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On the cover: Grandmaster Vincent Palumbo of Adelaide in teaching.

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MARTIAL ART SNOBBERY

Donald Miskel

Our nation was built out of protest of class and cast systems. One class being better than another and such similar ideas. We are a melting pot. We draw our ideas, wisdom, knowledge and philosophies from many different sources and cultures. If we were gem stones we would be multi faceted rather than the smooth faced cabochon. We have as many personalities as we do people and engrafted cultures. That's what makes us unique. That's what makes us strong.

In breeding in any species magnifies whatever weaknesses may be inherit in that species. Recessive traits become magnified and undesirable traits become dominant. In our nation we are constantly exposed to new and fresh ideas. The ability to disagree has contributed to our strength as much as the ability to have common ideas and a common voice. America is a democracy and encourages individuality. Apparently that doesn't apply in politics and martial arts. Since I don't want to start a riot I won't expound on political snobbery. I'll leave that for another time and another forum.

Give something to Americans and they will make it their own. Anything that we inherit will be given our own flavor. We give our knowledge its own unique character and it reflects our own individual character. Each individual can interpret new knowledge according to his own needs and level of understanding. Where flexibility is possible there is no definitive way of doing anything.

Now with that being said let me present my argument. First a disclaimer. I love the martial arts. I have dedicated the major portion of my life and much of my effort to the arts. I nettles me when an individual with twenty years of study who has studied with one system, one master or one organization feels that he is in the lofty position to judge others who have dedicated two or three times more time to the perfection of their various arts. I have a problem with people who believe that if I don't do it the way they do it or believe it the way they see it I'm less than credible. Those of us who have studied several systems or are eclectic in our approach are criticized by martial art traditionalists with half our experience.

Some people believe that unless you were taught by someone of oriental heritage your knowledge is lacking. Another misnomer is that unless you study the art the way it was taught three hundred years ago you aren't a martial artist. I've heard individuals who couldn't stand toe to toe with an amateur boxer tell the boxer that he doesn't study a martial art. Likewise I've heard purists tell mixed martial artists who could clean their clock in their sleep that they aren't martial artists. In all honesty I've been guilty of the latter at one time or another but I'm making an attempt at blatant honesty here and I'm not holding myself exempt.

Martial artists all but venerate Bruce Lee. They see him as some kind of martial art saint. This in spite of the fact that he thumbed his nose at the traditional arts and criticized the traditional martial artist. Bruce Lee borrowed what he needed from wherever it was available. His jeet kune do is based heavily on skill sets that many martial artists would claim are not martial arts. In my way of thinking I find that hypocritical at the least. These same martial artists discredit individuals who did the same thing; people such as John Keehan (Count Dante) and Bruce Tegner who did the same thing just as well. What these same martial art snobs don't realize is that the arts that they study may not be as pure as they think. Karate is an eclectic art. It borrowed from Chinese Buddhist, Taoist and Muslim kung fu systems and added it to their Okinawa te, an indigenous art to form tode which eventually became karate. I won't even examine the Korean arts. They're more eclectic than some of the Okinawan and Japanese systems.

The truth is there is no pure martial art nor should there be. A martial art master who doesn't use what he knows to work isn't much of a master. A master owes it to his students to keep the art current and usable by the day's standards. How important is it today to be able to defend against a swordsman on horseback or an armored samurai. If this is what you're training for, regardless of how traditional you claim your art to be, you are training for disaster. If you are going to be effective as a martial artist you have to be able to deal with the threats that you are subject to be presented with. Karateka of days past trained against the samurai sword because the samurai was one of their most prevalent threats.

I have spent a number of years studying several traditional martial arts. I hold rank in a number of them with advanced rank in several. With well over fifty years in the arts I don't feel that I need anyone telling me that I don't understand the arts. I judge a martial art by how well it works and how well it deals with modern day aggression. In the end that's what a martial art was originally intended for. When we make a martial art something it was never intended to be we run into problems. We garner many additional benefits from the arts but in the end if they aren't good for self defense or for combat they aren't really martial.

Boxing doesn't teach kata. Neither does catch wrestling. What shorenji kempo calls kata many systems would call waza. Would you say that because they don't have stylized drills to catalogue their systems techniques that they aren't martial arts? Then you might just be a red ne... Opps, sorry. Wrong argument. You might just be a martial art snob. By the way Bruce Lee Had no use for kata so by the measure of most of you who idolize him, he wasn't a martial artist. What kind of sense does that make? Sounds hypocritical to me but then who am I?

Ending this one sided argument I'll say that I do teach several kata in my system and even include some bunkai. But because, after almost fifty six years in the martial arts, I teach a nontraditional eclectic system I'm not a martial artist. Okay but I'll spend another fifty years trying to figure out that argument.

Donald Miskel

KUNTAO: SOUTH EAST ASIAN “WAY OF THE FIGHT”

Master Kublai*

1. What is Kuntao?

Kuntao (拳道) is a Hokkien word refers to the traditional Chinese Martial Art spread in South East Asia, primarily in local Chinese communities but also among other neighboring peoples. Kuntao practitioners may be found in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and China and the historical adventure of the art has realized an inter-cultural exchange around Kuntao, it has been named as Kuntao Silat sometimes in Indonesia, based on mutual interactions with different Silat styles and named as Kuntaw in Tagalog with very deep relations with Filipino martial arts, Kali / Arnis / Eskrima / Mano Mano in the Philippines. However, despite all the trans-cultural relations and effects Kuntao remained as a Chinese martial art.

What is Kuntao? In this article we will try to give an answer, or at least one of the possible articles to this question. When we translate literally it means the Fist Way, or with a more proper expression “Way of the Fist”. Fist (拳, Chuan, Quan, Kuen or Kun) has a general meaning in Chinese martial arts and beyond the particular meaning of “fist”, sometimes referred as “boxing”, many Kung Fu styles ending with this word such as: Tang Lang Quan (Praying Mantis Kun Fu), Lung Ying Kuen (Dragon Style Kung Fu), Tai Chi Chuan, etc. All these styles ending with Fist / Boxing not only limited with punches, many other techniques (kicks, knee strikes, elbow strikes, blocks, grappling, etc.) are also incorporated with these systems. So, it is better not to consider them as “Box” in the Western sense of term and rather consider as a general and complicated martial system. As for Tao (道), it is one of the most profound aspects of Chinese civilization, mostly assembled with Taoism, although there are usages of the same notion in Chan Buddhism and Konfucianism. Usually Tao is translated into English and other Western languages as way, path, principle or route, although it

includes and is beyond each of these words. Tao is a word not easy to describe and what it indicates is like an eternal flow proceed through centuries, through living creatures and all universe, give meaning and life power to everything. From this point of view in can be also considered as a kind of system or energy. After these explanations we can see that one alternative and clearer expression for Kuntao can be “Way of the Fight”, which is not a literally translation but can give the essence of what is Kuntao.

Usually in traditional Chinese Kung Fu the oral narrations through many generations are much more common than written historical materials. This situation is the same for Kuntao which is a part of Southern Kung Fu styles. So, in our research, since there is a big lack of written materials, we have based on the oral narrations too and first time in the history of Chinese martial arts such widely information on Kuntao is “recorded”. The information provided here was obtained through interviews with contemporary Masters (Sifu / Guro) of Kuntao and would be helpful also to further studies on this South East Asian martial art. The Masters we have interviewed within this research first time answered this kind of questions and made written what is passed to them through centuries in the history of Kuntao. They have revealed some “details” of the art which are crucial for understanding it more profoundly. Now we can proceed to read these invaluable knowledge given by the Kuntao teachers of 21st Century.

2. Lineages

For traditional martial arts lineage is one of the most important issues. A practitioner can practice a particular technique or form perfectly with its “physical appearance”, even he/she may know the meaning beyond the movements and some other aspects of the style. However, if a practitioner has no transmission from a legitimate master, he would not be considered as a legitimate member of the tradition he/she is practicing, unlike modern or modernized martial arts. If somebody has a Karate, Taekwondo or Wushu license from a legal federation he/she would be considered as a practitioner of that sport. But for traditional martial arts lineage and transmission of authority through generations are much more important than physical applications and performances of techniques. So, for Kuntao also having a legitimate lineage is an important issue. Like many other Kung Fu / Chinese martial arts styles, Kuntao practitioners tracing their origins backward before destruction of Shaolin Monastery in 17th Century. But this is nothing special to Kuntao, usually all Kung Fu styles, except the Taoist oriented ones, lean towards Shaolin Temple. However, beyond legends, some animal imitation techniques (leopard, snake, Etc.) in Kuntao is a proof that the Animal imitation Kung Fu of Shaolin Temple has been influential on some aspects of Kuntao. For centuries Kuntao styles and techniques has been very secretive, hidden by non-Chinese

people and not shared with public. But, in globalization process of 20th and 21st Centuries Kuntao spread toward the West, besides all other traditional styles of Kung Fu. There many internationally renowned masters today, who are westerners.

In America most of the Kuntao schools have a lineage through Willem de Thouars. He is the founder of Kun Lun Pai and many American and international Kuntao teachers trained under him. Willem de Thouars was born in Java and studied fifteen styles of Pencak Silat. Besides Pencak Silat, he studied a dozen forms of Chinese Kuntao. His Kuntao lineage is coming from several sources and incorporation of Kuntao and Silat forms in Indonesia can be seen in his personal style too. Besides some other sources, Willem de Thouars' Chinese Kuntao lineage is coming from Tan Tong Liong (1890-1959, Shantung Kuntao), William Chen (1900-1956, Fuekchin Kuntao) and Buk Chin (1895-1960, Hukien Kuntao). Professor Florendo Visitacion (1910-1999) was another important name in the modern history of Kuntao and some contemporary teachers (Rick Hernandez) go backward through his lineage. Rick Hernandez's Kuntao (or Kuntaw with its Filipino name) curriculum has more Filipino influences thanks to its origins from the Philippines and also included internal Chinese martial arts (Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, etc.) in its structure. Richard Clear is another teacher in this martial art whose curriculum includes internal aspects as well, such as Xingyiquan, Baguazhang and Fukien Kuntao with internal emphasizes. Henry Jayme is one of the most influential Kuntao teachers today and his art is deeply rooted in his country of origin, the Philippines too. Henry Jayme states that the origin of his Kuntao is from Tat Kun Tuo in Cebu Philippines, which was founded by GM Jose Milan Go, a Chinese originally from China. After he changed the name into Gokosa before he passed away. Jayme says: "We actually just changed the Tuo into Tao because that word cannot be understood internationally, because Chinese is a sound language, and we also drop The Tat which means touch, just concentrate kun which means fist, and Tao means knowledge Or way. So it becomes knowledge of fist fighting by empty hands." So, thanks to the origin of its founder Tat Kun Tuo had stronger connections with China compare to other Kuntaw styles of the Philippines.

Ron Kosakowski is also one of the Kuntao teachers in America, actively teaching the art today. His Kuntao originally came from Joe Rossi. He says that: "Before I went to his school, I was a kid practicing Karate point fighting. When I saw Kuntao, I was sold on it the very first day there. I never saw anything like it. There was angulation footwork, body positioning and moves that I thought at the time, resembled what David Carradine did in the weekly show called Kung Fu." Kosakowski also trained Grand Tuhon Leo Gaje, who is the family heir to Pekiti Tirsia Kali. One day in early 2000s he mentioned to Mr. Gaje that he would like to search roots of Kuntao in South East Asia. After a long and adventurous trip in the Philippines he met an "elder of Kuntao" named Ali Sharief, from Maranaw tribes of Mindanao.

Ron Kosakowski and the local Kuntao clan exchanged their knowledge in the art. He says: "Then I was accepted by them. That was history made where no one outside the Maranaw tribes was ever accepted by them before. They are now my teachers and I am here to carry on Kuntao and maintain its true essence and historical significance for them outside the Philippines." So Kosakowski teaches "Kun Tao Dumpag" as taught by Grand Tuhon Leo Gaje with inevitable contributions of what he has learned from Joe Rossi at the beginning and also what he has experienced in the Philippines.

W. L. van Prehn has been one of the teachers spread Kuntao in Europe. The origin of his lineage came from the Chinese Grandmaster Lie Tjhing Yan who was born and lived in Indonesia (already deceased). Prehn says: "The style Taokun was originally from China and has a very long lineage back for almost 2000 years. It past as a family system from family to family. All Chinese traditions are in principle the same only there are differences in styles and from what city it came from. For example from North or South etc." The style taught by W.L. van Prehn is called Kun Tao Hokkian Siau Lim and the expression of "Siau Lim" here refers to Shaolin origin of this arts. Kun Tao Hokkian Siau Lim is spread in the Netherlands, although W. L. van Prehn quit teaching.

David Seiwert is one of the American martial arts teachers spread Chinese Kuntao in the West. David Seiwert's Harmonious Fist Kuntao style comes from Southern China and was taught to his instructor by his grandfather who taught him Ng Family Kuntao and Six Harmonies Boxing. The system focuses on animal styles including Snake, Mantis, Monkey and Drunken techniques. He has also included techniques from Silat, like Willem de Thouars and other teachers and also the Kuntaw systems of the Philippines. Seiwert has very strong connections with South East Asia, regularly visit there for Kung Fu, Kuntao, Kali, etc. activities and incorporate the traditional methods these arts in his effective curriculum, which is very direct and applicable to sparring, rather than exaggerated forms. David Seiwert's influence in contemporary Kuntao scene is beyond America; spread in Europe, Middle East and Asia. His affiliated schools are teaching Chinese Kuntao in many other countries.

When we look at to all these lineages of contemporary masters, we realize that there are several roots for this traditional martial art. In the interview with Kuntao teachers we have tried to find out, "where should we locate Kuntao?" Is it really a Chinese Art, or much more a multi-cultural and mixed martial art? Does it belong to a particular country or more a regional heritage? Answers we have heard during the research may be an interesting contribution to the history of Kuntao.

3. Where to locate Kuntao?

Indonesia, China and the Philippines have been mentioned in different lineages of Kuntao. However, what is interesting nowadays is that the majority of prominent Kuntao teachers is either westerners or settled in the west although they have a background from these countries. Teachers (Guro or Sifu) live in South East Asia maybe do not have sufficient international network yet and not known well yet. Henry Jayme is one of the exceptions, who has many students from the West and very well known internationally. But, many Kuntao Guros/Sifus living in the South East Asia still wait to have more comfortable international connections and they deserve to be the subject of another research and fieldwork, which is beyond the limits of this article.

We have asked to Kuntao teachers of today about this issue and tried to understand where we can locate the art properly. Mostly, today's practitioners and teachers agree that Kuntao has a historical background from China. Richard Clear indicates that, it originates from Southern Style Kung Fu, but besides it there are influences from Northern styles and also Tibetan Kung Fu. His particular style is coming from Indonesia. According to Clear, when Chinese population came to Indonesia they brought their Kung Fu and modified it mixing with local Pencak Silat they found in Indonesia, "for various reasons including but not limited to the multi-cultural dimensions including marriage with indigenous population and the focus in the islands on machete (and other bladed weapons), multiple attackers and surprise attacks." David Seiwert reminds that although Kuntao is originally from China (you can also find styles in Taiwan) and was brought to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. The art was kept secret and passed down through families. Weapons are predominantly the sword, staff, and knife. Old styles of Kuntao are today considered by some to be "true" Chinese martial arts because they predate the Shaolin Temple's destruction. He also emphasize the mutual influences between Kuntao and Silat. So, Silat is a collective word for indigenous martial arts of the Malay Archipelago and Malay Peninsula of Southeast Asia. Sometimes Kuntao and Silat used instead of each other, and sometimes just combined as if it is a "one" style.

Bob Orlando much more focused on the connection / relations between Kuntao and Silat. According to him, Kuntao without Silat is classical kung-fu. He argues that, when the Chinese migrated into South East Asia, their martial skills were developed in "civilized" mainland China where there were rules to engagements, fights, or combat. When the Chinese fought silat players, it was classical Kung Fu with all its rules and protocols (classical martial arts) facing fighters who had no such rules (what I call fighting arts). The latter won more than their classical Chinese foes. The Chinese then, had to return to their fighting roots to survive. Further, they had to adopt a lot of the techniques and skills of their Silat opponents (more easily done for the Chinese than the Indonesians because the

Chinese were immigrants in Indonesia – they could see Silat all around them). So, according to Bob Orlando Kuntao is both Chinese and Indonesian, mix of Southern Style Chinese Kung Fu and Pencak Silat.

Kuntao is defined as a Chinese Martial Art by Rick Hernandez too, which can be found in all South East Asian countries. Hernandez also says: “It's vital to understand that each country has it's specific cultures and took what the Chinese shared to express it and share according to the language of the culture. Remember that if you extract the principles of the art then express it according to how you live, then the art is no longer bound by the specific origins of the culture. In my case, the name Kuntao is kept out of respect for the origin.” Indonesia, Philipines, Malaysia etc. have mixed the languages of the arts according to the region, community, and specific need for such arts. The name Kuntao indicates the common Chinese influence. According to Hernandez, depending on the teacher, these arts are often blended to form a Hybrid Art composing of principles from various sources whether it be stick, blade, Bagua, Animal, kicking, etc.

About the connections between Kung Fu and Kuntao, Ron Kosakowski has a different approach and he does not accept Kuntao as a Kung Fu style even though its roots are from China. Kosakowski mentions that it arrived in the Philippines from China going back approximately 2000 years ago. According to Kosakowski it is a Filipino indigenous style which has adapted to everything that has occurred over the years including the various weapons that have evolved in the south. It is mostly in the Sulu Archipelago though it is possible to find in other areas of the Philippines. Ron Kosakowski says: “In Indonesia, it seems Kuntao had held on to its Chinese roots more than it did in the Philippines; not that it is a bad thing. In the Philippines Kuntao is so secretive it makes it nearly impossible to find. It is usually passed down within families or within close tribal relationships. I am very lucky to have this particular style.” Kosakowski also says, it has been spread around through sailors and Chinese people brought their fighting methods with them and of course taught others to what it has evolved to today. Finally, within the period of evolution it has become “Filipino” in the Philippines. Heny Jayme insist on difference between Kuntao and Silat too. In our interview he said that: “As far as I know there is no connections between these two because Kun Tao in Cebu, the Philippines, is actually based on Kung Fu in China and the Balintawak stick fighting in Cebu. Because even the drills and training of Kun Tao is actually the same with the Balintawak, Arnis, Eskrima stick fighting. If I remove my stick it becomes a Kun Tao stuff.” Jayme's difference from Kosakowski is that he is more open to Chinese dimensions of Kuntao, rather than accepting it as a pure Filipino style.

Almost everybody in contemporary Kuntao community accepts that Kuntao's roots are in China, although about the rest of its history there are several different approaches. As W. L. van Prehn says, "Kuntao was brought to Indonesia by Chinese immigrants who past their system on to only other Chinese people, the Indonesian people, where not included to learn the system in that time because they held the system secret." Prehn explains the process of evolution and says: "because the Chinese lived in Indonesia the system was further developed there and integrated as a local martial art under the name of Silat instead of Kuntao because the Indonesian government was afraid of the influence from the Chinese people and forbid to use the name Kuntao or other Kung Fu styles. So many Chinese people changed the name in Silat." So, Prehn thinks that these particular reasons caused usage of the name of Silat.

4. Forms, Internality and Spirituality

Forms / routines have been an important part of traditional Kung Fu. Practitioners have learnt and practiced forms besides some drills, their applications and sparring. In Kuntao there are mostly two other approach on this issue: some teachers keep their traditional forms in the curriculum, some others much more focused on real life applications, rather than some complicated forms. For example, Henry Jayme has a routine and Forms to follow, as a foundation for improvement of your skill in self defense against any attack especially when you are surprised on the street. As for David Seiwert, it is a little different. He says: "When I first started teaching we did teach forms but I have found that in our modern society people are too busy or simply not motivated enough to spend time learning them. Therefore we now tend to focus on the fighting aspects of the art. I still teach the forms if a student wants to make the extra effort to learn them." So, the new tendencies of modern culture and life have changed the perception of forms in Kuntao.

Rick Hernandez considers "form" as a crucial point for martial arts. According to Hernandez, "form is vital in all parts of human development. There is a misconception about form training from those who only have a superficial understanding of the relevance. In a serious fighting art, Form is coupled with impacts, conditioning, and other attribute development. Any endeavor that includes moving the body to produce speed, power, and precision must include form to accomplish an apex of skill." Richard Clear has also involved in form during his study and current teaching activities. Clear has studied more than a dozen forms and now most of them are available in his curriculum. He says: "At a certain level of more advanced skill the forms become required. However, for the first Guru rank and year of training the focus is on principles and concepts as well as Beladiri fighting principles and

methods.” So for his concept of Kuntao, forms are determining after a particular level and much more important for advanced levels.

As we mentioned above, because of contemporary needs of today's Kuntao practitioners, in some schools practicing forms is given up. Ron Kosakowski is among the teachers who do not practice forms. His style does not have any forms or predetermined movements to practice. Kuntao Dumpag has hand to hand reflex developmental drilling methods that eventually turn into random play. They still have hidden movements but you learn the use of them as you get better at these sensitivity exercises. As for Bob Orlando, in his school forms have a special importance. He emphasizes the important roles of jurus, primarily focused on upper body movements and langkahs, legwork in traditional Indonesian martial arts. For a good martial harmony they must be taught together. Orlando says: “In Willem de Thouars' Kuntao-Silat, jurus and langkahs are taught together within forms. This allows a flow and continuity that is often lacking when individual movements are taught separately. Both training methods (those teaching upper and lower separately, and those teaching them together within forms) have their good and bad points. Nevertheless, both will serve the student well.” In martial arts communities there is a contemporary doubt about functional-practical values of forms. However, Bob Orlando argues that there are even practical functions of learning forms further than being any historical-aesthetical heritage. He thinks that: “Forms training teaches us just that — to use our minds, before and along with, our bodies. Mentally, forms training teaches strategic thinking. Physically, it is simply, how to move. We will look at the "how," the physical side, in a moment, but first, let us examine the mental side, the strategic thinking.” He explains more benefits of learning forms for real application with detailed examples and theoretical dimensions. W. L. van Prehn says that in their Taokun Kuntao tradition there are 108 forms (parts) also named twee-ta or pasangan. The first 36 are subparts and basic movements, the second 36 parts are progressed movements, the third 36 are series, high progressed movements, these are combination parts from 3 parts in one. All are executed with a partner. In Taokun Kuntao are three levels and the integral part of learning is that you can compare the 3 levels with school. The first level is equal to basis school. The second level is equal to high school college and the third level is equal to university addication/training. If you succeed you can consider yourself as a master and are entitled to teach the system to other people. So, we can say that Taokun Kuntao is one of the Kuntao lineages with highest emphasis on forms training.

Internality has been an integral part of some Kuntao lineages, although some other schools are not that keen to perform internal training in their martial systems. Rick Hernandez's Kuntao has equally internal and external principles in the training methods. In the beginning stages there is a lot of emphasis on external body conditioning through impact training.

Hernandez says: “The mindset is pure aggression through body impacts and animal training tactics. As the years go by, the student will begin to learn and apply the principles from Hsing I and Baguazhang. This includes extensive training in breath, posture, and visualization. The journey never ends!” According to Hernandez, this “journey” has a kind of “deep internal self re-editing in order to tap into all the power of the universe. This will allow us to transcend the limits of our own bodies and minds.” So, positive effects of practicing Kuntao can be seen in different aspects of life.

Richard Clear’s Kuntao system is primarily focused on internal martial arts, such as Hsing I, Bagua and Tai Chi. So, his system mostly focused on “Chi activation” and using this internal energy in martial situations. As David Seiwert said, many styles also teach the internal arts including his teacher’s system (Six Harmonies) and many others don’t, because it is based in Chinese martial arts. Seiwert’s Kuntao system is mostly combat-oriented and there is no primary emphasis on internal aspects. Ron Kosakowski’s approach to Kuntao is much more open to internality. He says: “Spiritual as in strong beliefs and internal thought utilizing the mind, the body and breath...that is our internal development! That along with the belief in the technique fully executed to do its job. This coordinated with the breathing but one has to be relaxed during practice in order to be able to pull it off in the same state of mind when the time comes you need it most. In self defense situations, you have anger or a goal to pull off a certain technique will prevent the free-flowing aspects of Kuntao. This focus grows as you spend more time in Kuntao Dumpag.” So, Kuntao Dumpag is a martial system try to maintain balance between physical aspects and internal power.

Bob Orlando stated that Kuntao can have either, internal and external aspects. In the case of his Kuntao teacher it was primarily Taoist (internal), but some of his teachers also shared their external arts knowledge (Shaolin) as well. He continued: “His Kuntao was then, a mixture of both with (I believe) the internal being the larger. For myself, I believe a mixture of both is far superior to the best of either alone – either pure internal or pure external – but that is just my personal opinion.” W. L. van Prehn also accepts that there are internal aspects in Kuntao but he thinks seldom people succeed in learning this, because it is too difficult and if one does not have the talent it is impossible to learn. According to him this falls under the highest level. In his art, there are also executing practice movements combined with breathing exercises which one have to practice every day to strengthen the body and inner strength. He says, “also the way of thinking is very important, one have to possess will power, decisiveness, keep-driven, perseverance and the most important is the ability of self-confidence, conviction and belief in yourself. Meditation is a requirement to develop the mental strength and to grow to self-consciousness and to become a better developed person who is able to help other people in live. In Prehn’s approach to Kuntao there is a balance

and harmony between meditative and martial sides of the art. His Kuntao style includes also spiritual aspects and discovering yourself, spiritual dimensions and reaching enlightenment is as important as physical dimensions of his lineage.

5. Conclusion

This research and article has given us the chance to learn deeper the South East Asian martial system, Kuntao. We have seen that Kuntao has been emerged through an interchange and communication of Chinese, Indonesian and Filipino cultures. However, in spite of this multicultural environment and interactions between South East Asian countries and their martial backgrounds, Kuntao still remained as a “Chinese martial art”. Different Masters/practitioners have different approaches, but the majority of contemporary community agreed that Kuntao is originally a Chinese arts. In fact, we can see the elements and influences of Chinese box styles, especially Southern Shaolin Kung Fu, in Kuntao. Although there is a tendency toward defining Kuntao as the “South East East Asian version of Kung Fu”, the oral narrations and traditions of Kuntao lineages consider themselves as an independent martial art which has existed in unique conditions of South East Asia region. However, there is a question rising from this point which requires another research and article, maybe: Why are the majority of today’s Kuntao teachers either Westerners or non-Chinese Asian people? If the art is a “Chinese System” where are the Chinese Kuntao practitioners? In the age of globalization, at least few of Chinese Kuntao practitioners should find opportunity to reach the wider, international martial scene. This is a crucial point and has to be analyzed and answered, for sure. We can trace the lineage of several contemporary practitioners to their Chinese martial ancestors. But, most of the active and predominant teachers have no personal Chinese background. Of course to be a teacher of any martial art you do not need to be a person from that particular culture, necessarily. But, there should be historical and sociological explanations regarding, why a Chinese martial art has not spread among Chinese communities, or at least why not visible there. This is entirely out of the scope of this article, which has been focused on “existing” lines, rather than “non-existing” or invisible actual possibilities.

* Master Kublai is a Kuntao, JKD and Taijutsu instructor. He is also writing articles for international martial arts magazines.

UNARMED AGAINST A BLADE

Donald Miskel

People study the martial arts for any number of reasons. The type of art you study probably reflects that reason. If you are sports oriented, you probably aren't studying aikido or krav maga. While all martial arts serve a purpose all aren't created equal. Some lend themselves better to self defense than others. Some are better for self discovery while others are better for competition. My emphasis in my study is combat, self defense and personal security. I had my martial arts foundations developed in a very combative system, more by coincidence than personal intent. That influence and the fact that I grew up in a violence ridden part of a very rough city shaped my philosophy concerning the martial arts. Having become a Christian and a pastor further shaped my thoughts involving self defense and personal protection

I grew up fighting and I was good at it. In the neighborhood I grew up in violence was a fact of life. No one questioned it. Every person dealt with it as best they could. I was gang related for a good portion of my life. Back in the day guns weren't the weapon of choice on the streets. They weren't as easy to come by for kids back then. We were more prone to make zip guns than to have a manufactured fire arm. Knives and other concealable weapons were preferred to guns. They were more readily available and they were more easily concealed.

Being black in the inner city of Chicago meant you could be stopped and searched at any time. More often than not knives were confiscated. You might get your butt whipped for carrying one but it usually wouldn't land you in jail. Consequently everyone on the streets carried some type of bladed weapon. There were exceptions. Some guys carried brass knuckles, a sap (blackjack) or some other such weapon but knives were more common.

In my neighborhood you had to be able to do two things. You had to be able to throw hands (box) and you had to be able to use a knife. Lacking in either skill got you hurt or killed in the streets.

I began studying the martial arts formally at age twelve. I also boxed for the Chicago Park District. When I started jiu jitsu and later karate classes I went in knocking more advanced students on their rear ends. I was street tough and I knew how to fight. The only reason I was there was because my father enrolled me to curb my aggression level. The one thing I wanted to garner from those classes was to be able to disarm a person with a knife.

I like to keep current with the trends in the martial arts. I like some of the reality fighting arts. I'm somewhat more dubious about Brazilian Jujitsu and especially MMA. By the way, MMA is nothing new. I did that when it was illegal and we fought for small purses and side bets. Of course the competition wasn't as good but those really were no holds barred. The only rule was you couldn't use a weapon. Other than that there were no rules. You fought until someone was incapacitated or rendered unconscious. There was no tapping out. You fought until one of the fighters couldn't continue. As I think back on it I see how foolish that type of thing was. At the time I was young and thought I was invincible and I needed the money. The fights were brutal, bloody free for all. Unfortunately, much of the MMA I've seen is too similar. Too often it seems to be brutality simply for the sake of brutality. By the way, that kind of thing would get you killed on the streets.

More often than not the average assailant will either be armed or he'll have friends for backup. If you think that you're going to stand toe to toe and trade blows with a street thug you'll very probably be sorely disappointed. Thugs don't fight fair. If they didn't think they had a distinct advantage chances are they wouldn't be confronting you.

In a lot of the disclaimers accompanying reality training a student is warned that his chances aren't good against a person with a knife. If the person is trained or skilled with his weapon that's probably true. I have yet to find the trained martial artist that can take a weapon from me. So what does that mean? We obviously can't curl up and die in the face of a knife attack. The best defense against a knife is foot techniques. Use those size twelves to get out of Dodge. Fighting should always be our last resort anyway. You fight only if you're left with no choice. That's especially true if your opponent is armed. Don't fool yourself. An armed person is always more dangerous than an unarmed person even if that unarmed person is trained. Still, if you have no choice and there's no way to make a quick exit your only alternative is to defend yourself. It isn't the best case scenario but when it's all you're left with you have to deal with the issue.

This isn't a set of techniques against a knife wielding attacker. Hopefully, if you're reading this you have some training to cover such a situation. Technique alone won't help you win in such a situation. Whatever skill you have has to be coupled with courage and a willingness to do whatever it is you have to do. Unless you are a police officer or work in some such similar vocation forget knife disarms. Disarms are designed to deal with a lethal situation with as

little harm to the assailant as possible. Life and death combat doesn't include compassion for your opponent. When faced with an armed assailant your purpose has to be to destroy or totally disable your opponent. Anything less than that is going to get you seriously hurt or killed.

I have taught self defense and anti rape classes over the years. In many of those classes I have had women walk out because the techniques were too brutal. Combat isn't ballet. Combat is brutal by nature. If you aren't ready to try to kill or seriously injure an armed assailant you've lose before the fight starts. Believe me, if he is trying to attack you with a knife, your safety and well being is not one of his primary concerns. His intent is to hurt, seriously injure or kill you. Anything less than total commitment on your part will help him in his efforts.

Is it possible to face an armed assailant and come away unscathed? Unlikely if he knows what he's doing but it is possible to defend yourself and discourage or even defeat such an attacker. Forget the odds against you. You aren't playing the odds. You're trying to survive. If you've trained realistically for something like this, you already have the tools. You have to be willing to use them brutally and viciously. You can't win a fight by being defensive. You have to defend yourself but at some point you're going to have to go on the attack. You'll have to find a way to initiate an attack or counterattack your opponent's attack. You can't keep evading and blocking his attacks forever. If you don't do something to discourage him or hurt him he'll keep trying until he finally connects. You have to fight back.

You're more dangerous with a weapon. Use whatever is available. Don't fight him empty handed if you don't have to. Use the element of surprise. Throw something at him. Spit in his face. Startle him with a loud unexpected noise.

If you're forced to fight empty handed fight smart. Forget about pressure points. Most of them are too small to access on an armed and moving assailant. In that type of fight there are three areas of attack. If he can't see he can't fight. Attack his eyes. Compromise his vision. If he can't breath he can't fight. Compromise his ability to breath. If given the opportunity, attack the throat or the solar plexus. If he can't stand he can't fight. Attack his foundation. That includes his insteps, toes, ankles, knees and shins. Often these areas can be accessed with minimum risk to you. If you can get access to a joint or a limb go for bone breaks or joint destructions rather than attempting a disarm. His personal safety ceases to be your concern when he threatened you with a weapon. Until he is incapacitated or subdued err on the side of maximum damage.

Lastly, expect to be injured. If by some miracle you aren't, well and good but don't go in expecting to walk away unscathed. If you are cut or stabbed your life depends on your

willingness to keep fighting. He isn't going to stop because you're hurt. You have to fight back if you hope to survive such an encounter.

In an encounter of this kind your survival depends on your willingness to not only defend yourself but to hurt, injure or kill your assailant. I'm both a Christian and a minister. I don't advocate unnecessary violence but you have a right to defend and preserve your life. It's your duty to protect you family and loved ones. There's no guarantee that you'll win such a conflict even if you fight with all of your skill and courage but I guarantee you that you won't live if you aren't willing to fight back. If you're willing to take a punch in the nose and turn the other cheek that's your choice. You may take a beating but you have a good chance of surviving that type of attack but when that same opponent is armed, turning the other cheek isn't a viable option. If you choose such a course your death won't be just murder. It'll be suicide.

I've had the fortune or misfortune of being involved in several knife fights. I've also had occasion to face several such opponents unarmed. I've been both cut and stabbed and still managed to take down or get away from the assailant. On the other hand I have actually managed to defeat an armed opponent without being injured. Whether those instances were because of my high level of skill or my opponant's ineptitude is open to argument but I'm still here to tell the story. I have no illusions about my martial abilities. Surviving such an encounter has as much to do with God's grace and mercy as with my skill or my opponent's lack thereof. I would never willingly find myself in such a situation if given any choice. My solution for this is to go armed. Because of several surgeries I carry a cane (and I'm not afraid to use it) but I'd probably carry one even if I didn't need it.

I would advise you to train realistically to develop usable skills. I'd further advise you to develop your killer instinct and develop a level of fighting aggression. Forget about fancy or complex techniques. They probably won't work when you need them most. Keep your techniques strait forth and simple. If you have to defend yourself be willing to take it as far as you have to. Against an armed assailant you have to be willing to take it all the way if you have to. You aren't fighting for a medal or a trophy. You're fighting for your life. You have to fight like your very life depends on it. Forget about fighting fair. There's no such thing as a fair fight. If you're going to fight then fight. Don't half fight or kinda fight. Give it everything you've got with conviction and lethal intent. There are no runner ups in a knife encounter. If you win, the prize is your life. If you lose... Well let me put it this way; I hope you're right with God.

In conclusion let me say this. The best fight is the one you can avoid. Next to that the second best is the one you win. Not managing either of those the third best fight is the one you survive. In the end that's what it's all about. If you don't survive the encounter you can't take

it back to the drawing board. All I can say is if you must die in such a situation sell your life dearly. Death is always a possibility. The ancient samurai went into every battle expecting to die. If death proved to be inevitable he sought to die well.

Train hard and train realistically, my brethren. Go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel

TAIKEN RYU – GOSHIN JUJITSU

Bernardo A Martino



Founder – Bernardo A Martino 2011

ABOUT THE FOUNDER

I started my Martial Arts Experience at the age of 13 in 1958 when I started learning Judo and Aikido from family members who needed a training partner for their practice at home. In 1963, while in the US Army, Stationed in Taejon, Korea I studied Judo, Aikido, and Tae Kwon Do.

After the Military I trained in various martial arts clubs, as well as with martial friends, relatives, and took private lessons with a former Marine Combat Judo Instructor. Over the years I have also attended various martial arts workshops, seminars, and private practice sessions in Tae Kwon Do, Judo, Aikido, Jujitsu, Tai-chi, Qi Gong, Hapkido, Krav Maga, Kyusho, and Tang Soo Do.

For 18 years I was employed in Security, Campus Police, and Special Police Positions where my continued martial training became very important to me, the last 6 years I was Chief of Security where I trained my officers in martial tactics and self protection. I passed my knowledge on to my 3 children who also practiced martial arts and my oldest son, now having over 20 years in the arts, also has obtained black belts and continues to train and teach. I also continue to work with family members, and also give private lessons in Self Defense mainly to people being bullied or abused.

Significant Dates:

1963 & 64 - Taejon, Korea Tae Kwon Do Club – Green Belt

1965 to 67 – Private study, Bryan Dufo (3rd Dan Instructor) – Awarded 1st Dan TKD

The World Musha Shugyo Association recognized me as an 8th Dan in TKD in 2002.

In 2011 I was recognized as a 9th Dan, Founder, of Taiken Ryu – Goshin Jujitsu by The American Federation of Jujitsu.

In 2012 I became recognized as a 1st Dan in Tang Soo Do by Master Kang Rhea's World Black Belt Bureau, through David North-Martino 3rd Dan.



My Taiken Ryu – Goshin Jujitsu is taught Strictly for Personal Defense use.

WHY A NEW ART ?

Having studied and practiced a number of martial arts over 50 some odd years it occurred to me that there was a segment of our population that wasn't being served.

Every year experienced Black Belts break away from their Masters, change a few things in the art they have been practicing for years, and start their own "new Martial Art Style.

This has been going on since the 1800 !

The problem that I've seen is that although there are many "new Arts" that have developed, the traditional belt structure has remained pretty intact and practitioners still

Need to study an art for many years !

Most Martial Artist, because of their love and dedication to the martial arts, don't mind spending years learning the art. However,

There are a number of people that for whatever reason, don't want to spend many years learning to protect themselves. They are the today generation. They want to know it now not 4 years from now ! I had been asked a number of times from students, do I really have to know the whole curriculum just to be able to protect myself ?

Looking at that question I came to realize that "most" people don't need to know a whole martial art curriculum just to protect themselves from the situations that the average person is likely to find themselves in. With all the scuffles that I've been in over the years I find that there are only a few techniques that I've ever had to use, even when dealing with multiple attackers at the same time. 40 to 50 Techniques are more than enough.

Researching this further, and maybe because I have studied so many different types of martial arts, I started going through the different arts and taking the techniques that seemed to be the best of that art, that are easy to learn and apply, and seem logical as the simplest defense for a given attack, and started clustering them together on paper....

The Martial Arts that I used are: Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do Karate, Judo, Jujitsu, Aikido, Hapkido, and Kyusho . Some people call Kyusho the pressure point art, But it is really more about Nerve Strikes. My feeling is that No Matter what art you study and practice, Kyusho should be a part of that art ! It is actually an art in itself, but coupled with other arts it's unbeatable I believe.

So we could say my New art takes Strikes and Kicks from Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do, Throws and Takedowns from Judo, Locks and Leverage techniques from Jujitsu, Aikido, and Hapkido and mixes in Nerve points of Kyusho. What we have is a the best of each art for any situation.

I also find that if you practice the principals until they become a reaction, meaning you can do them without thinking about them, you just react to the situation, you progress much quicker and don't have to learn a whole curriculum.

Because you don't need to learn a whole curriculum, but only have to master a few techniques to be able to protect yourself and other, this means you don't need to study this art for many years like all the traditional arts. For this reason I also don't give belts in this art. A colored belt is not going to help you when you're attacked unless you plan of putting it around the attackers neck and strangling them !

Also, take into consideration IF you have to use what you have been taught to protect yourself... The very first thing I teach a student is the Massachusetts self defense law... UNFORTUNATELY... When the police

arrive on the scene of an "incident", they "usually" always arrest the winner of the "fight" . (They call it a fight, you know you were assaulted !) It will take them some time to get all the facts and put everything together... mean while... you're getting locked up ! No matter what you say !

Do you know how many times the police have heard... " I was just protecting myself ! He started it ! " etc. etc. It's much easier for them to lock you up and let the attorneys sort it out ! Usually, what the police see is the winner of the "fight" is the person who started it, the aggressor, and this is why they will arrest you. Because you won !

IF for some reason the circumstances of the incident aren't "Perfectly Clear", for whatever reason, you're going to find yourself in court.... Criminal court first, then possibly civil court later...

Your defense attorney will say you were attacked and were using self defense as allowed by law ! Which will be true ! Lets say you have been taking martial arts lessons for 3 years.... you're only a colored belt and Not a black belt yet....

When the prosecutor learns you have studied Martial Arts the first thing he's going to say is: " This person has been studying how to hurt people for over three years now !!! He couldn't wait for an excuse to use his training on some poor person, just to prove to himself that he's a bad ass martial artist ! " They are going to do and say everything they possibly can to make it look like it was YOUR fault !

Now, remember, after this criminal court case, the person can turn around and sue you in civil court too ! Once again his attorney is going to say you have been studying to hurt his client for years, you couldn't wait to try out your new techniques on his client, etc, etc. Once again they will make You the bad guy.....

Now, IF no one knows you took a few classes, you don't have a belt, you're not a member of any martial arts "school" or Organization, and there's no formal record of any training, well then, you were just a person who was attacked and got lucky by just moving your hands and feet around because you were scared out of your mind and didn't know what else to do !

Under these circumstances, as long as you were in the right and met the standards of the self defense law, there shouldn't be any court cases at all ! And even if there is, they wont be able to say that you have been studying how to hurt people for years, only that you got lucky and were able to protect yourself !.

This is just one more reason I don't "usually" award belts !

For the protection of my students.

If a student practices an hour a week with me, and a few hours a week at home, Usually within 6 months or so the student has learned enough and is proficient enough to no longer need to come to classes.... So this becomes a short training program in self protection.

When I teach my self defense lessons, the person pays for my time. (an hourly rate)

There are no associations fees, no purchasing of martial arts uniforms because normally when you need to use your self defense, you will be in your everyday clothes, not a martial arts uniform, So, we practice in what you will normally be wearing !

There are no "school" fees.... There is no contract locking you into a year or more of training....When you show up for training you pay that days fee.... if you don't come for training, you don't pay.... Because I don't award belts, there are no test, so there are no testing fees, and no belt fees !

All you pay is for my time when you Actually train !

If you live in the Central Massachusetts area and you'd like more information or to set up a training schedule you can contact me at: self defense. concepts@yahoo.com

COMING OF AGE

Donald Miskel

I absolutely adore children. Next to women I think that children are one of God's best inventions. Infants, babies, toddlers and children; I love them all. Teenagers on the other hand... But that's a thought for another time.

Every living creature progresses through stages in its life. Adulthood is reached over time. Maturity is a process. It doesn't happen overnight. This rule isn't just limited to human growth but is common in just about everything that progresses into a functional stage. The martial arts are no exception.

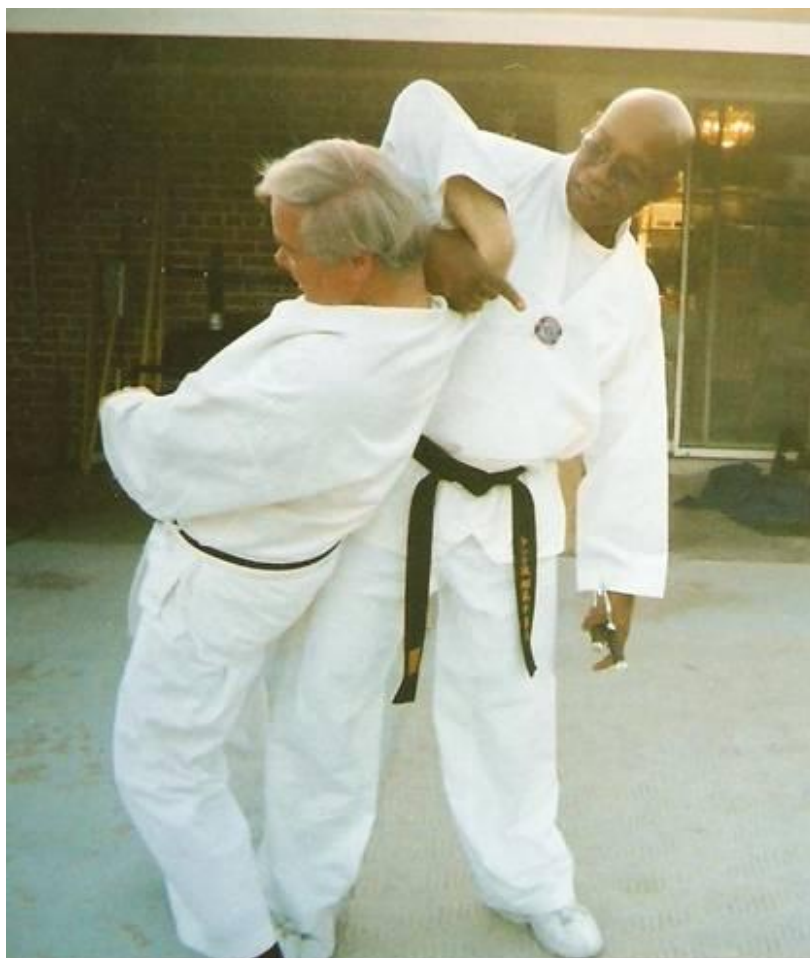
I am being inducted into the Museum of Sports Karate this month as a 'History General'. What that implies is that I'm so old that I have been involved in the martial arts since the dark ages. Not actually but I have been involved in the arts long enough to see it grow into what it is now. Sometimes watching what unfolds before me I suspect that we've reached senility and we're entering into our second childhood or maybe we are retarded in our growth and still acting like children when we should be adults. The bible speaks of drinking (mother's) milk when we should have progressed to eating meat. Unfortunately some of us are in a state of arrested development and we're still acting like playground bullies. I've never seen so much pushing and shoving in my life. We'd do better if we'd go on and fight and get it over with. All of the growling, snarling and posturing is bordering on the asinine.

In spite of what I see I still have great hope and faith in the martial arts to become what it is capable of being. We should have left our childhood behind long ago. It's time to grow up.

Regardless of what we may be told there are no big I's or little U's in the martial arts. There is no martial art aristocracy. We are martial artists. The martial arts are about fighting. We aren't exactly dealing with brain surgery here. Never the less, the martial arts can accomplish amazing things if we allow it to grow out of its infancy and come of age.

Actually, all of us aren't guilty of martial art retardation. Some of us are growing or have grown to maturity. Our primary focus is (or should be) self realization and the growth and

inspiration of our students. Bickering and infighting will not accomplish this goal. If anything it will inhibit the arts from reaching their full potential and our students from reaching their goals. If children see nothing but arguing and fighting from their parents it is hard to expect much more from them. We're deceiving ourselves if we act like children and think that our children will grow up to be responsible and sensible adults.



Growth is necessary if we are to survive. Children can't take care of them themselves and they certainly can't raise and take care of other children. Growth inspires growth. Intelligence breeds intelligence. Our children garner their inspiration and get their guidance from us.

I am a member of the Black Dragon Fighting Society. I've been involved in it since its inception. I'm one of the patriarchs of the organization and one of its senior grandmasters. I saw it in its wildest days. Its adolescence was something to behold. We were a wild bunch back then. We were born in controversy and we continued in the same for a number of years. Like all things, however, we went through a gradual change. We grew out of our childhood into adulthood. As most teens will, we grew out of that wild stage and have become mature and functional adults. Unfortunately our past has worked against us. The rejection of the past that made us much of what we were then still continues till this day. We are still ostracized by many.

In the legal system a minor's juvenile record is closed if not expunged when he reaches adulthood. What he did in his youth becomes a closed issue. In effect, his youth can't be held against him in adulthood. Children grow up. The apostle Paul said, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child but when I became a man I put away childish things. (1ST Corinthians 13:11)" We have, in effect grown up. We have become mature adults.

I have been blessed to see this transition. I have lived to see this historical organization grow out of its infancy, through its adolescence to where it is now. The culmination of this transition was so wonderfully demonstrated this past weekend (Oct. 5-7). We had our reunion seminar conference in Lexington Kentucky. The attendance was great and the air of camaraderie and brotherhood permeated place where it was held. There were individuals from many schools, systems and organizations. Even other countries were represented. With the mixture of styles, races, religions, creeds, colors genders and nationalities there wasn't a hint of dissension or politics. Everyone was about sharing and learning as much as possible in the time allotted. Every seminar was well attended and well received. No-one was criticized or ill spoken of. I have never seen anything like it in my fifty five years in the martial arts. I was proud to say that I am a Dragon. I don't think that anyone went away feeling short changed or disappointed. The whole thing was a great success. The high point of the convention was the ceremony recognizing the veterans in attendance and honoring our fallen and lost comrades at arms. It was beautifully done. It was recognized by the governor of the state (Kentucky), a senator and mayor. It was wonderful to see and be a part of. As a veteran I truly felt that my contribution was appreciated. Many of us who served in the Viet Nam conflict have long awaited such recognition. For those present, wherever they served, they were reminded that their service meant something to our people and our country.

I love the martial arts. I approach it with acceptance and tolerance of other styles, organizations and systems. We each practice at our own level for our own purposes but the important thing is that we all practice and we are all martial artists. We are a fraternity; a brotherhood. We embrace different ideas and philosophies but we are brothers never the less. It would be wonderful if we acted as such. We are past the point where we should be acting like spoiled children. We should act as an example to the rest of society. After all, as martial artists we are held to a higher standard.

God bless you my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel

GOOD OUT OF THE GATE (TEACHING FROM EXPERIENCE)

Donald Miskel

I just got home from teaching my Saturday morning martial art class. Everything hurts. My orthopedic surgeon and my pain management doctor warn me against what I do but you see how much good it does. Anyway, my own personal experience got me to thinking. Hence this article.

There are many elements that constitute mastery of a martial art or any other endeavor, for that matter. Mastery requires time, effort and experience. There are other elements that are necessary to attain mastery of any art. According to what one is trying to master there are many variables but these three are requirements regardless of your area of expertise. The martial arts are no exception. If anything these elements apply even more to the mastery of a martial art discipline than in most other arts. Mastery, if attainable by a particular individual is going to occupy a major portion of his life.

Martial art mastery doesn't happen by accident. It requires deliberation. One doesn't back into such an achievement. He has to strive with that result as a goal. If you're blessed with the physicality and coordination; if one has a measure of athleticism and the time to dedicate to the study of his particular system he will probably become a black belt. Things aren't what they once were. Back in the day it didn't matter how much you studied or how hard you trained everyone couldn't and didn't make black belt. The standards and expectations of the sensei and the system has changed over the years. If you're determined and have the time to dedicate to your art you will attain shodan and maybe higher. Everyone will not become a master.



By the time one has dedicated his life to an art and fulfilled the necessary sacrifices to become a martial art master many years have slipped by. His original ability has waned even as his knowledge and wisdom has grown. It's a trade off. Time increases knowledge but it robs one of youth. it will take about forty years or more to reach hachidan (eight degree black belt) and even longer for kudán or judán if those ranks are available for the practitioner. In many systems those rarified ranks are reserved for the master and grandmaster of the system. Except in rare cases, if a practitioner is able to reach ninth or tenth degree, fifty or more years of study have been dedicated to his art. By that time he is no longer burning up the tournament circuit or terrorizing young thugs in the streets. If he is still involved with the art at that age he may do a little teaching but primarily he will walk around (if he can still walk) looking important and wise. Or perhaps he is doing what I am doing now, presenting himself as an authority of all things martial.

Saturday morning kung fu movies (the older generation will know what I mean) have instilled us with a vision of old octogenarian masters flying through the air like eagles and beating up on young fighters. It works on films but in actuality it loses something in translation. Age takes a toll and most of us aren't what we once were. We know more and can do less. In a real world that's what happens.

I have dedicated fifty five years of my life to studying and teaching the arts. I still do both in spite of age, injury and several radical surgeries. If I had good sense I would sit my old butt down somewhere but as we all know by now that isn't going to happen. Consequently, I do

what I can. I teach children and several individuals who work in 'at risk' professions. I teach police and correction officers, security personnel and psych professionals. I have worked in several of those professions and know the risks that these individuals are exposed to and how to address some of them.

I am supposed to do a couple of seminars and demonstrations at a couple of large important gatherings in the coming months. I was a bit worried about being able to perform at a level that will compliment my rank. Several things happened to allay those concerns. I did an interview for a martial art documentary and the ones who did the filming and watched me teach my class (one an experienced martial artist) expressed appreciation for my abilities, form and technique. He even thought I had the physique of a much younger gentleman. While I must admit that god has blessed me with a decent physique considering my age I have to mention that he hadn't seen me with my shirt off.

I had pretty much given up on teaching because of age and injury but my ministry (I'm a minister and pastor) found me back in the dojo. I had pretty much resigned myself to managing the organization that I headed and writing the occasional article. God has a way of ordaining certain things in our lives that take us out of our comfort zone. What a difference a few months make. I find myself having to turn down teaching opportunities now. Never the less I still just teach my children classes and my specialized classes for those afore mentioned individuals. I'm not teaching tournament champions and I'm not quite ready to compete in kick boxing or MMA matches but I am still active in the arts and will be in some capacity until they plant me.

As I have said and will continue to say, a master is a master because of what he knows, not because of what he can do. If he is only able to give verbal instruction or is only able to teach in slow motion he is still a master and you would be a fool if you discount his knowledge because of his waning ability. He is a store house of knowledge and ability. Those of us who have opportunity should avail ourselves of the wisdom that they offer.

Speaking of myself again, I want to say that I'm good out of the gate. For five minutes I can be your worst nightmare but if you can outlast me...

My brethren I admonish you to give honor to whom honor is do. Venerate those who have gone where you someday hope to be. Don't worship him but recognize his knowledge, wisdom and his contribution to the arts. Maybe, if you stay the course and continue to train and study you will reach the place that they have. You can only hope.

God bless you, my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel

LINEAGE AND THE TRADITIONAL MARTIAL ARTS

Donald Miskel

I probably do enough writing for ten people. It's not so much that I'm insightful or prolific as that I'm opinionated. I'm a preacher and pastor by vocation. Pontificating is in my nature and preaching and teaching is in my blood. In my past I've been a Psych professional and a counselor. I have the training and the degrees to back up my experience. My passion aside from preaching is the martial arts. I've dedicated fifty five years of my life to training in and teaching the arts.

My career in the arts began in judo and jiu jitsu. From there I went to karate, kung fu and kempo. I have a long background in the classical systems of the martial arts. Since that time I have combined the arts that I've studied along with life experience and personal insight into an eclectic system that is combative in nature. What with working in psych, the penal system and on the fringes of law enforcement; growing up in the toughest areas of one of the roughest major cities of our nation, fighting in its mean streets trying to survive and experiencing war and military combat (some of it hand to hand) I have a pretty good grasp of practical self defense and combat. I'm no tournament champion but I can fight and I had a reputation that proved I did it well.

I try to keep my finger on the pulse of the martial arts community, its trends and direction. Sometimes seeing what I see in the arts and the martial art community baffles and often saddens me. The martial arts, especially in the U.S., have always been rift with politics but it's worse today than it's ever been. Some of us have taken it upon ourselves to criticize and ostracize some of the rest of us. Who have made certain of us the martial art police is a mystery to me but some of us seem to have assumed that position. We feel that we have somehow earned the right to determine who is worthy of acceptance and who isn't; who is real and who is phony and so on. It is my belief that those who believe and have faith in us

will follow, validate and support us. Actually, the effectiveness of our arts validates us. What else should a fighting art require?

One of the things that cause these divisions is the rift between the classical and eclectic styles. Then there is the division between the combative and sports aspects of the arts. Part of the reason for this is the almost religious reverence shown to the originators and creators of the arts that we train in. Many of us will fight to maintain the purity of our arts however time and the modern demands of combat show them to be impractical. Please understand me. I'm not criticizing these arts or the ones that follow them. There are many reasons for practicing the martial arts. If the traditional approach fulfills your needs then by all means follow them. There is a richness and beauty inherent in these arts that make them well worth studying. I just have a problem with anyone who teaches an art that was designed to answer the needs of a feudal age hundreds of years past and declare them to be the consummate self defense system for this modern day. If an art has to be tweaked too much just to make it practical I question its ability to fulfill the needs of modern day combat. All of the changes required to make them workable changes the art and at that point it is no longer the art originally created.

There is a lot of controversy concerning eclectic fighting arts. If one would be honest he would realize that most of the arts that we study today are eclectic in nature. Master Funakoshi, the creator of shotokan karate studied both naha-te and shuri-te. He combined these to create what we now consider a classical system. Likewise with Master Oyama's Kyukushanki karate and many others. Most of the Korean systems are a synthesis of Korean and Japanese systems. Likewise the Okinawan systems are comprised of Chinese influences as well as Okinawa's own indigenous arts. There are few pure systems that have not been influenced by or distilled from other arts.

It's good to be loyal to our particular styles and systems of martial arts and to show appreciation and admirations to those who made them what they are but we must keep in mind that these people were only men. Many Eastern countries have taken the recognition of lineage to a level that approaches ancestral worship. Japan, for instance, is a Shintoist country. That is to say that Shinto is their traditional religion. Their faith involves a deep veneration of ancestors. This is true to an extent in most Eastern countries. Those attitudes influence the way the martial arts have traditionally been taught. I believe in giving honor to whom honor is due but no-one on earth has yet to create anything that is perfect. All martial arts have their shortcomings and sometimes their flaws. In the end a martial art is as good as what it accomplishes. No martial art was created by a god and none of them will make us into supermen. In the long run it is the man that makes the art and not the art that makes the man. An art is no better than those who practice it.

I encourage every martial artist to continue studying. If you are satisfied with your art continue in it. However don't tear down someone else because he follows a different approach. We each must find our own way. The way may be blazed and the path laid out before us but it is up to each of us to walk it or decide on a different path. No one way has every answer.

It isn't anyone's job to validate another just as it isn't his job to defame another. We are at liberty to seek our own path and shouldn't have to suffer the abuse of others because our path doesn't coincide with theirs. It's time to grow up. All of the infighting and backbiting only denigrates the arts. It makes us look like a bunch of grammar school bullies trying to secure our reputations at the expense of others. There are no aristocrats in the arts. We are all fellow martial artists whatever we choose to study or to teach. If a system isn't efficient it will die on its own. It doesn't have to die under the gnashing teeth of a pack of rabid martial artists. If you don't care for or believe in a particular art, its creator or its practitioners just leave it alone. It will either succeed and grow or it will die a natural death.

God bless you my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Doctor Donald Miskel, Thd, CCD, MDiv.

THE DEADLIEST MAN ALIVE (GETTING OVER OURSELVES)

Donald Miskel

Personally I think that I'm one of the deadliest men on the planet. My Natural ability, my conditioning, my physical prowess and my superior training puts me in contention for this coveted title. Not!!!

Okay, since I'm not in the running who is the deadliest man in the world? Back in the day it used to be Count Dante, or so he told the world. Of course that self imposed title was a marketing tool. So who fills this slot today? Several names come to mind. Kelly McCann is one. Mark 'The Animal' Young is another. And then there's Danny Inosanto, Larry Tatum, Paul Vunac and several other individuals that I can name. Please don't be offended if your name isn't included. Those named was for illustration purposes.

Who cares about someone's physical prowess? The question only comes to play if you plan to contend with them one on one. That only happens in muggings and barroom brawls. No-one does that any more. Everyone who knows me knows that I'm a martial artist and in a physical confrontation I'll probably knock their hat around backwards or twist off their head. No-one's going to engage me in hand to hand combat which is good because I'm of the same mind set. I don't believe in fighting. I believe in resolving physical confrontations. Fighting involves two people going heads up. That means that both has a chance of winning. I don't do that. I'm going to set the stage so I know I'm going to win. That doesn't involve allowing you a fair chance. This isn't high school football we're talking here. This is life and death combat. I grew up in the inner city of Chicago. What we used to call the ghetto. Issues are resolved by drive by's, surprise attacks and gang attacks. If someone is stupid enough to stick a gun in my face I'll take it from him and pistol whip him If I don't shoot him. I don't worry about that. I worry about the sniper or the back stabber. The ones who stack the deck in their favor.

Back in the day I'd destroy anyone who threatened me. I don't deal well with threats. I may be able to deal with it when you launch your future attack or I may not. That depends on what you do and how you do it. I know I can deal with you here and now.

So back to the question. Who is the deadliest man alive? If we want to be honest I'ts probably the President of the United States. Not because all of the reasons (stupid in my opinion) that my conservative brothers give but because he heads the most powerful nation in the world and he has his finger on the button.

What I'm trying to say is this; we need to get over ourselves. Who's real, who's fake? What systems are authentic which ones are so much B.S. Who's tougher than who (my kung fu is stronger than your kung fu. Humph, my teacher is greater than yours. I'll beat you with two strikes). Let's be realistic here. Most of us aren't ready to deal with a trained soldier. Many of us wouldn't survive two days in a federal or state prison and most of us aren't ready to face a seasoned street fighter. I've worked in prisons and on psych wards that housed the 'criminally insane'. I've seen what the inmates and patients are capable of and believe me my brother, you aren't ready to deal with that. A sane man will hesitate before he'll cut your throat. That's the only advantage that the sociopath needs.

Most of us aren't as dangerous as we think we are. In my lifetime I've known of several really good martial artists that were cut down in the streets. None of them died in a one on one street fight. They were just taken out in the most effective and economical way possible.

We do all of this in fighting and posturing. It is my understanding that the empty wagon makes the most noise. Those that brag, threaten and belittle others do so because of their own insecurities. Who cares if you underwrite my theories or believe in my system? I'm known and supported by my peers; those that believe in me. If you don't fall in that category, oh well. That's your loss, not mine. Just understand this. Unless you've grown up the way that I have; unless you've had to survive in the worse streets of a major city; unless you've had to be involved with real military combat, you aren't ready to deal with me or anyone like me. If I felt threatened by you I'll deal with the situation but you can rest assured that it won't be in one on one combat. I'm not trying to prove who's the better man; I'm resolving a conflict and solving a problem in the most convenient way possible. Does that put me in contention for the aforementioned title? I think not. I'm not dangerous. I'll never attack you or do you harm. Not unless my life and personal safety or the well being of a loved one hangs in the balance. I'm not a sociopath.

My brothers, instead of trying to destroy each other's reputation and question their credibility we should be trying to support each other. We're family by way of a common interest. We belong to the same fraternity. None of us has a monopoly on physical prowess. None of us

has the perfect infallible system. In the end, the man makes the system, the system doesn't make the man. Your system being founded by so-in-so or headed by whoever doesn't make you a better fighter. So in the martial art community who is top dog? Who's the best fighter? Who's the toughest? Who cares? Hopefully we're too mature to act like a couple of grammar school kids. "My daddy can beat your daddy." Grow up. Ain't none of us more dangerous than any of the rest of us (ghetto speak). All of us are brothers under the skin. let's get over ourselves and be the best martial artists that we can be collectively and individually.

By the way, my daddy can whup yo daddy.

god bless you, my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel

A DOJO IS

Dai-Sensei Christopher Lucente

A Dojo is a place for learning “the way”. The way is all things.

All things includes modesty, triumph, humility, acceptance, character and determination, but also regret, failure, ego, status, anger and selfishness. Learning these things and accepting that they are all a part of oneself, but that it is the self that decides what is best is the way of a good dojo.

A dojo is a place to develop the body and exercise the mind which touches the spirit. A dojo is a place to develop the mind and exercise the body which touches the spirit. Always, a dojo should touch ones spirit and bring inner peace.

A dojo is a family. It is a hierarchy from those who teach to those you teach and includes all those who would see learning accomplished. It is mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and friends who give you a lift. A good dojo does not turn away anyone who would see learning accomplished. A good family begins with compassion, forgiveness and opportunity from one’s peers to succeed. Family means love, even during hate.

A dojo is a place to rescue those who have no guidance, to find the way from those also seeking it, to create strength in numbers along a journey that one takes for themselves, this is not a paradox. The man who drives from coast to coast to see the land does so only because along the way someone put gas in his tank, built the roads and died for the privilege of doing so. How far one goes in learning the way is up to them, but a good dojo offers all the support they need to get there.

A dojo is a second chance as it is a first beginning. It is where what someone looks like on the outside, what they have done and why become tools to better both their own view of the world and the view others have of them in the dojo, it is a place where balancing beliefs and notions, fears and hypocrisy become a simple matter of understanding and knowing those you may not understand. A frog knows his pond well, but not the same as the fish. If they took the time to understand each other rather than turn each other away because of their

differences, they would see that the commonality of the art of the way is a door to the common ground of everything else. One difference should never dissuade a thousand similarities.

A dojo is as it was and will always be. Among Confucian thought, all things serve another in a hierarchy, lord to servant, husband and wife, eldest to youngest. There is one exception in this rule, that of friend to friend. Only friendship honors an opportunity for equality without hierarchy. Even so, it was the duty of the youngest to inform the eldest if he was not performing well as a superior, and the duty of the eldest to think on those words and thank the youngest for his assistance, as it was an honor to be informed of a misgiving or fault to better ones character. The good dojo is both the hierarchy and it is the friendship, all should be taught and all should become equal.

A dojo is a home, when home is where the heart is and not where the laundry, bills, broken sink, bad breakup, failed business, lost pet, sad memories or worries for tomorrow happen to be. It is a refuge and the cure for chaos, if only for a few hours.

For a very long time, I had no dojo. Shidoshi Kokes taught me to honor the dojo, because it would be the one partner who would never show up late to help me train, the one friend who would always offer me assistance and insight into my character. Because of my dojo, I have never been arrested, never been hooked on drugs and never felt as alone as I could have felt without it. I was never the average kid and I grew into a not so average adult. My appearance is not standard edition and my methods of conduct and the things I say or do, like anyone, may not always be popular with everyone, but one thing I do not question about myself is that I honored my master and I honor the memory of that dojo.

When Sensei Sass invited me into his dojo, He invited me into his family. He invited me to protect and look out for the school and the development of those who train and teach there as if they were family. Family fights and bickers, but what good one doesn't? Eventually family looks past the past and that one thing becomes trivial again and something was learned in the process. Everyone who understands the need to experiment and create something new has made mistakes along the way in that process. A good dojo and a good family forgive a mistake and support one another when improvements are attempted. Sensei Sass is a master, and I am honored to call him family and friend just as I am honored to serve his dojo any way I can.

If you are reading this, and you left the dojo for personal reasons, it will always be there waiting for you. Dojos do not hold a grudge and they always lend an ear if you need it. Today, a great kindness was done for me and my family by a member of the dojo who is not sure about attending that shows me more about that persons character than they could ever

know. My family has been protected in a way that was a worry, but thanks to this person, no longer applies and with great humility, Thank You so much.

Others recently left because of a mistake I made, which when presented to me, I humbly rectified. This person questioned my character. I would ask that they know me better and read where I come from before making up their mind and ask that they not leave over a small disagreement that happened during what I felt were friends around a circle talking. I was not knowledgeable enough and a mistake was made, and I have no shame in admitting my fault, but I would ask that instead of denying themselves a place in this dojo and leaving, accept my apology and offer guidance instead. I would not refuse a lesson from anyone who honors me with their time.

Finally, there are those who have left and we don't know why. You will be welcomed when you find you need the support, and if you decide not to return for whatever reason you have, there is no such thing as a "former" student.

Thank you all.

INTERNATIONAL MARTIAL ARTS AND SPORTS AWARD CEREMONY 2011

Rizwan Mustafa Zubairi

The Zubairi's Martial Arts Sports Trust-International organized International Martial Arts & Sports Award ceremony 2011 at Sindh Olympic House, Sindh Sports Complex, Nazimabad # 2 Karachi, Pakistan on October 29, 2011 in collaboration with World Organizer of Martial Arts.USA.



The chief guest of the occasion was Dr Muhammad Ali Shah (President Sindh Olympic Association) and Member Provincial Assembly Govt of Sindh, Pakistan.

The aim and objective of Zubairi's Martial Arts and Sports Trust is to develop learning, teaching and friendship of martial arts and sports among all of us and to recognize the efforts of promoting such things on international level. Master Zubairi had informed the audience

that he is closely working with Kukkiwon for Taekwondo promotion in Pakistan for highlighting Taekwondo as martial arts among youth, with respect to close combat arts he informed that we are also promoting Yong Moo Do as Korean martial arts especially in ground fighting and close combat situations. Rizwan Mustafa Zubairi, The international Master Instructor in Korean Martial Arts of Taekwondo-Hapkido-Yong Moo Do and a Certified Sports Administrator from Olympic Council of Asia in his speech informed the audience and awardees that he is promoting the Korean Martial arts with the support and guide lines of Kukkiwon, World Yong Moo Do Federation, Universal Taekwondo Union, World Taekwondo University, Korean Hapkido Federation and Korean Martial Arts Instructors Association. He recently returned from South Korea and has advance training in Kukkiwon Taekwondo and Yongmoodo.

Prof M.I.Tianero, the founder of World Organizer of Martial Arts had specially approved the international award certificates for Pakistan's eminent sports and martial arts personalities with the strong recommendation of Master Zubairi. In his message to awardees he said that martial arts and sports give strong health and positive mental attitude and we present this award to you in recognition of your outstanding, unselfish support and dedication that leads to the success of martial arts and sports internationally and your hard work to educate people and community around us is highly appreciated by all of us.

He distributed the International awards to the eminent martial artists and Sport personalities.

Grandmaster Absar Hussain Shah (Grandmaster Award in Kick Boxing)

1. Master Shabbir Hussain (4 th Dan Taekwondo)
2. Master Rehman Shah (4 th Dan Taekwondo)
3. Master Sadiq Ali Kazmi (4 th Dan Taekwondo)
4. Safdar Ali (3 rd Dan Taekwondo)
5. M.Altaf Khan (3 rd Dan Taekwondo)
6. M.Furqan (3 rd Dan Taekwondo)
7. Shahid Shaikh Siddique (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)
8. Sadaf Gull (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)
9. Abid Alam (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)

10. Irshad Khan (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)
11. Alamgir shah Afridi (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)
12. Amjad Ali (2 nd Dan Taekwondo)
13. Arbash Khan (Silver Medalist Int'L Amateur Muay Thai Championship 2011)
14. Farzana Khanum (Women Kick Boxing Association)
15. Musheer Raza Rabbani (Incharge Sindh Sports Board, Sports Complex.)
16. Syed Nabeel Shah (Swimming Instructor)
17. M.Taqi (Secretary Karachi Scouts Association)
18. Javeed Kiani (Swimming Instructor)
19. Rukhsan Aziz (Sports Instructor)
20. Rashid Ali Siddiqui (President-Pakistan Sports Writers Federation)
21. Ubaid-Ur-Rehman (Secretary-Sports Journalist Association of Sindh)
22. Wajid Raza Isfahani (Treasure-Karachi Union of Journalist)
23. Yahya Hussani (Vice President-Sports Journalist Association of Sindh)
24. Muhammad Ali (Secretary Sindh Judo Association)
25. Naseem Qureshi (Secretary Sindh Karate Association)
26. Dilwaris Khan (President Sindh Amateur Muai Thai Association)
27. Khalil Jibrán (President Sindh Taekwondo Association)
28. M.Javeed Khan (Secretary Sindh Taekwondo Association)
29. Khalid Rehmani (Secretary Sindh Tennis Association)
30. Khursheed Shah (District Officer CDGK)
31. Rehana Saif (Sindh Olympic Association)
32. Ahmed Ali Rajput (Secretary Sindh Olympic Association)
33. Dr Muhammad Ali Shah (President Sindh Olympic Association)

Prof Zaib-Un-Nisa (Principal Khusbakht Leadership College for Girls) was the guest of honor and she specially praised the efforts of outstanding support to the sports and martial arts personalities of the trust and has invited Master Zubairi and his team to her college for seminar and speech.

Master Zubairi has been in martial arts and sports for over 30 years and is promoting Korean Martial Arts from Zubairi's Martial Arts Centre since 1983 in Pakistan.

Rizwan Mustafa Zubairi

Lead Trustee. Chairman-President

Zubairi's Martial Arts and Sports Trust-International (Since 2006)

EARTHQUAKES & CACOY DOCE PARES ESKRIMA BELT GRADINGS!

Leigh Jenkins

Enough has been written about all of the devastating earthquakes that have taken our once beautiful city of Christchurch by surprise.



And everyone has witnessed the incredible effects it's had on our city's infrastructure, business, families and on all of our friends as well.

Because now all of these really terrible earthquakes, tremors, and nasty conditions have destroyed the buildings that used to house some truly fine martial art clubs in the city, including our wonderful martial arts school too.

My occupation as a Detective in the Police Force of New Zealand has placed me in the privileged position of being a front line responder to the damaged sites in the city, and this was immediately after all of the earthquakes.

So my hobby as a martial arts instructor has allowed me to truly observe and understand the true resilient human condition and attitude in mid crisis.

When the quake hit, I watched as the students of our club made enquiries into the welfare of all their loved ones and friends, then assessed the damage done to their homes, and somehow try to then sought to establish if they still had a job or not.

After the initial shock of everything, the student's concentration then turned to getting our martial arts school club back on its feet. Despite the circumstances, all of them expressed a really strong desire and need to return to some sense of normality in their life, something with a familiar routine again.

There was overwhelming support to get classes back up and running again at our school, and this was only just some three weeks after February's disaster quakes, then we opened our doors once more for the students to come and train.



When practicing the Eskrima, there is not much opportunity to allow your locked in concentration to stray, and so the regular practice at our school proved to be a welcome time out from the quakes.

And then my Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima Instructor, Grandmaster Vincent Palumbo of Adelaide in South Australia, was in constant contact with me, because he was so very concerned for the wellbeing of our Eskrima students at my school.

All of the students were practicing really well, and so I then decided to invite GMV to attend our club so as to conduct a seminar and grading for my enthusiastic Eskrima students.

I knew that GMV had the ability to dramatically raise the spirits, confidence, and energy levels of all these eskrima students who train at my martial arts club, because he is a realist, and he's so approachable to anyone.



Even though Christchurch was still being hammered by many of the aftershocks, and a real lot of the really negative publicity in the news, so all this combined with GMV's friends in Australia calling him nuts, as all of them tried their best to talk him out of going to Christchurch, he still agreed to come and do a seminar and grading here for our students.

Then I was truly humbled to watch the effort put in by the students during the build-up to the Grandmaster's visit, even despite some of the extremely personal circumstances that the students found themselves in.

So then it was on that Friday 11th of November 2011, Grandmaster Vince Palumbo came and conducted a 4 hour seminar. He first started with some of the more familiar basic drills, and he built them up into the comprehensive and effective drills with disarms, locks, throws and sparring routines.



As I first predicted, and as always, I just watched with a big smile on my face as the my student's spirits, confidence, energy levels, and skills excelled in the presence of GMV.

Then on Saturday 12th of November 2011, we practiced and graded for 8 hours, so it was a very busy day, and all students were successful in achieving their promotion.



At the commencement of the seminar weekend, there was Dr Kyle McWilliams who's also the only student to have been graded for black belt in New Zealand, but by the end of that weekend, it was Miss Nadine Maynard's turn to under go a gruelling examination for black belt in Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima.

She has definitely earned this rite because over the years she's consistently been one of New Zealand Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima Club's outstanding performers, and so then she became the other only student to grade and achieve the prestigious rank of Eskrima Black Belt - so it was well earned by her, and it was truly deserved too.



Students graded to 1st Class Brown Belt:

- Patrick Flaherty
- Daniel Bowden



Students graded to 2nd Class Brown Belt:

- Tic H'sia How
- Nick Tan
- Rao Fu
- Daniel Mowatt-Gardiner
- Timothy Clark
- Patrick Durney

Students graded to 3rd Class Brown Belt:

- Robyn Tan
- Calvin Hock
- Jasmine Ting
- Ryo Yamamura

- Tom Aspinwall
- Andrew Schriffer
- Astrid Mueller
- Elliot Hill



All members of New Zealand Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima Club wish to thank Grandmaster Vincent Palumbo for his time and efforts spent with us here in Christchurch, and an even bigger thankyou to his lovely wife and daughter for just agreeing to let him come across to our shaky city.

Salamat to you GMV.

By Master Leigh Jenkins of the New Zealand Cacoy Doce Pares Eskrima Club.

CHRISTIAN MARTIAL ARTS, RANK AND ADVANCEMENT

Donald Miskel

Well, my bretheren, here I go again, pontificating. You may not especially care for it but you knew when you began training with me that I am as much pastor as sensei. If you like the training it is one of the other benefits that you get. It's a package deal so sit back and enjoy. If you don't enjoy, endure. There may be a test after this and your next promotion may rest in the balance.

All joking aside (what you thought I was joking?) there is an issue I would like to address. I head a Christian martial arts organization and belong to several others. I sit on the master's council of at least one of them. I also belong to several more secular organizations and sit on the master's council of at least one of those. Being a part of these two types of organizations with their differing philosophies I am often called on to address a disagreement between them and even try to mediate an argument. We want peaceful and amical resolution of these conflicts. We definitely don't want them evolving into actual altercations. Though I doubt that something like that would happen it has happened before. The dojo wars in Chicago in the late sixties and early seventies are an example. I remember those too well.

Everybody doesn't see things the same way. It's the varying views that we share that make life interesting. Unfortunately it can make life a little bit more interesting than we want it to be. An old Indian (meaning from India) curse and blessing states, "May you live in interesting times". According to how it is meant and how it unfolds it can be either. We want things to be interesting but only within reason.

I was recently put in a position to try to mediate a disagreement between two martial arts organizations. Both organizations and the primary individuals involved are dear to my

heart. One organization is a Christian organization and the other a secular organization. I sit on the master's council of both and have advanced rank in both systems of martial arts advocated by these organizations. I am also a chaplain and counsellor for both. The reason behind the argument was a bit complicated but for the sake of this essay I'm going to oversimplify it. The disagreement was over rank and promotion being awarded to a particular person. I don't want to argue the right or wrong of the two arguments or my own personal opinion in the matter. What I do want to discuss is the difference in rank and promotion between a Christian martial arts organization and a secular one. The ranking systems and criteria for rank can be at odds between the two types of organizations. Not saying that one is wrong and the other is right. The ranking system they use may suit the one and not the other.

First off let me say that several of the individuals on both sides of the argument were professing Christians. In spite of that the objectives of the two organizations were very different. The Christian martial arts organization is organized as a ministry first and a martial arts organization second. It's primary purpose was to use martial arts as a ministry. A Christian martial arts ministry is like any other Christian ministry. Its primary purpose is to win souls for Christ. The martial arts systems they teach are tools used to achieve those ends. That isn't to say that those who teach in such a capacity aren't serious martial artists. Many of us are. I've been involved in the martial; arts for almost fifty five years. The study and teaching of the arts is one of my passions but first and foremost I am a minister and pastor. Fortunately I don't have to choose between the two. I embrace both equally. In my mind they are different sides of the same coin.

In my teaching career I have taught both classical and eclectic martial arts, I have taught in commercial and non-profit dojo(s) and I have taught in Christian and secular schools. In each instance my goal and my primary thrust was different. These days I am only interested in teaching Christian martial arts in a spiritual setting. In a sense, my dojo is my cathedral. I have a steady income and I don't have to teach for a living. I teach primarily out of a church gym or out of my home. Since I don't care for large classes this works well for me. It also gives me an opportunity to impact the individual lives of my students independently. Considering my objectives that works best for me.

In the secular sector rank is based solely on skill and ability. Either a student is worthy of a particular rank, according to the requirements of the school, or he isn't. There is no

middle ground. In the ranking system of the organization that I head and the other two Christian martial arts organization that I am a council member of the criterion for rank and promotion is different. In my organization my expectation for kyu rank and for the lower dan rank is the same as any other organization. It is based primarily on skill, knowledge and ability. The reason for this is that I need the teachers in the system to be adept enough to teach the students that they will be instructed with. They have to have the skill, knowledge and teaching ability that is required of them. After sandan (3rd degree black belt) my criteria for rank parts with the norm. I am more concerned about their ability in ministry than their ability in the technical areas of the arts. That isn't to say that I require no more skill for a godan (5TH degree) than a sandan. At that level I just base rank on ministerial skill as much as knowledge and ability in the arts. It is my belief that rank beyond godan is more administrative than skill based. One reason being that at the age that an individual reaches godan his physical abilities are waning. By the time a person reaches eight degree he's been in the arts for about forty years. He's probably in his mid fifties or early sixties by then. His knowledge may have grown but his body is no longer in step with his mind. At that ratified rank a martial artist is judged more by what he knows and what he has accomplished and contributed to the arts than for raw ability. I can't even begin to do the things I used to do ten years ago. I'm approaching sixty five years old and while I'm in remarkable shape for my age (my opinion) I'm still a senior citizen. There's no need of fooling myself to the contrary. If I'm a master at all, and I don't claim to be, it's more because of what I know than what I can do. Too many people buy into the Saturday morning kung fu movie concept of shrived up octogenarian kung fu masters beating up on young fighting champions. That's a myth pure and simple. Angelo Dundee was a shrived up boxing master but you didn't see him beating up on Muhammad Ali.

Various schools, instructors and organizations have different criteria for rank and for promotion. A shodan in one school would hardly qualify as a brown belt in another. Each school and organization has its own requirements for rank. Since there is no one board that regulates this it is just how it is. My organization is no different. I want my instructor rank people to be comparable with any other organization's but when it comes to master rank I judge differently. I am looking for the one who can inspire. One who can give good council. One who can impact the spiritual lives he teaches and those who serve under him. First and foremost they are ministers. After that they are martial artists. At higher rank I place the former over the latter. I am more interested in creating good Christians than creating good fighters. Our system doesn't particularly encourage sports karate. Ours is a combative system. That isn't because I'm trying to turn out street fighters or bar room brawlers. It's

because I teach the way I was taught. I was taught what was effective in a self defense or combative application. It's what I know. What I understand. A few of my students have fought in tournaments and some have done very well but it isn't our point of interest. Ours can be a brutal system. Because of the potential of abuse of the system I am especially adamant that I teach good Christian ethics to go along with the martial skills I am trying to install into my students. We are accountable for what we teach. Especially to the young. A good moral foundation must be laid with the physical skills that they are learning.

I am not alone in my philosophy in teaching and ranking. The other two christian organizations that I represent hold to something of the same philosophy. We are trying to create good Christian, good citizens and good human beings. The ability to do so, using the martial arts as a means to that end is the quality we look for in our instructors and especially in our master level people. In our hearts and minds that trumps raw martial arts ability and teaching skills every time.

There, see there. This wasn't a sermon after all. You'll notice that unlike most of my articles and essays not a single scripture was quoted. Don't let that fool you however. This was as much a spiritual message as all of those others. I will give this advice to my fellow Christian martial arts instructors. Whatever you do do as unto the Lord. And remember, my brothers, only what you do for Christ will last. God bless you, my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

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Judan Shodai Soke, BLMAA

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KARATE FOR THE MASTERS

Donald Miskel

It has been a lifelong endeavor for me to truly master the martial arts. I have dedicated nearly 55 years of my life to that end. Still striving. Still seeking. Still studying. I am considered a martial arts masters amongst my peers and a grandmaster in some circles but I have better sense than to become too enamored with my ability. Age, injury and several radical surgeries have taken their toll on this old body but so far my mind is as clear as ever. Which, by the way, isn't saying much but it is what it is.

I HAVE OFTEN ASKED MYSELF WHAT IS MARTIAL ARTS FOR THE MASTER. What describes that rarified level of knowledge and ability? Is it a powerful gyaku zuki (reverse punch) or a blazingly fast yoko kekomi geri (side thrust kick)? How about the signature oi zuki (lunge punch) or the mae geri (front kick). Will mastering these moves make one a master. Good question. I'm still trying to find an answer to it. I remember when I could deliver a mawashi geri (roundhouse kick) that would scorch your gi. Today I can barely throw the same technique waist high due to a couple of back surgeries. Everything fused, nothing bends. Not the best situation for a karate/kempo sensei. Still I strive for mastery and have learned to reinvent myself as a martial artist. But then this isn't about me.

In the early days of my martial arts training I was attracted to the most radical and acrobatic techniques I was capable of doing. Spinning kicks, jump kicks, flying kicks were the order of the day and that was before the popularity of taekwondo in the Midwest where I resided. Like most youngsters I was attracted to the theatrical. But is this the martial arts of the master?

In order to reach grandmaster level, (eighth dan and above) a good forty or fifty years of training has been dedicated to training, practice and teaching. A lot happens to the body in that amount of time, much of it not good. What you were able to pull off at twenty you'll be hard pressed to duplicate with any authority at sixty. Let's face it, we do get old. Either that or we get dead which isn't conducive to training. Which brings up another peripheral question. Will there be karate in heaven? As a minister and Christian martial artist I concern myself with such questions. Interesting conjecture but let's get back on track. Is a master a master as his ability wanes? Unfortunately knowledge and ability seem to grow in opposite directions

as we age. We know more but we can do less. If this isn't you just give it a bit more time. You'll get there.

It has been my conjecture that a master is a master more for what he knows and what he has accomplished than what he is still able to do. Otherwise one will be a master for a while and slide back down the scale to a beginner. For mastership knowledge is key. Being able to transmit what you know into the lives of others. That is the true role of the master.

Real karate, or any other martial arts resides in the kyohan (the basic techniques). It isn't the eye catching, mind boggling esoteric techniques that describe the master. When all is said and done any real martial arts describes its worth on the field of battle. True any martial arts 'do' will accomplish much more than making a person a proficient fighter, which is good since violence is antisocial. But in the long run the martial arts are about fighting. Not about kumite, waza or kata though all three contribute to the ability of the fighter. In its rawest manifestation the martial arts are just that; martial. It's about combat, fighting and self defense. If the arts don't work in those areas they don't work at all. It's nice to build character and teach discipline but there are possibly easier and less traumatic way of doing that without the bruises and contusions that accompany the study of any fighting discipline. In the end, if you can't fight, you aren't much of a martial artist. You're merely a paper tiger.

Back to the beginning of this essay. Karate is effective because of its basics. Everything else is superfluous. Basics are what work in a real confrontation. When the blood is inundated with adrenaline and the heart rate peaks eye hand coordination basically disappears. Simplicity becomes the redeeming factor in such a situation. Gross motor skills are what work.

I would like to tell you that all those beautiful and flashy techniques that you perfected for last Saturday's demonstration will work in the streets but I would probably be misleading. Basics work. Simplicity offers a better chance of success. Leave those fancy techniques for the stage. That's where they'll get the applause. Don't allow those flashy techniques to leave you broken and bleeding in the streets. Likewise instill a sense of reality in your students. If you teach karate or any other martial discipline as a sport be honest with your students. What works on the tournament floor doesn't necessarily work in the streets. A master instills reality into his students. He doesn't inundate him with false and maybe dangerous expectations. A real master will take his student to where he needs to be as a martial artist.

Lastly, to cement my argument let me go to one of the great authorities on karate. Master Gichin Funikoshi stated that taikioka is the kata for the beginner. Then he turned around and stated that taikioka is the kata for the beginner. How can this be? Sounds like the classic oxymoron but in this truth lies the key to mastery of the arts. A young martial artist relies on

his youth and physical prowess. That will only take him so far. Especially if he intends to continue practicing his art beyond his youth. As he continues to pursue his art he'll eventually learn that there is a deeper depth and greater knowledge to be had and that resides in the basic foundational techniques of his art. Every sound building rests on a good foundation. Without it it doesn't matter what good material you build with. Your building will be built on and in futility. A structure is no better than the foundation it stands on. In the martial arts mastery resides in the basics.

Be realistic in your studies and training. Teach realistically. You'll be much happier with your accomplishments and in the end your students will appreciate it.

Train hard my brother and go with God.

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MENTAL KUNG FU

Donald Miskel

Man is a triune being. That is to say that he has three aspects to his being. Man isn't just a physical presence. If we live only according to the demands of the fleshly man we are living only a fraction of our life possibility. Man is a spirit, he has a soul and he lives in a body. Holistic medicine has become popular in recent years. Actually this is nothing new. The Chinese physician has been treating the various aspects of the human condition for longer than we can begin to understand.

I am a minister and of course I am concerned with more than just the physical man. I wouldn't be much of a pastor if I wasn't. But this is an article about martial arts and self defense. You may wonder how these other aspects of the human existence enter into the martial arts. Anyone who has studied the arts for any length of time, especially in the oriental systems, knows that many of the martial arts began in religious temples. Chan (Zen) Buddhism and Taoism birthed a number of martial arts. I'm not advocating that the Christian martial artist enters into these philosophies and spiritual practices but I am pointing out that the arts weren't created in a vacuum. In their creation all aspects of the human being were taken into consideration. In all actuality nothing can be accomplished independent of the soul and spirit. Where you go all of you goes. If your feet go, the rest of your body will follow. We are holistic beings.

There is more to self defense than a punch, a kick, a lock or a throw or takedown. Real martial art goes beyond its physical expression. If you don't put your heart into a technique, regardless of how much you've trained it won't work. Fighting is more than mere physical contention. Hopefully we are not just focused on combat in our studies and teaching. There is more to life than that. Violence is antisocial. It should always be a last resort. If we depend on our physicality alone violence will be the sole manifestation of our art. If, on the other hand, we base our martial expression in the other areas of our being we will have control over our circumstances to the extent that we will practice our arts on a higher level. We will learn to fight without fighting.

Many of us have studied some type of animal system, such as tiger crane, praying mantis or white crane kung fu. Yet, however affectively we mimic the fighting prowess of these animals we will be limited by our human limitations. No matter how good you become at black tiger kung fu you can't kung fu a tiger. Please, take my word for it. Don't put it to the test. That would be a lesson you won't live to profit from. Yet, in spite of our human frailty, we have almost caused the extinction of tigers. Human beings are more dangerous than any tiger. What gives us this superiority? It is the human brain. Our ability to think. The brain supersedes the limitations of the human body making us more dangerous than physical ability alone could accomplish.

All the training in the world won't help us if we aren't aware of our surroundings and don't see a dangerous situation before it becomes critical. We will do better in a self defense situation if we react to deal with the impending attack before it occurs. This type of awareness requires more than training the fist into weapons or learning a kick or two. Our minds are, or should be, our first level of defense. The best fight isn't the one you win it's the one you avoid. Fighting without fighting is always preferable to getting hurt or hurting someone else. If we can control the situation we can control the outcome.

My friend, Dr. John Enger of the Shinja Martial Arts University has a black belt in Verbal Karate. This method involves conflict resolution. Dr. Enger was a police officer and often had to use his verbal skill to defuse or deescalate what could become a dangerous situation. No police or security officer wants to fight with another person in the process of doing his job. Likewise, no responsible human being, martial artist or not, should seek a physical confrontation if he can reason his way out of it.

Too often we let our own pride, insecurities or, so called, righteous indignation enter into the equation goading us into a fight that we could otherwise avoid. For any civilized person fighting is always a last resort. Very little is resolved by conflict.

I have always held that if one of my students finds himself in a physical confrontation my instruction hasn't been totally effective. I try to build a level of self awareness and command of his surroundings in a student that he should see a possible situation before it happens. If confronted he should have the verbal and mental skills to deescalate the situation. Of course, unfortunately, a fight is sometimes unavoidable. I teach my students to be an angel in negotiation but a demon in a fight. Do everything you can to preserve the safety of you and any, would be, assailant but if violence is inevitable go all out in your efforts to protect yourself and loved ones. But first, think. Take control of yourself and you'll have a foundation to enable you to control the situation.

Use your mind as your first resource. Your first line of defense. Observe and always be aware of your surroundings and any possible impending situation. Avoid areas where trouble is likely. Carry yourself with confidence and an air of capability. Predators are looking for a soft target. Don't give them what they are looking for. If confronted be confident but not cocky. Strong but not pushy. Aggressive but not abusive. Flexible but not a push over. It's a balance that you are looking for. A perfect balance of yin and yang. And lastly, always keep in mind that it is your brain that makes you superior to the average predator. Your brain is your best weapon. Use it. Master that and you will be a true martial art master.

God bless you my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel

THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

Donald Miskel

This is going to be a brief article. I have a sermon to prepare for tomorrow's service at my church and I should be working on that. I also need to be putting together the syllabus for an academic class that I'll be helping teach at one of the local universities here. Those are going to have to wait for a bit. I just have to get this out of my system first.

I had occasion to speak with my Sensei this week, something that I should probably do more often than I do. Douglas (Doug) Dwyer is one of the toughest men alive in my estimation. I have had the good fortune to study with some really great karate instructors in my long martial art career. If I chose to drop names many of you would be suitably impressed but in my opinion Doug is amongst the best of the best.

Doug came up in the 'Deadliest man alive' era of Count Dante (AKA John Keehan). John was one of the driving forces of the USKA and later founded the old World Karate Federation (along with Doug) and the Black Dragon Fighting Society, the later which exists to this day. Doug and John were best friends and studied karate with Charles Grazanski and Robert Trias. Prior to that both had backgrounds in boxing and judo. They were close friends and peers, not instructor and student. Their journey in the martial arts was started together and they brought shorei goju karate and the USKA to the Midwest which would be its largest area of influence in the U.S.

I began studying with Doug in 1964 after having studied judo/jiu jitsu and shotokan karate. I had a pretty solid foundation in the arts but studying with Doug was light years ahead of anything I had experienced. If my prior studies represented grammar school and middle school then Doug's school would be high school and college.

I have since studied extensively with other instructors and martial art masters including John Keehan but none outstripped Doug. His knowledge, technique and teaching ability was amongst the best I've ever experienced. I am considered a martial art master by my peers and a grandmaster by some others but I am still trying to approximate the skill of my sensei, Doug Dwyer.

I was talking to one of my seniors recently and Doug's name came up. We both concluded that Doug isn't human. I don't believe he ever was. Not doing the things that he could do. I recall watching Doug destroy two roman bricks with a kukete (spear hand strike). I was his uke and often held the bricks while he demonstrated this impossible feat. Doug could break a stack of ten bricks without spacer and reduce them to gravel or he could use kime (focus) and break an individual brick in the stack. I've watched him punch his way through two two by fours like they were dry sticks. I was a pretty decent breaker in my heyday but I have yet to duplicate some of the feats that he did routinely.

I was a street tough kid in a rough neighborhood of an unforgiving city. I studied the martial arts more for survival than for any esoteric reason. I wasn't interested in competing or in demonstrations. They say that necessity is the mother of invention and where I grew up fighting prowess was a necessity not a nicety. It was about survival and not art. When I sought a martial discipline and an instructor I needed someone and something based in reality. Doug and the art he taught furnished me with the tools I needed to survive. His teaching saw me through the danger of the ghettos of Chicago and the jungles of Southeast Asia. In circumstances that destroyed more than a few young me I not only survived; I thrived.

I'm in pretty decent shape considering several debilitating injuries and illnesses, several pretty radical orthopedic surgeries and the effects of time and age. I still teach and train within the limitations that time has placed on me. I have enough metal in my body to foster panic in airports and I pursue my training through pain and discomfort but I still do the only thing I know how to do. I train. At a time when most of my peers have suffered many health challenges and are challenged by arthritis and injury Doug still trains like a demon. While the rest of us are struggling through our work outs with the appropriate moans and groans Doug is head butting his way through brick buildings. I'm sixty-five years old and Doug is considerably older than me so you go figure. Again, the only conclusion I can come to is that the man isn't human. Whatever planet he migrated from they made men a lot tougher than they do here. Where ever he hailed from he is one of a kind and he's the only man I'll ever call sensei. I don't mind sharing him with the rest of you buzzards as long as you keep in mind he's MY sensei.

God bless you, my brethren. Train hard and go with God.

Dr. Donald Miskel Thd, CCD, MDiv

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