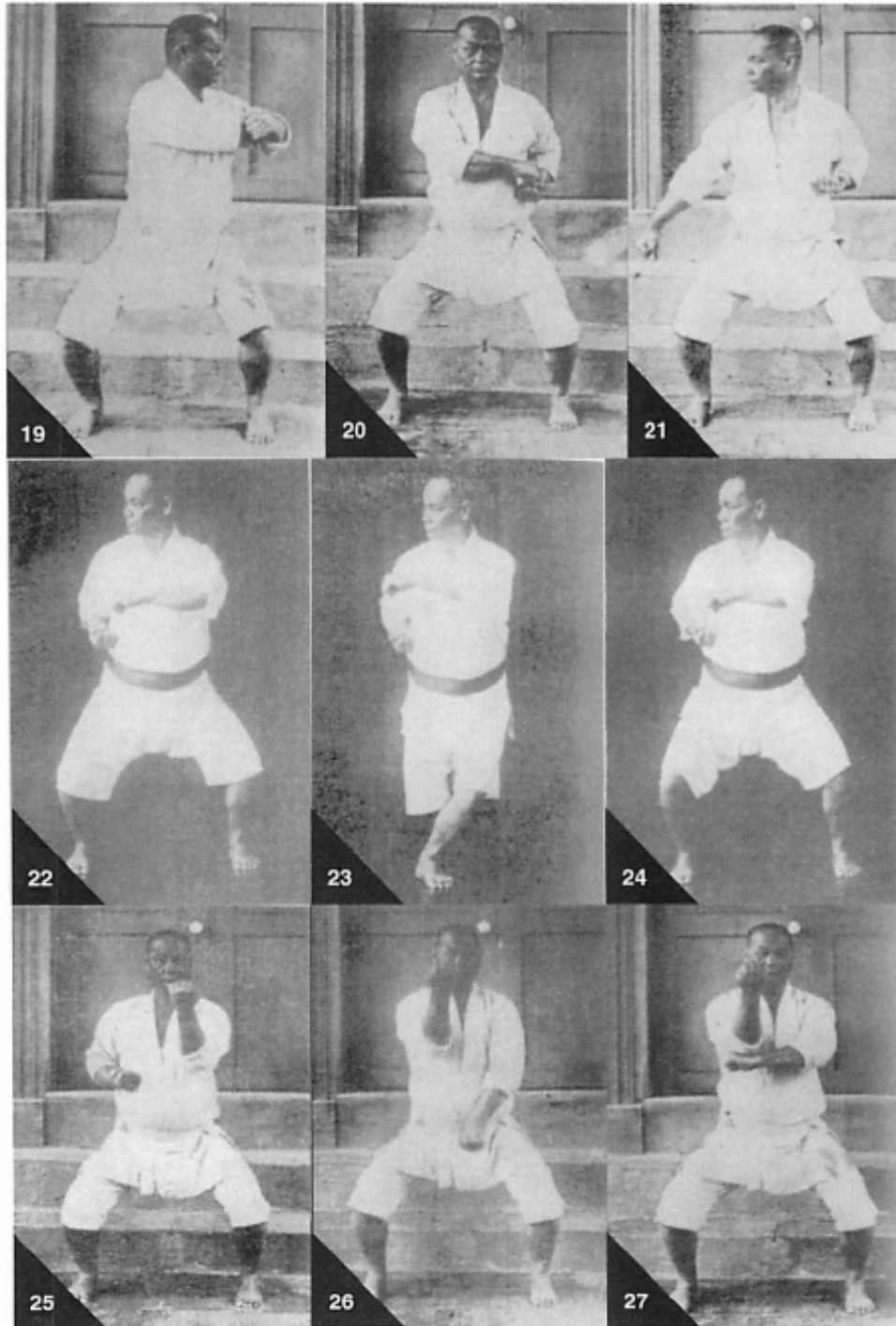
My Art of Karate-jutsu

Things to Know about Training

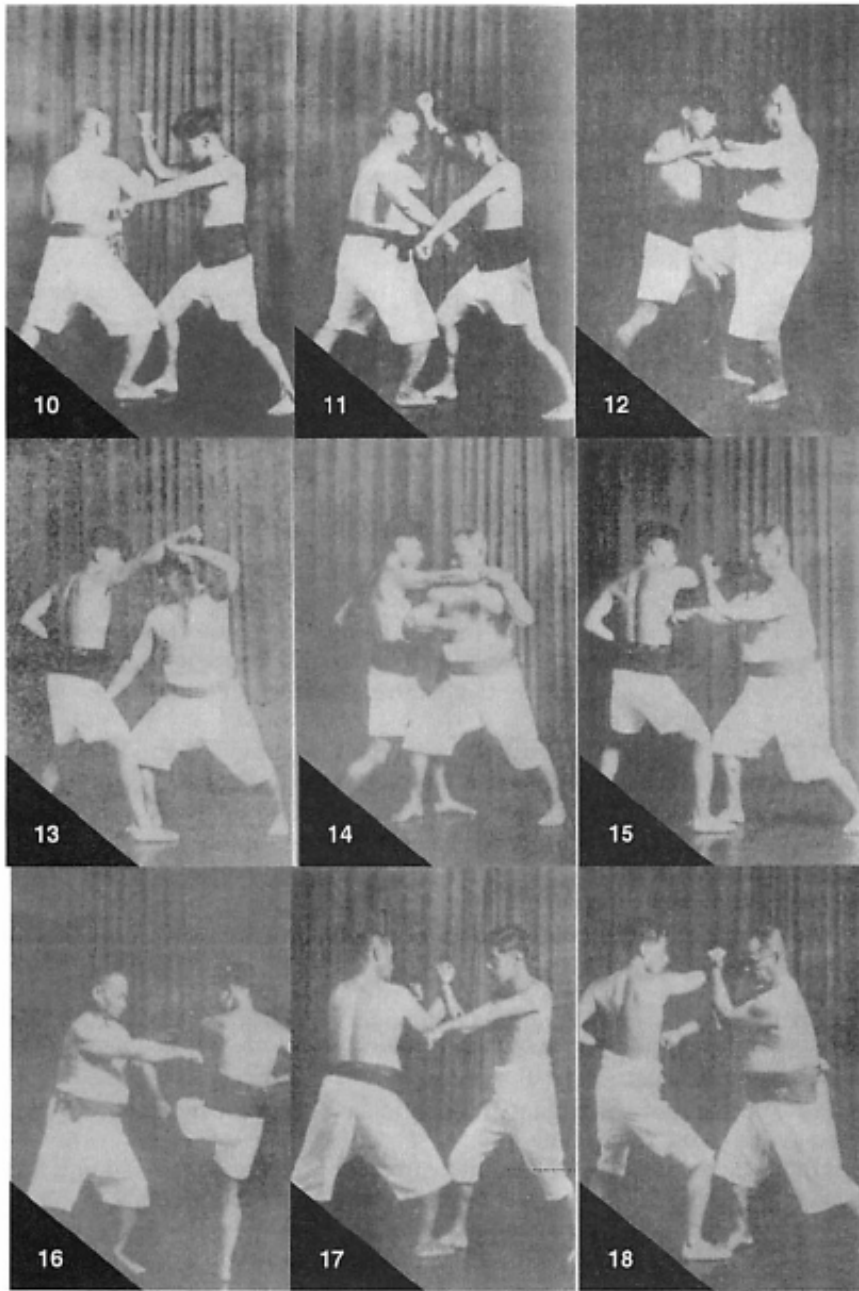
Over the many generations that karate has been handed down its principles and practices have varied widely because of the different personalities through which it has been transmitted. Although widely misunderstood today this issue is, nonetheless, paramount to understanding the true nature of karate. There is a term, "*Chikara Bushi*," which was once commonly used during Okinawa's old Ryukyu Kingdom to describe "Powerful Warriors". I'd like to offer some special advice for future karateka by sharing the wisdom handed down by some local "*Chikara Bushi*." This first story is about a compliment Nagahama Sensei paid to Bushi Matsumura of Yamakawa village in Shuri. Bushi Matsumura was slightly senior to Nagahama sensei and was not only known for his great strength but also for his indomitable spirit. He was extremely flexible and able to out think his opponent by reading their body language. I myself trained under the master for a while and during that time was always impressed by his understanding and application of kata. Matsumura clearly understood the distribution of strength and how kata was applied. Having followed these principles up to now, I believe that his theories were absolutely correct. Even if a person is stronger than his opponent and has a well-condition physique, if he has not mastered his technical skill his martial arts will never be truly effective in an emergency situation.

Speaking of Itosu sensei, he was yet another prominent bujin known for both his physical prowess and martial arts power. He used to come to our house almost everyday to teach karate to my older brother, Choyu. I myself had also practiced with him from the age of 12 or 13. However, I often lost my concentration because my brother used to tease and I focused too much on trying to always compete with him. Not completely satisfied training solely under Itosu sensei, I also secretly learned under Masters Sakuma and Matsumura, in Gibo. After I was about 20 years old, I had gained the confidence to better my older brother, but still took the odd lesson from Itosu. When I was finally taken into the confidence of Itosu he told me about the final days of Nagahama. Itosu, himself, originally learned under Matsumura. However, the latter considered him a thickheaded learner, and didn't teach him much. Even though Itosu trained diligently, Matsumura was not so eager to instruct him. Ultimately, Itosu left Matsumura and went to Nagahama sensei in Naha, who was also well known at the time. Despite only a year or so difference between the older sensei and Itosu they established a good teacher-student relationship. Nagahama was very passionate about his karate and often trained in his yard from early morning until the sunset cast a long shadow on his wife's weaving wheel. Nagahama's training method focused on developing a strong body and powerful technique. However, on his premature deathbed in the final moments of his relatively young life, Nagahama called Itosu to his side and told him he believed he'd been training with too much power. "Only now, in my final hour," he said, "do I understand that I have not focused on practical issues in my karate nor has it cultivated pliability or speed. Therefore, may I encourage you to continue on with Matsumura sensei." Although I am just repeating these words again, it's important that we not forget the value of his advice. If one understands the theory of these principles and trains diligently, your muscles, like your technique, will also develop naturally and continually. Conversely, a lack of speed and pliability can and will only ever produce inferior application.

Naihanchi Kata



Fighting Technique



My Art of Karate-jutsu

Another notable martial artist from the same generation as Tomigusuku was Tamagusuku Uekata. The best student of Makiya sensei, Tamagusuku was a proficient Shinto-ryu stylist who excelled at horsemanship and archery. In fact, Tomigusuku and Tamagusuku are both remembered as the two greatest horsemen of all time. There was Makishi, a man of incredible strength and master of snapping ropes. At demonstrations he was able to wrap a rope around his body two or three times and then break it with a kiai. It is also said that he once wrapped a bleached hachimaki (head band) tightly around his forehead and with only a single shake of his head it came flying off. Both Asato Ankoh and Itosu Ankoh were martial artists from the Shuri district. Asato was light and had very quick technique while Itosu was a devoted researcher whose powerful punching skills were honed from diligent makiwara training. Two other masters also from Shuri, a little younger than Asato and Itosu, are Kiyuna and Itarashiki, men once known for their awesome punching power. Itarashiki's nickname was Akayama, and, although he's now 81 years old, he's still healthy and in good shape. In addition to refined karate skills his horsemanship is admirable and he is a gifted singer of Yaeyama Bushi. Gushi of Naha was famous during the time Uehara was in Shuri. He was known as an agile martial artist and great puncher. Nagahama, the teacher of Itosu, was another heavy hitter. From Naha, Kuwae (Ryosei) was one more martial artist as famous as Nagahama during the time. He had also had a body of steel and was remembered for his great strength.

Three unrivalled martial artists from the Tomari district were Matsumora (Kosaku), Oyadomari (Koken) and Yamada (Gike). Having studied under Matsumora I remember what a brilliant technician he was. I learned much watching sensei teach his students how to think about what they were studying in order to develop and improve its application. Karate in the Ryukyu's was customarily taught like this; however, those who were unable to learn to think remained stiff and inflexible. Oyadomari was another martial artist famous for his leg maneuvers and foot seeping skills. Yamada was a martial artist known for his body of steel and was often likened to Kuwae Ryosei. During Itosu's generation there was a martial artist from Kume Village named Murayama who was also pretty impressive. Finally, the last two martial artists introduced here are Bo-Kohagura of Gusukuma Village, and Miyahira of Kohagura Village. During the old days martial artists usually had some specialty in addition to their karate and these two masters were no exceptions. The both of them excelled in horsemanship and bo-jutsu, but Kohagura was regarded as more accomplished Bo master during Matsumura's generation. Miyahira was yet another martial artist during their generation who was also an accomplished horseman, especially for being such a big man.



Anecdotes of Modern Martial Artists

A Martial Arts Genius

The Heroic Story of Gushikawa Umikame

There once was a famous master named Nishihira Uekata whose nickname was Sabi no Uekata. One of his favorite students was Gushikawa Umikame. The younger brother of a celebrated monk named Ungan originally from the Haneji clan, of Akahira, Umikame is remembered in a tale of heroism. During his time, there used to be an official branch of the Ryukyu government known as the Wakashu (trans. note: "Young People"). At just thirteen years old, Umikame was responsible enough to obtain a position at this office in the great castle of Shuri. One day, on the way home from work with a couple of friends, Umikame passed by the Atan river. Wanting a drink of water he went down to the river to quench his thirst. As he approached the riverbank he noticed a barrel of water. Without thinking to ask anyone's permission, Umikame helped himself to a drink of the cool water. Watching from the side there was the manservant of Nakada Donchi, who became infuriated with the boy. Now this guy had a reputation of being strong but conceited and everyone was afraid of him. Ignoring the boy's apology, the servant grabbed Umikame by the scruff of the neck and whacked him a good blow on the top of head with a clenched fist. Umikame ran home crying, and explained to his father what happened. Wanting to restore his honor, he begged his father to let him become a student of Sabi no Uekata who was a very famous martial artist at that time. Sabi no Uekata glanced at him and he said, *"In the future, this boy will be the best martial artist in the Ryukyus and his name will be forever remembered."* Agreeing to accept Umikame, Sabi no Uekata went on to train him diligently. Within a couple of years Umikame became a full-fledged martial artist and by the time he was only sixteen he had become one Sabi no Uekata's favorite students. Umikame was never proud or arrogant but always modest. And won widespread respect. Soon his name and reputation as a genius spread in the local karate community.

I'd like to introduce one of the many interesting episodes that have been handed down about him by word of mouth. Wanting to test Umikame's attentiveness one day, Sabi no Uekata called to him from beyond the sliding fusuma doors. As Umikame calmly knelt down in front of the sliding door and opened it before entering, he performed the requisite protocol (by doing a three-fingered kneeling bow) and slid his fan in the groove where the door slides open and closed just in case the door might be slam shut on his head. Sabi no Uekata was very impressed with Umikame's precaution and self-confidence as martial artist, despite the fact that he was only sixteen years old. The following year, when Umikame was seventeen years old, he asked permission to settle of score with the manservant who had assaulted him at Atan River in a gozen jiai (a match in the presence of higher ranking persons.) Permission was granted and the match was held at the racing track at Taira. Three days before the match, Umikame took a nap in his tiny four and a half tatami mat room and began to snore loudly. Coming over for an unannounced visit, Sabi no Uekata beheld the boy sleeping like a log.

A Brief History of Motobu
by Kanna Chojo

Born the third son of Motobu Anji, on 5 April, 1870, in Akahira village, Shuri, Okinawa, Choki's childhood name was Saburo, but was better known by his nickname, "Saru" which means monkey. Having enjoyed a penchant for martial arts since childhood, Motobu Choki first started learning karate at the tender age of twelve with his older brother Choyu. During the early days of his intense studies he also gained instruction and deepened his insights under such great masters as Itosu Okina, Sakuma, Matsumura and Matsumora. One expression that might best describe his penchant for martial arts was, "*Bu kore ware, ware kore bu;*" ("*Martial arts and I are one.*")

I wonder if the average person could possibly imagine how diligent Motobu Choki's training really was? Even in the middle of winter, he rarely used a blanket to warm himself. If and when he did feel the cold, he usually just got up and practiced kata, which, he said, kept him warm and let him sleep better. Whenever he discovered a potential application concept during training Motobu would virtually neglect eating or sleeping in order to have his query satisfied by visiting one of his many mentors. In this way his creative innovations provided him with a platform on which to continually improve his art.

By the time he was 24 or 25 years old, Motobu's reputation as a martial artist as considerable and those who knew "Saru," knew that provoking him was unwise. Now, however, as a matured teacher, he is a different person busy passing on his teachings to his students. Even though we have only become very close recently, I have long been impressed by his modest yet energetic personality. With Motobu Choki's physical prowess and impressive technique already being widely known there is little need for me to address it again in this summary.

Watashi no Karate-jutsu

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Yamada Tatsuo photo courtesy p62 of Kinjo Hiroshi
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Motobu two-person defence photos p65 courtesy of Konishi Takehiro private collection
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Motobu, Funakoshi, Taira, Mabuni, Ohtsuka, Toyama etc. group p70 from the 1934 publication *"Karate Kenkyu"*
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Konishi Yasuhiro with "Piston" Horiguchi p72 courtesy of Konishi Takehiro private collection
Motobu Choki group photo p73 courtesy of Onuma Tamotsu
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Motobu Choki group photo at the "KO" club p73 courtesy of Konishi Takehiro private collection
Original cover of the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"* p74
Shobu calligraphy p75 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Motobu portrait p76 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Photo of two fists (Mafutode) p83 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Photo of one-knuckle fist (Kosa) p84 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Makiwara photos pp86/87 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Naihanchi kata photos pp88-91 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Kumite photos pp98-100 from the 1932 publication, *"Watashi no Karate-jutsu"*
Lineage chart p118 drawn by P. McCarthy