

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*

Written by Professor Ron Rogers

March 2017

Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Judo: from, *An Encyclopedia of Judo* by Professor Ron Rogers

The following is given from the perspective of judo, though the terminology may differ in other arts. For example, “*shizentai*,” may be referred to (in *Shotokan*) as “*teiji dachi*” (“T” stance), and “*sankaku tai*” (“triangle/triangular body [posture]) in *Aikido*. Other arts may refer to it (or a slight variation) as “*kihon kamae*” (“basic [guarding] posture). Regardless of the nomenclature used, the principles remain the same for all martial arts,

1 ***Shizentai no ri*** or the principle of *shizentai* or natural posture. This is based on:

I. *ki wo mitsuru*, or the assumption of the correct position with the mind on the alert.

A. *Yuko* or the method of placing the body.

1. *Kamae* or the manner in which a *judo*ka holds him/herself. The posture or bodily attitude of the upper body. Sometimes referred to as a “guarding posture.”
2. *Tachi* or stance. This is the posture of the feet, or lower part of the body. *Fudodachi*, or firm posture, is descriptive of the state of a warrior before the attack. It consists of stillness, serenity and a state of imperturbability.

B. *Muko* or mental attitude.

1. *Heijoshin* or placid state of mind. This is the firm state of mind that must be maintained when one is under attack. It is a relaxed attitude with regular, steady breathing and totally fearless self-confidence.

a. *Genshin* or the ability to anticipate an attack (see *sen sen no sen*). This is related to *zenshin* or the preparatory state of intense concentration (see *mushin*).

b. *Fudoshin* or immovable mind. An imperturbable mind (or spirit) capable of acting in an emergency. Immutable in heart. A state of mind which is not troubled by anything external. A person knows no fear when faced with danger or unexpected events.

1) *Muga mushin* or no-self no-mind. This is the maintenance of a composed posture, as though asleep, during attack. It is related to *tsushin*, or maintaining mental concentration.

- *Muga* or a state of mind which is of such intense concentrated power that no thought can disturb the execution of technique by the person in that state. It is an intuitive consciousness of the whole, and identification with the “other” which enables one to act upon the opponent.

- *Mushin* – No mind. Original mind. A mind not fixed on anything and open to everything, reflecting everything like a mirror.

2) *Munen mushin* (*muso*) or no-thought no-mind. That is, a mind open and receptive to change. *Munen mushin*, or *munen muso*,

is the state of emptiness (*shinya*) of a total availability of the mind which is not fixed (*mushin*). Consequently, it is never troubled by the appearance of things. *Suisei mushin*, however, implies that life as we ordinarily conceived it is a kind of waking dream, an idea which is opposed to those of *mushin* and *satori*.

- c. *Zanshin* or remaining awareness. Continuing mind. This is how to act after the completion of the attack. *Tori* is always prepared to follow up or defend. There is some awareness remaining. *Zanshin* is mental quietness following the completion of a technique. A completion of technique in which awareness of the opponent and surroundings is continued.

Taiyoku

Taiyoku is a spherical symbol of Chinese derivation denoting the completeness of integrative balance. The common symbol is that of Yin/Yang (Japanese: *In/Yo*), which must be seen as a sphere, not two-dimensional. The oldest form was a circle with a dot at the center. Also related is the “Wheel of Life” from Buddhism, represented by an eight-petal lotus. Interestingly, these petals are the same as the eight directions of off-balance (*happo no kuzushi*) in martial arts, and the eight-sided mirror used in Feng Shui. Movements may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal. All movement is done from the center (*shita hara/tanden*) or (*seika no itten*), and is usually associated with *tenkan* or turning movements. The opponent is drawn into your center, and then thrown toward the outside of the sphere. This concept is most commonly associated with *Aikido*, but Mifune Kyuzo also used the concept for the highest levels of *Judo*. Also see your professor’s newsletter, 2012-A.

Kata: Form or Pattern

Although usually translated as “form,” *kata* may also be interpreted as “pattern.” A pattern is something used as a template. Further, it may be altered to fit the person. Almost all traditional styles decry the alteration of *kata*, even though most of them have altered *kata* to suit their style. However, alteration doesn’t mean change everything, but simply to make the pattern fit. Even within systems, alteration has taken place. Of the four *Shorin-ryu*, each has slightly altered *kata* within their system. *Shotokan*, a Japanese style derived from *Shorin-ryu* (and to a lesser extent, *Shorei-ryu*), altered the Okinawan form to fit the Japanese ideal. Alteration is due to many things; among them the culture, the intent and the individual. Okinawan styles, especially *kenpo*, taught multiple strikes, realizing that “one blow, one kill,” may be the ideal, but not the reality. Japanese *karate* insisted on the concept of “one blow, one kill,” because of affiliating *karate* with the sword. For the swordsman, it was many times a matter of life and death if the first blow with the sword did not kill. This concept was grafted onto their style of *karate*. With Okinawan *karate*, the intermediate moves (“chambers”) had meaning which, to a much lesser extent, was transmitted to Japan. Tang Soo Do, the Korean *Tode*, originally followed the Okinawan concepts to a greater extent. However, when Korean arts were assimilated into Tae Kwon Do, the principle stressed was power. Consequently, the intermediate moves were simply methods for arriving at the blocks, punches and strikes,

with little attention given to their meaning. In the sporting aspect, the transitions were changed for sport, not combat. As originally taught, every move had application and there were no superfluous moves. Even the stances were done for combative purposes. This was especially true of the older forms, although applications could be derived from the newer *Heian (Pinan)* and *Taikyoku*. For example, *Heian Shodan* has twenty-one movements. This includes three blocks (down block, rising block and knife hand), one punch (lunge), one explicit release (movement four), two stances (front and rear); three in the original version (movement four was originally an “L” stance) and five pivots (90o, 180o, 270o, 45o and 135o). As each movement contained a minimum of four applications (release, strike, throw and grappling maneuver), there was a minimum of twenty techniques if only each technique was counted once. When right and left versions were included, the total became a minimum of forty techniques. When the possibility of the pivots being techniques within themselves, the number increased by ten (twenty for right and left), making a total of thirty (sixty for right and left). This does not include the possibility of combinations and repeated techniques being utilized as alternate applications. To really “know” a *kata* refers to the concept of being able to apply all the afore-mentioned possibilities (as well as others), and to apply applications for the *omote* (front, or regular way of performing the form), *ura* (reverse, or moving in the opposite direction), *go* (rear, or moving from the end of the form to the beginning) and *ura go* (reverse rear, or moving from the end of the form to the beginning in the opposite direction). Incidentally, with *ura* and *ura go* at least one new movement is added to the form – a step backwards. Now you know what your Professor is asking when he asks: “Do you know [fill in the *kata* of your choice]?” Do you?

Terminology

Emon is the point at which the jacket [kimono] crosses in front of the chest.

“**Escape**,” as in “escaping from a grasp,” may be written with (at least) three different characters, each having a slightly different meaning. “*Hazushi*” means to “release.” “*Nuki*” means to “slip out of.” “*Hodoki*” actually means to “escape.”

Kiai is the focusing of one’s entire breath, body, mind, spirit, concentration and energy into one point of space and one instant in time. It is an ultimate commitment of one’s entire being toward a specific objective. It may be manifested vocally or silently.

Mikazuki, as in “*mikazuki geri*,” is usually translated as “crescent” (“crescent kick”). It is composed of three characters: *mi*, meaning “three,” *ka*, meaning “day,” and *tsuki [zuki]*, which means “moon”; literally, “three day moon” [“kick”].

No is a possessive indicator; that is, it indicates that one character “belongs to” or is associated with another. *Nage no kata*, usually translated as “Forms of Throwing,” literally means “Form Belonging to Throws.”

Suso, depending on the context, may mean cuff (of trousers), hem (of *hakama*) or the base of a mountain.

Waribashi are the wooden chopsticks which restaurants give to customers.

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