

The Bubishi

by Harry Cook

In 1621 Mao Yuan I published a work on military tactics. Composed of 240 volumes, the Wu Pei Chih deals with all aspects of Chinese military tactics, and includes a section on empty hand methods. As I studied the history of the martial arts I was intrigued to learn that Chojun Miyagi had given the name “Goju Ryu” (Hard/Soft Style) to his art from a line contained in the Bubishi (Wu Pei Chih in Chinese). Determined to find out more, I looked at copies of Mao Yuan I’s work in the libraries of Durham University and Cambridge University, but I could not find the section used by Miyagi. Finally after two years of looking, the truth finally dawned on me—there must be a different work with the same name! And of course, there is.

The Okinawan Bubishi may have used the name of the Chinese original for purposes of prestige, but the contents are quite different. I believe the Okinawan Bubishi is a product of an Okinawan martial artist (or artists) and reflects a synthesis of knowledge and techniques derived from South China (mainly Fukien) and Okinawa. The technical aspects of the work are based on the methods known as Fukien White Crane. The first chapter of Bubishi is entitled “The Origins of White Crane Boxing,” and tells us that the White Crane style was founded by a woman, Feng Chi Niang, who modified a system taught to her by her father, Feng Shih Yu of Fukien.

This method is widely known in Taiwan and Malaysia, and has also been included in the well-known Wu Tsu Ch’uan or Five Ancestor Boxing. Interestingly enough both styles employ a version of Sanchin kata, the central kata of Okinawan Naha-te systems (Goju Ryu and Uechi Ryu). The Bubishi has thirty-two chapters dealing with history of White Crane Boxing, advice and observations from Master Wang Yo Teng; information on vital spots and how to attack them; time strikes; grappling arts; six turning hands; 54 steps of the Black Tiger hand; Sun Tzu’s comments on war; and a variety of chapters dealing with herbal medicine, combat techniques etc. Recently a section of the Bubishi has been published in Japanese by the Goju master Tadahiko Ohtsuka, with a forward by the T’ai Chi Ch’uan master Yang Ming-Shih. I have used this work, the Okinawa Den Bubishi, Kenwa Mabuni’s work Karate-Do Kempo, and Okinawan Karate-Do by Takamiyagi as sources for this article.

One interesting aspect of the Bubishi is its widespread use by all Okinawan Karate masters. Gichin Funakoshi quotes it in his work Karate-Do Kyohan and the section left untranslated by Tsutomu Ohshima in the English language version comes from the Bubishi. Chojun Miyagi took the name “Goju” from the third line of the section “Eight Poems of the Fist”, i.e.:

“...the way embraces hard and soft, inhaling and exhaling.”

The last two characters of this line are very interesting as they are key concepts in modern Fukien White Crane and Five Ancestor Boxing. I quote from an article on Five Ancestors Boxing published in Real Kung-Fu magazine Vol. 2, #2, 1976:

“T’un—adhere—the exertion of force in a flexible manner so that you block or intercept the opponents blow by directing your force in a circular motion, causing his blow or strike to slide and miss the target.

“T’u—exert—to strike in such a manner that the opponent feels like being swatted, pushed, sunk and bounced away.”

So, here we have the same terms being used in Goju Ryu, Fukien White Crane, and Five Ancestors Boxing as well as being found in the Bubishi. This historical link is important in understanding the history and evolution of Okinawan karate and explains the value placed on the Bubishi by Okinawan Karate masters. Tatsuo Shimabuku the creator of Isshin Ryu actually uses the whole section of “The Eight Precepts of the Fist” as his Code of Isshin Ryu; this has been published in Official Karate magazine Sept. 1973, and in Dynamics of Isshin Ryu Karate Vol. 1 by Harold Long and Allen Wheeler. In both cases the translations leave something to be desired, but it is quite clear as to the source—the Bubishi.

The source for the Bubishi is often ascribed to either Kanryo Hiagaonna or Chojun Miyagi; and it is said to have been brought from China. I think it is possible that Chojun Miyagi did bring various books from China, but the Bubishi (or sections of it) was already in Okinawa. Certainly Gichin Funakoshi quoted from it in his 1922 book Ryukyu Karate Kempo.

The karate style of Ryuei Ryu was created by Kenri Nakaima, a student of Ryu Ryu Ko (the teacher of Kanryo Higaonna). When he returned to Okinawa, Nakaima brought a copy of the Bubishi given to him by his teacher. As he was older than Kanryo Higaonna, his copy of the Bubishi must have entered Okinawa prior to Higaonna's copy. It is also possible that some of the families of Chinese descent in Kumemura may have had copies of the Bubishi.

48 Methods of Boxing

This section of the Bubishi is most interesting as it shows the application of various techniques still taught in various Okinawan styles. For example, in Figure 1 we clearly see mawashi uke (roundhouse block) being applied as in the Goju kata Seipai or Suparinpei. In Figure 2 the armlock and back elbow techniques of Kururunfa kata are obvious.

A lot of other techniques are shown including locks and throws, but what is most striking is that no defences against weapons are shown. I have always been suspicious of the story that the Okinawans developed karate in response to rapacious repression by armed Japanese samurai—if that was true, which I seriously doubt, why doesn't the Bubishi show defences against swords, and other weapons?

Anyway this question still needs a lot of research, but these illustrations give us a good picture of the type of tode (China Hand) practiced on Okinawa perhaps two centuries or more ago. (Illustrations from Okinawan Karate-Do by Uechi and Takamiyagi.)

Vital Spots

The Bubishi includes charts and diagrams that contain the core secrets of Okinawan karate. Obviously derived from Chinese Boxing and medical systems, they show the targets and the times of the day that they are most vulnerable to attack. The theory behind this is the idea that the body's energy goes through a cyclical rise and fall and there are times of strength and times of weakness. This is alluded to in the second of the "Eight Precepts of the Fist" which reads "The pulse of the body resembles the phases of the sun and the moon."

The energy is seen to rise and fall in a definite sequence, and the chart details the specific spots to be struck at the appropriate time. The origin of this knowledge lies in China and is referred to by Robert W. Smith in his work Chinese Boxing: Masters and Methods (Kodansha 1974) where he says "Shaolin theory holds that the human body contains 365 vulnerable (soft) spots, 5 more than are used in acupuncture and moxibustion. Striking has 36 and shutting, 24 major points. The attack is oriented to twelve time periods of two hours each in the belief that the blood and neural activity is heaviest at the spots at specified times."¹

It is difficult to be sure how accurate this information is, but it is interesting to remember the ability shown by the Shorinji Kempo teacher on the 1983 BBC programme The Way of the Warrior² to knock out his opponent, with a relatively light blow to a vital spot. The author(s) of the Bubishi also follow Chinese tradition in that they give herbal remedies to heal the damage caused by the strikes. There is also a section on seven points which must not be struck as the results are irreversible.

Footnotes...

1. Chinese Boxing: Masters and Methods Robert W. Smith (Kodansha, 1974), 15

2. The Way of the Warrior: The Paradox of the Martial Arts Howard Reid & Michael (Croucher Century Publishing, 1983), 207-213.

ANALYSIS OF THE OKINAWAN BUBISHI

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(Lectured in October 25, 1997)

The Okinawan Bubishi is supposedly a compilation of teachings on the White Crane/Monk Boxing systems, that is, selfdefense techniques where the weapons are the empty hands. Books about selfdefense, exercises, and forms were common in China in the end of XIX Century as nowadays, and many people, as nowadays, learn about empty hand selfdefense by these books. In the Okinawan Bubishi, the White Crane and Monk Boxing system are melted in an unique improved fight method, and we doesn't know if it was originally a published book or a handmade manual of some school that were copied by students. We doesn't also if this text was written or compiled in Southern China or in Okinawa.

The Okinawan Bubishi is an assembly of techniques, kata, strategies, vital points, popular medicine and ethic/moral code for martial artists. This compilation shapes the theory and practice of the Traditional Karate-do (originally "Tode-jutsu", an Okinawa term for Chinese Kempo).

Chojun Miyagi (founder of Goju-ryu), Kenwa Mabuni (founder of Shito-ryu), Gichin Funakoshi (founder of Shotokan), Gogen Yamaguchi (founder of Japanese Goju-Kai), among others, had a copy of Bubishi and divulged it in popular books of karate. Although many writers especulate that Higaonna, Itosu and other grandfathers of modern karate had copies of Bubishi nothing proves this thesis, and the witness of Mabuni are not confiabile due to the tendency of the first masters of modern Age of Karate in surrounding the karate in a mist of legend and myth to hidden his true source, the chinese Quan Fa. On the other hand, with rare exceptions most of the karate's history was wrote by amateurs without training in historical methodology of research, based on legend, suppositions, and absence of trustly documentation.

Okinawan karate (formely Tode-jutsu) were an informal civilian art of self-defense, health improvement and stamina development adapted to Okinawan culture, that was strongly influenced from chinese literature, arts, medicine, agriculture, religion and trading. In the 1920-1930 years a strong interest on the origins of this empty hand fight art led men like Chojun Miyagi, Kenwa Mabuni, Juhatsu Kyoda, Chomo Hanashiro, Choyu Motobu, and others to begin informal researches about chineses origins of Okinawan karate. These men had a cultural formation more elaborate (most of early masters of karate were illiterate or unlearned men) and were influentiated by sociocultural forces of the japanese educational system of Meiji Restoration. It was precisely in this period that the chinese origins of karate was actively researched, and a chinese master was particularly important in this enterprise: Wu Xiangi or Wu Hsien Kuei, best knowed as GOKENKI, a chinese white crane master living in Naha. Gokenki was a close friend of Miyagi, Mabuni, Kyoda, Matayoshi, Hanashiro, Kana Kinjo, and others future masters, and gave instructions to them. Gokenki was a respectful nickname, a title given by the people that means "great ou very honorable master" (this nickname is equivalent to "Ryuryuko"...).

There is perhaps a significative relation between Gokenki and the Okinawan Bubishi. We know that Miyagi made several trips to China, some of them with Gokenki, that introduces him to some important Quan Fa masters and helped him to find books on chinese martial arts. Goju-ryu is a system developed and organized by Miyagi starting from Higaonna's Sanchin exercise and developed from chinese theories and techniques that he (Miyagi) researched actively, and in this enterprise he was strongly influentiated by Gokenki insights. To'on-ryu of Kyoda is the only style that preserves the insights from Higashionna, but also with strong Gokenki influence, from whom Kyoda obtained and introduced in his system the White Crane kata Nepai (in 1932).

The Okinawan Bubishi, as was said above, is a compilation and not a unique text. So, we can find divergences about, for example, classification of vital points. One classification is based on acupuncture theories without convincent evidences; other is based only on observation and experience, and a third relates effects that we only can accept if produced by spears and not by the hand attacks, no matter how the hand had been training (strong hands cannot to smash a kidney or perforate a liver or the gut; for this the spears was invented... and make the job easier). On the other hand, the techniques and strategies for unarmed combat teaching in the Okinawan Bubishi are very efficient, a true treasure for the karate masters. Miyagi, for exemple, used this insight from Bubishi to review the Higashionna kata and introduce others kata to complete the Goju-ryu curriculum.

The medicine section of Okinawan Bubishi is confuse and superstitious, for example, the childish theory about "sichen", that is derived from astrological theories. Sketches on acupuncture meridians are presented without practical directions and vital points are presented together herbal medicine references (moxa?). Nowadays this section of Bubishi has perhaps an interest for folkloric and historical researches on popular chinese medicine, but IT IS VERY DANGEROUS AND AN IRRESPONSABLE ACT TO TRY USE IT. Karate instructors need to learn First Aids and reanimation techniques on medical/nursery supervision to apply them in his dojos and competitions.

Sanchin and Paipuren

Okinawan Bubishi is a system based on a martial Qi Gong, but when we read the description of the basic moviments of this exercise we realize that the anonymous author refers to Sanchin exercise with the name Paipuren, but this kata is not the Shito-ryu or Whooping Crane's Paipuren kata currently knowed in Hakutsuru Kempo circles. George Alexander and Ken Penland in their translation of Bubisih detected this fact and uses the word Sanchin instead Paipuren, and it is possible that the old name of Sanchin of the Bubishi's school was Paipuren. However, both Sanchin and Paipuren are basic form (*hsing*) destined to body development and control of Ki that can be different kata in different schools.

Sanchin, Paipuren, and other tension/breath kata allows the student to concentrate his energy without any wasting and direct it to any part of the body to strike or for healing. The "martial" Qi (or *Jin*) is acumulated in the *tanden* (*dan tien*) when it is symbolised by a Tiger; from there it can be to all *hsueh* (*kyusho*) points of the body, and in this movement it is symbolised in a Crane; finally, it is spit out in an energetic action, being symbolised in a Dragon.

Paipuren is translated as "sequence of eight steps", and this term belongs to the chinese esoterism and is related to mutations (a dynamic symbol for represents the eternal cyclic changes of the Nature, that with the heavens and man forms an unity) represented in the eight trigrams (Be Gua). We can realize that Paipuren kata is linked with this wisdom and its practice involves a deep meaning.

In his practical aspects, Sanchin or Paipuren develops the principles that are uniques in the Quan Fa. These principles can be resumed in the following elements:

1. The kata is a training for learning the correct mode of breathing (with tanden). Incorrect mode of breathing (toracic breathing) is a factor for predisposition for many diseases and wasting of vital energy;
2. The kata is also a training for correct the posture (back straight but without tension, in a natural mode) that is necessary for efficacy of martial techniques. On the other hand, incorrect posture of vertebral spine is also cause of backaches, headaches, and difficult of mental concentration;
3. The kata teaching the correct basis for martial work: feet become rooted in the soil and the energy become naturally concentrated in the center of the body (*tan tien*), so, it can burst out in an powerful action (a strike, a punch, a block);
4. Tha kata teach the essential kamae: martial artist can strikes the center of the body and at the same time protect the center of his body.

Further development of techniques, strategies, etc, are codified in advanced kata. Bubushi describe these kata but there are not figures about them. These are Hakutsuru (Hakaku), Useishi (Gojushiho), Niseishi (Nijushiho), Nepai (Nipaipo), and four kata from Rakkan Ken (Lohan Quan) system. In the Mabuni's Bubushi there is a kata represented only in 34 figures without legends or description.

Tensho and Rokishu

Many authors refer the Rokishu (six hand techniques) of the Okinawan Bubushi as the source of Miyagi's Tensho kata, but there is no correlation between Tensho movements and the Rokishu shown in the current versions of Okinawa Bubushi, neither there is similarity to correlate Rokishu to Happoren kata as intended by some authors. However, the similarity between Tensho techniques and the Kakufa kata is very close, and it is probable that Tensho be a personal adaptation of Kakufa, a kata that Miyagi knew and taught before the 40 years.

The section on Rokkishu in the knowed Okinawan Bubushi is a representation of six open hand techniques. These hand techniques are elementar techniques without special importance. In my opinoon, this text is a spurious insertion put in place of the true Rokkishu or perhaps may be a key to remember the basic techniques found in some Rokkishu not illusted or described in the book.

The original Miyagi's Tensho developed movements of hands like rolling ball and influenced the performance of goju kata and is typical of White Crane kata, but modern Goju tend to forgot this style when approach to sportive performance and competitions. Present Tensho is different from old Tensho because it became a "hard" kata. The principal reason that led the first goju masters to modify this kata was, perhaps, because it were very soft and looked feminine (Miyagi were moked as "feminine" when performed thisa kata), and the machism cultivated among the young male japanese did not aprove this kata. As result, modifications were introduced in the kata that finished it in exercises for the wrist.

The 48 techniques of Quan

Masters like Mabuni and Yamaguchi Gogen gave great importance to the most treasured teaching of the Bubushi: the 48 illustrated kata techniques (article #29) showed two persons fighting (Mabuni reproduced only 28 figures in his book of 1934, perhaps because he realized that these techniques were the most important of all). These techniques resume the essential of the system and most of secret bunkai of the Koryu Kata. Understanding and training these techniques are the knowledge that all true masters of karate could have.

There are many controversies about the true interpretation of these figures, however, some of them are obvious to whom knows the principles of practical Ju-jutsu, and may be a clue to the Chinese origins of Japanese Ju-jutsu (figures 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 18, 21, 22, 24, 29, and 38). On the other hand, many of these techniques can be easily identified in the Chinese kata used by Miyagi to establish the foundation of the Goju-ryu system and also in other old Okinawan kata. This shows the importance that the Bubushi has in the development of Goju-ryu system. We can, for example, easily identify in many figures bunkai of Goju kata and some old traditional Okinawan kata (my reference is the Alexander/Penland translation, because the figures are the originals):

- Seipai movements are very evident in figures 11, 13, 20, 40, and 43.
- Figure 26 is characteristic in the Goju Seisan, and figure 27 can be easily identified as a typical movement of the Pangainoon Seisan.
- Figure 34 shows clearly the first movement of Niseishi.
- Figure 39 is a unique technique of Kururunfa.
- Figure 18 shows a throwing known in Tode-jutsu and that can be found in Wanduan, Kururunfa, Niseishi, and Sanseru.
- Figure 42 is a typical technique found in Shisochin kata.
- Figure 46 is a typical technique used in Seiyunchin and Suparimpei.
- The last movement of Suparimpei can be seen in figure 16.
- Figure 10 is a variant technique of Saifa kata.
- Figure 48 is clearly the first movement of the White Crane kata Hakucho, Hakaku, Kakufa.
- In figure 14 we can see a typical technique of Kusanku, and in figure 8 the opening movement of the old Takemura's Kusanku (sometimes referred as Azato-no-Kusanku).

Elements of the Quan Fa method that arise from Bubushi can be seen when we examine carefully this 48 figures.

Figures 25 (mawashi-uke tora-guchi), 32 (crane fist chudan soto-uke), and 37 (closed fist chudan uchi-uke) seem to exist only to remember the basic blocks used by the school represented in the Bubushi. The jodan-uke block occurs in figures and is performed with both hands (augmented or as X-block). Here it is used to defend a strike above the head or a hair grab. This block is naturally completed with a front kick in the groin of the adversary.

Hand strikes used along the 48 figures are performed with four fingers (nukite), one finger (ippon-nukite), crane bunched fingers (kakushiken), palm hand (teisho ate), punch (seiken or hiraken?), hammerfist (kentsui), elbow (ushiro hijiate), chokes with fingers and squeeze of testicles and biceps with the fingers. Training of the fingers should be encouraged in that system. Front kick is the only kick showed and the kicker always loose (figures 5, 12, 21, 26. NOTE: figures 21 repeat figure 12). This shows us that KICKS WERE NOT CONSIDERED GOOD TECHNIQUE in that school, and perhaps it were used only as a complement of some defense techniques.

We have also figures where the purpose is to call the attention for specific painful points and how it should be manipulated. These are showed figures 14 (insertion of triceps above the elbows), 16 (armpits), 30 (side of the thorax), and 40 (intercostal space below nipples). Vital

points showed along the 48 figures are testicles, throat, eyes, jaws (side), and carotids (see figure 31). There are not strikes to back, legs, or arms in the 48 figures. This is an example that "36 kyusho" or "sichen" doctrines were not important, WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS IF THE TECHNIQUE WORKS OR NOT.

Finally, the most dangerous technique showed in the Bubishi's 48 figures is as is easy to break the neck of someone in a close fight (figure 4 and 7, the later is a repetition of the first).

What are the *Quan* styles of Bubishi?

The Okinawa Bubishi is considered as a text on White Crane Kenpo, however, in the opening of the book we are informed that this system of boxing was created by a woman and incorporated in the Tiger Boxing by a strong and skilful man fighter, Zeng Cishu. So, the system is appropriately a Tiger/Crane system. In fact, a picture (article #28) illustrates this principle: first, the image of a woman, of the possible creator of White Crane, in a classical Hakutsuru-No-Kamae and at the side the image of a man in the tiger posture of the opening of the Gojushiho kata. Both figures are preceded by other (article #27) the opening posture of the Niseishi kata, belonging to the White Monkey Boxing. On the other hand, the Monk Boxing style is explicitly cited and described along the text. So, Okinawa Bubishi could be an amalgam of at least four style: White Crane Boxing, Monk Boxing, White Monkey Boxing, and Tiger Boxing. However, we probably need to add more one style to satisfy the esoteric chinese numerology (Five Ancestor/Elders mythology), and so, we could have added the Druken Boxing that also is cited in the text as a very efficient style.

Perhaps may possible that the Bubishi be a system based in a synthesis of five great Shaolin styles, such as the Five Ancestors Boxing, that was created from these five system but having the White Crane as its cornerstone.

The female archetype

It is common in the chinese martial arts legends about a woman as founder or improver of a martial art style. The Bubishi celebrates a woman as the creator of White Crane Boxing, Fang Jiniang. She was a girl with basic martial skills received from her father Fang Siushu, a master of Monk Boxing, but he was betrayed and murdered in a dispute for control of Yongchun village, and Fang Jiniang was obseded thenceforth to revenge her father. However, she was a fragile woman and knew that she needed a strong and skilfull man to complete her plane. She associated to a famous Tiger Boxing fighter, Zheng Chisu, and proves to him that the body changes, feintes, poking vital points, etc, could transform his style in a invencible boxing system. The Tiger Boxing fighter was convinced of superiority of White Crane method when constated that he did not obtain hit Fang Jiniang. However, she have not sufficient force to break him. So, he joining the Hard principle (Yang, Go) of tiger to the Soft principle (Yin, Ju) of crane arising an improved Quan Fa. This was the union of *Yang/Yin* principles, that is symbolised also as an Alchemical Wedding.

In the Bubishi Quan Fa system, this union or "marriage" is embodied in Paipuren or Sanchin (its other name). It is told that Zeng Cishu training during three years Paipuren/Sanchin and became an invencible master.

This beautiful history teach us nothing more that be only *Yin* or only *Yang* was not good and made any martial arts imperfect and full of weak points. Power and force are not sufficient to be a good fighter, is necessary to add body changes, feints, circular movements, to become a complete fighter, a true martial artist. These principles are very rooted in the chinese culture, medicine and philosophy. Fang Jiniang is the *Yin* principle that generate internal powerful energy to *Yang* principle or brute, external force, symbolized in Zeng Cishu. *Yin* is also the

circular, body-changing, feints techniques, that is, the soft principle; *Yang* is the force, the hard principle. Both principles need to be balanced to art become perfect.

In an Jungian perspective Fang Jiniang is the *Anima* archetype. The source of collective unconscious, or the source of ancestral knowledge mediated by this archetype, that can appear in an intense, mystical or "psychoid" experience (for example, the dream that Shimabukuro Tatsuo, the founder of Isshinryu Karate, that give to him an insight about a goddess between water and fire. I believe that this experience is the only initiation to become "by natural right" a true Grandmaster). It is possible that Bubushi celebrates in its pages this experience from some Shaolin master. The *anima* can be also shared for several individuals engaged in a same spiritual quest, and can manifest itself in many equivalent symbols, for example, a White Crane.

Miyagi's Goju-ryu and the Okinawan Bubushi

The occurrence of these 48 figures in chinese kata found in Goju and Uechi systems point us to a specific school of Quan Fa in Okinawa, more specifically in Naha. Miyagi in his 1934 panflet "Karate-do Gaisetsu" (see translation in P. McCarthy, Ancient Okinawan Martial Arts, vol 2, Tuttle, 1999) tells us that the Goju-ryu system was originated from a Chinese Kempo school that stablished in Naha around 1828. He doesn't refer to his master, Higaonna Kanryo, as the originator of Goju-ryu, but a Chinese school stablished in Naha since 1828. We know some prominent masters of this school: Sakiyama, Aragaki Seisho, Kojo Taitei, Nakaima, and Higaonna, among others unknown masters. The misterious Ryu Ryu Ko (or Torin Ryu Ko) could be one of the advisers of this school, along with Iwah, Wai Shin Zan, and others.

Thus, Higaonna is not the source of all Goju-ryu kata, but the Quan Fa school of Naha where Miyagi researched and collected most of the Goju kata (Kyoda Juhatsu, direct disciple of Higaonna, told that this master taught only Sanchin, Seisan, Sanseru, and Bechurin). In the famous 1936 meeting of Okinawan karate masters (see translation in P. McCarthy, Ancient Okinawan Martial Arts, vol 2, Tuttle, 1999) Ota Chofu says: "We have heard that local masters have not studied in China", and Miyagi answer to him with these words: "I heard that Matsumura studied in China". These words are very eloquent because he not mentioned his master, Higaonna, and we conclude that surely this master did not learn karate in China, but in Naha and probably with Aragaki Seisho and Kojo Taitei.

I believe that Miyagi knew the Bubushi origins and that he gave us clues that this book resumed the misterious Quan Fa school that established in Naha around 1828, according the above mentioned panflet. This can explain his veneration by this book and the importance of the master Gokenki in his researches. This can explain also why Kyoda Juhatsu completed the Higaonna system with the introduction of kata Nepai (learned from Gokenki) and also why Mabuni introduced Nipaipo (his revised version of Gokenki's Nepai), Hakucho and Paipuren (all from Gokenki) in his system. These kata link the karate of these masters to the Bubushi.

Comments of the Bubushi's editions used in this article

1. Bubushi's translation of George Alexander and Ken Penland is more realistic when compared to the original text (Bubushi, Yamazato Pub, 1993). The McCarthy's translation is adapted to the researches made by this karate expert and historian (The Bible of Karate - Bubushi, Tuttle, 1995).
2. Others important versions of Bubushi (only in japanese) are the Tokashiki Iken's version and the Ohtsuka Tadahiko's version. Ohtsuka interpretations of 48 figures was redrawn in a modern fashion by Roland Habersetzer (Bubushi, Éd. Amphora, Paris, 1995).
3. Figures of Mabuni's Bubushi are the same of the Alexander/Penland version, however, the order of 28 figures in the Mabuni's reproduction is different. Mabuni's reproduction

appeared in the second volume of his "Goshin-jutsu Karate Kempo", Tokyo, October 1934 (the first volume was published in March 1934). There is no translation of these very important books.

THE 48 FIGURES OF THE OKINAWAN BUBISHI

Fernando P. Camara

There is an esoteric book of XVII Century about Alchemy that teaches this spiritual method of transformation through mute figures. There is no text, only symbolic figures that can be decoded by those that have the keys and the motivation for an inner transformation. In the Okinawan Bubishi there are 48 "mute" figures that teaching a complete Quan Fa system. There is no "spiritual" transformation, but a set of technique that covers all selfdefense art known as Chinese Boxing, Tode-jutsu, or Ju-jutsu. Some researchers have studied these figures and interpreted them and many of their conclusion share among them.

In my article "Analysis of the Bubishi" I classified the basic, technical, and particular teaching of these figures, but in the present article I intend to go a little deeper in this research. We can divide the 48 figures in the following elements:

1. Basic blocks: Figures 25 (mawashi-uke tora-guchi), 32 (crane fist chudan soto-uke), and 37 (closed fist chudan uchi-uke) seem to exist only to remember the basic blocks used by the school represented in the Bubishi. The jodan-uke block occurs in figures and is performed with both hands (augmented or as X-block). Here it is used to defend a strike above the head or a hair grab. This block is naturally completed with a front kick in the groin of the adversary.
2. Hand strikes: These techniques used along the 48 figures are performed with four fingers (nukite), one finger (ippon-nukite), crane bunched fingers (kakushiken), palm hand (teisho ate), punch (seiken or hiraken?), hammerfist (kentsui), elbow (ushiro hijiate), chokes with fingers and squeeze of testicles and biceps with the fingers. Training of the fingers should be encouraged in that system.
3. Kicks: Front kick is the only kick showed and the kicker always loose (figures 5, 12, 21, 26. Note that figures 21 repeat figure 12). This show us **that kicks were not considered good technique** in that school, and perhaps it were used only as a complement of some defense techniques.
4. Kyusho jutsu: We have also figures where the purpose is to call the attention for specific painful points and how it should be manipulated. These are showed figures 14 (insertion of triceps above the elbows), 16 (armpits), 30 (side of the thorax), and 40 (intercostal space below nipples). Vital points showed along the 48 figures are testicles, throat, eyes, jaws (side), and carotids (see figure 31). There are not strikes to back, legs, or arms in the 48 figures. This is an example that "36 kyusho" or "sichen" doctrines were not important, **what is important is if the technique works or not**.
5. Lethal techniques: Most of 48 figures techniques are dangerous, but one of them is particularly lethal: breaking the neck of someone in a close fight (figure 4 and 7, that are the same technique). This is a easy technique, but extremely dangerous and not should be teaching in regular classes.

With these 48 figures **is possible to reconstitute the Quan Fa techniques of the bubishi** and create a system of teaching.

These figures are not difficult to those that have experience and knowledge in Ju-jutsu and Chinese boxing. In fact, **they should be a clue to the chinese origins of Japanese Ju-jutsu** (figures 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 18, 21, 22, 24, 29, and 38), **that could be a common origin with the Okinawan Tode-jutsu** (Okinawan masters teaching only kata and Japanese masters teaching only bunkai). On the other hand, many of these techniques can be easily identified in the chinese kata used by Miyagi to establish the foundation of the Goju-ryu system and also in other old Okinawan kata. This show the importance that the Bubishi has in the development of Goju-ryu system. We can, for example, easily identify in many figures bunkai of Goju kata and some old traditional Okinawan kata (my reference is the Alexander/Penland translation, because the figures are the originals):

- Seipai movements are very evident in figures 11, 13, 20, 40, and 43.
- Figure 26 is characteristic in the Goju Seisan, and figure 27 can be easily identified as a typical movement of the Pangainoon Seisan.
- Figure 34 shows clearly the first movement of Niseishi.
- Figure 39 is an unique technique of Kururunfa.
- Figure 18 shows a throwing known in Tode-jutsu and that can be found in Wanduan, Kururunfa, Niseishi, and Sanseru.
- Figure 42 is a typical technique found in Shisochin kata.
- Figure 46 is a typical technique used in Seiyunchin and Suparimpei.
- The last movement of Suparimpei can be seen in figure 16.
- Figure 10 is a variant technique of Saifa kata.
- Figure 48 is clearly the first movement of the White Crane kata Hakucho, Hakaku, Kakufa, Kingai Hakutsuru.
- In figure 14 we can see a typical technique of Kusanku, and in figure 8 the opening movement of the old Takemura's Kusanku (sometimes referred as Azato-no-Kusanku).

I believe that Miyagi knew the Bubishi origins and that he gave us clues that this book resumed the mysterious Quan Fa school that established in Naha around 1828. He mentioned this school in his 1934 pamphlet "Karate-do Gaisetsu", and tell us that the Goju-ryu emerged from his studies and researches on this Quan Fa school. This can explain his veneration by the Bubishi and the importance of the master Gokenki in his researches. This can explain also why Kyoda Juhatsu completed the Higaonna system with the introduction of kata Nepai and Mabuni with the introduction of Nipaipo (a revised form of Nepai), Hakucho, and Paipuren in his system.

The Bubishi Quan Fa is essentially the White Crane Boxing developed in Yongchun with elements of the Monk Boxing, Tiger Boxing, Monkey Boxing, and Drunken Boxing. The foundation of this style is the Sanchin form knowned as "Paipuren", that is more complex than the Higaonna's Sanchin. Advanced forms are mentioned and we know that this forms were Useishi or Gojushiho, Niseishi or Nijushiho, Hakutsuru or Paiho and Nepai or Nipaipo. Four routines of the Monk Fist are described but unfortunately in a cryptic language impossible of deciphering. In the Mabuni's version of Bubishi there is a kata shown only in figures without legends or title.

Most of the teachings found in the Okinawan Bubishi were passed by Go Kenki (1886-1940), a White Crane Boxing master from Southern China that established as a tea merchant in Naha,

around 1912. Miyagi, Kyoda, Mabuni, Matayoshi (father and son), Kana Kinjo, Nakaima, Hanashiro, and others masters learned some principles of White Crane Fist with this master. Go Kenki reintroduced the forms Paipuren, Nepai, Hakucho, Hakaku (Hakutsuru), Ryusan, and others kata along with the authentic teachings found in the Bubishi. This master probably studied in the same school that arising the Yongchun White Crane Fist.

Essentially, the Okinawan Bubishi is the most prominent source of the Okinawan Tode-jutsu and this justifies the importance of researches on this book.



Enter The bubishi

Part 1- Introduction & Origins

By Victor Smith

Editor's Note: This is the first in a three part series on the bubishi. Part 2 will discuss the text and its impact on Okinawan karate. Part 3 will discuss the availability of translations of the text in English, the text's impact on karate today and the current status of research on this text.

It is an obscure martial arts text written in Chinese. But, it was a most cherished possession of many of the great founders of modern karate -- something that was meticulously hand copied and shared among only their most trusted students.

It is called the bubishi.

The bubishi's age and the origin are unknown. Yet, while the text remains a mystery, it is also the only historical written record of martial techniques and theory to have emerged from karate's shrouded past.

Karate, as we know it, became known to the world in the early 20th century after emerging in Okinawa after centuries of secret practice. It was taught publicly for the first time around 1905. Its origins too remain obscure, tangled in a conflicting web of myth and oral tradition -- a mixture of native art (te, meaning hand) mixed with Chinese and other fighting traditions.

In the 1930's the first public reference was made to the existence bubishi in the hands of senior Okinawan karate instructors. By this time karate had been introduced into Japan, and Okinawan martial artists had begun publishing books in Japanese to publicize and gain approval for their imported art.

In their writings, both Ginchin Funakoshi (founder of Shotokan karate) and Kenwa Mabuni (founder of Shito-ryu karate) made public what had previously been a closely held secret in the Okinawan arts. It is also said that the founder of Goju-ryu karate, Chojun Miyagi, named his style after a phrase taken from this book. (1)



Funakoshi

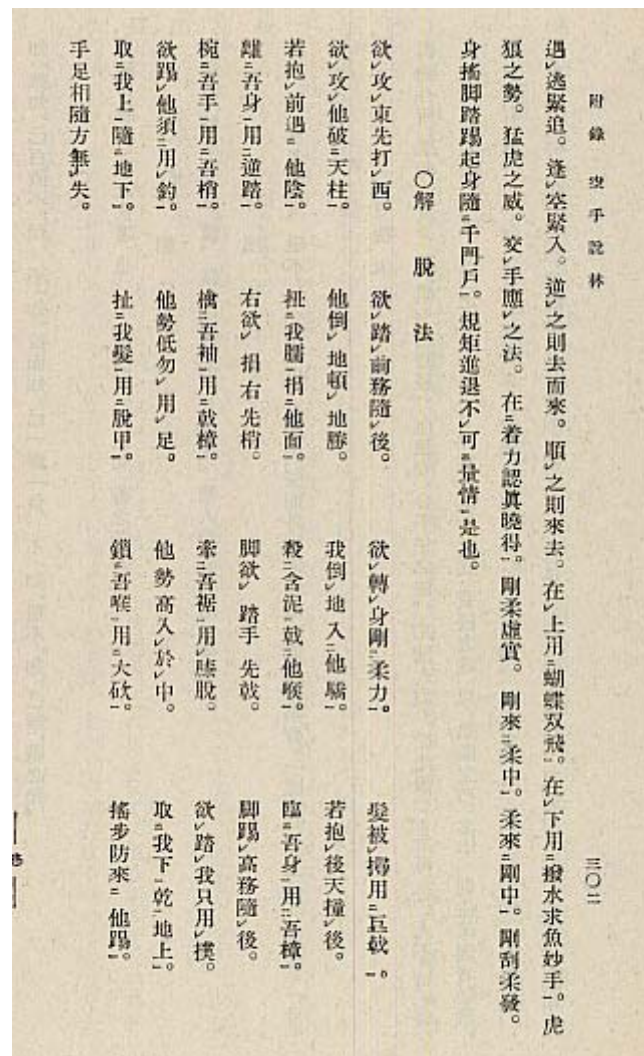


Mabuni



Miyagi

In 1922 Funakoshi published the first book on karate in Japan, "Ryukyu Kenpo Toudi." Four chapters from the bubishi were included at the end of the book, but the bubishi itself was not named. The bubishi section was also not translated. It was left in its original Chinese style of writing. (2)



In 1934 when Kenwa Mabuni published "Seipai No Kenkyu" (Study of Seipai) the bubishi was named. Mabuni included the drawings from five chapters from Anko Itosu's copy of the bubishi (Itosu had been Mabuni's teacher and is considered the founder of shorin-ryu karate. Itosu first taught karate in public on Okinawa). Interestingly Mabuni dedicated more pages of his book to the bubishi (95, in fact) than he used for the purported subject of the book (79 pages), the kata Seipai.

Another later text, "Karate, Goju-ryu by the Cat," by Gogen Yamaguchi (founder of Japanese Goju karate), also discussed text. The book included 39 pages from the bubishi (mostly

illustrations as shown here) as a separate chapter, but no translation of any of the text was provided. ⁽³⁾

Now available in several English language renditions the bubishi, allows us to enter the world of mystery and possibility that so endeared the text to the founders of modern karate who we revere today.

The Origins

There is no definitive answer to where the bubishi originated, or even who wrote it. In the same light, we cannot even be sure who possessed copies for their own use.

Prior to the 20th century, Okinawan martial artists did not document their arts. Karate was practiced in secret and many teachers were not literate. As a result, what is known of karate and its origin is the product of a relatively recent oral tradition. Thus, it becomes very difficult to prove any source or trace exact history.

In contrast, in China, where martial arts practice had been done in the open, books about self-defense, kung fu systems, exercises and forms (kata) were as common in the end of the 19th century as today. They were also used as a learning tool by many people to learn about empty hand self-defense. ⁽⁴⁾

We don't know, however, if the bubishi was written or compiled in Southern China or on Okinawa. We do know it was written in Chinese. It could be a personal notebook of someone trained in White Crane and Monk Fist (Shaolin) kung fu arts. Equally it could be a compilation of martial arts notes from many sources.

We also know that Miyagi Chojun (the originator of Goju Ryu) had a copy most likely copied from his teacher, Higashionna Kanryo. ⁽⁵⁾

Patrick McCarthy, the well known martial arts historian and writer, also notes that Mabuni Kenwa was allowed to copy the bubishi from the version owned by his instructor, Master Itosu. McCarthy also writes "I understand there are others," meaning copies in other hands. ⁽⁶⁾

All of these copies of the bubishi are not identical. They contain different chapters and the drawings of the self-defense techniques vary somewhat in the strike being used and the target attacked.

In sum, the bubishi is one part of the eclectic synthesis of karate as it developed on Okinawa in 19th and 20th centuries. Having only an oral tradition teachers exchanged knowledge and learned from each other, or visited China to study various Chinese Kung Fu styles. Others, like Funakoshi, sought to preserve the island's fighting heritage by recording and learning many ancient kata.

Thus, the existence of a written fighting arts text (bubishi) was unique and considered important even if the text was not fully understood. As a result, many karate masters meticulously hand copied the bubishi and later published excerpts from it.

What is not known is how much of the bubishi was understood by early 20th century karate teachers, or how much of its knowledge was adopted into the systems they pioneered.

Footnotes:

(1) Joe Swift noted to this author that Miyagi had named Gojuryu from the Bubishi has been published in old Japanese karate books as well, and he had a 1942 article named after that precept (Miyagi that is).

(2) It is therefore questionable how many could actually read or understand what was reproduced. The Funakoshi editions, it should be noted, only reproduced written text and not diagrams or drawings. In later reprinted English editions of Funakoshi's 1926 book, "Tote Jitsu," by Masters Publications, 1964, the translator noted that "I was unable to translate the Chinese style" and although several people were consulted, they "were also unable to help." The same segment from the bubishi was later published in the English version of "Karate-Do- Kyohan" published in 1973. The translator noted that he was unable to locate the original source of the material reproduced that was written in the Chinese style.

(3) The chapter titled, "Introduction of Part of bubishi," in Yamaguchi's book contained mostly (35 of the 38 pages) illustrations of self-defense moves and/or diagrams of the body's vulnerable points from the bubishi. The English translation of the book had no translations of the written text.

Enter The bubishi

Part 2- The Text & Its Impact On Okinawa

By Victor Smith



Editor's Note: This is the second article in a three part series on the bubishi. [Part 1](#) discussed the book's origin and introduction through the writings of many early 20th century karate masters. Part 3 will discuss the availability of translations of the text in English, the text's impact on karate today and the current status of research on this text.

The bubishi has over 30 chapters (depending on the edition) that focus on a wide variety of topics, including martial history, fighting strategy, vital point striking, hand positions, essential fighting techniques, grappling and escapes, herbal medicine treatment, forms and techniques and martial code. It also offers some history on the White Crane and the Monk Fist Kung Fu arts.

Patrick McCarthy in his translation of the text ("bubishi: The Bible Of Karate") has organized the book's information into four general categories, or parts. He also includes an Introduction and historical perspective. These parts include:

Part 1- Articles on history, concepts, strategy and philosophy including White Crane and Monk Fist Kung Fu.

Part 2- Articles, examples, definitions, diagrams and recipes for Chinese medicine, specific remedies and herbal pharmacology, including the concept of 12 hours chi (energy) flow (shichen cycle).

Part 3- Vital points including types, locations, diagrams, periods for attack, restricted locations, and delayed death touch.

Part 4- Fighting techniques, a list of kata moves, eight principles, maims, principles, six open hand positions, 48 self-defense diagrams, and Shoalin hand and foot, muscle and bone training postures.

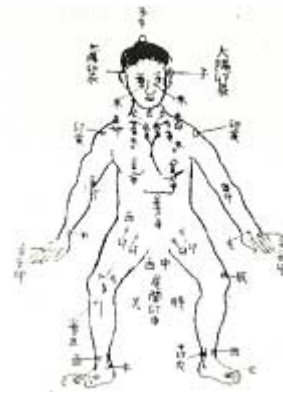
While many topics are discussed, most of the information is presented in outline form and thus for most readers will seem incomplete. For this reason many of the topics can not be fully

understood from the limited information presented. For example, while the bubishi offers many illustrations of vulnerable points, it does not explain how to strike them, or what technique to use. Thus many important details behind these practices are missing.

This lack of detail lends some credence to the theory that the bubishi may have been a personal notebook rather than a textbook. If the author had been in a martial training program, the notes taken would have been cryptic, something designed to work as a mnemonic device for future reference.

But the reader should not be discouraged, for there are some fascinating chapters. For example, the bubishi presents the principle of striking vital points according to the Shichen theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine. The theory states that body energy (chi in Chinese or ki in Japanese) flows in natural cycles or tides through the body and its organ systems, with each 24 hour cycle being divided into 12 two hour periods. Based on this theory, certain points are more active and more deadly during certain two hour periods. Thus knowledge of where the Chi flow is during a particular Shichen cycle allows the martial artist to locate the most vulnerable points which could be struck. Both the points and the optimum time for striking them are illustrated. The text often suggests death as the outcome, immediately or after differing periods of time after being struck. (1)

In a different light, certain sections of the bubishi could be seen as a medical text. The charts showing where to strike vital points, the charts showing the vulnerability of those points during specific Shichen, as well as the "correct" treatment for those injuries might suggest the points are shown only for medical treatment purposes.



Another section purportedly shows secret points that can be struck that will have a killing effect one-half or one year later. In some Chinese arts this is known as the "Death Touch," or "Dim Mak."

The bubishi also contains considerable information relating to fighting. It contains lyrical descriptions of forms: some versions of the bubishi show a diagram of techniques, possibly from a form (kata). There are also discussions of combat principles and a lengthy discussion on grappling and escapes.

Another interesting segment includes 48 Self Defense Diagrams. In each case the outcome of an encounter is shown. Both the winning and losing technique are listed along with a short synopsis of the strategy that led to victory. Here again, however, there is minimal discussion about how techniques can be applied.



Some authorities suggest that the practice of Okinawan Karate may have been influenced by these 48 diagrams. Many similar techniques can be found in many Okinawan karate kata as well as part of self-defense exercise sets. ⁽²⁾

There are also chapters explaining herbal treatment for illness and injuries. Except for anecdotal evidence it is not known if these practices work or not. In addition some translators have noted that mistakes have crept into copies of the text, probably as a result of people copying by hand information which they are not familiar. ⁽³⁾

I would suggest that these herbal formulas should be carefully examined and not be experimented with, except under the supervision of a trained expert in Traditional Chinese Medicine knowledgeable in herbal formulations.

The Impact Of The bubishi On Okinawa

We know the bubishi existed, but how do we track the actual influence it had on the development of the Okinawan arts?

We know that some important karate masters in the past possessed copies of the bubishi, but there are no published notes, direct studies, or even oral history on the text's influence available for our review. Also, exactly who and how many people possessed copies of the text is open to which "legends" one wishes to listen to.

Thus many questions arise:

Was the bubishi truly kept private for the select few?

Were those who possessed the bubishi sufficiently literate to read and understand the text which was written in an older style Chinese dialect? And if they could read the text, did they possess enough knowledge of Traditional Chinese Medical theory to use and apply the information?

Was the bubishi used to design training, such as teaching the defensive theories directly to the students? Or was the bubishi little more than a learned curiosity, something valued but not understood, something to be placed on the shelf to be revered but not actually used?

Without historical proof, it is very difficult to know the truth. We know that Mabuni, Funakoshi and Yamaguchi felt the bubishi was important enough to "announce" its existence by including portions of the text in their own works. Others famous masters, such as Higaonna, Itosu, Nakamura and others also had the text and passed it on to their most trusted students.

Miyagi Chojun also felt so strongly about the bubishi that he reportedly took the term "Goju" from it as the name for his system of training. According to Patrick McCarthy (The Bible Of Karate: bubishi), Miyagi took the name Goju from a section of the bubishi titled, "The Eight Precepts of Quanfa" which speaks of inhaling as representing softness ("Ju" of Goju) and exhaling as characteristic of hardness ("Go" of Goju). ⁽⁴⁾ Others suggest, however, that while Miyagi was influenced by the bubishi, he took his style name from other sources. ⁽⁵⁾ Material in

the bubishi may also have provided Miyagi with inspiration for developing his famous Tensho (Rolling Hands) kata.

Tatsuo Shimabuku (the founder of Isshinryu) chose the eight poems of the fist (Chapter 13) of the bubishi to be the Isshinryu Code of Karate.

But not everyone considers the bubishi to be influential. Miyazato Eiichi, a long time student of Miyagi and one of the principal inheritors of his system, believed the bubishi was not important. He did not have a private copy, however, and said that he had only seen it a few times. ⁽⁶⁾

As to the impact of the bubishi's sections pertaining to chi meridian theory, there is no evidence that they were used in the historical development of Okinawan karate. Certainly there existed knowledge of vital points and methods to strike them which relate to acupuncture points. But, there is no evidence that this knowledge was taken to a much more complicated level which involved understanding not only concepts of energy flow, but also related timing patterns. From what I've heard, there is no evidence that the Okinawans ever referred to the Meridian charts."

There have been many explanatory books and commentaries written on the bubishi in Japan, none of which are available in English. I also strongly suspect there are many instructors who have prepared extensive analyses concerning the bubishi, but this information is not readily available to the martial arts community. A great deal of time is likely being spent following the same lines of thought over and over again due to the unavailability of research and analysis of the texts contents and theory.

Footnotes:

(1) Christopher Caile in a communication with this author has noted that in addition to the 24 hour cycle of Chi, what is also important but unstated in the bubishi, is that chi theory (in Traditional Chinese Medicine) also includes a larger yearly cycle that greatly influences the daily cycle. Thus a technique based on the daily cycle will be much more effective when done at a certain period of the year. This, however, is not discussed within the bubishi.

(2) Conversation with George Donahue, a member of the Kishaba Juku organization, related the following observation about the bubishi to Christopher Caile: His organization has passed down the work for five generations, having made hand copies of the manuscript along with many notes. Donahue believes, however, that the most useful information is contained within the notes (overlays of onion skin with notes) themselves. Included are critiques of information within the bubishi including what works and what doesn't. Thus, while the bubishi is considered important in itself, it did not significantly influence his organization or its teachings. One of the bubishi copies, Donahue noted, was originally from Nakamura sensei. Another one passed down is from the late Kishaba sensei. Donahue's teacher and head of the organization, Shinsato sensei, has collected, annotated and bound a lot of information on the bubishi and other texts.

(3) Miyagi was well aware of the bubishi and even quoted from the book in an August 1942 essay that appeared in "Bunka Okinawa" that was titled "Breathing In And Breathing Out In Accordance With "Go" And "Ju": A Miscellaneous Essay On Karate." Notice the similarity of the essay's name with the section from the bubishi after which Miyagi is reputed to have named his style. It is perhaps this similarity that led some to suggest that "Goju" as the name for Miyagi's style came from this source.

(4) A more likely derivation for Goju karate's name lies elsewhere. Representing Miyagi at a 1930 All Japan Martial Arts Exhibition was his senior student Jinan Shinzato who was asked the name of his ryuha (school). Shinzato. The style having no formal name at the time other than association with its Nahate, Surite and Tomorite lineage, and Shinzato replied to the question, "Goju" (meaning hard/soft). This was later related to Miyagi, who adopted the name. Others, however, suggest that Shinzato never gave an answer to the question about the name of his ryuha and that Miyagi later coined the name after thinking the problem over.

(5) Information supplied by Christopher Caile. In 1992 Caile had a private translation made of the 39 pages from the bubishi that appeared in Yamaguchi's book, "Karate-Goju-Rui By The Cat." The translator, who is well versed in Chinese herbal medicine, noted numerous inconsistencies, possible errors, as well as the names of herbs not generally recognized. It was suggested that these unknown herbs might have been local herbs, or local names for well-known herbs. Furthermore some methods of preparation are not fully explained.

(6) From a private interview of Miyazato by Christopher Caile held in Naha, Okinawa, while Mr. Caile was studying in Miyazato's dojo in December, 1994.

A Close Look at the Bubushi (Long and Involved)

"The Bible of Karate". Big words to look up to. Big words to fulfill.

Rather than talk around the issue, I'd like to take a closer look at it.

First off I'm going to make several assumptions, because I have no information to consider otherwise. They're based on trying to logically look at the impact of the Bubushi and understand what it represents.

[BTW I'm very willing to change any of these assumptions. I only request documented proof, not opinion as to why they should be changed.]

1. Assume All translations of the Bubushi are correct. I have no knowledge that the translators are using the same text. And there may be great differences between the texts. But I couldn't read any of the originals myself.
2. Assume All Okinawan instructors had their own copies. I likewise have no knowledge who did or didn't have the Bubushi, so why argue about it. Instead lets consider how it may have influenced their instruction and art.
3. Assume All Okinawan instructors had equal knowledge of the 'archaic' Chinese used in the Bubushi and fully understood the text.
4. I assume the Alexander translation, as a closer source to what was in the original Bubushi. He doesn't appear to restructure the text. McCarthy often is the easier text to understand, whether do to better translation or the addition of subsidiary material in his understanding of the Bubushi. Both Alexander and McCarthy both include extra material on the Meridians and their point location, which was not in the original, as I've been able to ascertain.
5. I will keep the discussion as close to the text of the Bubushi as possible. Without evidence, I won't assume an Okinawan instructor had other information available to combine with this tradition.

As a historical text, whatever/whoever/whenever the origin of the Bubushi, it apparently represents a personal text(s) of one (several) individual(s). It may have come from one source of training. It may have come from several sources that an individual gathered together.

From my perspective, it appears to be an adept's personal notes. The art (techniques) of the person aren't recorded in great detail, but rather in a key word type of code describing techniques.

The Bubushi appears to be a reference notebook for someone who had extensive training. As a source book of where and when to attack a body, it does not go into detail as to the how the attack is carried out.

It shows the 36 vital points, as well as the 'delayed death touch' theories.

One would assume the individuals training had covered that in great detail, and they didn't need that recorded. Especially in reference to the 'delayed death touch' aspect of the art being presented.

As the charts show only specific places to be struck at specific times, without any explanation, one can assume that the points are 'Vital' by themselves, or that the points are 'Vital' in conjunction to a combination of attacks cumulating with their being struck. There is NO evidence in the Bubushi as to the correct answer.

The Bubushi as a medical reference, likewise doesn't go into preparation detail. I would assume because the practioner had the hands on experience preparing the remedy's. In fact, it strikes me as a quick reference guide incase you mess up and get struck, how to counter what was done to you or your students.

The tactical analysis, sayings, etc. likewise appear to me reminders to key word extensive prior training. Things that should be a part of the art, but a quick reference to remember all of the details behind the art. The technical sections demonstrated, likewise, appear to be just a quick reference guide to different sources.

Looking at the Bubushi as a whole, I would expect it would be of the greatest interest to Chinese Style Martial Artists from South East China. A historical reference from one practioner in that region.

Now looking at Okinawa several possibilities present themselves.

- 1) There may be a direct tradition of the original instruction to one of the Okinawan systems.
- 2) The Okinawan instructors may have directly used the Bubushi to provide focus to the system(s) they were developing.
- 3) The Okinawan instructors may have indirectly used the Bubushi to provide focus to the system(s) they were developing.
- 4) Outside of the sayings, the Okinawan instructors, may have found any practical application for the text of the Bubushi.

The only apparent evidence is:

- 1) The Bubushi influenced Myiagi Chojun in the choice of the name of his system.
- 2) It has been reported that Senior Goju practioners revere the book.
- 3) Funakoshi Ginchin incorporated several sections of the Bubushi in his 'Karate Do Koyhan' The code of karate he translated. The 2nd section he left in the original Chinese.
- 4) Shimabuku Tatsuo incorporated the 'Code of Karate' into the development of the Isshinryu system
- 5) Motobu Chotoko apparently incorporated similar medical information in his work on Karate.

I am unaware of any evidence that other aspects of the Bubushi are incorporated into karate training. This may be because of:

- 1) There are none
- 2) They are reserved for true senior students (say 20+ years of instructions).
- 3) American students did not study long enough to be exposed to the direct training.

How do we choose which is most likely?

Perhaps if we look at one portion of the text we might get some idea. [I freely admit this is supposition on my part.]

Lets take a piece of Article 21 - Delayed Death Touch 12 Hour Diagrams.

McCarthy Page 141 - Rabbit (5-7am) Death in one day can be caused by a severe trauma to the anastomotica magna of the femoral artery in the depression anterior to the semimembranosus and semitendinosus muscles posterior to the medial condyle of the tibia (LIV8), the transverse

perineal artery, between the anus and the scrotum in the male (CV 1), the brachial artery (TH 11), or the anterior ethmoidal artery or cranial nerve at the frontal fontanel (GV 22).

This is attended with a diagram indicating these points

Now Alexander Pg 71 - Illustration Number 22-4 Blood Gate Attacking, Dim Hsueh, U, from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. to cause death within 20 days.

The diagram lists on the forehead -Anterior Ethmoidal Artery. On the biceps the Anastomotic Magan Brachial Artery, the Transverse Pernieal Public Artery, and the Right and left Anastomotic Femoral Artery.

This is also attended with a diagram indicating these points.

Notice the difference in the hours and the number of days in which death will result.

Now assuming the 'ancestor' understood the diagram, how do you strike the point, which direction, how much force? Nothing mentions whether the strike is in coordination with anything else. It likewise doesn't indicate whether each point has this potential in these hours, or whether they are struck together or in a certain order.

I understand the trauma value from the strike to the forehead, and to the CV1 area. But let's consider the diagram strike to the Brachial Artery.

I don't know how our 'Okinawan Master' would determine which precisely was the area to strike from the diagram. Do they experiment? The penalties seem rather severe if the Bubushi is correct (in either case).

As McCarthy determines this is the equivalent of TH 11, which both English translations refer to as the Brachial Artery, rather than try to struggle with my Gray's Anatomy, I'll cheat and use my "Encyclopedia of Dim Mak" - Montague and Simpson. (p 375).

Montague defines TH 11 as Qinglengyuan (cooling gulf). The direction of strike is straight in to the rear of the elbow. The damage is the point can be used to weaken the elbow joint. In fact, most elbow breaks can be made using this location.

Now it may be that breaking the elbow joint will have other trauma effects. I'm copying my surgeon, Dr. Harper on this post to get further information from Modern Western Medicine <grin>.

Consider how confused I am using English translations, additional texts and capable of referencing Medical Authorities, too.

It makes me consider how difficult it may have been for anyone not personally trained in the original tradition of the Bubushi Art(s) to make sense of all of this.

Of course remember, the Bubushi in article 11 and 22 seems to give a cure for this strike, too.

McCarthy (page 94) Article 22 - Twelve-Hour Green Herbal Remedies. These herbs should be ground into a powder with rice wine, and drank every three hours to quickly remedy related injuries.

4. Rabbit (5-7 a.m.) qing yu lian (the herbal remedy)

Alexander page 80 - Chapter 23 The Precious Stone Glass Revealed/Ancient Chinese Herb And Plant Medicines.

Hour 4 U Medicine used is Pan Pien Lien, Green Fish Lotus, Better known as One half lotus. Scientific name of "Lobelia radicans Thumb. Preparation: The whole plant is used medicinally, 1 - Liang each time, prepared as decoction.

Allow me to close (as if you haven't seen enough at this point <g>) with this. I didn't try and pick out a difficult piece of the Bubushi. I just picked one section (point) at random. But I think if we're going to try and understand the potential impact the Bubushi might have had on the development of Okinawan Karate, we have to consider what they may have thought of.

More on the Bubushi

I still have more to consider on the Bubushi.

Remember my ground rules:

- 1.) I consider all English translations as correct, without an expert verifying that they're translating the same text, the rest becomes simply argument.
- 2.) I'm assuming all Okinawan instructors had their own copies of the Bubushi and were fluent in the Chinese dialect it was written in
- 3.) My mission is to try and understand how the Bubushi might have influenced Okinawan karate's development, from a logical analysis
- 4.) I'm using the Alexander and the McCarthy Bubushi translations and texts, as I don't read Chinese.

On my last post RT ^..^ made the following comments:

"As far as pressure points go a lot of the Bubushi seem medical rather than martial. For instance the correct time to administer a remedy is a lot more practical then trying to figure out exactly the best time to attack a point, especially in a critical situation."

"The major weak points are covered and appropriate warnings are provided, to me It's just as likely a case of things not to do as a case of things to do"

RT I think there is merit in what you're saying. One section of the Bubushi contains Article 9 - Twelve-hour Vital Points revealed, Article 17 - Seven Restricted Locations (Immediate Death May Occur) Article 21 - Delayed Death Touch 12-Hour Diagrams and Article 24 - the Bronze Man Statue which appears to show the 36 vital points. [This is from PM's translation]

Of particular interest, is the fact the Alexander and the McCarthy translations use different 36 vital point charts. I am currently doing an analysis of what those differences are and will post this eventually.

Because of the translations and other material added by the translators, its difficult to be sure, but I think the original text consisted mostly of diagrams of the locations to strike. Hence for the Okinawan instructor to understand the implications (without outside sources or formal instruction) they would have to bridge the gap between these different sources.

At the same time the Bubushi contains a number of sections on how to cure or relieve the effects of these strikes.

It does seem on the first analysis the Bubushi is highlighting these points and showing how to deal with being struck there.

I do feel the Okinawan instructors who developed Karate were moral individuals who were developing mostly a defensive art.

On the other hand, they were not the originators of this material from the Bubushi. Whoever the source, may have been using this information for defensive measures (i.e. How to cure if you blow the block).

On the surface it is reasonable to assume that you wouldn't take the time to remember where to strike at 3pm when attacked randomly.

Yet other answers are also possible.

The source material might have been developed for an attacking art. Hence if you're planning to attack someone at 3pm, here is where to attack.

But I can see a number of variables in which this material can be considered a defensive art.

Essentially the twelve shichen (bi-hourly) vital points utilize the 36 vital points of the Bronze Man Statue. Whether you buy the shichen theory, without doubt those 36 points will do damage to an attacker if struck there.

Hence, the instructors training might well be to attack those points under duress, and that allows wide latitude of targets in their own right.

Once one can accurately attack the 36 points, the next stage of defensive training might well be to focus on attack defense on the 12 shichen daily. Hence you train yourself that from Midnight to 2am you do 1 or 2 or 3. Then from 2am to 4am you do 4 or 5 or 6 and so forth.

My believe is if you accept the validity of these theories you would structure your training to fully embrace them.

Consider what that training would be like. To train you to know which Shichen you were in at any time, as well as are able to execute the correct responses. It seems to me if this was done this would be 24 hour a day training.

Simply because I know of no one training that way today, doesn't mean it wasn't addressed that way in the past.

But there is also another defensive strategy, that of attack before they attack you. In that context the 12 shichen vital points can also be considered defensive. This can be a planned defensive strike, or an instantaneous defensive strike, but hitting those point(s) first.

As I think about an art structured this way, I imagine a limited number of strikes to each target, but rigorously studied, would be the goal.

That could be one reason some instructors (Myiagi, Motobou, and Ueichi) were not interested in a large amount of kata? <Against sheer supposition on my part.> Instead, they were interested in them being executed correctly.

Unfortunately, as I understand Okinawan karate, I do not have any examples that this was the approach toward training being offered.

But, I hold it is something to be considered.

The Bubushi and Vital Points

Continuing on my quest to look at the Bubushi, things are starting to become more complicated.

My quest of course is to look at what the real impact of the Bubushi would have been on the Okinawan Sensei. But after looking at the Vital Point striking in Alexander's Bubushi and McCarthy's Bubushi, I have more questions than when I began this inquiry.

Others and I have remarked that the translations are quite different in both English Versions. Of course the entire issue of translation is a complex issue. Douglas Hoffstedler (if I'm recalling correctly) wrote a very long book where the author and dozens of others tried to provide an accurate translation of one French poem. The end result dozens and dozens of different paths. And its difficult to say any of them captured the essence of the original. I do not doubt understanding the Bubushi is any less tricky.

Then you have the Bubushi, written in archaic Chinese, with lots of 'key words' as a mnemonic device by the author, and the difficulty of preparing accurate renditions in English. But the thing that becomes apparent, is Alexander and McCarthy aren't even describing the same 36 vital points. There are many differences.

First look at the Source to their Bubushi texts.

The Alexander & Penland Bubushi source was Tsuneyoshi Ogura (10th Dan Goju Ryu Karate).

McCarthy used numerous sources to his information. Among them Lui Songshan Shifu provided the Shaolin Bronze Man Book, and Konishi Takehiro (of the Ryobukai) provided an original copy of the Mabuni Kenwa's Bubushi.

We cannot even be sure they are the same texts, one from a Goju tradition and one from a Shito tradition (with assuredly Goju roots).

If there are different Bubushi in Okinawa, we don't know how they may differ.

A simple comparison of the Vital point areas, between the two texts just leaves you wondering which is correct.

Likewise, there is discrepancy of the points between the different Bubushi Chapters. [This might be evidence that the material therein came from several sources.]

But the propensity of the authors to add extra material in their translations (such as the Meridian Charts in both texts, and the corresponding Meridian Points) makes it more difficult to consider what the actual text was for the Okinawan's use in the distant past.

It is not that I believe the addition of outside sources to a Bubushi translation are worthless, rather the reverse is more likely. But to consider what use the Bubushi may have been put to, it makes it more difficult to consider what was available to use.

From a historical perspective. I can see the Meridian material available only if the Okinawan's had such material available to use. It appears to me that Meridian Theory (which fits on top of the Bubushi Vital Points quite well) should not enter into the picture in understanding the past uses, unless PROOF is provided.

Before I go further, look at this outline of the text in the two Bubushi translations.

Alexander & Penland "Bubushi"

Chapter 8 Hard Fist Method of Vein Attacks (Dim Hsueh)

Chapter 9 The Twelve Hour Danger Points and the Death Touch (Dim Mak)

Chapter 17 Seven Locations Not to Hit/Immediate Death May Occur

Chapter 22 The Delayed Deaath Touch and Twelve Hour Dragon Breath Time Charts

Chapter 24 Diagram of the Bronze Statue

McCarthy "Bubushi"

Vital Point Analysis The Thirty-Six Vital Points

The Secrets of WuDang Boxing The Most Important anterior vital points (22)

The most Important posterior vital points (16)
Time period for Attacking the Vital points & Table Showing the Points
Article 8 Discussion on Seizing and Striking Veins and Tendons using the Hard Fist method
Article 9 Twelve-Hour Vital Points Revealed
Article 17 Seven Restricted Locations
Article 21 Delayed Death Touch Twelve-Hour Diagrams
Article 24 Bronze Man Statue (and points related to the Shichen (2 hour periods)

At first I thought it would be interesting to chart the differences between the two translations of the 36 Vital Points.

But when I started looking at McCarthy's translation, it became obvious he incorporated much additional text, most notably from the Shaolin Bronze Man Book. And within his text they cover different material.

Now as I reflect, out of the 700+ available Acupuncture points, there is obvious disagreement which are the 36 vital points. I'm of the opinion that all of these points (regardless of tradition) have great merit. But I then went to my own outside sources, such as Dr. Yang's original Chinese Chin-Na text, and in all of those sources they likewise used different vital points.

Perhaps as a Meridian researcher, there is merit for looking at everything, but as I want to see what independent Okinawan usage of this material might have wrought. And I don't think these texts clearly are useful for this purpose. They serve a larger indoctrination to this tradition, more fully.

In addition to this difficulty in my logical analysis, I see other issues.

If the Okinawan's accepted any of this material, how was it included into their curriculum? In a manner directly attributable to the Bubushi?

How was it used? Were there specific training practices directed where to target these points?

Of course, there's one obvious statement we can make about the Bubushi. There would be no difficulty for the true believer to practice the Sichen (Attacking the vital points by time period). The Bubushi gives the antidote for the strikes, if you get them down.

This might make for a fun practice with White Belts. <GRIN>

BUBUSHI, SEARCH FOR USAGE

To date, I've made a few brief posts on some of the material contained in the Bubushi. (Translations by Alexander & Penland, and by McCarthy). My interest being how to determine whether this text(s?) had an influence on the development of Okinawan Karate.

The text of the Bubushi covers some general areas.

Articles on History and Philosophy
Articles on Chinese Medicine and Herbal Pharmacology
Articles on Vital Points
Articles on Fighting Techniques

We've had some evidence where Funakoshi included 4 chapters of the Bubushi in his 'Karate-Do Koyhan' as well as Motobu including similar medical knowledge in his own writings. We must also include Myiagi choosing the name 'Goju' from the influence of the Bubushi, too. Without question it has some influence on Okinawan instructors.

However, viewing Okinawan Te, to look for the influence of the Bubushi, I believe we must search for usage of the Vital Points and/or the Fighting Techniques.

I chose to begin by considering evidence of the use of the Bubushi in striking vital points for Okinawan karate.

I do not believe this will be an easy case to make. Considering its past, a copy of the Bubushi was likely considered a treasure to the karateka. I'm sure they weren't handed out as training guides. It seems to me they may have been copied if the instructor truly trusted the student.

The following scenarios might come into play.

- 1) The Bubushi was considered a 'curiosity' and not relevant to active training.
- 2) The Bubushi 'Vital Point' theories were only used occasionally by instructors.
3. The Bubushi 'Vital Point' theories became the focus of training.

This may well be difficult to authenticate.

Considered the art of application of kata technique, or Bunkai.

I'm aware of Okinawan systems where the instructors state you have to develop your own bunkai. Hiagonna Morio, says the same thing on one of his earlier video tapes on Supreimpe. Yet from his own text, his instructor Hiagonna An'ichi reportedly received a great deal of instruction from Myagi Chojun.

Possible Conclusions on the transmission of Bunkai:

- 1) Hiagonna didn't receive that instruction from An'ichi.
- 2) He may have chosen to teach only basic training. [Perhaps at some much later date the student is clued in.]
- 3) This training is restricted to 'worthy' students/practioners.

Is this a parallel of the Sichi (bi-hourly) vital point training from Bubushi sources?

This does not leave us helpless, however. We can postulate what a system using the Vital Points, the Restricted Locations and the Sichi (bi-hourly) vital points would be structured like.

I fall again on my assumptions, the most basic being, our ancient instructor believed in the concepts in the Bubushi. Likewise I'm assuming the instructor's understood the locations of the vital points, and concentrated on the development of the striking mechanism.

I'm also assuming that this is being developed in a defensive manner, and not as an overt attacking art. Likewise the decision has been made that only these intense strikes are the appropriate response for an attack. [I do not know if they would balance these defensive strikes against other responses, takedowns, locks and controlling techniques, as well as other less vital strikes.]

The first goal would be to develop the striking techniques for the 36 vital points. I'm assuming this would be in conjunction with their systems training programs, mainly taking the strikes from kata.

My initial impression a hard strike to each of them should be able to down an opponent.

(A separate issue, is it safe to practice strikes on these points outside of their active Sichen?)

The next step would be to develop the timing of the delivery system. This is the most important key to utilize the Sichen Vital Points.

Some manner of training the body to identify which Sichen was dominate at any hour of the day. Probably by total training of some sort, to sensitize the practioners system to the time.

As you can see this becomes complex to discuss, and I expect complex to study.

But perhaps this was how things were originally done in China. One can imagine guards at a Shaolin temple changing their reactive strikes every two hours when the gong sounds. [Probably a movie in that, no? <grin>[

But would our Okinawan instructor, who believes the Bubushi is correct go to that level? Difficult to say. Or would he rely on memory and judgement to try and hit an appropriate vital point in defense?

Some things to consider:

- 1) Who would you train in such an art? Most certainly not your open students. The Okinawan must have felt the need to maintain the secrecy of this knowledge, both to avoid betrayal and to stop someone misusing this knowledge.
- 2) Its possible you would keep this to yourself, and perhaps share it with your successor, and perhaps not.
- 3) If the successor did not receive their instructors training, but did end up with the Bubushi, the cycle of study begins anew.

One thing I feel, such training would leave unique training patterns, especially the manner in which the student was sensitized to know the hour of the day. To my small knowledge, I haven't seen evidence of such work in Okainawan Te. [Not that it might be practiced, just I haven't seen any signs of this.]

To no small intent I'm starting to move into the Babble complex. I sit surrounded by 2 copies of the Bubushi, Dr. Yang's 36 points from his first Chin Na text, the 12 hour striking points in Leung Shum's Eagle Claw Kung-fu Classical Northern Chinese Fist, as well as Montague's Encyclopedia of Dim Mak, and assorted other texts on Dim Mak, PaGua and Funakoshi's Karate Do Koyan to name a few.

I'm sure if you attack me in several hours I can figure out where to strike. <grin> But of course the Okinawan I've been describing didn't have such problems, with only one text.

To close, let me throw out some Material from Pat McCarthy's Bubushi text.

McCarthy lists the Sichen in his edition of the Bubushi as: [I'm also adding his Meridian Points]

Rat	11pm to 1 am	Death in One Day	GB 3	SI18	SI17	LIV2	
Ox	1 am to 3 am	Death within 14 Days	LI17	GV24	CV8	BL62	LIV3
Tiger	3 am to 5 am	Death within 20 Days	ST18	LI17	BL60		
Rabbit	5 am to 7 am	Death in One Day	GV22	TH11	CV1	LIV8	
Dragon	7 am to 9 am	Death in 7 steps		TH17	GV26	SP9	
Snake	9 am to 11 am	Death in 3 Years		GV20	CV15	KD3	BL60
Horse	11 am to 1 pm	Indefinite Paralysis	GV22	BL40	GB33		
Ram	1 pm to 3 pm	Death in 1 Year	GV21	HT3	KD16/CV8		
Monkey	3 pm to 5 pm	Death within 2 weeks	SP12				

Cock	5 pm to 7 pm	Death within 2 days		KD24	PC8		
Dog	7 pm to 9 pm	Death within 3 days		ST26	BL62		
Boar	9-pm to 11 pm	Death within 1 week	ST16				

[Article 9 refers to 12 vital points (one per Sichen)]

[Article 12 shows 31 vital points (but GV22 is on the 7 restricted locations leaving 30 (1 of which must not be on the vital points listing- but I'm not doing the research at this time..)]

Also to consider that 7 of the 36 points are considered the 7 Restricted Locations. As they would be used in only the most extreme circumstances, that leaves only 29 to concentrate on.

And to leave this on a positive note, If you're struck during the Dragon Hours (isn't this important for Isshinryu?) with death in 7 steps, there is an antidote.

McCarthy Article 19: Effective "Twelve-Hour Herbal" Prescriptions to Improve Blood Circulation for Shichen Related Injuries. (page 92)

Dragon Time(7-9 a.m.) Medicine

1. Malted nonglutinous rice, 1 scoop
 2. Malted rice, 1 scoop
 3. Young *Prunus persica* (L.) Batsch. (Rosaceae) 15.60 grams
 4. *Eriobotrya japonica* Lindl. (Rosaceae) 6.24 grams
 5. *Carthamus tinctorius* L. (Compositae) 6.24 grams
- Decoct in rice wine, strain, and drink.

I suppose I should add, drink this very, very quickly.

PS. If you think I'm sounding confused, I've spent the last 4 days trying to make this sound comprehensible.

OKINAWAN BUBUSHI - Strategy and Tactics I

A text with many layers to consider, the Okinawan Bubushi, among the most interesting are those of Strategy and Tactics.

When the original author(s) chose what to include in the Okinawan Bubushi, they included Section 16, Grappling and Escapes.

Consider back a few years ago how controversial it was to mention that Okinawan Karate contained grappling techniques. I can remember one seminar I was presenting at a summer camp, many years ago, showing grappling techniques in Okinawan kata, and having one instructor argue with me that Okinawan Karate only contained punching and kicking. He changed his mind by the time I concluded, but here we have concrete evidence that consideration of same was something the Seniors thought of.

I wouldn't say this chapter influenced the development of kata directly. Rather it seems to me the concepts that are presented here helped the Martial Artist choose which technique to apply against an attack.

Both Translations (Alexander & Penland, and McCarthy) cover essentially the same material, but in different order (with some exceptions). But either text gives you the gist of a logical tactical analysis of how to handle specific situations.

The Commentary I'm suggesting for these techniques, is not necessary right, but does show how I'm seeing these techniques at this time.

This time I'm choosing the Alexander Bubushi text:

1. If you want to conquer the east, then you must attack the west first (a Feint).

Commentary - I once attended a Judo seminar where the instructor was teaching a technique his Japanese instructors made him wait 20 years to learn. This text sums it up completely.

2. If you want to advance forward, then fake a movement to the rear.

Commentary - Most people's perceptions can be used against them. By moving rearward, they might relax allowing an opening to enter.

3. If you want to use your body change, then you must use hard strength first.

Commentary - I believe they are saying by using a power technique, the opponent will lock themselves into a defensive position, creating an opening for body changes (tai sabaki)

4. If you get caught by the hair, then extend your arms forward to fight back.

Commentary - I see this as pulling your opponent off balance, negating their leverage against The hair pull, and creating an opening to enter. [BTW I consider all turning techniques in kata as defenses against a grab from the rear. A direct example is the last turn in Goju Kata Saifa.]

5. If you want to attack the sides, then you must attack the center first (both legs)

Commentary - I see an attack against the legs as so destabilizing that whether you connect or not Their back peddling will create an opening for a side attack.

6. If you want to throw the opponent to the ground, then quickly step on the feet of his shadow.

Commentary - Assuming his shadow is behind him, by stepping there quickly, you've placed yourself
To quickly unbalance your opponent.

7. If you are thrown on the ground, attack his eagle attitude (His hovering over you).

Commentary - The Keri Kihon, as taught by Tom Lewis, practiced side and front thrust kicks on the
Ground. If thrown, as they are descending on you, you can counter with a side thrust kick.

8. If you get caught from behind, you must use EMPI (flying Swallow technique) elbow.

Commentary - I wonder whether Alexander is using the Empi kata Shotokan as the reference for Empi
Here? In any case, this screams Te Wazza No. 15 (Seiuchin Kata) to me.

9. If you get grabbed from the front, you must hit his shadow (Knee to the Groin)

Commentary - Mr Miyagi (Karate Kid II) - Technique No. 1

10. If he catches your head, you must attack his face.

Commentary - Cause a distraction to keep him off of your face. His control of your head could be deadly.

11. While fighting, if your hands get trapped between his, you must attack his throat.

Commentary - this will make it very difficult to hold onto your hands.

12. If your attacker comes too close to you, you must stiffen him back for distance.

13. If you want to keep your distance, you must use kicks to keep your attacker back.

14. If you want to open up the left side, then you must fake an attack toward the right side first.

15. If you want to trap his feet, then you must first trap his hands.

16. When kicking very high, you must be aware of leaning back too much.

17. If your hand gets trapped, then you must quickly stiffen thrust with the other arm.

18. If your sleeve is grabbed, then you must quickly kick your opponent's knee.

19. If your sleeve (Arm) gets twisted, you must thrust the other spear hand toward the face.

20. If you are pushed back, then cup your hands and slap your opponent's ears.

21. If your opponent's posture is low, then it is of no use to attack the legs.

22. If your opponent tries to kick your groin, you must hook his leg, to the inside using your leg.

23. If your opponent's posture is high, then you should attack low underneath.

24. If your lower body is grabbed, then you must attack his higher body.

25. If your upper body is attacked, use your hand to attack his groin.

26. If your head is grabbed, you must use kicking techniques.

27. If you are being choked from the front, you must use big hammer fists to his sides.

28. If your opponent tries to kick, you must body change back away from the power.

29. If you are in the power stance, every time you punch, you couldn't lose in a million years.

Commentary - this one I love, "Power Stance". I see this as meaning if you're executing a technique with as much focus as possible (in a power stance) that alone should stop an attacker.

There's enough ideas contained in this chapter to consider a response to any attack.

BUBUSHI - The Forty-Eight Self-Defense Diagrams(PM)

As I conclude on my quest to see how the Bubushi may have been used by the Okinawan seniors in the development of Karate I would like to take up Chapter 29 - The Forty-Eight Essential Fighting Techniques of Kempo (A&P).

This chapter consists of 48 drawings showing an offensive technique and a suggested successful defense and counter-attack. The illustrations given by Alexander show both attacker and defender with hair, interestingly the illustrations given by McCarthy don't show hair (bald monk syndrome?) unless it is called for in the counter-attack.

As Alexander and Penland describe an illustration (such as illustration No. 2) , "There is an explanation given for each illustration but the poetic language used such as "Defender waits like a black tiger hiding in a cave" requires some thought and analysis in order to derive an accurate meaning." McCarthy on the other hand gives a more specific description.

[Note: the poetic language referencing the illustrations also relates back to Chapter 4 - Four Quan (forms) of Monk Fist Boxing (PM). That chapter just lists the poetic names of the Quan techniques. Some of them are cross referenced to Chapter 29.]

Specifically Chapter 29 - illustration No. 2

Alexander & Penland

Attacker comes in like a white monkey trying to steal the candy (groin grasp) He will fall into defender's trap.

Defender waits like a black tiger hiding in a cave. He will win.

Alexander additionally explains in the Chapter's opening, "This particular example refers to the use of the double fist punch from the Gojushiho kata (54 steps of the Black Tiger).

McCarthy's text for the illustration is:

Losing Technique : White Monkey stealing fruit

Winning Technique: Black Tiger rushing out from the cage

2. If an attacker attempts to lunge out to strike you (left), jam the attack cutting off the assault in its midst (right).

However, performing my own analysis of the 48 diagrams, I recognize at least 33 of them as being techniques found in Shorin Ryu, Goju Ryu, Ueichi Ryu, Hakutsuru and Kobudo kata. Including parallels to ground kicking techniques taught in the Keri Wazza by my own instructor in Isshinryu.

For the senior instructor to have this text showing possible applications of kata technique, I do not doubt this had some impact on those instructors. On the other hand, we are still left with a which came first, the Chicken or the Egg. Was this Chapter of the Bubushi put together from techniques in already existing Okinawan kata? Were the Chinese (?) techniques in this Chapter influential in the development of the Okinawan Kata? Does this Chapter prove that Okinawan forms came directly from Chinese Forms? Or does this Chapter prove that the limitations of Human Movement are found in all systems?

All important questions. But in my very humble opinion, this chapter does not prove any of them. [And I'm always willing to modify my opinions when true proof is provided.]

To me it seems likely, that the text was put together first. That there was no direct connection to these techniques and specific forms (which we know of). In my analysis, techniques which could have come from the same Okinawan kata (such as PM's 1, 22 and 39 relating to kata Seiuchin) are not next to each other, but found scattered, without apparent connection, in the Chapter.

Likewise, I can make a case in my mind that perhaps 1/2 of the technique which are shown are found in Goju/Ueichi kata (imports in the 1890's or so). If this text influenced the development of Okinawan Shorinryu kata, why did they ignore so much of it and only use some of the techniques?

There may be a theme, but my cursory analysis does not suggest a rational why they were presented as they are. They may well have just been individual drills, the original author wanted to retain. Our minds can draw inferences to kata where the original intent may not have made the same connections.

As I see it, only the very instructors seemed to have a copy of the Bubushi in the distant past. It also seems that only trusted senior students were permitted to make a copy. That would have kept this restricted information

The role of the student would not have been to ask questions about any of this, simply to train, as the antidotal evidence of Okinawan training seems to bear this out.

Even when Funakoshi Sensei placed text from the Bubushi in his writings, he did so in the original Chinese and did not translate them into Japanese. Sort of technique of no-technique. Here it is, but I'm not telling you what it means.

At this point in time, I don't have a clear picture how the Okinawan instructor possessing the Bubushi would have used this Chapter. He might have kept the techniques for private use, or for a select few.

He may have just taught the techniques, as they are depicted. They are useful in their own right.

The actual text does not appear to fully explain how to use the techniques. The mental effort to find the meaning and make it part of one's practice of course is worth the work itself.

This has been an interesting sort of analysis to make. Although there is a great deal in the Bubushi I haven't explored, I'm drawing a close to this cycle. All that remains, is to try and prepare a concluding text for all of these posts.

I always await any of your comments and insight. Joe Swift has been very helpful so far in his own research of Japanese martial literature on the Bubushi, and I trust we'll have more of his work to follow.

Bubushi - Looking for Conclusions

With all of the Bubushi research I've done in the last month or so, I've been meaning to tie it together with the conclusions I've come to as to the actual influence it had on the development of Okinawan Karate.

But when I was ready to begin, the force grabbed me, took me to a MA Supply House in Waltham, Ma, and found a copy of the video tape, Secrets of the Bubushi by George Alexander. He created it as a companion to his translation of the Bubushi.

Well to start of I watched the tape 2+ hours straight through, and then I've been going back through it piece by piece. Interesting tape, but as it turns out, not significant for my current studies. The pressure point locations are ok I guess, but he has much other information there, which I do not see directly in the original Bubushi (although some of it is in his current translation). Not that what's there is bad, but rather, it was not in the Bubushi. Which I guess sums up my issues as to what the Bubushi is or isn't.

Alexnader describes meridian theory, explains striking 2 and 3 points, etc, but never shows how this is from the Bubushi tradition. [This gets into a modern re-write of what the Bubushi actually is about, IMVHO.] Not to say this would be bad from the point of his practice and teachings, but rather dubious as to how it will be found in the Bubushi.

It looks to me like he's paving the way to tie in the work of Oyata, Dillman, Clark, Montague et. al. You can make your own assessment as to whether that's the direction you are taking your art, but I believe this should be billed as a modern interpretation as to what the Bubushi MIGHT mean.

Then Alexander glosses over the Delayed Striking/Death Touch sections, and for the 48 self defense techniques only shows a few (about 15) which are often quite different from the Bubushi pictures. He talks about doing research to find the answers yourself, and has some questionable physiological results from the strikes, which I am still investigating.

I'm sure this is all valuable for his students or individuals looking for George Alexanders interpretations on Bubushi Themes, but from my limited perspective, does not help me understand what actual impact the Bubushi may have had on the development of Okinawan karate.

Well back to my theme.

Regarding the Bubushi, we:

1. Don't know who authored it. (Was it even compiled by a martial artist?)
2. Don't know when it was compiled. (Is it from recent centuries, or ancient centuries.)
3. Don't know the sources it was compiled from.
4. Don't even know who had access to it on Okinawan, except in more modern times.

But

1. It did exist
2. Some senior martial artists did have copies.
3. It was not used for a student's manual.
4. It influenced some of the earliest writings in this century (Funakoshi, Motobou).
5. It did not describe meridian theory.
6. It did describe vital point striking
7. It did describe sichen (2 hour) striking locations.
8. It was used to name Goju Karate and was the source of the Shimabuku Code of Karate.

If the use of the Bubushi as kept only for the most Senior level of training, the case can be made it had little influence over the body of Okinawan karate. Perhaps nice for those who had it, but inconsequential for the rest.

If it has a more direct influence on the development of kata, teaching practices, striking sequences, etc. I think research showing the direct connection must be made. I my little experience I don't see this as there, so far.

I've had only limited discussions with my surgeon, Dr. Harper on these issues. Unfortunately his work keeps him busy. But he did clearly express to me he questions the validity of the delayed death touch striking theories.

He gives the analogy of his own medical training, stating without performing 20 or 30 appendectomies under supervision one would not be qualified to do so on one's own. If these strikes can cause death and the other results who actually ever was trained to execute them. Can you believe dots on some pictures would actually teach the skills, directions, etc. to make this happen reliably? I think his observation has much merit when we try to accept the validity of the Bubushi in use.

This does not mean Dr. Harper disbelieves Chi, et.al. But rather questions that the Bubushi text would give the knowledge to make this happen, especially if one did not have the specific training which might have existed for the original author.

Just to keep things interesting, another of my students, Tom Chan, who is Chinese-American, has his own theory as to how the 'delayed death touch' works. He believes the diet of the Chinese was so poor, and there were so many health problems in the population, they may well have had weaker constitutions which could not respond to focused physical attacks. This is just a theory, but it does make for a plausible topic to consider.

With so many questions, and lack of documented proof in a connection to how the Bubushi was actually utilized in the development of Okinawan karate, I believe the only logical conclusion is that simply admitting this remains unknown. I do not believe we gain from attempting to force answers to fit theories.

If you can take the Bubushi, Original Chinese, Modern English translations, whatever, and make it relevant to your contemporary training, then you've accomplished something of merit. That alone justifies your efforts.

However, I do not believe adding additional material to the original Bubushi, contemporary theories of research into Striking Meridians and other issues mean that is what the Okinawans did without constitute proof.

And proof must be public, open to review and analysis, to be accepted in my analysis.

Revisiting Bubushi Drawings of the 48 Self Defense Techniques

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the water, the Bubushi keeps returning to my focus.

I'd like to repeat a portion of the post from Mr. Joseph Blow on Cyber Dojo.

Date: Wed, 10 Nov 1999 07:54:57 -0800 (PST):

"For those of you who read Japanese, the publisher Beesubooru Magajin (Baseball Magazine) has out a translation of the Bubushi by Tadahiko Ohtsuka. In some places, Ohtsuka has included the original Chinese text (retyped) to permit readers to get nuances themselves. "

"The pictures differ from those included in both McCarthy's and Alexander's, and I tend to think that all of them drew their own. In some cases, the arm positions vary from McCarthy, leading to a different idea for application. "

I was able, this weekend past, to revisit the copy of the 1934 Mabuni Kenwa text on Sepai, 'Sepai No Kenkyu Goshijutsu Hiden Karate-do Kempo'. Specifically on the issue of the 48 Self Defense Techniques, I compared the drawings shown by Mabuni to those of the Armstrong/Penland text and the McCarthy Text.

I can now go into deeper comparison of the 48 Self Defense Techniques in these separate publications.

First issue, the Mabuni Kenwa text only shows 28 of the 48 Drawings.

Second issue, the Armstrong/Penland drawings are almost identical to those in Mabuni's text. They are redrawn by a hand with less finesse than Mabuni's version (I'm sure more for a darker copy for printing), but there is no essential difference in the drawings to my eye. That would lead me to assume that Alexander/Penland's entire set are based on ONE Okinawan version of the Bubushi.

The Alexander/Penland and the McCarthy versions are in the same order. As far as I can determine technique 1 in Alexander/Penland is the same as technique 1 in McCarthy, and so forth.

The Mabuni drawings are not in the same order.

For convenience of other researchers, here is my comparison of Bubushi Technique traditions.

Alexander/Penland Mabuni Kenwa
McCarthy # Page #

3 160 *

4 152

5 171

7 165

8 155

9 159

10 168

13 148 *

14 154

15 158

16 173 *

19 175 **

20 169

24 163

25 157
26 172 **
27 166
30 151 **
31 164 **
32 156 **
34 161
35 167 ***
37 174
38 153
39 149 *
40 170 **
43 162 *
46 150

While the Alexander/Penland and McCarthy translations apparently use the same order for the 48 Self Defense Techniques, there are differences between the techniques shown. Of course I cannot determine whether this was due to the artist's efforts, or different original source Bubushi traditions.

In my comparison of those drawings to Mabuni Kenwa's drawings, I've indicated the differences with '*'. With one * being minor or perspective changes and '***' being very different representations of the techniques involved (IMHO).

I have not compared the 20 drawings not shown by Mabuni. between Alexander/Penland and McCarthy.

I do infer that based on the 28 Mabuni drawings shown, Alexander/Penlands are almost exact copies from the same source as Mabuni.

Due to differences between that tradition and the one shown by McCarthy, I assume his drawings come from a different tradition.

Again, let me urge that this is not an evaluation of Good or Bad, but rather an evaluation of Similarity and Difference, based on Physical Comparison.

I have no knowledge of any inaccuracies in textual translation in either text, and am assuming both are correct, but from different Bubushi traditions.

More Bubushi 48 Analysis

I've been thinking on Stanic Milos (joemilos@beotel.yu), of Belgrade, Yugoslavia, and the analysis of the Forty-Eight Self Defense Diagrams (from P.McCarthy's translation of the Bubushi) to his Shorin Ryu kata. He sent this to the Cyber Dojo on Friday November 5th.

Receiving his permission, I decided to have some fun and try to match his suggested kata up with what I hope are Standard Reference Texts on Okinawan Kata.

Using Shoshin Nagamine's 'The Essence of Okinawan Karate-Do', Pat McCarthy's 'Classical Kata of Okinawan Karate', George Mattson's 'Ueichiryu Karate Do', Morio Higaonna's 'Traditioinal Karatedo vol's 2 and 3', and Long and Wheeler's 'Dynamics of Isshinryu Karate', I'm going to try and pinpoint where these techniques are found in the actual kata.

Perhaps you'll ask, why is he not just using Isshinryu references as he's an Isshinryu practioner. Fair question. First I wish to honor Stanic's efforts, so I'm going to concentrate with Nagamine's text. (No, I don't know if his Shorin Ryu is the same as Nagamine's but it's the best Shorin Ryu

text I possess, and I prefer to go with the best. Second, I've had occasion to participate in many different Okinawan martial traditions, and believe they all should be honored.

The other traditions are being used when I can't see Stanic's example in Nagamine's text. That doesn't mean Stanic's wrong, but most likely using a variation I'm not aware of.

I do not think this exercise will show that the Bubushi influenced the development of these kata. It is my suspicion that it's a greater exercise in the ability of the human mind to overlay and cross reference different material. Nothing wrong with that in my book.

This has not been an easy exercise. Many times the movement can only be inferred from the kata (for it might involve the movement from one technique to the other as well as the kata technique).

I hope you do find exception with my suggested cross references. But share your findings. Help develop a full cross reference, system by system of Bubushi links to your kata. Doing so, enables all of us to get to work and try and make it happen, instead of putting the book back on your shelf. And if we can make it happen, we might even go further and develop higher level of technique.

Stanic has used the Pat McCarthy translation of the Bubushi and the 48 Self Defense Techniques presented therein. I'm using the same text.

No Kata	Txt Page Tech. No.
4. Patsai	SN pg. 200 24-25
14. Patsai	SN pg. 204 53 or 54
19. Patsai	SN pg. 200 24 or 29
	SN pg. 201 28
22. Patsai	SN pg. 201 33-34
6. Pinan shodan	I can't find it
13. Pinan shodan	SN pg. 119 13-14
	SN pg. 118 14
43. Pinan shodan	SN pg. 120 27
33. Pinan nidan	I can't find it
39. Pinan sandan	SN pg. 131 14
46. Pinan godan	I can't find it
20. Naihanchi	SN pg. 149 10-12
31. Naihanchi	SN pg. 151 21
27. Seisan	GM pg. 273 4
	MH (vol. 3) pg. 61
	LW pg. 70
35. Seisan	GM pg. 275
	PM pg. 76 10

7. Chintou	SN pg. 227 49
	LW pg. 84 30
8. Kushanku	SN pg. 231 4
9. Kushanku	SN pg. 240 53-54
11. Kushanku	SN pg. 243 66
15. Kushanku	SN pg. 243 66
17. Kushanku	SN pg. 231
23. Kushanku	I don't see it
25. Kushanku	SN 243 66
28. Kushanku	I don't see it
28. Pinan GoDan	I don't see it
34. Kushanku	SN 238 47-48
36. Kushanku	SN 235 27
37. Kushanku	I don't see it
38. Kushanku	SN 231 4-5
42. Kushanku	SN 231 7-8
47. Kushanku	MP 124 5 or 16-17

Key to text suggestions -

SN - Shoshin Nagamine's 'The Essence of Okinawan Karate-Do'

PM - Pat McCarthy's 'Classical Kata of Okinawan Karate'

GM - George Mattson's 'Ueichiryu Karate Do'

MH - Morio Higaonna's 'Traditioinal Karatedo vol's 2 and 3'

LW - Long and Wheeler's 'Dynamics of Isshinryu Karate'

By no means do I feel this is inclusive. But I'd rather try and draw out your own efforts and suggestions.

My only intent in this effort with the Bubushi is to stimulate discussion on the topic.

Understanding the Bubushi 48 Self Defense Themes

Returning briefly back to the Bubushi, I (with the assistance of Dr. Paul Harper, Derry New Hampshire, a Surgeon by profession and Joe Swift, Kanazawa Japan, a translator by profession) would like to look at the issue of drawings found in different versions of the texts. To do this I would like to suggest one of the 48 self defense diagrams.

Browsing through the Mabuni 1934 text on Seipai Kata the other day with Dr. Harper , (one of my students, originally a San Dan in Goju Ryu) he noticed how the Bubushi diagram on page 151 was showing a finger strike to 'the Long Thoracic Nerve of Bell". He stated that strike as shown would cause a "winged scapula" arching the back for a moment, allowing time for a follow up strike or evasion.

That caused me to review the same diagram in my other Bubushi copies.

In George Armstrong-Ken Penland Bubushi, the same diagram follows the Mabuni diagram, with the Mabuni copy being superior, being drawn by someone who wished to capture specific detail, and perhaps not just make a recognizable copy.

By taking the Armstrong translation of that section and comparing it to Pat McCarthy's 48 translations, I find this as Drawing #40 in McCarthy's Bubushi. But in this instance I see what looks like a spear hand strike to the side and it does not appear (from the drawing) to hit the same area the same way.

>From examination of the Mabuni or Armstrong and Penland Bubushi, you might work up different explanations

My description of these diagrams.

Mabuni Seipai Text Page 151 (This is not available in English)

My description:

Attacker Left Foot Forward Left High Hammerfist Right back hammer fist

Defender A Right inward lead finger strike to the Long Thoracic Nerve of Bell. While left hand lies across the Right Biceps.

Armstrong and Penland Bubushi 48 No 30 page 143

A copy (with slight simplification of technique) of the Mabuni 1934 Bubushi drawing.

My description,

Attacker Left Foot Forward Left High Hammerfist Right back hammer fist

Defender A Right inward lead finger strike to the Long Thoracic Nerve of Bell. While the left hand lies across the Right Biceps.

Armstrong text:

Like the Hungry Tiger mauling its prey, this man will lose

Like a monkey poking with a pin, this man will win

Attacker comes in like a hungry tiger mauling its prey, using Hammerfists to try to overwhelm his opponent, this man will lose.

Defender keeps his Maai (Distance) until the right opportunity is there And then quickly like a monkey poking with a pin, pokes his opponent In the underarm to a vital spot which leads to the heart meridian, this man Will win.

Pat McCarthy Bubushi 48 No 30 Page 182

My description:

Attacker Left Foot Forward Left High block - Right Punch

Defender RFF Right Spear Hand to uke's side line, Left Hand parries back

McCarthy text

Losing Technique Tiger Mauls its Prey

Winning Technique Monkey threading the needle

By checking a punch or pulling a push and striking a vital point

It is easy to defeat an inexperienced attacker.

I also referenced Tadahiko Otsuka's work on the Bubushi which shows diagrams from two different Bubushi traditions. (Tadahiko's Bubushi research is not available in English)

In Tadahiko's Bubushi Page 200

Both diagrams are similar to Mabuni's but with less detail.

One defender is striking the Long Thoracic Nerve of Bell the other appears to be Striking Further forward on the chest. With the accompanying examples as how to Apply their Strike into the upper chest area. Another difference.

Finding this interesting, with different sources leading to entirely different interpretations of the diagrams in their own right.

Trying to get a wider range as to available Bubushi differences on this technique I discussed this with Joe Swift, who performed the following analysis.

Hi again Victor-san,

Looked at all my Bubushi(s) last night and here's what I got:

McCarthy (1995)

#30 - spear hand

McCarthy (1992)

#30 - single finger strike

Alexander

#30 - single finger strike (or so it seems to me)

Otsuka (1986)

#30 - bunched finger strike

Otsuka (1998)

#30 - bunched finger strike

Mabuni

#30 - bunched fingers with one extended

Tokashiki (1995)

Redrawings

#30 - pressing the side as you footsweep

Original Miyagi - Higa - Fukuchi lineage Bubushi

#30 - bunched fingers

The explanations (all except for Tokashiki's application) all seem to revolve around striking a single vital point somewhere on the opponent's side...

Bob McMahon on the Cyber Dojo once mentioned he has seen Pat McCarthy's 14 different copies of the Bubushi, and last night also mentioned more are being discovered regularly.

My thought is that this work will present a picture in what is required to fully understand the issues to consider in interpreting the Bubushi to our current practices. Depending on your source, we may well be describing different events