

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*

Written by Professor Ron Rogers

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Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Shu-Ha-Ri

Dave Lowry wrote an article for *Karate Illustrated* magazine about Randall Hassell, *Sensei*. The following comment is made: “*Shu-ha-ri* means a mastery of techniques and theories as they’ve existed [*shu*] followed by a breaking away from convention to try to discover something new [*ha*]. The final stage of *shu-ha-ri* though, is in finding that the something new you’ve discovered is nothing but the traditional way that’s been there all along [*ri*].” This would seem to be another way of saying, “there’s nothing new under the sun.”

Short Discourse on Weapons

The following comes from *Official Karate Annual: Special Weapons Edition*. Recently your Professor Emeritus received a collection of martial arts magazines, for which he is grateful. This was in the fall issue of 1974. The magazine also contains two of the original weapons *kata* taught to your Professor Emeritus. The first was learned as *Kihon Kama Kata*, although it was later found to have the official name of *Harai Kihon no Kama*. It is unique in that there are no changes in the grip. The *kama* is held in the natural grip throughout the *kata*. As learned by your Professor Emeritus, it was performed as for *Bō* I. After the initial movements to the front, they were repeated to the sides and rear. The second was learned as *Chatan Yara no Sai*, and was [much] later found to be the *Shō* version of the *kata*. Those forms learned were *Hamahiga no Tonfa*, *Tsukenhaku no Sai*, *Tawada no Sai*, *Chatan Yara no Sai* (*Shō*) and (*Harai*) *Kihon no Kama*. The *Chatan Yara kata* is unique in that it includes the simulation of throwing the *sai*. Also, most blocks are done while “fading” to the rear – that is, away from the attack. Conversely, strikes are done while “shuffling” forward. The following was written by Ronald Duncan, *Sensei* for the aforementioned magazine. [Indicate comments or terminology by your Professor Emeritus.]

Garrote is a weapon of Spanish origin, although prevalent in other cultures. It was used as a silent method of disposing of an opponent by strangulation or breaking the neck. Materials used vary from culture to culture, and variations included leather thongs [braided and unbraided – and, no, these are not the thongs you’re thinking of!], cord, wire [this included barb wire] and silk [Weighted by coins on either end and with one tied into the center of a scarf, this was the type used by the thuggee of India in worship of Kali, a manifestation of Shiva, the Destroyer. The sect was forbidden to spill blood, so the silken scarf was used to dispose of the enemy. Actually pronounced “Toog-ee,” we get the modern “thug” from the word.]

Nunchaku [are well known to the practitioners of Oriental martial arts]. They were originally used by Okinawan farmers to pound farm produce. [Another interesting theory is that they were derived from the bridle – actually, probably more like the hackamore – used for horses.] They were also used to demolish structures (huts) and control herds of animals. They proved to be a versatile and dangerous weapon when swung or used as a yawara. [*Yawara* is actually the name of an ancient form of *Jujutsu*. The “yawara stick”

is actually referred to as *kashi no bo*. With our usual American penchant for butchering language, they are called “chucks,” or “nunchucks,” as well as “numbchucks.” We did the same with the western lariat, or rope, which comes from the Spanish *la riata*.]

[**Boshi**] or chopsticks [were used as weapons dating] back to ancient China. Used then by cripples or disabled persons...also by monks. Much deadlier than they appear, an expert can use them to cause blindness, paralysis, disfigurement or death.

Yawara-jutsu or **Kongo-jutsu** is of Japanese origin. It is a weapon for both defense and offense. The length ranges from four to six inches (depending upon the size of the person’s hand). Used to strike at nerve centers for [the] purpose of paralyzing or killing. May be used singly or in pairs.

Kyu or longbow. Its origin is debatable. Some claim it was brought to the Orient by Europeans. [As the English warrior was noted for the use of the (yew) longbow, this is possible. Note the legend of Robin Hood.] Was one of the samurai’s “necessary” weapons. [Regardless of its origins, the bow used by the Japanese is unique and unlike any other. The top half is two-thirds of the bow’s length; the final third being the bottom of the bow. Ostensibly, this was to facilitate using the bow from horseback.]

Crossbow is of European origin. It was developed between the 14th and 15th centuries. It was one of the most powerful weapons known to man at that time. Its effective range was approximately fifty yards. [Recall the story of William Tell, who allegedly shot the apple off his son’s head with a crossbow. The nobleman who forced him to do so asked why he had kept two arrows. Tell replied that if he had hit his son and not the apple, the nobleman would have been the next to die.]

Shaken or **Shuriken**; also called “shaw-de-ken.” [Technically, the *shaken* is what we think of as the “throwing star.” The *shuriken* is a bar of iron or steel, pointed on both ends. Some schools use *shuriken* for both with a prefix to distinguish the type.] These are multi-bladed throwing missiles, whose points vary from three to ten, depending on the style using them. Those with a lesser number of points were used to harass or distract pursuers. Larger ones could be used to maim or kill. Their origin is believed to have come from China, and were adapted by the ninja centuries ago.

Shuko or Tiger Claws are an instrument used by the ninja. They are worn over the hands and may be used to scale walls, climb trees and ascend icy mountains. They could also be used as a weapon, making the killing look as though it were done by an animal. [One thinks of the “Leopard Men” of Africa.] As defensive weapons, they could be used to block or trap a sword or knife. They were very effective as an in-fighting weapon.

African Walking Stick was used by most African tribes. Its use developed over the centuries. It utilizes forms similar to those of the kata of Oriental martial arts. It is excellent in defense against knife attacks. One of the traditional uses was to deflect spears and even arrows. [Also used by African warriors was the knobkerrie, which is a war club similar to those used by the Iroquois, and the sjambok, which is a lethal version of the European riding crop. The walking sticks are believed to hold mudzimi or ancestral spirits. This is similar to the belief of the *katana* being the soul of the *samurai*. Also, the Malay warriors believed the kris held a spirit which would warn them of danger by rattling in the sheath.]

Bo or staff. This is a long staff used both defensively and offensively. It is common to Africa (“shepherd’s staff”), China (kun, which became the Okinawan *kon*), Korea and

England (“quarterstaff”). [This is probably one of the first and most widely prevalent weapons of mankind.]

Manriki gusari or “10,000 man chain,” was used by Japanese guards, Samurai and ninja. It was used to block, entrap, trip and strike vital points [*kyusho*]. It could also be used to strangle or even bind an opponent. [This weapon was devised by a sentry (Masaki Dannoshin Toshimitsu, who founded the Masaki Ryu) who believed that shedding blood in a sacred spot – can you recall *The Highlander?* – would be disgraceful. He believed the weapon contained the power and ingenuity of 10,000 persons. Note that he didn’t believe it could defeat 10,000 persons!]

Tonfa was a tool used by Okinawan farmers for grinding rice and other grains. It is also known as a tuifa. It was adapted as a defensive and offensive weapon against other weapons.

Katana is the “soul of the samurai.” This was the traditional weapon of the samurai, carried into combat as late as WWII. [This is the long sword of the *daisho* (long and short sword). The *wakizashi* is the short sword. This was a further development of the original *tachi*, the second of Japanese swords.]

Sai or three pronged bludgeon. [The central shaft is longer than the two shorter ones on either side of the shaft.] This is an Okinawan weapon of combat. It is effective for blocking hooking, stabbing or throwing. [Although many myths and legends surround this weapon’s origin, similar weapons are used in the Phillipines (tjambok) and in China. The Japanese have a similar weapon called the *jutte*, which only has two prongs; one long and another shorter one at the side.]

Fu or Hatchet is of Chinese origin, and was effectively used to kill a sentry or stop a fleeing opponent. It was used in close combat as well as being a throwing weapon. [Just as the Yakuza (“Japanese Mafia”) are noted for their use of the *katana*, the Triads (“Chinese Mafia”) are noted for their use of the hatchet.]

Jeet Kune Do: The Way of the Intercepting Fist

The concepts and philosophies of Jeet Kune Do are derived from twenty-seven martial arts. Bruce Lee and Dan Inosanto worked with twenty-six of them, and the twenty-seventh was incorporated after Bruce Lee’s Death. Following is a list as given by Dan Inosanto’s student, Paul Vunak. Vunak is a black belt in Kempo and Tae Kwon Do, as well one of the few instructors in savate. He teaches the concepts of Jeet Kune Do to the Navy SEALs. Vunak states that during his lifetime, Lee only considered three persons qualified to teach Jeet Kune Do: James Lee, now deceased, Ted Wong and Dan Inosanto.

1. **Wing Chun (chi sao or “sticky hands”)**
2. **Northern Praying Mantis**
3. **Southern Praying Mantis**
4. **Choy Li Fut**
5. **Tai Ch’i Ch’uan (Wu family style)**
6. **Paqua**
7. **Hsing-I**
8. **Bak Hoo Pai (White Crane)**
9. **Bak Fu Pai (White Tiger)**
10. **Eagle Claw**
11. **Ng Ga Kuen (Five Family System)**

12. Bak Mei Pai (White Eyebrow System)
13. Northern Shaolin
14. Southern Shaolin
15. Bok Pai
16. Law Horn Kuen
17. Chin Na
18. Monkey Style
19. Drunken Style
20. Western Fencing (Foil; concept of the “stop-hit”)
21. Western Boxing
22. Western Wrestling
23. Jujutsu
24. Escrima
25. Filipino Sikaran
26. Muay Thai (Thai Boxing)
27. Kali (by Inosanto after Lee’s death; hu bud or energy exchanging drills)

Kanō Jigorō and Education

Although noted primarily for his development of *Kodokan Judo* and, therefore, his contribution to the martial arts and sport, Kanō was essentially an educator. In a 1934 speech he is quoted as stating: “Nothing under the sun is greater than education. By educating one person and sending him into the society of his generation, we make a contribution extending to a hundred generations to come.” At the young age of twenty-one, Kanō had been awarded two teaching licenses of old *jujutsu ryu*, and created his *Kodokan Judo*. Four years later, at the still young age of twenty-five, he was appointed professor of political science and economics at both Komaba Agricultural School and at the Peers’ School (*Gakushuin*). After this, he became head of the Tokyo Teachers’ Training College, which he held for the next twenty years. It was largely due to Kanō that the educational standards of Japan were elevated. All work done by Kanō, including the development of *Kodokan Judo*, was based on the crucial importance of a sound education. Your Professor Emeritus highly recommends adding *Judo Memoirs of Jigoro Kano*, by Brian N. Watson, to your reading list.

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