



The unknown art of Okinawa

History of Soke Nakasato and Shobudo Bujitsu

The art of Shobudo was founded by Soke Nakasato Shoshu and was taught on Okinawa during the late 1950's through the mid 1980's to a fortunate few. The origins and history of both its founder and his art are very vague as Soke Nakasato has and is (to this day) a very private, evasive, protective and secretive individual.



Not having a dojo of his own, one was taught individually at his *uchi* (home) or on a military facility. He is devoted in the healing of others in the arts of *Kuatsu*, *Shiatsu*, *Kyusho* and I suspect also that of *Dim-Mak*. He treats and heals (out of his home) individuals which doctors are unable to heal through conventional means. Spiritual meditation and deep applications of *Ki* are a great part of his life.

He was born in 1918 on the southern island of Kyushu in Fukuoka, Japan. He was disciplined in his family art, known as *Hachiho Shobu Ryu BuJutsu* at the age of fourteen as taught by his father Shohide Koga. This art was a system his father named from learning several styles in and around Fukuoka and Kagoshima. Drafted in the army, he served but did not fight and was assigned to a special unit, which he did and would not disclose. All his friends and a



brother that were inducted the same time did not return!

After the war he continued his martial arts training, touring the main land of Honshu in pursuit of other arts. He spoke of learning *Kempo*, arts of *Aiki*, healing people that were ill (*Byooki*) and named these healing applications of recovery or (*Zenkai*) as *Setaiditsu*. He stated his real name is Koga and that (for whatever reason) he uses his mother's maiden name of Nakasato. In the early 1950's he took the best of his father's art and what he had learned after the war, combing them into what he thought to be a more realistic and practical system for today's society and renamed it *Shobudo Bujitsu Jujitsu*. According to Soke Nakasato, Shobudo is made up of eight different arts. Of the eight, non-are known specifically as he has vigilantly kept his past personal life and martial art studies a guarded secret, especially from whom he was taught, others than his father. However, with is vast knowledge of healing, religious deep meditation and strong applications of *Ki*, I'm certain his martial knowledge is rooted within one of the *Shorinji Kempo* systems.

Since 1960 we of Shobudo and I in particular, have tried to find out the past mysteries of this art and its founder. In March of 2000, my wife and I visited her family in Okinawa and also spoke with Soke Nakasato. Several specific questions were asked but he still would not reveal the answers. Searching the Internet, I've inquired and wrote several sources, but found no connections. For half a century this man of healing and martial art skills has lived on and off between Okinawa and Japan. It's odd that no one knows much about him. For whatever reasons, *his protective secrecy has to be a shared secret of others as well!*

Rich in history and tradition are the martial arts, but without its roots of lineage, one is looked upon as suspicious, unworthy and illegitimate. As we cannot confirm or deny the statements given us, one fact is certain ... he is a real living person walking among us, having great in depth knowledge of the human anatomy as well as great martial art skills. As he cannot be validated within the martial arts community and has chosen to remain secretive for personal reasons, I will not attempt to provide justification to claims of lineage or historical roots prior to 1958. Therefore, until his past is known and can be officially documented, let our history and lineage begin from this date forward of which can be verified. Whether Nakasato was self-taught (*Jishu/Dokushu*), or taught by others, Nakasato is the founder (*Kaiso/Soshisha*) of *Shobudo Bujitsu Jujitsu*, and is our *Soke*. One may ask at this point ... why learn from an unknown, or be associated with such a secretive individual! We of Shobudo have asked ourselves this same question from time to time, but on behalf of all Shobudo members, one of my teachers puts everything into perspective.

History is an important element of any society. Wise humans learn from the mistakes of the past, and take steps to avoid similar pitfalls in the future. Given that, I am perplex by our discussions of late ... especially those dealing with our lineage. What is it we're after! Is it recognition, commercialism, fame and fortune ... or all four? Since I appreciate people who don't tap dance, here goes the direct method: The style of self-defense taught to me by my sensei (Kaicho Morton), is one of the most effective and practical I have seen.

- I am intensely proud of the small size of our band of dedicated warriors, and the fact that I am counted among them.
- I practice Shobudo, not only as a martial art, but also as a way of life.
- I have the utmost respect for what the art has shown me physically, spiritually, and philosophically.
- It has fulfilled my life positively without it having a history or lineage.
- I remain unconcerned about anything said concerning our art by anyone external to it.
- Whether or not anyone in the "martial arts community" knows anything about Nakasato, he is our Soke; you taught what I know and that's good enough for me.
- In the past two years 90 people have come through our Albany dojo, yet I have four regular students; I like that about us.
- When I ask myself what I most enjoy about Shobudo, the answer is simple; I like to work out with my fellow practitioners and teach them the skills passed on to me.
- When I ask myself what I most worry about the least when it comes to our art, I answer; being unnoticed or recognized in any way, shape or form.
- All I really want and need is at least one other person with whom I can share our art and a good workout.

In conclusion, I don't care what is said about our art. The proof, I say is in the pain and we welcome to our ranks anyone who wishes to learn realistically, the ways of Itai. All of us appreciate your immense efforts in the area of lineage research, but Kaicho ... at the same time, we must ask the question, "Why bother"! Time has passed all these years without knowing and we have continued to prevail, so whom are we doing this research? Those who matter - your dedicated students, we know the real deal. Anyone who has spent time on the mats with you immediately realizes the qualities of Shobudo as passed on to you through Soke Nakasato and Vincent J. McGale. I believe the only critics that matter, are us. Should we ever end up on television or the cover of Black Belt magazine it would be a bonus, but if we don't ... I'll be fine! I will take our low profiled ways in the traditions of Soke Nakasato, teaching our gentle/aggressive warrior spirit, and continue to work out for the rest of my life in the ways of Shobudo. Kaicho, this is my most humble and respectful opinion!

In Budo,
Lauren, LaVine (Yondan)
Shobudo Bujitsu Kai

As Director of Shobudo, the above article humbles me by one of my students whom I promoted as my first teacher. It speaks for itself and is the overall thoughts and convictions of this organization since the days of my teachings as originally brought to the United States from Okinawa in 1965. Although our past lineage may never be found, it's important that its future starts now. Within the ranks of Shobudo, teacher status begins at Yondan. Nakasato's first student to achieve teacher status was *Vincent J. McGale* who studied one on one with Soke Nakasato and attained the rank of *Rokudan*. I, *Robert Morton* was McGale sensei's first Shodan and teacher as well as Soke Nakasato's second teacher. A third person under McGale sensei and Soke Nakasato (Mr. Nathan Banks) also made teacher and we are the direct (*Shodai*) first generation of teachers of Soke Nakasato. Even though we are new in history and lineage, we are rich in tradition. The techniques we learned are from a master of technical skills known only to those he taught. Fortunate are the few that can share the knowledge and wisdom of an unknown man of untold secrets.



Respectfully In Budo,

Robert Morton
Kaicho
Shobudo Bujitsu Kai