

Purification cuts with the sword *Harai no tachi*

Author: Minoru Inaba - Director of the Shiseikan

(text written in 2008 for 35th Anniversary of the Shiseikan)

The reason that the training of brutal martial arts techniques (*Bujutsu*), which aimed at wounding and killing the opponent, developed into *Budo*, which polishes people's spirit, is that there was the spirit of ablution-purification. This ceremony is called *Misogi-Harai* and is part of Japan's ancient *Shinto* faith.

The body and mind which use weapons and martial techniques have to be pure and righteous.

The origin of this conduct is the wish to purify.

Ablution (*Misogi*) can be described as removing acquired impurity. This is achieved by pouring water of divine grace onto one's body, and acting in accordance with the divinity.

Purification (*Harai*) can be described as extending righteous spirit and brushing away malicious spirit.

Based on these ideas, *Kyujutsu* developed into *Kyudo*, *Kenjutsu* into *Kendo*, *Jujutsu* into *Judo*, *Aikido* etc., and this *Budo* spread throughout the world.

Kashima Jingu, the *Shinto* shrine consecrated to *Takemikazuchi no Kami*, the deity of military arts (who is known in Japanese mythology for his nation-building activities), has been gathering numerous military commanders and martial artists throughout the centuries. Kashima Jingu also gave birth to numerous *Bujutsu* (martial arts) styles and schools.