



TAKEMUSU AIKIDO ASSOCIATION
ITALY

Takemusu Aiki?

Takemusu Aiki! For sure I do not want to make an attempt on explaining this highly spiritual term. But, I would like to tell you a personal anecdote of how I came in touch with this term at first hand.

In the late Eighties, when I came to the *Ibaraki Dojo* in *Iwama* for the first time to study Aikido at *Saito Sensei's* I had almost no experience in Aikido at all. Having lots of ideas in mind about the Spirit of *Aikido*, which I got from several *Aikido* teachers of different styles in Germany I longed for the ultimate truth that might be given to me by the closest student of *O-Sensei Uyeshiba, Saito Morihiro Sensei*. But, nothing came over to me. *Saito Sensei* even refused to tell anything about the spiritual side of *Aikido*. There was nothing but mere technical training. Every now and then he suddenly gave very short demonstrations of his marvellous *Takemusu Aikido*. He always ended up with a infectious smile saying "It's technique, no magic!".

Now I really have to admit that in the beginning I regarded *Saito Sensei* as being only a quite an uneducated railway worker who could not get even a glimpse of *O-Sensei's* spiritual teachings. So my hunger for learning something about the spiritual background of *Aikido* still was not satisfied. The only straw I could catch at was "It's technique, no magic! Ha,ha,ha..." And believe me it was really hard technique. Even as a former *Karateka* I doubted that changing over to *Aikido* had been the right decision for my further *budo* life.

One day, rummaging in the books and papers former *uchi deshi* had left in the *chisai shokudo* (small kitchen) of the *dojo*, most of them not worth mentioning, I found a postcard written by a student back home to the others left behind in the *Iwama dojo*: It showed two saints walking along their path one of them saying with a big gesture to the other: "Believe me, *Takemusu Aiki* is the best!".

The following weeks and months I learned that bearing these two sentences in mind was all I needed to find access to the spiritual side of *O-Sensei's Aikido*. Next I noticed that despite the feeling of brutality of the techniques of the *Iwama Sempai* as *uke*, there was no force on their side. My inability of taking correct *ukemi* made the techniques brutal to me. By the way, *Nemoto Sensei*, another generous and humble *Sempai* of the *Iwama Dojo* with brilliant *ukemi* showed me the right way in a private lesson.

So I came to the conclusion that if you have proper *kihon waza* training there is no need of talking and speculating about the Spirit of *Aikido*. It is all packed within the techniques passed on from *O-Sensei* by *Saito Sensei* in *Iwama* to our present *Shihans* Paolo Corallini and Ulf Evenas. All you need is the belief that what you are doing is the right way for you.

Try hard to be as humble as *Saito Sensei* used to be and concentrate on always bringing out the best form of the technique you are practicing with all your mind and body.

Takemusu Aiki the 'undescribable' term, is manifested in the huge number of techniques *Saito Sensei* has got from *O-Sensei* and systematized in his great heritage called *Takemusu Aikido*, which helped me a lot over the years, in my private life and as well as in my work dealing with children of all ages and social backgrounds and difficult to educate. When I get stuck in a problem not knowing how to deal with it I always step back to the practical exercise of *Takemusu Aikido* and an answer will show up.

It's all in the technique! Go ahead, practise *Takemusu Aikido* and unpack...

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