

Tadao Yamaguchi

靈氣直傳

Light

on the Origins of
REIKI

A Handbook for Practicing the
Original Reiki of Usui and Hayashi

Foreword by Frank Arjava Petter

LOTUS PRESS • SHANGRI-LA



Yamaguchi

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Foreword

It is my great pleasure and honor to introduce Tadao Yamaguchi's second book.

In 1996 I found myself in a similar situation to Tadao. In those days there was little information available about the origins of Reiki and through a series of 'coincidences' I was discovered by my friend Walter Lübeck. He passed the relay baton to me and today, with pleasure, I pass it on to Tadao Yamaguchi. I don't know anyone who would be more capable of describing the roots of Reiki than Tadao.

Jikiden Reiki, the way it was taught by Hayashi Sensei, convinces by its refreshingly simple clarity. The teaching is not tainted by Western thought and concentrates on the essential.

When Tadao and his mother Chiyoko appeared in the Japanese Reiki sky at the end of the 90's they were not aware of what they actually held in their hands. Tadao grew up with Reiki and had already received Reiki in his mother's belly. Meanwhile more than 50 years have passed and I am not aware of anyone who has the same wealth of Reiki experience and, most importantly, who is also willing and able to share his knowledge with others.

In a conversation Tadao once told me that he compares the energy of his mother with the energy of fire. It rises up, concentrates totally on the practical aspect of the work and in this way burns the non-essential. His own energy Tadao compares with that of water. It flows in all directions and is distributed to the thirsty. When those two energies meet and unite an energy field is created that covers all levels. And in this way they conquer your heart.

Frank Arjava Petter

Prologue: Reiki Meets 靈氣

Reiki—the great art of healing with the hands was originated in Japan and is now practiced by millions of people around the world. It was founded by the great man Mikao Usui Sensei¹ and became popular throughout the West through the contributions of Chujiro Hayashi Sensei and his student, Mrs. Hawayo Takata. However it seems to have at one time disappeared in its homeland—Japan. Now the Reiki, which is practiced in Japan, is mostly the reintroduced form from the West, so some people call it ‘Western’ Reiki.

Leaders of Western Reiki have tried to track down the roots of Reiki in Japan but have found little information. Failing to find people who had been directly initiated by Usui Sensei or Hayashi Sensei they concluded that it would be impossible to learn the original styles of Reiki there.

However there are still some people in Japan who have preserved the traditional teachings. In fact my mother was one of them. I grew up in good health thanks to my mother’s Reiki. She treated me whenever I hurt myself or fell ill, especially when I was a little boy. All my relatives practice Reiki. Some of them, including my mother, have been qualified as a *Shihan* (teacher) who can initiate others. When I was younger I thought Reiki was some kind of traditional secret art kept within my family. I had no idea that it had become so prevalent in the world or that people were searching for the information we had.

Before I started teaching Reiki I was engaged in my family business. Alongside that I was involved in promoting various activities regarding environmental issues and I always had the idea of setting up an NGO in this field. I often attended meetings on environmental issues where I had the chance to meet a lot of people from different fields. It was there that I had my first encounter with other Reiki people. I sometimes exchanged busi-

ness cards with the participants at those meetings and I picked up a few cards entitled 'Reiki Teacher'. I started to wonder:

"Why is 'Reiki' written in *Katakana* letters (Japanese phonetic letters used to describe foreign words) suggesting that it is a foreign thing?" One day I decided to ask a question of someone whose business card said 'Reiki Teacher'. I asked him why it was not written in the original *Kanji* characters (Japanese writing system coming from Chinese²). He answered, "There are no longer any traditional Japanese Reiki practitioners in Japan. If you want to learn Reiki the only way to do it is to learn the Reiki which has been reintroduced from the West." I told him that my mother had learned Reiki directly from Hayashi Sensei over 60 years before (in 1938). That was a great surprise to this Reiki teacher. He rushed back to Tokyo to tell his own teacher the news. His teacher is very famous in the Reiki community in Japan and the news surprised him so greatly that he promptly came all the way to Kyoto to meet my mother. Later he reported the conversation he had with my mother in his book. The impact of the reference in the book was so enormous that a lot of well-known Reiki teachers visited my mother and tried to persuade us to start teaching the original form of Reiki that she had learned from Hayashi Sensei. This was the very first cue for us to set up the **Jikiden Reiki Kenkyukai** (institute) and to start seminars (1999).

Of course the most important motivation for me in starting *Jikiden Reiki* seminars was my desire to pass on what my mother had learned from Hayashi Sensei as accurately as possible. Moreover, by introducing my mother's experience, I wanted to make people understand that Reiki is very effective as a great alternative to modern medicine. Throughout her life my mother healed a lot of people of a wide range of illnesses.

The founder, Usui Sensei, had initially intended to develop Reiki to cure physical illnesses. A lot of Reiki schools today focus only on spiritual development and don't take the healing of physical illness seriously. However I believe that the main

purpose of Reiki should be the healing of diseases. If the primary reason for you to receive or learn Reiki is only for your own healing, it is totally relevant. Diseases often guide us to awareness of the unknown. The experience of becoming ill and recovering is very meaningful because it gives us an opportunity to grow through the healing experience. Our direct teacher Hayashi Sensei also taught Reiki as a means of curing physical problems. So I conduct seminars focusing on healing physical illness.

I also hear that the Reiki, which is spread today, is treated as a means of 'relaxation' or 'consolation'. This is of course a part of its effectiveness but I would like to emphasize the immeasurable possibilities it has in more practical applications. In the past Usui Sensei and Hayashi Sensei promoted Reiki in the hope of applying it in medical treatments. Respecting their intention, I am going to continue promoting Reiki as a great way to improve health. I would like to introduce it to as large number of medical professionals as possible and reintroduce the original Reiki to those who have learned the Western form so as to demonstrate its practical uses.

When Western Reiki teachers in Japan visited us one after the other several years ago we were very surprised to learn that some of them had become teachers without any experience of giving treatment. I wondered what Reiki could be without doing treatments. Whenever we had a teacher in our house my mother would always ask them what illnesses they had dealt with in the past. She did not mean to be rude or critical but was just curious because she had assumed that they had had an abundance of treatment experience and wanted to exchange opinions. When she asked this question their faces would go blank and they would answer, without hesitation, that they had never done any treatments at all. I am not saying all Reiki teachers are like this. I think perhaps some schools give the Reiki Teacher qualification too easily. We were quite disappointed in the situation in those days.

However one day we had a visit from a couple of Reiki masters from Europe who were very happy to talk with my mother about their great treatment experiences. They had dealt with a variety of serious diseases like cancer and AIDS. I remember them complaining that people would come to them only after their diseases had become very serious and it would take a very long time to treat them. They wished their clients would decide to come much sooner. I totally understood what they meant because we had also encountered such situations. A lot of the people came to us to receive Reiki after their doctors had given up on them. It was like a 'last straw' for them. Reiki can help, even in these kinds of serious situations, but such treatments require lot of time and patience. Anyway, meeting these masters from Europe brought us a happy surprise and it made us understand why Reiki had spread so widely in the Western countries. Also I hear of some practitioners in the West who use Reiki quite practically in hospitals and have had great results. This makes me believe that a bright future lies before us. I greatly respect what these teachers are doing in the West.

In Japan today modern medicine is so prevalent that we are slow in adapting to alternative medicine (which used to be our 'mainstream' medicine), but I am sure there will be a positive change here too. I think we Japanese can learn a lot from what people on the other side of the globe are doing to facilitate change.

I had this book published in Japanese in 2003 in the hope of causing Japanese people to change their minds. Now I am happy to have it translated into other languages. When I wrote it for Japanese readers I did not imagine that it would be published for non-Japanese people. In order to meet the interests of non-Japanese readers I have rearranged some parts and written additional manuscripts. I hope this book will guide you to a further understanding of Reiki.

January 2007, Tadao Yamaguchi, *Jikiden Reiki Kenkyukai*

Some Words about Jikiden Reiki

LINEAGES OF REIKI— FROM JAPAN TO THE WEST

Reiki has become known worldwide today due to the contribution of a lady named Mrs. Hawayo Takata (1900-1980). She brought Reiki to the West and it gradually spread to people all around the globe.

Mrs. Takata was a second generation Japanese American born in Hawaii. In 1935, just before World War II broke out, she was sent to her mother country, Japan, for medical treatment for an illness that had affected her heart, stomach, lungs and gallbladder. Her husband had already passed away and she felt that time was running out. In case the worst should happen she wanted to be prepared by leaving her small daughters in the care of her Japanese parents.

Her condition became worse and worse during her stay in Japan so she had no option but to undergo a serious operation. However just as she lay down on the operating table she heard an internal voice say: "This operation is not necessary." The voice repeated the message three times and it had such an impact on her that she decided to stop the operation. The nurse was very surprised to hear this but made an effort to understand her.

When she asked the doctor if there was not any other way to save her life he replied with kindness, sincerely telling her that there was, but it would take a long time to recover. He introduced her to Hayashi Sensei and Reiki that was to save her life.

Whether by Universal Intention or by a miracle she had been led to Reiki and Hayashi Sensei. After eight months of treatment she had made a miraculous recovery. Hayashi Sensei conducted a Reiki center in Shinano-cho, which in those days was in central Tokyo. The center was quite big enough to accommodate eight Reiki tables and sixteen practitioners, and it was here that Mrs. Takata was a patient.

Having experienced the effectiveness of Reiki through her own healing it was only natural that Mrs. Takata would want to learn it herself. She studied under Hayashi Sensei for a year before returning home to Hawaii where later, in 1938, she invited Hayashi Sensei and was able to complete all the Reiki levels.

Initially Mrs. Takata did not teach Reiki. She might have taught privately but seems to have concentrated more on healing. It wasn't until 40 years later, in mid 1970s that she began to teach more openly. It must have been really difficult for a Japanese person to introduce something as Japanese as Reiki in Hawaii right after World War II, so it is not surprising that Mrs. Takata waited such a long time.

She taught for only a few years up to her death in 1980, managing to train just twenty-two teachers. The number was not so large but these teachers initiated the spread of Reiki throughout the world and, thanks to them, Reiki is now practiced by millions of people. There are various famous Reiki organizations active today – The 'Reiki Alliance' is led by Mrs. Takata's granddaughter, Ms. Phyllis Furumoto and Dr. Barbara Ray promotes and teaches 'The Radiance Technique®'. These organizations, among others, have been so successful in the promulgation of Reiki that it has now begun to be reintroduced to its homeland, Japan.

REIKI RETURNS TO JAPAN

Reiki has been slowly spreading in Japan once again since 1984 when ‘The Radiance Technique®’ organization began to hold seminars here. However it wasn’t possible to take a teacher’s course until 1993 when Mr. Frank Petter, then living in Sapporo, Hokkaido, in the north of Japan started to train Reiki teachers. Since that time a great many people have become teachers and it has gradually become popular here in Japan. We estimate that over 20,000 students have attended these seminars.

Since Reiki started to become re-acknowledged in Japan a number of people have tried to trace its history and thus the existence of the *Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai* – the organization founded by Usui Sensei himself – has become known. However this organization is closed to the general public so the original form of Reiki has not been passed down through this source.

As information has been gathered some of the misunderstandings about Usui Sensei and Reiki have gradually been amended. But time passed with core information still missing and Western Reiki teachers concluded that there was no way to learn the original Reiki from the direct lineage of Usui Sensei. Many people were now asking the important question:

‘Is it really impossible to learn the original form of Reiki in the way Usui Sensei and Hayashi Sensei taught?’

While Reiki was being reintroduced to Japan, on the other side of the world some others were trying to replicate the original style of Reiki using the book published by *Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai, Reiki Ryoho no Shiori*.³ In spite of their best efforts they could not complete the task effectively as some essential elements were still missing. For example, the symbols and the methods of attunement were not included because these were not handed down via written material.

At this time my mother and I were using Reiki every day completely unaware that it had become so popular or that people were searching for information that we had here.

WHY I STARTED TEACHING JIKIDEN REIKI

Then in 1999 my mother, Chiyoko Yamaguchi, was mentioned in a book written by a well-known Reiki teacher in Japan. This had a profound impact on the Reiki community, much greater than I or my mother could have expected. People were fascinated at the discovery of a woman who had learned directly from Hayashi Sensei and even more amazed by the fact that she had learned it at the age of 17 and had been practicing in her daily life for over 65 years!

Following this publication a great many people started to visit my mother, among them famous Reiki teachers at home and abroad. They encouraged us to start holding seminars replicating those held by Hayashi Sensei in the 1930's.

Initially we rejected the idea. However one day I overheard a colleague from an environmental group talking about Reiki, he claimed that Reiki was 'no big deal' and went on to say that he had taken a one-day seminar but did not feel that he had learned anything useful at all. He relayed the contents of the seminar and I was really amazed to hear that they were so far removed from the great spirit of Reiki. It made me realize that it is important for us to pass on the original teachings of Hayashi Sensei. It was a turning point for me. It was then that my mother and I decided to set up *Jikiden Reiki Kenkyukai* (institute) and start seminars.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the Reiki teachers who gave me encouraging advice motivating me to start doing what I now do.

JIKIDEN REIKI AND WESTERN REIKI

I am often asked, “What is the difference between *Jikiden* Reiki and Western Reiki?”

Both *Jikiden* and Western Reiki have their roots in Usui Sensei’s Reiki. However they are not exactly the same, as Western Reiki has left some elements behind and added various new ideas and practices.

I do not mean that Western Reiki is imperfect or wrong and I understand the reasons why some elements have not survived. It is possible that if the original form had been rigidly adhered to it would have fallen flat in other cultures and only a small number of people may have been blessed with Reiki. It is natural that in different cultures Reiki should spread in different ways for the people with varying cultural backgrounds to accept it. I feel that we shouldn’t be focusing on the differences. Instead we need to focus on the universality of Reiki and its incredible healing capabilities.

As I touched on in my preface, I know a Reiki teacher overseas who has been successful helping cancer patients at a hospital. To me, giving one’s best effort to help people is the great original spirit of Reiki as passed down by Usui Sensei and Hayashi Sensei. As I see it, the differences in techniques are not as important as attitude, so I believe that it is very important that the original teachings of Hayashi Sensei be passed on, not just in terms of techniques but of the fundamental attitudes and intentions he maintained.

You might have been wondering what ‘*Jikiden*’ means. ‘*Jikiden*’ is a general term for the Japanese (it is a term often used in traditional Japanese arts) that means ‘directly transmitted or passed down from one’s teacher’ and for us the teacher is

Hayashi Sensei. I named my institute and seminar 'Jikiden Reiki' because I have been trying to replicate as closely as possible the teachings passed down to my mother directly by Hayashi Sensei. I am afraid it is impossible to make it exactly the same as Hayashi Sensei's seminars. However, I have resolved to do my best to complete the mission and I have been reconfirming the content of the seminar not just with my mother but also with my relatives who also often attended Hayashi Sensei's seminars. Moreover, I believe that the most important asset of *Jikiden Reiki* is my mother's 65 years' devotion to Reiki. Cherishing my mother's experience I am determined to further improve myself doing the best job I can as selflessly as possible. I will leave it to your judgment.

Chapter 2:

Reiki and My Family

BIOGRAPHY OF MY MOTHER, CHIYOKO YAMAGUCHI

First of all let me introduce my mother.

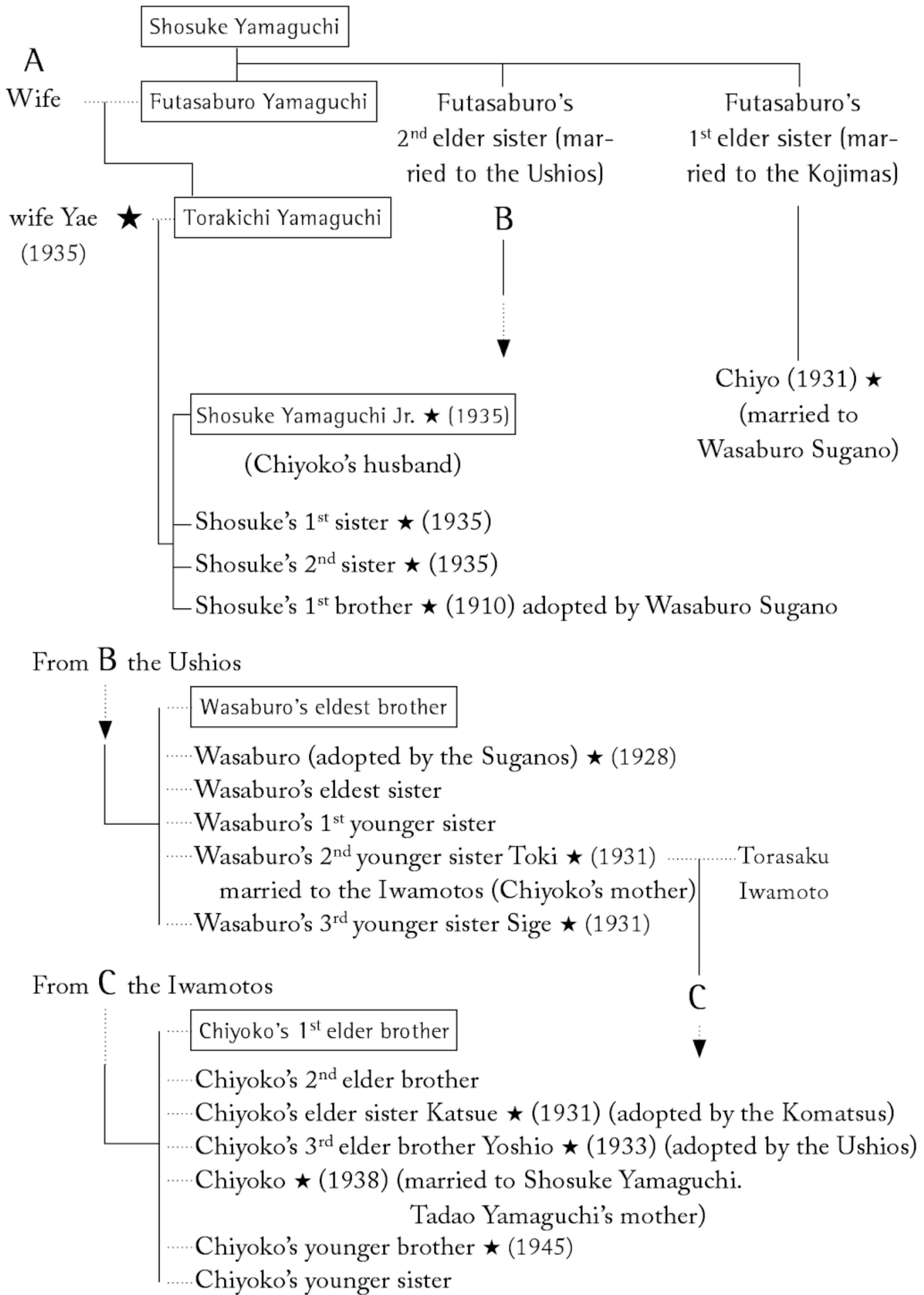
Chiyoko Yamaguchi was born in Kyoto on December 18th 1921. Her maiden name was Iwamoto. She was the second daughter in her family and had six siblings.

She lived in Kyoto until the second grade of elementary school when she went to live with her uncle's family in Tezukaiyama, a suburb of Osaka. This uncle, Mr. Wasaburo Sugano, was the person who brought Reiki into my family. I will elaborate on him later.

She grew up with Mr. Sugano's family because Mr. Sugano did not have any children of his own and Chiyoko's parents had seven. The Suganos had intended to adopt her as their own daughter but this was never realized.

Later, when she was around ten years old, Chiyoko and one of her brothers moved to Ishikawa prefecture, the family's hometown, to live with another family of relatives, the Ushios. After she moved there, she began to hear people around her talking about Reiki all the time. When one of the family members was not well, the others would say that they would give him or her

THE FAMILY TREE OF THE YAMAGUCHIS, THE USHIOS, THE SUGANOS, THE IWAMOTOS



★ Family members who were able to practice Reiki. Year of Reiki initiation in brackets..

Reiki. Reiki was a daily term. Because the Ushios were an affluent family they did not have to work outside to make their living. They always had a lot of servants to work for them at home too. They owned some farmland, which was left in the hands of caretakers, so, instead, they helped other people with Reiki. The Suganos, who in those days were living in Osaka, often stayed with them for a month during summer.

Chiyoko grew up happily in such an affluent family environment. She was lucky that she never had to worry about money in her youth. Even when she got married in 1942 her former foster family, the Suganos, generously helped her prepare for her new life.

FIRST CONTACT WITH REIKI— WASABURO SUGANO

Mr. Wasaburo Sugano, my mother's uncle who treated her like his own daughter, was the key person who brought Reiki into our family. He was a hard working-man from Daishoji, Ishikawa in the North of Japan who moved to Osaka to start his career. He found employment with the paper manufacturer Okura Yoshiten and there he worked his way up to become an executive director of the company. Mr. Sugano's initial interest in Reiki was spurred by the sad deaths of both of his children. His first child died soon after birth and his second at the age of fifteen from tuberculosis (TB), which in those days was considered incurable.

Success, with all the money, power and status that it brings, could not save his children for him. Conventional medicine offered nothing. He was completely helpless. Hearing about *Reiki Ryoho* (treatment) by chance around 1928, his initial interest was prompted by these bitter experiences and it led him to his first Reiki seminar with Chujiro Hayashi Sensei in Sakai, Osaka.



Around this time Hayashi Sensei and his organization, which he called 'Hayashi Reiki Kenkyu-kai', held seminars in Osaka on a monthly basis. Mr. Sugano progressed from the '6th *kyu* (degree)' and then the '5th *kyu*'. He kept on and completed the *Shoden* and *Okuden* levels.⁴ 'Kyu' is a set of levels preceding the *Shoden* and *Okuden*. The 'kyu' degrees were given when participants joined a session to experience Reiki. At this stage they were not yet permitted to practice Reiki on others. I hear there were four levels of 'kyu' up to the highest, the 3rd one. After these levels were completed they were allowed to join the main courses—*Shoden* and *Okuden*. I will elaborate upon the differences between the levels in a later chapter.

Mr. Sugano was so impressed with the effectiveness of Reiki that he actively promoted it amongst his extended family and his co-workers in Osaka. Many were invited to Osaka from his hometown Daishoji, Ishikawa to take Reiki seminars. He wanted

to give Reiki treatments to his elderly mother in Ishikawa but he was too busy in his business and lived too far away from her so he had his niece, (my mother's elder sister) Katsue, take a seminar in Osaka so she could go and give Reiki to his mother.

Katsue commuted to the seminar from her uncle Sugano's home in an affluent suburb of Osaka for five consecutive days. The lecture lasted only three hours everyday but was followed by a practical treatment session conducted by Hayashi Sensei himself. She fondly remembers that she was able to meet a lot of different people there including some famous **Kabuki* actors. (**Kabuki* is a traditional Japanese theatre and any Japanese person from her generation would have recognized these actors.)

RECOVERING FROM TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

As I mentioned earlier, Mr. Sugano became interested in learning Reiki after the painful experience of losing both of his children to tuberculosis. Later his wife Chiyo also became afflicted with the same illness but fortunately by that time Sugano had already started practicing Reiki. He gave her intensive treatments and she was privileged also to receive treatments from Hayashi Sensei himself. Thanks to this attention she made a complete recovery from TB, which at that time was thought to be incurable.

Naturally through this life-saving experience Mrs. Chiyo Sugano also became enthusiastic about Reiki, even more so than her husband.

This is not the only story of miraculous recovery from TB. Mr. and Mrs. Sugano also helped my mother's elder brother completely recover from tuberculosis. Around that time Japan was in the middle of World War II and her brother was about to be conscripted for military service. He was rejected however because the physical examination revealed that he had TB. He

was sent back home to Ishikawa. The Suganos heard about this and invited him to Mr. Sugano's sister's home in Osaka, which was close to their house. They gave him Reiki treatments every day and Hayashi Sensei joined them for some of the treatments. Thanks to their efforts my uncle completely recovered from TB. He regained his health and as a result ended up having to go to war, however he returned home fine and well and lived a healthy life to the age of 67.

In those days TB was considered incurable and it was really hard, not only for the one suffering, but it also weighed on the patient's entire family. If it became known to others in the community, people became afraid of contact with the family. Daughters would be excluded from bridal candidate lists so it was often kept secret. My mother, even as the patient's sister, did not know for a long time that her brother had been infected.

After this Mr. and Mrs. Sugano were completely convinced of the effectiveness of Reiki. From that time on Mrs. Chiyo Sugano taught Reiki to many people in Daishoji, Ishikawa including her



Around 1945 at Hayashi Sensei's memorial service. Chie Hayashi Sensei is the lady in the middle with the glasses, Chiyo Sugano (Chiyoko's aunt) is standing next to her on the right.

relatives. She gave *Reiju* to my father Shosuke Yamaguchi and his mother Yaeko (my grandmother).

After Hayashi Sensei passed away in 1940 Mrs. Sugano helped Mrs. Chie Hayashi, Hayashi Sensei's wife, conduct seminars in Ishikawa. Mrs. Sugano was the main organizer when the memorial service for Hayashi Sensei was held in Daishoji, Ishikawa. I will go into more details of this later.

SETTING UP THE DAISHOJI BRANCH

In Daishoji Ishikawa those who had learned Reiki in Osaka practiced it actively to heal others. Those who were helped became interested in learning it themselves but it was very expensive and very time consuming to go all the way to Osaka to take the course in those days. Mr. Wasaburo Sugano wondered if he could invite Hayashi Sensei to Ishikawa, knowing that he had been traveling around Japan teaching Reiki. He happily accepted the invitation knowing Mr. Sugano had been a trusted and major contributor to the promotion of Reiki. He said he would come if there were more than ten participants.

In 1935 the first seminar was held in Daishoji, Ishikawa. It became a regular event after this and was held twice a year, in spring and autumn. Hayashi Sensei was always welcomed and shown a great deal of hospitality by the locals in Daishoji whenever he visited there. He was always put up in an elegant traditional Japanese health resort near Daishoji. They hired a taxi each day to take him to and from the seminar, which was a rather special way to treat a guest those days. In the first seminar there in 1935 Chiyoko Yamaguchi's elder sister, Katsue, took the *Okuden* level training.

At that time moving up to the next level took more time and effort to practice than it does today. Katsue had previously attended Hayashi Sensei's monthly Reiki seminars held in Osaka



The very first seminar in Ishikawa. In the middle is Hayashi Sensei.
The young girl on the left is Chiyoko Sensei's elder sister Katsue.

(the seminars were also held in Tokyo) and progressed step by step from 6th *kyu* to 3rd *kyu* leading to *Shoden*. Students were allowed to participate in the *Okuden* training course only after a lot of practice, which would enable them to feel *Byosen* (problematic areas). (I will elaborate upon this *Byosen* concept in the chapters 3 and 5). However Hayashi Sensei did give an intensive five-day course of both *Shoden* and *Okuden* coupled with longer hours each day when he taught outside Tokyo and Osaka. He did the same in Ishikawa.

Hayashi Sensei traveled all over Japan. As well as in Tokyo and Osaka, he taught Reiki in Aomori, Mie, Wakayama and many other towns. People in those places started to form their own branch organizations. I have established that there were branches in Osaka and Ishikawa at this time and I am certain that there were more in other places but I haven't been able to confirm those yet.

Following *Okuden* the next level was *Shihan-kaku* (or assistant teacher level). At this level practitioners were permitted to teach

the *Shoden* course. After *Shihan-kaku* the next level was *Shihan* (teacher). *Shihans* were instructors who were allowed to teach both the *Shoden* and *Okuden* courses. Mr. Sugano reached *Shihan* around 1933 and in the late 1930s he was permitted by Hayashi Sensei to instruct teachers. My mother Chiyoko learned *Reiju* to become a *Shihan* from Mr. Sugano. She was very young but she had a lot of treatment experience, which qualified her to learn *Reiju*. Later she attended seminars as a *Shihan* and was honored to practice *Reiju* with Hayashi Sensei's wife, Chie Hayashi Sensei.

By the time the first seminar was held in Ishikawa some people had already been granted the *Shihan-kaku* diploma in Osaka. They organized a *Reiju-kai* (attunement session) every month so people were able to receive *Reiju* monthly from those local *Shihan-kakus* even though Hayashi Sensei was not present. By the time Chiyoko Yamaguchi attended her first seminar in 1938 people in Daishoji had already formed their own branch – the Daishoji Branch. She recalls that there were some *Shihans* there.

CHIYOKO YAMAGUCHI'S REIJU EXPERIENCE

As I have mentioned my mother lived with her relatives, the Ushios, from the age of ten. In that family Reiki was practiced daily. Whenever she had some minor ailment like a headache, stomach ache, cold or fever she was given Reiki by her uncle, aunt or her own sister. After the Reiki treatment she always felt better so she hardly ever needed to see a doctor.

Sometimes the neighbors would come to see her sister Katsue for a Reiki treatment. They would always feel better after the treatment and thank Katsue profusely. Chiyoko was continually impressed with Reiki and it was only natural that she would be eager to learn it herself. However her uncle made her wait until she graduated from school. She waited impatiently for that day.

The tuition fee for Reiki seminars in those days was 50 yen when the average salaried workers were getting 47 yen a month showing that it was extremely expensive. However Mr. Sugano was convinced that she should take it. He thought it would be most useful for her when she got married and had a family of her own. It would be more worthwhile spending money on the course than spending a fortune on luxurious wedding arrangements⁵. This shows how seriously the family took Reiki.

The great day finally came. On March 13 1938 Chiyoko joined the five-day course of *Shoden* and *Okuden*. Accompanied by her elder sister Katsue she left the house in a brand new *Kimono* (a traditional Japanese garment made of silk) that Mr. Sugano had bought for the occasion. They headed to the house of a member of the Daishoji Branch where the seminar was to be held. The 17-year old girl was very excited but extremely nervous at the same time. From here I would like to use my mother's own words so can you feel the atmosphere.



Chiyoko Yamaguchi at the age of 17

Chiyoko:

“When we got to the house some people were there already. Most of them were much older than I was. Some of the men

there were wearing formal attire, which made the atmosphere very serious. My sister Katsue had already been a regular member at the Daishoji Branch so she seemed pretty comfortable but I was totally overwhelmed. I felt a little reassured when I found one of my aunts among the coordinators of the seminar. I remember seeing three rows of six *Zabuton* (a Japanese style cushion for sitting on the floor) and we were each told to sit on one of them in order. I don't really remember the exact number of the participants that day."

She remembered that the coordinators greeted the participants with an explanation of the appropriate manner in which to receive *Reiju* (attunement). Here is how the *Reiju* was done:

Coordinator:

"Firstly the room will be darkened. We ask you to be seated in the *Seiza* posture (formal Japanese sitting style on one's knees) with your eyes closed, sitting up straight and taking care no pressure is put on the lower *Tanden* (a spot three cm lower than the navel).

Please place your hands in *Gassho* (folded hands in prayer style).

Even after your *Reiju* is completed please remain seated quietly until all the participants finish receiving *Reiju*. You are not to leave the seat or to talk."

Chiyoko:

"After the briefing sessions Hayashi Sensei entered the room dressed in *Haori* and *Hakama* (traditional Japanese formal suit type kimono). I had known that Hayashi Sensei was a respected naval officer and I was impressed by his dignified appearance and impressive bearing. A tall man, he appeared to have light shining all around him.

The room was very dark because the shutters were all closed and lights had been turned off.



Chiyoko's first seminar in 1938. The 3rd man in the back row is Hayashi Sensei. Chiyoko Sensei is standing 5th from the right. The 4th girl is her sister Katsue.

With Hayashi Sensei leading, *Go-kai-no-sho* (the five Reiki principles written on the scroll that was hung in the room where the attunements took place) was recited by the participants. The room was so dark that they could not read the words on the scroll. So they followed what Hayashi Sensei read, line by line. They recited the *Gokai* three times.

Occasionally before the *Reiju* he chanted out loud *Gyosei* of the Meiji Emperor (These are traditional Japanese *Waka* poems which, when written by an emperor are specially known as *Gyosei*. For further information about *Gyosei* please refer to Chapter 3). Then the *Reiju* finally began. First we were given *Reiju* by Hayashi Sensei, followed by others who held the *Shihan* (teacher) degree. I remember that there were possibly three *Shihans* but it was so dark that I could not confirm the exact number. Each *Reiju* lasted about five minutes.

After the *Reiju* all the participants came together to form a *Reiki Mawashi* (sitting in a circle, each person laying their hands on the person sitting in front in order to feel the Reiki circulating). Sometimes Hayashi Sensei himself joined the circle and at other times he sat in the center giving instructions to the participants. Hayashi Sensei then went on to explain the theory behind Reiki.

The seminar started at 10 am. In the morning we received one *Reiju*. Then we sat to listen to the lecture given by Hayashi Sensei and we also had a practical training. We gave Reiki to a person lying on the Reiki table, which was made of rattan. For the receiver we used a blanket to cover his or her body and a small cotton towel for the head. The beds were 30 to 40 cm high which helped practitioners sit straight when giving Reiki. We all had a chance to experience being both a giver and a receiver. We had the opportunity to lay hands on different parts of the body of different receivers every day throughout the entire five-day seminar. Sometimes there was

an opportunity to give an actual Reiki treatment to someone with an illness who lived close to the venue.”

REIKI— A GREAT GIFT FOR A BRIDE TO BRING TO HER NEW FAMILY

Having constantly received Reiki throughout her childhood Chiyoko learned to be a good Reiki practitioner quite quickly. After she took the seminar her foster grandmother at the Ushios told Chiyoko that strong Reiki was radiating from her hands. This remark gave Chiyoko the confidence to treat people in need. She treated a lot of people, especially young children with problems such as burns or bed wetting.

She married in 1942 at the age of 21 and was soon totally convinced of what Mr. Sugano had told her “Reiki would be very helpful and would be a wonderful bridal gift to bring to her husband’s family”.

Chiyoko:

“After I became pregnant I gave Reiki to my unborn baby. It worked really well and all of my kids were healthy. All four of my children were boys and they often suffered injuries and sometimes got sick. Whenever something happened to them Reiki helped greatly. It was really reassuring for such a young mother in those days. It is like they were brought up with Reiki.”

When my mother received *Reiju* for the first time her high school friends ridiculed her. They thought it absurd to spend money on something so intangible and thought it better spent on more substantial things like traveling or kimonos (clothing). Some said they would not buy Reiki at all. They said, “If this kind of hand healing can cure sicknesses why would we need doctors?” The funny thing is that she found the answer to these

kinds of remarks through her own experience. She would say, “Indeed we don’t need doctors”. My mother made every effort to enhance her Reiki energy, to bring it to a level where there was “no need for doctors”. In fact I have never seen a doctor since I was a little boy.

Chiyoko:

“Even if you learn such a wonderful healing art, if you don’t practice it at all you won’t be able to use it when it’s needed. It all depends on how seriously you practice what you have learned. My grandmother used to tell me to help others whenever possible. So whenever there was someone who was not well my grandmother would suggest that I give him Reiki and I did so. Thus I have had a lot of surprising experiences with Reiki”.

My mother Chiyoko proceeded to the *Shihan* level around 1940. She did this under her uncle, Mr. Wasaburo Sugano’s instruction with the permission of Hayashi Sensei. Mr. Sugano by then had



Chiyoko (34 years) with Tadao (3 years)

gained qualification to teach *Reiju* to other people. In those days the *Shihan* degrees were not given in a seminar the way we do today. When a person was ready he or she was able to learn to give *Reiju* privately.

My mother was still very young but she had had a lot of treatment experience and wanted to gain this level because she was leaving for Manchuria with her husband. She thought it would be helpful to know how to give *Reiju* to others. Before she left for Manchuria she met Chie Hayashi Sensei (Hayashi Sensei's wife). Mrs. Hayashi's warm words of encouragement moved her greatly to help people with Reiki in the new place.

LIVING THROUGH THE WAR WITH REIKI

During and after World War II Reiki helped my family through the troubled times. My mother got married in February 1942, a year after Japan became involved in the war. Prior to their marriage my father, Shosuke Yamaguchi, had gone to Harbin in Manchuria to start a business but he came back to Japan temporarily because he fell ill.

After he recovered from the illness they got married and moved to Manchuria, not knowing that they would have to go through a stormy time there because of the war. Without Reiki their life would have been even harder.

In Manchuria my mother gave Reiki treatments to her family and neighbors. They were grateful to her for helping their kids when they had problems like toothache. However it was during their return to Japan that Reiki helped her most.

Chiyoko:

“In those chaotic times normal medical services were not available. One day I happened to get a whitlow. I gave it Reiki constantly and it healed. That greatly renewed my appreciation of Reiki.

Some people who had brought their children from distant places had no choice other than to leave them with Chinese families because either they or the children had fallen ill on the way and they were unable to bring them back home. The local school near my house was packed with Japanese refugees evacuated from far away places.

I saw some children who were starved to the point of madness. They even tried to eat pieces that they peeled off the walls in the school. In the end they died.

There were no doctors or medicine available. As much as possible I tried using Reiki to help people in these situations. I never felt such necessity for Reiki in my life.

Finally I managed to get on board a vessel returning home. I sat in the hold with my two sons for the whole week it took to get back to Japan. There was anarchy on that ship. There were robberies even between Japanese people and the atmosphere was very tense.

People were avoiding one another so it was difficult to practice Reiki there. However I had occasion to use it when kids sitting near me got food poisoning from some old rice, which was the only food available.

I think it was there that I lost all my Reiki documents, including my certificate granted by Hayashi Sensei and the notebooks I had cherished. It was unfortunate but Reiki was alive in my palms and has never been lost. I came back to Japan in good shape thanks to the Reiki in my hands.”

SAVING MY FATHER FROM TERMINAL ILLNESS WITH REIKI

In the chaos after the war Chiyoko lost contact with her husband Shosuke Yamaguchi. He was called up for military service in March 1945 and went into battle. Five months later, in August

that year, the war ended. However he was interned as a prisoner of war in Siberia for three more years and finally came back to Japan in 1948. Those three years were very hard for my mother because she heard nothing from her husband. She was sure that he was alive however. She believed that, as a Reiki practitioner himself, he would manage to heal himself and help others. Moreover there was one more reason that made her believe that he would be fine. When she sent him distant Reiki she could feel sensations in her palms, which suggested that the receiver was alive. Back then all her family were Reiki practitioners and they also sent Reiki to their husbands, sons and brothers to confirm that they were alive.

After he got back to Japan he went into a military hospital where he had to stay for two years. His doctor told the family that he would not survive long. On the battle field the shock from a blast had caved in a part of the back of his head and cracked his skull. This left him with chronic headaches. We asked one of the best doctors from Kyushu in Southern Japan to help him. The doctor told the family that the operation would cost 30,000 yen, an enormous amount of money back then, and that he could not guarantee that it would help him. Actually the doctor was quite amazed that someone in this condition could still be alive. He also said that my father would not regain full functioning of his brain. He was sorry, but he would not even be able to calculate easy math problems and it would be quite impossible for him to go back to work or deal with difficult tasks. He also mentioned that he would not be surprised if my father's skull broke open like a bowl at any moment. When she heard this news my mother was so shocked that she could not utter a word.

Chiyoko:

“I was totally freaked out. It was as if icy water had been splashed on my back. I did not know how to bring up our

young children all by myself. However there were a lot of other people in even worse situations and considering this I pulled myself together and tried to be optimistic. After all, my husband was still responding when I talked to him. If necessary I was willing to be the breadwinner. The most important thing was that my husband was still alive. It encouraged me and with this realization I calmed down.”

So everyday my mother gave Reiki to my father’s wounded head, as did my father himself. The result was that he became well enough to go back to work even though he still had to use painkillers. He had been a successful businessman in Manchuria and once he regained his health through Reiki he was motivated to be successful again. He took his family to Kyoto where he began again from scratch.

When they came to Kyoto they were penniless. My mother who had been brought up in a wealthy family was miserable at first, but thanks to their business the family managed to make ends meet.



Shosuke Yamaguchi in the Military Hospital at Yamanaka spa, December 1950

A HEALING FAMILY — THE YAMAGUCHIS

Even before the 20th century and our own Reiki experience there was a healing tradition in my family. Before I go on with my personal Reiki story I will give you a brief idea of my family background.

MY SAMURAI ANCESTORS AND A JAPANESE TYCOON

One of my ancestors was a feudal lord during the Medieval Period in Japan, and owner of Daishoji castle in the region of Kaga (Ishikawa prefecture today). His name was **Yamaguchi Genbanokami Munenaga**. The family was charged with supervising a large area of land and rendered devoted loyalty to the then ruler of Japan, *Hideyoshi Toyotomi* — a major historical figure who actually brought about the unification of Japan during the warring period in the 16th century. Since Hideyoshi Toyotomi did not leave an adult heir a scramble for power followed his death in 1598. That led to a major battle (*Sekigahara Battle* on October 22nd, 1600). The winner of this battle was Hideyoshi's foremost vassal, *Ieyasu Tokugawa*, who successfully swept away the survivors of the Toyotomis.

Ieyasu Tokugawa started his administration in Edo (now Tokyo) and assumed the old title of *Shogun*⁶. This was the beginning of the long lasting *Tokugawa Shogunate* (also known as the Edo-Period), which marked a big turnaround in the history of Japan. The successful policies of successive Tokugawas enabled them to stay in power for the next 250 years, up until the mid-19th century.

My ancestors' family belonged to the Toyotomi side. Losing a battle fought against *Toshiie Maeda* of the Tokugawa side prior to the Sekigahara Battle, their status then collapsed.

After the defeat some of the family descendents, who had escaped and managed to survive, hid themselves in a small village called Sugao in Daishoji. They were brought up there as the children of the master of that village but they secretly kept the family name. For the next 400 years the family name was passed from generation to generation and it was inherited by my father.

ABOUT THE DRAGONFLIES ON THE COVER OF THIS BOOK

During the Period of the Warring States in Japan dragonflies were thought to be a lucky sign, which would bring Samurai warriors victory. The ancestors of the Yamaguchis were Samurai and the family back then wore armor emblazoned with images of dragonflies. When my book was published in Japanese someone suggested that we put a picture of dragonflies on the cover to pay respect to the guardian spirit that had protected my ancestors. For the English edition I also asked for them on the cover in the hope that they would help me send this great message to people around the world.

MY FAMILY'S HEALING ROOTS ANCESTORS BACK IN PREHISTORIC TIMES

Interestingly, it is thought in my family that our ancestors, dating even further back, were a family of *Shinto* priests and healers who used their hands to heal with. It is believed that we originally came from Izumo (which for Japanese is a spiritual region



The tree where the Hakuryujin are believed to reside.
In the left corner is Shosuke Yamaguchi.