

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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***Kukan* or Space/Time**

Jujutsu is a positional fighting system. This means that the weapons you have available depend on where you are in relation to your opponent. For a smaller, weaker person this can mean the difference between winning and losing. *Kukan*, usually translated simply as space, is probably best translated as space/time and refers to all of the space/time between, and around you and your opponent—spheres of influence for both. Literally, it means unlimited expanse. Distance and correct positioning are entirely dependent on time and context. A basic component of timing is placing yourself in the correct position. Being in the correct position is dependent on what time you are there. When you master this positioning you will encounter moments of free time in the fight. This is time in which you can reassess the situation. This can't be simply translated as space as there is a time component involved. When mastered, this “free time” is why things seem to move either fast or slow, depending on your perception. If things are moving fast, you are probably losing and your opponent sees them as slow. If things seem to be moving slowly, this means that you have positioned correctly both in time and space. Your opponent seems to be moving in slow motion, giving you the opportunity to position correctly. This means you have correctly understand your opponent's intent, and placed yourself in the correct position at the correct time, giving you time to reassess the scenario and ensure yourself a successful outcome by reducing your opponent's intent to zero.

This indicates a state of mind in time and space which may be manipulated. This may be done before, during/with, and after the attack. This may have different effects on the attacker's way of thinking which – hopefully – may also have a psychological effect on him or her. *Kukan* is also the energies (*Ki*) between you and your opponent. You must harmonize this energy (*Ki*) toward an outcome to your benefit. If you can do this you can control the whole outcome before it even begins.

All fights are based on strong psychological factors. Your opponent's intent, and your reaction to it, are determinate on how much space/time you will have in the fight. If you maintain a calm state, you will have the mental space/time to react appropriately. This may place you in a better position at the correct time by destroying your opponent's intent. Your intent is to force them to reassess their intentions and physical position, which again creates space/time for you in the fight. You must find the space/time in a situation to enable you to react appropriately at all levels – physical, mental, emotional and spiritual.

Your spacing may be perfect, or nearly so, but if you've entered into that space too early or too late, you will fail. This is where the concept of time enters the equation. Space is not empty, but is filled with future possibilities. By entering or altering that space, you eliminate some possibilities while creating new ones.

What is the right position and the correct time? Moving to a position of safety when it is safest to do so.

Kukan may be compared to music. The proper chord, at the proper moment, manipulates the space between the notes at the proper time. If the timing were off for any one note,

there would be a noticeable difference, and the piece would lose its beauty and its power. Position in combat at the wrong time will lead to chaos and lack of power.

Much of the above information is derived from the teachings of Hatsumi Masaaki.

***Te Sabaki* or Methods of Using the Hands**

Te sabaki is a generic term that refers to any method of manipulating the hands. These would include deflecting a thrust (*te nagashi*), pressure against the elbow in a joint lock (*osae waza*) or cutting upwards and hooking downwards on the opponent's wrist (wrist locks or *tekubi waza*). On the percussive (*atemi*) side, it would refer to striking (*uchi*), thrusting (*sashi* or *tsuki*) and punching (*tsuki*). However, it is the method of performing these movements, not the movements themselves to which the term refers. In the case of percussive techniques, it is the snap at the end of the technique that gives the technique its power. The delivery method is complimentary to the snap and the two must be studied as two parts of a whole. With deflections, it is the twist at the end that is important, as this is what unbalances the opponent. This explains how the two maxims of *karate* are complimentary. "There are no blocks in *karate*," and "Each block is a strike, and each strike is a block." When you realize that the "chamber" is the deflection done by using a strike to unbalance, and that the "block" is actually the ending of the technique, you realize how the two fit together. With *judo* it is the pull (*hikite*) and the push (*tsurite*) of the hands, which unbalances the opponent. Hand throws (*te waza*) are technically a continuation of *tsukuri* (making or "fitting in") without visible use of the rest of the body. Koizuki Gunji reminds us that the arms and wrists must be gently curved when applying *kuzushi*.

***Reigi Saho* or Proper Conduct**

Proper conduct is what was once referred to as etiquette. It is simply doing the right thing at the right time with *setsu* (also called *reihō*), or respect. Using a timeworn cliché, it is treating others, as you would want them to treat you.

This would include knowing when and how to bow. One bows to one's superiors in rank differently than one does to one's equals. When facing equals the incline of the standing bow is approximately 15°. This is so one can keep focused on the opponent. When bowing to the *sensei*, or any high-ranking visitor, the incline should be about 30°. This indicates a trust in the *sensei*, which is a form of respect that s/he will not abuse his or her authority. In formal classes the *zarei* (kneeling bow) is used. As with the military, the *sensei* should raise up first. This is followed by the highest-ranking *sempai*. The raising should look like a wave moving from highest rank to lowest. As a training method, this addresses the issue of peripheral vision. Without directly looking at the person beside you, you must know the proper time to come from the kneeling bow to the kneeling position.

The term *rei* includes both *reihō* and *reigi*. *Reihō* expresses the abstract **idea** of courtesy and respect. *Reigi* are the actual techniques or actions **showing** courtesy or respect. *Reigi* apply to a wide range of courteous actions that are directly related to the abstract concept of *reihō*. These include small things such as quickly dressing out so others won't have to wait, or introducing yourself to a beginner and making him or her feel welcome. These actions of *reigi* express the abstract concept of *reihō*.

Giri is the reason why the concept of courtesy or *reihō* exists. *Giri* in English may mean social obligation, (a sense of) duty, honor or a debt of gratitude. These concepts are at the

heart of courtesy in the martial arts. They are why so much importance is placed on expressing that respect and gratitude.

"*Yoroshiku onegai shimasu*" spoken at the beginning of each training session is an expression of gratitude. Literally, it means, "I make a request and I hope things go well." The statement means that you are expressing a debt of gratitude to your partner for imposing on him or her. At the end of each training session, the student may say, "Domo arigato gozaimashita," or "Thank you very much."

The *sempai-kohai* (mentor-student) system is an important part of *giri*. This is a system where the more experienced *budoka* is responsible for the training and conduct of their student. The senior mentor has the obligation and responsibility to understand the correct way of doing things and the reasons behind that way. Included is the obligation to show their student the correct way. Conversely, the student has the obligation to learn and apply what they are taught. When the time comes for the student to become the mentor, refusing that responsibility is refusing to assume one's obligation. To beg off testing saying "we are not ready" is deeply insulting to our mentor. In saying we are not ready, we are in effect telling our mentors that we consider ourselves a better judge of our ability than they are. In doing this we imply that our mentor's efforts have not been enough to prepare us. By refusing we are shrinking from our duty and our share of the responsibility, and all of our mentor's efforts are wasted.

A mistake by a student is a direct reflection of the mentor, and it is the mentor's fault. In the case of Grandmaster James M. Mitose, there was the question of his part in the death of a person by one of Mitose's students. Mitose firmly stated that it was his fault. Mitose did not, as many believe, confess to having ordered his student to kill the person, or that he was involved. He was stating that because he had not taught correctly it was his fault the student did the wrong thing. Regardless of what we think of Mitose's statement, I feel few of us would have the sense of duty that Mitose did. Because of his statement, Mitose was sentenced to life in prison and died there.

There are several interconnected concepts at the heart of *rei*. The courtesy and respect that comprise *reigi* and the idea of courtesy or *reihō* come from a sense of obligation and a debt of gratitude. This sense of gratitude comes from understanding that we share our art, and have an opportunity to share our skills and grow in our knowledge of the activity we enjoy. Mentorship is based on this idea of mutual obligation between mentor and student.

NOTE: I have used mentor, rather than senior, as *sempai* implies much more than ranking in a system. I would have preferred something better than "student," but do not like the OED's accepted "mentee," as it sounds – to me – pretentious and contrived.

Much of the above is based on the teaching of kendo instructors.

***Judo* History**

Almost every *judoka* and many *budoka* of other arts know of *jujutsu* schools' influence on Kano Jigoro's development of *judo*. However, many are unaware of other influences on *judo*'s development. Kano came to the United States two or three times. During these visits he met with someone who was to have a great influence on the development of *judo* as Kano was to conceive it. This individual was John Dewey. Dewey believed that there were microcosms that, when expanded, could lead one to being a better person. This belief is thought to be the basis – or genesis, if you will – of Kano's three maxims.

San-ri refers to the three principles, stated as maxims, developed by Kano Jigoro *Shihan*.

Jita kyoei means mutual welfare and benefit. Literally, “Going forward, shining together.”

Jiko no kansei refers to striving for perfection as a human being. It includes good health, intelligence and the ability to know worth. It means good character.

Seiryoku zen'yo means maximum efficiency. *Seiryoku* refers to physical strength. *Seiryoku zen'yo-jita-kyoei* means maximum efficiency with minimum effort for mutual welfare and benefit.

When looked at objectively, these are the precepts of the United States system of teaching: Each student should become a productive member of society, striving to be the “best s/he can be,” while learning team effort.

After his meetings with Dewey, Kano and Dewey corresponded at length. All too often it is forgotten that Kano was primarily an educator. Therefore, his education experience affected his *judo* – not so much the other way around.

It was these three maximums that raised *judo* from a physical art to a philosophical one.

There are two main divisions of *judo*:

- **Kyogi Judo** is a form of training which aims to prepare the body physically apt (*rentai ho*). This is due to the preliminary study of technique (*waza*) for actual contest or *shobu ho*. *Shobu ho* are contest tactics, regulations and rules employed in a tournament contest. These are the narrow goals of *judo*.
- **Kogi Judo** is *judo* in a wider sense. This includes technique (*kyogi* or *shobu ho*), the physical form (*rentai ho*) and the cultivation of the mind (*shushin ho*). This is ***karada o shite seishin ni jujun narashi meru jutsu***, or the art of making the body obedient to the mind. All are necessary to reach toward perfection. These are the higher goals of *judo*.

Hayward Nishioka states that “if you could use the concepts that you found within *judo* and apply them to your everyday life, then that would be termed as large *judo*.”

I highly recommend Martial Arts Talk by Mark V. Wiley.

“The Deadliest Ads Alive!”

For those of you who are too young to remember, and for those who will admit they are old enough and do remember, I recommend you google “Martial Arts Ads in the Comics.” As corny and hyperbolic as they were, these were almost the only information available on martial arts then. You could learn “Yubiwaza the secret, amazingly easy art of self-defense that turns just one finger or your hands into a potent weapon of defense – without any bodily contact.” Just how your fingers or hands were potent weapons without bodily contact was anyone’s guess! For \$1.98 you could become “a master of karate,” and get a “giant life-like karate practice dummy.” The last was a wall chart. One course offered explosive defense without physical strength. It was composed of judo, kung fu, karate, yawara etc. You could also get “the master’s complete course of kung-fu, considered by many to be the most deadly form of attack and self-defense known to man.” If you wanted, you could “master ju-jitsu and be able to overcome any attack—win any fight” –for a dollar! For \$7.95 (regularly \$10.25) you could get a complete ten volume library: *Defend Yourself – Ketsugo, How to Fight, Kashi-no-bo, The Key to Judo, Lightning Ju-Jitsu, American Judo Illustrated, Super Karate, Police Jiu-Jitsu, Scientific*

Boxing and Police Wrestling. At least three were pretty good, *Key to Judo*, *Lightning Ju-Jitsu* and *American Judo Illustrated*. Today one would be considered very politically incorrect: *Police Jiu-Jitsu*. One was just bad – *Super Karate*. Others would rank *Ketsugo* just as bad, if not worse. Then, came the crème-de-la-crème of deadly martial arts, *The World's Deadliest Fighting Secrets* of the Black Dragon Fighting Society. “Count Dante,” AKA John Keehan, who started out a legitimate *karate sensei* until the *dojo* wars in which a rival school killed one of his students, headed this “style”. Keehan was originally a student of Robert Trias. Keehan was one of the first to instruct Dim Mak, or the Death Touch. You have to read his *Dance of Death (kata)* to believe it. One of my favorites: Joe Weider’s WTTF course in which you could become “a terrifying, destructive, self-defense fighting machine in just 30 days.” (WTTF = Weider Trained Terror Fighter; you will hear Rogers Hanshi refer to his RTTF (Rogers Trained Terror Fighters) and Baker Hanshi has his BTTF (Baker Trained Terror Fighters). According to Weider his course was “10 times more effective than both judo and karate.” Weider was one of, if not the, first to mention Thuggee (pronounced Toog-ee), from which we get the word “thug.” This was a group of assassins who strangled with a silk handkerchief. There really was such a group in India, who worshiped Kali! For *Destroyer* fans, Kali is an alternate ego/consort of Shiva (“I am created, Shiva the Destroyer...”). When I showed the ad to Booth *Sensei*, he wrote a letter (on school stationery) asking about the course. He never got an answer. As Kung Fu became popular because of the series, there was a Kung-Fu course that taught “the Deadly Oriental Fighting Art of Instantaneous Death that requires no strength or close body contact.” Note that almost all the ads stressed little or no contact. Presumably, one wanted to be deadly without getting his or her hands dirty. In the martial arts world of make-believe, you could learn the combat system of Aicondo. To this day no one knows what the word means! I think the three middle letters say it all. Later, with the *ninja* craze, there were books on *ninjutsu* (always referred to as *ninja* in the ads). Finally, there was *Self Defense American Style*. Although these were called “books,” most of them were little more than pamphlets, or at best, booklets. Very few were actually books as we think of them, but they were what we had, and they were the introduction to martial arts for many of that era.

Caveat Emptor

For those of you interested in such things Robert Lichello has (at least) two books on *ju-jutsu*. Be aware that *The Art of Ju-Jitsu* and *Ju-Jitsu: Self-Defense for Teen-Agers* is the same book. The only difference is the title. The text and photographs are the same. The information is good and well written, but there’s really nothing advanced in the text.

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