

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's Corner*

Written by Professor Ron Rogers

May 2017

Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

Aikido Exercises for Teaching and Training

The title given above is a book by C. M. Shifflett. For Aikido instructors, or any other martial arts, it is an invaluable reference. Many of the exercises, as well as games, may be utilized in other arts as well. Chapter 3 (“Aikido Class”), and Chapter 4 (“Rolling, Falling and Flying”) are worth the price of the book! However, there are nuggets of information throughout the book for any martial art, and for the non-martial artist. Scattered through the book are common questions and observations, humorous, serious and informative. Your professor particularly likes the answer to the question: “Is Aikido the ultimate martial art?” (“No. Thermonuclear warfare is the ultimate martial art, followed by long range artillery, armor, guns, knives and large guys named Bubba.”) This answer is all three: humorous, serious and informative. Chapters 3 and 4, in addition to their stated content, also give a great deal of information (and common misinformation from other sources) about the human body and exactly how it works. A list of “Resources,” includes magazines, books, websites and organizations. There is also an extensive glossary that every *aikidoka* should know.

Strangling Techniques [*Shime Waza*]

Naked Strangle Variation [*Hadaka Jime Henka aka katate haigo hadaka jime*]

Tori blocks a right-handed punch with his or her right hand. S/he spins *uke* around as for *ushiro kata otoshi* [rear shoulder drop]. *Tori* applies *hadaka jime* [naked choke] with the right arm only (*katate hadaka jime*). *Tori's* left bent wrist is placed in the center of *uke's* back (*haigo*) at the *katsu-satsu* point. The palm may be used but the bent wrist is preferred. (*Jujutsu*, Volume II, page 180, I-A)

Naked Strangle with the Legs [*Ashi Hineri Jime aka hiza jime*]

This is a strangle using the legs from a standing *juji gatame*. The important thing to remember is the turning in of the left foot. *Tori's* left instep is placed beneath *uke's* left shoulder between the neck and shoulder. *Tori's* right instep is placed in an opposite manner at the right shoulder. Strangulation is applied with the lower parts of the legs in a twisting motion. (*Jujutsu*, Volume II, pages 180-181, I B) [This was Wilson Shihan's “signature move.” Very few others could get the choke as quickly, or as well.]

Strangle with a Spine Lock [*Hadaka Koshi Hishigi*]

Entry is the same as for *yoko do jime* except *ushiro do jime* is used in conjunction with *hadaka jime ichi*. *Tori*, by arching his or her back, can continue into a spine lock at the lower back [*koshi hishigi*]. (*Jujutsu*, Volume II, page 204, I-C-2)

KRABI KRABONG: Sword and Staff

KRABI KRABONG is regarded as the “mother” of MUAY THAI. It is a weapon based art closely related to SILAT. A KRABI is a single-edged sword and a KRABONG is a staff. The shapes of the KRABI may be similar to a *katana*, cutlass or rapier. Other implements associated with this art are the LOH or buckler (a round shield), PLONG, literally a stick, NGAO or halberd, DAAB SONG MUE, or double swords (that is, a

pair) and MAI SUN FAWK, a pair of forearm protectors. These resemble Okinawan *tonfa* with two handles at one end and a rope or metal ring (to slip around the arm) at the opposite end. Although mostly done with weapons, there are empty-hand forms. This art was derived from the 400 year old art of the WAT PUTTHAISWAN, or elite bodyguard of the Thai kingdom of Ayutthay, and is still taught to the king's bodyguard. Their sword style is a combination of Chinese and (East) Indian sword-fighting. The use of the staff is predominantly from the *bojutsu* styles brought by early Japanese settlers and traders. The *bojutsu* is strongly influenced by the stances and footwork. As with many Asian arts ritual is an important part of the art. KRU is the ritual blessing by the master, in which burning incense is used. As an extension of Buddhism, participants sit facing a Buddhist shrine to kneel and pray. The major concepts of KRABI KRABONG are balance and the middle way, in thought, word and deed. This art was seen in the movie, *The Man with the Golden Gun* (James Bond).

See, *The Way of the Warrior* by Chris Crudelli, an excellent reference book of all martial arts, Eastern and Western.

***Bassai Dai* and *Sho*: The Way of Removing Obstacles: Greater and Lesser**

The translation of *Bassai* is from John Burke *Sensei's Fortress Storming*. The history given below for both *Dai* and *Sho* is based on Hirokazu Kanazawa *Shihan's Karate: the Complete Kata*. Both are excellent reference books. *Bassai* is a powerful form introduced by Master Oyadomari Kōkan. *Bassai Dai* is distinctive for powerful dynamic techniques and its diverse variety of techniques. It contains consecutive blocking sequences, upper, middle and lower level attacks and attacks with both hands. With *Kanku Dai*, they are the two most representative forms within *Shotokan*. *Bassai Sho* was devised by Master Itosu Yasutsune, and includes responses to *bo* attacks. The *Sho* version of *Bassai* also contains grappling techniques in addition to stressing the positioning of the hips for the proper center of gravity.

“Expert” of *Jujutsu*

Your professor emeritus is not particularly fond of the word, “expert.” The implication of such a title is both limiting and wide-ranging. It limits one to a particular area of knowledge, when total knowledge may be more comprehensive. It is wide-ranging in that it presupposes one knows everything about the particular subject. The latter is an impossibility for any one person. The best that may be said is that one is more knowledgeable than others at any given time. However, the word seems to be here to stay, and has been for many decades. Patrick Lafcadio Hearn (aka Koizumi Yakumo), a Greek born citizen, who became a naturalized Japanese citizen in the last part of the 1800's, wrote an article about *Jujutsu* (*Judo*). Hearn's health prohibited him from actively participating in classes, but he was (and is) regarded as a person who grasped the theory quite comprehensively. Hearn was asked by Professor Kano, President of the Fifth College at Kumamoto, to join the faculty as Lecturer of English Literature. Hearn states that one must “study a very long time in order to learn [*Jujutsu/Judo*] even tolerably well.” He continues by stating that: “To become an expert requires seven years of constant practice, even presupposing natural aptitudes of an uncommon order.” Note the length of time – seven years – coupled with constant practice and this only if the person were gifted (“natural aptitudes of an uncommon order”). It is interesting that Hearn compared the art in reference to the manner of thought, rather than physicality. “The

Occidental mind appears to work in straight lines; the Oriental, in wonderful curves and circles.” Hearn refers to *Jujutsu* (*Judo*) as a philosophical system, an economical system and an ethical system. Hearn is mentioned in the James Bond novel, *You Only Live Twice*, by Ian Fleming. Bond’s reply to Blofeld’s comment of “Have you every heard the Japanese expression *kirisute gomen*?” with “Spare me the Lafcadio Hearn, Blofeld.” The phrase may be translated as: “I apologize in advance for striking you down,” and was said by the samurai before making their kill. Hearn was a prolific writer, having been an American newspaper reporter, and wrote many books about Japan, the most famous of which was *Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things*. This was (many years later) made into a movie.

Martial Arts and Chess

Both of your Professor Emeritus’ instructors, Booth *Sensei* and Wilson *Shihan*, insisted that to be a good martial artist, you needed to learn to play chess. The idea was that chess taught strategy and tactics, both of which were needed in combat. The concept was made clearer when it was learned that most, if not all, generals played chess. Also, the very word “strategy,” comes from the Greek word for “military general.” The moves may be related to techniques. The pawn may only move one move at a time in a straight line (except for en passant, and then one move diagonally). This is the one technique done over and over until defeat. The rook (castle) is unlimited in the number of spaces it may move (multiple techniques), but is still limited to back and forth and side to side. The bishop moves at a diagonal, but in a straight line; however, the spaces (multiple techniques) are unlimited (other than the edge of the board/mat). This is, of course, the technique/tactic of moving off the line of attack, and possibly counter-attacking. The knight moves in what is basically a semi-circle, allowing an attack from other than a straight line. The movement itself is limited to one form of attack, although at an off-angle (a circular strike or kick). The queen is the consummate aggressor, able to move any number of spaces in any direction, so that an attack may occur at any time and anywhere. The king is the ultimate defender, able to move in any direction, but only one space at a time, and rarely attacking. Also, the player may win, lose or draw (stalemate), just as in a tournament. Learning to use the correct piece (tactics of technique) at the correct time (strategy) may be transferred from the board to life.

Terminology

Juso gyoshiki means, “Form is void and void is form.” This expression contains four separate concepts: *ju* (perception), *so* (conception), *gyo* (volition) and *shiki* (consciousness). With form, these make up the five elements of Buddhist thought. All are equivalent to the Void.

Koku is the false void. Ko is untruth; ku is void.

Ku is Void. There are two kinds of void: *koku* and *shinku*. Emptiness; nothingness or vacuity; existence without enduring substance; the Invisible, a concept of God; the actual living of *ku* is the highest truth and universal love. All existences in the cosmos exist but their essence cannot be apprehended; compare *shiki*.

Kusokuzeshiki means void is form.

Mu is a negative prefix. It can mean nothingness, but not a complete nothingness. Though nothing exists, there is still something. It is the eternal void.

Ri is the contrast to *ji* in Kegon Buddhism. *Li* in Chinese. Means “a principle,” “reason,” “the whole,” “the all,” “totality,” “the whole,” “the universal,” “the abstract.” *Ri* corresponds to *Sunyata* (emptiness) or the Void (*Kung* in Chinese; *Ku* in Japanese).

Shiki are phenomena; the visible world. Compare *ku*. Form.

Shiki soku ze ku, ku soku ze shiki means, “phenomena produces ku, ku produces phenomena” (a quote from the *Hannya Shingyo*; all phenomena are identical, and the world of phenomena and the invisible world of ku interpenetrate and are interchangeable. All is void.

Shinku is true Void. *Shin* means sincere. *Ku* means void.

Shinku myou is true Void or mystery of nature. The mystery of nature exists in the true Void.

Sunyata is the Void. This is the doctrine of emptiness in the sense that reality has no fixed doctrines but is a continuous flux; the greatest principle in *Mahayana* philosophy; also means zero, as it is neither positive nor negative.

Any or all of this information may be copied for students if desired. All that's asked is that acknowledgment of authorship be given.