

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*
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Ichigo, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Usui Sensei and “Reiki”

Reiki was not created, developed or re-discovered by Usui Sensei. First, *Reiki* is not the name given to the process by Usui Sensei; that came later. Usui Sensei gave the name *Reiho* to his method of healing. This is given in the inscription on his Memorial stone beside his tomb. *Reiho* refers to a spiritual method. *Reiki* is a very modern western misapplication of Usui's method (*Usui Reiho*). *Reiki* as a “universal life force/energy” outside of the person is a Western conceptualization imported to Japan in the 1980's. Usui believed this “energy” was within the person. Specifically, about two inches below the navel (*saiika tanden* for the martial artist). This spiritual method was designed to awaken in the individual strong therapeutic abilities. Note that these abilities were already in the person and needed only to be awakened. Usui wrote in the *Hikkei*: “Every living, breathing being possesses the spiritual ability to heal. This is true of plants, animals, fish and insects, but it is humans – the culmination of creation – who possess the greatest power. Our method is a practical manifestation of this power.” Usui stated (*Reiki Ryoho Hikkei, Treatment Companion/Guide*) that he did not go in search of special powers. This therapeutic aspect was referred to as *Usui Reiki Ryoho* or Usui's spiritual healing methods. *Reiki*, as used by Usui, is best translated as spiritual. Even *Reiki Ryoho* (spiritual healing methods) was not unique to Usui. It was used at least twice before by two other healing exponents. In 1919, therapist M. Kawakami wrote *Reiki Ryoho To Sono Koka* or *Spiritual Healing and Its Effects*. Later Tanaka Daiseido practiced his method of *Reiki Ryoho* prior to Usui Sensei. Usui Sensei referred to his method as *Usui Reiki Ryoho*, much as Kanō Jigorō referred to his *judo* as *Kodokan Judo* to differentiate it from an earlier school (*Jikishin Ryu*) using the name *judo*. An alternate term used was *Shinrei Ryoho*, used as a synonym of *Reiki Ryoho*. Both *Shinrei* and *Reiki* were translated as spiritual. *Reiki* was also used in the philosophy of the *Omoto Kyo*, the religious Shinto group, with which Ueshiba was affiliated. *Reiki* for *Omoto Kyo* was used to mean an energetic effect, not the energy itself. For *Omoto Kyo*, *ichirei* (one spirit) was the spark of the divine that resides in every living thing. In human beings *ichirei* is referred to as *nao hi*, or spiritual essence. *Nao hi* may also be read as *choku rei*. In all cases, *rei* means spirit, or spiritual. For *Omoto Kyo*, *Reiki* was the manifest effect of *choku rei* in action.

Tokumine no Kun or Staff (Bo) of Tokumine

Tokumine Peichin was said to have been a teacher of Motobu Choki. Tokumine enjoyed drinking liquor and one such incident ended in a drunken brawl. During this, Tokumine injured between twenty and thirty constables to the point they could not even stand up. For this offense, he was exiled to Yaeyama Island. Kyan travelled to Yaeyama Island to learn Tokumine's *bo* form, but upon arriving, was told Tokumine had passed away. Kyan learned that Tokumine had taught the form to his landlord and Kyan learned the form from him. Later, Kyan taught the form to Shimabuku. Uezu Angi stated that Shimabuku studied this form from Kyan but later relearned it from Taira. However, there is no evidence that Taira taught or even knew *Tokumine no Kon*. It may be that Shimabuku

studied the form under Kyan but later re-modified it based on Taira's method of using the *bo*.

Okinawan Kenpo

The earliest reference to "*Okinawan Kenpo*" as a generic term for all *Okinawan Karate* was in the early 1950's. Master Nakamura Shigeru (1894-1972) began to use the term to describe his particular style. Nakamura *Sensei*, as had Funakoshi, disliked the thought of *karate* being divided into separate styles and wanted to form a fighting system based using *karate kata* as the basic core. He was noted for the power of his punch and it was rumored that he was able to flake the bark from a pine tree with a single blow.

Chatan Yara

Chatan Yara was the name of no less than three karate masters. The name meant Yara from Chatan Province, Okinawa. The earliest is credited with being from the early 1600's and is famed for allegedly creating the *kata Seisan*, mysteriously meaning "Thirteen." The mystery was what thirteen meant, and only a very few elite students were given the meaning. This is not the usual origin of *Seisan*, and your *hanshi meiyō kyōju* presents it as the legend it is. Truthfully, no one knows who created the *kata*, or who first brought it to Okinawa, although Matsumura Sokon is alleged to have done so. Thirteen has great significance in Taoism, being a prime number and a symbol of good luck and prosperity in China. There is a very similar form taught on the Chinese mainland called Shr San Tai Bau, meaning thirteen treasures. Some modern interpretations are: you are fighting thirteen opponents (*Isshin-ryū*), it demonstrates thirteen techniques (*Goju-ryū*), which include three initial chest punches, a chest block, two kicks to the knee, assorted quick punching from *kiba dachi*, a front kick followed by a punch and a drop into a cat stance while performing *mawashi uke*. Another version states there are eight defensive techniques and five offensive techniques (other sources state eight powers and five directions; one might make a correlation between the thirteen postures of T'ai Chi Ch'uan). Other interpretations are thirteen hands, thirteen fists, thirteen steps or thirteen types of power or energy. Others believe it is the number of application principles contained within the form. Another meaning is that *Seisan* should be performed in thirteen breaths to teach proper breath control. Each of the forms series of techniques are repeated three times (the three of thirteen?).

Traditionally it has been said that the *Goju-ryū* version of *Seisan* contains the beginning and the end of the "ancestral form," while the *Shorin* version contains the middle. The *Uechi-ryū* version begins in a manner similar to the *Goju* form and features in its "middle," techniques similar to those of the *Shorin* version as well as in its *embusen*. The *Uechi* version is perhaps closer in some respects to the "original" Fujian version than any other *Okinawan kata*.

The next was born around 1680 and studied with Wong Chung-Yoh of Foochow Harbor, Fukien Province, China. He taught his sons who became famous for their proficiency in *karate*.

Wall Running [*Tobi Maru Aruki*] and Acrobatic Stunts [*kyokugei*]

[This is] actually an advanced *ninjutsu* technique. *Tori* uses centrifugal force to "round the corner" of a wall, or run straight up, to elude pursuers.

The secret of the corner lies in “three steps” [*sampo ashi*]. For a counter-clockwise run, *tori* hits the left side wall, still with *tori* facing upward. Finally, on the third step [*sampo*], *tori* pivots 180o counter-clockwise, touching the left side wall with his or her right foot. At this point, *tori* descends 180o from his or her starting point and runs in the direction s/he started from. (Jujutsu, Volume II, pages 184-185, III-B)

Wall Climbing [*Tobi Tate Aruki*]: To go straight up the wall, *tori* must thrust upward with his or her feet, not outward away from the wall. (Jujutsu, Volume II, page 185, II).

Kuden: Wilson *Kanchō* stated that the *ninja* would urinate on his *fundoshi*, then unwrap it as he ran. When the *ninja* came to the wall, he would run as far up as possible, and then slap the *fundoshi* on top of the wall. Being wet, it would stick long enough for the *ninja* to get climb to the top and escape.

Back Flip: Done as [in] standard tumbling {gymnastics}. The secret of gaining height is to pull the legs to the chest as in “rabbit hops” [*usagi tobi*] while the arms are extended overhead as in *Zen'yo ryote ue zuki*. **Kuden:** Tori must “tuck” his [or her] body in as tight a “ball” as possible, straightening out only at the last moment! (Jujutsu, Volume II, page 184, III-A)

Original Requirements for Promotion

As a comprehensive art, Midori Yama Budokai Ju-jutsu issues ranks which are dual in nature for both *ju-jutsu* and *karate*. However, rank in *ju-jutsu* or *karate* alone may be obtained. Thus, rank may be given as follows:

- 1) *Ju-jutsu/Karate* in which the *budōka* must learn all *gohō* and *juhō* techniques as well as *kata*.
- 2) *Ju-jutsu* which requires all *juhō* techniques, but only the *atemi* portion of the *gohō*, *kata* not being required.
- 3) *Karate* which includes all *gohō* techniques and *kata*, but no *juhō* techniques.

Midori Yama Budokai's symbol is a compilation of geometrical patterns which show all possible directions of movement: circular, linear and spiral as well as a combination of all three. In addition, the symbol represents an abstraction of philosophy: The three outside circles represent the mind, body and spirit; the four inside circles, the four cardinal directions which meet at the center; the diamond, which is associated with the Buddha and the hardness of will needed to reach enlightenment. In a more prosaic light, the different lines on which *kata* are performed are shown.

Combination “Flying” Kicks

[Cary Wilson, *Hanshi*, is the only person I ever saw who performed this combination.]

Flying roundhouse kick to flying front kick.

This is a particularly devastating attack while “flying.” *Tori* does a right roundhouse “flying” kick. As *uke* automatically raises his or her hands in an upper-level defense, *tori* follows through under uke's guard with a left front kick! The obvious difficulties are height and speed. For the front kick to be effective, one still has to be airborne, not coming down.

Itsuku – Being glued, stuck, stiff

This is obviously a condition to avoid. In English we refer to “being frozen in place.”

The legs will become stiff, heavy, and not responsive. This usually happens when we judge too hard (think too much), which will cause the breath to stop or rise (we hold our breath). Even when we are not moving the breath has to interact with the feet, and there must be potential energy.

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