



PRESENTS
THE UNKNOWN NINJA SCROLL
BY
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軍法侍用集

THE THREE SHINOBI SCROLLS OF:
'THE GUNPO JIYOSHU'
'THE COLLECTED WAY OF THE SAMURAI MILITARY ARTS'
1612
BY
OGASAWARA SAKU'UN KATSUZO

The *Gunpo Jiyoshu* holds three full scrolls on the way of the ninja and here for this book we have translated scrolls which are dedicated to the art of the shinobi and were used during the *Sengoku* or Warring States Period in Japan. This often overlooked and understated selection of scrolls are full of generally unknown ninjutsu techniques used by the shinobi and in turn show how the shinobi were used by their commanders, giving the western world a view of the ninja no one has ever seen before.

A CONNECTION WITH TOKUGAWA IEYASU

The *Gunpo Jiyoshu* was originally named '*Shiyoshu*', which means "a personal collection" and was intended to be used for personal study. However, *Tokugawa Ieyasu*, the military genius and the first *Shogun* to unify Japan, happened to know of this manuscript and procured a copy. He was so impressed with the contents that he told the author, *Saku'un* to change its name to *Gunpo Jiyoshu*, because he thought it should not

remain limited to the author's personal use but instead, it should become essential reading for every samurai in the land.

Ogasawara Saku'un Katsuzo, the author of the ninja scrolls was a strategist of the *Ogasawara School of Military Strategy* and is the author of several works including: *The Gunpo Jiyoshu*; *The Toryu Gunpo Kosha no Sho*; and the *Shoke no Hyojo*, which are almost a complete trilogy in their connecting contents. The 12 books of the *Gunpo Jiyoshu* include the essence of his school, which originally consisted of 550 volumes on the way to govern a country by *Minamoto no Yoritomo*, coupled with these documents he included statements by the most significant warriors of all time.

In the bibliography section of the book the *Kosha no Sho*, the author is introduced as “brave and composed in character, of merits that are the most excellent in the country and is said to have distinguished himself in the service of *Shogen Ogasawara Masanori*.”

The date of 1612 has been established by cross-referencing historical events with the dates of death of the people involved; this has been done to try to give us a basic date of writing. We know that these scrolls must have been penned before or in 1612. This conclusion was arrived at through information provided by the original introduction for this manual at its time of dissemination. The author states that *Matsudaira Hidanokami Hideyuki* was the person who personally showed this document to the shogun as he was a retainer of the *Tokugawa* family. Therefore, we know that *Matsudaira Hidanokami Hideyuki* died in 1612 and that the work must have been finished by this point. We can conclude that the work was most probably written well before 1612 but this is the absolute latest date possible for its origins. That has considerable weight and meaning for the subject of shinobi research, as we know that the author was a samurai of the Warring States Period and that he himself claims to have been given this knowledge by a ninja of the *Hattori* line. This means that the information in this volume is the closet we will ever get to understand the ninja at the height of their power and shows us a true record of the real arts of the shinobi.

The full *Gunpo Jiyoshu* ninja scrolls are available in English on Amazon March 2011.

ANTONY CUMMINS & YOSHIE MINAMI

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