

Katori-shintoryu

Tenshin Shoden Katori Shintoryu is one of the oldest extant martial arts in Japan, an exemplar of koryu bujutsu. The Tenshin Shoden Katori Shintoryu was founded by Iizasa Ienao, who was living near Katori Shrine (Sawara City, Chiba Prefecture) at the time. The ryu itself gives 1447 as the year it was founded, but some scholars claim circa 1480 is more historically accurate (Watatani 1967).

Iizasa Ienao (Iizasa Chisai Ienao) was a respected spearman and swordsman whose daimyo was deposed, encouraging him to relinquish control of his household to conduct purification rituals and study martial arts in isolation. Legend says he spent 1000 days in Katori Shrine practising martial techniques day and night, until the kami of the shrine, Futsunoshi no Mikoto, appeared to him in a dream and handed down the secrets of martial strategy in a scroll named Mokuroku Heiho no Shinsho.