

## Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*

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*Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting*

“Victory goes to the one who has no thought of himself.” *Shinkage Ryu*

### ***Shorin-ryu Karate: Shaolin Style Empty Hand***

*Shorin-ryu* may be traced to the first historical figure in *Shorin-ryu's* history: "Bushii" Matsumura Sokon in the 18th century. The first person to use *Shorin-ryu* specifically as the name of his style was Chibana Choshin. This was circa 1933. After WWII other schools used the *Shorin-ryu* name and traced their lineage back to *Shuri-te* and *Tomari-te*. Nagamine Shoshin referred to his style as *Shobayashiryu* and the aforementioned Chibana Choshin's style is known as *Kobayashi-ryu*.

Historically, *Shorin-ryu* is considered the most influential style, and when *karate* was introduced to Japan it was mainly by masters of *Shuri-te/Tomari-te* (aka *Shorin-ryu*) who had been taught by Itosu Ankoh. Itosu, one of Funakoshi's main *sensei*, believed that there should be no styles of *karate* – only *karate*, a dictum also expressed by Funakoshi. Funakoshi and other students remembered that Itosu originally taught a combat form of *karate* and not a sporting version. Of four major Japanese styles, three may be traced back to *Shorin-ryu*. Two were directly influenced by *Shorin-ryu*, and one indirectly. These were *Shotokan* founded by Funakoshi Gichin and *Shito-ryu* founded by Mabuni Kenwa and *Wado-ryu* founded by Funakoshi's student, Otsuka, Hironori. In addition, the original forms of Taekwon-do, of the late 1940s and early 1950s, were also based on *Shorin-ryu kata*. As your Professor has previously stated, it is his belief that Booth *Sensei* actually studied Tang Soo Do, which was originally affiliated with *Shotokan*. In Grandmaster Choi's first book of Taekwondo, he lists and gives instruction for the fifteen basic *kata* of Funakoshi Gichin. One reason for *Shorin-ryu's* wide acceptance is its natural stances and breathing. Also, basic techniques are more easily taught and lend themselves to the practice of *kumite*.

### ***Bogyo Roku Kyodo: Six Defense Actions***

These compose a basic drill of the *Japan Karate-Do Ryobu-Kai*. This style uses the old names of techniques. In general, the phrase “*te*” may be replaced with “*uke*,” to correspond to modern usage.

Old	Modern
<i>Age te</i>	<i>age uke (jodan uke)</i>
<i>Harai te (or Gedan Barai)</i>	<i>gedan barai (gedan uke)</i>
<i>Soto yoko te</i>	<i>soto uke (Japanese: uchi ude uke)</i>
<i>Uchi yoko te</i>	<i>uchi uke (Japanese: soto ude uke)</i>
<i>Shuto te</i>	<i>shuto uke</i>
<i>Sukui te</i>	<i>Sukui uke</i>

It should be noted that Okinawan usage names the technique for the ending motion and the Japanese name the technique for the beginning motion. *Soto uke* in Okinawa refers to

the block moving to the outside. In Japanese, this would be *uchi ude uke*, referring to the block moving from the inside to the outside.

### ***Uke/Tsuki: Receiving/Thrusting***

Your professor emeritus has written that *uke* actually means “receiving,” not “blocking.” This, of course, gives a different meaning to techniques. One would “receive” the attack, implying something given. This means that when any type of attack is done, the opponent gives you the means by which to defeat him or her. A block would simply stop the attack, and not necessarily lead to the defeat of the individual. The difference is subtle, but very important as each technique (or series of techniques) should have the potential to end the confrontation. In like manner, *tsuki* (-*zuki*, if a compound) literally means “thrust,” not “punch.” Obviously a punch may be a thrust, but a thrust may be interpreted in other ways. The most common would be a push against the chest. This is still a *tsuki*, or thrust, but is not commonly perceived as a punch. Another example would be a two-handed choke. The thumbs (or fingers) are thrust into the throat but, again, it is not normally considered a punch. The two-handed *tsuki* to the side at the middle and end of *Tekki Shodan* (*Naifanchi Ichi*) may be a thrust (with the side-facing arm) across the opponent’s throat, resulting in a throw or takedown. The movement is still a thrust, but not a “punch.” When your professor emeritus asks you to “listen to your *kata*,” it is with the actual meaning of the technique, not the common (mis-) interpretation. One would receive the opponent’s thrust as a means to ending any type of attack, not just stop an isolated attack and attempt to counter. The counter-attack should be simultaneous with the received threat. This is particularly evident in the “double-block” in *Tekki Shodan*. The movement is usually given as a type of rising (or flowing) block with the upper arm and a downward block with the lower arm. In reality, the upper arm receives and deflects the thrust as the lower arm thrusts into the opponent’s lower abdomen. The counter-attack was traditionally taught at three different levels. As a beginner, to learn movement, one received then countered, with a slight pause between the two. At the next stage of development, one learned to receive and counter, as in *Tekki Shodan*. The final phase combines the receiving with the counter. Another way to say it is the counter is the receiving. The *Shotokan* technique of *tsuki-uke* is representative of this and may be done from inside or outside the opponent’s attack. Excellent timing is required for this latter technique.

### **Examination for *Shodan***

The following outline is based on traditional testing for the Beginning Step of *Shodan*. Be aware that if your professor emeritus is on the board, he will be looking for the following!

- When performing techniques or *kata*, if you make a mistake – continue! Do not pause, roll your eyes or indicate in any way that what you did is not what you meant to do. If mistakes are obvious, you will be asked to repeat your performance.
- You must remain focused (look at) your opponent, either your partner or the one in the *kata* you perform. This includes not looking away as well as focusing on the correct vital point. Do not look at the judges, the ceiling or the mat (ground)!
- In most *kata*, breathing should not be visible or audible, other than *kiai* at moments of maximum concentration. Obviously, *kata* designed for breathing

- techniques are the exception. One should not grimace, or contort the face. *Kata* teaches combat, and the opponent should not see weakness or inattention.
- The hips should not rise during a block or attack and, with certain exceptions in *kata*, they should remain horizontal. Faults are one hip lower or higher than the other. This is more common than expected. An incorrect front stance may produce a forward lower hip, whereas the rear stance will produce the opposite effect.
  - A strong lower abdomen is the quality of a black belt. It must be tensed, strong and in line with the chest. Do not let this area be uncontrolled. The stomach must be solid; the upper body upright, with the back level, not “swaybacked,” and the buttocks must be pulled in.
  - The shoulders should not be raised when performing a technique. There will be no strength in the arms and no power in the abdomen and stomach. In this regard, as well as the two criteria above, the shoulders should be above the hips, with neither protruding beyond the other.
  - The stances must show stability. If the legs are weak, you will easily lose balance. You must withstand a strong attack and have a strong defense and attack. This is true whether with an actual opponent or an imagined one in a *kata*.
  - The position of the feet will determine a strong stance. For instance, in the forward stance, the front foot should be turned slightly inward, and the rear foot should point slightly forwards. The horse stance should have the feet turned in slightly, with tension inward – as though riding a horse.
  - All techniques should be done with no “telegraphing” movements (“tels”). When done in this manner, they are considered “pure” techniques, and the black belt must strive to make all movement without signaling what s/he is doing. Extraneous movements (“tels”) include blinking the eyes, withdrawing the fist slightly before attacking, turning the forward foot before attacking, a change in breathing and emotion on the face. All of these, as well as others, will alert your opponent.
  - Concentration of force (*kime*) must be total. The fist clenched tightly and correctly, with the power coming from the rear foot in the majority of techniques. There may be a brief period of time for penetration to be exhibited, then immediate relaxation, preparing for the next movement.
  - There must be no “dead time” between the defense and the attack. Remember: “S/He, who hesitates, meditates from a horizontal position!”
  - All attacks, as well as counters, should be sincere. *Kata* should be done at combat speed and with correct movement. For example, if performing a rising block, the right (receiving) arm should begin beneath the left arm. If performing a vertical back fist, the attacking (right) arm should begin above the left arm. Incorrect positioning for any technique shows the exponent has not truly mastered the basics and is not ready for advanced rank.

The above was based on criteria given in *Karate: Beginner to Black Belt*, by H. D. Plee. Certain elements given are from personal experience, but the above book is worth finding for the information it contains.

### ***Ate Dokoro to Jintai Kyusho: Weapons of the body and Vital Points of the Body***

The following are the standard weapons of the body (ate dokoro) and vital points of the body (jintai kyusho) as originally taught in judo (you read correctly; judo, not jujutsu).

These are the very basic weapons and points, as jujutsu included many more. Given in [brackets] is the karate equivalent of the bodily weapons (vital points tended to be more uniform in their nomenclature). The most interesting feature is that judo did not list any vital points on the back of the individual! All those given are in the front or at the side of the opponent. As has been explained previously, Dr. Yasushi Yamada, of the Kodokan, stated that there were thirty-eight methods: thirteen with the use of the fingers; ten with the fist; seven with the ulnar border of the hand, the palm and the elbow; five with the foot; three with the head. Dr. Yasushi also stated that there were eighty vital points: nineteen on the head; nine on the neck; sixteen on the chest; seventeen on the stomach; six on the arm; thirteen on the leg. These were not taught until the exponent reached black belt.

#### Jintai Kyusho: Vital Points on the Human Body

1. Tendo or the bregma (sometimes written as tendo). Technically, tendo is the bregma and tento is the frontal fontanel.
2. Kasumi or the temples.
3. Jinchu or the philtrum.
4. Murasame may refer to two locations: the side of the neck and the supraclavicular fossa.
5. Hichu refers to the base of the throat, or cricoid cartilage.
6. Danchu is the summit of the breastbone where the manubrium and sternum meet (juncture).
7. Ganchu is a spot below the nipples at the end of the fifth and sixth ribs.
8. Uto or the naison.
9. Matsukaze is the carotid artery or carotid sinus.
10. Shoho is used for two vital points. The first is the suprasternal notch of the throat; second is a point between hichu and danchu in line with the nipples.
11. Suigetsu or the solar plexus.
12. Denko and Getsui; the hypochondrium on the right and left, respectively. Getsui is sometimes referred to as tsukikage. These points are located between the seventh and eighth ribs.
13. Tsurigane or testicles.
14. Kachikake or the point of the chin.
15. Dokko or the mastoid process.
16. Myojo or the hypogastrium.
17. Shitsukansetsu or the knee joint.
18. Hyaku otoshi or instep. Also called *kori* or *ashi no ko*. This is the medial portion on top of the foot. Site of the superior peroneal nerve.

#### Ate Dokoro: Weapons of the Human Body

1. Ude, comprised of the hand and arm.
  - Yubi saki ate, or thrusting with the fingertips [nukite or spear hand].
  - Ryogantsuki, or thrusting with two fingers to the eyes [nihon nukite or two-finger spear-hand].
  - Kobushi ate, or hitting with the fist [seiken or horizontal fist].
  - Horyu, or hitting with the side of the fist [tettsui or iron hammer].
  - Tegatana ate, or hitting with the little finger edge of the hand [shuto or knife-hand].

- Hiji ate, or hitting with the elbow [karate uses the same nomenclature, and a variant: empi uchi; karate further uses hiji ate to refer to linear thrusts with the elbow, and empi uchi to designate circular strikes].
2. Ashi, comprised of the foot and leg.
    - Hiza gashira ate, or hitting with the knee (cap); [hizatsuchi or knee hammer].
    - Sekito ate, or hitting with the ball of the foot (also called ashiura) [joshi, chusoku or josokutei].
    - Kakato ate, or hitting with the heel of the foot [karate uses the same term and includes ushiro kakato, or rear heel, used in hook kicks].
  3. Atama ate, or hitting with the head.

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