

Midori Yama Budokai: Essays
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Busai Geiko or Martial Arts Awareness Training

Although Wilson *Kancho* had tremendous peripheral vision, he contended that anyone could develop theirs far beyond what they believed was possible. Given below is what he taught to increase peripheral vision to look behind one and see any perceived threat.

When looking back to see an opponent to the rear, one should first focus his or her eyes straight ahead. The Japanese refer to this as *enzan no metsuke*, or looking at a distant mountain. From this position, one may increase his or her range of vision by looking up! The person then turns his or her head toward the shoulder without shifting the eyes! One's eyes must not shift as s/he turns his or her head, and s/he must not look down at any time! If one “focuses” and does not look down the eyebrows do not move and give him or her away, so the opponent cannot be certain s/he has seen him. The person seems to be “gazing into space.”

As an adjunct to this training, one may train him- or herself to notice subtle movement from the opponent. Begin with a partner (later you may train with multiple “opponents”) facing you. As you become more adept at noticing movement they can be at your side or angled to a front corner. To begin, the partner makes large movements (“cocking” the arm to punch, stepping into a ready position, etc). As you progress, the movements become more subtle – a clenching of the teeth (causing the jaw muscles to twitch), narrowing of the eyes and so on. When you can watch a group and be aware of their movements, large and subtle. Next, you can have one be the first aggressor and attempt to discover the clues that give away him or her.

Carry this into daily life. Watch the persons surrounding you. Do they limp, favor one hand over the other; do they walk confidently or hesitantly? Do they seem focused, “lost,” or scared? After a short while you will be amazed at how well you can gauge an individual and their potential.

***Haragei* or Development of the *Tanden* (Lower Abdomen)**

Presented here are some drills learned in your *hanshi*'s early days of martial arts. The first is a variation of *shikko*, or walking on the knees. There are different methods of *shikko*, but following is the method taught to your *hanshi*. From *seiza*, the individual drives the right hip forward, bringing the right knee up and directly ahead. Driving with the hip is referred to as *koshi o ireru*, or entering with the hips. The feet should still be together, or nearly so, with the left knee on the mat at right angles to the upraised right knee. The left foot has swung counter-clockwise as the right foot drives straight ahead. Still driving forward with the right hip, the right knee is placed on the mat. It now becomes the pivot point (*jiku*) for the next movement. The *budoka* now drives forward with his or her left hip, raising the left knee and pointing it straight ahead. The right foot turns with the driving left foot and the knees again form a right angle. This is continued for the preset distance required by the sensei (usually the length of the mat). At the end, the *budoka* makes an 180o turn and returns the same way. Presuming the *budoka* has ended with the right knee forward (but still off the mat!) s/he turns in the following

manner. The *budōka*'s hips are rotated 180° counter-clockwise as the left knee is raised to face the opposite end of the mat. As the *budōka* does so, the right knee is turned 90° counter-clockwise and placed on the mat at right angles to the left knee. From this point, regular *shikkō* is continued to the end of the mat in the opposite direction.

After standard *shikkō* is learned, the *budōka* may begin truly learning how to enter with the hips by including kicks as the knee is moved forward. *Mae geri keage* (front snap kick) is the easiest with which to begin. As the right knee is moved forward it is in position for *mae geri keage*. The *budōka* does the kick and returns the foot to its original place, lowering the right knee to the mat. This is followed by *hidari mae geri keage*, alternating to the end of the mat. Almost any kick can be used, including roundhouse (*mawashi geri*) and spinning back kick (*ushiro ura geri*). The important criterion, whether simply walking or using the added kicks, is to drive with the hips. Throughout the drill, the hands should remain on the thighs as in *seiza*.

The second drill is a two-person drill (*ninin-dori*) while standing, and has two methods of execution. In the first drill person number one places his or her hands on the *budōka*'s shoulders. S/he is not trying to stop the *budōka* from moving, but to prevent him or her from forcing the movement by pushing with the upper body. If the *budōka* pushes with the strength of the upper body, depending on the relative size and strength of each person, they will not be able to move forward, or will experience trouble moving forward. When movement is generated from the hips there will be little or no resistance felt by the *budōka*. A simple test to discover if power is generated from the hips is for person number one to suddenly remove his or her hands, as the *budōka* is moving forward. If the *budōka* stumbles or falls forward the power is from the upper body, not the hips.

In the second method, person number one takes hold of the *budōka*'s rear belt. Again, the purpose is not to restrain the *budōka*, but to ensure that the movement is generated from the hips not from “digging in” with the feet and pulling with the upper body. The test is as the first of simply letting go the belt as the *budōka* moves forward. Stumbling or falling forward implies little or no use of the hips. If the *budōka* continues moving steadily, s/he is using the power of the hips.

The final method is having two persons assist the *budōka* in a three-person drill (*sannin-dori*). One has the hands placed on the shoulders, and the second holds the belt. While more difficult than either of the first two, there should still be relatively little effort if the hips generate the power.

Displacement Kick

This kick is one of Wilson *Kancho*'s core techniques. Most of his teaching and subsequent techniques is based on this kick. The term “displacement” is used but not actually understood. For Wilson *Kancho* it had two meanings. Primarily, the kick displaces time. Later, the student learns to displace distance. Consequently, the kick is used to displace time and distance, creating a different *ma-ai* than a “skip kick,” “cross-step kick,” or other conventional kicks.

From a right foot forward stance, the student displaces the right foot with the left foot, turning 180° as s/he does so. The unique application requires that the foot and leg “move through the knee.” There is no chamber as in a conventional rear kick. In this manner, the student displaces time. When the left foot displaces the right, the right foot (heel) should

strike the target. There is no lapse between switching the supporting foot and the impact against the target. Also displaced is reaction time. As there is no chamber, and the kick is done simultaneously with the movement, the opponent has less time to react, both physically and mentally. Physically, without the chamber, the kick is faster, though no less powerful. Also, it is mentally distracting in that the kick is done with the “weighted foot,” which is traditionally taught as mechanically incorrect. It is an excellent kick, though traditionally trained *budoka* have quite a problem with the mechanics, as there is no chamber. Although the kick is described as moving straight to the target, it actually moves in a parabolic arc that is perceived as straight.

In displacing distance, the (left) rear foot crosses in back of (or in front) of the (right) front foot as the student performs the kick. The displacing foot and the striking foot still land simultaneously.

One entry method for the displacement kick could best be described as the “infinity” method, or the “figure-eight” method. As with many of Wilson *Kancho*’s techniques, this gives the initial impression of non-combat. For illustrative purposes, the *budoka* faces the opponent with the left foot forward. The movement begins by bringing the left (forward) foot in back of the right in a semi-circular, as though retreating. As the opponent comes forward, the *budoka* circles the right foot toward the approaching opponent. This circle is 180o, ending with the heel of the right foot toward the opponent. At this point, the right foot displaces the left foot and the left foot/heel performs a displacement rear kick. One of the major advantages of this type of movement is that the *budoka* may use it to do a displacement kick at any point (to any opponent) within a 360o circumference. Wherever the heel points is the point at which the attack is directed.

Not only does this version have the advantages of the standard displacement of distance and/or time, it is also used as a feint. The opponent first believes the *budoka* is retreating, and then the attack comes off the “weighted” foot.

In addition to the displacement kick, Wilson *Kancho* taught a “double displacement kick.” This combination is “simply” two sequential displacement kicks. After the initial displacement, the kicking leg is returned to the mat as the *budoka* turns to face the opponent. At this point a second displacement kick is done.

Ten-Jin-Chi: Heaven-Man-Earth

Ten-Jin-Chi, or the synthesis of man with earth and heaven, is an important element of Japanese philosophy and is shown in the *kata*. First, the *kata Kanku Dai* contains the opening of *Kan-ku*, or viewing emptiness. As the *karate-ka* raises his hands, s/he forms a circle, literally reaching toward heaven. Second, the hands are brought together forming a triangle with the thumbs and fingers. This represents man’s attempt to become one with heaven, represented by the void. In the final movement, the arms are separated, with the forearms and upper arms forming right angles. This symbolizes a mountain (the arms and head resemble the *kanji* for mountain). The lowering of the arms represents the return to the earth as the foundation of the mountain. Earth is man’s foundation for reaching for the serenity of heaven. Also to be noted are the shapes. The arms reach for heaven in a circular manner, which is the circle with no beginning or end, the representation of eternity. The thumbs and fingers form a triangle, which represents the stability of man.

When the arms are separated, they represent a square, or the “four corners” of the earth. They are then lowered circularly, completing the circle, and returning to earth.

As your *hanshi* emeritus learned the *kata*, the three “*Ji*” *kata* were also representative of the *ten-jin-chi*. The left hand covered the right fist in all three ready positions. This is the *in* [yin] (open hand of non-combativeness) and *yo* [yang] (fist poised for combat, if needed). This is known as *jiai no kamae* or the posture of the harmony of [the] *ji*, or temple. This is a reference to the *Shorin-ji* (Shaolin ssu) temple. The first *kata* learned was *Jitte* (*Jutte*), in which the hands were held in front of the lower abdomen. Next was *Ji'in*, with the hands placed in front of the solar plexus. Last was *Jion*, and the hands were placed in front of the throat. It is believed these three *kata* come from *Tomarite*.

Karate and the “Chinese Connection”

Although the Shaolin temple is considered (unhistorical) as the birthplace of Ch’uan Fa (Japanese: *Kempo*), there were two Shaolin temples, one in the north and one in the south. The southern temple, Pu-tien, was in the south of Fuzhou (Foochow or Fuchou) in the coastal province of Fujian. It was known as the Nine Dragons Shaolin Temple. While the existence of the temple is in dispute, the area of Fujian was responsible for the spread of certain Chinese styles. Okinawan folklore and history relate stories of Ryukyuan gentry who traveled to China to learn martial arts and other aspects of Chinese culture. Fujian was where the trade centers of Fuzhou and Changchew were located. They were only a few days travel from Okinawa and there was a considerable Okinawan community in both areas. Also, “boxing” had become popular with the merchant class in China. These individuals with military attaches, known as *sappushi* (such as Kusanku [Ku Shanku or Koso Kun] and Wanshu), helped spread these arts throughout the Orient. Wanshu represents the first truly historically verifiable link between Chinese boxing and present day karate. Most of the karate that is taught today is based on the Chinese boxing introduced to Okinawa beginning in 1850. It is to be noted that prior to 1879 Okinawan martial arts were for the upper-class families only! Karate’s predecessor, *ti* (later given the Japanese pronunciation *te*), was a personal means of self-development by the nobility. Styles definitely based on Chinese boxing are given as follows. *Kojo ryu* (not named until after WWII) was taught by and to the Kojo family. This style was descended from one of the thirty-six families of Chinese immigrants who settled in Kume in 1393. The Chinese family name was Sai. This style maintained ties with Fuchou until the 20th century. The third generation style head was Kojo Isei, who spent a total of 20 years in Fuchou. *Ryuei ryu* was introduced between 1870 and 1880 by Nakaima Norisato who was taught by Ru Ru Ko in Fuchou. Next was *Goju ryu* founded by Higaonna Kanryo (Chojun Miyagi was Higaonna’s student). *Goju* gives the name of Higaonna’s teacher as Ryu Ryo Ko, probably the same Ru Ru Ko of *Ryuei ryu*. Higaonna also studied with Ryu Ryo Ko’s chief assistant Wan Shin Zan. This was believed to have been the essence of Hsing-I Ch’uan Fa. Finally, another Fuchou student was Uechi Kanbun who brought *Uechi ryu* (originally called Pangai Noon, also called Pan Ying Jen or Pan Ying Gut) to Okinawa. Uechi studied with Shu Shi Wa, also known as Chu Chi Wo, at the beginning of the 20th century. Matsumura Sokon also visited Fuchou as well as Satsuma. At Fuchou he studied Chinese boxing with Ason and Iwah. He is also said to have studied at the Fukien Shaolin Temple.

The oldest empty hand forms in Okinawa, that are still in use today, are: *Wanshu*, *Passai*, *Seisan*, *Kusanku*, *Chinto*, *Useishi* (*Gojushiho*) and *Sanchin*. *Sanchin* is an unadulterated Fujinese *kata*, but was not popular on Okinawa until the mid 19th century. It can be traced back to Go Cho Kune Ch'uan Fa, or the Five Fist Style of Chinese Boxing. In China, it is known as Sam Chien, and was established in Fukien. The oldest and most original *karate kata* are found in *Shurite*, and at least some of these have Chinese antecedents. *Seisan kata* of *Nahate* has definite Fujian *derivation*, as does *Useishi*. *Kusanku* is derivative of China through the envoy of the same name. *Chinto* is also from China, although there are two very different versions. It is believed that *Wanshu* predates all of them. The *Sappushi* (envoy) *Wanshu* was prominent in Okinawa almost a century prior to King Kung Shang K'ung.

I have made clear the above refers to empty hand *kata*. The oldest known *kata* on Okinawa is a *kobujutsu kata*. Akahachi Oyakei is credited with creating (or at least passing on) the *Akahachi no Gyaku Bo*. This *kata* is verifiably five hundred years old.

It is to be noted that the old masters taught *kata* differently at different times in their lives! They also taught dissimilar forms to different students.

Lua, or the Art of the Hawaiian Warrior

Huna na mea huna. Keep secret what is sacred. Not respecting this **kapu, lua** will be done for money and greed.

The art of **lua** is based on three principles, which are as follows:

- **Ho-omau** is the perseverance or persistence in studying. This refers to **huamana** (students) learning correct teaching from a **'olohe lua** (master of **lua**) to harmonize the mind, body and spirit. This harmony (**lokahe**) leads to mastery by which the techniques become second nature.
'olohe originally meant hairless which came from the custom of the warrior plucking their hair and greasing their bodies to prevent the enemy from gaining a hold.
- **Nalu** refers to surf waves relating to ocean people. The **lua** warrior knows that going against the force (of the surf) is inefficient at best, and at worst can bring about death. They must ride the wave (of the attack) and slip out of danger. In this way they follow nature's order and energy to arrive at perfect balance (**pono**).
- **Ho'i hou** refers to finding the lessons and **mana** of previous warriors through education and meditation. This refers to enlightenment through contemplation, which brings clarity and openness of mind.

The word **lua** means, among other definitions, "two." This refers to duality and polarity, force and counterforce, action and reaction, life and death. This is the Hawaiian version of Yin and Yang (*in* and *yo*).

Amazingly, most, if not all, **lua** techniques, strikes and holds (**'ai**) resemble the illustrations contained within the Okinawan **Bubishi**. **Ka-piko-o-Wakea** (the navel of **wakea**) resembles the technique "Fighting Alone (a spear-hand to the abdomen)." "Golden Lion Shakes Its Mane" (a groin grab) resembles **'Ope 'a-panipani** (the copulating scrotum, variant one), just as **'Ope 'a-panipani**, variant two, resembles "Seize Testicles Behind."

Also, the Hawaiian **lua** is associated with dance, especially **'ai ha'a** and **hula ku'i**, just as karate techniques are woven into Okianwan dance (*mai no te*).

Weapons of the body included the fingers (**ha'iha'i**, or limbering; **'ope'ope**, or bundling; **ku'iku'i**, or punching; and **pelupelu**, or bending), **pa'i**, a slap with the open hand,

pu'upu'u or **ku'i** was a hit with closed fist and **oki** was a “chop” with the side of the hand. Weapons were various. Among them was the **ma'a**, or sling, the **pololu**, or long spear, the **ihe**, or short spear, the **la'au palau**, or long club, knobbed at one end and with a cutting edge (of shark's teeth) on the opposite. Also used was the **pikoi** or tripping cord. Another weapon, used much as a belt in Hapkido, was the **ka'ane** or strangling cord. The **leiomano** was a short club with shark's teeth having a rope which was looped over the thumb and brought across the back of the hand, as the short stick in Hapkido. **'Ai** literally means to destroy or consume. Within the context of **lua**, **'ai** refers to destroying (consuming) the enemy by breaking his bones and killing him. The number of **'ai** range from one hundred, fifty-six to three hundred, fifty-nine.

Lomilomi: Hawaiian Massage and Healing

As with all traditional martial arts of any culture, there is the martial side and the healing side. This was done from a practical standpoint. If someone were hurt, knowledge of how to treat the wound was necessary. From this knowledge, techniques were expanded for non-martial injuries or sickness. Your *Hanshi* Emeritus was taught traditional Kappo (Katsu) along with Amma (massage), and was beginning the study of herbs when he lost his instructor. In addition he is certified in both CPR and First Aid to the level necessary to certify other instructors. He believes any black belt, especially an instructor, should be certified in both.

The traditional healing art of Hawaii is referred to as **lomilomi**. It is learned from a **kumu**, or teacher, through six methods. These methods are as follows: **nana pono ka maka**, or the skill of observation; **ho'olohe**, or the skill of listening (probably the most difficult); **pa'a ka waha**, or the skill of thinking; **ho'opili** or the skill of imitating; **ninau**, or the skill of questioning; and **hana lima**, which is using the hands to feel, palpate and do the work.

It is the belief of the healer that to be effective, Hawaiian medicinal plants must be administered with spiritual intention. Patients must be treated spiritually before receiving healing remedies. The remedy depends on the patient, the illness and the potency needed. The same plant may be harvested at 11,000 feet rather than 2,000 feet for a different potency. Plants belong to the **'aina** (land) and **kai** (sea) and many are now endangered. As a sad commentary to our times, care must be taken to harvest non-polluted plants, as these may cause more harm than good.

In the 19th century, **lomilomi** was referred to as shampooing. Shampoo comes from the Hindi word, *champo*, meaning massage.

As with Chinese medicine, and other holistic treatments, Hawaiian medicine was used as a restoration to good health (**hamohamo**).

Originally, there were three aspects of Hawaiian body work: The **lomilomi** (name of the person, originally) would **lomi** the abdomen to induce bowel movement; the **hamohamo** would **hamo** (rub oil) on the skin to massage the muscles; the **iwikuamo'o** would walk on the back (**kua**) to **ha'iha'i iwi**, or make chiropractic adjustments. As daily use of the Hawaiian language became rare, only **lomilomi** was remembered by most persons, and became the word for the whole art. The most celebrated healers were **kahuna** who were highly skilled in all disciplines: **la'au lapa'au** (medicinal plants), **haha** (palpitation), and **lomilomi** (massage). Such knowledge was considered a gift. The top expert was known

as **kahuna lapaau**. Training could begin at birth through certain signs that the person was destined to be a healer, or, when older, his attitude (**mana**) was seen to be that of a healer (unusually kind and thoughtful towards others and concerned about playmates who were injured). With this training came **haumana kulena**, or responsibility of the student. A haumana (student) must have a desire to learn and must ask to be taught. A **kumu** would not offer to teach, but wait to be asked. If no one asked the **kumu** took his knowledge with him at death. A **haumana** had to be a live-in disciple, just as the top students of martial arts in Japan, or *uchi deshi*. There are three realms of human sickness: anatomic, physiologic and spiritual. After the patient was healed, a ceremony of prayerful closure (**pani**) was held.

A traditional martial artist of any culture is similar to a Renaissance Man. Not only are techniques of combat learned, but how to teach them, as well as some type of healing art indigenous to the culture. In addition, the artist learned their style's lineage. In many instances the *bujutsuka* were great artists (Musashi Miyamoto, for example). In China, not only were martial arts learned but also the (Chinese) classics. Your *Hanshi* Emeritus recommends deep study in the art of your choice and expanded study in other areas. From a practical standpoint, the more arts you know the wider your range of tactics and techniques. How can you defend against something of which you know little or nothing?

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