

Midori Yama Budokai: *Hanshi's* Corner Written by Ron Rogers *Hanshi Meiyokyoju*

“Elephant’s Trunk”

The “Elephant’s Trunk” was an exercise taught by Leo Wilson *Kancho* for entry into four different throws, ending with *kawazu gake* (frog hooking).

From a standard grip in a right natural stance (*migi shizentai no kumi kata*), *tori* broke *uke's* balance to the right rear corner (*migi ushiro sumi no kuzushi*), and placed the right foot (*tsukuri*) for *o soto gake*. *Tori* then transferred *kuzushi* to *uke's* left rear corner (*hidari ushiro sumi*) and placed the right foot for *ko soto gake*. *Kuzushi* was then moved to *uke's* right rear corner, or direct rear (*ma ushiro no kuzushi*), and *tori* placed the right foot for *ko uchi gake*. The final *tsukuri* was *o uchi gake* to *tori's* right rear corner. From this position, *tori* hooked *uke's* left leg with the right leg and threw with *kawazu gake*.

O soto gake required the back of the right knee of *uke* to be hooked with the heel of *tori's* right foot. *Ko soto gake* had *tori's* right heel hooked in back of *tori's* left knee. For *ko uchi gake*, *tori* hooked the back of *tori's* right knee with the right heel. Finally, the back of *uke's* left knee was hooked with *tori's* right heel for *o uchi gake*. From this position, *uke's* balance was continued to the left rear corner as his or her left leg was brought forward with *tori's* right foot wrapped in *kawazu gake*.

The idea behind this exercise was to teach the correct direction of *kuzushi*. Most *judoka* have a tendency to initially break *uke's* balance to the left rear corner for *migi o uchi gari*, but during the throw they tend to shift *uke's* weight to the right rear corner. This exercise was created to teach *tori* to perform *kuzushi* in the proper manner.

Also, *tori* learned that *uke's* foot must be carried diagonally forward for *kawazu gake*, i.e. toward *uke's* right front corner. Any other direction would inhibit the movement.

Shikaku or Dead Angle

This concept was one of Wilson *Shihan's* major teachings. Entering from a 45o angle, or pivoting to a 45o angle in back of the opponent, was considered optimum. Wilson *Shihan* repeatedly stressed that this angle attacked the “blind spot.” It is a position from which the opponent finds it difficult to attack, or continue an attack. It is also a position from which it is (relatively) easy to control the opponent’s balance and movement. The first phase of technique is best used to establish *shikaku*. Supplementary Spring Newsletter, 2007

Moten or Blind Spot

The blind spot, or *moten* in Japanese, is known to almost everyone. Anyone who has begun backing a car, or changing lanes, and wondered where that car came from knows about the blind spot. The anatomical blind spot, or optic disc, is the region of the retina where the optic nerve and blood vessels pass through to connect to the back of the eye. (Thanks, Kim) This creates a literal “blind spot.” However, we must realize that we have mental, moral and emotional blind spots as well. If a person’s intelligence or morality does not meet our standards, we have a blind spot for that person’s capabilities. The first rule of combat is never to underestimate our opponent. Blind spots lend themselves to incorrect assumptions (and you should never assume anything!). Emotional blind spots are the worst. If we (forgive the pun) blindly believe something good or bad about an individual without facts, we place ourselves in a position to be hurt. The greatest example

of this type of blind spot is Shakespeare's *Othello*. All anyone had to do was question what Iago told him or her, and they would have found everything he said was a lie. There was an emotional attachment to Iago (friendship) that precluded the thought of his lying. Consequently, lives were lost or destroyed. This does not mean to be paranoid about everyone (or anyone!), but if something does not seem right, check it out. Also, do not assume the worst about anyone or any situation without finding out for yourself if what has been said is true. Remember, the true warrior sees things as they are, not as s/he wants them to be.

Taekwon-do

T'ae Kyon was the ancient name of Taekwon-do, and was developed in the Silla Dynasty approximately 1300 years ago. During the 37th year of the reign of King Chin-Hung, an organization of loyal warriors was established. This was the Hw rang-Do, led by General Kim Yu-Sin. Much later, during the Japanese occupation, hand techniques from both China and Japan were added to T'ae Kyon. Various names were used for this one art. Among them were, Tan-Su, Kong-Su, Karate, Kwon-pop, and T'ae-Su. After the liberation of Korea in 1945, there was a movement to combine all styles under one name. In 1955 the name TaeKwon-Do was chosen. The Korean translation of Taekwon-do is derived from three words. Tae (t'ae) literally means to jump, kick or smash with the feet. Kwon, literally fist, means to destroy with the hand or fist. Do, as with Japanese *Do* and Chinese Tao, means a Way (of life). Together, the three refer to techniques of unarmed combat for self-defense, which involve the skillful application of hands and feet for the rapid destruction of an opponent.

Skillful application is achieved through reaction force, concentration of power and equilibrium and breath control. These four elements combined are the theory of power. Reaction force refers to two forces combined. This would be the forward momentum of an opponent's rush toward you plus a blow to his head with your fist. Concentration is the application of the impact force into the smallest target area. Equilibrium means that you should stay on-balance while taking the opponent off-balance. Breath control, or controlled breathing, affects stamina and power. In addition, incorrect timing of breath can cause imbalance, while correct timing will "root" the person.

Japanese Titles and Terms of Martial Arts Ranks and Grades

Dai-sensei (also, ***Q-sensei***) means Great Sensei and is usually used to refer to Kano Jigoro, Funakoshi Gichin and Ueshiba Morihei. ***Q-sensei*** is the term used for Ueshiba Sensei and is used only for those who have passed on. It is, in Japan, a posthumous title.

Kensei means sword saint, sometimes translated as "first saint." This is a title used to describe a martial artist of legendary stature (i.e., Musashi Miyamoto is a *kensei*).

Meijin is a Higher Master, and the epitome of martial arts. A *meijin* has transcended all physical techniques.

Kaiso refers to the founder of a system. Other terms used are *Soshi Shiso* and *Shuso*.

Shodai, ***Sokei*** or ***Shosei*** are variations of a title given to one who founds a *ryu* in the martial arts. ***Shodai*** refers to the 1st generation, or family head.

Soke, or ***Sodenke***, means the hereditary headmaster of a system or style, and is usually passed on within a family from generation to generation.

Soke Dai is the heir apparent to a system or style.

Soke Dai Ni refers to the official representative of the Headmaster.

Kanchō means Master of the House and refers to the Headmaster of a worldwide style.

Saiko Shihan means Absolute or Supreme Master.

Shi, or **Shisho**, means Master, and may also mean the founder of a *ryū*.

Sosho means a master Teacher or Instructor.

Shihan-dai is an instructor, usually of *Daitō Ryū Aiki Jutsu*. In other systems it refers to the top assistant or second in the teaching line of command.

Shihan means a model teacher, or one who sets the example. This refers to a senior or upper-level instructor, usually equated with *godan* to *shichidan*.

Sensei literally means “born before,” and is more than a teacher of technique. The title indicates respect for the wisdom of one who has gone before. A *sensei* also gives spiritual (not necessarily religious!) guidance along the way.

Dōshu means a master of the way. The head of *Hombu Aikidō* uses this designation.

Dojō Chō is the head of a *dojo*.

Kaiden means equal to the master, a great master, or a master who teaches.

Deshi (Teishi) means a disciple or apprentice. Other words used to mean disciple are *montei*, *monjin*, and *seito* (regular trainees).

Ototo, or Younger Brother, refers to a new *deshi*.

Uchi deshi is an apprentice. This refers to an old Japanese practice in which a student was apprenticed to a martial arts master in order to become an instructor in turn.

Jiki Deshi means a direct disciple, or a student who studies directly with the Headmaster of a *ryū*.

Shōsei means a student dependent, similar to *uchi deshi*. It is sometimes used to describe the most senior or top student.

Ani Deshi is a senior disciple.

Kaikin Deshi is a disciple who never misses class.

Mago Deshi is a disciple of one’s disciple.

Mana Deshi is a favorite disciple. Even though modern education frowns on having a “favorite student,” even Jesus favored Peter.

Montei or **Monjin** means disciple.

Juka-gashira is the title given to the leading disciple of a “professor,” or “doctor,” of a martial art to whom all the secrets are imparted.

Menkyō-kaiden is a certificate of full proficiency in a Japanese martial art, usually awarded to an advanced student deemed most suited to carry on the transmission of the art. Usually only one is granted in the master’s lifetime.

Shugyōsha is one who does intense training and devotes his or her entire life to discipline.

Okotodate or **kyōkaku** is an expression used to describe a virile man with the spirit of a knight errant, who defends the weak and oppressed. He is a man of strong character who has gained mastery of his desires through the practice of the martial arts.

Renshi is the first of three advanced titles and refers to a person who has mastered him- or herself. Literally, it means forging person, or a person who has forged him- or herself through severe training.

Kyōshi, or Master, is the second of three advanced titles and may be given at *rokudan* to *hachidan*. In Japan it is given 10 years after *Renshi* (no earlier than seven) and the person must be at least 40 years of age.

Hanshi, or Master Instructor, is the third of three advanced titles and means model person. This title refers to a teacher of teachers, usually given after *hachidan*. In Japan it is given 15 years after *Kyoshi* and the person must be 55 or older.

Hanshi Dai is a rank just below *Hanshi* and refers to the heir apparent of a *ryu*.

Sempai, or previous companion, refers to one's senior in rank and time.

Dai Sempai is used to mean the oldest senior instructor.

Dohai is one of equal training, and refers to rank and time.

Kohai means "behind companion." This refers to a junior in training rank and time. *Kohai* is referred to in the third person, only. If addressed to the individual/s it is considered rude.

Yudansha refers to the ranks of black belt.

Dan is the term used to refer to any black belt. It literally means, "step."

Ho is a contraction of the word *hobo*, meaning nearly. It is sometimes used to denote a probationary grade (*Shodan-ho*, or nearly a *shodan*).

Kenshusei is a trainee instructor.

Kyosei is a student teacher of *Shodan* level.

Shidoin or **Fukushidoin** refers to a lower level instructor, usually a *nidan* or *sandan*.

Seito is a pupil or student.

Mudansha (not graded) refers to any *kyu* rank.

Kyu is used to refer to any rank below black belt.

Kyusho, with different characters than those meaning "vital points," means a grade (*kyu*) certificate.

Jokyusha refers to an upper level in the *kyu* ranks.

Chukyusha is an intermediate level in the *kyu* ranks.

Kaicho means chairman, or the head of an organization.

Shoshinsha is a beginner or novice in the study of martial arts. This usually refers to any unranked Japanese martial artist. *Mukyū* (without rank) may also be used.

Kenkyū means to study or research.

Kenkyuka means a seminar or postgraduate course.

Kenkyuka (with a different character for "ka") is one who researches, or a scholar.

Kenshusei is a research student who is being trained to become an instructor.

Note: This list is by no means exhaustive, but it gives the most common ranks or titles of Japanese Martial Arts.

A Certificate of rank or grade is referred to as *Menjo*. The license is termed *Menkyo*. A teaching license is called *Kyoju Dairi*. Full proficiency is designated *Menkyo Kaiden* and an international instructor's certificate is *Kokusai Shihan Menkyo*.

Ma

Ma is the space and/or time "in between." *Ma* is there because the opponent is there. If one eliminates *ma*, s/he makes the opponent hers or his. The opponent's thinking becomes one's own, and one can always be ahead of every movement. Space, in this instance, refers to space-time, or an unspecified interval between two things, two volumes of space or two movements. Both the opponent and the self are the center of a sphere, and the center of the sphere is the *tanden* of the person. All points in space-time

should be related to this importance of the center of gravity. Moreover, the *tanden* houses the *seika no itten*, or central point of the *tanden*. This is the spiritual center of the person where physical and psychic forces converge to cause the *ki* to act.

Closely related is *hyoshi*, or timing, which includes spatial and temporal factors.

This also relates to *yomi*, or reading the thoughts of others before the thought has materialized in their own mind. Practically, this is the ability to foresee an attack, based on – among other things – body language. *Yomi* is a function of *ma-ai* and *hyoshi*. Buddhism refers to this as *ishin-denshin*, or from one mind to another [without the use of words]. One is “on the same wave length” as the opponent.

Ma-ai is space-time meeting, or “in-between” meeting. That is, *ma-ai* is the “in-between” of the opponent’s attack and the self’s defense or counter.

Kikai is the moment that separates two movements of attack and defense. This is the physical aspect of attack-defense. In this moment, one person experiences a state of uncertainty and the other a state of potential advantage.

Katsu hayabi refers to the moment of perceiving, in a single instant, the opponent’s spirit. At this moment there is no time and no space only *ima*, the present moment, now!

Within both *aite* (opponent) and *jibun* (self) there is *seika no itten*, or the central point of the *tanden*, the spiritual/physical center. When *ma-ai* and *hyoshi* converge there is *yomi*. When one perceives the thought of the other (*yomi*) and *kikai* is experienced, there is the opportunity for *katsu hayabi*.

Kamae: Posture or Attitude

Following is an outline of the essentials of *kamae* or attitude of the body.

Kamae or combative engagement postures, or attitudes:

- *Yuko no kamae*, or physical aspects of *kamae*.
 1. *ashi no tachi kata* or forms of placing the feet; generally refers to the body from the waist down – specifically the placement of the legs and feet.
 2. *kamae kata* or forms of combat engagement; generally refers to the body from the waist up – specifically, the position of the arms and hands.
- *Muko no kamae*, or mental aspects of *kamae*.
 1. *zenshin (kamaete)* means to be prepared with intense concentration.
 2. *tsushin* is maintaining the same state of mental concentration throughout combat or performance of *kata*.
 3. *zanshin* is the mental concentration after the opponent has been defeated.

Bogyo or Defensive Tactics in Judo

Bogyo or blocking an attack:

- *Tome waza* or stopping techniques.
 1. *Kawazu gake* or leg entangling.
 2. *Kusabi dome* or stopping by wedging.
- *Tai sabaki* or body pivoting.
- *Jigotai* or defensive posture.
- *Kuzushi* or balance breaking.
- *Shintai* or body movement.

Kaeshi waza or countering techniques:

- *Kaeri* or reversals.
 1. *uchi gaeri* or inner reversal.
 2. *soto gaeri* or outer reversal
 3. *tombo gaeri* or “dragon-fly” reversal.

Sukashi waza or evasive techniques:

- *Tai sabaki* or body pivoting.
- *Hiki ashi* or pulling foot/leg.

Note: These are not mutually exclusive. For Uchi mata sukashi, tori would pivot (*tai sabaki*) to the rear while pushing (*kuzushi*) to the front corner to perform *uki otoshi*.

Sumo: Banzuke, or Official Ranking List

Sumo is based entirely on combat efficiency. A *sumo tori*'s place in the ranking list is based on a win-loss record. The only rank that cannot be lost is that of *Yokozuna*. However, if a *sumo tori* loses too many times after achieving this rank, he is expected to “retire” from competition.

- I. *Seki tori*
 - A. *Maku no uchi* or First Rankers (Ones Within the Curtain).
 1. *Yokozuna* or Grand Champions.
 2. *Sanyaku* or First Three Ranking Wrestlers.
 - a. *Ozeki* or Champion (Great Barrier).
 - b. *Seki wake* or Junior Champions, First Grade.
 - c. *Ko musubi* or almost Champions, Second Grade.
 3. *Maegashira* or Senior Wrestlers (Before the Head).
 - B. *Juryo* or Contenders for the First Rank. Ju-ryo referred to the original pay for this rank – ten ryo (an old Japanese coin).
 - C. *Nidan-me* or Senior Grade.
 - D. *Maku-shita* or Second Rank Seniors (Outside the Curtain).
 - E. *San Damme* or Juniors (the Third Step).
- II. *Kuri mage*
 - A. *Jo Nidan* or Sophomores (the Second Step).
 - B. *Jo no Kuchi* or Freshmen (the first Step).
- III. *Chon mage* or Plain Topknot.
 - A. *Hochu* or Beginner (the Base).
 - B. *Maezumo* or Recruits (Pre-sumo).

The winner of the tournament receives the *shihai*, or Emperor's cup (which is returned next tournament, and a smaller one is given for keeps). In addition, there are three consolation prizes in the form of shields. The first is *shukun-sho*, which is given for outstanding achievement. This translates to the one whom upset (beat) the most grand champions and champions. Second is *gino-sho*, an award for skill. Finally, there is the *kanto-sho* for fighting spirit.

The three elements of *sumo* are *shin*, *gi* and *tai*. *Shin* refers to fighting spirit, *tai* is the body itself and *gi* are the techniques.

For those interested in learning more about *sumo*, I recommend *The Essential Guide to Sumo* by Dorothea N. Buckingham

Budo: Tsukuri (Setting Up)

Usually thought of as *judo* related and translated as “fitting in,” *tsukuri* is any action used to set up a technique and involves physical as well as mental and emotional preparation. Physical preparation includes practicing the technique and different applications, as well as practicing various entries for the technique. Mental preparation is learning variations and follow-ups and their entries. “Imaging” is included; i.e. the *budoka* imagines the techniques and outcome. Emotional preparation would include “psyching out” the opponent and “psyching up” oneself. None of these in and of themselves are unique to *budo*, but the concept that they are automatically included is. That is, in the Japanese thought process, one does not think of doing all of the above, it is presumed that one just does.

Reflect on This:

There should be no competition between *sensei* and student. The student should not nurture unrealistic expectations of the *sensei* and then fault the *sensei* for not living up to them. The greatest tribute that you can pay to your *sensei* is to surpass him or her in the quality of your life and your practice. You are part of the Universe. To ruin your life or waste it is to ruin a piece of the Universe.

Ichi go, ichi e: One life, one meeting

In any encounter there is only one chance. The same situation will never return. Now is now! Tomorrow is maybe. There is no second chance, no “one more time.” Your whole life is Now. Learn from your “bad days,” and treasure your good days.

I would like to welcome back, and thank, Kim Morey, Yudansha. She has been my “proof reader” for a number of papers. Those with mistakes were when she was absent. Any mistakes in any papers are mine.

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