



MUSHA SHUGYŌ: THE WARRIOR PILGRIMAGE

**Marcos Andrés Sala Ivars. PhD Art History. Complutense University of Madrid.
Secretary of the Asia Research Group.**

Abstract: The samurai "completed" his martial training with a trip along the Japanese geography to learn from other schools and sometimes beat them to test their martial skills. However, these pilgrimages also included other aspects such as religious and artistic concerning the Japanese sword (*nihontō*).

Keywords: Samurai, *shugyō*, *nihontō*, *koryū*.

1. The pilgrimages in Japan and their relationship with the samurai class.

Pilgrimages have existed in Japan since the early days, of which historical sources are preserved. As in other countries, these trips were intimately related to religion, reaching all strata of society, which included the warriors or *bushi*, who from the Heian Period (some of them)¹ would start taking the name of *samurai*.

The religious pilgrimages began as an event linked to the monks and priests who traveled between the different temples of their order, or to the main temple / sanctuary to learn more about their faith and pray to their gods. However, soon these trips became extremely popular routes, mobilizing a large part of the population in different ways of pilgrimage. The pilgrimages, did not need to reach temples or sanctuaries to acquire a religious character, there are numerous routes to hills and sacred mountains of the Japanese geography, among which we highlight: Fuji *san*, Kōya *san* and Tate *san*. The *samurai*, like other members of the society, participated in these religious, *Shintō* or Buddhist pilgrimages, as well as the trips to the sacred mountains, and the celebrations in the reproductions of the great cities².

¹ The *samurai* class began in Heian Period, but we can't state that all the warriors (*bushi*) took this rank at the same time, or same place, this was a long process over the years till all the Japanese warrior class became *samurai*.

² NISHIYAMA, Matsunosuke. *Edo Culture. Daily life and diversions in uran Japan, 1600-1868*. Translated: Gerald Groemer. University of Hawai'i Press. Honolulu. Pp.85-87.

However, if something defined a *samurai* on other aspects was its military nature, in this sense, the *samurai* tended to have their own routes of pilgrimage.

There were pilgrimages to the Buddhist deities or *Shintō*, that his family or clan prayed for. In the second instance, we would find a series of pilgrimages focused on places of prayers for the ancestors of the family or of the school / martial schools that the samurai studied. It is common that when speaking of ancestors in these two senses, we continue to enter the religious world (although in a much more personal and specific way). This is due to the "canonization" of personalities of great relevance, transmuted into *kami* that are venerated in *Shintō* shrines along with other deities.



Pic-01- Hayashizaki Jinja (*Iai jinja*) in Murayama (Yamagata).

To refer to local cases I will give as an example the small sanctuary Hayashizaki jinja, in the (also) small village of Murayama (Yamagata), dedicated to Hayashizaki Jinsuke no Shigenobu, founder of many *iaijutsu* styles, or *katana* swordsmanship techniques to draw a sword. To this temple of no more than 30 square meters travels every practitioner of this martial art, to pray and show respect to the founder of many old schools like Musō Jikiden Eishin ryū *iaijutsu* or Shin Musō Hayashizaki ryū *iaijutsu*. Also some practitioners from old schools like Tamiya ryū *iaijutsu*, Shin Muraku ryū *iaijutsu*, Sekiguchi ryū *iaijutsu*, Hoki ryū *iaijutsu*, consider this *samurai/kami* very important for their traditions, and came on pilgrimage to show their respect. Even modern schools like Musō Shinden ryū *iaidō*

or the International Iaidō Federation, has important events related to this small *jinja*.

The *samurai* were not only educated in martial arts, their training consisted of the so-called *bun-bu ryōdō* (culture / strategy and martial arts in one). In this sense, they learned military tactics and philosophy, but also calligraphy (*shōdō*) and different arts such as: *kadō* (floral ornament), *kodō* (arts of incense) or *sadō* (tea arts). For example, those *samurai* who learned the Ikenobō school of floral ornament, it was logical that at some point they made a pilgrimage to the Rokkakudō of Kyōto, a building founded by Prince Shōtoku himself in the 8th century, and center of this school of *ikebana* (*kadō*), today, the oldest that has been preserved.

Finally, from the Edo period, there was a political reason by which different columns of *samurai* crossed Japan throughout the distance that covered between their fiefdom and the city of Edo. We are talking about the *sankin kōtai*, an edict that promulgated the Tokugawa *bakufu* in 1635 for the *tozama daimyō* (feudal lords far from Edo), and in 1642 for the *fudai daimyō* (feudal lords close to Edo) - *shinpan daimyō* (feudal lords of the family Tokugawa / Matsudaira). This decree obliged the *daimyō* to maintain a residence in Edo, in which they would remain in alternate stays between their fiefdom and the *bakufu* city. The main reasons for the government to impose this decree were: to maintain control over the *daimyō*, to have a large contingent of *samurai* in Edo and empty their money expenses with the large costs of travels and double residence. In spite of this, the collateral effects of *sankin kōtai* surpassed the government's expectations, favoring the creation of roads and routes, as well as stimulating the economy of the towns of passage, inns and stops along the way. To give us an idea, each time Tosa's Yamauchi family moved to their residence in Edo, they mobilized between 1500 and 3000 vassals, of which, more than half were *samurai*. On their way to Edo, many warriors observed the characteristics of the clothing, the type of swords, and its fittings from the different areas through which they passed. Once in Edo, each residence was like a small fief from which it was difficult to sneak away, but as far they can, the *samurai* took any opportunity available to compare their cultural knowledge, martial skills and clothing / accessories, with the *samurai* from the rest of Japan, contributing to a kind of globalization of Japan's fiefs around Edo.

As we have seen, the *samurai* were very accustomed to travel with all kinds of purposes: religious, leisure, martial, cultural and political obligations. While the greatest aspiration of a *samurai* was sedentary life in a castle or residence serving his lord, they are still people accustomed to a wandering life covering great distances on foot or horse.

2. The *musha shugyō*, the training trip of the samurai:

In the first word we will not stop much in the analysis, because *musha* 武者 means "warrior", a quality that any samurai "was supposed" to be. The second word, *shugyō* 修行 needs a further explanation to not confuse with other "study" words. *Benkyō* 勉強 is the word that refers to a study of a subject as we understand it in the Western countries, while *shugyō* refers to a greater deepening in matter, up to almost levels of spiritual asceticism.



Pic-02 *Daimyō* from Iyo-Matsuyama during the *sankin kōtai*. National Museum of Japanese History (Chiba).

One of the best known meanings of the word *shugyō* is related to the practitioners of *shugendō*. Although the *shugendō* is a practice mainly constructed from buddhist sources, it has a high *shintō* component and other philosophical assets, both local and imported from China and Korea. The main characteristic of *shugendō* is the incorporation of practices related to the elements of nature, such as the contemplation and performance of rites through the use of fire, or the purification of the body through the use of ice water or snow. Strenuous physical exercise, taking the human body to its limits is another characteristic of the practitioners of this mystical, ascetic and eremitical doctrine. In a very close way to the practitioners of the *shugendō*, we found the *yamabushi* or monks who make their pilgrimage through the mountains while performing practices similar to *shugendō*. The use of the word *bushi* (warrior), is given by the connection with ancestors from military groups associated with *shintō* shrines or buddhist temples.

Generally it is usually included in the categories of *yamabushi* and *shugendō* a large

number of practitioners: Exorcists (*sekizoro / kamabarai*), traveling musicians monks (*komusō*), warriors associated with Buddhist temples (*sōhei / zokuhei*) and practitioners of the Tendai or Shingon schools. However, the reality is that each of these groups, although performing practices similar to *shugendō*, must be studied independently, since their origins, motivation, forms and purposes of their actions are completely independent and non-transferable to other groups.

During the *musha shugyō*, the samurai takes part of all the mystical and religious connotations of a sincere study (*shugyō*) and combines them with certain practices of other groups such as *shugendō* or *yamabushi* practitioners, in the sense of a pilgrimage that often required to cross mountains and valleys. However, the first purpose of this trip was none other than to learn and consolidate their martial knowledge.



Pic-03 *Makimono* from the 7th *sōke* of the school Hokushin Ittō ryū hyōhō (Chiba dōjō)

A samurai used to be formed in the schools of his *han* (fiefdom), both in cultural and martial aspects. Speaking of martial practice, each *han* had several *dōjō*³ or training centers. When a samurai succeeded in completing the learning and transmission of his school, he received a certificate attesting to this fact. This document could have several

³ When talking about an organization in terms of training centers, we will always refer to cases from the Edo period. Before this period, the martial training was much more chaotic and focused on the fast formation of soldiers for the battlefield. Also the formation centers began to be called *dōjō* (place of the way) very late, since it incorporated a series of spiritual and philosophical concepts from a heritage of the Buddhist religion.

forms and names, from the landscape format used in the certificates of "enlightenment" (*inkajō*), to the most popular rolled documents or *makimono*. Although each school had a name for the document certifying the complete transmission of the style (*okuden denshō*, *tora no maki*, *kongen no maki*, *shinden no maki*...), the most common denomination was that of *menkyō kaiden* (total transmission license). However, the reception of this honor did not mean the end of a path, but the beginning of the journey. From this moment the only way to continue improving in practice was to start off on a trip (*musha shugyō*) through different province and *dōjō*, learning new techniques and putting into practice. In this way a *samurai* could prove the worth of his school and his own, improving those weaknesses, reinforcing them in the experience of having met other martial practitioners. Sometimes the *samurai* received the *menkyō* and only after completing his *musha shugyō* did he receive the final seal that converted the document into a *menkyō kaiden*. In the case of the most notable students, or those who had a family lineage with the school director (*sōke*), they could receive the inheritance legacy of the same, accompanying the document with an object related to the founder of the school, like a sword, a guard...

Once the *samurai* was in possession of an official certificate of martial transmission and a letter of recommendation from his master, he could apply to his *daimyō* for permission to travel through one or several fiefs in Japan in order to complete his training by *musha shugyō*. This document was not granted lightly, being denied in many cases, because it supposed a great honor and an enormous responsibility, since that individual would represent (for better or for worse reasons) his fiefdom in the rest of Japan. The borders between the different *han* were very strict controlled, and any abandonment of the fief itself was considered an act of high treason (*dappan roshi*), punishable by imprisonment, confiscation of property, exile, and in the most extreme cases, death by *seppuku* (ritual suicide). For example, we can found the case of military strategist Yoshida Shōin (1830-1859), who left his Chōshū fief without the official letter of the *daimyō*. Although his intentions were to expand his cultural and military knowledge, he was punished by house arrest and several of his privileges were taken from him.

The *musha shugyō* was a kind of scholarship stay. In compensation, once their apprenticeship was completed, the *samurai* had to return his debt to the fiefdom, serving as instructors or useful members of society. Sometimes, they were also required to keep a detailed diary of the schools they visited and the achievements they were making on their trip.

3. Examples and evolution of *musha shugyō*.

The *samurai* Iizasa Chōisai Ienao briefly served the *shōgun* Ashikaga Yoshimasa and then came under the orders of Chiba Tatenao (Lord of Chiba Castle), fighting in numerous battles. Perhaps due to age, or perhaps due to the continuous loss of power of the family and the fall of the castle, at age 60 he decides to make a pilgrimage to the temple of Katori Jingu, where after 1000 days of ascetic retreat he receives a revelation of the god Futsunushi No Mikoto. This *kami* presents Chōisai a transmission scroll detailing war techniques and strategies. This document is called Mokuroku Heihō no Shinsō. From that moment (1480) Chōisai founded his school with the name of: School of the correct and true "celestial" transmission of the style of the *Shintō* gods of Katori or Tenshin Shōden Katori Shintō *ryū*. Despite not knowing too many details of Chōisai's life before founding the school, it is known that he participated in battles and skirmishes, learning different styles of fencing and hand-to-hand combat.

At the beginning of the 16th century, the *samurai* Takenouchi Nakatsukasa Daisuke Hisamori performed his *musha shugyō*, traveling through cities and making ascetic retreats to the mountains. It is said that he was a man of small stature with a great sword. On one occasion, he performed a meditation retreat and training on the hill of Atago in the current Minato-Tōkyō, accompanied by a *bōkutō* or wooden sword. After the daily training session he fell sleep exhausted, and during the night a *yamabushi* rebelled in his dreams as a personification of the deity of the Atago temple. Hisamori felt threatened and attacked the apparition, but he was being defeated. While contemplating his defeat, the apparition took his wooden sword and split it into two equal parts, making him see that in hand-to-hand combat, small weapons are more useful than long ones. This, called *koshi no mawari* (around the hips) is the motto of the foundation of his school. The divinity also showed Hisamori different ways to immobilize and tie the enemy, something that it would evolve later as the art of tying or arrest techniques (*hojojutsu*). All this took place on June 26, 1532, date on which the founding of the school and day of celebration since then for the members of Takenouchi *ryū*. Despite being based on hand-to-hand combat with or without small weapons, this *koryū* (old school) is one of the *sōgō bujutsu*⁴ with the most extensive curriculum in Japan.

Between the Eiroku era (1558-1570), the Genki era (1570-1573) and the Tenshō era (1573-1592), the *samurai* Asano Kazuma no Shigenori, was killed by political rivals in a

⁴ We use this name to refer martial traditions that has more than one weapon or school inside their curriculum.

series of intrigues that took place in the domains of the Mogami clan (Yamagata). He was the father of the well known *samurai* Hayashizaki Jinsuke no Shigenobu. The version that has come to us documented, is that Jinsuke, faced with the impossibility of facing his father's murderers out of numerical inferiority, began an ascetic pilgrimage of training through the mountains of Murayama⁵. There he trained and meditated for 100 days and finally received a divine revelation. According to this revelation, he had to fight with the sword sheathed, in order to strike with a first attack, sudden and deadly from the scabbard. In the beginning of his school he also fixed the fact that the *nihontō* (sword) of the school had to be large, measuring approximately one meter of blade (*san shaku san sun*).



Pic-04 Statue of Hayashizaki Jinsuke no Shigenobu in Hayashizaki *jinja*.

What Jinsuke had just developed and perfected would be the art of *iaijutsu* or drawing the Japanese sword, a discipline that would have many followers among the *samurai* class. Instead this art known also as *battōjutsu*, existed before Jinsuke, he was the first who created a specific school just for this technique.

Once he had defeated the enemies of his family with the new techniques developed, Jinsuke started his *musha shugyō*, learning new styles and winning numerous followers and students who would later found their own styles based on the teachings of Jinsuke.

⁵ YAMAKOSHI, Masaki - TSUKIMOTO, Kazutake. *Musō Jikiden Eishin Ryū*. The iai forms and oral traditions of the Yamauchi branch. Kyoto, 2004. P. 15.

During this journey of improvement, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, after observing an *enbu* (demonstration), awarded him the title of Tenka Musō "sword without equal under the sky". At the end of the trip, he dedicated himself to training his successor: Tamiya Heibei Narimasa, and who would be the successor of his successor: Muraku Nyūdō Kinrosai, both in turn founders of their own styles. With an advanced age, Jinsuke part in a second *musha shugyō* with the awareness that "he still has much to learn".

Miyamoto Shinmen Musashi no kami Fujiwara no Genshin or as it is more commonly known, Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645) was a great *samurai* of his time, and today is perhaps the most popular character of the ancient Japanese warrior nobility. Musashi was born under the name of Bennosuke in the village of Miyamoto, his father was the also famous *samurai* Miyamoto Shinmen Munisai. As a child he learned the Tōri *ryū* style created by his father. In his younger ages, Musashi had a reputation as a disobedient child, something that caused the fatal end of the expulsion from the family home with only 8-9 years. Since that time, his maternal uncles accepted him, and continued their cultural and martial training. One day, taking a walk, the 12-year-old Musashi found a tablet belonging to the *samurai* Arima Kihei from the Shintō *ryū kenjutsu* school, announcing that he was performing a *musha shugyō* and challenged any *samurai* who wanted to test their skills⁶. Musashi, who carried one of the brushes with whom he practiced *shōdō* with his uncle, wrote his name together with a challenge. Despite the attempts of his uncles that the *samurai* Kihei rejected the duel and excused the offense, Musashi ran to the place, insulting Kihei. This provocation succeed and both prepared to fight with their *bokutō*. Musashi run on his adversary striking till both swords became blocked. Suddenly, Musashi released his *bokutō*, grabbed Kihei and performing a form of *jujutsu* threw him to the ground, and immediately he took his wooden sword and began to hit the head of Kihei until his skull was completely crushed. With his ego higher than the clouds, Musashi conceived that he was ready to start his own *musha shugyō*, and did it so for 4 years, until at the age of 16 he decided to return with his father to be able to carry out the coming of age ceremony or *genpuku*. Munisai accepted and recognized his son, imposing the name of Shinmei Musashi Harunobu and teaching him all the principles of his Tōri *ryū* style. He also allowed his son to accompany him in battles that he participated in the service of the *daimyō* Kuroda Yoshitaka. Musashi was still hungry for victories and teachings, so he took his second *musha shugyō*. On this trip, he wanted to face the best

⁶ DE LANGE, William. *Miyamoto Musashi. A life in arms. A biography of Japan's greatest swordsman*. Floating World Editions. Connecticut, 2014.

fencers in the country, however, he agreed that many of them enjoyed positions of importance in the government of the Tokugawa Bakufu, so they would never accept a duel with someone of lower status. This led Musashi to the area of Kyōto, where he planned to confront the Yoshioka family and their school, who had been instructors of the late Ashikaga *shōgun* during the Muromachi Period. When Musashi arrived Kyōto, he asked the Yoshioka instructor, for a duel, however, the day he feigned an illness and excused himself for not coming. At the insistence of Yoshioka Seijūrō, Musashi went to the meeting lying on a palanquin, and when Seijūrō appeared to ask about his health, Musashi hit him with his *bokutō*. With similar stratagems, using all his skill, intelligence and picaresque, Musashi managed to beat the rest of the members of the school Yoshioka, ending his reputation and increasing his own in proportion. After this, Musashi continued his *musha shugyō*, facing numerous opponents. One of this was Hōzōin Kakuzenbō In'ei, founder of the Hōzōin *ryū sōjutsu* (spear) style. Departing in search of the most famous spearman of his time, Musashi left for the Kōfukuji temple of Nara. There he found that In'ei was 84 years old and despite being physically and mentally fit, he could not fight, so Musashi fought against his best pupil, Okuzōin. No one died or was injured, nor was there a clear winner, in this case it was a duel in which both learned from each other.



Pic-05 Miyamoto Musashi by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)

In 1612, at the age of 28, Musashi ended his *musha shugyō* and returned to the Kitsuki castle where he shared with his father the advances in his study of martial arts. There he heard about a *samurai* of exceptional abilities that years ago, during his *musha shugyō*, he had tried unsuccessfully to start a duel with his father. He was Sasaki Kojiro, founder of the school Gan *ryū*, against him he would fight in famous duel, however, this and other battles will not be dealt with here since it is not *musha shugyō*, but normal duels during his lifetime.

There is another fact in the life of Miyamoto Musashi that connects with the founder of another school of great fame. Thanks to this testimony we can see how, sometimes, the stories of a *musha shugyō* can favor one of the sides depending on who transmits the history. Once, during a *musha shugyō*, Musashi faced a *samurai* who had studied the school Tenshin Shōden Katori Shintō *ryū*, his name was Musō Gonnosuke Katsukichi. According to the version transmitted by the followers of Musashi, the duel occurred around 1615-30 when Gonnosuke (who was on his *musha shugyō*) asked to see the

techniques of the new school reformulated by Musashi⁷. When Musashi refused, both fought, Gonnosuke being a specialist in the handling of the *jō*, a wooden cane reinforced with iron plates. Gonnosuke ended up losing the fight and became a disciple of Musashi for a while to later found his own school of staff fighting or *jōjutsu*, the Shintō Musō ryū. According to the version transmitted by the followers of Gonnosuke: The duel occurred at the beginning of the XVII century, towards 1605, when both Musashi and Gonnosuke performed their *musha shugyō*. In the combat Musashi used his technique of two swords against the technique of a single sword of Gonnosuke, that had studied several schools besides the Katori tradition. Musashi beat Gonnosuke, leaving him alive. In the face of an unexpected defeat, Gonnosuke made a pilgrimage to Mount Hōman (Kyūshū) where, after 37 days of training and meditation, he had a divine revelation that indicated victory would be achieved by using a round stick. That's when he founds his school Shintō Musō ryū *jōjutsu*, and with these new weapons and techniques he starts looking for Musashi to ask for a rematch. Upon meeting, both *samurai* fought, coming out victorious Gonnosuke with his *jō* (in the version of Shintō Musō ryū does not incorporate metal pieces in the stick).

4. The end of *musha shugyō* and the beginning of a new era.

So far we have seen how the warriors made different types of pilgrimage to strengthen and check their martial skills. Briefly reviewing the history, it is easy to realize that as the years passed, these pilgrimages were losing mysticism and gaining practical empiricism. Due to the prohibitions of duels with sharp weapons imposed by the Tokugawa *bakufu*, *musha shugyō* were dominated by the use of training tools made of wood or covered in their dangerous parts (except in exceptional cases, such as Musashi duel against Sasaki). However, we have also found that there were still many deaths in the fighting, and that sometimes, these deaths led to a spiral of endless revenge. That is why the *daimyō* began to grant fewer and fewer *musha shugyō* licenses and the *dōjō yaburi* were forbidden (challenge to the owner of a school where the winner could keep the school and the students).

In order to save the situation, several schools played a fundamental role: The Yagyū Shinkage ryū, founded in the mid-sixteenth century, developed a type of *bokutō* covered

⁷ The schools founded by Musashi became famous for use simultaneously of the long and short sword, attacking or defending with both at the same time. The name of the schools was Enmei ryū to Nitten Ichi ryū (school of the two havens in one).

with leather, so that fighting could be done minimizing the damage caused by a wooden sword. The Maniwa Nen *ryū* school, founded at the end of the 16th century, incorporated in its practice with wooden swords a series of protections for the head and hands. The school Ono-ha Ittō *ryū*, founded at the beginning of the 17th century, also incorporated protections for the hands and forearms. The school Kashima Shin Jikishinkage *ryū*, founded around 1570, incorporates in the eighteenth century, the ideas of the protections of the previous schools, developing the definitive protections for arms (*kote*) and head (*men*). The Nakanishi-ha Ittō *ryū* school, founded at the end of the 17th century, will create a body protection (*dō*). Inspired by the Japanese armor, these schools will end up conforming the origins of the armor used today in modern Japanese fencing (*kendō*). The weapon will also evolve into a sword of bamboo canes, which combined with the protections, reduced in large numbers the wounds in combat. The school Hokushin Ittō *ryū hyōhō*, founded in the early nineteenth century, would be one of the main disseminators of this new type of combat, popularized today by the *kendō* - Zen Nippōn Kendō Renmei, founded in 1952.



Pic-06 Gekken practice by Chikanobu Toyohara (1838-1912)

With all these advances, towards the 19th century, there was a new boom of the *musha shugyō*. The *dōjō yaburi* were replaced by *taryū shiai* (competitions between schools), this favored the foundation of a multitude of schools of fencing, as well as the appearance of independent *dōjō* that were not linked to any traditional *bujutsu* school, practicing only the combat with protections.

In this context we find the diary of Muta Bunnosuke (1830-1890), *samurai* of Saga licensed in the school Tentsujin *ryū* of double sword, derived from the Nitten Ichi *ryū* of Musashi. A year after receiving his *menkyō kaiden*, Bunnosuke asks the *han* for permission and undertakes a two-year-old *musha shugyō* for the different provinces of Japan. This diary is an unparalleled source to know the schools and *dōjō* of the time, as well as their chief instructors. At the same time, it offers us a vision of *musha shugyō* that is tremendously practical and never contemplated before. The mysticism, fine prose and chivalry that seemed to always accompany the figure of the samurai (even more in the 19th century when texts such as Hagakure, Gorin no Shō, Bukkyō - Shidō, begin to be known by most people), seems to fade between Bunnosuke's annotations. Most of the comments about *dōjō* and his leaders are extremely derogatory, saving very few of anger from Bunnosuke's sword (and brush)⁸:

Sixth year of the Kaei Era (1853). October 1st. Imai dōjō. Led by Imai Seizaemon of Jirishinkage ryū style from Kurume: I have struggled with several students selected at random. The level is very low, laughable⁹.

First year of the Ansei Era (1854) June 24. Ōbuchi dōjō. Led by Ōbuchi Ryūnosuke from the Jikishinkage Ryu school from Shōnai: I have fought Ōbuchi Ryūnosuke, but he has behaved like an insect, he has been harassing me with a lot of arrogance. His students are like him¹⁰.

First year of the Ansei Era (1854) 2nd of November. Genbukan dōjō. Led by Chiba Shūsaku from the Hokushin Itto ryū school: I went as promised, but Chiba Eijiro (the second son of Chiba Shūsaku) refused to fight me due to an inconvenience. Tomorrow I will return. Due to the great reputation of this dōjō, running away like this seems extremely ridiculous to me.

November 3: Today Chiba Eijiro has refused to fight with me due to his poor health. It is clear that he is running away from a confrontation. He is a coward. I fought against twelve of his students, only two of them had average level. I won 80% of the matches. If

⁸ FURZI, Sandro (traductor) *Shōkoku Kaireki Nichiroku. Diary of wandering several provinces 1853-1855. Muta Bunnosuke.*

⁹ Op. Cit. P. 12.

¹⁰ Op. Cit. 15.

this is the true level of the famous Genbukan dōjō, I laugh at him¹¹.

After the end of the Edo period (1868), with the abolition of the *samurai* class and the prohibition of carrying swords (Hai tō rei edict - 1876), many old schools (*koryū*) disappeared, especially those more traditional and weapons-based work. Although *musha shugyō*, *taryū shiai* and even *dōjō yaburi* continued clandestinely (especially in the case of *jujutsu* schools), but these traditions were on the road to extinction. The USA prohibition to practice traditional martial arts at the end of the Second World War, led to a new decay of traditional schools. Finally in the middle of the 20th century until today, there was a slight recovery of this legacy. However, time has caused schools to become increasingly hermetic and restrictive, wanting to keep their traditions intact at all costs, so practices such as *musha shugyō* or *taryū shiai* are not seen with good eyes nowadays by most of this schools.

¹¹ Op.Cit. P. 16.