

KYŪ TO DAN Q&A



BUJINKAN
FUDŌ-MYŌŌ
DŌJŌ



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HOW DOES IT WORK?

This document contains fundamental questions and their answers to take you from Kyū to Dan. When you test for a module during your grading, you will be asked to answer some of those questions, either verbally, or by physically showing the answer.

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Read! Learn! Memorize! Internalize! Gambatte Kudasai

Frederic Casagrande
a.k.a. Ginkuma



9TH KYŪ

WHAT DOES BUJINKAN MEAN?

“Bujin” is the God of War, or the Divine Warrior. It is the Japanese translation of one of the nicknames attributed to Takamatsu Sensei by the Chinese. “Kan” is the house. Hence, “Bujinkan” can be translated as The House of the Divine Warrior, a place where warriors gather.

WHAT ARE THE 9 RYŪHA OF BUJINKAN?

A “Ryū” (plural Ryūha) means school. Bujinkan has 9 Schools:

- Togakure Ryū Ninjutsu
- Gyokko Ryū Kosshi Jutsu
- Shinden Fudō Ryū Daken Taijutsu
- Kukishin Ryū Happō Hiken
- Koto Ryū Koppō Jutsu
- Gyokushin Ryū Ninpō
- Kumogakure Ryū Ninpō
- Gikan Ryū Koppō Jutsu
- Takagi Yōshin Ryū Jū taijutsu

WHAT IS BUDŌ TAIJUTSU?

Budō is a Japanese term that describes martial arts. It literally translates into "The Martial Way", or "The Way of War". It describes Martial Arts, but also the path you walk by practicing your Martial Art, the lifestyle you live: the Way of Life. “Tai” means body, and “Jutsu” means technique, so Taijutsu translates into the physical expression of the body (with or) without weapons.

In the early 90’s, Hatsumi Sensei renamed “Bujinkan Ninjutsu” into “Bujinkan Budō Taijutsu”, to represent its holistic approach to martial arts. Its foundation is based on five domains: Taihen Jutsu; Daken Taijutsu; Jūtaijutsu, Koppō Jutsu; and Kosshi Jutsu. Once this technical foundation is internalized, you can build Ninpō Taijutsu, and its sole pillar: Juppō Sesshō.



WHO IS HATSUMI SENSEI?



Masaaki Hatsumi is the founder and current Sōke (Grandmaster) of the Bujinkan. He was born on December 2nd, 1931 in Noda, Chiba, Japan.

WHO WAS TAKAMATSU SENSEI?

Toshitsugu Takamatsu was Hatsumi Sensei's teacher. A renowned martial artist born March 10th, 1889, he received 6 Ryūha (schools) from his uncle, Toda Shinryūken Masamitsu; and 3 other schools from Ishitani Matsutaro Sensei and Mizuta Sensei. After 10 years of an adventurous life in China, he came back to Kobe, Japan, where he lived until his death on April 2nd 1972.

WHAT DOES SHIKIN HARAMITSU DAIKOMYŌ MEAN?

This mantra is recited during the Dōjō Rei (greetings) before, and after every class. Its non-literal translation means that *in every event, there is a lesson*.

WHAT IS JŪNAN TAISŌ?

Jūnan Taisō is the warming up and body conditioning exercise done at the beginning of each class. It is composed of two elements: "Ryūtai Undō" ("Ryūtai" means the body of the dragon, or fluidity and "undō" means exercise), a series of simple exercises to increase the flexibility of the body; followed by "Shin Kokyū Sanaden" (real or true breathing method), which improves your ability to breathe.

WHAT IS THE SHINDEN?

The Shinden is a small altar in front of which we bow at the beginning and end of each class. It acts as a focal aid to bring the class to attention and to concentrate. If the dōjō does not have a Shinden, we usually bow to a photograph of Hatsumi Sensei or to one of his works of calligraphy.



8TH KYŪ

NAME 8 BUJINKAN WEAPONS

Here is a non-exhaustive list of weapons that are in use in Bujinkan:

Bō	Bō Shuriken	Dai Sharin	Hachiwari
Hanbō	Jō	Jutte	Kaginawa
Kama Yari	Kanabō	Katana	Kunai
Kusarigama	Makibishi	Manriki Gusari	Metsubushi
Naginata	Nawa	Nekote	Ninjatō
Nodachi	Nyoibō	Ōdachi	Ono
Senban Shuriken	Senzu	Shikomi Zue	Shotō
Shuko	Shuriken	Sode Guruma	Tachi
Tanegashima	Tantō	Teppan	Tessen
Tetsubishi	Tsurugi	Wakizashi	Yari
Yoroidōshi	Yumi		

WHAT IS A KYŪ?



Kyū is the specific Japanese term reflecting the Rank, Grade or Level of a martial art practitioner before his black belt. In Bujinkan, you start at Mu Kyū (no rank), wearing a white belt. You then work your way from 9th Kyū (the lowest), to 1st Kyū (the highest). The Kyū students wear a green belt (male), a red belt (female) or a yellow belt (under 12).

WHAT IS A DAN?



Dan is the specific Japanese term reflecting the *Rank, Grade* or *Level* of a martial art practitioner after black belt. The Bujinkan ranking system goes from Shodan (1st Dan) to Jūgodan (15th Dan).

WHAT IS A SHIDŌSHI?



In Bujinkan, Shidōshi is a term used by Hatsumi Sensei which means coach, leader, mentor or trainer. After successfully passing Sakki Test and receiving Godan (5th Dan), a Shidōshi-Hō becomes a Shidōshi. Both titles are used for a licensed teacher.



WHAT IS A SHIHAN?



In Bujinkan, the title of Shihan is granted after passing Jūdan (10th Dan). However, it usually refers to Jūgodan (15th Dan) masters. In 2014, Hatsumi Sensei has introduced two more honorary titles:



Yūshū Shihan means “*Important Shihan*” and recognizes prominent teachers in Bujinkan; and Dai Shihan recognizes someone who can stand in or replace the grandmaster in his absence. This is currently the highest distinction in Bujinkan.

WHAT ARE THE 3 USES OF UKEMI?

“Ukemi” means *to receive*, and describes your ability to receive the ground. The rolls, or break falls we perform are mainly used for one of the following three reasons:

- Defense: To gain some distance from an opponent or a threat
- Attack: To reach your opponent, or move within attacking range
- Safety: to fall on the ground without injury

WHO WAS TODA SENSEI?

Toda Shinryūken Masamitsu was the uncle of Takamatsu Sensei. He was a sword instructor for the members of the Shōgun’s council in Nakano no Machi (district of Kyōtō). He dedicated his life to teaching Budō, and transmitted 6 of the 9 future Bujinkan Ryūha to Takamatsu Sensei.

WHICH IS THE OLDEST SCHOOL IN BUJINKAN?

The oldest school in Bujinkan is Gyokko Ryū (arrived in Japan in 9th Century, but formalized as a combat system during 12th Century); then Koto Ryū (arrived in Japan during 9th Century, but formalized as a combat system during 16th Century); then Togakure Ryū (12th Century) and Shinden Fudō Ryū (12th Century); then Kukishin (14th Century); then Gyokushin Ryū, Kumogakure Ryū, and Gikan Ryū (16th Century). The most recent school is Takagi Yōshin Ryū (17th Century).



WHAT IS “SHIKI”?

“Shiki” is the 6th element of the Japanese cosmogony: *Consciousness*. It is the Ura (non manifested) of the Omote (manifested reality) of the five elements (Chi, Sui, Ka, Fū, Kū).

7TH KYŪ

WHICH ARE THE 3 NINJUTSU SCHOOLS?

- Togakure Ryū
- Kumokagure Ryū
- Gyokushin Ryū

WHICH ARE THE 6 NON-NINJUTSU SCHOOLS?

Although all Bujinkan schools are taught with the spirit or feeling of Ninpō, 6 of them don't contain the name Ninpō:

- Gyokko (Ryū Kosshi Jutsu)
- Koto (Ryū Koppō Jutsu)
- Shinden (Fudō Ryū Daken Taijutsu)
- Kukishinden (Ryū Happō Hiken)
- Takagi Yōshin Ryū (Jū Taijutsu)
- Gikan Ryū (Koppō Jutsu)

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF KAMAE?

The term Kamae means *posture* or *attitude*. It is the ability to conceal a plan, strategy or an attack. It refers both to the physical posture (Tai Gamae) and the mental attitude (Kokoro Gamae) of a person.

WHICH SCHOOL DID HATSUMI SENSEI LEARN FIRST?

The first school Takamatsu Sensei taught to Hatsumi Sensei was Togakure Ryū. It was also the last school taught to Takamatsu Sensei by Toda Sensei.



WHICH SCHOOL DID HATSUMI SENSEI LEARN LAST?

The last school Takamatsu Sensei taught to Hatsumi Sensei was Shinden Fudō Ryū. It was also the first school taught to Takamatsu Sensei by Toda Sensei.

WHAT ARE THE 5 PILLARS OF BUDŌ TAIJUTSU?

The five pillars are:

- Taihen Jutsu
- Daken Taijutsu
- Koppō Jutsu
- Kosshi Jutsu
- Jū Taijutsu

WHAT ARE THE 3 DISTANCES OF BUJINKAN?

The Bujinkan is based on 3 fighting distances (Sanshin):

- Kosshi Jutsu (Short distance)
- Koppō Jutsu (Middle distance)
- Ninpō (Long distance)

All techniques of the 9 Ryūha express this triple reality: Ninpō, Koppō, and Kosshi.

CHI RYAKU NO MAKI

WHAT IS THE TEN CHI JIN RYAKU NO MAKI?

The Ten Chi Jin Ryaku no Maki regroups the basic principles of the 9 schools of Bujinkan. It is the common foundation for obtaining the black belt. The adaptation of these principles can be used to defend against an opponent.

LIST THE TECHNIQUES IN HAJUTSU KYŪ HŌ

The alternate name of Hajutsu Kyū Hō is *Aite to Kumu Kokoro Gamae* (inner attitude to encounter with the opponent), it is a box in Chi Ryaku no Maki and contains:



- Te Hodoki (Katate & Ryōte)
- Tai Hodoki
- Oya Goroshi & Ko Goroshi
- Kosshi Kudaki
- Happō Keri
- Keri Gaeshi
- Keri Kudaki
- Ken Kudaki
- Henka Kudaki

LIST THE TECHNIQUES IN RYŪ SUI IKI

Ryū Sui Iki is the Nage Waza box in Chi Ryaku no Maki, and contains:

- Tachi Nagare (concept)
- Yoko Nagare (concept)
- Kuruma (concept)
- Te Makura
- Tomoe Nage

LIST THE TECHNIQUES IN SHIME WAZA

Shime Waza is a box in Chi Ryaku no Maki, and contains:

- Hon Jime
- Gyaku Jime
- Itami Jime
- Sankaku Jime
- Dō Jime

WHICH SCHOOLS WERE TAUGHT TOGETHER?

Fighting schools are transmitted from generation to generation, but sometimes, it happens that there is no legitimate follower in a school. The owner of this system would then approach the Sōke of another school and transmit his Denshō to keep the school alive. This is what happened to Kukishin Ryū & Takagi Yōshin Ryū, and to Koto Ryū & Gyokko Ryū.



WHAT WAS TAKAMATSU SENSEI NICKNAMED?

Takamatsu Sensei received many nicknames during his lifetime. As a child he was called “Nakimiso” (the Cry Baby), but during adulthood, he was known as “Moko No Tora” (the Mongolian Tiger), and in China, as “Wu Sen” (the God of War) which became “Bujin” in Japanese.

JIN RYAKU NO MAKI

WHEN WAS TOGAKURE RYŪ CREATED?

Togakure Ryū was created in the 12th Century (around 1161AD) before the Genji clan defeated the Heike clan during the naval battle of “Dan no Ura” (1185AD) and established the Kamakura Shōgunate.

WHO WAS THE FOUNDER OF TOGAKURE RYŪ?

Daisuke Nishina, a samurai of the Genji clan, was hiding in the Iga mountains, near the Togakure village after the Genji clan (the Minamoto family) had been defeated by the Heike clan (the Taira family), where he encountered an exiled Chinese warrior monk named Kain Doshin who taught him the Hakuun Ryū, Chinese and Tibetan fighting styles. Daisuke Nishina changed his name to Daisuke Togakure, and created the Togakure Ryū.

WHO TAUGHT TOGAKURE RYŪ TO TAKAMATSU?

Toda Shiryūken Masamitsu Sensei was the uncle of Takamatsu Sensei. He was an instructor at a military academy of Kyōtō in the Nakano district. He dedicated the end of his life to the teaching the martial arts of:

- Shinden Fudō Ryū
- Gyokko Ryū
- Koto Ryū
- Togakure Ryū
- Kumogakure Ryū
- Gyokushin Ryū



Young Takamatsu was sent by his father to enter the Military Academy, but having lost the use of one ear in a fight, he was not allowed to take the exam.

WHERE DID TOGAKURE RYŪ ORIGINATE?

The village of Togakure still exists today, it is now called Togakushi, and it is a famous ski resort in Kaminomichi, Nagato (260 km NW of Tōkyō).

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF A TANTŌ?

A Tantō is a knife with a blade measuring not more than 30cm. If the blade is longer, the knife is called a Kōdachi.

WHY IS THERE NO TANTŌ JUTSU DENSHŌ?

Although it might have existed in other martial arts, there is no Denshō of Tantō in the Bujinkan schools. The reason for that is that the knife was a basic weapon for every soldier, and was not taught in the military (as it is still the case today).

WHAT IS A KUNAI?

A Kunai is a multi-purpose tool in the shape of a fish. It is a blunt blade made of tempered iron that serves as a shovel or a hammer. In Bujinkan, it is used to block an attack, or to hit the attacker while in combat.

WHAT IS A WAKIZASHI?

A Wakizashi (or Kōdachi) is a short sword inserted in the belt at the belly that provides support to the long sword. The word comes from “waki” (support) and “zashi” (*balance*). Samurais used to wear a long, flat Obi (belt) that was used as a set of pockets. It was folded in “U” shape, and rolled around the waist at least three times. The Wakizashi was placed first between the first and second roll of the belt, followed by the long sword which was placed between the second and third roll. This was done to protect the lacquer of the Saya (*scabbard*).



WHAT IS KOI GUCHI?

“Koi” means *carp* and “Kuchi” means *mouth*. The Koi Guchi is the opening in the Saya (*scabbard*) holding the blade. When holding the extremity of the Saya, the thumb and index look like the lips of a carp.

TANTŌ JUTSU & HANBŌ

WHEN DID THE GYOKKO RYŪ ORIGINATE?

Gyokko Ryū was established as a fighting system during the 12th Century, but it originates in China at the end of the Tang dynasty (618-907), when a monk named Chō Gyokko fled to Japan and shared his fighting knowledge with the community that welcomed him.

WHAT IS THE “TENSHŌ IGA NO RAN”?

During the Sengoku Jidai (the period of war of 1467-1568), Oda Nobunaga returns to invade Iga in 1581, two years after the first attempt by his son, Oda Nobuo in 1579. This war is called "Tenshō Iga no Ran" (the Rebellion/War of Iga during the Tenshō Era) (天正伊賀の乱).

WHAT OPPOSED NOBUNAGA AND THE NINJAS?

In his desire to unify Japan by force, Nobunaga faced a group in the Iga province that refused to follow him and the new organization of the country he was creating. The guerrilla and resistance that ensued is said to be the origin of what we call Ninjutsu today. It ends with the departure of the families of Jizamurai of Iga. These families had developed special techniques during the many years of guerrilla warfare. Their relocation all over the country explains why 70 Ryūha of Ninjutsu suddenly appeared at the end of 16th century.

WHAT IS "KOSSHI JUTSU"?

It is techniques to hit on Kyūsho, tendons or soft parts of the body. It is also the typical Gyokko Ryū movements done by pivoting the whole body around the backbone as a vertical axis.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN KAMAE OF GYOKKO RYŪ?

The Gyokko Ryū has many Kamae, but the main 3 Kamae are:

- Ichimonji no Kamae
- Jūmonji no Kamae
- Hichō no Kamae

The other Kamae are linked to the 3 levels of Gyokko Ryū, and they are:

- Ten Ryaku Uchū Gasshō no Kamae
- Fūten Goshin Gasshō no Kamae
- Hannō Banitsu no Kamae
- Tenchi Inyō no Kamae (and its variations Shizentai Hira no Kamae, Ryūsetsu no Kamae & Hanin no Kamae)

WHO WAS MOMOCHI SANDAYU?

Japan history retained the names of eight legendary Ninja: Omochi Sandayu, Ishikawa Goemon, Fujibayashi Nagato, Sarutobi, Hattori Hanzo, Kotaro Fuma, Jinichi Kawakami, and Mochizuki Chiyome (a woman). Momochi Sandayu was the legendary Sōke of Gyokko Ryū and Koto Ryū. Ninja of Iga, he fought the invasion led by Nobunaga and died during the Tensho Iga no Ran at the end of the 16th Century.

WHEN WAS THE HANBŌ CREATED?

Sticks have been used to fight since mankind has been on this planet, and there is no formal Denshō of Hanbō Jutsu. Hanbō techniques became common during the Meiji period, when Japanese began to dress like westerners. As samurai lost their right to carry a sword, their walking stick became their weapon.

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF A HANBŌ?

The Hanbō (“half bō”) was 3 Shaku long, i.e. 91cm (1 Shaku = 30.3 cm). However, due to the difference in average heights of Japanese, and Westerners, the right length for a Hanbō for most practitioners today



should be longer: given that a Hanbō was historically a walking stick, a good measure would be from the ground to one fist above the user's hip.

WHAT IS “OTONASHI NO KAMAE”?

Many Ryūha use Otonashi no Kamae (音無しの構え). Otonashi means to “go down”, or “say nothing and wait for an opportunity”. Otonashi no Kamae therefore could translate into the posture of “waiting silently for an opportunity”. We can see the application of this Kamae in the Kōdachi and the Hanbō. In Otonashi the Hanbō or Kōdachi is held hidden behind the body awaiting an opportune moment.

BIKENJUTSU & SHOTŌ/KUNAI/JUTTE

WHAT IS A “JIDAI”?

The Japanese started recording dates using the Gregorian calendar around the middle of the 19th Century (during the Meiji period). Before that, an age or a period (of time) was recorded with reference to the reign of a specific emperor or Shōgun. Due to this method of timekeeping, the dates of the beginning and ending of a period might vary, based on the calendar used (solar or lunar calendar) or the event considered for the beginning or ending of a period (e.g. the Tokugawa period could begin 1600AD – after the Battle of Sekigahara, or in 1603AD – when Tokugawa is appointed Shōgun by the emperor, or in 1610AD – when real peace is finally achieved in Japan). A period is called “Jidai” in Japanese.

WHAT ARE JIDAI OF JAPAN?

The list of all the “Jidai” of Japan are:

- 710AD to 794AD – Nara period
- 794AD to 1185AD – Heian period (Heian became Kyoto)
- 1185AD to 1333AD – Kamakura period
- 1333AD to 1573AD – Muromachi period
- 1573AD to 1603AD – Momoyama period



- 1603AD to 1868AD – Edō period (Edō became Tōkyō)
- 1168AD to 1912AD – Meiji period
- 1912AD to 1926AD – Taishō period
- 1926AD to 1989AD – Showa period
- 1989AD to 2019AD – Heisei period
- 2019AD to Present – Reiwa period

All the 9 schools of the Bujinkan were created around a period of conflict, when one period was ending, another was taking shape:

- The Gyokko Ryū was created around the 9th Century, when the Nara period was giving way to the Heian period;
- The Togakure Ryū and the Shinden Fudō Ryū were created around the 12th Century, when the Heian period was giving way to the Kamakura period;
- The Koto Ryū, Gyokushin Ryū, Kumogakure Ryū and Gikan Ryū were created in the 16th Century, during the Sengoku period, when the nation was in a state of chaos and war;
- The Takagi Yōshin Ryū was created around the turn of the 17th Century, when the Edō period was taking shape after the Azuchi-Momoyama period.

WHAT IS THE TOKUGAWA ERA?

The Tokugawa era begins on March 24th, 1603 when Tokugawa Ieyasu receives the title of Shōgun from the Emperor Go-Yōzei. He was 60 years old and led the country until 1605. He officially resigned and gave the power to his son Tokugawa Hidetada but continued to rule the country in the shadow till his death in 1616. He governed from Edō (Tōkyō) which is why this era is often referred to as the Edō Jidai. The followers of Ieyasu were in power until the Meiji restoration in 1868. They all received the title of Shōgun.



WHAT IS A "SHŌGUN"?

A Shōgun (Shō = leader, general; -gun = armies, war) is the General in Chief of the armies, and is also the head of the Government. In the history of Japan, the Shōgun was the real leader of the country but had to be appointed by the emperor.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KATANA AND TACHI?

The main difference between a Tachi and a Katana resides in how you hold them. The tachi is hung on the side, resting over the thigh of the user, with the cutting edge of the blade facing the ground. The katana is worn in the belt, with the cutting edge facing towards the Sky. Other noticeable differences are in the size and curvature ("sori") of the blades and their centre of gravity: The Tachi is often longer and more curved than the Katana.

WHAT ARE THE "GOSHIN"?

Hatsumi Sensei refers to the Goshin as the "5 periods of weapons":

- Tsurugi (or Ken)
- Tachi
- Jū (firearms)
- Katana
- Modern Weapons (nuclear weapons)

It is interesting to note that the use of Katana came after the use of the firearms imported by the Portuguese during the 16th century: The Katana was used mainly during the peace period of the Tokugawa Shōgunate (1603-1868). It is also interesting to note that Tsurugi (double edged sword) was in use for 11 centuries in Japan (24 centuries after China).

WHO LED JAPAN AFTER NOBUNAGA?

On the death of Nobunaga betrayed by one of his generals (Akechi Mitsuhide), Hideyoshi Toyotomi avenges his death and became his successor. Hideyoshi completes the unification of Japan and he is replaced



after his death by Tokugawa Ieyasu. Of these three rulers, only Tokugawa was officially appointed Shōgun by the emperor.

WHAT IS "SHIMERU"?

Shimeru means to apply pressure, but is commonly used in martial arts for “choking”, as in the Shime Waza. Shimeru is also the action applied to the Tsuka with the left hand at the end of a cut.

WHAT IS A JUTTE?

A Jutte (“ten hands”) is a non-sharp weapon made of a 30-50cm of steel stick with a protruding metallic finger. This finger is able to block an attack while capturing the attacking weapon (blade, or finger). This was a common weapon of the police during the Tokugawa period.

WHAT IS THE "KAMAKURA JIDAI"?

The Kamakura Jidai stretches from 12th to 14th Century. It marks the start of a new government under the leadership of Minamoto no Yoritomo. His government was located in Kamakura to get rid of the influence of the Heian Court. Yoritomo defeated the ruling Taira clan with the help of his brother, Minamoto no Yoshitsune who was a general in his army. Yoshitsune became too popular and was forced by his brother to commit Seppuku. With the Kamakura Jidai and the end of the Heian Jidai, the samurai begins to rule the country. They will do so until the Meiji restoration (1868).

WHICH BATTLE GAVE VICTORY TO TOKUGAWA?

On 21st October 1600, Tokugawa Ieyasu won the Sekigahara battle (aka the “Sekigahara no Tatakai”) against the army of Toyotomi Hideyori, the son of Hideyoshi. Of the 170,000 men who met on the Plains of Sekigahara, 45,000 died (including 30,000 from Toyotomi’s army). Some considered this victory to be the start of Tokugawa’s Shōgunate, although he was officially declared Shōgun only three years later.



BŌ JUTSU & JŌ JUTSU

WHO WAS ISHIKAWA GOEMON?

Ishikawa Goemon is a legendary Ninja from the Japanese folklore, who used to steal and redistribute his booty to peasants (like Robin Hood). His name was Sanada Kuranoshin and he was from a Samurai family. When he was 15, after his father was murdered by the men of Shōgun Ashikaga, he fled to Iga and learned Gyokko Ryū with Momochi Sandayu. After failing in murdering Oda Nobunaga, he was finally captured and burnt alive in a cauldron.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOKO ARAUKI AND JŪJI ARAUKI?

Yoko Aruki is a sideways movement, feet are crossing and toes are always pointing in the same direction. Jūji Aruki is a sideways movement made by pivoting the body. Toes are hence pointing in perpendicular directions.

WHICH SCHOOLS ARE YOKO ARAUKI AND JŪJI ARAUKI COMING FROM?

Yoko Aruki is the traditional footwork from Koto Ryū and Jūji Aruki is the traditional footwork from Gyokko Ryū.

WHO WAS KURANDO?

The Samurai who freed the emperor Go Daigo was called Kurando. The emperor gave him the nickname of "Kukishin": the one that fights like "9 (Ku) demons (kishin)." He created Kukishin Ryū (九鬼神伝流), the school of the spirit of the 9 demons (aka Kukishinden Ryū).

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "KUKISHIN"?

There are several ways to write "Kukishin". Hatsumi Sensei plays with the different sounds that make up the word: Ku is 9, but Kū (空) is emptiness (the 5th element). Kishin (鬼神) is a "fierce god", but also a demon (Oni,



Ki, Kishin). Shin (心) is heart, spirit; but also, truth (真). Shinden (神殿) is the altar that we bow to in the dōjō, but also the teachings given by the Gods (神伝). Therefore, although the official translation is "9 demons" (in reference to the extraordinary fighting ability of Kurando), we often refer to "divine teachings" or to the "emptiness that allows you to touch the divine essence of things" or the ability to "perceive Kūkan or emptiness".

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF A BŌ?

A Bō (also called Rokushakubō) is 6 shaku long, i.e. 1.82m (1 Shaku = 30.3 cm). However, due to the difference in average heights of Japanese and Westerners, a 2m long Bō is better suited. The length of 6 Shaku is called Ken (and the Tatami was 1 Ken long). Although Japan went metric in 1924, this is still used by many (e.g. "My room is 5 tatami" = 10m²).

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF A JŌ?

The Jō (also called Yonshakubō) is 4 Shaku long, i.e. 1.21m (1 Shaku = 30.3 cm). However, due to the difference in average heights of Japanese and Westerners, the right length for a Jō is to the armpit of the wielder.

WHAT IS THE ADVANTAGE OF USING A JŌ AS A WEAPON?

Jōjutsu was taught for the first time in Bujinkan in 1997, at the culmination of the study of the Bō, Yari, Naginata and Biken and it embodied the principles and concepts covered in all of these weapons. The Jō was so versatile that Hatsumi Sensei often referred to it as the "Swiss army knife" of the Bujinkan.

YARI JUTSU & NAGINATA JUTSU

WHY IS "KASUMI UCHI" DIFFERENT WITH BŌ/ YARI?

Kasumi Uchi refers to the striking of the Kasumi (the temporal bone) with the extremity of the weapon. This technique is used both in Bō Jutsu and



Yari Jutsu. The difference is that with the Yari, the circular movement is horizontal (as opposed to diagonal with the Bō), which allows you to increase the force of impact of the steel tip without losing balance.

WHY ARE WEAPONS AN EXTENSION OF THE BODY?

Every unarmed movement in Bujinkan is a fighting technique from which the Yoroi and Weapons have been taken off, to allow teaching to children. Every technique is considered a technique with a Weapon, even when you don't have one. In Bujinkan, all techniques are developed for weapons and every movement is treated as a weapon technique, therefore the weapon is an extension of your own body and its movement.

WHY IS THERE A WEIGHT AT THE END OF A YARI OR NAGINATA?

The metallic weight at the end of a Yari or a Naginata has two names: "Ishizuki", or "Hirumaki". "Ishizuki" means a "weight with a point", it is a spike used to balance the weight of the blade or spear head at the blunt end of the weapon. "Hirumaki" means "Big Roll", and is used as a wrapping, or a cladding of metal added to increase the weight. It reinforces the wood and prevents splitting, and balances the weapon.

WHY IS CROSSING HANDS ALLOWED WITH THE NAGINATA?

In the Bujinkan it is forbidden to cross your hands when using a Bō or a Yari, but it is allowed with the Naginata because the handle of the Naginata is to be considered as a very long Tsuka. The Naginata is used like a sword with the right hand always forward. The Naginata movements are an evolution of the Bō and Yari movements.

WHAT IS A SODE GARAMI?

Developed during peace time (when the Yoroi was not worn), it is a Bō with hooks on one extremity, looking like a crown. It allows the wielder to entangle ("garami") the sleeve ("sode") of the opponent. The upper part of the weapon is protected by a 1-shaku long metallic tube covered with



spikes, so when an opponent was entangled, he would not be able to grab the weapon to escape. It was mainly used by the police along with the Tsukubō (with a T-shaped head) or a Sasumata (with a 'U' shaped fork).

WHAT IS A KAMA YARI?

A Kama is a sickle. A Kama Yari is a type of Yari with one or two curved blades, perpendicular to the pole.

WHAT IS THE SHAPE OF THE YARI HEAD?

The Yari head comes in many shapes, but the most common one is the triangular head Yari which is called Sankaku. This specific shape was not very sharp but was mainly used to drill into the opponent.

WHICH WEAPON WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS?

The Yari was the most devastating weapon during the centuries of war in Japan. According to Hatsumi Sensei, the Yari accounted for 60% of deaths, compared to 20% only for swords (Tachi / Katana / Nodachi).

WHY WAS THE YOROI CREATED?

The Yoroi was created to protect the wearer from the Yari, even though the Samurai could still stab the opponent through the plates, or harm the wearer of the Yoroi by piercing through the gaps and drilling into their body.

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF A NAGINATA?

The Naginata could be found in various dimensions, but the most common size was between 2.10 and 2.15 meters.