

The Untold Story of Mabuni Kenwa
by Patrick McCarthy

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

The Mabuni Kenwa Story

"When compared to the fighting traditions of Japan's ancient *samurai* warrior, *Mabuni's Shitoryu* must then be to *Okinawa's* combative heritage what *judo* and *kendo* are to the classical schools of grappling and swordsmanship, *jujutsu* and *kenjutsu*." PM

by
Patrick McCarthy

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Contents

Acknowledgements	4
Preface	5
Introduction	6
Mabuni The Man	7
Ochayagoten Celebration	9
Qin Na	13
Toudijutsu on the Mainland	14
Itosu's Ten lessons	14
Mabuni Goes to the Mainland	16
Understanding the name "Shitoryu"	17
Kobudo	18
Opposition	19
The Dai Nippon Butokukai	20
Mabuni the Author	22
Transcending Boundaries	26
Conclusion	26
Poem	27
Genealogy	29
Kata of Shitoryu	30
About the Author	31

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Preface



In 1905, the same year that Okinawan Karate master Hanashiro Chomo published "Karate Kumite," the great French mathematician and philosopher Henri Poincare wrote, "*Science is built upon facts, much in the same way that a house is built up of stones; but the accumulation of facts is no more a science than a heap of stones is a house.*" So too, can the same be said of *Karatedo* when it is learned indiscriminately. Learning *Karatedo* without understanding the principles and values upon which it rests reduces a profound cultural tradition to a mere sport, which can, and often is, used as a form of common brutality.

Vigorously pursuing a moderately successful competitive career in sport Karate for many years, I sought to get beyond the immediate results of physical training and discover the essence of the art. Ultimately, my desire took me on a pilgrimage to Japan for the sole purpose of researching *Karatedo*, its history, philosophy and application. There I lived for nearly ten years and traveled all over the country, to China and throughout Asia to further my studies. Although I believe that my unswerving enthusiasm and determination, combined with lots of luck and a Japanese wife, had much to do with the success of my efforts, my teacher, Kinjo Hiroshi, is of the opinion that it was simply my destiny. Whatever the case, my research has brought me into contact with many of the most respected authorities of the fighting traditions of our time. It is no secret then that my understanding of *Karatedo* has been profoundly influenced by those whom I have enjoyed the pain and pleasure of learning from.

Mastering *Karatedo* means mastering the self, and before such a feat can ever be accomplished one must first transcend the very source of human weakness. *Karatedo*, when learned correctly, teaches the source of such weakness is internal, not external. Hence, the journey must be inward, not outward. In spite of the differences which separate the art from its competitive counterpart, perhaps we might all profit more by recognizing its affinity: "the real opponent lies within, and it is there where all battles must be first fought."

With the advent of *Karatedo* and its subsequent popularization each generation has produced creative leaders who, in an effort to keep the tradition a living experience for the community it serves, re-interpret the common principles upon which it rests. In doing so, more innovative methods of imparting its ancient principles unfold. Regardless of how small, *Karatedo* is, nonetheless, a part of Japanese Budo and must, therefore, be recognized as a microcosm of the profound culture from which it comes. However, its inner-most message, one which transcends mere punching or kicking, winning or losing, has become overshadowed during a generation

so preoccupied with materialism and greed. Unscrupulous leaders, under the guise of impartiality, practice methodical discrimination with such impunity that *Karatedo* has become plagued by the very issues it seeks to eradicate.

The teachers who have made the most lasting impressions upon me have been those who advocated diligent training, principles and the inward journey. Mabuni Kenwa was a man who found direction in the virtues, values and principles upon which *Karatedo* rests. The great master maintained that virtues, values and principles never varied in the same way that the personalities of those most responsible for imparting them often did. Kenwa Sensei truly was a great man and I sincerely hope that this modest presentation might portray him as such. Any work must therefore be recognized as ongoing research.

Patrick McCarthy
Yokohama

Introduction

空
手
道

Karatedo is the modern Japanese art of self-defense that fosters humility, pacifism, physical fitness, and spiritual harmony through physical discipline; philosophical assimilation; and protracted methodical, introspection. Once vigorously cultivated by *Okinawa's* feudal aristocracy, *karatedo* emerged from the Chinese *gongfu*¹ that had been introduced to the tiny island kingdom over several generations.

By nature, the island of *Okinawa* had evolved as a community of farmers and fishermen. However, because of its suitable geographic location between Japan, China, and the rest of Asia, it ultimately became a bustling port for shipping and reshipping. Threatening the early period of this developing prosperity, internal power struggles kept much of *Okinawa* contained in civil wars. To end the feudal conflict, a newly centralized government, formed by King *Shoshin* (1477-1526), methodically prohibited the use and stockpiling of weapons in 1507. Powerful landowners were then forced to consider alternative means of protecting themselves and their property.

This ultimately led to the development of a native fighting discipline that introduced plebeian combative principles to a myriad of domestic weapon-usable objects.

Enjoying a protracted liaison with the Middle Kingdom (China), every facet of *Okinawa's* culture was deeply influenced by the more sophisticated Chinese. Up to and even beyond the *Meiji* Restoration (1868), various kinds of *gongfu* found their way to the tiny archipelago. The self-defense principles of Chinese *gongfu* enabled its users to subjugate an adversary without rendering serious injury unless it was absolutely necessary. Hence, these effective *gongfu* self-defense principles were embraced as an adjunct to domestic law enforcement, and then more vigorously cultivated, in a ritual of secrecy, after the *Satsuma Samurai's* military subjugation of *Okinawa* in 1609. Representing varying interpretations of these *gongfu* principles modern *karatedo*, evolved from these old Chinese disciplines.

Karatedo's numerous interpretations have come about as each generation has produced masters who cultivated different but equally effective ways of achieving *karate's* goal of perfection. *Shitoryu karatedo* is one such style. With an incredible repertoire of weapons and empty-hand *kata* (formal exercises) and a profound philosophical infrastructure, *Shitoryu karatedo* is one of the most comprehensive

¹ *Gongfu* is a generic Chinese-Mandarin term denoting the various self-defence traditions that developed from either the Buddhist *Shaolin* Temple (i.e., Dragon, Leopard, Tiger, Crane, Snake), or the *Daoist Wudang* Temples (i.e., *Taijiquan*, *Bagua*, *Xingyi*); it generally means "accomplished work." There are two current, more specific Mandarin terms used, which fraught with

representations of *Okinawa's* ancient combative heritage.

In fact, when compared to the fighting traditions of Japan's ancient *samurai* warrior, *Shitoryu karatedo* is to *Okinawa's* combative heritage what *judo* and *kendo* are to the classical schools of grappling and swordsmanship, *jujutsu* and *kenjutsu*. *Mabuni Kenwa* (1889-1952), the founder of the *Shitoryu* tradition, was one of Japan's most respected masters and pioneers of the "*Okinawan*" self-defense disciplines. Yet, the story of this unpretentious man, and his efforts to establish a single style of *karatedo*, remain virtually unknown.

The Man



Mabuni Kenwa was one of the most gifted prodigies to ever study *Ryukyu kenpo Toudijutsu*² in *Okinawa* during the dawn of this century. The 17th generation descendant of a distinguished *keimochi*³ named *Oni Ougusuku*; *Mabuni Kenwa* was born and raised in *Okinawa's* old castle district of *Shuri*. First schooled in the fighting traditions when just a boy, *Kenwa* was a weak and frail child, according to his 1938 book, "*Kobo Kenpo Karatedo Numon*." However, through *karatedo* training, his strength gradually increased as he matured into a powerful and, by all accounts, kind young man.

It was during the *Itosu-Higashionna* generation⁴ of *karatedo* history that a young *Kenwa* first began learning the mainstream traditions of *toudijutsu*. An insatiable curiosity brought *Kenwa* into contact with several other indigenous, albeit lesser known, self-defense disciplines like *tegumi* (indigenous grappling;) and various kinds of *kobudo*, i.e., *bojutsu* and *saijutsu*. The various interpretations (styles) we know today did not then exist in *Okinawa*. In fact, the term *karatedo* had not yet been established.

The local self-defense disciplines were simply referred to in *Hogan* (the *Okinawan* dialect) as "*di*," meaning "hand" or "hands," pronounced "*te*" (tay) in Japanese, or more properly, "*toudi*" ("Chinese hand,) reflecting to its Chinese origins. "Indigenous" fighting disciplines included self-defence traditions that had been cultivated in and around *Shuri*, much, of which the legendary *Bushi Matsumura* (1809-1901) was responsible for handing down from his teacher, *Toudi Sakugawa*.⁵

However, the history of those self-defence methods had remained shrouded in folklore for as long as anybody could remember. Ironically, it was not until late 1926 that mainstream self-defence disciplines practiced in *Okinawa* were assigned such names as *Shurite*, *Nahate*, and *Tomarite*. With a forthcoming visit by the dignified founder of *Judo*, *Dr. Kano Jigoro*, this name change was done to eradicate *karate's* foreign (Chinese) image and associate the arts with the locality in which they were being cultivated.

2 A generic *Hogan* term used up until December 1933 to describe the Chinese-based eclectic civil self-defense disciplines as they evolved in *Okinawa*.

3 Often mistakenly referred to as *shizoku*, the term *keimochi* is used to describe people with a chronicled lineage during *Okinawa's* *Ryukyu* kingdom period. *Shizoku* is a *Meiji*-Period Japanese term used to denote members of the former *samurai* class. *Mukei* refers to those *Okinawans* without a chronicled lineage, peasants.

4 This refers to the era in which *Okinawa's* two mainstream self-defense traditions, *Nahate* and *Shurite*, were popularized by *Higashionna Kanryo* (1853-1917) and *Itosu Ankoh* (1832-1915).

5 There are three versions regarding *Sakugawa's* birth and death dates: 1733-1815, 1762-1843, and 1774-1838.

No one really knows how old the *Nahate*, *Shurite*, and *Tomarite* traditions were; however, with *Kuninda* (*Naha's Kume* Village) being the former Chinese settlement on this one-time tributary state (est. 1393), most people assumed that *gongfu* had always been practiced there. Notwithstanding, young *Kenwa* enjoyed a remarkable penchant for athletics and was attracted to a myriad of native combative disciplines, excelling in all. In 1902, at just 13 years of age, *Mabuni* started learning *Toudijutsu* directly under the eminent master *Itosu Ankoh* (*Ankoh* is often mistakenly pronounced *Yasutsune*, which is a Japanese name) at the old master's home in *Shuri*. Later, he learned under *Hanashiro Chomo* (1869-1945) while a student at *Okinawa's* Prefectural First Middle School. When *Kenwa* was 20 years old and had already finished school, he trained directly under *Higashionna Kanryo* (often pronounced *Higaonna*), the prominent master from *Naha*, thanks to an introduction from his good friend, *Miyagi Chojun* (1888-1953). That was in 1910, the same year that *Miyagi* was sent to *Miyazaki* Prefecture, Japan, to serve his two-year compulsory military service.

Another *deshi* (personal disciple) of *Higashionna*, *Kiyoda Juhatsu* (1886-1967) said that *Mabuni* had trained under *Higashionna* with an intensity he had not previously seen. However, *Mabuni's* training under *Higashionna* was cut short a year after he began because of his two-year military obligation. *Mabuni* was one of only three men who enjoyed the privilege of studying directly under two of *karate's* most important figures of that era; *Toyama Kanken* (1888-1966) and *Gusukuma Shimpan* (1890-1954) were the other two.

Receiving a personal introduction was the only way to get any instruction in the self-defense arts during those early days. Unlike today where there are "*dojo*" in practically every community center, and martial arts instruction is taken for granted, training then, as it had for generations before, took place virtually in secrecy. It was not as if people were unaware of such practices, it was just that training had always been conducted in seclusion.

The *deshi* eagerly embraced a set of standards not fashionable to a generation dominated by materialism. Sales gimmicks, 2-for-1 memberships, free week passes, and 19-year-old masters had not yet evolved. It was still considered a privilege and honor to be accepted as a *deshi*. Also, the standard *dogi* (uniform) and *dojo* (training hall) concept had yet to be established. *Deshi* usually trained outdoors in their *fundoshi* (loincloths, the standard underwear of that generation).

In 1913, and nearly 23 years old, *Mabuni* began a career in civil law enforcement after completing his obligatory military service. This proved to be valuable experience for *Mabuni*, especially after he was promoted and transferred to the *Naha* Central Police Station's Detective Division. As a detective, he traveled throughout the island and came into contact with many people who had a profound influence upon him.

Quoting *Mabuni's* son *Kenei*, the astute British *karate* historian *Graham Noble* described *Kenwa Sensei* thusly: "In his younger days many people would challenge my father to *kakedamashi* (challenge match, or exchange of techniques) after they had heard he was practicing '*te*.' He accepted these challenges and would choose a quiet corner of town for the match. Each contestant would bring a second. There were no special *dojo* like there are today; we used to train and fight on open ground. There was no street lighting; we had to use lanterns. In this dim light contestants fought, and then after a period the seconds would intervene and stop the fight. They would then declare who was the winner and who needed more training. Such challenges were often made to my father, and he frequently acted as a second at others."⁶

Mabuni eagerly sought out the guidance of experts he met through his position. Among the experts

⁶ Graham Noble, "Master *Funakoshi's Karate*," Liverpool, Fighting Arts International Magazine, Issue #61.

Mabuni Kenwa came into contact with *Aragaki Seisho Tsuji Pechin*.⁷ Both *Itosu* and *Higashionna* had described *Aragaki* as an eminent authority in the empty-handed and weapon disciplines. Seeking out *Aragaki* at his *Kuninda* residence, *Mabuni* learned the *bojutsu* tradition of *Sesoku* from *Aragaki*. A former interpreter for the *Ryukyuan* court and *pechin* class *kemochi*, *Aragaki* also corrected the *Sochin kata* that *Mabuni* had learned from Master *Itosu*. During his fruitful relationship with *Aragaki*, *Mabuni Sensei* was also taught the *Niseishi* and *Unshu kata* that Master *Aragaki* had brought back from *Fuzhou, Fujian, China*.

Although there is extensive speculation about Master *Aragaki*, little information actually exists on him. *Funakoshi Gichin* (1868-1957) wrote that *Aragaki* had studied *gongfu* under *Wai Xinxian*.⁸ *Fujiwara Ryoza* said that *Aragaki Seisho* traveled to *Beijing* in 1866 with *Zhao Xin*, the last Chinese *Sapposhi* to visit the *Ryukyu* Kingdom.⁹ In his description of *Aragaki*, *Nakaya Takao* wrote that he had also accompanied *Uechi Kanbum* (1877-1948) and *Matsuda Tokusaburo* (1877-1931) on their 1897 trip to China¹⁰. We know that *Aragaki* was the first to teach *Higashionna Kanryo*, before referring him to master *Kojo Taite* (1837-1917). The son of *Chitose Tsuyoshi* (1898-1984; the founder of *Chitoryu karatedo*), recently told me that his father had also studied briefly with master *Aragaki*. *Toyama Kanken* also wrote that he too had received instruction from *Aragaki*.¹¹

Ochayagoten Celebration¹²

On 24 March, 1867, a special ceremony was held at the *Ochayagoten*¹³ of *Shuri* castle's East Garden in *Sakiyama* village, to commemorate *Zhao Xin*, the last *Sapposhi*'s visit to *Okinawa* (in March of 1866).¹⁴

The program was divided into three parts: 1. *San Ryu Chu* (native folk dancing), 2. *Bujutsu* (martial arts), and 3. *Uchihanazutsumi* (drum music.) This record of martial arts is now regarded as the "Ten Items of *Bugei*," and because it occurred during the old *Ryukyu* Dynasty, hence, it is regarded as an important document.

The Martial Arts Program

1. *Tenbe (Shield & Blade demonstration)* by *Maeda Chiku Pechin*
2. *Tesahaku (iron ruler or saijutsu) & Bojutsu prearranged sparring* by *Maeda Chiku Pechin* and *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*
3. *Jusanpo (Seisan kata)* by *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*
4. *Bo & Toudi (bojutsu & Toudi prearranged sparring)* by *Maeda Chiku Pechin* and *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*
5. *Chishaukiun demonstration* by *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*
6. *Tenbe & Bojutsu (Shield/Blade & Bojutsu prearranged sparring)* by *Tomura Chikudon Pechin* and *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*
7. *Teshaku (saijutsu kata demonstration)* by *Maeda Chiku Pechin*
8. *Toudijutsu prearranged applications* by *Maeda Chiku Pechin* and *Aragaki Tsuji Pechin*

⁷ A Master of White Crane and Monk Fist boxing, *Aragaki* (1840-1920) was described by one of his students, *Chitose Tsuyoshi* the founder of *Chitoryu karatedo* as having passed away in 1918.

⁸ "Karatedo Kyohan," *Kodansha International*, 1973; p 8.

⁹ *Gima Shinkin* and *Fujiwara Ryoza*, "Kindai Karatedo no Rekishio Kataru," published by Baseball Magazine, Tokyo; 1986. p 34.

¹⁰ *Nakaya Takao*, "Karatedo, History and Philosophy," JSS Publishing Co., Carrollton, TX., 1986; p 38.

¹¹ *Toyama Kanken*, "Karatedo Daiho Kan," Tokyo, *Tsuru Shobo*, 1963; p 83.

¹² Although not directly connected to the life of *Mabuni Kenwa*, the *Ochayagoten* demonstration is, nonetheless, of enormous significance, and confirms Master *Aragaki* as a historically important figure.

¹³ The *Ochayagoten* (lit. the great tea palace) in *Shuri's Sakiyama* district, was a beautiful garden area where the *Sapposhi* and other dignitaries would wait prior to their audience with the king.

¹⁴ "Nihon Budo Taikei," vol #8, chapter on *Karatedo*, Tokyo, 1982, p60.

9. *Shabo* (*Bojutsu kata* demonstration) by Mr. *Ikemiyagusuku "Shusai"* [*shusai* were *Kume* village *kemochi* (aristocratic) boys who would ultimately receive a government stipend to study in China and later hold an official position in the the service of the King]
10. *Suparinpei kata* by *Tomura Chikudon Pechin*

Mabuni was nearly 37 years old before he established his first real *dojo* in October 1925. However, in the preceding years he had founded *Toudijutsu* clubs at the police department and a local marine college. Of this remarkable man's many accomplishments, perhaps none was as noteworthy as his organizing the *Okinawa Toudi Kenkyukai* ("The *Gongfu* Research Society of *Okinawa*") with his friend *Miyagi Chojun*.

It was in realizing that the interests they shared were far greater than the differences separating them, that informal gatherings headed up by *Motobu Choyu* (1865-1929, *Motobu Choki's* older half-brother) ultimately prompted *Mabuni* and *Miyagi* to organize an official *Toudijutsu* research society. Knowing that the task of researching, preserving, and promoting *Toudijutsu* was far beyond the reach of any one man, *Mabuni* and *Miyagi*, with *Motobu's* support, felt that by officially structuring their impromptu exchanges, the entire *Toudijutsu* movement could be improved.

In many ways, the study group was *Okinawa's* first informal *karate* association, an early attempt at bringing together the loose-knit groups after the deaths of *Itosu* and *Higashionna*. Supported by local *Toudijutsu* practitioners, *Mabuni Kenwa*, with little space and next to no money, established the *Toudijutsu Kenkyukai* at his *Shuri* home in 1918.



In a 1978 interview, *Mabuni's* first son, *Kenei*, remembered when he was growing up how "everyone knew the *Mabuni* house was a Mecca for *karate* men."¹⁵ Some of the most recognizable names supporting the study group were: *Funakoshi Gichin* (1827-1906, the principal student of *Azato Ankoh*), *Matayoshi Shinko* (1888-1947; primarily a *kobudo* expert who had honed his skills in China), *Yabiku Moden* (1882-1945; a local weapons expert and former student of *Itosu*), *Oshiro Chojo* (1887-1935; also a former student of *Itosu* and an instructor at the *Okinawa Teachers College*, but best remembered for his skill in *Yamaneryu bojutsu*), *Chibana Choshin* (1885-1969; also a former student of *Itosu*, who later opened his own club at *Baron Nakajin's* residence in 1919, and coined the term *Shorinryu* to describe his style), *Wu Xiangui* (1886-1940; a Chinese who's Japanese name was *Go Kenki*, a Whooping Crane *gongfu* expert who immigrated from *Fuzhou* in 1912), *Wu's* friend, *Tang Daiji* (1887-1937; another Chinese known as *To Daiki* in Japanese, an expert of Tiger Fist *gongfu* who immigrated from

Fuzhou in 1915), *Tokuda Anbum* (1886-1945; another former student of *Itosu* who had taught at the Teacher's College), *Gusukuma Shimpan* (1890-1954; a former student of *Itosu* and an instructor at the *Okinawa Teacher's College*), *Kiyoda Juhatsu* (1886-1967; one of *Higashionna Kanryo's* most senior disciples and the founder of *To-Onryu*), *Motobu Choyu* (one of the island's most senior self-defence authorities), *Hohan Sokon* (1889-1982, the disciple of his uncle *Matsumura Nabe*, the grandson of *Bushi Matsumura*, who later founded *Matsumuraha Toudi* [the *Matsumura* sect of *Toudijutsu*]), and *Kyan Chotoku* (1870-1945; a former student of both *Matsumura* and *Itosu*, probably one of *Okinawa's* most popular self-defence teachers at that time).

¹⁵ "Karatedo," Sozo Kabushikigaisha, Tokyo, 1978: pp 60-61.

The *Kenkyukai* gave many public demonstrations all over the island during that era. With local connections in various bureaucratic, educational, and cultural organizations, the group was often called upon to give performances for visiting dignitaries.

On 5 May, 1917, *Funakoshi Gichin* and *Matayoshi Shinko*, two of *Mabuni's* closest senior associates, went to *Kyoto* where they demonstrated *Toudijutsu* at the *Butokukai Butokusai* (Martial Virtues Festival held at the *Butokuden*). This was the first demonstration of *Toudijutsu* on Japan's mainland.

Of the many demonstrations that the *Toudijutsu Kenkyukai* gave, perhaps none were as memorable as those given before members of the imperial family, including Crown Prince *Hirohito* in 1921. Three of the most notable exhibitions in 1924 were one held at the *Taisho* Theatre in *Naha* that featured about 40 different local experts and two at the prefectural teachers' college gymnasium on the hill behind *Shuri* Castle before an imperial contingent from *Tokyo*, and later before Prince *Chichinomiya*.

Expanding the *Okinawa Toudi Kenkyukai* in an effort to accommodate the influx of his own students, *Mabuni* established a *dojo* in his backyard in 1925. Because the *Dai Nippon Butokukai* had not yet officially recognized *Toudi*, as it had *judo* and *kendo*, *Mabuni*, by law, had to report the new development to the local police station. Local government offices in *Okinawa* were in fact smaller representatives of the federal government, and therefore, having *Okinawa Prefecture* recognize the *Okinawa Toudi Kenkyukai* meant national recognition. In many ways, this was the first step to having *Toudi* recognized by the *Butokukai's* *judo* department.

If fate means preparation meeting opportunity, then perhaps the event that had the most effect upon *Mabuni Kenwa's* life was his 1927 demonstration before the founder of *judo*, Dr. *Kano Jigoro*. With *Kano* planning to visit the island in October of that year, *Okinawa Prefecture* had decided to host a special welcoming celebration for him.

*Gima Shinken*¹⁶ wrote that *Kano* first visited *Okinawa* to lecture at the *Okinawan Shihan Gakko* (*Okinawa Teachers College*), and then again four years later in the summer of 1926¹⁷, but during both trips had never seen a *Toudijutsu* demonstration. Hence, as a part of the welcoming celebration in October, *Mabuni* and *Miyagi* were petitioned to organize a demonstration.¹⁸

In preparation for the celebration, the prefecture further recommended that the *Toudi Kenkyukai* consider using a term that might characterize *Toudi* (Chinese hand) as a martial tradition more closely associated with *Okinawa* rather than the existing name, which accented its foreign origins.



16 *Gima Shinken* (1896-1989) was born in *Naha* and first studied *toudi* under *Itosu* and *Yabu Kentsu*. Before going to *Tokyo*, he served as the president of the *Okinawa Teacher's College Toudi* club. He is perhaps best remembered as the young man from *Tokyo Shoka University* who assisted *Funakoshi Gichin* in *Tokyo* with his 1922 demonstration at the "First National Athletic Exhibition" and later at the *Kodokan* demonstration for *Kano Jigoro*

17 *Kano* was invited to *Okinawa* by the prefectural *Judo Yudanshakai* (*Okinawa Prefecture Judo Black Belt Association*) on all three occasions.

18 FAJKO *Karatedo* Directory (p. 86), reports the visit and demonstration occurred in 1927.

In spite of *Hanashiro Chomo* having referred to *Toudi* as *karate* (empty hand) as early as 1905, everyone agreed that the names *Shurite*, *Nahate*, and *Tomarite* should be used to describe the *Toudi* that had been cultivated in and around the *Shuri*, *Naha*, and *Tomari* districts. *Gima Shinken* said that he had never heard *Toudijutsu* referred to as *Shurite* (etc.) before that time, and that it was *Mabuni* who first told both him and *Funakoshi* about these terms when he and *Miyagi* went up to *Tokyo* in 1928.¹⁹

Organized by *Okinawa's* Board of Education, prefectural bureaucrats insisted upon a demonstration that reflected the *kata* (*Pinan* and *Naifuanchin*) being taught in the school system. As such, *Mabuni* was petitioned to provide a commentary on *Shurite*, while *Miyagi* would describe *Nahate*. If there was any one man in Japan during that era who could influence the growth and direction of *budo*, then it was *Dr. Kano*, with his political pull, aristocratic connections, and International Olympic Committee recognition. It was for that very reason that *Mabuni*, frustrated by all the bureaucracy, believed that a demonstration of this nature would only impede the future direction of *Toudijutsu* rather than help it. With that in mind, both he and *Miyagi* implored *Kano* to consider a private demonstration by the island's most senior experts the day after the school demonstration. *Kano* agreed.

The following morning, at the new *Yudanshakai dojo*, *Kano* watched *Yabu*, *Hanashiro*, *Kyan*, *Miyagi*, and *Mabuni* perform *kata* and their applications. *Gima Shinken* wrote: "*Mabuni* told me that right after the demonstration, *Kano* suggested that both *Miyagi* and I go to the mainland to introduce our disciplines there."²⁰

Kano Jigoro, arrived in *Naha (Okinawa)* on 3 January, 1927. For the next four days, he visited the city office, a shrine, and a library. He then went to *Shuri* and up to *Nago*. *Kano* also gave seminars at the *Naha* Public Meeting Hall and Elementary School Auditorium, for students from the Middle School, Girls School, and Teachers College, along with the general public. *Kano Sensei* described seeing a demonstration of *bojutsu*, board breaking, and *Toudi*.²¹

A pragmatic man, *Mabuni* was deeply influenced by the great *Meiji* Period swordsman *Yamaoka Tesshu* (1836-1888), and often quoted him by saying: "Which do you think is better, the carpenter who needs the right tools to complete his task, or the one that can make do with what is available?" Brilliantly eclectic, *Mabuni* always made do with what he had. However, not very well off financially, *Mabuni* was never able to pursue his life-long ambition of traveling and studying the fighting traditions in China, as his teacher, *Higashionna*, and friends, had done.

Nonetheless, in recognizing the importance of such a need, he did cultivate close friendships with Chinese *gongfu* experts *Wu Xiangui*, *Tang Daiji*, and *Uechi Kambun*. *Wu* and *Tang* had a major influence upon not only *Mabuni*, but also his friends *Miyagi*, *Kiyoda*, and *Matayoshi*.

Mabuni's compulsion to understand the entire magnitude of *kata* ultimately provoked him to seek out, commit to memory, analyze, and then cross compare nearly every known *kata* known in *Okinawa*, and then some. In addition to the *Okinawan* paradigms, *Mabuni* also learned several *gongfu quan (kata)* from *Go Kenki*, *To Daiki*, and *Uechi Kambun*.

According to *Fujiwara Ryozo*, *Mabuni Kenwa* learned *Naifuanchin kata* from a student of *Matsumura Sokon* named *Matayoshi*.²² When *Mabuni* demonstrated the *kata* for his teacher, *Itosu*, *Itosu* said that it

19 "Kindai Karatedo no Rekishio Kataru," Ibid; p 270.

20 Ibid, p 143.

21 "Kano Jigoro Taikei," edited by the Kodokan, and published by Abe Osamu, Tokyo, 2nd Edition: vol. #13 1994. pp 107-108.

22 Ibid, p 77.

resembled the *kata Channan* he learned from the Chinese in *Tomari*. However, in seeking to establish a standard everyone would follow, *Itosu* suggested that *Mabuni* practice the modern version *Mabuni* had learned.

Speaking about *Channan*, some people have said he was a *Chan* (*Zen* in Japanese) monk, others say he was a former *Qing* Dynasty (1644-1911) official, even a *gongfu* teacher who fled China after the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. Perhaps he was all three! Whatever the case, it is said that *Channan* left a secret book on *gongfu* with *Itosu*, a book that allegedly influenced him significantly. Some say this book was the *Bubishi* that *Mabuni* had hand-copied and then published in 1934. Others say it was a copy of *Qi Jiguan's* 1561 "*Ji Xiao Xin Shu*," a book from which *Itosu's* idea for the *Pinan kata* came. However, no one can be sure because *Channan's* mysterious book has never surfaced.

Gima Shinken wrote that *Funakoshi* was so well known for teaching the *Pinan kata* that many people referred to him as the *Pinan Sensei*. However, it was *Mabuni Kenwa* who was the original master of *Pinan*, not to mention the *Hakutsuru*, *Cai* (*Kojo* also *Kogusuku*) family fist *kata*, and 5 Ancestor Fists *kata*, as well.²³

Another interesting, but little known, point about the *Pinan kata* appears in the FAJKO (Federation of All-Japan *Karatedo* Organizations) *Karatedo* Directory. "In 1919, at the age of 51, *Funakoshi Gichin*, learned the *pinan kata* from *Mabuni Kenwa*."²⁴ That, of course, would make sense as *Funakoshi Sensei*, who had studied with *Itosu*, was primarily the student of *Azato Ankoh* (1827-1906) and had concluded his training with *Itosu* long before he established the *Pinan kata* in 1905. After the turn of the century, it was *Mabuni* who became recognized as *Itosu's* foremost disciple.

Qinna



With so little written about *Mabuni's* relationship with *Wu Xiangui* and *Tang Daiji*, *Kinjo Hiroshi*²⁵ believes that one of the principal reasons he may have sought out their instruction, and that of *Uechi Kambun*, may very well have been to gain a deeper understanding of *Qinna* (Mandarin for "to seize and hold.")²⁶ Referred to as *tuidijutsu* by the *Okinawans*, *Qinna* represents the application principles of those techniques upon which *kata* were based. Culminated by his lengthy analysis of the "*Bubishi*," the hallmark of *Mabuni's Shitoryu* was his attention to *kata* application: the striking of anatomically vulnerable points (*kyushojutsu*), throws (*nagewaza*), the use of joint locks, come-along's, and dislocation techniques (*kansetsuwaza*) etc.

Before individual *gongfu* styles were established in China, *qinna* is believed to have served as the very first codified form of self-defense. A compilation of self-defense skills, *qinna* represented the principles of seizing and controlling

²³ Ibid, p 86.

²⁴ *Fujiwara Ryoza*, "FAJKO" *Karatedo* Directory, Tokyo: Sozo Co. Ltd., 1979: p 81.

²⁵ Historian, author, and *karatedo* master, *Kinjo Hiroshi* was born in *Shuri, Okinawa*, in 1919, and is a direct disciple of *Hanashiro Chomo* and *Oshiro Chojo*.

²⁶ Dr. *Yang Jwing-Ming*, "Analysis of *Shaolin Qinna*," YMAA Publication Center, Jamacia Plains, Mass., p 1.

an adversary without seriously injuring him unless it was absolutely necessary. Because *qinna* has always been an effective deterrent in thwarting and controlling would-be attackers, it has served as a practical adjunct for peace officers for centuries.

In *Toudijutsu*, the Chinese-based self-defense disciplines once vigorously cultivated in old *Okinawa*, this practice is referred to as *bunkai*: a generic term describing the applications to of the *kata* techniques. Modern Japanese *karatedo* has popularized other terms to describe specific components of *bunkaijutsu* in recent times: *torite* (*tuidi* in *Hogan*), to seize with one's hands; *kyushojutsu*, vital points striking; *tegumi*, grappling hands; *kansetsuwaza*, dislocating joints; *shimewaza*, strangulation techniques; and *atemi waza*, striking techniques etc.

Qinna teaches one how to discourage an attack, by hurting, incapacitating, or even killing, if necessary. A code of conduct handed down from ancient times that rationalized one's self-defense actions goes something like: Avoid fighting at all costs; however, if no other choice is available, hurt rather than be hurt, maim rather than be maimed, kill rather than be killed. *Qinna* applications were never intended to be used in an arena, or against well-trained warriors, rather, they worked best against an attacker completely unaware of the methods being used against him.

The results of untold ordeals, each *qinna* principle was ingeniously contrived to neutralize an opponent's ability to attack through numbing one's limbs (paralysis), obstructing the air or blood flow (respiratory), rendering one unconscious (neurological), or killing (death points).

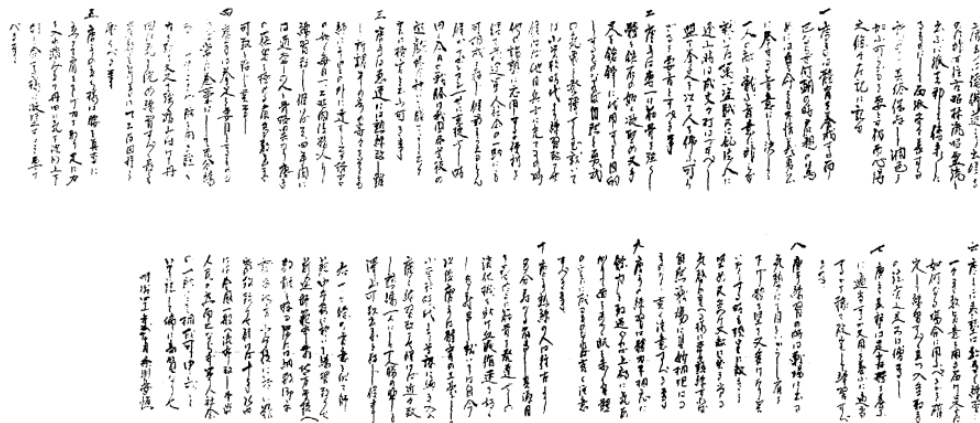
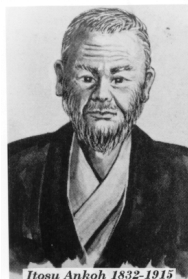
Toudijutsu on Mainland Japan

Several historical accounts detail *Toudi's* early development and subsequent introduction to mainland Japan. For years, the Japan Karate Association remained unchallenged in their campaign making *Funakoshi Gichin* the patriarchal figure responsible for bringing this *Okinawan* phenomenon to the mainland. However, *Motobu Choki* reportedly, had been teaching for more than a year before *Funakoshi's* arrival. Other reports describe several *Okinawan* students studying on Japan's mainland teaching *Toudi* long before the arrival of either *Funakoshi* or *Motobu*.

If there was any curiosity on mainland Japan about *Toudijutsu* prior to the efforts of *Motobu*, or *Funakoshi*, etc., it had to have been when the Imperial Army first considered its value as an adjunct to physical training. Impressed by the physical conditioning of two *Okinawan* conscripts, *Hanashiro Chomo* and *Yabu Kentsu*, during their medical examinations in 1891, the Army ultimately abandoned its interest in *Toudijutsu* because of archaic training methods, poor organization, and the great length of time it took to gain proficiency. However, that was not before a local campaign surfaced to modernize it.

The movement, headed by *Mabuni's* principal teacher, *Itosu Ankoh*, ultimately culminated in *Toudijutsu* becoming a part of the physical education curriculum of *Okinawa's* school system at the turn of the century. His 1908 address to the Education Ministry, a document now referred to as the "*Itosu's 10 Lessons*," clearly delineates *Toudijutsu's* aims and objectives.

"Itosu's 10 Lessons"²⁷



Toudi did not come from Buddhism or Confucianism. In the olden days, two *Toudi* schools, the *Shorin* and *Shorei*²⁸ styles, were introduced from China. Both support sound principles and it is vital that they be preserved and not altered. Therefore, I will mention here what one must know about *Toudi*.

1. *Toudi* does not only endeavor to discipline one's physique. If and when the necessity occurs to fight for a just cause, *Toudi* provides the fortitude with which to risk one's own life in support of that effort. It is not meant to be employed against a single adversary but rather as a means of avoiding the use of one's hands and feet in the event of a potentially dangerous encounter with a ruffian or villain.
2. *Toudi*-training's primary purpose is to strengthen the human muscles, making the physique strong like iron and stone so that one can use the hands and feet like weapons, such as a spear or halberd. In doing so, *Toudi*-training cultivates bravery and valor in children and it should be encouraged in our elementary schools. Do not forget what the Duke of Wellington said after defeating Emperor Napoleon: "*Today's victory was first achieved from the discipline attained on the playgrounds of our elementary schools.*"
3. *Toudi* cannot be adequately learned in a short time. Like a torpid bull, regardless of how slowly it moves, it will eventually cover 1,000 miles; so too for one who resolves to study diligently two or three hours everyday. After three or four years of unremitting effort, one's body will undergo a great transformation revealing *Toudi*'s very essence.
4. One of the most important issues in *Toudi* is the training of the hands and feet. Therefore, one must always use the *makiwara* to develop them thoroughly. To do this effectively, lower the shoulders, open the lungs, focus your energy, firmly grip the ground to root your posture and sink your "*ki*"—commonly referred to as one's life force or intrinsic force—into your "*tanden*" [just below the naval.] Following this procedure, perform 100-200 *tsuki* [thrusts] with each hand everyday.

27 Translation by Patrick McCarthy, IRKRS, August, 1994, *Yokohama*.

28 I believe that the term *Shorei* is an error made by *Itosu* when describing the Chinese soft style fighting traditions of *Wudang*. This error most probably occurred when the civil fighting were handed down by oral tradition in an iron-clad ritual of secrecy. Often there are mispronunciations when two different languages interface.

5. One must maintain an upright position in the *Toudi* training postures. The back should be straight, loins pointing upward and the shoulders down, while maintaining pliable power in your legs. Relax and bring together the upper and lower parts of the body with the *ki* focused in your *tanden*.

6. Handed down by word of mouth, *Toudi* comprises a myriad of techniques and corresponding meanings. Resolve to independently explore the context of these techniques, observing the principles of "*torite*" (theory of usage), and the practical applications will be more easily understood.

7. In *Toudi*-training, one must determine whether the specific application is suitable for defense or for cultivating the body.

8. Intensity is an important issue for *Toudi*-training. To visualize that one is actually engaged on the battlefield during training does much to enhance progression. Therefore, the eyes should dispatch fierceness while lowering the shoulders and contracting the body when blocking or delivering a blow. Training in this spirit prepares one for actual combat.

9. The amount of training must be in proportion to one's reservoir of strength and condition. Excessive practice is harmful to one's body and can be recognized when the face and eyes become red.

10. *Toudi* participants usually enjoy a long and healthy life thanks to the benefits of unrelenting training. Practice strengthens muscle and bone, improves the digestive organs, and regulates blood circulation. Therefore, if the study of *Toudi* were introduced into our [athletic] curricula from elementary school and practiced extensively, we could more easily produce men of immeasurable defense capabilities.

With these teachings in mind, it is my conviction that if the students at the Teachers' College [*Shihan Chugakko*] learn [*Toudi*] they could introduce *Toudi* at the local levels after graduation; namely in the elementary schools. In this way, *Toudi* could be disseminated throughout the entire nation and not only benefit people in general but also serve as an enormous asset to our military forces.

In modernizing *karate*, *Itosu* established a foundation upon which a new generation of teachers unfolded. While many of those first-generation teachers, like *Funakoshi*, *Kyan*, *Yabu*, and *Hanashiro*, had studied under the legendary *Bushi Matsumura*, *Mabuni* was among the few who had not.

In the opening passage of *Itosu Ankoh's* 1908 "Ten Lessons," the great master wrote that "both [*Shorinryu* and *Shoreiryu*] support sound principles and it is vital that they be preserved and not altered." Misinterpreting *Itosu's* words, many people have concluded that the two styles should never have been combined. However, Master *Mabuni* understood that what Grandmaster *Itosu* actually meant was that it was only teaching methods that divided these styles and that for each *kata* to be correctly preserved they had to be brought together to be analyzed.²⁹ In doing so, *Mabuni Kenwa* ensured that each *kata*, a separate tradition unto itself, would never need to be altered.

29 See *Miyagi Chojun's* comments in Patrick McCarthy's (trans.) "The 1936 Meeting of the Masters," Yokohama: IRKRS, 1994; p9.

Mabuni Goes to the Mainland



Miyagi Chojun

With *Kano Jigoro*'s recommendation still fresh in his mind, a determined *Mabuni Kenwa* took an early retirement from the police department and, with what little funds he had managed to save, ventured up to *Tokyo* with his good friend *Miyagi Chojun* in 1928. Visiting both *Kano Jigoro* and *Funakoshi Gichin*, *Mabuni* gave a demonstration at the *Kodokan*, *Tokyo Police Station*, *Toyo University*, and the *Transportation Ministry*. It soon became evident to *Mabuni* that *Toudijutsu* was indeed a growing trend that required men like he and *Miyagi*.

Meeting influential and earnest prodigies like *Konishi Yasuhiro* (1893-1983, *Shindo Jinenryu*) and *Ohtsuka Hironori* (1892-1982, *Wadoryu karate jujutsu kenpo*), both *Mabuni* and *Miyagi* were invited to give lectures in and around

the *Kanto* and *Kansai* regions. Well received in *Osaka*, and later in *Kyoto* at the *Butokuden*, *Mabuni* decided to establish himself in the *Osaka* area out of respect for his good friend, *Funakoshi*.

Mabuni established clubs in *Osaka*'s west ward of *Nari* and several universities where he ultimately built up a considerable following. He was reportedly quite instrumental in helping *Miyagi* establish his club at *Ritsumeikan University*, the university where *Yamaguchi Gogen* (*Gojukai*) first studied *karate* in 1931. In September 1932, *Mabuni* reinforced his base when, by popular demand, he organized the *Toudi Kenkyukai* at *Kansai Gakuin University*, and registered his *dojo* with the *Dai Nippon Butokukai*.

Despite this success and popularity, *Mabuni* was not prosperous. *Ohtsuka Hironori* said that "*Mabuni* could have easily been a rich man several times over had he ever wanted to cash in on his popularity. He was liked by everyone, perhaps envied by some, but hated by no one."

Konishi Yasuhiro, who became *Mabuni*'s closest friend on the mainland, wrote that *Kenwa Sensei* was so deeply committed to exploring the depths of *Toudijutsu* that he often spent what little money he had on research rather than food to feed himself and his family. Rarely was a moment of *Mabuni*'s adult life ever far from *karate*; in fact, *karate* was his entire life. After *Mabuni* moved to *Osaka*, the *Konishi*'s were like second parents to his son *Kenei*, who often stayed with them when his father was in the *Tokyo* area teaching and lecturing.

On one occasion in early *Showa*,³⁰ *Konishi* accompanied *Mabuni* down to *Wakayama Prefecture* where he met with *Uechi Kanbum* (*Uechiryu*)³¹ who had moved there with his family from *Okinawa* in 1924. *Mabuni* was intensely curious about what had kept his fellow islander in *Fuzhou* for so many years. Speaking about their trip, *Konishi* wrote in 1933 that *Uechi Sensei* could not speak Japanese very well and lived like a recluse³². The *kata Shimpa* ("mind wave") represents the combative principles *Mabuni* learned from his meeting with master *Uechi*. A simple but rare exercise, *Shimpa* features the basic grabbing and striking principles of Tiger and Dog boxing.

By 1933, *Mabuni* had established a considerable reputation, along with an even stronger following in *Kansai*. During what is now referred to as the era of great change in *Toudijutsu*, his style was being referred to as "*Hankoryu*" (meaning the half hard style) in the *Kansai* region, while supporters in the *Kanto*

30 The *Showa* Period of Japanese history was from 1925 until 1989.

31 *Uechi Kanbum* is said to have studied Tiger Boxing in China's *Fujian Province* directly under master *Zhou Zhihe* (1874-1926).

32 "Karatedo Johatsuho," *Konishi Yasuhiro*, *Tokyo*, 1933: p 156-161.

region simply called it "*Mabuniryu*."³³ In April 1933, and with the blessings of *Kano Jigoro*, the *Okinawan* branch of the *Dai Nippon Butokukai* located in *Naha*, officially admitted *karate* into its *judo* department under the name *toudijutsu*. In December of the same year, and after meticulous efforts, *toudijutsu* was finally recognized as a Japanese *budo*.

In 1934, *Mabuni Sensei* decided to designate his interpretation of *toudijutsu*, "*Shitoryu*," naming it after his principal teachers, *Itosu* and *Higashionna*. Although *Mabuni* often used "*Mabuniryu*," when referring to his style in private,³⁴ *Gima Shinken* noted that *Mabuni* was far too modest to use his own name to publicly advertise his interpretation.³⁵ In 1939, Master *Mabuni* officially registered the name *Shitoryu* with the *Dai Nippon Butokukai*.

The Name "*Shito*"

Comprised of two separate Chinese characters (*kanji* in Japanese) "*shi*-糸" and "*to*-東" the term is actually made up from the first ideogram in each of the surnames of *Mabuni's* teachers.

In the Japanese language, a single Chinese character often has more than one pronunciation. This linguistic phenomenon is referred to as the "*on-yomi*" (meaning the Chinese reading) and the "*kun-yomi*" (the Japanese reading). The "*shi*" of *Shito*, the *on-yomi* for the *kanji* for "thread" is normally read "*ito*," as in the *Okinawan* surname *Itosu*. "*To*," the *on-yomi* for the *kanji* for "east," is normally read "*higashi*," as in *Higashionna*. This special combination represents *Mabuni's* regard for his two principal teachers. Although not the original name for his brainchild, it does reflect the very foundation upon which his style developed and subsequently became the orthodox name of his interpretation.

Several years after *Yabu Kentsu* introduced *toudijutsu* to Hawaii on his way to visit his son *Kenden* in Los Angeles in 1927 (where he also gave a demonstration at the American *Okinawan* Club,) a growing popularity encouraged a local newspaper company to invite some more experts directly from Japan. Recognized as the leading authorities of *karate*, *Mabuni Kenwa*, *Funakoshi Gichin*, and *Miyagi Chojun*, were all invited early in 1934 to introduce their *karate* in Hawaii by a *Tokyo* company, on behalf of the Hawaiian Pacific Times Newspaper Company.

However, because of the great time it would take to travel there, lecture and teach, and then return, both *Funakoshi* and *Mabuni* did not make the trip. In spite of his aversion to lengthy voyages, *Miyagi Chojun* went to Hawaii by himself in April 1934.

The year 1934 was a memorable one for *Mabuni Kenwa* as he opened his *Youshukan* dojo in *Osaka* and met with remarkable success. One of *Mabuni's* most prolific disciples, *Sakagami Ryusho* (1915-93), once mentioned that the name *Youshukan* was based on the name of the *Okinawan* school Master *Mabuni* had attended as a child.

Commanding such widespread respect in the *karate* community, *Mabuni's* reputation was equaled only by that of his colleague and friend, *Funakoshi*. In fact, not only in *Okinawa*, but all over Japan, *karate* in the *Kansai* region was considered the jurisdiction of *Mabuni Kenwa*, while *Funakoshi Gichin* was regarded as the principal force on the *Kanto* plain.

33 *Fujiwara Ryoza*: "*Kindai Karatedo no Rekishio Kataru*," *Tokyo*; p 235.

34 *Ibid.* p235

35 *Ibid.* p235

Kobudo



Although rarely mentioned, *Mabuni Kenwa* was also highly skilled in *kobudo* ("old martial ways,") using the indigenous weapons developed and handed down by *Okinawans* during feudal times.

A discipline that evolved primarily because the actual weapons of war had been methodically prohibited early in *Okinawa's* history, *Ryukyu kobudo* is a plebeian but lethal method of self-defence that evolved through applying combat principles to a myriad of domestic weapon-usable objects: horse-shoes (*tekko*), the handle of a millstone (*tuifa*), lengths of rope with stone weights attached (*suruchin*), the boat oar (*eku*), the fishing gaff (*nunte*), the shell of a sea turtle and machete (*tenbi* and *rochin*), the rice flail or horse bit and bridle (*nunchaku*), a hoe (*kuwa*), and the garden sickle

(*kama*), to name a few of the most popular ones.

Being a policeman, it is no surprise that *Mabuni* specialized in *saijutsu* (the use of an iron truncheon) and *bojutsu* (the use of a 6-foot wooden staff), two weapon traditions that were vigorously cultivated by *Okinawa's chikudon pechin keimochi*³⁶. Although profoundly influenced by weapon experts like *Chinen Sanda* (1842-1928)³⁷, *Mabuni* received most of his instruction in *kobudo* from *Chinen's* best-known disciple, *Yabiku Moden*, who, like *Mabuni*, had learned his *toudijutsu* directly under *Itosu*.



Taira Shinken

In addition to his training with *Yabiku*, two other important *kobudo* experts that *Mabuni* also came into contact with were *Sueyoshi Jino* (1846-1920) and *Tawada Shimbuku* (1851-1920), two individuals whose hard earned reputations had won them great respect. From these two, *Mabuni* deepened his understanding of *bojutsu* and *saijutsu* while enhancing his *kata* repertoire.

Sought after not only for his *toudijutsu* knowledge *Mabuni Kenwa* was often asked to teach *kobudo*. In fact, it was one of *Funakoshi Gichin's* most senior students, *Taira Shinken* (1897-1970), who benefited most from *Mabuni's* teachings. Studying under *Funakoshi Gichin* from 1922, *Taira* began learning *kobudo* in 1929 from *Yabiku Moden*. In 1932, *Taira* moved to *Gunma* Prefecture, where he established his first *dojo* at the hot springs resort of *Ikaho*.

In February 1933, during a seminar at the *Ikaho dojo*, *Yabiku Sensei* awarded *Taira* with the *Shihan Menkyo*³⁸ and recommended that he further his study under *Mabuni*. In September of that same year, Master *Funakoshi* also went up to *Ikaho* and taught a seminar at *Taira's dojo* and assured *Shinken Sensei* that Master *Mabuni* would come to *Gunma* the next year. *Mabuni* went to *Taira's dojo* in 1934 to lecture on *kobudo*.

³⁶ Responsible for domestic law enforcement and related matters, *pechin* were mid-class civil servants during the old *Ryukyu* kingdom: Two classes of *pechin* included the *satunushi* (selected from *keimochi* (people with a chronicled lineage), and *Chikudon* (chosen from those commoners who had distinguished themselves. *Sai* and *bo* were standard issue for law enforcement officials in feudal *Okinawa* nearly a century before *Tokugawa's Edo kasatsu* (policemen of Japan's *Edo* Period (1603-1968).

³⁷ Also known as *Yamane no Chinen*, the founder of *Yamaneryu kobudo*.

³⁸ A master teacher's license.

Taira was so taken with *Mabuni's* expertise that he petitioned the great master to continue his instruction. Master *Mabuni* taught *Taira* for six years. During that time, *Mabuni* taught *Taira* the *bojutsu* of *Sueyoshi*, *Urazoe*, and *Sesoko* along with the *saijutsu* of *Hamahiga* and *Hantaguwa*.

Mabuni's genuine personality and profound knowledge of both *karate* and *kobudo* attracted a considerable following, many of whom came to support the independent *kobudo* movement that *Taira* later embarked upon. Among the most well-known *Mabuni* students who helped further *Taira's kobudo* campaign were *Sakagami Ryusho* (*Itosuha*), *Kuniba Shyogo* (*Motobuha*), *Hayashi Teruo* (*Hayashiha*), *Konishi Yasuhiro*, and *Mabuni's* son *Kenei* (*Shitokai*). These men's efforts were largely responsible for introducing and popularizing *Taira's kobudo* to the Western world through their success as international teachers of *Shitoryu karate*.

Mabuni's eclectic *Shitoryu* hybrid is characterized by a myriad of prominent *kata*, most of whose individual histories have been lost in the annals of time. Having only studied with *Higashionna Kanryo* for little more than a year, it was *Kenwa's* good friend *Miyagi Chojun* who imparted what he had missed after he went into the military. Naturally, *Shitoryu's Tensho kata* also represents part of what *Mabuni Kenwa* learned from its developer, *Miyagi Chojun*.

Another hallmark of *Mabuni's Shitoryu* is the balanced way in which he used pliability and power. This synthesis also extended to *Mabuni's* personality as well, and perhaps explains why he was able to yield in the winds of adversity. Regardless of how one cares to remember him, *Mabuni Kenwa* was able to preserve and carry on an exemplary friendship with many of those who could not stand to be in the same room with each other.

Another example of *Mabuni's* genius can be observed especially in his five principles of blocking:

1. *Rakka* (dropping flower): represents intercepting an attack by dropping down onto it so hard that if it was a tree being struck the leaves would fall from its branches.
2. *Ryu Sui* (running water): represents the ability to respond to changing conditions with circular movement, in the same way that flowing water naturally conforms to its path.
3. *Kusshin* (up and down): represents using vertical movement to subjugate an adversary.
4. *Teni* (changing position): represents the three principles of initiative, combative engagement distance (*maai*), and the space between oneself and an opponent necessary for subjugation by shifting and pivoting (*taisabaki*).
5. *Hangeki* (countering): represents the principles of brief but intelligent responses; it also encompasses the capacity to overcome an adversary with or without a physical encounter.

Opposition

A rumor once surfaced in *karate's* competitive circle during the thirties suggesting that *Mabuni Sensei* only knew *kata* and did not advocate sport fighting. In reality, the comment is a great compliment, although the allegation, coming from young competitive fighters who had little or no respect for *kata*, was intended to ridicule *Mabuni*.

Nothing could be further from the truth. *Mabuni*, like *Motobu Choki*, *Ohtsuka Hironori*, *Kudaka Kori* (1907-1988, *Shorinjiryu Kenkokan*), *Sawayama Masaru* (1906-1977, *Nihon Kenpo*), and *Yamada Tatsuo* (1905-1967, *Nihon Kenpo*), was one of the very few men to pioneer full protective equipment in sparring.

In a 1989 interview with this writer, *Sakagami Ryusho*, one of *Mabuni*'s most prolific disciples, described the former *Okinawan* policeman as a mild-mannered gentleman who had tasted his fair share of street encounters while in law enforcement. His son, *Mabuni Kenei*, said that his father often told him how his *karate* had helped him as a street cop.

Mabuni maintained that *karate* was never intended to be used in an arena against other trained athletes. He described *kumite* as a completely detached entity that had surfaced when *karate* became a cultural recreation influenced by *kendo* and *judo*, influenced mostly by the younger generation within the highly competitive university *karate* clubs. *Mabuni* never liked competitive fighting, he said it always seemed to bring out the worst in human behavior, but that it did have some good points. About this issue, *Nagamine Shoshin* wrote "I don't mean to suggest that I have a totally negative opinion about *karate*'s competitive element, it's just that I feel that it is too shallow. Regardless of whether its *Okinawa*, the mainland of Japan, or the world in general, free-sparring [*jiu-kumite*] ignores the principles to which *kata* apply. Simply put, *jiu-kumite* should in some way reflect *kata*, because *kata* is the origin of *karate*. If there is no *kata*, its not *karate*, just kicking and punching."³⁹

Also students of *Mabuni*, both *Ohtsuka Hironori* and *Konishi Yasuhiro* described him as a calm and warm person, whose kind and charitable character was indicative of *Yamaoka Tesshu*, the man whom he so revered. *Kinjo Hiroshi* told me that, until the day he died, almost everyone regarded *Mabuni* as the guru of *karatedo*.

Whenever someone needed to learn new *kata*, make necessary corrections, or analyze their applications, they went to *Mabuni*, and that included *Funakoshi*, concluded *Kinjo Sensei*. *Ohtsuka Sensei*, who had been deeply influenced by *Mabuni*, said that many of *Funakoshi Sensei*'s *kata* either came directly from *Mabuni* or were corrected by him. Regarded by the *Nihon Karate Kyokai* (JKA) as the father of modern Japanese *karate*, *Funakoshi Gichin* spoke highly of *Mabuni Kenwa* and visited *Mabuni* in *Kansai*, bringing with him his top students to learn and study new *kata*.

The Dai Nippon Butokukai



The distinguished *Dai Nippon Butokukai* (Japan's Association of Great Martial Virtues) was responsible for regulating and supervising all the martial arts throughout the country, from the post *Edo* Period until the end of WWII. Representing centuries of illustrious cultural heritage, the *Butokukai*'s ultratraditional *bugei* and *budo* cliques were deeply concerned with *toudijutsu*'s growth and direction and the open hostilities between rival leaders.⁴⁰

39 "Shijitsu to Kodan ni Yoru-Okinawa no Karate Sumo Meijin-den," Tokyo: *Shinjimbutsu Oraisha*, 1986.

40 Regarded as a master fighter, *Motobu Choki* insisted that the scholar, *Funakoshi Gichin*, was an impostor whose *karate*, although elegant, was ineffective because he had no idea of its application. *Motobu* felt *Funakoshi* was able to deceive many because of his tricky behavior and eloquent explanations. This resulted in *Motobu* issuing a public challenge to *Funakoshi*. Irreconcilable rivals, *Funakoshi* described *Motobu* as a densely illiterate person, and refused the challenge. *Motobu* compared *Funakoshi* to a *samisen* (a three-stringed instrument) player; a lovely sound but hollow inside, and continued his character attack upon *Funakoshi*. On the other hand, every time *Motobu*'s name was mentioned in the presence of *Funakoshi*, his face contorted in disgust, said *Konishi Yasuhiro*, who described their hatred for each other like that of a cat and a dog. "Karate and His Life," (Tokyo: *Kaku Kozu, Ryobukai*, 1993), pp 13-15.

This, coupled with the unorganized teaching curricula, lack of social decorum, and absence of formal practice apparel, compelled the *Butokukai* to regard the escalating situation as detrimental to *Toudijutsu's* growth and direction on the mainland and set forth to resolve it.

The principal concern focused not only upon ensuring that *Toudi* teachers were fully qualified to teach, but also, that the teachers actually understood what they were teaching. For *Toudijutsu* to be accepted in mainland Japan called for the development and implementation of a unified teaching curricula, the adoption of a standard practice uniform, a consistent standard for accurately evaluating the various grades of proficiency, the implementation of *Kano Jigoro's dan-kyu* system, and the development of a safe competitive format through which participants could test their skills and spirits.

Just as 12 inches always equals 1 foot, the *Butokukai's* intention was to establish a universal set of standards, as had been done with *judo* and *kendo*. This was also Master *Mabuni's* goal.

No less demanding were the powerful forces of nationalism combined with anti-Chinese sentiment.



Together, they propelled the *Toudijutsu* movement to reconsider a more appropriate ideogram to represent their discipline rather than the one that symbolized China and adopt the Japanese pronunciation of that *kanji*, *karate* instead of *Toudi*. In making the transition, the *Ryukyu kenpo Toudijutsu* movement would also abandon the "*jutsu*"⁴¹ suffix and replace it with the modern term "*do*," as in *judo*

Adopted by the *karate* movement, the wearing of sashes or belts was conceived of by the late founder of *judo*, *Kano Jigoro*. *Kano* foresaw the need to distinguish the difference between the advanced practitioner and the different levels of beginners; thus he developed the *dan/kyu* system. The *dan*, or black belt,

41 Often mistakenly rendered as "*jitsu*" in the West, which means "day," as in *jujitsu*, which means "gentle day," or "*kyushojitsu*," meaning "vital point day!"

indicated an advanced proficiency level and those who earned were called *yudansha* (*dan* recipients); *kyu* degrees represented the varying levels of competency below the *dan*, and were called *mudansha* (those not yet having received a *dan*).

Kano Sensei felt it particularly important for all students to fully realize that one's training was in no way complete simply because one had achieved the *dan* rank. On the contrary, he emphasized that the attainment of the *dan* merely symbolized the real beginning of one's journey. By reaching black belt level, one had, in fact, completed only the necessary requirements to embark upon a relentless journey without distance that would ultimately result in self-mastery.

The *Butokukai* also conceived of and issued the first distinguished titles for the modern *budoka* who were considered outstanding in their particular disciplines. The *Dai Nippon Butokukai's* *budo* ranking system was, and still is, the evaluation of an individual's progress toward the attainment of human perfection through the practice of the fighting traditions. This evaluation is not based solely upon physical prowess, but rather encompasses the entire human being's physical, moral, and spiritual development: *budo's* goal of cultivating our world-within in an effort to enhance the world-without. *Dai Nippon Butokukai* promotions were, and still are, based on this standard.

The first *Shihan* (Master Teacher) titles were: *Hanshi*, Model Expert or Teacher by Example, and *Kyoshi* (although originally called *Tasshi*), Teaching Expert. In 1934, a third title was introduced, *Renshi*, "Well Trained or Skilled Expert." The *Butokukai* continues to issue these titles.

It may seem rather ironic that *Konishi Yasuhiro*, a man who learned from *Motobu Choki*, *Funakoshi*, *Miyagi Chojun*, and *Mabuni Kenwa*, would be the one in charge of issuing rank certification to those who taught him. However, in 1938, the *Butokukai* made him chairman of the committee responsible for issuing *karate* teachers licenses through the *judo* section. The move was supported by most *karateka*, but did not sit well with everyone, especially *Funakoshi* and *Miyagi*. At a 1936 meeting of *karatedo* masters in *Okinawa*, *Miyagi* said "It is believed that *karate* has two separate sects: *Shorinryu* and *Shoreiryu*. However, there is no clear evidence to support or deny this fact. If I was forced to distinguish the differences between these sects, then I would have to say that it is only the teaching methods that divides them."⁴²

Funakoshi called it blasphemy but went on to receive his teacher's license from the *Butokukai*. Regarding *Konishi's Butokukai* position, *Mabuni* said: "All one need do is evaluate his pivotal contributions: he holds a prominent position in the *budo* world; he is highly regarded as a *kendo* teacher, a respected *jujutsu* enthusiast, and a man of wealth and position; and his efforts are having quite an influence upon the growth and development of modern *karatedo*, despite *Funakoshi's* protestations."

Some of the most recognizable *karatedo* teachers to receive the prestigious *Butokukai* titles have been: *Mabuni Kenwa* (*Shitoryu*), *Miyagi Chojun*, *Funakoshi Gichin* and his son *Giko* (*Shotokan*), *Konishi Yasuhiro*, *Ohtsuka Hironori*, *Yamaguchi Gogen* (*Gojukai*), *Nagamine Shoshin* (*Matsubayashiryu*), *Shinzato Jinan* (*Gojuryu*), *Izumigawa Kanki* (*Gojuryu*), *Higa Seiko* (*Gojuryu*), *Yagi Meitoku* (*Gojuryu*), *Ueshima Sannosuke* (*Kushinryu*), *Kinjo Hiroshi* (*Shurite*), *Richard Kim* (*Shorinjiryu*), and *Sakagami Ryusho* (*Itosukai Shitoryu*).

In May 1938, the same year *Mabuni Sensei* became a standing member of *Konishi's Ryobukai karatedo* organization, the *karate* movement was officially authorized to give group demonstrations at the *Butokusai*, the *Dai Nippon Butokukai's* annual *budo* festival held at the *Kyoto Butokuden* on Boys Day

42 "The 1936 Meeting of the Masters," (an English translation of its minutes), Patrick McCarthy, IRKRS, 1994, *Yokohama*: p 9.

Sanchin and *Seiinchin kata*. "*Seipai no Kenkyu Goshijutsu Hiden Karate Kenpo*," which included the "*Bubishi*," was published on October 8, 1934, and 176 pages, and sold for 1.50 yen; the second edition was published under the name, "*Kobojizai Karate Kenpo Seipai no Kenkyu*" on October 25, 1934, also with 176 pages, and sold for 1.50 yen.



His "*Karatedo Numon*," was published on October 10, 1935, had 210 pages, sold for 1.80 yen, and is considered *Mabuni's* best work ever; the second edition was published under the name, "*Kobo Kenpo Karatedo Numon*," on March 25, 1938, with 209 pages, and sold for 1.80 yen. "*Kobo Kenpo Karatedo Numon*," is an exposition of *Mabuni's* personal research and is, at least in this writer's opinion, the real "master text" of *karatedo*. Addressing the entire spectrum of *karate*, *Mabuni Kenwa* won widespread recognition during that pre-war era with this book. In considering the magnitude of this work, it is surprising that it has never been translated into English.

Assisting *Mabuni* in publishing "*Kobo Kenpo Karatedo Numon*" was an Okinawan named *Nakasone Genwa* (1886-1978). *Nakasone* graduated from the Okinawa Teachers College in 1929. After moving to Tokyo, he learned *karate* under *Toyama Kanken* at his *Shudokan dojo*,⁴⁵ became involved with Japan's socialist movement, and ultimately served as the publisher of its newspaper. In 1934, he began to support and publish several books on *karate*. *Nakasone's* best known work is the 1938 "*Karatedo Taikan*" ("Encyclopedia of *Karatedo*") which, in addition to *Funakoshi Gichin*, *Hanashiro Chomo*, *Ohtsuka Hironori*, *Gusukuma Shimpan*, and *Chibana Choshin*, features *Mabuni Kenwa* performing *Aragaki's Sochin kata*.

Nakasone is probably best remembered for organizing the "Meeting of the Masters" sponsored in part by *Ota Chofu*, editor of the *Ryukyu Shimpusha* (newspaper company) in 1936.⁴⁶ After the war, *Nakasone* continued a career in politics, and in 1973 authored, "From Okinawa to Ryukyu."

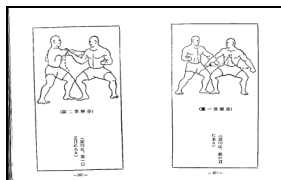
Mabuni Sensei also appeared in *Konishi Yasuhiro's* publication, "*Karate Jotatsuho*" ("How to Master *Karate*"), illustrating *Patsai (Bassai) kata*. *Kinjo Hiroshi* told this writer that *Mabuni* was, in fact, terribly envied by rival *karate* teachers when he was alive. Master *Kinjo* maintains that *Mabuni's* research and understanding of the fighting traditions put him in a category all by himself. According to *Kinjo Hiroshi*, that served as the basis from which several unkind rumors came from the sport faction, by those who had little interest in *kata* or *karatedo's* philosophical elements.

In an advertisement that he ran in his book on *Seipai no Kenkyu*, *Mabuni* describes himself as a *Gojuryu*⁴⁷ *kenpo shihan* teaching Japanese *kenpo karatejutsu*. Promoting his *Osaka dojo*, he wrote that

45 The Tokyo *Shudokan* was established in 1930 by Okinawan *karate* master *Toyama Kanken*: *Toyama Sensei* had studied under such legendary masters as *Itosu Ankoh*, *Higashionna Kanryo*, *Oshiro Chojo*, and *Chibana Choshin*.

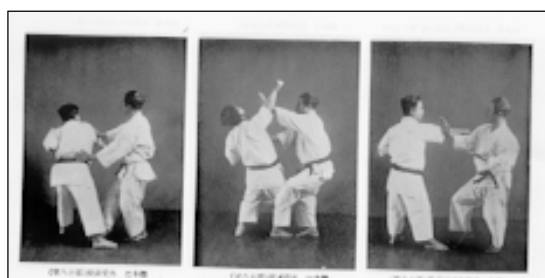
46 Sponsored by the *Ryukyu Shimpusha*, this historic gathering, to discuss the using of the ideogram to describe the "*kara*" of *karatedo*, and the establishment of an organization through which to unify and standardize the discipline, was held in Okinawa on October 25, 1936 at *Naha's Showa Kaikan* (meeting hall) and hosted many of the island's most prominent authorities of *karate*: In attendance were *Hanashiro Chomo*, *Kyan Chotoku*, *Motobu Choki*, *Chibana Choshin*, *Kiyoda Juhatzu*, *Miyagi Chojun*, and *Gusukuma Shimpan*.

47 *Mabuni Sensei* used the term "*goju*" (hard and soft) to symbolize the unique features of his self-defence method: Hard (*go*)



karate is a great way to get in shape and add years to one's life. It is an effective form of self-defence, and an idealistic training method that requires no special equipment or practice place. Moreover, there is no risk in learning and no restrictions upon age or sex, anyone can learn and it does not take too long when compared to other kinds of *budo*.

Also worth mentioning in the same book are a number of endorsements from newspapers, noted authorities, and friends supporting the forthcoming publication of "*Kobo Jizai Goshinjutsu Karate Kenpo*." *Funakoshi Gichin* recommended the book by saying: "*Mabuni Kenwa* is my good friend, and a remarkable *karate* researcher, who is presently regarded as the leading expert. *Mabuni Sensei* has been collecting a myriad of research materials for a very long time, and is unsurpassed because of his mastery of so many *kata*."



**Master Mabuni poses with his student
Taira Shinken in Karatedo Nyumon**



After meeting and observing two days of demonstrations in *Okinawa* during his January 1927 visit, *Kano Jigoro* praised *Mabuni* and encouraged him to introduce his *karate* throughout Japan.

Konishi Yasuhiro said: "My friend, *Mabuni Kenwa*, has released this new book at just the right time. His book provides instruction and brings a freshness to an art that was in danger of disappearing from the *budo* world. I believe that Mr. *Mabuni's* book will be a great asset in helping improve the physical fitness of the Japanese people. An interesting publication that you simply won't want to put down once you start reading it, *Mabuni's* book is well written, easy to understand, and clearly detailed.

The *Osaka Mainichi* Newspaper wrote: "The author is a well-known master who concisely explains the entire essence of *karate kenpo*. The publication contains numerous photographs and illustrations."

The *Hokushi Mainichi* Newspaper wrote: "Because of the times we all face, everyone should read this book by

Mabuni Kenwa. It is easy to understand and well illustrated."

The *Chogoku Minpoo* wrote: "A long time ago, *Bodhidharma* taught *kenpo* to his students as a means of improving their health. This method brought together the physical and spiritual. This method found its way to the *Ryukyus* where, affected by indigenous cultural forces, it was further cultivated. Once a secret practice, *karate* has now been introduced in many local areas. *Mabuni Sensei's* book is ideal for learning self-defence without carrying a weapon, while improving one's general health at the same time. Learning *karate* does not require much time or money, and one can practice either by themselves or with a group.

The *Otaru* Newspaper wrote: "*Karatejutsu* is suitable for the times in which we now live. With 'karate fever' widespread, it has since been introduced all over the country. *Karatejutsu* appeals to everyone

characterizes the material force of the human body, while softness (*ju*) represents the principle of pliability: the potential to yield in the winds of adversity, also a personality trait to aspire for.

because it has no restrictions upon age or sex. It is easy to learn and is very effective. Written by the great *Gojuryu karate kenpo* master, *Mabuni Kenwa*, who teaches at places like *Kansai University*, this book explains *karate* in detail, is well illustrated, and easy to read. This book is the result of his many years of research and reflects his great mastery."

Mabuni had also planned to publish a book on women's self-defense entitled, "*Mabuniryu Karate Kenpo Joshi Goshinjutsu*." In the book, he was going to address the different ways in which women should study *karate* for self-defence, which he had spent great time and effort to establish. The *kata* "*Aoyagi*" (Green Willow) and "*Myojo*" (Venus) represented *Mabuni's* unique self-defence applications developed specifically for women with or without detailed experience in *karate*.

In an advertisement promoting that book, *Mabuni* wrote that school girls, housewives, ladies, and career women, regardless of age could learn defensive skills by learning to be like the green willow in a powerful wind: yield and overcome, and in doing so, maintain their virtue like a Venus. Japanese women generally stop exercising when they finish their schooling and *Mabuni* wanted to teach them that inactivity contributed directly to health problems, and that by practicing *karate*, women could not only learn to defend themselves but improve their health at the same time.

Another book he had planned to write was "*Gojuryu Karate Kenpo, Sochin and Kururunfa*." The advertisement for that book said that the *Sochin* and *Kururunfa kata* included techniques not found in other *kata*, such as reverse grabbing techniques, special throws, and reverse headbutts to the solar plexus.

Among the many things that *Mabuni Kenwa* wrote were two interesting pieces for a local *Okinawan* tabloid. In one article, he addressed the importance of health and spiritualism and described *karate* as an ideal vehicle. That article, entitled "*Budo for Life*," appeared in the March 1941 "Culture *Okinawa Monthly*" magazine. The other, which appeared in the May issue of the same magazine, addressed the need to unify *karatedo* and was entitled "Establishing *Karatedo* as a Single Sect of Japanese *Bushido*." I believe that such compositions reveal how *Mabuni* imagined the future direction of *karate*.

Transcending the Boundaries of Physical Training

Mabuni felt that the ultimate aim of the fighting traditions was to recognize and overcome the real enemy, the enemy within, get beyond the impulse of fighting with others; transcend ego related distractions; and bring man back into harmony with nature through austerity, philosophical study, and protracted introspection. *Kinjo Hiroshi* told me that one thing that impressed him more than anything else about Master *Mabuni* was when he said: "There are no styles of *karate*, just varying interpretations of its principles. *Karate* can enhance the value of life itself.

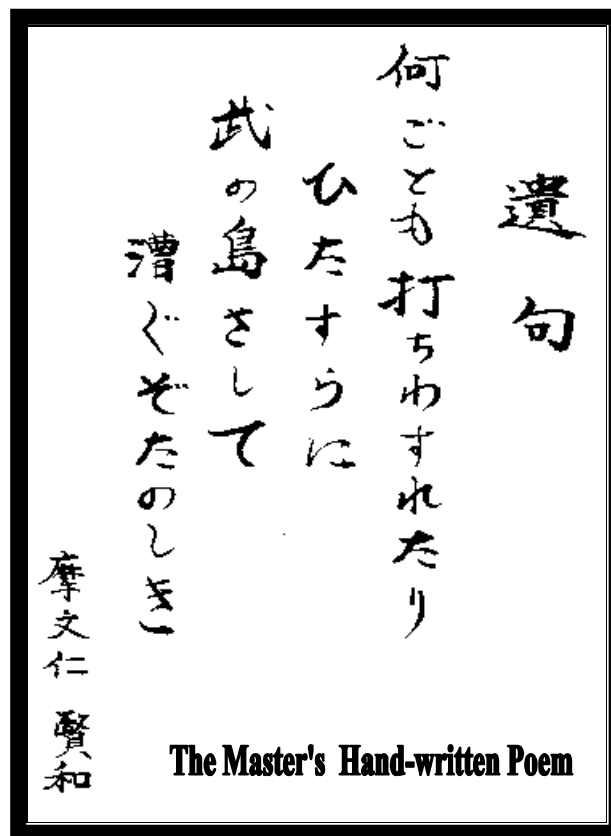
"People in *karate* seem to place too much emphasis upon this style or that, this teacher or that, winning or losing. This has nothing to do with *karatedo's* ultimate aim. Living in the past is as foolish as thinking we can travel to the future, there is only this moment in life. We must all learn to enjoy the beauty of the moment without prejudice, even if it requires a lifetime of study, this is the beauty of *karatedo*. The answers can only be found within, and those who have truly found the answers need never look anywhere else."

The "*do*" of *karatedo* merely describes the spiritual path upon which followers of *karate* travel en route to the world within: inner discovery. What else can the "*do*" of *karatedo* represent if not the *Dao*? An ancient proverb describing the Way reads: "Although there are many paths that lead up a mountain, there is only one moon to be seen by all those who achieve its summit."

A staunch advocate of the moral values established to govern the behavior of *karatedo* practitioners, *Mabuni* concluded that understanding the deepest meaning of *karatedo* first meant transcending ego-related distractions and finding inner-peace. In an abstract poem, *Mabuni Sensei* described how karate could improve the living of daily life through dedicating one's efforts to training happily and ignoring life's trivial distraction. "When the spirit of budo is deeply embraced, it is like taking a voyage in a boat across the great void to find an island of paradise:"

Conclusion

Although the *Butokukai's* campaign to unify *karatedo* lost momentum in Japan's post-war depression, *Mabuni Kenwa's* contributions to the discipline's development remain unparalleled. Despite *Mabuni* having sought out and studied under some of the most eminent masters of his time, forging a remarkable tradition, producing a number of prolific students, and publishing several outstanding works on the discipline, his contributions to the development of modern *karatedo* have, like a tall tree deep within the vast forest, remained largely unknown. Geniuses are rarely recognized during their own time. And, if there is any truth to the expression "tall trees provoke the pride of the winds" then, *Mabuni Kenwa* was, by far, the tallest tree in the forest of *karatedo*.



Yet, in having said that, it was not the magnitude of this man's knowledge that set him apart from the others, it was the application of that experience and a gift for transforming his vision into a valuable tradition benefiting all of *karatedo* that made *Mabuni Kenwa* such a remarkable human being. Anybody can learn to kick and punch, however, getting beyond ego-related distractions while navigating the turbulent rivers of one's life, with any self-dignity and respect for others, is the central idea *Mabuni* left to *karatedo* followers.

Grandmaster *Mabuni Kenwa* died in 1952 at the relatively young age of 63. Leaving behind a legacy of knowledge so deep and penetrating that even to this day the magnitude of his research has yet to be completely evaluated or fully understood. In leaving this world, this remarkable man's contributions remain intact, waiting to be discovered by all those who practice *Shitoryu karatedo*. If *Mabuni Kenwa* was able to see further than others, it was only by standing on the shoulders of giants. Nothing of any value is ever gained without humility, diligence, and the guidance of others.

Mabuni Kenwa's Karatedo Genealogy
Principal Teachers

Itosu Ankoh
(1832-1915)
Shuri Shaolin

Higashionna Kanryo
(1853-1915)
Kume Shaolin

Hanashiro Chomo
(1869-1945)
Shuri Shaolin

Wu Xiangui
"Go Kenki"
(1886-1940)
Fujian Crane

Aragaki Seisho
Tsuji Pechin
(1840-1920)
Kume Shaolin

Sueyoshi Jino
(1846-1920)
bojutsu

Tawada Shimbuku
(1851-1920)
saijutsu

Yabiku Moden
(1882-1941)
bo & saijutsu

Mabuni Kenwa
(1889-1952)
Shitoryu Founder

Principal Students

Taira Shinken
(1897-1970)
Ryukyu kobudo

Iwata Manzo
(1924-1992)
Shitokai

Mabuni Kenei
(1st son)
(1918-)
Shitoryu

Mabuni Kenzo
(2nd son)
(1927-)
Shitoryu

Konishi Yasuhiro
(1893-1983)
Shindo Jinenryu

Sakagami Ryusho
(1915-1993)
Itosukai

Kokuba Kosei
(1901-1958)
Motobuha
Seishinkai

Tani Chojiroh
(1921-)
Taniha
Shukokai

Uechi Kanei
(1904-1993)
Shitoryu kenpo

Sawayama Masaru
(1906-1977)
Nihon kenpo

Hayashi Teruo
(1924-)
Hayashiha

Seiki Hiroshi
Shudokai

Fujitani Masatoshi
Meibukai

Abe Iwao
Doshikai

Tomoyori Ryusei
(1909-1977)
Kenyukai

Kimura Kempe
Nambukai

Fuji Kozo
Shingikai

Takayama Teruo
Kenseikai

Watanabe Masaru
Seikikai

Shitoryu Karatedo Kata

Itosu-ha

Shuri Shaolin

Pinan 1-5

Naifuanchin 1-3

Jitte

Jion

Jiin

Bassai sho

Bassai dai

Kusanku sho

Kuniyoshi Kusanku

Gojushihou

Chinto

Kusanku dai

Shiho-Kusanku

Chinte

Rohai 1-3

Yara Kusanku

Tomari Shaolin

Wankan

Matsumora Rohai

Wanshu

Wanduan (Wando)

Tomari Bassai

Tomari Chinto

Higashionna-ha

Naha Shaolin

Sanchin

Suparinpei

Seisan

Seipai

Seinchin

Saifua

Kururunfa

Miyagi-ha

Naha Shaolin

Tensho

Gekkisai ichi

Gekkisai ni

Go Kenki-ha

Fujian Crane Gongfu

Happoren (Paipuren)

Nepai (Nipaipo)

Hakutsuru

Ishimine-ha

Shuri Shaolin

Ishimine Bassai

Aragaki-ha

Kume Shaolin

Unshu

Niseishi

Sochin

Seisan

Matsumura-ha

Shuri Shaolin

Seisan

Bassai

Uechi-ha

Yongchun Gongfu

Shimpa

Mabuni-ha

Myojo

Jyuroku

Aoyagi (Seiryu)

Other research by the Society include the "*Bubishi*;" *Bushi Matsumura's* 1882 "Seven Precepts of *Bu*, as well as his 1885 *Zayunomei*;" *Itosu Ankoh's* 1908 "Ten Lesson; *Miyagi Chojun's* 1934 "Outline of *Karatedo*; *Taira Shinken's* 1964 "Encyclopedia of *Kobudo*" and *Nagamine Shoshin's* "Biographies of *Karate & Tegumi* Masters." We can be contacted by writing to "The Society," PO Box 715, Aspley 4034 Australia or visiting our web-site www.koryu-uchinadi.com

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