

Chapter 2 - Definition of AIKIDO as a Combat Technique (BUGI)

It is important to know that AIKIDO includes a philosophy and ideas that go beyond BUDO. BUDO is a subset of AIKIDO, but AIKIDO is not a subset of BUDO. Therefore, developing AIKIDO technique as a complete form includes, in addition to the principles of combat that will be discussed here, other elements such as KI (and its constituent elements), KOKYURYOKU (breath power), and spiritual functions. These aspects will be addressed in a future work. For the moment, it is more critical to clarify the issue of the physical elements of AIKIDO techniques, for these provide a necessary foundation upon which to build an understanding of more abstract elements.

BUGI means combat techniques to deal with an opponent who initiates a confrontation. More than that, BUGI's techniques aim to dominate the opponent physically in order to achieve control over him. BUGI has methodology, rules and principles. BUJUTSU is a system to organize and continually improve all aspects and elements of BUGI.

The BUGI of AIKIDO is characterized by the application to combat techniques of two fundamental principles: the Principle of the Unified Body, and SOTAI KANKEI (the confrontational relationship between oneself and the opponent). Application of these physical principles allows one to more effectively utilize any technique.

BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU -- the principle of BUJUTSU requires that all techniques and movements, and all elements of BUJUTSU and BUGI be applied with total precision and accuracy. Their effectiveness is determined by whether they are applied at the right time, in the right way and with the right amount of energy.

For example, BUGI includes the elements of speed and power. Power is the emergence of energy which is used to achieve a goal. Speed can create power and power can substitute for the lack of speed. Speed can create real destructive power, for example, when a hurricane wind blows a straw to such a velocity that it penetrates a wall. Conversely, even if moving slowly, a power of sufficient force can push through the same wall. Effectiveness depends on whether they are applied correctly in light of particular conditions.

Thus, BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU can be expressed as determined activity to deal a confrontational relationship in order to place oneself in a more advantageous situation given certain conditions. BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU is an inevitable consequence of achieving and maintaining control over an opponent using minimally required amounts of:

movement,
MA-AI , and
power.

This BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU is the basis for AIKIDO techniques, and, similarly, by keeping them in mind, very precise definitions and descriptions of AIKIDO techniques can be generated.

There are three key requirements for accurate AIKIDO techniques:

maintaining one's correct and proper posture,
entering into SHIKAKU and
consciously using the body to avoid direct confrontations with the opponent's movement.

The first requirement for an accurate technique is proper posture. Proper posture allows one to generate all the power that one possesses, execute movements accurately and rapidly, and also maximize one's attacking or defensive power.

The second requirements is to enter into SHIKAKU, that is, the opponent's "opening", "blind spot", or "dead angle". Although the opponent's dead angle is the opponent's weak point which can be attacked, it is simultaneously much more than this, i.e. it is a place where one can maintain one's own safety.

The third requirement is to use the body in a way that avoids collision, that is, a direct opposition of power against power, or movement against movement. To be most efficient in dealing with a confrontational relationship, one must use the opponent's power or movement and the minimally required amount of one's own movement and power to make the situation develop in the way one desires, that is, to one's own advantage.

Direct opposition of power or movement necessarily increases the required effort, and therefore wastes energy. In addition, when two sources of power or movement come into direct opposition, the one with stronger force will win, an outcome contrary to the objectives of AIKIDO's combat techniques. The ability to control movement so as to avoid clashes with the opponent requires repetitive and continual practice over an extended period of time until this approach becomes a strongly embedded habit.

If AIKIDO practitioners would devote themselves single-heartedly to focusing on these elements, BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU would automatically and naturally spring up and grow.

Another note to the preceding discussion is that BUJUTSU, in addition to being based on fundamental and unalterable principles, has another aspect which is simultaneously free, unrestricted, and able to adapt to any circumstances. Within this, there is room for KICHI (quick wits) that do not necessarily fit into any pre-determined principles.

Those who train sufficiently so as to develop and master BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU will also generate KI and its elements, which include KAN (intuition), and KICHI. This allows one to deploy mental and spiritual elements which are described, for example, as "leading KI", the "feeling" or "knack" of BUDO, and the ability to "see" the opponent's movement (even in a case when the opponent is behind one's back).

KICHI, however, has a higher and lower expression. Its higher form can only develop as a result of a high level of training aimed at creating consummate skills based on fundamental theories or principles. Those who have really mastered BUJUTSU NO HOUSOKU can deploy such a high form of KICHI.

There is another and different example of a technique similar to KICHI which could be possibly (although roughly) included as BUGI. This is SUTEMI (the sacrifice trick) in which one attempts to extricate oneself from danger by making a surprise move to startle the opponent.

Although this technique follows some of the principles of BUDO, it ignores some other critical elements, such as posture and balance. SUTEMI technique can be classified as one of the combat techniques, but because it does not include all aspects and elements of BUJUTSU, it

should not be included as a complete technique. This is precisely why SUTEMI is not included in AIKIDO.

The reason why AIKIDO so fully expresses BUBI (the aesthetics of the martial arts) including many aspects such as precise techniques, sense of stability and elegance, is that it incorporates all the essential elements of BUJUTSU NO HOSOKU.

Based on the explanations and viewpoints described above, now I would like to enter into the subject of technical theories.

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