



# The Shambhala Guide to Kendo: Its Philosophy, History, and Spiritual Dimension

*Minoru Kiyota*

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Kendo is the art of swordsmanship that was cultivated by the samurai in medieval Japan and it is an increasingly popular martial art studied in the West today. While most books on kendo focus primarily on *kata*, or the traditional movements or forms, *The Shambhala Guide to Kendo* provides a succinct overview of the art as a whole: its historical significance, spiritual teachings, and how it can be used by practitioners today as a means of strengthening the body and mind.

*The Shambhala Guide to Kendo* (previously published in hardcover as *Kendo: Its Philosophy, History, and Means to Personal Growth* by Kegan Paul International, 1995), covers everything from the details of practice—such as strikes, shouts, and stances—to the history and philosophy of Japanese swordsmanship, including an overview of bushido, the code of the samurai. The author also demonstrates how the development of Buddhism influenced two important schools of Japanese swordsmanship.

*The Shambhala Guide to Kendo* includes discussions of:

- Kendo as an expression of complete body-mind integration
- The historical development of kendo from the twelfth century to today
- The cultivation of the "mind of no-mind" in kendo, a state of egolessness and fearlessness
- The Buddhist "infrastructure" of kendo
- The practice of kendo meditation
- The significance of the dojo, or hall of practice

*The Shambhala Guide to Kendo* also provides a useful glossary that includes the Japanese and English rendering of key terms and an informative list of *ryu* (or school) lineages. This accessible overview of the art will appeal to students of traditional Japanese culture as well as kendo practitioners.

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