

Seventh Generation Heir  
 to Hokushin Itto Ryu Hyoho (Art of Warfare)  
 OTSUKA Ryunosuke Masatomo

北辰一刀流兵法第7代宗家  
 ほくしんいつとうりゅうひょうほうだい だいそうけ  
 大塚龍之介政智さん  
 おおつかりゅうのすけまさとも

## Taking on the Responsibility of Handing Down Traditions

文化を守り伝える  
 ぶんかまもつた  
 責任を負って  
 せきにんお



“Around 200 years ago, my mother’s ancestors took over a forge that had been founded in 1415. Because of this I became interested in swords and by studying a variety of different sources, came to know a great deal about Japanese swords. When I started learning *iaido* (the art of drawing one’s sword) at a *dojo* in Munich, I became increasingly captivated by *kendo* (fencing), more particularly *koryu kenjutsu* (a school that preserves the fighting style of ancient times). I came to Japan when I was 18,” says German national OTSUKA Ryunosuke Masatomo.

「約200年前、私の母方の先祖は1415年創立の鍛冶屋を引き継ぎました。それで剣に興味を持ち、いろいろ調べていて日本の刀を知りました。15歳のときミュンヘンの道場で居合を習い始め、ますます日本の剣道、特に古流剣術（古い時代の戦い方を伝える剣道）にひかれました。来日したのは18歳です」とドイツ出身の大塚龍之介政智さんは言います。

Otsuka’s original name was LOESCH Markus. He changed his name when he became the adopted son and successor to the Hokushin Itto Ryu Hyoho (Art of Warfare) family. It’s a tradition among *samu-*

*rai* to have two first names, that is Ryunosuke and Masatomo. He wears a *kimono* every day and trains both himself and his pupils from 6:30 am onwards. “Because I am large, I had to have my *kimono* made to order,” he laughs.

大塚さんの元の名前はレッシュ・マルクスといいます。古流剣術の流派の一つである北辰一刀流兵法の第6代宗家の養子になって後を継いだときに名前を変えました。龍之介と政智という二つの名前を持つのは武士の伝統です。日常的に着物を着て、毎朝6時半から自分の稽古だけでなく門下生に教えるという生活をしています。「体が大きいので着物は特注です」と笑います。

His sole purpose in coming to Japan was to study the art of the sword. “I did not go to a university nor to a Japanese language school. My typical day consisted of ten hours of training. Apart from that I studied scrolls on technique with my master, before returning home to my apartment near the *dojo* and going to sleep. First, I communicated by using Japanese words with English. I got used to the language by listening to the conversations of others,” he recalls.